

## **No News is Bad News: CNN's Evacuation of New Orleans**

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**PEJ News** - C. L. Cook ? The message has trickled from the Atlanta corporate head office of CNN: In the Age of Rage, the flagship of American television journalism is to desert its post; as have hundreds of police and fire-fighters in New Orleans. If you have, as have I, been monitoring the coverage of the unprecedented disaster unfolding in the American south these last days, you may have noticed: CNN?s coverage consists today of almost entirely re-cycled footage and heart-tearing stories, while ignoring the real situation on the ground in that God-damned city.

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True, there have been approbations, but the decidedly angry-toned reports from ?interns? in the field, so vividly depicting the Biblical scope and extent of the impacts of this disaster are now subsumed by the accepted truth of the situation. Flaccid reports of inconveniences suffered by distant commuters, now paying unprecedented prices at the gas pump currently take precedence to true tales of those afflicted.

There?s little acknowledgement of America?s now nascent ?Age of Rage.? Coming amidst this meteorological disaster, America itself is coming under increasing scrutiny. The system that would have itself replicated throughout the world is today a shamble that underscores the rampant pollution that is its promise for the rest of the globe.

It is clear, as George W. Bush may say, that a caring federal government will come to the rescue, in the meantime, the misery of those people on the water-rich streets of New Orleans are left unimpressed. Fully five days after Katrina?s descent on the city, only now (Sept. 3) food and water being delivered to the desperate makes small amends for the too long abandonment of the city?s citizenry. Stranded citizen already described as ?criminals? and ?the worst of the worst? by officialdom now face much worse.

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Troubling perhaps, to the thousands of ordinary citizens forced to ?loot? grocery stores for the staples of daily life, in light of recent ?shoot-to-kill? orders issued to National Guard being deployed to the area. But, not to worry; CNN reports, ?the Sooners won today, despite being touted to lose.

These people, derided as shiftless layabouts, unwilling to heed official dictates to leave the ultimately doomed city, now painted as villains, worthy of the horrors familiar to America?s war zones victims elsewhere, are too soon to be felled by the same 'rules of engagement.'

It?s no wonder CNN has fallen silent.

**Chris Cook** hosts [Gorilla Radio](#) , broad/webcast from the University of Victoria. He?s also a contributing editor to PEJ.org, where you can read his dispatches on this, and other disasters. You can also check out the [GR Blog here](#) .