

which they live. Finally, when communities themselves alter their sense of value about surrounding golf course land, you're going to be able to talk to them intelligently about taxation.

Golf courses do provide a relief from the unrelieved, continuous sprawl of housing, industry and highway. Therefore golfers and government at all levels, through taxation and zoning, have a responsibility to see that such land is conserved as open space. Even if the land is not necessarily conserved for golf.

In the next few years the land use issue is going to bring about some very fundamental rethinking of some very sacred cows in American political and social thinking - in, for instance, our traditional reliance on dollar values to measure our progress and the quality of our existence in America.

But perhaps the most interesting thing about the current debate over ecology is that the needs of sound ecology are very frequently in direct conflict with traditional American ideas about populism. The Sierra Club is a very undemocratic organization, because it is telling us that it is more important for six dozen backpackers to enjoy walking through the High Sierra at Mineral King than it is to open the land to a million Californians. Golf land, too, falls in a special privileged classification and will always be discriminatory in a sense, because a large amount of valuable land is able to accommodate a relatively small number of people at a given time. But ecology tells us, rightly, that the preservation of open land without intensive use applied to it can be a good thing. In many cases, however, this concept is going to run counter to traditional American populism - for instance our ideas about privilege and property.

Now I am not going to make a case here for the ecological benefits of open golf space out-weighing the civil rights considerations inherent in membership discrimination by country clubs. But in the next few years it is going to be difficult to sweep this issue under the rug, because every time the special property status of golf courses comes up at the Federal and state levels, the issue is going to arise. Let me just say that if golf were not saddled with the discrimination issue, the political swimming would be a whole lot easier for clubs.

Some time this year, Senator Edmund Muskie is going to conduct Congressional hearings on property tax reform. I urge you to start thinking right away about this opportunity to present golf's case at the level of a national forum. It will require study and documentation, but I hope the opportunity will not go begging.

EDITORIAL

Well, the election's are over. There are new faces on the board and new faces in the three top offices. And with the change in personnel and expiration of terms of offices, much to the satisfaction of many, I find my term as a director of the Mid Atlantic over and done with. But not without comment, as you may well have expected!

First, let me say I have really sincerely enjoyed being a Director. The past three years have been especially fulfilling, being able to work for and with the association. It's really enjoyable being able to see how the association works and to see the interest and hard work that all the officers put out as one unit. There are a lot of people who are quick to criticize the decisions and ideas of the board, and it is to their advantage for them to attend a board meeting and see just how these decisions are made and how much thought and discussion goes into each item.

Second, I would like to thank the people who helped out on the newsletter by an occasional article, an item sent in from another publication and very often comments and criticism. The newsletter was done with one idea in mind - to provoke thoughts. There are too many publications in circulation that are middle of the road and very wishy-washy. This has been the one idea in mind in publishing the newsletter - to print something that not everyone will agree with. And the results have been quite rewarding. They have ranged from hateful remarks over the telephone to anonymous letters in the mail to personal letters from Ben Chlevin.

When everyone agrees with what you write, then you aren't doing your job.

The newsletter has been a fun and rewarding job and I hope the tradition and good name will be carried on. But after nearly four years of doing the job, I feel it is time to step aside for two reasons.

First, I feel as though there are other young men in the association who could do the job and there is a lot of hidden talent that we don't know of. Let's give some of these boys a chance.

And second, after four years, I feel as though I have had my fair share of raising hell with people on a lot of different issues. Most of the articles I wrote on were things which I had plenty of say on and definite opinions or questions. But I've had my chance and my term is up. So carry on and let's keep the newsletter going.

AN EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY

We express our deepest sympathy to George Campbell of Belle Haven Country Club on the passing of his wife on December 3rd.