

24th May 2018

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

For the attention of Marie van der Zyl, Deputies President-Elect

Dear Marie,

First of all, an apology for unintentionally promoting you prematurely to President in my recent communications, and of course thereby demoting Jonathan.

At the presidential hustings you used the words 'fought' and 'battle' when talking about your cancer as a young mother. These are "words of war", says Dr Max Pemberton who writes a column in a daily newspaper, and Macmillan the cancer charity discourages their use. By using words such as 'fight' and 'win', it suggests the patient is responsible for their own recovery when, in reality - as the doctor points out - the success of cancer treatment relies on drugs, radiotherapy or surgery, not willpower.

It may massage our egos to think that we are heroes or heroines, but it is not so, Those titles belong to the doctors, therapists and specialist nurses who treat us.

Yours sincerely,

George Rooker
Historian