

TOM DAVIS, ON THE RECORD SOURCE

By far the most interesting thing (to me at least) in today's WaPo story on how Karl Rove mobilized Administration resources to commit massive Hatch Act violations is this:

"He didn't do these things half-baked. It was total commitment," said Rep. Thomas M. Davis III (Va.), who in 2002 ran the House Republicans' successful reelection campaign in close coordination with Rove. "We knew history was against us, and he helped coordinate all of the accoutrements of the executive branch to help with the campaign, within the legal limits."

Tom Davis ... Tom Davis. Gosh, isn't he the ranking member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform? By golly he is!

That's awfully curious, because this article relies on materials before that Committee: it relies on details about the briefings that have already been released through the Committee, as well as emails and briefing invitations that would fit under Henry Waxman's requests for information of government agencies.

An invitation to a March 12, 2001, political briefing for federal officials – one of the Rove team's earliest – framed the mission thisway: "How we can work together."

[snip]

Most of the political briefings, officials said, were held at the White House or Old Executive Office Building for the liaisons or the agency chiefs of staff. But once or twice a year, Rove's team sought to spread the message beyond this core team. Attendees were presented

aslide show with the latest polling data, election talking points andmaps identifying competitive media markets, congressional races andpresidential battleground states.

The subjects for such meetings– which involved at least 18 agencies – ranged from "a politicalupdate" and "mid-term election trends" to "outreach" and "coalitionactivities/organization," **according to invitations** gathered bycongressional investigators.

DeBerry requested one such meeting at the Agriculture Department about five months before the 2004 election.

"Wewould like to hold a briefing for our political appointees on thestrategy we should focus on over the next several months," he wrote onJune 15, 2004, to Barry Jackson, the White House chief of strategicinitiatives. "The briefing you gave the Asset Deployment team about ayear ago would be perfect."

DeBerry's e-mail captures what administration officials said was theessence of Rove's approach: making sure that political appointees atevery level of government pushed a uniform agenda in key media marketsand on behalf of White House-backed candidates.

[snip]

Some briefings targeted political appointees because of their race orethnicity. On Aug. 11, 2006, for instance, **Hispanic politicalappointees were summoned** to a meeting with Rove's team to discuss theadministration's accomplishments for Hispanic Americans.

Mind you, I'm not accusing Davis of leaking this information or of any impropriety with his quote. Indeed, Committee Chair Henry Waxman is

quoted as well, in the money quote of the entire article.