

*Marjory Stoneman Douglas discusses growing vegetables in the Third World as a way to help curb refugee problem*

Marjory Stoneman Douglas: In fact, I am beginning to, this is just heathenish and what I'm saying, I'm taking full responsibility for. Nobody told me to say this. In fact, nobody does tell me to say much of anything, that I can think of, never mind that. (*Laughter*). But, I don't see why we have to have all this agriculture in Florida. What's the use of all this agriculture? Why can they raise tomatoes and beans somewhere else than encroaching on the sheet flow of the Everglades? When it comes to that, that land is getting to be so much more valuable from the developers' point of view, that the developers are buying up agricultural land to develop housing. Well, we don't want them either. So that I would be very happy to see a lot less agriculture around here. As it has been said, again the Water Management District allots more water to agriculture in South Florida than it does to the cities and the people, and whatever light industries which we have that are perfectly justifiable, that we are perfectly justified in having. I see no reason why agriculture should be so important. And I can go on and tell you more about that. (41:35) Because I see no reason why, this is my own theory, mind you, I'm completely responsible for any statement I make. I see no reason why we shouldn't get cheap vegetables from Mexico. Mexico can raise vegetables. All right, one of our great troubles is refugees. People from Mexico coming across the border, into the United States, because they can't get work in Mexico. Why shouldn't we buy our vegetables from Mexico and keep their people home? Why shouldn't we do something about Haiti and let them feed their people there instead of them coming over in leaky boats, trying to be rescued in this country? We haven't faced this refugee problem, which is a problem of this country, which is an outpost and a frontier and the southernmost part of the United States, being surrounded by other countries, by the Third World, with other economic situations. Why should we raise vegetables, at our own expense, greater expense, when they could be raised cheaper, somewhere else, particularly Mexico. I see no reason why we shouldn't. We're not handling either the vegetable problem or the refugee problem or our neighbor economics problem at all well with any foresight whatsoever. And yet we'll always have refugees when we have food and they don't have it. You can bet your life on that, and we are not facing it.