

INDEPENDENCE DAY MESSAGE FROM THE MOST
HON. P.J. PATTERSON, ON, PC, QC, MP
PRIME MINISTER

AUGUST 6, 2005

My Fellow Jamaicans:

Every year at this time we pause to reflect on the progress we have made as a people in this great country we call home. In our National Anthem, we ask for the blessings and guidance of the Eternal Father on this land.

We know so well that God helps those who help themselves, but that none but ourselves can free our minds. We realize that it is by our own efforts we can rid ourselves not only from the obstacles of the past, but also dissipate the inertia that would prevent us from overcoming present difficulties. We have to create our own path to the future of which we dream—the future which we would want our children and their children to inherit.

More and more we have come to appreciate that Independence is not simply a single event that took place in August 1962 but a process which allows us to build a nation for ourselves.

Our Founding Fathers based the pursuit of Independence on the firm conviction that we can be the creators of our own destiny. In this changed, and still rapidly changing world of this twenty-first century, it becomes even more urgent that we hold on to that conviction.

We are, after all, a people of proven grit and resilience whether we reside at home or abroad. We must use these attributes to creatively explore our potential and the opportunities that exist for economic, social and spiritual growth and development. To do otherwise, is a defiance of commonsense and a devaluation of the gift of life we have been given.

Fellow Jamaicans:

You have a right to expect from your leaders and the society at large: proper healthcare; affordable housing; a sound education that can facilitate and ease the journey from childhood to adulthood.

You are right to expect opportunities for gainful employment which is sustained and adequate to meet the vicissitudes of life.

And it is right that you should want to have the assurance of individual safety and collective security since all such rights herald the great freedoms from hunger, from ignorance, from disease and from fear.

But none of these can be achieved without the strategic alliances we must make between each other with all the caring, trust and compassion that a civilized society demands of all who inhabit it.

Forty three years in the life of a nation is short compared to the four and more centuries of degradation and deprivation. Through the struggles, the wisdom, foresight and example of our Founding Fathers, we have developed, and continue to develop, even greater self-esteem and self-confidence.

We have seen over the years that, despite the challenges and inherited disadvantages, we are not only fit to rule ourselves but also able to make a remarkable contribution on the regional and international stage.

In today's competitive global economy comparative advantage rests on intellectual skills and the mastery of technology. It is for this reason, that I have been stressing the importance of investing in our human resources—in ourselves—through education.

Today, education is the most effective means of shaping values, attitudes, behaviours and skills. Education is the key driver of economic transformation. It is our solemn responsibility to equip the future generation with the thinking skills that will assure their individual growth and development and the creation of a habitable society.

It is for this reason, that I have been stressing the importance of investing in our

human resources—in our young students and adults—through education and training.

To do so, we are harnessing the resources to create an education system that is viable and relevant in the global marketplace.

The challenge is immense!

It is indeed a challenge for all Jamaicans: civil society; our private sector; the Church; the family in whatever form; our energetic and talented youth population; our workers and their trade unions; and, of course, our elected representatives.

Let us view ourselves as custodians of our nation's resources which we must invest in a broader purpose—the betterment of all our people.

This is a time for both celebration and renewal.

On this 43rd anniversary of our Independence, I once again summon every Jamaican in town or country, at home or overseas, to re-commit yourselves to giving to this our beloved country the loyalty, caring, dedication it so richly deserves from us all.

I wish everyone a peaceful and reflective Independence.

May God bless us all and bless Jamaica, this beautiful land we love.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF ROSALIE S.
OBARA

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 7, 2005

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect, admiration and much sorrow that I rise today to remember the life of Rosalie S. Obara. Rosalie was elected to the office of New Castle County Clerk of the Peace for a record seven terms, serving from 1969 to 1996. She loved life and took great pleasure in giving back to the community that brought her so much happiness. She was also indispensable to my own career, lending a helping hand in many elections.

In the 1930's, Rosalie moved to Delaware, where she would raise four kids with her husband Frank J. Obara, a former City Council President. During her seven terms as Clerk of the Peace, she would perform over 15,400 marriages.

In addition to her professional success, Rosalie left an indelible mark on her community. She was the co-founder and one-time president of the Americans of Polish Descent Cultural Society, as well as an officer with the Council of Polish Societies and Clubs of Delaware. Rosalie was also very active in her church, St. Hedwig, and served the Republican Party as a member of the State Committee and the New Castle County Republican Women's Club.

During her lifetime, Rosalie was the recipient of numerous honors, including the Order of the First State, the highest honor given by the State of Delaware. During the Eisenhower administration, she joined Mamie Eisenhower for tea in the White House. Rosalie will be remembered for her class and dignity.

In closing Mr. Speaker, I would like to point to a 1996 quote from Rosalie that sums up her American Dream story, "I'm the daughter of immigrants. I survived the Depression. I had a limited education, but I made something of myself . . . I am glad I was able to help others." Rosalie Obara can rest in peace knowing that she was always able to help others with grace and elegance.

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL AP-
PROPRIATIONS ACT TO MEET IM-
MEDIATE NEEDS ARISING FROM
THE CONSEQUENCES OF HURRI-
CANE KATRINA, 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 2, 2005

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure this is politically incorrect, but watching the President fly into the disaster area left by Hurricane Katrina and declare that the director of FEMA has done a good job should cause everyone of us to scream out "the President has no clue." As has become painfully obvious, the Bush administration's response to this fearsome natural disaster has been woefully late and utterly inadequate.

Mr. Speaker, this is not meant to be a partisan attack; it's important to remember that not all criticism of the President is for political advantage. Indeed one of the principal duties of the Congress, and one we have been shamefully inattentive to, is oversight of the executive branch and its utilization of taxpayer resources. And if there is no criticism of the disastrous response to this disaster, then we have no right to expect that this administration, or some later administration, will not similarly mishandle the future challenges our Nation is sure to face.

Americans rightfully should have expected that by now, every region of this country, every metropolitan area, every great city, would have a comprehensive disaster response and evacuation plan. It should not require a disaster or a cataclysm, or worse, a terrorist attack, nor should it be a mystery, or an improvisational effort to figure out how to preserve hospital and medical services, to know which facilities will be needed to provide emergency shelters, or to determine how food, water, medicine, blankets and cots and other essentials are going to be sent to designated distribution sites in the fastest, most efficient way.

It should be obvious, even to those who have habitually failed or refused to see the obvious, that once again, there is no plan. By diffidence and incompetence the Bush administration has lost the battle for New Orleans. We in this House need to ensure that we don't lose the battle for the survival of America.

Mr. Speaker, I never take joy in publicly criticizing my President, but questions about the failure of his leadership in the planning and implementation of rescue efforts—whether now or when the dust settles—have to be asked. If a country knows they're going to be attacked, whether by Mother Nature or by terrorists, they must be prepared. It is all too apparent that the federal government was not prepared for Hurricane Katrina. Sufficient troops and ample disaster relief supplies should have been on the ground in advance of the storm, and there should have been clear plans for additional resources to be brought in within a reasonable amount of time.

Moreover, in light of the vast scale of the devastation, and the immediacy of need, where was the innovative spirit and can-do attitude we Americans are so rightly famous for? Why not contract with Greyhound and America's other bus companies and use them to

make short runs to nearby safe railroad terminals so hurricane survivors could have been more quickly relocated to safer out-lying areas on trains? Couldn't a system like this have transported more people to safe ground quicker? Wasn't there some way to free up the too few school buses which were forced to drive to cities far away and make return trips with nobody on board? Couldn't those same vehicles have been used to bring in bottled water, food, emergency supplies and medicine?

Mr. Speaker, what on earth has the Federal Government been doing since 9/11 to prepare for a disaster striking a major American city? With all the Federal agencies, the massive homeland security bureaucracy, and all the many czars, bosses and chiefs, there is still no national or regional master

plan to evacuate people, to rapidly bring in relief and to adequately deal with a large scale emergency of this nature. Where has all the money and effort gone? What have the taxpayers got for their hard earned money? All the money for Homeland Security, what has it bought us? Where is the coordination? Where is the Federal-State-local partnership? Have we learned nothing about disaster response from 9/11?

Is there a plan in place for how to deal with the profiteers when the resettling and rebuilding begins? Is there a plan to address the spike in oil prices? Do we even have a system to help our fellow Americans in finding friends and loved ones? Is our government even capable of putting together a list of the lost, missing, found and deceased?

Of course, right now, the Government must devote its energy to rescue efforts and to beginning the recovery of the affected region. And, once again, we cannot adequately thank all those first responders and rescue workers who have once again shown the kind of steadfast bravery that makes us proud to be Americans. We will never be able to repay their heroism adequately or thank them for all the lives they've already saved.

But as the crisis passes, Mr. Speaker, we cannot and we must not ignore how the Federal Government failed to protect the health and safety of its citizens. If the measure of a great nation is how it deals with its weakest and neediest citizens, then Hurricane Katrina has revealed some very unpleasant truths. How we deal with those truths will show what kind of nation we really are.