

AGAG SAYS “GOOD JOB”-BUT ABOUT WHAT?

Al Kamen chronicles the latest joy-ridden interaction between Alberto Gonzales and Patrick Fitzgerald.

In the Justice Department’s Great Hall (the very room where giant, blue drapes covered the underdressed statuary during *John Ashcroft’s* tenure as attorney general), an array of prosecutors, securities regulators and FBI honchos gathered yesterday to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the President’s Corporate Fraud Task Force.

Chicago U.S. Attorney *Patrick Fitzgerald*, who famously prosecuted former vice presidential aide *Scooter Libby*, was chatting with a pair of reporters about his upcoming appearance on the National Public Radio program “Wait Wait . . . Don’t Tell Me!” when none other than Attorney General *Alberto “Fredo” Gonzales* appeared at his side.

“Good job,” Gonzales said, extending his hand to Fitzgerald. Must have been thinking of Fitzgerald’s office’s successful prosecution last week of media mogul *Conrad Black* for fraud, obstruction, etc. Fitzgerald, taken aback, didn’t say much in response, our colleague *Carrie Johnson* reports.

I suppose the context—an event on Corporate Fraud might support the explanation that AGAG was complimenting Fitzgerald on his successful prosecution of Conrad Black. But that’s not the only thing Fitzgerald has done in the last few weeks that might please Bush’s Fredo. After all, in an attempt to salvage some modicum of punishment for Libby’s obstruction, Fitzgerald argued in support of Fred Fieldings’ interpretation of Bush’s commutation order: that

Libby should proceed immediately to supervised detention. No doubt the Bush Administration wanted to ensure they could wave around that "punishment" so as to stave off further pressure for their Get Out of Jail Free card. So it's possible that Gonzales was complimenting Fitzgerald for fulfilling his bitter duty in arguing for supervised release.

Who knows? With these thugs, such a slap in the face would be par for the course.