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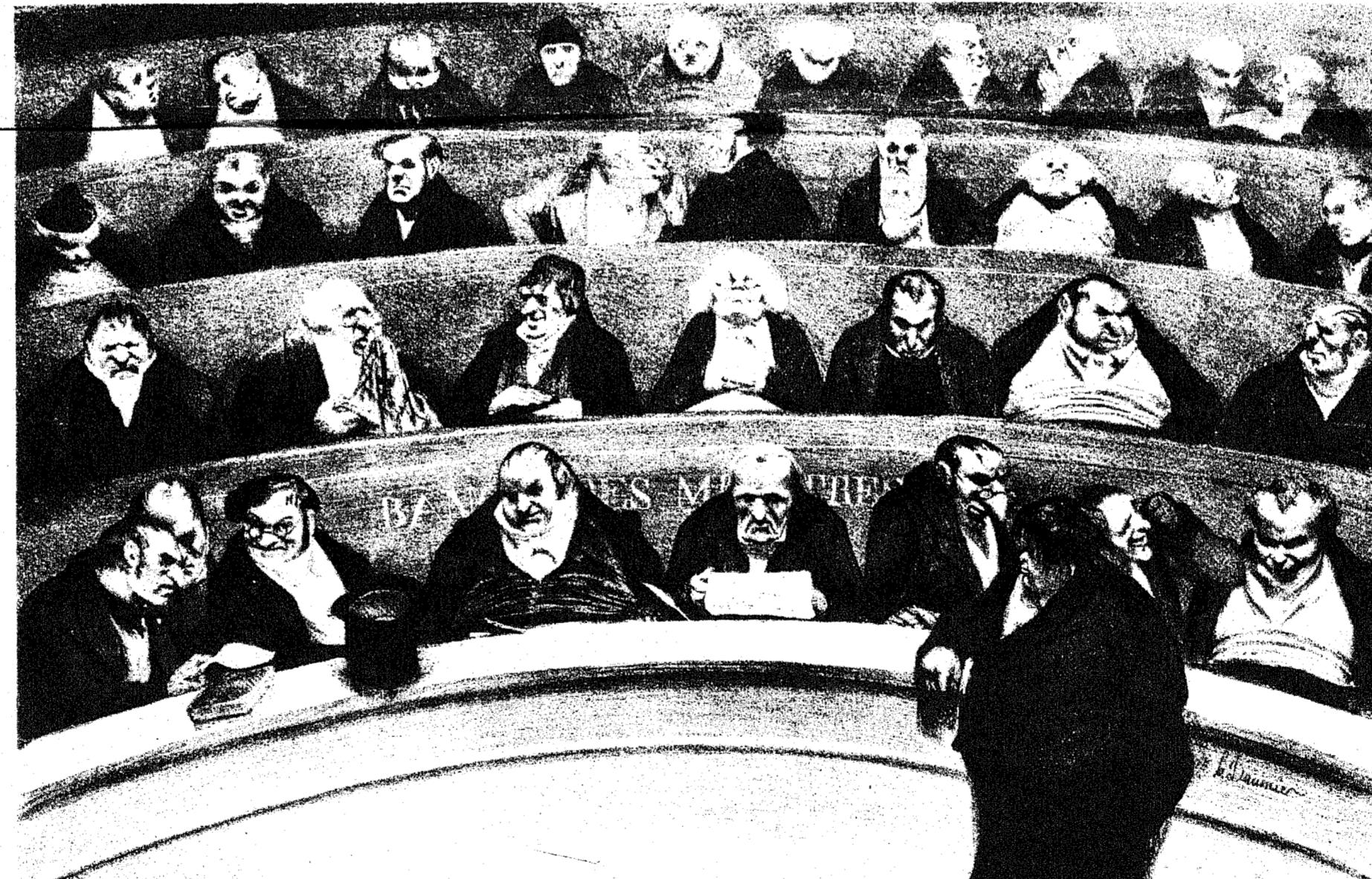
"The highest point in Key West"

Vol. 1, No. 9

Key West, Florida

October, 1971

Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Key West Politics*



Honore Daumier

THE LEGISLATIVE BODY. 1834. Lithograph

*But Were Afraid
to Ask.

Election Primer

Voters and Taxes, Key West, 1838

In 1838, William Ade Whitehead (you remember him; we reprinted his *Notices of Key West, 1835* in our August issue) was Mayor of Key West. Though only 28, Whitehead possessed an impressive record for public service to the young island city as any man in Key West. He produced the first survey of the town in 1829, and in that year was appointed Collector of Customs, a position he held until 1838. He served on the first Town Council after Key West was incorporated in 1828; he was Chief of the Fire Department, Chief of the Law and Order Society, and head of the school committee.

As Mayor in 1838, however, Mr. Whitehead was not exactly receiving the Kiwanis Distinguished Service Award. On the contrary, Whitehead in 1838 was involved in a heated controversy over the right of the city to tax its merchants. Several of the prominent merchants - Weaver, Baldwin (employers of the young William Curry at \$1/week), Sawyer and Fontaine had written a letter to their mayor explaining that they refused to pay the city's occupational tax. They had paid the tax the year before when it was first levied, and they were under the impression that having paid the tax initially, they would never have to pay again. If the city could levy the tax every year, what's to keep the city council from setting up a daily tax? Besides, several of the merchants hadn't even paid last year's tax; why should the city set up a new one.

Mr. Whitehead was a man of reason, and he tried to persuade the businessmen that the city was empowered to collect an occupational tax each year, but only once annually. Whitehead requested a town meeting for all those interested in the question of the occupational tax. The businessmen refused even to call this meeting, and Whitehead called a special election, announcing that he would resign if the townspeople did not support his stand on the need for a yearly occupational tax. He cited the bridge over Simonton Street and the filling in of Front Street as needed civic improvements that were paid for by the previous tax.

But the Key West of 1838 wasn't much interested in civic improvements or whatever. To ridicule the sincere and reasonable Whitehead, the "downtown" interests put forth one Tomaso Sachetti as their candidate for Mayor. Sachetti was an infamous gray shop owner and was famous for the blank space between his ears.

You can guess the rest: Sachetti won in a landslide, and Mr. Whitehead, as announced, resigned his post as Mayor of Key West. He left the island shortly thereafter, never to return. Jefferson B. Browne, in his *Key West, The Old and the New*, commented:

Key West thus lost one of its foremost citizens, a victim to the spirit-still too prevalent - which seeks to belittle and injure the man who dares oppose public opinion, or who bravely maintains his position against popular clamor.

Voters and Taxes Key West, 1971

There's no question about it; the main issue of this campaign should be taxes. But it won't be. As our history shows us, Key West has ingenious ways of neglecting its civic responsibilities, and creating party issues which cloud the island's air like City Electric's smokestacks. Already Sonny McCay, candidate for mayor, is being pressured to reinstate former Police Chief Jimmy James.

Key West politics: not issues, but personalities.

And the issue is bankruptcy. The City of Key West incurred a deficit of \$287,000 in fiscal 1971. The sewer system, which by law is obligated to remain self-sustaining through adequate sewer rates, was \$167,000 in the red. The City lost the Project Face lift monies and its credibility with the federal government dropped to a new low. Key West pays its police less than any comparable city in the state, offers its employees no pension plan, and grants no

overtime wages for its workers. City Finance Director Charles Aguero has gone on record with an estimate of total City indebtedness of half a million dollars.

And we're supposed to be a tourist town attracting vacationers from around the country to bask on our tropical beaches and stroll down quaint 19th century sea town lanes. What about our vacant lots which look like trash piles, or our beaches clogged with seaweed, or our sidewalks crumbling and caving in? It takes money to make these needed improvements.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves. We're half a million dollars in debt, remember? Commission after commission has passed the buck so that the City is in no position to talk about growth and development. The two steps backward we need to take right now are:

1. Pass a utility tax

2. Raise the sewer rate

Then maybe we can begin to go forward again.

The present commission has made no attempt to sell the voters on either of these measures. Because of favors for friends and relatives, they have presided over the badgering of Bill Kroll for six months.

As we approach our 150th year as an island city, what signs are there of civic responsibility? We see few.

Let us face the fact that this city is crumbling, like our sidewalks, out of neglect. The only responsible action is to tax ourselves.

Earlier Key Westers sent Mayor Whitehead on his way when he had the courage to ask for more taxes.

Will we do the same? Or will we listen this time?

EDITORIAL

William Huckle

A great problem of politics is that it pits one man against another rather than sharing the best abilities and ideas of both. Too often the public hears from one candidate how bad his opponent is or will be in office. And this leads to counter charges - all wasted time and the city is the big loser. Almost never will one man credit his opponent with having good ideas, programs, etc. This is totally wrong.

Perhaps part of the problem is making a fellow office seeker an opponent rather than a co-worker for the common good. Certainly the object of seeking public office should be to benefit society. Rather than people running for office against other people, it should be people running for office FOR the good of the city.

I will state candidly that I feel free to use any good ideas - and I will give credit to their originators - that I feel will benefit the city.

If, happily, we could all be co-workers for the common good, how would you, the voter, tell us apart?

Obviously, ability to do the job is a striking consideration.

Equally important, is what personal philosophy does the office seeker bring to the job. How will he incline? Toward the country club or toward Petronia Street? In short, where's he at? This is very important to the voters.

I bring no particular business skills to the city at this time. But I do have friends who are recognized for their business abilities. I profit greatly from their advice.

I am an intelligent man and can reason well.

I am not scared off from unpopular positions if I believe in them. I say what I feel to be so and manage to get along with most of my fellow citizens.

To a great degree, I am not self-seeking but see my future better served by community good rather than by personal gain.

I subscribe strongly to the thought of what can I do for my city, not what can my city do for me.

From "the little white lie" to the massive deception, this is an unusually dishonest age. I try very hard to be straight with people and there have not been many exceptions to a promise when I have given my word on something.

I'm trying to do better than I have done before.

Philosophically, I totally believe that mankind prefers good to evil.

However, I feel that we live in a society that tends to numb man's sense

of his fineness and tends to dwell on his unfitness. We are conditioned to expect the worst from people rather than their best. To be gloomy about man's future is considered wise but to feel hopeful about his future is considered naive.

This is bad enough but I feel that society is doing little or nothing to change man's state for the better - perhaps society, too, is conditioned to expect the worst from people.

I accuse society of taking too much comfort in this negative view of man and using it to justify an increasing need to bear down on him.

I accuse society of avoiding its responsibility for the betterment of its citizens thereby creating the very conditions that lead men to break laws. This vicious cycle must be broken.

Let me use the recent tragedy at Attica prison where guards and prisoners were killed as an example of what I mean.

I feel that both sides can be justified here.

The authorities basically felt that to give in to the demands of the prisoners could only create further prison revolts. Therefore, they acted in what they considered the best interest of society to stop this revolt before it led to more and uglier revolts.

The prisoners felt that they had nothing to lose and rather than spend any more time in sub-human conditions, they were willing to die.

Given the force of circumstances surrounding the authorities and the prisoners, I could foresee no alternative to what happened. Authority must be preserved and hopelessness will fight until it is dead.

Unfortunately, I see more Attica's. Why?

At the very time of the Attica tragedy, the headline of the Key West Citizen read "Housing called scandalous" and "Study says U.S. cities are worse." This study was an assessment of the progress made since the Kerner Report in 1968.

The Kerner Report warned that unless something was done to improve the cities, they would become spawners of crime and delinquency on a staggering scale. What has happened? The report reads "The rates of crime and unemployment and disease and heroin addiction are higher."

Not enough is being done.

Unless you correct what causes crime, you will have a steadily increasing rate of it. It is no more complicated than that.

O.K. Now, how would I combine what I consider my abilities and my philosophy to help make Key West a better city?

For example, knowing that I believe more in the good of man than in his non-good, how would I react to the growing crime and delinquency in the Black area?

One obvious solution is to beef up the police force. I would reject this. I don't feel that more police end crime; I feel that mainly they contain it until it grows larger.

I feel that the only way to break the cycle of more delinquency, more police, more uptightness leading to more delinquency and more police, is to remove the reasons for delinquency. Make it more desirable to be law-abiding.

Stop the policies of increased force and start policies of better times. I feel strongly that if the Community Pool area had been fixed up and running, there would not have been a problem of such scope. Just suppose that the pool area

less than its market value. The city is now negotiating a bond issue for its purchase. It will cost \$300,000, to be paid off over a ten-year period. Even after all costs for buying it - for maintenance, salaries, upkeep, depreciation, etc. the city will realize \$68,000 profit at the train's present ride rate of \$1. The city could profit around \$130,000 at a rate of \$1.25, or it could profit around \$190,000 at a cost of \$1.50 a ride. This is an unexpected bonanza for the city.

I suggest that Bill Kroll help in the search for a very able manager for this operation. A good salary should be paid someone to oversee the day-to-day running of this business.

3. Now comes what will be considered the most unpopular part of the financial program that I recommend for the city.

A 10% electric tax is necessary to help make the city run efficiently. Even with the Conch Train profits, the city cannot get out of the financial hole in which have placed it.

There are four points I would like to make about this tax before going into its benefits to the city of Key West.

One is that I would try to find a way to exempt true hardship cases from paying this tax.

The second point is that an electric tax would return sufficient income so that we would not have to tax other utilities. There does exist a law, however, that if you tax electricity, then you must tax gas. I would hope that this law could be repealed in this case.

Third, with such a tax, Key West stands to receive almost half the money, or around \$350,000, from the Navy and from users of City Electric up the Keys. These represent new sources of revenue.

Fourth, other than having the State Legislature repeal the law, an electric tax could only be imposed if the voters wished it and voted for it.

What would we expect to receive from this additional income?

I understand that we could expect around \$700,000 additional income as a result of this tax. This, along with a potential \$190,000 from the Conch Train, would give the city around \$900,000 to add to its budget of 1.7 million dollars at present. (Naples, a city of only some 10,000 people, has a budget of around 4 million dollars.)

What would this money be used for?

1. I imagine that we are one of the few cities in this country that has no pension plan for its employees. Priority, then, is given this.

2. We pay our employees poor salaries - by this, I mean all employees of the city including the police, the clerks, the laborers, etc. The police, in particular, have an enormously demanding job and must receive a fair salary. Priority then, is given for a raise in salaries for city employees.

3. Look at our beaches, our needs for community centers, our needs for storm drains, our needs for street and sidewalk repair where critically bad, our need for a boating marina, our need for drug preventative and rehabilitative programs, our need for a greatly increased recreational program, our needs for expanded clinics, etc. The need for capital improvements is enormous. There is no chance that the city would grow fat off these anticipated revenues.

How do I propose to get this message across to the public? I guess simply by asking where any other sources of income are going to come from for the running of the city. If there exists an alternative way or ways to raise this money, I would not hesitate to use them. Hopefully, one of the other candidates has found a way, but I doubt it.

How would I propose to convince the people that this money would not just go in the general revenue fund and be unwise spent?

When this tax request was put to the voters, I would ask that this money be earmarked for specific purposes, and not given as a blank check to the commission. Then, the voters would know where this money is going.

We must reach out for state and federal money that we are eligible for. After all, we have been paying for all these programs with our taxes and ought to benefit from them.

The city needs to plan much more rigorously for its future. We must analyze our needs and understand our resources. The city commission should plan a comprehensive program agenda for the coming two years.

I will be a candidate for the office of city commissioner. Group 4, lever 8-A.



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EDITORIAL MICHAEL PREWITT ART DIRECTION JERRY MILLER
EDITORIAL "DANCING BILL" HUCKEL PHOTOGRAPHY LEE BALLARD

With a little help from our friends...

Pat, Cas, Ray, Ruthie, Warren, Georgia, Becky, Bill, The Dating Game VC, Jane, Janet, Darlene, Mario, Sue, Ann, August Plinth, Slide-rule Sammy, Steve, Aunt Helen, SFC, Jr., No. 12, Peter and Susan, Heather, Donna, Kathy, Squirrel, Jean, Brenda and Dink

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How to Make the City Solvent

An Election Eve Interview with Henry Lee

Interview by Michael Prewitt



In the past year, while City deficits were mounting day by day, our City Commission seemed caught up in petty personal bickering and tiny issues which drew them away from our main problem: How to get the City out of the red. Now we come to campaign time and a fresh chance to look at some of the ways toward solvency. To do this, we could think of no one better than Henry Lee.

Mr. Lee served as a City Commissioner from 1963-67. During his two terms, the City managed to remain in the black. One reason for the City's sound financial situation was Henry Lee's adept stewardship. A Southerner from Franklin, he devised and gained acceptance for a plan to shift the timing of certain City revenues. Through a method of legitimate borrowing against guaranteed revenues which would come into the City several months later, the City was actually able to make some money by depositing the borrowed money at a higher interest rate elsewhere.

Like most real experts, Mr. Lee has a way of simplifying what has been confused and distorted. It's not a complicated matter to get the City back on its feet financially. Here's Dr. Lee's prescription for a healthy city: Step 1...

PART I: THE STATE OF THE CITY

SOLARES HILL: I want to start by discussing the financial state of the city. It's been a current theme now since last spring when Mr. Aguero and Mr. Stack started talking very frankly about the dire straits that the city was in. They said they had a deficit for fiscal year 1971, which ended August 31, of about \$287,000. I'd like you to clarify, if you would, this figure. I know that many public bodies operate under large deficits all the time. They're continually going into debt, and this is not usually a matter of distress. I wonder if you could clarify this for me.

LEE: Well, what is meant when they say that the city incurred a deficit of \$287,000 is this. This figure is simply the difference between the amount of money they took in and the amount of money that they spent. And it's serious in that, if you pay out more dollars than you take in, you're faced with a cash shortage. The only answer, to tide over the operation of the city government, is to borrow money. That's only a temporary solution because the money has to be paid back, and the borrowing itself adds another expense in the form of interest. And, with one exception, it's a situation that simply cannot continue. It has to be terminated. As I understand it, the city now has not made provision in the present budget to pay back all the loans that it received during the past fiscal year.

SOLARES HILL: Why has the city been operating in the red? Is this the result of inflation? Is this the result of mismanagement? How do we get these results?

LEE: It's a result of many things. In fairness to the City Commission, one of the major causes of this problem is the fact that the City Electric System was unable in fiscal 1971 to give them as much money as it had in past years, and as much money as they had expected in making up the City budget for 1971. Inflation is another cause. During the course of the year, everything has been going up. They hired more employees than they had anticipated.

SOLARES HILL: Now, what are the ways that the City can use to get themselves out of this hole?

LEE: Well, number one, just like a home budget or any business budget, you have to bring your expenditures in line with your receipts. There are two ways to do that; reduce your expenditures and increase your revenues.

It is absolutely essential that means of reducing expenditures be found. Even a desirable service might have to be reduced in order to accomplish this.

SOLARES HILL: Can you suggest a service that might be reduced without hurting the workings of the City too much?

LEE: Yes, but this is not an original suggestion. The City should seek a combination of the City Police Department and the County Sheriff's Department with the aim of having all of the police function, in as short a time as feasible, be conducted by the Sheriff's Department.

SOLARES HILL: Are you speaking of a consolidation of the City with the County?

LEE: This would be a partial consolidation, involving only police service. Other functions already have been consolidated such as the tax assessment function and tax collecting function. A large portion of the election function has been consolidated, and that has worked very well. I don't advocate a total consolidation all in one jump. I think it should be done in stages and only entered into after sound and well thought out plans are laid. I believe that the cost of police services to the citizens of Key West could be reduced, perhaps cut in half. But no one can give a meaningful answer until this problem is carefully studied, plans and numbers laid out on paper.

SOLARES HILL: Last spring, a citizens' special task force was set up to look into this question of City revenues and making things more efficient. Do you think that's the proper way to go to investigate these matters, or should we bring in experts from outside who are professionals in public administration to do this for us?

LEE: Well, just a few years ago, a city financial consultant was brought in. Although I don't wish to demean the efforts of the citizens' committee, I didn't see any single item that they proposed that would produce substantial revenue. This does not mean that their suggestions should not be pursued. What I'm saying is simply that the magnitude is not such as to constitute a major or satisfying result. But, I think that the avenues that are open to the City to gain major additional revenues are known. For example, the financial consultant, that I spoke of, recommended a 10% utility tax. A referendum would be necessary.

SOLARES HILL: So we already know that this might be a possible thing. What you're suggesting is that the City have someone set out very rigorously the nuts and bolts procedures for a consolidation of the Police and County Sheriff's Departments.

LEE: Exactly! The timing, the phase-out of the City's responsibility, the phase-in of the Sheriff's added responsibility. What will be the remainder participation by the City, if any? The financial arrangements? All these matters must be programmed for a smooth transition.

SOLARES HILL: We've spoken of reducing our expenditures. Let's talk about the other side, which is increasing our revenues. You just mentioned briefly a utility tax. Why don't we discuss that first?

LEE: Well, some years ago, the City brought in a financial consultant. After

study, he recommended that a utility tax be imposed. Many other people have recognized the need for a utility tax, even though it's very distasteful. I believe that this is far and away the source that can provide the greatest increase in revenues. It is a fair form of tax.

SOLARES HILL: Now, when you say utilities tax, which utilities are you referring to?

LEE: Well, electricity and gas. I include gas because there is a law that requires that if a tax be imposed on one utility, it must also be imposed on any competing utilities, and electricity and gas are competitors.

SOLARES HILL: Now, there's been talk of this utility tax being 10%. Would you go into the amount of revenue that might accrue from a 10% increase in utility rates.

LEE: I have no figures on other utility sales, but with respect to electric sales, a 10% tax would bring in approximately \$700,000 per year, at present rates.

SOLARES HILL: Why do you confine the proposed tax to electricity and gas rather than a general utility tax?

LEE: Well, as I pointed out, under present law, gas must be taxed if electricity is. I would otherwise have omitted gas.

It may be that a legislative change can be effected to enable omission of gas sales from the tax, and I think that would be desirable. This would leave electricity as the only utility subject to the tax.

SOLARES HILL: Why is it desirable for the tax to be confined to electricity?

LEE: For a very important reason that is not generally understood. A couple of years ago, I was well informed on the finances of the City Electric System. At that time, approximately 40% of City Electric sales were to the military and another 10% to customers outside the City. There are also sales to other customers who pay no city or county property taxes, though these latter are not very large in total. Under those conditions, it could safely be said that one-half of a tax on electricity would be paid by customers of City Electric, none of whom pay City property taxes and most of whom pay no property taxes to the County. In other words, half of that tax revenue would be derived from new tax sources. We're still paying a 10% tax, but we're getting the equivalent benefits of having a 20% tax. In plainer words, we've shifted some of the tax burden onto the military and people up the Keys.

There is plenty of precedent for this tax. Jacksonville, Orlando and many other cities have a utility tax, used to gain municipal revenue. For these cities, the tax has applied to all utility users whether they live within the city limits or not.

I suspect that the military portion of City Electric sales has decreased and that the Keys portion has gone up a little with the result that now it is probable that not quite half of the tax on electricity would come from the sources outlined.

This is not true of taxes on other utilities, and that is why I think it desirable to confine the tax to electricity.

Some people up the Keys might think this is unfair to them. Let me point out that they would be paying exactly the same for electricity as Key West residents. It is, of course, true that they would not participate in the benefits of the tax. However, City Electric cannot deliver electricity to customers at distances of 5 to 30 miles from Key West at the same cost as to residents of the City. The one possibility is to impose an occupational license on

SOLARES HILL: Would you suggest any exceptions to the tax?

LEE: Yes, but only one: certain low-income families. Any action that affects thousands of people will create a hardship for some, and that is true of an electric tax. Electricity is a necessity and humanitarian considerations require a means be found to avoid imposing a hardship, in the form of a tax on a necessity, upon those who truly cannot afford it.

My suggestion on this point is that up to say 3% of the tax yield be set aside for a hardship relief fund. I pick 3% because that would amount to about \$20,000 per year which would take care of the tax upon 1000 families having electric bills of \$200 per year (\$17.00 per month). I would seek to have this relief fund handled privately by the Welfare agencies and set up stringent rules so they could administer it without political interference. I do not claim that 3% is a proper figure. The matter would require study.

SOLARES HILL: What are the alternatives? Now let's refer again to this deficit of \$287,000: What if the City and if the voters continually pass the buck, refuse to confront this issue. What will be the consequences of not passing any kind of utility tax or finding any other form of increasing revenues?

LEE: Well, the City is pretty much in the same position that you and I are when it comes to borrowing. If we borrow money and don't pay it back promptly, we become poor credit risks, and nobody wants to lend us money. And pretty obviously, the end result of this deficit spending by the City is that nobody will want to loan them any money. This means they'll run out of cash. They won't be able to meet their payrolls. They won't be able to pay their bills. What happens then, I don't know. There are laws with respect to municipal bankruptcy.

SOLARES HILL: Are there any other forms of increasing revenues besides the utility tax?

LEE: We're speaking of major ones. All of them, all of the possibilities are small, relative to a utility tax. The City is authorized to impose a resort tax. It's a shame to have to do this in a community where we're trying to promote tourism. I would hope that we don't have to go to this. However, it might become necessary. The Conch Train offers a fine possibility as a revenue producer for the City. Other things such as review and occupational licenses raising can be done. This, however, is small. All other things that come to my mind now are minor.

SOLARES HILL: Let me suggest something. In looking at the economic base of this community, we have a very large industry here that doesn't pay very much tax. This is marine industries: the shrimp industry, the lobster industry. Granted these people are in a very unique profession where their base of operation is this city, but their actual wealth comes from the sea. I don't believe at this time there's any very strong commercial industrial tax on their productivity. Could this be instituted in any way just as an IBM plant in Moline, Illinois, has to pay a certain tax because it's an industry. Are we taxing this industry at this time, and if we aren't, is there a way of setting up a tax?

LEE: Well, in my view, the management certainly should not be elected. Two suggestions have been made: First, that the Old Island Restoration Foundation operate the Conch Train, but the City Attorney has ruled that out. The other is that a separate board be established. The latter suggestion stated that the board should be composed of the presidents of the three banks. I like the second one, and I think that if these men are willing to undertake it, that this would be as good an answer as we could find.

SOLARES HILL: Is this within the City's charter to appoint a group of citizens like this?

LEE: That's a question a lawyer has to answer. I understand that the City's Attorney

shrimp boats; charter boats pay an occupational license now.

SOLARES HILL: The shrimp boats at this point do not pay an occupational license?

LEE: No. Some years ago, I rewrote the occupational license ordinance, and in doing this, I called for an occupational license tax on shrimp boats. Very quickly I got a phone call from a very knowledgeable gentleman, and he pointed out to me that if the City imposed an occupational license tax for the shrimp boats, they'd all move out to Stock Island, so I removed it.

SOLARES HILL: All right, let's pursue this one step further, which is if you consolidate the occupational tax and then redistribute it to the City or to the County so that even if these shrimp boats did move to Stock Island, they would still fall under the jurisdiction of Monroe County, and under a consolidated plan, this money would still be able to be collected and used in the City.

LEE: Well, even without consolidation, it might be possible for the County on their own to impose an occupational license tax on shrimp boats, and other commercial fishing boats.

SOLARES HILL: And then be redistributed as per each tax district; let's say Key West might be a tax district.

LEE: Right. An arrangement might be worked out where the City could share in this.

SOLARES HILL: Let's talk about the Conch Train then. Could you summarize just briefly the situation as it stands now.

LEE: Mr. Kroll has offered to sell the Conch Train to the City for \$300,000. This is an extremely generous offer on the part of Mr. Kroll. The Conch Train is worth far in excess of the \$300,000 he has asked for it. If properly managed, it can produce substantial revenue for the City. This, of course, involves a fare increase. I've seen figures in the paper as high as \$250,000 per year return to the City. I think that's putting it a little high. The City, of course, would not have to pay income taxes on the Train profit. An estimate of \$200,000 a year profits from the Conch Train is reasonable, I believe, assuming a fare of \$1.50. The clue to this is the way in which the Conch Train is managed. Obviously, it is an enterprise with very outstanding management, and for it to continue to yield as it has in the past, and to be as popular as it has been in the past, it's necessary that it have the same quality of management. And, I think the suggestions that a separate body be established to operate the Conch Train are fine. I think it essential that the Conch Train be divorced from politics.

SOLARES HILL: Just how can we do this?

LEE: Well, in my view, the management certainly should not be elected. Two suggestions have been made: First, that the Old Island Restoration Foundation operate the Conch Train, but the City Attorney has ruled that out. The other is that a separate board be established. The latter suggestion stated that the board should be composed of the presidents of the three banks. I like the second one, and I think that if these men are willing to undertake it, that this would be as good an answer as we could find.

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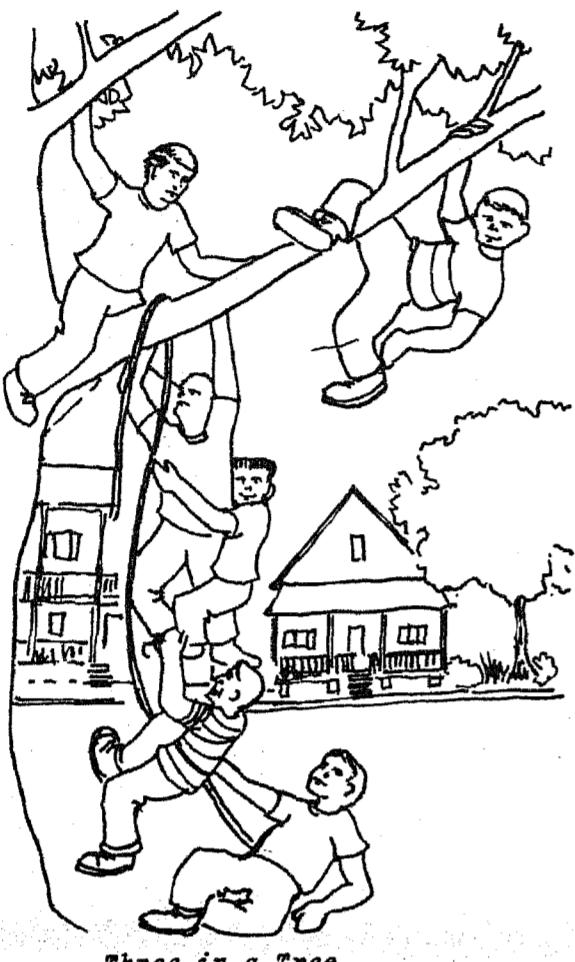
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The Conch Book of Games, According to Daniels



Drawings by Benjamin Curry Bruce

Ray Daniels Still at Play



Three in a Tree

Taken as a group, the guys I palled around with when I was young, were average youngsters of Key West. Often, when I tell people stories of the games we played and related incidents, I feel they tend either not to believe me or are turned off by the roughness in them.

In 1952, there were very few organized sports; in fact only after my childhood did I see any major interest amongst kids in organized sports.

I am sure they existed but were, as a rule, unappealing to our group. Some of the guys went in for Little League, etc. But, mostly, it was sandlot baseball in Harris School grounds, now all but closed to kids. The lot where the library now is was also a favorite spot; now children cannot even run through the garden. Ever wonder where a generation gap comes from? Finally came the park, Bayview Park. The only problem here was, this always turned into a battle royale with the kids from that side of town.

I give to you the most cherished memories of a great childhood, the games we once played.

FENCE TOP OR TREE TOP TAG:

These tag games were played just as an ordinary game of tag is except we played in trees and on fences. If we felt daring we would play touch tag in the trees. Often we would tie ropes from one tree to another so as to expand the scope of the games.

In playing this game I was forever falling to the ground. I learned not to play it in Spanish lime trees as you can break branches easily. One day I was "it" and was after a little guy about one-half my size. We were in an extremely high Spanish lime tree when a branch broke and down I went. I caught on to another branch and it broke, another and another, then a dead fall of 25 feet and an earth shaking crash. It took me three weeks to get enough nerve to climb that tree again, and then only to get Spanish limes.

FIGHTING TOPS:

Everyone remembers the good old top spinning games, but remember there were 'tops, boys' tops and fighting tops.

Girls' tops were red or blue, kind of small and had a round peg for a spinning point.

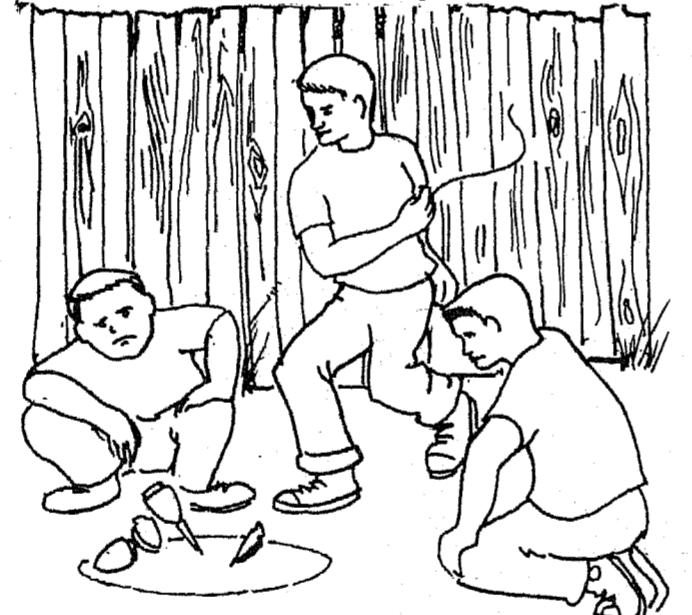
Boys' tops were red, dark blue, green, yellow, white and orange, often with another color stripe and had small points for spinning.

Then there were fighting tops, all scuffed, barked nicked and usually faded so badly you could say they were all brown, no matter what color they were once. The point was a copper spike from the telephone poles, or a wood drill bit which had been hacksawed with the square part that fits into the chuck filed to a razor point. The bit was then inserted into the top. Failing these you got a 16 penny nail and made do. My best fighter had a 3-1/2" spike ground out of steel from a square steel rod with a vicious point and sharp edges.

Having the top was just part of it; you had to know how to peg it so you could place it like a pile driver right into the heart of your enemy's top.

First we would draw a circle about 18 inches across; then we would spin our tops in this circle. The boy whose top spun the longest would have first throw, then the next longest and so on. When you were through spinning you would place your tops in the ring while the first thrower took aim and pegged.

I lost several tops until I learned how to spin a top a long time. (The secret is



Fighting Tops

in the winding and the kind of string you used.)

You see, the first thrower, if he were good, would split a top and get to shoot again. If the thrower hit tops and knocked them out of the circle, he still shot. Only when he missed splitting a top or knocking it out of the circle did he have to place his top in the circle. You could put an old top in instead of a pegger.

We were sports about this game and only played putting the peggers in the ring for a feud or championship. Alas, I lost many a pegger.

If you shot for peggers, then you lost your peg to whomever split your top. I never could get a pegger to spin long, - something about body English and follow-through.

CORKBALL OR STICKBALL:

Take a broom handle and saw off the broom end. This is used as a bat. The ball was usually a large cork; often we covered the cork with plastic tape so we could use it longer. Sometimes a tennis ball was used. In corkball, two to four

guys would play, one batting, another catching, and the others fielding. Any hit beyond the pitcher that hit the ground was a 1 base; any hit beyond a certain spot was a two base, and beyond yet another area was a home run.

The rules were similar to baseball, except the batter never ran the bases. We had pitchers, using corks, who would twist you in knots swinging at their weird sliding curves, fast pitch and more. I was always a slow swinger and often hit a pitch by luck. Some I didn't even see, not even with my glasses on.

KILL THE RUNNER, OR MASSACRE

Gather all the rags you can find and make a gigantic ball. Use rope and fishing line to tie it together.

Form two teams; make goal lines and out-of-bounds; then prepare yourself for fun.

The object of this game is like soccer, to move the ball to the enemy's goal, scoring one point. Simple, huh?

Just remember the guy running the ball can be tackled, tripped or punched to get the ball away.

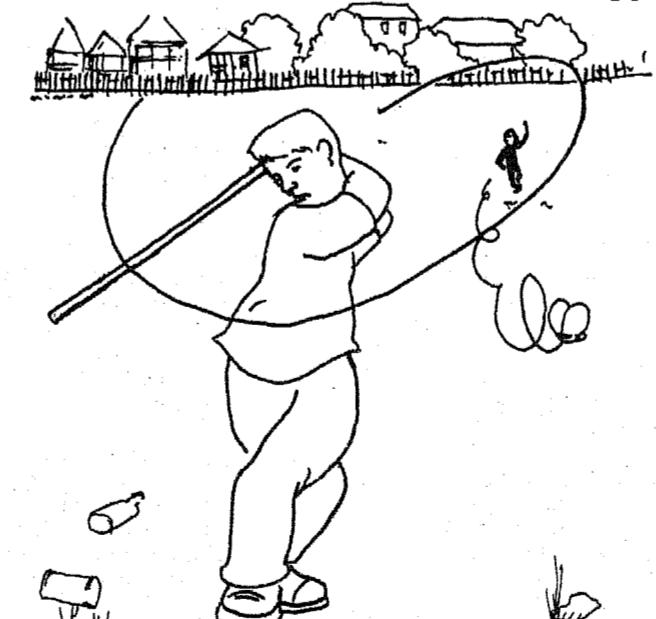
Here is how it goes: 200-pound Daniels has the ball and is running toward the enemy goal; fifteen to twenty guys pile on him, in the street yet, and try to steal the ball. Meanwhile, his team piles on too, trying to keep the ball there for 10 seconds or until the referee, a 60-pound shrimp, separates the teams and tosses the ball and the action starts again. Skinned knees? I went one summer looking like a bandaid commercial. I don't think we ever won or lost; no one lasted a whole game to find out.

KITE FIGHTING:

We built our own kites using colored ink paper and thin sticks. The object was to build a fast, maneuverable flying devil with a seven- to nine-foot cloth tail.

We would weight the tail with lead sinkers and attach several razor blades to the tip and at each knot.

Then we would fly the kites at each other's kite, trying to slice the kite to shreds. Several times a kite would get cut



Corkball (Stickball)

loose from the string, and everyone would duck under the trees. No one fancied the thought of a kite tail full of razor blades sailing at them.

I used kites reinforced with binding tape and as a result usually stayed in the air fairly long. As a precaution against string cutting, I used 15-20 feet of steel

leader. These kite games were exciting, but so was a boy's life in Key West.

KICK THE CAN:

We selected two teams - again, this is sort of a running tag game like Klee-Klee. You sit a can right side up in the middle of the street or yard, then counted to 100. The out team hid, and the home team chased. Once a guy was caught, he could only be freed by someone running in and kicking the can. If the guard saw you, he had to set the can back in place before chasing you.

Again boundaries were set up, usually two city blocks and usual off-limits places. Once everyone was caught, the home team had outs.

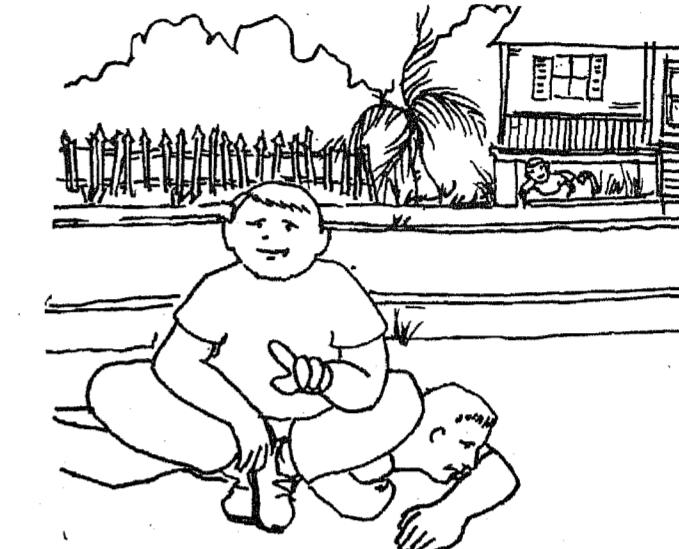
KLEE-KLEE or (CLEE-CLEE)

Spelling depended on whom you learned the game from.

This was a combination of tag and hide and seek. The difference was you had to hold the guy long enough to say "One-two-three, Klee-Klee". If he got away before you said it, you would chase him and do it again. (I used to pull the guy down and sit on him.)

Preparation for the game:

1. Two captains with teams.
2. Tree or pole designated as jail.
3. Another tree or pole as home or free base - used for rest and to free failed teammates.
4. Playing area (usually one city block with alleys).
5. Time limit (Otherwise the chasing team would be there all day). Of-



Klee-Klee (Clee-Clee)

be freed from jail by a free person tagging him. Then both would usually run to the free base and rest up. After resting up, we counted to 50, then chased them again.

THREE IN A TREE:

Pick a large well-branched tree and three guys in it. Then have 8 to 10 guys to climb the tree and replace the three guys.

You replaced a guy by getting him below you and keeping him there. Stepping on fingers, heads, etc. was allowed. The three-man team stuck together, no matter what. As soon as one guy's position was in trouble, all three were open to attack.

This game was like King of the Hill, only when you fall here, you really fall.

BEAN BAG TAG:

Remember the bean bags made of bright colored cloth, filled with navy beans? You played Keep Away, Bag Toss, or Bag Tag with this bag.

When I was 11 years old, a new game developed, Bean Bag Tag with a heavy cloth bag filled with small stones.

The bag was padded but packed a wallop anyway when you were tagged. Any game ordinarily played was changed to make it more of a challenge. The children of our neighborhood enjoyed a little danger with their fun.

Remember, a youngster couldn't go hiking, camping, or hunting here, so we used these games to add interest and skill to our lives.

TREE TUG-OF-WAR:

Three to five guys would form a team, then challenge another team to Tug-of-War. Naturally, the challenged guys would laugh and call us sissys, until we told them we played the game in trees. Usually, the challenged team would "turn butter" or chicken out.

Once we found a team that would play, they chose the trees, and we would flip a bottle cap or coin to find which team would get the best tree. Often one tree would be full of branches, and this was the best for hanging on.

We would take a rope and tie a white rag in the exact center of it. Next, each team would climb their tree to whatever height had been determined. Then each team would take one end of the rope and start to pull. The white rag was used as a guide. If the rag went too far from you would have to hang on or jump from the tree.

I still have flat feet from this game.

The Exorcism

This is a true story of something that happened a short time ago. The setting was rural South Florida in a warm early week of September.

I felt there was something wrong with the house the first time I saw it. There was a definite feeling or vibration there. However, it was nothing you could even describe to yourself. And, besides, we had only planned to rent the house for a month. The price was a bargain, so we decided to do it.

And it was beautiful! It was a very simple old white stucco house with all manner of tropical trees and flowers around it. There was a large expanse of green lawn on one side that ended in a row of pine trees.

But somehow, if you can understand what I mean, it was just too beautiful! The grass was too green, too soft. The sweet odor of jasmine was too heavy in the still night. The enormous crotos which grew over every window were too brilliantly colored. Even that most beautiful tree, the poinciana, which shaded the house, had a strange quality about it and was oddly formed.

Some strange things began to happen as soon as we moved in. For one thing, that large area of too-green grass next to the house was totally avoided by our very wise, fearless and noble dog. He would always walk around it to get from the front door to the back. Our young son, who loves to be outside everywhere, would scream and cry as soon as we brought him out there.

As the late summer Florida night came down, the technicolor crotos became strange and menacing forms. I would think we'd been conditioned to think this way about the shrubbery at night. Maybe so, except that this time there really was something there at the window. We could never quite see it, but whatever it was, it wasn't groovy.

We didn't, however, anticipate what began to happen. Every night we were each assailed by dreams or nightmares or visions, or call them what you will. Every dream was as brightly colored as this place was by day. The sense of reality in these dreams and their intensity grew each night.

What was most terrible was this; for three nights in a row, we were each plagued by the same incredible nightmare. It was always such a lovely, beautiful place, and then suddenly, there was total indescribable destruction. I most remember fleeing through toppling buildings, my son in my arms, the streets filled with screaming humans, all insane with fear and hate. We would awake, amazed to find that this planet and all of us were still here. We were even more amazed to realize that each of us had experienced the same dream.

On the evening after the third night of this particular nightmare, I went to visit a new friend whom I'd been working with. He and his wife were very wise people of Bahamian and Conch descent. I had been there only a short time when I began to tell them of what had been happening. I recall that I was about to get around to asking them if they believed that places or things had vibrations. But they knew what I was talking about immediately.

He also assured me that there was something that could be done about it. But, he told me what could be done could only be done at quarter of ten, quarter of twelve or quarter of four - morning or night. He glanced at the clock, thought for a moment and said he could show me what to do and how I could do it. He said it would cost me a dime - not a nickel and five pennies or ten pennies - but a dime. I had one in my pocket.

Before I knew it, I was sitting next to him in his car, a blazing sunset before us and a large worn brown paper bag filled with something between us. There was also a folded white sheet of paper on the seat between us.

We had driven just a short while when he told me to take the paper. I was to write out exactly what the problem was and what I wanted done. I should then sign my name and address.

As I started to write, he half turned and told me to be sure to cross no t's and dot no i's. I tore off the first sentence I'd written and started again. I don't remember exactly what I wrote now, but I described the situation at the house and simply asked that these forces which were besieging us be stopped.

By the time I signed my name and looked up, the sun had long since set and it was almost dark. We had driven many miles into a sparsely populated area that I didn't know. I started to tell him I'd written that the house was Eden by day and Hell by night when he cut me off quickly and said he didn't want to know. He said I should fold the paper in half and hang on to it.

Suddenly we turned down a dirt side road through a pine woods and soon emerged on a long circular drive. He stopped and asked me for the dime. I handed it to him and we got out of the car. It was a graveyard. I followed him, holding the folded paper as we walked quickly between the tombstones. He stopped, bent down and seemed to half-feel, half-read the inscription on a few of the stones. When he was certain of what he was looking for, he came around to where I was standing, knelt

down and dug a hole with his hands between two tombstones. He told me to place the folded paper in the hole. He covered it quickly with the earth he'd just scooped out. Then he knelt again, crossed himself and slapped both his palms to the earth, remaining that way for a long time. Finally, he scooped up some earth in his cupped hands, turned to me and quickly said, "Hold this". Then he turned and picked up the brown paper bag which until then I hadn't realized was there, and I followed him quickly back to the car.

Nothing was said as we drove for a long way. I sat holding the warm earth in my hands.

We were slowly driving down residential sidestreets. He stopped the car in front of a house and told me it would be best if I put the earth in my shirt pocket. We were going inside, and I wondered what was coming next.

He wanted me to meet some of his relations in this house. I just sat down and was completely overwhelmed by the warmth and goodness I felt in this home. The children were all smiling and glowing with love and well-being. The lighting in the house was soft and warm. On one wall was a huge tapestry of Jesus, a face radiating kindness and love. I left feeling that their glow of warmth was with me. Nothing had been said about what we had been doing.

The drive back to my friend's house was quick and silent. I was very aware of the strange weight the earth made over my heart. Next, we were again sitting at the same table in his home, the large, worn brown paper bag between us.

He lost not a moment, but removed ten or twelve vials and jars from the brown paper bag and began to make a mixture of

their contents, pondering for a moment before the addition of each substance. I was aware of the odor of camphor and asked what these things were, but he just glanced up and smiled a quick, mysterious smile. He finally seemed satisfied and mixed it all together thoroughly with the fingers of his right hand. Then he rubbed the crown of his skull with the residue on his fingers while looking at the mixture.

His wife came up to the table holding a small piece of white linen of about six square inches. As he took it from her, she asked him to same part of it since they might need it. He tore it in half, placed a half of the strange mixture in each half of the cloth. She handed him four common pins. He made two tiny bundles and secured them by pinning them in the form of a cross. With quick movement he tossed one into my shirt pocket on top of the earth and the other into his pocket.

He then gave me very explicit instructions. I was told again about the only three times this exorcism could be done. He told me that when I returned, I should, at one of the three times, sprinkle some of the earth at each of the four outside corners of the house. He asked if we had a double mattress and said to place the tiny bundle between the two.

He said that more than this could be done if needed, but that these things he'd told me about were almost always all that were needed. Strangely enough, I felt little curiosity about all this. I only wanted to know what to do.

But I did ask him how he knew of all these things. He said that his people in Nassau and in Key West have known about them a long time. "Not everyone, but many of them."

His last words, smiling and looking me in the eye, "This may seem like foolishness to some people - but you let me know what happens, my brother."

At quarter of ten I returned home to sprinkle the earth on the four corners of the house. Then I placed the small bundle, now emitting a strong odor of camphor, between the mattresses. Feeling a sense of protection for us in this room, we turned off all the lights in the house and laid down. Sleep was out of the question, but rest was possible.

After a long while, I had a strong desire to hear music. It was almost quarter of twelve. We turned on all the lights in the house and I decided to play George Harrison's "While My Guitar Gently Weeps". We played it very loud - twice. We felt better after hearing it, and once more turned off the lights and retired.

Now we felt that, in this room of the house at least, the vibrations had changed dramatically. The odor of camphor was very strong and filled the room. There was a gathering feeling of well-being and peace.

But the feeling of peace was not complete. The peaceful vibration we were creating seemed to only hold at bay the stronger forces still surrounding us. We felt it would be a long time until dawn.

Much later I was standing in the center of the room. I had been concerned about the restless sleeping of my son. Suddenly, something like a tremendous jolt of electricity shot up my spine, through my head and out my shoulders and arms. I then had an enormous feeling of strength. Amazed, I stood there speechless. I looked over at my son who was now resting quietly.

I turned and walked into the other room. It was just a quarter of four.

We slept soundly that night for the first time since we arrived. There were no nightmares. The battle was over and everything about the house was different than it had been.

Again, I feel little sense of curiosity about these things. I'm only glad that I had encountered this very wise man of these islands at a time when I needed his help.

Jim Coan

* The act of casting out evil spirits

A Summer Away... and Back

Janet Wood



The Author on Her Bike

So went twenty or so such conversations I had last spring. The general theme: leave Key West for the summer. And being an exceptionally weak Leo (Leo's normally listen to no one), I made plans to split for Carolina and the Smokies.

First priority: get some bread together. Now, if you're a chick, and a chick with long, split-end hair and no bra, job opportunities are negligible in Key West.

Fortunately, a friend turned me onto Sloppy Joe's, and I was hired as a barmaid, working the day shift. My responsibilities: completely, and I mean completely, scrub the bar down each morning and serve the juice - not bad considering I wasn't expected to hustle dances and drinks like some bars would like you to do.

The job lasted a week, at the end of which I dropped my bike and my knee on marl - no walking - no job.

The bike went to the shop, and I counted my money - deciding I could spend \$5.00 a day for a month. The other month I planned to be gone would have to be with friends. I'd have just enough bread left to make the return trip.

By the end of May, my knee and bike were back together. I packed the bike, topping the load with my guitar and sleeping bag. For not being a Boy Scout, I was well prepared.

So, one bright, hot morning, I said goodbye to my few friends still in Key West, and headed for what I hoped would be a peaceful camping trip in the Smokies.

Getting to the Smokies was beautiful. I took back roads to avoid tourists and heavy traffic. The people in the small towns along my route were almost always kind and courteous. Some expressed amusement at the sight of a girl on a motorcycle, but no antagonism.

The bike, a Yamaha 350cc, ran smoothly and, except for the hassle of having to unload everything to fill the oil tank, presented no problems. Eight to ten hours a day is a long time to stay on a bike, but there's no better way to really see, smell, hear and feel the country.

However, there was one disturbing thing happening; I saw more campers on the road, even the back roads, than I thought existed in all the States. Here was another revolution; the complacent "silent majority" was taking to the road, ready to dig their country. Now this is an admirable development, but one which blew a lot of minds, like forest rangers, state and federal park and recreational services, and fellow campers.

Here's what the Smokies were like: beautiful, green green mountains and cool, clear, clean mountain streams - and camping areas that gave me the feeling of an outdoor motel.

The scenery was groovy enough to hold me for a few days, but the thousands of other campers got to be too much, and I split, hoping to find a place, Lake Chatuge, in the northwest portion of Georgia that I'd heard was unknown and unspoiled.

To reach this fabled paradise, one of the Georgian natives said I'd have to take a dirt road (gravel in the good parts) nineteen miles long, "but it's worth it cause no one goes to this here place - up in them mountains, with a purdy lake and good eatin' fish and you'all sure like it."

"OK, this sounds like just the place I've been looking for. Thanks."

"You're welcome, Missy - now take it easy on that there motorcycle. Bye now."

So up and off I went - climbing roads that would make a "hill climb" rider's heart flip. At one point there was mud up to my pipes, but the hope of being virtually alone in the mountains by a lake drove me to ride that bike better than I can.

And, lo and behold, there was Lake Chatuge, surrounded by pines, elms and the full capacity of the camping area - 275 people. I couldn't believe it.

I spent two nights to get it together enough to face that beautiful road down and out, and I made a decision - if no one stays in Key West during the summer, then that's where I was heading.

The trip back down was uneventful, stopping occasionally to dig a groovy mountain view or running stream, until a camper pulled in too - then moving further south, finally reaching the Keys and Key West.

Now, I'm not saying it isn't hot during the summer in Key West, but it's certainly not in the hundreds, and there is a breeze, and some jobs, and enough people leave to make it peaceful, and enough stay to make it groovy.

And being a Leo, there's no better place to worship the sun - in Peace.

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Poems

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

Summer gentleman
dressed in summery greens
Thinking through the pleasant thoughts
of warm summer days....

Grassy whispers
and the Beatles singing:
"Do you believe
in love at first sight?"

PHOEBE COAN

FROM
THE BETTY CROCKER
ROADSHOW

to katie
who on this day
sept. 26, 1971
is in the hospital
having my baby

you are my lady
of the morning
marie antoinette
wearing arrogance
like a cloak
of spilled wine
to cover legends blood

i am entangled
in your shadow
a soldier with a soul
and fountain pens
for medals
of past conquest
over hunger and loneliness

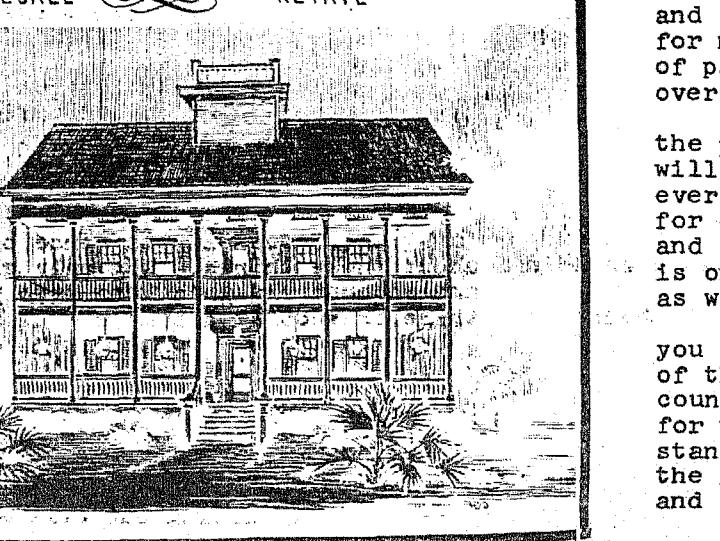
the partisan winds
will always triumph
ever the trees gold
for dust is forever
and legend
is only as real
as wine and blood

you are my lady
of the morning
counselor of defense
for what is real
standing between
the gillette super stainless
and another legend

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"i don't give my songs
titles, so why should i
give this article a title"

Over the past two years I have been freelancing as a music critic for various publications around the country. My approach to that position has been one of being hopefully more positively informative than negatively critical. What I have tried and am trying to achieve with this article is to inform people of the existence and appeal of music that is worthy of acceptance and acclaim but which, for one reason or another, has gone relatively unnoticed, and to relate this to the acceptance and acclaim of that music which is at one time or another in popular favor.

For the majority of music lovers/recorder buyers, musical interests extend no further than the "artists" and forms that are at the time socially-in-vogue, and therefore, commercially successful. For most people, music, like cosmetics, clothes, and cars is a commodity—one more product to consume. For most of those who produce and deliver the music (musicians, record companies, and record stores), music is a commodity—something to be or have consumed. Record corporations create the interest in their "artists" through mass promotional campaigns, through radio stations, concert bookings, newspaper and magazine advertising, and even highway billboards. While record companies are selling millions of James Taylor and Grand Funk albums and spending millions of dollars promoting them, many highly creative and talented artists go completely unnoticed and unappreciated by the masses. After the money is dished out to promote the biggies to make them even bigger, there is little left to help out the less established artists.

Payola is alive and thriving in the music industry today. For a price, companies can get prime spots for their records on television and radio shows and can also secure favorable reviews from certain publications.

Most consumers follow the business instincts of the leader companies. At the same time, most record buyers never demand or truly want artistic or original products from the record companies, so the companies play follower to the stagnant tastes of the record buyers—a continuous cycle.

Although most of the records and artists I write about cannot be found in Key West record stores, they can be ordered through record stores, mail outlets, or various record clubs. For this purpose, I give the full album title, label, and catalog number of all records that I review.

Elvin Jones-Genesis-Blue Note (BS7-84369)

Elvin Jones has been around for years and has always been at the top of most of the major jazz polls as being one of the best jazz drummers in the world. This album shows him backing off a bit on the flash and picking up on some tasteful restraint and complementation of the other musicians with whom he is playing. The name, the Elvin Jones Group would better suit Jones' act because the other four musicians on the record play together with him regularly and everyone within the group participates and contributes equally. Modern jazz on one of its higher plateaus.

McGuiness Flint-Happy Birthday, Ruth Baby Capitol (ST-794).

McGuiness Flint is a five-piece English band that takes its name from the last names of its two founding members, Tom McGuiness and Hughie Flint, the first drummer for John Mayall's Bluesbreakers five years ago. McGuiness/Flint's first album, released about a year ago, sold very little, received almost no airplay, but had a single, "When I'm Dead and Gone", that made it to the Monroe County Beach restaurant jukebox. The group is both loud and soft, both fast and slow. Besides showing good versatility—though not all versatility is good—McGuiness Flint's positive attributes include solid vocals with good harmony, lyrics free from rock music's hackneyed clichés, and musicianship professional enough to put their sounds where their ideas are.

Bronco-Country Home--Capitol (SMAS-9300)
Bronco-Ace of Sunlight--Capitol (SMAS-9309)

One of the better groups to come along within the past year, this British five-some's combination of strong material, acoustic and electric sound, and the unique voice of Jess Roden leaves to my ears a pleasant ring. On Ace of Sunlight Bronco shows a definite ripening over Country Home in that the group's material has become more diverse, and the group itself has evolved into a much tighter musical unit, shown by their sometimes lengthy, but never boring improvisations.

To curb the monotony created by the continuous drone of praise within this article and to illustrate the context of my introduction I find it necessary to pan an album—one held in high accord by the masses.

Jefferson Airplane--Bark--Grunt Records (FTR-1001)

Once upon a time, the Jefferson Airplane was the best rock band in America—four or five years ago when the Airplane was completely in touch with and an important part of the new "counter culture" movement of love, peace, Haight-Ashbury, hair, flowers, and concerts in the park. At the time that the Haight-Ashbury street people hauled caskets down the streets denoting the death of the hippie movement, the Airplane started spending less time in San Francisco and more time touring. They then became the biggest (most successful money-wise) rock band in America. Life magazine said so.

During those past four years, Marty Balin, the main creative force of the band during the early days, phased himself out of the band; the group encountered mounting drug problems, at least one face-lifting, and millions of dollars in concert fees and record sales.

It came as no surprise to me to learn that the group received a gold record for their new album, the first on their own label, upon the first day of its release. In other words, the demand for the new Airplane album was so great that orders for the record totaled one million dollars in sales before the record was even released or before RCA (who distributes Grunt records) had the chance to spend their huge sums for promotion of the album.

Bark. The music is jumbled and lackless. The Airplane sounds like it is gasping for air with which to lift its battered wings out of its successful (\$) boredom. The lyrics—formulated and clichéd attempts at science fiction—"my woman's the best there is," and even one attempt at pig-German (remember pig-Latin?).

"Can you make it to the island
Rock and roll island
in the middle of the time seas
back through time in firesign
magnetics flow all around me
sonar laser quasar pulsar
bombaried with argon

Rock and Roll Island

Ya das ben mine
ya das ben du
du das ben ich
fairzuc ess

**Never Argue with a German
If You're Tired
Or European Song**

Wayne Shorter--Odyssey of Iska--Blue Note (BS7-84363)
Weather Report--Weather Report--Columbia (C-30661)

Wayne Shorter is one of the most creative and talented musicians and composers on the new jazz front. He played saxophone with Miles Davis for six years, from 1964 to 1969, during Davis's brightest years to date. For the past eight years, Shorter has also been composing and recording his own albums. His newest, *Odyssey of Iska*, is by far his best. On the liner notes Shorter says that Iska, a Nigerian name for the wind, "is the wind that passes; leaving no traces". Wayne Shorter's music moves as naturally and freely as that wind, but the traces leave lasting impressions.

After recording *Iska*, Shorter joined with Alphonzo Mouzon, Joe Zawinul, Miroslav Vitous, and Airto Moreira, all top jazz figures, to form the group, Weather Report. The group, whose first album was released a few weeks ago, has as one of its obvious influences, Miles Davis. Although it lacks the continuous breezy flow that characterizes Shorter's *Iska*, Weather Report's music is aural and celestial and diverse in texture. The music of tomorrow today.

chris elmore

A Natural Way

Janice

After I had first visited Key West, I remember getting this idyllic vision of Blacks and Whites and Cubans all living next door to each other. I missed any neighborhood distinctions, missed all the complexities, the balances and imbalances that keep this town moving in its peculiar sideways fashion. However, I don't mean to talk about race or politics, at least not directly, but about supermarkets.

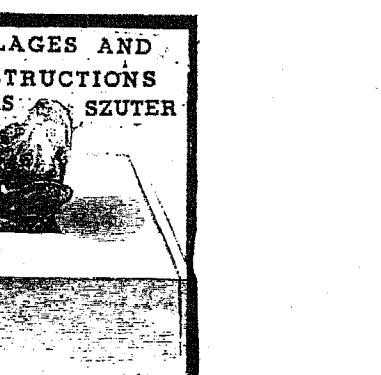
There seem to be three or four major supermarkets and two or three minor ones, depending on how you want to class Faustos. And although Key West remains pretty casual, her supermarkets try hard to capture that familiar surrealistic quality beginning with the electric door and ending with the girl at the check-out counter in the white nurse's uniform and starched cap. Same basic format, but here's where those neighborhoods come in. Each supermarket pretends to lure the general public but in reality caters to a distinct personality of the town.

Faustos gets the bike trade and the ethnic types. Winn Dixie gets the Country Squire crowd, and the die-hard northerners shop at the A & P. Quik Check is a puzzler. I haven't been there enough yet, but I've heard rumors of bags of brown rice. Could it be? Then there's Food Fair, maybe the most eclectic, close enough to pedal to, yet looking like a shopping center attached to Neisners, and offering vegetables you can touch.

What's missing from this list is the health food store. It's not really even a minor supermarket, but I've got to include it because it's heading that way and because it's part of the landscape of food buying in Key West, depending on how seriously you take the words 'natural' or 'organic'. It's tucked away on a side street off Flagler, and I can't make a generalization about its customers because I'm not so sure who they are.

Now, if you do take the words, 'natural' and 'organic' seriously but can't spend a lot on food and like different atmospheres, try this. Buy flour, yeast, fresh Grasse Key eggs, rice, sugar and any other grains you need at the health food store, but skip the expensive oils, nuts, dried fruits, honey, canned and jarred things and any pre-packaged foods. You can get cheaper versions of these things at supermarkets.

Food Fair has good fresh fruits and vegetables, pure, unblended honey, bio-degradable detergent, cheeses without stabilizers and chemicals and pure fruit juices, and green noodles.



Faustos has rennet, many varieties of olive oil, peanut oil (an underrated multi-functional oil), whole forms of many herbs and spices and another brand of bio-degradable detergent.

The A & P also has weigh-yourself vegetables, whole coffee beans (ground daily in a blender makes really fresh coffee), different kinds of whole spices and herbs, unsulfured molasses, sundried fruits with nothing added (raisins and prunes), and sweet tub butter. Also the canned and jarred foods are mostly free of chemicals (Their mayonnaise is the only pure one I've found.).

Winn Dixie gets redundant and has very few nice, different little tucked-away items, but they do have big cans of malt syrup, which is a real find if you're into beer making.

This is a partial list, but it's a decent start. It all gets to be a lot of work, I know, but the system isn't set up to make eating whole foods easy.

Here's a recipe for beer to take seriously or not, depending on your tolerance level for American beer. This is an alternative to American beer.

1 can malt extract
10 lbs. sugar
10 gal. water
1 cake yeast
A couple of handfuls of whole grain (corn, wheat, rye, barley)

Heat the water to lukewarm. Dissolve the sugar and malt extract in it. Crumble the yeast in and add the grain. (The grain is very important for the flavor). Cover the crock tightly with plastic. (A crock is ideal, but a wood tub, etc. would be good. Avoid containers that leave a taste, e.g. metal.) The plastic really ought to be air-tight; then let it work. It'll take from 5 to 7 days; the plastic will puff up and when it goes down, take off the plastic and taste the beer. If it is almost but not quite flat, it is ready to bottle. Siphon it into bottles through a cheesecloth lined funnel and cap the bottles. (You can buy a bottle capper at Sears for \$2.98.) The beer will work up more fizz in the bottles, so let them rest in a cool, dark place for 1 or 2 weeks. Then it's ready to drink.

I hate to say this, but white sugar is far superior to brown for making beer. In fact, brown sugar is lousy. I rationalize using white sugar in 2 ways. First, it goes through a chemical change and is no longer sugar anyway; second, it's good not to be overly rigid in one's beliefs.

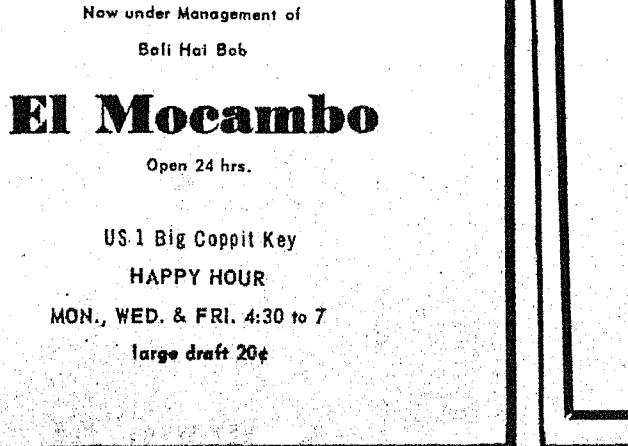
LEE: Well, I believe that, by far and away, the major issue in the campaign will be the question of the City's finances. The voters will favor candidates who can convince them that they are able and willing to embark upon stringent cost-cutting efforts as well as revenue producing efforts.

SOLARES HILL: What are the priority areas that a Commissioner or a Mayor should work toward, during the coming year for increasing revenues or decreasing expenditures?

LEE: OK. Utility taxes are rough for any candidate to campaign on, but I don't see how sincere candidates can duck that question.

SOLARES HILL: OK then, well you feel that the types of experiences or the types of skills that a desirable candidate should have would be skills in management of money or fiscal matters.

LEE: Yes, I think it highly desirable that candidates have business experience, that they be able to show several years' experience in truly responsible positions. I don't think that a City Commission post is the place for on-the-job training in basics.



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has said that it can be done. The idea of a board of the bank presidents has many advantages: There's the question of vacancies. Appointment or election of vacancies would bring the board into a political situation. Well, the bank president arrangement eliminates that. There will always be a president of each bank. If, for any reason, one of them is no longer a bank president, there will be a replacement, and he would be on the Conch Train board automatically.

SOLARES HILL: We've gone over the question of this deficit, the question of the shaky financial situation of the City and the possible ways to decrease expenditures and increase revenues. Are there any other matters that you feel are germane to the situation now before we discuss the entrance of a new crop of political candidates to try to deal with this situation?

LEE: The Press has informed us a number of times that the sewer system has been operating at a substantial deficit. I think it's absolutely necessary that the sewer rates be increased. In fact, it's required by law that they be increased to a point that will at least enable the sewer system to break even. And it's essential that this be done in order to shut off the continuing deficit. As I understand the President's freeze order, the Commission is precluded from making the increase now, though I believe this to be only temporary. The increase should have been made long before the freeze order. I don't know whether the sewer system deficit is reflected in the \$287,000 or not. If so, increase in sewer rates will help diminish the future potential deficits.

PART II: PROMISES, PROMISES

SOLARES HILL: OK, well let's look through the eyes of a potential candidate for City Commission or Mayor, who will be campaigning very vigorously during the next month. He's faced with a situation which we've tried to summarize this morning: a situation where his main concern should be fiscal matters. He shouldn't be interested in finding new ways for the City to spend money. He's got to be very interested in tightening up the City's financial matters. What kind of campaign, what kind of promises, what kind of goals should a sound candidate for City Commissioner or Mayor be making?

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SOLARES HILL: Finally, let's do some talking with long-range perspective. If these avenues are pursued, the avenues of cutting our expenditures and increasing our revenues, and we get ourselves back on a little bit sounder footing, what directions should the City be going in, what kinds of positive steps. We're talking now about taking steps backward to shore up and to get things back under control. Once that happens, what kind of positive steps should a City Commission be taking?

LEE: Well, one of the major needs in the City is to improve our streets and sidewalks. Recently, the County has made a very important step. They have decided to take over the maintenance of County roads instead of having it performed by the State Department of Transportation. I hope that this will give the County a great deal more latitude than it has had in the past. I hope they will be able to construct roads that are quite adequate but not so expensive as required by the standards of the Department of Transportation. This means we'll get more for the same amount of money, though it may not be of such gold-plated quality. Most of the streets in the City qualify as secondary roads, and, therefore, are eligible for the use of secondary road money. I think that the City should start as soon as the County's organization is established to seek to have as much as possible of this money be spent on improvement of the City's streets and sidewalks.

SOLARES HILL: Any other areas that you feel are realistic goals for the City?

LEE: The long range? Well, if the City is going into the Conch Train business, I wonder why they can't go into the aquarium business. They already own the aquarium. The present operators have a lease which required that they do a number of things, and I am told that some of these things have not been done. I don't believe the Aquarium is producing as much revenue as it can. I believe that if the City were to take over the Aquarium and operate it and manage it the same way as proposed for the Conch Train, they would have a nice source of revenue, greatly in excess of the amount that they now receive and also have a better tourist attraction.

SOLARES HILL: Can we talk about a direction for this city? What will it be in the future, as a city. It's going to have to think about a much more substantial economic base than it has now. Just what kind of city should Key West become? How might an astute City Commission start pointing Key West in that direction?

LEE: I think Key West's future is definitely tied to tourism. We have the best weather and the best sport fishing in the country. And so I believe by proper promotion, we can attract far more tourists to Key West than we are now getting. We will have to have a clean city and a presentable and attractive city, and that is our best hope. Because it's unlikely that we will be able in the foreseeable future to expend the kind of money nationally that it takes to attract people, our best hope is to seek to get a greater percentage of the tourists who now come to Florida to come down here, and I believe this should continue to be our approach to the problem and it offers great promise.

Many of us have been wondering whether Disney World will help or hurt our tourist business. Last week it was announced that WOMETCO Enterprises of Miami had purchased the Santini porpoise school up the Keys. Given WOMETCO's experience with tourist-oriented operations, it's a pretty safe guess that they did not purchase a tourist dependent business in the Keys with the expectation that tourist traffic there would diminish. This looks like an encouraging omen for us.

Overseas Fruit Market

934 Truman Avenue
COMPLETE VARIETY OF FRESH FRUIT
AND VEGETABLES

The Belted Kingfisher

Thurlow Weed

Key West Naturalists' Society

Megaceryle alcyon is an easy bird to find and recognize. They are now coming back for the winter, and you are apt to see one near most any shallow water. That's where they hang out, because they dive for fish. If you see any small bird (eight inches or so) diving headlong into the water and you're sure it's not a tern, then it is a Belted Kingfisher. Even if you're not sure about the tern part, it's a Kingfisher if it's blue.

Actually, the whole thing isn't blue. The belly is white, except for a blue band clear around the bird at shoulder level (with an additional cinnamon band on the female). There is a white band that goes around at chin-neck level. In other words, the back is blue except for a white band, and the belly is white except for a blue band. Hence, "Belted" Kingfisher.

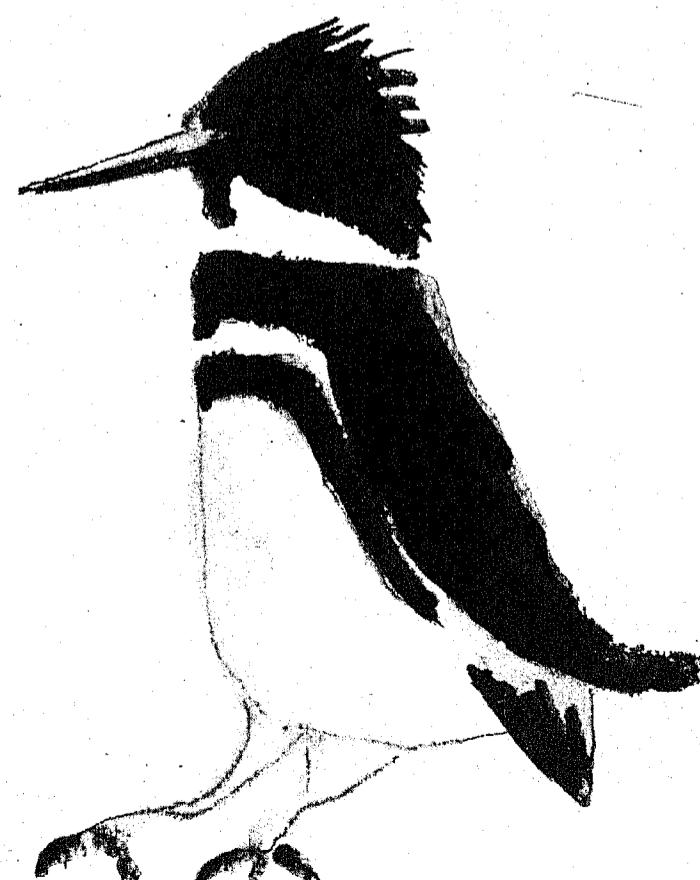
Between the blue-and-white color pattern and the distinctive head, there is no way to confuse the Kingfisher with any other bird.

First, there is the bill. It is more battering ram than bill. It is long in proportion to the stocky (even chubby) bird, and is massively thick. Even more instantly obvious - and diagnostic - is the immense crest which doubles the size of the head. The crest looks rather like a badly cleaned and solidified blue paintbrush of the worst stamp - ragged, stiff, and mean.

The Kingfisher perches in the open near shallows, often quite high. Telephone wires along the highway are frequently decorated with them, or leafless tree branches, or poles. They are easy to see and easier to hear.

The call is more obtrusive than the appearance. It is a strident and arrogant rattle - like the sound made by small children with those dimestore wooden ratchets on handles that they spin.

Another obvious characteristic of the Kingfisher is the way it captures meals. While the Reddish Egret goes through a horizontal rigamarole chasing fish on foot, the Kingfisher runs a vertical routine. He selects the fish, usually from a good fifteen feet up, often much more, gets directly above it, hovers motionless like a frenzied, overgrown hummingbird, and then plunges upon it with such hurtling force that the observer expects to see a dead Kingfisher bob to the surface. If the fish has not been killed outright, the bird flies to a perch and beats it to death.



An old legend explains that in Noah's time the Kingfisher was drab and colorless. When it was released from the Ark, it flew toward the setting sun. The sky stamped blue upon its back, and the westering sun scorched its breast to brown.

Also from ancient times is the sad tale of Alcyone, the daughter of Aeolus. Her husband was lost in shipwreck, and the grieving Alcyone threw herself into the sea, whereupon she was transformed into a Kingfisher.

Thus, a translation of the scientific name begins to emerge. "Halcyon" was the name the old Latin-speaking people had for the Kingfisher, and *Megaceryle* seems to mean "Kingfisher". So: Halcyon Kingfisher.

Pliny writes that the Kingfishers lay their eggs and brood them in winter when the days are at their shortest. He points out that then the sea is calm and easily navigable, and that this is the origin of the term "halcyon days", for calm and peaceful days when it is pleasant to be outdoors - Kingfisher days.

In Key West almost every day is a Kingfisher day. So watch for the Halcyons, and enjoy. Tober.



516 Duval 294-6336

OCT. MOVIES

Fri - Thurs

7 + 9

15-21 Black Jesus
22-28 Summer of '42
29-4 Man & Boy Bill Cosby

NOV. MOVIES

Fri - Thurs

7 + 9

5-11 Omega Man Charlton Heston
12-18 Touch Elliot Gould

OCT. MOVIES

Fri & Sat only

Midnite Movie (12:00)
15616 Belle de Jour Catherine Deneuve

22623 Magic Christian Peter Sellers
29630 Blood of Dracula

NOV. MOVIES

Fri & Sat only

Midnite Movie (12:00)
566 Tropic of Cancer

