

2020.06.30

2 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade of the Chair of the Privileges and Procedures Committee regarding the Committee's consideration of the existing nationality requirements for people wishing to stand for election to the States: (OQ.183/2020)

Will the chair advise what consideration, if any, the committee has given to the situation whereby Islanders who have lived in Jersey for decades (but who do not have a British passport) cannot currently stand for election to the States whereas British nationals who have lived in the Island for 2 years can do so, including any potential impact this situation has on Islanders' democratic engagement?

Deputy R. Labey of St. Helier (Chair, Privileges and Procedures Committee):

P.P.C. (Privileges and Procedures Committee) did look at this at the end of 2016 but in relation to P.138 from Deputy Higgins, which was about standardising the qualification for candidacy across all 3 categories of States Member. There is a very good report on it prepared by the Deputy Greffier, if the Deputy is interested in seeing that. Shortly after that, of course, the Deputy himself lodged P.1 ...

The Deputy Bailiff:

Deputy Labey, you froze just then so we could not hear what you ... Deputy Labey, we cannot hear what you are saying.

Deputy R. Labey:

Okay, I have got my mic on, can you hear me now?

The Deputy Bailiff:

That is a bit better yes. Sorry, can you start your answer again, I do not think Members heard it all.

Deputy R. Labey:

I am so sorry. Maybe I should come closer. The issue was looked at by P.P.C. at the end of 2016. There is a very good paper on it by the Deputy Greffier. It looked really more at the standardisation of qualifications to the candidacy across all 3 categories of States Member but it does reference citizenship as well. Of course the Deputy's own proposition for P.1/2017 came hot on the heels of that and was lost unfortunately resoundingly 31/8. So I think that killed the matter as far as P.P.C. was concerned. My committee have not yet considered his proposition that is on the table at the moment but we will be doing so in the coming days.

4.2.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

I had hoped that this question, which was obviously lodged on Thursday, would be an opportunity for the committee to consider the matter. It is a political decision ultimately whether or not we level up in terms of who can stand for election or whether we level down across the 3 categories. Does the chair believe that it would open up our political system in a positive way where swathes of Jersey people who have been here for decades are finally allowed to serve in their Assembly where they have previously been banned from it?

Deputy R. Labey:

The Deputy is asking for my personal opinion, which I am happy to offer but it is not representative because I have not yet spoken to P.P.C. of P.P.C.'s opinion of his proposition. I am on record as

having supported the Deputy on the previous attempts to get this through. He is a very clever man and far more cleverer than me but I would offer this advice. I think he should approach this from a culture point of view. He is after all the Assistant Minister responsible for culture. Culture does not just mean the arts, it means our social makeup, our traditions, our customs. We pay a lot of lip service to including ...

The Deputy Bailiff:

I am afraid we lost you after “lip service”. Deputy Labey, the last words we heard were “lip service”.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Ironically.

Deputy R. Labey:

I am having trouble hearing people as well so I missed the start of Deputy Tadier’s question. I was saying if we were to enfranchise more people from our cultures that we cherish and we pay a lot of lip service to this would provide action and a meaningful contribution rather than just words.