

Two protests in St Andrew Square today

Two groups of activists held protests in St Andrew Square today amid a large police presence inside and outside the garden.

The first, Black Lives Matter, held a rally in Holyrood Park two weeks ago with around three to four thousand people in attendance. Today the number was smaller, around 700 or so, all demanding reform in Scotland.

Within days of the last event the City of Edinburgh Council got together with Professor Sir Geoffrey Palmer to agree the wording for a plaque to be put on the Melville Monument, on top of which there is a statue of Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount Melville.

The peaceful protesters listened to poetry and song, and short speeches. Poet Fadeke Kokumo Rocks read some of her poetry with her usual panache

The performance poet Kokumo Rocks addressed the Black Lives Matter protest in St Andrew Square pic.twitter.com/QHZD3Zvggz

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [June 20, 2020](#)

One speech was given by Trainspotting author Irvine Welsh who likened leaving the statue of Henry Dundas in St Andrew Square to having a statue of Jimmy Savile looking down on us with a cigar. He ended: "This is Jimmy Savile times a hundred thousand. It is a f***ing embarrassment."



Irvine Welsh addressed the crowd at Black Lives Matter Protest St Andrew Square 20 June 2020 PHOTO © Live Edinburgh News We met Joseph Malik, a musician and activist, who was also at the Holyrood Park protest. He explained his life has changed

just in two weeks. He said: "A lot of people have called me in the meantime. I've reached out to each and every single one of them, including young kids that really need help getting walked to school, or need a mentor to deal with racial hatred in Scotland. We have set that up but today we're here mainly to speak about Mr Dundas. and his crimes against humanity. This man has the highest statue in the city dedicated to himself. He is a mass murderer and his family live on the blood money of what he did.

"I don't think a plaque is good enough for the amount of people that died. Does Hitler have a statue in Germany? No."

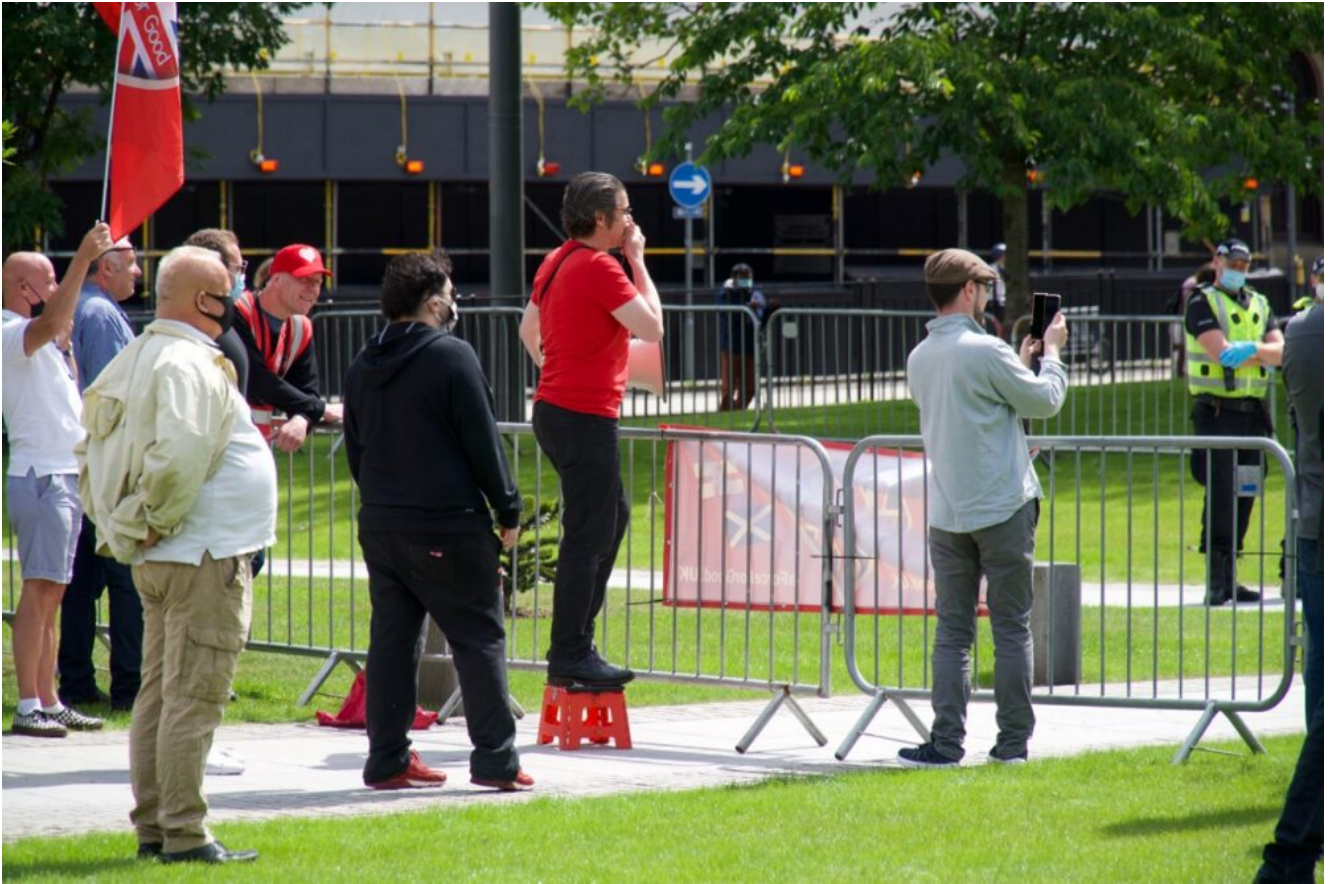
Protests in St Andrew Square today Black Lives Matter and Force for Good pic.twitter.com/Ld6Hu73KyR

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [June 20, 2020](#)

Luke Samuels organised the event and said it has been a busy two weeks since the previous event. He said it was important that people work together. we have spoken to the police the whole time and they are ready for anything that might happen.

"Our main message is that we don't want Dundas to be there because it is an ugly statue in our beautiful city. It is all about unity I think we should unite together and teach colonial history in schools. Kids should be taught this from an early age. We're the new generation rising up and we have technology at our fingertips. We can learn more and pass on that information more easily."

The garden had been divided in two with crush barriers and there were police inside and outside.



Alistair McConnachie founder and Director of A Force For Good addresses the Black Lives Matter crowd on the other side of the garden, supported by around 30 or so of his friends. PHOTO ©2020 The Edinburgh Reporter

On the north side of the garden a smaller group, A Force for Good, founded and directed by Alistair McConnachie gathered. There were about thirty or so, all men and young men, with Union Jacks on their T-shirt.

Mr McConnachie told The Edinburgh Reporter that their reason for being there was very simple. He said: "We believe that the UK is a moral as much as a political concept so we do not like our history or institutions or forebears being smeared, especially not wrongly and falsely as this gentleman at the top of this 150 ft high column is.

"Unfortunately and unwittingly he is by many of the people over there who don't actually understand his proper history. We're here to speak for him to remember him and to esteem his memory. We are also here to help give the other side over there a history lesson and help them appreciate just what a great country the United Kingdom is. It is not a good idea to

go through life with a negative attitude thinking that the past is all wrong. The United Kingdom is a fantastic place for everybody regardless of race colour or creed. No need to concentrate on the negatives. We are talking up the positives and how our United Kingdom is a force for good.”



#BlackLivesMatter #BLM. Photo: Martin P. McAdam
www.martinmcadam.com





Release
the chains of
Discrimination



15 YEARS

600000+
INNOCENT
LIVES
RUINED

TIME TO
OWN UP!!

BLACK
LIVES
MATTER

Confronting the legacy
of slavery and empire...

SHOULD ALL THE STATUES FALL?

Day & time:

Wednesday 24 June

7.30pm

Venue:

Online Zoom meeting

ID - 431 459 112

Password - 967537

Facebook: SWP Edinburgh

Hosted by the Socialist Workers Party
swp.org.uk • Not to be flyposted

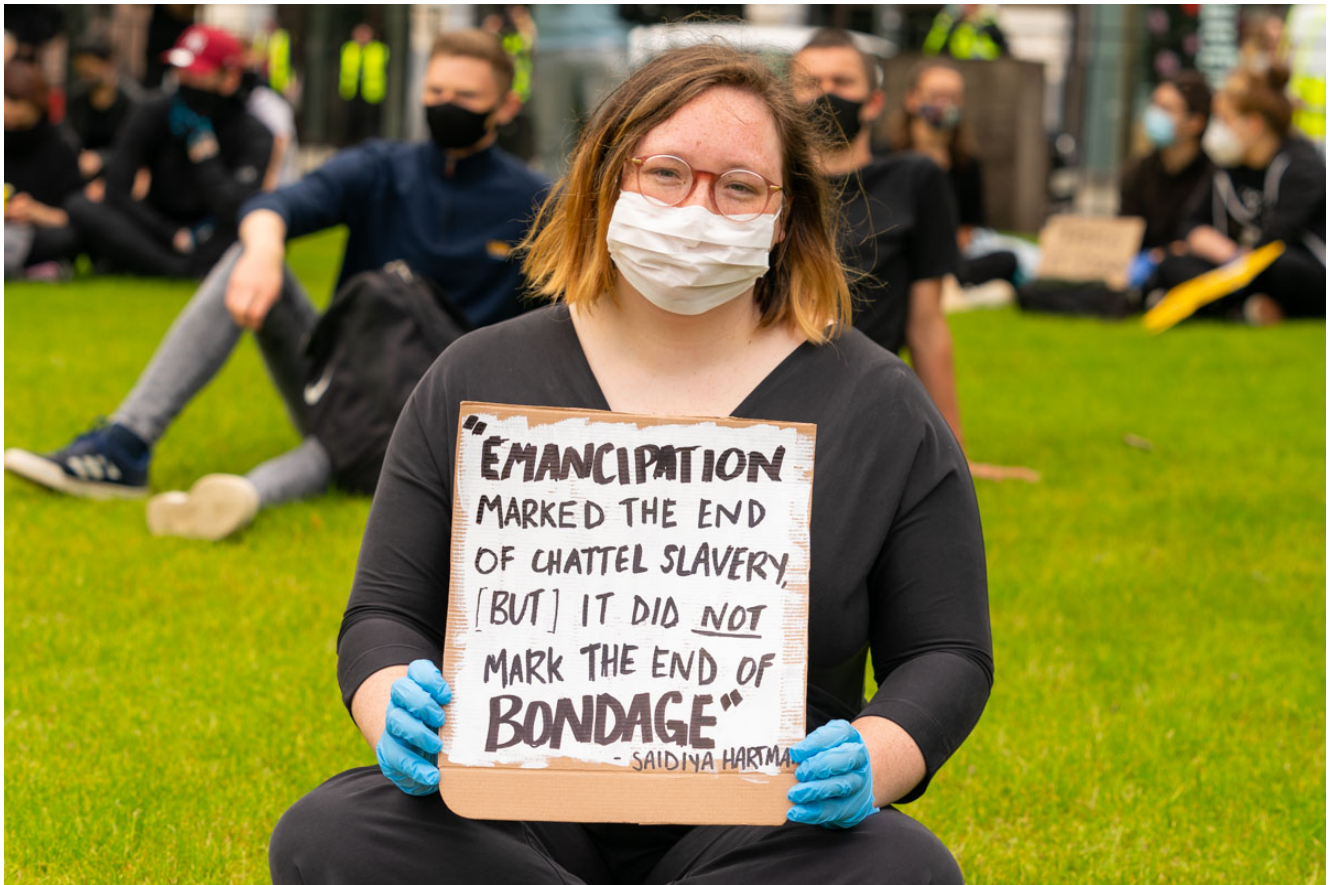
Statues of historical figures from the US and Britain have been at the centre of recent controversies – particular those figures who were champions of slavery and imperial conquest.

Should they all be torn down? What is the best way to address the bloody legacy of the slave trade and colonialism – and to fight attempts to rehabilitate them?

Come and join the debate.











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OPPRESSION
STARTS WITH
IGNORANCE
PLEASE DON'T LET ME DIE







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TO RACISM**

**BLACK
LIVES
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**No justice
No peace**

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