

A retired Sikh schoolteacher is set to become the first non-white member of the far-right British National Party (BNP) after it reluctantly voted on Sunday to change its current whites-only policy following a court order. Rajinder Singh (78), who has been an unabashed admirer of BNP despite its virulently racist agenda and gave a character reference for its leader Nick Griffin when he was tried for stoking racial hatred, said that he admired its “core policies”.

“I also admire them since they are on their own patch, and do not wish to let anyone oust them from the land of their ancestors,” said Mr. Singh who moved to Britain from India in the 1960s. Reciprocating the sentiment, Mr. Griffin said: “I will be absolutely delighted to shake his hand and give him his membership card.”

A BNP spokesman hailed Mr. Singh as a “brave and loyal” and said he ought to be given the “honour of becoming the first ethnic minority member of the BNP”.

The party has been forced to change its constitution after a court, acting on a complaint from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, rules that its current rules were discriminatory and incompatible with race relations laws. It faced disqualification and could be barred from contesting elections if it did not comply with the order.

But Mr. Griffin made clear that the party would continue to focus on the interests of white native Britons and expected only a “trickle rather than a flood” of applications from non-whites.

One member said that the party changed its rules out of a “necessity rather than something we wanted to do from the heart”.

Hasan Suroor, The Hindu, 15 Feb 2010