

Team Obama: New National Security Adviser, Jim Jones, Puts Energy First

Posted by Keith Johnson
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U.S. presidents have been talking about energy security and searching for an energy policy since Nixon was popular. By tapping General James Jones as his national security adviser, President-elect Barack Obama is indicating that the great energy debate will take place at the epicenter of U.S. national security—and that the outcome of that debate will look more like [“all of the above”](#) and less like a “green revolution.”

For Gen. Jones, formerly the Marine commandant and Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, “energy is a national security issue, and it is an international security issue of the highest order.” Gen. Jones is the president and chief executive of the Institute for 21st Century Energy, an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. In November, the Institute [offered Mr. Obama a roadmap for bolstering U.S. energy security](#) as a key component of increasing its national security. (Our colleagues at Washington Wire [have more](#) on the national security team announcement.)

The Institute’s business-friendly approach advocates more of everything—more domestic oil and gas, more nuclear power, more coal, more renewable energy, and above all, for the federal government to cut through regulatory thickets that have hamstrung U.S. energy modernization in recent years. The key message from the Institute’s transition plan is that U.S. economic and security interests have suffered due to the lack of a comprehensive national energy plan that addresses how we can get more energy and how we can use less.

The only thing Gen. James doesn’t countenance is more of the same: “We are in a race against the clock and complacency is our greatest enemy. If we do not take this challenge seriously, America’s economic prosperity, national security, and global standing will be at risk. The status quo is not only an option, it is a recipe for failure.”

One of the Institute’s other recommendations for the next president? The creation of an energy-policy chieftain who will sit on both the National Security Council and the National Economic Council to make sure that energy is the common thread uniting disparate government policy.