

Brainwashed - Conspiracy as Usual

Written by Gary Suarez

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[A recent piece from *The Nation*](#) offers some compelling questions that the so-called "Katrina Commission" should aim to answer. Unfortunately, the unsurprisingly Republican-helmed congressional investigation will almost certainly leave many of the concerns expressed unanswered as politics-as-usual trumps justice.

Despite Davis and Fontenat's conspiratorial tone, their sentiments offer a glimpse of the likely end result. This sham circus will yield a bogus report, the biggest steaming turd in modern American history, that assigns meaningless blame to everyone and no one with no true accountability nor resignations worth mentioning.

The tactical approach to handling the initial waves of heavy criticism represent a significant precursor. When the Bush administration came under fire, in addition to the obligatory photo opportunities and platitudes, a trained pack of blowhard pundits and figureheads stormed the mediawaves, talking points in hand, spewing defenses. Unfair accusations of playing some kind of "blame game" crudely countered serious and desperate questions about why so many poor--and overwhelmingly black--Americans were left for days to suffer and die in flooded homes and polluted streets, not to mention the chaotic cesspools of the Superdome and the convention center. Reinforced by the official positions coming from Scott McClellan and other White House spokesmen, this forced the timid, lazy media to steer their attention from the top and instead towards scapegoats like Michael "Brownie" Brown, the blundering and incompetent former head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

To this cluster of ideologues, hucksters, and bobbleheads, the Katrina "crisis" was always about public opinion, about political survival, and never about human rights. To put it plainly, for this criminally negligent administration, an independent commission would potentially be "bad for business." Considering the effectiveness of their campaigning, expect similar efforts from these pundits to continue as the Katrina Commission presses forward.

The overwhelming silence on this aspect of the Katrina aftermath from Americans, who donated generously at the behest of selfless charities, truly baffles me. When Bush and his chattering goons tried to fight the independent "9/11 Commission" at every step, public outrage rightly served to sufficiently twist their arms. That same outrage is necessary here and, tragically, absent. The collective indifference to this current investigation, this willingness to allow this two-bit community theater parody of justice to go on, implies a failure of our own, a shameful complicity with the doings and dealings of Beltway bandits and their benefactors. Our personal politics, our drama, our 9-5 grumbling are but crumbs on a bakery counter when compared to the lives ravaged, ruined, and ended by Hurricane Katrina and by our government's overwhelming failures in its aftermath. We should hang our heads in shame

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for allowing murderers to dictate the terms of their trial.