The golf industry is at war. If you don't believe it, four stories in this month's edition of Golf Course News will clearly illustrate the nature of the conflict. It's a war of public relations and it centers on what defines a "good neighbor." Are golf courses "good neighbors"? The answer almost doesn't matter, because the question is flawed. The better query is this: "Are golf courses really so hard to be good neighbors?"

And the answer is no.

Anti-growth special-interest groups, often dressed in grass-root skirts, have taken their messages to the seats of power and directly to the people—any place where laws are written and public opinion is formulated. Has it been effective? Well, has it become harder or easier to register products with the EPA? Is it easier to gain golf-course construction approval? Is it harder or easier to register products with the EPA?

"Have gun, will travel," reads the card of a man. Remember Paladin? Where is Richard Boone now—when we so badly need him? It now seems time for the O.K. Corral Planning Board, Beaumarchais' statement is borne out: "Truth is all we ask." As Maryland developer Lex Birney said: "If things are wrong, or there are interpretations of any scientific data that should be made and they don't agree with what my company is trying to do, that's OK. We want to know. But what appears to be MOSPLACED PRIORITIES".

The editor: I have been a faithful reader of your periodical for several years now. I find that I learn more from your publication than any other industry journal. However, I will have to take exception with your recent treatment of a particularly important golf course issue in Hawaii, and elsewhere.

On the cover of the May 1992 issue of Golf Course News, your staff ran an article by Associate Editor Peter Blais regarding a gentleman named Gen Morita of the National Golf Foundation. The article seemed to praise Mr. Morita's efforts to "...obtain moratoriums against new development in 10 of Japan's 46 prefectures." The article went on to describe Mr. Morita's lust for re-establish EPA on numerous technical/scientific research the EPA must answer their often fatuous assertions. Ignoring them won't make them go away.

Colleague Mark Leslie believes the golf industry needs a hired gun of its own—someone armed with facts to refute the Kleins and Moritas of the world, someone to attend every zoning board of appeals meeting in America (see below). In Hawaii, the golf industry must take the message to the people, because facts nearly always triumph over fanaticism.

The golf industry could use a hired gun of its own. Enough said. Yet, after watching this process get the better of our golf industry, patriots are beginning to fight back.

Turn to page 3 and read about the National Golf Foundation's "Environmental Impact of golf course construction." The report on the economic impact of golf. Much of the NGF's findings seem like common sense: Golf courses create jobs, pay huge taxes and spur local economic activity.

Common sense? Certainly. But if the NGF doesn't put the word out, John Q. Public continues to view golf courses as playgrounds for the rich, completely devoid of positive economic impact. Turn to page 1 and read about Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment, or RISE. This is the type of association formed by chemical companies, but it's also a lobbying group. After watching local communities overthrow the EPA on numerous technical/scientific research assertions. Ignoring them won't make them go away.

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The golf industry could use a hired gun of its own.
Alfonso

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to stay. It's been six years since that White Paper and perhaps it's time to take another look at this issue. Maybe there are bigger fights to try than things like:

More economical mowing practices or more efficient ways of running the golf car or food concessions.

Maybe there are questions that cut directly to our survival as a business — like the environment, federal and state regulations and ADA.

Maybe there are things that are bigger than our concern over profitability, accountability, and who is paying taxes and who isn't.

Maybe there's a great need for the taxpayer-owned golf courses of this country to upgrade their customer-service attitude and improve their playing conditions - and maybe the NGCOA members can help that along. Maybe some taxpayer-owned golf course personnel out there can teach NGCOA members a thing or two.

Maybe, just maybe, if we were all in one giant pool of golf courses, we could muster up enough clout to get golf's positive environmental story told as effectively as the opposition has been able to communicate its view.

Maybe we need to sit down and talk. Maybe there is a lot more to pull us together than there is to keep us apart. I am going to work hard to reopen this discussion with the members of NGCOA, and I would sincerely welcome any input from all of you taxpayer-owned golf facilities.

Shouldn't we find common ground and work together on issues which may well affect the very survival of our livelihoods? Not to mention the great game itself, golf. The game of a lifetime.

Maybe life's too short not to talk about it. What do you think?

Island? Surely there are other highly regarded scientists - in each region of the country - who could be available.

Ladino and gentlemens, you're out there. You're packing bazookas that would make Silly Putty out of the six-gun toters. You're honest-to-goodness regarding scientists - in each region of the country - who could be available.

Ladino and gentlemens, you're out there. You're packing bazookas that would make Silly Putty out of the six-gun toters. You're honest-to-goodness scientists with expertise in the necessary areas. Your life's work has been research to discover truths, not to oppose or to support any one thing, so your testimony would be considered credible and unbiased.

Please stop forward. If you don't, your back yard may get a law like that into the unusual springtime practice of watering his course almost everyday from the local water company.

While the purchased water and additional wetting agents have added 10 to 15 percent to his maintenance budget, Seibel said the course is in great condition and "we're turning away as many people as we let play."

The same is true in Oregon. While drought and hot weather have reduced yields at the state's major grass seed farms, the lack of rain (40 percent below normal) has increased play and revenues by $30,000 at Grants Pass Golf Club, according to superintendent Scott Shillington. That has more than made up for the extra $2,000 spent on fungicides needed to fight back the more-intense-than-usual attacks of anthracnose, fusarium, pythium and dollar spot, he added.

Sufficient water has been available from the Rogue River to keep the course in excellent shape. Supplies could be shut off in early September, a few weeks earlier than usual, Shillington said. That would not affect conditions, however, he added.

Other parts of the country have suffered along with the Northwest. Most of Ohio was "severely" to "extremely" dry through the first half of 1992, according to National Climatic Data Center, NOAA figures.

Shawnee Hills Golf Club southeast of Cleveland received less than seven inches of precipitation from April through June. That forced superintendent Paul Hudak into the unusual springtime practice of watering his course almost everyday from May 21 through July 9, when the heavy rains returned.

Shawnee Hills added workers to hand water certain sections of the course. Extra fertilizer and fungicides were needed to keep the green grass and ward off disease. But the drier weather increased play, Hudak said. Shawnee Hills attracts older players who liked the extra roll the drier-than-normal fairways provided.

Head superintendent Mike Shannon of Teton Pines Golf Club in Jackson Hole, Wyo., has added two to three people, at about $150/day, to hand water dry spots and aerify trouble areas.

Effects of bone-dry May, June still linger

Continued from page 1

they aren't going to come. We can't buy extra water from the city. It simply isn't available."

That isn't the case 50 miles southwest at Edgewood-Tahoe Country Club in Stateline, Nev. Superintendent Steve Seibel has supplemented what little water is available in the course's wells and springs with liquid purchased from the local water company.

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