

Statement from John Adams:

"On Tuesday 23 June 2020 I received an unsolicited phone call from an ABC radio producer on behalf of James Valentine's radio program. The producer invited me to participate in a radio discussion about why does white go first in chess and whether it is still appropriate that white continues to go first in the game of chess given the current climate of racial tensions in the wake of the death of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter protests. Given that I no longer hold an official position with the Australian Chess Federation (ACF), I politely declined the offer and referred them to a current office holder at the ACF.

"I found the phone call highly inappropriate that a taxpayer funded organisation would even contemplate discussing chess in this context given COVID-19, the economic lockdown and the fact that the Australian economy is in a state of decline. The fact I was asked to comment about the appropriateness of the current rules of chess given the current political climate led me to draw the inference that Mr Valentine and ABC staff were unhappy with the fact that white goes first in chess. Moreover, the fact that the ABC just wanted to focus on the one game where it is mandated that white goes first and did not seek comment on games where it is mandated that black goes first such as 'checkers' or the east asian strategy game 'go' was telling as to the underlying motivations of the ABC.

"Importantly, during Mr Valentine's radio segment which went to air on this topic, Mr Valentine did not provide any balance to his segment by discussing why is it that black goes first in games outside of chess.

"In subsequent interviews such as with the Australian newspaper, Mr Valentine suggested he was never pressing for black to go first. This was not my experience on the phone call with his producer. The question as to whether white should continue to go first in chess given the current political climate was clearly put to me. It is important to note that Mr Valentine was not a participant on the phone call.

"I have dealt with the ABC for many years across multiple programs. The phone call I received from the ABC continues a pattern of behaviour where ABC presenters seek to place overemphasis on topics relating to race, gender, class and the environment. Unfortunately, the ABC continues to manifest a pattern of behaviour based on a centre-left ideological framework which does not resonate with a significant proportion of the Australian public. This is not a pattern which I only have observed, this pattern is becoming more apparent in the eyes of an increasing number of Australians.

"Moreover, as a small business operator who pays a substantial amount in Commonwealth taxes, I find it offensive that the ABC would waste their taxpayer-funded resources on such topics, especially as ABC staff have gone to twitter recently complaining about funding cuts. Mr Valentine claims he was looking to create some conversation that was fresh, unfortunately the public does not want the ABC to generate esoteric discussions as we don't wish to pay for such content. If Mr Valentine wishes to pursue such topics, he should pursue these topics in the private

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sector. He would soon find that the Australian people have no interest in such discussions and would struggle commercially as a result."