

Political Favors; a Democratic Sham

News:

The government has been accused of turning the honours system into an “old boy’s club” after Lynton Crosby, the political strategist who ran the Conservatives’ 2015 election campaign, was awarded a knighthood.

The shadow chancellor, John McDonnell, said the well-trailed decision to knight Crosby was “not the best use of the system”.

“The main thing he is known for is introducing the concept of aggressive negative campaigning, or as Boris Johnson described it: ‘the dead cat strategy’ [which involves distracting the public from a politically difficult issue by creating shocking news]. Hardly worthy of honouring in this way if at all,” said McDonnell.

He said Crosby’s knighthood would make the public think the titles perpetuate “an old boy’s club”. Andy Burnham, Labour’s shadow home secretary, described the news of Crosby’s honour as “outrageous” and said it was “the clearest evidence yet that the Tories think they can get away with whatever they like”.

Comment:

This week the government published the official list of all individuals set to receive honors from the Queen of the United Kingdom as a result of exemplary service to the military, community or country. Amongst these individuals include ordinary laymen who have worked at grassroots levels to decrease racial and religious tensions within communities, as well emergency service workers who have served and saved lives for over forty years.

It was a shock to many that amongst such as list of dedicated and selfless individuals that conservative election strategist Lynton Crosby also featured. While Crosby could very well be an upstanding citizen who gives back to society in many private ways, his professional and public capacity as a consultant of the Conservative party does in no way qualify him for such an honour having already been compensated by the Tories for his time, work and likely the outcome of the election that saw the Conservatives gain seats in the House of Commons, enough to form a majority government.

This has sparked outrage as above notable figures amongst the opposition have condemned the move by the Prime Minister with other commentators seeing the move as tantamount to corruption, where political favors are handed out to members of the establishment. Though the outcry from leading figures in the Labour party is welcomed, it is in its very essence hypocritical as in 2006-07 the Labour party was embroiled in its own “cash for honors” scandal, showing this is by no means an irregularity and takes place on by sides of the Parliament.

Here we have evidence that Western politicians are by no means more integral or honest than those in the third world and corruption is just as rife in the developed world as it is in the developing amongst the ruling classes. This is truly a hallmark of failed societies where the elite collaborate and collude that inevitably disadvantages the majority of society.

As Muslims we believe that the system Allah sent us will be devoid of such errors where individuals are held unaccountable and can act against the will of the people and use their powers for selfish purposes. In the Quran it says, **يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ ۚ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا ۖ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا ۚ وَإِنْ تَلَوُّوا أَوْ نَعَضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ۝** **“O You who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for Allah can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest You swerve, and if You distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily Allah is well-acquainted with all that You do.”** [4:135]

This is the level of accountability and justice Islam holds us to as Muslims, with even Harvard Law citing it as the most profound statement of justice in history.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
Maleeha Hassan