

Britain and Johnson's Policy

By: Adnan Khan*

Boris Johnson won the election to be the leader of the Conservative party on 23 July 2019, as the Conservative party won the last general election, Johnson automatically became the UK Prime Minister. He is now the third prime minister in 3 years. Johnson has been in the public spotlight for over two decades and despite numerous failures, his unorganised personality and constant controversial statements and affairs, he was the most popular Conservative party politician.

Boris Johnson has had a long career in politics and journalism, and he has been in the media spotlight for a long time. His family ancestry was in the Ottoman Khilafah; his grandfather from his father's side, Ali Kemal, was a journalist for the Ottoman Khilafah, who was sent into exile by Sultan Abdul Hamed due to his liberal views. Ali Kemal was outspoken against the Khilafah and the nationalist movement that was gathering strength and fighting the Turkish War of Independence. In 1922 Kemal was killed, whilst his children lived in Britain during WW1, and his son, Osman Kemal, adopted his maternal grandmother's name. (Osman) Wilfred Johnson and married Irene Williams. Their son Stanley Johnson became an expert on the environment and population studies and became a member of the European Parliament from 1979-1984 for the Conservative party. He had six children — Boris Johnson, the oldest, is now the UK prime minister and his brother Joseph Johnson is also an MP for the Conservative party. Johnson's sister - Rachel Johnson, is also a political commentator and regularly appears on national media.

Boris Johnson's family and descendants have been involved in political life for over 100 years. Before entering politics, Johnson had a career in media and journalism. He started with the *Times* Newspaper which supports the British establishment and empire. He was sacked for making up a quote and was caught lying. He then got a job as a journalist for the Daily Telegraph, a pro-Conservative newspaper, and he was the Brussels correspondent. He focused on developing a narrative that everything that came from the EU was silly and evil. He lied about many issues to do with the EU but became popular in the UK for this. Johnson also became a regular contestant on '*Have I got news for you,*' which was a TV quiz show based on making people laugh and of humorous nature.

Boris Johnson entered Parliament in 2001 when Michael Heseltine retired. Johnson was MP for 8 years until he stepped down to become the London Mayor. There was little success he achieved during this period and he did not undertake any major role in the government. He was appointed to a committee to oversee financial fraud in the country, but he missed most of the meetings. On parliamentary votes, he took part in less than half, usually supporting the party line. He supported the Iraq war despite saying he was against it initially.

When David Cameron, someone Johnson studied with and two years his junior, became the conservative leader and who did not give him a place in the shadow cabinet, Johnson's chances of advancement seemed to have finished. However, the

London mayorship was offered to him to represent the Conservative party and with a disciplined campaign he became London mayor in 2008.

Johnson returned to the Parliament and won the seat of Uxbridge and South Ruislip in 2015. To everyone's astonishment, Theresa May made Johnson her foreign secretary despite obvious hostility between them. His greatest error was his careless words that directly led to the extension of the prison sentence in Iran of the British-Iranian woman Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe. As a result, he is regarded as one of the worst foreign secretaries in history.

Johnson has always been against the EU and also used this to build his own career. From Brussels, where his father had served as a member of the European Parliament and a senior member of the European Commission, Johnson wrote columns full of lies and myths about EU regulations and scandals. From 2009 onwards, he advocated for a referendum on Britain's EU membership. In 2018, during the Brexit negotiations, he called for Britain to leave the Single Market. He stated that Britain's EU membership had led to the suppression of the wages of its 'indigenous' people and said the EU was intent on creating a 'superstate' that wants to rob Britain of its sovereignty. In 2019, Johnson said he would take Britain out of the EU on 31 October 2019 whether there was a deal in place or not.

Johnson has always believed Britain should have a close relationship with the US as this would serve British interests. Trump has made many positive remarks about Johnson, especially since he became Prime Minister, so both should get on well personally, but whether this leads to any fundamental changes remains to be seen.

Johnson has constantly presented a new Britain which will be a power in the world outside the EU. He believes the EU is holding the UK back and his strategy of leaving the EU without any deal will force the EU to offer the best deal that will suit Britain. Although the UK prime minister has changed the UK parliament and the EU remains the same and the UK parliament has opposed a no deal exit from the EU, the Conservative party only has a majority in government with a coalition with a smaller party, due to this it's possible that an election could take place to make his position stronger. Johnson is not a strong leader and as the Brexit deadline approaches he will be tested and may well need to be replaced.

*** *Written for Ar-Rayah Newspaper – Issue 246***