

The United States Chess Federation

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Mr. Neil T. Austin
1608 42nd Street
Sacramento 19, Calif.

Dear Mr. Austin:

Since you were good enough to forward a copy of your letter to Mr. Graves, I will take a moment to refer to the point that concerns me directly -- your point five.

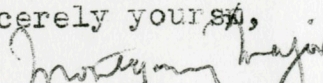
Since I have a thick hide (needed in this business), I am not in the least upset by criticism -- although I doubt if a vote of censure can be termed "mild".

But I do object to such a vote based on the potpourri of fabrication and misrepresentation which Mr. McClain and Mr. Alexander and others foisted on a trusting public. And I beg to take exception to your statement that Mr. McClain is in a position where his integrity and motives are beyond question. For one, I definitely question them.

I question them because he circulated a letter of attack that was filled with vague, elusive and erroneous statements which he presented as the truth without troubling first to verify any of his charges. I question them because Mr. McClain has refused to correct even the most obvious of his misrepresentations when they were brought to his attention. His attitude is that it doesn't matter. But it does, if he is to pretend to any claim to integrity. I pass now over the fact that Mr. Alexander in his open letter at New Orleans made a statement that has all the appearance of a deliberate lie, because it is possible that Mr. Alexander was merely too stupid to know better -- but I have no intention of being convicted on evidence presented by as questionable means that used by Mr. McClain and Mr. Alexander.

I question Mr. McClain's motives from the fact that he circulated this attack on the Federation (not only without troubling to verify his statements) but without troubling first to communicate with Federation officials to see if differences could not be ironed out first. Anyone with a real wish toward helpful cooperation would first exhaust cooperative means of settling agreements before attempting (and succeeding too well) in raising a furore with deliberate (or at least it looks deliberate) attempts to blacken the eye of the Federation. I can only assume that Mr. McClain thought he had found a short-cut to becoming a big shot in chess.

Sincerely yours,


Montgomery Major

Copy: Mr. Frank R. Graves
Mr. Guthrie McClain