

New Orleans

David Rovics

Ev-ry-bo-dy knew that it could hap - pen The
like - li - hood was clear The fu - ture was com - ing Now it's here They
had to fix the le - vees Oth - er - wise they'd break On one side was the ci - ty On the
o - ther was the lake It was in the dai - ly pa - pers in bold let - ters was the writ What would
hap - pen when the Big One hit But ev - 'ry year they cut the fund - ing
just a lit - tle more So they could send it to the Ar - my to fight their o - il war
New Or - leans New Or - leans New Or - leans

In National Geographic
And the Times-Picayune
They forecast the apocalypse
Said it was coming soon
Preparations must be made, they said
Now is the time
It was years ago they shouted
Inaction was a crime

They said the dikes must be improved
And the wetlands must be saved
But Washington decided
Instead they should be paved
Because malls were more important
Than peoples' lives
So put some gold dust in your eyes
And hope no storm arrives

New Orleans, New Orleans, New Orleans
Years and years of warning
No evacuation plan
It was just if the waters rose
Just get out if you can
There were no buses
No one chartered any trains
There was no plan to rescue
All of those who would remain
All the people with no money
All the people with no wheels
All of those who didn't hotwire
One that they could steal
Thousands and thousands of people
Abandoned by the state
Abandoned by their country
Just left to meet their fate
New Orleans, New Orleans, New Orleans

And the people died
And then they died some more
They drowned inside their attics
An army of the poor
An army of the destitute
Who couldn't get away
And the world will remember
These sad and awful days
When people shouted from their houses
Dying on their roofs
When people came to find them
They were turned back by the troops
They died there with no water
They died there in the heat
They were shot down by the soldiers
For trying to find some food to eat
New Orleans, New Orleans, New Orleans

And now the city is in ruins
A massive toxic sea
Scattered through the nation
Half a million refugees
Here we are In the richest country on the earth
Where the color of your skin
Determines what your life is worth
Where oil is the king
Where global warming is ignored
Where the very end of life
Is the place we're heading toward
Where it's more than just a metaphor
The flooding of the dike
And if we don't stop this madness
The whole planet will be like
New Orleans, New Orleans, New Orleans