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An Open Letter to Hon. F. M. Hudson  
Tallahassee and Miami, Florida.

Dear Sir:

I have seen a signed statement from you in the Miami Herald of Saturday, Feb. 26th, headed "Drainage of Everglades".

Although you have not been willing in your communication to let the voters know who it is that offers a constructive plan of drainage, I presume that you are referring to me, because I am the man who is a candidate for Governor with the slogan of "Back to Broward."

On February 14th, in Broward County courthouse at Ft. Lauderdale, the county seat of Broward County, I launched a Back to Broward fight for a constructive plan, the Broward plan, of reclamation of the Everglades.

I have read your communication several times and I don't yet know where you stand. It is fair to assume that the communication will have the same effect upon the average voter as it has upon me, and I think it is <sup>a</sup> fair deduction that you did not intend that anybody should know what your ideas on the subject are.

You mention a letter from ~~some~~ one in Miami which brings this complaint: "You have failed to start a fight upon this question." I think that is the real reason why nothing effective has been done. You have represented in the State Senate, for twelve years, the largest Senatorial District in the State. In that district is situated the main body of the Everglades, the drainage and reclamation of which is



now and during all those twelve years has been the largest, most important and in fact the paramount issue in State politics. And during all those twelve years "you have failed to start a fight upon this question." Certainly your home people had a right to expect that you would start a fight upon this question, and the members of the Legislature of the State had a right to expect that you, representing the district most directly affected, would have some ideas on the subject and would be willing to start a fight upon that question. But you have failed for twelve years to do it, and you fail now.

Frankly, I expected you to make this fight. I realized its necessity and its importance and I knew that it affected one of your home towns more directly than it does my home town. So important did I consider this question that I waited for twelve months after you announced your candidacy to see a definite statement of your views upon the question. I have not seen it yet, and, as I said in the beginning, I have read your latest communication upon the subject several times.

If you had made the fight I should in all probability, realizing its extreme importance to the people of the State, have enlisted under your banner; but, in common with most of my fellow-citizens of Florida, I cannot list under the banner of a man who does not stand for anything.

The sum and substance of your communication is that you don't know what are the proper plans to adopt in connection with the Everglades work. Where have you been all these years when you were supposed to represent that District in the State Senate? Have you given the matter no study at all? Why do you think the people of your District sent you to Tallahassee unless they expected you to give some study to their



problems, and particularly to their most important problem?

You say what you would do if you had it in your power to do so. That does not interest the people of the State, because certainly you have had it in your power to get hold of some kind of an idea about the drainage of the Everglades during the years you have represented that District in the State Senate. You have failed to do that. This is not the time for any man, and particularly for any candidate for Governor, to say "I favor drainage". Somebody has been "favoring" drainage of the Everglades since 1822. If you have ever taken occasion to familiarize yourself even superficially with the literature of the subject you know that. But no drainage was actually accomplished until Napoleon Broward, Florida's greatest son, proposed and fought for before the people an actual plan of drainage.

In another place in your communication you say you would welcome a change that would result in the appointment of ~~an~~ a local Drainage Board. Is that all you propose to do about it? Suppose that every citizen of Florida and every candidate simply proposed to welcome a change, and nobody started a fight upon the question or did anything about it. How many thousand years would it be before anything was done?

The drainage of the Everglades is not a judicial matter. It is first a political matter, because the people of Florida must command a change before men of your temperament will ever make it. After that there are a thousand and one problems. As you say, many of them are matters of detail but all these matters of detail must be related to four or five matters of fundamental policy, and you have no fundamental policy so far as I can judge by your public utterance upon the question.



You say you recognize only three classes of problems in connection with the Everglades, legal, financial and engineering. Did it ever occur to you that there may be more? There are administrative problems, agricultural problems, transportation problems, and many more which I could name but which apparently have not occurred to you. Representing that District for twelve years it seems to me you would at least have tried to learn about them.

You say there is a conflict of engineering authority upon this question and therefore you will not defend the unit plan of drainage. What conflict is there? What engineers are there who do not defend the unit plan? You say you know. Let the people of Florida have the benefit of your knowledge. Probably it would help them to solve this great question if your knowledge is what you claim for it.

You say you know as much about Everglades drainage as any candidate for Governor. What DO you know about it? Do you know how much land is now drained? Do you know how much was drained at the time of Governor's death? Do you know how much longer the work can continue unless there is a change of plan and policy? You say you know. If you do, let the people of Florida have the benefit of that knowledge. You are seeking office at their hands and they are entitled to have you tell them what you do know about it.

This thing has gone far beyond the consideration of legal problems. It is far past the point, if it ever was at such a point, where a man can treat it in a judicial manner. Probably, if he has a judicial temperament, he cannot help it. But it is necessary now to take some positive stand upon it. My plan may not be the best but at least it is a plan, and that is more than can be said of any utterance



of yours upon the subject. If you offer a better plan than mine I shall not hesitate to adopt it. But unless you do I shall conclude that you are not in possession of any better plan.

You say the Governor should study the record of former Trustees and profit by their errors. If Napoleon Broward had stopped to study the record of former Trustees drainage operations would never have been started. He offered a plan and fought for it before the people of Florida. He did not ask them to elect him Governor with the idea that he was going to retain an open mind and reach, some day, some decision about the Everglades.

Are you satisfied with the manner in which the work has been conducted for the past five years? If so then there is an issue between us upon ~~ix~~ which we can go before the people of Florida. If not, in what particulars are you dissatisfied? I have stated publicly the mistakes which I conceive to have been made. Do you agree with that statement or not? If not, wherein do you differ? If so, be man enough to say so and let's fight it out side by side.

You say you know Governor Broward's views of drainage about as thoroughly as anyone. Let the people of Florida have the benefit of your great knowledge upon that question. You are a candidate for office at their hands and they are entitled to this benefit at your hands.

I have stated publicly what the essentials of Governor Broward's plans were. You say you know what they were. Is my statement of his plans and policies correct, or not? If so, out of your knowledge of Governor Broward's plans let the people of Florida know that I am on the right track. If not, in what particulars did his plans differ from the plan which I say was his. If these were Governor Broward's plans was he right or was he wrong? If he was right, why not adopt them now?



If he was wrong, wherein was he wrong? Whether right or wrong he did, in three years, drain more land with less money than his successors have done since his death, did he not? Or do you know? Is the land he drained still drained now, or has it since been submerged because of.....

If so, why? And have you no fight to make upon that question, a question that involves the honor and the reputation and the fair name of the State of Florida and all her people.

You say that Gov. Broward never tied himself to details with unwise pledges. You seem to assume that you will be elected Governor and therefore your hands must not be tied. With that assumption I must respectfully disagree, but did Gov. Broward not propose even fundamental policies for the State government? Did he not take the facts before the people? Did he not outline to them his plans? Did he ask them to trust his open mind, or did he take them into his confidence? Did he refuse to commit himself to a plan in advance, or did he start a fight upon a great question? And did he not start that great fight because all other candidates for Governor at that time, like you, had refused to tie their hands with unwise pledges? Do you think that without any knowledge of your ideas upon the subject the people of Florida ought to trust you rather than any other candidate, to undertake this great work? Or do you think that these questions ought to be discussed in the light of day, fully and freely, before the people of this State? Do you think they ought to trust a man to really accomplish anything who, between the lines of a lengthy communication, evidently is priding himself upon his judicial temperament? The people of the whole United States made that experiment once, - but only once.



Do you think your record as State Senator entitled them to believe that you will really accomplish anything for the drainage of the Everglades? They have trusted you for twelve years to make up your judicial mind upon the question. You say you have not had time to familiarize yourself with it. Permit me to call your attention to the fact that the Constitution of Florida limits a Governor's tenure to four years and you will not have as long in the future, even if by any chance you should be elected Governor, to familiarize yourself with this great question as you have already had. Men with judicial minds seek life appointments as Judges in the Courts of the United States. If the Governor's chair were to be filled for life perhaps you might, by diligent application, if you were elected, familiarize yourself with this subject to the extent that you could formulate some sort of plan before the expiration of your term.

You say, "If I receive the nomination for Governor I shall consider myself retained to accomplish drainage, but my client will be the State of Florida and not one particular section of the State." You have been in the State Senate for twelve years from the District in which the Everglades is situated. By whom have you considered yourself to be retained heretofore?

I have started this fight and I propose to see it through. I shall carry it into every county in Florida. I shall discuss it in the open, in the light of day, before the people. I have said that I would force every candidate for Governor into some expression of his views upon the subject, - into formulating some definite plan. But I did not reckon with your judicial temperament. You have come into the open with a long discussion, but your communication began without a purpose, pro-



ceeded without a plan, and ended without a point. So far as the people are concerned, even to this good day you have no plan on the subject. I have offered them a plan. In its essentials it is a Back to Broward plan. In my opinion it offers the only hope for the completion of the drainage of the Everglades, and if the Everglades are to be drained a fight must be made before the people, and, in office, by some man who has the welfare of his ~~Sta~~ State sufficiently at heart to offer a real plan and make a real fight. You have done neither. I have done the one, and before this campaign is over you will have cause to know that I have done the other.