

**Statement von Jasleen Singh**  
**bei der Zentralen Gedenkveranstaltung im Bundestag**  
**am Volkstrauertag, 15. November 2020**

My name is Jasleen Singh and firstly I would like to thank Germany for giving me this opportunity to reflect on the Second World War.

I would like to start by talking about, probably, the most valuable and irreplaceable commodity we all possess and it's gifted to us for free.....

I am referring to time.

Recorded events of time past are our history and we are here today to remember all the souls who gave up the time they could have had. Over 384,000 British soldiers and 4.3 million German soldiers were killed during World War 2. These horrendous figures are dwarfed only by the estimated 61 million innocent men, women and children from many nations whose time was taken from them.

In 2019, I was fortunate enough to go on a battlefield tour with my school, Bristol Grammar. During this tour we visited various battlefields and cemeteries around both France and Belgium. I vividly remember the many fields that had row upon row of gravestones. While I was there, I visited the grave of one of the soldiers out of the 148 known to have died from my school. The soldier's name is Stanley Booker. We laid a wreath for him on his grave and it was at that moment that it really hit me that each stone represents the flesh and blood of not just a soldier - but also a Father, a Brother, a Husband and a Son. When these men died, the loss affected all those around them. The war changed the trajectory of millions of lives forever, not just for those who died but also for those who were left behind. I felt a deep sense of sadness, looking out at these cemeteries as in the end, these men, no matter whose side they fought on or what their beliefs were, returned to the same Earth. In death, they found themselves all equal. I hope a lesson has been learnt.

Now it appears we are facing a new war that once again threatens every corner of the globe - the war to save the Earth. As we begin to see the effects of climate change more and more prominently, it seems that it isn't our country that needs us to act this time, but instead our planet. A prerequisite of this is, of course, peace between nations.

As we look to the future, we should try and imagine what we want the many generations after us to think when they are looking back on the time we are living in now. Ultimately it is up to sow the seeds of the kinds of things we want to grow and outlive us. If we can set examples for the next generations then hopefully we can create a world where we don't let

hate and division divide us and instead we look for constructive solutions to problems that encourage peace and prosperity. We should use the power of our voices to strive to create a better society for all people. Our voice matters.

We must never forget the pain, the loss and suffering caused by the ultimate sacrifice of those who died during World War 2. We must honour them by using our time in the best possible way, learning from history, so that future generations will not only remember them but live the change you and I can also make.

This is my hope, my wish and prayer.

Thank you for your time