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FOUNDATION

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## Dear Fencers Club Community:

I have received so many calls about Boris Vaksman's recent comments; and I apologize for not having the time to return them all.

These are difficult times—dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic and so many lost lives, and protests against systemic racism. Recent news about Boris' racist comments is extremely painful and hurtful. I pray this incident will move everyone's spirit, including my own, to think about how we can be better and stand up against injustice and what we know is wrong. Racism is wrong.

This leads me to the present situation at the New York Fencers Club, where I have been a member for nearly fifty (50) years. When Boris Vaksman recently said: "I think uh...what's his name, Lincoln, made a mistake..." in reference to slavery during a taped fencing lesson, this was wrong. These words are racist, hurtful and painful.

We all need to look at ourselves, including me to make a better world and a better club.

The Fencers Club leadership has taken steps to respond to Boris' unacceptable behavior. Although I originally voted to suspend Boris, after reviewing the video, I changed my position and agreed he should be terminated. There are other issues of equal importance that need to be addressed to improve our FC community. I will discuss these issues further at our upcoming forum.

I'd like to thank each and every one of you for your positive support and encouragement.

God Bless my Fencers Club family!

  
Peter Westbrook

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