

## **Larry D. Thompson, General Counsel for PepsiCo, Speaks to FBA**

By Brooke Heath

This month, Larry D. Thompson, senior vice president of government affairs, general counsel, and secretary of PepsiCo, was a guest speaker at this year's Federal Bar Association (FBA) annual meeting and convention held in Atlanta.

As a former Atlanta federal prosecutor, Thompson has deep ties to Atlanta's legal and civic circles. But perhaps Thompson is best known as a former U.S. deputy attorney general appointed by President George W. Bush.

In his address, Thompson explained that his responsibilities as general counsel for PepsiCo mirrored those of a country lawyer, according to the *Fulton County Daily Report*. He explained that in-house counsel, like country lawyers, have to work on a broad range of issues.

"You are more of a generalist than a specialist," he said.

According to the *Fulton County Daily Report*, Thompson said that whenever possible, he delegates tasks to the other 128 lawyers at PepsiCo, explaining that he prefers to focus on "the strategic thinking that a global corporation needs."

Thompson also challenged all general counsel to avoid scandals such as the Enron scandal that he investigated for the Justice Department in 2002. He explained that in-house counsel need to demonstrate "professional courage" and confront companies with "rotten" management.

Thompson added that regardless of whether his role as a lawyer is in a government, private practice, or corporate capacity, he is proud to be a lawyer.

"That's all I want to do," he said.

Thompson was introduced by his former employee, Assistant U.S. Attorney and president of the Atlanta chapter of the Federal Bar Association Amy Levin Weil.

continued on back

“Maybe if we’re lucky,” she said, according to the *Fulton County Daily Report*, “he will serve this country again as attorney general.”

In light of Alberto Gonzales’s recent resignation from his seat as U.S. attorney general, much speculation has been raised regarding who will be his successor. According to Cox News Service, Thompson is favored by many political analysts. They say that he is one of the few Republicans who could pass confirmation hearings in the Senate, the majority of which is comprised of Democrats.

Also, Thompson’s former position as the second person in charge of the Justice Department gave him applicable experience as he helped to lead the war against Al-Qaeda after September 11, 2001-especially since Tony Fratto, a White House spokesman, said that the president “is looking for someone who understands the national security threats and the legal tools required to address those threats.”

However, Thompson has made it quite clear that he has no intention of leaving his position with PepsiCo, where he has been since 2004, for a place in the White House. According to Cox News Service, Thompson was quoted last month as saying that he was “very happy” in his current position with PepsiCo. He even went so far as to issue a press release insisting that he is satisfied with where he is.

## **ON THE NET**

FBA 2007 Schedule

[www.fedbar.org/atlanta\\_speakers07.html](http://www.fedbar.org/atlanta_speakers07.html)

Cox News Service

[www.coxwashington.com/hp/content/reporters/stories/2007/09/14/BC\\_AG\\_THOMPSON14\\_COX.html](http://www.coxwashington.com/hp/content/reporters/stories/2007/09/14/BC_AG_THOMPSON14_COX.html)

PepsiCo

[www.pepsico.com](http://www.pepsico.com)