

Hurricane Katrina: Tragedy in New Orleans. Inertia of the Bush Administration

By [Don Nordin](#)

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Picture a huge empty bowl with water flowing uncontrollably over its edge to fill up that bowl. That's what's going on in New Orleans now.

The citizens who had counted on their governments to protect them are finding out that they had no protection. They are now paying with their lives.

Hurricane Katrina has devastated the city with its fierce winds, blowing buildings apart and causing major damage. And now that low lying city is slowly being filled with water from Lake Pontchartrain. It's a major catastrophe in relatively slow motion - just like the US under 'president' Bush is a country in the process of financial, economic, social and political collapse.

There are still reported to be over 100,000 people in New Orleans, many of them being trapped by rising flood waters. The city is not equipped to handle a catastrophe of this magnitude. Police have become overwhelmed by looters who have rampaged through the city and cleaned out whatever stores they can. Drug addicts are reportedly breaking into pharmacies in order to get something to substitute for their next fix. I would think that some of the looting has been done merely by people who are stocking up on food in hopes of surviving a little longer. People have been warned not to drink city water. Bodies are floating through the streets. Poisonous snakes are in the flood waters. Islands of fire ants are floating through the water. Gas mains are erupting from under the water. Fires are burning unchecked.

And Bush says that he may come to New Orleans at the end of the week. He's actually going to take time out from his plans to start another illegal war with Iran to give his blessings to his people.

A major side effect of this tragedy is that over 95% of the oil flow from the Gulf of Mexico has been said to be interrupted. This will result in every American and even Canadians paying for the incompetence and corruption of government officials who should have acted to minimize such an impact on the availability of vital oil supplies for energy needs. And now we see the laughable scenario of lesser wealthy countries offering aid to New Orleans and other affected areas. Hugo Chavez has already offered to sell 66,000 barrels of heating oil to poor communities in the US and has reportedly offered medical airlift aid for the evacuation of people in devastated areas. There are unconfirmed reports of aid also being offered from China, Iran, Holland and Russia. Will the US accept all of this aid. Not likely.

And it's not that the US could not do much to handle the situation itself, if it had the political

will. After all, it's the most highly advanced country, at least technologically, in the world.

It's not like the governments have not seen this coming. They have been sitting on the problem of the deteriorating levees for at least 40 years now. Instead of fortifying them and putting in more pumps to deal with a major hurricane, they have done nothing. They have played politics. The ruling elite of New Orleans that control the city was too busy, it seems, lining its own pockets. Now ordinary people te, are paying with their lives.

And other Americans that have not yet been swept down the drain by a nation on the brink can watch all of this on their TVs from the security of their own homes.

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