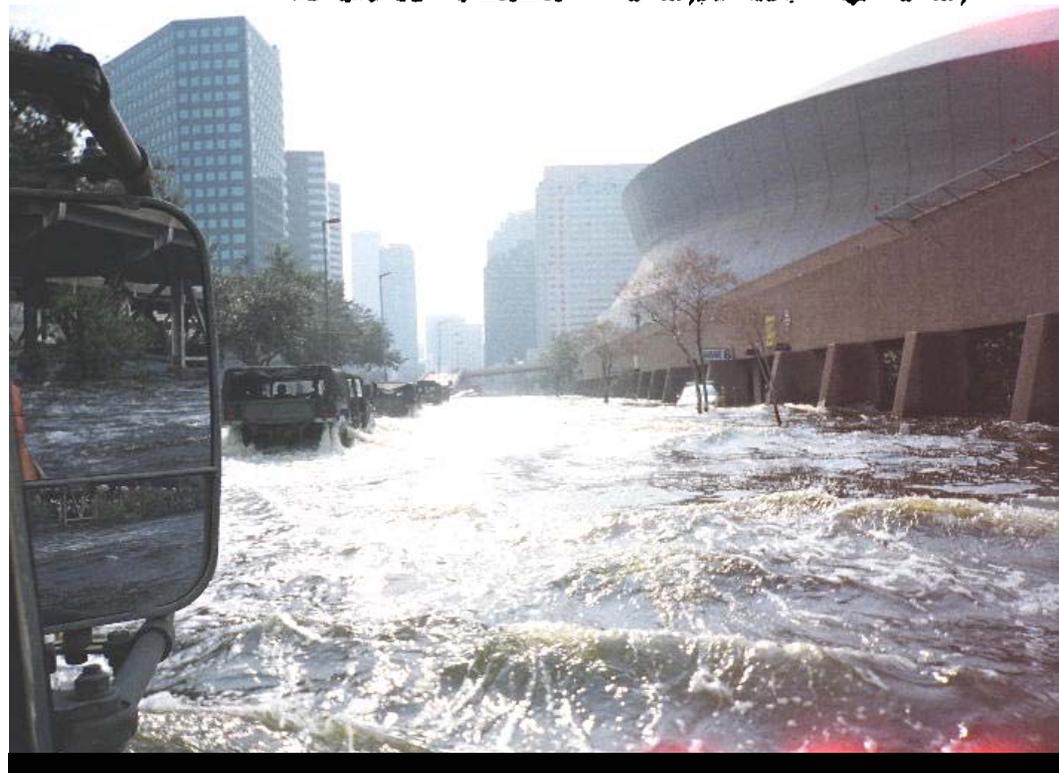




*BIG EASY,
SMALL WINDOW*



*One Thousand Emotions
PO Box 63333
St. Louis, MO 63163
USA*

2005 >> Hurricane Katrina >> Gulf Coast, USA

“The immense river of human history also has its threatening and irresistible floods. When the wave increases, it roars against both dikes that shut it in. On the right hand is the conformist dike, for the conservation of traditional and existent forms – a continuous passage of priests chanting in procession, of cops on patrol, of schoolmasters and charlatans spouting official lies and the class scholastic. On the left hand, the reformist dike: members of ‘popular’ parties, professionals of opportunism, members of parliament and chiefs of progressive trade-unions are crowded in there. Bandyng insults on both sides of the current, both processions claim to possess the recipe to see to it that the powerful river continues its suppressed and forced course. But at the great moments of history, the current breaks all hindrances, overflows its banks and ‘leaps,’ as the [River] Pô at Guastalla and at Volano, towards an unexpected direction, sweeping away both sordid gangs in the irresistible wave of revolution, reversing dikes of all kinds, and giving to the society, as to the earth, a new face.”

-Amadeo Bordiga, “Filling and Bursting of Bourgeois Civilization” (1951)



* **Refugees coming to your town?** The most significant difference between the L.A. revolt and that of New Orleans is that L.A. still exists. So far we have seen looting spread to areas where the refugees are sent, so this seems the most obvious way to expand the attack. People used to one week of not paying for anything (and gunfights with the police) of course find it psychologically difficult to walk into a store and revert back to paying (or obey the police)- any petty thief can tell you this. Here in St. Louis, authorities have decided to house hundreds of refugees in an (not-so-) old county jail. Enough said.

* **Target the agencies responsible for the brutal neglect and murder of the people of New Orleans.** Salvation Army, Red Cross, FEMA, all U.S. Military branches, etc. (More perpetrators keep being uncovered- e.g. Outback Steakhouse was reported to be serving food to rescue workers but denying food to the refugees in central Louisiana.)

* **Provide solidarity with 'insurgents' in N.O.** It is a very real possibility that the next week will see the federal government engaged in a guerilla conflict with citizens intent on defending their city. Solidarity could mean vocal support, material support, and/or attack on our own terrain to spread the insurgency and weaken the forces of order. Any revolt, no matter how wonderful, will suffocate if it's not spread. Their fight is our fight – refuse to be divided from and condemned by potential comrades.

* **Be careful what you take from the media reports.** Don't believe the government statements. First-hand accounts and even on-the-ground corporate media reports provide a vastly different story than the official line. And it is those stories that must surface so we can't be divided into bad looters and good looters, armed gangs and rescuers, unemployed and workers, etc.

* **Harness the sudden spirit of mutual aid.** Outsiders are offering help for the displaced. Feelings of mutual aid not only pervade in the looted street markets of battered N.O., but also in those who were not there. But, as usual, it is mostly misdirected to paternalistic aid organizations (Red Cross and Salvation Army – both of which have abandoned the survivors), though housing offers seem to be bypassing these large organizations.

*-a handful of St. Louis' unwanted children of capital
September 3, 2005*

* This is the result of discussions between comrades here in St. Louis over the last 6 days concerning the situation just down-river from us – discussions which will no doubt continue. We want to encourage a breaking out of discussions across the country on the implications and potentialities of the post-catastrophe situation in America. This is a hastily written text that we acknowledge has many gaps. Please help us fill them and share any discussions you have had with comrades in your city, whether it be inside or outside the Gulf region.



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On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina made landfall. Five hours after the storm hit, levees broke and much of New Orleans flooded. A mandatory evacuation had been issued without regard for the city's poorest, and thousands died from the storm and subsequent flooding. Those who stayed were told to go to the Superdome and Convention Center. The slow and hypocritical relief efforts of the State and Federal governments and those of large aid organizations deeply angered thousands in the Gulf and thousands watching on TV.

Now bat this around in your head and with your friends...

* **Growing defense of unlawful acts.** Many everyday Americans are breaking from their lawful routine to justify the looting. As the definition of crime (and survival) shifts, agents of social control begin to weaken.

* **A second crisis is threatening the stability of the system:** rising gasoline prices. People are asking, when will it stop, who is responsible, and why even pay? Gas theft has skyrocketed and street protests against the hikes are rumbling across the country. This is creating a double crisis and people are mobilizing with the regime up against the wall. Not to mention the military stalemate in Iraq. Can the system be overloaded to the point of collapse? How can we best participate in these crises?

FOLKS IN LOUISIANA AND MISSISSIPPI HAVE RECOGNIZED THIS VULNERABILITY AND ARE ACTIVELY ASSAULTING IT.

* **They are physically attacking the social order.** The stories of gunfights, arson, and looting keep surfacing: in New Orleans, organized and sporadic attacks on police stations, officers, and National Guard units since the time the hurricane hit (before the flooding) and now fires set to buildings, many of them previously untouchable in the eyes of the poor; and then there is the looting (most notably, guns to carry out further attacks on the system) on a scale far greater than what South Central L.A. experienced in 1992.

* **They are undermining capital's dominant social relations.** Mass looting throughout the Gulf Coast, some of it quite pre-meditated and some of it outside of the hurricane path. Every account reads as a festive (or nervous) atmosphere with every sector of the population partaking: black, white, Latino, men, women, children, old, young, and even cops and wealthy tourists. The normal forms of exchange have been abandoned and large free markets have been reported on the neutral ground (the median) down some New Orleans streets. And it's not just a big 'fuck you' to those who profit from their needs, but also a defiant stance that everyone is entitled to enjoy themselves- what some would call 'excesses:' beer, televisions, etc.

* **The breakdown is spreading:** reports of widespread looting in New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Biloxi, Gulfport, and Hattiesburg and now signs that Memphis and Houston may soon face unrest with all the refugees from N.O.

IF NOW IS THE TIME, THEN WHAT TO DO? (SOME POINTS TO DISCUSS, MODIFY, AND, OF COURSE, ACT UPON)

The following text was distributed on September 3, 2005. It was one of only a few texts that began to fully recognize the enormity of the rupture in American life that Katrina was creating *while the crisis was still unfolding* and the potentialities therein. Such discussions are now totally irrelevant (concerning this sealed window) and this text should be laid to rest. So here it lies.

Now is the Time? Now is the Time! *The Potential of the Gulf Coast Crisis: Points for Discussion and Intervention*

We wrote this text because we felt the level of discussion regarding the aftermath of hurricane Katrina needs to move beyond the rhetoric of cheering or condemning looters, cheering or condemning the authorities, or simply crying for the victims. "Oh my god, I can't believe this is happening," or "I told you so," or "People are dying!" just send us talking in circles. We want the U.S. (and possibly the world) to launch into the unknown- the total breakdown of the social order- and then continue pushing for a self-organized society.

In wanting this, we encourage drawing out and publicly defending the liberatory activities of the last 6 days and deepening this social rupture by refusing to confine it to the Gulf Coast. Our idea of how: implement concrete forms of solidarity that do not just focus on defense, but on attack.

RIGHT NOW, THE SYSTEM IS EXTREMELY VULNERABLE.

* **We are experiencing one of the largest disruptions of the capitalist economy and the social order** since perhaps the L.A.-fueled urban rebellions that rippled across the country in 1992.

* **Morale among the authorities is low:** One-third of the N.O. police force has deserted and the rest are operating with limited vehicles, fuel, weapons, and communications, National Guardsmen are openly questioning their intervention both in N.O. and Iraq, the N.O. Mayor has broken down publicly...

* **Faith and trust in the federal and state authorities** is evaporating as aid and rescue resources are strangely absent or diverted. Meanwhile, world watches the starving locals on the nightly news. The National Guard is physically blocking ordinary citizens trying drive aid into N.O.. Bush has his lowest approval rating ever. His rhetoric of 'death to the looters' confuses most people who have, in the last few days, began to sympathize with the looting (see next point). Disgust with the government, and perhaps with government itself, grows.



10:53am: One of the guys ventured out to check for open stores... they're open to looters. He reports that there's looting at Wal-Mart and the like.

-Interdicator Blog, August 30

ESCAPE/POOL/ENJOY/ASSEMBLE/BARTER/GIVE/LOVE/OCCUPY/SEIZE/ESCAPE/POOL/ENJOY/ASSEMBLE/BARTER/GIVE/LOVE/OCCUPY/SEIZE/ESCAPE/POOL/ENJOY/ASSEMBLE/BARTER/GIVE/LOVE/OCCUPY/SEIZE/ESCAPE/POOL/ENJOY/ASSEMBLE/BARTER/GIVE/LOVE/OCCUPY/SEIZE/ESCAPE/POOL/ENJOY/ASSEMBLE/BARTER/GIVE/LOVE/OCCUPY/SEIZE/ESCAPE/

[The cop] turned the corner onto Canal Street and it looked like a flea market. People breaking into every store, going to the neutral ground (median) and trading and selling everything.

-Interdictor Blog, September 1

Robert's was the first place we saw looters. There were people running in and out, dude. We rode our bikes over and were just looking inside. Man. There were people trying to bust the ATM open. I don't know how they got that metal gate up as far as they did. I don't know if they drove a car into it or what. I looked in the door, and this was only like two hours after the storm. It was practically empty already... So I get [to Walgreen's] and that place is like an in-and-out, dude. People are putting their bikes in the bike rack and locking them up. They're not in a rush. People were running in and out, packing their trucks. The pharmaceutical section was being demolished. There were people going crazy back there. People were trying to bust the ATM open there. Dudes were walking out of the store with cash registers.

-Jason Fraude interviewed in City Pages (Minneapolis), September 20

The Iberville Housing Projects got pissed off because the police started to "shop" after they kicked out looters. Then they started shooting at cops. When the cops left, the looters looted everything.

-Interdictor Blog, September 1

10:04am: Massive looting uptown, st charles, garden district.

-New Orleans Yacht Club, August 31

On cam right now you can see looters selling new shoes and shirts...

-Interdictor Blog, August 31

If you're watching the cam you'll note that there are WHITE people, BLACK people, and HISPANIC people looting.

-Interdictor Blog, August 31

The first week after Katrina, for all practical purposes, capital property relations disappeared.

-New Orleans resident Mike Powls, September 12

If you're on the cam, you've got a special treat: you're watching... the looting of a hotel.

-Interdictor Blog, August 31

Donald Dudley, a 55-year-old New Orleans seafood merchant, complained that when he and other hungry refugees broke into the kitchen of the convention center and tried to prepare food, the National Guard chased them away. "They pulled guns and told us we had to leave that kitchen or they would blow our damn brains out," he said.

-AP, September 1

The group of mostly teenagers and young adults pooled what little money they had to buy diapers for the babies and fuel for the bus.

-Houston Chronicle, September 1

"We don't want their help. Give us some vehicles and we'll get ourselves out of here!"

-Donald Dudley, New Orleans resident referring to the National Guard, September 1

"Looters are hitting food stores, they're hitting department stores, they're in jewelry stores and gun stores - they're stealing guns wherever they can," Sergeant Frank Coates, a spokesman for the Louisiana Police, said in a telephone interview from Baton Rouge... As refugees headed north to escape the

Angry planters denounced any evacuation... Will [Percy] then went to tell furious ship captains that the blacks would remain on the levee. The steamers did not leave quite empty. The *Wabash*, capable of carrying several thousand, departed with thirty-three white women and children."

There was a big transport plane [C-130] waiting for us, so I got in there, and they raised the gate, and the plane took off. There were about 24 people in the plane, sitting on the seats on the side because there's nothing in the middle, and they put 2 patients on stretchers in the middle. He says that there was no place for others to sit, so they only took those who could fit in seats and on the stretchers.

-80 year-old survivor from Chalmette, September 3, 2006

Refugee/Slave Camp

"Roughly 5,000 blacks crowded into warehouses, oil mills, and stores. Up to 13,000 more blacks lived on the levee in an elongated city that ultimately snaked more than eight miles, complete with electric lights, pipes for water, barges for latrines. Tents had finally arrived for shelter and the weather had turned warm, but the tents were not floored and cots had not arrived, so refugees still slept on the wet ground. There were no eating utensils or mess hall. Blacks had to eat with their fingers, standing or squatting on their haunches like animals. Beyond the line of tents, for more miles farther up the levee, were thousands of livestock. The stench was unbearable... The National Guard patrolled the perimeter of the levee camp with rifles and fixed bayonets. To enter or leave, one needed a pass. They were imprisoned..."

[A Red Cross memo on 'return of refugees,' stated,] 'Plantation owners desiring their labor to be returned from Refugee Camps will make application to the nearest Red Cross representative,' whereupon they 'will issue passes to refugees...' [Greenville Red Cross head Will Percy declared,] 'No able-bodied Negro is entitled to be fed at all unless he is tagged as a laborer... To wear one was humiliating. Without one, a man could get no food for himself or his family.'

And in other refugee camps, even where work was forced, laborers earned wages. Will ordered that all Red Cross work be done for free. Food was the only compensation. The levee camp became a slave camp."

What do Negroes want?

Will Percy, son of LeRoy Percy (Senator and most powerful Plantation owner in the Mississippi delta) and head of Greenville, MS Red Cross chapter stated: "None of us was influenced by what the Negroes themselves wanted: they had no capacity to plan for their own welfare; planning for them was another of our burdens."



The Most Obvious Solution

“On Monday, April 25, the government steamer *Control* left Greenville with 500 white women and children. The *Minnesota* loaded more than 1,000 refugees, mostly black, at the wharf. Two other steamers, the *Wabash* and the *Kappa* were standing by. The *Sprague*, *Tollinger*, and *Cincinnati* were en route, each towing barges capable of carrying several thousand each. The city would be virtually emptied in a day...

[The levee at Greenville,] resembled a war zone, all confusion and noise, choked with smoke from kitchens, people on litters, squalling children, and a few men with purpose struggling to establish order. White women and children massed around gangplanks waiting to board the steamboats; the barges would carry Negroes and terrified livestock... Gangs of black men under white foremen were unloading supplies. Several more gangs of men were banging hammers, building a scaffold above the floodwater to connect the Red Cross headquarters, the second floor of the American Legion Building, the Opera House, the Cowan hotel, and the levee.

‘The situation here, with the water supply gone, most of the food destroyed, and ten thousand camping on the levee... was desperate.’ The flood had cut off the city for weeks, possibly months. The most obvious solution was to evacuate the refugees. But evacuation would denude Washington County of its labor supply, particularly sharecroppers. They would have nothing to return to. Most of them had with them on the levee the little they had been able to salvage before the flood washed their homes away. All that remained were their debts to the planters. It could take years to replace the croppers. They might never be replaced...

flooding, lootings and break-ins were reported in other cities, including Baton Rouge.

-Bloomberg, September 1

[Visitor Erin O’Shea said] in the aftermath of Katrina, an intelligence network sprouted on the largely deserted streets of New Orleans letting looters know where the best pickings were. “It’s all hush hush, word of mouth thing. We’ve been finding out just by traveling around.”

-AFP, August 31

In Lumberton [Mississippi], officials said looting has become a problem – with people breaking into Lumberton High School’s cafeteria Wednesday night and also into the Jiffy Express to take cigarettes. In Hattiesburg, where officers have been fighting looting and enforcing a curfew, officials have tried all week to find out when or if the city will get more help from other law enforcement agencies or from the National Guard.

-The Hattiesburg American, September 2

They said mass looting is constant in [Gretna].

-Holly Hatten, Times-Picayune, September 2

We are survivors who live here. We can take care of ourselves.

-61 year-old Karen Watt, September 12

Before the supplies were pitched off the bridge today, people had to break into buildings in the area to try to find food and water for their families. There was not enough. This spurred many families to break into cars to try to escape the city. There was no police response to the auto thefts until the mob reached the rich area – Saulet Condos – once they tried to get cars from there... well then the whole swat teams began showing up

with rifles pointed. Snipers got on the roof and told people to get back.

-Interdictor Blog, September 1

A woman at the city’s convention center says... the thugs and the criminals are the ones who saved her from her flooded neighborhood, using a stolen speedboat and moving truck. At the Superdome, another Katrina evacuee says the looters have been distributing food to the evacuees there. Otherwise, he says, they’d starve. Some looters have been anxious to show they need what they’re taking. A gray-haired man at a Rite-Aid pulled up his T-shirt to show a surgery scar and explained that he needs pads for incontinence. Another man showed a reporter toothpaste, tooth brushes and deodorant.

-AP, September 2

Earlier, a CNN crew saw looters leave the mall carrying filled Gucci and Brooks Brothers bags.

-KLTU, September 2

We came across five seemingly unsavory characters. One had scars from what seemed to be gunshot wounds. We found these guys at a two-story recreational complex... They broke into the center and tried to rustle as many people as possible from the neighborhood into the center. These guys stayed outside in the center all day, getting everyone out of the rec center onto boats. We approached them at approximately 6:30pm, obviously one of the last trips of the day, and they sent us further into the neighborhood to get more people out of homes and off rooftops instead of getting on themselves. This at the risk of their not getting out and having to stay in the water for an amount of time.

These five guys were on the last boat out of the neighborhood at sundown. They were incredibly grateful... When we got them to the dock, they offered us an Allen Iverson jersey off of one of their backs as a gesture of gratitude, which was literally probably the most valuable possession among them all.

-Robert LeBlanc, Jr., September 3

Doug Mittelstaedt, vice-president of Human Resources for Children's Hospital in New Orleans, said one of the biggest issues at the hospital on Wednesday was debunking the prevalent rumor that looters had stormed the hospital.

-Times-Picayune, August 31

Up to 500 Florida airboat pilots have volunteered to rescue Hurricane Katrina victims, transport relief workers and ferry supplies. But they aren't being allowed in... "We cannot get deployed to save our behinds," said Robert Dummett, state coordinator of the Florida Airboat Association. He said the pilots, who range from commercial airboat operators to weekend pleasure boaters, "are physically sick, watching the New Orleans coverage and knowing that the resources to help these poor people is sitting right in our driveways." On standby since Monday, the pilots – many from Central Florida – have spent thousands of their own dollars stocking their boats and swamp buggies with food, water, medical supplies and fuel. But... FEMA will not authorize the airboaters to enter New Orleans. Without that permission, they would be subject to arrest... [According to a FEMA official,] "Right now, private citizens trying to go into those impacted areas are more hindrance than help."

-Orlando Sentinel, September 2

Right now I'm staying at my parent's place 25 miles up the Mississippi from New Orleans, listening to WWL (conservative talk-radio/local emergency broadcasting station), and one caller who was hunkering down Uptown... reported that he and other folks in his neighborhood have been collectivizing all available resources (food, water, clothes, etc) and have been doing "excellent." His tone sounded empowered and excited, and his only concern was the call from on high for martial law, fearing that the military soldiers and cops would be hostile. Another caller in Algiers Point neighborhood... complained of police harrassing, and even shooting in the direction of, the neighborhood children who would leave to scavage for relief drop-offs, accusing them of being "looters."

-"workweek" on anti-politics.net forum, September 4

In an extreme act of looting, one group actually stole a bus to escape ravaged areas in Louisiana. About 100 people packed into the stolen bus. They were the first to enter the Houston Astrodome... Randy Nathan, who was on the bus, said they were desperate to get out of town. "If it weren't for him right there," he said, "we'd still be in New Orleans underwater. He got the bus for us." Eighteen-year-old Jabbar Gibson jumped aboard the bus as it sat abandoned on a street in New Orleans and took control. "I just took the bus and drove all the way here... seven hours straight," Gibson admitted. "I hadn't ever drove a bus." The teen packed it full of complete strangers and drove to Houston.

-KRGVTV, September 1

The displaced then endured months of agonizing mistreatment in trying to receive compensation for what they'd lost at the hands of the city's rulers. The city ended up paying far less than half of what they had promised in reparations; and most of what was paid went – in huge chunks – to industrialists who were friends with New Orleans banks. Nonetheless, these filthy thieves masterminded a massive media campaign to convince the world that New Orleans was safe (had never even been threatened!) and was saved by those in charge making the right decisions.

'Of Course Without Any Legal Right'

"Nothing could be more interesting, so far as racial study goes, than to see five or six thousand free Negroes working on a weak point [in the levee] under ten or twelve white men, without the slightest friction and of course without any legal right to call upon them for the work, and yet the work is done not out of any feeling of obligation but out of a traditional obedience to the white man."

-Senator LeRoy Percy, Greenville, MS

"Police and Guardsmen impressed every black male they saw and sent them to the protection levee." The levee began to collapse late in the night.

"The water was just rolling, like an ocean wave... It struck the way the sea strikes against rocks, with violence, roaring, shooting up waves 12 and 15 feet high, jumping over the levee, sweeping up sandbags, backing up and rising higher... Still deeper water was coming. Most workers ran."

The Guardsmen trained their guns on the remaining Black workers and forced them to continue, "*working as the swells washed over them, washed away the sandbags, washed over the levee.*"

Who Decides who is Dead?

"Thousands of workers were frantically piling sandbags... when the levee caved. It was impossible to recover the bodies swept onward by the current at an enormous rate of speed... Refugees declare there is not the slightest doubt in their minds that several hundred Negro plantation workers lost their lives."

The only official account, that of the National Guard officer at the crevasse site, stated only, "*No lives were lost among the Guardsmen.*"

of Civil War. But the board had extraordinary powers (and “operates today with many of those powers”).

“First, every day the city deposited *all* the money it collected in taxes in the board’s bank accounts. The board paid off whatever notes and interest were due, then gave any money left over to the city government. In the 1920s, payments on bonds absorbed between 39 and 45 percent of all city taxes, leaving little for the city to spend on anything else.

Second, the city could issue no bonds - not for schools, for roads, not for lighting - without the board’s consent.

But the most extraordinary aspect of the board was its composition. It had nine members: the mayor and two councilmen served *ex officio*, while six ‘syndicate’ members, who made all real decisions, served for life. And the board was ‘self-perpetuating.’ When a syndicate member died or resigned, surviving syndicate members picked a successor...

Between 1908 and 1971 only twenty-seven men served as syndicate members; *virtually all were either bankers or bank directors.*”

‘Fine Families’ and Dynamite

“The fine families, as if on a picnic, traveled down to see the great explosion that would send dirt hundreds of feet high and create a sudden Niagara Falls. Cars jammed the road down to St. Bernard, and yachts crowded the river.

But not just anyone could witness the explosion. It required a official permit. The men who had decided to dynamite the levee controlled those permits. Residents of St. Bernard could not witness the destruction of the levee, and their parish.

As New Orleans writer Lyle Saxton noted: ‘Only the privileged with their official permits could pass the National Guard... They came in automobiles, boats, and aeroplanes, eager for the big show.’”

‘We’re letting ‘em do it’

“[St. Bernard Parish Sheriff L.A. Meraux,] stood on the levee in his laced boots and riding breeches with his revolver in his holster, talking quietly to a group of reporters. ‘We’re letting ‘em do it because we can’t stop ‘em. You can’t fight the Government. I have a hell of a time trying to get my people to see that. A lot of them don’t see it yet. They wanted to tell the state of Louisiana to come ahead and cut the levee - but it would be cut over their dead bodies first. We managed to talk them out of that for their own good... And we haven’t got a line in writing of any guarantee that we’re going to get anything back... Gentleman, you have seen today the public execution of this Parish.’”

[Television showed] some kids stole some mail trucks and rode them out of nola. Then the cops caught them. And there was a picture with them lying on the ground with guns pointed at them.

-“*sad*” on *anti-politics.net forum*, September 4

A boy ran out from a petrol station on Lee Circle clutching boxes of chocolate bars, followed by an elderly man carrying all the cigarettes his arms could hold. He flashed a half-toothed smile and declared “Everything’s cool,” offering a pack as a gift.

-*The Guardian*, September 1

Those boys from down in the river parish in their flat boats came to help. Nobody told them nothing. They just jumped in their flat boats. That’s the boys who just like to fish for fun, and they were picking people up, picking people up.

-*Harold’ interviewed in City Pages (Minneapolis)*, September 20

Some hotels, like the Royal Sonesta, have a few employees guarding them. Others, like the St. Louis across the street, have been abandoned and taken over by the homeless.

-*The Star-Ledger (New Jersey)*, September 4

I never felt threatened and I walked around the entire [Superdome]... I was talking to people, administering first aid. But people were ready to get out of there.

-*Dr. Kevin Stephens*, September 4

Groups of rich and poor banded together in the French Quarter, forming “tribes” and dividing up the labor. Jack Jones... continues to boil his clothes in vinegar and dip water out of neighbors’ pools for toilet flushing and bathing. “They may have to shoot me to get me out of

here,” he said. “I’m much better off here than any place they might take me.”

-*AP*, September 4

Yes, wealthy people feasted on steak and quaffed warm champagne in the days after the storm. But many who stayed behind were the working poor – residents of the cramped spaces above the restaurants and shops. Tired of waiting for trucks to come with food and water, residents turned to each other. Johnny White’s... has become more than a bar. Along with the warm beer and shots, the bartenders passed out scrounged military Meals Ready to Eat and bottled water to the people who drive the mule carts, bus the tables and hawk the T-shirts that keep the Quarter’s economy humming. “It’s our community center,” said Marcie Ramsey, 33.

-*AP*, September 4

We decided we had to save ourselves. So we pooled our money and came up with \$25,000 to have ten buses come and take us out of the City. Those who did not have the requisite \$45.00 for a ticket were subsidized by those who did have extra money. We waited for 48 hours for the buses, spending the last 12 hours standing outside, sharing the limited water, food, and clothes we had.

-*Larry Bradshaw and Lorrie Beth Slonsky*, September 6

A few blocks away, a dozen people in three houses got together and divided the labor. One group went to the Mississippi River to haul water, one cooked, one washed the dishes. “We’re the tribe of 12,” 76-year-old Carolyn Krack said as she sat on the sidewalk with a cup of coffee, a packet of cigarettes and a box of

pralines. The tribe, whose members included a doctor, a merchant and a store clerk, improvised survival tactics. Krack, for example, brushed her dentures with antibacterial dish soap.

-AP, September 4

I heard today, that [police] pulled over a Kentwood water truck which was being driven by four survivors and had nearly 15 people in the back, including pregnant women. They admitted that they had stolen the truck, but were simply using it to escape.

-New Orleans Yacht Club, September 3

What we witnessed were the real heroes and sheroes of the hurricane relief effort: the working class of New Orleans. The maintenance workers who used a fork lift to carry the sick and disabled. The engineers, who rigged, nurtured and kept the generators running. The electricians who improvised thick extension cords stretching over blocks to share the little electricity we had in order to free cars stuck on rooftop parking lots. Nurses who took over for mechanical ventilators and spent many hours on end manually forcing air into the lungs of unconscious patients to keep them alive. Doormen who rescued folks stuck in elevators. Refinery workers who broke into boat yards, "stealing" boats to rescue their neighbors clinging to their roofs in flood waters. Mechanics who helped hot-wire any car that could be found to ferry people out of the City. And the food service workers who scoured the commercial kitchens improvising communal meals for hundreds of those stranded.

-Larry Bradshaw and Lorrie Beth Slonsky, September 6

In the morning, I was like, "I have to get my children and my mother-in-law." With 17 feet of water, they weren't going to survive. So I stole a van... In the midst of me stealing that van, as my family was loading up, they had a lot of other families, elderly people, in the hotel, and they wanted to get in the van. But we didn't have enough room to put everybody in. So they had like a couple SUVs and another van, and I stole them, too. Then the people and their families drove the van out of the hotel. This was my first time ever stealing a car... I got five cars altogether. One SUV Yukon, two 15-passenger vans, and two Ford Explorers. I had to start the cars for people. A couple of them knew how to start them once I popped it up for them. I loaded up my family and I left.

-Derrick Tabb interviewed in City Pages (Minneapolis), September 20

We now numbered several hundred. We held a mass meeting to decide a course of action. We agreed to camp outside the police command post. We would be plainly visible to the media and would constitute a highly visible embarrassment to the City officials. The police told us that we could not stay. Regardless, we began to settle in and set up camp.

-Larry Bradshaw and Lorrie Beth Slonsky, September 6

Our small group retreated back down Highway 90 to seek shelter from the rain under an overpass. We debated our options and in the end decided to build an encampment in the middle of the Ponchartrain Expressway on the center divide, between the O'Keefe and Tchoupitoulas exits. We reasoned we would be visible to everyone, we

Who Decides Who Dies?

"No one protested against the enormity of the act... It was illegal, and it would destroy the livelihoods of thousands of people. Nor had anyone questioned the authority, right or ability of those in the meeting to perform this illegal act."

The Good General's Recommendation

There had been discussions earlier than 1927 about how to deal with the risk of the Mississippi flooding New Orleans. Five years earlier (Aug. 1922), a group of people put pressure on the US Government to build "spillways," which would allow the river to safely run-off to places that wouldn't damage life or property.

General Beach, head of the Army Corps of Engineers told a group of concerned New Orleans businessmen and bankers,

"If it were my property, I would rather blow a hole in a levee, and let the water take care of itself, rather than [pay to] build [a spillway] and pay \$250,000 a year continually in interest charges [for bonds] and the additional cost of maintenance."

So, despite the lack of actual risk, on April 15th, 1927 the manager of the New Orleans Dock Board, Association of Commerce, and a handful of bank presidents held an emergency meeting and discussed seriously the idea of dynamiting the levees south of New Orleans.

"No one protested against the enormity of the act... It was illegal, and it would destroy the livelihoods of thousands of people. Nor had anyone questioned the authority, right or ability of those in the meeting to perform this illegal act. Nor, although they had been discussing the most public business, business that involved federal, state, city and parish governments, had anyone protested the fact that no public official had been present."

This gang of six white men was able to persuade the Mayor, the Governor, and the War Department to approve the inundation of St. Bernard and Plaquemines Parish for over four months.

The 27 Most Powerful Men of New Orleans

That this group of half a dozen or so bankers and businessmen felt they ought to control city policy is not surprising – they *quite literally* were in charge.

In 1880, New Orleans bankers created the 'Board of Liquidation of the City Debt,' nominally to pay off the debt brought about as a result



As the 1927 flood crest of the Mississippi river flowed further south, it threatened to completely drown the city of New Orleans. Weeks before the flood was due to make its way to the Gulf of Mexico, the water level in New Orleans was *at the height* of the levees – the pressure was so intense that spouts of water shot up from underground and onto the city streets. People panicked.

With businesses initiating massive liquidation sales and college mothers and fathers urging their children to evacuate the city immediately, the city’s wealthy elite began to worry. As a port and tourism city, the *reputation* being created by the threat of a flood could devastate trade, investment, and tourism. In other words, those with the most capital feared a massive loss in wealth as a result of damage to the city *or threat of damage*.

In reality, the chances that the flood would reach the city were slim. The levees in northern Mississippi had already given way to the river and inundated thousands of acres of land. Many hundreds of miles more of levees were expected to collapse as the flood progressed. With each new breach, the total volume of water headed to the gulf would be less, and thus the threat to New Orleans would be much less. As it turned out, the levees north of New Orleans most certainly gave way, which would have spared the city from damage. But actual physical safety is not the same as actual *profit*. The city might survive, but will it continue to fatten the pockets of the fat cats?

All following text in quotes is pulled directly from John Barry’s, *Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America*. 1997, Simon & Schuster’s.

would have some security being on an elevated freeway and we could wait and watch for the arrival of the yet to be seen buses. The only way across the bridge was by vehicle. We saw workers stealing trucks, buses, moving vans, semi-trucks and any car that could be hotwired. All were packed with people trying to escape the misery New Orleans had become. Our little encampment began to blossom. Someone stole a water delivery truck and brought it up to us. Let’s hear it for looting! A mile or so down the freeway, an army truck lost a couple of pallets of C-rations on a tight turn. We ferried the food back to our camp in shopping carts. Now secure with the two necessities, food and water; cooperation, community, and creativity flowered. We organized a clean up and hung garbage bags from the rebar poles. We made beds from wood pallets and cardboard. We designated a storm drain as the bathroom and the kids built an elaborate enclosure for privacy out of plastic, broken umbrellas, and other scraps. We even organized a food recycling system where individuals could swap out parts of C-rations (applesauce for babies and candies for kids!). Flush with the necessities, we offered food and water to passing families and individuals. Many decided to stay and join us. Our encampment grew to 80 or 90 people.

-Larry Bradshaw and Lorrie Beth Slonsky, September 6

[In the Superdome,] evacuees broke into the suites, commissary areas and into offices looking for food.

-Doug Thornton, superdome manager, September 7

Two community centers have risen out of this storm. Both are old

wooden pubs. One is Molly’s at The Market on Decatur Street; the other is Johnny White’s on Bourbon Street. The former is open every day from 11am-6pm, and serves as a place for people to get together to exchange knowledge and resources. The latter does this too, but has evolved into a kind of shelter/supply depot/first aid station. “We are the community center. It started out as just a bar and then people started bringing food here. People started bringing clothes and water. Suddenly, it became a soup kitchen and a homeless center,” said Johnny White’s bartender Joe Bellamy... Many of the supplies are donated by residents. It is common, when a person decides to evacuate, for them to drop off their useful belongings to one of these centers. In the last few days... much of what comes in has been “looted”... On a typical day, the tavern provides services for dozens of residents, and until recently was one of the only places where people could receive first aid, administered by... volunteers. Hamilton’s efforts include stitching up an ear with a sewing needle and fishing line. “It doesn’t matter if you’re gay, straight, no matter race, religion, no matter what your personal beliefs are, you come in and need some food, you’re getting it. You need some water, you’re getting it,” said Bellamy.

-David Van Deusen, *Infoshop News*, September 12

All told, about 7,000 prisoners spread among 10 Orleans Parish Prison lockups found themselves surrounded by rising floodwaters... numerous deputies and inmates... described a chaotic scene in which inmates set fires, breached walls and jumped from smashed windows into more than six feet of water... “In the

evacuation, many of the inmates removed their arm bands and used assumed names when they were booked into facilities outside of Orleans Parish"... Deputies were forced to virtually abandon Templeman III because of high water and a variety of security breaches by inmates... Inmates used metal benches and shower rods as battering rams to break windows and shatter cinder block walls... Dozens broke out and jumped into the murky floodwaters... [A commander said,] "Hundreds of inmates got out of that building. It was deep water and they (inmates) swam right through it. Deputies were picking them and, just as fast as they grabbed them, they had to go back and get more. We don't know about the ones who got over the fences, but we're lucky the number was as small as it was."

-Times-Picayune, November 18

The first suspect locked up at Camp Greyhound, the temporary jail built in the New Orleans bus terminal... unwittingly walked smack dab into the hands of the law, police say. "He drove up in a stolen Enterprise rental car to buy a bus ticket," Louisiana State Penitentiary Warden Burl Cain said.

-Times-Picayune, September 9

Kenneth Corner of Uptown was picked up for public drunkenness. "If I don't leave my house, who is going to feed me?" said Corner, who was slouched in a plastic bus station seat with his wrists handcuffed behind him.

-Times-Picayune, September 9

People waded through waist-deep water on the way to loot the Shell station at S. Jefferson Davis Parkway and Tulane Avenue. Three people

even trudged through the water pulling a blue and white boat down Tulane, apparently to make it easier to haul goods away from the station's convenience store. And they weren't the first to get there. Minutes before, a pair of teenagers floated two rubber trash cans full of beer, hard liquor and other plunder toward the S. Jeff Davis overpass over I-10. When they reached dry roadway on the span, they abandoned the garbage cans and carried the contents away in blue plastic bags. One of the young men even shucked a pair of wet jeans when they fell to his ankles and walked away in a red bathing suit.

-Times-Picayune, August 29

One man used a plank to paddle away down Perdido Street perched atop a large square of roofing. He rowed off with two 40-ounce cans of malt liquor sitting behind him and a broad smile on his face. At a Walgreen's drug store in the French Quarter, people were running out with grocery baskets and coolers full of soft drinks, chips and diapers. When police finally showed up, a young boy stood in the door screaming, "86! 86!" – the radio code for police – and the crowd scattered. Around the corner on Canal Street, the main thoroughfare in the central business district, people sloshed headlong through hip-deep water as looters ripped open the steel gates on the front of several clothing and jewelry stores. One man, who had about 10 pairs of jeans draped over his left arm, was asked if he was salvaging things from his store. "No," the man shouted, "that's EVERYBODY'S store."

-AP, August 30

APPENDIX



city officials have already stated that they don't intend to rebuild a number of the hardest hit areas. The housing that is currently livable has seen a rent increase of 200-300%; landlords forge ahead with thousands of evictions, posting notices on empty apartments and dumping tenant's possessions on the curb before evictees even know what happened. The majority of the city remains an official 'dead zone' without electricity, grocery stores, trash removal, and other basic services. In these areas 2,000 military police officers, leftover from the earlier state of martial law, enforce an 8pm-6am curfew. Only the curfew-free French Quarter and several wealthy (mostly white) neighborhoods function.

The economies of Houston, Atlanta, Baton Rouge, and San Antonio absorbed the relocated (belatedly evacuated) hurricane survivors. Work crews from Mexico, Central and South America, Haiti, Russia, and Thailand now keep the city ticking. The Port of New Orleans wheels and deals and the French Quarter glows again. The underclass hasn't been *eliminated* – such an act would be suicide for the wealthy – just recomposed, disoriented, unsteadied, and tranquilized. The city appears alien, but the machinery and social relations remain unchanged.

.....

What could we beg of FEMA, the military, Halliburton, and the bastards running the city? Should we tell them not to bulldoze homes that soaked in 20 feet of water for weeks? Should the projects' residents demand back their normally decrepit apartments and police and drug-ridden neighborhoods? And if we succeed in getting the city 70% black once again, the tourist industry can still sell 1850's White Supremacy in the Quarter every night. Mardi Gras, an unquestioned multi-million dollar industry, will go on – if we, the disparate underclass, let it.

Katrina ought to have taught us that waiting for 'the authorities' to act is suicide.¹¹ Left to their own devices, our rulers will squash us again and again to mold the society they want. Now we must *choose* to act for ourselves and turn our backs to the systems of power and brutality that control our world.

Surely shouting demands to deaf ears is worse than doing nothing at all.¹²

¹¹ "One of the lessons we learned from Katrina is that the government abandoned us, left us here to die. We had to depend upon ourselves to save ourselves. And today we know we have to depend on ourselves and our unity to rebuild our homes and our lives, even against the government's wishes," Malcolm Suber, January 16, 2006

¹² And, if we insist on demanding, let's ram a pencil into their ears if they don't respond accordingly!

Some groups organized themselves into assembly lines to more efficiently cart off goods.

-Times-Picayune, August 30

Looters went to extraordinary means to get into the Rite Aid drug store on Carrollton Avenue and Oak Street in Uptown New Orleans, where metal storm doors were rolled shut on the doors and windows. Looters commandeered a fork lift, which they used to ram into the metal and peel open the protective covering to get inside the store... After much of the store had been emptied, a pair of looters carrying handfuls of candy and chips stopped briefly to talk to a newspaper reporter. "They still have some canned foods in there if you want some."

-Times-Picayune, August 31

A group of reporters and photographers stumbled on a parade of looters streaming from Coleman's Retail Store... The looters, who were men and women who appeared to be in their early teens to mid-40s, braved a steady rain and infrequent tropical storm wind gusts to tote boxes of clothing and shoes from the store. Some had garbage bags stuffed with goods. Others lugged wardrobe-sized boxes or carried them on their heads. The line going to and from the store along Earhart Boulevard numbered into the dozens and appeared to be growing. Some looters were seen smiling and greeting each other with pleasantries as they passed. Another group was seen riding in the back of a pickup truck, honking the horn and cheering. The scene also attracted a handful of curious bystanders, who left the safety of their homes to watch the heist.

-Times-Picayune, August 29

[Ms. Taylor] describes fleeing her first-floor apartment on Monday, when the water had risen almost to her shoulders, and wading to the local school. "We were fortunate because we had the school kitchens, so we got all the food they was looting and cooked it," she recalls with a brief smile.

-The Independent (UK), September 4

Carmaine Neville, local jazz and funk singer, described her experience of evacuating her 9th Ward home, rescuing neighbors to a school in a flatboat, finding food and feeding people, seeing many, many dead bodies, boating people to the Quarter and eventually 'stealing' a bus to drive these folks out of town.

-"Katrina and the State," New Orleans Indymedia, September 8

Nobody is giving orders. There are enough people that know what needs to be done and we talk it over.

-French Quarter resident David Richardson summing up the "spirit of self-reliance," September 12

Not until Wednesday morning did more helicopters appear. Quigley and other volunteers tried to get the attention of the numerous helicopters they could see hovering over the city... As the hours and days wore on and no help came, floodwaters continued to rise. Medication and supplies ran out. Quigley says he saw no National Guard, local or state police or security forces of any kind. Around midday on Thursday, air boats operated by private volunteers began arriving and taking four or five persons at a time. The remaining hospital patients and staff – approximately 2000 people – were evacuated by citizen volunteers.

-Raw Story, September 5



fell away or detonated. Exhausted mothers in the convention center, ghetto youth firing at rescue helicopters, prisoners clawing their way out of cells, grandpas chest-deep in water in attics, and 'respectable citizens' stealing buses all saw through the bullshit of American life. These moments were brilliantly authentic - perhaps even more so due to how carefully they've been hidden from us.

A population left to starve in putrid conditions taught themselves how to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, rescue the trapped, heal the wounded, and tend to the dead - all while practicing unprecedented levels of collective self-defense and even attack. A grand supersession of the United States government!

Within two days of these tendencies developing, people were brutally and repeatedly punished. Swarms of tens of thousands of soldiers attacked and locked-down the city, even sealing parish borders, to protect the state and corporate infrastructure, reestablish themselves as experts, and ultimately write themselves into the story as saviors of the mostly black populace.

Rather than seizing an opportunity to make a profound departure from being ruled and 'protected' from above, we concede our rulers 'finally did what they're supposed to do.' But it's the desperate and oppressed people who 'finally did what they're supposed to do!'

In times of crisis, the conservative scrambles to contain the underclass and milk them for labor. The liberal reassures us that only these exceptional circumstances warrant a temporary break from the aforementioned dairy farm. The Communist shamelessly insists such a

Minutes after the hurricane made landfall, an MSNBC news van filmed hundreds of people filing in and out of the back doors of a supermarket with boxes of goods.

NOPD already had a reputation for corruption, but I am telling you now that the people we've been talking to say they are not recognizing the NOPD as a legitimate authority anymore.

-*Interdictor Blog, August 31*

More from the Police Officer: The people in the city are shooting at the police. They're upset that they're not getting help quickly enough. Over 30 officers have quit over the last 3 days. Out of 160 officers in his district maybe 55 or 60 are working. He hasn't seen several since Sunday. HQ is closed, evacuated. No phones to contact them.

-*Interdictor Blog, September 1*

In case anyone in national security is reading this, get the word to President Bush that we need the military in here NOW. The Active Duty Armed Forces. Mr. President, we are losing this city. I don't care what you're hearing on the news. The city is being lost. It is the law of the jungle down here. The command and control structure here is barely functioning. I'm not sure it's anyone's fault - I'm not sure it could be any other way at this point. We need the kind of logistical support and infrastructure only the Active Duty military can provide. The hospitals are in dire straights. The police barely have any capabilities at this point. The National Guard is doing their best, but the situation is not being contained... Please get the

military here to maintain order before this city is lost.

-*Interdictor Blog, September 1*

As he came down the road, elderly people gave thanks and some nearly fainted with joy. [Police Superintendent] Compass also warned that if anyone did anything disruptive, the troops would have to stop distributing the food and water and get out.

-*AP, September 2*

CNN said the police force, which has been hit by a wave of resignations, didn't want to enter the [Convention] center because they were being shot at.

-*Bloomberg, September 2*

All week long we had been told, you're a police officer, and once you go active we're going to be on active duty for the remainder. Make sure that your families are out and your houses are taken care of, because we can't have you worrying about your family, your house, your dog, and be a police officer. That made sense to me. But a lot of people were like, fuck this, I've got to go with my family. So they left.

-*NOPD officer Dumas Carter interviewed in City Pages (Minneapolis), September 20*

I had an altercation with a police officer and he ended up just crying to me because he was so frustrated.

-*Tourist Joanne Miller, AAP, September 2*

I spoke to some Federal Marshals and NOPD. Morale is LOW. Very low.

-*Interdictor Blog, September 2*

A CNN television crew accompanying New Orleans police officers on a nighttime patrol into the

flood-ravaged housing projects, broadcast footage of officers hiding behind walls under a hail of gunfire from the darkness.

Military and police officials have said there are several large areas of the city are in a full state of anarchy... Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and police helicopters filled the city sky Friday morning. Most had armed soldiers manning the doors. According to Petty Officer 3rd Class Jeremy Grisham, a spokesman for the amphibious assault ship Bataan, the vessel kept its helicopters at sea Thursday night after several military helicopters reported being shot at from the ground... Numerous soldiers also told Army Times that they have been shot at by armed civilians in New Orleans... Spc. Cliff Ferguson of the 527th Engineer Battalion pointed out that he knows there are plenty of decent people in New Orleans, but he said it is hard to stay motivated considering the circumstances. "This is making a lot of us think about not reenlisting," Ferguson said.

-Army Times, September 2

Hours before Hurricane Katrina hit, [NOPD] Captain Jimmy Scott... steered his cruiser slowly through Mid-City and a dirt-poor housing project in Treme, just beyond the French Quarter: "It was just dead calm. Quiet. You wouldn't think the worst storm in the history of the country was about to hit. People were sitting on stoops. Thousands of them. They weren't going anywhere. They couldn't go anywhere..." When the storm passed, and the water rose, the shooting began. It was open season on the cops from the First District. After they started

taking incoming fire from Treme... the First District sloshed around their flooded police station and started firing back. As the gun battles raged, one of Scott's officers grabbed a sheet and painted "Fort Apache" on it, hanging the sheet from a second-floor window of the drab, squat, three-story First District police station on North Rampart Street. The officers were surrounded by flooded streets, downed power lines, abandoned cars, and a determined enemy... [who,] Scott said, relished the chance to exploit police vulnerability after the storm.

-The Boston Globe, September 12

At one point, there's a guy in a stolen Jeep Liberty who's shooting at us with an M16.

-NOPD officer Dumas Carter interviewed in City Pages (Minneapolis), September 20

7:43pm: Southern yacht club still stands.

8:28pm: Unknown people in neighborhood on foot. Neighbors arming selves. No imminent threat.

8:36pm: Southern yacht club burning to the ground.

-New Orleans Yacht Club, August 29

[Firefighters] were forced to abandon efforts to fight a blaze that threatened to consume an upscale riverfront mall on Canal Street, where looters had been seen earlier... Firefighters told CNN the blaze started under "suspicious circumstances." Smoke wafted from the upper floor of the Saks Fifth Avenue store.

-CNN, September 3

They are starting to get closer to heavily populated areas – hotels, hospitals, and we're going to stop it right now.

economic system.¹ The first phase of government response to Hurricane Katrina was slaughter presented as *inaction*;² a mere natural disaster. We were told people had no food or water because those in charge failed to provide any, and people were stranded on rooftops, in attics, on overpasses, in hospitals, and in the Superdome because of a limited rescue capacity – a reasonable enough explanation.

In accepting this explanation, we calm our outrage and silence the vicious hatred that wells inside us when we hear the news: over five thousand dead or missing and thousands more physically and psychologically wounded. Certainly, there's relief in thinking the powerful are simply stupid or ill-prepared.³ It's easier to believe they didn't mean to. It's easier to believe the system you live in is good, just a little flawed.

But donations of food and water were *turned away* by FEMA. Sheriffs wielded shotguns and opened fire on those trying to reach dry land.⁴ A government 'ill-prepared' to feed a desperately hungry population was quite prepared to shoot and arrest those who looted.⁵ The state declared martial law and deployed thousands of soldiers instead of deploying buses, trains, helicopters, boats, and planes.⁶ Careless neglect alone cannot explain this. And for a day or two after the storm, tens of thousands of people strongly felt the Government neglect was *intentional*.

During the crisis, illusions that allowed us to skip along in misery

¹ "In Algiers [Orleans Parish], I believe, approximately around 18 African American males were killed. No one really know what's the overall count. And it was basically murder. It was murder by either the police or by vigilantes that was allowed to run amok." -Malik Rahim, *Democracy Now* radio program, October 24, 2005

² "I think I've told you that I'm into Arab horses. Well, for 3 years Michael Brown was hired and then fired by our IAHA, the International Arabian Horse Assoc. He was an unmitigated, total fucking disaster. I was shocked as hell when captain clueless put him in charge of FEMA a couple of years ago." -Daily Kos Blog, September 2, 2005

³ "Take whatever idiot they have at the top, give me a better idiot. Give me a caring idiot. Give me a sensitive idiot. Just don't give me the same idiot." -Aaron Broussard, Jefferson Parish President, CBS TV, "The Early Show," September 6, 2005

⁴ "A Gretna Sheriff showed up, jumped out of his patrol vehicle, aimed his gun at our faces, screaming, "Get off the fucking freeway." A helicopter arrived and used the wind from its blades to blow away our flimsy structures. As we retreated, the sheriff loaded up his truck with our food and water." -Larry Bradshaw and Lorrie Beth Slonsky, "Hurricane Katrina – Our Experiences," *EMSNetwork*, September 6, 2005

⁵ "These troops are battle-tested. They have M-16s and are locked and loaded... These troops know how to shoot and kill and I expect they will." -Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco, September 6, 2005. "Mayor Ray Nagin ordered 1,500 police officers to leave their search-and-rescue mission Wednesday night and return to the streets to stop looting" -AP, August 31, 2005

⁶ "School and municipal buses, government-owned vehicles and vehicles provided by volunteer agencies may be used to provide transportation for individuals who lack transportation and require assistance in evacuating." -*Louisiana Disaster Plan* (page 13, paragraph 5), January, 2000. "These [146] buses [documented in a flooded lot under a mile from the Superdome] have 60 or so seats on them. That adds up to an additional 9,000 or so passengers who could have ridden them out of New Orleans ahead of the storm and the flood in one trip." -September 3, 2005, www.JunkYardBlog.net



Shouting at Deaf Ears

BRIEF AND BITTER REFLECTIONS ON A HOLIDAY TURNED DISASTER

We drive through the Lower Ninth Ward, slowly scanning the devastation and grasping for words to try and understand, explain, grieve, change - anything but be overwhelmed. In mid-December, many rubble-filled streets are still closed. And the remaining damaged streets have not been repaired, despite months passing. We only drive by; we can't take in the horrifying sights and smells inside the houses. My friend reaches a terrifying realization. She tells me, "All I can think about is: four months later and more than four billion dollars. Four months later and more than four billion dollars, and still this... still this..." Her words are so acute that we can't help but repeat them to one another.

Turns out, FEMA's budget is more than \$60 billion. And still...

Disasters, like Hurricane Katrina, wipe away the sparkle and shine that conceal a brutally unjust system allowing us to see and feel without distortion. Disasters also create openings where people can demonstrate alternatives to capitalism, white supremacy, and state power. And once these openings are smashed, both left and right maintain that rebuilding a wretched old city offers new hopes.

Pinned to the wall by technological failures, desertion, fatigue, and bureaucracy, the murderers running our society become known. With bells and whistles gone, the wealthy killed to maintain an exploitive

-New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin citing the looters for his ordering the police to suspend search-and-rescue efforts to stop the 'violence,' September 1

I lived in Los Angeles during the Rodney King riots. That was a piece of cake compared to this.

-New Orleans resident Ken Elder, Times-Picayune, August 31

Fourteen contractors were traveling across the Danziger Bridge under police escort when they came under fire, said John Hall, a spokesman for the Army Corps of Engineers.

-AP, September 4

Earlier Wednesday, a roadside bomb struck a convoy of American security guards in the southern city of Basra [Iraq], killing four U.S. contractors.

-NBC, September 7

Although the manpower crisis may have eased, officials acknowledged Sunday that the mental toll of the last week is having lethal repercussions. Sgt. Paul Accardo, a 36-year-old spokesman for the NOPD has committed suicide as has another officer.

-Times-Picayune, September 4

Things are starting to break down now in Jefferson Parish. Refugees are starting to stream in and so is the looting.

-New Orleans Yacht Club, September 1

Jeff parish seals borders. Sheriff Harry Lee orders shoot to kill. Broussard declares himself dictator. Taking parish back by all means available.

-New Orleans Yacht Club, September 1

Once again, at gunpoint, we were forced off the freeway. All the law enforcement agencies appeared threatened when we congregated or congealed into groups of 20 or more.

In every congregation of "victims" they saw "mob" or "riot."

-Larry Bradshaw and Lorrie Beth Slonsky, September 6

The fires are still raging around the perimeter of the [Central Business District]. Not sure how many there are.

-Interdictor Blog, September 6

Another major fire broke out Tuesday, gutting a mansion in the Lower Garden District.

-Times-Picayune, September 7

ATF agents patrolling Algiers saw gunfire coming from an apartment window. Two young men then walked out of the building and were heard chatting about shooting at a helicopter. "They won't be back now," one of them said, according to an affidavit filed in U.S. District Court.

-Times-Picayune, September 7

The stepped-up evacuation came as workers trying to get into the city to restart essential services came under sniper fire. More than 100 officers and seven armored personnel carriers captured a suspect in a housing project who had been firing on workers trying to restore cell phone towers, authorities said. "These cell teams are getting fire on almost a daily basis..." said Capt. Jeff Winn, commander of the police SWAT team.

-AP, September 7

Camp Greyhound has room for 700 suspects. In the past week, 155 came from the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office; 39 were nabbed by Kenner police. New Orleans police brought in 17, and the rest were hauled in by the state attorney general's office, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco,

Firearms and Explosives and the U.S. Marshals Service. Even the Army brought in one of its own, a deserter.

-Times-Picayune, September 9

Lance Madison, 48, booked with eight counts of attempted murder of a police officer, fired at an officer at the intersection of Chef Menteur Hwy. and Downman Rd., and when reinforcements arrived, he shot at them, too, according to the police report of the incident. Madison finally fled and threw his handgun into the Industrial Canal before the cops caught up with him.

-Times-Picayune, September 9

We don't know how long this is going to last.

-New Orleans Deputy Superintendent Warren Riley, September 5

[In St. John the Baptist Parish,] most gas stations and grocery stores that are open have lines of people. Some stores, like Wal-Mart and Winn Dixie, are limiting the number of people allowed inside in order to maintain security and handle crowds.

-Times-Picayune, September 9

Orleans Parish Prison Commissioner Oliver Thomas [said]... that inmates at the prison have rioted, attempted to escape and are now holding hostages... A deputy at the prison, his wife and their four children have been taken hostage by rioting prisoners after riding out the hurricane inside the jail building.

-ABC News, August 30

About 15,000 to 20,000 people who had taken shelter at the convention center to await buses grew increasingly hostile. Police Chief Eddie Compass said he sent in 88 officers to quell the situation at the

building, but they were quickly beaten back by an angry mob.

-AP, September 1

A National Guard military policeman was shot in the leg as he and a man scuffled for the MP's rifle.

-AP, September 2

Looters filled industrial-sized garbage cans with clothing and jewelry and floated them down the street on bits of plywood and insulation as National Guard lumbered by. Mike Franklin stood on the trolley tracks and watched the spectacle unfold. "To be honest with you, people who are oppressed all their lives, man, it's an opportunity to get back at society," he said.

-AP, August 30

Some officers joined in taking whatever they could, including one New Orleans cop who loaded a shopping cart with a Compaq computer and a 27-inch flat-screen television. Officers claimed there was nothing they could do to contain the anarchy, saying their radio communications have broken down and they had no direction from commanders. "We don't have enough cops to stop it," an officer said. "A mass riot would break out if you tried."

-Times-Picayune, August 30

Most officers, though, simply stood by powerless against the tide of law-breakers. One veteran officer said, "It's like this everywhere in the city. This tiny number of cops can't do anything about this. It's wide open."

-Times-Picayune, August 31

The officer was shot by a looter after he and another officer confronted a number of looters at a Chevron store at Shirley and Gen. DeGaulle... One

"It is racist to call American citizens refugees," the Rev. Jesse Jackson said... Members of the Congressional Black Caucus have expressed similar sentiments.

-AP, September 6

The people we're talking about are not refugees. They are Americans and they need the help and love and compassion of our fellow citizens.

-President Bush, September 6

The context doesn't make crime acceptable. It doesn't lessen the very real dangers for military and law enforcement personnel tasked with the daunting job of restoring security. But it doesn't make an entire population "insurgents" either. We often hear the term used by military leaders or politicians to refer to armed entities in Iraq and other war zones overseas. We are talking about fellow American citizens here – in America. Not insurgents. Not refugees. Not enemies. Americans.

-BoingBoing.net, September 3

I remember when the sounds of New Orleans were jazz and people laughing and having a good time. Now the sounds of New Orleans are helicopters and Army vehicles.

-Mayor Ray Nagin, September 7

We must put all our resources into rebuilding these communities.

-NAACP President Bruce Gordon, September 4

However, this was one of the strongest cities in the nation. No

other city matches New Orleans for the culture and music and resistance and community that I heard from regular, everyday folks in that city.

-"Katrina and the State," New Orleans Indymedia, September 8

The Rev. Christopher Colby... in Pass Christian, Miss. [said] "There is such a longing for normalcy. There is such a tremendous power in the nature of everyday life."

-Columbus Dispatch, December 25

We're moving on, we're going to solve these problems... We're beginning to think through how to reconstitute this really important state and city.

-President Bush, September 12

We need to reconstruct the truth, we need to reconstruct families, who are still separated, we need to reconstruct the lives and community of the people of New Orleans, and, finally, we need to reconstruct the city.

-Professional Leftist Jordan Flaherty, September 14

People displaced from their homes because of Hurricane Katrina should be housed close to New Orleans and receive first dibs on the jobs that will be created when the rebuilding process begins.

-Rev. Jesse Jackson, September 5

Chase to open bank branches Sunday

-Times-Picayune headline, September 9

THE RIGHT BOARDS 'EM UP, THE LEFT THREATENS TO PAINT 'EM

Certainly I think the issue of race as a factor will not go away from this equation.

-Rev. Jesse Jackson concerned about his career, CNN, September 2

Meanwhile, Jackson attempted to lift the spirits of evacuees at Baton Rouge's convention center. He spoke to a vast meeting room filled with cots, tents and thousands of people, with a small crowd gathering around him. "Don't give up, and don't give out," he told the amassed victims of Hurricane Katrina. "Help is on the way, and hope is at hand." Then he offered a prayer: "If we have faith, God has the power to see us through. Somehow, someday, we're going to make it. If we hold out and hold on, God will come in the morning."

-Times-Picayune, September 5

The much-promised federal, state and local aid never materialized and the windows at Walgreen's gave way to the looters. There was an alternative. The cops could have broken one small window and distributed the nuts, fruit juices, and bottle water in an organized and systematic manner. But they did not. Instead they spent hours playing cat and mouse, temporarily chasing away the looters.

-Larry Bradshaw and Lorrie Beth Slonsky, September 6

If looting is explainable and acceptable for police, who have all the state's support, it is certainly acceptable for New Orleans residents to meet their desperate needs during the crisis.

-"Katrina and the State," New Orleans Indymedia, September 8

"We deserve better leadership," Jackson said in reference to FEMA officials saying they were not aware of a crisis in New Orleans, since it's been on television for days... Jackson questioned why no African-Americans were a part of Bush's leadership during the hurricane aftermath... "How can blacks be left out of the leadership and trapped into the suffering as we seek some plan for rescue and relocation and relief and reconstruction?" he said.

-WBRZ, September 2

There were many innocent people who left in the direction of the hurricane. No one told them where they should go.

-Hugo Chavez, AP, September 1

Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr., D-Illinois, said too much focus has been placed on the looting, taking away from what should be the priority: getting food, water and stability to the tens of thousands of displaced victims.

-AP, September 2

The government immediately commandeer the necessary resources, such as transportation and shelter, in order to evacuate people from the city and ensure that they have adequate accommodations until it is possible to return to their homes or move on.

-First demand of the Capital City Terminus, "A Southern U.S. Anarchist Statement on the Gulf Coast Disaster," September 2

The People's Committee demands representation on all boards that are making decisions on spending public dollars for relief and reconstruction.

-Third demand of the People's Hurricane Relief Fund, September 20

of the looters reportedly was shot in the arm by an officer during a shootout.

-Times-Picayune, August 30

The police in New Orleans are only patrolling in large armed groups. One spoke of "meeting some resistance," as if the desperate citizens of New Orleans were Iraqi insurgents.

-Alexander Cockburn, August 31

Looters set fire to Oakwood Shopping Center in Terrytown today... The fire was intentionally set in multiple locations by people who apparently went in to loot the mall. Authorities found a ladder on the side of a building and a vent ripped off the roof allowed suspects to gain access, he said.

-Times-Picayune, September 1

Russell witnessed a shootout between police and citizens near the Convention Center that left one man dead in a pool of blood.

-Times-Picayune, September 1

Winn-Dixie's Riverside Market Place on Tchoupitoulas Street was breached in the morning by foragers who broke through a metal security door. Eight police officers in marked cruisers made it to the parking lot by noon, but they had a more pressing problem than people walking off with food and liquor. The officers were rushing to a break-in next door at the Sports Authority, desperate to secure the store's stockpile of guns and ammunition... The cops secured the store with heavy plywood before moving on to other emergencies. At about 2pm, the officers rushed back to disrupt a second break-in at the sporting goods store. An officer in a squad car tried to chase a Bell South utility truck that fled the scene, but

he lost the truck amid fallen trees. Upon surveying the thefts, the officer said the most conspicuous missing items were all the weapons from the store's knife case.

In Biloxi, Miss., people picked through casino slot machines for coins and ransacked other businesses...

One shotgun-toting Third District detective described the looting as "ferocious." New Orleans' homeland security chief, Terry Ebbert, said looters were breaking into stores all over town and stealing guns... At one point, officers stranded on the roof of a hotel were fired at by criminals on the street...

The gun section at a new Wal-Mart had been cleaned out by looters.

-Times-Picayune, August 31

The 1,600-member New Orleans Police Department has fallen to about 1,000.

-Warren J. Riley, NOPD assistant superintendent, September 6

[FEMA] workers in Louisiana have been told to be careful when wearing clothing with the FEMA logo and lettering... an incident at the Joint Field Office on Main Street [in Baton Rouge] prompted the advisory, along with several other threats of violence against FEMA workers and others... In the Baton Rouge incident, someone pulled a knife outside of the office's gates and made threatening comments and gestures... In [New Orleans] the Federal Protective Service has made six arrests for threats against FEMA workers... Workers with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers also have been threatened.

-WBRZ, December 3



CLIMBIN' OUT WINDOWS

*-"New Orleans: The City Disaster Built,"
Communicating Vessels, September 9*

I blame the nature of government in the first place. It's too big, it's too slow, it's too inefficient, it's too bloated, and it's too initiative-stifling to be effective in normal circumstances, much less in a disaster. It's a systemic issue, more than an issue of individual people in government.

-Interdictor Blog, September 4

Just to clear up, Jesse Jackson, LSU was not being racist. At all. You cannot say it's a race thing because if the NAACP was worried about us, they could have chartered planes and dropped us food. So if they gonna blame anybody, they might as well blame white and black politics too.

-Tysuan Harris interviewed in City Pages (Minneapolis), September 20

A hotel in the quarter takes up one three-story wall with Christmas lights. A half-dozen giant green trees made of strings of lights. Red candy-canes and spotlights that make for a snow effect on the wall, complete the picture. This seems strikingly out of place given that not far away there is no electricity whatsoever for mile after mile. But there's not "really" any connection, right? I mean, if the hotel took down their Christmas decorations, it wouldn't make the lights come on anywhere else, would it?

-Taylor Sparrow, December 11

Amidst the horrified shrieks of politicians, police, military and public opinion, specific residents have taken it upon themselves to take care of their own needs... Yet those who are trapped in the city are told to hold back and wait for the authorities to provide relief for them.

Crucially, this devouring pattern of normalcy must be broken. The human condition has become increasingly perilous. We are living in a time which threatens not only to erode the last threads of human endeavor and history, but we are also threatened with the destruction of the natural world. There is something truly cynical about an age which refuses to see a way out of its stingy grime of disaster and subdued dread. The loss of any real sense that we can fight back comes part and parcel with the notion that "nobody ever fights back (or has fought back historically), so why should I?" Beyond the electronic bits of information we are encouraged to consume lies a world that must be remade. The historical record is bursting with examples of ordinary humans (not stars, celebrities or politicians) transcending the bounds of a market society... These instances are springboards that provide a living hope for a potential world of colorful promise.

*-"New Orleans: The City Disaster Built,"
Communicating Vessels, September 9*

In 1965 during Hurricane Betsy, the rumor, though probably a fact, is that the city blew up the levees flooding the 9th ward and Arabi and Chalmette so that the French Quarter would survive. At this time, the 9th ward was increasingly black, but most of Arabi and Chalmette were white. My father's family lost their house during this one. White supremacy doesn't explain it all.

-"kame" on anti-politics.net forum, September 3

**Waverunners seen on new orleans.
Gospel singing in superdome.**

-New Orleans Yacht Club, August 30

*GAZE/IMAGINE/PARTICIPATE/SMILE/BENAU
GHTY/RUBEYES/GAZE/IMAGINE/PARTICIPAT
E/SMILE/BENAUGHTY/RUBEYES/GAZE/IMAGI
NE/PARTICIPATE/SMILE/BENAUGHTY/RUBEY
ES/GAZE/IMAGINE/PARTICIPATE/SMILE/BEN
AUGHTY/RUBEYES/GAZE/IMAGINE/PARTICIP
ATE/SMILE/BENAUGHTY/RUBEYES/GAZE/IMA
GINE/PARTICIPATE/SMILE/BENAUGHTY/RUB*

The [D-day] Museum took minimal storm damage but was broken into by looters.

-Interdictor Blog, September 8

[Amid the looting,] one man with an armload of clothes even asked a policeman, “can I borrow your car?”... Some in the crowd splashed into the waist-deep water like giddy children at the beach.

-AP, August 30

Inside the store, the scene alternated between celebration and frightening bedlam. A shirtless man straddled a broken jewelry case, yelling, “Free samples, free samples over here.” Another man rolled a mechanized pallet, stacked six feet high with cases of vodka and whiskey. Perched atop the stack was a bewildered toddler.

-Times-Picayune, August 31

At an empty lot on Elysian Fields, people are driving in used cars, removing the stickers and selling them themselves.

-Times-Picayune, August 31

In the central business district, a technician dangled on a helicopter skid high above the street, trying to repair the power lines that run downtown near the Mississippi River. A few blocks away on the corner of Chartres and Dumaine streets in the French Quarter, two cross-dressing bicyclists carrying a music box swerved down the street until one of them crashed, opening a nasty gash in his right elbow.

-Times-Picayune, September 5

An AP reporter... in Biloxi, Mississippi, says it “looks like a free-for-all,” as looters come running out of souvenir shops, loaded down with

merchandise. He saw two men riding go-carts taken from an amusement park near the beach.

-AP, August 30

On Thursday, one cell included three men from Syria who were said by police to have been carrying \$14,000 in cash that no one with a badge believed they earned honestly.

-Times-Picayune, September 9

Watching the sordid display and shaking his head in disgust, one firefighter said of the scene: “It’s a fucking hurricane, what are you do with a basketball goal?”

-Times-Picayune, August 30

Last update for the night. Lots of police patrolling in their cars tonight, shining those high intensity spotlights at anyone on the street. The only civilians out are the homeless, one of whom you’ve all seen on the cam day after day – the guy who set up his little stolen clothes shop on the sidewalk under the Pan Am building. We’ve got four regulars out there now – the guy I just mentioned, a drunk who carries a cane and beats on every object he passes, a woman who wears a leather skirt and thinks everyone is a cop and offers herself for arrest, and her man who basically yells at her all day.

-Interdictor Blog, September 4

Then Homeland Sec comes driving by and yells water and hums a 20 ounce at our feet without slowing down. I know I’m not looking too hot right now, but come on. I’m standing out there with my flashlight on in the middle of the road, obviously waiting on a convoy.

-Interdictor Blog, September 2

a bed of broken glass and splintered wood.

-Times-Picayune, September 12

National Guardsmen used armored vehicles to retrieve wads of soggy cash from a flooded-out vault a few blocks from the Superdome... Clark would not say how much money was retrieved by the National Guard unit, which entered the vault on Saturday. Coins were also retrieved. As much as 75 percent of the cash was ruined in the floodwaters, Clark said. He said the money will be destroyed by the Federal Reserve.

-AP, September 15

One guy asked me why we wouldn’t just want to tear down the Dome because it harbors so many bad memories of the storm, but we had 30 years of good memories here before the hurricane. It could be a symbol for the rebuilding of New Orleans, something people could rally around. [But] there is a possibility that they’ve played the last game in the Superdome as we know it.

-Doug Thornton, superdome manager, September 12

The weird junk shops on Decatur St. – that specialize in tasteless t-shirts and other tourist bullshit – now have multiple Katrina T-shirts such as, “Katrina gave me one hell of a blowjob!” and “Katrina – that bitch!”

-Taylor Sparrow, December 11

Relief workers say the people can stay [in Houston’s Reliant Arena] for now – even though aid agencies would prefer the entire complex were cleared by Sunday’s home opener for the NFL Texans.

-AP, September 16

The city of New Orleans has announced that it is creating the nation’s first *citywide* free wireless internet network. As of yet, however, it only works in the 300 block of Royal St., directly in front of the police station.

-Taylor Sparrow, December 11

At one point, the Superdome evacuation was interrupted briefly when school buses rolled up so some 700 guests and employees from the Hyatt Hotel could move to the head of the evacuation line – much to the amazement of those who had been crammed in the stinking Superdome since Sunday. “How does this work? They (are) clean, they are dry, they get out ahead of us?” exclaimed Howard Blue, 22, who tried to get in their line. The National Guard blocked him as other guardsmen helped the well-dressed guests with their luggage.

-AP, September 2

Recipients improperly used their [FEMA issued] debit cards... for \$400 massages, a \$450 tattoo, a \$1,100 engagement ring and \$150 worth of products at “Condoms to Go”... Meanwhile, a one-day “snapshot” investigation found a handful of cases where hurricane victims improperly sold free military foodstuffs known as “Meals Ready to Eat” (MRE’s) on eBay.

-AP, February 14 [2006]

Perhaps they should write their Social Security numbers on their arms with indelible ink.

- Governor Kathleen Blanco to those who faced Hurricane Rita, AP, September 23

New Orleans will reopen one ZIP code at a time.

-AP Headline, September 16

four corners around the Bell South building.

-Interdictor Blog, September 4

Monte Towe, head [basketball] coach of the displaced University of New Orleans, told ESPN.com on Saturday that his best player, sophomore guard Bo McCalebb, is being approached by intermediaries representing other schools to leave the university. "We're a microcosm of the whole city of New Orleans because now someone is trying to loot my players."

-ESPN.com, September 4

Outside the Convention Center... Henry said he was going to 'loot the looters' and was searching for shoes and liquor and was following the trail of debris left by flood victims as they made their way to an evacuation staging area.

-Times-Picayune, September 4

New police command center:
Harrah's Casino
New city jail: Greyhound station

We arrived at the airport on the day a massive airlift had begun. The airport had become another Superdome. We 8 were caught in a press of humanity as flights were delayed for several hours while George Bush landed briefly at the airport for a photo op.

-Larry Bradshaw and Lorrie Beth Slonsky, September 6

[Oprah] Winfrey viewed the 9th Ward and other areas of the flood-ravaged region Sunday with John Travolta, Matthew McConaughey, Chris Rock, Faith Hill, CNN's Anderson Cooper, Jamie Foxx, Lisa Ling, Gayle King, Lisa Marie Presley, Nate Berkus and medical expert, Dr. Oz... Meanwhile,

Oprah's protégé, Dr. Phil McGraw, was in Houston last weekend consoling the thousands of evacuees housed in the Astrodome for an impromptu "town meeting" that was taped for a future "Dr. Phil" show.

-EURweb.com, September 6

The suspects were caged outside. The group of about 50 awaiting transportation to prisons elsewhere were generally quiet Thursday. Some lay on the pavement of the station's parking lot; a few were barefoot. Several called out for help when visitors passed by. "Welcome to New Angola South," said a handwritten sign on the gate leading to the outdoor lockup at Camp Greyhound, a row of 16 cells made of chain-link fencing topped with razor wire. The temporary jail was constructed by inmates from Angola and Dixon state prisons.

-Times-Picayune, September 9

"When we get back together as a city, people will sit in a recliner and watch Saints' games." Houidobre said. "It may take some time, but it will happen."

-Times-Picayune, September 9

On the [Superdome's] suite level, windows were shattered; holes and graffiti marred several walls. Damage to the luxury boxes varied from suite to suite. In one, the liquor cabinets had been broken into and the chairs were rearranged but everything else was unharmed. Down the hall, one of the New Orleans Saints' suites was ransacked. Leather couches were turned over. Holes were punched in the walls and pictures were shattered. A 10-by-18-inch picture of former Saints running back Ricky Williams lay in tatters on

Crews found an oil spill of 68,000 barrels at a Bass Enterprise storage depot in Venice, and another of 10,000 barrels from the Murphy Oil facility in Chalmette. "Everywhere we look there's a spill. It all adds up," he said. "There's almost a solid sheen over the area right now." Besides the petrochemicals and human waste, officials said, the water was surely polluted by a variety of other pollutants, including pesticides and a catalogue of industrial solvents.

-Times-Picayune, September 7

Earlier Friday, an explosion at a warehouse rocked a wide area of New Orleans before daybreak and jolted residents awake, lighting up the sky and sending a pillar of acrid gray smoke over a ruined city awash in perhaps thousands of corpses, under siege from looters, and seething with anger and resentment.

-AP, September 2

From an official source... A lot of the already homeless refused to leave without their shopping carts. So they won't go near the evac centers, even though we have heard reports that the helicopters will now allow people to bring their shopping carts with them.

-Interdictor Blog, September 4

"Why leave?" a bicyclist asked as he poked through refuse along Convention Center Boulevard looking for unopened bottles of water. A Drug Enforcement Agency team on Elysian Fields Avenue encountered two young men who explained their continuing presence in the city very simply: They "live here." "No one lives in this city anymore," one of the heavily armed agents shot back.

-Times-Picayune, September 7

On the corner of Loyola Avenue and Julia Street, just a few blocks from the French Quarter, people emerged from abandoned buildings as the sun began to heat up the floodwater and turn the air to hot soup. Nine out of 10 of these remnants were black. All were destitute, dressed in rags, and carrying what was left of their possessions in plastic bags. They had survived the hurricane and the floods and a terrifying night, and now they were wandering the streets, looking for a way out.

-The Guardian, September 1

At night it's weird to see all these high rises with no light coming from the buildings. No street lights, no traffic lights, the clock on the Whitney Bank building on Poydras and Camp – a widely recognized feature – is stopped. The debris is still everywhere. Cars abandoned all over the place. Abandoned and trashed. And the quiet. Aside from the occasional vehicle, this place has no sound. Every piece of glass that used to be a high rise window which hits the ground can be heard blocks away.

-Interdictor Blog, September 4

If I didn't know better, I'd have thought I was peering through the fence at a concentration camp.

-Denver Post reporter on the evacuee shelter at the Community College of Aurora (Colorado), September 7

Now, in the midst of fun and booze and boobs, you can also find men with automatic weapons and police powers. They stand on the corner and chat with young women leaving the bar. They cruise the quarter in their stylish jeeps. They walk among the crowd as if it were a normal occurrence to bring a soldier to a celebration... A man in a blue

construction helmet stumbles about with a green bucket in his hands. Is he headed home? Is he collecting recyclables for a little bit of cash? Is he just a lunatic? He makes his way over to a payphone and picks up a Corona bottle. Shockingly, he dumps three-quarters of a bottle onto the ground and then just tosses the bottle aside, letting it smash all over the sidewalk... A Latino stands at a payphone and tries to complete a phone call. 7 or 8 gringos swarm around him, a cross between playground bullies and the lynch mob. They hurl epithet after epithet at him. "You fucking bitch! You understand that, don't you? Don't tell me you don't understand that!" "That's why you ought to just get the fuck out of here – just go home, bitch!" they even sling together what little spanish/spanglish they know to really drive the point home: "Chinga

tu madre! Punta! You don't have your punta with you tonight, do you?" despite their undeniable drunkenness, the thrust of the message gets across perfectly well. And, where words fail, they hurl trash at him and spit. Furthermore, they rely on a classic gringo tactic for foreigners and other inferiors – *speak loudly*. In fact, they shout so loudly that they can be heard a block away, and they persist in demeaning this lone immigrant even after he is over 100 yards behind them... A man stops a pair of soldiers walking down Bourbon Street to ask for directions. Performing their duty as servants of the American public, the MPs stand in front of a strip joint, with the neon words "BARELY LEGAL" shining powerfully in the background.

-Taylor Sparrow, December 11

On the Sept. 2 NBC Today Show, a reporter admits the media is over-hyping the danger and they have encountered no violence. The reporter asks a driver of one of many parked buses why they were not picking people up a mere one mile away at the Convention Center. Too dangerous and he promised his wife he wouldn't go into the city, he responded.

New Orleans is probably less violent now than it is on a regular day.

-"kame" on anti-politics.net forum, August 31

When their food ran out in Katrina's wake, the 29-year-old Wood and his companion Erin O'Shea, 28, both normally law abiding teachers from upper New York State, judged it necessary to join the larcenous throngs... But any camaraderie among thieves stopped when Wood whipped out a camera and tried to take pictures of the looting in the Winn-Dixie shop. "This guy was saying, 'Give me your camera or I'm going to beat the crap out of you,'" O'Shea said... "So we took her Star magazine and we got out," Wood said. O'Shea said she and Wood had to return home by Tuesday in time for the start of classes and "I plan on sending a check to the Winn-Dixie for 50 dollars when I get back."

-AFP, August 31

[Jeanette Brase, 76,] never thought she would witness such behavior first-hand, [she] said after seeing looters stream in and out of a local pharmacy: "It's something you hear about and see on TV."

-AFP, August 31

The huge Chevron Refinery in Pascagoula, spared catastrophic

damage by a dike built in the wake of Hurricane Georges, is moving forward with plans to set up a tent city – called Camp Pascagoula – not far from its Bayou Casotte plant. Chevron estimates that from 15 percent to 25 percent of Pascagoula employees – up to 250 people – lost everything to Hurricane Katrina.

-Sun Herald (South Mississippi), September 3

That huge convoy of utility type trucks rolling in appears to MCI. Seems like the tech type stuff is gonna be up and running before the flooding is pumped out and the water is turned on.

-Interdictor Blog, September 4

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld toured a medical facility at New Orleans' international airport. He spoke and shook hands with military and rescue officials but walked right by a dozen refugees lying on stretchers just feet away from him, most of them extremely sick or handicapped.

-Reuters, September 4

Specialists working for the New Orleans Notarial Archives have been stymied in trying to return downtown to rescue some of the most historic documents in the city's history, from original land grants to slave sale records and title records.

-Times-Picayune, September 6

Law enforcement have absolutely lost their minds. Some guy wearing khaki fatigues and black vests which say Police on them have their faces covered in black ski masks and are touting M4-A1s with front hand grips – like they're some kind of Delta Force operators waiting to hit the tire house. They're guarding the



**Kenner is flooded from lake to river –
the malls are gone – it is really bad.**

-Interdicator Blog, August 29

**Bull shark seen on i-10 service rd in
metairie.**

-New Orleans Yacht Club, August 31

MEDIATE/DENY/TECHNOLOGIZE/DISTRACT/S SWIM/ROAM/QUACK/CROUCH/BITE/SNAP/CU
PECTATE/COWER/REPRODUCE/FLIPCHANNE DDLE/FISH/SWIM/ROAM/QUACK/CROUCH/BIT
LS/MEDIATE/DENY/TECHNOLOGIZE/DISTRAC E/SNAP/CUDDLE/FISH/SWIM/ROAM/QUACK/C
T/SPECTATE/COWER/REPRODUCE/FLIPCHAN ROUCH/BITE/SNAP/CUDDLE/FISH/SWIM/ROA
NELS/MEDIATE/DENY/TECHNOLOGIZE/DISTR M/QUACK/CROUCH/BITE/SNAP/CUDDLE/FISH/
ACT/SPECTATE/COWER/REPRODUCE/FLIPCH SWIM/ROAM/QUACK/CROUCH/BITE/SNAP/CU
ANNELS/MEDIATE/DENY/TECHNOLOGIZE/DIS DDLE/FISH/SWIM/ROAM/QUACK/CROUCH/BIT
TRACT/SPECTATE/COWER/REPRODUCE/FLIP E/SNAP/CUDDLE/FISH/SWIM/ROAM/QUACK/C

Word on the radio is that already giant schools of turtles have been seen heading north out of the marshes. Animals have a sixth sense regarding bad weather and know when to head to high, or at least in this case above sea-level. On the TV, they are starting to banter around Cat 5.

-New Orleans Yacht Club, August 27

It is a zoo out there though, make no mistake. It's the wild kingdom... Property rights cannot and are not being enforced.

-Interdictor Blog, September 1

New Orleans Police Department Status: The situation for the NOPD is critical. This is firsthand information I have from an NOPD officer we're giving shelter to. Their command and control infrastructure is shot. They have limited to no communication whatsoever. He didn't even know the city was under martial law until we told him! His precinct (5th Precinct) is under water! UNDER WATER – every vehicle under water. They had to commander moving trucks like Ryder and UHaul to get around... He says the force is impotent right now. They have no idea what's going on, no coordination, virtually no comms, etc. the National Guard is gonna air drop a radio system for them with 200 radios? They are getting very little direction. The 3rd District bugged out to Baton Rouge because they flooded out. His quote: "It's a zoo."

-Interdictor Blog, September 1

We walked the water through the darkness, flashing flashlights on each other to make sure nobody drowned. Oh, that water. Gas, oil, brake fluid,

chains, bodies, snakes – everything. All kinds of snakes.

-Tysuan Harris interviewed in City Pages (Minneapolis), September 20

One evening, I looked out and I saw this movement in this water. We had water moccasins on the ground floor. They were everywhere – on throw pillows, everywhere. They bite you and they're dangerous.

-J. Michael Brown interviewed in City Pages (Minneapolis), September 20

Guys pushing shopping carts with 40 Nike boxes in them. People breaking into cars. Assaulting ATM machines. It's hard just to sit by and do nothing. That's property that belongs to other people and these animals are just taking it... We're getting a guy on cam right now stealing tires from one car and putting them in his car. What a bunch of monkeys.

-Interdictor Blog, August 31

And as the sun set and turned the sky a hazy pink, four horses led by a white stallion burst from the flood waters on Claiborne Avenue and started grazing on the neutral ground on Elysian Fields Avenue.

-Times-Picayune, September 4

Early television images showed a man walking down the aisle of a looted Wal-Mart with a dozen fishing poles resting on his shoulder.

"Hell no, I'm not glad to see them [NG]. They should have been here days ago. I ain't glad to see 'em. I'll be glad when 100 buses show up," said 46-year-old Michael Levy, whose words were echoed by those around him yelling, "Hell, yeah! Hell yeah!" "We've been sleeping on the...

ground like rats," Levy said. "I say burn this whole... city down."

-AP, September 2

"We were trying to get stuff that would sustain us. Some people were going by and they had a plant."

-Looter Erin O'Shea, AFP, August 31

Two dolphins that were swept from their [30-foot-high] aquarium tanks into the Gulf of Mexico by Hurricane Katrina were rescued Thursday, but six others remained at sea... Trainers and scientists hope to catch more of the dolphins on Saturday, but said that may be tougher because the dolphins "get pretty wise to our tricks"... They were spotted Saturday swimming off Gulfport by NOAA scientists conducting an aerial damage survey... Moby Solangi, the [Gulfport, Mississippi] aquarium's owner, said the staff had been worried that the dolphins had died. "We are just thrilled that they have stayed together during the past couple of weeks."

-AP, September 16

The black smoke belching from the roof of one of the city's crown jewels has regrettably stopped. The generator at the Aquarium of the Americas is shot. Its demise signaled the death of scores of gorgeous animals according to stricken workers who moved through the building with miner's lights strapped to their heads. "These were our buddies. We did the best job we could to keep them alive," said John Hewitt IV... Near tears, Hewitt declined to describe the watery tombs inside the aquarium. Most of the fish in the giant shark tank and the Caribbean reef exhibit are feared dead, as well as the tropical sting

rays and other Amazonian fish in the aquarium's rainforest section... Hewitt identified the aquarium's thick green anaconda and white alligators as among the survivors.

-Times-Picayune, September 4

I rode the storm out at my dad's condo by Audubon Zoo and, while it was scary to hear the howling winds, we made out okay... After Katrina blew through we walked around and ran into someone who worked at the zoo. We asked him about the animals and he said that they were all [1,400] safe, except for two sea otters.

-Ernie, Metroblogging New Orleans, September 1

One of [the homeless people] seems to have adopted 3 dogs. We're seeing a lot more stray dogs on the street too. So far they look like they're not starving.

-Interdictor Blog, September 8

Many people had dogs and they cannot take them on the bus. A police officer took one from a little boy, who cried until he vomited. "Snowball, snowball," he cried. The policeman told a reporter he didn't know what would happen to the dog.

-AP, September 1

Every home in New Orleans was broken into by the SPCA, looking for dead or abandoned dogs and cats. The animal-loving do-gooders spray painting big X's on the front wall and marked the amount of dogs and cats found, on what date, by who, etc. at a house on Moss Ave. (~\$300,000-\$500,000 homes along the Bayou St. John) the spray paint reads, "Many ducks, geese and beavers near the river."

-Taylor Sparrow, December 11