

# STATES OF JERSEY

## OFFICIAL REPORT

**TUESDAY, 9th MAY 2023**

<b>COMMUNICATIONS BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1.1 Welcome to official visitors to the States Assembly.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>PERSONAL STATEMENT .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. The Chief Minister, Deputy K.L. Moore of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter, will         make a statement on the occasion of the 78th Anniversary of the Liberation of the         Island.....</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1 Deputy K.L. Moore of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter (The Chief Minister):.....	2
<b>ADJOURNMENT.....</b>	<b>4</b>

[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 official visitors to the States Assembly**

I am delighted to welcome Members to this traditional sitting of the States Assembly to mark Liberation Day. We are joined by His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor and His Excellency Ambassador Berger from the Federal Republic of Germany. **[Approbation]** Mrs. Sheryll Murray M.P. (Member of Parliament), chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Channel Islands, is also with us, as are the Mayors of Trenton, New Jersey, Mr. Reed Gusciora, and of Bad Würzach, Frau Scherer, and of Dorsten, Herr Stockhoff. I would ask Members once again to join me in welcoming them in the Assembly. **[Approbation]** There is but one item on the Order Paper, as is traditional, and I call upon the Chief Minister, Deputy Kristina Moore, to make a statement on the matter of the 78th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Island.

## **PERSONAL STATEMENT**

### **2. The Chief Minister, Deputy K.L. Moore of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter, will make a statement on the occasion of the 78th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Island**

#### **2.1 Deputy K.L. Moore of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter (The Chief Minister):**

It is a great honour to be invited by you to address the Assembly and our Island on our National Day. Thank you. Liberation Day elicits so many memories, emotions and personal stories both for Islanders who went through those 5 painful years and of course for their descendents. Many of us today will, like me, be thinking of our parents, grandparents, relatives, friends and loved ones from whom they had heard occupation experiences first-hand. It is so important that we take time to remember this period in our history and not allow the painful experience of our occupation to be forgotten. That is why, when we reflect on similar events occurring in other parts of the world, we do relate to those nations. For example, we stand with Ukraine and we can all be proud that Islanders have contributed the most per capita to supporting its people. We must not forget that the Nazi occupation took place within living memory, ending 78 years ago today and there are people in the world today who are still experiencing similar deprivation. Occupation is, we know, not unthinkable and, unfortunately, not unrelatable. Indeed today, we are reminded that our freedom, liberty and democracy, which we so cherish and for which our forebears fought so hard, is precious and not to be taken for granted. We continue to argue for our liberal values, to promote them and to defend them across the world. Nobody knows the importance of that more so than our liberation generation; Islanders who saw through 5 years of occupation in Jersey, Islanders who were evacuated or deported and Islanders who fought for their King and their Bailiwick. They all stood for freedom and all contributed to rebuilding our Island after 1945. We owe them a debt that can never be repaid. **[Approbation]** Liberation Day, as we celebrate it in 2023, is Jersey's National Day. A day for everyone who calls this Island home but it is a day that still belongs first and foremost to our liberation generation. So, to everyone who is part of that unique and special generation and who are either here in the public gallery today, listening on the radio, watching at home or braving the elements in Liberation Square, we pay tribute to you and wish you all a very happy Liberation Day. **[Approbation]** To those who are no longer with us, we remember them today. We remember their stories and we remember their sacrifices. We commemorate and celebrate today alongside our friends, allies and fellow liberal democracies from across Europe and the world. As you have mentioned, we are joined in the gallery by Sheryll Murray M.P., chair of the Channel Islands All-Party Parliamentary Group, to whom we all extend a very warm welcome. Jersey is proud of its place in the British family and we greatly value our close ties with the U.K. (United Kingdom)

Ministers and parliamentarians. Thank you for being with us. I am equally delighted to echo the warm welcome you have given to the German Ambassador, His Excellency Miguel Berger, who we are so pleased to host here in the Island today. Thank you, Ambassador, for being here with us and for sharing in today's events with us. It is a great honour. The way in which Jersey's relationship with Germany has grown since 1945 and especially in recent years is, I know, a source of pride for us both. For many years now, communities in Germany and in Jersey have worked hard and with determination to build bridges and make the past experiences of occupation and deportation become a modern-day story of reconciliation. We need only look at the example of St. Helier with Bad Würzach's partnership as a mark of what can be achieved with the spirit of reconciliation, freedom and friendship. With this in mind, I also extend my own warm welcome to Bürgermeister Scherer and Bürgermeister Stockhoff from Bad Würzach and Dorsten, who we are most pleased to have with us today. We also welcome a delegation from Avranches, I hope reflecting the great value that we place on our relations with Normandy and we welcome home a former Vice-Dean Reverend Michael Halliwell, who I am delighted is here once again today and I wish him a happy birthday for yesterday. **[Approbation]** As a student, Reverend Halliwell travelled to Germany in 1947 to begin a process of reconciliation and later, as rector of St. Brelade, championed the process of building that strong bond that we now celebrate with the German nation. On this most important day in our national calendar, little speaks more to friendship than a willingness to cross an ocean to celebrate with us. We welcome back and thank Mayor Reed Gusciora from Trenton, New Jersey, and all of his team who have joined him. I have mentioned that today we will all take time to remember the stories and experiences that we have heard and learnt from our liberation generation. As well as hearing from them direct from our parents and grandparents, we are lucky that so many of them have been recorded, written down and preserved for posterity. We have the memoirs of course of Lord Coutanche, a great Jerseyman and a Bailiff of the day, whose account epitomises the struggles that were faced during the Occupation and the sheer joy of regaining our freedom. At the turn of every page, the anguish of Lord Coutanche experienced at seeing his Island occupied is so palpable. Equally, one senses the stubbornness, resilience and determination that characterised the population and saw the Island through. Another of your predecessors, Sir, Sir Peter Crill, has documented his story of escape in 1944, one of the very few Islanders who successfully fled during the Occupation. A personal favourite of mine is Dr. Lewis's account of his experiences caring for the health of Islanders who endured those years in the Island. I also remember today the stories of other extraordinary Islanders who I have had the pleasure to meet over the years, Leo Harris, Michael Ginns and Joe Miere, to name but a few. Many of us will have read the accounts in *Jersey Evacuees Remember*, a book that was spearheaded by the ever-energetic Jean McLaughlin and which sets out the experiences and tribulations of those who had to leave their Island home against their will. For several years now, I have had the privilege to call David Drage my friend. David was imprisoned in Bad Würzach along with his father and has played a key role both in ensuring the experience of those Islanders who were deported to prisons in Germany is for ever remembered and, equally, in the work of reconciliation, which I earlier mentioned. These were, and are, all Islanders who responded to extraordinary times in an extraordinary way showing courage, bravery, kindness and resilience and I hope that now is an appropriate moment to remember and pay a special tribute to Bob Le Sueur who we sadly lost in November last year at the grand age of 102.

[10:45]

Bob was himself a great storyteller who did so much to ensure that the experience of Occupation cannot be forgotten. One of the greatest privileges of being a journalist and then of course a Member of this Assembly has been the opportunity to meet so many wonderful Islanders. I know that Liberation Day meant so much to Bob. It stirred memories and emotions for him, as it has done through the years for many thousands of men and women. Bob Le Sueur has his own unique place in our Island story and he will never be forgotten. **[Approbation]** Bob was a campaigner for peace and freedom right until his last day. His Ukraine walking challenge, which he completed in his

garden and front room, epitomised the value he placed on liberty. Indeed, as I touched on earlier, Russia's invasion of Ukraine rekindled memories of what Bob and his contemporaries experienced from 1940 to 1945. As a community, we relate to the unjustified suffering of the Ukrainian people and that is why, as an Island, we stand always for peace, democracy and freedom alongside our friends and allies. I touched earlier on the spirit of reconciliation which forms such a central part of our Liberation Day. Although it has taken time, that process of reconciliation began on Liberation Day back in 1945. The Constable of St. Peter shared a story with parishioners at Friday's Liberation Flower Festival, which I thought I should share with everyone today. He recalled how, when the Military Police left the house that they had occupied opposite his family's farm, the blacksmith, who was German, chose to stay. The smithy spent his time carefully crafting a sign stating simply "9th May 1945" recognising the significance that that date will always have for Islanders. When the Constable's father spoke to the blacksmith, he was struck by the prescient statement that, in the future, we would be fighting on the same side for freedom and against totalitarian aggression. The Occupation highlighted the resilience of Jersey's population, be it our resourcefulness, our self-sufficiency or pure determination. It took character to get through 5 years of occupation and particularly that last year when we were cut off from Britain and Europe. That is of course not a place that Jersey wanted to be in then and, equally, not one we would wish to see again. We are as proud now of our autonomy, our creativeness and our resolve as we ever were. They are qualities and assets that define us. We remember that in 1944 and 1945, our efforts here were supported by the delivery of the SS Vega of Red Cross parcels which kept us from widespread starvation. The Red Cross rightly retains a special place in the hearts of Islanders and I know that the ongoing work of the Minister for International Development and the Jersey Overseas Aid commissioners means that the links between us remain as strong as ever. The world reached out to us in our time of need and we are reminded again today that, reciprocally, we must always remain a place that reaches out beyond our own shores. We are a global Island proud of our identity as a diverse and united community. While we will always recognise our relative size and the limits of our power, we are a community that has never and will never walk on by while we see others suffering. We saw that during the Occupation itself when many Islanders, despite their own difficulties, did what they could to help slave workers, some paying the ultimate sacrifice. We of course today commemorate those forced workers and those Islanders who did what they could to assist them. The annual memorial at Westmount has rightly become an integral part of Liberation Day, ensuring that these brave people are always remembered for the intolerable suffering, the racism and the killing that they were callously subjected to. Their memories live on and we are blessed to have their descendents as part of our community. Today is a day primarily for commemorations but it is also a day for celebration. We celebrate the end of occupation, the restoration of peace and the opportunity of reconciliation. The sheer ecstasy of freedom after 5 years of deprivation was celebrated in 1945 and it is celebrated equally today and particularly as we watch events in Ukraine and, more recently, in Sudan and Syria and in other parts of the world where people are fighting or struggling for freedom. It is a day for us all to show pride in who we are, in the values we hold dear and in our history, our present and our future. This is Jersey's day, Sir, and I wish you, all of my colleagues and each and every Islander a very happy Liberation Day. **[Approbation]**

**The Bailiff:**

Thank you very much indeed, Chief Minister. That concludes the business of the Assembly on this special sitting and the Assembly accordingly stands adjourned until 23rd May this year.

**ADJOURNMENT**

[10:52]