

For Courts, The Show Must Go On

By Reg P. Wydeven
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The damage to human life and property caused by hurricane Katrina and piggy-backing Rita is immeasurable and the Gulf Coast won't be fully restored for possibly decades. Many people have speculated about what could have caused such devastating storms - some theologians believe the storms were caused by God, Old Testament-style; some scientists think the storms were the result of global warming; meteorologist Scott Stevens, however, claims the hurricanes were caused by the Yakuza, the Japanese mafia.

The weatherman for KPVI-TV in Pocatello, Idaho, Stevens says the Yakuza bought a Russian-made electromagnetic generator that can manipulate the weather. The Soviet Union constructed the device in 1976, at the height of the Cold War, to use as an untraceable weapon against the United States. The Yakuza used the machine to cause a hurricane in the U.S. to avenge Japan for the Hiroshima atom bomb attack.

Stevens began investigating alternative explanations for weather phenomenon he was otherwise unable to explain meteorologically. He discovered the Yakuza theory on the internet, which states that a little-known oversight in physical laws makes it possible to create and control storms. Stevens believes his theory was confirmed after two particularly damaging hurricanes, Katrina and Ivan (which hit Florida in 2004), were assigned Russian names. He also believes the Japanese mobsters are going to use it again to ravage another American city.

Stevens details the specifics of his theory on his website, www.weatherwars.info. On his site the meteorologist also expresses his concern that he no longer has to forecast the weather, but rather, try to predict the intent of the Japanese mafia.

Other than Stevens, pretty much the rest of the scientific and meteorological communities completely discount his theory, especially since it violates the golden rule of thermodynamics - energy can be neither created nor destroyed. Whatever the cause, the hurricanes have turned the Gulf Coast upside-down, including the justice system.

Because of the hurricanes, court records have been destroyed by floodwaters, making it difficult, if not impossible in some cases, to determine what crimes a suspect has been charged with. Even if authorities are able to determine the correct charges, prosecuting these criminals may be impossible because witnesses have been displaced and relocated throughout the country. Other witnesses may have even died.

To combat this problem, President Bush signed into law the Federal Judiciary Emergency Special Sessions Act of 2005, which allows federal appeals, district and bankruptcy courts to operate outside their jurisdictions in the event of a disaster. The bill was first introduced in June, however, Katrina sped up its passage.

Under the law, a federal appeals court may hold sessions "at any place outside the circuit" if the chief judge or the next highest-ranking person available determines the court cannot operate in its jurisdiction due to "emergency circumstances." The law further provides that, "the court may transact any business at a special session outside the circuit that it might transact at a regular session."

The 5th Circuit Court of Appeals, located in New Orleans, has temporarily moved to Houston, Texas, because of the damage caused by Katrina. Several law offices in Houston have also opened up their doors to provide office space to displaced New Orleans attorneys. Turns out lawyers may have hearts after all.

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