

September 4, 2005

KATRINA SHOWED US - WE HAVE LOST SOMETHING IMPORTANT

It's amazing,
But in ways - familiar
It's tragic
But in ways - maybe avoidable
It's a feeling of loss
But not the loss we see, the loss we can no longer feel -
That's what was lost - the feelings
How to feel for one another. We have all lost *that*
When we lost it? Where we lost it? Do we care?
So many of us have said that the people who stayed in the area
Stayed of their own accord
When reminded that over 120,000 people of New Orleans were counted to have no cars
(nearly ONE FOURTH of the city's population)
And almost HALF that population lived below the Federally stated poverty level
Well, when reminded of this, then the blame shifts -
The local governments failed their charges
The U.S. Government neglected to calculate how serious was the issue
But it was WE who failed -
We failed - each of us - no matter our beliefs, our rants and raves
We failed to live lives of caring for each other
We have failed to recognize the great race divide
We are still failing to act as good neighbors
We are relying on the government to do it for us, on our behalf
We have traded our power in exchange for the convenience of things
We have sold out for far less than our votes were worth
We have practically given away our rights as individuals
We have let it all go - way too cheap

It was not just one city
It was the entire Gulf Coast Region
It was hundreds of cities and towns and bergs and suburbs and communities
It was devastation on par with the far east's recent tsunami
It was millions of us - displaced
It was thousands of us - who died
It was light skinned people who foraged the abandoned stores for the goods of survival
It was dark skinned people who looted and stole food
It was light skinned people who were plucked from roof tops and the high ground
It was the dark skinned people who were left stranded when the rescue helicopters failed to return
It was a divide of skin color - and the lack of our caring about that
No medications available
No living assistance devices
Jails forced to either release prisoners or know they played a part in their killing
Hospitals that had to make that same choice
The local police forces reduced by a good 25%
Because their lives had value greater than those armed against them
We, our society, created the social conditions for those who shot the police
It was US who allowed the situations to exist for the police
We let funding for thousands of police melt away as we drove to the stores to shop
We cheered knowing that cutting after school programs would keep more money in our pockets
The twelve oil refineries that produced for the center of the United States?
They are damaged. One is back - running at reduced capacity
Three others may be salvageable
But eight will require complete rebuilding
The pipe lines that carried gasoline and diesel and motor oil
Right up the center of America are broken and full of sea water
Two of the refineries made jet fuel
The airlines' cost per gallon rose 20% overnight
Gas stations are running out of gasoline
Not just in the south and mid west, but in the eastern and western states as well
Product is being re routed from the edges of America to the middle
The gas companies are sharing their supplies in a quick, cooperative and orderly fashion
While we are arguing about who was to blame
Arguing that the people who stayed did so out of defiance
The government is still slow to respond
Still trying to save people who are stranded and starving -
Still - after a WEEK - failing to respond with great force and fervor
Our National Guard is in Iraq protecting a country who can't share it's own power politic
Our Red Cross is there - and in Africa where the U.S. has threatened to cut off aid
Stop funding to any country that passes out condoms for aides prevention
Our Red Cross is still in Sri Lanka - HELPING - because our government had to withdraw
Fall back from helping to keep the insurgents at bay in Iraq
This is what we gave up - what we lost - what we traded for better shopping experiences

And the press -
First to arrive
Their helicopters dropped equipment and people -
(Camera operators, sound recorders with their gear)
Reporters who drank their bottles of water and tossed them aside, half full
They too had dropped from the sky to ask
"What is your story?"
"What do you need?"
"What will you do now?"
Then they all re-boarded the choppers and left - to share *THEIR* experiences of HELL
So the ultimate capitalists - the oil companies - are prepared
The press has it's own act together
And now hear this tale of truth and caring
A few years ago, shortly after another huge hurricane had left the area
The Mormons dispatched a convoy - headed in to help
A well organized group of people who's talents and specialties were known and cataloged
They brought trucks loaded with food, lumber, clothes, bedding and temporary shelters
They helped everyone who was in their path with whatever was needed
They had people from all walks of life, who were capable, caring human beings
They asked for nothing
They did not proselytize
Many they assisted didn't even realize these were Mormons
The FEMA web site lists organizations for money donations (stay away from the area, they warn)
ALL but ONE are Christian fundamentalist groups
The Mormons are not listed
The Mormons are on the move again
We all make fun of - or HAVE made fun of the Mormons (myself included)
We have lost the ability to look beyond the labels and see the people
America leads the World in several ways
America uses more resources than ALL the rest of the World - COMBINED!
America out spends the world
Americans save less than ANY other nation
For those who believe in a God - that God has surely tuned away from us in disgust
For those who believe in the earth - the earth is beginning to treat us as we have treated the earth
For those who believe in our fellow human beings - most of us don't even know our neighbors
For those who believe in nothing - you have finally attained what you sought
We are lost because we blinded ourselves
We are morally bankrupt because we sold our morality to the lowest bidder
It's amazing . . .

© 2005 - ALL RIGHTS RESERVED -
Ray A. Monigold
Unlimited R.A.M. Publishing
Founded in 1946

copy and pass this along to all who wish to read it - for FREE