

*John DeGrove's introduction of Marjory Stoneman Douglas:*

DeGrove: It is a privilege to introduce this beautiful lady; it's what I'm supposed to do, right? I don't suppose that the Joint Center for Environmental and Urban Problems ever had a more distinguished guest than Marjory Stoneman Douglas. I can't recall one, and I have a good memory. It's our special pleasure and privilege to have her with us here today. I might describe her as the First Lady of the Everglades, the author of *The Everglades: River of Grass*, one of the great books on the Everglades, a lifetime of concern for the Everglades, which really she's more properly described as the First Lady of Florida's environment. She has a concern for all our environment and particularly the environment of South Florida. But not restricted to that, she's been giving me a little lecture on what I better do about St. George's Island.

Marjory Stoneman Douglas: That's right, that's right...

DeGrove: And I'm assuring her we're going to do right or bust, and we are...

MSD: That's right. Do right or I'll bust ya. (Audience laughter)

DeGrove: That's right, and she's a tough lady too.

MSD: Oh yeah, real tough.

DeGrove: I have, Marjory, and I haven't said this before, a special message for you, from the Governor.

MSD: Well...

DeGrove: Who I talked to yesterday morning when I was coming down here, and who said to send you his great love and affection...

MSD: Very kind...

DeGrove: And to tell you that he is working hard on putting together a new initiative to get on with the job of protecting, restoring and seeing that, in the future, the Everglades is treated better than we've done in the past. The Governor has not completed in putting together that initiative and I'm not

announcing that initiative for the Governor, I'm only giving you a message from the Governor that he is working on that effort and that announcement along those lines and with a detailed set of directions, probably to some special group that he will convene to move forward within the next couple of weeks. His definition of the Everglades is the same as yours. He understands that it starts in the headwaters of the Kissimmee Valley, comes down into the Lake comes down into the Everglades Agricultural Area, the Conservation Area, Everglades National Park and Florida Bay and all associated areas with it and that what South Florida is all about, and that's what Marjory Stoneman Douglas is all about. To maintain a constant vigil, a constant record of leadership, forceful, not even polite sometimes, when she feels it is necessary to be.

MSD: (laughs)

DeGrove: But, unpolite in the best cause in the world is okay. I have worked with Marjory Stoneman Douglas a long time since 1973, I guess, when she was kind enough to come to Kissimmee to the Governor's conference on...

MSD: Seventy-one

DeGrove: Seventy-one?

MSD: Seventy-one

DeGrove: Well, '71 conference you were at...

MSD: Yeah

DeGrove: But that was the one down at Miami Beach, but then you came to Kissimmee to Governor Askew's conference on growth and the environment at which we upset the Department of Transportation Secretary so that he got up from the table and went home.

MSD: Yeah...

DeGrove: He called for a fairly modest recommendation that was made by somebody, the group leader, somebody in the group, who said that we should just take the funding for the Department of Transportation and

reverse it, and give all the money scheduled for roads to mass transit, and all the money scheduled for mass transit to roads. I thought that was a sensible policy or proposal, and not only that but it was made tongue-in-cheek, but the then Department Secretary didn't take it tongue-in-cheek, I guess, and got up and made a speech about how irresponsible we all were and went home. We got through the conference without him, and we never quite stuck to this policy, but we've made some modest progress in the meantime. I don't recall who that Secretary was and wouldn't say if I did.

MSD: No.

DeGrove: Well, I'm not going to say anything else because I'm already intruding on the time we wish to give to our special guest to talk to us about a place that she cherishes, that she loves and about which she probably knows more than any human being on earth. So we're very happy to have her here, and it's my pleasure to introduce to you, Marjory Stoneman Douglas.

(Audience claps)