

The Howey Political Report



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“QUOTE” OF THE WEEK

“If you’ve got two full-time jobs, you’re not going to be able to do either well. And if I can’t do something well, I’m not going to enjoy it.”

- Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan

Bayh, Hill, Andrew head ‘thin bench’

Daniels speaking in Indy; McIntosh in

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY** in *Indianapolis*

HPR: Joe, how much do you weigh these days?

JOE ANDREW: That’s good.

HPR: Well, the *Star* and Dr. Vargus keep talking about that thin Democratic bench and I figured they had to be talking about your weight, Evan’s and Baron’s.

JOE ANDREW: Well, you know we’re all wearing those bicycle pants now

There is no other way to describe the events of this past week other than to use the word “bizarre.”

We’ve had a popular lieutenant governor (with anemic name ID across the state) walk away from an opportunity hundreds of Hoosier political figures dream of having. There’s the specter of a U.S. Senator seriously pondering whether to return to the job he occupied for eight years.

And there’s are elements of the press and punditry that laughably termed the Democratic Party has having a “thin bench” that is destined to hand the Statehouse to the GOP. This kind of chatter demonstrates an almost incomprehensible lack of understanding about this state’s political culture.

HPR has talked to dozens of political figures across Indiana since Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan announced he would not seek re-election on Monday. This is a synthesized essay on my understanding of the situation as it stands today and, given so many elements of uncertainty due to personnel, war, terror and the economy, might play out in the days and months to come. Let’s start with some observations I feel I can live with.

1.) Barring pleas from President Bush, OMB Director Mitch Daniels can be expected to come back to Indiana and

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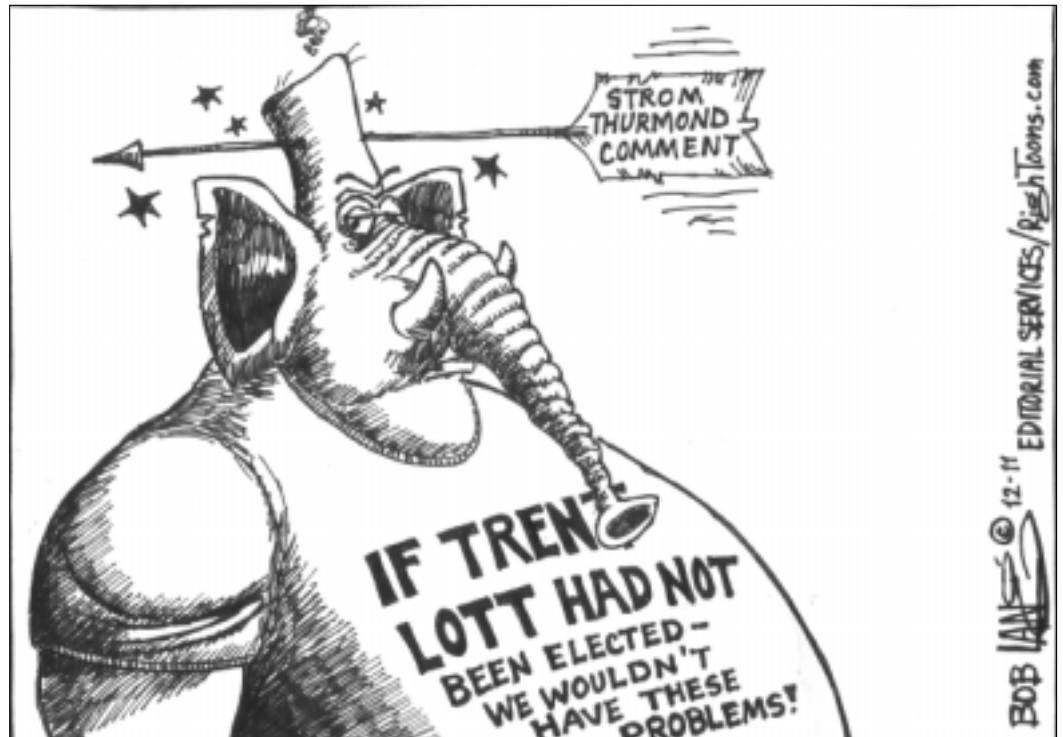
Lugar, Bono on pandemic (present and future)
www.indianapoliseye.com

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ORENTLICHER CERTIFIED WINNER: Any hope Republicans had of winning control of the Indiana House was dashed Wednesday when the Indiana Recount Commission certified Democrat David Orentlicher the winner in the chamber's closest contest. A recount by the three-member panel showed Orentlicher winning the Indianapolis-area House District 86 race by 37 votes over incumbent Republican Rep. Jim Atterholt - the same margin Orentlicher won by on Election Day. A two-day recount conducted by the State Board of Accounts gave Orentlicher a 38-vote victory.

ROEMER EXPLAINS DECISION NOT TO RUN IN '04: U.S. Rep. Tim Roemer said Tuesday he is "content" with his decision to leave elective office in order to spend more time with his family (Jack Colwell, South Bend Tribune). Roemer, who did not seek re-election, is leaving Congress officially on Jan. 3. He announced soon after beginning his present term he would not run for re-election. "Two years ago," Roemer said, "I made the decision to return to the private sector to spend more time with my family. I remain content with that decision." Roemer, who said he would work with state party leaders to recruit

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run for governor. While no final decision has been made, all indicators point in this direction. If that occurs, there will be extreme pressure from across the GOP spectrum to clear the field even as 2000 nominee David McIntosh enters the field, he says to stay, today.

2.) U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh is truly considering a third gubernatorial run. Knowledgeable Democratic sources say it's a 50/50 chance that Bayh will do this.

3.) The Indiana Democratic Party, while in turmoil today, has an extremely tough gubernatorial bench and anyone who describes it as "thin" today are probably repeating the same mistake they made in 1996. In addition to a sitting U.S. Senator, the top tier of candidates include a sitting Congressman in U.S. Rep. Baron Hill, a former Democratic National Chairman in Joe Andrew, former House Speaker John Gregg, and a former 34 year House veteran in Lee Hamilton, who is still hot commentary property on network television. At this writing, I would rate the gubernatorial pecking order that way. Any of these potential candidates will have the opportunity of winning in 2004, whether Daniels is on the ballot or not.

Several sources tell HPR that Bayh would like to ponder his options through the holidays. Gov. Frank O'Bannon and Kernan (who still commands between \$2 and \$3 million in cash) will play a major role in determining a consensus nominee. O'Bannon reportedly would prefer Bayh to hasten his decision making process.

Now, HPR works through a lot of observations from many "informed and reliable" sources. Here's my take.

U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh

Now why would Bayh even consider a run for governor, which sounded unbelievable when it surfaced Monday?

That's the critical question. Here's one way to look at it. Since the Bayh family moved to Washington four years ago, their home was severely damaged by fire. Bayh's workplace (the U.S. Capitol) nearly came under assault on the Sept. 11 attacks. Bayh's Senate colleague, U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar, had his office rendered useless for several months following a weapons grade anthrax attack. Washington is under a constant threat of further Al Qaeda attacks, to the point that anti-aircraft batteries have been positioned

around the capital city and barriers have been erected around the nation's most sacred monuments and houses of government. The American population has been told to prepare for a nationwide small pox inoculation.

On top of all that, the Washington area went through almost two months of terror due to the sniper attacks. To put in bluntly, just about anyone living in Washington with young children has to be wondering if there is a better way; a better place to raise the kids.

Then there's the U.S. Senate. Bayh's chief-of-staff Tom Sugar and other Bayh allies note that the former governor feels cramped by the rampant partisanship and the slow issue movement. For a former executive like Bayh, that's taken some time getting used to.

"Evan Bayh immensely enjoyed being governor," Sugar said. "He could make a positive difference."

Sugar cautioned that Bayh would not make a decision based on potential opposition. He is also aware that until the dominant figure at the end of the "thin bench" everything else is frozen. "We're now into the cycle and we know we can't lay on this for a long, long time."

When HPR confirmed Bayh's intention to consider the gubernatorial option, the thought was that the senator had witnessed enough turmoil and, acting as a huge stalking horse, would freeze the field in order to allow his organization, Gov. O'Bannon and Democratic Chairman Peter Manous to bring some order to the process.

If Bayh decides to run, the political reasons would be the "Gubernatorial/Presidential Model." Only Sen. John F. Kennedy became president with an upper chamber base. FDR, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush reached the White House via governorship. Bayh is probably surveying the landscape and seeing a recession that will end in the next year. If he returned, he would be an immediate front-runner.

He could serve a term and announce for an open White House in 2008 (Vice President Dick Cheney is probably viewed as a long-shot due to his medical condition). The modern model on this is former California senator-turned-governor Pete Wilson, who had an opportunity that was subsequently squandered on sensitive immigration issues.

Mitchell E. Daniels Jr.

On the GOP side, most await a puff of white smoke out of the chimney of OMB as to whether Daniels is going to run. Several informed and reliable sources tell HPR that while no final decision has been made, they believe "The Blade" is inclined to come home and run. On Saturday, Daniels will be holding a news conference prior to speaking before the Indiana Farm Bureau.

Influential Republicans like Chairman Jim Kittle, Bob Grand, former Lilly CEO Randall Tobias have openly pushed for Daniels to run because they see Indiana as a state that has fallen by the economic wayside after 14 years of Bayh-O'Bannon rule. They have also grown impatient at poorly executed (but well-funded) gubernatorial campaigns since 1988.

The notion of Bayh coming back to reclaim the governorship has some suggesting that someone like Daniels would opt out and, perhaps, gravitate toward an open Senate seat. Don't count on that. While it is unknown if Daniels would shy away from an epic showdown against Evan Bayh, the financial GOP troika is even more concerned about the Hoosier malaise they believe took shallow rooting under Bayh's stewardship.

To them, Bayh was a "caretaker" governor who's sole purpose was spending eight years to position himself for the U.S. Senate and then the presidency. A Bayh gubernatorial candidacy would be an anathema to them, giving the wandering Republicans an epic opportunity to

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a strong candidate for the 2004 race, also praised Kernan as "a great friend" who had shown "enthusiasm, passion and commitment to public service."

DANIELS SAYS BUSH HAS MORE ALLIES ON BUDGET: Bill Clinton may have declared in 1995 that the era of Big Government was over, but Congress didn't take the hint. Over the next six years, lawmakers increased spending on domestic discretionary programs--from roads to police to schools--by 28%, or nearly twice the rate of inflation (Business Week). That spending spree is about to come to a screeching halt. The federal deficit, now at \$159 billion, could top \$200 billion in the fiscal year that began Oct. 1. So to free up money in a \$2 trillion budget for its top priorities -- a military buildup, homeland security, and tax cuts -- the Bush Administration and the new Republican majority on Capitol Hill are mapping out an aggressive strategy to squeeze domestic programs. "This year, the President was the only stopper against excess spending," says White House budget director Mitch Daniels. "Now, he has more allies."

PARKER JOINS DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE; YOVICH RESIGNS: Democratic

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Chairman Peter J. Manous announced Saturday at the quarterly meeting of the state Central Committee that Dan Parker will become the State Party's first vice chairman effective Jan. 1. Since 1999, Parker has served as U.S. Senator Evan Bayh's state director. Parker was Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson's coordinated campaign manager in 1999 and served as political director for the Indiana House of Representatives Democratic Caucus from 1996-to-1998. Parker is a 1992 graduate of George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. His first taste of Indiana political life was in 1992, when Parker worked on Bayh's gubernatorial campaign. Manous has known Parker since 1994, when both helped with Tim Jeffers campaign for Indiana Secretary of State. "Dan Parker brings a wealth of experience to our Party," Manous said. "I very much look forward to Dan making a significant and immediate impact during the very important upcoming months." Manous also announced Saturday that Daniel J. Yovich, the party press secretary, has resigned effective Jan. 3 to accept an editor's position at a Chicago trade publication. Yovich joined Manous late last year after a 12-year career in journalism.

LUGAR WARNS OF SMALL
POX SHOTS FOR POPULA-

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use 2004 not only as a referendum on what they see as a lack of dynamic leadership during the Bayh-O'Bannon years, but a chance to sideline one of the most popular political figures in Hoosier history.

A Bayh-Daniels showdown would take what is expected to be a \$30 million race into a zone closer to \$40 million.

A Bayhsmith election?

The other possibility of this fascinating Bayh-Daniels dynamic would be what the late Harrison J. Ullmann used to describe as the "Bayhsmith" mode. When Bayh was governor and Stephen Goldsmith was mayor of Indianapolis, there was a line of demarcation between the Statehouse and the City County Building as well as these two ambitious politicians. Neither criticized each other; they ran on different election cycles. Essentially, their swords never crossed, even in potential proxy fights. If Bayh decided to run for governor and Daniels opted for the Senate, that would be a continuation of the "Bayhsmith" dynamic.

That might be wishful thinking for Democrats. Kittle has centered his entire rise to power based on Indiana's faltering economic posture and his desire for a "best of class" governing mode that he believes would create the Midwest's top business climate. He was fully prepared to launch Daniels against Joe Kernan, believing that despite Kernan's impressive resume and retail political appeal, the Republicans would make 2004 not only a referendum on the Bayh-O'Bannon years, but also one on a 21st Century vision for the state.

If this were 2004, that might be a jarring contrast since Indiana has lost 109,000 manufacturing jobs since 2000, has seen personal income trend downward, all while leading the nation in mortgage foreclosure. But two years is an eternity in politics. Right now, the Bayh-O'Bannon record would be viewed as one of caretaking governance, the sheen coming off O'Bannon's 2000 re-election cam-

paign when he touted 350,000 new jobs, 500 new cops, falling crime and a billion dollars in tax cuts.

Conventional wisdom might have Daniels basking in the glow of President Bush, who has yet to drop out of the 60 percent job approval rating.

Yet, these forces could be headed in opposite directions. President Bush just replaced his economic team amid fears by political chief Karl Rove that a continued slide in the nation's financial condition could doom the presidency, as did the mild 1990-91 recession and President George H.W. Bush. If a war with Iraq brings a high casualty price, there are further terror attacks on the homeland or a lack of progress in the War on Terror, President Bush's standing could erode, and Daniels might be seen as the guy who helped usher in huge budget deficits.

HPR can't tell whether George W. Bush is on his way to forging a great presidency or whether we witnessed its apex last November. The fate of President Bush and, subsequently, Mitch Daniels is hardly cast in stone.

On the Hoosier front, when tax restructuring passed last June, Senate Republicans like Larry Borst predicted new tools to usher in an era of prosperity and a better business climate. Should the legislature pass the O'Bannon-Kernan "Energize Indiana" economic development plan, by the fall of 2004, it could be "morning in Indiana."

That thin Democratic bench might look about as thin as it did in ... November 1996.

David McIntosh

Activity on the GOP front is not entirely dormant. David McIntosh will announce his candidacy today at the Statehouse in an attempt to fill the void. McIntosh has the support of U.S. Rep. Mike Pence, but many others in the GOP camp still abide by the "you get only one shot" when it comes to gubernatorial politics and McIntosh has yet to show he can

overcome that. McIntosh will have to resist heavy pressure to step aside if Daniels decides to get in. That pressure would mount even further if Hoosier Democrats align behind one candidate.

McIntosh will reason today that since it's an open seat, he's got more than \$10 million in name ID accrued, would lead even Daniels in most polls, and he is entitled to gain the respect to run. His characterization that Kittle does not have the power of an old-fashioned party boss probably sent the cereal flakes flying at this morning's table at the Kittle cabin.

Asked by HPR what he would do if Daniels enters, McIntosh said, "Then we'll sit down and talk." In McIntosh's mind, there is currently a huge void and to await Daniels' decision would be ceding the higher ground he could occupy. In the interim, McIntosh needs to show critical out-state Republicans that he is capable of putting together a homegrown campaign with a sound research component.

Ambassador Dan Coats

We don't see Coats entering this race unless Daniels doesn't come back. At that point, the "Draft Mitch" movement would turn its eyes to Berlin.

U.S. Rep. Baron Hill

In the echelon of influential Democrats, Hill lines up second on the short list behind Sen. Bayh. Hill has run statewide once, losing a 54-46 percent victory to Sen. Dan Coats in 1990 (806,048 to 696,639) while being out raised \$3.6 million to \$1.07 million). It's worth noting that in that race, Coats was running statewide for the first time since his 1989 appointment to Dan Quayle's Senate seat.

Hill has gone on to win three races, a come-from-behind effort against Jean Leising in 1998, 51-48 percent (\$1 million to \$649,000 money advantage); a 54-44 percent win over abortion activist Michael Bailey (\$981,802 to \$218,270); and this year's defeat of Mike Sodrel, 96,654 to

87,169, raising \$1.11 million..

Serving in the Indiana House from 1982-90, Hill pondered a run for governor in 1996, but bowed out to clear the field for O'Bannon. The dilemma facing a Hill gubernatorial candidacy is running from the U.S. House. Democrats had a field day over McIntosh's missed votes in 2000, so Hill would have to resign his congressional seat by early 2004. Hill, 49, is a handsome former athlete, an excellent public speaker and currently serves on Hoosier-relevant committees (agriculture and armed services). His ties to labor are strained over free trade with China votes.

Joe Andrew

Republicans might salivate over an Andrew candidacy, hoping to tie him to President Clinton, whom he served as Democratic national chairman. Andrew would bring an almost fervent ideological element to any race. But his strengths are important. Hoosier Democrats love the guy. He is whip-smart, employs an edgy sense of humor, has the ability to raise a prodigious amount of money from a national base. While never holding elective office, Andrew points out, "I've been in the Oval Office enough to understand power."

John Gregg

The former House speaker is speaking before two statewide groups this week, has received more than 100 calls, and can count on a legislative base should he decide to run. He appears to be keeping his options open at this point, awaiting word from Bayh. He has already called Bayh and Hill "great candidates and friends." Of all the potential candidates, Gregg conjures great emotion, both pro and con. There would be resistance from the O'Bannon camp who felt that Gregg's votes against tax restructuring and the timing of his retirement had a negative impact even though he helped line up support for passage last June.

"I'll take the heat on the 'no' vote

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TION: U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar warned Americans to brace for small pox inoculation of the population during a press conference at the University of Indianapolis Saturday morning. Asked if war in Iraq was inevitable, Lugar said, "No, it's probable, but not inevitable and I think we all pray that we can disarm Iraq. Saddam must be disarmed and the weapons of mass destruction must be destroyed. Absent that, the world is vulnerable whenever Saddam decides to use it." As for a nationwide small pox inoculation sometime in 2003, Lugar said Americans should expect it to occur. "The dangers of inoculating everybody are now evident from inoculations of some young people, and what I mean are people 20 and under who are very healthy who have had substantial reactions. People my age who are reinnoculated may have a swollen arm but that's about it. This is the problem. People have not been inoculated in many, many years. It apparently makes a difference. Now the dilemma is the first people who are going to be inoculated are going to be health people who are on the front lines, and or troops of ours who may go into battle in Iraq. So I think we're going to have a pretty large universe of inoculations before we begin to think

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about the general public. But it's a very large issue and this is why the President has approached it very carefully because we do not want people to be surprised. The dilemma is there is small pox in the world. I've seen the Russian reserves this summer. The problem of whether somebody has siphoned off any in the meantime is the real question." HPR asked Lugar if there were small pox strains that inoculations would have no effect. "That's right," Lugar responded, "and it's dangerous."

HAMILTON CHOSEN FOR 911 PANEL: Former Indiana Rep. Lee Hamilton has been picked to vice chair an independent commission to investigate the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks (Evansville Courier & Press). Hamilton would replace former Sen. George Mitchell, D-Maine, who was chosen in November but withdrew his name. Instead, Hamilton and former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger would lead the 10-member commission, which would spend 18 months probing the attacks. Their work will supplement a joint House-Senate intelligence committee investigation on the attacks.

KERNAN PITCHES ENERGIZE PLAN: Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan pitched his econom-

on HB 1001 SS," Gregg said. "It was a vote of conscience and convictions. I thought the press was wrong on their criticism of me. The easy thing to do was vote against my convictions and for the bill. Odd, isn't it, how when you stand for something it offends those who stand for nothing?"

One obvious drawback: Gregg is not very thin.

Lee Hamilton

A 34-year House veteran with an expertise on foreign policy, Hamilton, 71, deepens the Democrat bench if the others opt out. Again, this is another credible candidate, a former athlete, who routinely commands a national audience and has maintained a wide constituency both here and in Washington. Plus, he's thin, too!

Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan

The strange case of Joe Kernan took shape on Monday when he told the press and glum supporters that "it's just time." A day later, Kernan told another gathering of the press that he feared that in serving as LG and running for governor, he feared he would do neither well. "If you've got two full-time jobs, you're not going to be able to do either well," he said. "And if I can't do something well, I'm not going to enjoy it."

Kernan also dismissed as speculation the idea that he feared running on the record of Gov. Frank O'Bannon, or that his relationship with the governor or governor's staff had soured.

"They will say whatever they're gonna say," he said of critics.

In analyzing Kernan's bowing out statements, there is a major lack of logic. The "it's just time" statement was interpreted by one prominent Democrat as, "He just didn't have the fire in his belly."

There had been much speculation that Kernan really wanted to go back home to South Bend, where his wife, Maggie was a bank executive. But the

South Bend Tribune reported on Tuesday that Mrs. Kernan had recently quit her job. But even stranger was the notion that one can't serve as LG and run for governor and do either well. The American political system functions widely on people moving from one job to the next. His campaign manager, Mary Downes, insists that "it really was for personal reasons."

Last week, HPR asked the question, "How good is this guy (Kernan) any way?" A number of Democrats HPR talked with since didn't see the Kernan campaign organization as moving the candidate across the state beyond economic development circles, are upset about several Republicans were appointed to head the regional commerce offices, and found Jerry Payne's vow to run from the AFL-CIO footing as evidence of frosty relationships with labor. The real answer is, we'll never know.

Gov. Frank O'Bannon

One of the most intriguing aspects of the Kernan withdrawal was how it unfolded. Gov. O'Bannon was out of town and when the governor commented, it was by saying "I was both surprised and disappointed when Joe Kernan called me and informed me of his decision not to run for Governor in 2004." HMMMMM.

Some have suggested a rift between O'Bannon and Kernan. Both went out of their way to emphasize their mutual affection. "Joe and Maggie have been special friends to Judy and me for more than 15 years and this was a very difficult and a very personal decision that the two of them have reached," O'Bannon said. First Lady Judy O'Bannon attended Kernan's press conference. Asked whether he is angry by the *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette's* Sylvia Smith, O'Bannon said, "As a leader, you can't get mad. You've just got to move forward as strong as you can. . . . I would never get mad at Joe Kernan."

Others say that any animosity came at the staff level, which is typical. ❖

Indiana 2003, 2004 Racing Form

2004 Indiana Gubernatorial

Governor 2004: Republican: David McIntosh, Sen. Murray Clark, Sen. Luke Kenley, Mitch Daniels, Eric Miller, Petersburg Mayor Randy Harris. **Democrat:** U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh, Lee Hamilton, U.S. Rep. Baron Hill, John Gregg, State Sen. Vi Simpson. **1996 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,075,342, Goldsmith (R) 997,505, Dillon (L) 35,261. **2000 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,230,345, McIntosh (R) 906,492, Horning (L) 38,686. **2004 Forecast:** McIntosh officially enters the GOP field today. Daniels is still mulling a bid and would not leave OMB prior to a budget resolution by April 15 and its reconciliation process firmly on the road to success. Our bet is that Daniels will run ... for governor. Clark came out in favor of using tobacco settlement money for economic development. On the Democratic side, Sen. Bayh has frozen the field and process in order to allow the party to get a grip on itself. We'd still be surprised if he came back and ran, but then again, *there is no such thing as "conventional wisdom" in Hoosier politics these days.* **Status:** TOSSUP.

Indiana 2003 Mayoral Races

Anderson Mayoral: Republican: Kevin Smith, John Blevins. **Democrat:** Mayor Mark Lawler, Robert W. Rock, Anderson Twp. Assessor Dorothy Manis, Controller Leisa Julian, Madison County Councilman Thomas Broderick Jr., city Councilwoman Carroll Grile, Madison County Commissioner Otis Cox. **Independent:** Linda Haynes. **1995 Results:** Lawler (D) 9,411, Graham (R) 8,817. **1999 Results:** Lawler (D) 8,395, Czarniecki (R) 7,002 Haynes (I) 1,950. **2003 Forecast:** Rock will enter the race this week. **General Status:** TOSSUP.

Indianapolis Mayoral: Republican: Treasurer Greg Jordan, State Rep. Phil Hinkle, Brose McVey. **Democrat:** Mayor Bart Peterson. **Libertarian:** Open. **1995 Results:** Goldsmith (R) 64,209, Jimison (D) 39,539, Dillon (L) 7,175. **1999 Results:** Peterson (D) 102,870, Gilroy (R) 83,044, Horning (L) 7,772, Gibson (OP) 2,145. **2003 Forecast:** Peterson has declined to enter the Indiana governor's race and will seek re-election with that announcement coming next spring. "Like just about everybody else, I was caught off guard by Lt. Gov. Kernan's announcement on Monday," Peterson said. "I will not be a candidate for governor in 2004. After I was elected in 1999, a few things occurred to me that I had never thought about before. One is that being Mayor of Indianapolis is one of the highest profile political jobs in the state. I made a commitment to myself that so long as our daughter was still living with us and until she graduated from high school, I would not run in a statewide race." **General Status:** LIKELY PETERSON.

Terre Haute Mayoral: Republican: Bill Dunbar. **Democrat:** Mayor Judy Anderson, Jim Jenkins. **1999 Results:** Anderson (D) 6,791, Hooper (R) 2,608, Cronk (I) 1,178 Brouer (I) 174. **2003 Forecast:** Former Terre Haute Mayor Jim Jenkins may seek his old job. "I've considered it," he said (Pete Ciancone, *Terre Haute Tribune-Star*). "I haven't decided yet." Jenkins said he had no timetable for making the decision, other than the official deadlines. Another Democrat who has definitely ruled himself out is Pat Ralston, a Terre Haute resident now executive director of the State Emergency Management Agency. Ralston was in Washington, D.C., on Friday for a meeting as a member of the Gilmore Commission, established by the federal government to study local agencies' ability to respond to terrorist attacks. Alden Taylor, spokesman for SEMA, said he contacted Ralston to ask about his candidacy. "He told me there is no way he is going to run," Taylor said. Former Republican state Sen. Bill Dunbar said people have asked him if he would be willing to run. "I have been approached for close to a year and a half by both Republicans and Democrats, frankly," he said. "It's something I've given very serious thought to." **General Status:** LEANS ANDERSON

Brian A. Howey ❖

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ic development plan to the budget committee Wednesday, but the fiscal lawmakers were more concerned with tax laws already on the books (Shannon Lohrmann, *Lafayette Journal & Courier*). After Kernan's brief presentation to the bipartisan panel, he fielded questions about the administration's economic development proposal and the tax-and-budget bill approved during a special legislative session last summer. He hopes they will help jump start the state's struggling economy, calling the Energize Indiana economic development proposal "the next logical" step of overhauling the state's tax system. House Republicans on the State Budget Committee wanted a commitment from Kernan that he would not support delaying or altering any sections of the tax restructuring bill approved during the special session. "What we are going to do with what we did is the critical question," Turner said. Speaker of the House Pat Bauer said Tuesday that he would support delaying property tax reassessment a year to capture more money from the sales tax increase for the budget. "It's just a suggestion, and we would need to work together to get that done," he said. The sweeping legislation called for the one percentage-point sales tax increase to be used to lower homeowners' prop-

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erty taxes, which are expected to increase -- dramatically for some -- as a result of a court-ordered reassessment. But Kernan wouldn't commit to anything. "I'm not going to comment on rumors I don't know anything about," he said. "I hope that we are not going to have to backpedal. But you are not going to make me say something on the basis of something that might or might not happen."

CLARK SUPPORTS USE OF TOBACCO MONEY: State Sen. Murray Clark, a 2004 Republican gubernatorial contender, sent this letter to supporters late last week, excerpted here: "I am disappointed by the reported reaction of some, perhaps taken out of context, that this proposal is imprudent or will somehow mortgage our future. I have long advocated the use of our tobacco settlement funds as a creative source to facilitate job creation. Careful use of these funds now is a wise investment in Indiana's long-term economic future."



COLUMNISTS ON INDIANA

Robin Winston, *Indianapolis Eye* -

Here's another news flash: Democrats in Indiana did well in the elections last month. Did you hear about that? I bet you did not. I bet you thought Indiana Democrats took it on the chin, just like the national Democrats. I bet you heard Indiana Democrats were in disarray and that our message was off kilter. So, let's set the record straight. Democrats -- Indiana Democrats, that is -- did just fine on November 5th. They bucked the national trend. And it was no fluke. The party, led by Chairman Peter Manous, worked hard for its success. Pete and his team were swimming upstream and they knew it. But they kept swimming, and they enjoyed success. For example, Peter Manous set in motion an overhaul of the party's voter file. For both major parties, the quality of information in their files about each voter, and the way they deploy that information to candidates and campaigns is absolutely crucial. If you watch carefully, the parties boast about their voter files without offering specifics because this technology is perhaps the most competitive area between the two party organizations. True to form, I'm not going to say much about our party's work on its voter file. But I assure you Democrats knew what to do, did it, used it well, and maintain technology leadership between the two major parties in Indiana. Peter Manous and his team kept us at the forefront. Speaking of money, Pete turned out to be a champ -- no surprise here, for I knew he was a tenacious and successful fund-raiser with a score of new ideas. Pete will have raised a total of \$5.8 million this year, the best off-year record for fund-raising in our party and well past the \$5.2 million record set in 1998❖

Jack Colwell, *South Bend Tribune* -
Governors get too much credit when their

states experience good economic times; too much blame when economies turn sour. So it is with Indiana Gov. Frank O'Bannon, now a target in the blame game. Republican critics attack the Democratic governor -- and also Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan, since he'll be the next Democratic nominee for governor (*ed. note: this was published last Sunday*) -- as though they were responsible for all the economic woes experienced by Hoosiers, from job losses to mortgage foreclosures. Well, that's the way the game is played. After all, remember how O'Bannon and Kernan proclaimed success of their efforts back when the state's economy was doing so well and record surpluses were piling up in the state's coffers.? Were O'Bannon and Kernan brilliant then? Have they become stupid now? The truth is that their policies have had little to do with boom times or depressed times.

Sylvia Smith, *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette* - Call it the case of the 3,847 missing voters. That's the number of Allen County people who voted in the Republican congressional primary in May but didn't vote for the party's nominee in November. Some of those 3,847 surely were crossover Democrats who, knowing full well that the district is deeply Republican and would ultimately elect a Republican, saw Paul Helmke as the kind of Republican they could live with. Others, no doubt, were Republicans who just can't stomach Rep. Mark Souder and didn't cast a ballot in the November congressional election. They didn't support or vote for the Democrat, Jay Rigdon, but they couldn't bring themselves to vote for Souder. And others certainly were people who normally don't vote in primaries but were lured to the polling booth in the primary because it had all the trappings of a general election campaign. ❖