

An angry letter from New Orleans

3 September 2005

On September 1 the WSWS posted a letter from a New Orleans hospital, forwarded to us by Karen O'Keefe, a Washington, DC-based lawyer. [Letter from New Orleans: tragedy at stranded hospital] Ms. O'Keefe sent the following letter and accompanying message to the WSWS on Friday.

Yesterday, I wrote to you to let you know that my friends were stranded with many, many others in a hospital. Thank you for posting it. I am so relieved to report that they are out of New Orleans now. But, many, many others (including at least one of my good friends) are still stranded there—with little or no water, medications, food, security, and other essentials. The relief response—as we all know—has been scandalously little and late. Now, on top of the disgraceful federal response, the feds are actually preventing individuals from providing desperately needed help. Here is the email I received:

NOLA Denied Food & Water/Get Your Act On Relief

There are supplies sitting in Baton Rouge for the folks in New Orleans, but the National Guard has the city surrounded and is not letting anyone in or out. They are turning away people with supplies, claiming it is too dangerous. ...

This is the message I am now sending to all major media sources, national and worldwide, as well as posting to email lists, blogs, etc. The story is getting out that the people there are not getting supplies, but the truth of WHY is not. Please help spread the word, we must get this story out. Please do not let any more of my friends die.

Here is my message:

I am a resident of the Bywater in New Orleans (9th Ward). I am one of the lucky ones that was able to evacuate before the storm.

I have recently managed to speak to some friends stranded in New Orleans. They are starving and dehydrating and there is no news of when they will be

receiving food and water. I have spoken to relief efforts and understand that there are plenty of supplies waiting for these people, BUT THEY ARE NOT BEING ALLOWED INTO THE CITY.

The National Guard has the city surrounded and is not letting anyone in or out, except the buses being evacuated. The excuse that they cannot bring supplies into New Orleans because of the looting and gun fire is not a valid excuse—if they are too afraid to enter the streets of New Orleans, they need to be air dropping supplies into the city. If the United States is capable of sending planes that can withstand enemy fire to drop bombs in Iraq, certainly they are capable of air dropping supplies into a city where the worst of the gunfire they could encounter would be from semi-automatics.

Our government is killing the people of New Orleans. By withholding supplies, they are ensuring more deaths, and I hold them complicit.

Please bring this matter to the attention of the people of the United States. They need to know that New Orleans is deliberately being denied food and water. Perhaps if the people there had food and water, they might not be shooting off guns.

Please feel free to call me for further information or with any questions. I appreciate your attention to this most serious matter.

I fear for my friends.

Sincerely,

Andrea Garland

Get Your Act On! (getyouracton.com)

[Andrea Garland went to Camp Casey as part of Cindy Sheehan's legal team August 17-21, 2005.]



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