



**Citizens Uprooting Racism in Bermuda**

# **2019 Racial Justice Platform**

## **Call to Action**

The Racial Justice Platform is a living document, a work in progress. If you have questions or suggestions for additional reparative action please contact CURB at [admin@uprootingracism.org](mailto:admin@uprootingracism.org)

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## INTRODUCTION

In the Report of the United Nations Special Mission to Bermuda 2005, UN Members frequently commented on the serious racial divisions between Bermudians of African descent and those of European descent, noting the wounds caused by the historic legacy of segregation were very apparent, especially among many of the older generation of Bermudians of African descent who spoke at the public meetings. They recognized that the division is played out, in significant measure, in the support for opposing political parties, as well as in the support for or opposition to independence.

They stated that critical to the future of Bermuda was national reconciliation, irrespective of its eventual political status regarding independence, and that the key to national reconciliation would be for those societal differences to be addressed and reconciled, so that the people of the Territory could move forward together in whatever direction they choose.

Regarding racial divisions, the UN members concluded that both racial groups needed to reach out for a common agenda of unity, and that the racial issues in Bermuda must be addressed irrespective of independence and that they have to be discussed by the society.

### **The Need**

Bermuda's struggles with racism represent a microcosm of what occurs in many countries elsewhere.

CURB's work has been recognized internationally, with Dr Eduardo Bonilla Silva, a leading academic, author and racial justice activist at Duke University stating; *"I am just emailing to let you know how impressed I am by the events CURB puts together. This is much more than ANY similar organization is doing in the US, so know that CURB's work is cutting-edge."*

The International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) Canada Director on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018 congratulated CURB on the "fantastic work" and "excellent presentations" given by CURB at the IIRP Canada Conference in Toronto and later the World IIRP Conference in Detroit on the Bermuda Truth and Reconciliation Community Conversations. He went on to state *"those of us in Canada can relate to the issues you are facing as a country and we also are impressed by the processes your organization has developed in order to engage members of your community in restorative conversations. Our country is facing a similar journey regarding Indigenous people in Canada and IIRP Canada is in the process of developing materials and processes that will enable us to effectively facilitate these much-needed conversations. We are hoping therefore to be able to access your materials that have been created by CURB as well as the processes that you have developed for possible incorporation into our plans."*

In a community as small as Bermuda, there is a very real opportunity to make extraordinary steps towards real change in the area of race relations. It may be that this tiny island, with its history of oppression, survival and adversity, will be able to provide an example to the world.

All Bermudians know that change is needed and as a society we must have the courage and determination to carry out a vision that enables us to heal and find a way forward in community. Big Change requires Big Vision. With Hope, Hard Work and a great deal of Love lives can be changed; and it is for this reason we must take on a new Vision for our society, one that will bring about a change in all our lives for the better and a more stable, healthier and racially just community.

A reconciliation process is necessary in any community that has suffered historical injustices, the legacy of which continues to burden today those who have been historically mistreated. It requires constructive actions to create a new culture of equity, fairness, equal opportunity and racial parity.

With social unrest occurring in 2016 and 2017, and a constant question recurring, “How do we move forward together?” We see this as an important time to restate what we believe are key recommendations to achieve the goals of racial equity and healing in our community. We believe that unless and until these issues are addressed, we will continue to struggle with the legacies of the past and be unable to create the socially just and economically stable society we all want for ourselves and Bermuda’s future generations.

### **What is Racial Justice?**

It is not uncommon to hear the term ‘post-racial,’ or it being alluded to, in public discourse. In its most basic context, it is the notion that race no longer matters in society. Yet, when statistical and social data are analysed, there are stark differences by race, with one race, Whites, fairing significantly better than others. Race therefore matters and we have not moved into a post-racial era. What we propose are the first steps of a thousand-step journey toward racial justice and racial reconciliation in Bermuda.

In the Bermudian context, CURB views racial justice as a process where there is healing from past hurts, educational enlightenment, economic opportunity and alignment, and a movement towards restorative practices throughout our community, with measures including legislation put in place to ensure its sustainability.

We further believe that *“racial justice should not only repair the damage that the legacy of racism has created but should also dismantle the current structuring of racism in ... our laws, policies and culture”* (Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity, 2010).

### **Why Now?**

James Smith’s *Analysis of Emancipation Experiences in Bermuda* states, *“Bermuda’s post emancipation governments failed to tackle the question of race relations directly, leaving a complex legacy of discrimination and segregation, which the present generations are trying to come to grips with.”* This statement is as valid today as it was in 1991, with our society continuing to struggle with the racial divide. This continuing disconnect is evidenced by the protests culminating in the historic blockade of the House of Assembly in March 2016 and the December 2016 Pepper Spraying incident.

As such there is an ever increasing and urgent need for the government of Bermuda to address the continuing racial disparities and ongoing discrimination in our community with concrete policies and legislation.

### **Why CURB?**

CURB is a non-governmental, volunteer, independent racial justice organization, and is uniquely positioned to put forward a Racial Justice Platform for consideration by the people of Bermuda. It is hoped that elected officials, and those contemplating running for public office, see this as an opportunity to provide bi-partisan support for actions that will help bring about long-term stability and equity to our community. Ultimately, the power rests with the people to drive this process.

CURB released its first Racial Justice Platform in 2012 and as a living document it has continued to be refined and updated. CURB's Racial Justice Platform is a culmination of the research, advocacy and racial justice education work we have carried out in the community since 2005. We have reviewed many reports commissioned by Government during the last 50 years to address the racial disparities that continue to exist in Bermuda and have spent many hours discussing how to address the economic disparities, social, racial and cultural disconnects that continue to plague our community.

The 2019 Racial Justice Platform includes items we believe are essential to creating a more equitable and just society. We urge the people of Bermuda to review these recommendations with an open mind, and endorse the concepts detailed in CURB's updated Racial Justice Platform as a way to heal our society, repair the damage, bring about greater equity, and create trust and respect in the community. CURB's Racial Justice Platform is a living document and will be added to and amended as new research is obtained and feedback is received from the people of Bermuda.

*"The way you help heal the world is you start with your own family."* Mother Teresa

# 2019 Racial Justice Platform

## SOCIETAL/COMMUNITY REPARATIONS

1. **Support for a Truth & Reconciliation Process:** In 2013 CURB called for the introduction of a formal, structured, process where the harms and societal divisions caused by slavery, segregation and racism, can be learned, understood, and addressed, with a view to acknowledge and repair those harms and mutually determine a path forward that is in the best interest of all. During 2016 CURB researched and put together a process for such a reconciliation process and in January 2017 the Truth & Reconciliation Community Conversations were launched and are now in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year.
2. **Guaranteed Government Scholarships:** The reinstatement of Bermuda Government scholarships to Bermuda public school students covering 100% of tuition costs at Bermuda College for a two-year programme. The provision of scholarships to Bermudian students who graduate from the Bermuda College and go on to complete the final 2 years of a 4-year college degree outside of Bermuda at an accredited institute of higher learning.
3. **Racial Equity Index:** The establishment of such an index will serve as a monitoring vehicle that can measure by race, progress in education, access to health, and economic opportunity, among other variables; and to inform government and private sector of policies that will encourage and enhance racial equity. Dorothy Newman in her 1994 report entitled *Bermuda's Stride Towards the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* stated "Some important institutions cannot be studied because records are not kept and statistically valid surveys made that could reflect progress in race relations, or the records kept and published require revision. It is, for instance, essential in a bi-racial society for data to be collected, analysed and published by race. The fact this is not the case in some Bermuda institutions is, in itself, institutional racism."
4. **Voting Rights**
  - a. **For those imprisoned and/or on parole:** Due to racial profiling and other legacy issues, the numbers of Black people in prison far outweigh the demographics for their race. Many countries allow inmates to vote. Examples include Australia, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Sweden, and Zimbabwe. In Germany, the law even calls on prisons to encourage prisoners to vote. Policies that deny voting rights to people who are paying or have paid their debt to society offend fundamental tenets of democracy and human rights.
  - b. **Improved Access to Voting** – Limited time periods a) to register, b) to sign up to get travel plans okayed by the Parliamentary Registrar, and c) only one week before people travel; this restricted access disenfranchises all people travelling but in particular Black Bermudians who outnumber white Bermudians 3 to 1.

- c. **Introduction of Absentee Voting** – Many Bermudians have had to leave the island since 2008 as economic refugees seeking job opportunities overseas. The inability to vote from overseas penalizes them again, e.g. in the UK British Citizens can vote for up to 15 years after they leave the UK. Additionally, students overseas, and those seeking job experience, are likewise penalized. Numerous methods have been devised worldwide to facilitate this, e.g. application for a postal vote.
- 5. **The creation of a Black History museum, library and research centre** to ensure the work for racial justice and equity is continued, whilst exhibiting the history, culture and community of Black Bermudians; the stories of trailblazers, innovators, artisans, visionaries and history makers who helped shape the Bermuda we know today. The museum to demonstrate through an African-Bermudian lens, the political, educational, military service, culture, religion, sports, and visual arts, how the African Bermudian story is quintessentially one of determination, faith, perseverance, pride, and resilience.
- 6. **Memorial to Mary Prince** – CURB believes that the time is long overdue to erect a statue to the memory of Mary Prince and her legacy. Recognized worldwide as a leading abolitionist and an example of courage and determination, the story of her life left a lasting impression and hastened the abolition of slavery in the British colonies. This statue would be a lasting memorial to Mary Prince and to all the thousands of enslaved ancestors of Bermudians who are buried in unmarked graves around the island.
- 7. **Emancipation and Mary Prince Day** – It is CURB’s strongly-held belief that the second day of Cup Match should be renamed from Somers Day to *Mary Prince Day*. The history of Cup Match and Emancipation are inextricably linked but for many years has been buried beneath the weight of a dominant narrative that talked of “benign” slavery and colonial glory. Thanks to the contributions of mostly Black historians this narrative has long been disproved, e.g. the 1761 rebellion which saw over half the population willing to revolt and kill their slaveowners to seek freedom, this 30 years before the Haitian Revolution.

In 1831 Bermuda’s own Mary Prince took her plight to the Anti-Slavery Society in London and her story of the horrors of enslavement was published and helped to bring about the ending of slavery throughout the entire British Empire. Mary Prince, from Brackish Pond, Devonshire, Bermuda, born a slave, and today renowned and celebrated worldwide as a heroine and abolitionist for her courage, fortitude and determination, is surely worthy of the celebration of her name at Cup Match.

Emancipation Celebrations, the forerunner to Cup Match, were introduced after the abolition of slavery when Bermudians of African descent would gather together on the 1<sup>st</sup> August for picnics, games and family gatherings to celebrate and commemorate the anniversary of their emancipation and the abolition of slavery; for many in the Friendly

Societies this would involve playing cricket as part of the celebrations. In 1901 members of the Friendly Societies agreed that the match between Somerset and St. George's be played annually and the game we know today as Cup Match was officially born.

In 1947 the Public Holidays Act officially made both days of Cup Match a public holiday, naming the first day "Cup Match Day" and the second day "Somers Day". Given the context of segregation and the post-war push to increase tourism, the renaming of the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of Cup Match to Somers Day was likely an attempt to placate the white population and move away from its association with Emancipation.

For those who wonder why the renaming of a day is important, one only has to remember the harsh scene in *Roots* where Kunte Kinte was beaten to acknowledge his slave name of "Toby".

CURB calls on Government to fully recognize the Emancipation origins of Cup Match by renaming the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of Cup Match *Mary Prince Day* to recognize her efforts to bring about Emancipation, to acknowledge the intent of those previously enslaved to both commemorate and celebrate their freedom, and to memorialize all those who fought and died enslaved and lie in unmarked graves.

## LEGISLATIVE/POLICY REPARATIONS

Legislation that requires the acknowledgement of the lasting impacts of slavery, segregation and post-segregation discrimination and the establishment and execution of a plan to address those impacts.

- 8. National Health Care** – Historically domestic workers, farm labourers and construction workers, predominantly Black, were denied access to medical insurance due to the temporary or part-time nature of their employment. Low wages made even the HIP plan difficult to afford. A fresh look at Health care coverage especially for seniors and the unemployed must be considered. We have a growing aging population, most of whom are employed outside of the civil service. Upon retirement our seniors look to purchasing FutureCare and HIP, which for many is out of reach financially. Getting medical coverage is expensive and uses up the majority of a seniors' pension funds, leaving many with little to nothing to live off for the month. Some opt to have no coverage, in order to be able to eat. Unemployed individuals have no coverage, and a growing number of part-time or temporary employees are without coverage.
  - a. Serious consideration must be given to establishing a National Health Plan to assist those who are unable to help themselves.
  - b. Insurance companies should offer benefits to employees who have parents that need coverage - the parent can be added in the same way children are included on an employee's insurance.

- c. Those employed by companies for 10 years or more who retire should have the right to retain their insurance coverage upon retirement, even if pre-existing conditions exist.
- 9. Pensions:** Historically domestic workers, farm labourers and construction workers, predominantly Black or Portuguese, were denied access to Government pension plans due to the temporary or part-time nature of their employment. Many today live on minimum government pension incomes due to this past. Additional assistance must be provided to senior citizens who have found themselves in this situation due to historic biased legislation.
- Guest workers are currently (2017) not required to pay into pension plans, which makes them 'cheaper' to employ and disenfranchises Bermudians from work opportunities. This should be rectified so Bermudians are not put at a disadvantage for employment opportunities.
- 10. Revival of a Workforce Equity Bill:** It is accepted in the social justice arena that in order to address historical injustices and its continuing legacies, affirmative action is necessary, and this tenet is recognised by our constitution. We view a Workforce Equity Bill as a rational step forward and support its revival or new legislation which has similar goals and objectives.
- 11. Immigration Reform:** That a comprehensive bi-partisan immigration reform be urgently undertaken, taking into account Bermuda's past oppressive and discriminatory history with regard to repeated banishment of Free Blacks prior to Emancipation, subsequent Black population control policies, racialized immigration policies, biased legislation and discriminatory voting rights. Bermudians have the right to be protected.
- 12. Equal Pay for Equal Work:** Equal Pay for Equal Work aims to address situations where there is unequal pay based on race, gender, etc., even though they are carrying out equal work. In Bermuda, paying people of colour, women, or those with a disability less than men is not only unfair, it also has far-reaching implications for society by contributing to the race and gender pay gap, lower pension contributions and higher incidence of relative poverty in later life.
- 13. Pay Transparency/Publishing Wages:** Pay systems should be transparent and reward the entire workforce fairly and send a positive message about an organisation's values and ways of working. The concealment of pay allows more money to be allocated to those who negotiate more aggressively, those who are perceived as less, those who threaten to quit, or those who are friends with the boss. Unconscious bias can infiltrate salary decisions when pay is kept secret. When pay is transparent, organizations must be able to justify each employee's salary – thus reducing or eliminating any type of bias. Job scope and the market value of the position should be the sole determinants of pay as both are purely objective measures. When a job is advertised it should include a

salary range with a job description, enabling the higher rate of pay when an applicant meets all criteria, and a lower rate when they have less experience or qualifications and can be mentored/ trained.

- 14. Advertising Jobs:** All jobs to be advertised, no exception. Too often we see jobs in Bermuda going to friends and family, or to someone you know. With most businesses still being owned disproportionately by whites, this results in an exclusion of qualified Black Bermudians from being hired, especially at senior or professional levels in both local and exempt companies.
- 15. The Mandatory Reporting of Wealth by Race:** The reporting of wealth by race is carried out in most western societies. As part of their license, financial institutions be required to report annually, aggregate net worth data by race. This would provide necessary information to determine if the wealth divide is changing/improving based on demographics.
- 16. Capital Gains Tax on Houses over a Determined Annual Rental Value:** Lord Pitt, in making recommendations after the 1977 disturbances stated the following, *“We repeat our belief that in the long run it will prove essential to regulate the transmission of inherited wealth.”* We believe that without such regulation, there will be continued and further economic division among the races, and that it is time to close the widening divisions.
- 17. Living Wage:** That every employee receive a living wage to enable them to provide basic needs for themselves and their families. (See CURB’s opinion piece in the Royal Gazette 28 March 2015)
- 18. Financial assistance:** A review and amendment of the Financial Assistance Regulations 2004, which in its current form, does not enable those on assistance to save even small amounts of money and is not flexible enough to ensure that existing bills at the time of signing up and/or bills that exceed the costs allocated in the Schedule to be paid, resulting in a never-ending cycle of debt for many financial assistance clients. The current legislation was amended in order to prevent clients from taking advantage of the programme; however, we believe that, in its current form, it is contributing to the poverty cycle rather than enabling families/individuals to become financially independent.
- 19. Repeal of section 3 of the Incentives for Job Makers Act 2011:** We are concerned that section 3 of the Act, which allows people holding senior positions in companies to acquire PRC status, is unconstitutional. We believe that the Act is unfairly discriminatory in its effect, as the demographic of the category of people to which it applies is predominantly, and almost exclusively, white males and their families.

## 20. Taxation Reform:

The need to create a more economic, social and racially just and equitable country is critical for our community. The economic depression since 2008 has crushed those already living in poverty and many from the middle class now struggle from pay cheque to pay cheque. We are required to take bold steps to create a fairer and more equitable environment for all Bermudians.

CURB believes that the only way to bring about a more equitable society is through comprehensive tax reform including the introduction of a simply structured graduated income tax, providing relief for those in crisis, and more responsibility for those earning at the high end.

- a. **The introduction of graduated income tax:** Sir Hugh Wooding, in his Report of the Commission following the 1968 Civil Disturbances, stated “...the system of relying on import duties for almost all of the colony’s revenues bears unfairly upon the less wealthy... and the time was ripe for direct taxation.” Subsequent commissions, reports following civil disturbances, social unrest and riots all carried the same message.
- b. **Comprehensive Tax Reform** – to ensure Bermuda’s tax system, historically heavily weighted to protect the wealthy class, becomes fairer whilst helping to create jobs for Bermudians.

21. **Employment Act 2000 Reform** – Review and amend the Employment Act, in particular Section 9 (1) and (2) wherein it allows for employers not to pay overtime rates if it is agreed to by the employee. This section has been abused and Bermudians who have refused to agree to this stipulation have been marginalized, i.e. not hired, and if hired are not being given additional work and opportunities. Whereas expatriate workers who agree to be paid at straight time for overtime work have been kept on and work longer hours. In effect making it cheaper for employers to hire non-Bermudians, resulting in the marginalization of Bermudians.

## REPARATORY JUSTICE

22. **Introduction of Restorative Justice into the Criminal Justice System:** Bermuda has inherited the Western punitive system of justice. We strongly support the implementation of restorative justice in our criminal justice system that focuses on healing and restoring all those affected by the harm crime causes. In jurisdictions where this practice is used, there is strong evidence that victims are better able to move on with their lives, and the rate of recidivism decreases<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> We are pleased to note that since the issuance of the first Racial Justice Platform in 2012 a restorative approach to justice has begun in the Department of Corrections and is advocated for by Senior Magistrate Juan Wolffe and the previous Chief Justice, Ian Kawaley.

**23. Review of the Criminal Justice System:** We note that many of the recommendations in the Tumin Report 1992, the last publicly-released document on the Criminal Justice System, have not been implemented. For instance: *“We recommend that offences ... or any laws that appear to discriminate on the basis of race or sex should be reviewed by a working party with a view to the abolition of those which are a legacy of an outdated era.”* Another such example, *“We recommend that consideration should be given to the idea of a half-way house as suggested by Prison Fellowship and the Salvation Army, who have both offered to establish and operate such a facility.”* Instead of repealing laws, there have been additions to the criminal code which have had the effect of unfairly targeting young black males compared to other groups.

Bermuda’s criminal justice system, court services, the legislature, the courts, social agencies, prosecutions, the Police Service, and Corrections to be fully integrated providing and exchanging current data that speaks to the overall health and fairness of the system.

**24. Introduction of Equality Impact Assessments through legislation and/or public procurement policy:** An equality impact assessment involves assessing the likely or actual effects of legislation, policies or services on people in respect of disability, gender and racial equality, among others. It helps ensure the needs of people are taken into account when we develop and implement new legislation, policies or services or when we make changes to same.

In the US & UK equality, diversity and inclusion requirements are embedded into public procurement procedures which has direct benefit to local and small business owners (supply chain requirements) and targeted employment opportunities for under-represented groups (positive action) tied into contract award and performance payments. This approach has significant social benefits in both the short and long term. With the Bermuda government being by far the biggest procurer of services on the island this approach is likely to have substantial benefits. Public procurement policy is the most practical and fastest method to reducing employment inequality prior to the introduction of any legislation. Evidence of this approach is well established across the US, UK and EU.

**25. Legalization of Cannabis:**

- a. We see no need to make criminals out of individuals who use small amounts of marijuana for personal use. (See CURB’s Report to the Cannabis Reform Collaborative 10 March 2014).
- b. We support the call for Cannabis Forgiveness Legislation.

**26. Repeal of Section 315F of the 2005 Amendment to the Criminal Code:** We have championed for this since early 2011. This section of the Criminal Code (Stop and Search **without** probable cause) brings persons into contact with the criminal justice system by stealth, severely limiting their life chances. We further believe that the powers granted

to law enforcement agencies under the 2006 PACE Act are more than adequate to fight crime without putting public safety at risk.

27. **Review of sections 3 and 4 of the Debtors Act 1973:** Aligned with our support for the implementation of restorative justice in our criminal justice system, we believe that alternatives to imprisonment for the non-payment of debt should be explored within the community, including participation in Drug Treatment Court and/or Mental Health Treatment Court programmes instead of imprisonment.

## **ECONOMIC REPARATIONS**

28. **Economic Intimidation:** Education in schools' social studies programs on how economic terrorism worked in the past, and how economic intimidation continues today. Those who commit examples of economic intimidation are dealt with by the courts as a crime. Historically economic violence was committed pre and post-Emancipation in order to exert control over Black Bermudians, i.e. the control of Black Bermudians through the threat of withdrawing employment or loans, mortgages, throwing people out of their rented homes or being blacklisted, etc. Today CURB hears multiple reports of economic intimidation committed against Bermudians, with Bermudians too frightened to report on these incidences because of the fear of loss of employment and/or being actively marginalized from other job opportunities. Despite it being illegal and against the Human Rights Act, discrimination based on political affiliation continues to rear its head in our community.
29. **Workforce Survey:** The Workforce Survey analysis should be expanded to the extent when it was published annually under the Commission for Unity and Racial Equity. It included information on the racial background of employees, salaries and wages, compensation packages, as well as hiring and promotion information. It is important for this information to be publicized again to assist with the continued work with racial disparities and guide policy initiatives such as the Workforce Equity Bill.
30. **Establishment of a Necessity Goods Depot:** The Government, through its international connections, to secure bulk goods from overseas and establish a Goods Depot where basic foods and household items can be purchased at affordable prices for those in need.
31. **Charitable Grants/Support** – That all charitable and not-for-profit organizations supported, funded and/or in receipt of grants from Government, paid with taxpayers' monies, are required to ensure that their hiring practices represent the Bermudian demographics in the country. And that said charities and/or not-for-profits have 5 years from the introduction of this policy/legislation to come into compliance.

- 32. Mortgage Reform - 1% Mortgages through the Bermuda Housing Corporation, 3.5% Mortgages for Expanding Families:** The lower mortgage rates would allow first-time homeowners and expanding families who meet eligibility requirements to afford homes that suit their needs.
- 33. No-claims Discount, Home-Owner Insurance:** The encouragement of a public-private sector run insurance agency that rewards home-owners for no claims, returning funds back to them whilst keeping insurance premiums affordable.
- 34. Caricom Reparations Commission** – many of the items above can be looked at through the lens of reparation for past and continuing harms, i.e. repairing the damage of the past by providing responsibility and accountability and sites of memory. Bermuda is an Associate Member of CARICOM but has failed to join the CARICOM Reparations Commission (CRC) which formed in 2013. Over the past three years the CRC has inspired the formation of the National African American Reparations Commission, the European Reparations Commission and similar formations in Canada and Great Britain. Since then, conversations and debates about reparations and reparatory justice have intensified across the world.

There is a global movement for reparations and the call for reparations is resonating beyond communities in the Caribbean, with indigenous peoples of Australia, New Zealand and the large communities of African descent in Brazil and Colombia raising their voices demanding reparations. India is also talking about reparations for the suffering inflicted from decades of British colonial rule.

CURB urges the Government of Bermuda to join the CARICOM Reparations Commission to seek reparations for the hundreds of years of legislated enslavement and colonial rule.

## **EDUCATION REPARATIONS**

- 35. Introduction of Restorative Practices into the Educational System:** CURB believes that the introduction of Restorative Practices into the Educational System is not only a cost-effective way to provide both faculty and students with tools to deal with conflict and trauma but more importantly a proactive methodology **to prevent** conflict by building community and relationships within the schools system through the introduction of Restorative Practices at all levels.
- The field of restorative practices also has significant implications for all aspects of society — from families, classrooms, schools and prisons to workplaces, associations, governments, even whole nations. Restorative practices can develop better relationships among organizations' constituents and help the overall organization function more effectively. For example, in schools, the use of restorative practices has been shown to reliably reduce misbehavior, bullying, violence and crime among

students and improve the overall climate and culture for learning. Everyone who finds themselves in positions of authority — from parents, teachers and police to administrators and government officials — can benefit from learning about restorative practices.

**36. The introduction and/or expansion of Black Studies curriculum in all schools and the**

**Bermuda College:** It is an oxymoron that in a majority Black country a Black studies curriculum has never been mandated in our education system. Black studies curriculums have been prepared by dedicated Bermudian researchers and educators but have not been instituted by the Department of Education. Black history has been researched and documented by a number of eminent Black Bermudian scholars, and there are individual dedicated teachers who seek to bring greater balance to their history or social studies classes.

The question must be asked why is it that every country teaches their own history throughout a child's time in school, and that no matter which country that child chooses to attend university, that course work is accepted. Yet Bermuda history only appears for a term or two scattered throughout a child's education?

The legacy of colonialism in Bermuda's education system ensures that Bermuda's history, written from the perspective of those in power (the dominant narrative), is European-centric. A 1970 Black studies movement at the Technical Institute and Berkeley Institute was quickly curtailed with threatened expulsions. Dr. Kenneth Robinson, a Bermudian historian of considerable note, wrote a paper to Cabinet in the 1970s recommending that Black History be taught in schools, sadly it did not make it past the Minister of Education of the day. In September 2010 Berkeley Institute student, Kiaaron Minks, made a request to the Government of Bermuda for more Bermuda history in the school curriculum. There is an urgent need for our museums, institutions and schools to rise to the challenge of telling Bermuda's history from a more inclusive perspective.

CURB's workshops on *Hidden History* and *Immigration in Bermuda: Its History. Its Legacy* have repeatedly demonstrated the lack of knowledge of those educated in Bermuda about Bermuda's past oppression and its consequences. Our society's failure to teach an accurate and complete telling of Bermuda's history shows how institutional racism continues to play out today by preventing entire generations from fully knowing the critical underlying factors that have shaped, and continue to shape the society they live in. Imbedded in the legacy of colonial-inspired school systems and museums is a European-centric perspective that is both a symptom and driver of structural racism, and an underlying cause of other issues such as challenged identity, and continuing discrimination.

## **IX. INDIVIDUAL REPARATIONS**

### **37. Facing our History**

- a. Recognise that systemic racism and legacies of slavery and segregation still exist in Bermuda today.
- b. Educate yourself, your friends and family about the true history of slavery and segregation and its impact on successive generations.
- c. Acknowledge the existence of intergenerational trauma and poverty in our society as a direct result of years of slavery, segregation and ongoing prejudice, bias and discrimination.
- d. Acknowledge the ongoing spiritual and emotional pain existing in our community as a result of individual's personal and historical connection to slavery and its legacy for yourself and others.
- e. Own your own privilege and transgressions that perpetuates racism and work to correct them.

### **38. Crossing the Divide**

- a. Reach out to establish relationships across racial lines. Become a part of the Truth & Reconciliation Community Conversations.
- b. Seek out linked descendants and establish connections and friendships where possible across the racial divide.
- c. Work to repair the harms of slavery and its legacies by joining, donating or supporting local or international organizations like CURB, The Family Centre, the Inter Agency Committee, and others both locally and internationally that are working to repair the harm of the past.
- d. Attend public forums, presentations, workshops in order to learn about racism and its legacies and make connections across racial lines.
- e. Financially support public events, fairs, plays put on by public schools.

### **39. Repairing the Harm**

- a. Make a commitment to no longer be a part of Bermuda's Culture of Silence and Culture of Fear surrounding discussions on race.
- b. Accept your personal responsibility for repairing the harm from historical wrongs and from benefitting, perhaps unknowingly, from advantages given because of your race.
- c. Be willing to be part of discussions on racial matters in your organization, church, groups.
- d. Be cognizant of words that hold negative images/connotations/interpretations for people of colour.
- e. Listen with attention to Black Bermudians when they speak of injustice, racism, reparations and reform. They speak from personal experience.

- f. Learn about the stressors, medical and mental health issues that affect some Black Bermudians because of intergenerational trauma from the past, and work to reduce the impacts of these stresses as medical and mental health providers.
- g. Document your history, your connection to enslavement, share your experiences and stories of past and current oppression.

#### **40. Taking Action**

- a. Be willing to speak up when someone says something racially charged or insensitive in a public environment. Attend CURB workshops to learn how to do this as a teaching moment rather than confrontation.
- b. Support the Black community economically by purchasing in their businesses.
- c. Work with educators in the private schools to reform curricula to ensure it tells Black History from an empowering perspective.
- d. Teach beyond the generic story of slavery and include the full spectrum of Black History, its art, its literature, its poetry, its music.
- e. Support legislation, policies, initiatives that correct racial injustices (e.g. Workforce Equity Bill, Equal Pay for Equal Work, Living Wage).
- f. In personal and professional situations take action to level the playing field.
- g. Support the hiring of Black Bermudians in your professional life.
- h. Be active in your community to support criminal justice reform.
- i. Offer personal or family foundation support for college scholarships, or through the Bermuda Community Foundation.
- j. Share personal history, genealogical data, stories with historical societies, libraries, archives to ensure your story is told.
- k. Support the collection of data and statistics to evaluate how we improve as a society.

### **X. WHAT DOES RACIAL EQUITY LOOK LIKE?**

**41.** If Bermuda is to make strides towards racial equity, the evidence could be in the form of the following:

- a. Strong statistical association between family wealth and racial identity declines.
- b. Increased system or institution-based efforts to identify ways to reduce structural racism.
- c. Each organization has an articulated analysis of structural racism and privilege, and continually shares and strengthens its analysis throughout the leadership and the wider community.
- d. Sustained or endowed resources support tracking and sharing of outcomes at regular intervals over time.
- e. Shared commitment to the work of unifying Bermudians as a people, rejecting racism, finding strength, not resentment, in our differences.

- f. The creation of sites of memory recognizing the contributions of Black Bermudians to Bermuda.
- g. All Bermuda's students are taught history that includes Black studies and the connection between the past and current day social inequities.
- h. Visible strengthening of Black culture and identity through a process of recall, remember, record, reflect and repair.
- i. Through the use of story circles, interviews and documentation elicit histories around race and use the power of these stories to tie history to current challenges and translate into recommendations for institutional change and community transformation.
- j. Through the use of the Truth & Reconciliation Community Conversations and introduction of Restorative Practices in our schools and criminal justice system, reach a tipping point in society whereby a paradigm shift occurs leading to a more racially just and equitable society.