

Now I am one of those unsettled, disturbed, and humiliated millions with his head down, his left arm straight, his hips loose, and his seat planted on some imaginary stool. I have the position down pat. The pro says I have a pretty good swing. And one of these days I am determined I will even hit the ball farther than some of the thirteen-year-old girls who play the same course.

Golf is a diabolical thing, the great leveler of egos. It enslaves businessmen, governors and presidents. In the world of Sunday golf, only the caddy is king.

My major fault, I suppose, is taking the game seriously. But I want you to know that I am always in control of my emotions. I never fail to replace a divot and, no matter how bad my score, I am always considerate of the course. In fact, in the interest of good groundskeeping, I will sometimes move an obstructing stick or rock a little to the left or right of my ball, when I believe swinging with it in the way will cause needless damage to the course, and when I am perfectly sure my partner isn't looking.

At this time, I would like to make a public statement of great importance, and I hope it will be duly noted by the press. It is not true that all of my major appointees in Annapolis are golf players. It is not true that every time I am called out of State to a governors' conference that I take along with me a pre-handicapped foursome. And it is not true that I will not allow anyone to serve on my personal staff who shoots a better game than I do. After all, I have to have some staff. These are outright fabrications and distortions, without basis in fact. On the other hand, I will not deny that I have played golf with members of my staff. I will not deny that I know each and every one of their handicaps. And I will not deny that I insist upon proper protocol at all times and at all places. I think that just about sums up the situation.

In a few days, the 1968 session of the Maryland Legislature will convene, and the serious business of your governor and elected representatives will leave little time for other than a few practice swings in the odd and seldom hours of inactivity. I have truly enjoyed being with you today in a relaxed and fun way and hope that when we meet again, I will be able to say that the State is shooting par, that it's burning up the course with better laws, and that as good as its first round was, its second was even better.