



Associated Press

That's a reef?

Coast Guard cutters *Bibb* and *Duane* were sunk intentionally Saturday off the coast of Key Largo, Fla., to provide a new artificial reef for the area.

A PRE-PLANNED VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA

Two decommissioned Coast Guard cutters, the *Bibb* and the *Duane*, left the docks of East Boston this week in tow for Key Largo, Fla., where they will be sunk as artificial reefs. "We can't wait to get them," said Corky Toth of the Key Largo Artificial Reef Association, who accompanied the cutters to Bayonne, N.J., where they will be cleaned before a Navy dive team scuttles them with explosive charges next month 7½ miles offshore.

The *Bibb* and *Duane* are among six secretary-class vessels — named for U.S. Secretaries of State — built in the 1930s and used during World War II on convoys in the North Atlantic. Only one of the six remains in service, but in Toth's opinion the two retired cutters will render service above and beyond the call of duty. "Our natural coral reefs are so heavily dived they're suffering," he said. "The ships will be an alternative dive site and great for fishing as well." Sen. Lawton Chiles (D-Fla.) arranged to get the cutters from the Coast Guard, and the group raised about \$150,000 for cleaning and towing them. *HERALD - OCT 9, 1987*