

<p>The recent broadside on the Presidential Office's and Black Management Forum's♦ Jimmy Manji♦ once again put a spotlight on racism.♦♦ Manji was accused of being a racist and of talking about ♦'Coloureds' and 'Indians' and 'Whites' akin to H F Verwoerd. While there is not much doubt about the latter's credentials, I would like to argue that Manji does not deserve that particular branding, more so when 'blinkered lobbyist of the bottom order' is also available. Also, I believe that the spectre of racism is greatly overused and abused because there is♦ a convenient (?) ambiguity about its meaning.</p> <p>The popular definition of a racist is quite simple: Racists act out a delusion of superiority based on their belonging to a 'superior' race, and are commonly associated with♦ slavery, Bushman shooting, the Nazi-holocaust (and apartheid). In a just society they are deemed pariahs and will be punished if found out, like the allegedly-racist Reitz 4 students.</p> <p>Unfortunately the definitions supplied by dictionaries and particularly the United Nations confuse the issue (by their own admission) by covering a few more academic bases.♦ They say it is discrimination based on ethnic, national or skin colour grouping, which is tough on the Black Management Forum, German Chamber of Commerce,♦ Inkhata Freedom Party, etc., etc., etc., all of whom promote some particular grouping and must inevitably discriminate to some extent against other groupings, whether through effectively closed membership and/or through the result of their activities.</p> <p>And finally, to be declared a racist for accepting that different peoples can have♦ different attributes is wrong in the light of tons of research. ♦Interestingly enough that definition of racism assumes that there is a 'grading of attributes', so that persons who strenuously insist that all peoples are in essence the same (different to saying they are all equal) reveal their fundamental insecurities and racist beliefs of superiority of one over the other. Who can judge what 'superior' means when taking into account ♦for instance global warming or the horrific mistakes made in nuclear energy by several 'enviable' peoples! ♦</p> <p>As if that isn't enough trouble already, Reverse-racism is used in several countries (eg in Brazil, USA, India, UK, RSA)♦ to describe quota- and affirmative action programs which counter the effects of past and present discriminations.♦ Is Manji maybe a Reverse - Racist?♦ The question really highlights the absurdity of the broad use of the term 'racist' in many situations involving lobbying or groupism♦ without♦a hint of 'real'♦racism.♦Refraining from indiscriminate name-calling and 'shooting from the hip' can only lower temperatures and♦increase good-will.</p> <p>Letter to The Star 4th♦April 2011.</p>