

Wednesday, July 02, 2003

Dear *OCA Member*:

It is with a very heavy heart that I submit my resignation as President of the Oklahoma Chess Association. By now some of you have read emails discussing the situation or perhaps heard from a friend the news of my impending resignation. Some of the emails I have seen have been very misleading (and perhaps forged which is easy to do by the way). From what I've heard people say, I resigned Sunday morning, Sunday night, Monday night, ...?! The truth of the matter is that I hadn't resigned yet, though a number of individuals are acting as if I did. This letter is to serve as official notification of my resignation and to clarify my reasons, and they have nothing to do with my desire for power or getting my own way.

While the elections at the Annual Membership Meeting in Stillwater on June 29th were legal, I believe strongly that the results were ethically wrong. It appeared to me that the elections were controlled by a few select individuals with personal agendas who used children to ensure the election of their hand-picked slate of officers. To my knowledge, only one of these officers has ever organized an adult USCF/OCA tournament, and none in at least fifteen years. In selecting this slate, these individuals excluded some of the most active tournament organizers in the state. While the use of children is bad enough, these individuals did not appear to be satisfied with one or two representatives on the Policy Board. They ensured that all vacant offices were held by their candidates. This despite the fact that the personal agenda these individuals espoused was separation of scholastic chess from the OCA, which they were sure to achieve. They wanted to leave nothing to chance, regardless of the damage done.

If these Policy Board members were elected by the core members of the Oklahoma Chess Association (the active adult USCF tournament player), I would perhaps be discouraged by what I might consider poor judgment but accept the wisdom of democracy. I find it increasingly difficult to see this election in this light.

I have been able to work with many difficult and selfish individuals in the past, as I believed in the inherent goodness of man. However I find it very painfully to work with this new Policy Board. Even if I were able to allow myself the luxury of entertaining the thought that rigging an election was somehow ethically just, the fact that these individuals surprised me and most of the rest of room with their slate of candidates is disturbing. This clearly points out that these individuals will not trust anyone else and cannot be trusted in return.

It is also apparent to me that these individuals are not interested in working with anyone else. This group has alienated every single organizer in the state in both adult and scholastic chess. They have worked very hard to isolate and undercut any potential "competition" to their efforts.

This dear gentlepeople is the nub of the matter. If I cannot trust the officers elected to serve you, how can I be an effective leader? If these individuals are not willing or even able to work with others for the good of all, how can I be an effective leader? If these individuals do not consider my opinion of value, how can I be an effective leader? In recognition of these truths and in line with my belief in the inappropriateness of the election, I am forced to resign. Perhaps my conscience will allow me to return to the OCA in the future.

This resignation is not to say that I will be absent from the chess scene. I will continue my organizational efforts, but I can no longer support the Oklahoma Chess Association. Thank you very much for your time and support in the past. I hope we will continue to meet of the chess board and in the tournament room.

As always, your servant,

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cc: USCF Office
Frank Niro