

STATES OF JERSEY

OFFICIAL REPORT

SUNDAY, 9th MAY 2021

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[10:30]

The Roll was called and the Dean led the Assembly in Prayer.

COMMUNICATIONS BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER

The Bailiff:

1.1 Welcome to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor

I would like to begin this sitting by welcoming His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor to the Chamber this morning for this hybrid sitting of the States Assembly to celebrate the 76th Anniversary of the Liberation. **[Approbation]**

1.2 Welcome to everyone watching

I would also like to extend that welcome to all people watching us online streaming or through the medium of the cameras that are in the Assembly this morning. There is but one item of business before the Assembly and that is the celebration and marking of Liberation Day, our Island day. I therefore call upon Deputy Carina Alves to address the Assembly on this occasion.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

2. Deputy Carina Soares Alves of St. Helier will make a statement on the occasion of the 76th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Island

2.1 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier:

I am truly honoured to have been asked to speak on the most important day in our Island's calendar, Liberation Day. Liberation Day is a day on which our Island celebrates its freedoms, its strengths and its proud history. It is a day when the Island comes together as a community to remember and reflect. This day is not only for those who can trace back family roots to the Occupation and the Second World War but also for those, like myself, who were born on the Island but whose family were not. We too grew up with this as part of our history. I have fond memories of school trips to the war tunnels and experiencing the Occupation-style baking at school. Even memories of the royal visits and commemorative coins and stamps, which I still hold to this day. Equally, it is also for those who moved to our Island to appreciate and take on its value and become part of it. Those who moved to the Island learn very early on how strongly Islanders feel about 9th May and its significance to our culture. All of these things reinforce the memories of Liberation Day and strengthen our collective memory of the people who lived here at that time. For me, Liberation Day has always been a day to celebrate our liberties, democracy, peace and freedom but also to recognise the sacrifices that were made by those before us. Whose sacrifices allowed us to have these things and to show and feel gratitude for this. My family and many others chose to make Jersey their home. Many moved here for the peace, safety and freedom that Jersey offers them. For me, it is a time to come together as a family, as friends, to celebrate and remember how fortunate we are to have these freedoms, to recognise that there are still places in the world who do not experience the same liberties that we do and to remember that it is so important that we continue to work together, to challenge and scrutinise anything that puts this at risk, and to do the same for others who face adversity. The Occupation is carved into the very stones of our Island and I believe embedded into the memories and hearts of those who live here. All around the Island there are numerous memorials connected to the Occupation. Some, like the statue in Liberation Square, are more obvious than others. There are those more subtle we walk past every day and do not realise the significance of. Like the V set in the stones of our Royal Square right outside this Assembly; an act of defiance and belief in our right to freedom. Some of the memorials that I often find myself reading on my many walks through St. Helier are the quotes engraved into the paving slabs around Charing Cross. These quotes are from those of the Occupation generation and many are from those who suffered during that time. I remember recently reading one of the slabs there, a quote from a Spanish horse labourer: "I shall

never forget the kindness shown to me and other slave workers by the people of Jersey.” This particular quote has stayed with me and I am sure it has meaning to many others too. Particularly given the challenging time our community has faced over the last year and the many acts of kindness we have seen. For the first time since the Occupation, we have all experienced a restriction on our civil liberties and although it has not been easy it is important to recognise that we are incredibly lucky. We live in a very different time to those who suffered through the Occupation. We have not had to hide our wireless sets beneath the floorboards just to get the news. We have not had to whisper for fear of being overheard. Or seeing family and friends deported because they were not so discreet with passing on news from outside the Island. Thankfully we live in a time of technology, which has enabled us to continue to communicate and see family. A time that would not exist without the sacrifices of those who have come before us. Our community has shown many of the same qualities that were shown in the Occupation. In times of need and throughout history our Island and community has shown great kindness and embraced all those who have made Jersey their home. We all know that this year is a little different and we are still not back to normal; whatever that may be. This year we still have concerns and many still feel lost and confused in the aftermath of the lockdowns, which has given us just a small taste of what those Islanders went through during the Occupation. We have been given a glimpse of the restrictions of freedoms that they had to endure and it must be present on everyone’s mind today - today of all days - what they strived to protect and what we must remember. Today, on the 76th Anniversary of the liberation of our Island it is important to remember. Remember not only the suffering of the past and the impact it has had but to also remember the solidarity and kindness shown by people facing hardships. Remember that we would not be here without the past sacrifices of others, the many Islanders that left and never came back. We must remember and we must take what we have achieved over the last year, the community, the Island life that we have grown, the Island family we have grown, and continue to work together to ensure the maintenance of Jersey’s freedom, its prosperity, its community and, above all at this time, its health, and to grow towards a better future for us all. **[Approbation]**

The Bailiff:

Thank you very much, Deputy. That concludes the formal business for this special sitting of the Assembly. Accordingly we now stand adjourned until 9.30 a.m. on 11th May.

ADJOURNMENT

[10:43]