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*'No room for Indians?': Tory donor Frank Hester suggested staff climb on the train roof.*

**Is Britain a racist country? The Conservatives' biggest donor is in the spotlight for allegedly making racist remarks — and the party has made things worse by being slow to criticise him.**

## What's happening?

Frank Hester told his staff: "I try not to be sexist, but... It's like trying not to be racist but you see **Diane Abbott** on the TV and you're just like... you just want to hate all Black women because she's there. And I don't hate all Black women at all, but I think she should be shot".

Hester's computer company TPP has earned over £400m from the government, notes *The Guardian* newspaper, and he has given £10m to the **Conservative Party**.

## Find out more

Hester's remarks about Abbott were made in 2019. In the same year he told staff that although he made a lot of jokes about **racism** he hated **prejudice**.

TPP says that Hester has tried to apologise to Abbott and sees racism as "a poison".

Abbott was **suspended** from the **Labour** party last year for claiming that Irish people, Jews and Travellers were not affected by racism as much as Black people were.

At first, the **government** refused to call Hester's remarks racist. But it later said they were.

This raises some troubling questions:

**Immoral money** Can politicians be influenced by people who donate money to their parties?

**Legal enlightenment** Can laws stop racism? Britain banned all forms of **discrimination** in 1976, but we still see discrimination.

**School rules** Are teachers the best people teach us moral values? What happens if parents have a different view?

**Bad jokes** Should only members of a particular racial group be allowed to talk about their **ethnicity**?

**Blind bias?** Can people be racist without realising it? Some say no, when race is such a hotly debated issue. Others claim that everyone is racist, without realising it.

**Generalising despising** Some people hate an entire community because of a meeting just one member of it. How can this be prevented?

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## Some say

Yes! It clearly is when someone like Frank Hester can be accepted into the heart of the Establishment, welcomed as the Conservatives' biggest donor ever and awarded the **OBE**.

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## Others think

No! If it were, Rishi Sunak would not be prime minister. A survey last year found that only 2% of Britons felt uncomfortable about the idea of living next to someone of a different race.

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## Some people say

*"No one is born hating another person... People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love."*

**Nelson Mandela (1918 – 2013), South African statesman**

*What do you think?*

## Six steps to discovery

### 1. Connect

**How do you feel about this story?** - Have you come across racism? Do you know people from many different backgrounds?

### 2. Wonder

**What questions do you have?** - For example: How do you think Diane Abbott feels about what Frank Hester said?

### 3. Investigate

**What are the facts?** - Pick out one thing we know for certain and one thing we cannot say for sure.

### 4. Construct

**What is your point of view?** - Someone from an ethnic minority asks you if she should move to Britain. What you would say?

### 5. Express

**What do others believe?** - What can be done to make people more tolerant of each other? Talk about this with your classmates.

### 6. Reflect

**What might happen next?** - Imagine that someone purple joins your school. Design them a welcome banner.

## Glossary

**Diane Abbott** - The first Black woman to be elected to the UK Parliament and one of the country's first Black MPs.

**Conservative party** - A British political party. Members are known as Tories.

**Racism** - Prejudice or discrimination due to a person's race or ethnicity.

**Prejudice** - An idea about something, especially a group of people, that is not based on reality.

**Suspended** - When a privilege or role is temporarily taken away from someone.

**Labour** - Britain's main left-of-centre political party.

**Government** - The group of people who govern - or lead - the country.

**Discrimination** - When people are treated unfairly due to characteristics such as gender, race and age.

**Ethnicity** - Groups of people with a shared culture, language, history and set of traditions.

**OBE** - The Order of the British Empire, a lesser honour than a CBE.