



Political Report

HOWEY

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Weekly Briefing on Indiana Politics

Thursday, Jan. 18, 2007

Clinton, Bayh on giving up the ship

Visit to Iraq, Afghanistan forge Terror War positions

By **MARK CURRY**

WASHINGTON - U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh returned from a weekend visit with key leaders and U.S. soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan to a United States more divided and pessimistic than ever over our fate in the region.

Yesterday, Bayh joined travelling companions Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.) and Rep. John M. McHugh (R-N.Y.) at a press conference in the U.S. Capitol to declare his opposition to President Bush's decision to send more troops to Baghdad, and to call for a deployment of at least two more military divisions to Afghanistan by spring.

White House intentions to increase the size of U.S. military forces in Iraq have further divided both the nation and its capital. According to a poll released Tuesday by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 60 percent of Republicans say they support the president, but fewer than one in three Americans (31 percent) overall favor the deployment.

"If anything, the plan has triggered increased partisan polarization on the debate over what to do in Iraq,"



The trip to Iraq and Afghanistan by Sens. Hillary Clinton and Evan Bayh had many speculating on a potential 2008 Democratic ticket. (HPR Photo by Mark Curry)

according to the poll analysis. Wednesday was a popular day for posturing in the Senate. In a flurry of activity long absent on Capitol Hill, senators, mostly Democrats, unleashed several salvos to force the White

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Lugar stays mum on surge

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - For those of us awaiting news on Sen. Richard Lugar's position on the Iraq troop surge, don't hold your breath.



Brian Howey's Column

"Lugar may not have more to say on surge," said his press secretary, Andy Fisher on Wednesday. "He notes that too little emphasis has been placed on the broader strategic importance in the Middle East and the Iraq border security, so that has been his focus."

This comes as some of Lugar's Republican colleagues in the Senate



"I was heartened by the goals he set for the state. Full-day kindergarten and health care are proposals Democrats have had for years. Now we need to take advantage."

- Sen. Earline Rogers, on Gov. Daniels



and Foreign Relations Committee are parting with the president over the troop surge. Sens. Sam Brownback (a conservative presidential candidate) and Gordon Smith are openly opposing the surge. Foreign Relations colleague Chuck Hagel, another potential presidential aspirant, was preparing to sponsor a non-binding resolution opposing the surge with U.S. Sens. Carl Levin and Joe Biden (yet another POTUS candidate).

Lugar seems intent on pressing what he calls "regional diplomacy." Or, as Fisher explained, in the statement at Secretary Rice's hearing last week, Lugar said, "Much attention has been focused on the President's call for increasing troop levels in Iraq. This is an important consideration, but it is not the only element of his plan that requires examination. The larger issue is how we will manage our strategic interests in the Middle East in light of our situation in Iraq."

Lugar said he's going to continue offering constructive suggestions and support to the President in advancing U.S. strategic objectives. "I appreciate the efforts the President has made thus far to reach out to Congress and the American people," Lugar said Tuesday. "I was encouraged by the President's emphasis on a regional element in his Iraq strategy. Whenever we begin to see Iraq as a set piece -- an isolated problem that can be solved outside the context of our broader interests -- we should reexamine our frame of reference. Our efforts to stabilize Iraq and sustain a pluralist government there have an important humanitarian purpose. But remaking Iraq, in and of itself, does not constitute a strategic objective. Stability in Iraq is important because it has a direct bearing on vital U.S. strategic objectives. To determine our future course in Iraq, we must be very clear about what these strategic objectives



Sens. Chuck Hagel, Dick Lugar and Joe Biden in Iraq in 2005. Hagel and Biden are openly contesting the Iraq troop surge. Lugar hasn't taken a position and is focusing on "regional diplomacy." (Lugar Photo)

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

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 Call 317-254-0535.

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, DC Office: 202-256-5822.
 Business Office: 317-254-0535.

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are."

Lugar detailed four strategic objectives in his statement at the Jan. 11 hearing. These are:

1. Preventing the use of Iraq as a safe haven or training ground for terrorism;
2. Preventing civil war and upheaval in Iraq from creating instability that leads to regional war, the overthrow of friendly governments, the destruction of oil facilities, or other calamities;
3. Preventing a loss of U.S. credibility in the region and the world, and;
4. Preventing Iran from dominating the region.

"I would observe that all four of these strategic objectives are deeply affected not just by whether the insurgency and sectarian violence can be abated in Iraqi cities and

neighborhoods, but by the actions of Iraq's neighbors," Lugar said in that statement.

"For this reason, I have advocated broader diplomacy in the region that is directed at both improving stability in Iraq and expanding our options in the region. Inevitably, when anyone suggests such a diplomatic course, this is interpreted as advocating negotiations with Syria and Iran, nations that have overtly and covertly worked against our interests and violated international norms. But the purpose of the talks is not to change our posture toward those countries. A necessary regional dialogue should not be sacrificed because of fear of what might happen if we include unfriendly regimes. Moreover, we already have numerous contacts with the Iranians and Syrians through intermediaries and other means. The regional dialogue I am suggesting does not have to occur in a formal conference setting, but it needs to occur and it needs to be sustained."

Lugar believes that both our friends and our enemies in the region must know that we will defend our interests and our allies. "They must know that we are willing to exercise the substantial leverage we possess in the region in the form of military presence, financial assistance, diplomatic contacts and other resources," he said. "Although it is unlikely that a political settlement in Iraq can be imposed from the outside, it is equally



unlikely that one will succeed in the absence of external pressure and incentives. We should be active in bringing these forces to bear on Iraqi factions, and we should work to prevent miscalculations related to the turmoil in Iraq," Lugar said.

Lugar concluded at the hearing on Jan. 11 that "Congress must carefully study how the President's plan will affect the welfare of American service men and women, the prospects for success in Iraq, and the future of our broader strategic interests."

He has told committee witnesses that he wants to hear how prescriptions proposed will affect "the broader strategic context of the Middle East that is vital to U.S.

national security."

So while Sens. Hagel and Brownback and Norm Coleman have openly split with President Bush on Iraq, similar to the way Foreign Relations Chairman J. William Fulbright split with President Johnson on Vietnam, Lugar is unlikely to make a public departure with President Bush.

If he did, it would have sensational repercussions. And he knows it. So Lugar will do what he perceives he does best: work around the margins, quietly trying to influence an isolated and incurious administration which finds itself at this writing in a quagmire of unprecedented proportions. ❖

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House to reconsider the deployment. Among those joining the fray were Sens. Barack Obama (D-Ill.) and Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.), both considered presidential contenders. In a press conference that preceded Bayh's, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Joe Biden (D-Del.) and Sens. Chuck Hagel (R-Neb.) and Carl Levin (D-Mich.) described their intention to submit a nonbinding, bipartisan resolution opposing the deployment.

Hundreds of reporters and photographers attended the Bayh-Clinton-McHugh press conference, cramming the hearing room to capacity and spilling into the office spaces behind the stage. When one reporter confided to another that it was the largest crowd she had seen in her six years on the beat, a nearby photographer made comparisons to media reaction to the Iran-Contra affair.

As the debate over deeper involvement in Iraq heats up, Sen. Clinton stepped up her opposition to the Iraq war, but at the same time she and Bayh advocated shifting troops to Afghanistan. Still officially on the sidelines of the White House race, she sounded every bit like a candidate.

"The President's team is pursuing a failed strategy in Iraq as it edges closer to collapse," said Sen. Clinton, who sought to block the President's call for a troop increase by capping the number of U.S. forces in Iraq and advocated a phased troop withdrawal. She proposed instead sending additional soldiers to Afghanistan, where "the Taliban is coming back."

"The Taliban, and its al Qaeda partner, remains a pernicious enemy, and a failure to defeat it decisively in the spring risks undermining public confidence in the government of Afghan President Hamid Karzai," Bayh and

Clinton wrote in a letter to Defense Secretary Robert Gates. "It would be tragic if we fail in Afghanistan because of an unwillingness to deploy a manageable size of additional troops to aid an important and willing ally during a time of true need."

The senators also highlighted the continued shortage in intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance capabilities, including Predator unmanned aerial vehicles, and the importance of helping a country that has proven to be a willing partner in the fight against terrorism.

"There are reasons to be hopeful about Afghanistan," Bayh said during the press conference. The country is unified politically, he added, but the spring and summer will be critical in the fight against the Taliban resurgence.

Presidential politics factored significantly in yesterday's debate. Though several questions were directed at Bayh, who organized the four-day mission, most of the attention was focused on Sen. Clinton. Subsequently, some news accounts reported her remarks in the context of an ongoing struggle between Clinton and Obama to be seen as the top contender

for the Democratic Party's next presidential nominee. HPR fielded speculation from various sources over the past week concerning the significance of Bayh's choice of travelling companions at a time when it is certain that voter interest in Iraq would be markedly increased. Deb McKee, writing in today's **Terre Haute Tribune-Star**, notes that during a teleconference late yesterday the senator was asked if he and Clinton had discussed a joint run for 2008.

"Bayh said they had not talked about it," McKee wrote, noting, he said, "We were there to focus upon one of the biggest challenges facing our country today: what to do about the global struggle against terrorism, what to do





about Iraq and Afghanistan.”

After the press conference, Sen. Bayh conducted an impromptu meeting with a dozen reporters at the stairway landing just down the hall. There, rising nearly two stories, is situated a mural of artist William H. Powell’s “Battle of Lake Erie,” which illustrates a precarious and telling moment in our nation’s history. On Sept. 10, 1813, Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, flying under a banner inscribed “Don’t Give Up The Ship,” engaged a British fleet near Put-in-Bay, Ohio. In Powell’s painting, the commodore is seen in a small cutter as he is rowed to the nearby Niagara, a 20-gun ship. There Perry rallied his fleet, and in a sudden act of bravery sailed directly into the enemy lines, caught the British ships off guard and out of position and decimated their decks. Thus was looming defeat turned to one of the most resounding triumphs of the War of 1812. In reporting the victory to Gen. William Henry Harrison, the commodore wrote these now famous words, “We have met the enemy and they are ours.”

Today it is acknowledged by hawk and dove alike that a solution in Iraq will arise not from military victory but from a confrontation of political intentions. Sen. Bayh and his colleagues in Congress are challenging the president to force the Iraqi government to bend to American designs, or face the consequences certain to follow withdrawal of the brave troops who risk their lives to contain the chaos. Americans expect their president and the 110th Congress to make substantial progress on the question of Iraq and the war on terror. ❖

Obama out to prove star power is real

By CHRIS SAUTTER
The Howey Political Report

WASHINGTON - Exactly two years after becoming a United States senator, Barack Obama has thrown his hat into the ring for a presidential run in 2008.

Obama’s meteoric rise from obscure state senator to political phenomenon is truly amazing. But time will tell whether Obama is just a shooting star, as the Hillary Clinton camp hopes, or the next Bobby Kennedy, as some observers have said.

Much has been made of Obama’s thin but nonetheless impressive resume: the first African-American president of the Harvard Law Review; Southside Chicago community organizer; leader of one of the largest voter registration drives in Illinois history; University of Chicago constitutional law professor; civil rights lawyer; Illinois state senator for seven years; U.S. senator; and author of two best-selling books.



Few presidential candidates have been elected with so little national experience. To underscore the point, Obama will formally announce his candidacy on Feb. 10 in Springfield, Ill., home of Abraham Lincoln, who served only two years in Congress before winning the presidency.

I worked with Barack Obama when he was an Illinois state senator and he is everything they say he is. Smart, articulate, and charismatic, Obama’s experience, unique for a presidential candidate, is more likely to work for him than against him. He is as comfortable chatting with ordinary folk in a neighborhood church as he is meeting with leaders on the world stage. Obama is the first post-baby boom presidential candidate and stresses pragmatic instead of ideological solutions to problems.

What may be more challenging for Obama than convincing voters he has the requisite experience to be president is whether as a candidate he is able to meet the expectations generated by his campaign theme, which he has called the “politics of hope.” What do Obama’s new politics actually mean when it comes to reforming America’s costly and inequitable health care system, tackling global warming, or ending the war in Iraq? And, can Obama retain his authenticity in a political process in which candidates are routinely co-opted or ground down and chewed up?

Obama has never been truly tested in a campaign. He was appointed to his state senate seat and never challenged in subsequent elections. He emerged as the front-runner for the U.S. Senate nomination in Illinois only after front-runner Blair Hull, a multi-millionaire who was self-funding his campaign, tripped over allegations that he abused his former wife. Remarkably, the Republican nominee’s campaign met a similar fate and Obama wound up facing the ubiquitous conservative talk show host Alan Keyes, who actually lives in Maryland. Obama’s only truly difficult race was his long-shot challenge (and loss) to Chicago Congressman Bobby Rush in 2000. Rush was never seriously in trouble, so it is an open question whether Obama can really take a punch. Mario Cuomo once famously said that you campaign in poetry and govern in prose. It has been a long time, some say since Robert Kennedy’s campaign in 1968, since the magic of poetry has been on display in a presidential campaign. Barack Obama is out to prove it can still be done. ❖



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Chris Sautter, a Washington attorney and political consultant, is co-author of *The Recount Primer* (1994) and director/producer of *The King of Steeltown* (2001).



There are reasons for the Mitch & Pat lovefest

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - Conventional wisdom had nothing but blood, sweat (car bombs) and tears with the new dynamic between Gov. Mitch Daniels and House Speaker B. Patrick Bauer going into this Indiana General Assembly session.

It is HPR's analysis, however, that there is perhaps more for Daniels and Bauer to accomplish together than in any recent session in memory. As Speaker Bauer has suggested in the past, a Democratic House might actually make Daniels a "better governor."

The state's fiscal house is largely in order. Bauer points to a downward blip in personal income as a point of biennial budget constraint, but Steve Johnson of the Indiana Fiscal Policy Institute is more worried about sales tax receipts.

In Tuesday's State of the State address by Gov. Daniels, he appeared to play off Bauer's better nature. Daniels was conciliatory and bipartisan in nature. He answered the call of Indiana Democrats and pledged to be a better listener. "Now we have only one path upward," Daniels said. "The cooperation that has eluded us on most occasions is now the only alternative to stalemate and paralysis. If I too often did not find the words to bring it about, I will have to do better, and find them now. Let me then submit an agenda for greatness, built on items that might unite those who have recently found too little common ground." Legislative Democrats applauded vigorously. They also applauded when he said he wanted "the assembly's help and oversight" on reinvesting public assets.

Bauer, in turn, was reaching out. "I want to thank the governor for using his speech to embrace programs that have been strongly advocated by Indiana House Democrats in the past," Bauer said shortly after Daniels' primetime speech. "Full-day kindergarten has been a priority for our caucus for a number of years. We will work with the governor to convince skeptics that this

program is essential. However, in addition to discussing full-day kindergarten, we must restore the critical state funding for schools that was taken away in the last state budget. Full funding for our schools will be a priority for House Democrats in considerations of this year's budget. We also are pleased to see that the governor is attempting to address the needs of uninsured Hoosiers. We continue to support efforts to make health care more accessible and affordable for everyone in Indiana."

How did peace come to this valley?

The answer lies somewhere between November 2006 and November 2008.

Daniels spent perhaps the most political capital of any Indiana governor in his first two sessions since 1973-74 when Doc Bowen forged his property tax reforms. Daniels used his slim Republican majority in the House to forge his first balanced budget, set up the tax and telecommunication reforms and, of course, Major Moves. All of these will bring economic (and political) fruit in earnest by 2008 when he is expected to seek re-election.

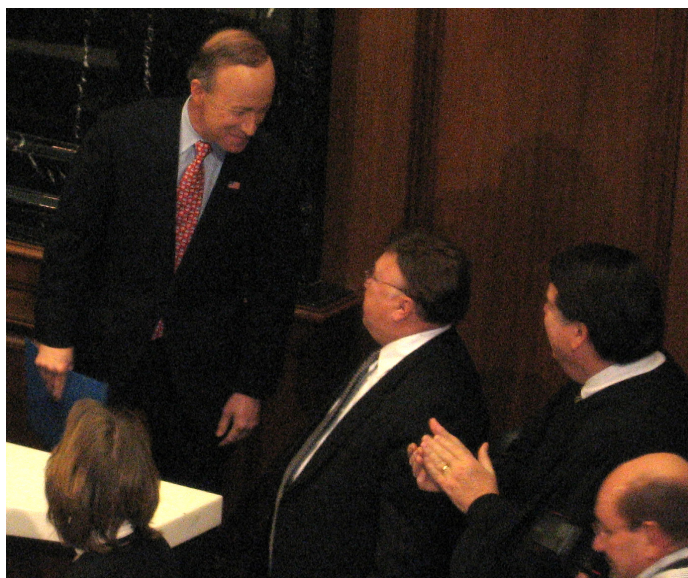
The heavy lifting of his first term has been done.

It resulted in a loss of control in the Indiana House last November - but barely. On Election Eve, HPR, Mike Gentry of the House GOP campaign, and Michael Davis of the Indiana Chamber were girding for as much as a 56-

to 54-seat Democratic controlled House. But when the dust settled, Bauer was speaker, but only by a 51-49 thread. Unless President Bush's Iraq War policies so erode the Republican condition and create a second national wave in 2008 (and this, folks, is a distinct possibility), Bauer and Indiana Democrats will face a Daniels onslaught in 2008 when new Honda and Toyota plants (and their suppliers) are gearing up, as well as many more with Major Moves, the so-called "jobs bill of a generation."

Little wonder that Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson is so reticent to jump into a challenge.

If Bauer comes away from this session with nothing but party line votes, no victories on kindergarten, minimum wage and property tax issues, that will come back and haunt House Democrats 18 months later in November 2008. Gov. Daniels and House Minority Leader Brian C. Bosma will blame obstinate, do-nothing House Democrats as they make the appeal to win back the two seats (and



Gov. Daniels greets House Speaker B. Patrick Bauer as Chief Justice Randall Shepard looks on. (HPR Photo by Brian A. Howey)



control) they lost.

Bauer knows this.

Success on full-day kindergarten that Govs. Frank O'Bannon and Joe Kernan championed, a minimum wage hike and a 2002-style deal on property tax reform (which will likely develop late) will fill the Democratic quiver with arrows to defend their majority.

Bauer's post-State of State comments can only be seen as constructive. "Most experts believe that we are looking at property tax increases in the 15 to 20 percent range for homes, farms and small businesses in 2007," he said. "There had been a long-standing tradition of bipartisan efforts at reducing property taxes. We worked together to have the state assume a larger share of the burden faced by local property owners. In the Republican budget passed two years ago, that effort to cut property taxes stopped. As a result, local property taxes went up by close to \$1 billion. Now the administration's new budget proposal imposes even tighter limits on property tax relief, a move that will pass on at least another \$500 million to the local level. How will the shortfall be handled? By letting local units of government decide whether or not taxes should be raised, and whether those funds will be spent on local services or property tax relief?"

These are good questions.

There is also a potential deal on the cigarette tax and, perhaps, slots at racetracks that could help expand health insurance coverage. Bauer also knows that if Mayor Peterson does side-step a challenge to Daniels, the Democratic bench is light with no obvious candidate in the wings. The weaker the gubernatorial candidate, the less vision will be articulated before the voters in 2008. ❖

2008 Indiana Governor

Governor 2008: Republican: Gov. Mitch Daniels.

Democrat: Senate Minority Leader Richard Young. **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 Results:** Daniels (R) 1,302,912, Kernan (D) 1,113,900, Gividen (L) 31,644. **2008 Forecast:**

That Gov. Daniels was quoting California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger in his State of the State is an interesting parallel. Schwarzenegger just won a second term by a resounding margin after spending 2005 with poll numbers similar to Daniels last year. Daniels has almost \$2.6 million in campaign cash. "Since the November election, all of our effort is geared toward making sure (Daniels) has all the cash he might need, if he chooses to run," campaign manager Bill Oesterle told the Indianapolis Star. **Status:** LEANS DANIELS. ❖



United we stand, divided ... we just might get things done

By **ABDUL-HAKIM SHABAZZ**

INDIANAPOLIS - The nice thing about divided government is that it accomplishes two goals. It can force individuals from different political parties to work together to achieve positive results for taxpayers, or it can result in gridlock and nothing gets done, thereby keeping government out of the lives of its citizenry. The latter ain't too



bad, but the previous is more preferable.

Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels extended a hand and an olive branch to Indiana lawmakers Tuesday as he unveiled his third State of the State address. In the 30-minute speech the Governor intermixed a relatively new agenda with newer themes of cooperation. "Cooperation is always the best way," Daniels said in his address.

The Governor had already unveiled his plans for full-day kindergarten, creating the Illiana Expressway and Commerce Connectors, health insurance for Hoosiers and turning over the lottery management to a private company. Most of which was met with mixed reaction from lawmakers. But his tone was one of someone who was well aware of the new political reality in the State Legislature. "The cooperation that has eluded us on most occasions is now the only alternative to stalemate and paralysis. If I too often did not find the words to bring it about, I will have to do better, and find them now," he noted.

There was mixed reaction from Democrats. State Rep. David Crooks said he was pleased with the Governor's bipartisan tone. Mike Edmondson, executive director of the Indiana Democratic Party, said, "If he's serious, we're there as a willing partner, but time will tell if he will be a consensus builder." However, Vi Simpson noted, "The Governor has been talking about a canoe, but instead he's been using a one-man kayak." She was referring to the Governor's analogy that lawmakers are in a canoe and need to paddle together.

Democrats may be cautious, but they can be obstructionists. They have to put together a plan and they also have to show leadership. The balancing act for the Governor is for him to compromise, but not be too conciliatory. And we can't forget the third branch of government, the State Senate. Pro Tem David Long will have his hands full balancing that chamber's conservative insurgency that is beginning to grow.

The new day in Indiana government is a lot like the old day: government's divided, lawmakers compromise or they stalemate. Which do you prefer? ❖



The coming lull in the big city mayoral wars

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

FORT WAYNE - At this time in 1999, there were full-scale mayoral wars preparing to rage in Indianapolis, Fort Wayne and Evansville.

Four years ago, with Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson safely headed for a second term, the big battles were set for Evansville and Fort Wayne.

And this year?

All quiet on the big city front.

This became obvious on Tuesday when Republican Indianapolis Councilman Isaac Randolph and Marion County Prosecutor Carl Brizzi took a pass on the Peterson Challenge. That leaves vanquished congressional challenger Eric Dickerson as Peterson's most likely opponent and that is hardly sending tremors down the spines of Democrats.

The wildest challenges appear to be coming in Indiana's next tier of cities - Terre Haute, Kokomo, Elkhart, Michigan City and New Albany - as well as the open seat in Muncie.

What's going on?

In the two biggest cities, Indianapolis and Fort Wayne, demographics are in play. Indianapolis is becoming increasingly Democratic, with baseline vote in 2006 in the 12,000 range favoring the Dems. Only Brizzi's \$2 million campaign was able to withstand this tide.

In Fort Wayne, former Mayor Paul Helmke's annexations have fully come on line. Heavily Republican Aboite Township poses to do for Fort Wayne what Keith Bulen's Unigov did for Indianapolis more than three decades ago: make the Summit City a Republican bastion for the next generation.

Mayor Graham Richard is not seeking a third term. On the eve of filing, there is no credible Democratic challenger lined up, though former Councilman Tom Henry is being urged to take a long hard look.

If Allen County Commissioner Nelson Peterson defeats Matt Kelty in the Republican primary (and that is widely expected), Peterson with an Aboite thrust will be a heavy favorite in November.

In Evansville, Mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel is without a credible Republican opponent four years after defeating Republican Mayor Russell Lloyd Jr.

Weinzapfel has successfully forged an alliance with the Evansville business community and has concentrated revitalization efforts in the downtown and neighborhoods.

An easy re-election sequence for Weinzapfel could position him best for a 2008 challenge to Gov. Mitch Daniels.

Peterson's powder keg

Of the big city mayors, it is Mayor Peterson who, while politically safe, may be sitting on the biggest potential powder keg. Crime in Indianapolis appears to be spiraling out of control. It caught statewide attention when State Sen. Sue Errington was attacked at a pharmacy near Butler University. Less than a mile from HPR's office, our bank, Fifth Third, was robbed for the second time this month with the perpetrators threatening employees and customers with a fake bomb.

Since the first of the year, there have been 17 carjackings in the Hoosier capital city.

Peterson has not been static on crime. He has overseen the creation of the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, though it now answers to Marion County Sheriff Frank Anderson.

Peterson is also reaching out to the legislature to help fund an \$85 million initiative to properly fund its criminal justice system. "Our city has under-funded public safety for decades, and last year's rise in crime was an all too harsh wakeup call," Peterson said. "Recent investments in public safety - including \$36 million added to this year's budget for new crime-fighting initiatives - mark progress, but that will be short-lived

unless we sustain the increased spending for our criminal justice system and invest in crime fighting for the long term.

"We must 'right-size' the criminal justice system for decades to come, and that means securing the necessary funding needed to keep improving public safety, and this cannot happen by continuing to patch our budget together every year with string and baling wire," Peterson said.

Peterson won in 1999 on a crime platform that called for 200 new cops. In that race, he faced a fully financed Sue Anne Gilroy, who had the backing of Sheriff Cottey, Prosecutor Scott Newman and outgoing Mayor Stephen Goldsmith.

This year, Marion County Republicans are so weak and anemic that they can't even muster a credible candidate in a crime-wracked city.



Mayor Bart Peterson looks to be a shoo-in, but sits on a crime wave powder keg. (HPR Photo by Brian A. Howey)



Lake County mayors load up

Lake County mayors are loading up with cash to defend themselves in 2007 elections, the **Post-Tribune** reported today. Tom McDermott Jr. of Hammond has the biggest war chest among municipal incumbents, according to annual campaign finance reports which were due Wednesday at the Lake County election office.

McDermott's \$226,179 as of Jan. 1 put him comfortably in front of Gary Mayor Rudy Clay, whose election committee had \$107,050, according to the filings.

Clay faced stiff fund-raising competition from challengers lining up to see whether they can unseat him in his first title defense after winning the mayoralty through precinct, not popular, vote.

The Lean on Me Committee, Gary City Council Chuck Hughes' mayoral organization, raised \$103,129 last year, according to his records.

Of that, \$79,144 was an in-kind contribution of "design, printing and floats" by Beryl Martin, a Griffith printing company.

Gary attorney and mayoral candidate Karen Freeman-Wilson reported collecting \$66,046 in '06.

Like Clay, Freeman-Wilson collected thousands of dollars from out-of-state political organizations and individuals.

Hobart Mayor Linda Buzinec, who could face several challengers in the May 8 Democratic primary, raised \$56,216 last year. Buzinec

spent all but \$12,756 of her war chest on contributions to other political organizations, donations to various groups and other expenses.

Crown Point Mayor Dan Klein's committee, Citizens for Klein, is flush with \$83,126 after raising \$78,747 in 2006, according to his filing.

East Chicago Mayor George Pabey had \$8,155 in hand at the beginning of 2007. Pabey's re-election committee tallied \$58,931 in 2006 expenditures.

Katie Hall's husband running

Attorney John Henry Hall, husband of former Gary Clerk Katie Hall, will join three others in challenging Mayor Rudy Clay for his job in May (**Post-Tribune**). He has written a 21-point "manifesto" in which he describes his plan to revitalize Gary, if he is elected. "I've been passing it around to various people," Hall said. Katie Hall and their daughter, Junifer Hall, pleaded guilty to federal mail fraud charges in 2003. John Hall said he doesn't expect their convictions will pose any challenge to his election. "In fact, they're going to be working with my campaign," John Hall said. ❖



Gary Mayor Rudy Clay



THE BOAR'S NEST

The Boar's Nest Returns

In 2001 and 2002, HPR Publisher **Brian A. Howey** wrote "The Boar's Nest" column for the **Indianapolis Star** editorial page, appearing on Saturdays. The Star discontinued the column when Howey launched the **Indianapolis Eye Online Magazine**, which Gannett deemed competition.

Howey got the idea for **The Boar's Nest** column from **Mike Snyder**, who remembered the original Boar's Nest at the old Harrison Hotel across the street from the Statehouse. It was a gathering place for GOP power brokers and young staffers, who were known from time to time to hide a cache of booze in the closet and away from the stern view of **John K. Snyder**, Michael's father, who served as Indiana state treasurer and later ran for governor and the U.S. Senate. We decided to dust off the old Boar as a place to put news and names that don't fit in any of our news stories, analysis, columns or Horse Race items. You will be able to scan the Boar's Nest for names, short stories and, of course, retorts.

We'd like to invite HPR readers to send along items for the Boar's Nest at: brianhowey@howeypolitics.com. Send in three original tips that we use and we'll add an extra month to your subscription.

'Premature Adulation'

Former **State Rep. Mitch Harper** poked some fun at HPR's 50 Most Influential List on his **Fort Wayne Observed** blog over Allen County Commissioner and mayoral candidate **Nelson Peter's** lofty 14th ranking. Harper called it "premature adulation."

While that is a great line, the 50 List tends to project into the future. We had another newcomer at a similar point on the 2006 list. His name? **Brad Ellsworth**. As in Congressman Ellsworth now.

As for political timing, the ol' Boar recalls a series of soul-searching lunches and drinks with Harper in 1993 when he finally concluded that **U.S. Rep. Jill Long** was unbeatable in 1994. So, isn't Harper suffering from a prostrate political career? ❖



Jack Colwell, South Bend Tribune - If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. That warning on how to spot a scam is appropriate advice in evaluating the proposal to privatize the Hoosier Lottery. Gov. Mitch Daniels and presidents of the state universities make the plan sound too good to reject, too good to delay, too good to be true. The proposal: Sell the rights to run the Hoosier Lottery for 30 years to a private gaming operator for a one-time \$1 billion payment upfront and guarantees that the state still would share in some of the lottery profits in order to continue funding auto excise tax cuts and state pension obligations. The university presidents bought in -- or were bought off -- with the proviso that the billion bucks would go for worthy purposes they embrace. Forty percent would help to attract high-priced, high-caliber faculty, including those involved in scientific research. And the other \$600 million would be used for scholarships for Indiana high school graduates agreeing not to flee the state immediately after getting a diploma from one of the state institutions of higher education. In a statement supporting the plan, the presidents said: "We applaud the governor for his initiative to invest in Hoosiers and place Indiana on a more prosperous path." Well, it might not exactly send all Hoosiers down a more prosperous path. Inherent in the plan, though the presidents never mentioned it in their statement, is an expansion of gambling. Where would the private gaming operator get all that money to cover the billion upfront, to make annual payments to the state to match what Indiana gets now in lottery proceeds and still to make the huge profit sought by a big-time operator? Where would the money come from? From Hoosiers. From the folks who play the lottery and pay what could be called a user tax or a loser tax. ❖

Rich James, Post-Tribune - Ever since the story broke a month or so ago about U.S. Attorney Joseph Van Bokkelen becoming a federal judge, it's been eating at me. Not that Van Bokkelen wouldn't make a good judge. To the contrary, he'd be just fine. What keeps dogging me is that Van Bokkelen will turn 64 in June, a month before he's expected to take his seat on the federal bench when Judge Rudy Lozano steps down to take senior status. It's not that 64 should be considered old. But in terms of launching a career on the bench, 64 borders on ancient. Van Bokkelen is bright. Very bright. He knows his way around the justice system and around a courtroom. His career has been lengthy and varied -- the kind of career that prepares one for being a judge. But, at 64, how long will he serve? Van Bokkelen was an assistant U.S. attorney in the 1970s and prosecuted members of the Family Street Gang -- the worst of the worst -- who terrorized Gary, leaving

bodies strewn all over the city streets. From there, he went into private practice and became one of the most successful defense attorneys in the area. A former U.S. attorney once told me that the three best defense attorneys in Lake County -- in terms of white-collar crimes and public corruption -- were Dick James and Max Cohen, both retired, and Van Bokkelen. When former Lake County Prosecutor Jack Crawford was at wits' end over the murder of East Chicago lawyer and political operative Jay Given in the early 1980s, Van Bokkelen got the call as special prosecutor. Van Bokkelen said publicly at the time that he felt he had enough to have East Chicago Deputy Police Chief John Cardona indicted for the murder. But Crawford wouldn't act. Several years later, Juvenile Court Judge Mary Beth Bonaventura hired Van Bokkelen to help in her push to get the county to commit to building a new juvenile justice facility in Crown Point. He won. After the Supreme Court selected George Bush to be president, Van Bokkelen's name was among those that surfaced to be U.S. attorney. But Van Bokkelen balked somewhat, saying he wasn't sure he wanted to give up his law practice -- a comment that was synonymous with saying he didn't want to take a pay cut to become federal prosecutor. Nevertheless, the lure of being in a position to dismantle the Lake County Democratic Party was too much to turn down. ❖

Nancy Sulok, South Bend Tribune - Hundreds of Indiana Toll Road employees will learn Friday if they still have their jobs. Representatives of the Indiana Toll Road Concession Co. will travel up and down Interstate 80/90 tomorrow to meet with workers and deliver the news. ITRCC has been running the highway since July, when a controversial lease agreement began between the state of Indiana and Statewide Mobility Partners. SMP is a consortium made up of Macquarie Investment Holdings of Sydney, Australia, and Cintra Concesiones de Infraestructuras de Transporte SA of Madrid, Spain. As part of the agreement, SMP was required to interview all existing Toll Road employees who wanted to keep their jobs. Gov. Mitch Daniels promised that those who were not hired would be provided job opportunities elsewhere in state government. Jane Jankowski, press secretary for the governor, said more than 80 percent of the workers asked to keep their jobs and were interviewed by ITRCC. "Everyone will have a job," Matt Pierce, public information officer for ITRCC, said Tuesday. "No one will be losing their job." The Toll Road has 565 employees, he said. Those who do not stay with the Toll Road will be offered other state jobs, he said. ❖





It's FDK vs. free textbooks legislators told

INDIANAPOLIS - The argument over whether the state should provide free textbooks to students quickly boiled down to a question of priorities Wednesday – full-day kindergarten or textbooks? Speaker after speaker testified about how bad it was that Indiana is one of 10 states that makes parents pay for books (**Fort Wayne Journal Gazette**). And they supported having the state pay, which could cost upward of \$120 million. But textbooks were often not at the top of their wish lists – especially falling behind full-day kindergarten in importance for many education groups. “We believe in free textbooks,” said John Ellis, executive director of the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents. “But we don’t want it to come from schools’ foundation grants and we don’t want to sacrifice full-day kindergarten again for the 19th year.”



Weatherwax proposes property tax amendment

INDIANAPOLIS - A group of lawmakers is pushing a proposed constitutional amendment to abolish property taxes, saying it would force the General Assembly to eliminate an antiquated and unfair system and replace it with more equitable taxes. But Senate Tax Chairman Luke Kenley frowned on the idea Wednesday, saying the plan contains no upfront provisions on how lost revenue to local governments would be replaced in the long term (**Fort Wayne Journal Gazette**). Kenley, R-Noblesville, said if the proposal comes before his committee, “I’m going to insist on a ... plan that says this is how we pay for this.” Property taxes are traditionally

a hot topic in the General Assembly, and lawmakers are especially sensitive about them this session because a variety of factors is expected to lead to double-digit increases on average bills statewide this year. The proposal by Republican Sen. Thomas Weatherwax of Logansport and several other lawmakers contains a proposed state constitutional amendment that would abolish property taxes, which local governments use to pay for such things as public schools, police and fire services, libraries and construction projects.

Sen. Errington has surgery

INDIANAPOLIS - Sen. Sue Errington, D-Muncie, will have minor surgery to protect her vision in the wake of injuries from a mugging last week (**Muncie Star Press**). Errington was punched in the eye, sustaining a fracture to her cheekbone, by one of two robbers who took her purse while she was coming out of a north-side pharmacy. Physicians advised that the fracture could cause muscles to drop and result in nerve damage, affecting her vision, Errington said. “I don’t have any problem right now,” Errington said. “I just hope no other problem results.”

Roob explains governor’s health insurance program

HOBART - Gov. Mitch Daniels’ plan to provide health care insurance to those now without it will take as long as a decade to sign up everyone eligible, his human services chief said yesterday. Secretary Mitch Roob of the Family and Social Services Administration made the remark as lawmakers began considering the best plan for Indiana (**Louisville Courier-Journal**). Two Indiana House committees, on public health and insurance, met to hear the details of Daniels’ plan and to take testimony from lobbyists and advocates for employers, doctors, the uninsured and others. The governor’s plan calls for covering at

least 120,000 low-income adults by raising cigarette taxes by at least 25 cents per pack. It is one of at least six proposals being considered by the Democrat-controlled House as it wrestles with how to provide insurance to the estimated 850,000 Indiana residents who now lack it. Roob said even if the governor’s plan were to win passage, it likely would take seven to 10 years to enroll everyone eligible.

Four cities vie for Chrysler plant

WEST LAFAYETTE - With the West Lafayette Economic Development Commission withdrawing itself from consideration — four sites remain in the running for a possible \$560 million automotive manufacturing plant (**Kokomo Tribune**). Among the contenders are Kokomo, Tipton County, Frankfort and Miami County. Several officials have speculated that DaimlerChrysler, in a joint venture with Getrag, has been looking for a spot in central Indiana to construct a new transmission assembly plant. Only one thing is certain — the plant won’t be in Lafayette. Cinda Kelley, the president of West Lafayette EDC, said the city recently pulled out because it wasn’t a good fit. “We are not working that deal,” Kelley said Thursday. Such a plant could bring 1,200 jobs and likely result in new residents for the winning county.

Putnam County Council passes tax on cats

GREENCASTLE - For years, responsible canine owners have been paying annual dog taxes, and soon, cat owners will have the same opportunity (**Greencastle Banner-Graphic**). The Putnam County Council on Tuesday indicated its approval of adding cats to the animal taxes now being collected by the Humane Society of Putnam County.