Islamophobia, it would seem, is respectable while antisemitism is not

Tuesday 7 August, 2018

Boris Johnson gives further encouragement to haters of Islam

In his article which appeared in *The Daily Telegraph* on Monday 6th August, Boris Johnson, the former Foreign Secretary, told his readers that "it is absolutely ridiculous that people should choose to go around looking like letter boxes", adding that any female student who appeared at school or in a lecture "looking like a bank robber" should be asked to remove it. This is not the first time Mr Johnson has expressed hatred for Islam and Muslims.

In 2005, Mr Johnson wrote in the Spectator: "To any non-Muslim reader of the Koran, Islamophobia — fear of Islam — seems a natural reaction, and, indeed, exactly what that text is intended to provoke". He continued "Judged purely on its scripture — to say nothing of what is preached in the mosques — it is the most viciously sectarian of all religions in its heartlessness towards unbelievers."

After the London bombings, he said: "That means disposing of the first taboo and accepting that the problem is Islam. Islam is the problem." These are only some examples of Mr Johnson's rantings by which he has tried to make Islamophobia respectable. We wonder whether he made his views known to the Saudi and other Muslim governments when he went round begging for trade deals.

Baroness Warsi was widely criticised by the Conservatives for saying that "It's [Islamophobia] very widespread [in the Conservative party]. It exists right from the grassroots, all the way up to the top". Boris Johnson's statements prove that she was correct. The Conservatives criticise the Labour Party for failing to conduct an enquiry into allegations of antisemitism in the Party while failing to carry out a similar enquiry into Islamophobia in their own ranks.

We understand that the Prime Minister, Mrs Theresa has now, perhaps a little belatedly, backed calls for Mr Johnson to apologise. Some have pointed out that Mr Johnson appears to be adopting the 'dog whistle' politics so favoured by certain people in the United States in order to attract the support of the far right.

If he is prepared to stand corrected, Mr Johnson would benefit greatly from a careful study of the literature of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, particularly the book *Islam, Peace and Tolerance* by Dr Zahid Aziz (now in its second edition) and the *Translation of the Holy Quran with Commentary* by Maulana Muhammad Ali.

We now demand that:

1. the Conservative Party hold an open enquiry into Islamophobia in its ranks;

2. those found to preach hatred of Islam and Muslims are expelled from the Party;

3. Mr Johnson be prosecuted for spreading hate speech — hatred of Islam and Muslims in this country.

The Ahmadiyya Association for the Propagation of Islam (*Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam*) was established in Lahore in 1914 to promote the informed understanding of Islam in the West. In the UK it operated the Shah Jehan Mosque in Woking until the early 1960s. Its new headquarters is at *Dar-us-Salaam*, 15 Stanley Avenue, Wembley, HA0 4JQ, UK. In 1924, in Berlin, it built the first mosque in Continental Europe of the modern era. The German Government recognises the Berlin Mosque as part of the German national heritage. From its European and other centres around the world this organisation has taught that Islam promotes peace, harmony and mutual respect between all communities and nationalities.

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