

*Marjory Stoneman Douglas speaks about the 1971 Water Management Conference and the message from the Governor*

Marjory Stoneman Douglas: Well, thank you very much. Thank you very, very much John. I love to hear him talk; he does a beautiful job. As a matter of fact, it was in '71 particularly because, I remember it particularly because Dr. DeGrove was chairman of the Governor's Water Management conference at the Beach in '71, and I've said then, that man chairs a big tumultuous meeting in my life. He ran that meeting and never got out of hand for a single minute. And I think because he handled it so extremely well, the conclusions of that conference were especially good. That was when, by resolution of the whole conference, we decided to cut up the state into five water management areas, and I think that was a great step in advance, because it was the first time practically that from the government point of view, the state had been recognized not as just a series of political units, but as a very important piece of geography, which was divided by nature into five areas for which the source of water was entirely different. I, we, could do an interesting lot of talking about all the other areas which now have their separate Water Management District boards, and are coming along variously, especially well in the St. Johns area. Perhaps a little more slowly with us, because ours was already established in 1947 when the Army Corps of Engineers came into Florida with a contract from the State of Florida to do what was called "control of floods" all up and down the Kissimmee-Okeechobee-Everglades Basin. And, at that time, the first water management area was established called the I-C-S-F-C-D or the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control District. And of course that was so silly, as if there were nothing but floods. The whole idea was to get the water off the Everglades and let everyone sell the land and make a lot of money without any regard at all to the fact that that was all the water there was, and if you got rid of the water, there wouldn't be any drinking water. That thing has not been entirely corrected, I think, in the thinking of the Water Management District to now, because, while it was changed, its title was changed in '71 to be the South Florida Water Management District it still has had the trouble of getting rid of some of its old thinking about flood control. I actually heard a member of that board a couple of years ago state at a public hearing, that when he was appointed on the board, the Governor said, "Now you are here for the subject of flood control." Even in those days the Governor hadn't heard that we weren't doing just flood control, that we had the whole problem with water conservation in our hands. Thank you very much for the message from the Governor who has indeed learned an

awful lot since the time when he appointed that man to be on the flood control board. The Governor has been coming along just splendidly, and my congratulations to him, and he has been learning more and more the problems and difficulties of South Florida. And his whole attitude, which Dr. DeGrove has been kind enough to make public to us, that he is going to do something in a week or two to appoint, I gather, appoint special study groups and so on is all to the good.