

# Like it or not, we do need the government

We need the government.

As Michael Gormley reminded us in last Sunday's Daily News, legislators in the Northeast were told to begin planning for a storm of historic proportions over 30 years ago.

"But most of the warnings and a requirement in a 1978 law to create a regularly updated plan for the restoration of 'vital services' after a storm went mostly unheeded, either because of tight budgets or the lack of political will to prepare for a hypothetical storm that may never hit."

Contrary to the misguided and naïve assertions of some, government has an important role to play in preparing for, and responding to, "natural" disasters.

As inconceivable as this may be to many of my libertarian friends, some things are simply more important than preserving individualism or promoting an unrestrained free market.

Will preparing for the inevitable be expensive? Absolutely; it will require hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars.

But the cost of doing nothing except crossing our fingers and hoping for the best will certainly be much higher.

Part of the problem is that many Americans no longer seem capable of seeing the big picture or thinking in the long-term. They want the greatest return in the shortest amount of time for the least amount of effort.

As my grandfather used to say, however, you reap what you sow.

What we witnessed in New England a few weeks ago was neither arbitrary nor capricious; it was the logical consequence of processes that are clearly understood and entirely predictable.

So we can either revel in igno-

rance and denial or step up and take responsibility for our own destiny.

Personally, I don't want to live in a world where dealing with adversity involves fending for yourself or relying on the voluntary generosity of others.

We need the government.

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