

The Hoosier civility sanctuary

As Holcomb and Bosma appeal for dignity, Daniels lays out what's at stake

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – In the era of brash intolerance, when a presidential candidate says he could shoot someone on Fifth Avenue and not lose a vote, could Indiana be poised as an island of civility?

Our history has sunk and risen on both sides of the political mayhem equation. When President Andrew Johnson's "Swing Around the Circle" tour came to Indianapolis on Sept. 10, 1866, to push his mid-term election Reconstruction policies, it came after he compared himself to Jesus Christ, accused the Republicans as his betrayers; and defended himself against unmade accusations of tyranny. Britannica noted the Indianapolis "crowd was so hostile and loud that Johnson was unable to speak at all; even after he retreated, violence and gunfire broke out in the streets between Johnson supporters and opponents, resulting in one man's death."



Of course there was U.S. Sen. Robert F. Kennedy's April 4, 1968, extemporaneous speech in Indianapolis where he informed a campaign crowd of the assassination

Continued on page 3

Fire & fury in Indiana

By **MARK SOUDER**

FORT WAYNE – Every Notre Dame fan fully understands that a book can dramatically influence the result of a contest. And it pretty much is the same way that Ian Book's pass did: You throw it out there and even if it's not completely accurate, if those grabbing it use sharp elbows and muscle, it can be useful in determining the outcome.

Whether the recent book, "Fire and Fury" by Michael Wolff, is an early catch in a very high-scoring game, or a critical one at a pivotal time, cannot be determined at this point in the 2018 political cycle. The president and the administration have done everything possible to make sure it exceeds projected sales



"There's no one fighting it in the halls, there's no one fighting it here, there's really no big strong opposition to it. It just shows you what can happen on good policy legislation if everyone works together."

- Sen. Ron Alting on SB1 Sunday alcohol sales advancing 9-0



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with everything from attempted legal suppression to Stephen Miller's subtle criticisms ("grotesque work of fiction" and "garbage author of a garbage book").

Given the fact that the author admits to inconsistencies and shaky accuracy himself, the president's immediate tirade against Steve Bannon when his quotes were leaked in advance, is a tad confusing. Presidents don't generally attack fiction books as if they were fact, though we all understand that we have a rather unconventional president. After all this kerfuffle passes (the word seems appropriate here), several of the things still standing may impact Hoosier politicians: The separation of Trump and Bannon and pro and con impacts on Vice President Mike Pence.

The condescending line, "Pence is like the husband in Ozzie and Harriet, a nonevent," which is supposed to sum up White House insiders' views of Pence, is rather telling. If it isn't clear by now, after decades in the business world and saturation coverage of his White House experience, that no one "controls" Donald Trump, but rather, people who praise him or fail to criticize him can actually guide the specifics of policies or even alter the direction over time. Vice President Pence has been a perfect fit.

In Howey Politics last February, I noted about Gov. Pence: "As an executive – whether you agree with him or not – he took years of advocating more purist conservative ideas and then applied his ideas to divisive issues including education and health care."

Hmmmm. HHS has Seema Verma, who helped re-make Medicaid in Indiana, running two of the largest programs in the nation (Medicare and Medicaid). Hoosier Alex Azar is the nominee to head the HHS. At Education, Betsy DeVos was long a school

choice advocate. Indiana has the largest school choice program in the nation. The most stressed foreign policy position of the vice president was the constant defense of Israel.

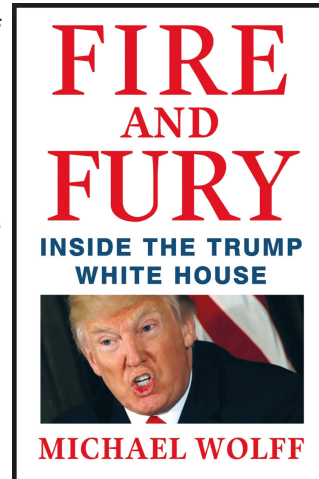
On social policy, his greatest interest was not related to homosexuality but abortion.

It is significant to note that, while Ozzie and Harriet TV series took place largely at the Nelsons' home, and thus in Harriet's domain, it was Ozzie the famous bandleader who negotiated and guided the details of the show. While I doubt that is what Wolff meant to convey, but at least in areas of previous focus by Pence and ones in which Trump did not make dominant campaign themes, Pence is – ironically – like the real Ozzie.

The Republican primary for the United States Senate and fall face-off with incumbent Sen. Joe Donnelly are clearly going to have their own sets of weekly twists and turns. Because I believe that what will matter most are the image positioning of the candidates, solidified by ending ad blitz in the primary because people just aren't paying attention yet (if ever), the Luke Messer problem of his Washington residency and his wife's part-time \$240,000 long-distance city attorney arrangement with Fishers are likely the most damaging and defining image. If he fights it off in a primary, then it will likely not serve Donnelly as well in the general election.

Todd Rokita has not built much upon his fast start. Mike Braun spent a lot of money to get to the point of when you ask someone who is running for Senate, they may say, "Oh yeah, I saw his ads." That, however, is different than converting it into votes and his competition was not exactly inspired. Nevertheless, from late November to the start of the new year, Braun had the most impact.

There is no disagreement that Luke Messer is the favored estab-



lishment choice. Rokita's only solution is to go more populist and pursue a more Trumpian approach. During the holiday lull, Congressman Messer likely pressed his advantage so presumably will have gained somewhat of a financial edge. He has rolled out endorsements, and likely will continue to do so, which always gain desired local media attention. Primary voters in Indiana and elsewhere had not been looking favorably on endorsements by elected leaders, often lumping anyone they actually elected to do the jobs as having almost immediately become part the "establishment" (which appears to be definitional). There appears to be some comeback by the Republican establishment, but it is not clear that any "recovery" will translate as the politics heat up and more voters engage.

This weekend's Congress of Counties straw poll should be a Messer convention. If he scores 80% of the Republican vote, it will be impressive, but 70% would show power among the local political establishments. Anything under would suggest that the "establishment" is more divided than thought.

Rokita will need to counter this with the aggressiveness for which he is known, and liked and disliked



U.S. Reps. Todd Rokita (top) and Luke Messer at their campaign kickoffs.
(HPI Photos by Brian A. Howe)

because of it. If he does not, Messer will gain significant momentum going into filing. Still, at the end of the day, Messer will need to attack Rokita to counter what is the logical Rokita major thrust that could be politically fatal. But Rokita has his own vulnerabilities, as does Donnelly. The campaign is just beginning. We obviously don't know the unknown.

The reason "Fire and Fury" is so significant to our Senate race is this: If Bannon has truly imploded, and Trump has joined the establishment, suddenly Rokita and Braun are deprived of the two most identified populist leaders in the nation. Furthermore, Braun would most clearly take votes from the more Trumpian (compared to Messer) candidate Rokita as opposed to offering a "third way." In other words, if Messer starts to pull ahead of Rokita, Braun becomes mostly a vote drain on Rokita.

It is not clear to me that the Bannon implosion has impacted the views of the Trump core constituency at all. But if Trump is perceived to have moderated his positions and become Sen. McConnell's pal, it is not clear that Congressman Rokita or others who aligned themselves with Trump can gin up enough of a crusade without him to defeat the more establishment candidates.

It is likely that we will see many more "revelations," as well as soft money campaigns. There will be many twists and turns. But all that matters, in electoral terms, is who is on top on election night. ❖

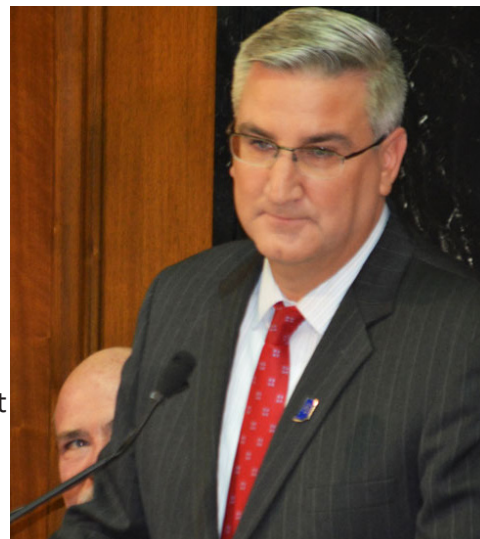
Souder is a former Indiana Republican congressman

Civility, from page 1

of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., quoting the ancient playwright Aeschylus: "Even in our sleep, pain which cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart until, in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom through the awful grace of God." Dozens of other cities erupted in violence, but Indianapolis remained calm, though saddened.

The age of Donald Trump, even here in Mike Pence's Indiana, is prompting calls for renewed civility. In his State of the State address, Gov. Eric Holcomb's penultimate paragraph explained, "Going forward, I'm going to view civility as the very foundation that all five pillars I just described rise up from. I'm convinced that our ultimate goals – this ambitious to-do list – will remain elusive unless we stay open to different points of views, treat each other with respect and focus not on what divides us, but on what we have in common."

During his Organization Day speech, House Speaker Brian Bosma noted that political attacks were posted on



his mother's funeral remembrance page. "That's exactly how low we've gotten," he said. "I refuse to participate in the long spiral to uncivil conduct in political life. Some of you here in the building encourage incivility, encourage misrepresentation, you participate in the vilification of others. You're insensitive to those who are hurting and those

who are misunderstood. And I would only encourage you to stop."

Last October, Purdue President Daniels gave the Ian Rolland Lecture in Fort Wayne, honoring the legendary businessman, community leader and philanthropist. As he did at his February 2011 CPAC "Red Menace" speech, the former Indiana governor sounded prudent alarms, warnings and aspirations.

"Democracy, as we've known it, government by the people – of, by, and for the people someone said – is not the natural state of affairs in world history. In fact, the United States and now a few other modern nations are anomalies," Daniels reminded his audience, and now all of us. "We Americans have only been accustomed to freedom and free institutions. The founders were painfully aware of this. Even as they took these risks they were dubious that this experiment could last for long. John Adams said maybe two generations."

Daniels said their fears were of a republic that "would spend ourselves broke," adding, "Their biggest fear, expressed over and over, was (what) the underpinnings they thought were essential, this experiment of freedom, morality, religion would face."

Connecticut's Oliver Ellsworth warned that if Americans become "ignorant, idle and vicious," then we would be "easy business to reduce us to obey tyrants." New York Magazine's Andrew Sullivan observes that the emerging "tribalism" is in reality the "default human experience," saying it is the natural way of things for people to clump together, like with like and to fear and even come to despise the other, trust only in the tribe. People may be nominally citizens of the same place, but their deepest loyalty is to something else.

"How did we get here?" Daniels asked. "I think there were some natural causes, some society changes that have simply led to Americans being more divided, more suspicious, even hostile to each other. There is the phenomenon called the 'Big Sort' that includes "assortive mating" for the fact that "people marry people like themselves" and now "geographic clustering." Some of the sorting is economic and racial.

He points that in 2012 only 5% of America's 3,000 counties had outcomes in the presidential vote within 5% plus or minus. Only 10% were within 10% or more. "In the vast majority of American geographies, it was not close, people tended to lean very heavily in one direction or another," the Purdue president explained.

"Even if it's a good idea for the law somehow to step in against gerrymandering, it may be a little late. In the geographic concentrations I just talked about, you could draw the fairest, squarest, most geographically compact lines around the so-called common communities of in-

terest, just the way the law contemplates, and you would still get a one-sided outcome, because our population has concentrated in this novel way," Daniels said. "You would almost need reverse gerrymandering. You'd almost have to draw salamander-like districts in order to throw, let's say, Democrats and Republicans together in some even mix."

Slathered on top in 280 tweeted characters is social media, or what Daniels calls "anti-social media" that "encourages the worst tendencies. People will say things



that they would never say face to face with someone else and sometimes wind up these cycles of vituperation, one to the next, back and forth, back and forth. Lincoln might have been worried about the worst angels of our nature if he had seen today's social media."

This manifests in what Daniels calls "the most ignorant fallacy extant today" under the label of "pre-sentism."

"This is the notion that we in this moment, this historical moment, are uniquely wise, uniquely knowledgeable, uniquely moral and those who went before were deeply flawed individuals, whose memories are not worth preserving, maybe should be denigrated, defaced, torn down.

"The undisguised disdain of one tribe or the one that more generally prevails in let's say in Fort Wayne, Indiana, was to me the decisive factor in the shocking events of the 2016 election. I think the absolutely decisive factor was the sense among many, many people that they were being read out of the American family, that they were not worthy. That views and values that seemed eternal, until very recently, were now not only changing, but those who held them were some subspecies that could be looked down on. I told a number of friends, who were deeply disappointed by the outcome of the last election, I said, "You know, if you look down your nose at people long enough, one day they will punch you in it."

"We awaken to find ourselves in this place where mere disagreements have been elevated to fatal character flaws," Daniels continued. "Where really awful words, hate,

racism, bigotry, are not to be reserved for the worst tendencies among us, but are thrown around so loosely and so often, I think some of them are being stretched and cheapened by overuse."

Daniels believes

Hoosiers can calm the national affliction.

"Is there a chance that Indiana could be different?" he asks. "That we could strike a different direction, a different tone, perhaps with different results that at least separate us from what I believe is a dangerous new direction in the country? And who knows, maybe induce others at some point to think about heading that direction themselves. I think in Indiana, it's fair to say, with very few exceptions, we tend to assume the best about each other and keep our arguments from becoming personal and bitter and tribal."

This is a state that in 2008 gave its 11 Electoral College votes to Barack Obama, and 58% of the vote to Daniels. Many yards displayed signs of both campaigns. This is a state where 77% in a recent 50-state survey found their state government to be competent, second highest in America.

This comes in a state where the last four winning gubernatorial campaigns by Daniels, Mike Pence and Holcomb resisted the urge to go negative. Pence's 2012 campaign might have lost to John Gregg had that trend continued.



"That I had run three campaigns, a primary, and two general elections and never ran a television ad that attacked anyone's character, motives, or background. It was the biggest applause line of any speech in which I thought to mention it," Daniels said. "I look around today, we have – I think it is fair to say, others have said, a governor who is open and friendly and constructive, and hoping to work with people who are willing to work with him. I think we have two senators, one of each party, who meet that description and are frequently mentioned as somewhat rarities in that body now, because they might not be fully predictable, not totally dug in on one side or another. And I

think our General Assembly seems to conduct itself with a degree of decorum and civility. And you know, this has positive effects that ought not be overlooked or underestimated.

"So maybe our contribution here in Indiana, our way of 'resisting' is to avoid the vilification, tribalism, that for now at least seems to be strengthening in the country is to keep on keeping on in the way we have. Maybe we can be a sanctuary for civility in a nation that seems to have very few," Daniels said. "We don't yet need another Lincoln. Although it's quite possible that if things don't change, we will have to pray for one."❖

Gov. Holcomb puts forth an array of ideas

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – It may have been news to some, but when Gov. Eric Holcomb addressed Hoosiers Tuesday night, his speech was filled with consequential policy, goals and challenges.

Previous governors have all had defining "big ideas," whether it was Doc Bowen's tax reforms, Gov. Robert Orr's A+ education reforms, Gov. Frank O'Bannon's elusive push for full day kindergarten, or Gov. Mitch Daniels' Major Moves. Holcomb faces an array of complex

problems, some firmly rooted in social dilemmas, others in calcified state bureaucracies and underperforming education training grounds. Thus, his Five Pillars fan out like an invasion front. This governor is popular these days, but failure to find traction in the next two years could have political consequences.

Administration insiders tell Howey Politics Indiana that critics of Gov. Mike Pence cited his distractions on divisive social issues, something Holcomb has eschewed. With Gov. Mitch Daniels, the IndyStar once suggested he was going "too fast" and trying to do "too much." Holcomb was a key policy cog in the latter, and a political ally of the former before taking the lieutenant governor post in March 2016 as Pence was preparing for the national stage. Holcomb set the foundation of his ad-

ministration last year with the two-decade Next Level road and infrastructure investment, coming on the politically risky fuel tax increase, though the fallout hasn't occurred and likely won't as more and more road improvements unfold.

Holcomb vowed to expand opioid treatment locations from 18 to 27 so that an estimated 95% of the population could be within an hour's drive of a facility. This comes as a handful of counties and a recalcitrant attorney general have questioned needle exchanges and methadone treatment of addicts. With Holcomb establishing a five-year goal and with no state finding proven solutions, he and his administration are embarking on a challenging and perilous path.

He stressed an emerging triumvirate of state agencies preparing to man the ramparts on the opioid crisis and the related infant mortality problem that claimed 623 lives in 2017, citing Health Commissioner Kristina Box, FSSA Director Jennifer Walthall and new Department of Child Services Director Terry Stigdon as forming a united front. This comes as he's sent senior staff on to the front lines of addiction and warrant sweeps.

At one point, Holcomb noted, "We can and we will save more of them. Our infant mortality rate is a direct lens into the overall health of Hoosiers, so leading the charge will be our Health Commissioner Dr. Kris Box, who has devoted her career to mothers and babies, and FSSA secretary Jennifer Walthall, who to this day still works a shift a week at Riley Hospital for Children in addition to her day job. We'll take an important step this year by working with you to implement a "Levels of Care" program to assure that the highest-risk babies are delivered at hospitals with the facilities to meet the needs of the mother and the baby. But we must do more. We've engaged outside experts to conduct a complete assessment of the safety and welfare of our children. We'll be transparent and provide you with progress reports."

On the jobs front, with 85,000 unfilled across the state because many lack the skills and can't pass a drug test, Holcomb staked ambitious markers. He will seek to assist at least 25,000 of the estimated 700,00 Hoosier adults lacking a college degree but have some higher education. He wants to help at least 30,000 of the 475,000 lacking a high school diploma to gain job training. Efforts are underway in this session to review and consolidate 30 job training programs spread across nine agencies. By 2020, he hopes to assist 1,000 prison inmates to earn certificates and credentials so they can secure high-demand jobs.

"Our greatest challenge is that too many Hoosiers lack the education and skills for the jobs that are here

today and being created tomorrow," Holcomb said. "Nearly all require a post-secondary education. This is the issue of the decade and we don't have a day to waste. Add in the IEDC's 30,000 new jobs, with even more on the way this year – not to mention the more than one million jobs to be filled over the next 10 years as Baby Boomers retire (and) this is the defining issue of the decade, and we don't have a day to waste. That's why, of my Five Pillars, developing a skilled and ready workforce will demand the greatest focus and collaboration. One way we've already begun to tackle this challenge is with our Next Level jobs program. In the



five months since we rolled it out, over 275,000 people have visited NextLevelJobs.org, over 13,000 of them have filled out the grant application, and over 300 businesses have expressed their interest."

Holcomb said that Section V of the I-69 project between Bloomington and Martinsville would be open by August, said the state would resurface 10,000 lane miles of road pavement and repair or replace 1,300 bridges that will be funded under the Next Level road and infrastructure legislation he pushed and signed in 2017. He wants to sign legislation that will clarify Indiana's tax law for "Software as a Service" to support the burgeoning tech sector.

Other education priorities include expanding computer science programs to all high schools (currently just 42% offer that curriculum) and STEM subjects. "To do that, we must ensure that every Hoosier student receives an education infused with STEM subjects, critical thinking skills and the intellectual curiosity that prepares them for lifelong learning, so when they graduate from high school, they have a ticket to their future success, be it going on to college or entering the workforce to realize a fulfilling career," Holcomb said.

"Over the next year, we'll use the newly created

Education to Career Pathways Cabinet – led by Secretary Blair Milo, Supt. Jennifer McCormick, Commissioner Teresa Lubbers, DWD Commissioner Fred Payne and OMB Director Micah Vincent – to set the framework to guide regions and communities,” he said.

On the infrastructure front, Holcomb said, “It’s also high time for Indiana to address our aging water infrastructure. State oversight is spread across several agencies, so we’re going to form the executive branch governance structure needed to manage our operations and long-term strategy. We’re eager to work with lawmakers to get the ball rolling. In the meantime, I’ll direct the Indiana Finance Authority to designate half a million dollars each of the next two years for development of asset management plans for high-need water and wastewater utilities.”

Holcomb did not mention some of the most contentious issues facing the General Assembly, which will be in session until March 14. Those would include Sunday alcohol sales, a greater availability of cold beer, and



Senate Minority Leader Tim Lanane and House Leader Terry Goodin await Gov. Holcomb at his State of the State address (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)

medicinal marijuana, as well as redistricting reform and hate crime legislation pushed by the Democratic minority.

Holcomb told HPI that he wants to “modernize” Indiana’s archaic alcohol laws. But administration sources tell HPI that endorsing the widespread sale of cold beer, for instance, is a multi-year scenario that if not done carefully, can disrupt some of the economic underpinnings of the current system, particularly with the different licensing

fees that liquor stores shoulder. Indiana already has some very progressive aspects of alcohol distribution (you can buy liquor in many drug and grocery stores, as opposed to Ohio where it is only available in state stores).

Indiana Democrats said Gov. Holcomb didn’t go far enough in addressing DCS troubles and evaded several issues they want to pursue, including redistricting reform and hate crime legislation.



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Senate Democratic Leader Tim Lanane said, "When the governor lays out his vision in the State of the State Address you expect to hear about ideas to improve the lives of everyday Hoosiers. I did not hear any mention of many of the themes that resonate with people across this state. I heard no mention of legislative redistricting reforms, giving people a larger and more equitable voice in the election process. I didn't hear any urgency from the governor about protecting children in DCS. There was no mention of Indiana finally passing meaningful hate crime legislation, a bill supported by 64% of Hoosiers. No financial commitment for desperately needed resources to treat the opioid crisis plaguing rural, urban and suburban communities.

Indiana House Democratic Leader Terry Goodin added, "We seem to have reached the point where we are patting ourselves on the back for doing the obvious, just as we're applauding the idea that our public schools are going to get the funding they need to make up shortfalls caused by years of budgeting that continually shorted

those schools. Indiana House Democrats support doing more to train our workers, stop drug addiction, and protect our public schools. But we also support protecting at-risk children and the voting rights of Hoosiers. These should be top priorities as well."

Speaker of the House Brian Bosma countered, "I think the governor did it just the way he should and that was to acknowledge it and indicate that he's committed to rectifying the situation, to finding out all the problems and making the Hoosier role better for those in the foster care system, especially for children."

Democratic Party Chairman John Zody added, "After tonight, I can't blame Hoosiers for feeling left behind. Leaders rise to meet challenges. Gov. Holcomb stepped back. He offered few details and a vision that borrows all the wrong ideas that left Hoosier families behind in the first place. Vulnerable children at DCS will have to wait. Working families swamped by the rising cost of living and stagnant wages will have to wait. Hoosiers crushed by the wave of opioid addiction will have to wait." ❖

Holcomb featured in Rauner TV ad

By RICH JAMES

MERRILLVILLE – I had to chuckle when I first saw the television ad designed to boost the political stock of Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner. The ad does so by attacking Illinois House Speaker Mike Madigan for allegedly raising taxes and blocking Rauner's agenda.



This could be a tough year for Rauner who likely will face a primary challenge, which is the last thing a sitting governor needs. He also will have a stiff challenge from a Democrat in the fall. That likely will be from J.B. Pritzker, who like Rauner is a billionaire businessman. Pritzker started his own TV ads last year.

Featured in the ad for Rauner are the Republican governors of three of the states bordering Illinois – Wisconsin, Missouri and Indiana. The three governors, including Indiana's Eric Holcomb, all "thank" Madigan for driving people out of Illinois into Indiana, Wisconsin and Missouri. They contend that Madigan's actions are leading to the creation of lots of jobs in the states surrounding Illinois.

They contend that the atmosphere for job growth in Illinois is poor because high taxes are forcing companies to look elsewhere. It's clear that some compa-

nies are moving to Indiana because of the taxes in Illinois. The same can be said for homeowners fleeing Illinois because of taxes. Many are moving to Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties in Indiana.

The part of the commercial that brought a chuckle came from something that Holcomb said: "We're growing union jobs (in Indiana) faster than Illinois." The irony of that comment is that Indiana became a right-to-work state under the direction of a Republican governor and Legislature a few years back. And the law creating a right-to-work state is designed to discourage the growth of union jobs.

What's that old saying about truth in advertising?

❖

Rich James has been writing about state and local government and politics for more than 30 years. He is retired from the Post-Tribune.

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GOP straw poll, FEC to define Senate race

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – The Republican U.S. Senate race will take on further definition this coming week with the first joint appearance of the candidates and a straw poll this Saturday at the Indiana Republican Congress of Counties.



The joint appearance will include U.S. Reps. Todd Rokita and Luke Messer, former legislator Mike Braun, Kokomo attorney Mark Hurt, New Albany educator

Andrew Takami and former Libertarian nominee Andrew Horning and will take place at noon Saturday at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Indianapolis, followed by the straw poll. There has yet to be a scientific head-to-head poll taken by an independent pollster. A couple of campaign-driven polls released to HPI last summer revealed a potentially tight race between Rokita and Messer. Since then Braun has conducted two statewide TV ad campaigns, with another running this week, aimed to ginning up his name ID.

In the next several days, the year end FEC reports will be released. None of the campaigns has released preliminary numbers.

This past week, Messer put to rest any notion that he might drop out of the race to keep on a potential career path toward House speaker after Paul Ryan was reportedly pondering retirement in 2018. Messer told the Washington Examiner's Philip Wegmann, "I am not running for speaker," he tells me definitively over a hearty breakfast at a local diner. "I'm running for U.S. Senate."

Braun sought to stake out a delineation between him and the congressmen, calling on Rokita and Messer to denounce earmarks. "Republicans ran on a promise to drain the swamp, and now they want to bring back the corrupt tool that led to multiple indictments and helped destroy voters' faith in Republicans as good stewards of tax dollars?" said Braun. "My position on earmarks is this – I oppose them, I won't take them, and I'll do everything I can do eliminate them, even if that means offering amendments in the Senate to strike projects inserted by members of my own party. Congressmen Todd Rokita and Luke Messer both serve in the House. They should join with me in denouncing and opposing any plan to bring earmarks back."

Messer picked up the endorsements of State Reps. Marin Carbaugh and Dave Heine, according to the Fort Wayne Journal Gazette. Heine told The Journal Gazette

he had asked veteran state legislators about Messer, a Greensburg resident who was a member of the Indiana House in the 2000s. "Everybody said, 'That guy was a leader,'" Heine said. He added: "Luke Messer, the way that he gets along with other people, Democrats included, I think that's what's best for the state of Indiana."

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's Senate Leadership Fund is doubling down on its \$500,000-plus digital ad campaign, launching ads in Florida, Indiana, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio and West Virginia attacking Senate Democrats on tax reform (Politico Playbook). This \$50,000 buy is targeting influencers and voters seeking out information on tax reform.

Donnelly told a pumped-up crowd of about 200 Democratic candidates and volunteers prepping for the May primary last weekend, "We have to work really, really hard on having the best technology, the best voter turnout programs, all those things, But at the core, none of that matters if we're not focused on the right thing, which is making sure that Hoosier families can have a better life"

(Miley, CNHI). Candidates representing township to statewide contests received training simultaneously.

Finally, a little-known candidate has suspended his campaign for the Democratic nomination for a U.S. Senate seat representing Indiana (Francisco, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). Martin Del Rio wrote Tuesday night on his Facebook page that "due to unforeseen circumstances, it is no longer possible for me to continue my campaign and be placed on the primary ballot." The Highland resident had said he intended to run against Sen. Joe Donnelly in the May 8 Democratic primary election. He

filed a statement of organization in October with the Federal Election Commission. **Republican Primary Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

Congress

Greg Pence consolidating 6th CD

Columbus businessman Greg Pence is consolidating his frontrunner status in the open 6th CD after State Sen. Mike Crider announced in December that he was pulling out of the race. Crider announced on Facebook in December he was exiting. "After extensive discussions with my campaign team and my family, I have decided to withdraw as a candidate for the United States Congress in Indiana's 6th District," Crider said on Facebook. "Unfortunately, congressional campaigns are very expensive endeavors and due to that we have determined that we do not and likely will not have the ability to spread our message as widely as will be required to achieve victory in May. While disappointed the campaign has come to an end, I am at peace with this decision and know that we all worked hard to put together a winning strategy. The only negative to this whole adventure is that I find myself a bit



jaded as I realize that this scenario is likely playing out in races all across the country. People who would be quality candidates simply cannot participate because they cannot afford to self-finance campaigns and the political establishment locks down the remaining financial support."

Pence, brother of vice president Mike Pence, is expected to self-fund much of his race. Muncie businessman Jonathan Lamb and veteran Stephen Mackenzie remain in the race. **Republican Primary Horse Race Status:** Safe Pence.

General Assembly

SD4: Tallian to seek reelection

State Senator Karen Tallian filed Wednesday for reelection for the Northwest Indiana State Senate seat. Tallian was appointed to the seat in 2005 and elected to a full term in 2006, 2010, and 2014. Senate District 4 includes portions of Porter and LaPorte counties. "I am excited about seeking another term in the Senate," Tallian said. "Northwest Indiana faces a unique set of challenges. With my background and experience, I think I will continue to be a strong advocate for those concerns."

SD7: GOP caucus Jan. 25; McBarnes out

Indiana Republican Party State Chairman Kyle Hupfer officially called a caucus of eligible precinct committee members to fill the vacancy in the office of Senate District 7, the seat most recently held by former State Sen. Brandt Hershman. A news release stated the caucus will be held at 6:30 p.m. ET on Thursday, Jan. 25, at the Best Western Plus Brandywine Inn & Suites, 304 S. Sixth St., Monticello. Individuals interested in running in the caucus should contact the state party secretary at secretary@indiana.gop to ensure they file the proper forms prior to the deadline, which is 72 hours prior to the vote. Frankfort Mayor Chris McBarnes will not be a candidate, telling the Lafayette Journal & Courier that after praying with his wife, he's deciding to stay put. Arvid Olson, director of development with Faith Ministries, sent letters over the weekend to Greater Lafayette Republicans saying he was listening to those who encouraged him to run. Lafayette attorney Stuart Gutwein said he was up for the job, too.

HD23: Manning announces

Miami County Councilman Ethan Manning has announced his candidacy for HD23, which includes parts of Miami, Cass, and Fulton counties. State Rep. Bill Friend announced on Friday he would not seek reelection. Manning, who is also county GOP chairman, said, "I'm excited to begin this campaign and I look forward to talking with people all across the district to make sure I understand their views and challenges so I can best represent them in the General Assembly. I must begin by thanking State Rep. Bill Friend for his service to our community and state. He has been a great mentor and example for me and is a role

model for all who desire to be a public servant. He leaves big shoes to fill." His family farm, Manning Cattle Company, raises commercial beef cattle. He is an associate broker with Carriger Oldfather Realty, where he works with clients on residential, commercial, and agricultural property transactions. Manning received national coverage as one of Indiana's presidential electors in December 2016. He voted for President Trump, but told Politico that he believed Trump was "damaging for the GOP brand. I still have those same reservations. He was not at the top of my

list of candidates to support during the primary. But he was the nominee."



HD33: Winchester Mayor Byrum files

Winchester Mayor Shon Byrum has filed for the open HD33 as a Democrat. Byrum, a former teacher, has spent his first term battling the opioid crisis, pushing for a city-financed treatment center. "The one word that comes to my mind is desperate," Byrum told the IndyStar. "We are desperately in need of help, and so many people are desperate to get their loved ones the help that they need. People are searching for answers. I hear

it every day." The seat is open due to the retirement of Republican Rep. Greg Beumer.



HD44: Norton enters HD44

Indiana is a red state and Hoosiers are known for their conservatism and old-fashioned values, yet Hoosier conservatives continue to be frustrated by crony politicians who campaign on those points and yet fail to deliver time after time, according to candidate Jess L. Norton (Green-castle Banner Graphic). "Excessive spending continues, we hear nothing but requests for increased taxes to cover the roads, and solid conservative legislation continues to be killed before it ever leaves committee discussions," he said. Norton, a Roachdale resident, has declared his candidacy for the District 44 seat in the Indiana House of Representatives in the 2018 Republican primary.

HD43: Loudermilk declares

Norm Loudermilk, a former Terre Haute councilman and police officer and currently one of the city's assistant fire chiefs, plans to make a run for state representative (Terre Haute Tribune-Star). Loudermilk posted his intent on Facebook, saying he will run for the House

District 43 seat, for which incumbent Democratic State Rep. Clyde Kersey has announced he will not seek reelection. Loudermilk said he would have no comment on his candidacy until his official announcement on Thursday.

Wednesday primaru filings

Indiana’s filing for the May primary opened on Wednesday. Here are filings for Congress and legislature:

Congress: 1CD: U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, D; 7CD: Wayne “Gunny” Harmon R, Tony “Big Dog” Van Pelt, R.

Indiana Senate: Democrat State Sens. Karen Tallian SD4; **Republican:** Joe Zakas SD11 , Mike Delph SD29, Jon Ford SD38, Travis Holdman SD19, Dennis Kruse SD14 and Erin Houchin.

Indiana House: Democrat Rep. Chuck Moseley HD10; Rep. Sue Errington HD34, Rep. Melanie Wright HD35; Joe Taylor III HD7; Delano Michael Scaife HD11; Mark W. Back HD19; Lisa Beck HD19; Justin P. Notoras HD25; Harlan Vondersaar HD28; Shon Byrum HD33; Thomas Hedde HD38; Norman E. Loudermilk II HD43; Tonya Pfaff HD43; Steve Schoettmer HD69. **Republican:** Rep. Dale DeVon HD5; Rep. Douglas L. Gutwein HD16; Chuck Goodrich HD29; Douglas L. Miller HD48; Rep. Dan Leonard HD050; Rep. Bob Cherry HD53; Joseph VanWye Sr HD66; Rep. Randy Frye HD67; Charles Johnson HD69; Rep. Ron Bacon HD75; Rep. Dave Heine Republican HD85.

Counties

Clifford enters Hamilton sheriff race

Sheriff Sgt. Bill Clifford has declared for Hamilton County sheriff, saying, “Since I announced my intent to run last February we have been hard at work listening to thoughts and concerns of the people. In doing so, my family has been incredibly humbled by such an outpouring of support from new and old friends.” Clifford emphasized his “Five Pillars” of the campaign: Discourage repeat offenders, expand addiction treatment, grow community relations, operate efficiently and protect the innocent..

Burkhardt seeks Martin County sheriff

A long-time deputy has announced his plans to run for sheriff in Martin County. Andy Burkhardt is seeking the Democrat nomination for the job (Grant, Washington Times Herald).

Local

Goodwin announces for Terre Haute mayor

Businessman Pat Goodwin announced he will run for mayor of Terre Haute in 2019. Goodwin is the owner of Tractor Tools Direct, and he’s a former Terre Haute city engineer. He plans to run as an independent. ❖

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Sunday sales passes Senate panel 9-0

INDIANAPOLIS — A proposal to end Indiana’s unique status as the only state in the country that prohibits all retail alcohol sales on Sundays easily cleared its first hurdle (Carden, NWI Times). On Wednesday, the Senate Public Policy Committee unanimously approved Senate Bill 1, authorizing businesses that sell alcohol for off-premises consumption six days a week to also sell on Sundays between noon and 8 p.m. State Sen. Ron Alting, R-Lafayette, the committee chairman and sponsor of the measure, said most businesses that once advocated against Sunday sales now accept their customers want the convenience of being able to buy carry-out alcohol on Sundays. Indeed, representatives of Hoosier liquor stores, grocery stores, bars and taverns, wine shops and chambers of commerce all urged the panel to advance the legislation to the full Senate. “There’s no one fighting it in the halls, there’s no one fighting it in here (the Senate), there’s really no big, strong opposition to it,” Alting said. “It just shows you what can happen on good policy legislation if everyone works together. I think it’s time.”



Lawmakers back police mental health bill

A bill to help law enforcement deal with mental health problems will head to President Donald Trump’s desk. The proposal is authored by Democratic Senator Joe Donnelly and Republican Senator Todd Young, and was led in the house by U.S. Rep. Susan Brooks (R-IN) (WANE-TV). The Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act passed the Senate Tuesday night. Before then it passed the House in November. The bill makes grants available to initiate peer mentoring pilot programs, direct the Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services to develop resources for mental health providers based on the specific mental health challenges faced by law enforcement, and support law enforcement officers by studying the effectiveness of crisis hotlines and annual mental health checks.

House approves school funding bill

When more than 6,000 extra students showed up in Indiana’s public schools, there wasn’t enough money in local school budgets to handle them (Irish, Statehouse File). Wednesday, the Indiana House Ways and Means Committee addressed that funding shortfall by approving House Bill 1001, which would allow the state to transfer up to \$25 million in additional funds to K-12 schools to meet the tuition needs of all enrolled students in 2018. In 2019, this ceiling would double to \$50 million, in step with public school growth. The bill, authored by Rep. Sally

Siegrist, R-West Lafayette, is the House’s first response to an unexpected 6,315-student increase in public school enrollment.

Chief Justice Rush focuses on opioid crisis

Indiana Chief Justice Loretta Rush told lawmakers Wednesday in her State of the Judiciary address the state’s court system is prepared to meet the challenges it faces – chief among them the ongoing opioid epidemic (Smith, Indiana Public Media). Rush says she asked legislative leaders for input when preparing her speech. And she says the common theme was the court’s response to the drug crisis. “This is a situation where well-reasoned, evidence-based judicial interventions can get people to treatment, give consequences, cut the supply, support families, and save lives,” Rush, pointing to several recent initiatives she says will help the judicial branch tackle that challenge. Those include a complete restructuring of the state’s court system and continued technology upgrades. She says improved tech includes a system that blocks the sale of drug ingredients from certain buyers.

Bosma comments on Rush address

House Speaker Brian Bosma distributed the following news release regarding the State of Judiciary address by Indiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Loretta H. Rush: “To address Indiana’s opioid epidemic, all branches of government must work together to attack the issue. Today, Chief Justice Rush reaffirmed her support for helping those caught in the revolving door of incarceration due to drug addiction and assisting those who are left in its tremendous wake – Hoosier children. We also support her continued efforts to expand court technology, which is critical to improving efficiency and service for all Hoosiers who interact with our judicial system.”

Bill would raise age of consent

Two Hoosier lawmakers are making a push to raise the age of consent in Indiana (McGill, WTTV). State Representative Karlee Macer, (D-Indianapolis) and State Senator Frank Mrvan (D-Hammond) both have introduced bills to raise the age of consent to 18. Indiana law currently allows anyone over the age of 16 to consent to a sexual encounter, though makes it a crime for anyone in a position of power (i.e. parents, guardians, teachers, law enforcement officers) to have sex with someone under the age of 18.

Bullying bill filed

A state lawmaker has filed legislation in direct response to a Call 6 Investigation that found schools misreported how often students are bullied (Kenney, WRTV). Rep. Greg Porter filed House Bill 1356 this week that aims to improve how schools report bullying incidents to the state. “We need to do something about this,” said Porter.



Hoosiers and the 25th Amendment

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – In the 20th Century, Presidents Woodrow Wilson and Dwight David Eisenhower suffered serious strokes and heart attacks that were concealed from the public. President John F. Kennedy's Addison's Disease and the medication he took was concealed by friendly news media.

Historians believe Presidents John Adams, James Monroe, Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln suffered sometimes debilitating depression. Two others, Presidents James Garfield for 10 weeks and William McKinley for eight days, lingered after their initial assassination wounds.

In all these cases, there were no constitutional provisions for succession or a plan to deal with a president impaired and unable to perform duties. That didn't occur until 1967 when Indiana U.S. Sen. Birch Bayh drafted the 25th Amendment in the wake of President John F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963. If a vacancy in the vice presidency occurs, the president nominates a successor, as Presidents Nixon and Ford both did.

What makes this topical is Section 4, which is receiving intense scrutiny after a myriad of reports have surfaced regarding to mental state of President Trump, who was the oldest to be elected at age 70, passing President Reagan who was 69 when he took office. The notion of Section 4 being invoked places Vice President Mike Pence in unprecedented territory. It would be Pence who could trigger Section 4.

At a Fordham University forum on the 25th Amendment in 2010, Prof. Akhil Reed Amar observed, "The Section 4 provision really pivots on the decision of the vice president. If the vice president is not willing to put himself or herself forward, Section 4 really can't be triggered." That conference was moderated by William Baker, Columbia University executive in residence, who asked at the onset, "Don't we have the right to elect incompetent and unable people?"

Seated at the table with Prof. Amar was retired U.S. Sen. Birch Bayh, who reacted to pleas for changing the 25th Amendment, with some calling for a medical

panel to be convened if a sitting president was thought to be mentally disabled, as author Michael Wolff has sourced in his book "Fire and Fury." Wolff portrays President Trump as detached and getting senile, repeating himself, failing to recognize well-known friends, and prone to fits of rage. Wolff claims there are wide concerns throughout the White House about Trump's mental stability. "This is alarming in every way. And then this went on, 'Okay, this is a little 25th Amendment.' So the 25th Amendment is a concept that is alive every day in the White House," Wolff said on Sunday. "This is what happened here, what's going on here. This is I think not an exaggeration and not unreasonable. It's not unreasonable to say this is 25th Amendment kind of stuff," he added, stating staff brought up the topic "all the time."

Bayh pointed to that medical panel quandary. "The difficulty of a panel of docs who don't have a day-to-day relationship with a president, is that most presidents, even if they have a psychosis, can put on a good face when presented with the docs. Suppose you have a panel of docs and they vote 4-3 that the president is competent? The panel of docs has no place in this at all."

Bayh said that determination rests entirely with the vice president and cabinet. "You need to have people who see the president in action day after day after day," said Bayh, the only American since James Madison to author two successful constitutional amendments (Bayh also authored

two unsuccessful amendments). "The cabinet people are in a good position to know how the president is responding."

Specifically, Section 4 states: Whenever the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall immediately assume the powers and duties of the office as Acting President."

It continues: "Thereafter, when the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that no inability exists, he shall resume the powers and duties of his office unless the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive department or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit within four days to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of



U.S. Sen. Birch Bayh and wife Marvella at the White House with President John F. Kennedy, whose assassination in 1963 prompted Bayh to author the 25th

Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office. Thereupon Congress shall decide the issue, assembling within 48 hours for that purpose if not in session. If the Congress, within 21 days after receipt of the latter written declaration, or, if Congress is not in session, within 21 days after Congress is required to assemble, determines by two-thirds vote of both Houses that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall continue to discharge the same as Acting President; otherwise, the President shall resume the powers and duties of his office."

On Sunday, President Trump refuted concerns of his mental health, insisting via Twitter that he is a "stable genius."

Pence, who along with the cabinet has been extremely complimentary to President Trump at two 2017 meetings, told conservative commentator Dana Loesch on Monday, "It really is remarkable to hear some of the commentary that has taken place, particularly in the last week, when clearly a book of fiction made its way into the national debate. I can tell you, I've not read the book. I have no intention of reading it, but excerpts that I've heard reported bear absolutely no resemblance to the president that I spend three, four, five hours a day with every day."

Pence added, "I have to tell you, you know the president and I have become very close. I'm obviously very fond of him, but serving with him every day, spending hours every day in the Oval Office, in one meeting after another – I just wish every American could see what I've seen in the last year. And it would give them absolute confidence that for all that we've done in the last year, we really are just getting started. And before the next seven years is out, we're going to make America great again."

Twice presidential disabilities hidden

Twice in the 20th Century, presidential disabilities were hidden. Prof. Robert Gilbert of the University of Massachusetts said that President Eisenhower suffered a heart attack in 1954, a year after assuming office. "The White House never disclosed it," Gilbert said. "In 1955 he suffered a massive heart attack and it was too serious to conceal. The decision Eisenhower had to make in 1956 was to run for reelection."

Gilbert said that Eisenhower was advised by a panel of three doctors, including two cardiologists, who recommended he not run. Ike's staff doctor, an ardent Republican, advised him to run. Gilbert notes that Eisenhower ran, was reelected, served out his term, leaving office in



Indiana Gov. Mike Pence and Donald Trump formed the 2016 Republican ticket.

1961, and died in 1969, outliving the 1956 Democratic ticket of Adlai Stevenson and Estes Kefauver. "What would have happened if those doctors had gone public?" Gilbert asked.

President Wilson lost his first wife, Ellen Watson, and plunged into debilitating depression. Prof. Rose McDermott of Brown University, noted that Wilson subsequently became "very aggressive, got involved in the Veracruz context in Mexico. His doctor is matching notes saying he can't handle things on his own."

Wilson searched for a wife, found and married Edith Bolling Galt. "She was a very different character, very quickly he married her and all of a sudden, it was like a switch flipped and he was well,"

McDermott said. "What was I doing in Mexico?"

Wilson suffered a mild stroke in September 1919 and then a severe one on Oct. 2, 1919, which left him partially paralyzed. Vice President Thomas R. Marshall, like Pence a former Indiana governor, was prevented by the First Lady from seeing Wilson and his condition.

A U.S. Senate account of the scenario notes: "The First Lady believed that an official communication from Wilson's staff on his condition would allow Marshall to trigger the constitutional mechanism allowing him to become acting president, and made sure no such communication occurred. After Marshall demanded to know Wilson's status so that he could prepare for the possibility of becoming president, they had a reporter from the Baltimore Sun brief Marshall and inform him that Wilson was near death. Marshall later said that 'it was the first great shock of my life,' but without an official communication on Wilson's condition, he didn't believe he could constitutionally assume presidential powers and duties."

The Senate history continues about the ensuing confusion: "At a Sunday church service in mid-December, in what Marshall believed was an attempt by other officials to force him to assume the presidency, a courier brought a message informing him that Wilson had died. Marshall was shocked, and rose to announce the news to the congregation. The ministers held a prayer, the congregation began singing hymns, and many people wept. Marshall and his wife exited the building, and made a call to the White House to determine his next course of action, only to find that he had been the victim of a hoax, and that Wilson was still living."

Prof. McDermott observed, "Wilson was very successful to deceive the people who came into investigate him. They closed the curtains, they made sure there was his paralyzed side in the dark. Doctors can be co-opted

as well. A lot of past presidential leaders and others who have followed them and hidden their disabilities and inabilities and who gets to decide whether or not somebody is sufficiently incapable of reporting their duties so as to be removed from office."

Pence and the cabinet invoking the 25th is "highly unlikely," former Bayh Chief of Staff Jay Berman told Politico, "The amendment's language on what could lead a president to be involuntarily removed from office is spare, saying simply that the vice president and a majority of the Cabinet could take such a step when 'the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office,' I think it's both its strength and its weakness. The answer is not provided in the 25th Amendment ... It just does not provide that certainty or specificity. That might be easier in the context of physical incapacity, but it would be a lot harder in the case of mental incapacity."

Since the 25th Amendment passed in 1967, it has been invoked several times, when President Ronald Reagan was shot in 1981 and again during a medical procedure in 1987. It was put in play briefly when President George W. Bush underwent a surgical procedure, with power temporarily assumed by Vice President Dick Cheney.

As for succession, the first two sections of the 25th Amendment were used in 1973 when Vice President Spiro Agnew resigned after pleading guilty to corruption, and again in 1974 after President Nixon resigned to avoid impeachment in the Watergate scandal. Americans ended up with an unelected administration of President Gerald Ford and Vice President Nelson Rockefeller.



President Woodrow Wilson and Vice President Thomas R. Marshall, another former Indiana governor.

That concerns Bayh. "The American people voted for Nixon and they are entitled to get that four years of Nixon," Bayh told the panel. "We don't want to whiplash."

At the 2010 Fordham conference, Bayh advised that every president and administration "no matter what his age, a contingency plan of what is to be done if he can't make a decision" should be in place. "It should include the spouse, the chief of staff, a doctor or two." Bayh had a conversation with Valerie Jarrett, a key aide to President Obama, who told him the administration "has a very comprehensive contingency plan."

Historian Jon Meacham said on MSNBC's Morning Joe this week that President Eisenhower left very specific written instructions for Vice President Nixon in what he described as a plan to transfer power upon a medical emergency, and have it passed back upon a conclusion.

Even with the 25th Amendment in place, Prof. Amar believes the U.S. is flirting with a constitutional crisis. "This isn't just science fiction. When Garfield is shot and the guy who is shooting him says, 'I am a stalwart and (Chester) Arthur should be president.'"

As for the Lincoln assassination, when conspirators unsuccessfully targeted Vice President Andrew Johnson and severely wounded Secretary of State William Seward, Amar observed, "John Wilkes Booth was affecting regime change. There are many reasons to be very nervous; a constitutional accident by epic proportions is waiting to happen." ❖



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Fame, fortune and Oprah

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Covering Richard Lugar’s presidential campaign in 1995-96, reporters in Iowa and New Hampshire would ask the Hoosier senator what it would take for him to evolve from darkhorse to victor. Lugar would respond with the word “fame.”



Or, as my memory serves me, Lugar would matter of factly state the obvious: “Well, you have to be famous.”

We’ve had famous presidents before, namely generals like George Washington, Andrew Jackson, Zachary Taylor, U.S. Grant, James Garfield and Dwight David Eisenhower. And we’ve had celebrity in President Ronald Reagan, though it took him three tries between 1968

and 1980 to turn fame into White House paydirt.

Donald Trump converted fame into a one-cycle genius quotient. He did it over a mere 18 months in 2015 and 2016, brilliantly turning himself into the blue collar billionaire. He didn’t like to shake hands with the middle class (he’s a germaphobe), but he was their whisperer up on the stage and out of sneeze range. He said what they were thinking, and turned their resentments into Electoral College votes. But 16 years before the genius Trump figured it all out, when he flirted with a 2000 presidential bid, he was asked about a potential running mate, and it wasn’t Mike Pence.

“Oprah, I love Oprah,” Trump told Larry King in pre-evil CNN in 1999. “Oprah would always be my first choice. I mean, she’s popular, she’s brilliant, she’s a wonderful woman.” Pence became Trump’s vice president because he looked that way out of central casting. Oprah never surfaced in 2016 because her fellow billionaire had already targeted women, Muslims, reporters and Mexicans with his thundering Thor lightning bolts.

Remembering Lugar’s call to fame, I posed the Oprah Winfrey 2020 foresight to Democratic Chairman John Zody in December, who quietly listened in bemusement. Entering what may be an age of celebrity

presidents, Winfrey would begin with some of Trump’s strengths. She’s a billionaire businesswoman, remarkably famous, a TV and movie star and more popular. When Public Policy Polling tested Winfrey in March 2017, her fav/unfavs stood at 49/33%. She topped Trump in a head-to-head 47-40%. This was before all the Twitter storms. Rasmussen did the head-to-head on Jan. 8-9 and Winfrey led Trump 48-38% with 55% approval.

And then there are the contrasts. Where Trump doesn’t read (much), Winfrey would recommend a book on her TV show and it would top the NYTimes best seller list. There is the potential of her bringing on much of the Obama campaign apparatus, one which won a reelection bid in 2012 that economic telltales suggested he should have lost. In the age of spurned women, Winfrey is seen as an empowering figure.

In her lengthy Golden Globes speech Sunday night, she sounded like a candidate: “In my career, what I’ve always tried my best to do, whether on television or through film, is to say something about how men and women really behave. To say how we experience shame, how we love and how we rage, how we fail, how we retreat, persevere and how we overcome. I’ve interviewed and portrayed people who’ve withstood some of the ugliest things life can throw at you, but the one quality all of them seem to share is an ability to maintain hope for a brighter morning, even during our darkest nights.”

Oprah took her vivid brand and exploited a breach in time as wandering and confused Democrats pondered the vacuum and discovered a sprite.

The New Yorker’s Doreen St. Félix observed that on her 25-year show based in Chicago (and not the coasts), Oprah “served as an empath, challenger, and guardian of the varied anxieties of the middle-class cause. Along the way, she rewrote the romance of the American striver in the image of her impossible ascent. The mass of motivational literature that she has produced encourages us to remember her as a little black girl in Milwaukee, born amid a nation’s racial upheaval.”



So here in the age of Trumpian disruption and instability, with long-time Winfrey mate Stedman Graham saying she could be moved by the masses to run, we find ourselves conjuring the celebrity elixir to all things Donald.

How seriously should we take this? Former Obama campaign strategist David Axelrod told the New York Times that Winfrey has “a boundless capacity for empathy and a preternatural ability to communicate powerfully and authentically – as we saw at the Golden Globes. Will there be hunger in 2020 for someone with some experience in government, after Trump? There isn’t anybody who’s a greater antithesis to Donald Trump than Oprah Winfrey.” And remember, it was the Axe who recognized

this potential in young Barack Hussein Obama when he was barely on the radar.

Former GOP speaker and Trump supporter Newt Gingrich told Politico, "She is very smart, she has a substantial following. I would take her very seriously as a candidate." Republican strategist Mike Murphy, who aided and abetted celebrity California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, observed of her 14-minute Golden Globe speech, saying, "I recognize the beats, and they were done exquisitely."

And Democratic strategist Brian Fallon adds, "People are treating Oprah as if she fits into some box. She doesn't. It's not a celebrity box. Oprah is a unique, standalone entity that uniquely could winnow the field." New York Post columnist Jon Podhoretz, who along with HPI recognized the Oprah potential in late 2017, wrote on Tuesday, "There's no one in her party who can deliver a speech the way Oprah delivered that speech on Sunday night. And there's no one in America who knows how to

talk, simply how to talk, the way she can. Good luck to the worthy and ambitious Democrats – the Hickenloopers and Bookers and Harrises and even the Bidens – who seek to try and match her word for word. And good luck to Trump, too."

Hoosier Democrats were mostly mum. The establishment only partially swept into the column of the last Chicagoan who had the audacity to run, Barack Obama. The Bayhphiles adhered to the Clinton dynasty, even if recalcitrant Rudy Clay didn't. Indiana Democrats clung to Hillary and watched socialist Bernie Sanders feed off the same resentments that Trump did as he won the 2016 primary with 53% of the vote, the same percentage that Trump did without Pence and the GOP hierarchy on board prior to the primary.

But that just goes to show ya that when you've got fame and fortune, Hoosiers, no matter what their ilk, can come around. ❖

U.S. Census plots Indiana's growth

By **MORTON MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS – Uncle Sam, via his Census Bureau, just before Christmas, gave us the news: Idaho had the fastest growing population in the nation. The great potato state had an estimated 2.2% increase from July 1, 2016, to the same date in 2017.



"Why not us?" Alzo Incognito asked. "Is there something wrong with the Hoosier State, the spark plug of America, the carburetor of commerce?" "Population change is simple and complex," I told him.

"What's complex?" he asked. "People are born, they die and they move from place to place."

"True, but why? There's the complexity," I responded. "Indiana ranked 24th among the 50 states in rate of growth '16-'17 at 0.5% increase. This compared with a 0.7 national rate and well behind Idaho's 2.2%. However, we grew faster than any of our four adjacent, neighboring states."

"I get tired of that neighboring state stuff," Alzo said.

"There's a neighborhood effect," I argued, "that can't be ignored. "The Midwest added population at a sluggish 0.3% rate while the South and the West were growing by 1% each."

"But why?" he asked again.

"We don't have the latest age data yet," I said, "but I'd bet it has to do with who left our state. Indiana had net

domestic out-migration of 57,900 persons, while Idaho had net domestic in-migration of 61,300 between 2010 and 2017."

"Idaho had more people moving in than we had people moving out? Who'da thought?" Alzo was puzzled. "On balance, yes." I assured him.

"And who moves?" I posed the question then followed with the answer. "Younger people move, older people tend to stay put. And – no surprise here – younger people pack their fertility with them in the U-Haul van."

"So Indiana ends up with fewer babies!" he declared. "Not so fast," I cautioned. "Our 605,000 births since 2010 ranks 15th in the nation, remembering we're now 17th in total population. There doesn't seem to be anything in our water diminishing passion among Hoosiers. The issue is 435,000 Hoosiers died since 2010, the 14th highest level among the states."

As I feared, Alzo faded with the accumulation of numbers, percentages, and ranks. But I had to finish the picture that put all those jigsaw pieces together. "Indiana's population gain of 182,700 since 2010 is not to be belittled; the percent change may be small, but those people have to be housed, fed, provided with water, plus protected in their homes and on the streets. Many require education and/or health care.

"Above all, 40% of that increase, nearly 73,000 people, were migrants from another country. Some came to America and Indiana for a better education. Others came with hopes of commercial success. And now we have a chance to join them in realizing their potential."

Alzo nodded agreement, but I knew he was out of it, for now. ❖

Mr. Marcus is an economist, writer, and speaker who may be reached at mortonjmarcus@yahoo.com.

Comparing 2018 to the 1968 turmoil

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND – Many in America look with trepidation toward what will unfold in 2018. Anger grows in a nation divided into uncompromising camps. Threats arise from overseas. What of conflict in Asia? What of turmoil over rights here at home? The president, way down in the polls, simply is not believed by large segments of the population, especially the young.



Well, that's also the way it was as events unfolded in another year, 1968, half a century ago. Fears were realized in that year of trial for America, but the nation overcame the horrors of war in Vietnam, assassination of popular leaders, violence in the streets and questions about whether democracy could prevail. The good news is that if the nation

could survive all that, it surely can overcome the divisive situation now, even if some of the present fears are realized.

The president then was Lyndon B. Johnson, different than President Trump in many ways, especially in dealing with Congress. LBJ was a master of bipartisan compromise, winning passage of key legislation, including a civil rights act that had seemed to be a political impossibility. But Johnson sank in the polls as death tolls mounted in Vietnam. Many Americans, including young men of draft age, didn't believe anything he said about a path to victory or a way out of the Vietnam quagmire.

Then on March 31, Johnson stunned the nation, announcing: "I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your president." There is no presidential election this year, and even if there were, it's hard to imagine President Trump making such a decision.

Shocking events continued throughout 1968. Martin Luther King Jr., who promoted nonviolence, was killed by an assassin on April 4. Rioting broke out all around the nation. Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, brother of the assassinated

President John F. Kennedy, sought the Democratic nomination that Johnson surrendered. Indiana was in the national political spotlight as Kennedy campaigned in the state's Democratic presidential primary. He was in a wild three-way contest with Sen. Eugene McCarthy, challenging to be the prevailing "peace" candidate, and Gov. Roger D. Branigin, seeking to hold the state for Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey.

South Bend was pivotal. Kennedy campaigned four times in St. Joseph County, McCarthy three times. Dyngus Day, the Monday-after-Easter celebration in Polish-American neighborhoods in South Bend, was featured in the national news as Kennedy drew crowds never since matched here in size and enthusiasm.

It was a "must win" contest for Kennedy. He won. And then lost his life to an assassin on June 5 in California as he celebrated winning the primary there and seemed to be headed for the Democratic nomination and, probably, the presidency.

The Democratic nomination then was to lose value as the party split – not just politically, but violently – at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Bloody confrontations erupted between demonstrators and Chicago police. The Illinois National Guard was activated. Troops, with bayonets fixed and machine guns mounted on jeeps, blocked Michigan Avenue in front of the embattled Conrad Hilton Hotel, separating demonstrators in Grant Park from delegates at the hotel.

Richard M. Nixon won the presidency. The war in Vietnam raged and would continue to do so. There was



hope of a "Prague Spring" in Czechoslovakia until it was crushed by Soviet tanks. A U.S. ship, the Pueblo, was captured by North Korea, a pesky but not yet nuclear foe. The crew was released through diplomacy, without threats to push a big button. The nation survived all of this a half century ago.

Life goes on. It did then, despite the trepidation and tragedy. There was no

"Saturday Night Live" to inject humor. Instead there was slapstick humor in a TV program called "Laugh In." And astronauts orbited the moon. Never before had humans seen its hidden side. Americans also looked for a brighter future. Finally, it came. ❖

Colwell has covered Indiana politics over five decades for the South Bend Tribune.

Charlie Cook, Cook Political Report: The NBC News Political Unit's morning newsletter First Read on Thursday nailed it, noting, "The last two days are a reminder that 2018 will be all about Trump: For those who thought the GOP's tax law or Democrats' message might be key parts of the 2018 midterm environment, the first days of the brand-new year have been an important reminder that 2018 will be all about—or mostly about—President Trump." The idea that this president and this White House would not step on their own message and not cut short what should be a post-tax-bill victory lap is laughable. Look at the last two days alone—the president's braggadocio that his nuclear button is "Much bigger & more powerful"; the suggestion of jail for former Hillary Clinton aide Huma Abedin and former FBI Director James Comey; Michael Wolff's tell-all book on the Trump White House palace intrigue and former Trump intimate Steve Bannon's accusation of "treasonous" behavior on the part of Donald Trump Jr., Jared Kushner, and Paul Manafort; and various threats of lawsuits. Regardless of whether Americans approve or disapprove of the tax bill (so far it's the latter), it's Trump's and congressional Republicans' sole significant legislative accomplishment. So their hope should be a focus on this president, this administration, and this Republican Congress actually accomplishing things and making a difference. But they can't seem to keep that focus for longer than the nanosecond that is President Trump's attention span. Even if only a third of Michael Wolff's "Fire and Fury" is accurate and not the product of exaggeration (my guesstimate), it would constitute both a scandal and major threat to any conventional White House. Instead it amounts to just another week or two in the tumultuous Trump era. ❖



Jon Webb, Evansville Courier & Press: I'm gonna guess Jeff Sessions has never smoked marijuana. I'm also going to assume he has no idea what it does to people. He probably nurses visions of stoners growing horns and bursting into flames. To find out, he would have to rely on government tests, and thanks to our ridiculous federal laws, it's illegal to conduct research into weed's medical benefits. The writer Ashley Feinberg distilled my suspicions into one tweet last week. "I don't have any proof of this, but I believe with every fiber of my being that Jeff Sessions is pretty sure you ingest marijuana by injecting it," she said. But that didn't stop our country's attorney general from furthering his pointless war against the drug that brought us every great album, movie and Amazon review of the last 60 years. On Thursday, Sessions reversed an Obama Administration policy that discouraged prosecutors from pursuing marijuana charges against individuals in states where the drug was legal. Under that rule, prosecution was still encouraged if the offense involved dealing to minors or furthering gang activity. A lot of politicians pushed back, including several Repub-

lican governors from weed-friendly states. The reason? The move could still create a lot of confusion. And when it comes to cannabis laws, more confusion is the last thing we need. Take Indiana. Republican state Sen. Jim Lucas has introduced a medical marijuana bill for the 2018 legislature. Enacting it would be a common-sense move, and allow Indiana to join the 29 other states with similar operations. Because it makes so much sense, it naturally stands the same chance of survival as a popsicle re-entering the Earth's atmosphere. IndyStar reported some GOP leaders are "softening" on the issue – including House Speaker Brian Bosma. But no politician honestly thinks it has a chance of passing this year. And Sessions' decision makes it even more unlikely. A state that's waited this long to enact any kind of legalized marijuana is obviously skittish about the move already. The promise of clashing with federal authorities would give those anxiety-ridden fence-sitters a reason to keep medical marijuana on the shelf. ❖

David Brooks, New York Times: Let me start with three inconvenient observations, based on dozens of conversations around Washington over the past year: First, people who go into the White House to have a meeting with President Trump usually leave pleasantly surprised. They find that Trump is not the raving madman they expected from his tweetstorms or the media coverage. They generally say that he is affable, if repetitive. He runs a normal, good meeting and seems well-informed enough to get by. Second, people who work in the Trump administration have wildly divergent views about their boss. Some think he is a deranged child, as Michael Wolff reported. But some think he is merely a distraction they can work around. Some think he is strange, but not impossible. Some genuinely admire Trump. Many filter out his crazy stuff and pretend it doesn't exist. My impression is that the Trump administration is an unhappy place to work, because there is a lot of infighting and often no direction from the top. But this is not an administration full of people itching to invoke the 25th Amendment. Third, the White House is getting more professional. Imagine if Trump didn't tweet. The craziness of the past weeks would be out of the way, and we'd see a White House that is briskly pursuing its goals: the shift in our Pakistan policy, the shift in our offshore drilling policy, the fruition of our ISIS policy, the nomination for judgeships and the formation of policies on infrastructure, DACA, North Korea and trade. It's almost as if there are two White Houses. There's the Potemkin White House, which we tend to focus on: Trump berserk in front of the TV, the lawyers working the Russian investigation and the press operation. Then there is the Invisible White House that you never hear about, which is getting more effective at managing around the distracted boss. I sometimes wonder if the Invisible White House has learned to use the Potemkin White House to deke us while it changes the country. ❖

Trump does little on opioid crisis

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump in October promised to “liberate” Americans from the “scourge of addiction,” officially declaring a 90-day public health emergency that would urgently mobilize the federal government to tackle the opioid epidemic (Politico). That declaration runs out on Jan. 23, and beyond drawing more attention to the crisis, virtually nothing of consequence has been done. Trump has not formally proposed any new resources or spending, typically the starting point for any emergency response. He promised to roll out a “really tough, really big, really great” advertising campaign to spread awareness about addiction, but that has yet to take shape. And key public health and drug posts in the administration remain vacant, so it’s not clear who has the authority to get new programs moving. State health officials and policy experts say billions of dollars in new funding are needed to make a dent in the crisis. The Public Health Emergency Fund, which HHS could tap under the Trump declaration, has a balance of just \$57,000 and the administration hasn’t proposed replenishing it. Rather than asking for new money, the administration can move funds around in existing agency budgets — but that just means taking money away from other health programs.

Kittle urges DACA passage via letter

INDIANAPOLIS — Jim Kittle Jr., the former chairman of the Indiana Republican Party and current chairman of Indiana’s Kittle’s Furniture, has signed a letter with dozens of other leaders of major companies, demanding protection for beneficiaries of the Deferred Action for Child Arrivals program (Clark, IndyStar). Kittle and the nearly 100 other signees

say in the letter that the approaching termination of DACA “is creating an impending crisis for workforces across the country.” The letter, addressed to House Speaker Paul Ryan, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Sens. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., and Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., also says the economy could lose \$215 billion in GDP if Congress fails to act.

More Carrier workers laid off

INDIANAPOLIS — More than 200 Carrier employees will lose their jobs this week, the company announced (Savransky, The Hill). The 215 employees will leave the manufacturer in its final round of layoffs at the

Indianapolis facility. Carrier said in a statement the layoffs are part of the company’s plan to “relocate fan coil manufacturing production lines,” which are moving to a facility in Mexico, according to a reporter from the IndyStar. “Following the transition, Carrier’s Indianapolis operations will employ approximately 1,100 people,” the statement said. President Trump — who promised to revamp the manufacturing sector on the campaign trail and in the Oval Office — said in November 2016 he reached an agreement with the corporation to preserve about 1,000 jobs at the Indianapolis plant.

IDOH denies abortion clinic

SOUTH BEND — The Indiana State Department of Health has denied an application to open an abortion clinic in South Bend (Catanzarite, WNDU-TV). According to the ISDH, “In response to the Department’s request to list all of the abortion and health care facilities currently operated by WWHA, its parent, affiliate, and subsidiary organizations, WWHA failed to disclose, concealed, or omitted information related to additional clinics.” Amy Hagstrom Miller, the

founder and CEO of the Texas-based Whole Woman’s Health Alliance, says they plan to appeal the decision.

Michelle Obama to speak in Indy

INDIANAPOLIS — Former first lady Michelle Obama will be in Indianapolis next month to speak at an event hosted by Women’s Fund of Central Indiana (Gilmer, IndyStar). The group will host “A Moderated Conversation with Former First Lady Michelle Obama” at 7 p.m. Feb. 13 at Bankers Life Fieldhouse, 125 S. Pennsylvania St. Ticket sales begin at 10 a.m. Friday at Ticketmaster.com or at the Bankers Life box office.

Rep. Issa latest to pass on reelection

WASHINGTON — Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Calif.) became the latest GOP veteran to announce that he would not seek reelection, two days after his fellow California Republican, House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Edward R. Royce, said he would retire (Axios). Why it matters: Democrats had placed both men high on their midterm target lists, and key congressional forecasters immediately moved their seats to likely Democratic pickups.” Ominous math for GOP: “At least 29 House seats held by Republicans will be open in November; only 22 GOP seats were open in 2006, and 19 Democratic seats in 2010. The 1994 ‘Republican revolution’ that swept the GOP into power after decades of Democratic rule saw 27 Democratic retirements.

Young, Donnelly back Sweeney

WASHINGTON — Democratic Sen. Joe Donnelly and Republican Sen. Todd Young introduced Indianapolis attorney James Sweeney during his nomination hearing Wednesday before the Senate Judiciary Committee, urging quick confirmation.

