

**Subject: Re: Fwd: "Lessons From Katrina" - New VTPI Paper**

**Date:** Wed, 21 Sep 2005 02:49:37 +0100 (BST)

**From:** Elizabeth James <cagebc@yahoo.com>

**To:** Brian Platts <bplatts@shaw.ca>

**CC:** Elizabeth James <cagebc@yahoo.com>, Carolanne Reynolds <EditorWVM@WestVan.org>, Corrie Kost <kost@triumf.ca>, "James Ridge, CAO" <james\_ridge@dnv.org>, FONVCA <fonvca@fonvca.org>

Whew! That makes me feel a whole lot better...I was wondering how I could have missed it....I do remember Haiti but didn't make the connection, 'cos I was worrying about seniors' moments - you know, those things to which *elderly* people are prone .....

**Brian Platts <bplatts@shaw.ca>** wrote:

My apologies to Jamaica!!! I was actually thinking of Haiti when it was devastated by Hurricane Jeanne last year.

-Brian

Brian Platts wrote:

Hi Liz,

I too saw the "offer" of Cuban doctors but never took it seriously. It was clearly done for political purposes in an attempt to embarrass the US. There they were in their white coats standing before the cameras on what looked like a military parade ground. There never really was a lack of doctors, the problem was one of logistics -- getting those stranded people (and hospital patients) out of the city and into proper facilities elsewhere. Besides, how would those Cuban doctors (and all their necessary supplies and equipment) have gotten into New Orleans and what would they have done when they got there and how many speak English? In other devastated areas of Louisiana and Mississippi, it seemed more a matter of rescue and recovery.

The report that Carolanne raised of Jamaica having better emergency preparedness rings a little hollow. Wasn't it just last hurricane season or the one before when thousands of poor Jamaicans were killed or left standing in waist deep water for weeks on end while the US and other countries rushed in aid? If I recall, Jamaica's destructive logging practices where entire landscapes are stripped clean and left vulnerable to the torrential rainwater from hurricanes, resulted in muddy torrents roaring into the cities.

This disaster down south has once again made me consider our situation here in Vancouver. In New Orleans alone there were over 350 military and coast guard helicopters in action. In this Great Nation we have just 15 modern rescue choppers from coast to coast. Of course there are a few 45 year-old Sea King helicopters that can still get off the ground (I hope) while our nearest ground based military is in Edmonton with a handful of Griffin choppers. God help us if the BIG ONE hits in our lifetimes.

-Brian

Elizabeth James wrote:

Thx to you, too. I did see reference to those items, both in the Sun and on the never-ending CNN coverage. What astounded me was that Bush would reject Cuba's offer, no matter that the people of an entire state were suffering. I also got a charge out of Mexico sending in their doctors to "save the day" for the greatest nation ever known to the world - if not the Universe.

As to West Vancouver, I have thought about that - even though it is predicted that I'd end up on the shores of Stanley Park! The good thing about the North Shore is that, so far as I know, we still have the heli-pad available. Question is, would a West Van pick-up be possible? Knowing Tim Jones and his network, my guess is that the answer would be, "Yes - if no other way, at least on a long-line."

I'm working on the theory that if we really, *really* prepare ourselves, nothing will happen.

Cheers,  
Liz

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