

JIM C'S QUIZ OF THE WEEK

MONDAY - 03/03/08

The American Constitutional system was designed to provide a system of “checks and balances,” but there are concerns that influence peddling by “special interests” is tipping the scales.

HOW DID THE TERM “*SPECIAL INTERESTS*” ORIGINATE?

***Origin:* In U.S. political sense, *special interests* is from 1910. *The Nation* (1865–) was a forerunner to political “*special-interest*” periodicals. An early liberal journal, the *New Republic* (1909–), had among its editors Walter Lippmann (1914–17).**

***Definition:* An individual, group, or organization concerned with some particular aspect of the economy who try to influence public policy and legislators/bureaucrats to act in their favor.**

***AKA:* Advocacy group, lobby group, or pressure group**

***Motivations & Compromises:* Candidates need political support from voters, but they also need money to advertise. If money buys votes through political advertising, there is a political incentive for the candidates to take “special interest” money.**

***Conventional Wisdom:* Special Interests = Influential Advocates**

***Moment of Zen:* Sadly, misinformation and disinformation in campaigns have become more valuable than truth.**