



Hurricane Katrina's misery affected everyone. Here, a young boy sits amid the wreckage.

## FEMA

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cording to the letter, which said that Fish and Wildlife helped rescue 4,500 people in the first week after Katrina.

Other Interior resources that were offered, but unused, included flat-bottom boats for shallow-water rescues. "Clearly these assets and skills were precisely relevant in the post-Katrina environment," Scarlett wrote.

Knocke, the Homeland Security spokesman, said up to 60,000 federal employees were sent to the Gulf Coast to respond to Katrina. However, he said, "experience has shown that FEMA was not equipped with 21st century capabilities, and that is what (Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff) has committed as one of our top priorities going forward."

Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, who chairs the Senate committee that released the documents before the hearing, called them "the most candid assessment that we've received from any federal agency."

"Here we have another federal department offering skilled personnel and the exact kinds of assets that were so desperately needed in the Gulf region in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, and there no response that we can discern from FEMA," Collins said in an interview Sunday. "That is incredible to me."

Sen. Joe Lieberman of Connecticut, the committee's senior Democrat, said the documents underscore "an outrage on top of an outrage."

Lieberman and Collins both said they also were dismayed by an internal FEMA e-mail, dated Sept. 1, calling a halt to search and rescue task force efforts in Louisiana.

"All assets have ceased

operation until National Guard can assist TFs (task forces) with security," said the e-mail, sent from FEMA headquarters.

Knocke said the halt was likely the result of looting, rioting and other security concerns in New Orleans in the days after Katrina hit. He said he did not know whether FEMA suspended its search and rescue missions indefinitely or just temporarily on Sept. 1, and that this would be determined in the department's own review of the response.

But Lieberman said the e-mail shows that FEMA "left early," noting that response personnel from the Coast Guard, and other federal, state and local agencies continued looking for storm victims for days after.

"This is shocking and without explanation," he said.

The documents were among 800,000 pages of memos, e-mails, plans and

other papers gathered by investigators for the Senate committee, which plans to issue a report of its findings in March.

Lieberman last week accused the White House of hindering the inquiry by barring some staffers from answering investigators' questions.

Presidential counselor Dan Bartlett maintained Sunday that the Bush administration would not give up specific internal documents or information from top advisors that might inhibit the separation of powers in the government.

Meanwhile, Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn., told NBC's "Meet the Press" that the federal government will spend "well over \$100 billion" to help rebuild the still-reeling Gulf Coast. The government has so far committed about \$85 billion, including \$67 billion in direct spending approved by Congress.



Residents of New Orleans struggle in Katrina's floodwaters.

## Stamp fetes McDaniel, Black Oscar pioneer

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP) - Hattie McDaniel, the first Black actress to win an Academy Award, was honored Wednesday with a U.S. Postal Service commemorative stamp.

McDaniel is the 29th person honored in the Postal Service's long-running Black Heritage stamp series.

The 39-cent stamp depicts the plump-faced McDaniel in a 1941 photograph in the blue dress she wore when she received the Oscar for best supporting actress in "Gone with the Wind" in February 1940.

McDaniel played Scarlett O'Hara's maid in the 1939 movie about the Civil War.

"She was a most special lady," McDaniel's "Gone with the Wind" co-star Ann Rutherford told AP Television News.

Rutherford recalled how McDaniel thought some of her friends looked down on her for playing a maid.

"But (McDaniel) said, 'I'd rather play a maid than be a maid,'" Rutherford said.

Rutherford, who portrayed Scarlett O'Hara's sister "Carreen," was joined at the ceremony by fellow "Gone with the Wind" cast members Cammie King Conlon ("Bonnie Blue Butler") and Mickey Kuhn ("Beau Wilkes").

McDaniel was born in 1895 in Kansas and arrived in Hollywood in 1931 after starting her career in vaudeville and on ra-



Hattie McDaniel

dio. She died in 1952.

The ceremony took place at the Margaret Herrick Library of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, where the Hattie McDaniel collection includes photographs of McDaniel and other family members, as well as scripts and other documents.

The collection also contains a large number of recordings from her radio program, "Beulah," which was broadcast on national radio and the first to feature a Black star.

## Students

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meal. "I can't be mad; it's nothing new," Watson said. "Of course you'll have people who say, 'Yeah, Black people eat watermelon'; but it shouldn't have been served."

Watson took his complaint to Dining Services Tuesday, Jan. 17.

According to Watson, watermelon was served during the MLK celebration dinner, on the MLK Holiday and throughout the week. He went to Dining Services because he felt they were the only people who could change the menu.

"I felt I had to take action whether or not people felt it was that serious or not; it was an insult," Watson said.

According to Watson, who spoke with Food Service Director Pete Mandela, the watermelon was served because Mandela wanted to put out fresh fruit. They began serving watermelon weeks prior to the dinner.

Also according to Watson, Mandela said he had been at the UNCG Dining Services for five years, "a Black guy" made the menu for the MLK dinner eight years ago and that it was the rotation of the menu that happened to fall on

MLK day.

This was the first year students have spoken out regarding the dinner selection.

According to a UNC Greensboro food service worker, Mandela went home sick on Tuesday, Jan. 24. He could not be reached at press time. The food service worker also stated that one food service director would not be able to comment on the issue without the other.

Students had different responses. Freshmen Kourtney Smith, 18 and Debreaka Key, 18 believed the choice of food was not done intentionally.

"Don't they serve it all the time?" Smith asked. "They always serve Kool-Aid where you put your tray. They serve fried chicken every blue moon."

Key said she also thought the menu options weren't intended to harm.

"I don't think it was purposely done because they have Kool-Aid every day," Key said.

Sophomore Shameka Frazier, 19, agrees.

"I don't think the purpose to do that was to make it seem like all Black people like watermelon, but it is a stereotype," Frazier said.

"But I don't think they did it to make a scene or anything. My whole thing was, 'what are they trying to prove?' That's why I didn't eat it."

Many students believed the menu perpetuated stereotypes and that it should have been changed.

"It was very stereotypical to have chicken and watermelon on King's birthday because basically, they're trying to say that all Black people like chicken and watermelon," said 19-year-old sophomore Will Jones. "They should change it, but they said it's been going on for eight years," said sophomore Will Jones.

According to Watson, Dining Services is looking into an alternative menu. Watson has asked that a public letter of apology be made.

"The matter may not be on a large scale," Watson said. "This may be a small thing, but MLK said 'racism is a cancer that plagues America.' All of us know that cancer starts small and grows. So, this thing may be small, but that is why we have to stop it now before it gets out of hand."

Jeanna Covington writes for the Carolina Peacemaker.