



Debate: With no knockout, now GOTV

Lugar, Mourdock debate was civil, but the final chapter will be anything but ...

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - Richard Mourdock and Dick Lugar spent an hour before a statewide televised audience Wednesday night debating the issues with civility, with neither delivering a knockout punch. It leaves this campaign to be decided by the incumbent's ground game and the challenger's array of outside partners who are pumping millions of dollars into the state on his behalf.

A buoyant Sen. Lugar, speaking to reporters after the debate, acknowledged the polls had been narrowing and called the debate "a turning point."

"I thought it was a great debate and I thought it was a big turning point in the campaign," Lugar said. "I'm very excited about the fact that heading out of this debate tonight, we'll be putting out thousands of yard signs to-



Indiana Treasurer Richard Mourdock and U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar just prior to their first and only debate Wednesday night at WFYI-TV.

morrow and the next day, tens of thousands over the next week." Lugar said that after making 1.1 million phone calls, the pace "will accelerate in the next few days. They will tell us who is for us, who is against us and who is undecided so that we can get a turnout."

Lugar said that he had never been in a campaign "with such vigor on the turnout question when that is

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The most important debate

By **MARK SOUDER**

FORT WAYNE - Senator Richard Lugar is and will always be an Indiana legend for multiple reasons: 1) as Mayor of Indianapolis he was the key person in taking "Indiana-No-Place" to modern Indianapolis; 2) he is the longest serving Indiana Senator in our state's history, two times over; and 3) his leadership in Washington, especially foreign affairs, has made him world-renowned. I write this anticipating Wednesday night when he will be involved in a debate that could end his distinguished political career.

In 2009 Senator Evan Bayh



"This is an unprecedented failure of leadership and oversight."

- John Gregg, on the \$206 million the state failed to pay local governments



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seemed nearly invincible. Bayh had stockpiled funds the equivalent of multiple community banks. The Republicans had no threatening opponent. My former boss Dan Coats declared for Senate, and Evan Bayh bailed out – money and all – hours later. Senator Bayh saw that a contest with Coats would be hard, if not impossible, and that both would wind up with damaged reputations. The political establishment was in shock. This type of thing does not happen. Except when incumbent Senator Dan Coats did exactly the same thing when confronted with the entry of Evan Bayh against him in 1998. Coats was behind, but it could have been overcome. However record fund-raising efforts would be required to be used in the political “nuking” of Bayh, and the reverse. In 1998, Coats just didn’t have the stomach for the fight.

When Coats re-emerged in 2010, I was asked by his numerous House and Senate friends whether he could adjust to the more brutal politics of 2010. One asked, “Can a former Senator and former Ambassador adjust to the nasty populist style of today? Things have changed.”

I replied that people always underestimated Dan Coats and his gritty determination to win. Within his friendly and kind spirit there is a steely determination to triumph. It was best exemplified in college when he learned that the sport at Wheaton was soccer, which he had not played before. Learning most skills as a freshman on a nationally powerful team would be impossible. But becoming a goalie was. He bloodied himself, earning the back-up position. The top goalie was injured. Dan Coats became a star goalie, and Wheaton won a national championship. People who think Dan has a marshmallow core are always surprised.

So in 2010 Dan Coats raised funds in ways he never had before. There was no coronation or “thank you” for rescuing the Indiana Republi-

cans. It was more: “Who do you think you are? You’re a Washington guy being jammed on us by your lobbying buddies. Furthermore, you once voted for a bad judge, want to take my gun away and how could you have possibly voted for amendment number 23 on some bill back in 1983?” But Dan Coats, with attempts to sully his reputation as never before, got down and did it.

Now Richard Lugar faces a similar challenge. His last serious primary challenge was 1976 from former Governor Edgar Whitcomb (for whom I was the 26 year-old Allen County Chairman). Lugar had already been “Nixon’s Favorite Mayor.” He became a Reagan ally. In probably the most personally offensive moment of his life, after having been considered for President and Vice President himself, he saw this young kid Dan Quayle get picked as Vice President for George H. W. Bush. Those in the same party are on the same team. We generally say nice things about each other. We all understand how politics works: Bush did not need an intellectual leader with foreign policy skills, he needed someone younger, deferential, not challenging, who could appeal to a broader group including social conservatives. Still ... a slow burn. Every day Senator Lugar most likely told himself “get over it, the decision had nothing to do with you” and then he’d read about Vice President Quayle.

Once Speaker Newt Gingrich, when we all were particularly disruptive in Conference, said: “All of you think you’re the leader. By the way, how many of you were student council or senior class presidents?” All but a few hands, out of over 200, went up. Elected politicians are by nature among America’s most competitive people. One day every few years for federal positions people vote on YOU. In a sense, it is all about you. To illustrate, two of my congressional friends had a dispute. Congresswoman Michelle Bachman was quoted as



saying that she realized that others in the GOP Conference weren't being personally critical of her. Congresswoman Virginia Fox replied: "No, Michelle. It is about you."

If the 2012 Senate primary were about ideas, Lugar would win. Hard-core conservatives like Richard Mourdock (and me, for that matter) would generally get a third of the vote. In 2012 Republicans are more conservative than normal, or at least more cynical about government, but we are also about to nominate Ford/Bush41/McCain/Romney again.

The residency question, having to pay for Indianapolis hotels, and the number of Adams County parades Senator Lugar has marched in are part of a broader issue: Is Lugar too old? Is he still a Hoosier? Or is he now somewhat of an out-of-touch Washington monument to the past?

Richard Mourdock, while victorious statewide, is basically unknown. While Lugar may be old, we know him. Is Mourdock really Senate material? Is he just another carping conservative, or does he have a vision for Indiana and a positive outlook?

Ideas do matter in politics. But during this debate, those who watch will spread the news fast. Did Lugar drift off during the debate? Could he hear well? Can he talk about things we care about or ramble about obscure details in Egypt?

Did Mourdock seem angry or mean? Can he smile? Is he reflective? Can he listen?

We have not seen Senator Lugar directly challenged. There is still a month left to spin the election by both sides. But Lugar has this last hurdle to conquer and he's not 65 anymore. If he slips, and Mourdock is at all appealing, Mourdock will win. All the honors in the world will not save Lugar. On the other hand, Senator Lugar is no ivory tower professor: he is standing his ground with guns blazing. The debate, and the next 30 days, will be – shall we say – "lively."

Addendum: A slight Mourdock edge

Senator Richard Lugar avoided the knockout blow in the one and only Senatorial debate by standing there for 60 minutes and displaying his deep and wide knowledge of issues. He not only didn't have the "mind drifting" that an 80 year-old always risks but rather looked like a man who had more to say than time allotted. He switched his answer approach twice under pressure, not easy to do if you're 35 who loves combative debate.

Early on Senator Lugar was giving specific, Indiana-based examples as has historically been done and to help counter the image that he wasn't here enough. He tactically switched because he could tell that Mourdock was giving more general, principle-based responses (elaborated clichés) that were persuasive as opposed to detail-based.

Lugar later, in the middle of an answer, suddenly quoted Edmund Burke, in a philosophically logical way when he realized that he had wandered into the weeds.

While 80 is old, and 86 at the end is very old in today's political world, Lugar clearly demonstrated that he is mentally capable. Crudely said, he didn't symbolically "drool" or show hearing problems, which could have ended his campaign.

Mourdock had a different challenge which I constantly hear: "Lugar is really old, seems to have drifted more liberal, and is out of touch. Is Mourdock qualified?" Variation number two on this: "I am worried if we nominate Mourdock that he will be like some of those 2010 Tea Party candidates who then proceeded to lose the fall race to a Democrat."

Richard Mourdock had nothing like a "like you, I am not really a vampire" moment. He did not head WWF: he was a former Vanderburgh county commissioner. He has less of a flaky side than someone whose idea of drama is to thrill you with details about Abraham Lincoln. When he becomes passionate and near tears, it is about repayment of Chrysler bonds. He proved last night, like him or not, that he is NOT like those who blew the 2010 Senate races.



The most surprising things last night from Mourdock were: 1) after a justified deferential statement to Senator Lugar, he proceeded to go head-to-head with him on foreign policy, laying out what

historically would be called more of a "defense department" rather than "state department" approach to dealing with Russia, for example and 2) when given a direct opportunity to lay out his Christian worldview, he switched subjects.

Mourdock gained by showing up, looking good, wasn't mean, and showed that he was a respectable candidate. He may have been a bit boring, but in politics that is usually better than being perceived as a nut. But will his gain be enough? For the next thirty days we will now learn through television ads, not the candidates themselves. And, with Santorum out, Romney now likely will top 50% which becomes problematic for Mourdock.

Overall, my favorite description of the debate came from my 24 year-old son Zach. He said, "Dad that looked like it could have been taped twenty years ago." ❖

Souder is a former Republican congressman from Indiana.



Lugar/Mourdock, from page 1

clearly going to be the difference of this campaign.”

Hours after the debate, Lugar picked up the endorsement of the Indiana Chamber of Commerce and the Indiana Manufacturers Association.

A week ago, the Howey/DePauw Indiana Battleground Poll showed Lugar with a 42-35% lead over Mourdock, with the two evenly splitting the Republican vote. The poll, conducted March 26-28, came after Lugar had taken broad sides over his residency issue that played out before local and state election boards, and it also coincided with Club for Growth’s first six-figure advertising volley. In essence, the Howey/DePauw poll came after two of the worst political weeks in Lugar’s long history that includes six Senate victories, two Indianapolis mayoral wins along with an Indianapolis School Board win. His only loss came when he challenged U.S. Sen. Birch Bayh in the wake of the Watergate scandal in 1974. The national press seemed transfixed that an incumbent of Lugar’s stature could only conjure up 42%.

Mourdock’s problem is that he hasn’t been able to escape the 30th percentile. In the days following the Howey/DePauw Poll, the Lugar campaign has lashed back at Mourdock, saying that his Washington special interests that include the National Rifle Association, FreedomWorks and Club for Growth were essentially buying a Senate seat. This Washington trident aimed at Lugar has taken him to task for obscure energy votes, his support for President Obama’s two Supreme Court nominations, and his support for earmarks.

During the debate, Mourdock failed to work into his dialogue the Supreme Court nominees, the earmarks and NRA positions on guns. While Mourdock put forth a generally credible performance, he got tangled up with facts on ethanol and its relationship to gasoline prices, as well as the latest START treaty. On the ethanol question, Mourdock talked about a federal mandate he said began in 2005, but it actually started in 2011. None of these were egregious faux pas that the average voter would pick up on.

Asked why he thought Wednesday was a turning

point, Lugar responded, “I think we both tried to respond to the questions as they were presented and I don’t have any way of divining what my opponent decided he wanted to deal with. I had the opportunity to talk about my voting record, what I’ve been doing on domestic policy as well as abroad over the past 35 years. I appreciated this opportunity. The general impression has been I’ve read press accounts and various polls and so forth that the race had been narrowing. At least that’s the impression I get reading all of this. My guess is it’s stopped narrowing and we’re going to expand, getting people out to vote.”

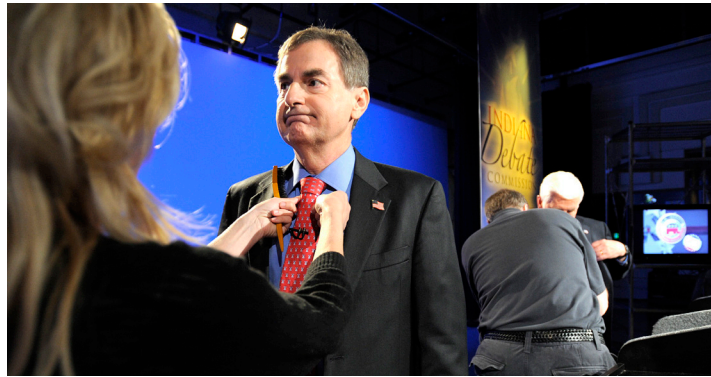
Lugar noted that U.S. Sen. Orrin Hatch of Utah has also been a Tea Party/FreedomWorks target, but Hatch appears to be persevering and is expected to be renominated at a state convention in the coming weeks. “He might have been in danger and he’s doing well now,” Lugar said of Hatch. “But after that, the so-called national groups have found Indiana as the only playground. And this is where everyone is romping around. These folks have nothing to do with our state. But they have various agendas and messages they want to

bring out and so as a result I have not been in a campaign where there was this much national interest. Tonight was a very good opportunity to make our case and it was one I believe we were able to take advantage.”

About half of the debate centered on foreign policy, which also worked into Lugar’s wheelhouse.

At one point, Mourdock suggested that Nunn-Lugar funds used to contain weapons of mass destruction from the old Soviet nuclear, chemical and biological weapon arsenals were ending up in the hands of rogue regimes in Syria and Iran. “We are sending in money to Russia and to Syria and Syria is helping Iran,” Mourdock said. He said the U.S. needed to take a more “unilateral” response and accused the Obama administration of consistently “leading from behind.”

“It’s something that Sen. Lugar, last I knew, was still opposing,” Mourdock said. “He wanted to do that through the U.N. I think there are times we need to act unilaterally to put the pressure on those nations to make



Indiana Treasurer Richard Mourdock and Sen. Dick Lugar get mics affixed prior to the debate. This morning, Lugar was endorsed by the Indiana Chamber and the Indiana Manufacturers Association, with Lugar shown here with Kevin Brinegar and Pat Kiely.



sure they understand they know we care about world peace and we don't want to see those nations develop nuclear arms."

Lugar disagreed in perhaps his most demonstrative rebuke of the challenger, though it was mild when compared to other donnybrook campaigns. He said that he worked with U.S. Sen. Jon Kyl daily on START and added, "The real problem is making sure we get the Russians aboard, we get the Chinese aboard, we get others aboard who right now are undercutting those efforts. That's going to require some very strong diplomacy."

Toward the end of the debate, moderator Phil Bremen asked the two candidates to define their conservatism.

Lugar talked about his service in the U.S. Navy, his management of a small manufacturing company that made exports, and the family farm. "These are conservative elements of my life and they are expressed in my votes, and the work we have been doing, both on the economy as well in foreign policy to bring security for America."

Mourdock responded, "I see myself as a conservative meaning, I believe in the founding fathers' principles that the federal government needs to be restricted and limited. We have grown to the point with our government today that I don't think our founding fathers would even begin to recognize this country for what they designed it to be."

Mourdock said after the debate that he thought "I did pretty well. I was well prepared on all the questions and there weren't any surprises."

He talked about the "questions that were left out" and said, "I wish we could have talked about the 31 years I've had in the private sector because I think that type of experience is just as important as being knowledgeable in my time in government. Absolutely I believe I'm ready. If I didn't believe that I wouldn't be here."

Asked why he didn't bring up Lugar's votes for Supreme Court Justices Kagen and Sotomayor, and whether he was trying to be less combative with his statesman opponent, Mourdock said, "Honestly, standing there I didn't



Lugar and Mourdock supporters picket outside of the WYFI-TV studios in Indianapolis on Wednesday night. How the campaigns conduct their GOTV will determine the winner of this intense race.

think of the judges, otherwise I would have brought it up, I'm sure. The residency issue of where Mr. Lugar votes, I never talk about." But he added, "If I'm a senator, I'm not going to be paying hotel bills in this state. I think that is inexcusable for a U.S. senator."

Asked about the 30% of the voters who voted for Marlin Stutzman in the 2010 U.S. Senate race, Mourdock gave his political analysis: "I love that question. Here's how I've looked at this race for some time: In 2010 ... there were four Republicans running for the United States Senate" - Don Bates, Stutzman, John Hostettler and Richard Behney. "At the last minute, Dan Coats returned to get in this race. He was seen as the establishment candidate. On primary day, Dan Coats received 39% of the vote, which means 61% of the people who voted on primary day voted against the establishment. If Mr. Coats is seen as establishment, I think Mr. Lugar is seen as more establishment."

Mourdock began the debate by saying that he was "shocked" when members of the Indiana Republican Central Committee urged him to run two and a half years ago. What he didn't say was that during district reorganizations last year, seven of 10 central committee members who supported him either quit, retired or were defeated for reelection. Two key campaign aides - Rich Bramer and Diane Hubbard - also lost district races.

At the end of the debate, Mourdock grazed the residency question that had dogged Lugar, saying that he would always live in Indiana. "If I have the privilege of serving in the Senate, I'm not moving. I'll always call Darmstadt home."

And Mourdock said he wished the format had been a "Lincoln-Douglas" Senate debates of 1858 where "this thing could have gone back and forth."

Asked if there was an answer that Lugar gave that crystallized the difference between the two candidates, Mourdock sighed, "Oh boy. I don't think I can pick one particular question. I think there were a number of them where the differences were pronounced. Some of them were subtle. As I said, there are certainly many things he and I agree on. But there are those issues we differ on. How the United States is going to be a foreign power. I see our role a lot differently than he does. He wants to see us deal multilaterally through the United Nations. That's not going to work. We need to be stronger and we have to deal from a position of strength."

Mourdock said he didn't anticipate a "knockout punch," adding that his goal was to "demonstrate that Mourdock is capable, competent and conservative."

In the final month of the campaign, the victor will be the one with the organization that turns out the vote. ❖



Tea Party loses support in Howey/DePauw poll

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - The Tea Party movement was once seen as a potent force in Indiana and national politics and was supposed to propel Treasurer Richard Mourdock into the U.S. Senate. But the Howey/DePauw Indiana Battleground Poll released on April 5 shows that among the 503 likely general election voters, it could be a drag.

Only 32% had a hard favorable view of the Tea Party, compared to 42% who had a hard unfavorable view.

Another 22% had no opinion and just 4% were oblivious to the movement. In Howey/DePauw cross tabulations, among "very conservative" voters, the Tea Party had a 65.2% favorable rating, but that fell to 40% among "somewhat conservative," 13.4% among conservative Democrats, 27.8% among conservative independents and 17.9% among moderate/liberal independents. The Tea Party fav/unfavs almost match the 42-35% lead that U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar has over Mourdock, creating a scenario that suggests Mourdock may not be able to move much beyond the mid-30th percentile that he has had for much of the campaign.

The complete Howey/DePauw top lines for both the Republican primary and general election surveys can be found by clicking these links: <http://howeypolitics.com/main.asp?SectionID=45&SubSectionID=289&ArticleID=7624&TM=42098.83> and <http://howeypolitics.com/main.asp?SectionID=45&SubSectionID=289&ArticleID=7623&TM=42098.83>

"Murdock's numbers haven't changed," said David Willkie, communications director for the Lugar campaign. "The Tea Party has moved from being a populist grassroots movement to now being controlled by national groups portending to speak for them: Club for Growth, Freedom-

Works, and Tea Party Express."

The Tea Party's hard stance on the debt ceiling issue last August – with many, including Mourdock against a raise – may have galvanized a growing opposition to the movement. While Congress approved an increase in the debt ceiling, the ugly debate prompted the Standard & Poor's rating service to downgrade the U.S. credit rating for the first time in history.

Murdock's candidacy was encouraged by many of the estimated 92 Tea Party cells scattered across Indiana. That's the number Chuck Ford, who heads the Tea Party of Hamilton County, described as the Tea Party universe in Indiana. When the Tea Party cells gathered for the first time in Tipton in January 2010, there were 70 tribes represented.

In Greenfield last September where Mourdock received the Tea Party "endorsement," 55 were represented. A rally scheduled for May 5 – three days before the primary – listed only 16 cells, according to internal memos from Hoosiers for a Conservative Senate that HPI obtained.

Ford and Anna Kroyman of a White County Tea Party cell have objected to Hoosiers for a Conservative Senate speaking for the movement in the Senate race, and Kroyman has been critical of national groups assuming the movement's mantle.

The Howey/DePauw poll mirrors similar findings nationally. A Fox News poll revealed 30% favorable, compared to 51% who viewed it unfavorably. A recent Washington Post/ABC News poll shows 44% supporting it and 43% opposing, but just 15% of Americans supported the Tea Party "strongly," while many more – 26% – were "strongly" opposed.

"That suggests opposition to the Tea Party is more strident than the Tea Party itself, which means the movement may be doing the GOP more harm than good," the Post reported. "It's no longer

viewed as a populist, grassroots organization, but a dangerous group with extremist views that don't reflect the mainstream values of America's middle class," Democratic media strategist John Lapp told the Post. "The Republican establishment allowed the inmates to run the asylum in 2010. And now they're paying the price electorally. As a Republican candidate, if you can effectively tell your story and

THE INDIANA BATTLEGROUND POLL HOWEY DEPAUW *Politics Indiana* UNIVERSITY





establish your own 'brand,' then you will be fine. However, if you play into that narrative – think Sharron Angle – then you will find yourself in trouble. But that is true for any candidate, Tea Party-affiliated or not."

GOP strategist Chris LaCivita told the Post, "Some of the negatives come out of the fact that there isn't anyone defending the Tea Party as a political party. They have as many factions as they do members, and speaking behind a cohesive central message is foreign to whom they are, not only as a 'party,' but what they believe in."

Campaigns respond to Howey/DePauw

Richard Mourdock spokesman Christopher Conner said the results of the Howey/DePauw Indiana Battleground Poll show "Hoosier Republicans are ready for a change" (Carden, NWI Times). The poll showed Lugar leading Mourdock 42-35%, with the two candidates tied among Republicans.

"After millions of dollars in TV and radio ads, mostly attacking Richard Mourdock personally, Sen. Lugar continues to be under the important threshold of 50% for incumbents, which means people aren't buying what his campaign is selling," Conner said. At the same time, the poll found 17% of Republicans never have heard of Mourdock, and 40% have no opinion of him, even after twice being elected state treasurer, most recently in 2010.

Lugar spokesman Andy Fisher said Indiana Republicans aren't going to vote for someone they don't know. "As we find in our daily calls to Hoosier primary voters — which we have made more than a million — once they know Richard Mourdock, they won't choose Richard Mourdock," Fisher said.

Cross tab gems

Here are some data points that we found as we combed through the Howey/DePauw cross tabulations:

President Obama: The president approve/disapprove stood at 39/52%. Breaking it down by gender, 35.9% of men and 41.4% of women approve.

Gov. Daniels: His approval stood at 63% and disapproval was 31% in the general election survey. Among conservative independents, it stood at 65.9%; moderate independents at 60.1%, moderate/liberal independents at 31.3% and among conservative Democrats, 39.6%. Daniels' approval with Tea Party backers stood at 62.7%.

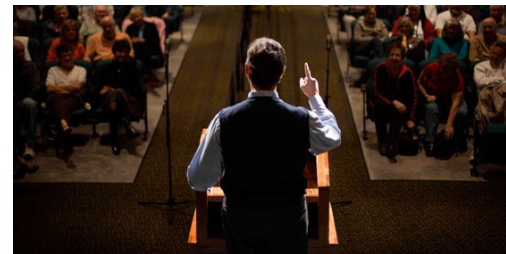
Senate race: Independents – key for the general election – greatly favored Lugar over Mourdock. Among independent men, Lugar's approval was 58.6%, compared to 14% for Mourdock; independent women, 46.3% favored Lugar, 9.9% Mourdock; and Democratic women, 44.6% favored Lugar, 6% Mourdock. ❖

Who benefits with in Senate race with Rick Santorum gone?

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - The Indiana presidential primary has fizzled. When Rick Santorum pulled out of the race in Gettysburg on Tuesday, it left Mitt Romney barreling toward the Republican presidential nomination with only a couple of gnats – Newt Gingrich and Ron Paul – buzzing around his head.

The down ballot implications in the May 8 Indiana primary are potentially vast. Indiana Treasurer Richard Mourdock, in a gut fight with U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar, immediately saw it as an advantage, telling Politico, "I think the timing couldn't be better. I think it definitely helps us. The



real grassroots politics, the ones that motivate people, were the ones that were out there more for Santorum. They're still going to

be motivated, they're still going to get out and vote, but I don't know that Romney's folks will. I think it probably keeps some of the fair weather voters home who might be more inclined to go with name ID, who don't really tune into the Senate race as much as they do a presidential race."

The Lugar campaign always saw the presidential overlay as an exercise in punditry with little value. "There is way too much speculation that it would have an impact," said Lugar spokesman Andy Fisher. "The presidential race is less of an issue on our race."

Fisher said that Mourdock's assessment is "a best case scenario that a lot of people who would have turned out for Santorum would turn out for Richard Mourdock."

Mourdock and his allies have long talked about a suppressed turnout as an element that would favor the challenger. The Lugar campaign has based its entire premise on contacting its GOP voters and expanding the field by bringing in Republican-leaning independents. "There are clearly independent voters who will vote in the Republican primary," Fisher explained. "They are there and will be helpful to us." In addition to the more than 1 million phone calls the Lugar campaign has made, there is a micro target-



ing program that, Fisher said, is the most sophisticated of any of the senator's campaigns.

In the 2008 Hillary Clinton/Barack Obama race in Indiana, HPI's analysis in the May 8, 2008 edition reported that CNN had projected 10% of the Democratic primary were Republican crossovers, and 23% were independents. In the April 29, 2008, Howey/Gauge Poll, the survey found 10% of Republicans intended to vote in the Democratic primary. CNN political analyst Bill Schneider characterized the "Rush Limbaugh effect" as "slightly measureable." That was in reference to radio talk show host Limbaugh's "Operation Chaos" in which he goaded Hoosier Republicans to vote for Clinton, who defeated Obama by just 14,000 votes. Obama campaign manager David Plouffe said Limbaugh "had a clear factor in the outcome." HPI's final election forecast in 2008 noted that Republicans might determine the race and in its May 8 edition HPI reported: "we believe you can find that impact in the 14,000 margin."

Hendricks County Republican Chairman Mike O'Brien sees the Santorum withdrawal as a wash. Conventional wisdom is that a vigorous presidential primary would draw independent and even some Democratic votes that might be more inclined to vote for Lugar. The Santorum candidacy and its potential voting pool, O'Brien said, were more aligned with the Mourdock campaign. Without Santorum stumping the state and igniting that evangelical conservatism, the more likelihood is the Mourdock voting base will be smaller. "The Santorum energy would have been strong for Mourdock," O'Brien said.

Howard County Republican Chairman Craig Dunn, who endorsed Mourdock early, told HPI, "First, I am not trying to spin this. I could probably argue it either way. However, without a Presidential race to boost turnout, turnout will be suppressed. Your poll showed the race knotted at 38/38 with those who voted in 2008 and 2010."

Dunn added, "Our most conservative and engaged Republicans generally vote in primaries. If a 36-year Senator can't break 42% 30 days before a primary, he has got big problems. The Mourdock camp spin has been that Lugar will get the same basic 38% that Coats received and Mourdock will get the lion's share of the rest. I can tell you that there are no real ground troops for Lugar and his campaign has virtually no emotion. The wild card will be Governor Daniels. How much will he become involved?"

Other Republicans have wondered where the Lugar yard signs are. The answer is that they will begin popping up on Saturday. Lugar and his campaign will be handing

out materials at 12:30 p.m. today in Broad Ripple.

State Sen. Mike Delph has crisscrossed the state in recent weeks and has had his pulse on the conservative movement. "Rick Santorum was the conservative candidate and conservatives would have turned out and voted for him," the Carmel Republican said. "Other conservatives would have benefited from that increased enthusiasm. My thinking was that an energized conservative base at the presidential level would have benefited Richard Mourdock in his senatorial race. That's my connecting of the dots. I don't understand the logic of where his thinking is."



State Sen. Mike Delph (second from left) with fellow conservative Sens. Jim Buck, Brent Waltz and Dennis Kruse. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)

Delph said he was "only speaking for myself" and acknowledged that the end of the Santorum candidacy had "taken the wind away from my sails when Rick made the courageous and personal decision to withdraw out of love for his family. I still believe he had the best shot of defeating President Obama. I

was very excited about his candidacy."

Delph cited the Howey/DePauw Indiana Battleground Poll released on April 5 and said, "Your data last week showed that even though he had not gotten up to speed, he would have done very well. He was leading. Other polls had him leading by wider margins. I believe Rick Santorum would have won the state of Indiana. As a conservative, I'm disappointed. I'm not as excited about the primary as I was at the beginning of the day."

Howey/DePauw had Santorum leading Romney 27-26% with a +/- 4.5% MOE. Paul and Gingrich were tied at 6% and 35% were undecided.

"There are a lot of conservatives in Indiana who are less than enthusiastic about our options in the May primary," Delph said.

Delph, who pondered a Senate run of his own before deciding it would not have been good for his family, warned that this "one-to-one algebraic translation doesn't work in politics." He explained, "Some of his (Santorum's) supporters would have gone to Richard Mourdock, but not all. Ideologically speaking, they are more compatible than Santorum/Lugar. So I think that helps Lugar more than Mourdock."

Much more important than guessing how the Santorum withdrawal will bear on the Senate race is the execution of turning out supporters. "The most important timeline in any campaign is the last 72 hours," Delph explained. "That's where you separate the men from the boys. Who can turn out the base vote? The Santorum deal puts all the pressure on the Mourdock organization. If he has a paper tiger organization, that will show through on May 8." ❖



Mourdock campaign manager Holden draws fire from friend & foe

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - In a tightly contested primary, the armchair quarterbacking is already underway.

The talk about the Lugar campaign is that the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee stepped in after seeing signs that the incumbent wouldn't fight the flood of special interest money from national groups as if it were a street brawl, and thus we are seeing an array of aggressive and negative ads running for Lugar. Other Lugar allies are critical of the "DC influence" his TV advertising has shown.

And the Mourdock campaign? Howey Politics Indiana is struck by the mounting criticism from friend and foe alike of Mourdock campaign manager Jim Holden.

Sources backing the Mourdock candidacy cannot contain themselves when it comes to the way Holden has run the campaign. They say the campaign hasn't kept county parties apprised, has had an array of scheduling conflicts, has spent too much time concentrating on Tea Party groups as opposed to the county parties, and isn't honest. They cite Holden's shoving match with a blogger last June in a Tea Party event in Kokomo that coincided with U.S. Rep. Mike Pence's gubernatorial campaign kick off.

This flared to a head in Sunday's Indianapolis Star "Behind Closed Doors" column: Holden apparently didn't take it too well when he learned that Marty Obst, a former finance chairman for the Indiana Republican Party, was working for a super PAC that is backing Lugar. Holden, using his own email and not the Mourdock campaign account, sent Obst an email saying: "I just read about your new job. Congratulations, you are now the newest lowest form of life on earth. I hope you choke on your 30 pieces of silver."

In case Obst didn't get the point, Holden included a link to a Wikipedia article on "Judas Iscariot." Christopher Conner, a spokesman for Mourdock, said only that this was "a personal email between the two of them on a personal matter."

The Star's report said that Robert Vane works with

Obst at the super PAC Hoosiers for Jobs. Vane is communications director while Obst is the fundraiser. "He showed (the email) to me and said, 'I want you to take a look at this,'" Vane said. "My actual reaction was, 'Well, Jim Holden has colored more books than he's read.' What does this say about Richard Mourdock's judgment if he keeps Holden as his top aide?"

That is a question heard frequently from a number of Mourdock allies and in Republican circles. Holden was once fired from the Indiana Republican Party, sources said.

An example of Holden's stunts followed a Howey Politics Indiana inquiry to Mourdock's treasurer's office regarding 911 wireless funds and the Indiana Bond Bank. Holden fired off a letter to the newspaper carrying the Brian Howey column that said, "In the past, we have had to point out a clear bias – along with factual errors – in ar-



Jim Holden, campaign manager for Richard Mourdock, has a penchant for offending friend and foe. He's shown here prior to an altercation with a blogger in June 2011 at a Tea Party event in Kokomo.

ticles submitted to Indiana newspapers by Brian Howey of HPI regarding Indiana State Treasurer Richard Mourdock. We are aware of another Brian Howey piece in the works that may attempt to distort facts related to the state's Emergency 911 system. As you can see from the email below, Brian Howey approached an inquiry to Richard Mourdock's office with an accusation, and it is clear from his use of the term 'slush fund' that he already has his story written before he gathers the facts. Please read this and the thoughtful response from the Treasurer's Office and use it to fact check any article on this subject that Mr. Howey submits to your publication."

It was the first time in memory, a rebuttal of an opinion column that had not been written. But that's the Holden way.

The most conspicuous episode in Holden's long tenure with Mourdock came at the 2002 Indiana Repub-



lican Convention when Mourdock was in a floor fight with Mike Delph, Todd Rokita and Dr. John McGoff for the secretary of state nomination. The Mourdock strategy was to consolidate the "conservative" vote and they saw Rokita as Mourdock's biggest roadblock.

Howey Politics reported in its June 17, 2002 edition: Going into the convention, the pros steering the Rokita campaign were saying that victory had been all but assured. But Friday morning, the hard count of delegates emanating from the two perceived front-runners, Rokita and Vanderburgh County Commissioner Richard Mourdock, revealed an intense battle about to commence. Mourdock floor leader Matt Klein felt they had 700 votes, with about 500 for Rokita.

Greg Zoeller (now Attorney General) was Rokita's floor whip. Howey Politics reported that Zoeller had reaffirmed Klein's assessment, but with different numbers. "We're down to Mourdock by about 25 votes," Zoeller said. History was troubling Zoeller. Never in modern times had someone who didn't finish first on the initial ballot win the nod.

At the end of the first ballot, Mourdock led Rokita 720 to 670, with Delph in third at 341 and McGoff at 197.

When Gordon Durnil announced the first ballot results, Mourdock conferred with one of his floor leaders, Rich Bramer. "Within any delegation, we've defined who might come over," Mourdock said as Bramer shouted, "Let's go! Let's go! Get the signs up!" Outside the convention hall, two flyers began showing up. A yellow flyer read: "Delph Supporters Urged to Vote Mourdock: Conservatives must unite on the second ballot to guarantee strong candidate support in November. The Mourdock campaign congratulates Mike Delph on a hard-fought campaign and invites Delph supporters to join with Mourdock supporters to nominate a conservative on the second ballot!" Tiny letters at the bottom of the flyer read: Paid for by Hoosiers for Richard Mourdock. The flyers, while probably not sealing Mourdock's fate, certainly stole his first ballot momentum. Asked about the flyer, Mourdock made it clear that a campaign cowboy had gotten out in front of the herd. "I am sick and disappointed down to my gut," he told HPR a few minutes after Durnil had made an announcement from the dais, saying the flyers had been inadvertently released.

Had Mourdock authorized the flyers? "I did not," he said, his disgust relayed with each short, staccato syllable.

And who was the "cowboy?" Multiple sources told HPI it was Jim Holden. Here's the timeline and players involved as HPR reported in 2002: Delph was in his convention center headquarters down the hall, having expressed his shock and anger at Mourdock to his face. Delph refused to bail on the second ballot, but was fuming at Mourdock. "If he were to win the nomination, it would assure victory to John Fernandez," he said. "I would have hoped the top

election officer wouldn't resort to such tactics. I would hope that people would act appropriately. I'm committed to seeing what happens on this ballot." Maintaining a slim lead at 14 votes on the second ballot, the Yellow Flyer Incident seemed survivable. At least briefly. Then Delph withdrew, telling his supporters to vote for anyone they wanted on the second ballot. Left unsaid but understood was that most of the Delph supporters were headed toward Rokita. Mourdock said one of his staffers admitted sending out the flyer without permission. He said it was the only major misstep of his 15-month campaign, but it was the one that counted. Rokita's floor manager, Bob Grand, took advantage of the Mourdock team's misstep, said Vanderburgh County Republican Chairman Bettye Lou Jerrel. "Bob Grand did a real number on Richard Mourdock," Jerrel said. She said Grand encouraged ill will with delegates and stressed how it was in poor taste for Mourdock's team to expect the two low candidates to drop out after only the first ballot. "Politically, he did a very bright thing, and it defeated our candidate," Jerrel told reporter Susan Taylor of the Evansville Courier & Press. "But it wasn't just the Rokita team that doomed Mourdock."

On the third ballot, Rokita defeated Mourdock 847 to 753. Mourdock became the first in history to lose a statewide nomination after leading on a convention's first ballot. While losing three congressional races and a Vanderburgh County Council race in 2004, that blown opportunity to make the statewide ticket is a brutal reminder that poor staffing can have dire consequences.

Sen. Delph has never forgotten what Mourdock did to his campaign in 2002. "There is honor and nobility in running a tough race and losing," Delph told HPI earlier this week. "There is no honor in a scorched earth worldview. It's a short-term, flawed philosophy. It will ultimately lose. In 2002, Richard Mourdock believed he had to get all of the conservatives out of the race so he could have a one-on-one shot at Todd Rokita. It was a scorched earth tactic. Richard Mourdock empowers Jim Holden. The voters in 2002 found out that he (Murdock) lied. I will go to my grave thinking I had won on the second ballot. We had been everyone's second choice. Mourdock found out about that. That's why they put out the flyer to create the misperception that I had dropped out of the race."

Today, the Holden-managed Mourdock campaign is in the hunt because of a deluge of national money spilling into the race. The Club for Growth purchased more than \$250,000 in airtime over the past two weeks for anti-Lugar ads after spending \$160,000 against him last year. FreedomWorks has spent \$100,000 on behalf of Mourdock. The National Rifle Association launched a \$100,000 television advertising campaign and \$102,000 on millions of mailers that accuse Lugar of opposing the gun lobby's interests. ❖



Gregg pounces on missing fund story

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - The governor's race took on a different hue this past week in the wake of the Daniels' administration announcing that \$206 million had not been delivered to local governments. That comes on top of \$320 million that turned up due to a computer glitch last year.

Democrat John Gregg pounced on the issue last Thursday, saying, "Today we learned that our state government mismanaged over half a billion dollars – this is simply unacceptable. Where this old boy is from, half a billion dollars is a ton of money. With this kind of news, it's no wonder Hoosiers have lost faith



in their government. We've been forcing schools, firefighters, police departments and other public services to slash budgets while the state government was holding over half a billion dollars. The resignation of Department of Revenue officials and conducting an independent audit are just the first steps of many actions that need to be taken."

Gregg concluded, "This is an unprecedented failure of leadership and oversight. I call on Governor Daniels to conduct a quick and thorough investigation to find out what else may be missing and I encourage Congressman Pence to do the same."

On Friday, Gregg stood outside the Indiana Statehouse with textbooks. "We've got some 'Elements of Accounting.' We've got 'Accounting for Dummies.' And we've also got a great book they use right over here at IUPUI," said Gregg. "If someone at the (Office of Management and Budget) or Revenue, any of the state agencies where this mismanagement has occurred would like copies of it, I will personally deliver it to them. I'm going to carry these around with me until they ask for these copies."

By late Friday, Pence called for an audit, which is also backed by the Daniels' administration. "Given the news of an error in the administration of local income tax dollars, I fully support an independent, transparent and bipartisan audit of the Department of Revenue," Pence said in a statement. "There is no more important duty for public officials than the careful safeguarding of public funds. I applaud the administration for moving quickly to make local governments whole, and now we must set politics aside and work together to enact the kind of reforms that will ensure that this never happens again."

The news comes after the Howey/DePauw Indiana Battleground Poll by Republican pollster Christine Matthews and Democratic pollster Fred Yang (March 26 - 28 with a +/-4.5% MOE) revealed Pence leading Gregg 44-31%. The general election sample of 503 likely voters revealed that 71% don't know who Gregg is, compared to 30% for Pence. Pence's fav/unfavs stood at 32/20% while Gregg's stood at 10/4%.

IACT Executive Director and CEO Matt Greller informed all IACT members Wednesday morning that in an early morning meeting with several affected parties, OMB Director Horst revealed that since January 2011 the Indiana Department of Revenue has improperly calculated income tax revenues, resulting in local units receiving less than their lawfully guaranteed distributions. In his message Greller stated, "IACT believes the state has uncovered the error and acted swiftly to rectify the situation. While we appreciate their aggressiveness in remedying this troubling situation, we are concerned about the long-term implications for taxpayers and cities and towns. This failure has likely impacted not only the basic delivery of services, but resulted in fewer dollars going to property tax relief and greater property tax cap losses to local units of government. When errors of this magnitude occur it causes a significant loss of confidence in the system. We are glad to hear that the governor and OMB Director Horst have ordered a third party audit of the Department of Revenue and we will be anxiously following their findings."

This story may not be over. Indiana Legislative Insight is reporting that other problems may be in the offing. Ed Feigenbaum reported in a recent issue that state auditors already have found other problems in the department that have yet to be revealed. Feigenbaum reported the staff at the State Board of Accounts found the Department of Revenue was unable to account for all the payments that make up a \$47 million balance in a collections fund. They also found that the DOR duplicated, overstated or understated revenues in other accounts.

Indiana Republicans tried to tag some taint on Gregg. Niki Kelly of the Fort Wayne Journal Gazette reported that, "First they sent out a release trying to tie Gregg to a nearly \$300 million homestead tax credit goof discovered in 2003. State officials essentially miscalculated the credit for 17 years – starting back in 1985 when Republican Gov. Bob Orr was in charge – and extending into two other governors' administrations. Gregg wasn't even in the Indiana House until 1987 and left in 2002 before the error was discovered – by Democrat fiscal analysts, we might add. Yet Indiana Republican Party Chairman Eric Holcomb said 'now we know why Speaker Gregg bought a copy of Accounting for Dummies – he needed it so he doesn't make the same mistakes again. We'll be sure to send him a highlighter.'"

Then on Tuesday the state party sent out a "flash-



back" release criticizing Gregg for voting for hundreds of millions in delayed payments for schools and local governments when he was speaker of the Indiana House. And they point out accurately that Gov. Frank O'Bannon refused to sign the budget (which was also approved by the Republican-controlled Senate). Horse Race Status: Leans Pence

Senate: How reporters saw debate

Associated Press, Tom LoBianco: After struggling at times during the early Republican primary campaign, U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar sounded more like the senator he's been for the past 35 years during a debate Wednesday night with Indiana Treasurer Richard Mourdock. Mourdock, though, went after what is considered Lugar's strength, challenging why he didn't support sanctions proposed by Arizona Sen. Jon Kyl against rogue countries such as Iran, North Korea and Syria.

Evansville Courier & Press, Eric Bradner: Even though they debated Wednesday night, it's what U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar and state Treasurer Richard Mourdock didn't say - at least while the cameras were on - that stood out. In the only hour that the two will share the stage ahead of the May 8 primary, Lugar highlighted his foreign policy expertise and deep knowledge of the issues while Mourdock made the case that harder-line conservatism is necessary in Washington. Neither swung for a knockout blow, and their disagreements - Mourdock made critical but veiled comments about Lugar's lack of an Indiana home, and Lugar hit Mourdock for not supporting pro-ethanol regulations - were mostly mild. It was a gaffe-free affair, and only afterward, as they met with reporters for 10 minutes each, were the two more direct. Mourdock said his goal was not to pummel the six-term senator, but to show voters who are on the fence that he is a competent and capable replacement for Lugar.

Fort Wayne Journal Gazette, Brian Francisco: Sen. Richard Lugar, R-Ind., and his primary-election opponent, Richard Mourdock, dressed alike for their debate Wednesday: navy suits, blue shirts, white-dotted red ties, American flag lapel pins. Many of their answers were the same, too. Each called for relaxing government regulations on businesses, repealing President Obama's health care law and gradually increasing the age to receive Social Security benefits.

Indianapolis Star, Schneider & Sikich: For Hoosier Republicans trying to decide whether to stick with U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar or reject the 36-year veteran for State Treasurer Richard Mourdock, Thursday's debate provided no definitive answer. During the one-hour debate - much of it devoted to Lugar's strong suit of foreign policy - he showed that at 80, he is a sharp lawmaker with broad

experience of the world and national issues. But Mourdock, a 60-year-old two-term state official, showed he could hold his own against Lugar's expertise and challenge him without ever appearing disrespectful of his fellow Republican.

NWI Times, Dan Carden: U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar and State Treasurer Richard Mourdock spoke knowledgeably over a wide swath of domestic and foreign policy issues in a debate Wednesday that found the Republican U.S. Senate candidates agreeing far more often than they disagreed. "It is immoral for the United States government to make promises it cannot keep and unfortunately today we are doing that." — State Treasurer Richard Mourdock "We're on the job now, we're excited about this and we have quite an agenda for the future." — U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar Both men pledged to reduce federal spending by changing Social Security and Medicare eligibility for Americans younger than 55, claimed excessive government regulation is holding back job growth and called for the repeal of the 2010 health reform law, known by some as Obamacare. "It is immoral for the United States government to make promises it cannot keep and unfortunately today we are doing that," Mourdock said.

Politico, David Catanese: There was no sniping, no memorable moment and no knockout blow. But Indiana voters who tuned in to watch the lone Republican Senate primary debate between Sen. Dick Lugar and Richard Mourdock saw stark stylistic and substantive differences between the six-term Republican incumbent and the insurgent challenger. Lugar's answers during the hour-long face-off exemplified the pragmatism, nuance and serious thinking that has defined his 36-year Senate career. Mourdock, for the most part, distilled the issues and problems confronting the nation at home and overseas into simpler, black and white terms. In the current political environment, one that rewards clarity and punishes subtlety, chalk it up as a win for Mourdock.

Hoosier businessman Dean White has been a major supporter of FreedomWorks, a Tea Party-aligned group that is trying to defeat Lugar (Indianapolis Star). White's family foundation gave \$1M in 2010 to the FreedomWorks Foundation that shares some expenses with FreedomWorks Inc., another nonprofit arm, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. FreedomWorks Inc. has given \$1.4 million to FreedomWorks for America, the super PAC that has spent more than \$250,000 to replace Lugar with Mourdock. White has supported Lugar in the past, but hasn't given him a contribution since the \$1,900 he gave in 2005. White has made many other political contributions lately, including \$325,000 to GOP Rep. Mike Pence's gubernatorial campaign. His company, Whiteco Industries, gave \$1 million in November to American Crossroads, a super PAC backed by GOP strategist Karl Rove. The company has declined to comment on that contribution.



Finally, asked whether he would endorse Mourdock over Lugar in the race for Indiana Senate, Grover Norquist said he had no plans to do so. Mourdock has signed the pledge, Norquist said, and Lugar has not (Indianapolis Star). "I think I've endorsed one candidate this election cycle, and it's this gentleman," Norquist said, gesturing toward McIntosh. **Primary Horse Race Status:** Tossup

5th CD: McIntosh residency surfaces

The old saying "home is where the heart is" turns out to be more than a sentimental phrase. It's also a defense of residency, according to the Indiana Supreme Court (Anderson Herald-Bulletin). Opponents of David McIntosh, who is running as a Republican candidate for Congress in Indiana's District 5, have brought up questions of his residency because of his work in the Washington area the past decade. McIntosh owns a home in Arlington, Va., and had a Virginia driver's license. His spokesman, Ryan Streeter, said McIntosh currently has an Indiana's driver's license. Despite home ownership and a driver's license in Virginia, McIntosh has continued to vote in Indiana. This raises residency issues, according to one of his opponents, former U.S. Attorney Susan Brooks. She calls it a "serious, troubling issue." Last July, anticipating questions about his residency, McIntosh had attorney Jackie M. Bennett send a letter to Madison County Prosecutor Rodney Cummings requesting an opinion on McIntosh's residency. Cummings responded that according to his understanding of residency, McIntosh has taken reasonable steps to retain residency in Indiana to the exclusion of any other jurisdiction. Cummings said McIntosh sent him the letter to make sure the former congressman was not breaking any laws by running for office. On Friday, Cummings elaborated by saying the essence of residency lies in intent. He cited a 1988 Indiana Supreme Court case that ruled in favor of Evan Bayh, who was running for governor. According to Streeter, McIntosh was required to get a Virginia driver's license after being stopped by a police officer. McIntosh had to show proof of Virginia residency to get the license. McIntosh owns a home in Virginia, and lives there with his family. His children go to school there. On the Madison County ballot for the May 8 primary, McIntosh lists his address as 1606 E. 7th St. in Anderson. He's renting that residence, said Streeter, and also rents a home in Pendleton. While McIntosh's residency might pass the legal test, it's still open to political interpretation. "It's a political issue," said Cummings. "Voters will have to decide."

Dr. John McGoff responded by saying, "I don't need a team of lawyers to tell me where I live. The fact that McIntosh would need to hire a lawyer to establish an appearance of residency in order to run for Congress is absurd. This is another example of why Americans don't trust Washington and politicians. You don't need a lawyer. Just ask some simple questions: Where does David work?

Where is the pillow he lays his head down on at night to sleep? Where does his children go to school? And, where does he go to church? The answer to all those questions is metropolitan Washington D.C., not Indiana."

Conservative activist Grover Norquist flew to Indiana to endorse McIntosh in the 5th District. McIntosh also had signed the pledge as a congressman from 1994-2000. "I will not vote to raise taxes if you choose me as your next congressman," McIntosh said. While politicians have been signing Norquist's pledge for years, the national figure said he rarely endorses a candidate. McIntosh's record and pledge going forward make him a different case, Norquist said.

"We can trust Wayne Seybold on taxes" – that's the message sent by Indiana State Senator Jim Banks, the chair of the Taxpayer Protection Caucus in the Indiana Senate, as he endorsed Seybold. "We truly value and appreciate Senator Banks' support, especially since he works right here in the state and directly understands the needs of Hoosiers," said Seybold, who is currently serving his third term as mayor of Marion.

Former senator and presidential candidate Fred Thompson will host a fundraiser for McIntosh from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 25, at the Ritz Charles in Carmel. But in doing so, McIntosh will be the only candidate skipping a 5th CD debate in Marion that night. **Primary Horse Race Status:** Leans McIntosh

Indiana General Assembly

MILLER CHOSEN TO REPLACE LAWSON IN SD24:

Pete Miller, a former Hendricks County Republican chairman employed by the Indiana Office of Management and Budget was chosen on the seventh ballot to replace Secretary of State Connie Lawson in SD24. Miller defeated Kelli Waggoner 51-41 in the final vote Saturday. "I can't remember a time when we held a caucus with so many qualified candidates than the group that ran in today's SD24 caucus," said Hendricks County Chairman Mike O'Brien. "The strength of the field resulted in seven votes before a majority was reached. Pete has been working on behalf of voters and taxpayers in Hendricks County most of his life. We're excited that he'll continue that work as a member of the Indiana Senate in the years to come." Miller said he will leave his OMB job once he joins the Senate.

OBER ENDORSED BY ALLEN COUNTY RTL: The Allen County Right to Life PAC will support conservative Republican David Ober for state representative, stating in a press release that he has earned their endorsement. "I am honored to receive the endorsement of the Allen County Right to Life PAC," Ober said. "I will work hard to fight for our shared Hoosier values at the Statehouse." ❖



The ‘persnickety fiscal manager’ unraveled

By **SHAW R. FRIEDMAN**

LAPORTE - It was MSNBC’s host, the former Republican congressman from Florida, Joe Scarborough, who first made light of Mitch Daniels’ supposed budget prowess when he said that turning to Daniels as a possible presidential prospect was like turning to the arsonist to serve as a firefighter.

The carefully tended image of a “persnickety fiscal manager with an eye for detail,” as AP’s Tom LoBianco put so well in an April 5 dispatch, has come unraveled in the wake of recent revelations of yet another couple hundred million dollar error under this state administration.



When confronted with yet another fiscal disaster, rather than any kind of contrition or acknowledgement of mistakes, as the Star’s Matthew Tully put it, “the governor seemed downright indignant at criticism” coming from Democrats. Then Tully, one of those reporters who tries to toe a “middle of the road” objectivity when describing this governor’s administration, had to admit there appears now to be a “hefty record of foul-ups, from

the bungled welfare privatization to what seems to be an inability to count.”

Even the Star’s editorial board, as reliable an apologist for Mitch Daniels as can be found anywhere, had to call this latest snafu for what it was – “inexcusable at a time when local governments across Indiana have been forced to slash services and lay off employees, the state was sitting on \$206 million in taxpayers’ money intended for cities and counties.”

Because of so much of the Statehouse press corps has looked the other way for seven years, the Daniels’ administration has carried on budget foul-ups and demands for cuts in basic services even as surpluses existed, and yet they were given a pass.

Yet anyone looking behind this governor’s well-tended budgetary image should have seen that the margin for error in Mitch’s estimates of revenues and expenses have been wildly off. This is a man who as OMB director under President George W. Bush opined in all seriousness from the secure confines of his Geist Reservoir mansion in December 2002 that the Iraq War could be fought at the

bargain basement price of \$60 billion. As the war wound down to its conclusion nine years later, news reports talked about the actual costs having exceeded \$1 trillion.

Our governor who claims to have a “head for business” and a “nose for numbers” got it so wrong when it came to estimating the cost of a war that simply could not be fought on the cheap.

This is the same man who as governor in December 2011 breezily proclaimed that the discovery of \$320 million was just an “early Christmas gift.” This is the same chief executive who belittled comments by those such as House Assistant Minority Leader Scott Pelath who called then for an independent audit. It took yet another accounting debacle and the discovery of the latest \$206 million for the governor to finally recognize the need for an independent review.

These are not the kinds of mistakes that should have gone undetected. As Verenda Smith, deputy director of the Washington, D.C.-based Federation of Tax Administrators told the Associated Press last December, tax collections are a fairly complex undertaking. But certainly our governor, who has carefully nurtured a reputation nationally as a “numbers guru,” has shown remarkable incompetence that is wildly at variance with the national image.

How about our governor admitting he might well have been wrong in demanding budget cuts from various agencies and restoring some of the needed funds out of the \$320 million found just before the holidays?

Forget the 60 bucks that the governor intends to rebate to Hoosiers that barely buys a tank of gas these days. What about restoring funds to struggling school districts, hard-pressed child protective services staff and mental health professionals who have had to cut services because of the imagined budget crisis? Sure wish this governor would come to his senses in this, his final year, rather than keep up the pretense that he’s a budget guru and a numbers whiz when all signs are to the contrary. ❖

Shaw R. Friedman is an HPI regular contributor. He’s also former legal counsel to the Indiana Democratic Party.



Time to lay claim to \$206 million

By **DAVE KITCHELL**

LOGANSPORT - Imagine a scenario in which somebody shows up at the Indiana Unclaimed Property Division to claim all the cash from the latest state accounting error courtesy of the Indiana Department of Revenue.



The dialogue for some unassuming clerk would start something like this: "Excuse me, is Mr. Zoeller, Mr. Greg Zoeller here? I'm a Indiana taxpayer, and I'm here for my share of the \$206 million."

"The \$206 million," a confused clerk may respond.

"Yes," a confident taxpayer might retort. "I've read where the latest state accounting error took away that amount from cities, counties, towns, libraries, schools and whatever else is

funded by the state, which I guess includes all major state universities. I don't want all of it — just my share if you don't mind."

For those of you who just joined this issue, before last week, the last time this happened was just before Christmas when Gov. Mitch Daniels announced there was a slight, \$320 million error caused when a fund collecting e-filings for business taxes was not included in the mix for state revenue — for three years. The Indiana General Assembly in its finite — not infinite — wisdom, decided to right that wrong by giving all Hoosiers a \$50 rebate.

But legislators aren't in session now until next year, which means it may be up to Daniels to decide how to right this latest wrong. To put this amount of cash in perspective, the \$206 million error is roughly the amount any of last month's three record Mega Millions lottery winners collected before taxes, which is enough to run the city of Indianapolis for a couple of months, according to one projection.

To say that any taxpayer or the president of the Indiana Civil Liberties Union or Grover Norquist could stop by the Indiana attorney general's office and lay claim to \$206 million is sardonic. But to point out that Zoeller and his staff are charged with the responsibility of returning millions of unclaimed stock dividends, safety deposit contents, insurance revenue and other personal property to rightful owners is purely ironic because Daniels will have a devil of a time ever returning \$206 million to the rightful taxing

units that were owed the money in the first place.

And how will he compensate all these taxing entities that had to borrow money just to make payroll? He won't. That will be a cost passed along to us, the taxpayers. He won't pay a penalty. He won't serve time, and he won't lose his job.

Yes, in less than six months, Daniels, a former White House budget director for George W. Bush, managed to lose track of at least a half billion in tax dollars. Given the current counter lawsuits involving the state and IBM over the botched reform efforts for Hoosiers seeking or receiving TANF, Food Stamps and Hoosier Healthwise that IBM implemented for Daniels, the state could be out another half billion, depending on what settlement is eventually reached.

And there's more. Daniels has called for an independent audit to determine what other errors might have been made by the Department of Revenue. An audit may never tell us if Daniels ever questioned or attempted to find out if the Department of Revenue was doing its job.

But the real issue here is not just what errors have been or are still being made. It's what can and will be done to remedy this Keystone Coper of a state budget process. And incidentally, who audits local government to make sure all its books are in order? You guessed it, the state does.

The sad thing is that if no one claims unclaimed property in the attorney general's office, the funds go to the state by default. But the ineptitude of the Daniels administration has allowed the state to confiscate money local units of government should have had all along — and keep it.

Who could potentially be filing "claims" for part of that \$206 million?

How about police in Marion County who are plugging over a \$30 million budgetary gap, or the school corporations that laid off teachers as class sizes ballooned? And then there are all the public safety employees in cities such as Logansport and Muncie. Support your local fire department signs appeared in Logansport as jobs were cut when Daniels tightened the state's purse strings. Hoosiers blindly put their trust in a public official who had no clue that there were hundreds of millions virtually stored in the state's mattress in Indianapolis.

The reason, we assumed? It had to be the national economy hitting Indiana hard. It wasn't.

Speaking of irony, the last time somebody in Indianapolis was found to have taken \$200 million from people who had it coming, federal authorities seized the records of Indianapolis investment manager Tim Durham and indicted him. Not so coincidentally, Durham has been a huge contributor to Daniels' campaign, and Daniels hasn't returned that money to Durham's alleged victims in Ohio



and Indiana either.

Meanwhile, as the state's books were still simmering from the latest cooking by revenue officials last week, Daniels was in a curious place – the Middle East. Presumably, it's a trip that could build his resume to be a vice presidential hopeful when Republicans meet in Tampa this summer. But this latest fiasco makes a former White House budget director look like a former Supreme Court justice who couldn't tell you how many amendments to the Constitution there are, or a former member of the Joint

Chiefs of Staff who has lost track of all the nation's nuclear warheads.

The elephant in the room on this issue is an elephant, small in stature, completing his second term in a state that has no recall petition, but millions of residents who will one day be able to recall the worst budget debacle in Indiana history and the man who claimed to be fiscally responsible at the forefront of it.

They say elephants never forget. Hoosiers will never forget this elephant either. ❖

Massive tax gap plagues the nation

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS - Hoosiers, as Americans everywhere, have prepared or are preparing their 2011 tax returns. These voluntary and timely payments account for about 85 percent of the taxes owed to the federal government. Are you part of the 15 percent not in compliance with the tax laws?



Every few years the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) estimates "the tax gap". The latest study was released this year and relates data for 2006.

In that year, before the recent recession and recovery, \$2.2 trillion in federal taxes were paid voluntarily and on time. Late payments and enforced settlements accounted for another \$65 billion. That left a "gap" of \$385 billion of taxes never collected.

Did you get that number? \$385 billion not collected. That's more than \$1,000 per American. It is a sum that would buy a few arms for wars we don't want to fight. It would pay for the operations and treatments of more than a few sick people. It is enough to supplement our education budget, improve our infrastructure, and restore many acres of environmentally damaged brown fields.

Of this vast sum, 98 percent (\$376 billion) results from underreporting -- the failure to tell the IRS how much you actually made or the fabrication of expenses you did not incur. (Excuse me, in your case it was an honest error that you'd be glad to correct if the IRS contacts you.) More than three-fifths of that \$376 was the responsibility of individuals.

This "underground" or "informal" economy includes the legal activities of the very rich as well as the very poor. It does not include illegal acts such as dealing drugs and

selling hot cars.

The rich may "neglect" to report capital gains, dividends or cash receipts. They may invent phantom expenses or charge personal activities as business outlays. Self-employed professionals are strong candidates for this behavior.

The unwealthy or poor generally do not have capital gains or dividends to neglect. They may underreport cash income for their off-the-cuff businesses. Casual construction, domestic work, and personal services (haircuts) often are performed with the expectation of untraceable cash payments.

The IRS tries to estimate how much income might be collected if there were strong voluntary compliance by taxpaying citizens. Famously, they estimate how much in tips is earned by waiters and cab drivers, pole dancers and masseurs.

For new business owners, eager entrepreneurs, tax avoidance could be the difference between survival of the enterprise or bankruptcy. For the very poor, tax avoidance may be necessary for survival itself.

As a society the problem of this massive tax gap is clear. We want each citizen and each enterprise to pay its fair share of taxes. We have a complex, often inadequate, system to help individuals, but it tends to stifle entrepreneurial activity. If you are running a beauty parlor, you are not unemployed, yet your earnings may be inadequate to support your needs. Yet you cannot qualify for unemployment compensation because you are self-employed. The earned income tax credit may still leave you short of sufficiency.

The new JOBS act is intended to help small businesses, but has loopholes that worry many observers into thinking that large corporations will be the ultimate beneficiaries. Somehow, we have to modify the tax laws so they do not suppress enterprise while they encourage compliance with the law. ❖

Mr. Marcus is an independent economist, writer and speaker formerly with the IU Kelley School of Business.



Is Lake County getting cleaner? Answer is yes

By **RICH JAMES**

MERRILLVILLE - Someone asked me the other day if Lake County is getting cleaner.

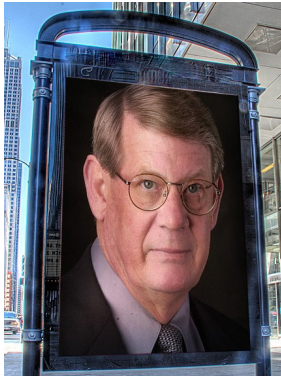
I asked if they meant in terms of less public corruption or fewer emissions from the steel mills.

The answer is yes on both accounts.

In terms of public corruption, there has been a concerted effort on two fronts to foster change.

Some of the improvement is coming about as a result of action by the General Assembly to implement some of the recommendations put forth by the Kernan/Shepard Commission on how to streamline and improve local government around the state.

During the last session of the Legislature, for example, a bill was passed that does two significant things to improve local



government.

First, the legislation prohibits someone from being an elected official in a unit of local government that employs them.

The other part of the bill precludes a government official from employing a member of their family (with specific exceptions and salary caps for township officials that use home-based offices).

Especially in terms of Lake County, this will bring monumental change.

Both local and county government over the years has been as incestuous as one can find.

In many cases, going to the office each day resembled a family reunion.

With the new law about to take place banning the hiring of blood relatives, one might expect Lake County government units to ignore the state's effort to bring business as usual to a halt.

That likely will happen in many cases, but not the city of East Chicago.

East Chicago? That's right, the city that has had a hankering for public corruption and is viewed as one of the few surviving political machines in the country, is taking the state mandate to a new level.

And to be as certain as it can be, the city of East Chicago last week announced it is compiling employee genealogies. That's a far cry from employee fund-raising lists.

There's a second part of the new law. Yeah, the one that prohibits someone from being an elected official in a unit of government for which they work.

There was a time when a substantial number of government units in Lake County had city or county employees sitting as elected officials.

There was a town councilman in Lowell who happened to be a police officer and voted to oust his boss.

There were public works employees in Highland who voted as town councilmen to enhance their departments.

And Lake County government today has a county clerk employee sitting as a county councilman.

While that's not family incest, it clearly is governmental incest, which is worse. You can't serve two masters.

Those elected officials always argue that they abstain when there's a vote impacting their jobs. Unfortunately, their constituents aren't then being represented all of the time.

The local good government effort has been even more significant.

About the time of the inception of the Kernan/Shepard study, the Northwest Indiana Better Government Commission was forming under the leadership of Calvin Bellamy, a community facilitator and retired banker who is respected by most.

The commission set out to teach local government employees what is right and wrong and ethical.

The initial commission members were Dyer, Highland, Munster, Schererville, Crown Point and Whiting – the communities with few ethical problems. But hold on.

The word last week is that Gary and East Chicago are almost ready to become commission members. Given their histories of public corruption, that's significant.

New Gary Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson said, "There is a difference between the past, present and future of the city of Gary."

That is a valuable statement from the woman who was attorney for the Gary Urban Enterprise Administration when it was ripped apart by public corruption within the last decade.

But, perhaps the most impacting statement about the status of public corruption in Lake County came a week ago from the most unlikely of sources.

U.S. District Judge Joseph Van Bokkelen, a Republican and former U.S. attorney who prosecuted public corruption, spoke to the local government commission.

"The sun is starting to shine," Van Bokkelen said. Indeed. ❖

Rich James is the former opinion page editor and columnist for the Post-Tribune in Merrillville.



Joe who? Donnelly isn't very famous

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND - Congressman Joe Donnelly isn't exactly well known in most parts of Indiana outside his home 2nd District. And, although he will win the Democratic nomination for the U.S. Senate in the May 8 primary election, he won't gain a lot of name recognition in the primary campaign. Donnelly is unopposed.



Donnelly traveled around the state last week, presenting his views on how to create jobs. But neither the news media nor the voters focus much on a candidate running unopposed. What did Donnelly propose? Anybody know? How many

know he proposed anything?

In a statewide professional opinion poll conducted March 26-28 for Howey Politics Indiana and DePauw University, 53 percent of respondents said they never heard of Donnelly. Focus is on the fierce Republican primary contest between Sen. Dick Lugar and Tea Party favorite Richard Mourdock, who seeks with the help of big TV buys of national organizations to wrest the GOP nomination from Lugar.

Lugar, long one of the most popular political figures in Indiana, already has saturation name recognition. Mourdock, with all the TV buys and extensive news coverage of the eye-gouging Republican tussle, will have high name recognition as well by May 8.

But their names will be known to many voters in negative ways, a result of all the negative TV and campaign attacks in which both sides will engage - already are engaging.

Being opposed can be a mixed blessing.

Yes, either Lugar or Mourdock will emerge from the Republican primary with higher name recognition than the unopposed Donnelly. The two Republicans will have an opportunity to test and improve their campaign organizations, message and campaign style. Also, if the winner captures the nomination impressively by a significant margin after what is regarded now as a close race, the GOP nominee will have momentum for the fall.

But if the Republican primary battle leaves the winner as well as the loser bloodied, broke and burdened with a negative image, especially if viewed in a negative way by the independent, swing voters who decide fall elections, the real winner will be Donnelly.

An ironic aspect in this is that Chris Chocola, the incumbent Republican Donnelly upset in 2006 to win his seat in Congress, could unintentionally become Donnelly's best political friend. Chocola now heads the Club for Growth, the national organization leading the effort to defeat Lugar in the primary in the name of conservative ideological purity.

If Lugar faced no primary warfare and, like Donnelly, was unopposed, Lugar would be an overwhelming favorite to trounce Donnelly this fall.

A dream come true for Donnelly would be having Mourdock as his fall opponent.

The Howey/DePauw poll showed Lugar and Mourdock in a close race in the Republican primary. But Lugar still had a huge lead over the relatively unknown Donnelly, 50 percent to 29 percent, among general election voters. In contrast, Donnelly and Mourdock were tied at 35 percent among general election voters.

Being relatively unknown is another mixed blessing. Donnelly will of course become known quickly in the fall campaign as focus shifts to what could be a race in the national spotlight, with control of the U.S. Senate at stake.

Not being well known now hurts fund-raising. But lack of primary campaign attacks leaves Donnelly with few negatives and gives him a chance to establish the moderate image that helped him win re-election in 2010 despite the Republican tsunami.

Democratic strategists dream of a race with Mourdock because Donnelly would have stronger appeal to those independent, swing voters than Mourdock, with his tea party views and appeal mainly to the most partisan of conservative Republicans.

With Chrysler auto sales up a whopping 34.2 percent this March over sales a year ago and with General Motors also recording huge sale increases, Mourdock would be an easy target on the jobs issue for trying as state treasurer to kill the successful effort to save the American auto industry.

But the organizations pouring in money to get rid of Lugar find some votes where Lugar didn't agree 100 percent with them. They think Mourdock would never disagree.

So they take the risk of unintentionally helping Donnelly. They figure that any Republican, even Mourdock, could win that Indiana Senate seat over some Joe who's not yet really known. ❖

Colwell has covered Indiana politics over five decades for the South Bend Tribune.



Matt Tully, Indianapolis Star - If you're among that 12 percent of the American public that looks at our dysfunctional and divided Congress and gives it a thumbs up, then I have the perfect political candidate for you. His name is Richard Mourdock, and he proudly says that if he is elected to the U.S. Senate he'll do what he can to deepen those partisan divides, which would only add to the dysfunction in Washington, D.C. When asked in an interview last week at The Star about the problems with partisan gridlock in Congress, he pushed back with this depressing bit of philosophy: "We need less bipartisanship in Congress." Yes, folks, in an era when Democrats and Republicans seem one step from brawling on the House and Senate floors, Mourdock sees the problem as too much bipartisanship. That's like saying the Colts problem last season was too many wins. It's a scary thought from someone who, thanks in part to the backing of a handful of Super PACs and special-interest groups, is in a tight battle against Sen. Richard Lugar for the Republican Senate nomination. In politics, there are partisans who truly believe in and fight for their principles and policy ideas as they seek to craft solutions to big problems. And then there are people like Mourdock — unbending ideologues who believe the only acceptable outcome to any argument is a complete victory by their side. In a diverse nation, such victories are largely impossible. And, so, under this type of thinking nothing gets done. In our interview last week, Mourdock made clear that if he is elected to the Senate seat now occupied by Lugar, he would think about politics first. If, for instance, all of government were not controlled by conservatives in January 2013, he would put politicking ahead of energy policy, the economy or other crushing issues. "If I'm in the minority, I know I won't have nearly the chance to be productive that I might otherwise have," he said. "In that situation, I'm going to go wherever I can, whenever I can, to get people who think like I think elected." Think about that. If the people of Indiana grant Mourdock the honor of holding one of our two Senate seats, he would see campaigning as his top priority. ❖



Peter Rusthoven, Indianapolis Business Journal: the Club for Growth is spending \$250,000 on an ad that asks, "What's Lugar Done?," says "he voted for higher gas taxes and Social Security taxes," and blames Lugar for the \$15 trillion national debt! Astounding. The last major gas-tax in- of Balanced Budget Amendment. Opposed Obamacare on all votes. Spurred Indiana's involvement in the current Supreme Court challenge. Supporter of Bush tax cuts. Leader of Keystone XL pipeline effort. Respected worldwide for foreign policy leadership. The man responsible (with Sam Nunn) for destroying over 7,000 Russian nuclear warheads that terrorists will never use. The Club

for Growth attack is astonishing for a group whose focus is eliminating tax and other barriers to growth, on which Lugar's record is stellar. It is more astonishing because its president is former Indiana Rep. Chris Chocola, whom Lugar supported—and who knows better about Lugar's record. Chocola should be ashamed. ❖

Mark Kiesling, NWI Times: It's a bit surprising that incumbent U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar, R-Ind., leads challenger Richard Mourdock by only 7 percent in a recent poll. Mourdock has 35 percent of voter support among Republicans, while the veteran Lugar has 42 percent, according to a poll co-sponsored by The Times Media Co., DePauw University and Howey Politics Indiana, a daily blog on Indiana politics. Lugar, a former mayor of Indianapolis and a U.S. senator since 1976, clings to this lead as Mourdock slowly but surely erodes his support. Lugar spokesman Andy Fisher said he believes the people of Indiana will not vote for someone they don't know, but Mourdock is not an unknown candidate, being the state's treasurer and all. "People aren't buying what his campaign is selling," Mourdock spokesman Christopher Conner said of Lugar. "Hoosiers are ready for a change." Well, maybe. Still, Lugar cannot be content to sit on his laurels. Sure, he has been chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Yes, he is well respected by both Republicans and Democrats. But for Lugar, he is going to have to fight the notion that he is too old to do the job. He just turned 80 on Wednesday. But is it any more proper to base a candidate's eligibility on age than on his or her gender, race, religion or sexual orientation? I base my decisions on who is most qualified to serve. End of story. Period. I'm not being some sort of shill for Lugar, but Republican voters should take notice of the fact that he easily would defeat Democrat Joe Donnelly, of Granger, by a 50 to 29 percent margin. Mourdock, on the other hand, comes in at the Times/Howey poll in a dead heat with Donnelly, who is unopposed, at 35 percent each. ❖

Dale Moss, Louisville Courier-Journal: The recent tornadoes, the Sherman Minton's closing — they obviously were huge headaches. Leaders rushed to show concern. Todd Young, my congressman and probably yours, was among them. Young was not necessarily front and center when the cameras rolled. Hogging spotlights doesn't seem to be his style. "It's not about getting attention," Young said. "It's about getting the job done." Young, R-Bloomington, is in the second year of his first term representing the 9th District. His face is not yet all that familiar. He is the area's fourth congressman in 14 years, which alone is reason to be aware there soon could be a fifth. ❖



Rep. West says Dems are commies

INDIANAPOLIS - Republican Rep. Allen West said he believes 75-plus House Democrats are members of the Communist Party, a claim that echoed Joe McCarthy's unsubstantiated 1950s charges that communists had infiltrated the top ranks of the U.S. government (Politico). Addressing a town-hall meeting Tuesday in Florida, the freshman lawmaker was asked how many members of the American legislature are "card-carrying Marxists." West said "there's about 78 to 81 members of the Democratic Party that are members of the Communist Party." He did not provide names. West's office said Wednesday that the congressman stood by the comments and was referring to the 76 members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, the largest group within the House Democratic caucus. "The Communist Party has publicly referred to the Progressive Caucus as its allies," said Angela Melvin, a spokeswoman for West. "The Progressive Caucus speaks for itself. These individuals certainly aren't proponents of free markets or individual economic freedom."



Henry seeks restraint on funds

FORT WAYNE - Fort Wayne must balance the needs of its neighborhoods with numerous other pressing obligations when considering how to spend its newfound \$8.5 million, according to Mayor Tom Henry (Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). Henry on Wednesday said he will discuss possibilities for the money with Controller

Pat Roller early next week, but the City Council has already begun trying to lobby for how to use it. Council President Tom Smith, R-1st, on Tuesday said \$1 million should be dedicated to neighborhood projects in each of the six council districts. Henry called the request a "big ask" and hinted it was unlikely that much would be used for those improvements. "That's pretty aggressive," he said.

Budget Committee to review \$\$ snafu

INDIANAPOLIS - The State Budget Committee on Friday will begin reviewing a second programming mistake made by the Department of Revenue that short-changed local governments more than \$200 million over about 14 months (Indianapolis Star). But the bipartisan committee -- which includes four lawmakers and the governor's budget director -- is not expected to act immediately to hire an independent auditor. Instead, the group is likely to gather more information about the incident -- and an earlier problem the Gov. Mitch Daniels administration disclosed in December -- before moving forward with the audit. "I don't think you're going to see a decision," said Sen. Luke Kenley, R-Noblesville, a member of the budget committee. "The question is whether this is indicative of a deeper technology problem, or a deeper audit problem? Or is it the result of a management issue? Until we found out the answers to those questions, I'm not sure how far we want to go."

Councilman keeps Evansville FD job

EVANSVILLE - The Evansville Fire Merit Commission concluded Wednesday that Fire Department Capt. Al Lindsey was guilty of drinking

after a January City Council meeting, then returning to his firefighting post (Evansville Courier & Press). The five-member commission also determined Lindsey's termination recommended by Fire Chief Mike Connelly was too stiff. Instead, the commission handed Lindsey, who also is the 6th Ward City Council member, a 30-day suspension and a year of probation with random alcohol testing. But the commission rejected a decision by Fire Chief Mike Connelly to terminate Lindsey from his fire department job and instead gave Lindsey a 30-day suspension and a year probation and random alcohol testing. Merit Commission President Mike Humphrey said in his opinion, Lindsey, a 26-year fire department veteran, made a serious error. "However, I do not agree the termination was fitting," Humphrey said. "He has no history or issues of this nature."

Mellencamp sends email to Walker

BLOOMINGTON - Liberal rocker John Mellencamp wants Republican Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker to know he supports collective bargaining and union rights and says Walker should be aware of that before using his song "Small Town" on the campaign trail (Associated Press). Mellencamp's publicist Bob Merlis told The Associated Press on Wednesday that he sent Walker's campaign an email not asking him to stop using the song, but to inform him of Mellencamp's beliefs. "He's a very liberal person," Merlis said of the singer. "He appeared at the Democratic National Convention in 2004. His wife at the time was a delegate at large. He's very pro-collective bargaining and the fight for a living wage."

