



Fair-weather Politicians

It's tough to feel sorry for a billionaire who's also a powerful politician, but once in a rare while I almost manage it. And then my sympathies extend not just to New York City's nanny — sorry, mayor, Michael Bloomberg, but to anyone government employs, from POTUS to the lowliest, surliest bureaucrat.

Why? Because most taxpayers harbor incredibly unrealistic expectations for these mere mortals. Somehow, when a fellow citizen descends to elected or appointed office, he becomes God — or at least Superman — to many folks.

Said official is then supposed to protect us during natural or manmade disasters, soothe our fears, supply our every need, clean our air and water, keep us healthy, educate our intractable kids, and guard us from those greedy corporations despite their lavish contributions (*sic* for “bribes”) to election campaigns.

Consider the hurricane that wasn't last month — the one that was supposed to hit New York City but didn't. Before it drenched us, an embarrassing number of New Yorkers seemed to believe Our Rulers could cancel Irene — or at least deflect her path. When she fizzled to a tropical storm, those same people praised Nanny as if he had single-handedly saved us.

Instead, they should have damned his scaremongering, hysteria, and exaggeration.

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Though you'd never learn it from the corporate media, some disagree that Irene ever deserved the status of hurricane once she left the Caribbean. The Feds define such a storm as a cyclone with “sustained” winds howling for at least a minute at 64 knots (74 mph) or more. “I took a look at all the observations over Virginia [*sic*], Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, and New York,” [says one blogger who's published a book on weather](#) and presumably knows his stuff at least as well as [the constantly inaccurate National Weather Service](#). **“Not one National Weather Service or FAA observation location, not one buoy observations [*sic*], none reach the requisite wind speed.** Most were not even close.” [Original emphasis.]

No matter. None of Our Rulers sports a degree in meteorology, nor are they competent to judge whether Irene was as dangerous as the media and the National Weather Service insisted. But that didn't keep them from bloviating non-stop prior to the storm. Constituents' faith in officialdom is so overwhelming that it's pretty much convinced its objects of their own omnipotence and omniscience





Written by [Becky Akers](#) on September 14, 2011

President Obama dispensed this invaluable advice: "If you are in the projected path of this hurricane, you have to take precautions now." For this we're paying [\\$400,000 a year](#) with free housing and transportation?

New York City's politicians were even worse, if that's possible. They basically recycled the weather report — which turned out to be wrong. Thanks, but I can listen to the news myself. And they shut down the City's subways and busses while ordering residents to evacuate (though there was "[little authorities could do to force people to leave](#)". "We do not have the manpower to go door-to-door and drag people out of their homes," Nanny lamented. Thank God, because they would if they could).

Closing New York's public transit is equivalent to barricading every street and highway elsewhere. Few of Manhattan's residents own cars, relying instead on the trains and busses. This socialist system is extensive and inexpensive (thanks to the taxes and subsidies). Both the outright costs to taxpayers (conductors had to drive their vehicles to terminals rather than simply handing them off to a new operator at the change in shifts) and the [opportunity costs to businesses](#) were staggering.

Yet the morons who mistake politicians for the Almighty merely shrug. They aren't about to blame these charlatans for costly, irresponsible decisions. Indeed, [the New York Post reported](#) two days ago that a poll shows "Bloomberg's strong performance during Hurricane Irene has restored his popularity to the same high level as before the botched Christmas-time blizzard."

This refers to Nanny's having gone missing last December while a blizzard raged in New York. [He was probably vacationing at his home in Bermuda](#), but commies like Bloomberg hate to admit their pleasure in such decadent, capitalist pursuits. So to this day, Nanny's location then remains officially "undisclosed."

Wherever he was, his absence from the City threw New Yorkers into a tizzy. I happily confess I never understood their angst. What, would inches rather than feet of snow have fallen were Nanny in Manhattan rather than Bermuda? I for one wish he'd extended his leave — permanently. Ditto for the entire political class.

Like most Americans, New Yorkers have forgotten that government has only two strengths: it's very good, even exceptional, at warring and at taxing. Indeed, if you want to slaughter whole villages overseas while stealing fortunes from taxpayers at home, government's your guy.

But thereafter, its skills decline precipitately. It can't provide decent housing for the poor: its "projects" are dangerous, dilapidated and so overrun with vermin that a herd of rats recently chased kids off a playground at Brooklyn's Marcy Houses.

Ditto for its abilities at educating children. Even the National High School Center, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, observes that a whopping ["70% of high school students need some form of remediation"](#) when it comes to literacy.

Contrast that with the early 19th century, before government controlled education. Pierre Samuel DuPont de Nemours published a book on *National Education in the United States of America* in 1812; he wrote, "The United States are more advanced in their educational facilities than most countries. They have a large number of primary schools" that were completely private, without any regulation or public financing whatever. "Most young Americans, therefore, can read, write and cipher. Not more than four in a thousand are unable to write legibly, even neatly."

Americans used to understand that politicians are fallible sinners like everyone else — actually,



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waaaaay more fallible and sinful. They can't house, feed or educate us, much less predict and then save us from bad weather. Why and when did we forget that?



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