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Racism – Ongoing Stupidity

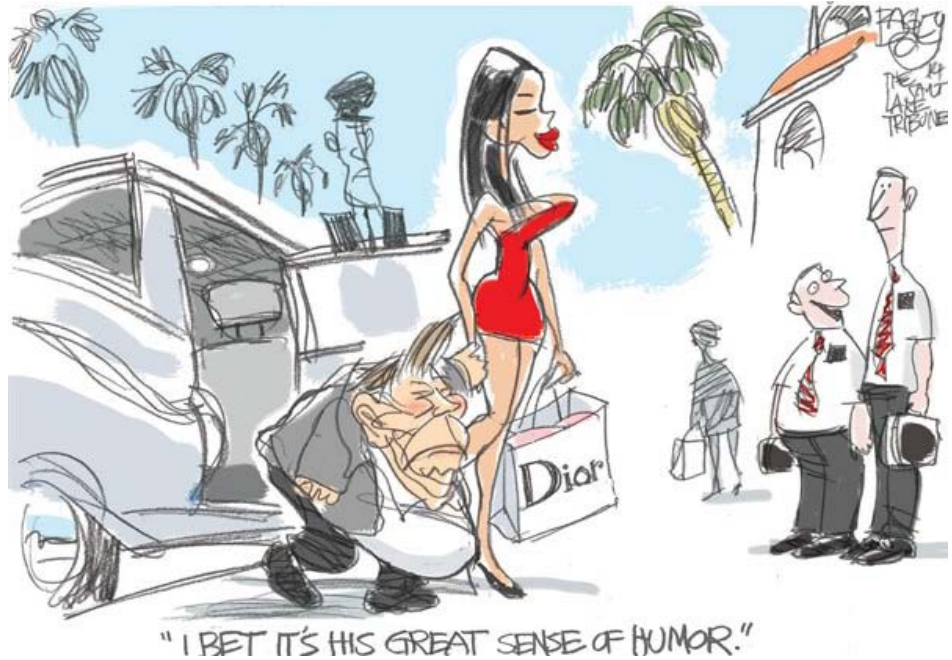
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Ashok Dhillon has 40 years of front-line business experience in Canada and International markets. He has founded and led companies in construction and international power development.

Mr. Dhillon has worked and negotiated with highest levels of Governments in Canada and India. He has pursued and won mandates to develop power plants in Canada, and foreign jurisdictions such as Hungary, Iran, Pakistan and India with uncompromising ethical standards. His extensive experience in securing and negotiating multi-hundred million and billion dollar mandates in power project development, gives him in-depth knowledge and intuitive insights into macro and micro, national and international, geo-political and economic realities and trends.

Mr. Dhillon has been invited to speak on international business at various forums, including as an expert witness for the Standing Senate Committee, Government of Canada, on "The Rise of Russia, China and India".



It has often been said that money cannot buy you happiness. We know for sure poverty doesn't. But, considering all the wealthy and famous people in the news regularly that seem miserable, either fighting over money - or having it all - still ending their lives prematurely due to their acute personal unhappiness, it would seem there is some truth to money not being able to buy happiness. It would also seem that money does not buy you good sense, wisdom, understanding or tolerance either. This was recently proven by Donald Sterling (*the Billionaire-owner of the Los Angeles 'Clippers', a professional NBA basketball team*).

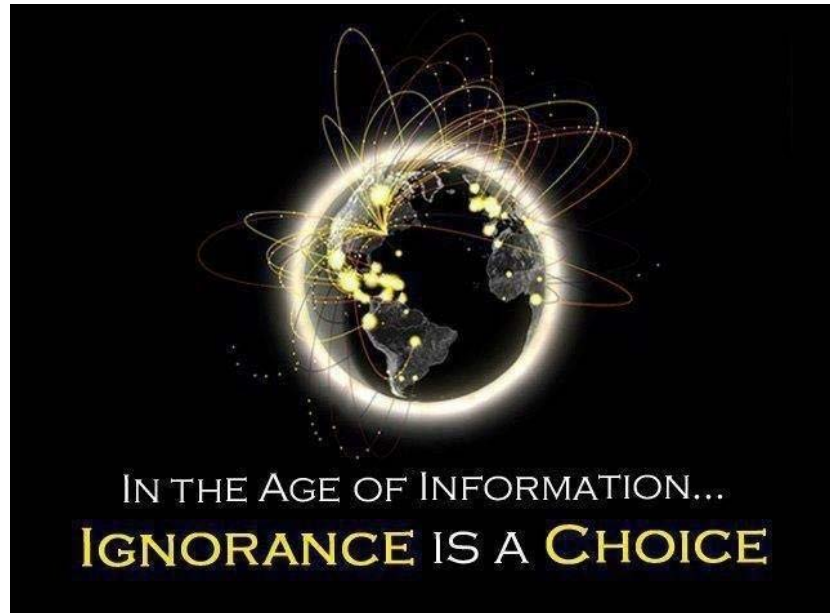


His blatantly racist comments to his alleged mistress, disclosed recently, about her consorting with 'black' people in public, and his strong disapproval of it, sent a shock wave throughout the civilized World. The idea that people of other races are inferior or undesirable in some way, just because they belong to another race or colour, in the face of all evidence to the contrary over the past

centuries, is obstinate bigotry, pettiness, persistent and stubborn stupidity.

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Considering the access to overwhelming information that proves that historical divisions created between humans, through sheer ignorance of others was due to – *sheer ignorance of others* – prevents us all from using ignorance as an excuse now. We should all know better by now, as we have seen representatives of every race excelling in all fields of endeavor, given the opportunity to participate. It is the lack of opportunity that holds people back (*usually results of bad governance*) and not racial makeup. America is testament to that truth, as people from all races and countries come to America and generally excel in all fields once they are there, while back in their home country they did not have the opportunity to participate.

Therefore, one would expect greater acceptance and understanding from citizens of the richest, most advanced country that is leader of the first World, the United States. Yet lately, whether it was the racial slurs directed at Barrack Obama when he became President, from the Republicans of the far right, or more recently, the almost laughable stupidity of the racist remarks of the Nevada Rancher Cliven Bundy, who thought the current American “Negro” may be better off as slaves picking cotton again – or it is the even more recent incident where Donald Sterling is objecting to his ‘girl friend – mistress’ bringing black friends/acquaintances to his basketball games. It would seem that regardless of all the information available and proof to the contrary right before their eyes (*there is a ‘black’ person as the President after all, so high can one go?*) some Americans insist on holding on to cherished, albeit hopelessly outdated and ignorant views, regarding biases against other people, based solely on the colour of their skin.



Racism is not confined to any particular race or colour. All races have and do indulge in racism to varying degrees. But one would expect those that have

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been subjected to a lot of discrimination to be more sensitive and sympathetic to those that have historically shared similar injustices. Historically the Jewish and Black people have suffered some of the worst discrimination and injustice at the hands of other races. And that is why, initially, it is even more shocking and incomprehensible to learn that Donald Sterling is Jewish American. One normally would have expected him to be naturally repulsed by racism, considering the history of horrific persecution suffered by the Jewish people through the centuries. But obviously we forget that it is in human nature for people *to take exception to be discriminated against*, but to have no thought in turning around and *practicing blatant racism and discrimination against others*. This aspect of the human nature is in part responsible for preventing people from evolving further morally.



Donald Sterling is obviously an educated and extremely successful person (*at least wealth wise*), living in a country that prides itself for being multi-cultural, accepting and open to all. That he would still harbor such crude notions of personal superiority based solely on skin colour is stunning to try and comprehend. Such stark display of ignorance in the face of all we now know about people in general, from someone like him, can only be termed as sheer stupidity. But, when one does a bit of background check on him (*most of us were not aware of him until this incident*) and get a glimpse of the kind of person he has always been, it becomes clear that he, like some others, is just built this way, narrow minded and bigoted.

Donald Sterling was born and raised in the United States. He was a divorce and personal injury lawyer by profession (*immediately suspect?*), and made his fortune primarily by buying and holding real estate. It is also reported widely that he has never been shy in discriminating against, and openly talking about

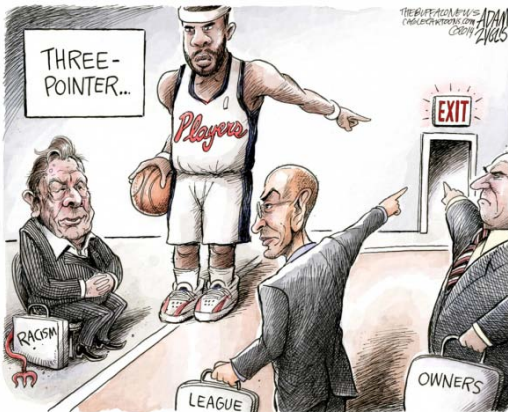
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certain types of people that he did not consider as suitable tenants for his apartments, whether they were Hispanics, Blacks, Koreans or other races.



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According to the various reports on him in the media, he has been sued and fined on a number of occasions for his racially charged comments and actions, but that obviously has had no material impact on him. In the various accounts of his past, he does not come out looking like a particularly pleasant person. And therefore this, his latest indiscretion, is only one in a long history of such shortcomings. He seems to relish a life of a seemingly unrepentant and committed bigot. But this time it seems his latest indiscretion will cost him a little more than the past incidences. This time, in the long run, *it might*, cost him his beloved basketball franchise. His public reputation and profile is obviously of little concern to him, so the negative publicity and fall out he has generated will matter little to him.



Darby Cagle

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It is particularly disturbing that such sentiments about the social undesirability of 'black' people should be expressed by a man who for over thirty years has owned a basketball team that is made up of primarily of *black* players. These players have over the years made Sterling's basketball franchise very valuable. He bought the team in 1981 for \$12,500,000 million, and today it is estimated to be valued over \$500,000,000 to \$700,000,000. That is a lot of zeros his 'black' players have added to his net worth. But, in the taped conversation it is clear that he does not appreciate the player's significant contributions to the making of his fortune. In fact he makes it clear that in his mind it is him that is the benefactor to the players.



To him the players seem to be nothing more than the tools of his trade, and therefore to be treated as such, strictly for the job at hand, the basketball game, and then not to be socially associated with. The fact that without his 'black' players he would not have a valuable team, as over 70% of professional basketball players in the NBA are black, does not seem to register on him. And if it does, he certainly is loathe to let his bigotry be influenced by such trivialities.



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But those of his ilk, the self absorbed, insensitive takers, are not concerned with any sense of fairness or sensitivity towards others. In their mind the World singularly revolves around them, until it comes crashing down, and even then it's hard for them to change, as human equality and compassion are not in their sphere of daily interest, only money and the power are, even at 80 years of age.



His liaisons and relationships with attractive young women over the past years are well known and documented (*the oldest trade in the World, youth and beauty for money and power*), and that is his personal business. But even those relationships of his don't seem to end well. And when they don't end well, he describes his former female companions in the most derogatory terms, choosing to ignore the fact that he got fair exchange for what he was providing. He demands that the largess he extended during the relationship, money, houses etc. (*the exchange*), be returned. And he is not respectful or kind in the description of such personal companions when at court, apparently describing the relationship with the last one as one with 'a prostitute', to try and get the house back that he had bought her while the relationship was going good. The Court disagreed with him regarding the nature of the relationship, and let the woman keep the house.

It seems from all reports that this recent relationship is going the same way, as his 'mistress' and him are currently in Court, which is probably what prompted the release of the taped conversation between them, where the racially charged statements were made by him, and released by her. Although, through her lawyer, she denies that she was the one who released the tape.

For a former litigation lawyer Mr. Sterling sure seems to be opening a lot of potentially damaging fronts at this time, at the tender age of 80. On the face of it, it certainly seems that in Mr. Sterling's case, money does not buy happiness, tolerance or wisdom.

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One wonders, if the United States, a relatively new country founded and populated by immigrants from all over the World, cannot rid itself of racism, with its foundation of freedom and equality—assuring—Constitution, what chance have the rest of the much older countries got, with their centuries, if not thousands of years of entrenched habitual practice of degrading discrimination against fellow humans.

On all counts, Donald Sterling's recent behavior has again proved that too many people, and countries, too often, apply gross double standards when it comes to viewing others different from themselves. Towards that behavior not only the Americans, but the English, the Indians, the Chinese, Russians, Japanese, Koreans, Europeans, Africans, and all the rest of the nationalities practice the same double standard. Almost everyone is so sensitive to being on the receiving end of racism (*rightfully*) and yet will not change their own personal attitude and behavior, when it comes to accepting others of different race or colour. Cliven Bundy and Donald Sterling once again demonstrated, lest we forget, that the inherent stupidity of racism in this time and age, of an individual - remains constant, regardless of age, race, nationality and wealth, to the very bitter end. It's such a pity!

