Mr. Addington informed GAO that he did not believe that its investigation had a legal basis. Mr. Addington conceded that GAO was empowered to evaluate programs or activities which "the Government carries out under existing law," but he made the far-fetched argument that this provision did not extend to the activities of the energy task force because the task force carried out its operations under the authority of the Constitution. Mr. Addington further asserted that GAO's authority to investigate matters related to the use of public money was extremely limited.

Documents and Links

- Letter from Counsel to Vice President Cheney to GAO