

# **JIM C – QUIZ OF THE WEEK**

## **MONDAY – 12/08/08**

**To reverse Bush Administration policies, President-elect Obama plans to use his executive powers to make an immediate impact.**

**HOW DID THE TERM “*EXECUTIVE ORDERS*” ORIGINATE?**

***Definition (mynation.com):* Executive Orders (EOs) are legally binding orders given by the U. S. President, acting as the head of the Executive Branch, to Federal Administrative Agencies.**

**EOs are also used to guide agencies in directions contrary to congressional intent, which runs against the general logic of the Constitution -- that no one should have power to act unilaterally.**

***Origin/History:* Although there is no Constitutional provision or statute that explicitly permits executive orders, U.S. Presidents have issued *executive orders* since 1789. The Department of State instituted a numbering scheme for executive orders in 1907, when EOs were retroactively numbered going back to 1862 when President Lincoln suspended the writ of habeas corpus and issued the Emancipation Proclamation by Executive Order.**

***Note:* To have the effect of law, *executive orders* must appear in the *Federal Register*; also, Congressional override of an executive order is a nearly impossible event due to the supermajority vote required.**

**Conventional Wisdom: Executive Orders = Presidential Power**

**Moment of Zen: Unilateral power has unintentional consequences**