

The Howey Political Report



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“QUOTE” OF THE WEEK

“He has questioned my patriotism.”

- State Sen. Vi Simpson, angered at criticism aimed at her by Republican Chairman Jim Kittle over a vote the Bloomington City Council took opposing war in Iraq.

Lame ‘Conventional Wisdom’ in Indiana

Assessing gubernatorial starting gate

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY** in *Lebanon, Ind.*

You can usually depend on the Jim Shella and Brian Vargus types of the Hoosier political world to define the “conventional wisdom” that over the past decade has been so routinely debunked.

But last weekend, *Indianapolis Star* editorial writer/columnist James Patterson did an interesting job of setting up the new precarious definitions of CW. In one Saturday column Patterson wrote:

1. (State Sen.) “Vi Simpson is sailing into uncharted waters. Her likely opponent, former state and national Democratic Party Chairman Joe Andrew, if he stays in the race, would be hard to beat. Last Saturday, just by announcing his candidacy, Andrew became the front-runner.”

2. “Whoever emerges from the Democratic dust will likely run on the “Energize Indiana” platform, the most progressive economic development plan in the state's history.”

3. (*This is my favorite one*) “So far, there's no clear front-runner among the GOP candidates. Should Bush administration Budget Director Mitch Daniels join in, the picture would become even more muddled.”

Ahem, allow me to retort.

Joe Andrew is the “front-runner?” He could be. But right now, there is no “front-runner” in the Democratic gubernatorial race. In conversations with Democrats from across the state, a number who had jumped on the (pick one) Evan Bayh, Baron Hill, John Gregg bandwagon have begun reassess the Simpson candidacy. One prominent Democrat told me, “I don't know why I didn't take Vi Simpson seriously at first. It was a reflexive thing, I guess, and I'm embarrassed that I did.”

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BAYH PRESSES TENET ON NORTH KOREAN MISSILES: U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh was thrust in the international spotlight Wednesday when he asked CIA Director George Tenet, "What is the likelihood they have a missile capable of hitting the United States?" Tenet paused, talked briefly with aides, and then answered, "The answer is yes, they can do that."

CLARK TO ANNOUNCE ON MONDAY: State Sen. Murray Clark will officially kick off his gubernatorial campaign at 3:45 p.m. Monday, Feb. 17 at the Firefighter's Union Hall in Indianapolis.

HORNING JOINS GOP: Former Libertarian gubernatorial, congressional and mayoral candidate Andrew Horning attended the Marion County slating convention and told HPR he has joined the Republican Party.

GILROY JOINS UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL: Former Secretary of State Sue Anne Gilroy has joined the new University High School of Indiana as director of advancement. Gilroy will focus on building community relationships, developing resources, strategic planning, and being a student mentor and educator. "I am pleased to have found a new way to serve our com-

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Yes, Andrew coming out of the gates with labor support is impressive. Simpson quickly countered by adding Bill Moreau and John Gregg to her campaign, along with the Senate Democratic caucus.

Between now and next financial reports, there will be no front-runner. Both Andrew and Simpson are running statewide for the first time. A candidate can look great on paper (i.e. Sue Anne Gilroy, David McIntosh) and fail to execute in the field.

The expectations of Andrew are that he will use a vast national money network to post impressive fund-raising. But there is persistent talk in Democratic circles that he has alienated some factions along the way (state chairmen have a tendency to do that). Will there be enough of these factions to bolster Simpson? It remains to be seen.

Simpson's liability is that she has run in only one tiny Senate district. Her money raising ability has been called into question by State Chairman Peter Manous. Her gender-breaking mode has caught the attention and fancy of part of the establishment. Whether she can turn that into financial support and more

impressive endorsements remains to be seen. At this point, it's too early to tell.

Patterson predicts that Andrew will run on the Energize Indiana program as his key 2004 issue. Yeah, right.

At this point, Energize Indiana is in deep trouble in the legislature, gutted Wednesday by the House Public Health Committee. It has been split up and picked apart by House Democrats. Parts of it may survive, but there's a strong likelihood that the package that passes for a budget bill will be vastly different than what Gov. O'Bannon and Lt. Gov. Kernan unveiled last fall. And the 2004 gubernatorial race will not be run on a 2003 legislative package. The candidate who can articulate the best vision for the future will become the next governor.

Finally, Patterson says that Mitch Daniels' expected entry into the Republican race will "muddle" the picture there.

Say what?

That's absurd. He obviously wasn't in Lebanon or Greenfield last weekend when Daniels spoke to packed-to-the-gills Lincoln Day events. At Boone County, Daniels received a standing ovation *before* he even spoke. The crowds there were

huge because of an anticipation of a new GOP savior. They leaned into his speech. They laughed enthusiastically at his jokes. A bevy of state senators with their eyes on the second banana were there to preen.

And this was before endorsements surfaced from former Gov. Robert Orr, former chairs Al Hubbard, Mike McDaniel and Gordon Durnil, and current officeholders Tim Berry, Brian Bishop, Brian Bosma and Larry Borst.

Essentially, the 2004 Republican gubernatorial sequence began on Feb. 6 in Lebanon. Anyone in the Lebanon Ramada Inn banquet room last Thursday night – perhaps even David McIntosh and State Sen. Luke Kenley – could feel the momentum and, perhaps, even the inevitable.

There was nothing “muddled” about the notion of Daniels' entry into the race and its impact on the GOP field. Once he enters, there will be significant pressure on the others to clear the field.

Daniels did just about everything a declared gubernatorial candidate could be expected to do, falling just short of singing the song. He, however, spoke the words. “I get a little homesick out there,” he said of Washington. “I find myself humming ‘*Back Home Again in Indiana*’ and the Purdue fight song ... and the Notre

Dame fight song. And of course there's that line, ‘Through the sycamores the candlelight is gleaming.’ I don't think the candlelight is quite gleaming. It's flickering. And it's the Indiana Republican Party's job to bring the life back into that candlelight.”

Daniels spoke strategically like a gubernatorial candidate. In days gone by, Daniels said, “Victories that we've won across the state of Indiana always started in Marion County. Well, look at us in the years 2002 and 2003. Todd Rokita won a great victory, but he did it with virtually a zilch margin in Marion County. Where will the margin come from so that Republicans can take back leadership after 16 long years? It will have to start in this county and neighboring counties. People who used to produce those margins didn't just up and leave, they just moved a few miles away.”

Daniels concluded his speech by saying, “I can feel the hope coming back to our state and I can feel the change coming to our state. Coming like an earthquake; coming like an avalanche. And I feel that change is going to start right here.”

The packed house saw nothing muddled; only clarity. James Patterson and others will define CW, but beware ❖

Simpson prepares to explode the ‘myths’

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - State Sen. Vi Simpson was in an animated mood when we sat down in her Statehouse office to talk about her gubernatorial campaign. She was upset because the Indiana Republican chairman “has questioned my patriotism” after the Bloomington City Council voted for an anti-war resolution. “He questioned my patriotism for something that a city coun-

cil in my district did,” Simpson said.

HPR: Where does your campaign stand in this early stage?

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Simpson: It's very exciting. We're getting a great response. I'm doing a lot of traveling near and far across the state. We're hearing from Republicans and Democrats, men and women, rank and file union members who have been very supportive and asking me to go forward and to win this primary. I've been very

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munity,” Gilroy said. “I look forward to becoming an active partner in fulfilling the school's mission.” Gilroy told HPR she will stay involved politically, but is unlikely to seek office.

LUGAR PRESSES BUSH ON IRAQ EXIT STRATEGY: With American troops preparing to enter Iraq, senior Bush administration officials predicted Tuesday it could take at least two years before they could begin to leave, the first time the White House has talked publicly of its “exit strategy” in the event of a war (Chicago Tribune). Sen. Richard Lugar of Indiana, the Republican chairman of the committee, asked: “Who will rule Iraq, and how? Who will provide security? Who will manage Iraq's oil resources? Unless the administration can answer these questions in detail, the anxiety of Arab and European governments, as well as that of the American public, over our staying power will only grow,” Lugar said.

HOOSIER LAWMAKERS CHANGE ROUTINES DUE TO TERROR THREAT: Indiana Rep. Steve Buyer has stopped running outside and now gets his exercise on an indoor treadmill. Indiana Rep. Mike Pence is limiting the trips his family will make to Capitol Hill

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(Maureen Groppe, Lafayette Journal & Courier). One of the first things freshman Indiana Rep. Chris Chocola did when he set up his new office in January was create an emergency plan for his staff. "Everyone just needs to be smart," Buyer said of the heightened state of terror alert in America. "I think (people) should continue on and live their lives, but be very aware of anything out of the ordinary and trust your instincts." The appealing target of Washington gives those living in the capital an extra reason to be concerned about attacks, particularly after the national threat meter was bumped up last week to its second-highest level. Lawmakers were given a security briefing Wednesday morning, outlining what the new threat level means and what new precautions are being taken. Lawmakers were also given cards telling them where to go and who to contact during an emergency.

DANIELS COMES UNDER CRITICISM OVER HOMELAND SECURITY: When Office of Management and Budget Director Mitchell E. Daniels Jr. unveiled the administration's overall budget, he highlighted non-Defense Department homeland security, which he hailed as "the highest priority in this budget," and noted the nearly 8 percent increase in funding to \$34.6

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encouraged by the response.

HPR: How are you juggling the candidacy and your Senate duties?

Simpson: I'm not sleeping very much. We have Friday off in the Senate and I usually spend Friday, Saturday and Sunday working on the campaign. I'm meeting with people I need to meet with. I'm making a lot of phone calls trying to make contact. We're doing a lot by mail.

HPR: When Joe Andrew announced, he came out with AFL-CIO and ...

Simpson: He does not have the AFL-CIO endorsement.

HPR: Is it in play?

Simpson: It hasn't taken place yet. I'm talking to a lot of working men and women, union members, union representatives who feel differently.

HPR: Do you expect labor endorsements?

Simpson: When all is said and done, some of the labor endorsements will come my way. I have an 18-year voting record in support of working families. While some people have chosen to ignore that voting record, other people have recognized it and are supportive of it and supportive of my candidacy.

HPR: What are your key labor votes and bills?

Simpson: I've done a lot of work in the unemployment insurance area, workers' compensation, and a lot of work on family issues -- health insurance, child care -- are directed at working families. I've always been there for labor and I always will be.

HPR: It seems there are a number of Democrats who were ready to jump on the Bayh, Hill, Gregg bandwagon who initially didn't take you seriously, but are embarrassed by that and are willing to hear you out.

Simpson: That's right. There are a lot of people who are starting to slow this process down a little bit. They are waiting to see what kind of a campaign I can put

together and what kind of a candidate I will be. People will be pleasantly surprised. We're putting together an impressive campaign organization. We'll be kicking off that campaign officially in the next couple of weeks. When people get to know me they will see that I'm a very high energy person and that I work very, very hard. Because I have an interest in a diverse and wide spectrum of issues, I am active with a very diverse part of the population and I have that network of support out there. Energizing that support will be the focus of my campaign. It will be much more of a grassroots

campaign that people are expecting.

Democrats will be interested that I will bring people to this party, young people and people of various interests.

HPR: Indiana Democrats have always prided themselves on diversity, yet it appears there's a glass ceiling there. Can you break through it?

Simpson: There has been a glass ceiling. I think back that a number of party officials had a negative response to my campaign at first. My husband (Bill McCarty), who is one of my political advisers and whose opinion I respect, said, 'You have to get people to think the unthinkable.' It's just not something people have thought about. It's difficult for me to get in front of a group of people and say gender is not important, when in fact all they have to do is take a look at me and know that I'm different. On the other hand, being different is important. It will be a very important factor not only in the primary, but in the fall election. That will make me a stronger candidate .

HPR: Having John Gregg and Bill Moreau helps give you credibility.

Simpson: And we're building momentum. We'll have some House members involved and there will be more big announcements in the next couple of weeks.

HPR: The big leap for you will be

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to show decent money when finance reports are due, when?

Simpson: Next January.

HPR: That will be one of the perceptions you'll need to shoot down, that you can't raise money.

Simpson: That's part of the great myth. I'm one of the best fund-raisers in the legislature. I've never had to raise millions of dollars, but that's not to say I cannot. There are some who say they can raise money nationwide, but if you look at Gov. Jennifer Grandholm in Michigan and Gov. Kathleen Sebelius in Kansas, the same kinds of myths had been perpetuated about them. They've shown they are very strong and they can rise above these myths. Part of my job in this campaign is to show that women can be strong candidates, can raise as much or more money, and can put together a tough and able campaign staff and win elections.

HPR: What are your money goals?

Simpson: I'm doing everything I'm supposed to do. We've got lots of fund-raisers scheduled. I'm making appointments with people and I'm talking about why I'll be the stronger candidate in the fall. The way you put these myths to bed is to win the primary.

HPR: How do you deal with the "clear the field" mentality in the party and get behind one candidate.

Simpson: It saves the party money if there's no primary. But in a situation where there will be contested primaries in both parties, and I think that's going to happen, it adds to the dialogue. It's important for Democrats to be able to draw distinctions about themselves, about their leadership abilities, about what they stand for. It's important to have a forum and perhaps the primary will do that.

HPR: It's an open seat and money spent in a primary won't go to waste. It will build name ID.

Simpson: I'm not saying I think that a primary is a bad thing.

HPR: Conventional wisdom does.

Simpson: Yeah, conventional wis-

dom (laughs). James Patterson hasn't even talked to me.

HPR: How will you deal with the end of the dynasty talk?

Simpson: I've served under two Democratic governors and a Republican. I disagreed with them when they were wrong and I supported them when they were right. The same is true with Gov. O'Bannon. This campaign will be about what I think and my vision for Indiana, it shouldn't be about Gov. O'Bannon.

HPR: Many people see Gov. O'Bannon as someone who they thought would have great legislative relationships, but it hasn't worked out that way.

Simpson: It's imperative. If you want to make progress and move the state along, you have to have a vision, you have to be able to articulate that vision and then you have to be realistic about how you get that vision implemented. The only way is by working hand-in-hand with the legislature and not in an adversarial situation. As governor, my focus would be improving relationships with the legislature. They need to have input into the vision; they should be players.

HPR: Are you a Bloomington liberal tree-hugger.

Simpson: I represent Bloomington, but I'm in a Republican district. I represent Greene, Owen and Brown counties. When I won in 1984 I beat a Republican incumbent (Sen. Duckworth) in a Republican district. I represent farmers, the university, working people. I own the bragging rights to being a player in the tax restructuring legislation that passed.

HPR: How will your campaign agenda emerge?

Simpson: It will over time, but I can tell you I have percolating ideas about economic development, job creation with small businesses. I have ideas about education, particularly higher education, which has not traditionally been a campaign issue, but I think it's such a crucial component to the future of this state. And I will be talking a lot about health care. ❖

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billion (National Journal). Yet this year's homeland security numbers left some analysts wondering why they aren't higher. "If you count inflation, that's a decrease. That \$41.3 billion today is probably a 1 or 2 percent decrease overall in real program growth," said Frank Hoffman, a former top aide to the Hart-Rudman commission on terrorism. "There's no sense of urgency." "It's not clear to Mitch Daniels what Ridge's linkage is to the big picture," Hoffman contended. "We end up with Mitch Daniels doing this in a strategic phone booth."

CARSON TELLS BUSH TO READ CONSTITUTION: U.S. Rep. Julia Carson called on President Bush to read Article VI of the United States Constitution which provides, in part: "... all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land..." U.S. membership in the United Nations constitutes a treaty, Carson said on Monday. "Yet, on Sunday, President Bush found it in his heart, or in his speechwriter's art, to declare that if the United Nations doesn't give in to his demand for war, the United Nations will not be 'relevant in terms of keeping the peace,'" Carson said. "The United States Constitution is highly rele-

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vant in the discharge of presidential duties. Our treaty with the U.N. says we cannot go to war against another nation unless it has attacked us or the Security Council authorizes us to start a war against that nation. Therefore, should the President start a war against Iraq without Security Council authorization, he would be violating the supreme law of our land and committing a high crime which is mentioned in another part of the Constitution." Carson added, "The President might also take a look at Article I, Section 8, clause 11, and bear in mind the fact that the Congress has not declared war against Iraq and cannot delegate its constitutional responsibility in that matter. It takes more than a speech-writer to amend the Constitution of the United States, which the President swore to preserve, protect and defend. Preserving the Constitution includes obeying it."

HOSTETTLET AGAINST IRAQ WAR: U.S. Rep. John Hostettler, Indiana Republican, says that while Iraq is a threat, "it does not pose an imminent threat that justifies a pre-emptive military strike." He and Mr. Duncan were the only two conservative House Republicans to oppose an Oct. 8 resolution authorizing military force against Iraq

Indiana 2003 Racing Form

Indiana 2003 Mayoral Races

East Chicago Mayoral: Republican: None. **Democrat:** Mayor Robert Pastrick, Councilman George Pabey, Judge Lonnie Randolph. **1999 Primary Results:** Pastrick 5,772, Stephen Stiglich 3,790. **1999 General Results:** Pastrick (D) 3,027, Acost (R) 629. **2003 Forecast:** It's no surprise that in the primary mayoral sequence, the East Chicago race has become the most sensational. Lake County Prosecutor Bernard Carter said Monday his office will examine work by a special assistant to East Chicago Mayor Robert Pastrick (William Lazarus, *Times of Northwest Indiana*). "I'm definitely interested in doing something based on what I've read thus far," Carter said in a telephone call to the Times. The prosecutor said he will either ask the Indiana State Police to investigate, bring the matter before a special grand jury or possibly a combination of both. In a story Sunday, the Times reported the city of East Chicago has paid Timothy Raykovich more than \$572,000 in fees since he became Pastrick's special assistant in 1999. Meanwhile, the city paid more than \$418,000 to Raykovich's company Cyber Systems. Raykovich said that company billed mostly for his time. The city also has paid a total of \$170,000 to Cenifax Management Services and its subsidiary Cenifax Network Solutions since 1999. Raykovich said he probably owns 25 percent of Cenifax and serves as its treasurer.

General Status: *Solid Pastrick.*

Elkhart Mayoral: Republican: Mayor Dave Miller, Councilman Dave Henke, Charles Hawkins. **Democrat:** James Perron, Councilman Rod Roberson. **1995 Results:** Perron (D) 5,017,

McDowell (R) 4,869. **1999 Results:** Miller (R) 4,959, Perron (D) 3,902. **2003 Forecast:** Hawkins, a former city engineering department employee, enters the GOP race, giving Mayor Miller two primary opponents. Henke, who unseated five-term Elkhart City Councilman John Calvert in the 1999 Republican primary, also officially declared his candidacy. "It is with a great sense of responsibility that I undertake a new mission," Henke said Tuesday in announcing his run for mayor (Rick Meyer, Elkhart Truth). "I believe that I can offer clear and decisive leadership. I believe in a leadership style that fosters dialogue, discussion and debate with and between constituents and public officials. I have witnessed the power of this type of interaction within several neighborhood associations who came together and effected positive change. I am looking forward to meeting and discussing the issues with the citizens of Elkhart." The fact that Miller is facing a three-way contest for mayor is both good and bad news. A three-way race could split up his Republican opponents, but the fact that he has primary opposition shows he has not consolidated his party base and that is good news for Democrats. **General Status:** *Leans Miller.*

Evansville Mayoral: Republican: Mayor Russell Lloyd Jr. **Democrat:** State Rep. Jonathon Weinzapfel. **1995 Results:** McDonald (D) 19,162, Frary (R) 9,565. **1999 Results:** Lloyd (R) 15,980, Borries (D) 15,461. **2003 Forecast:** Lloyd filed for re-election Tuesday, saying voters are looking for a mayor who promotes economic development, job creation, diversity and efforts to make the city a regional attraction (Herb Marynell, *Evansville Courier & Press*). But the 46-year-old Republican, after the formal filing ceremony, left open the possibility of a delay in having a proposed Downtown baseball stadium ready in April 2004. The \$25 million stadium, which has drawn public opposition, is a major political issue at the outset of this year's city elections. The stadium project "could be delayed in its own right" if adequate financing isn't found, Lloyd said. Lloyd comes under fire from council Democrats for committing the city to a \$300,000 training grant for Whirlpool workers. Democrats didn't learn about the city's part of the program until Gov. Frank O'Bannon put out a news release. The Democrats say this is typical of Lloyd - not consulting them on financial matter. **General Status:** *Leans Lloyd.*

Gary Mayoral: Republican: Open. **Democrat:** Mayor Scott King, Karen Freeman-

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Wilson, Dozier Allen, Lake County Commissioner Rudy Clay, Roosevelt Allen, Douglas Grimes. **1995 Results:** King (D) 23,588, Williams (I) 5,482, Boswell (R) 1,108, McCraney (I) 96. **1999 Results:** King (D) 11,467. **2003 Forecast:** Tuesday's election of Deputy Mayor Suzette Raggs as clerk was revealing about the coming crowded mayoral primary. The ally of Mayor King won the vote in just one round with the city's Democratic precinct committeemembers, winning 71-62 over Lake County Recorder Morris Carter. Of those who dropped out, Ben Coleman Jr. had the most political support and it was expected that many of those supporting him were going to instead vote for Carter. Carter also came in with the support of city Democratic chairman Rudy Clay, who is challenging King in the mayoral primary, and Richard Hatcher, who is backing Grimes. While King is a significant frontrunner in the primary, partially due to the fact that the anti-King vote will be fragmented, the Raggs election on one ballot has to be seen as good news for the incumbent. **General Status:** *Likely King.*

Indianapolis Mayoral: **Republican:** Treasurer Greg Jordan, Bob Parker.

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:** Joran won an impressive first ballot victory at the GOP slating convention Wednesday night, winning with 325 votes (Parker 194, Hinkle 167). Whether Parker, who finished second, continues his campaign remains to be seen. He said after the defeat that he would be "searching his soul." Jordan won by coming out against a commuter tax and the consolidation of IPD and the Marion County Sheriff. "Bart Peterson continually tries to divide the county," Jordan said during his speech. "I am prepared to take it to the mayor." Parker's pre-convention speech went haywire when his nominator, Bobbi Beckwith, rambled on for most of his nine minutes. Speaking for only a minute, Parker had time to only say, "Everyone who knows me knows I'm all about jobs." The Jordan victory was viewed as a stinging rebuttal to the Jack Cottey-Tom Schneider-David Brooks faction of the party who lined up behind Parker. **General Status:** *Likely Peterson.*

Mishawaka Mayoral: **Republican:** Open. **Democrat:** St. Joseph County Commissioner Cynthia Bodle. **1999 Results:** Buetter (R) 5,391, VanBruaene (D) 2,286. **2003 Forecast:** St. Joseph County Commissioner Cynthia Bodle announced her candidacy on Wednesday and has the backing of State Rep. Craig Fry. **General status:** *Solid Luecke.*

Muncie Mayoral: **Republican:** Mayor Dan Canan. **Democrat:** Dennis Tyler. **1995 Results:** Canan (R) 9,718, Carey (D) 6,521. **1999 Results:** Canan (R) 7,973, Smith (D) 5,611. **2003 Forecast:** Democratic Party Chairman Dennis Tyler moved closer Monday to making a run for Muncie mayor (Rick Yencer, *Muncie Star Press*). "I still have to weigh this out," said Tyler, a Muncie fire captain. "This is not an easy decision. Tyler talked about a possible mayoral campaign Saturday with members of the Democratic Central Committee, some of whom encouraged his candidacy. He told reporters Monday that a decision would come in a few days. "I want to talk to people and see what they think," he said. No other prominent Democrat has stepped forward to challenge Republican Mayor Dan Canan, who faces no primary opposition so far. Only perennial candidate Ken Davenport has filed for the Democratic nomination for mayor. **General status:** *SOLID CANAN.*

New Albany Mayoral: **Republican:** Mayor Regina Overton. **Democrat:**

Councilman James E. Garner, Betty Lou Tuttle, Yvonne Kersey. **1995 Results:** England 6,845, Real (R) 5,886. **1999 Results:** Overton (R) 5,512, England (D) 4,205. **2003 Forecast:** The New Albany FOP approved the latest contract offer by what the president of the union stated was a strong majority last night at its regularly-scheduled meeting. It is a 20-month deal that provides a one-percent increase on Jan. 1, 2003 and one percent on Jan. 1, 2004. City officials and FOP leaders have been in negotiations for the last three months. The agreement is the pinnacle of two years of arbitration hearings that resulted in two opinions that mirrored offers made by the Overton administration. Mayor Overton said, "This contract allows the city to continue to pay its' police department the highest salary of any in the state (\$39,000 for a second-year officer), while addressing many of the health insurance issues we needed to resolve."

General Status: *Tossup.* ❖

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(Washington Times). Although the resolution passed with overwhelming Republican support, including many of the most conservative House and Senate members, Mr. Hostettler says a "vote for pre-emption would also set a standard which the rest of the world would seek to hold America to, and which the rest of the world could justifiably follow."

LUGAR COMMENTS ON FRIST BILL AIDS CHANGE: Weeks after President George W. Bush unveiled a \$15-billion plan to fight AIDS overseas, Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist has withdrawn his support from a sweeping AIDS bill he authored just last year (Newsday). There is no sign that Frist, a transplant surgeon and the White House point man on the pandemic, has abandoned the broad goal of tackling AIDS. But Frist (R-Tenn.) has put his name behind a White House draft bill that critics say would greatly weaken his earlier Senate-passed bill. A copy of that draft shows that it would strip all specific funding levels for AIDS programs named in the bill, render toothless mandates in the Senate-passed bill by swapping the word "shall" for "should" and remove all congressional oversight mechanisms. Sen. Richard Lugar (R-Ind.),

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Foreign Relations

Committee chairman, said he will try to craft a bipartisan alternative. Lugar said he does not think Frist has abandoned the goals of last year's bill, but is "attempting to coordinate his thinking with that of the White House." "Dr. Frist does not want to be at cross purposes with the White House, nor do I want him to be," Lugar said.

PENCE CALLS CLONING AN ABOMINATION: U.S. Rep. Mike Pence voted to ban human cloning today as the House Judiciary Committee passed a bill on a vote of 19-12 and sent it to the House floor for consideration by the full House. "Keeping human cloning legal is the equivalent of turning human life into a wholesale commodity. It is an abomination," said Pence. "By passing this cloning ban today, we showed the American people that we stand with them in showing respect for the sanctity of human life and I strongly urge the full House to do the same."

KITTLE AGAINST USING TEACHER PENSION FUNDS: House Democrats are considering tapping the Public Employees Retirement Fund and the Teachers Retirement Fund accounts and issuing bonds or notes in order to help fill the gaping hole in the state's budget and Indiana Republican Chairman Jim Kittle said, "It's a terrible

Chocola brings a business-like approach

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.

The Howey Political Report

WASHINGTON - After ushering one group out of his office at 5:50 on Tuesday afternoon, freshman GOP Rep. Chris Chocola checks his electronic organizer, asks his chief of staff about the evening schedule and welcomes his next appointment into his office.

Crisp. Efficient. Buttoned down. With a perfectly knotted tie and a Spartan personal office, Chocola, a 40-year-old former executive with CTB International Corp. of Milford, has brought a business-like approach to his new job representing Hoosiers in the 2nd CD. Even his committee assignments -- on the House transportation, agriculture and small business panels -- lend themselves to productive trips back home, according to Chocola.

"Being on the transportation committee, everywhere I go people want to talk about the Hoosier Heartland Corridor or U.S. 31," said Chocola. "Being on the ag committee, everywhere I go, we have Farm Bureau members and people who earn their living in agriculture throughout the district. And now I'll be on the small business committee and there are people who have small businesses around the district. It's a great way when I'm in the district for a very efficient forum to hear what's going on and for me to communicate back what's going on here to get people's reaction."

Chocola's plum assignments may have come in part from a House Republican leadership that wants to make sure the vulnerable freshman, who won with 50 percent of the vote, can establish himself in the seat by bringing money back to the district. But a rookie's influence on a House committee like transportation may be limited.

"Being an advocate for north central Indiana on the committee when a highway bill is going through is a very important thing, whether you're a freshman or (Republican chairman) Don

Young," said Chocola. "One of my goals is to create more jobs in Indiana. We need good infrastructure. We need to take advantage of our geographic location in the country. As a freshman, that's one of the most influential seats I could have on any committee to help the state do something I think is very important."

Staying in Touch

Connecting to voters in the 2nd CD will be a priority for Chocola, who survived a bruising campaign against Democrat Jill Long Thompson last fall. In a targeted race for an open seat created by the retirement of former Democratic Rep. Tim Roemer, Chocola and Thompson spent \$1.6 million and \$1.5 million, respectively. President Bush visited twice on behalf of Chocola. A picture of Chocola and Bush on Air Force One is one of the few decorations in his office.

Chocola likely will be targeted by Democrats again in 2004. In his initial run for Congress against Roemer in 2000, he made an issue of Roemer's residency, saying that the incumbent, who moved his family to Washington, spent too much time in the Capital. Chocola's wife and two teenage children remain in the family's Bristol home while the congressman commutes to Washington. He lives in an apartment on Capitol Hill through the week.

In the last campaign, Democrats attacked Chocola for living outside the 2nd CD. After redistricting, his home fell just outside the new district boundaries. He is making sure that folks at home see him as often as possible. "We're going to have a pretty aggressive town hall schedule," he said. On Jan. 25, Chocola held meetings in Rochester, Logansport, and Kokomo. "I'm going to work hard in the district. I'm going to have well-run district offices that provide customer service. The customer is king when you're in business."

Lingering memories of the sometimes bitter campaign aren't clouding

Chocola's perception of his new job. "It was a spirited exercise in democracy," he said. "The people had a clear choice. The voter turnout was very high on a historical basis. People knew what the issues were, who the candidates were and that's not necessarily a bad thing." Chocola has kept his South Bend campaign office open with one full-time staffer. He continues to raise money for 2004.

Democrats likely will target Chocola the next time around. "We'll be keeping a very close eye on him," said Kim Rubey, spokeswoman for the DCCC. "Next year, he'll have a record he has to defend. This will be a competitive race. The extreme agenda the Republicans in the House are pushing will be harmful to the district."

Backing the President

If the president's approval ratings go south, Democrats won't have any problem connecting Chocola to the nation's chief executive. Now that he is in Washington, the freshman is backing

Bush's foreign and domestic policy initiatives.

Chocola would support a war against Iraq, even without UN authorization. He places much faith in Bush's national security leaders. "If that team were to make the decision that military action was necessary, then I would back it," he said.

He also supports Bush's \$670 billion package of tax cuts, which features the elimination of taxes on dividends paid to shareholders. Democrats have criticized the plan as a sop to the rich. "We have to get over the political rhetoric and focus on the results," said Chocola. "Sixty percent of the people who receive dividends are senior citizens on fixed incomes." He also said that it is okay to increase the national deficit in the short run to catalyze growth. "The only way to get back into a surplus situation is with a strong economy. A strong economy creates a surplus. A surplus doesn't create a strong economy." ❖

COLUMNISTS ON INDIANA

Sylvia Smith, *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette* - In a speech 15 months ago, Bush administration budget director Mitch Daniels hit a cautionary note that was worth heeding: "We can - I hope we will - budget and govern as adults should in a time of crisis and urgency. Whether we do or don't will decide whether we head back in the direction of balance, surpluses and reduction of our national debt, or lose contact with that objective for good." It was a grim time. When President Bush was sworn in nine months before Daniels' speech, the federal government was looking at a 10-year surplus of more than \$5 trillion. Recession, war and Sept. 11 took their tolls, however, and we were back in the familiar landscape of deficit spending.

Hence, Daniels' admonition to "budget and govern as adults." His remarks were directed at the congressional reluctance to choose between guns and butter and the lawmakers' inclination to cushion the pain of decision-making by picking both. Yet the White House can hardly glower at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue these days as the biggest-in-history federal deficit looms. Bush's proposed 2004 budget forecasts the fiscal 2003 deficit at \$304 billion, which is \$14 billion more than the previous record of \$290 billion in fiscal 1992. And here's an amazing statistic: Bush predicts the 2003 deficit will have nearly doubled in one year. The truly scary fact is those numbers don't take into account the cost of a war with Iraq. ❖

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idea. Fundamentally, the state budget is growing faster than our economy. Therefore borrowing money today to pay for operating expenses simply doesn't work. This form of borrowing is particularly bad because, at this point, the economy shows no indication that it will be able to pay back what we borrow today with what we earn tomorrow. Given our current fiscal mess, Hoosier teachers and public employees ought to be suspicious of the state's ability to pay those debts."

HOUSE COMMITTEE OKS ORANGE COUNTY CASINO: A House committee yesterday approved legislation that would put a casino in Orange County and use the profits to refurbish two historic hotels (Lesley Stedman, *Louisville Courier-Journal*). But the bill still has a long road to travel before it becomes law. The Public Policy, Ethics and Veterans Affairs committee voted 12-1 to send House Bill 1902 to the Ways and Means Committee, which will examine its fiscal impact. If approved there, the bill -- written by Rep. Jerry Denbo, D-French Lick -- will move to the full House for consideration.

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