

JIM C'S QUIZ OF THE WEEK

MONDAY - 06/23/08

In political campaigns, *plausible deniability* enables candidates to stay "clean" and denounce unethical acts, approaches, or ads.

HOW DID TERM “*PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY (PD)*” ORIGINATE?

***Definition (Kavinay):* “1) A process whereby one first abstracts the directness and origin of a command decision in an effort to deviously *CYA*. 2) A state where one has prevented one’s self from officially learning what one already knows in order to later retain the precious ability to plead ignorance.”**

***Origin (Wikipedia):* “A political doctrine originally developed in the United States of America in the 1950s and applied to operations by the then newly-formed Central Intelligence Agency. “*Plausibly deniable*” was first used publicly by CIA Director Allen Dulles.”**

- Iran-Contra - Vice Admiral John Poindexter: “I made a deliberate decision not to ask the President so that I could insulate him.”**
- Super Bowl Halftime Show/Janet Jackson “wardrobe malfunction”
MTV: Planned? Heaven forbid, how can you suggest such a thing?**
- Former Enron Chairman Kenneth Lay: “I was in the dark.”**

C W: PD = Sophisticated vagueness and circumlocution

Moment of Zen: No one told me. If I had only known.