

## Letters to a President

### **Winner Year 11 – Eve Beckford**

Dear Vice President Harris,

As a young mixed race girl, I have always been aware of racism and it will always remain as an important aspect of my daily life and my outlook on the world. To my relief, this year many other people (in particular white people) are becoming increasingly more aware of the racial prejudice that divides the world particularly after the Black Lives Matter movement, which I'm sure you will agree, exposed the extent to which people of colour in America are suffering. Indeed, there has been a great improvement from how the world used to be; the fact that I am writing to the first female African and South Asian American Vice President of the United States is proof of this and yet there is still much to be achieved.

For many, the Black Lives Matter movement was shocking and seemed to come out of nowhere. There were so many people who were entirely uneducated on the matter and didn't realise the severity of the consequences caused by racial injustice. This should not be the case. Whilst many African Americans are fearing for their lives, there are too many people that remain unaware of what they have to experience on a daily basis. There are too many school children who grow up learning so little about their heritage and there are too many black people who are mistreated by the criminal justice system. The Black Lives Matter movement has given people of colour the platform to have their voices heard globally and I think this is an opportunity that America can seize. More black and minority ethnic people are sharing their experiences of racism and more and more white citizens are standing with them in support.

As President Biden said in his inauguration speech, 'unity' is the key to overcoming problems. As Vice President you face an America divided by blue and red as well as by black and white. I believe that Black Lives Matter has given an opportunity to reduce the divide between black and white and bring American citizens together in unity. With greater awareness spread and charges for police brutality, simple steps can be made in the right direction to reduce the racial gaps. Whilst there are so many issues that 2021 presents, how can America tackle them if the country remains divided? In order for issues like climate change and coronavirus to be overcome, systematic racism has to be challenged because racism has been tolerated by people of colour for far too long.

During the 1960's Martin Luther King told the world of his dream that white and black could live together peacefully, that people wouldn't be judged by the colour of their skin but rather by the 'content of their character'. A seemingly simple idea and yet nearly sixty years later, it has not been achieved. It may be years until another opportunity like this arises to tackle racism. It is an opportunity that must be taken.

Sincerely,

Signed by student