

The Howey Political Report



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“QUOTE” OF THE WEEK

“This is a dark day in the history of liberty and the Supreme Court.”

- U.S. Rep. Mike Pence, on

Wednesday’s Supreme Court ruling upholding campaign finance reform

Meetup.com: Mitch and Howard get it

It’s the ‘21st Century precinct’

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY** in Indianapolis

As the Internet powered Howard Dean to presidential prominence and an Al Gore endorsement, the idea of the “21st Century precinct” arrived in Indiana.

The word had gone out on *Meetup.com* of a Mitch Daniels get-together at the Athenaeum’s Rathskeller in Indianapolis Wednesday night. As the 8 o’clock hour neared, the ballroom next to the Kellerbar began to gather people, probably close to 75 in all when Republican gubernatorial candidate Daniels appeared. There had been four previous events by the *Meetup.com* crowd before this one in Indianapolis. Another had taken place in Richmond.

“Howard Dean has used this phenomenally well,” explained Christie Luther, who heads up Daniels’ volunteer efforts. Spending no money for fliers, postage and envelopes, the word had gotten out to the grassroots. And folks are showing up. New folks.

As a blues band played in the Kellerbar, and a dozen people conspicuously partied and cackled on the other side of the ballroom, Lori Janssen, another Daniels campaign member, explained to the gathered group, “Our goal is to bring a lot of new people into the movement.” The Daniels campaign wants these new people to write letters to the editor and, as Janssen said, “Come together and bring ideas.”

The campaign talks back, letting this new community know what the Daniels effort is doing with e-mails. There are “*Mitch’s Notes from the Road*” that go out to thousands of supporters. The *Meetup.com* folks also tend to write \$25 checks to the campaign. That doesn’t sound like much, but 80 folks bring in \$2,000 for 45 minutes work. These people

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Covering 10 years of Indiana politics

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GALLUP HAS BUSH AT 55 PERCENT: A Gallup poll of 1,004 adults, conducted over December 5-7 (+/- 3%), shows: 55% "approve of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president", 43% disapprove; 2% don't know; 48% "approve of the way George W. Bush is handling the economy"; 49% disapprove; 3% don't know. 53% "approve of the way George W. Bush is handling the economy"; 43% disapprove; 4% don't know. 50% "approve of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation with Iraq"; 47% disapprove; 3% don't know.

SCHOLER WON'T SEEK RE-ELECTION: Many Tippecanoe County Republicans will get the news by e-mail today, but state Rep. Sue Scholer, R-West Lafayette, confirmed Wednesday that she will not seek re-election (*Lafayette Journal & Courier*). Scholer, who has served the 26th District for 61/2 terms, will step down at the end of 2004, ending a political career that spans two decades. "It's been such a privilege to represent this area. I will certainly help and encourage others who are interested," said Scholer, noting that her husband, Charles, retired from Purdue University a couple of years ago. "I just know that the Lord's telling me to do something different." Republican Connie

leave with a sense of the 21st Century precinct.

They come from everywhere and anywhere. Dean's campaign connected with a teenager living on an island off the Alaskan coast, according to a story in last Sunday's *New York Times Magazine*. This young man has gone on to make major intellectual contributions to the Democrat's presidential campaign.

Table to table

Daniels went from table to table, sitting down and talking to every volunteer. When he rose to speak after about 20 minutes of hobnobbing, Daniels observed, "This is magnificent. It wasn't organized. It came from the bottom up. Some of you dragged your mother or a spouse. But this is a spontaneous meeting. It's very cool and exciting for us."

The *Meetup.com* volunteers leaned into Daniels' words, because of the muffled blues in the distance and cackling diners in the background. "This will be a campaign of ideas and change," Daniels promised in a soft, matter-of-fact delivery. "It will be motivated by people not seeking power, but to rescue the state from its downward slide. And we are embarked on a campaign you can be proud of."

Daniels said he has yet to "demean or disparage anyone."

"We will win by calling people to a higher standard," Daniels said, asking them to take better care of themselves. "I believe the people are ready to aim a little higher."

And, Daniels explained, it is time for Indiana to start thinking about itself as one people and one state. There are regions versus regions; all regions versus the center. "In some places, there are people who only get a soundbite from their own state," Daniels, mentioning the perception of a disconnect in The Region, the Hoosier suburbs around Cincinnati, and the growing antagonism between almost all regions of the state and Indianapolis. That is being exacerbated by the political

class warfare the Indiana General Assembly launched against local units of government. That could create a breeding ground for dozens of city, county and school officials to think about challenging legislators in 2004.

Daniels surveyed the room and observed, "These are new faces. It's exciting to see that somehow, someone new came to our cause."

The Republican took questions. What about a running mate? someone asked. "Are you available?" Daniels responded. He told the group that decision would be made after the primary election.

Perotista redux

It was a truly amazing thing, just as the Ross Perot volunteers of the spring of 1992 were. The Perotistas heard the call, turned out in force, and reorganized precincts into zip codes or "zippies." They measured in the 30th percentile in the polls. For a few weeks in '92, it seemed as if Perot could have won, until he succumbed to his own paranoia.

Now, the Internet has become the conduit to scores of surfers, who contribute an average of \$77 to Howard Dean, according to the *New York Times*. When the Burlington, Vt., based Dean asked his *Meetup.com* volunteers whether he should forego the federal campaign funds, they responded yes. Overwhelmingly. Dean is now determined to take on the \$200 million Bush campaign by not taking a single cent from tax returns.

The *New York Times* observed that the Dean campaign has taken its cues from Robert D. Putnam's book, "*Bowling Alone*" and has created the new mode of communication and involvement. "Responsiveness is the essential sound of the Dean campaign. It is embodied not only in Dean himself, but also in the blog, which creates the impression of constant dialogue between supporters and campaign staff, and in the organizing on the ground. People at all levels of the Dean campaign will tell you that its purpose is

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not just to elect Howard Dean president. Just as significant, they say, the point is to give people something to believe in, and to connect those people with one another. The point is to get them out of their houses and bring them together at barbecues, rallies and voting booths."

There is the "Dean Space" software that allows the campaign in Burlington to monitor the conversations and activities on the estimated 900 volunteer Dean web-sites around the nation.

The street is the web

Discussing at the Chatterbox, a nearby jazz joint, what I had just seen, my friend, trial lawyer Kevin McShane explained, "You've heard of the politics of the street? It's now the world wide web. And those streets go on forever. It's the 21st Century precinct. With instant feedback."

My friend John Goss, a longtime Democratic strategist and current director of the Department of Natural Resources, explained, "The kids in their 20s have figured it out, and Howard Dean's people have figured it out. And the negative TV spot and the crappy flier is the past. The negative TV spot is dead."

Why? How?

"Because one bad TV ad for a can-

didate could trigger 15,000 people firing off critical e-mails. Politics as usual is gone," Goss predicted.

Mitch Daniels is getting it. Howard Dean gets it. He's taken John McCain's Internet campaign of 2000 and has increased its sensors, it's financial power (raising \$7 million in the third quarter off the internet), and its communication ten-fold. He's producing scores of oddball and on-the-ball volunteers.

A Democrat from Vermont is doing this. Al Gore, who helped shape the Internet (he really did), sees in Dean the guy who gets it; who's hip to the new conductivity of the internet. That could be the real reason for his endorsement of Dean.

McShane made perhaps the simplest and boldest observation of the night: "Ever hear of a doctor who lost an election?" an election.

Hmmmmmm. Doc Bowen ... Dr. Senator Bill Frist ... Dr. Borst ... I'm sure there is ... but I can't think of one. Aha! Dr. John McGoff, but that was a convention floor fight, not an election.

McShane said, "They should call him Dr. Dean. You can't lose folks when they call you doctor."

Watch for these comments and more on the Dean blog ... tonight. ❖

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Basham, who is president of the Tippecanoe County Council, confirmed that she will announce her own political intentions Friday at press conferences in Pine Village and West Lafayette. Basham said she's been instructed not to reveal in advance exactly what she will say Friday, but "my announcement will be related to Sue Scholer's announcement."

PENCE CALLS CFR SUPREME COURT DECISION A 'DARK DAY': The Supreme Court decision Wednesday upholding key provisions of a new federal campaign finance law drew mixed reaction from some of Indiana's politicians and officeholders. The high court upheld the law's ban on unlimited "soft money" contributions to national political parties and candidates, and certain political advertising in the months prior to elections (Indianapolis Star). U.S. Rep. Mike Pence, R-Ind., was the only member of the House to serve as a plaintiff in the lawsuit, and he called the ruling a deep disappointment. "This is a dark day in the history of liberty and the Supreme Court," Pence said, adding that the ruling would be remembered along with such infamous decisions as the 1857 Dred Scott case, which found that blacks -- both

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Gore's nod to Dean leaves behind Bayh?

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS - Perhaps it could be said that the 2008 presidential race commenced in Harlem on Tuesday, just around the corner from Bill Clinton's office, when Al Gore endorsed Howard Dean.

But the earliest roots of what would be the "post-Bush era" may have been put down during the last "post-Bush era," on Aug. 28, 1996. That was the night young Indiana Gov. Evan Bayh was to stake his claim as the future of the Democratic Party before a nationally televised audi-

ence at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

Bayh was the keynote speaker, planning on a 30-minute speech highlighting his fiscal conservatism and accenting the pragmatic centrism that was spawned by Bill Clinton and Al Gore within the progressive Democratic Leadership Council. As *HPR* reported seven years ago, Bayh's speech was designed to "make him a national figure as he prepares for federal office in 1998 and, potentially, for the next political generation."

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slaves and free -- were not and could never be citizens. Pence argued that the law contradicts the Constitution's First Amendment protections for free speech. He said he was especially offended by the law's ban on ads by special-interest groups that mention federal candidates one month before a primary election and two months before a general election. But U.S. Rep. Julia Carson, D-Ind., applauded that provision. "I don't think many of us will miss those killer ads that have become popular here," said Carson, who has been the target of such ads in past campaigns. U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar, R-Ind., who voted for the measure, also said he was pleased by the court's action. "The court's decision allows implementing a law that improves a deeply flawed campaign finance system by establishing greater disclosure and protections against corruption," he said.

ARMY REINSTATES PAY TO HOOSIERS IN IRAQ: U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar was informed Wednesday that the Army will allow immediate temporary reinstatement of reduced pay for some 650 members of the Indiana National Guard members serving in Iraq. The Army decision came in response to a December 4th letter from Lugar to Acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee. In response to

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But Bayh's speech ended up in suspended animation. There was Tipper Gore who spoke, followed by First Lady Hillary Clinton, neither of whom were on schedule. Then came three regional challenger candidates who seemed to drone on and on through a couple of time zones.

As Bayh stewed behind the stage at Chicago's United Center, the show seemed to drag for an eternity. When Bayh finally reached the podium, it was just a couple of minutes before the East Coast network affiliates were to break away to their 11 p.m. news, robbing the keynote of the limelight Bill Clinton enjoyed in 1988. And the rampant speculation among Bayhphiles was that the Gores and Clintons had purposely staggered the schedule, fearful of the up and coming young governor from Indiana.

The grand irony in the waning days of 2003 is that many of these same characters are at it again, jockeying for position.

There was Al Gore, endorsing Howard Dean, the very candidate that Bayh, now chairman of the DLC, had fretted would lead the Democratic Party to disaster. At the DLC's "National Conversation" in Philadelphia, Bayh observed, "The administration is being run by the far right. The Democratic Party is in danger of being taken over by the far left." When a reporter asked whether Democratic woes were a result of Republican attacks or Democratic mistakes, Bayh responded with a curt two-word answer that silenced the room: "Assisted suicide."

As *HPR* reported in July, it was a broadside aimed at Dean, who has emerged as a McGovern/McCarthy style anti-war Democrat to whom Republicans love to attach the word "liberal."

R.W. Apple Jr. of the *New York Times* observed in Wednesday's editions, "It is almost as if the dovish Senator Eugene J. McCarthy, the insurgent hero of 1968, had been endorsed by the hawkish Harry S. Truman --flattering, of course;

politically useful, surely; ideologically confusing, probably."

Bayh's "assisted suicide" comment was followed by then-gubernatorial candidate Joe Andrew's assertion that the DLC had become the "right wing" of the Democratic Party, a comment that angered and mystified the Bayh organization.

But it's becoming a trend, at least for now.

Remaking the party

"I'm very proud and honored to endorse Howard Dean to be the next president of the United States of America," Gore said Tuesday in a move that gave Dean more momentum, with his lead in Iowa and New Hampshire stretching into double digits. "We need to remake the Democratic Party, we need to remake America. In a field of great candidates, one candidate clearly now stands out and so I'm asking all of you to join in this grassroots movement to elect Howard Dean president of the United States."

Shaw Friedman, Dean's Indiana coordinator, said Gore's endorsement was critical. "This is a big boost to continue building what is already there: Message, money and momentum at the grassroots level," Friedman said.

Not only were people such as Sen. Joe Lieberman stunned at the turn of events, but it marked a sharp leftward tilt of the Democratic Party. With the economy revving up, the Dow flirting with 10,000 again, many Democrats see Dean as drawing the sharpest contrast to President Bush with the Iraq war as the crucial issue.

Gore called the Iraq invasion and occupation a "catastrophic mistake" by the Bush administration, terming the present situation a "quagmire."

"He was the only major candidate who made the correct judgment about the Iraq war," Gore said of Dean. "And he had the insight and the courage to say and do the right thing. And that's important because those judgments -- that basic

common sense -- is what you want in a president."

There is ample reason to believe that strategy might work. In another blast from the past, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich told *Newsweek* that U.S. policy in Iraq was going "off a cliff."

Gingrich explained, "Americans can't win in Iraq. Only Iraqis can win in Iraq." Gingrich, a member of the influential Defense Policy Board, argued that the administration has been putting far too much emphasis on a military solution and slighting the political element, adopting "a deliberate strategy of amnesia." The real key in Iraq, he said, "is not how many enemy do I kill. The real key is how many allies do I grow. And that is a very important metric that they just don't get."

Jockeying for position

Having said that, many analysts saw Gore's move as a clear strategy to become a kingmaker, and challenging the Clintons as the titular head of the Democratic Party.

In one scenario, if Dean wins the nomination and loses to Bush, Gore emerges in 2008 as a true powerhouse, seeking an open seat with scores of Dean's "*Meetup.com*" supporters remembering his decisive move.

That sets up an expected battle between Sen. Clinton, Gore, and, perhaps, Sen. Bayh.

Gore was sharply critical of the war and called Dean's anti-war status the reason Democrats should get on his bandwagon. Sens. Clinton, Bayh, Lieberman, John Edwards and John Kerry supported the war resolution. So Gore's move was all about creating distinctions.

And it's a gamble.

It's too early to determine if the American invasion will become the proverbial "quagmire," or a bold move to create an atmosphere of democracy in the Middle East.

Americans will likely come to grips with this first take on history between next April, when a spate of "first anniversaries"

coverage will inundate the public, through June. That's when many Americans will decide who they will vote for. The second wave will come in late October or early November. How will the American occupation look then?

No one knows. It is about as volatile a proposition as we've seen since 1968, a year when the economy purred and Richard Nixon won a razor-thin victory over Hubert H. Humphrey with the Vietnam War as the critical issue.

Credible scenarios

There are credible scenarios that could go either way.

If you're President Bush, the capture or killing of Saddam Hussein, followed by battlefield defeats of his guerilla thugs, a new Iraqi constitution, the transfer of power and the resumption of oil production could prove to be a rosy scenario that would bring him a second term, and redemption for Bayh and others.

But if Saddam and Osama bin Laden prove elusive, the body count continues unabated, no clear end game emerges, and the United States takes a domestic terror hit, that could propel Dean into the White House.

And the timing of a terror hit could be crucial. Al Qaeda is legendary for keeping its powder dry and lying in wait. A domestic terror attack just before the November election might prompt Americans to rally around the president.

An attack in April or June, with a nightmare scenario of coordinated suicide bombers hitting U.S. stadiums, shopping malls or other symbolic and economic targets would devastate the current message from the Bush re-election campaign: That they've kept America safe.

Bayh and Dean

So, is Sen. Bayh a big loser as the Democratic Party tilts leftward?

"Right now, Howard Dean is the hot button," said former Indiana Democratic Chairman Robin Winston. "But I

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Lugar's letter, the Army has decided to immediately reinstate the deduction for any soldier who requests it. The soldier must make the request through his chain of command to the 336th Finance Command in Kuwait, and the money will be paid to him before the end of the month. Collection of the debt will then be pro-rated over a four-month period from January through April, when the unit is scheduled to come off active duty. "I am pleased that Secretary Brownlee and the Army realized the seriousness of this situation and have acted quickly to remedy the problem," Lugar said.

THREE INDICTED IN BMW PROBE: Three more people were charged Wednesday with attempting to bribe a Bureau of Motor Vehicles worker in a scheme officials now think could have helped thousands illegally obtain state identification (Indianapolis Star). The federal indictments against Hugo Santos, Ricardo W. Herrera and Kamila Saxova followed the November arrests of seven other people in what authorities say is a scheme that has allowed foreign nationals to fraudulently obtain Indiana driver's licenses. Marion County Prosecutor Carl Brizzi said "potentially thousands" of people had obtained Indiana IDs using bogus immigra-

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tion documents. Many of the applicants were from Russia, China, Bulgaria, Pakistan and Mexico, Brizzi said, adding investigators may never be able to identify all of the people who fraudulently obtained IDs. The three were arrested Nov. 24 after a BMV worker, acting as a police informant, helped snare them in a sting operation.

ST. JOSEPH AUDITOR HEARS PLIGHT OF PEOPLE: A chastened St. Joseph County Auditor Michael Eby said Tuesday that he is concerned about the effect rising tax bills will have on low- and fixed-income residents (James Wensits, South Bend Tribune). "Our hearts go out to these people," said Eby, whose office has been besieged by residents who have suddenly been faced with huge tax bills they have no way to pay. There are human faces on both sides of the office counter and both ends of the telephone line, according to Eby, who said some of the stories told are so woeful that his staff members have had to go to their break room and cry.

LAWLER EYES TAPPING OLD GAS FIELDS: Mayor J. Mark Lawler said Tuesday that Anderson might return to its glory days of natural gas (Anderson Herald-Times). The city and the

can remember four years ago when John McCain was the hot button."

Winston said that even if Dean gets the nomination, "They'll come back around. As the campaign evolves, our nominee has to appeal to centrist voters. And I think Evan has positioned himself as a centrist Democrat and that will do him well in Indiana and nationally."

Winston will remind you that the nomination is far from locked up. "Forty percent of those at the convention are super delegates," he said. "That means 200 of Dick Gephardt's colleagues will be there. There's still a long way to go with Michigan, Pennsylvania and Ohio, which have big AFL-CIO contingents who might

end up backing someone like Gephardt."

Winston's own man, Sen. Edwards, could revive his campaign in South Carolina. Still, Winston said he called Shaw Friedman the day Gore endorsed Dean. "I called Shaw to say congratulations. It looks like you're on the way to the nomination."

CNN's Paul Begala called the endorsement an "enormous boost" that would clearly give Dean momentum. "It's very good for him," Begala said. "I wouldn't go so far as to say it locks anything up, though, because people want to make up their own minds." ❖

Who's supporting who in Indiana

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - So, when it comes to Democratic presidential candidates, which Hoosiers are backing who? Thus far, Howard Dean has the biggest and most influential contingent. Headed by Shaw Friedman, it includes 2nd CD Chairman Butch Morgan, Gaming Commissioner Glenn Lawrence, 6th CD 2000 nominee Melina Fox, LaPorte County Chairman Vidya Kora, former 6th CD Chairman Ray Scheele, and 1984 gubernatorial nominee Wayne Townsend.

Backing Sen. John Edwards are former Democratic Chairman Robin Winston, trial lawyer Ed Delaney (with influential wife Ann attending several Edwards fund-raisers, lawyer David Kahn, and Roger Pardieck from Seymour.

Former Greencastle Mayor Mike Harmless is heading up the Indiana campaign of Sen. John Kerry. Sources tell HPR that there have been a number of Indiana defections from the Kerry ranks in recent weeks as his campaign has gone south.

Supporting Gen. Wesley Clark are former Marion County Chairman Kip Tew, and former Democratic National Committeewoman Bren Simon, who will be hosting a fund-raiser for the general at her estate in Carmel.

Joe Champion has headed up Sen. Joe Lieberman's Indiana campaign in addition to helping Evansville Mayor-elect Jonathon Weinzapfel with his transition.

Beyond those names, few Democratic members of Congress, Gov. Joe Kernan, and a number of other influential Democrats have taken sides.

If you're U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh, the reason for neutrality is because so many of his Senate colleagues are running for president. In the past, Bayh frequently mentioned Lieberman as a mentor as he ran and then entered the Senate. It would be Lieberman or Edwards who might find Bayh an attractive running mate. Bayh would appeal to Midwestern voters in critical battleground states such as Illinois, Ohio, and Michigan surrounding Indiana.

Edwards might be inclined to reach outside the South, and Bayh could potentially fit into those plans. Winston said that if former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean prevails, he would almost certainly have to look to the South for a running mate. "As a party, we just can't concede the South to the Republicans," Winston said. ❖

2004 Racing Form

Indiana 2004 Gubernatorial

Governor 2004: Republican: Mitch Daniels, Eric Miller, Petersburg Mayor Randy Harris, Bob Parker. **Democrat:** Gov. Joe Kernan, Roy Graham. **1996 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,075,342, Goldsmith (R) 997,505, Dillon (L) 35,261. **2000 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,230,345, McIntosh (R) 906,492, Horning (L) 38,686. **2004 Forecast:** Rumors had it that there has been griping on the far right about Daniels' endorsement of Supt. Suellen Reed. We have found no evidence to support those rumors. Miller said he has no problems with Reed, the GOP's top statewide vote-getter in the last three elections, being on the ticket. **Republican Primary Status:** *Likely Daniels*; **General Status:** *Tossup*.

Indiana 2004 Congressional

Congressional District 2: Republican: U.S. Rep. Chris Chocola, Tony Zirkle. **Democrat:** Joe Donnelly. **Geography:** South Bend, Michigan City, Mishawaka, Elkhart, Kokomo, Plymouth, Logansport; LaPorte, St. Joseph, Starke, Marshall, Pulaski, Fulton, Cass, Carroll and parts of Howard, Porter, Elkhart and White counties. **Media Market:** South Bend-Elkhart, Indianapolis, Lafayette, Chicago. **People:** Urban/rural 73/27%; median income \$40,381; Poverty 9.5%; Race 84% white, 8% black; 5 Hispanic; Blue/white collar: 34/50%. **2000 Presidential:** Bush 53%, Gore 44%; **Cook Partisan Voting Index:** R+5; **2002 Result:** Chocola 95,081 (50%), Long Thompson 86,253 (46%); **2002 Money:** Chocola \$1.69m, Long Thompson \$1.535m. **2004 Outlook:** This race is going opposite directions for the primary round. The Democrats coalesced around Joe Donnelly, the Mishawaka attorney from Granger. Steve Ross and Bill Carnegie dropped out of the race and showed up at Donnelly's press conference. "The discussions have gone on for months," Morgan said. "If it had been shoved down everybody's throat, this wouldn't have happened." Morgan said that St. Joseph County Prosecutor Mike Dvorak had first refusal, and after he declined, the consensus among district chairs and labor was Donnelly. Meanwhile, **Republican Tony Zirkle will challenge Chocola in the primary.** "I'm just not satisfied with the quality of the debate in the last election. It seemed like all we heard about was where candidates lived and how much they're worth," said Zirkle (*Elkhart Truth*). "Issues win the hearts and minds of people, and that's what's important. I'll have to prove myself to Republicans, but I will win." The Democratic field cleared for Donnelly. Zirkle got 37 percent of the vote against then St. Joseph County prosecutor Chris Toth in the 2002 GOP primary. Dvorak told the *South Bend Tribune* that polling showed a challenge to Chocola was "doable" but he decided to remain as prosecutor. **Status:** *Leans Chocola*.

Congressional District 6: Republican: U.S. Rep. Mike Pence. **Democrat:** Melina Ann Fox. **Geography:** Anderson, Muncie, Richmond; Wells, Adams, Blackford, Jay, Madison, Delaware, Randolph, Henry, Wayne, Rush, Fayette, Union, Decatur, Franklin, and parts of Bartholomew, Shelby, Johnson and Allen counties. **Media Market:** Indianapolis, Fort Wayne, Dayton, Cincinnati. **People:** urban/rural 59/40%; median income \$39,002; poverty 9.7%; race: 93% white, 3.8% black, 1.3% Hispanic; blue/white collar 35/49%; **2000 Presidential:** Bush 58%, Gore 40%; **Cook Partisan Voting Index:** R+10; **2002 results:** Pence 118,436 (64%), Fox 63,871. **2002 Money:** Pence \$1.2m, Fox \$342,987. **2004 Outlook:** Fox will make her decision on whether to run by Jan. 4. The Conservative Political Action Conference will have Pence deliver the "State of the Movement" keynote address on Jan. 22 in Arlington, Va. Last year, Vice President Dick Cheney gave the keynote address. Pence has been front stage in the reaction to the **Status:** *Likely Pence*. ❖

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Corporation for Economic Development are funding a study to determine if 100-year-old gas reserves are still present and if they could be extracted at a competitive cost. But Lawler wouldn't say how much the city is paying for the study, nor the source of funding. "The study is of the prospects of the old gas field," said John Hagen, director of the Corporation for Economic Development. "Are those fields depleted or are there some prospects for the future?" Hagen said any exploration or extraction of natural gas is a long way in the future.

KOKOMO RESIDENTS DON'T LIKE US 31 ALTERNATIVES: On the latest Indiana Department of Transportation map of a possible eastern bypass to U.S. 31, Howard County resident Larry Smith's 120-acre farm has a big line running through it (Scott Smith, Kokomo Tribune). And according to Smith, he's not very interested in having his acreage bisected by a four-lane interstate. Like most of those in attendance at Kokomo High School's auditorium Tuesday evening, judging from the applause, Smith was there to let INDOT know he doesn't want an eastern bypass. "If the [proposed] bypass was on the western side of the county, I probably wouldn't be here at

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this meeting," Smith told the audience. Howard County residents first learned Nov. 23 that INDOT officials were no longer considering improving U.S. 31 along its existing route. That decision was the main focus of the audience's criticism. Kokomo resident Cleo Oliver, who said he favors improving the existing route, said he didn't think INDOT officials had listened to enough "of us average Joe people." Oliver noted that INDOT's 1995 Major Improvement Study of Kokomo's U.S. 31 corridor actually recommended upgrading the existing route.

SINGLETON WON'T RUN: Republican Judy Singleton will not seek a challenge to State Rep. David Orentlicher. Singleton is currently helping to coordinate "Lugar Series" organizations in more than a dozen states. Republican Mort Large has already declared. Orentlicher, meanwhile, is already conducting an aggressive door-to-door campaign through the Meridian-Kessler neighborhoods hard hit by reassessment. The just concluded special session of the legislature was called by some the "Orentlicher Session" because House Speaker B. Patrick Bauer was trying to find some relief for homeowners hit with skyrocketing property taxes.

HOUSE USES UP EIGHT DAYS: During the just con-

COLUMNISTS ON INDIANA

Rich James, *Post-Tribune* - This reassessment nightmare is pretty much the culmination of a long, bad dream. It started in the early 1950s when John Pers was elected Lake County's North Township assessor. It intensified over the next 41 years of Pers' reign. Former Hobart Township Assessor Paul Leon Wolek, who served for 36 years, is responsible as well. Each retired at the end of 1994. Each since has died. Each has to shoulder a good deal of responsibility for the fix we find ourselves in today. And each is a fitting example of why the system needs to be changed. Although Pers and Wolek didn't necessarily do anything illegal, their performance showed that the system is corrupt. In order to guarantee re-election every four years, they kept residential assessments woefully low. In North Township, industry picked up the slack but never complained until later years because business was good. When John Matonovich replaced Pers in 1995, he found out that it was even worse than he anticipated. "There were 2,000 homes in Hammond that paid zero taxes," Matonovich said in 1999. "Almost all of Hammond was rated as poor — very undesirable and unattractive, including homes valued at \$150,000." As a result of the 1995 reassessment, Matonovich was able to add homes to the tax rolls. He got an earful. "They didn't want to pay anything," he said about the complaints. But former St. John Township Assessor Terry Barczak, who was elected in 1990, wasn't so fortunate. She replaced Joe Rokosz, who had been assessor for 20 years. Barczak said in 1999 that she found the township's assessments a mess — with a host of favors for certain individuals at the expense of commercial properties. Barczak played it by the book — cut out the favors and raised assessments for many. She was voted out of office after one term. That's why township assessors

should be eliminated and assessments done by certified appraisers appointed by the county assessor. ❖

Jack Colwell, *South Bend Tribune* - Santa arrived early at the Bristol home of Chris Chocola with a nice present for the congressman. What better present could the Republican incumbent receive than word that he won't face a challenge from St. Joseph County Prosecutor Mike Dvorak, the Democrat who would have had the best chance to deprive Chocola of a second term? Chocola now becomes not just an early favorite against an opponent with a reasonably good shot but rather a strong favorite against an opponent seeking to pull a major upset. ❖

Mike McDaniel, *Indianapolis Eye* - "I want to start construction as soon as possible and I don't want to wait 12 to 14 years to finish," Mitch Daniels declared while detailing his commitment to build Interstate 69 by using a direct route from Evansville to Indianapolis. I am sure there are some of you asking, isn't this the same Mitch Daniels who, when asked about I-69 shortly after he announced his candidacy, said he was open to reconsider all routes? Including improving U.S. 41 on the western border of the state? This was and is classic Mitch Daniels. He wasn't about to give an absolute answer to the reporters' original question until he had studied the issue. Study doesn't begin to describe his research. He sought out the best information available from within the state, from the federal government, and from other states. He concluded first and foremost that the project is essential for the future economic revitalization of the state. Second, he is convinced that the best route is a direct route with an adjustment from Martinsville north. ❖

Help pick the HPR 50 Most Influential List

Dear HPR Subscriber:

Who should be on the 2004 HPR 50 Most Influential list?

How about Northern District Attorney Joseph Von Bokkelen?

Or Bernie Toon? Mark Lubbers? Sen. Becky Skillman?

It's time to make your submissions for the *2004 HPR 50 Most Influential List*. Ponder the 2003 list (and other years going back to 1999 at www.howeypolitics.com) and make your additions, subtractions and reordering. Send me your thoughts, or even your own complete list to:

brianhowey@howeypolitics.com.

It will be published in the Jan. 8 edition of HPR and a January edition of *The Indianapolis Eye* magazine. Cheers!

2003 HPR Most Influential List

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| 1. Sen. Richard Lugar | 26. Ken Zeller |
| 2. OMB Director Mitch Daniels | 27. Fort Wayne Mayor Graham Richard |
| 3. U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh | 28. Evansville Mayor Russell Lloyd Jr. |
| 4. State Sen. Larry Borst | 29. U.S. Rep. Mark Souder |
| 5. Senate President Pro Tempore Robert D. Garton | 30. Lee Hamilton |
| 6. House Speaker B. Patrick Bauer | 31. State Sen. Murray Clark |
| 7. Gov. Frank O'Bannon | 32. David McIntosh |
| 8. GOP Chairman Jim Kittle | 33. Eric Miller |
| 9. U.S. Rep. Mike Pence | 34. House Minority Leader Brian Bosma |
| 10. Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson | 35. Supt. Suellen Reed |
| 11. State Sen. Vi Simpson | 36. U.S. Rep. Baron Hill |
| 12. Joe Andrew | 37. Secretary of State Todd Rokita |
| 13. U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer | 38. Attorney General Steve Carter |
| 14. Ambassador James Morris | 39. U.S. Rep. John Hostettler |
| 15. Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan | 40. Michael Gerson |
| 16. Democratic Chairman Peter Manous | 41. U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky |
| 17. Ways and Means Chairman William Crawford | 42. U.S. Rep. Chris Chocola |
| 18. Marty Morris | 43. Bob Grand |
| 19. Kevin Brinegar | 44. Mike Fichter/Betty Cockrum |
| 20. Pat Kiely | 45. Allen County GOP Chairman Steve Shine |
| 21. Dan Clark | 46. St. Joe County Democratic Chairman Butch Morgan |
| 22. U.S. Rep. Julia Carson | 47. Lake County Sheriff Roy Dominguez |
| 23. U.S. Rep. Dan Burton | 48. Marion County Democratic Chairman Ed Treacy |
| 24. Ambassador Dan Coats | 49. Tim Goeglein |
| 25. House Majority Leader Russ Stilwell | 50. Jack Colwell |

TICKER T A P E

cluded special session, the Indiana House used up eight days of the 2004 short session calendar, given them 22 days left, unless rules are suspended. The Senate did not use up any of its days.

