

you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?"

The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."

Mr. President, the least of our brothers have lost the little they had. They are hungry, they are suffering, and they are vulnerable now to the worst expressions of human desperation. You have recognized that our response to date has fallen short of our duties.

And I fear that God, also, would not be pleased. We are called on to do all that is necessary to care for our brothers at this time. And we pledge to work with you to extend our Nation's hand and all of our Nation's resources to those in dire need.

When history looks back upon how our Nation pulled through this difficult time, let it reveal a record worthy of a great Nation.

HELPING VICTIMS OF HURRICANE KATRINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, like so many families, my family has been watching the horrible scenes that we see from Mississippi and Louisiana, and really every day my wife, Leslie, and I talk about how lucky we are and talk about how really the trivial problems in our life are just that, trivial, compared to what is going on elsewhere.

Last night, I told her a story that I had not thought about in a long time, that was, that back in 1969, it was August of 1969, three friends of mine from school, Jim Caperton, Doug Young and Sammy Sells, we went down to Jackson, Mississippi, for a school program; and we were there when Hurricane Camille struck the coast. Some National Guard came to our meeting and said, Would any of you volunteer to go down and help clean up after Hurricane Camille?

Well, Doug and Jim and Sammy and I decided we would do that. We wanted to help, and we also thought it would be an adventure. So we got in the back of the National Guard truck and started heading down to the coast. As we drove down there, there was just a steady stream of cars and trucks and buses coming the other way. So many folks had all the goods that they could salvage tied down to their car and were coming this way.

Then when we got there, it was shocking. I had seen what a tornado could do in my hometown of Murphysboro to a house, and I had seen how it was torn up. But at that time, what you found is that the hurricane would send in these massive tides. They would tear down anything in their way and then take it all back out to sea, and it was like it had never been there before, and all you might see would be maybe some brick steps here and there to a home. It was, as I say, shocking.

The first thing that we were asked to do was to hand out food and water to some of the survivors there. It was, again, shocking to see the desperation on their faces, the unbelievableness of what was happening to them.

It really reminds me, there was an old blues song that said something to the effect that the only thing that I own is what is on my back, and I have been wearing those clothes for the last 4 days. That was really the situation of all these people at that time.

Then they took us over to a dorm late that night, or what seemed to be a dorm, there was no electricity or water and all the windows were all blown out, and we swept the glass out, turned over the mattresses and fell asleep in an exhaustive state and got up the next day.

The next day our job was to sort through clothes that had been shipped from all over the country. We would separate them into women's clothes and men's clothes and different sizes, and we handed out those clothes again to people that were lined up in the only clothes that they had for quite some time.

So my wife, Leslie, last night was telling me, we have a four-year-old daughter, her name is Payton, and like all little girls, she has outgrown a lot of her clothes. I have been trying to get my wife to donate them to the church so that someone would get some good use out of them, but Leslie feels like sort of giving up those clothes is like giving up those early years of our daughter's life. But last night she said, You know, we need to box these clothes up and send them to Mississippi and to Louisiana. So that is what we are doing.

Then I called my mother and I talked with her, and she told me the story that she has told me a lot of times in the past. When she was a little girl, their house burned; and when their house burned, they lost everything. Back then, when you lived out in the country and your house burned, you did not have insurance. All you had was your neighbors and friends and whatever generosity that they might provide. So now I think that really we really are the neighbors and friends of these desperate folks down in Louisiana and Mississippi, and we all need to try to find a way to help them.

I hope I can help you to help them. For the ones of you that live in the Sixth Congressional District in Tennessee, you can get on my Web site, www.house.gov/bart, and we will give you a list of organizations and ways to help. If you do not live in the Sixth District of Tennessee, then the Federal Government has set up a Web site, it is www.firstgov.gov, and that is the way that you can help.

I think by helping, it makes all of us feel that in some way we are trying to relieve this horrible pain that other folks are going through. They are our neighbors, and we need to help. Here is how you can do it.

PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF HURRICANE KATRINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, we gathered here in the People's House today to provide some financial assistance to those who have suffered as a result of this natural disaster. I think it is important for us to remember that those who are suffering most are those who are the poorest among us.

I was reading the New York Times, and I read this comment from an engineering professor at the State University of Louisiana who has served as a consultant on Louisiana's State evacuation plan. He said that little attention had been paid to the evacuation of New Orleans' low mobility population, the elderly, the infirm and the poor without cars or other means of fleeing the city, about 100,000 people.

We knew this disaster was upon us days before it reached our shore. In fact, the President went on television and urged people to evacuate the city. We saw the TV pictures of cars lining the freeways as they were heading northward out of harm's way. But apparently there were many in New Orleans and elsewhere along the hurricane's path that did not have cars, that did not have credit cards, that had no means of renting an automobile for transportation, that could not afford a bus ticket, that simply were left behind. These were the poorest among the city's population.

Then the flooding came, and these, the sickest, the poorest, the oldest, along with many children, have died; and the sad truth is that many have died unnecessarily. Many have died simply because they lacked for water, they lacked for food, they lacked for timely medical attention.

We are the greatest, most advanced Nation on the face of the Earth. We have at our disposal every resource that is known to mankind. Yet when disaster hit our own country, when our own citizens were without food and water and medical care, we did not respond in a timely manner, so many lost their lives. And those who lost their lives were primarily black and they were primarily poor, and that should strike at the conscience of every one of us.

We are all a part of a great human family, but we are also a part of a great national family; and when tragedy strikes any of us, all of us should feel affected.

Mr. Speaker, the House has done a good thing today in providing initial relief resources, but there is much more that needs to be done in the days and months ahead. One of the things that must be done is for us to examine ourselves as a Federal Government and as a people. Why is it, why is it that it is the poor, the minority, the child, the elderly and the infirm who are most likely to suffer in times of disaster,