



## PMO HIRED ARI FLEISCHER TWICE, DOCUMENTS SHOW

Former Bush spokesman earned nearly \$50,000 off sole-source contracts helping Stephen Harper manage U.S. media relations

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Documents from the U.S. Justice Department show that a former spokesman for George W. Bush received a second sole-source contract from the Prime Minister's Office for American communications advice.

Ari Fleischer was first hired last spring to help Stephen Harper get American media exposure in advance of a critical G20 summit in London.

But a second communications contract with the PMO, worth the same \$24,500 as the first, was paid out to Mr. Fleischer on Sept. 28.

A government spokesman says the work was a separate, distinct contract following the G20.

That work has since been completed and Mr. Fleischer is no longer under contract.

No details of the additional work were provided in Mr. Fleischer's latest filing under the U.S. Foreign Agents Registration Act, which is date-stamped Dec. 15, 2009.

However, information provided by Mr. Fleischer on the original G20 contract sheds new light on his activities on behalf of the Prime Minister.

Canadian news consumers, who this week are seeing their first limited interviews with Mr. Harper about his Christmas holiday decision to suspend Parliament, might aspire to the access provided to conservative American columnists – seven of whom enjoyed dinner with Mr. Harper in Washington last March 29 at the invitation of Mr. Fleischer.

The following day, Mr. Fleischer arranged a lunch meeting between the Prime Minister and the president of Fox News Channel, Roger Ailes, and with media mogul Rupert Murdoch, whose News Corp. owns Fox.



Figure 1 White House press secretary Ari Fleischer smiles as he takes questions during his last daily briefing on July 14, 2003.

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