



The defining of candidate Pence

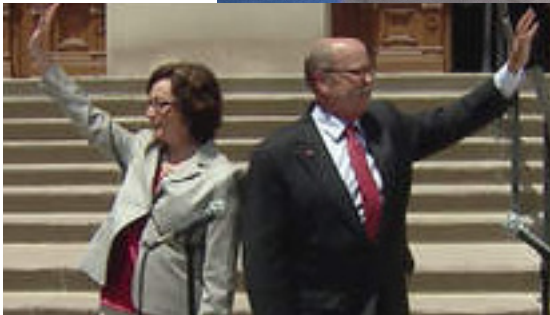
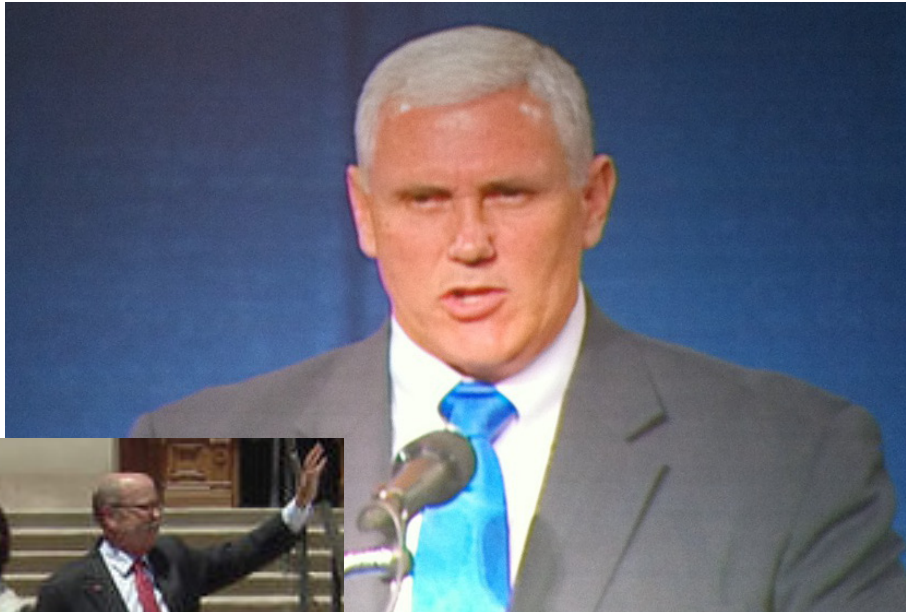
Cash-strapped Gregg campaign seeks to tag Pence on social issues

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

GREENWOOD, Ind. - What do you do when the money is trickling in, your opponent is flush with cash, and there are significant policy details that have evaded the public's attention? If you're John Gregg and Vi Simpson, the Democratic gubernatorial ticket, you hit the road and pump up the earned media.

That's exactly what the Democrats have done over the past two weeks, highlighting their version of the "Pence Plan" that focuses not on jobs, as Gregg repeatedly stated should be the top priority of the 2012 campaign with the Indiana unemployment rate hovering around 8%, but the Pence record on social issues.

Pence is tacking in the opposite direction, focusing almost exclusively on jobs. At the Indiana Republican Convention last Saturday, Pence said, "I believe Indiana is on



the verge of an era of growth and opportunity like no other in the history of the state, and if we meet this moment with the right leaders and right ideas, Indiana will take her rightful place as the leading state in the Midwest and one of the fastest growing state economies in America. My vision is clear: To make Indiana the state that works."

Continued on page 3

Statistics unworthy of us

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

NASHVILLE, Ind. - We live in not only the richest, most powerful nation in the world, we live in perhaps the wealthiest and most influential country in the history of civilization.



So it should trouble us all when a study released earlier this month by the organization Feeding America revealed that 22.7% of Hoosier children – an estimated 358,000 – don't know where their next meal will come from. In Miami and Starke counties, the statistics are even more troubling with 26.9% of children on the verge



“Reagan would have, based on his record of finding accommodation, finding a degree of common ground ... a hard time if you define the Republican Party.”

- *Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush*



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of hunger.

"As summer begins and Hoosier kids do not have access to school meals, we must take this information as a call to action," said Emily Weikart Bryant, executive director of Feeding Indiana's Hungry. "It is unacceptable for nearly a quarter of all children to be at risk of hunger in Indiana. There is no reason any child should be faced with the grim option of going without meals."

Why is this happening?

A new report by the Federal Reserve shows that between 2007 and 2010 – a period spanning the final two years of the George W. Bush and the first two years of the Barack Obama presidencies – American family median net worth declined by 40%. The last time we saw such a fall was during the Great Depression in the 1930s. Median net worth dropped from \$126,400 in 2007 to \$77,300 in 2010. Overall, median net worth fell 38.8% and the mean fell 14.7%. The median income for all American families fell 7.7%.

American families are getting hammered. They are seeing their home values decline. A home I own in Broad Ripple is now worth \$30,000 less than what I paid for it in 2005 (and that's after making \$40,000 in improvements).

The Fed said in its Survey of Consumer Finances: "Although declines in the values of financial assets or business were important factors for some families, the decreases in median net worth appear to have been driven most strongly by a broad collapse in house prices."

Here's another stunning statistic: While the FBI's Preliminary Annual Uniform Crime Report for 2011 showed that violent crime had declined nationwide by 4%, in small towns with populations under 10,000, the murder rate jumped 18.3%.

In Indianapolis, a survey of the homeless revealed an increase of 5%, from 1,567 in 2011 to 1,647 this year. But the Indianapolis Star

reported that the number of homeless U.S. military veterans surged by 34%. These are the people who served their country and have been discarded onto the mean streets.

On June 30, the Regional Bus Authority in Lake County will be on the verge of suspending public transit to Hammond, East Chicago and Gary. While the percentage of people living below the poverty level in Indiana is 13.5%, in Hammond it is 14.3%, in Gary it is 25.8% and in East Chicago it is 33.1%. The question that should be asked is: How are these people going to a job or the doctor's office once bus service is cut?

In 2009, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that 43.8% of Hoosier children were born out of wedlock, compared to 5.4% at the end of the Baby Boom in 1964. Some 39.4% of single mothers with children are poor compared to 6.1% of married couples with children. It prompted the Heritage Foundation to observe, "Marriage is a highly effective institution which greatly decreases parental and child poverty while improving long-term outcomes for children. Conversely, the absence of marriage greatly increases welfare costs and imposes added burdens on taxpayers."

In 2010, the rate of teen births was 37.3 per 1,000 population, compared to 34.3 for the U.S. average. The Indiana infant mortality rate per 1,000 stood at 7.8%, compared to 6.8% nationally.

Finally, the Pew Research Center reported this week that as Americans head to the polls this November, their values and basic beliefs are more polarized along partisan lines than at any point in the past 25 years. Unlike in 1987, when Pew began the series of surveys, the values gap between Republicans and Democrats is now greater than gender, age, race or class divides.

Overall, there has been much more stability than change across the 48 political value measures that



the Pew Center has tracked since 1987. But the average partisan gap has nearly doubled over this 25-year period, from 10 percentage points in 1987 to 18 percentage points in the new study. Nearly all of the increases have occurred during the presidencies of George W. Bush and Barack Obama. During this period, both parties' bases have often been critical of their parties for not standing up for their traditional positions. Currently, 71% of Republicans and 58% of Democrats say their parties have not done a good job in this regard.



Pew adds that the growing partisan divide over political values is not simply the result of the declining number who identify with the party labels. While many Americans have given up their party identification over the past 25 years and now call themselves independents, the polarization extends also to independents, which mostly lean toward a political party. Even when the definition of the party bases is extended to include the leaning independents, the values gap has about doubled between 1987 and 2012.

In contrast to the widening partisan gap, the new survey finds neither growing class differences in fundamental political values, nor increasing class resentment. As in the past, a substantial majority of Americans agree that "the rich just get richer while the poor get poorer." Yet there are no indications of increasing hostility toward the rich and successful. And there are no signs that lower-income people have become more cynical about an individual's power to control their destiny or the value of hard work.

In the Jan. 29, 2009, edition of HPI, I observed: The crisis we face today is a financial World War II. We've never been here before and it will take trial and error to find a way out. I am extremely skeptical of the congressional Republicans – those who helped set the stage for

the deep mess we are in – who right off the bat pronounced the stimulus plan as unworkable. How could they possibly know? And I am equally disenchanted with congressional Democrats who just couldn't resist loading up the stimulus bill with their social agenda, attempting to steer money into contraceptive programs and the National Endowment for the Arts. All it did was to throw up a barrier to Republicans, the very people President Obama says he wants to receive input from, and ultimately votes. And then comes Wednesday night. The stimulus bill that will bring \$4 billion dollars over the next two years to our state, passed by a straight party line vote. Folks, if this is the way it's going to be, we are in deeper trouble than I thought.

After U.S. Rep. Mike Pence invited President Obama to meet with them in January 2009, the President said, "The main message I have is that the statistics every day underscore the urgency of the economic situation. The American people expect action. They want us to put together a recovery package that puts people back to work, that creates investments that assure our long-term energy independence, an effective health care system, an education system that works; they want our infrastructure rebuilt, and they want it done wisely, so that we're not wasting taxpayer money."

So here we are more than three years later, with Obama and Pence on the ballot. The Indiana jobless rate stands at 7.9%, the U.S. rate at 8.2%.

By any standard, by any measure, our leaders are failing us. They didn't figure how to put the politics aside and work together. Today, the number of people I know who six years ago were firmly stationed in the middle class and today are struggling to make ends meet has grown exponentially.

Shame. ❖

Pence, from page 1

For Indiana Democrats, the lesson of allowing an opponent to talk in diversionary platitudes is a raw one. In Mitch Daniels' 2004 gubernatorial campaign, there were few specifics on initiatives like Major Moves. It surfaced two years later with the Indiana Toll Road lease, even though Daniels had spent a good part of Mayor Stephen Goldsmith's administration heading the SELTIC board that ignited privatization efforts. During his 2008 reelection, few details came out regarding what would be his monumental 2011 education reforms. And during the 2010 legislative

campaigns, there was scant mention of Right to Work, which months later embroiled the General Assembly in a five-week Democratic walkout and culminate in its passage in 2012.

While Pence pushed the federal assault on Planned Parenthood for three consecutive congressional sessions, conservatives in the Indiana Senate ignited the issue late in the 2011 session, with House Republicans joining in to overwhelmingly pass a bill that Gov. Daniels signed into law.

"If Planned Parenthood wants to be involved in providing counseling services and HIV testing, they ought not be in the business of providing abortions," Pence told



Politico in a 2011 interview. "As long as they aspire to do that, I'll be after them."

And Pence rebuked Gov. Daniels' 2010 call for a "truce" on social issues, with the governor saying Republicans needed to focus on the lurking financial disaster. Pence told a Family Research Council Values Voter Summit in 2010 that Republicans "can create jobs while protecting innocent human life. We must not remain silent while great moral values are being waged."

Pence also has been an ardent proponent of traditional marriage. In a letter he wrote that was posted on the blog Pam's House Blend, Pence said, "In the wake of ominous decisions by activist courts and recent actions by state governments, the need to defend the institution of traditional marriage is more apparent than ever. The traditional two-parent family is the nucleus of our civilization. Harvard sociologist Pitirim Sorokin found that throughout history, societal collapse was always brought about by the deterioration of marriage and family. This debate is not about discrimination. Congress should oppose any effort to put gay and lesbian relationships on an equal legal status with heterosexual marriage. Marriage was ordained by God, instituted among men; it is the glue that binds the American family, and the safest harbor in which to raise children. That is why it is so important to put in that most sacred of documents an affirmation of the foundation of our society – traditional marriage."

But the Indiana Republican platform - for the first time in years - does not mention the issue.

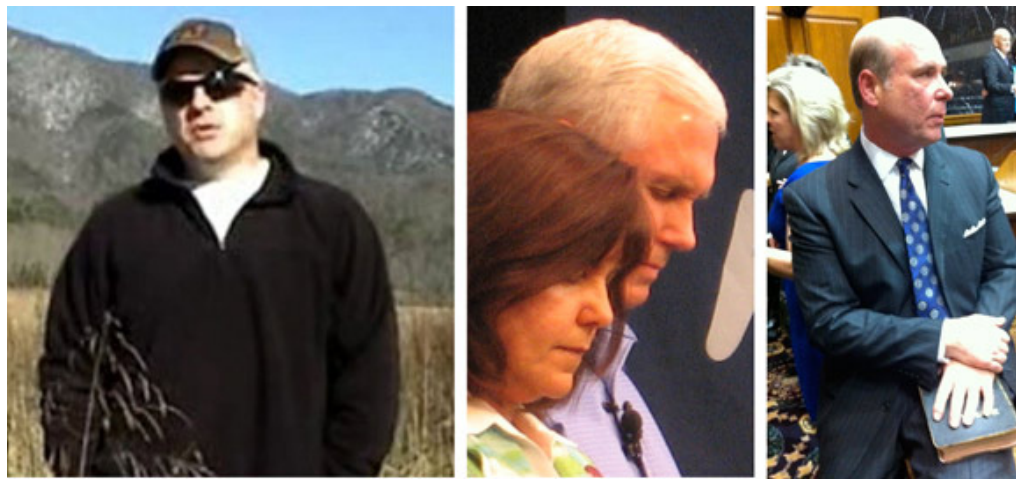
As for other controversial issues that have surfaced in the Indiana General Assembly in recent years, such as the teaching of creationism along with evolution in public schools, or the extension of vouchers, Pence has not articulated policy stances.

Pence spokeswoman Christy Denault told the NWI Times the Republican candidate isn't running on social issues and did not write or edit the book - "The Indiana Mandate" - that Gregg referenced. "This campaign is about jobs and education," Denault said. "The issues we're campaigning on are the same issues you're going to see appear in the governing agenda that we're going to lay out in the coming weeks."

But when it comes to a social agenda in a Pence

administration, the nominee is uncharacteristically mum. "I'm happy to be held accountable for what I've said and done in my career," Pence told Abdul Hakim-Shabazz and WRTV's Norm Cox in a convention interview, saying he wanted to "create good jobs and strong families."

"I've said a lot of things over the last 20 years. People know I say what I mean and mean what I say," Pence said, adding that "we're committed in this campaign to talk about our agenda for Indiana's future. What voters heard today was a positive vision. They also want to hear what that means for their lives. The truth of the matter is



Mike Fichter (left) of Indiana Right to Life has called for "extreme leadership" on the abortion issue. The Pences pray at the campaign kickoff in Columbus in June 2011. At right House Speaker Bosma may have a second Republican governor to work with along with a 67-seat super majority.

you can't move any organization unless you articulate those goals."

Cox asked whether Pence stands by comments about unmarried women, promiscuity and subsequent choices. "Let me stand by my words I wrote in the past, that I've spoken on the floor of Congress and in forums around Indiana," Pence responded. "I'm proud to stand on my record over the last 20 years. We'll let others defend their own words."

While Pence began outlining his economic platform with a Greenwood press conference Tuesday on creating more vocational education Core40 graduates, there is no similar social agenda, even though Pence has repeatedly told supporters that great moral battles are in the offing.

Thus, we find Gregg holding a presser outside of a Indianapolis Planned Parenthood clinic – with, perhaps, abortions being performed inside as he spoke – revealing his own "Pence Plan" that centers on a 1992 Indiana Policy Review Foundation booklet called "The Indiana Mandate," an agenda for the 1990s Gregg is referring to as the "Pence



Manifesto.”

“Throughout his career he has advocated an extreme agenda, focused on pursuing divisive social issues and supporting policies that have been bad for Hoosiers across the board,” said Gregg. “If he’s not ready to roll out his agenda, we’re happy to do it for him.”

Democrats say highlights of Pence’s blueprint include: Declaring that it is an “extreme argument” that women have “almost unlimited choices, including promiscuity”; calling a doctor’s judgment unreliable as to whether an abortion is needed to protect the health of the mother; claiming that contraception for unmarried couples “destroys the American family”; calling on young victims of incest to obtain consent from their parents for an abortion, despite the fact that those parents may have been the abusers. Given this blueprint that Pence endorsed early in his career, the path he has followed since then should not be surprising, said Gregg.

That Democrats would highlight an “extreme” Pence agenda is not simply an opposition overreaction. Mike Fichter, a Pence ally who heads Indiana Right to Life, uses similar rhetoric. In a web video promoting his book “Viability,” Fichter called for the war against abortion to be played at a “higher strategic level,” adding that it would take “extreme leadership and raw courage.”

Fichter is preparing to call for the Indiana General Assembly to pass legislation outlawing chemical abortion. “According to the 2010 statistics, chemical abortions climbed 35% between 2009 and 2010, accounting for 1,968 abortions” Fichter said. “This marks an accelerated spike in chemical abortion rates that have more than doubled since 2005. We are shocked by the rapid increase in the use of chemical abortifacients that are largely unregulated. This as an alarming trend that the Indiana legislature must address.”

Pence has not left his passionate stance on abortion. At his campaign kickoff in June 2011, Pence made it clear that while he will have a lieutenant governor, God will be the co-pilot. “To restore our economy we must reaffirm our respect for the institutions and traditions that nurture the character of our people,” he said. “As your governor, I will stand for the sanctity of life, traditional marriage and the importance of organized religion in everyday life. To build an even better Indiana, we must recognize every day that our present crisis is not just economic, but moral.”

And on Saturday in accepting the nomination, Pence said, “I believe in the sanctity of life. There is no such thing as an unwanted child.” Republican delegates responded with a standing ovation. He said that Indiana’s challenges are not strictly economic, but “moral.”

IUPUI Prof. Sheila Suess Kennedy observed in her blog, “Pence’s voting record during his time in Congress has been consistent with these and other positions set out in that Policy Review document. That in itself is fine – here’s a candidate who has a very strong ideology and who has continued to support that ideology. The idea of elections is that we voters get to compare the positions held by the candidates and choose between them. Unfortunately, when candidates realize that their beliefs are unlikely to be embraced by the average voter, they do what Pence is doing: They re-invent themselves. Mike Pence has never shown the slightest interest in economic development, transportation policy, public administration, or the myriad other issues that occupy a governor. His sole passion has been the social issues that divide Americans, and even in the Hoosier heartland, most people do not agree with his positions on those issues. So he’s trying to ‘reinvent’ himself as a softer, gentler Mike Pence.”

The editorially conservative Fort Wayne News-Sentinel observed, “Pence is doing what he must to woo



the two main Republican factions – the social conservatives and the fiscal conservatives. He cannot win without both groups, so he must appeal to both. And because the alliance between them is sometimes fragile, Pence has to be careful he doesn't twist himself into a political pretzel. It can be done. The social issues can be introduced subtly and elegantly as one part of conservatism's overall message. Pence seems to be on the right track with his linking of a healthy economy and healthy families – in fact, they reinforce each other."

While Gregg and Simpson are using abortion restrictions and women's issues to make a play for the vital independent vote, they may be treading into dangerous territory. While there has been no recent Indiana polling on the abortion issue, a 2011 national Harris Poll revealed that 36% of Americans believe women should have access to abortion in all circumstances, up from 23% in 2009. The poll also found that almost half of U.S. adults (47%) favored permitting abortion under "some [but not all] circumstances," a slight dip from the 53% in 2009.

Pence's pollster, Kellyanne Conway of The Polling Company, surveyed eight congressional districts in 2010 on behalf of Woman Trend for the Susan B. Anthony List, including Indiana's 8th and 9th CDs. In live interviews with 300 voters in each district, at least three in five respondents agreed that federal abortion funding should not be included in a health care bill. When asked, regardless of their personal opinion on abortion, if abortion should be included as part of the bill, there was opposition in all eight districts and was highest in the 8th CD, Gregg's home district, where 65% said they would be less likely to vote for then U.S. Rep. Brad Ellsworth if he backed legislation with federal funding for abortion.

A 2008 national Zogby Poll also found hostile territory for Democrats. While it was a national poll, an assumption is that Indiana would poll further toward the anti-abortion stance, given that in 2011 the Indiana General Assembly overwhelmingly passed a Planned Parenthood defunding bill and House Republicans appear to be in a commanding position to not only maintain a majority, but by HPI's analysis are in a good position to achieve a 67-seat super majority. Pollster John Zogby noted that "while much of the poll's findings suggest Democrats will have trouble gaining a political advantage by using the emotionally charged issue of abortion, voters are still evenly split on whether the U.S. Constitution guarantees a woman's right to choose to have an abortion." Forty-six percent of the respondents agreed that there was a constitutional guarantee while 45% disagreed.

The Howey/DePauw Indiana Battleground Polls coming in September and October will certainly survey likely Indiana voters on both economic and social issues.

During the convention period, Pence is airing a

second biography TV ad and is well on his way to reporting a \$7 million war chest. Gregg and Simpson are scouring the state for earned media and face perhaps the most crucial guidepost in this race on June 30. After posting just \$584,000 during the first quarter, Gregg needs to be in the \$2 million to \$3 million range for the second quarter. Indiana Democratic Chairman Dan Parker told HPI last month that uncontested primary candidates often don't raise as much money until after the primary, an indicator that this second quarter posting will be the most critical of the Indiana gubernatorial race.

If the Gregg-Simpson ticket is going to make this race a competitive one, the money spigot has to be gushing in the final weeks of this period. Attempting to flush out Pence on social issues is a way of doing that. The other dynamic is that in the coming months Indiana reporters and editorial page editors will be pushing Pence to reveal his true social issue agenda before Nov. 6. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Pence ❖

Pence comes up to me one day and wants to talk about economic issues . . .

By MARK SOUDER

FORT WAYNE - One day I was talking to some members on the House floor. Mike Pence came over and asked what we could do to fight the Democrats' proposed tax increases. I turned to him and said: "Mike, I am amazed. I thought you only cared about social issues."



Actually that story is apocryphal. Mike did not come up to me once about economic issues, he did all the time.

I know former Congressman Baron Hill said Mike primarily cared about social issues and not economic issues. Baron was usually seated in the front row during the Republican conferences, and whenever I was privileged to be in leadership meetings, Baron

was always there. Actually, he wasn't. Nor were all the media people who pronounce such things with great supposed authority.

The charge can be made that Mike spoke out more



about taxes and spending after Barack Obama became president, for obvious reasons. But it would be incredibly wrong to say that Mike also didn't buck the Bush administration on spending as well. In fact, I would argue the precise opposite point the media is making.

I know Mike cares deeply about social issues. But our few disagreements were when I felt he didn't understand that we were sometimes forced to trade money for social policy or regulatory policy. In other words, that Mike Pence at times got too focused on economic (and thus jobs) related issues. But of course I was in the room for some of those discussions, unlike his critics who want to peddle the current theme.

This current liberal line as "Pence the preacher" fails in a whole series of ways.

First of all, John Gregg is the social-issue-only guy, not Pence. Here is the sum total of knowledge about John Gregg in northern Indiana right now: He is supposedly a pro-life, pro-gun Democrat. To be fair, a few secondary facts are also vaguely known as well, including that he is from somewhere south of U.S.

30. He's funny, the unions like him, he says Mike Pence is his friend every time before bashing Mike, and he isn't going to make Vi Simpson grow a moustache. But as for Gregg policies he is known for, the only thing is his claim on social issues. Ironic.

Gregg has developed a supposed Pence Plan for Indiana but not his own plan.

When I first heard Gregg's supposed Pence policy positions I thought he was merely confused about Mike's role as a policy alternative development foundation leader and as a legislative officeholder. But no, it was more than that. Mike never said the things attributed to his plan: Mike was merely the coordinator of an organization which published a book of ideas, written by other people. Guilt by association is common. To take someone else's words and turn them into a supposed specific platform of a candidate is a new level of deceit. So far, I missed the editorial outrage.

Liberals keep whining about the negative Tea Party extremists. Mike Pence is running an exemplary ad campaign, and Gregg's campaign is only negative.

Had Senator Lugar developed his campaign as Mike is doing, as well as clearly establishing his residency, he probably would be heading to re-election right now. Mike is establishing who he is, and why he wants to be governor. He is also releasing how he proposes to govern. You know, like people claim is the way they want campaigns to be run.

Mike Pence is not just a social conservative Christian. His statement – I am a Christian first, a conservative second, and a Republican third – is sometimes distorted. Let's try the reverse in front of the Throne on Judgment Day. "Well, God, I thought it was my duty to be a Republican first." Your worldview, Christian or non-Christian, is how you view things, whether or not to recognize that to be true. Furthermore, at times you can become defined as primarily a social conservative because you stand up when others are quaking in fear of defending their beliefs. Then your enemies define you that way. Mike is not ashamed of his moral views, but Mike was never solely defined by social issues. He has always been a limited government, tight-spending, no-new-taxes, strong pro-military, anti-terrorist triad conservative (economic/social/defense policy).

Washington is different than Indianapolis, congressman is different than governor. As head of OMB, Mitch Daniels didn't talk about the toll road, re-shaping the license bureaus, promoting on-line college degrees, or privatizing some bookkeeping functions of welfare

programs. Mitch did, however, promote state flexibility, as Mike has done.

Mike was the moderate's favorite strong social conservative. For the unaware, Speaker John Boehner is not the Tea Party poster boy. But he picked Mike Pence for Republican conference chairman, with overwhelming support of the members, because Mike was a Republican Study Committee right flank leader on

economic and social issues who the moderates felt was reasonable. Furthermore, when I was encouraging Mike to run for president, when recruiting members of Congress, several were well known moderates who said they would support Mike because he was a social conservative who could work with all factions, was positive and optimistic, had clear views, and could articulate them well in non-offensive ways.

This concerted effort to distort Mike Pence will fail, just as future personal attacks will, not because – as liberals will claim – Mike has more money to spend. Money is needed to get your message out. Money is a measure of your ability to convince others of your worth to be in office. But the attacks will fail because they are combinations of exaggerations and complete fabrications. It is becoming increasingly clear that Mike is building a huge lead in this race that will likely carry the entire Republican ticket. ❖

Souder is a former Republican Member of Congress.

'The attacks will fail because they are combinations of exaggerations and complete fabrications. It is becoming increasingly clear that Mike is building a huge lead in this race that will likely carry the entire Republican ticket.'



Hammond's ascension to RNC over Bopp has post-primary angles

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - To the victor, the spoils, right? Not when it comes to the Indiana Republican Central Committee and a race that played out before the state convention last week, when Republican National Committeeman Jim Bopp Jr. lost his seat to 7th CD Chairman John Hammond III.

Bopp claimed that his ouster by a 16-6 vote was retribution for his support of Senate nominee Richard Mourdock over U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar. "Everybody knows that the critical element was that I supported Richard Mourdock, and that unfortunately the Lugar supporters rather than focusing on the good of the state and the country and uniting the party decided to get revenge," Bopp told Indiana Public Media.

Another way to look at it is that despite the assertions of Gov. Mitch Daniels that Mourdock is from the "mainstream" of the Republican Party, the party apparatus itself is reluctant to turn over the keys to what a number of observers see as the GOP fringe that backed Mourdock's candidacy with only a small sliver of Indiana voters (22%) voting. And of that sliver of the GOP vote, 39% backed Lugar. One Republican Central Committee member told HPI on background that the search for ideological purity smacked of the same kind of rhetoric associated with the early days of the Third Reich in Germany.

When it came to the search for purity, Bopp was leading the way. Roll Call reported that in 2009, Bopp proposed a 10-point Republican purity test that would grant financial support only to candidates who supported eight of 10 core principles, including opposing same-sex marriage, amnesty for illegal immigrants and federal funding of abortion. The constitutional lawyer has helped press some of the most influential campaign finance cases in recent years. They include *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, a 2010 decision that allows FreedomWorks' new super PAC to collect unlimited sums from corporations. Without the *Citizens United* and *Speech Now* Supreme Court decisions, Mourdock would not have had the outside funds to defeat Lugar. As *Mother Jones Magazine* reported, Bopp's *Citizens United* case essentially dismantled 100 years worth

of U.S. campaign finance law.

The Indianapolis Star reported last Sunday that Bopp and another RNC member drew criticism from some party leaders in 2009 for proposing a resolution that would have asked the Democratic Party to change its name to the "Democrat Socialist Party."

While Mourdock's defeat of Lugar was a blow to the so-called Republican "establishment," given the nominee's opposition to the Lugar concept of bipartisanship and consensus building, the Republican Central Committee appears headed in the other direction. Hammond and Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman, who replaces National Committeewoman Dee Dee Benkie, were Lugar supporters. Benkie and Bopp backed Mourdock.

In 2011, seven of the 10 Central Committee members who were early backers of Mourdock either retired or



Jim Bopp Jr., speaks at the Republican Leadership Council in 2011. He will remain on the RNC through the end of the Republican National Convention.

lost reelection bids during congressional district reorganization. The 16-6 vote for Hammond was a reflection of the new Central Committee.

And, as last week's HPI analysis of the Senate race revealed (along with Howey/DePauw Indiana Battleground Polling released on May 4), most GOP voters rejected Lugar more for his age and longevity than ideology. Republican pollster Christine Matthews observed in HPI on the poll released on May 4, "These voters think Indiana's senior senator has served too long. The comments relating to Lugar being too liberal, or Obama's favorite Republican, or voting for his Supreme Court justices account for just about 15% of the reasons given for supporting Mr. Mourdock."

Bopp did not go without a fight. The prominent Terre Haute attorney tried to deflate the Hammond candidacy by citing party rules that he believed would keep a lobbyist from serving on the RNC.

Hammond was not impressed, saying in a respond-



ing email, "I was disappointed to hear that Jim had circulated our private e-mail string without allowing me time to get my legal analysis back to him." Hammond cited, and the Central Committee agreed, that RNC members are not "officers" of the Indiana Republican Central Committee.

Bopp's defeat has hardly sidelined him. Roll Call reported on Wednesday that before he leaves the RNC on Sept. 1 – after the Republican National Convention in Tampa – Bopp will try and influence the national GOP platform. It is perhaps no surprise he showed up at FreedomWorks' policy and political boot camp Sunday to give some 125 activists insight on how to shape the party's platform, which will be officially blessed at the Tampa convention.

"We're doing everything we can to get everybody on board with the RNC and our candidate," Bopp said.

A preview of that occurred at the Indiana Republican Convention on Saturday. The NWI Times reported that the tightly scheduled convention had a moment of uncertainty when Chris Retson of Crown Point proposed amending the party platform to demand an audit of the Federal



Dee Dee Benkie says she left the RNC to concentrate on her commentary career with Fox News.

Reserve System, a position popular among supporters of Republican presidential candidate Ron Paul. As many delegates shouted "End the Fed," party leaders conferred briefly on stage and agreed to amend the declaration of party principles.

Within the rightward shifting ranks of the Indiana GOP, the prevalent view for now is to "End the Fed"; to reject bipartisanship and compromise; to reject raising the federal debt ceiling, putting the U.S. government in default as Mourdock advocated in August 2011; to

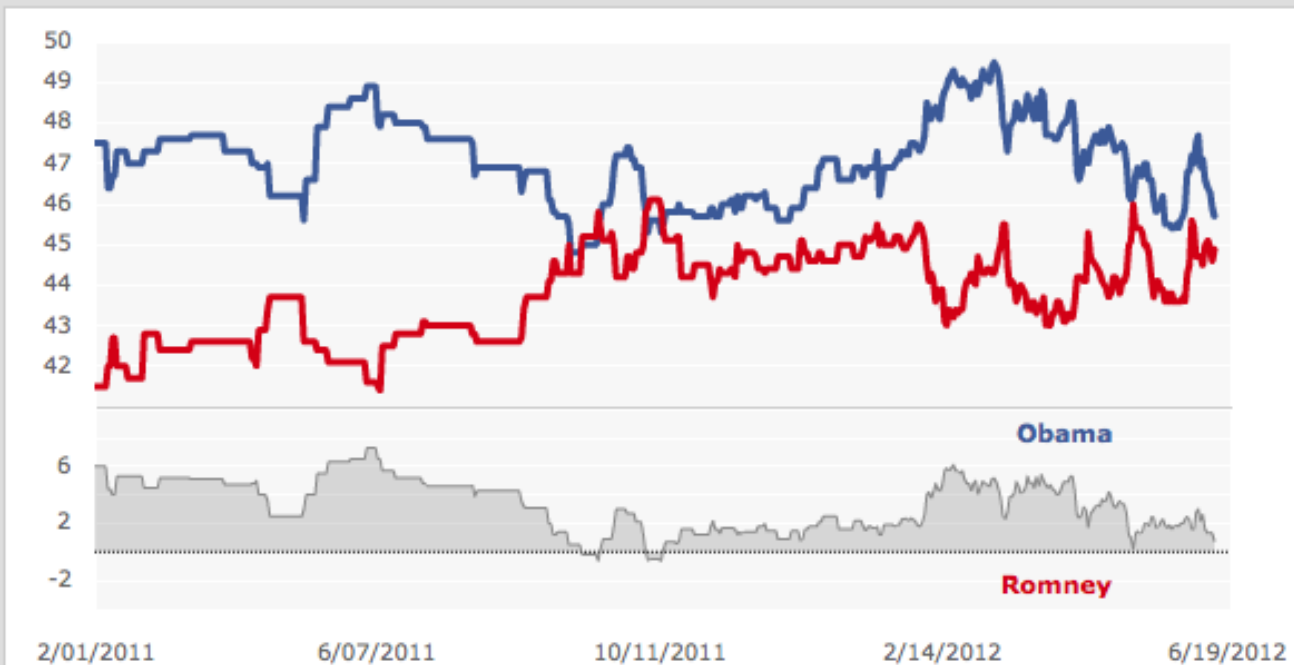
declare President Obama as a "socialist" (never mind that the President actually jumped in bed with Big Pharma as Obamacare was being hammered out, as opposed to the initiation of state control over the means of production); to question the 17th Amendment for the direct election of U.S. senators; and to call for an end to the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Education and the EPA.

If Mourdock defeats Democrat Joe Donnelly in November, the Indiana GOP's rightward journey stands to be codified, with the party officials perhaps becoming as vulnerable as Sen. Lugar. ❖



RCP POLL AVERAGE General Election: Romney vs. Obama

45.7 Obama (D) +0.8
44.9 Romney (R)





The torch is passed from Daniels to Pence

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - Gubernatorial nominee Mike Pence began revealing his agenda at the torch-passing Indiana Republican Convention on Saturday, calling for "A vision for the state that works."

Pence acknowledged the 250,000 Hoosiers out of work and called for increasing private sector employment, emphasizing new investment on manufacturing, agriculture, life sciences and logistics. He will seek increased graduation rates, improved math and science scores from elementary school students, and healthier families and children.

"I am running for governor because I love this state, because I have a vision for the future," Pence told delegates at the Indiana Convention Center. "I believe Indiana is on the verge of an era of growth and opportunity like no other in the history of the state, and if we meet this moment, with the right leaders and right ideas, Indiana will take her rightful place as the leading state in the Midwest and one of the fastest growing state economies in America. My vision is clear: To make Indiana the state that works."

Pence has repeatedly steered away from hot button social issues, saying "To make Indiana the state that works we must make job creation job one and make it our aim to have more Hoosiers going to work than ever before in our state history." But in accepting the nomination, Pence shared his "core beliefs," citing integrity, hard work, and treating others the way you want to be treated. He said "government should live within our means" and called for limited government. "And I believe in the sanctity of life," Pence said. Delegates rose for a standing ovation. He said "There is no such thing as an unwanted child."

He said that Indiana's challenges are not strictly

economic, but "moral." He called for a state "where every child is nurtured."

Pence also called for education improvements, saying, "Being a state that works should mean that our schools work for all kids, whether you're college bound, or you want to get right into a job. Our high schools must be there to help every student start on success." He cited his wife Karen, after she introduced him, who is a public school teacher. "Our schools should work for all of our kids, regardless of where they start in life." He said the state should make "vocational education a priority in every high school."

Pence had few details of his program, saying, "In the weeks ahead, we will be outlining our strategies and solutions for moving Indiana from reform to results. With these goals before us, we can take Indiana from good to great."

On Tuesday in Greenwood, Pence began rolling out his agenda. Citing what he called a "skills gap" in Indiana, Pence called for the creation of regional Indiana Works Councils (IWCs) to bring employers and educators together to design demand-driven career, technical and vocational curriculum to create job opportunities for high school graduates.

"There is a skills gap in the Indiana workforce. To make Indiana the state that works, we should start by making sure that every student has the opportunity to start

on success," said Pence. "The time has come to make career, technical and vocational education a priority in every high school in Indiana." Pence pointed to research that showed the importance of making career, technical and vocational education a priority in every Indiana high school: In 2011 only 1 percent (1,010) of all high school graduates earned a Core40 with Technical Honors degree, and yet Indiana has the third highest percentage of high school graduates in our workforce.

John Gregg responded to the first Pence policy, saying "I agree with Congressman Pence that we ought to improve technical and vocational opportunities for Hoosier students, and I'm glad that Congressman Pence is now thinking about our

public schools, but I don't think just proposing another Washington-style committee is the answer. We need less talk and more action. The best ideas don't come out of Washington, DC or from Indianapolis - they come from



Former Indiana Treasurer Marge O'Laughlin greets GOP gubernatorial nominee Mike Pence at the state convention on Saturday.



classrooms throughout the state.”

The six-term congressman from Columbus vowed to take on the “liberal agenda” and urged the “repeal of Obamacare.”

Essentially, the GOP torch passed from Gov. Mitch Daniels to Pence.

Unlike the 2004 convention when Daniels had his campaign icon RV1 driven into the hall, on Saturday he entered the hall on his Harley-Davidson. “Thank you Mitch!” a delegate shouted. “Sorry about the noisy introduction,” Daniels said, “but without a contest on the agenda, some of you might need a wakeup call.”

“Indiana is a different state today because the Indiana Republican Party is different,” said Daniels, who had a 63% approval rating in a March Howey/DePauw Indiana Battleground Poll. “Because it comprises men and women who care about the future, care about our young people, care about those yet to achieve the American dream. So we recruit and elect people with those ideals and then insist that they deliver real results once in office. That’s where the new Indiana came from. That’s why Indiana is a leadership state.”

He said that “lean, clean government is the rightful expectation of the voters whose permission we seek to be their employees in public office. We’re gonna elect Mike Pence and a crew of fellow reformers who will lead this state further forward, to growth and hope that should be every Hoosier’s birthright.”

Toward the end of the governor’s speech, Daniels looked out across the convention hall and said, “Please indulge me while I look around for a minute. This is the last chance I’ll have to see this beautiful sight. I’m looking at the faces of people who have launched this state on a new era of leadership, good government and hope. The party to whom Hoosiers look for the next improvement, the next set of reforms. The party of purpose.”

The Indiana Republican Party is at a crossroads, following a bitter primary battle between U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar and Treasurer Richard Mourdock, with the latter

winning a dramatic landslide victory on May 8. But Howey/DePauw Indiana Battleground Polling data from its March 26-27 revealed that 57% of Lugar supporters had an unfavorable opinion of the nominee. Mourdock worked to try and unite the party.

Mourdock kicked off the morning’s speeches, telling delegates who gave him a standing ovation, “I love this

party as all of you do. I have to tell you I never imagined I would stand here.”

Mourdock asked, “Why would I take on the challenge I began in 2011 - to challenge Sen. Dick Lugar? As a Republican, we believe in competition.” He called for a “round of applause” for Lugar and said, “The legacy of Richard Lugar will live on.” Delegates rose to their feet and applauded Lugar, who was not in attendance. Pence also invited delegates to honor Lugar, but quickly added, “It is

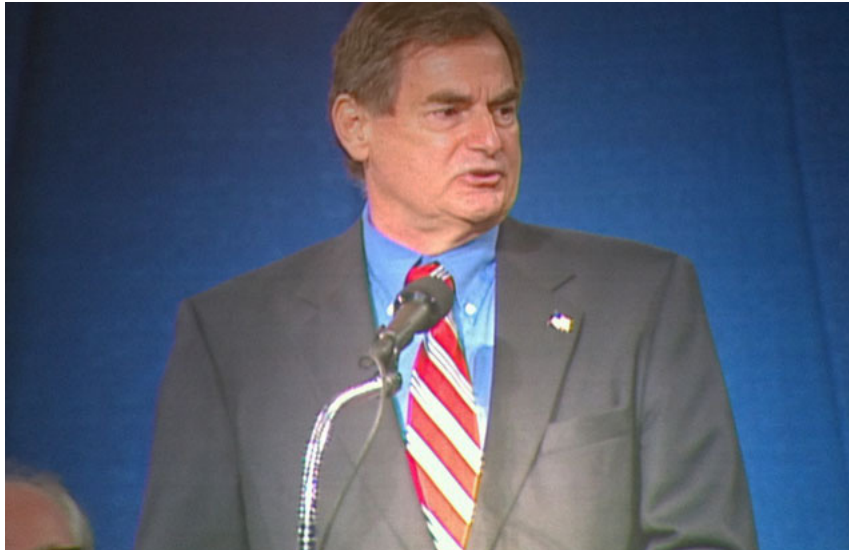
even more important we come together as a party and send Richard Mourdock to the Senate.”

Mourdock said that GOP stands for “Growth, opportunity and prosperity. That’s what we’re going to do. I am confident, but not over confident.” He added, “If we were having this conversation four years ago today, I would have bet my house, IRA, 401k, even my beloved motorcycle, that this state would not give its 11 Electoral College votes to Barack Obama. We cannot let that happen again.”

Indiana Republican Chairman Eric Holcomb said that the party has a “deep bench” and added, “Our positive vision and message has resonated across the state - and across the nation. The crossroads of America is now a road map for how other states can balance their books without raising taxes, cut debt, get a AAA credit rating, improve education and ensure freedom of choice for workers.”

Indiana Senate

Chrysler’s bankruptcy proceedings will cost state taxpayers \$2 million in legal fees, but he has no regrets about what some saw as a quixotic effort. The AP also took note of ways the Tea Party-backed Mourdock could exploit the case for partisan gain: “The Chrysler fight thrust



Republican Senate nominee Richard Mourdock addresses the GOP Convention Saturday morning. He said the GOP stands for “Growth, opportunity and prosperity.” (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)



Mourdock into an odd place for an Indiana treasurer - the national spotlight... that could help Mourdock if he decides to run for a second term as treasurer in 2010 or tests the waters for governor. Since that time the cost of the suit has increased, with Manhattan-based White & Case LLP eventually billing Indiana \$2.8 million as Mourdock parlayed his newfound fame into a primary campaign against Senator Richard Lugar."

When asked by the Associated Press if he had any regrets Mourdock said "If I had to do it all over again, I'd do the same," a sentiment he also expressed while disputing Don Quixote comparisons, telling the Indianapolis Star that "these are real windmills." Had Mourdock's suit succeeded, the liquidation of Chrysler would have eventually cost Indiana nearly 150,000 jobs and increased the losses incurred by the pension funds Mourdock claims he was suing to protect. The funds' stake in Chrysler was purchased at 45 cents on the dollar; Mourdock was granted 29 cents on the dollar for secured debt, nearly three times what he would have received in liquidation. "Three years ago, Hoosier taxpayers first saw how much of their money Richard Mourdock was willing to risk spending to boost his political star," said Indiana Democratic Party Chair Dan Parker. "Not only did he spend an exorbitant amount of taxpayer money; he risked the jobs of nearly 150,000 Hoosiers and nearly cut the return to Indiana pension funds by two thirds. Richard Mourdock is continuing to delay releasing the costs of his suit, but Hoosier taxpayers already know they can't trust Richard Mourdock with their money."

Mourdock spent part of the week talking about health care. Mourdock and U.S. Rep. Todd Rokita, R-Indianapolis, said they are waiting in the wings if the 2010 insurance law is struck down this month (Carden, NWI Times). The pair told reporters Monday they favor capping federal spending and giving states total control over eligibility, coverage and spending decisions for Medicaid, the federal-state health insurance program for the poor. The Republicans also want to privatize Medicare, the federal health insurance program for senior citizens, with seniors receiving government vouchers to cover some of the cost of private insurance premiums. Mourdock and Rokita both said that without competition between states under a reformed Medicaid plan -- and competition between insurance companies under a reformed Medicare program -- future federal spending on health care would be unsustainable.

"I believe the health care issue will be the biggest issue through the entire election cycle, not just for this race but for the presidential race as well," Mourdock told the News & Tribune during a campaign swing through New Albany and Jeffersonville. "I believe campaigns ought to be about contrast and there are few issues that will show greater contrast between Congressman Donnelly and me than this issue. Clearly, he believes in Obamacare, he voted

for it, he's continuing to defend it and I think it's a horrible idea that's not only going to result in really bad health care but it's also really crushing the economy right now because of the expectation of the cost." He favors a plan that would allow health care to be bought across state lines, creating more competition. Further, he would like to see regulations changed in a way that allows businesses to pool together in purchasing health care insurance, which would spread the risk and reduce costs. Mourdock believes the health care law will inflate costs and reduce health professionals' efficiency; "instead of seeing 80 patients per day they're only seeing 40," he said. Of particular interest to the candidate is a mandate that requires an employer to pay for certain services they may be morally opposed to — such as birth control — which Mourdock said he opposes. But is that fair to the consumer, who may want their birth control covered?

Mourdock's example was an employer who decided to cover everything but cancer. "Does that employer have the right to do it? I would say yes they do if they want to keep their health care costs down but it also means it's less likely you're going to want to work here. If that employer wants to get the best employees coming in the door he's going to offer the best insurance possible." So is there anything to like about Obamacare? Mourdock concedes that he has heard support from people on the pre-existing condition coverage that the bill allows. Further, he said, health insurance companies are also embracing a provision in the law which allows parents to keep their children on their plans until they reach age 26. "Those types of reforms are good ones that we need to continue to build on," he said. Donnelly points to the same two reforms as positive progress that came out of the bill. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup

Indiana Democratic Convention

FORT WAYNE - Democrats from across Indiana will begin invading the Summit City tonight as the party prepares to have its first convention outside of Indianapolis in nearly a century (Lanka, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). While delegates can't actually register until Friday evening — and the official convention isn't until Saturday — guests are expected to arrive today for a series of events ranging from BBQ Ribfest to one that features many of the the products made in northeast Indiana. Mayor Tom Henry, chairman of the convention, said the expanded list of activities is no accident. With up to 2,500 people trekking to Fort Wayne from across the state, he said it was important for the city to show what it can offer, especially because this could be the first trip to the Summit City for many of the delegates. "This year we're trying to offer all kinds of additional attractions," he said.

The events related to the convention are estimated to have a local economic development effect of nearly



\$500,000, according to the party. During the convention at Grand Wayne Center, Indiana Democrats will officially nominate Vi Simpson for lieutenant governor and select a nominee for superintendent of public schools and attorney general. Henry said he will give a speech at the convention, but joked, "not a long one." Democratic gubernatorial nominee John Gregg and U.S. Senate nominee Joe Donnelly, a current U.S. House member, will also give addresses. The convention had been in Indianapolis for decades. Henry said it was moved to Anderson about 80 years ago out of necessity, but this was the first time the party held a competitive bid process involving other communities. Gregg, who is from southern Indiana, said he was looking forward to having the event in a different part of the state, and he was especially excited about making a special trip to Coney Island for lunch.

Indianapolis attorney and Boonville native Kay Fleming announced her candidacy for the office of Indiana attorney general today. Fleming plans to focus her campaign on issues that affect average Hoosiers and improving the effectiveness of the attorney general's Office. "As a parent, an attorney, and taxpaying Hoosier, I believe our state and this office could be doing much better when it comes to child welfare, identity theft and other issues that affect the lives of Indiana residents," Fleming said. "I'm running because I believe I have the background and skill set to make the necessary improvements as attorney general." Fleming said her campaign will initially focus on the following issues: The Indiana Department of Child Services: "There are too many children dying of abuse or neglect. Clearly the DCS could use some help and I believe that the AG's office is in a position to offer it and should offer it"; Identity theft: "This problem has not only not gone away, it has not sufficiently abated. We've got to be sure we investigate the perpetrators so they are punished in such a way as to serve as a deterrent, but also set our investigative arm so that we prevent the crimes in the first place.

Gregg endorsed Fleming, saying on Wednesday, "we have talked a lot these past few weeks about workhorses versus show horses, and I don't think we could have found a better workhorse to be our state's attorney than Kay."

Indiana General Assembly

SD40: Sharp enters race

Monroe County Assessor Judy Sharp has thrown her name in the hat for the senate seat Vi Simpson is vacating. Simpson legally must give up her seat after the state Democratic convention Saturday when she officially accepts the nomination for lieutenant governor (Indiana Public Media). Sharp says her experience in the financial



Monroe County Assessor Judy Sharp will seek Vi Simpson's Senate seat.

sector qualifies her for the position. She says much of the time during her 20 plus years as the county assessor has been spent at the statehouse, speaking to legislators and testifying on tax issues. "I've gotten to know the statehouse very well," she says. "I know all the players up there. I work with them, I'm respected." Sharp says she will fight for women's issues and stand strongly against any

amendment to the state constitution that prohibits gay marriage. "I'm a Democrat and I disagree with a lot that has been going on," she says. Monroe County Councilmember Mark Stoops is the only other candidate who has officially announced his campaign. Many analysts predict state representative Peggy Welch will enter the race. The Monroe County Democrats will decide on Simpson's replacement in a caucus after the Democratic state convention.

SD7: Thompson vs. Hershman

Brad Thompson was selected by local Democrats this weekend to run against State Sen. Brandt Hershman in SD7. Thompson, a local union President who resides in Carroll County, was elected at a caucus of precinct committeemen from the district to challenge Hershman in the election in November. Thompson plans to focus on job growth and public education, if elected. "Our families need a state senator who will be working in the General Assembly to help to improve the jobs market in the state, and who will help to improve education for our students," explained Thompson. "By focusing on education, we can strengthen our workforce which will help us to attract and retain good jobs in Indiana. Our public schools have taken a beating in the last few years, and it's time to put the focus back on helping our students and our teachers thrive." As a union president, Thompson feels uniquely qualified to represent the district. Having served in this capacity for 12 years, he has strengthened his leadership skills and his ability to work with others. He knows the issues facing working Hoosier families in the district. "Our district needs a senator who not only understands the issues facing our communities, but who will be a strong voice to bring them front and center at the legislature," Thompson said. "I will work hard to represent all the people of this district and will work with members from both sides of the aisle to ensure that Senate District 7 is well represented in the legislature." ❖



Chocola sees Donnelly at his high water mark

By JACK COLWELL

WASHINGTON - Chris Chocola, instrumental in the defeat of Sen. Dick Lugar, eyes now the possibility of going after another fellow Republican with whom Chocola once served in Congress, Rep. Fred Upton of Michigan's 6th District.

"Nothing personal," says Chocola.



The former Republican congressman from Indiana's 2nd District, now is president of the Club for Growth, sponsor of political TV ads that helped to change the description of Lugar from statesman to lame duck.

In an interview here, Chocola sought to refute what he considers misconceptions about his goals and those of the Club for Growth, which he estimates to have spent \$1.2 million to

help defeat Lugar.

"There is no personal satisfaction in this," Chocola said of Lugar's loss. "It's not about Lugar. It's not about me. It's about our country."

Chocola is a true believer in the Club's philosophy that shrinking government and cutting taxes will bring economic growth.

Simply put: Lugar strayed from the nearly 100 percent voting record for what the Club regards as a true pro-growth conservative agenda. And the Club believes that state Treasurer Richard Mourdock, who defeated Lugar in the Indiana Republican primary, will not stray.

Chocola viewed it as a matter of ideological purity, not personalities.

In fact, Chocola said, it is a shame Lugar's Senate career ended in defeat instead of high acclaim upon voluntary retirement. He said that he advised people "very close to Lugar" that they "would be doing the senator a great service in talking him into retiring" rather than seeking a seventh term.

Chocola said the Lugar race met the Club test for involvement against an incumbent in a Republican primary: A good opportunity to replace someone with less than an ideal Club rating with someone more ideal in a situation in which the Republican is almost certain to win in November.

Is Mourdock almost certain to win over Democratic nominee Joe Donnelly?

Yes, Chocola said.

While polls show a tossup now, Chocola predicted that big wins in Indiana by Mitt Romney and by Congress-

man Mike Pence, the Republican nominee for governor, who was Chocola's initial choice for president, will bring a GOP tide that Donnelly cannot survive.

The Club will actively support Mourdock in the fall, Chocola said, not to get back at Donnelly, who defeated Chocola for Congress in 2006, but to make the Senate more conservative and refute contentions that the Club backs candidates that prove to be disasters and losers in the fall.

Mourdock will be an able candidate, no Christine "I Am Not a Witch" O'Donnell, Chocola said. He added that the Club did not support O'Donnell in her primary upset in Delaware.

And he said all of the candidates supported by the Club in contested Republican primaries have gone on eventually to Congress - with one exception. That was Club support in 2010 for Sharron Angle, who went on to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory in a Nevada race against Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid.

Will the Club target Upton in the Aug. 7 Michigan primary? It already sought to soften him up with critical TV ads earlier this year.

"We're still looking at it," Chocola said. "It's a matter of resources."

He said the Club plans to spend \$5 million now to support Ted Cruz, the Tea Party and Club backed candidate who forced a July 31 runoff for the GOP Senate nomination in Texas against the lieutenant governor. The Club doesn't have unlimited funding and does careful targeting for maximum results.

Chocola said that any challenge to Upton would be based on ideology, not something personal. He said he and Upton had no personal differences, although they sometimes voted in different ways, when they were together as the congressmen representing Michiana.

Upton, since facing a possibly serious primary challenge, has recorded higher Club vote ratings, Chocola noted.

"If Fred's converted to a true conservative, that makes a difference," Chocola said. "But I'm not convinced."

Convincing Republicans in Congress to toe a more conservative line is as much of a Club goal as defeating some incumbents who stray.

Lugar's defeat will create a ripple effect, Chocola said, with other Republicans in Congress turning more conservative to avoid facing the Club and Lugar's fate in their next primary. ❖

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



Labor is taking it on the chin

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS - Today unions are being peeled so that they become smaller. They are being sliced and diced in an attempt to get rid of them. But they are not being used to good advantage.

They are being blamed for America's declining dominance of world trade as well as the perilous finances of local and state governments. These unrealistic charges fail to get at the core issue.

Inept management is as pervasive among unions as among corporations and not-for-profit agencies. Too often unions and firms see the other as their enemy rather than their partner in a highly competitive, rapidly changing environment.

Instead of focusing on how the firm and its workers can advance their mutual interests in the success of the company, they battle over small issues. The petty grievances of employees and the equally petty rigidities of employers form the day-to-day interactions of the two parties and the image the public has of both.

Unions must define and protect the interests of their members. They give voice to workers

who are often at a disadvantage in dealing with employers.

However, often that means taking the side of a worker whose behavior is contrary to the well-being of the firm and reduces the productivity of other workers. Yet, the union might argue, for example, rigid starting times for work fail to account for the day-to-day vagaries of life that may prevent workers from being "on-time".

This simple example reveals a conflict of cultures. On-time is of consequence when work is inter-dependent and temporally coordinated. For some persons, however, on-time is virtually a moral issue.

Others see other priorities that keep people from being on-time: children who need attention or unusual traffic delays. They are more relaxed about obedience to the clock and have no internal need to worship a time piece.

Some labor experts argue that the union and the firm must educate the worker so they share the same set of values. Those values are the ones that promote the well-being of the firm, requiring labor to accept the balance sheet and the income statements as the measures of success.

Few suggest that the employer may be the problem and require education -- a reorientation to the realities of the modern workplace. How interdependent are the jobs in that company? Do they truly require simultaneous arrival and departures to be efficient? What benefits are gained from flexibility?

It is easier for a manager to set an arrival time for all than to explore actual work flows and balance them with respect for the employees' variable circumstances. The larger picture on which the firm's existence depends requires a different framework.

Perhaps labor needs to be seen as an integral part of the firm, not as merely another input in the production process. It means a firm that closes a factory and moves production elsewhere is a failure, not a success with executives who deserve bonuses.

Can sustaining jobs really be a higher priority than return on equity? Of course it may require employees to show up, on-time for a serious day of work. ❖

Mr. Marcus is an independent economist, writer and speaker formerly with the IU Kelley School of Business.



HOWEY
Politics Indiana

When Chris Cillizza of the *Washington Post* posed the question to readers across the nation - Who's the most influential political journalist in your state? - the answer in Indiana was this: Brian A. Howey of *Howey Politics Indiana*. Since 1994, *Howey Politics Indiana* has provided news, analysis and commentary from throughout Indiana and Washington D.C. Howey reaches the most influential insiders with his newsletters and the masses with his weekly newspaper column and www.howeypolitics.com.

Photo: Howey with Richard Lugar and Sam Nunn in Russia.

The Washington Post
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2007

"The Best Indiana Political Reporter: *Howey Politics Indiana* editor Brian Howey."



Kingmaker McDermott takes aim at Van Til

By **RICH JAMES**

MERRILLVILLE - Tom McDermott, Hammond mayor and Lake County Democratic chairman, added kingmaker to his titles last week. In doing so, he essentially stripped the local Democratic Party of its democracy.

He did that when he called on long-time Lake County Surveyor George Van Til to resign from the November ballot. And he did it on the radio, not during a personal conversation with Van Til.



Talk about a total lack of class.

What's prompting McDermott is that the FBI went into Van Til's office last week and took computers and paper records. The computers were returned in less than 24 hours. Neither the FBI nor the U.S. attorney's office would say what they were looking for. McDermott told the Times of Northwest Indiana, "In my opinion the FBI is not going to make a high-profile show of

force, like they did on Tuesday, unless they think something is there."

In other words, he called Van Til a crook. Yet, as of now, no one else is saying that – not the FBI, not the U.S. attorney, not the big man himself. Nevertheless, McDermott says the public perception is that the seizure of unknown records pertaining to unknown issues could hurt the party in the fall, including U.S. Rep. Peter Visclosky, if Van Til remains on the ballot. Get real, Tommy, Visclosky has one of the safest congressional seats in the country.

When he isn't playing mayor, McDermott is a lawyer. Yeah, a lawyer – those people who deal with the law that says a person is innocent until proved guilty.

In his quest for Van Til to resign from the ballot, McDermott drummed up the case of Carol Ann Seaton in 2010. Even though few knew her and she campaigned little, Seaton was a surprise winner in the Democratic primary for county assessor.

Then things quickly unraveled as questions were raised about her residency, with some thinking she lived in southwest Michigan. And there were questions about tax exemptions on a home in Gary that she claimed as her residence. If ever there was cause for someone to get off the ballot, this was it. She didn't. And McDermott didn't call for her to do so.

Because of Seaton's vulnerability, Republican Hank Adams – a fellow popular with Republicans and Democrats – was appointed to fill the vacancy on the Republican ballot. Being a township assessor, he was a natural. Adams won, largely because of the Democrats who crossed over and voted for him. That's not going to happen with Van Til, who should win easily over Eric Krieg, a Republican who likes to see his name on the ballot.

The FBI frequently has walked into the county government center and city halls across the county, picking up records and saying nothing about their mission. Sometimes those investigations result in an individual or two being charged. Other times, nothing comes of the federal probe. When that is the case, one would think the FBI would announce that they didn't find any wrongdoing and that they were sorry to have tarnished someone's reputation. Nope. That doesn't happen.

No one seems to know what the FBI is looking at in the surveyor's office. There's not much there but a bunch of maps that pertain to drainage. Some contend it is a witch hunt based on baseless allegations. That's been known to happen. All we know is that records were confiscated for an unknown reason. And because of that, McDermott wants Van Til to voluntarily end a long and mostly respected political career.

No! A true Democratic county chairman would stand up and defend Van Til's place on the ballot, saying that he hasn't been accused of anything. You don't have to like Van Til – and some don't because he can be abrasive – but don't infer he has done something wrong because records were taken from his office.

McDermott says his movement to have Van Til banished from the party isn't personal because the two were opponents for the county chairmanship in 2009 and the two have clashed on political and governmental issues since. Tell it to the jury.

Perhaps McDermott is trying to come across as being holier than thou because he has his eye on something bigger politically down the road. But throwing a colleague under the bus for your own political gain doesn't seem like a very Christian thing to do.

Rich James is the former editorial page editor and columnist for the Post-Tribune in Merrillville.



Eric Bradner, Evansville Courier & Press:

Democratic gubernatorial candidate John Gregg doesn't want the race to become Indiana's next governor to focus on social issues. He called a press conference at a Planned Parenthood clinic to say so. It was how he started a week-long effort to call his Republican opponent, Mike Pence, a zealot on those issues. But since Gregg says he, too, opposes abortion rights, questions about where his stances diverge from Pence's came up in the following days, and he retreated and tried to change the topic. The episode revealed a central problem for a candidate who is struggling to juice his Democratic base without making a mess of his moderate appeal: Behind the mustache and the folksy quips about just dropping this stuff, he can't articulate how he's different from Pence. It's an issue that puts him at risk of failing to achieve either of his goals. He could leave liberals unconvinced he is with them and conservatives turned off by his tactics — all while raising questions about the sincerity of his own beliefs. Gregg spent five days bashing the congressman's push to stop Planned Parenthood from getting tax dollars for any service, abortion-related or not, from the federal government. The question Gregg got, since he brought up the issue: Would he try to have the Indiana law ditched if he is elected governor? It should have been a slam dunk. After all, he'd just been complaining about "limiting women's access to health care," and since this law specifically bars Medicaid recipients from paying for routine coverage at Planned Parenthood, it puts the pinch on poor women. But Gregg hedged. "I don't necessarily know. I do think we ought to have a truce on all these social issues," he said, adding that he doesn't like the law but invoking by name Gov. Mitch Daniels, who issued the first call for such a "truce." "Why are we spending all this time on these social issues where nobody's going to change their mind?" Gregg said. "We need to be concentrating on jobs." Daniels, though, is also the one who signed the bill to defund Planned Parenthood into law. He didn't push for it himself, but he didn't try to keep the Legislature from sending it to his desk. The next governor will have to grapple with these questions, too. ❖

Mark Kiesling, NWI Times: Well, this was news Lake County Surveyor George Van Til really didn't need just five months before an election. FBI and Indiana State Police hit his office the other day and carted off computers, looking for something no one is saying anything about. I asked Van Til on Thursday what he thought the officials were looking for. "I don't know," he said. "It would not be productive for me to talk to you at this point. For many years, I've tried to be a good public servant, and I think most knowledgeable people would agree. "It's hard to talk to me about something I don't know much about." The

whole raid has led to much speculation about what the feds and Indiana State Police were seeking, but speculation is not fact. I've heard some of it; maybe you have, too. But until we have some hard evidence or at least a statement from either Van Til or the feds, it's reckless at best to print rumors. One thing that is not a rumor, though is that Van Til faces Republican opposition in the fall election. BP mechanical engineer Eric Krieg wants the job, although I cannot figure out why. I mean, surely he is making more than the \$50,000 or so that our county elected office heads take in. Does this raid give Krieg a foot in the door? Maybe. But it is always an uphill battle for a Republican to win a countywide office in predominantly Democratic Lake County. ❖



Dana Millbank, Washington Post: This week's featured entree in the Republicans' auto-da-fe is a rather surprising selection: presidential son, presidential brother and presidential timber Jeb Bush. The former Florida governor, until now a revered figure in the party, had the temerity to state in public what many others think in private: that the Republican Party has become so intransigent that even Ronald Reagan couldn't fit under its tent. "Reagan would have, based on his record of finding accommodation, finding some degree of common ground, as would my dad — they would have a hard time if you define the Republican Party . . . as having an orthodoxy that doesn't allow for disagreement, doesn't allow for finding some common ground," Bush said Monday in a meeting at Bloomberg headquarters in New York, according to the online publication Buzzfeed. "Back to my dad's time and Ronald Reagan's time — they got a lot of stuff done with a lot of bipartisan support," Bush added. Reagan today "would be criticized for doing the things that he did." This brought immediate condemnation from the Grand Inquisitor himself, Defender of the Faith and Keeper of the Tax Pledge Grover Norquist, who told Talking Points Memo that Bush's sentiments were "foolish" and "bizarre." Coincidentally, Bush made his remarks the same day the conservative American Enterprise Institute held a show trial for Norm Ornstein, its scholar who dared to co-author an article in The Post titled "Admit it. The Republicans are worse." Ornstein's debate opponent, conservative author Steve Hayward, suddenly had the more difficult task of arguing against not only his AEI colleague but also against one of the nation's most charismatic conservative leaders. After Ornstein invoked Bush's words, Hayward answered with two Latin debating techniques the Republicans have used with great frequency over the past few years: ad hominem and non sequitur: "Well, all I'll say about Jeb Bush is the Bush family still has not gotten over losing in 1980 to Ronaldus Magnus, and I'll leave it at that." ❖



Skillman signs business deals

HANGZHOU, China – Lt. Governor Becky Skillman signed Memorandums of Understanding with three Chinese businesses. Godeagle, Jiaxing Stone Wheel and Henan Fukang Feather Group all intend to invest in Indiana. The agreement with Godeagle would establish a cooking oil production and processing facility headquartered in Muncie that may create more than 50 jobs. Jiaxing Stone Wheel plans to enter into a joint venture with Chinese-owned Sutong in Elkhart that could lead to 150 jobs for a wheel and brake drums manufacturing facility. Henan wants to expand its feather collecting and processing facilities in Huntingburg, creating up to 40 jobs. "The agreements signed today open the door for more opportunity for our state and Hoosiers," Lt. Governor Skillman said. "Indiana's business friendly environment is leading to additional job growth and investment from the relationships we have built in China." Skillman also hosted the Indiana Economic and Trade Exchange Summit, connecting members of the Hoosier delegation with nearly 40 Chinese companies interested in investing in Indiana. Chinese-owned companies made 332 job commitments in Indiana from 2008-2011, investing \$130.75 million. to China grew by 554 percent.



Hancock coroner took Ambien

GREENFIELD - Hancock County Coroner Tamara Vangundy had just begun taking a prescribed

sleep aid the day she was arrested for operating a vehicle while intoxicated, her attorney said today (Indianapolis Star). Vangundy, 49, is accused of being intoxicated at a death investigation late the night of May 2. In addition to the DUI charge, she also is accused of official misconduct since the alleged DUI came during the course of her duties as an elected official. Were it not for the effects of the prescription drug Ambien, attorney Carl Brizzi said, Vangundy would have exercised better judgment than to drive after consuming a few glasses of wine. "If you've ever taken Ambien, you certainly know the effects it could cause," Brizzi said.

Lugar joins Obama at state dinner

WASHINGTON - U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar and wife Charlene joined President Obama and the First Lady at the head table for last night's Medal of Freedom Dinner honoring former Israeli President Shimon Peres. Also at the head table were Izhak and Toby Perlman, Haim and Cheryl Saban and former secretary of state Madeleine Albright.

State may sue over air quality

INDIANAPOLIS - dispute over Northwest Indiana's air quality may become grounds for a lawsuit between the state's environmental department and the federal government (Carden, NWI Times). On May 31, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency concluded ozone from Lake and Porter counties contributed to a violation of National Ambient Air Quality Standards in Lake County, Illinois. The finding dropped the two Indiana counties into "non-attainment" status, which requires that Indiana submit an air quality improvement plan to the U.S. EPA

and forces businesses moving to the region to meet stricter environmental permitting requirements.

1st female FD chief in Fort Wayne

FORT WAYNE - Fort Wayne's fire department will have its first female fire chief in its 173-year history, but Mayor Tom Henry said it was her qualifications and not her gender that earned her the post (Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). Henry announced Wednesday that Amy Biggs will replace retiring Chief Pete Kelly, who moved up his departure from Aug. 3 to June 29.

Gallup finds more blame for Bush

WASHINGTON - Americans continue to place more blame for the country's ongoing economic problems on former President George W. Bush than on President Barack Obama, a new survey shows. Though Bush has been out of office for nearly 3½ years, 68 percent blame him a "great deal" or "moderate amount" for the nation's economic woes, according to a Gallup Poll released Thursday. Meanwhile, 52 percent of Americans believe the same about Obama.

Ex-North Judson clerk owes \$84k

NORTH JUDSON - A State Board of Accounts special audit of North Judson financial records from 2011 has resulted in the state requesting that former North Judson Clerk-Treasurer Connie Miller repay \$84,960 (Post-Tribune). Prosecutor Nick Bourff has not indicated if he intends to file charges against Miller. Miller was defeated in November's general election.