

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

16<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Open letter to Marie van der Zyl, Deputies President

Dear Marie,

In your recent letter(s) to Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn, you make various accusations about him not recognising or admitting to expressions of racism, which he is alleged to have made in the past.

Your own inaction with regard to the racist material your late father Barry Kaye sent to me and your mother-in-law was - and remains - open to scrutiny. You have spoken publicly about your father in affirmative terms, as when you invoked his memory when you were elected President. The question remains: what made him so embittered that he felt free to make personal attacks and write in such a derogatory way about me? Why did you not challenge him? I was someone he had never met and did not know, so what had he been told?

His letters were inexcusable and in my communications to you as President of the Board I have quoted at some length from them, and I refer you to them. My Holocaust survivor wife and I were entitled to an apology for your failure to speak out against the prejudicial language expressed by him. But the time for that is long past and your silence signals support for his unambiguously racist comments, particularly relating to me being a 'non-Jew'.

I have the impression that you do not understand that antisemitism is one strand in a spectrum of racism and that you do not care whether your silence about your father's actions, inadvertently or deliberately, signals support for his racist attitudes and behaviour.

Lord Sacks, said "Jews are not the only people who face prejudice and hate" and Liberal Rabbi Alexandra Wright says that "... racism of any kind should never be tolerated". The Talmudic Dictum "Shtika Kehoda" means: "Silence is complicity." What part of these statements do not understand?

Yours sincerely,

George Rooker  
Historian