

# A TOUGH JOB MARKET FOR DISCREDITED BUSH LAWYERS

As many of you have pointed out, Alberto Gonzales is having a tough time on the job market. I'll get to that, but first I want to remind you of two other experiences former Bush lawyers have had after they left. First, there's Harriet Miers, who after a four month job search, ended up where she started, at her old firm of Locke Liddell. She found a job, sure, but it didn't look like any other big firms were eager to snap up the former White House Counsel.

Then there's William Haynes. He found something right away—as Corporate Counsel for Chevron. But Chevron doesn't want you to know they've hired Haynes.

When a company recruits a prominent government official, it's usually eager to put the word out immediately. But Chevron Corp. took more than a month to publicly confirm that it had hired William "Jim" Haynes II, the controversial former general counsel of the Pentagon. Chevron officials say that they didn't make a big deal of Haynes' hiring because they didn't think it was newsworthy.

[snip]

The U.S. Department of Defense announced Haynes' resignation as general counsel Feb. 25. Two days later Chevron general counsel Charles James sent a memo to the company's management committee stating that Haynes would be coming aboard as chief corporate counsel. Haynes, who will report to James, will manage the 45-attorney legal department.

Chevron spokesman Kent Robertson says that the company did not make an

external announcement about Haynes' hiring. "I don't think we thought it was newsworthy," Robertson says. Word of Haynes' employment by Chevron began appearing in blogs last week, and was reported on *Newsweek's* Web site April 5.

Mr. Robertson, you may not want the general public to know where Haynes ended up, but particularly with the news that Dick Cheney has leant his personal lawyer to Haynes to represent him in matters pertaining to torture, it is certainly newsworthy that Haynes ended up at one of the oil companies Dick and Bush have been making rich of late.

And then there's Gonzales—he's been looking for a job for 9 months. The article on it doesn't saw what we're all thinking: law firms are holding out until they're sure that Gonzales isn't about to be indicted for perjury and worse.

"Maybe the passage of time will provide some opportunity for him," said one Washington lawyer who was aware of an inquiry to his firm from a Gonzales associate. "I wouldn't say 'rebuffed,' " said the lawyer, who asked his name not be used because the situation being described was uncomfortable for Mr. Gonzales. "I would say 'not taken up.' "

The greatest impediment to Mr. Gonzales's being offered the kind of high-salary job being snagged these days by lesser Justice Department officials, many lawyers agree, is his performance during his last few months in office. In that period, he was openly criticized by lawmakers for being untruthful in his sworn testimony. His conduct is being investigated by the Office of the Inspector General of the Justice Department, which could recommend actions from exonerating him to recommending criminal charges. Friends

set up a fund to help pay his legal bills.

Asked about reports that law firms have not taken up feelers from Mr. Gonzales, Robert H. Bork Jr., a corporate communications specialist and his spokesman, said Mr. Gonzales was talking to many people about the next steps in his career. "He is considering his opportunities in law and business," Mr. Bork said, "but after many years in public service he is considering his options carefully."

He said Mr. Gonzales "looks forward to the conclusion of the department's inquiries and getting on with his life."

Shorter Bork Jr., Gonzales is looking forward to some conclusion of the multiple inquiries into his behavior, so firms can decide whether they want to hire him independent of fears that he's about to be indicted.

The Gonzales article also says something else which accords with my recent suspicions. Gonzales (and Rove) have been doing the talk circuit of late, even though every time they get a \$30,000 speaking gig, students protest about wasting resources on war criminals. I've long suspected that some Bush functionary has been behind the placements, providing a kind of gravy train for two such unpopular Bush loyalists. The NYT article on Gonzales makes it sound as if these speaking fees are Gonzales' biggest income right now.

While he has not taken any full-time job, friends said he was probably receiving as much income from speaking engagements as he did as attorney general with its annual salary of more than \$191,000.

Mind you, I'm not terribly sympathetic. There are lots of honest, hard-working, non-criminal

folks who have been looking for a job for the last nine months, and they haven't had someone forcing speaking engagements for them down universities throats.

But it is a testament to the legal world's perception of both the quality of the lawyering Bush relied on and the likelihood that we haven't heard the end of the consequences for such lawyering.