

ARE GOLF COURSES IN DANGER OF BEING LEGISLATED OUT OF EXISTENCE ?

Who are the real polluters?

Will the big golf boom in Japan go bust?

Is world-wide media becoming negative about golf?

What can we do about it?

Today our world is filled with paradox. We are like ostriches with our heads in the sand. We threaten war to secure our gasoline supply in the Persian Gulf. Yet if we do not stop using oil, our atmosphere will be permanently harmed, half the world will be flooded and we also may destroy ourselves. We should find an oil substitute but we are doing almost nothing about it.

A friend called me from Hawaii. He had just visited Japan. "They are against golf courses in Japan," he said. "The papers are full of it. Golf courses there are polluting the water supply. They are eating up the good agricultural land. Everybody is alarmed."

"That's nonsense," I said. "The farms are the real polluters in Japan as they are in America. They use powerful fertilizers like Ammophos 'B' and Muriate of Potash and all kinds of inorganic pesticides. Also most of the courses in Japan are built in the mountains where there is no agriculture; they represent much less than one percent of Japan's land surface. The farming lobby is very powerful, so they are directing the attention to golf as the culprit, just as they are in America."

"How do I know?" he said, "I read it in the papers everywhere. Golf is bad these days, even the Hawaiian papers are against it Your business is becoming unpopular worldwide."

He is of course right.

We who are involved with golf must reassess our attitude. We must reinform the public. We must fight for our survival as a legitimate, respectable and beneficial land use. We must police ourselves, and quickly lay down our own environmental standards. We must use a maximum of organic fertilizers and pesticides and a minimum of inorganics. Industries who police themselves predetermine their own sensible laws and restrictions. Industries policed by others, like the Japanese golf industry, usually have ignorant laws which become straitjackets.

And we must get into politics. The public at large, *the people*, are suddenly interested in the environment. It is often the number one concern in opinion polls. Millions of dollars are poured into PGA tournaments, millions more are generated from them. More millions are poured into ridiculously expensive, impossible to maintain new courses, or into earthworks for stadium golf often used for four days a year. We must quickly divert those millions for lobbyists and public relations Public opinion against development and the despoliation of the countryside is rightly growing at an exponential rate.

I'm for a better environment, isn't everybody?

I'm for saving the working landscape. However, I believe that golf, at worst, should be a neutral environment which absorbs noxious carbon dioxide and gives off healthful oxygen. And its best, a golf course is entirely positive and is far from being a detriment. Recent studies on Cape cod golf courses have shown no harmful nitrates in the ground water. Indeed golf provides fresh air for smoke-filled lungs.

Most of us are not effective. Touring pros, for instance, almost never show up for meetings on the environment. They must change; so must we all change.

We must all pull together. We must all put our time, effort and money into saving golf courses. We must all lobby our politicians. We must help finance their campaigns, that is how our society works. We must also have an army of professional lobbyists. Politicians don't act they react. If we don't act, I sincerely believe that the time is not far off when there will be few or no new golf courses built in America and other industrialized nations And that would be a pity. Which is surely the understatement of the era.

CREDIT: Desmond Muirhead Executive Golfer's Architectural Consultant



Don Naumann

510 Salmar Avenue • Campbell, CA 95008 • (408) 374-4700
(800) 827-TURF Mobile (408) 234-4571 Fax (408) 374-4773



830 LATOUR CT.
NAPA, CA 94558

(707) 255-2828
(800) 252-6660

**GOLF COURSE
RENOVATION**



**Jim Duhig Terry Stratton
(415) 229-1060**

CONTRA COSTA LANDSCAPING, INC.
P.O. BOX 2069 • MARTINEZ, CA 94553

**INTERNATIONAL
SEEDS, INC.**

Breeders and Marketers of
World Class Turf Seed

"Seed - the Gift of Life"®
Halsey, Oregon