

## **TO THE BOARD OF DEPUTIES OF BRITISH JEWS**

We are Jewish members of the Labour Party who abhor antisemitism and all forms of racism and discrimination. We know that to oppose antisemitism we have to recognise it and combat it wherever it occurs. We also call out racism and abuses of human rights whenever they happen.

The Board of Deputies claims to speak for “the Jewish Community” but they represent only a minority of Jews and do not represent us. To claim that there is a single Jewish community who share the views of the BoD is discriminatory. To attempt to limit Jews to a single legitimate voice treats us less favourably than other groups and so is antisemitic.

The Board of Deputies has carried out a long hostile campaign against the Labour Party, which predates Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership. The previous President of the BoD, Jonathan Arkush urged a vote for the Tories in 2015 when Labour had a Jewish Leader, Ed Miliband, and welcomed the election of Donald Trump. The current BoD President, Marie van der Zyl, has enthusiastically endorsed Boris Johnson as Prime Minister despite well-known allegations of racism against him.

We reject the ten pledges the Board of Deputies has directed at the Labour Party leadership candidates as biased and counterproductive in our fight against all forms of racism and discrimination. We are issuing the Board with twelve demands of our own.

**שלום**

# OUR DEMANDS

- ❖ Be clear that to oppose antisemitism you must combat it wherever it exists in all institutions including your own.
- ❖ Show that you are utterly opposed to all racism and discrimination and show your support for others who put antidiscrimination at the centre of their beliefs.
- ❖ Recognise that there is no single Jewish community or a single *legitimate* Jewish community, and that it is antisemitic to pretend this is the case.
- ❖ Be open about the Jewish communities that you represent and acknowledge that all groups have a variety of opinions.
- ❖ Recognise that the campaign of allegations of antisemitism in the Labour Party has exacerbated sectarian conflicts between Jews that have divided families and friends.
- ❖ Acknowledge that while some allegations of antisemitism within the Labour Party have been justified, many have been exaggerated and many spurious.
- ❖ Be strong in your opposition to human rights abuses wherever they occur, including in the state of Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.
- ❖ Make clear that it is not antisemitic to criticise Israeli policy by declaring your opposition to the Nation State Law, the continued occupation of the West Bank, the building of illegal settlements and Donald Trump's 'peace' plan.
- ❖ Be transparent about the political nature of your own organisation and its strong Conservative bias and try to be even-handed with all political parties.
- ❖ Know that confidentiality is required in education sessions, where learning takes place and sensitive issues are addressed, which the Jewish Labour Movement has not maintained.
- ❖ Recognise that according to the draft IHRA document the examples it gives do not count as antisemitism without separate evidence of intention to discriminate against Jews.
- ❖ Link yourself to our Jewish traditions of dialogue and hospitality to the stranger so that you try to find common ground with those with whom you have partial disagreement.

*Graham Bash, Katherine Booth, Tony Booth, Erica Burman, Mike Cushman, Miriam David, David Epstein, Debbie Epstein, Carolyn Gelenter, Alison Harris, Adam Hurst, Kenny Fryde, Jenny Kas, Richard Kuper, Leah Lavane, Dorothy Macedo, Jenny Manson, Diana Neslen, Marion Roberts, Svetlana Robson, Jonathan Rosenhead, Glyn Secker, Justin Schlosberg, Steve Tiller, Charlotte Williams, Naomi Wimborne-Idrissi*

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