

LEAHY'S KEEPING BUSY

Shouldn't Pat Leahy be back in Vermont tipping cows or something like that? Instead, he's churning out letter after letter, closing in on the Bush lying thugs. Tuesday's letter seemed to target Karl Rove. In today's letter, Alberto Gonzales is clearly the target.

I am writing to ask that you investigate and evaluate potential misleading, evasive, or dishonest testimony by Attorney General Alberto Gonzales before the Senate Judiciary Committee on July 24, 2007, and in previous hearings before this and other congressional Committees. I have identified numerous instances in which the Attorney General appears to have contradicted his own previous testimony or the statements or testimony of other senior officials, or where he appears to have engaged in efforts to mislead. I have given him an opportunity to clarify and revise his testimony, but he has not meaningfully addressed our significant concerns.

Now just because I'm a timing weenie, let me remind you that the last we heard from Leahy (way back on Tuesday) he had agreed to contact the White House to see if they would meet and negotiate. Does this letter indicate he has already gotten his "go fuck yourself" in response?

In any case, Leahy seems to be striking a moderate tone, suggesting that Gonzales' lying may not be criminal, but simply inappropriate.

I ask that you review the Attorney General's testimony and compare it with other testimony and evidence to determine whether his testimony was in any instances intentionally false, misleading, or inappropriate. Consistent with your jurisdiction,

please do not limit your inquiry to whether or not the Attorney General has committed any criminal violations.Â Rather, I ask that you look into whether the Attorney General, in the course of his testimony, engaged in any misconduct, engaged in conduct inappropriate for a cabinet officer and the nation’s chief law enforcement officer, or violated any duty –“ including the duty set out in federal regulations for government officials to avoid any conduct which gives the appearance of a violation of law or of ethical standard, regardless of whether there is an actual violation of law. [my emphasis]

(Though if you have any doubts on the criminality of Gonzales’ lies, I recommend this Elizabeth de la Vega piece.)

Click through for Leahy’s list of AGAG’s lies—though if you’ve been reading this site, I’m sure you’re familiar.

This letter only leaves me with one question (besides whether the White House has already told Leahy to fuck himself, in which case this is his next level of escalation).

As I’ve reported before, DOJ’s Inspector General, alone among the Inspector Generals in the Executive Branch, has kind of a hinky jurisdiction. As established, DOJ’s IG cannot investigate any violations committed by DOJ’s lawyers as lawyers—OPR has to investigate those issues, which means the results will not be made public, and the investigation will fall under Gonzales’ direct authority. Most of what Leahy is talking about here are Gonzales’ duties as Agency head, not as a lawyer. But given that Leahy talked about AGAG’s inappropriate conducts as the nation’s top law enforcement officer, it raises the question.

Has DOJ’s IG received the ability to investigate

DOJ's lawyers fully, or not?