

The Board of Deputies of British Jews
1 Torriano Mews
Kentish Town
London NW5 2RZ

10th December 2018

For the attention of Marie van der Zyl, Deputies President

Dear Marie,

You may have heard that the last survivors of the Kindertransport are to receive a one-off payment from the German government. My father-in-law Rabbi van der Zyl accompanied one of the groups which arrived in England in March 1939. His wife and daughter, my future wife Nikki, made their way here separately to make their life in a country where the language and culture were different and alien. The Rabbi was interned in the Kitchener Camp (near Sandwich, Kent) as an 'enemy alien' where he took over the spiritual leadership. Later he was transferred to the Isle Man where he continued his valuable work, but it entailed the forced separation of Nikki from her parents at a tender age.

My father-in-law, with whom I established a positive relationship when I married his daughter, gave continuous service to the Jewish community throughout his life.

By comparison, what can we say of your father Barry Kaye? The 'simple truth' (a phrase currently favoured by the Board) is that without any basis he sent me offensive hate mail which contained the threat of physical violence. He claimed that, in his role as a grandfather, he was 'mentor, teacher and guide to the children, of the Holy Law of the Torah' - your children - and this raises serious questions about his malign influence which have still to be addressed.

Mrs Roslyn Pine is being pressed to apologise for her alleged 'Islamophobic' statements. Whilst in no way judging the matter either way, it does appear to me that her remarks were of a general nature, whereas the letters sent to me by your father were personal and intentionally offensive and intended to intimidate.

The Jewish community prides itself on a long tradition of standing up against racism and intolerance and the Talmud warns that: *Silence is the same as agreement*. From an ethical and legal perspective, when we do not publicly distance ourselves from what is wrong, we are implicitly agreeing with it. It is completely unacceptable that neither you or your husband - my step-son Darrell - interceded at the proper time. Nor have I ever received a statement of regret or apology for the racist letters I was sent. The deafening silence, since I first advised you in 2012, must mean that you supported his actions. How does this sit with the Board's claim to challenge extremism in all forms? The evidence seems to point to a different conclusion.

Yours sincerely,

George Rooker,
Historian