

CHAPTER XII

THE 1926 HURRICANE AND THE MARTIN BOND PROPOSAL

1. The Hurricane

The fact that 1925 had been a relatively dry year was particularly evident in the first months of 1926 when the earth literally burned in the Everglades. Fires sweeping through the tinder-dry saw grass on February 20 near the Everglades Experiment Station endangered the buildings and the locality was backfired to save the property.¹ Six days later it was reported that a fire at Okeelanta, lighted from the flames of burning grass and muck, had consumed six houses, one of which belonged to T. E. Will. "For weeks the nightly glare of burning sawgrass reminded the settlers of their danger."²

In an endeavor to provide measures of protection and aid in saving the land and property of the Okeechobee mucklands the Internal Improvement Trustees adopted a \$156,000 budget for the Everglades Fire Control Board in March, 1926.³

Seasoned Evergladers--not swivel chair Everglades amateurs--learned some time back that "drainage" is by no means one grand panacea for all Everglades ills. They learned, in fact, that drainage--much vaunted--may prove a curse rather than a blessing. They learned that thoroughly drained but inaccessible Glades lands. . . . are in a case for worse than Glades lands covered with water.

1 Florida Experiment Station, Annual Report, 1926, 125R.

2 Everglades News, February 26, 1926. The fires of that year were blamed on grass growth during previous years of high water and consequent inability to plow the lands, fine weather, and lower water. Strange as it may seem, Howard Sharp had castigated Chief Engineer F. C. Elliot, two weeks before this for not deepening the Palm Beach Canal or other large canals like the St. Lucie. Ibid., February 12, 1926.

3 I.I.B. Minutes, XVI, 358-359, 364.

The reason is that lands thus dried out, have been converted into a tinder-heap and will burn like a wood pile. By the side of this menace, excess water is no foe at all. It is the one best friend of the neglected, misunderstood and largely abandoned Glades country.⁴

An issue which raged between the upper Everglades residents and those along the lower reaches of the Miami and North New River Canals was the matter of damming these waterways. Under the poor drainage conditions water flooded the lower reaches for days on end after a heavy rainfall, merely draining the unsettled areas between Okeelanta, five miles south of the lake, and the Ft. Lauderdale area, fifty miles south. Dams were thrown across the Miami Canal in 1925 to hold back the lake waters and were later ordered removed by the Drainage Commissioners. The Dade County settlers refused to do this, so in October settlers from the lake region destroyed one of the dams.⁵ As an outcome of hearings held at Ft. Lauderdale in 1926, the Commissioners issued permits for the establishment of dams in both of the long diagonal canals. This move was made to the disgust and chagrin of the upper Everglades residents.⁶

Spring and summer rains put out the muck fires and, as seen above, created high waters that fed fuel to the dam argument. On September first Lake Okeechobee reached a level

4 T. E. Will, "Letter to editor," Fort Lauderdale Call, June 18, 1926. Clipping in Will Collection.

5 Memorandum in T. E. Will Collection.

6 E. D. D. "Minutes," VI, 117, 123, 127, 169, 170, 221. Several typed manuscripts, five to ten pages each, castigating state officials for allowing or participating in the damming of canals are to be found in the Will Collection.

of 13.7 feet, a very high level at a bad season and sufficient motive for the editor of the Everglades News to telegraph the Board of Drainage Commissioners at Tallahassee to do something about the situation.⁷ Almost three weeks later on September 17 a hurricane, first observed near St. Kitts Island on September 14, reached the coast of Florida. Traveling 125 miles per day, the storm passed over Miami with winds reaching a velocity of 140 miles an hour and the barometer falling 27.62 inches.⁸

High winds reached Lake Okeechobee during the evening hours and had reached hurricane strength by daybreak. The wind action backed the waters into the southwest corner of the lake, an area that had been flooded in 1922 but was supposedly protected by dikes begun in 1924. A "Day of death follow[ed] a night of horror when the hurricane [broke] the frail dike on the Moore Haven lake front."⁹ The outstanding tragedy of the storm occurred when a wall of water, said to have been ten to fifteen feet high, swept in from the lake drowning 130 people and causing heavy property losses.¹⁰ The water remained over the Moore Haven area for many weeks and made reconstruction impossible; the final decline of the flood

⁷ Everglades News, September 24, 1926. Sharp wrote, "No action was taken."

⁸ E. E. Slosson, "The Florida Hurricane," Scientific Monthly, XXXIII (November, 1926), 480.

⁹ Everglades News, September 24, 1926.

¹⁰ American National Red Cross, The Florida Hurricane; 8. Over the state 327 people were killed by the storm. Ibid., 27.

left the muck too soggy to return houses carried away by the waves. "Destruction in this section was exceptionally severe and awards to families therefore averaged higher than those in other sections."¹¹

The Board of Commissioners of the Everglades Drainage District was deluged with letters and telegrams seeking action in flood relief. The Board resolved on September 29 to restore the dikes and levees at once. Governor Martin inspected the area and reported that repairs were being pushed with all possible speed.¹² Martin became the target of castigation by the Miami Daily News for refusing to call an extraordinary session of the legislature for the purpose of appropriating several million dollars for relief.¹³

Reaction to the storm tragedy on the lake shore was indicated by Howard Sharp's editorial in his first issue after the

¹¹ American National Red Cross, The Florida Hurricane, 33; John Barton Payne, chairman of the American Red Cross, was embarrassed by the attempts of his organization to raise relief funds when telegrams from the mayor of Miami minimizing the disaster were published in the press. Peter O. Knight, prominent Tampa lawyer and financier, acknowledged that 17,000 people in Florida needed aid, but he was fearful lest the American Red Cross in its zeal to raise funds would "do more damage permanently to Florida than would be offset by the funds received." H. B. Vanderblue, "The Florida Land Boom," loc. cit., 114.

¹² E. D. D. "Minutes," VI, 175, 178, 189. The Board put up \$2,500 for emergency work in the Moore Haven area. Ibid., VI, 194.

¹³ Joe Hugh Reese, Florida's Greatest Hurricane, 59; Kenneth L. Roberts, "In the Wake of the Hurricane," Saturday Evening Post, XCCIX (November 27, 1926), 6-7.

hurricane entitled "The Dead Accuse." Sharp held that the Moore Haven disaster had been due to the unnecessarily high level of the lake and the deceased persons came to their death through the culpable negligence of the Commissioners of the Everglades Drainage District.¹⁴ But it should be remembered that the Randolph Report of 1913 had stated:

In the Everglades violent floods are inconceivable; the very flatness of the country and the absence of tributary uplands of high slope makes it certain that overflows occur by the quiet and gradual rise of water without torrential characteristics.¹⁵

In the controversy which raged as to whether the Moore Haven deaths could have been avoided, it was pointed out that frequent complaints had been made to the Drainage Board that the canal locks at the lake should not be kept closed but no heed was given. As a result of this agitation the Secretary of War directed army engineers to survey the Caloosahatchee River with a view to establishing flood control measures. Strangely enough, Representative Herbert L. Drane, whose district composed the lake shore, had secured passage of an act authorizing the survey in February, 1925, but no action had

¹⁴ Everglades News, September 24, 1926. Sharp had been reminded by R. E. Rose in 1924 that J. O. Wright was responsible for the drainage system when the latter had been appointed in 1910 on the recommendation of six land companies with immense holdings. Rose cited the I.I.B. Minutes, VIII, 301-311 as his authority. Ibid., November 28, 1924.

¹⁵ Senate Documents, Number 379, 63 Congress, 2 Session 54.

16

been taken.

The Moore Haven catastrophe awoke the people of Florida to the fact that the valuable Everglades area was a hodge-podge attempt at drainage. The Miami Daily News, a severe critic of Governor Martin's attitude on storm relief, found state politics were whipsawing Everglades policies. The newspaper noted that the muck farmers were paying state drainage taxes up to \$1.25 an acre, and up to \$5 an acre for the same purpose to sub-drainage districts, for which the state had pledged itself to protect the residents from high water and drain the land.

Yet, the governor who claimed the legislature was powerless to relieve storm suffering was the governor who diverted internal improvement funds \$700,000 to make additions to the state penitentiary plant. . . maneuvering to keep down a state millage that must otherwise have been increased. 17

Probably no one had more to do with bringing the state affairs in the Everglades to general public attention than Governor Martin. Although abuse became his lot and rumor marked his step, Martin at least had a plan. Tired of hearing

16 J. H. Reese, Florida's Greatest Hurricane, 58.

17 Miami Daily News, October 16, 1926. Clewiston residents adopted a "Peoples Resolution" on October 19, 1926, which they forwarded to Governor Martin. It included as salient points: confidence in the Everglades, 15-17 foot lake levels for good drainage, sale of Internal Improvement mortgages for drainage funds, use of Internal Improvement Funds for drainage, survey of the Everglades project by a recognized engineer, special session of the legislature to secure a resident drainage board, and a new chief drainage engineer to reside in the Everglades. Everglades News, February 17, 1928.

the complaints and receiving the verbal chastisement of the residents and press of South Florida, the chief executive led the Drainage Board to West Palm Beach, where a public meeting was held on the future of the Everglades. Martin made the key speech, taking his stand on the 1913 Randolph Plan, and defended his predecessors.

The question has been repeatedly asked why the Lake was permitted to reach such a high level recently. The answer to this question is that the Board did not permit it, but could not help it; it went there against all of the efforts to reduce it because God sent the rain and the storm and the Board had not sufficient funds with which to finish this canal St. Lucie in time to head off the storm and the rain. 18

The governor analyzed the protests he had received on the Everglades and remarked that less than a year before the storm he was bitterly criticised because there was not enough water in the lake or on the Glades to stop the fires. Martin told his audience that he was not in favor of a resident board and would not ask for one from the legislature. The chairman of the Drainage Board sought cooperation from the citizens of the area and financial assistance through the issuance of more bonds.¹⁹ Howard Sharp attended the West Palm Beach conference and acidly charged Governor Martin and the Drainage Board with

18 John W. Martin, Address of John W. Martin, Governor of Florida on the Everglades and the Drainage Problem, West Palm Beach, October 28, 1926, 18.

19 Ibid., 23-27.

draining nothing but the treasury; he said that the board should be given to the people of the Everglades Drainage District for their local benefit.²⁰

The Drainage Commissioners decided on November 9, 1926, that it was to the best interests of the Board to call a conference on the Everglades at Tallahassee on December first.²¹ The meeting came off as scheduled and, after long discussion, the conferees decided to seek an enlargement of the Everglades Drainage District to include east coast areas, wider and more equitable taxation in the district, a state-wide one-half mill Everglades drainage levy, a citizen's advisory committee of five to work with the board, the establishment of drainage headquarters with a resident engineer in the Everglades, and an engineering review board composed of three engineers. Each of these requests was embodied in a resolution for use in preparing for the 1927 session of the state legislature.²²

²⁰ Everglades News; November 5, 1926.

²¹ E.D.D. "Minutes," VI, 201. Among others the Board invited the following prominent citizens of South Florida to the meeting: Frank B. Shutts, banker, J. W. Watson, state senator, and Lon Worth Crow, real estate dealer, all of Dade County; W. C. Kyle, banker, and H. C. Stilwell, publisher, of Broward County; George F. Bensel, chamber of commerce; D. H. Conklin, publisher, and Alfred H. Wagg, state senator, of Palm Beach County; L. W. Jennings, state senator, of Okeechobee County; E. J. Ethredge, state senator, of Highlands County; A. O. Kanner, lawyer, Martin County; Ed Lambright, editor of the Tampa Tribune, of Hillsborough County. H. C. Rorick of Spitzer, Rorick, and Company of Toledo, Ohio, and representative of the only bondhouse ever to handle E.D.D. bonds was also invited; also Peter O. Knight, banker, and D. B. McKay, editor of the Tampa Times of Hillsborough County. Ibid., 209.

²² Ibid., VI, 224.

2. The Twenty Million Dollar Bond Issue

Governor Martin met the 1927 session of the legislature with two lengthy reports. The first of these was F. C. Elliot's Biennial Report as Chief Engineer of the Board of Drainage Commissioners of the Everglades Drainage District for 1925-1926. F. C. Elliot's report contained a summary of the drainage work to 1927: canals, levees, locks, expenses, and proposals for new construction and taxation. ²³ The total drainage expense of operations and maintenance to 1927 was set at \$14,903,584. The amount of money to be expended on proposed new canals was estimated at \$13,704,515 and the cost of necessary work to complete old canals was set at \$5,022,825. The area included in Elliot's estimates may be stated in general terms as that part of the district north and east of the Miami Canal and a belt around Lake Okeechobee. The chief engineer recommended that steps be taken at once to prevent a repetition of the 1926 storm disaster by building ²⁵ a levee on the southern shores of the lake.

23 F. C. Elliot, Biennial Report of the Engineering Department of the Everglades Drainage District, 1925-1926, 3. Hereinafter cited as Elliot's 1927 Report.

24 Ibid.; 9-10

25 Ibid., 14. Elliot suggested a high embankment, 150 to 250 feet wide on top, "which will afford attractive home sites for the Everglades section." Twenty-six miles of levee divided into building lots 90 feet wide with a 60 foot right-of-way every quarter mile would provide 56 lots per mile valued at \$500 a lot totaling \$582,000; at \$750 a lot, \$873,000. Ibid., 14, 17, 18.

Elliot advocated the cutting of new canals on an east-west basis rather than the diagonal plan of the 1913 Randolph Report; the east-west canal routes would follow the shortest route to the ocean and take advantage of a faster gradient and easier excavation along those lines. The total estimated cost for new canals, existing canals, control works, and the Okeechobee levee was appraised at \$20,583,438.²⁶ The proposed work, the chief engineer believed, should be carried out in blocks allowing eight years for final completion of main drainage works to drain 2,300,000 acres. The assessed valuation of property in the Everglades Drainage District was set at \$52,404,416 in 1926, with taxes set at \$1,636,490. Total drainage bonds outstanding as of January 1, 1927, were \$10,255,000, with \$497,862 owed to private construction interests and \$298,000 due on loans from the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund.²⁷

Martin's second document was an engineering report made by a board of three recognized reclamation authorities. In the middle of November, 1926, the Drainage Board had instructed the secretary of the Commissioners to employ engineers to

²⁶ Elliot's 1927 Report, 28.

²⁷ Ibid., 72-73. Elliot estimated the population of the district in 1927 at 46,000 and the real value of property in the district at \$262,000,000 or five times the assessed value. On January 18, 1927, Howard Sharp sought Elliot's removal as chief drainage engineer. Sharp contended that Elliot was the controlling force of the Everglades drainage rather than the Commissioners. Everglades News, January 18, 1927.

criticise the operation of 1913 Randolph scheme and "to examine the drainage works of the Everglades Drainage District reviewing present plans and make recommendations for continuance of the district. . . ." ²⁸ On March 22, 1927, the board made an agreement with Anson Marston, dean of the College of Engineering of Iowa State College, Samuel H. McCrory, chief of the Division of Rural Engineering, Bureau of Public Roads, United States Department of Agriculture, and George B. Hills, a consulting engineer of Jacksonville, Florida, and secretary of the 1913 Isham Randolph Commission. ²⁹ Howard Sharp, who felt that the engineers should have been selected without the knowledge of the chief drainage engineer, wrote that Elliot was "to select the jury to try the case against him." ³⁰ Sharp quoted Kenneth Ballinger, a well-versed feature writer of the Miami Herald, to the effect that the board of review would approve the "present" system of drainage; the Canal Point editor added that the forthcoming report would whitewash Elliot. ³¹

The Board of Commissioners of the Everglades Drainage District instructed this Engineering Board of Review to check carefully to find if the 1913 Randolph design had been followed,

²⁸ E.D.D. "Minutes," VI, 209, and entry for February 15, 1917, with no pagination.

²⁹ "Everglades Drainage Plan Endorsed With Minor Changes," Engineering News-Record, XCIX (August 4, 1927), 187. The members of the engineering board of review were paid \$7,500 each for their services of two months duration. E.D.D. "Minutes," March 23, 1927, no pagination.

³⁰ Everglades News, January 26, 1927.

³¹ Ibid., February 4, 18, March 25, 1926.

to ascertain whether or not the 1913 plan was the proper one to follow, and to report on the correctness of the work already done. The engineers were further instructed to make recommendations for the future, to investigate the economy with which previous work had been done, to decide whether to drain as a whole or by units, and, finally, to get all the information which might aid the Board in the reclamation of the 'Glades.³² The Board of Review prefaced its report with the following statement:

These instructions and our conference with you prescribed that our work was to be that of an engineering board of review, confining its attention to the engineering features of the Everglades drainage.³³

The Board spent two weeks inspecting the Everglades and several weeks in Tallahassee examining a mass of records and data collected by the staff of the drainage district engineer. Marston, McCrory, and Hills advised the Drainage Commissioners to adopt a revised plan of drainage embodying three features: (1) independent control of Lake Okeechobee; (2) a system of east-west main drainage canals; (3) progressive drainage of the region by unit areas.³⁴

32 State of Florida, Everglades Drainage District, Report of Everglades Engineering Board of Review to Board of Commissioners of Everglades Drainage District, 1-3. Hereinafter cited as E. E. B. R. Report.

33 Ibid., 3

34 Ibid., 6.

The Board of Review recommended that the outlet canal of Lake Okeechobee be immediately increased to a capacity flow of 7,500 cubic feet per second and an ultimate flow of 10,000 cubic feet per second. The Board criticized the Randolph plan for the use of drainage canals through the Everglades for emergency control of the lake levels; it held that these canals were for the exclusive purpose of draining adjacent lands.³⁵ It recommended enlargement and improvement of the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie canals for the flood control of the big lake as the fastest and most economical methods of managing the height of the lake. As a safeguard to life and property around the lake shore, it urged that an enlarged levee be built to a height of twenty-seven feet above sea level on the southeastern, southern, and southwestern edges of the lake.³⁶

Marston, McCrory, and Hills criticized the long diagonal main drainage canals through the Everglades and advocated a new or supplemental system of eighteen east-west canals, spaced at intervals of six to eight miles from north to south below Lake Okeechobee to provide drainage of the muck lands. They suggested that the spoil banks be molded into continuous levees so as "to prevent free draining off of wet weather

³⁵ E.E.B.R. Report, 8, 49, 85.

³⁶ Ibid., 8-10. In conjunction with the levee it was further urged that the Drainage Board request permission to hold the height of the water between 14 and 17 feet. Ibid., 7-8.

7
accumulations of water from all excepting lands under actual development, and to make possible an increase in canal capacity for emergency use.³⁷

This Board of Review suggested that the drainage program be carried out in successive sections insofar as conditions of settlement and development would permit. The Board of Review found that the 1913 Randolph plan was being followed in 1927, that \$14,903,854 had been spent on all operations to 1927, and that the work had been done with praiseworthy economy.

The existing drainage works have removed the year-round standing water from vast areas of land, have brought Lake Okeechobee to the point where its levels can be successfully controlled in most years, have brought a considerable number of settlers into the Everglades Drainage District, have interested capital for agricultural developments on large tracts whenever adequate drainage can be assured. 38

In its conclusions the Everglades Engineering Board of Review noted that the 1913 Randolph plan had stated that the progressive scheme of drainage was preferable, but that Randolph, Leighton, and Perkins had laid out designs to reclaim the whole area between the West Palm Beach and the Miami Canals. The Board declared that

37 E.E.B.R. Report, 83. Elliot had previously recommended east-west canals to take advantage of shorter distances to tide water, steeper grade, and softer rock. See infra.

38 Ibid., 45.

Actual experience since 1913 in carrying out this policy has demonstrated that very much greater areas of Everglades land would have been brought into use by 1927 if money available for main canal construction from year to year had been in close accordance with a wise progressive plan. ³⁹

Marston, McCrory, and Hills found that Randolph, Leighton, and Perkins had made a very poor guess on their 1913 calculation of an eight inch subsidence of the organic Everglades soils. There had actually been three to five feet shrinkage on the Okeechobee shore since 1913. The 1927 board called attention to the fact that this subsidence had already seriously impaired the effectiveness of the drainage canals, and insisted that provisions should definitely be made for further shrinkage of the muck soils in the following decade. ⁴⁰

The projected revisions and new plans advocated by the 1927 Board of Review were estimated to cost immediately from \$5,000,000 to \$8,000,000, with \$3,000,000 of that sum being allotted to the expense of increasing the Okeechobee outlet capacity by fifty per cent. ⁴¹ The cost of the whole revision was estimated at \$26,000,000. The Board declared that this sum would reclaim from two to three million acres of South Florida lands. ⁴²

³⁹ E.E.B:R. Report, 48.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 32, 74. It was suggested that the Board of Commissioners reorganize the administrative, engineering, and operations departments of the district and that offices and a resident engineer be maintained in the Everglades. Ibid., 24-26.

⁴¹ "Everglades Drainage Plan Endorsed with Minor Changes," Engineering News-Record, XCIX (August 4, 1927), 187.

⁴² "Board of Review Reports on Everglades Drainage," Engineering News Record, XCVIII (May 19, 1927), 833.

The subsidence in the Everglades reported by the 1927 Board of Review prompted study of the problem, and an article was published which analyzed the causes of subsidence in muck soils. They were: (1) the removal of the supporting value of ground water on the lowering of the water table; (2) compaction due to agricultural cultivation; and (3) the gradual escape of volatile constituents. The maximum shrinkage in such soils was that recorded in the English Fens of ten feet in eighty-seven years on muck eighteen feet deep. The 1927 inspecting engineers had recommended that the Everglades canals be cut on the basis of an eventual fifty per cent subsidence of the Everglades soils.⁴³

Following his address on the Everglades and the drainage problem made at West Palm Beach in October, 1926, Governor Martin made thirty-two speeches in South Florida using the same subject matter, or variations of it. On January 10, 1927, he spoke before the Miami Chamber of Commerce recounting the history of the drainage project, the condition in which he found the Drainage Board when he was inaugurated, what had been done in the first half of his administration, and his plans for the future.⁴⁴ He said: "My desire is to see the Everglades properly financed and put under way that it may ulti-

⁴³ "Muck Subsidence Under Drainage in the Everglades," Engineer and Contractor, LXVI (November, 1927), 511.

⁴⁴ Orlando Morning Sentinel, January 11, 1927. Martin related that he had found the drainage district assessed at \$15,000,000 in 1925 and saddled with \$11,000,000 bonded debt; that \$400,000 had been borrowed from the I.I. Fund and that a sum of \$425,000 was due the Arundel Corporation.

mately be cultivated and made into the most productive re-
 gion on earth."⁴⁵ The governor stated that he would lay the
 problem before the legislature, but that the people of Flori-
 da should pull together, and that \$15,000,000 to \$25,000,000
 expended in finishing the Everglades project would not in-
 jure the merchants along the lower east coast.

Howard Sharp, commenting on Governor Martin's address
 of January 10, tabbed it "Miami propaganda"; he noted that
 Martin rejected any part of a local board of commissioners
 for the district, and was unwilling to change any part of
 the 1927 set-up of five state officials. Despite his speech-
 es, Sharp continued, Martin had never cooperated with the
 people of the Everglades in any way.⁴⁷

Within two weeks after the legislature convened in April,
 1927, Governor Martin delivered a special message to that

⁴⁵ Orlando Morning Sentinel, January 11, 1927. Martin
 noted the difference between the Trustees of the I.I. Fund and
 the Board of Commissioners of the Everglades Drainage District
 by telling his audience that the funds of the former belonged
 to all the state, and that the 'Glades area should not expect
 returns from the I.I. Fund. Martin's reasoning was a little
 specious since W. S. Jennings had secured the Everglades pat-
 ent in 1903 when such land as was in the Fund at that time
 was being contested by land grantees.

⁴⁶ Ibid. Modifying his West Palm Beach stand, when he had
 held out against any change in the personnel of the Drainage
 Board, Martin stated that if the people would rather have an
 independent Everglades board, the legislature should enact a
 new bill which would put the headquarters and membership in-
 side the area.

⁴⁷ Everglades News, January 14, 1927.

body in which he presented his plan for a \$20,000,000 bond issue. The Governor laid a great deal of emphasis on the fact that the everlasting trouble with Everglades reclamation since Jennings' administration had been the lack of sufficient funds, and he declared that had his predecessors been properly financed the project would have been completed years before.⁴⁸ The Everglades could be drained and the soil was productive; and, added the governor, if the area was worth draining it should stand the expense. Martin noted that \$3,000,000 worth of bonds authorized by the 1925 legislature could not be sold, but he declared if the measure he proposed were enacted into law New York bond-houses were willing to put up \$20,000,000 to do the job once and for all.⁴⁹

The chief executive pointed out that with the issuing of the proposed bonds, all of the drainage tax would be used to retire the obligations. In addition, the proposed measure authorized the levying of an ad valorem tax if the drainage tax was not enough. Martin declared that the Everglades voters would rather handle their problems with a local board, and he would leave it to the legislature to decide whether or

⁴⁸ Journal of the State Senate of Florida of the Session of 1927, 305-307.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 308-309. "I am advised that during the year 1925, of all the bonds issued in the United States of America, Florida issued 35 per cent of them." Address of John W. Martin, Governor of Florida on the Everglades and the Drainage Problem, West Palm Beach, October 28, 1926, 9.

not to remove the Drainage Board from the hands of state officials. The governor warned, however, that the New York bondhouses would not handle the deal if the Everglades proposition were removed from the hands of the commissioners as created in 1913.⁵⁰

Eight days later the legislature incorporated the governor's recommendations into a law, by which the Drainage Commissioners were authorized to issue the additional bonds to complete the reclamation of the Everglades.⁵¹ The Martin bond law became a political issue in the state. Many leaders in business, politics, and the press supported Martin's plan, but others opposed it. The state of Florida, especially the more southerly part, had experienced a real estate boom that had been accompanied by a large amount of county and municipal bonding. The collapse of the boom in 1926 had left bitter memories in the minds of some and gave doubts in others. Howard Sharp, the sage of Canal Point, told his readers that the law bought a "pig in a poke" since the 'Glades were without roads. He said it was a waste of money; that private landowners were paying the cost of draining the state's school lands but had no local control of or representation on the

⁵⁰ Journal of the State Senate of Florida of the Session of 1925, 310-311.

⁵¹ Chapter 12016, Laws of Florida, 1927. Chapter 11842, passed at the same session, appropriated a loan of \$30,000 for the relief of Glades County, scene of most of the storm damage of 1926, to be repaid in twelve years. Ibid.

52

Drainage Board.

On May 24, 1927, the Board of Drainage Commissioners discussed the matter of the sale of bonds and decided that it would be some time before any bonds could be issued; consequently, the chief drainage engineer was ordered to discontinue all construction on June first.

53

The most vocal of Martin's opponents on the Everglades bond subject was Herman A. Dann, prominent political aspirant and president of the state chamber of commerce. Dann charged that the commissioners had made a bond deal with Dillon, Read, and Company and Eldredge and Company, New York bond houses, in which they agreed to accept ninety-one cents on the dollar when Martin had been offered ninety-eight by other buyers.

Dann also charged that state responsibility in the Everglades ceased with flood control, that the Everglades citizens should work out their own plans without interference from Tallahassee, that the proposed addition of a million acres of land would be uneconomic and wasteful to reclaim since it would increase the overhead expenses, and, finally, that there were many

54

52 Everglades News, April 22, 1927.

53 E.D.D. "Minutes," VI, May 24, 1927. On June 7 the Board found their debts totalled \$1,500,000, and with no funds available the May 24th order was repeated in a resolution to be effective June 15. Ibid., June 7, 1927. Martin blamed his opponents for the "drainage mess" and told the press it would not be his fault if the "work" shut down. Everglades News, June 10, 1927.

54 Orlando Morning Sentinel, July 17, 1927.

large areas of the muck soils in condition for cultivation
 that had never been placed under the plow.⁵⁵ "We have not
 reached the Mussolini stage when the acts of executives are
 undebatable," Dann said; he concluded by stating that the
 whole scheme looked like a plan to sell land rather than to
 promote its use, and that the burden would fall on Coral
 Gables, Hialeah, Opa Locka, and Coconut Grove.⁵⁶

On the same day that Dann spoke at St. Petersburg, the
 editor of the Miami Herald analyzed the bond proposition and
 concluded with the question and answer, "Is it worth the price?
 The Herald thinks so."⁵⁷ Believing that the prospect of in-
 creased taxes was at the root of most of the opposition of the
 lower east coast to the Martin design for future reclamation
 of the Everglades, the newspaper presented facts obtained from
 the Trustee-Drainage Commissioners so that the taxpayers of
 that county "may better judge whether or not the returns
 from a back country drained and safeguarded against floods

55 Orlando Morning Sentinel, July 17, 1927. Dann quoted
 the Dade County Agricultural Agent to the effect that of the
 36,000 acres of drained tillable land in Dade County only
 3,000 were in production. Dann also stated that only 3,000
 of 20,000 acres in the Disston Island District and 9,000 of
 the 57,000 in the area from Pahokee to Ritta were in culti-
 vation.

56 Ibid.

57 Miami Herald, July 16, 1927.

floods is worth the expense." ⁵⁸ The editor pointed out that the ad valorem tax, if assessed, would be laid as a safeguard to the new bond issue to insure against any shortage in the Internal Improvement Fund. This Fund, paying drainage taxes on its lands, was fed by the sale of state lands and used each year to buy in tax redemption certificates on land where the drainage taxes were not paid and where there were no other bidders. Thus, in 1925, \$118,255.77 was paid by the Trustees of the Improvement Fund to the Commissioners of the Everglades Drainage District to make up for unpaid taxes on lands bid in-
⁵⁹ to the Fund. The editorial summed up the advantages of finishing the drainage project as follows: protection from flood waters, agricultural industry for the back country, and tonnage from diversified crops necessary to make Miami harbor an important shipping center.

The Everglades Drainage District as originally created included an area close to, and just west and south of, the town of Miami. Metropolitan suburbs had developed in this area; since the disputed bond law of 1927 provided for unlimited ad valorem taxes, if needed, it was quite natural that property owners would oppose the law. In the early summer of 1927

⁵⁸ Miami Herald, July 16, 1927. The assessed value of the Everglades Drainage District in 1926 was \$52,500,000 of which \$31,021,978 was placed in Miami west of 27th Avenue West, Coral Gables, and unincorporated Dade County.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

F. H. Arthur, Glenn H. Curtiss, Rodney B. Burdine, J. C. DuPuis, and twenty-four other citizens with property in the affected section of Dade County issued The Taxpayer's Answer to Governor Martin: An Analysis of the \$20,000,000 Bond Issue. This twenty-four page pamphlet contrasted the Dade County complainants' position, the State obligations, and also the bond houses' construction of the responsibilities of the other two.

Never in the history of Florida has there been offered for sale a bond with the security behind it that these bonds will have. First, an unlimited taxing power and an unlimited liability upon every parcel of land within the District; second, an unlimited personal liability upon every owner of land within the District; and third, an unlimited State endorsement or guaranty, and the big thing in the mind of the bond buyers is the last. 60

The taxpayers declared that this was no political controversy with Governor Martin, but that they were interested in the development of the Everglades along sane and conservative lines, and that efforts were being made to get the Courts to pass upon the legality of the law, "because we believe its provisions to be burdensome upon the taxpayers, and unfair and unjust in their operation." 61

On July 18, 1927, a conference on "Florida Everglades Reclamation" met in Baltimore, Maryland, at the written invita-

60 P. H. Arthur, et.al., The Taxpayers' Answer to Governor Martin: An Analysis of the \$20,000,000 Bond Issue, 23
61 Ibid., 24

tion of S. Davies Warfield, president of the Seaboard Air-
line Railway, Warfield declared that he had called the confer-
ence

In the endeavor to clarify and to lay before
[Florida's] citizens and those interested in her
welfare questions that have arisen in connection
with that great territory within her borders known
as the Everglades the successful reclamation of
which by drainage means so much to her future. . . .62

Warfield opened the conference with the remark that the Bal-
timore meeting grew out of a conversation between the rail-
road executive and George E. Merrick, prominent Miami citi-
zen and developer of Coral Gables, in New York the preceding
month in which the Floridian had expressed misconceptions of
the purpose of those who had assisted in the financing of the
Everglades reclamation undertaking. The Maryland meeting was
held at Merrick's suggestion, although he was absent on account
of business pressures.
63

Warfield deplored statements in the press that the Sea-
board had gotten various rights of way along canal banks in

62 1927 Baltimore Everglades Conference, 1. The list of
attendants at the conference included Governor Martin, B. G.
Dahlberg; Herman Dann, F. E. Bryant, F. C. Elliot, S. Davies
Warfield, and thirty-eight other representatives of banks,
legal firms, construction companies, land corporations, manu-
facturers, wholesalers, merchants, and several state senators
and one congressman.

63 Ibid., 6. Warfield made it quite clear that if the
Seaboard had believed the people on the lower east and west
coasts of Florida were content to rely solely on the tourist
business and existing conditions his railroad would not have
extended its lines below West Palm Beach or to Ft. Myers and
Naples. "Chief Drainage Engineer Elliot, before the Seaboard
extension from Coleman to West Palm Beach was constructed,
discussed Everglades reclamation with me and had suggested that
the Seaboard should look into the desirability of running
tributary lines into the Everglades lands." Ibid., 7.

the Everglades for help in financing the bonds of the area and Merrick's information that the Seaboard official had⁶⁴ actually drawn up Martin's 1927 bond bill. The rail-roader went on to tell how he had introduced Martin to representatives of Dillon, Read, and Company so that Florida might benefit by the experience of the carrier in distributing bonds to investors, rather than lower the price by placing them on the market in blocks. After posing questions of methods of financing, taxation, drainage plans, and organization, Warfield asked for a roundtable discussion on

Whether it is desired to continue the policy of carrying out the contract which was made when the Everglades lands were taken over from the national government by the State, that they were to be drained or whether that contract is to be repudiated.⁶⁵

The conference was in session for two days during which time F. C. Elliot, Frank B. Shutts, B. G. Dahlberg, John W. Martin, Herman Dann, O. A. Brown, F. E. Bryant, and several others discussed at length various phases of the Everglades program. Dann was the only member of the group to oppose the Martin plan; he voiced the same views he had given in his St. Petersburg speech, especially emphasizing the obligation as-⁶⁶sumed by the state under the 1927 law.

⁶⁴ 1927 Baltimore Everglades Conference, S. Warfield said he had never seen the bill and knew nothing of it until it was a law.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 15
⁶⁶ Ibid., 51-52; 63-67. Dann briefed the "bulwarks" provided the new bondholders as (1) drainage tax, (2) ad valorem tax, (3) funds of the I.I. Board through delinquent tax sales, and (4) legislative appropriations of funds to pay off the bonds.

Walter F. Lineberger, a member of the United States House of Representatives from California, was present at the conference and broached the subject of federal aid to Florida on the problem of flood control. As a member of the Rivers and Harbors Committee, Lineberger spoke with some authority when he said that the house chairmen of the rivers and harbors committee, the reclamation committee, and the chief of the army engineering corps were all sympathetic to the national government's contemplated study of the peninsula's flood control problems.⁶⁷

The remarks made by H. C. Sebring, a real estate operator of Sebring, Florida, shed light on one aspect of the Everglades reclamation program. Sebring stated that he would like two things to come out of the conference: (1) a change in the sentiment of the Florida press on the problem; (2) a diminution of sectionalism within the state. Sebring denied the accusation of a Florida newspaper that Martin had bargained with Warfield on the bond-canal bank deal. "We all know that a newspaper very rarely retracts. . . there ought to be something come out of this meeting to make the paper making any such statement retract it."⁶⁸ On the second point, Sebring voiced

⁶⁷ 1927 Baltimore Everglades Conference, 76-78.
⁶⁸ Ibid., 86-87.

the opinion that strife between the northern and southern sections of the state since 1910 might be fatal to the commonwealth if continued, and that the drainage of the Everglades should be made a state obligation for the benefit of the whole peninsula.

The conference adopted seven resolutions approving the Martin plan and pledging full support to a renewed attack on the problems of drainage, reclamation, and settlement of the Everglades.⁶⁹ L. W. Jennings, state senator from Okeechobee City, in the closing address, emphasized the necessity of harmonizing the discordant elements of the state behind the drainage program. Jennings felt that it was unfortunate that George E. Merrick, Glenn H. Curtiss, and James H. Bright, Dade County residents and opponents of the Martin plan, could not have been present. He praised Dann for his courageous stand.⁷⁰

During the late summer and fall of 1927 suits were instituted in the courts of Florida to restrain the Board of Commissioners of the Drainage District from carrying through the bond delivery, and litigation continued into 1928.

⁶⁹ 1927 Baltimore Everglades Conference, 91-97.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 101-104. Howard Sharp wrote that the Dann-Martin debate on the Everglades found Dann on top, that F. C. Elliot was still the "drainage boss," and that the Warfield-Martin bond deal was a good thing for those in on it since the governor was for the "big fellow." Everglades News, July 22, 1927.

3. The Dayton Morgan Report

Lying north and west of Miami in Dade County, along both banks of the Miami Canal, the Dade Drainage District formed one of the sub-districts of the Everglades group. In the late summer of 1927 the supervisors of this sub-district secured the services of Arthur E. Morgan to advise them on the problem of their bailiwick.⁷¹ Morgan, president of the Dayton Morgan Engineering Company, it will be remembered, had had a prominent part in the Moss Committee Hearings on the Everglades in 1912 when he had taken the J. O. Wright report apart and disclosed its errors.

In the years between 1912 and 1927, Morgan had earned an excellent reputation in the field of hydraulic engineering and flood control in the Miami-Ohio Conservancy District, the Pueblo-Colorado flood control project, the Rio Grande Valley project, as consulting engineer on the Boulder Dam design, and as a vice-president of the American Society of Civil Engineers.⁷²

The Dayton Morgan Company sent its report, with a letter of transmittal, to the Sub-district Board on October 3, 1927, with the statement that

⁷¹ Dayton Morgan Engineering Company, Report to Board of Supervisors of Dade Drainage District on Reclamation of the Everglades, 3. Hereinafter cited as Dayton Morgan Report.

⁷² Everglades News, November 4, 1927.

In advising your board on the problems of the Dade Drainage District it is necessary to consider the plans and policies of the Everglades Drainage District, because success for the Dade District is dependent, in a large measure, upon the adoption of an intelligent and adequate policy for the Everglades as a whole. 73.

Morgan recognized and set down four fundamental conditions upon which the success of the Everglades scheme of reclamation depended. They were as follows: (1) modern, well designed legislation; (2) thorough and effective engineering design; (3) adequate financing; and (4) the consideration of the Everglades as a practical problem of reclamation and development rather than as a matter of politics. 74

If other conditions are met, satisfactory financing will follow, almost as a matter of course. Investment money is more abundant in America than ever before, and is eagerly hunting for sound investment opportunities. If money is hard to secure, or if unusual terms must be offered, it is almost conclusive evidence that the development is unsound, or that its management is bad. 75.

The hydraulics engineer prefaced his discussion by noting that any reclamation plan must be based on sound legislation. To him, the laws of the Everglades Drainage District were ". . . about the most primitive, unfair, and inadequate of all the reclamation laws now in use in America." 76 Morgan drew his readers' attention to the skill of drafting statutes for drainage in Florida to escape being held unconstitutional, a fact which did not mean that the legislation would be suitable.

73 Dayton Morgan Report, 3
 74 Ibid., 3
 75 Ibid., 3
 76 Ibid., 4

The economy of assessments apportioned against the lands of the district, according to this consultant, were

. . . an inequitable, antiquated system arbitrarily fixed by the Legislature. . . the failure of the Everglades project, partly because of poor laws, almost entirely lacking in sound, effective policies has not been accidental or necessary; but a natural and inevitable outcome of bad laws and bad policies. 77

As a specific example, Morgan observed that while the Everglades Engineering Board of Review was at work in the spring of 1927, the legislature was laying assessments on the area west of the Miami Canal, which the board proceeded to lay off as swamp and marginal land for indefinite abandonment. Thus, such an area, cut off from any chance of improvements, would have borne drainage taxes throughout the life of the bonds.
78

Lack of a definite plan of improvement, unsound distribution and inadequate estimates of the costs, and the policy of the drainage of large areas before needed were, according to Morgan, the primary defects of the Everglades Drainage District laws and policies. Morgan believed that the failure to adopt an adequate and authoritative plan with proper and equitable assessments was the cause of much of the continued unsuccessfulness of the Everglades project. The great illusion

77 Dayton Morgan Report, 5. "Unless laws and policies are improved, the borrowing of further large sums will only delay and make more difficult the ultimate reclamation. . . ."

78 Ibid., 6.

of low costs for the necessary works in the district was broken wide open by the Dayton Morgan Report. Even the estimates of the 1927 Board of Review of \$26,000,000 for the area east and north of the Miami Canal, the Chief Drainage Engineer's estimate of \$26,000,000 more for the lands west of the Miami Canal plus the \$15,000,000 expended by 1927 would not provide complete reclamation, only main outlets.

Complete reclamation will cost \$100,000,000 or more. Throughout the whole history of the Everglades project, reclamation has been promised at a cost impossibly small. The report of Mead, Metcalf and Hazen in 1912, was a straight forward attempt to look the facts in the face, but it was largely neutralized by the report of Randolph, Leighton and Ferkins in 1913. 79

In commenting on the Randolph Plan, Morgan wrote that the commission erred in its conclusions that drainage could be had at a small cost per acre, in its figures for navigation and power development, in the size of a control canal for Lake Okeechobee, and in the recommendation of the expeditious construction of additional long diagonal canals. Furthermore, Randolph and his associates were largely silent on the vitally important issues of economic, financial, and administrative policies upon which the success of the Everglades Drainage District depended.

If, therefore, the Randolph report has constituted the main guide and plan of the Everglades Drainage District, we are forced to the opinion that its guidance has been inadequate, unsound and inefficient. 80

79 Dayton Morgan Report, 7.

80 Ibid., 9.

The Dayton Morgan engineers examined the report of the 1927 Everglades Engineering Board of Review and discovered that this report likewise made no mention, worthy of the name, of legal machinery, organization, or engineering management of or for the South Florida district. "If such a board of review fails to advise on these matters of fundamental importance, then how shall the District obtain such counsel?"⁸¹ Morgan singled out the instructions given to the 1927 board and reported that he had questioned the personnel of the Board of Review as to why they had not entered into and advised on matters of policy. Their reply was that Governor John W. Martin confined them to engineering matters.

He said he considered engineers incompetent to pass on matters of policy. They should confine their attention to the surveys, he said, and he would determine policies. The report of the Engineering Board of Review seems to confirm the Governor's estimate of their status. 82

To the Ohio engineer this was practical heresy.

A thorough consideration of the economic features must necessarily have great effect on the design of engineering features, thus in failing to face the main controlling issues the Engineering Board of Review has failed to lift the project from the tangle of legislative, financial, administrative, and engineering difficulties which have long impeded its progress. 83

81 Dayton Morgan Report, 10.

82 Ibid.; 12.

83 Ibid., Morgan was very pointed in his comparison of the statement of the 1927 board of review which, with due caution to unavoidable uncertainties, found nothing to indicate that the money expended for Everglades construction had been spent otherwise than economically. "This seems to contradict their own recommendation for the practical abandonment of the long diagonal canals constructed by the district. . . ." Ibid., 14.

Both the 1913 and 1927 engineering reports, especially the latter, suggested progressive drainage as the best plan, but Morgan observed that ". . . at the same time [they were] recommending a system of canals for millions of acres to be constructed immediately at the expense of the entire district."⁸⁴ There were, according to the consultant of the Dade District, many excellent features in the 1927 report that should not be minimized because it represented faithful study of engineering data and was a very great improvement over the one of 1913.

The Dayton Morgan report closed with suggestions for a sound and effective Everglades drainage plan. Among them were the following: divorce from the state administration, actual home rule for the district, public review of plans, thorough study of economic and agricultural as well as engineering problems, deeding of the state lands in the district to the new district upon its creation, immediate reclamation by the sub-districts under supervision of the general district, and the⁸⁵ maintenance of a general experiment and research station.

⁸⁴ Dayton Morgan Report, 15. "The similarity in method of treating the Everglades problems in the report of the Engineering Board of Review and that of the engineering commission of 1913 may be due in part to the fact that one of the engineers was a member of both boards."

⁸⁵ Ibid., 19-21. Morgan laid heavy stress on the ". . . main function of the sub-districts and local units [which] should be the actual reclamation and development of the lands of the Everglades. This . . . will require diking and pumping as well as the construction of canals, and can best be accomplished by organizing the work in relatively small units, making it possible to get complete reclamation on limited areas without delay, so these areas will be able to bear the cost of financing the work." Ibid., 21

At some time the Everglades Drainage District will have to recognize and liquidate past mismanagement, and begin over again. We believe it is better to do that now than when another ten or twenty million dollars has been committed. . . .

The Everglades can and should be reclaimed. At a recent informal conference at Baltimore much discussion was had as to whether the reclamation of the Everglades should be abandoned or continued. That is beside the point. . . . The present Everglades Drainage District may cease to exist, yet the reclamation of the Everglades may go on. Present agricultural operations in the district clearly demonstrate the desirability of reclamation. The character of the soil and climate afford an attractive prospect, and some owners of land will continue to develop their holdings as best they can under any conditions that may prevail. 86

With well worked-out administrative, economic, financial, and engineering policies the Everglades could reach a high state of development and become one of the chief resources of the state. The technical difficulties were great, concluded Morgan, and "unless the whole project is directed by a quality of management and statesmanship that is not yet in evidence, the troubles of the Everglades have only just begun."⁸⁷

Shortly after Aurthur E. Morgan transmitted his company's report to the Board of Supervisors of the Dade Drainage District, Howard Sharp wrote a long editorial on the twenty-four page pamphlet. Sharp declared that the members of the 1927 legislature might disregard the Morgan analysis of the

86 Dayton Morgan Report, 22-23

87 Ibid., 24.

Everglades, but that Morgan's reputation throughout the United States insured a nation-wide audience for the critical light which had been brought to bear on the morass south of Lake Okeechobee.

Mr. Morgan's high integrity, coupled with his exceptional ability and rugged frankness in setting forth his findings without fear or favor, makes his services much sought after by those desiring to learn the plain, unvarnished truth about their reclamation projects. 88

In September, 1927, a month before the release of the Morgan Report, the Dade Muck Land Company brought suit against the Board of Commissioners of the Everglades Drainage District to enjoin the sale of the Martin bonds issued under the authority of the 1927 law. ⁸⁹ The state circuit court held that the powers granted the Drainage Commissioners to sell drainage bonds and to levy an ad valorem tax on all the real property in the district constituted a valid exercise of the legislative power, and that the statute in question was in accord with the purpose of the grant by Congress of the swamp and overflowed lands to the state. ⁹⁰ In December of the same year the Drainage Commissioners lost their case on the 1927 bond and tax law in a suit brought by the M. B. Carris

88 Everglades News, November 4, 1927. "Bonds were supposedly sold for the improvement, but the bond holders insisted that the purchase be contingent on my approval. I considered the project to be without engineering merit and did not give my approval. The bonds were never sold." Letter of Arthur E. Morgan to the author, March 9, 1946.

89 Everglades News, September 2, 1927.

90 95 Florida 538; see also Southern Digest, 1940, 150.

Properties before Judge E. C. Lane in the state circuit court at Quincy, Florida, but the case was appealed to the state Supreme Court where the decision of the lower court was re-⁹¹versed in May, 1928.

With the upholding of the 1927 bond law by the Florida Supreme Court, the Drainage Commissioners ordered their secretary to proceed with the sale of the first bonds on June 1, 1928, but two weeks later Spitzer, Rorick, and Company began suit in the United States District Court at Pensacola on the grounds that the new bond issue violated the 1927 law and prejudiced the rights of holders of the old drainage bonds.⁹² During the first week of July, 1928, the federal court at Pensacola issued an injunction which restrained the Drainage Board from selling any more bonds. The court held that the new bonds were an impairment of the obligation of the old bond contracts.⁹³ Howard Sharp, the Canal Point editor, added the benediction to the fight over the bonds when he wrote: "The Everglades is benefitted, not hurt, by the failure of

⁹¹ Everglades News; December 23, 1927, February 17, 1928; E. D. D. "Minutes," VII, May 31, 1928; The appeal of M. B. Garris. et. al. versus John W. Martin, et. al. was dismissed on Per Curiam for lack of jurisdiction on the ground that the decree sought to be reviewed was not a final one. 49 Florida Supreme Court 25.

⁹² Everglades News, June 15, 1928. On July 3, 1928, Nathan Mayo, Commissioner of Agriculture and member of the Drainage Board refused to place his signature on any bonds pending the outcome of the litigation in the federal court. E. D. D. "Minutes", July 5, 1928.

⁹³ E. D. D. "Minutes," VII, July 10, 1928.

94

Martin's bond deal."

The major objection of the Everglades landowners to the bond issue had been the ad valorem tax feature. In the previous January the Drainage Board had met in a session at West Palm Beach to hear protests against valuations and tax levies under the provision of the 1927 law. The majority of the complaints were against the levy of a one-fifth mill ad valorem tax, and the protestants included the Florida East Coast Railway, City of Coral Gables, Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, Model Land Company, and a number of others.

Drainage operations had been suspended in June of 1927, and on July 7, 1928, the Trustee-Commissioners meeting in joint session decided that because of the inability of the Drainage Board to secure further funds and the small amount of land transactions of the Trustees they would cut even clerical help to a minimum. F. C. Elliot was made Secretary to the Trustees as well as Chief Drainage Engineer for the Drainage Board. On December 11, 1928, Elliot called the attention of the Drainage Board to the fact that interest was due on drainage bonds

94 Everglades News, July 20, 1928.

95 E. D. D. "Minutes," VII, January 12, 1928. A. E. Morgan called this 1/5 mill ad valorem tax "An illustration of the wasteful and inefficient methods used" in the district. "The drainage board maintains that the collection is necessary in order to establish the principle that such ad valorem tax can be collected if necessary to protect the bond issue." Dayton Morgan Report, 5.

96 I. I. B. "Minutes," XVII, 275-276; see also E. D. D. "Minutes," VII, July 3, 1928.

to the amount of \$275,142; that the Board had funds on hand of \$273,897; and that the Drainage Board owed the Trustees of the Improvement Fund \$277,000. The tax certificates struck off to the Trustees by the Commissioners, however amounted to \$546,304. On motion the Board of Drainage Commissioners drew a warrant on the Improvement Trustees for \$200,000, and the remaining sum owed by the Commissioners to the Trustees was placed in one note.⁹⁷ This transaction graphically depicts the condition of the finances of both Boards and the methods used to settle their mutual debts.

97 E.D.D. "Minutes," VI, December 11, 1928.