

NEWS BRIEFS

DEVELOPMENT FREEZE

Concern over Monroe County's failure to develop a land use map as well as the failure of the county and the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority to assess the impact of major developments on public services had led to strong action in Tallahassee. Gov. Bob Graham and the Florida Cabinet voted unanimously to recommend a freeze on new and pending applications for major developments in the Upper Keys. The Cabinet also asked FKAA to grant no more hookup permits to major developments in the Upper Keys. The state action is advisory. Projects which have received all required state and local permits are not affected, but some 28 applications now under consideration are. A major development has a minimum of five acres and 35 units.

There is no time limit set by the state, but the recommendation will apparently stand until the county completes a study on apportioning public services in the Keys as well as a land use map, and the Cabinet has time to review both. County commissioners noted the action, but instructed the county zoning board to proceed under guidelines the commissioners laid down—that is to process and decide on the 28 pending applications but to freeze temporarily new applications. The commission also asked to meet with the Cabinet to clarify the state's position.

OTEC PLANT BYPASSES KEYS

A revolutionary Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion plant won't be constructed in the Atlantic south of Big Pine Key after all. The federal Department of Energy decided to award nearly \$2 million in plant design grants to proponents in Hawaii. An OTEC plant is designed to generate electrical energy by harnessing the temperature differential between warm surface water and colder waters in the ocean's depths.

BASE MAY REOPEN

The jury still is out on whether or not the Truman Annex naval base in Key West will be pressed back into service. The former submarine base on the western edge of the island, decommissioned in 1974, may be reactivated by the Pentagon due to the increasingly tense situation throughout the Caribbean and Central America.

While many contend the decision already has been made in Washington,

Key West officials have expressed mixed reactions on reopening the 74-acre base as an intelligence-gathering center to monitor Soviet and Cuban military activity in the Caribbean basin. Such a move would dash long-held plans of developing the annex as a waterfront tourist attraction.

The Navy has also reneged on the sale of the old missile base on upper Key Largo. Plans were in the works to develop an Upper Keys airport on the site.

TOURIST TAX AIDS KEY WEST

A two per cent levy on all tourist accommodations in Key West already is at work promoting the charms of Florida's southernmost city. Rick Easton, who sits on the nine-member Key West Tourist Development Council headed by county commissioner George Dolezal, says \$42,000 has been collected so far to lure more visitors to the state's second oldest city.



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ON THE COVER

The 7½ pound gold disc is part of the treasure recovered from the wreck of the Spanish galleon *Nuestra Senora de Atocha*. The sand-cast disc, bearing the markings XV... to indicate 15¾ karat gold, was found in the middle of a pile of encrusted coins on the sea floor in 1973, five years after the intensive search began, by Kim Fisher, Mel Fisher's son. See stories beginning on page 28.

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