

An Update on Attorney General Mukasey's Office Décor

*John Q. Barrett**

Copyright © 2008 by John Q. Barrett.
All rights reserved.

In a September 2007 post, I discussed office décor, including some of Robert H. Jackson's decorating choices in his day and some of the portraits that various officials have displayed over the years at the United States Department of Justice.¹ I also noted that Michael B. Mukasey, United States Attorney General-designate at the time, had earlier displayed a Jackson portrait in his New York judicial chambers, and that Mukasey, if confirmed as Attorney General, of course would be able to claim and hang in his office the Department's official portrait of Attorney General Jackson.

After Attorney General Mukasey's confirmation, Department of Justice staff guessed at his portrait preference. They moved the Jackson portrait from the Solicitor General's office to the wall of the Attorney General's large conference room.

Apparently they were wrong. When Attorney General Mukasey met with reporters in his personal office in late January 2008, there on the wall was the Jackson portrait that John C. Johansen painted in 1942.² Mukasey explained that Jackson's "career in large is a portrait of what a person should do with his life. He has clarity of expression and a clarity of thought that I can aspire to on my good days."³

* Professor of Law, St. John's University School of Law, New York City, and Elizabeth S. Lenna Fellow, Robert H. Jackson Center, Jamestown, New York (www.roberthjackson.org). I posted an earlier version of this text, without footnotes, to my Jackson email list on January 26, 2008. I thank the friends who helped me gather some of the facts herein.

For a selected archive of Jackson List postings, see my homepage at www.law.stjohns.edu. To subscribe to the Jackson List, which does not display recipient identities or distribute their email addresses, send a note to barrettj@stjohns.edu.

¹ See John Q. Barrett, *Office Wall Décor* (Sept. 28, 2007), available at www.stjohns.edu/media/3/82383b77a6c745098c5051650e92cb55.pdf.

² See John Q. Barrett, *A Jackson Portrait for Jamestown, "A Magnet in the Room,"* 59 BUFFALO LAW REVIEW 809, 815 (Fall 2002), available at www.stjohns.edu/download.axd/b2555afa401f4c2da8701d22dc14d81f.pdf.

³ Pedro Ruz Gutierrez, *For the First Time, Mukasey Meets the Press*, LEGAL TIMES, Jan. 28, 2008.

ATTORNEY GENERAL MUKASEY'S OFFICE DÉCOR

A photograph of Attorney General Mukasey in his office with the Jackson portrait is below. In his conference room, Mukasey and colleagues now work beneath portraits of four other former Attorneys General, including Edward H. Levi (1975-77).⁴



⁴ *See id.*