

# PARC's LETTER TO THE SA INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS

22 APRIL 2013

To: The Chief Executive  
South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR)  
Fax: 011 482 7917

**Dear Mr. John Kane-Berman**  
(copy to Frans Cronje)

In my capacity as founder, and national co-ordinator, of PARC (People Against Race Classification) I am writing this letter as a constructive attempt to point out what I consider to be **negative consequences of your race-based statistical analyses** of the South African society.

In principle PARC does not believe in the ideology of grouping people according to race. If you believe in "race" it means that you agree with the fact that a person can be defined by his skin colour and physical looks. This is wrong and racist! The SAIRR conducts race-based surveys and, through these, unconsciously reinforces and exacerbates, inherited racist attitudes. Some of the surveys and the reports you produces based on these, are nothing better than the article that was published in UCT's campus newspaper, *Varsity* on 2 April 2013. In this newspaper they published a survey around **what race is the most beautiful**. We all know the criticism this provoked. In the same light, the findings of the SAIRR, in a survey in which they found that "white" people are still the highest-paid people in South Africa, is also disturbing. (*Press release by the SAIRR on 2 April 2013; White men still top of the pay scale.*) Is your organisation encouraging people to hate, or love, "white" people for having this status? Are you bragging about "white" people's economic status? Also, this survey doesn't differentiate between "white" people with talent, having honestly worked, and deserving of their wealth, and those who obtained their wealth through apartheid benefits. This survey also doesn't differentiate between "black" or "coloured" people who became poor because of the apartheid legacy, and those lazy, unmotivated ones who are poor, were given opportunities to improve their life quality but didn't do so. When you refer to race you GENERALISE! Generalisation is wrong! This is where confusion is being created and statements like these are used as a political play ball.

Why should South Africans know to what degree "white" people are richer than other groups? Or how poor "blacks" still are? Or that "Coloureds" outnumber the "white" people in the Western Cape. What is the sense of comparing one race with an other? The only thing that this produces is hatred because of the past (Apartheid), jealousy, and division. You are nurturing a culture of entitlement which will inevitably culminate in a Zimbabwe-type situation, where almost the whole of productive agriculture was destroyed, through the seizure of most white-owned farms.

The people in my examples are the types of people who would fill in their respective racial lineage on your race-based forms. Then, when you sum up the statistics, **the only derivation you make** is based on their economic status. This would constitute only half the picture. The choices you make dictate your life! **Your wealth status is not the result of your racial lineage (being black or white), but because of your ATTITUDE!**

I have no objections to statistical comparisons, except that they not be racially-based. Alternative categories such as income groupings, social circumstances, educational qualifications, how many people needing jobs, etc. could be used instead.

### **Our protest:**

- (a) We will urge South Africans taking part in any kind of race-based surveys, to tick the “**Black African**” block. It is the right of individuals to choose the identity he/she wishes to assume! The race classification law, the Population Registration Act, was scrapped in 1991. We are in the process of mobilizing public support for the phasing out of all resuscitated remnants of the odious Race Classification Act.
- (b) Our stance via-a-vis your organisation will be made public to the South African community, where YOUR institution is in breach of what we would like to think should be considered enlightened principles. We will be unreservedly adversarial in the pursuit of our goals.
- (c) We will attempt to make the collection of race-based information inaccurate and worthless!
- (d) Accordingly: please **CEASE FORTHWITH TO PUBLISH STATISTICS BASED ON, AND LINKED TO RACE!!!**

\* **Right is always right even if nobody does it. Wrong is always wrong even if everybody does it.**

Yours truly

**Glen Snyman**

Founder and Co-ordinator of PARC.

Cell: 0723424926 (Available between 15h00 – 23h00)

# **THE RESPONSE OF THE SA INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS**

**25 APRIL 2013**

**SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS**

**From: John Kane-Berman**

Dear Mr Snyman

I refer to your attached letter. Your conclusions are erroneous. The Institute publishes a vast amount of information broken down by race, age, sex, occupation, economic sector, income group, religion, place of residence, level of education, province, language group, etc. The factual information that shows white people generally earning more than others is not designed to encourage others to hate them, nor is it to brag; it is simply a fact. If most black people are poor we are not suggesting, contrary to what you imply, that this may be because they are lazy or unmotivated. Again, it is a fact. Publishing information broken down by race or sex or age or anything else is entirely different from advocating discrimination or on any other grounds. We resolutely opposed racially discriminatory laws enacted by the previous government and we are by far the most prominent critic of all the discriminatory laws issued by the present government.

Yours sincerely

John Kane-Berman

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