

**April 28, 2014**  
**A Constant State of Katrina**

FEMA was created in 1979 by then President Carter. It was created to respond to emergencies and natural disasters throughout the nation. For decades it had been run by the most qualified people in the field. People who knew how to coordinate and mobilize massive amounts of rescue, housing, food, temporary shelter, funding etc in the most expedient ways, immediately after a disaster. Often within 24 hours of a storm, because the storm could be predicted with likely location and timing, due to more and more advanced meteorology techniques; and to earthquakes, fires, etc, as soon as the ground stopped shaking or the smoke had cleared.

We never knew the names of the people who ran FEMA because it ran so well, we just expected it to be there, on the ground, doing what it was supposed to do, the way it had always done, since day one. FEMA was always being improved upon, and mistakes were being learned from, always with the intention of improving response time and meeting needs without the red tape delays.

It worked fantastically up until 2005 when Katrina hit. And FEMA didn't show up, and didn't show up, and the scenes grew more grotesque and monstrous as bodies floated behind newscasters, even a week or longer after the storm had left. No FEMA.

The storm was one of the worst. But the lack of aid and assistance, the confusion and lack of leadership, made it many times worse for everyone in the Gulf States, with images of New Orleans still seared into our minds.

When FEMA did show up, it was chaotic, disorganized and more than worthless. No one with any sense of logistics or engineering was running it. Billions of tax dollars were wasted and still not accounted for in that disaster after the disaster.

That's when we learned that all the senior people, all the leadership at FEMA, the ones that had been with that agency for 10 years or more, had been thrown out when George W Bush took over.

He decided (he was The Decider) to instead install a political pal as the head of FEMA. "Heckuva Job Brownie" became the byword for all that is FUBAR in this world. Brownie had no qualifications whatsoever for running that agency. He had received it as a political payoff. He had been a terrific supporter and fundraiser for the Bush-Cheney ticket and this was his reward.

We'd think that the lessons learned from that shame and horror staining our recent history, especially the one about putting extremely unqualified people in positions that deal with life and death, safety and danger, would not have been forgotten so quickly.

Brownie, as it turns out, had as his resumé that he was primarily the President of the Arabian Horse Association ... [TIME Magazine](#) did a more in-depth piece on Michael Brown, after the Katrina debacle:

*Before joining FEMA, his only previous stint in emergency management, according to his bio posted on FEMA's website, was "serving as an assistant city manager with emergency services oversight." The White House press release from 2001 stated that Brown worked for the city of Edmond, Okla., from 1975 to 1978 "overseeing the emergency services division." In fact, according to Claudia Deakins, head of public relations for the city of Edmond, Brown was an "assistant to the city manager" from 1977 to 1980, not a manager himself, and had no authority over other employees. "The assistant is more like an intern," she told TIME. "Department heads did not report to him." Brown did do a good job at his humble position, however, according to his boss. "Yes. Mike Brown worked for me. He was my administrative assistant. He was a student at Central State University," recalls former city manager Bill Dashner. "Mike used to handle a lot of details. Every now and again I'd ask him to write me a speech. He was very loyal. He was always on time. He always had on a suit and a starched white shirt."*

So, he 'fudged' a little bit on his resume. Went from being a glorified secretary/intern to being the Assistant City Manager... so clearly, he knew he wasn't qualified or he would not have lied so elastically to make it look like he could handle the job.

Remember: Much more qualified people were removed or demoted so he could take that Undersecretary position.

As a nation, we were collectively horrified: First by the storm and the damage it did, and then at the endless string of flubs and errors as well as the extremely late response to the emergency, and then to the wasted billions that never helped anyone, except those politically connected who were able to off thousands of trailers that were unfit to live in, many of which continue to rot in fields to this day, never having been occupied.

To this day, there are neighborhoods that are not yet cleaned up from Katrina and there is no more money available to clean them up. People are out of homes, lost everything or have to live with the wreckage of their community still in view.

### **Run Government Like a Business?**

This is what happens when you run government like a business. Spin, PR, Cronyism become 'Qualifications' and the system becomes useless except as a vehicle to slosh billions of taxpayer dollars around. Those who count on these agencies to perform their stated tasks or live up to their declared missions, are T-boned by the reality that the unqualified have, like a virus, spread so far and wide throughout the system, that no part of it works.

The incompetent, the unqualified and the corrupt have had the run of the place for so long because no one ever knew their names or what departments they ran, until of course there's a Katrina, or in this case, a constant state of Katrina, with the most

unqualified filling the topmost key positions, rendering those agencies unable to either recognize the crisis, or to know what to do about it.

In the case of the ACF, The Children's Bureau and the BIA, PR & cronyism are rampant and children are treated as mere faceless data points upon which individuals, foundations and organizations can create fundraising, grants and profits and political influence can be capitalized with no regard for living, breathing, suffering or fatal outcomes.

There is also no regard for present or future impact on communities or society in general. Where did you think all these addicts, violent offenders and rapists come from? Disneyland?

Like those rotting bodies floating behind Anderson Cooper as he boated through New Orleans, reminded us daily that FEMA had not shown up, had not done their job, so too, shall these stories of babies and small children being raped and murdered while Marianne McMullen, "Heckuva Job Mully" denies any opportunity to remedy the system so broken on so many levels, all they can do is point to the other one: The Federal Agencies saying it is the responsibility of the State and Tribe to fix this, and the State denying all responsibility, while the Omnibus Bill Signed by President Obama said clearly that the children of Spirit Lake are the responsibility of the Federal Government... nothing gets done.

During Katrina, there were politicians who flew in and held press conferences first thanking and congratulating each other for doing such a great job, when clearly nothing had been done, another Anderson Cooper moment where he said out loud that he didn't think the people here wanted to hear them congratulating each other on doing a great job when it was clear they had done nothing...

We have the exact same thing going on with Heitkamp posing for pictures with Melissa Brady, and you cannot find a more unqualified person to be running either Tribal Social Services or Victims' Services than Melissa Brady, and they congratulate each other constantly on their great work...

The ACF/Children's Bureau panel that came to town a few weeks ago was a dog and pony show. You pick which was the dog, I couldn't tell the difference. It did become clear at that meeting that "Heckuva Job Mully" had no qualifications to be the Undersecretary of the ACF. Unless of course 'having been a foster parent' is considered a qualification for the top position overseeing child welfare for the nation, with no other credentials whatsoever.

The death last Friday of that eight month old little girl, who struggled and fought to catch her breath until she shuddered and fell limp in her killer's hands, is just another body floating by, in the background, reminding us that help has not arrived. The agency that is supposed to be overseeing all of these other agencies and coordinating this is being run by a blithering idiot.

Real suffering, real dying is going on, unabated while Mully tries to find ways to silence anyone that would dare to issue a Mandated Report. She cares not that the agencies she shovels money into, our taxpayer dollars, billions of them mind you, are corrupt and refuse to even investigate a single child rape on the rez, despite there being hundreds reported every year. \*NOTE: Timothy Purdon did investigate ONE Rape, but only one, and the perpetrator was not from Spirit Lake.

Think of these rapes and child murders going on in the background, floating behind the talking heads that proclaim themselves successful, congratulate themselves on doing a great job.

And yes, another Law is being proposed that would supposedly up the standards for caring for these children... but that law has no penalties for those who ignore it or violate it. Like the laws we have today that say child rape is a crime, or that sex offenders should not dwell in the same houses as their victims or children... all laws that are not enforced today, with no intention by any Federal or State Agency to enforce these or any other laws, current or future; they are just blowing smoke up our collective ass without lifting a finger to do anything except threaten, harass, ridicule, intimidate anyone that dares make a report.

### **The Purpose of Government**

The purpose of government should be to serve the people, the communities and to protect those who cannot protect themselves—the children.

But government wants to be a business these days. It wants to make a profit, cut costs, and make other stronger business alliances. Those alliances rely on them covering for one another, praising one another, and not doing their jobs.

We know why FEMA failed in Katrina. We can see clearly why ACF/Children's Bureau are failing. We can see that the BIA has been failing and the USAG's Office in ND is a complete failure.

It's costing children their lives. It's costing all of us a healthier community, more productive and healthy citizens, and it's creating a system built on fear, violence, addictions and human wreckage. It's costing us more, and the money is not going to fix anything, but instead, is going to find its way back into the pockets of the politicians that depend on these unholy alliances to fund their campaigns, fatten their portfolios, and leave us to pick up the tab.

We can demand they act, that they do their job in this one small spot on the map or we are helpless and stupid and deserve the violent, addicted, costly society that we are allowing to be created in our name.

This one small spot on the map. We can demand they fix this one place, and ride them like a rent horse until they do. Or we can admit that we really don't give a crap about anyone, or about the future we are leaving to our children and grandchildren

who will have to live with the consequences of what we have left undone: here, in this one small spot on the map, and throughout the nation, where children are treated like faceless data points upon which profits and influence can be capitalized ... you know where to find them... they work for you.

If we could see these children the way we saw those bloated bodies bobbing in the background, we would be a thousand times more horrified at what is happening right now, with no one stopping it.

Those would could stop it, refuse to. Those who struggle to bring this into the light, they fight against the incompetent and the corrupt. No one is paying them. This has cost them all dearly on several levels. Meanwhile, our tax dollars are giving the high life to Senators, Undersecretaries, BIA officials and Timothy Purdon.

Don't look now, but another child has been raped, another child has been trafficked, another child has been murdered, in this small spot on the map and in a home near you... close your eyes. Pretend it's not happening. Pretend there is nothing you can do. Doing nothing is what your government wants you to do.

You know where to find me.

~Cat