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MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 05, 2005

Now Bush Will Spring Into Action

by Michael in New York on [9/05/2005 05:00:00 AM](#)

And now the real work begins. The relief FINALLY starts to gain some traction so look for Bush and his cronies to get more and more vehement about dismissing criticism -- we're focused on helping people, not the blame game, they'll say. ANYONE who criticizes them will be "playing politics." The farther away they get from those disastrous first days, the more vicious they'll get and the more the American people will instinctively want to hear positive stories of hope rather than the bungled incompetence that shocked us to the core and cost untold numbers of the poor and helpless their lives.

But Bush has two problems. The first problem is that soon we're going to be seeing gruesome images of the dead -- the bloated and discarded bodies of the weak and defenseless that Bush callously ignored during those first crucial 72 hours. The true horror of what happened in Louisiana and Mississippi and Alabama will stare us all in the face.

The second problem? We're not going to forget that when the worst natural disaster in our country's history attacked us, BUSH STAYED ON VACATION. Why did the relief effort falter during those first crucial days? Because Bush and Cheney and Rice stayed on vacation. They couldn't be bothered to go to work during the worst natural disaster in our nation's history. And we're not going to forget that.

NOTE: So I had this post ready to go. Then I see [this NYT article about Karl Rove taking control](#) and it lays out exactly what I'd been expecting -- they don't even try to pretend they're doing anything but exactly what they're doing: treating this disaster as a political problem instead of a humanitarian crisis. How cold and calculating are they that the NYT can just spell out what they're doing and they think no one will catch on or care? Astonishing.

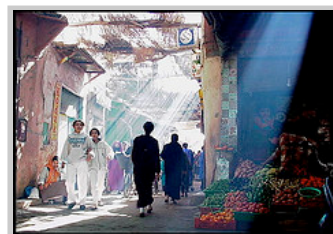
Under the command of President Bush's two senior political advisers, the White House rolled out a plan this weekend to contain the political damage from the administration's response to Hurricane Katrina.

It **orchestrated visits by cabinet members** to the region, leading up to an extraordinary return visit by Mr. Bush planned for Monday, directed administration officials not to respond to attacks from Democrats on the relief efforts, and **sought to move the blame for the slow response to Louisiana state officials**, according to Republicans familiar with the White House plan.

The effort is being directed by Mr. Bush's chief political adviser, Karl Rove, and his communications director, Dan Bartlett.



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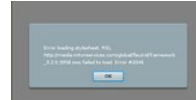
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