

*Marjory Stoneman Douglas talks about the "Squatters" in East Florida*

Marjory Stoneman Douglas: So, let me get back to vegetables in Florida, I don't think they're so important. Now, I don't want to see this land used for houses. I want the State of Florida to define the sheetflow area of the Everglades and keep the people out. The great problem we have in East Florida is that people have gone and built there without permits, without electricity. They've put in shacks: Florida Power and Light company has found the houses there and run poles out, giving them electricity. So then when the high water comes, as it came three years ago with the flash hurricane, and you had too much water down there in the East Everglades. And recently when we've had these early rains that were so good for a great deal, they began to flood the east Everglades. And the people, who would come down illegally into the east Everglades began to yell and scream for more drainage. Well, let them have floods! That's what we've got to have there is water. They should not be allowed to build in the area reserved for the water. You can't try to do everything at once. You know, we had this odd idea of multiple use, say for a recreation area. You can't use a water system for recreation; you've got to use it for water. You can't expect it'll do well for water if you use it for building or for hunting or for anything else. So then we've got this bad problem in East Everglades, 'cause people are living there that don't belong there. And they want the State to either buy the land or drain it, well that's stupid, they have no business. In some way, they should go away. You know we used to have that idea about let the buyer beware, if they didn't know that when they bought, it's their own faults; nobody made them. We have a great many more problems in the area, but the main problem is this restoring the Kissimmee, cleaning up Lake Okeechobee and restoring the sheetflow of the Everglades. In that process, we have a lot of minor problems. And I don't know if I've been talking too long. Because the trouble with me is, that when I get started talking, I guess John DeGrove is one of the few people who could stop me. So I should depend on you. Well anyway, I can say a few more words. We have the Everglades National Park, which has been a great asset to the south of us, and I'm one of the two people still alive who was on the committee for the building of the park. But when the park was put in, it was put in south of the Tamiami Trail, which was finished in '28 from Collier County, and it cut off the water to the south, so the Park has never had enough water. And since we've had these other roads, and the whole cutting down of the sheetflow, it hasn't had one-tenth of the water it should have. So the park itself has been changing from a wetland park, which it was a completely unique and

wonderful one, but these dreadful trees have been coming in, not only the Australian pine, but the Brazilian pepper, *Schinus terebinthifolius*, I think it is. And, the melaleuca, which has been coming in like mad, in the Park, changing the character of the Park.