

STATES OF JERSEY



JERSEY AND THE SLAVE TRADE (P.78/2020): AMENDMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 1st September 2020
by Deputy J.H. Perchard of St. Saviour

STATES GREFFE

1 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (a) –

For the words “as Benin Square” substitute the words “to a name put forward by Black Lives Matter Jersey, which may wish to consult the wider community and other stakeholders, within 60 days of the adoption of this proposition”.

2 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (c) –

For the words “place names and memorials” substitute the words “place names, memorials, public art and public holidays”.

DEPUTY J.H. PERCHARD OF ST. SAVIOUR

Note: After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

- (a) to request the Minister for Treasury and Resources, as shareholder representative, to request the States of Jersey Development Company to rename Trenton Square to a name put forward by Black Lives Matter Jersey, which may wish to consult the wider community and other stakeholders, within 60 days of the adoption of this proposition;
- (b) to request the Chief Minister to commission a report into establishing a permanent memorial which acknowledges Jersey’s part in the Slave Trade, to be presented to the States no later than 23rd August 2021;
- (c) to request the Chief Minister to commission, in conjunction with Jersey Heritage, the Jersey Community Relations Trust, Black Lives Matter Jersey and other potential stakeholders, an audit of all place names, memorials, public art and public holidays relating to former slave traders in Jersey, in order to inform work on understanding and explaining the full contribution of the slave trade to Jersey’s history, with the outcome of the audit to be presented to the States no later than 23rd August 2021.

REPORT

The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in Jersey began in the run up to 6th June 2020 when hundreds of Islanders took part in the peaceful protest for racial justice which took place in People's Park as the BLM movement intensified over the globe. This protest saw hundreds of Islanders kneel for 8 minutes and 46 seconds to mark the death of U.S. citizen George Floyd, who lost his life after being arrested and pinned to the ground for that length of time by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, who has since been charged with second-degree murder. The event also featured speeches and poetry from members of the black community.

Following this, and the toppling of the Edward Colston statue in Bristol over historic links to slave trading, connections between Sir George de Carteret and the slave trade were publicly decried resulting in calls for the statue to be removed.

As the BLM movement grew in Jersey, Deputy Tadier lodged 'Jersey and the Slave Trade' (P.78/2020): a welcome and valuable contribution to this historical movement.

My amendments are small and, hopefully, complementary.

The rationale for the change to part (a) is simply that whilst I think Benin Square may well be viewed favourably, the proposal and choice of a new name should come from Black Lives Matter Jersey and that the opportunity should be given for their wider membership to have a voice.

The rationale for the change to part (c) is that there is a dearth of political public art in Jersey; including art within the consideration of the review would provide the data to support this statement, and, I hope, trigger a movement towards the creation of more political public art.

This rationale applies to the addition of a public holiday audit; it is not that there are particular holidays I wish to see abolished (though this audit may indeed encourage us to reconsider any with outdated ties), but, rather, it is a good opportunity to consider what we do not yet mark in our calendar and what we may like to publicly and collectively recognise.

“What's happening in the U.S. isn't contained to the U.S. Racism is something that affects us all both individually and as a community, and coming together is important to start that conversation and reflect on what's happened and understand how we can all move forward.”

Joint co-ordinator of BLM Jersey

I encourage all States members to vote in favour of P.78/2020 as we accelerate the journey towards ending racism in Jersey.

Financial and manpower implications

There are no additional financial and manpower implications arising from the adoption of this amendment.