



HPI Forecast: Bayh demise, Gov tossup

Comey bombshells reshaped the Indiana election; Gregg needs Lake, Indy, turnout; Trey's bad weekend; Soliday Slager, Olthoff in tossups

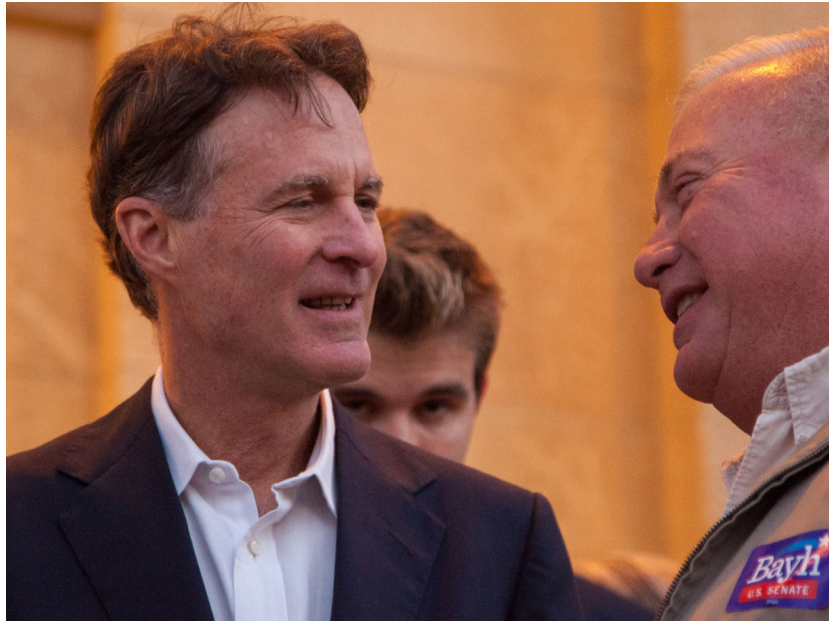
By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – In September 2014, Evan Bayh made a fateful decision. The buzz was that he was thinking about making a comeback for the job he truly loved, being governor of Indiana, as opposed to his two terms in the U.S. Senate, which became his buzzkill.



"It's unfortunately, from my point of view, very divided by partisan lines," Bayh said in announcing he would not return to Indiana to live

and govern. "Given the current makeup of the state legislature and the way the maps are drawn, I'm just wondering if my style of leadership would be feasible right now. And just for me, not for somebody else, I concluded that it would be fairly difficult under the current political



Democrat Senate nominee Evan Bayh campaigns in South Bend late last week in what may be his last hurrah. (HPI Photo by Thomas Curry)

climate and with the current legislature that we have. It's likely to be the case at least for the foreseeable future."

Bayh opted to stay in Washington, hoarding a \$10

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Post-Trump Republicans

By **MARK SCHOEFF JR.**

WASHINGTON – The most damaging consequence of the Republican Party's nomination of Donald Trump for president is that it denied that role to Texas Sen. Ted Cruz.

It's not that Cruz would have beaten Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton. But if Cruz had been the GOP standard bearer, it would have answered a question that will vex the party for the next four years.

After Trump falls to Clinton, social conservatives will say to party leadership, such as it is: You did it again. You nominated someone who is not a true believer, and the party paid the price at the polls.

Beginning on Nov. 9,



"Based on our review, we have not changed our conclusion that we expressed in July with respect to Secretary Clinton."

- FBI Director James Comey in a second bombshell on Sunday, clearing Hillary Clinton in the email probe





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they will argue that it's their turn in 2020. They will lift up Cruz, or maybe Indiana Gov. Mike Pence, to lead the party into the battle to deny Clinton a second term.

If it hadn't been for Trump, this fundamental question about the Republican Party could have been answered this year: Is it most effective when it situates itself on the far-right of the political spectrum or when it occupies the center-right?

A Cruz loss to Clinton this year would have meant that the GOP centrists could have assumed control of the party, guiding it to a place where bipartisan governance is elevated rather than repudiated, where economic and budget issues are prioritized and where middle- and working-class problems are addressed.

Instead, as the far-right asserts its influence, it could mean an endless loop of House investigations about Clinton's email problems and Senate GOP refusal to consider her Supreme Court nominees.

Two Hoosiers could play important roles in determining the direction of the party.

In a few weeks, Gov. Mike Pence will be out of a job and will have plenty of time to devote to politics, which he seems to enjoy much more than actual governing or else he wouldn't have been so quick to give up his gubernatorial seat to become Trump's running mate.

Perhaps Pence has bolstered his reputation among Republicans by being the grounded yin to Trump's volatile, offensive yang. His acolytes will assert that he heroically held the party together. On the other hand, does the most competent sailor on the Titanic bridge get to steer another ship?

Pence will have to choose whether to join Cruz in seeking political nihilism in Washington - grinding the governance gears to a halt if the GOP doesn't get its way - or to offer a more expansive vision of the party.

Another Hoosier who could be in the middle of things is Rep. Todd Young, if he defeats Evan Bayh for the seat of retiring Sen. Dan Coats.

In the Senate, Young would have to decide whether he wants to get things done, such as approve budgets and Supreme Court nominees, or endlessly fight with Democrats in a bubble of denial that the rival party has taken over the chamber.

The earnest Young embraces the substance of Congress and the "policy entrepreneur" approach that House Speaker Paul Ryan coined when he was chair of the House Ways and Means Committee, a panel on which Young serves. At his core, Young is a lawmaker who wants to make Capitol Hill work, rather than burn it down.

It's probably not apparent from the harshly negative campaigns that Young and Bayh have waged that each can be thoughtful and independent of their parties' extremes.

Bayh voted in favor of both President Obama's health-care reform plan and the Dodd-Frank financial reform bill. But that hardly means he's a darling of the left.

In fact, if Bayh defeats Young, he'll likely face more attacks. This time, they'll be from Senate liberals, such as Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., who believe Bayh is too cozy with Wall Street and, like Young, will use his work for a hedge fund as a cudgel. They don't want him to re-join the Senate Banking Committee.

As Young might find out, Bayh's relatively pro-business moderation is one of the traits that makes him hard to beat in Indiana.

Bayh would clearly be a Clinton ally in the Senate. But Young could be, too. Based on her performance as a senator, Clinton has the ability to work across the aisle - and is likely more skilled at it than Obama.

The question is whether Republicans will give her a chance to work with them. A Senate newcomer like Young will have to determine whether he's more motivated to govern or to obstruct. It will be a tough choice that could vary by issue.

But as he decides each time, he will help shape what his party is to become. ❖

Schoff is HPI's Washington correspondent.

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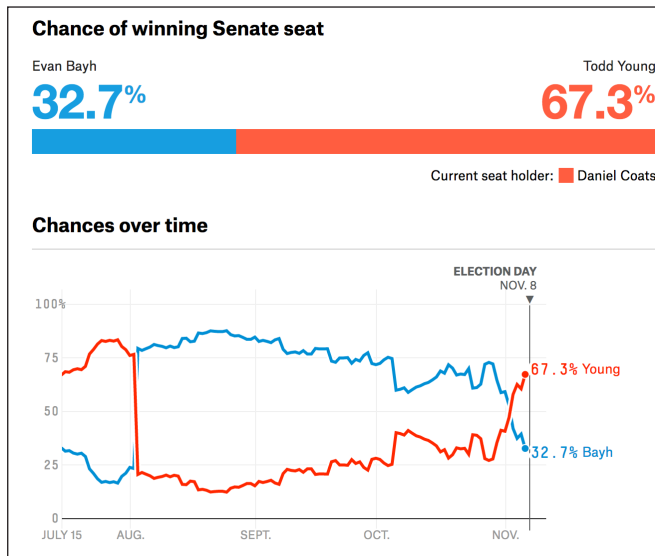
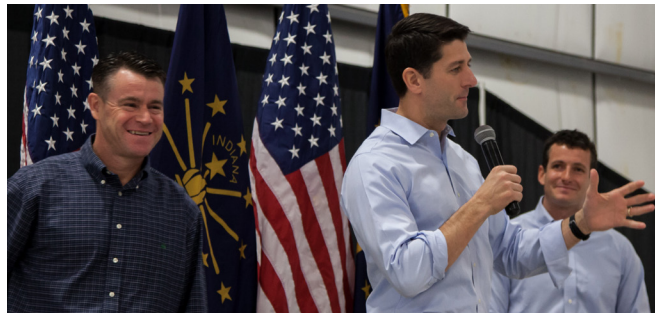
million war chest. But he remained a foreboding shadow over the Indiana Democratic Party. When State Rep. Christina Hale pondered a 2016 Senate bid, her phone calls to Bayh weren't returned. He was to be the ultimate option. Some Democrats believe that just as Bayh knew in September 2009 he wouldn't run for reelection in 2010, he also had a Plan B for the 2016 U.S. Senate race, that if nominee Baron Hill didn't reach a June 30 FEC money threshold, he would come out of the blue to send the seat into the blue column and help Hillary Clinton gain a Senate majority.

Just hours before the 2016 election, the unthinkable may be about to happen. Evan Bayh will likely endure his first political defeat since he managed his father's final U.S. Senate campaign in the landslide year of 1980. The WTHR/Howey Politics Indiana Poll had him trailing Republican Todd Young 46-41 on Nov. 1-3. SurveyMonkey tracking produced similar results. FiveThirtyEight now gives Young a 67.3% chance of winning, and Charlie Cook of the Cook Political Report said on NBC's Meet the Press Sunday he believes the seat will stay in the Republican column.

We have witnessed the destruction of the Bayh brand. There have been 300 state and national news stories on the Indiana Senate race, including 160 in October and 40 this month, with an overwhelming number of them critical of his Senate record, his accumulation of wealth during and after his two terms in the Senate, his condo in Indianapolis that he rarely inhabited, staying in hotels instead. There were stories about his job search and Senate votes cast in favor of future employers.

Bayh chose the wrong race. As one Democrat observed of a Bayh gubernatorial candidacy, "He wouldn't have had \$12 million of Mitch McConnell money destroying his character." If Bayh had run for governor, it would have been about 21st Century Scholars, and a legacy of hundreds of thousands of new jobs, of leading the state police into embattled Gary, and record tax cuts.

Instead, we found a tone deaf Evan Bayh, dressing his Harvard-educated sons in Hoosier collegiate t-shirts



U.S. Rep. Todd Young appearing in Sellersburg last week with Speaker Paul Ryan and 9th CD nominee Trey Hollingworth. The chart is FiveThirtyEight's final Indiana Senate forecast. (HPI Photo by thomas Curry)

for TV ads, and tossing basketballs into hoops. There was the classic Bayh symbolism and air war, but no ground game. He collided head-on into a Hoosier electorate leery of Washington, voters seeking fracturing change, and either highly educated or miseducated. Bayh was a symbol of the beltway, an onerous relic that Bernie Sanders supporters found offensive.

In the U.S. Senate race, the HPI Horse Race rates this as "Leans Young."

Can Gregg withstand the Comey tide?

Two weeks ago, Democratic gubernatorial candidate John Gregg seemed to be zooming down I-65 just nine miles over the speed limit. It was great cruising speed, enough to get to the destination fast, not enough to get a speeding ticket from Indiana State Police Trooper Smoky Bear.

And then Friday, Oct. 28, came, a traditional bad news dump day, except that FBI Director James Comey was driving that state police squad car. In the most ambiguous intrusion a law enforcement officer could make, Comey announced the FBI was investigating 650,000

emails found on Anthony Weiner's laptop. The perv husband of top Clinton aide Huma Abedin was the Democrat's worst nightmare. The announcement lathered up social media from coast to coast as well as from Lake Michigan to the falls of the Ohio, and dominated Sunday talk shows, sending the presidential race into a spasm.

Gregg's 12% lead in a Monmouth Poll winnowed down to a 6% lead in a poll released on Halloween, but conducted Oct. 27-30, most coming before the Comey smoke bomb. By Nov. 1-3 in the WTHR/Howey Politics Poll released last Friday, Gregg slipped into a 42% tie, 5% for Libertarian Rex Bell now hospitalized with a stroke, and 11% undecided. SurveyMonkey tracking over a similar time period had the race a dead heat, with Republican Eric Holcomb at an average 47.5% and Gregg at 47.25%.

WTHR/HPI pollster Gene Ulm believes that Gregg can win this race, though he gives tiny advantage to Holcomb who could benefit from the surge of Donald Trump voters turning out in the Indianapolis doughnut counties, Morgan, Elkhart, Clark, Floyd and others in the red belt. Holcomb believes that the Comey-reinforced Trump tide

has put him "in the passing lane."

In this, the post-truth election, it matters little that the careening Comey gave Clinton a clean bill of Weiner health in the midst of the Colts upset over Green Bay late Sunday afternoon. Democratic, Republican and operatives working down-ballot races all tell HPI that the Comey bombshell reverberated through the entire spectrum.

In earlier WTHR/HPI polling, Ulm advised that while the Senate race was a donnybrook raging in a different dynamic, the gubernatorial race was a twin of the presidential race. And here we saw Trump/Pence moving from a languishing, fat-shaming of a beauty queen era 43-38% lead to an 11% advantage in the post-Comey bombshell era.

In essence, Gregg is now facing a difficult headwind.

Can Gregg pull it out? The answer is yes, and it hinges on Indianapolis, and, perhaps, a Gary school referendum. In the state capitol, Republicans were able to reduce three early polling places to one at the City-County Building, which is in the midst of two major construction sites and surrounded by squad cars. Sites in Southport and 86th Street were eliminated. So early voting is down some 25% since the Barack Obama election of 2008.

Since 2014, Gregg had viewed Joe Hogsett recapturing the mayor's office as a crucial building block to success in 2016. But Hogsett hasn't played a conspicuous role in this election. Gregg now faces the Peterson Dilemma. Will the black vote turnout on Tuesday like it did in 2008 for Barack Obama? Or will it be more like 2007 when it didn't for Mayor Bart Peterson?

Key Democratic sources tell HPI they believe the languishing early voting will be replaced by dynamic Election Day turnout. In Lake County, the Gary school referendum will likely bring heavy turnout, which will help Gregg. He's also paid visits to lead-contaminated East Chicago, whereas the Pence/Holcomb administration has been missing in action. In Hammond, Mayor Thomas McDermott told HPI this morning, "We are working hard to



John and Lisa Gregg talk on the Gregg/Hale tour bus between Shelbyville and Greensburg last week; Eric Holcomb at a campaign rally in Zionsville last week. (HPI Photos by Brian A. Howey)

make sure we do." Gregg will need heavy turnout along the lakeshore to win. Lake County is seeing heavy early turnout south of U.S. 30, and some of that are labor guys who are going to vote for Trump, but could be inclined to vote for Gregg. Remember, Indiana is a ticket-spitting state. I asked Gregg last week about the notion of yards bearing Trump and Gregg signs, similar to 2008 when yards in Carmel sported Obama and green My Man Mitch signs. Gregg simply smiled serenely.

One thing to keep in mind on Tuesday, which is Lake County is an hour behind the rest of the state. So watch for the potential of Lake either reaffirming a Gregg victory, or potentially putting him over the top.

The HPI Horse Race rates the Indiana governor's race a pure "Tossup."

Statewides: Edge to Hill, Ritz

In the statewides, our prediction is that Republican Curtis Hill wins the attorney general race, while Democratic Supt. Glenda Ritz prevails in her race against Jennifer McCormick. We believe that Ritz's statewide network of educators positions her for victory, though if Trump were to win north of 15% and Holcomb pulls ahead of Gregg by more than 3%, that could be enough to pull McCormick with them. HPI Horse Race: Likely Hill, Leans Ritz.

Indiana House and Senate

HPI is forecasting tossup races in HD4 where House Transportation Chairman Ed Soliday is trying to fend off Democrat Pamela Fish, in HD19 where Democrat Shelli VanDenburgh is attempting to return to the seat she lost to State Rep. Julie Olthoff, and HD15 where State Rep. Hal Slager is attempting to fend off a rematch with Democrat Tom O'Donnell. Soliday is facing his challenge in a district in the Valparaiso area that is trending Democratic. Slager is facing an intense ground game that could be impacted by the race involving Democratic Commissioner Gerry

Scheub.

In "leans," races, State Rep. Alan Morrison holds a slight advantage over Democrat Tim Skinner, and in the open seats, Republican Jim Pressel has a narrow advantage over Karen Biernacki in HD20 and in HD26, Republican Sally Siegrist has an edge over Democrat Victoria Woeste, who will need a large turnout from Purdue students if she is to prevail.

In Indiana Senate races, we give Aaron Freeman an edge over Sarah Wiley in SD32, while John Ruckelshaus has an edge over Democrat Pam Hickman, and in SD36, Republican Jack Sandlin has an edge over Democrat Sean Gorman.

9th CD: A bad weekend for Trey

The WTHR/HPI Poll had Republican Trey Hollingsworth leading Democrat Shelli Yoder 44-42%. But since our poll, Hollingsworth has endured in an array of bad headlines about his filing residency claims in seven states. Yoder has accused him of perpetrating a "felony" crime in Missouri. The story has received coverage in the IndyStar, Bloomington Herald-Times and the News & Tribune of New Albany and Jeffersonville. While this is a "tossup" race, we give Yoder a slight edge due to the late bad headlines. Hollingsworth can overcome them if Trump wins in Indiana by 15% or more and pulls in down-ballot races with him.

Trump coattails

Gov. Mike Pence spent a week preaching the notion of Republicans "coming home," from Jeffersonville eight days ago to Utah, North Carolina and Minnesota. It appears they are heeding that call. Trump will easily carry Indiana.

If he surges much over the 11% lead in the WTHR/HPI Poll, he could pull in Holcomb, Trey Hollingsworth in the 9th CD, and the statewide attorney general nominee Curtis Hill and superintendent nominee Jennifer McCormick.

Did the Comey bombshell change the dynamic nationally? FiveThirtyEight's Nate Silver posted this morning, "When FBI Director James Comey told Congress on Oct. 28 that he was reviewing additional emails pertinent to the case of Hillary Clinton's email server, Clinton had an 81% chance of winning the election according to our polls-only forecast. Today, her chances are 65% according to the same forecast. The change corresponds with Clinton's drop in the national popular-vote from a 5.7% lead in our estimate on Oct. 28 to a 2.9% lead now, so a swing of about 3 points against her."

Silver notes that during this period, Trump had been "comparatively disciplined on the campaign trail"

which accounts for him gaining 2% nationally while pulling a number of states into the tossup zone. Silver observes, "One advantage of having a model like ours, that's pretty quick to detect changes in the polls, is that we can potentially make better inferences about the cause of polling shifts. And while it isn't proof of anything, the pattern is at least consistent with a 'shock' caused by a burst of negative news for a candidate, as opposed to a more gradual decline."

Silver notes that because of that shock, Clinton still leads, still has a 67.5% chance of winning, but "is not in a terribly safe position. The electoral map is actually less solid for Clinton than it was for Obama four years ago."

In final national polls, Hillary Clinton holds a 3-point lead over Donald Trump in the closing days of the presidential race, a new POLITICO/Morning Consult poll, a 4-point lead over Trump in the final national NBC News/



9th CD Shelli Yoder campaigns over the weekend in Franklin. (HPI Photo by Thomas Curry)

Wall Street Journal poll, a 48-43% in the final ABC/Washington Post Poll, and a 45-41% lead in the final CBS News tracker.

In final swing state polls, Trump is up 5% in a Fox 2 Detroit/Mitchell Poll of Michigan, though filmmaker Michael Moore warned of a Brexit scenario on MSNBC last week, noting that Clinton had a solid lead over Sanders in the primary, then lost. A Columbus Dispatch Poll has Clinton leading 48-47% in Ohio, a Des Moines Register Poll has Trump up 7% in Iowa, a UNH Granite State Poll has Clinton leading New Hampshire 49-38%, and an Albuquerque Journal Poll has Clinton leading 45-41%. HPI Horse Race Status: Leans Clinton, who will end up in the 290 Electoral College vote range. ❖

A final take on 2016 from Importantville

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

ATLANTA - We Hoosiers here in our bicentennial year have lived at the center of the political universe. So many fates and futures passed through the crossroads of America that Donald Trump even called us "Importantville" on the eve of our May 3 primary.

It revealed the double edged blade to Trump in what has essentially become a "post-truth election." He clasped our better angels, saying, "Now Indiana is becoming very important .. you folks belong where you belong; it's called Importantville right? I love it." The following morning, he was accusing Sen. Ted Cruz's father of complicity in the assassination of President Kennedy.

Gov. Mike Pence endorsed, campaigned and even snapped my photo with Sen. Ted Cruz at the Republican Spring Dinner. It earned him a Twitter swipe from Trump. By late summer, Pence had shunned Indiana media.

Trump would go on to clinch the Republican presidential nomination in Indiana after he had been exhorted to victory by our sports pantheon of Bobby Knight, Gene Keady and Lou Holtz. He would find his vice president, Mike Pence, here, though it appears that our governor, fearing a reelection defeat to John Gregg, literally flew out to New Jersey in mid-July to box the nominee into that decision.

This past year we have witnessed the lieutenant governor shuffle, with Pence dispatching Sue Ellspermann to Ivy Tech and

fetching Eric Holcomb out of the U.S. Senate race. The deck was cut and tapped again when Pence ascended to the national ticket. Attending Pence's veepstakes audition at a Westfield sports complex, I was denied entry. Asked what the problem was, the Trump people told me I was "banned" from the event. In 30 years of reporting, I had never been blacklisted by a campaign.

A few calls to Rex Early and the governor's peeps, and I got in, where I was subsequently shepherded into a pen of media jackals. Trump would later pronounce the press corps liars and scum as his supporters turned to gawk. In some states, they would jeer reporters and photographers and throw stuff. Hoosier folk tended to smile and wave. I never sensed fear or offensive derision from my Hoosier brothers and sisters.

On top of all that, former governor and senator Evan Bayh reappeared out of thin air with his \$10 million war chest, nudging Baron Hill aside to take on the Marine, Republican Todd Young in a Senate race that could decide which party controls that chamber.

I watched Hillary Clinton speak to 300 folks in a sweaty Indianapolis park gym two days before the primary, then witnessed in epic fashion 10,000 folks fill a good part of Monument Circle in the heart of the state the following evening to rally on Bernie Sanders. It was a fitting scene in our bicentennial, as Sanders and Trump fed off the same suspicious energy of rigged systems and economies, each winning the Indiana primary with 53 percent of the vote.

With a Nikon dangling from my neck, I snapped photos of Sanders fueling his followers under the corporate logo of Anthem across the circle. A few days before, peering out of my office window, I saw flashing squad car lights before rushing over to Shapiro's Deli. Donald Trump had arrived to order a rueben. A Secret



Service agent ordered me to get down from the chair I was standing on to shoot more photos.

I witnessed the twisting of 44 Republicans arms in a Cleveland hotel lobby, a process that brought Holcomb the gubernatorial nomination with a mere 12 votes. Some \$6 million of Pence reelect money was supposed to fuel Holcomb's nascent bid, but only \$1.2 million made it. If Holcomb doesn't overcome Gregg, the lack of early funds may be the reason.

There were rising stars, like Democratic lieutenant governor nominee Christina Hale, who told me in Greendale she never imaged her imaged emblazoned on the side of a tour bus. But there she was. Rep. Marlin Stutzman faded in his Senate bid, to be replaced by an Afghanistan veteran named Jim Banks.

There was a transplanted Tennessee millionaire named Trey Hollingsworth taking on a former Miss Indiana named Shelli Yoder in the 9th Congressional District. Her family had owned a LaGrange Shell station. Up north, we watched a former reporter named Jackie Walorski attempt fend off a former South Bend cop she covered on her beat named Lynn Coleman.

By the penultimate week, Trump was surging, Bayh was fading, Rex Early was spinning Weiner jokes while Gregg and Holcomb ended up in a gubernatorial to-



sup donnybrook.

These were the players and events that brought us this peculiar year, one like we've never seen before and probably never will again. As a steward of the process we call democracy from my perch in the Fourth Estate, I have great angst and trepidation. Our institutions ranging from Congress, to the political parties, to the press and, in the last few weeks, even the FBI, are all distrusted and under duress. There are calls for revolution in the streets.

In our state, after the stunning assassination of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr, we stayed calm. A candidate that year, U.S. Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, a hero to Gov. Pence and John Gregg and Evan Bayh, told an angry crowd in Indianapolis that night, "We can move in that direction as a country, in greater polarization -- black people amongst blacks, and white amongst whites, filled with hatred toward one another. Or we can make an effort, as Martin Luther King did, to understand, and to comprehend, and replace that violence, that stain of bloodshed that has spread across our land, with an effort to understand, compassion, and love."

That's the thought I leave with you on the eve of our great bicentennial election. Go vote. While some of you will be disappointed with the results, think of this great state and nation we have and ponder what we can do to preserve it. ❖

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