



Daniels, Peterson preparing for 2007, 2008 re-election campaigns

Paths won't cross politically; signs they will work together

By BRIAN A. HOWEY in Indianapolis

In last Sunday's *New York Times*, an article in the front section had the doors to the Indiana governor's office swinging open and a flood of 7th graders from Marseilles, France streaming in. (Gov. Daniels) stood, smiling, to face them. Any questions? One student raised her hand tentatively. How long does a governor serve in office? Mr. Daniels took a long pause. "Four years," he said. "Although the last month has kind of seemed like four years."

That kind of quote seemed to reinforce one of the little parlor games going on at the Indiana Statehouse; that Gov. Daniels was destined to be a one-term governor.

This came a few days after a tantalizing headline - "*Time for a one-term Governor?*" appeared in a Feb. 17 HPR headline ... by mistake. We had pulled the text, but not the headline. In that text's place we added a section about how State Rep. Phil Hinkle had committed Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson's reorganization legislation to a year's worth of study. Many saw Hinkle's move as purely political; an attempt to wound Mayor Peterson, who was perceived as a threat to Republican Statehouse rule in 2008.

But after lengthy talks this past week with leading political associates of both Gov. Daniels and Mayor Peterson, one thing becomes clear: Both are clearly aiming for re-election battles; Peterson for a third term as mayor in 2007, and Daniels for a second and final term in 2008.

"His priority is to change the state, regardless of the political cost," said Bill Oesterle, CEO of Angie's List and Daniels' 2004 campaign manager. "That does not



Gov. Daniels (top) and Mayor Peterson both command the state's largest media market. (HPR Photos)



"The strong bipartisan support in the Ways and Means Committee and the reaction of the mayor and the Colts is encouraging. I like where this project is at halftime." — House Speaker Brian Bosma to the *Johnson County Daily Journal*

The Howey Political Report is published by NewsLink Inc. Founded in 1994, The Howey Political Report is an independent, non-partisan newsletter analyzing the political process in Indiana.

Brian A. Howey, Publisher
Mark Schoeff Jr., Washington Writer
Jack E. Howey, Editor

Subscriptions:
\$350 annually HPR via e-mail;
\$550 annually HPR & HPR Daily Wire.
Call 254-0535.

The Howey Political Report
PO Box 40265
Indianapolis, IN 46240-0265.

www.howeypolitics.com
BrianHowey@howeypolitics.com

Indianapolis Office: 317-506-0883.
Indianapolis Fax: 317-254-0535.
Washington Office: 202-775-3242.
Business Office: 317-254-0535.

©2005, The Howey Political Report. All rights reserved. Photocopying, Internet forwarding, faxing or reproducing in any form, in whole or part, is a violation of federal law and is **strictly prohibited** without consent of the publisher.



Marriage: Sanctity of hypocrisy	p.4
Schoeff: Social Security town halls	p. 5
Howey: Remembering Hunter & Harry	p.6
Columnists: Smith, Schmidt, Gerard	p.7
Ticker: Bauer, Garton predict DST passage; Kollintzas pleads mercy	p.8



mean that those of us who are working with the re-elect aren't working every day to ensure he can win and will win in 2008."

Oesterle laughed about the perception that because Daniels has chewed off big and what are seen as intractable political issues, it means he will not be politically viable for re-election. "All is based on the premise that good leadership is good politics," he said. "If you haven't seen leadership in awhile, you don't know what it looks like."

As for Mayor Peterson, former deputy mayor Mike O'Connor, now CEO at BoseTreachy Associates, confirmed that the mayor "intends to run for re-election in 2007." Peterson has \$1.2 million in the bank. He personally believes it is disingenuous to raise money for one office, then run for another.

Plus, Mayor Peterson is a student of history, particularly 1995-96, two disastrous years for then-Indianapolis Mayor Stephen Goldsmith, who won a mediocre 58 percent victory over an incredible challenger, then lost the governor's race the following year, in part, due to a police scandal. If Peterson was on a collision course with Gov. Daniels, he wouldn't be raising money for his mayoral campaign in 2005 or run in 2007.

Having said that, O'Connor issued one caveat: Peterson is intent on running for re-election, unless House Republicans give him reason not to. The meaning is clear. If they stall his Indianapolis Works legislation, forcing the mayor to raise more taxes, close parks, and lay off cops and firefighters, it will introduce a new political dynamic.

Peterson knows full well that challenging an incumbent governor is a political Mt. Everest. Gov. Frank O'Bannon seemed vulnerable leading into his 2000 re-election and was challenged by rising star U.S. Rep. David McIntosh, who lost by 14 percent. Peterson's political apparatus doesn't even have a potential 2008 challenge to Gov. Daniels on its radar.

Daniels/Peterson dynamic

In our 2005 HPR Most Influential List published Jan. 6, we observed, "So here we have the young, aggressive Republican governor (Mitch) and the young, aggressive Democratic mayor (Bart) simultaneously active, like two political volcanoes, thundering and rattling the hovels of stressed people. Will they work together, spending the next two years radically reshaping Indiana for the next couple of generations? Or will they butt heads and produce a bitter rivalry that might culminate in a 2008 showdown? Our guess is that Peterson and Daniels will work together and sort things out."

The speculation over a Daniels/Peterson relationship came after four years when Republican Mayor Goldsmith and Democrat Gov. Evan Bayh never crossed swords between 1992 and 1997.

After Daniels was elected last November, Mayor Peterson did much to reshape the Indiana General Assembly by announcing a new Colts stadium deal that would have been financed, in part, with slots from an Indianapolis-based casino. Senate President Pro Tempore Bob Garton noted that it was the mayor, not the new governor, who was setting the agenda.

Both Gov. Daniels and Mayor Peterson, however, appear to be cut from similar cloth. Both ended decades-long political dynasties from the other party. Both are intent on dramatically reprioritizing and reshaping their governments. Both face serious financial dilemmas.



February House showdowns

Fast forward to mid-February. Both Daniels and Peterson have found challenges in the Republican-controlled Indiana House.

For Daniels, a showdown looms over whether his 1 percent, one-year tax increase on households making more than \$100,000 can pass muster. House Republicans seem recalcitrant, prompting Daniels to warn last Friday, "I am absolutely committed to balancing the budget now." Asked by another reporter if he would veto the GOP plan, Daniels answered, "I don't know how I can say what I said any more plainly. I'm convinced we will get there. I've got the one plan that will get us there and I think it is a reasonable one. And apparently so do four out of five Hoosiers."

Daniels said he was "open" to "different policies that might get us the same outcome." Asked if he would veto any permanent tax increase, Daniels said, "I might."

Then there was Peterson's dilemma over Indianapolis Works. He had been feuding with new House Speaker Brian Bosma over funding for the Colts stadium, and last week, his government restructuring package was shelved. On Wednesday, Ways and Means Chairman Jeff Espich came up with a new plan to charge fans, NFL players and Indiana casinos more taxes to fund a Colts stadium, but it left out Indiana Convention Center expansion funding.

The shelving of Indianapolis Works brought this response from Gov. Daniels: "The mayor and others ought to be encouraged to come up with ideas" that would eliminate "extra layers of government and save taxpayer dollars. I



would hope it would get a fair and open hearing."

Mutual respect

Both Oesterle and O'Connor said the governor and mayor have great respect for each other and a good working relationship. "The mayor and the governor have to work together if the state is going to prosper," Oesterle said.

The move of Rep. Hinkle, a 2003 Republican mayoral primary candidate, and House Republicans over Indianapolis Works has been controversial. Many of the House GOP caucus contributors are Indianapolis business executives who want the program to pass. Some observers believe the House GOP is trying to bloody Peterson politically because they perceive him as a 2008 threat.

Chess game

A chess game has evolved. On Monday, the Indianapolis City-County Council passed a .3 percent income tax hike to pay for a criminal justice system improvements. The timing was purposeful because in January, Gov. Daniels had suggested that an income tax hike could be used to pay for the new stadium. Peterson responded that if there was an income tax hike, it would be used to keep murderers off the street.

Sources tell HPR that the normally sanguine Mayor Peterson, in announcing his support for an income tax hike, had telegraphed to Marion County Prosecutor Carl Brizzi that his opposition could mean a well-financed Democratic opponent in Brizzi's 2006 re-elect. Brizzi did not oppose the income tax hike. The threat, however, was unnecessary.

Daniels, too, was pulling out untraditional stops as a prelude to today's expected emotional vote for Daylight-Saving Time. Legislative sources tell HPR the governor appeared before the House GOP caucus on his initiative, and not via an invitation from Speaker Bosma.

WTHR-TV reported that Gov. Daniels received "thunderous applause" and he was quoted as saying, "Well, it had to do with a number of things which are coming up that I think are pretty important. I told them, 'Thank you, press on, be of good courage.'"

On Friday, Gov. Daniels will take the new RV1 out for his first mission into the Hoosier hinterland. It can be expected to show up in the districts of recalcitrant legislators.

Back to the campaign, Oesterle said that the Daniels political apparatus will continue to "exercise a volunteer network, direct mail, e-mail and volunteer work. The mechanisms of the campaign will continue to progress in their development. We'll use them over the next three and a half years." That means they will be used to achieve legislative initiatives. In addition, while the Daniels gubernatorial campaign has \$600,000 left, there is another \$300,000 from the transition. Oesterle said those funds can be used for "policy advocacy."

The first example of this comes today when the new governor expects to win the historic DST vote in the House (head counters see 53 ayes). It will continue with other issues from economic development and the inspector general (where Speaker Bosma has been helpful), and on the budget and the Colts, where the governor will seek the consensus he desires by working the grassroots needed to sway legislators.



The sanctity of fidelity

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS - in one sentence -- "*This Constitution or any other Indiana law may not be construed to require that marital status or the legal incidents of marriage be conferred upon unmarried couples or groups*" -- the Indiana Senate made it clear that the Republican Party is uninterested in finding any sort of middle ground on one of the most controversial laws involving marriage.

The Senate passed a resolution Monday to amend Indiana's constitution to ban gay marriage by a 42-8 vote. State Sen. Vi Simpson, D-Ellettsville and a possible 2008 gubernatorial contender, was one of the dissenters, setting herself up to reap the bitter political harvest that year.

State Sen. Anita Bowsver, D-Michigan city, protested, saying the very amendment the right-listing GOP says we need to ward off judicial attacks on the institution of marriage will only result in more lawsuits.

"This constitutional amendment directly contradicts Article 1, Section 23, which states *The General Assembly shall not grant to any citizen, or class of citizens, privileges or immunities, which, upon the same terms, shall not equally belong to all citizens,*" said Bowser. "This measure not only bars same-sex couples from getting 'married,' it prohibits civil unions and prohibits any domestic partner rights these loving couples might wish to enjoy."

Polling consistently shows political support for marriage being between a man and a woman, but also for middle ground (i.e. civil unions), including Indiana. On this, even President Bush, who reaped a political windfall in 2004 riding the issue, seems to be moving toward compromise and his 1998 recorded conversations reported in the *New York Times* tells of a candidate wary of bigotry and discrimination.

The resolution now heads for the House, a place where HPR was told the divorce rate of GOP legislators there wasn't "relevant" and where rumors of extramarital dalliance among Members and staff still run rampant. ❖



Hoosier constituents seek Social Security answers

Ad, web Campaigns target Chocola as he conducts town hall meetings

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.

The Howey Political Report

WASHINGTON -- In recent weeks, Republican Rep. Chris Chocola (2nd CD) has been the target of a television advertisement by an independent political organization, a Web site attack by the Democratic Party, and a phone call campaign by a labor group, all designed to portray the second-term congressman as attempting to undermine Social Security.

But the potential eye of the storm over restructuring the nation's retirement program -- constituent reaction back home -- remains calm, according to Chocola.

"I've been encouraged by the level of open-mindedness and the sincere effort to seek to understand," he said in an HPR interview early Wednesday evening. By that time, he had conducted three town hall meetings--in South Bend, LaPorte and Logansport. He planned to host a total of seven forums during this week's congressional recess.

Chocola, a new member of the House Ways and Means Committee, which will be instrumental in writing Social Security legislation, said the Social Security debate has created a cacophony. "There's a lot of confusion out there, a lot of political rhetoric," he said.

He should know; some of it has been directed at him. In early February, MoveOn.org launched a week's worth of television advertising in South Bend asserting that President Bush will make substantial cuts to Social Security benefits and urging people to call Chocola to protest the plan. The Republican National Committee disputed the accuracy of the ad.

This week, a labor union, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, sponsored a phone call campaign in the 2nd CD in which callers claim that Bush's Social Security plan would jeopardize the program.

In addition, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the political arm of House Democrats, recently

posted a Web site called "The GOP -- Caught on Tape!" One section features a Chocola campaign ad from 2002 touting Chocola's opposition to cutting federal retirement benefits. It juxtaposes the ad script with an excerpt from an October 2000 edition of the Elkhart Truth quoting Chocola as saying he wants to "privatize" the entire Social Security system. In a South Bend Tribune article this week, Chocola denied making that statement.

"He supports a Social Security plan that even proponents admit would cut Social Security benefits," Greg Speed, a DCCC spokesman, said in an HPR interview.

"He's going back on his word, and we believe he's in for a rendezvous with his record. His inability to take a position on private accounts is an important issue, and one that should raise concerns among his constituents." Speed said an e-mail message promoting the Web site had been sent to more than 1000 Democrats in Indiana.

Chocola said the Democratic attacks haven't registered in his town hall meetings. "Nobody has mentioned the ad yet," said Chocola. "There have been phone calls, too. No one's bringing those up."

Chocola considering options

Chocola said he has not formulated a position on Social Security reform. President Bush made the issue a centerpiece of his Feb. 2 State of the Union address. He argued that the retirement system is headed toward bankruptcy as baby boomers leave the work force in droves, leaving fewer people to pay for the program's benefits. The estimated shortfall is \$3.7 trillion over the next 75 years. Bush has touted a plan to divert part of the 12.4 percent payroll tax into personal retirement investment accounts. He also said he open to cutting Social Security costs by reducing benefits but has ruled out raising the payroll tax rate.

Most Democrats dispute Bush's claim that Social Security is in crisis and oppose what they call the "privatization" of the system through personal accounts. They say that people will suffer as their retirement nest eggs are subject to the vicissitudes of the stock market. Opinion polls show that most Americans are leery of overhauling the federal retirement program.

Chocola said Social Security reform is a pressing issue. "It's clearly a problem that's on the horizon," he said. "We're still trying to consider all options. We should consider personal accounts thoroughly, but if somebody has a better



U.S. Rep. Chris Chocola chats with Jack Colwell of the South Bend Tribune at Rochester in 2002. (HPR Photo)



idea, we're certainly willing to listen. Personal accounts should be considered as part of a solution."

Pence finds Hoosiers question fiscal crisis

But before support can be generated for a solution, people have to believe there's a problem. That has not been the case in the town hall meetings that Republican Rep. Mike Pence (6th CD) has conducted. He started the process expecting that people would agree that Social Security is in dire fiscal straits but that they would be skittish about personal investment accounts.

"I've found the opposite to be true," Pence said in an HPR interview. "Many constituents at town hall forums and in my e-mail seem to be very skeptical about pronouncements of fiscal crisis but receptive to giving our children and grandchildren a chance to choose a better deal through personal retirement accounts."

Pence makes the point in the meetings that federal entitlement spending on Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid is growing at a rate that could require major tax increases or benefit cuts. "We're headed, about 30 years out, for a fiscal cliff," he said. But many Hoosiers aren't moved. "They'll look right at the chart and stand up and say, 'I'm not buying it.'"

Constituents also are riled about Social Security reform implications for those about to retire. Pence argues that people over 55 won't be affected. "As soon as people hear that, blood pressure goes down."

Chocola also spends time on education. "I talk them through it to make sure they understand this is not a privatization program, it's still government run," said Chocola, who emphasizes that personal retirement accounts would be placed in conservative investment instruments and that payroll taxes would continue to support Social Security. "The word 'privatization' has taken on a life of its own that's not always constructive to a responsible discussion of the issue."

Potential campaign issue in 2006

But privatization may be key to the political lexicon of 2006. Although Chocola won re-election last year with 54 percent of the vote last year and raised \$1.6 million, Democrats have zeroed in on him over Social Security. "We're hoping to recruit a strong candidate," said the DCCC's Speed. "We hope to give Chocola a run for his money next year."

Chocola said he's not worried about the political implications of the Democrats' attention. "I can't guess the motivation of the Democrats," he said.

"We're several lifetimes away from the 2006 elections." ❖

Legislators & congressman: a biennial confrontation with their voters

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

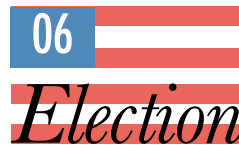
INDIANAPOLIS - If you're Gov. Mitch Daniels, 2006 and 2008 be damned. Good governance is good politics.

But for legislators and congressmen, the biennial two-year confrontation with voters is the dilemma of survival. The votes just a month into the terms of freshmen and sophomores become harrowing experiences. Part of this fear factor comes from legislative leaders and caucus operatives who factor in their own precarious positions into the votes of the most vulnerable.

South Bend Tribune columnist Jack Colwell captured the essence of this last Sunday in one of his Q&As that centered on today's Daylight-Saving Time vote in the Indiana House and freshman State Rep. Jackie Walorski:

Q. Will the vote be close?

A. Probably. It was in committee, where a 6-5 vote sent it to the House floor. The measure would have stalled right there if Rep. Jackie Walorski, R-Lakeville, had attended the committee session and voted the way she said she would have.



Q. What's Walorski's problem?

A. It's serious. She's caught between a rock and a hard place. Not just a rock but rocks. They could be cast at her by a majority of her constituents, who oppose daylight time, if she votes for it. The hard place is being a freshman Republican in the House who was talked to personally by the Republican governor about the value of the bill. If she had attended and voted "no," as she said she would have done if present, the Daniels-backed bill would not have emerged.

Q. Why was she absent?

A. She cited an overlapping committee schedule.

Q. Does anybody believe that is the real reason?

A. She didn't lie. It was a reason. And somebody may even believe it was the real reason.

Walorski's problem is compounded by the precarious nature of her caucus, a 52-48 advantage over the Democrats.

But in this first month, Indiana Republicans have become the party of tax increases and big government when you look at their options for funding the Colts and closing the budget deficit with cigarette, gas and restaurant tax proposals. Ditto for the Indianapolis Works proposal, which brought about the delicious confrontation between vulnerable freshman Rep. Bruce Borders and Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson. Borders wanted to know which Indianapolis fire stations would be closed. Peterson called it "micromanaging." ❖



Fading Inner Voices and Munchkins in the House

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS -- A few months back, the phrase "fear and loathing" slipped into some of my HPR reportage (I believe it had something to do with the Indiana General Assembly) and I subsequently received a few e-mails from readers that went something like this:

"Aha! You're mimicking Hunter Thompson."

I was quietly aghast.

Not because I didn't love to read Hunter S. Thompson.

It was more because I knew there was no way to get as

cunning, as crazy, as violent as the real thing. And by using anything Thompsonesque was to reveal those innermost weak points and be seen as a wannabe. So you haven't been treated to drug, alcohol and gun-infested treatments of following the Kernan-Davis campaign victory bus tour through Southern Indiana. The closest I came to that was a 3 a.m. euchre game with Lt. Gov. Kernan on the French Lick veranda a few years back (I forgot who won).

Then there was last week when I conjured images of Escher and Flying Monkeys from Oz swarming and tilting the Indiana General Assembly and I wasn't even thinking of Hunter S. Thompson. The legislature is too rich a vein to have to mimick a legend. Mark Lubbers and Bill Oesterle did approach me after the Governor's press conference and wondered what kind of drugs I had taken. The answer was ... "Nothing my physician hadn't prescribed."

Actually, when I think of the Indiana General Assembly, I think of my old buddy, the late, great Harrison J. Ullmann, who used to call it "America's Worst Legislature." I don't use that line much, either. Partly because of the wannabe thing. But also because Harrison and I used to have arguments over that assertion at our morning java binges at the Monon Coffee Company.

"C'mon, Harry, you're telling me that one of those Deep South legislatures like Mississippi or Alabama or Texas isn't worse than ours?"

Ullmann would never relent from his stance. In his mind, the Pat Bauers, Skinny Alexanders and Joe Harrisons made it the worst, no doubt about it. And Hoosier legislators never complained.

Ullmann was no gonzo journalist. But he and Hunter S. Thompson had something in common: the ability to wield the



acid-tipped pen and strip down their subjects when they acted like bubbas and fools.

I must admit that Hunter S. Thompson had a huge impact on my political bearings. His "*Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail 1972*" was brilliant. It thoroughly hooked me on becoming involved in politics ... as a writer. With my own voice. This was after I had believed President Nixon when he said he wasn't a crook, and that he had a timely plan to get us out of Vietnam. One resignation, 28,000 American battle deaths, and one fallen domino later, I saw American power for what it was: deeply flawed and while steeped in patriotism, the most honorable at its most soaring heights aren't afraid to lie, cheat, impugn one's character, steal or send scores of young men to their deaths to fulfill their craven need for power.

You see it in Washington. You see it in Indianapolis.

Thompson continued to have an influence after Nixon came and went and we were on our own. I'll never forget the day word reached the *Elkhart Truth* newsroom that Thompson had showed up in Miami to cover the Peter vs. Roxanne Pulitzer divorce trial (remember "*I slept with a trumpet*"?). His take was vintage Thompson, ending with him sipping champagne in a convertible with two French lesbians.

Thompson faded. I hadn't heard much about him other than his recent quote about his good friend and Colts owner Jim Irsay ("Every once in awhile it's good not to be the craziest person in the room").

About a year ago I spent some time in Aspen (skiing) and it was a surreal place. Hoosier pop king Michael Jackson had been seen and stopped by police for wearing a ski mask at the local Wal-Mart. I asked around about Thompson, where Owl Farm was, and whether he still hung out at the Woody Creek Tavern. I was told by a dispatcher who worked for Sheriff Bob Braudis that Thompson was in precarious mental and physical shape and was consuming high-powered drugs. He wasn't much of a social animal anymore. Eric Schlosser was in town to talk about his books "*Reefer Madness*" and "*Fast Food Nation*" (both highly recommended reading) and that seemed more interesting than trying to track down a pathetic, suicidal writing legend.

On Sunday, when news of Thompson's suicide was announced, I was working on HPR and all the shenanigans from one of America's worst legislatures. I do remember wondering what Harry's take would have been on it all.

It's sad to think of the controversial social commentators passing from the scene. But it was time to get back to serious work. Rep. Ralph Ayres would be presenting Munchkins before the Indiana House of Representatives later this very week. ❖



Sylvia Smith, *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette* - There was a lot of harrumphing within the House Education Committee last week, as Republicans accused Democrats of being "deeply strident" because they dared ask why anyone would think it's acceptable for tax dollars to be used to discriminate against job-seekers on the basis of their religion. The issue was a bill that would make some modifications to legislation that provides job training to unemployed people. Among the proposed changes: Republicans wanted to allow faith-based groups that receive grants under the legislation to be able to be picky about whom they hire. Not picky about whether the applicant is well-qualified, but whether the job-seeker is of the same religion as the faith-based group or shares the same opinions about what is moral and what is not. Before you wonder why anyone would question the utter reasonableness of a Lutheran church insisting that its pastor be Lutheran, consider this: The jobs we're talking about aren't in any way related to the faith-based groups' practice of religion. The jobs are the staff for the job-training programs that the faith-based groups get federal tax dollars to operate. But when Democrats asked these logical questions, Republicans were indignant. That kind of questioning, they said, was offensive to religion. "If you want churches to participate," Rep. Mark Souder said, "you can't continue to insult them by implying they can't help the poor and have faith." He went on: "The core of this – and this is where we're headed if we're not careful – is does the Catholic Church have the right to have male priests?" ❖

Gary Gerard, *Warsaw Times-Union* - Seems the vermin – there are two women running the scam – show up at small country churches in the southern part of the county and tell a sad story. The story goes like this: The woman says she came from Colorado to be with a sister who lives in our county. She came to be with the sister because the sister just had a stillborn baby and she needed to console her. But no sooner than she arrived in Warsaw, she gets word from Colorado that her father died of cancer and she had to get back to Colorado right away. But there wasn't enough money for gas and food. Church members note that the woman cries and becomes very emotional, asking meekly if there is any way they could find it in their hearts to help her. Of course, admonished by Jesus to be charitable and to help the down-trodden, what self-respecting Christian can say no? You're in a church, for cryin' out loud. They drive a red car. Please forgive me the dripping sarcasm, but this is really pretty low. Taking advantage of the goodwill of people in small country churches? Come on. These people are so low they have to crawl up to go down. ❖

Bernie Schmidt, *Vincennes Sun-Commercial* - It is fashionable these days for politicians and others, primarily Republicans, to repeat what amounts to a lie when they claim that this nation was "founded on Christian principles." Even our 8th District Congressman, John Hostettler, whose ability to be re-elected comes from a pious portrait he paints of himself, seems intent on having his constituents believe revisionist history by citing this phrase when discussing the U.S. Constitution. Hostettler, and those who try to convince the rest of this country that the Founding Fathers held Christian beliefs to be the cornerstone of a free nation, are wrong. Read the U.S. Constitution, the document that is the basis of our government. There is no mention of God or Christianity. Religion was purposely set aside when the delegates to the Constitutional Convention of 1787 met in Philadelphia to create a document which would govern a free nation. Before you throw your newspaper down in disgust, I must tell you that I have nothing against religion and certainly nothing against Christianity. I was fortunate in my youth to get plenty of religious education. That we Americans are primarily Christian is a cultural evolution. It has nothing to do with the founding of our system of government. While religion may be important to our people, our nation was not founded on Christian principles. Our leaders respect religion because they know it is respected by a majority of Americans. But as Brooke Allen writes in *"The Nation,"* "there is a difference between offering this gesture of respect for majority beliefs and manipulating and pandering to the bigotry, prejudice and millennial fantasies of Christian extremists." The Founders had priorities and religion was not one of them. George W. Bush, John Hostettler and others ought to study the truth in history instead of trying to revise it. ❖

Hunter S. Thompson, *ESPN* - Unfortunately, I bet the Colts heavily to win by seven points -- and they only won by three -- so I was wrong again, and I paid a terrible price. First the presidency, then the point-spread on Monday night. Indeed. Gambling was not a happy experience for me last week. But so what? I lost, but I am not a Loser. I have long understood that losing always comes with the territory when you wander into the gambling business, just as getting crippled for life is an acceptable risk in the linebacker business. They both are extremely violent sports, and pain is part of the bargain. Buy the ticket, take the ride. Mahalo. Right after the Colts finally won last night, I called team owner Jim Irsay to congratulate him on his fine victory, even though he failed to make the spread. "That was too close for comfort," I told him. No team with the worst pass defense in the NFL has ever even been to a Super Bowl, much less win the game. ❖



Bauer predicts DST passage in House

INDIANAPOLIS - House Minority Leader Pat Bauer, D-South Bend, said the DST bill probably will pass (*Louisville Courier-Journal*). "I believe they will get the votes one way or the other, and I do think there will be some Democrat votes (for it)," Bauer said. He said some of his members come from districts that favor a change to daylight-saving time and likely will vote accordingly. Reliable sources tell *HPR* that Indianapolis Democratic members of the Black Caucus are likely to support the bill.



Garton predicts DST will pass Senate

INDIANAPOLIS - Senate President Pro Tem Robert Garton said Wednesday that he will not assign the bill to an unfriendly committee if the House approves the legislation and sends it to the Senate (*Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*). "It will be assigned to a committee on a straightforward basis," he said. "It will receive a fair hearing." As for the chance of passing the bill in his usually conservative chamber that hasn't voted on the issue since 1983? "It's close. Just as it's close in the House," Garton said. "But my sentiment right now is it will pass the Senate." The last time such a bill was voted on by the full Senate was in 1983, and it failed 46-4.

Most Fort Wayne area legislators to vote for DST

Eight of the area's 12 House members told the *Journal Gazette* they plan to vote "yes," although several cau-

tioned they could change their minds (*Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*). Two of those eight are Democrats – Fort Wayne Reps. Win Moses Jr. and Ben GiaQuinta – and the rest are Republicans. Only Reps. Bill Ruppel, R-North Manchester, and Mike Ripley, R-Monroe, said they plan to vote "no." Ripley might miss the vote because of the death of his grandmother. "I will vote 'no' because my constituents don't want it changed," Ruppel said. "I have always been against it."

Daniels promises help in meth fight

INDIANAPOLIS - Law enforcement officials from Jackson and three other counties hit hard by methamphetamine crimes met for an hour yesterday with Gov. Mitch Daniels, who promised to work with them on the problem. Jackson County Prosecutor Stephen Pierson said the governor was open to suggestions about dealing with the growing problem of meth, a highly addictive drug that is cooked in clandestine labs in rural areas. And Daniels had some good suggestions of his own, Pierson said. "The governor was excited to think about the possibilities of what the state could do to help" local officials deal with the problem, Pierson said.

Brown County to remove kids from meth cooks

NASHVILLE - Parents who choose to "cook" methamphetamine endanger their children by exposing them to hazardous, explosive chemicals (Brown County Democrat). And if officials catch them, their children will be taken away until the parents can prove to a court that they are not creating a dangerous environment for them, according to Debbie Taylor, director of the Brown County Office of Family and Children.

Eckert, Atterholt join Daniels administration

INDIANAPOLIS - Corydon-native John Eckart will head up the Department of Revenue. He previously served as president of Indiana American Water Company, Ohio American Water Company and Michigan American Water Company. Former State Representative Jim Atterholt officially becomes Indiana Insurance Commissioner. He has been the Acting Commissioner since January.

Three banks drop from do-not-call drive

INDIANAPOLIS - Three banks headquartered in Indiana are listening to their customers and a call by Indiana Attorney General Steve Carter to oppose an effort by a national group to weaken Indiana's No Call law. "Our message is clear and strong - we don't want a large loophole that allows telemarketing calls in Indiana," Attorney General Steve Carter said. "Banks who listen to their customers know that and are distancing themselves from this latest attack to change the rules on Hoosiers."

Kollintzas pleads for mercy from judge

SOUTH BEND - Former East Chicago Councilman Frank Kollintzas is puzzled and embarrassed to be heading to prison for his role in the sidewalk-for-votes scheme (*Times of Northwest Indiana*). The 62-year-old teacher, coach and school administrator wrote U.S. District Court Judge Robert L. Miller on the eve of today's sentencing that, "I don't feel what I have done means I deserve to go to prison until I die or become an old man. Please your honor, I ask you have mercy on me and my family." ❖