

## **Tuesday reflection 10 Nov 2020**

I am sure that all of us who witnessed the Remembrance Sunday celebrations were struck by their silent dignity - truly a case of 'less being more'.

It is right and proper that we remember all those whose lives were cut short by the horrors of war; their deaths are a constant reminder to all of us of the futility of war, which does not solve anything, and definitely does not deter mankind from continuing with this senseless waste of human life.

The Second World War ended in September 1945; on the most optimistic calculation there have only been 26 days since then when there has been no armed conflict somewhere on the globe.

It is right and proper that we remember those of our countrywomen and countrymen who met an untimely end as a result of war; at the same time as we remember the 382,600 dead service men and women, let us not forget the 67,100 civilian casualties in this country.

As we mourn our own dead, however, it is also right and proper that we remember our dead fellow humans, our brothers and sisters, from other countries.

Let us not forget that it was our ally the Soviet Union that bore the brunt of the Second World War; that country lost 15% of its population, nearly 17 million people, half of them civilians. Our American allies lost 416,800 service personnel, and our French allies 217,600 military personnel alongside 350,000 civilian casualties. And finally let us not forget that Germany lost over 4 million members of their armed forces, many of them unwilling conscripts.

Altogether the Second World War cost 45 million civilian lives and 15 million military - a total cost of some 3% of the world population in 1940.

Let us not enquire about the national origins of these casualties or ask 'which side were they on'. They were all children of God.

**Michael Townson**