

North Strand 31 May, 2011

I am very grateful for having been invited to participate in this ceremony of mourning and remembrance.

The North Strand bombing by a German aircraft in 1941 brought death and suffering into this city and to its inhabitants. We recall today the memory of the many Dubliners who were killed and those who were injured or lost their relatives or homes. My deep sympathy and respect are with the survivors amongst us here today and families and friends of the victims. Their suffering is a lasting reminder of how immensely precious peace is. It was the terrifying war experience that led the peoples of Europe to start the European peace project that was to become the European Union. Today our two countries are united in this Union and we stand by each other. Germans remember Operation Shamrock after the war when Irish families fostered impoverished and malnourished German youngsters. And Germans carry the burden together with you in present times of need.

I should like to thank Marino College (and the CDVEC) for so diligently restoring this Garden and thus keeping the memory alive. At the same time I would like to acknowledge the great services that institutions represented here today have rendered not only in those fateful days and thereafter but ever since and before, notably the Dublin Fire Brigade, the Irish Red Cross, St. John's Ambulance and the Irish Army.

May this Memorial Garden be a place of recreation and reflection in the service of people in this community and this college.