



# JIM C'S QUIZ OF THE WEEK

## MONDAY - 04/28/08

← By Keith Simmons, USA TODAY

***The Soul of Man (1891) - Oscar Wilde: Somebody - was it Burke? - called journalism the *fourth estate*. That was true at the time, no doubt. But at the present moment, it really is the only estate. We are dominated by Journalism. In America the President reigns for four years, and Journalism governs for ever and ever.***

### **HOW DID THE TERM "*THE FOURTH ESTATE*" ORIGINATE?**

***Definition:*** The journalistic profession or its members; the press.

[Note: Feudalism in the Middle Ages separated mankind into three "estates," or social classes – church, nobility, and peasantry.]

***Online Etymology:*** "the press," 1837, first recorded in writings of Carlyle, though he said it was not original to him (perhaps in use from circa 1823). Earlier the term had been applied in various senses that did not stick, including "the mob" (1752).

Some experts say that Edmund Burke (1729 - 1797), son of a Dublin attorney and British statesman, coined the term with its present meaning. It comes from a quote in Thomas Carlyle's book, "*Heros and Hero Worship in History*" (1841): "Burke said that there were three Estates in Parliament, but in the Reporters Gallery yonder, there sat a fourth Estate more important far than they all."

**CW:** The Fourth Estate = A catch phrase for media influence

**M of Z:** "Voice of the people" - when did the ownership change?