

Why the people are so damn angry

New economic realities putting the 'American Dream' out of reach of the middle class

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

MICHIGAN CITY, Ind. – Americans and Hoosiers are angry. They are seeking political retribution. They are finding Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump as the answer. But the critical question that has remained largely unanswered is why?

Why are We the People so pissed off?

Appearing at two events in Elkhart last week, President Barack Obama laid out the template for the sizzling anger that is fueling one of the most unpredictable political climates in modern times. And Prof. Robert J. Gordon of Northwestern University, a macroeconomist and economic historian, supplies an array of data that helps understand why the political decisions of 2016 are almost certainly being framed in the context of an emotion which



Angry Donald Trump supporters confront U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz in Marion on the eve of the Indiana primary on May 2

doesn't always yield the wisest decision making.

At the Lerner Theater in Elkhart, PBS moderator Gwen Ifill listened as Obama made what Howey Politics Indiana called an "economic victory lap," where the president reminded the Republican-dominated county that the 20%

Continued on page 4

Party of Lincoln stained

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – On May 17, 1860, the Republican convention campaign team of native son Abraham Lincoln met with the Indiana and Pennsylvania delegations in Chicago. What emerged hours later was that the Hoosier delegation would vote as a solid bloc for the president who would go on to become the Great Emancipator, a worldwide statesman of biblical proportions.

"We worked like nailers," said Richard J. Oglesby. An employee of Chicago Tribune publisher Joseph Medill would report: "We are going to have Indiana for Old Abe for sure." How did you get it? Medill



"Oh, look at my African-American over here. Look at him. Are you the greatest?"

- Donald Trump, pointing out a black man attending a campaign rally in California last week





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asked. "By the Lord, we promised them everything they asked," he was told.

It is a proud chapter that began with the Indiana Republican Party in its nascent form. The party was only six years old and it played a decisive, early role in Lincoln's improbable 1860 presidential nomination and subsequent victory that autumn. After that election, in a shrewd deal, the former nominee of the nativist but anti-slavery Know Nothing Party, Lt. Gov. Oliver P. Morton, ascended to the governor's office, appointing the elected governor Henry Lane to a U.S. Senate seat. Gov. Morton would forge a strong relationship with President Lincoln. He was an emphatic backer of the Emancipation Proclamation. And he shrewdly kept Indiana in the Union by establishing a state arsenal, negotiating private loans to fund the war effort, and suspending what had become a Copperhead General Assembly after the 1862 elections.

For his decisive leadership and moral bearings that made the Indiana Republicanism a stanchion for "The Party of Lincoln," Morton's statue along with two Union fighters guards the eastern approach to the Indiana Statehouse to this very day.

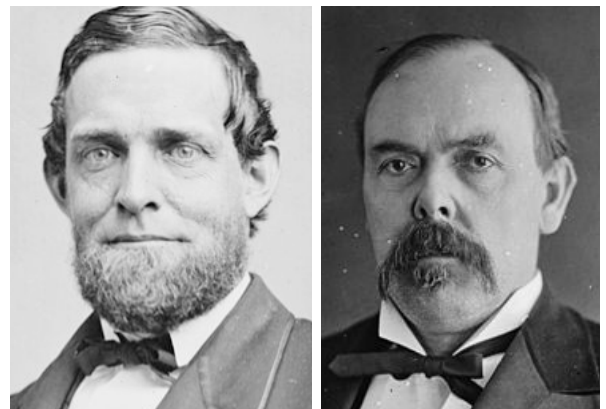
There were other examples of Hoosier Republicanism who have stood the test of time. House Speaker Schuyler Colfax, a founder of the Republican Party after winning a congressional seat as a member of the anti-slavery Indiana People's Party which formed to oppose the Kansas-Nebraska Act, played a crucial role in the passage of the 13th Constitutional Amendment of 1865 that forever banned slavery. So invested in that process, Speaker Colfax took the rare step of voting for the amendment in what would become one of the defining moments of the Lincoln presidency.

House Minority Leader Charlie Halleck had been a strong opponent

of the liberal New Frontier and Great Society agendas of Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, but when it came to the watershed Civil Rights Act of 1964, Halleck was one of its most emphatic advocates.

With this history, watching the Indiana Republican Party of today is to see a proud, vivid organization stoop in a strange moral decay.

Many in its "establishment" stratas watched in horror the ascendency of Donald Trump, beginning last autumn. When it looked as if a Trump nomination might be possible early last winter, this establishment sat on its hands. There were a few endorsements of Marco Rubio and Jeb Bush, but GOP leaders, ranging from Gov. Mike Pence to Sen. Dan Coats and Chairman Jeff Cardwell, did nothing



U.S. House Speaker Schuyler Colfax (left) and Indiana Gov. Oliver P. Morton set the early civil rights tones for the Indiana Republican Party during the Civil War.

to advocate or coalesce behind a true conservative who shared in the party's historical values until Pence did for Ted Cruz in the final days of the primary. There was a moment when the runaway Trump train might have been stopped, but no one moved.

Such a strategy worked in Wisconsin in March, when Gov. Scott Walker, other Badger State Republican officials and its conservative talk radio network set up a bulwark in an attempt to derail Trump. They succeeded as Ted Cruz won the state. But other states down the line, including Indiana, did not mobilize.

The reward was Trump's 53% Indiana primary win that allowed him

to assume the title of "Republican presidential nominee." As it had with Lincoln, Indiana played a key, fateful role.

Influential Republicans stewed. Pence would endorse Trump two days after the primary, saying he would campaign for him. Sen. Coats came around in late May, saying that Trump was a preferred alternative to Hillary Clinton. Congressional delegation members Jackie Walorski, Todd Rokita, Lt. Gov. Eric Holcomb and U.S. Senate nominee Todd Young hid behind the phrase that they would "vote for the Republican nominee."

And their reward? Instead of switching to a general election trajectory and a move to bind the wounds, unite on a conservative message, and broaden appeal, Trump launched into a bitter, insulting, grudge mode over the past five weeks. It culminated in San Diego on May 27 when he took aim at a "Mexican" federal judge, Gonzalo Curiel of East Chicago and a graduate of the Indiana University Law School. A few days later, he would point to a black person at one of his California rallies and blurt, "Oh, look at my African-American over here. Look at him. Are you the greatest?"

What has transpired since has turned into what will likely be seen as an astounding and regrettable chapter in the Indiana party's history. While House Speaker Paul Ryan would call the Trump antics "textbook racism," U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham would compare Trump to Sen. Joseph McCarthy, and Sens. Jeff Flake and Mark Kirk would announce they couldn't vote for the nominee, the Hoosier Republican response was an affront to the party's most esteemed history.

Pence, Coats and Young would term the remarks "inappropriate." This comes after Pence called Trump's stance on a Muslim ban as "unconstitutional" and "offensive." U.S. Susan Brooks expressed concern about "personal attacks against the presiding judge." Republican Chairman Jeff Cardwell called the Curiel episode a "distraction."

It took Attorney General Greg Zoeller, who will not be on the ballot this fall, to provide some moral clarity, telling Doug Ross of the NWI Times, "Our institutions are all under attack. Without the rule of law, you've got chaos, a point that needs to be remembered. If there's a legitimate question of bias, there is a professional way to raise that without showing disrespect for a judge and the system generally. This is nowhere close. I'm very sensitive to this, and I'm upset that members of the profession have not all come out and said this is what we don't allow. We would all like more civility, that's what we're shooting for, and this is going in the wrong direction."

Those "members of the profession," – Pence,

Coats, Rokita, Brooks, and Rep. Luke Messer – failed to denounce Trump in their roles as attorneys.

There are dilemmas here. Pence, Holcomb and Young will need Trump voters this fall in races that will likely be close, given the national dynamic that is just now beginning to form. The fear of alienating them is palpable. But failing to confront Trump is to alienate a wider swath of independent and moderate Republican voters who are heartsick over where their party is headed.

Keep in mind that only about 35% of American Republicans voted for Trump in the nominating process. So we're talking about 20% of the entire general electorate.

What happens when a party loses its moral bearings?

Look no further than 1922 when Republican Gov. Warren McCray vetoed an "Indiana State Fair Ku Klux Klan Day" bill, earning the enmity of Grand Dragon D.C. Stephenson, who then orchestrated mail fraud charges



U.S. House Minority Leader Charlie Halleck (left) was a conservative who advocated for the Civil Rights Act of 1964, while Attorney General Greg Zoeller has become the moral conscience of the embattled Indiana Republican Party of 2016.

against McCray with a friendly prosecutor. This paved the way for Gov. Ed Jackson, a KKK member who had received bribes from the organization, escaping conviction only by a hung jury. It was one of the darkest stains in the Indiana Republican history.

While there is no hint of any such legal missteps, the notion that a racist nominee would be denounced in the tepid term as "inappropriate" is an affront to the Indiana Republican Party's history.

Many Hoosier Republicans I've talked to are in various states of torment, denial and acquiescence. There is an obvious out, backing the Libertarian ticket of former Republican governors Gary Johnson of New Mexico and William Weld of Massachusetts.

By sticking with Trump, they are firmly under the sheets with a wild, unpredictable, nativist, racist and megalomaniacal standard bearer.

Good luck with that. ❖

Angry Hoosiers, from page 1

jobless rate he found on his first presidential visit in February 2009 had evolved into less than 5%. Why, Ifill asked, is there such a disconnect?

"Well, look, here's what has changed in the economy over the last 20 to 30 years," Obama began. "Right after World War II, America was ascendant. It was dominant around the world because Europe was blown up, Japan was digging itself out of the rubble, China was still a backwater, Eastern Europe was behind the Iron Curtain. There wasn't much competition. We were the only folks who were seriously making cars and trucks and appliances, and you name it. We had strong unionization, which meant that workers had leverage so that they could get a good share of a growing pie. And people saw, each year and each generation, their standards of living going up pretty rapidly."

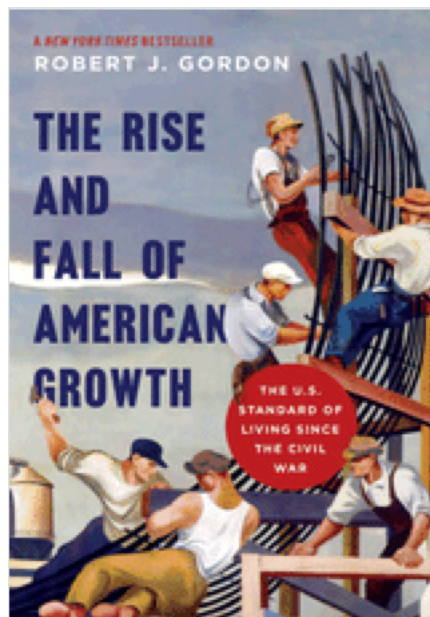
Indeed, growing up as a Baby Boomer, the implicit promise of the "American dream" was the notion that each successive generation would do better than the last. By the time Obama took office in January 2009, not only was the jobless rate up, but home values had tanked and mortgage foreclosures were rampant. The \$400 billion budget surplus under President Clinton had ballooned to an almost unfathomable \$1 trillion.

"What started happening is you started seeing foreign competition," Obama continued. "Unions started getting busted, so workers had less leverage, which meant their wages didn't go up quite as fast." Indeed, per capita income in Indiana had declined by more than 10% in the prior decade.

"You started seeing the end of defined benefit pension plans," Obama explained. "In terms of health care programs, if you had health care on your job, suddenly you were paying a lot of deductibles and premiums. College costs started going up because the public university system, which used to be generously funded by state governments so that tuition was low, suddenly state governments were spending more money on prisons than they were on universities, which meant tuition went up."

On that front, Hoosier taxpayers are now funding less than 10% of the annual budgets of Indiana and Purdue universities.

"You add all those things together and people then start feeling more stressed," Obama said. "Now, the answer to that is, how do we get wages up? How do we make sure that you can save for retirement? How can you make sure that your kid can afford to get a higher education to compete for the jobs of the future? And the question then is, what is actually going to get that done?"



President Obama at the Lerner Theater in Elkhart last week for a PBS Town Hall where he talked about why Americans are disconnected. At left is Prof. Robert J. Gordon's book.

The 'special century' in the rearview mirror

This is where Prof. Gordon picks up the narrative. As the Baby Boomers entered into adulthood, he cites what was essentially the end of a historical anomaly, the termination of what he calls the "special century" from 1870 to 1970.

"The century of revolution in the United States after the Civil War was economic, not political, freeing households from an unremitting daily grind of painful manual labor, household drudgery, darkness, isolation and early death," Gordon writes in his book, "The Rise and Fall of American Growth."

"Only 100 years later daily life had changed beyond recognition. Manual outdoor jobs were replaced by work in air-conditioned environments, housework was increasingly performed by electronic appliances, darkness was replaced by light, and isolation was replaced not just

by travel, but also by color television bringing the world into the living room. Most important, a newborn infant could expect to live not to age 45, but to 72. The economic revolution of 1870 to 1970 was unique in human history, unrepeatable because so many of its achievements could come only once."

Essentially, Americans went from traveling at the pace of a horse, a primitive train or steamboat to the speed of sound in a Boeing 707 in 1958. Clarence Birdseye would develop the cold chain in 1916, bringing refrigeration and frozen foods to the dinner table. There was no household electricity in 1880, but it reached near 100% by 1940, a year in which homes had connections to five networks (water, sewer, electricity, gas, and telephone). In 1870, some 50% of the labor force was on the farm. In 1870, 25% lived in cities, rising to 73.7% in 1970. The labor force went from 21% female participation in 1870 to 76% a century later.

In Gordon's view, this type advancement can't be replicated.

Four headwinds

Gordon quotes June Carbone and Naomi Cahn who wrote in 2014, "The American family is changing and the changes guarantee that inequality will be greater in the next generation. For the first time, America's children will almost certainly not be as well-educated, healthy or wealthy as their parents."

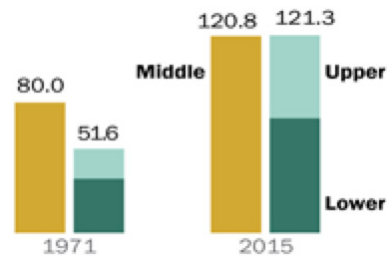
Gordon observes, "The problem created by the computer age is not mass unemployment, but the gradual disappearance of good, steady, middle-level jobs that have been lost not just to robots and algorithms but to globalization and outsourcing to other countries, together with the concentration of job growth in routine manual jobs that offer relatively low wages. It combines disappointing productivity growth over the past decade with a steady rise of inequality over the past three decades."

He continues: "Far from soaring toward the tech-optimists' vision of mass unemployment, the U.S. unemployment rate has declined rapidly, from 10% in October 2009 to 5.4% in June 2015, and seems likely to decline below 5% in 2016. And far from exploding as people are replaced by machines and software, labor productivity has been in the doldrums, rising only 0.5% per year in the five years ending in the second quarter of 2015, in contrast to the 2.3% per year achieved in the dot.com era of 1994-2004. Now that the American economy has arrived back

The middle class is losing ground

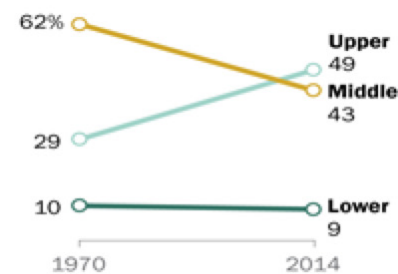
Middle-income Americans are no longer in the majority ...

Adult population by income tier (millions)



... and share of aggregate income held by middle-income households has plunged

% of U.S. aggregate household income



at a state of relatively full employment, it is hard to maintain the case that robots and artificial intelligence are creating a new class of the permanently unemployed."

The "headwinds" he describes include:

1. Income inequality: Income stagnation for the bottom 90% of the distribution has a different set of causes, including the effect of automation destroying middle-income jobs, an erosion of the strength of labor unions, the decline in purchasing power of the minimum wage, the effect of imports in the shrinkage of manufacturing sector, and the role of both high-skilled and low-skilled immigration. Peak real income for the bottom 90% was \$37,053 in 2000, barely higher than the \$35,411 achieved in 1972, and by 2013, the average real income had declined from 2000 by 15% to \$31,652. Meanwhile, the average real income for the top 10% doubled from \$161,000 in 1972 to \$324,000 in 2007, followed by a modest retreat to \$273,000 in 2013. Union membership went from 27% of the labor force in 1973 to 19% in 1986 and to 13% in 2013.

Gordon calls this the "hollowing out of the middle." He explains, "It seems plausible that the decline of relative incomes below the 19th percentile in the late 1970s has been caused, at least in part, by the declining bargaining power and density of unions, by the increased importance of imports and immigration, by the inroads of automation, and by the decrease of the

real minimum wage." He cites Caterpillar Corporation as an example. The Illinois-based firm broke strikes to enforce a two-tier wage system where new hires are paid half of that of existing workers, and its CEO had an 80% increase in compensation. It had a mantra of, "We can never make enough money, we can never make enough profit." Democrat Bernie Sanders broke this down, talking about the "disposable" workers at Carrier in Indianapolis.

Pew Research documented earlier this year that the middle class is no longer the majority, with 21% upper incomes, 46% middle, 33% lower income households.

2. Education: The GI Bill allowed the post-World War II generation to enter an increasingly skilled workforce. But in the past decades, the United States has stumbled, with its college completion rate now down in the 10th percentile or below. And the American youth who enter college, regardless of whether they complete it, now face a combined burden of outstanding debt of more than \$1 trillion. More serious is the high degree of inequality in reading and vocabulary skills of the nation's children at age 5. Middle class children have a spoken vocabulary as much as triple that of children brought up

in poverty conditions by a single parent.

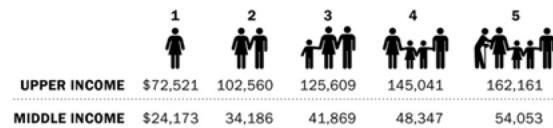
College completion for households in the top quarter of income distribution rose between 1970 and 2013 from 40 to 77%. In the bottom quarter, it rose from 6 to 9%. Between 2001 and 2012, funding by states and localities for higher education declined by full third. The University of Colorado had 37% state funding in 1985, but only 9% in 2013.

In 1981, Purdue in-state tuition was \$2,849 in today's money. Today, Purdue in-state tuition is \$9,992. "Somewhere about five years or so ago, we sort of had the crossing of that line on the graph where the state allocations are paying a lesser percent of our cost and tuition and other revenues are paying more," Ted Malone, Purdue's executive director of financial aid, told WLFI-TV.

In Elkhart, Obama addressed this, saying, "The reason that college is so much more expensive for this generation than it was for my generation, and even better for the previous generation, really had to do with government spending. It used to be that most state universities were heavily subsidized by the state so they kept tuition

Who is "middle income" and "upper income"?

Minimum 2014 household income needed to qualify for middle- and upper-income tiers, by household size



Note: Middle-income Americans are adults whose annual size-adjusted household income is two-thirds to double the national median size-adjusted household income. Lower-income households have incomes less than two-thirds of the median and upper-income households have incomes that are more than double the median.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the 2015 Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement

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really, really low. What happened around the '80s and '90s was state legislators started saying, we've got to build more prisons. In fairness to them, they also started feeling more pressure because of Medicaid spending, because health care costs were going up. And so they started cutting higher education budgets and they made up for it with higher tuition. And that's why, at least at public colleges and universities, the costs have gone up a lot."

Obama added, "We need to better prepare our children and our workers for the high-tech, high-wage jobs of tomorrow. Now, we actually know what works here, we just don't do it. We know early childhood education works. And we should invest in smart ways of doing it across the country, especially because child care costs take up a huge share of a family budget. We know that we have to make college more affordable and job training more available. And one way to do that is to provide two years of community college for free for every responsible student. There are mayors and there are governors who are already doing good work on these issues across party lines. They've shown the

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way. Now we need Congress to do the same."

3. Demographics: The Baby Boomers are retiring, spread out between 2008 and 2034. The effect of baby boom retirement and declining labor force participation of younger ages reduces the number of hours worked per person and declines that the standard of living defined as output per person must grow more slowly than labor productivity.

4. Government debt: The ratio of government debt to GDP is predicted to increase steadily in the future. The growing ratio of retirees to working taxpayers will soon require remedies that change the current set of rates for Social Security taxes and/or change the calculation of benefits. Then-Gov. Mitch Daniels defined this in 2011 as the "new red menace" that no one on the presidential campaign trail is addressing this cycle. Social Security will reach exhaustion level by 2034, Medicare by 2030. "At some point," Gordon writes, "measures must be taken to rein in persistent fiscal deficits by structural reforms that combine raising tax revenue and reducing expenditures."

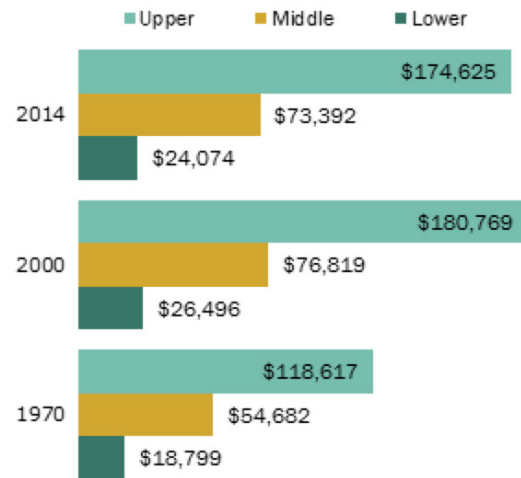
Back in Elkhart, Obama explained, "One of the reasons wages grew so quickly in the '50s and the '60s and the '70s is because we had a government that put people to work building highways, and building bridges, and building airports, and exploring new frontiers in space and science, and investing in research and development. And it led to countless new discoveries and innovations, and it educated a new generation of workers with public colleges where tuition was low, and a GI Bill."

Gordon observes, "The combined effects of growing inequality, a faltering education system, demographic headwinds, and the strong likelihood of a fiscal correction imply that the real median disposable income will grow much more slowly in the future than in the past. When all the headwinds are taken into account, the future growth of real median disposable income per person will be barely positive and far below the rate enjoyed by generations of Americans dating back to the 19th Century."

He adds, "The combine effects of the four headwinds, can roughly be qualified. But more difficult to assess are numerous signs of societal breakdown in American society. Single parent households, vocabulary disadvantage, prison populations, are signs of social decay everywhere in the America of the early 21st century."

Growth in income for middle-income households is less than the growth for upper-income households since 1970

Median income, in 2014 dollars and scaled to reflect a three-person household



Note: Households are assigned to income tiers based on their size-adjusted income in the calendar year prior to the survey year.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements, 1971, 2001 and 2015

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Here in Indiana, we've been dealing with the twin scourges of heroin and methamphetamine.

New York Times columnist and Nobel Prize-winning economist Paul Krugman, reviewing Gordon's book, observed, "It's a shocking prediction for a society whose self-image, arguably its very identity, is bound up with the expectation of constant progress. And you have to wonder about the social and political consequences of another generation of stagnation or decline in working-class incomes. Of course, Gordon could be wrong; maybe we're on the cusp of truly transformative change, say from artificial intelligence or radical progress in biology (which would bring their own risks). But he makes a powerful case. Perhaps the future isn't what it used to be."

Epilogue

In April and early May, Hoosiers heard Trump and Democrat Bernie Sanders indict the

economic and political status quo. Both won their respective primaries with 53% of the vote. Yet, as HPI analyzed last week, much of their party leadership hasn't come on board. In Trump's case, his volatility and continued push on rhetorical boundaries and boorish behavior has created that disconnect.

But both Sanders and Trump have seized on the fears of voters. The middle class jobs are hollowing out. The population is becoming browner and sexual relations are evolving. A number of Indiana cities and towns now have large Latino populations.

The Baby Boomer who could graduate from Kokomo Haworth or Peru HS and get a six-figure-a-year assembly line job at Chrysler and Delco has met up with a new reality, the need for higher skills. Many of these Hoosiers have gravitated to Trump because he expresses their frustration. He "tells it like it is" even with a reckless disregard for the facts. He has come up with easy, sound-bite-to-bumper sticker solutions: "Build that wall!" was the chant heard across the Hoosier prairies this spring.

What Hoosiers haven't heard from anyone are credible solutions to the "headwinds" that Prof. Gordon has defined. And they cannot forget the lessons of the 1960s and '70s, that each generation would do better than the last.

That's why folks are angry. ❖

Predicting the unpredictable

By CAMERON CARTER

INDIANAPOLIS – So, the stage is set for the November presidential election. In a nation of 320 million people, the best the two major political parties have to offer is a pair of morally vapid megalomaniacs who will spend the next several months scratching and clawing at each other in a very, very nasty national election. That's the only rock-solid prediction one can make at this stage of Trump vs. Hillary. All the rest is informed speculation.



Generally, presidential elections can be predicted by looking at the demographics and historical voting patterns of individual states, their heft in the Electoral College, the incumbent president's approval rating, and the state of the national economy. Not in 2016, however. Politically

speaking, America has stepped through the looking glass.

This time last year, pundits were dismissing Donald Trump as a non-serious candidate who was running to boost his own ego and brand. They were right, but he won the GOP nomination anyway. Hillary Clinton was the odds-on favorite to win her party's nomination – the term "coronation" was heard more than once – but none in the pundit class predicted the durability of Bernie Sanders, whose arithmetically challenged supporters (nothing in life is "free") helped him chalk up victories right through this week's primaries.

With the economy on a slow growth trajectory and President Obama's approval ratings in the "he said, she said" range, it will be difficult to predict going forward how these factors affect the presidential race. Call them a wash. Pundits now will turn to the electoral map where, if historical patterns inform, Hillary Clinton has a decided edge by simply being the Democratic nominee – sorry, presumptive nominee. (Both Clinton and Trump are presumptive nominees at this point, as we have yet to consume the spectacles of the party conventions in Philadelphia and Cleveland this summer to ratify the voters' choices. Or, the super delegates' choices, in the case of Clinton.)

On Tuesday night, Donald Trump signaled his intent to become more familiar with the teleprompter and to aggressively attack the Clinton graft machine that is simultaneously empowered by the non-profit sections of the federal tax code and, reportedly, under the scrutiny of the FBI and Obama justice department. We know that the Donald can be very aggressive and his promised upcoming speech on this subject will be fascinating. It remains to be seen how aggressive the FBI and justice department

will be on the subject, ditto the news media, but Trump's campaign seems determined to offer them opportunities to prove their mettle.

And the Clinton machine is no lightweight when it comes to aggressive attacks; just ask any of the women who have credibly come forth over the years to question the behavior of Wild Bill.

The sleazy character of both Clinton and Trump and the strength of conviction of both their supporters and detractors will make the 2016 election different in character from past presidential contests. Like strongly hopped beer, both candidates are an acquired taste and, after nearly three decades in the celebrity limelight for each, it is unlikely that one will acquire a taste for either if one has not done so already. For the most part, their brands have been set in the public mind. In an overused but accurate word, they are polarizing.

Therefore, the opportunities for persuasion would seem to be limited, but here the Sanders factor and the obvious bigotry of Trump will have some effect. Where will the distraught Sanders voter go? The Donald made an explicit appeal to them this week and, in some sense, both Trump and Sanders have been nibbling at opposite ends of the same electoral hot dog; they appeal to the economically insecure and dispossessed.

How many nominal Republicans appalled by the Donald's racist appeals and un-presidential temperament will stay home or – gulp – vote for Hillary?

And, how many thinking Americans appalled by the results of the primary process in both parties will reject those choices and examine the Gary Johnson-William Weld ticket on offer by the Libertarians? Both are former Republican governors of states that have trended blue in past presidential contests. The answer could depend on whether they are allowed a third podium in the debates this fall. They should be.

With the conventions yet to take place, with the debate over debates yet to take place, with a final report from federal law enforcement on the Clinton email server yet to be delivered, and informed by the unpredictable nature of the process that has unfolded to date, it is perilous to predict the unpredictable at this point.

Hold your nose and let the vile circus continue. ❖

Carter is a recuperating lobbyist and long-time political strategist who has worked on several state and national political campaigns. He is HPI's national correspondent. Email him at hoosier1az@mac.com.

The danger of holding your nose when voting

By MARK SOUDER

FORT WAYNE – In some ways Trump’s campaign is mirroring James Blaine’s famous “Rum, Romanism and Rebellion” campaign of 1884. Blaine didn’t actually say the phrase, Dr. Samuel D. Burchard did while addressing the Religious Bureau of the Republican National Committee. The actual quote was: “We are Republicans, and don’t propose to leave our party and identify ourselves with the party whose antecedents have been rum, Romanism, and rebellion. We are loyal to our flag.”



In other words, “Hold your nose, vote for Blaine, and let’s make America great again.”

It is fascinating that a “Religious Bureau” of the RNC even existed in 1884. “Rum” of course was part of the battle over prohibition, particularly

about the immigrants from Germany and the Irish who drank too much. It was a “code word” with multiple signals.

“Romanism” was the hot-button word for the waves of Catholic immigrants. The immigrants were less educated, poorer, took their jobs at much lower wages, and wouldn’t speak English.

Grover Cleveland, the Democrat nominee of 1884, was the favorite of the gold-standard establishment Democrats. The populist Democrats, even Tammany Hall in New York City, felt that he was only acceptable because he was “not Blaine.” When the results were tallied there were more “Mugwumps” – Republicans who defected from Blaine – than Democrats who defected, so Grover Cleveland won the first of his terms.

The year 1884 is not a perfect mirror of 2016 by any means. That is not my point. It does illustrate why it is silly that commentators write about each election as if it was unique. The orators of the political parties always forecast “gloom and doom” for America if the other side wins.

Post-1964 after Barry Goldwater lost, a favorite expression of disgruntled Goldwaterites was this: “They told us if we voted for Goldwater, America would go to war. They were right. I voted for Goldwater and America went to war.”

When Andrew Jackson tore apart the financial system that Alexander Hamilton had so carefully crafted and brought “populism” to the White House (not to mention kill-

ing blacks, Native Americans and people who challenged his wife’s purity), he did decades of damage but, at least after a Civil War, America survived. Hopefully we’ll never have to repeat the “after a Civil War” qualifier.

America survived not only eight years of a Clinton, but also eight years of President Obama. Had there not been eight years of Bush in between, I think we’d be in a lot worse shape, but the point is that we have lots of checks and balances in this nation. Fewer than we used to have, and the government centralization marches on, but it is still hard for a president to single-handedly wreck this country.

While I think Hillary Clinton will likely be an awful resident who won’t get my support, I will not hold my nose and vote for Trump. He possibly could be better than she from a conservative perspective on some points, but also worse on others. While she is not exactly an example of a life to be emulated, his is nearly perfectly imperfect.

But Trump’s racially charged comments about Judge Gonzalo Curiel, who is hearing the case about Trump’s fake college, illustrate how he threatens not just differences but the very underpinnings of our system of government. In other words, while this country will likely survive any president, Trump represents a threat far beyond what we faced even under Jackson or Obama.

When he said that a Hispanic judge could not give him a fair trial, what did he mean? He obviously didn’t like the preliminary rulings, but no one with a lousy legal case likes rulings that go against them. But Trump’s statement is a profound challenge to our entire legal system. Trump didn’t say that he disagreed with the judge’s current or past rulings, he said the rulings were race-based bias against Trump himself.

What he effectively said was this: If you are a Hispanic in America, and you don’t like the rulings in a case in which the judge is white, you can complain about being treated with discrimination. After all, the judge’s rulings illustrate his racial bias. This presumably is also true of white judges ruling on African-American cases and male judges ruling on cases involving females. After all, rulings that go against you prove de facto bias, according to Trump.

The Republicans, who earlier so quickly and appallingly united around this man, now don’t even have much leverage. They can just fume. The battle is for the Bernie vote. Can Hillary corral more of them than Trump?

Will Trump be able to outdo her in blaming Washington, including the Republicans who control the House and Senate? Will he attack the business interests more effectively than she can, appealing to the socialist views of the Bernie voters?

Will it work for Trump to remind Sanders voters



An edited Trump sign on the White River in Indianapolis. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howe)

that he, Trump, agreed with Sanders in opposing ObamaCare because it wasn't centralized into a single-payer system, reminding them that Hillary favored a health care system that favored a compromise which included the drug and insurance private sector options?

Will it work for Trump to remind Sanders voters that he, Trump, agreed more with Sanders about the "Bush wars" than Hillary did, who supported going after the terrorists? Will it work for Trump to remind Sanders voters that he, Trump, has made recent statements far more friendly to the Palestinian cause than Hillary ever has? At the end of the day, I believe Hillary Clinton will win because the Sanders voters just won't be able to

stomach Trump's racial and sexist views even if he is more like Sanders on policy. But with one-third of the Sanders voters saying they won't for Clinton, and generally considering Trump an outsider who views Washington more like they do, it may at least keep Trump theoretically close for now.

As for my fellow Republicans still with Trump, if you hold your nose too long you might die of asphyxiation. He is endangering far more than just the presidential campaign. ❖

Souder is a former Republican congressman from Indiana.

8th CD primary recount has stalled

By THOMAS CURRY

INDIANAPOLIS – With hotly contested gubernatorial and U.S. Senate races slated for this fall's election cycle, the Indiana Democratic Party is going to have to pick and choose which of the many Democrats up for election get support and attention from the party.



Ron Drake and David Orentlicher may have already found out that their race to run in the 8th CD against U.S. Rep. Larry Bucshon is one of many throughout the state that are going to be left in the cold. Orentlicher has asked for a recount of the May 3

primary results because of the close vote totals.

Late last week, Recount Director Phillip Sicuso told HPI that the Recount Commission has set a tentative start date of June 13 to begin the two-county and near-10,000-vote recount in SD36. Despite taking more than a month to even begin the recount, Sicuso expects that Senate race to have a declared winner sometime near the end of June. This means with the 4th of July holiday likely delaying the start of the 8th CD recount, it will have been two months before the 21-county and over-50,000-vote recount has been set to get underway.

Sicuso explained that it is hard to tell why recounts can sometimes take so long. Staff from the State Board of Accounts have to gather the manpower necessary to count all the votes, and candidates need to select representatives to at-

tend all recount sessions.

Even with the need for accuracy, experienced recount expert Chris Sautter says the current time frame set out by the recount director is a shame. It should not take a May 3 primary over two months to be completed, according to Sautter. There is no movement on the matter because Democrats may not have the time or resources to devote to a primary recount, or an interparty dispute as Sautter calls it, when there are other races the party needs to focus on. It is a calculated risk by the Democrats to milk the recount process for news attention now, and then refocus their efforts on the race when a winner is declared. As Sautter told HPI last week, recounts attract media attention thus giving candidates better name recognition than they would otherwise have.

HPI has contacted Indiana Democrats twice on the matter and both times spokesman Drew Anderson said that they hope the Recount Commission will be finished with their work come mid-August. Indiana Democrats have remained confident in the commission according to Election Division Chair Angela Nussmeyer.

That delay would mean over three months of not being able to raise funds according to Drake, who told the Evansville Courier & Press last week, "It makes it impossible to prepare at all; I think it would be presumptuous of me to ask for support when I don't know who

the winner is. It's very detrimental."

Orentlicher tells HPI that he is going to remain patient with the recount and is willing to wait however long it takes to get the most accurate results. Orentlicher believes that by the time voters are paying attention, he will be able to raise funds and receive donations as necessary. ❖

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GOP floor fights on platform, attorney general, superintendent

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Hoosier Republicans gather on Friday and Saturday for their biennial convention, facing a potential platform fight over social issues and what appears to be a tossup floor battle for attorney general. The party will also nominate an opponent to face Democratic Supt. Glenda Ritz.

The marquee event will be the AG race between former Attorney General Steve Carter, Elkhart County Prosecutor Curtis Hill, State Sen. Randy Head and deputy Attorney General Abby Kuzma. This race has been subterranean with none of the candidates running much of a public campaign. The candidates have been doing everything from door-to-door with delegates to direct mail pieces.

The nominating process has changed from 2014 when there was a three-way floor fight for auditor. This weekend, the last place candidate will be eliminated after each round, meaning there will be a likely winner as early as a second ballot.

Handicapping the AG race is difficult. Carter is the former two-term AG who has been running his campaign for a third term “like a machine,” one influential GOP source told HPI. He’ll have more name ID than the rest of the field. If Republicans go with a familiar entity, Carter might prevail.

But a number of Republicans are not revealing which way they lean, multiple sources are telling Howey Politics Indiana. There is some speculation that Head and Hill have more first ballot commitments. Most believe that Kuzma will drop off after the first ballot. Sen. Head has strong support from the Indiana Senate where he championed anti-methamphetamine legislation during this past session. Hill has been endorsed by a number of county prosecutors. Hill is a three-term prosecutor and as an African-American, would broaden the scope of the party at a time when Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump has tarnished the GOP brand after a series of vulgar comments on Latinos and other ethnic groups.

So the second ballot will be critical and it is possible that a consensus nominee will emerge then.

HPI Horse Race Status: Tossup.

McCormick favored for superintendent

Yorktown Supt. Jennifer McCormick is a heavy favorite to defeat conservative, home-school activist Dawn Wooten of Fort Wayne. McCormick has trotted out an array of endorsements from party leaders and legislators. She has attended dozens of Lincoln dinners across the state and has been advertising on the Internet. A number of county chairs have told HPI that Wooten has not had much contact.

Wooten, an adjunct faculty member at Ivy Tech Community College Northeast, IPFW and the University of Saint Francis, is likely to draw some support from the Tea Party wing of the party, which is suspicious of federal funding. In a January campaign web posting, Wooten wrote, “In the current educational climate, the government is demanding control over ALL curricula and attaching funding to each state’s compliance – the federal dollar is the focus of administrators and state officials. In the current educational climate, teachers and school corporations are being sued for instituting reasonable discipline; teachers and administrators fear the courtroom and this gives children and parents control of the classroom. In the current educational climate, corruption and misappropriation of funds run rampant. In Indiana alone, hundreds of thousands of dollars are lost each year due to theft by corrupt officials and/or administrators, or unreasonable pricing schemes between vendors and officials. The State Board of Accounts has listed several school corporations as having issues with corruption.” Those ideas will resonate with the Tea Party wing. Gov. Mike Pence’s conversion to seeking federal Pre-K funding could give Wooten some momentum.

McCormick has centered her focus on Ritz, saying, “Indiana was once a leader in the nation; today we are not. Today we have a department of education that is disorganized and disconnected from schools. They are also unaware of the local impact this has on schools.” She has vowed to increase communications between DOE and school districts. “We have kids on the line, my own child is one of them,” she said of her senior son. “Politics have got to be taken out. It is time to move forward. It’s time to collaborate, communicate and play nice.” **HPI Horse Race Status:** Likely McCormick.

Platform fight

Social conservatives will push for a same-sex marriage plank in the platform. The so-called “Daniels wing” of the GOP will push for a civil rights expansion plank. That would dovetail with efforts by House Speaker Brian Bosma and Senate President David Long who have advocated summer study of the issue and promise to bring legislation to the General Assembly in 2017.



Yorktown Supt. Jennifer McCormick is favored to win the nomination to oppose Supt. Glenda Ritz.

How Gov. Mike Pence, who has been politically burned on the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, his unwillingness to push for an LGBT civil rights expansion, and is taking heat on HEA1337, a controversial abortion restriction law, will seek to influence this platform could be a key story line for this convention.

In 2014 at Fort Wayne, the platform fight was contentious over the same-sex marriage issue. Social conservative forces were able to reinsert a plank defining marriage as between one man/one woman into the 2014 party platform after it was excluded in 2012. Again, under the heading "strong family structures," this plank instead reads: "We believe that strong families, based on marriage between a man and a woman, are the foundation of society. We also recognize that some families are much more diverse and we support the blended families, grandparents, guardians and loving adults who successfully raise and nurture children to reach their full potential every day." It was the only plank not adopted by consensus; the Rules Committee was deadlocked 4-4 on the change, which resulted in a convention floor vote. However, that wasn't even close; only a small minority supported a return to the 2012 language.

A continuation of the 2014 position could be a problem for the party. In just about every poll taken since April 2015, support for expanding LGBT civil rights has been in the mid-to-upper 50th percentile. But Indiana

Republicans have often moved in a different direction than what will likely bring success in November, as the party did in 2012 when it jettisoned U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar in the primary, only to have Treasurer Richard Mourdock lose to Democrat Joe Donnelly in the fall when he blundered into an abortion/rape comment in the final debate.

In 2014, RNC Chairman Reince Priebus addressed Hoosier Republicans and he talked about the 2013 "autopsy" of the 2012 election called the Growth and Opportunity Project that called for a more inclusive party. The echoes of Priebus's speech are interesting in today's context. He explained, "For the GOP to appeal to younger voters, we do not have to agree on every issue, but we do need to make sure young people do not see the party as totally intolerant of alternative points of view. Already, there is a generational difference within the conservative movement about issues involving the treatment and the rights of gays, and for many younger voters, these issues are a gateway into whether the party is a place they want to be. If our party is not welcoming and inclusive, young people and increasingly other voters will continue to tune us out."

Pence's RGA surrogate goes negative

Gov. Pence's embattled reelection campaign now has a surrogate to drive Democrat nominee John Gregg's negatives up, the Republican Governors Association. In an ad that began running in the Indianapolis and South

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Bend media markets today, the RGA sought to portray Gregg as a tax and spender who drove a surplus into a "massive deficit" and a lobbyist who worked for the scandalized and collapsed Enron. Howey Politics Indiana was first to report that the Pence campaign and RGA swapped out ads in the two markets. The RGA said that the ad is running statewide.

"Mike Pence has failed as governor. His record is one that has brought scorn and embarrassment to Hoosiers, hurt our economy and set us all back," said Tim Henderson, Gregg for Governor campaign manager. "Now, he's not even man enough to put his own name on this attack." Pence deputy campaign manager Marc Lotter said of the ad, "Lobbyist John Gregg and his allies are again wrong about the facts and attempting to mislead Hoosiers in a desperate attempt to cover up his record of mismanagement and bankrupting the State of Indiana."

The ad comes as Pence led Gregg in the WTHR/Howey Politics Indiana Poll in April 49-45%, and 40-36% in a May Bellwether Research Poll with Libertarian nominee Rex Bell with 2%. Both polls showed sagging numbers for Pence, with Bellwether finding Pence's reelect number at 36%, with 49% wanting a "new person" as governor.

The Pence and Gregg campaigns launched TV ad campaigns within days of the May 3 primary, but the RGA ad is the first negative one of the cycle, and is indicative that the Pence campaign faces a daunting reelection bid. It is also the first "good cop/bad cop" element of the campaign. Pence wrote a 1992 Indiana Policy Review essay titled "Confessions of a Negative Campaigner" and vowed not to do so again. He has planned to contrast himself with Gregg, but the governor is using the RGA to deliver the negative message.

The script of the RGA ad reads: "John Gregg for Governor? Here's the facts. As Speaker of the Indiana House, Gregg helped turn a \$2 billion surplus into a massive deficit. Speaker Gregg also supported higher taxes on Indiana families and businesses. And while still being paid thousands by taxpayers, Gregg did side work for scandal-riddled Enron, who got a special tax break. A wasteful spender, tax loving, former lobbyist for Governor? No, thank you."

The Gregg campaign refuted several themes of the RGA ad. On turning a \$2 billion surplus into a massive deficit, the Gregg campaign quoted Bosma in the 2002 *Governing Magazine* article, saying, "I think John and I both realize that while political position certainly plays a part in the legislative process, responsible adults have to bring the process to a responsible close for the benefit of those who are governed."

It was Gregg's last session in the General Assembly, ending in a late June special session that forged what would be the first wave of tax reform in the state. Gov-

erning reported: "The final product didn't please anyone entirely, perhaps least of all Gregg and Bosma, who both voted 'no.' But the pair was able to work together to pool what votes were needed to pass a bill that modernized a badly outmoded tax code. The two hugged emotionally when the vote was over." The Gregg campaign also notes that all three biennial budgets during Gregg's six-year speakership occurred with a Republican-controlled Senate along with the support of Senate Finance Chairman Larry Borst and President Pro Tempore Robert Garton.

Pence on Washington Post Trump veep list

Gov. Pence is one of 35 Republicans on the Washington Post's potential Donald Trump vice presidential list published today.

GOP cites Gregg tax cuts

The Indiana Republican Party has begun hitting Democratic gubernatorial candidate John Gregg hard on his fiscal record (Kelly, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). They often say he turned a record surplus into a huge deficit. Technically accurate, though a \$670 million tax cut package and a recession were also part of that. But this week the GOP tried a new tact -- Gregg cut taxes to win an election. And they are using Gregg's own words against him. "John Gregg is patently misleading Hoosiers with his attempts to blame the deficit on the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the recession," said Jeff Cardwell, chairman of the Indiana Republican Party. "The truth is he spent the surplus to buy an election, and did it over the objections and warnings of Democratic Governor O'Bannon about the looming recession." Gregg was speaker of the Indiana House for six years from 1997 to 2002, and oversaw the passage of three state budgets. All of them also were approved by the Republican-led Senate. Cardwell quotes Gregg's book -- "From Sandborn to the Statehouse" -- on the need to win the majority in 2000 because the party in charge gets to draw legislative maps.



Hill blasts Trump from East Chicago

Democratic U.S. Senate candidate Baron Hill joined State Sen. Lonnie Randolph, D-East Chicago, Wednesday at East Chicago City Hall to denounce Donald Trump's comments about U.S. District Court Judge Gonzalo Curiel (NWI Times). "I wanted to come up here to his hometown and reinforce that what Trump is saying and doing is outrageous. It's racist," said Hill, 62, who traveled from Indianapolis for the day. "I'm glad to see some Republicans coming out and saying the same thing -- Paul Ryan and Mitch McConnell and others." "This is such an important issue in light of the fact that Mr. Trump has been name-calling and saying a person is disqualified because of he's a Mexican," Hill said. "If people buy into that argument then they might as well kick their Statue of Liberty into New York Harbor." ❖

The lazy, hazy, crazy summer politics

By LARRY SABATO

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. – As we find ourselves at the end of the primary season, we can all look back in wonder: What hath the voters wrought? Last summer when he announced a candidacy, almost no political professional picked Donald Trump to be the GOP nominee, yet here he is. And no one we know thought that the big, complicated GOP field of contenders would sort itself out many weeks before the small group of Democrats, but Trump has been in general election mode for some time while Hillary Clinton has had a devil of a time shaking off a persistent foe.

As of this writing Wednesday morning, Bernie Sanders remains in the race, but on Monday night, Clinton became the presumptive Democratic nominee and the first woman ever chosen by a major party, according to the Associated Press, and she sealed the deal comfortably with big wins in California and New Jersey. In particular, the Golden State was critical for Clinton because her intraparty opponent had targeted it and planned to use a victory there as justification for a long struggle.

However, while Clinton won a majority of the pledged (elected) delegates, her majority among all the delegates rests on support from super delegates, who overwhelmingly back her and are made up largely of establishment-style officeholders and party leaders. This reality, which was also the case for Barack Obama in his much narrower 2008 victory over Clinton, has left the door open for Bernie Sanders potentially to hold out until the floor vote at the convention.

While it is technically possible for the party's super delegates to switch to Sanders (or even another candidate) between now and the convention, it seems utterly unlikely unless something dramatically bad happens to Clinton, such as an indictment for her use of private email while secretary of state. Sanders otherwise has no serious claim to the nomination; Clinton won millions more votes and hundreds more delegates in the primary and caucus season. In addition, the super delegates are part of the rules for this year. Like it or not, as we all learned as children, you can't change the rules in the middle of the game.

From the largest field of candidates in modern times (a total of 22, 17 on the Republican side plus five on the Democratic), the two most unpopular major-party nominees anyone can recall have emerged. Each has an intense cadre of supporters, but most people we've en-

countered are unhappy with the choice, and that's putting it mildly.

Still, the odds are as massive as Mt. Everest that either Clinton or Trump, the latter currently possessing the higher unfavorable ratings, will win the White House, even as the candidate offerings grow, though perhaps not by enough to truly impact the election.

Over Memorial Day weekend, the Libertarians nominated an experienced ticket, with two former Republican governors at the helm, Gary Johnson of New Mexico and William Weld of Massachusetts. A few polls put Johnson, also the 2012 Libertarian nominee, at around 10% nationally, and there is the possibility – not great,

but measurable – that he and Weld might gain entry into one or more of the fall debates, assuming in this crazy year that a major-party candidate in a fit of pique doesn't drop out of the scheduled debates. A third-party or independent ticket needs to be polling at least 15% nationally in an average of five surveys selected by the Commission on Presidential Debates.

As we noted in a previous Crystal Ball, the Libertarians have never topped even 2% of the presidential vote, but maybe their moment has arrived. In effect, they could be the none-of-the-above line on ballots around the country, and their platform is a mixture of GOP philosophy (small government, low taxes) and Democratic social issue preferences (pro-choice, pro-gay rights, etc.) There's something for everyone to like, and dislike, in the Libertarian agenda.

Normally, Libertarians appear to take more votes from the Republican nominee, but that may or may not prove to be true this year. Let's see how this complicated contest sorts itself out. The Green Party, which is likely to again nominate physician Jill Stein as its presidential standard bearer, could also attract a small number of disaffected Sanders supporters. But other than Ralph Nader's 2000 bid, which won 2.7% nationally and arguably cost Democrat Al Gore the election, the Greens have barely registered as a national presidential force.

#NeverTrump conservatives, led in part by The Weekly Standard Editor Bill Kristol, have cast about for a candidate to run in November as an alternative for anti-Trump Republicans. It appeared at the end of May that they had found a contender in National Review writer David French, but this mostly unknown conservative declined to run this past weekend. Kristol says he and his brethren will have the financial support to make a good showing, but they are back to the drawing board when it comes to actually finding someone to run, much less an impressive standard-bearer.

Meanwhile, Trump has already proven he has no intention of "acting presidential" – whatever that means in his case – now that he has secured the Repub-

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SABATO'S CRYSTAL BALL



lican nomination, nor is he going to stop running in his unique, controversial way. Attacking the Latina governor of New Mexico and calling out a "Mexican" judge (who is as American as any citizen) for his rulings on the Trump University civil suit are just part of his strange, free-flowing campaign. While the GOP rank and file has mostly fallen into line and the party leadership has reluctantly signed on as well, there remains a deep unease about Trump's style in the traditional precincts of the Republican Party. Maybe Trump will win, these party-oriented conservatives say, and they have little choice but to follow him now, freely forfeiting their chapters in any future edition of "Profiles in Courage." But they also fear Trump could fail spectacularly and take the party down with him. This year's GOP is living with both its feet on banana peels.

Attention will soon be turning in earnest to the VP selections and the conventions. It's possible that Trump will have a less-than-ideal list of possible options, thanks to his ever-growing list of outrageous comments. Discombobulated Republican officeholders are stumbling around, trying both to support Trump and decry some of his remarks. A prime example came over the weekend, when Sen. Bob Corker (R-TN) struggled through an awkward interview with George Stephanopoulos on ABC's This Week. This could not have helped his chances to become Trump's vice presidential choice. Trump's despicable, racially based tirade against the federal judge handling the Trump University case has earned him condemnation even from Republicans such as Newt Gingrich, who have previously been friendly. Gingrich also has hoped to be Trump's No. Two.

For Democrats, despite becoming the presumptive nominee, Clinton finds herself in a shaky position she could not have imagined last year. Weakened by the self-inflicted wounds of her email controversy and her inability to generate enthusiasm in major parts of the Democratic coalition, Clinton has been forced to spend precious time, money, and energy fighting Sanders right to the end. This tireless foe has tapped into the idealism of youth as well as pent-up anger about an economy that hasn't produced for middle-class Americans since the 1990s (when, ironically, Bill Clinton was in charge).

Sanders has tugged Clinton further to the left than she wants to be. On the other hand, Clinton is due for a traditional polling bonus now the primaries are over

and she has clearly won; Trump got his boost a few weeks ago. Another significant factor for Clinton is that President Obama, who remains quite popular among Democrats and now enjoys an approval rating around 50% in the polling averages, seems poised to endorse Clinton and campaign vigorously on her behalf.

Obama also will meet with Sanders on Thursday, which could be a prelude to the senator turning down the rhetoric or possibly leaving the race despite his repeated promises to continue on. However, even if he does drop out, the Vermonter and a good portion of his voters could be a thorn in Clinton's side all the way through the Democratic convention, and possibly beyond.

Negotiations with Sanders aside, all Clinton can do is continue to give speeches like the one last week in which she roasted Trump so effectively that Democrats were cheered for the first time in quite a while. Based on past performance, Trump will continue to provide plenty of material for her fire.

Both parties, and especially the Republicans because of deep divisions and Trump's antics, have a gloomy sense of foreboding that has dampened the usual excitement and euphoria accompanying the emergence of nominees. This matches the general public mood. Everyone knows the scorched earth campaign that lies ahead will be remarkably unsettling and unpleasant. Like a root canal that must be done, the selection of a new president is unavoidable – although at least the patient merits anesthesia for a root canal. We simply have to hope our fears for the autumn are exaggerated because no medicine exists that can deaden the pain of a potentially miserable, no-holds-barred campaign for the White House. ❖



From the GOP to the Garden of Trump

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND – Many readers say they just don't understand what's happening politically these days, especially how the GOP became the GOT. Yep, from Grand Old Party to Garden of Trump. So, it's my responsibility to answer their questions and explain clearly the politics of 2016.



Q. Will the Republican National Convention in Cleveland really be staged like a party honoring Donald Trump?

A. Yes. Trump, with all the delegate support he needs for the presidential nomination, will orchestrate the convention as an event in his honor. Huge.

Q. Is it true that a lot of prominent Republicans – governors, members of the House and Senate and former presidents – won't attend?

A. Yes. Seems that many have conflicts that won't permit them to attend, such things as need to rearrange sock drawers. That's important. Think of the political damage to a senator appearing in public with socks that don't match.

Q. Well, they must be like Marco Rubio, who called Trump a con artist, a liar and a threat to the republic and made jokes about "small hands." He'd never endorse Trump, right?

A. Wrong. Rubio now has endorsed Trump. There's even speculation about Rubio as vice presidential running mate.

Q. So, some stop-Trump Republicans now are endorsing him, and some other Republicans not wanting close association with him are staying away from the convention?

A. That's right.

Q. Even if Trump has everything running smoothly in the convention, will there be protesters outside, with demonstrations perhaps leading to violence and arrests?

A. Alas, Cleveland police could have a difficult time with conflicts between protesters and Trump supporters in streets outside the convention site.

Q. Would mass protests and violence seen nationally on television hurt Trump's chances to win the presidency?

A. No. They would help Trump win additional voter support.

Q. Could Trump really be elected president?

A. Yes.

Q. If he is, can I move to Canada?

A. No. Trump would build two walls, one at our southern border to keep Mexicans out, another at the Canadian border to keep U.S. citizens in.

Q. Would a Trump wall be more like the Great Wall of China or the Berlin Wall?

A. It would trump both.

Q. Trump promises a lot of grandiose things that seem impossible. How could he get such huge changes approved by the Senate, the House and the Supreme Court?

A. Easy. Suspend the Constitution. It's old anyway.

Q. Well, how about the other side? Does Hillary Clinton have a message to unite the nation in a democratic way?

A. No such message has been found in her email, either official or sent with the private server.

Q. Columnist Charles Krauthammer recently suggested that a terrorist attack before the election could enable Trump to voice another "shamelessly demagogic" response that could enable him to beat Clinton. Is Krauthammer right?

A. Yes.

Q. If terrorists could decide our election, how would they vote?

A. Most terrorists just want terror, not electoral votes. But ISIS would love Trump as our president.

Q. Wait, doesn't Trump say he would ban Muslims and wage all-out war against ISIS?

A. Yes. And ISIS wants to drag Americans into Middle East conflicts and radicalize Muslims against this country.

Q. What else could help Trump?

A. Bernie Sanders helps Trump now as he rages on, adding to the negative perception of Clinton. A Democratic convention more nasty on the inside than the Republican convention could turn off independent voters and convince wavering Republicans to go with Trump. A Democratic platform with far-left planks also could help Trump capture the important middle ground.

Q. What could hurt Trump?

A. Nothing, it seems. Trump said he could shoot somebody in the middle of New York's 5th Avenue and he "wouldn't lose voters." If the person he shot was a TV reporter asking about Trump University, that would just about guarantee he would win. ❖

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

The Hoosier judge in Trump tempest

By RICH JAMES

MERRILLVILLE – We're talking about a Hoosier here. Yeah, the federal judge at the center of the racist attacks by presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump is a native of East Chicago in Northwest Indiana.

One would think there would be a tremendous hue and cry from Gov. Mike Pence and Indiana's congressional delegation chastising Trump for his comments. Trump contends he can't get a fair ruling from Judge Gonzalo Curiel, who is of Mexican heritage, because Trump wants to build a wall along the U.S./Mexico border.



But, no, there was virtual silence until much of the rest of the country had spoken. And there was some fairly heavy criticism from Republicans around the country, including U.S. Sen. Mark Kirk of Illinois. Kirk, who

is on the ballot this fall, went so far as to say he no longer supports Trump and won't vote for him.

Finally, Pence weighed in, but only after reporters caught him as he was en route to the airport. Prior to commenting on what Trump had to say about Curiel, Pence couched his upcoming remarks by saying, "Every American is entitled to a fair trial and an impartial judge." But Pence didn't call on Trump to apologize to Curiel for his racist comments. Pence simply said Trump was wrong to make the comments.

As reporters persisted, Pence became even more elusive. The governor refused to say whether he is reconsidering plans to support Trump on the campaign trail and to vote for him in November. Pence then seemed irritated as reporters persisted with questions about Trump. "You know, if I wanted to comment on everything that's being said in the presidential campaigns, I would have run for president," Pence said flippantly just before heading to an airplane for a trip to West Virginia to campaign for a governor candidate.

Lt. Gov. Eric Holcomb seemed even more irritated as reporters asked him about his support for Trump. "I'm supporting our nominee," Holcomb repeated several times as reporters pursued.

Curiel was born and raised in East Chicago's Indiana Harbor section and attended Bishop Noll Institute, a Roman Catholic high school. He received degrees, including a law degree, from Indiana University. Perhaps it shouldn't be surprising that Pence wasn't stronger in his criticism of Trump, who wants to build a wall.

Pence recently asked a federal appeals court to allow him to bar war refugees lawfully admitted to the United States from entering Indiana based on their national origin. Specifically, he wants to bar refugees from Syria.

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Looking deep into township data

By MORTON MARCUS

INDIANAPOLIS – According to the U. S. Census Bureau, 34 (37 percent) of Indiana's 92 counties gained population between 2010 and 2015. Thus, 58 (63 percent) of our counties lost, or had no change in, population.



Since this was competently discussed in the press by Matt Kinghorn of the IU Indiana Business Research Center, I look to the township data for a column that goes deeper into the data.

Wrong turn. The first thing I do is count up all the townships that added population (388) and those that lost population (609), plus those unchanged from 2010 (12).

It's then I should have quit. That sum is 1,009 and, as every Hoosier fourth grader knows in this state of exemplary education, there are 1,008 townships in Indiana. I double check my count. Again it's 1,009. Something is amiss. "Let it be, don't mention it," Myrtle my muse, tells me, appearing without warning. "No one will notice another township; we have so many."

I can't do that, despite Myrtle's truth. I press on only to spot something strange. In 43 of our 92 counties, every township declined in population. On the other side, 23 counties had not a single township declining; winners all. That's 66 counties growing or declining exclusively. With the help of my calculator, I figure out that means we had only 26 counties with some townships growing while others declined.

Uniformity of growth or decline is not what I think would be the case. So I go back, way back, to the method by which the township estimates are made by the Census Bureau.

"Stop!" Myrtle commands. "No one cares how they get the numbers. Just report what the numbers say. Don't pretend you can read a methodology statement from the professionals in Washington who write that stuff."

"That's insulting," I tell her, but to myself I recognize her reality. Congress and large organizations who use these data just want the numbers without the mumbo jumbo of how they are produced.

"It's important," I tell her as I break out of my funk. "The Congress and other government units allocate billions of dollars according to these estimates. Businesses and not-for-profit agencies plan their marketing and service activities on these numbers. But no one wants to pay the taxes needed to make them better."

"What's wrong with the numbers?" Myrtle asks.

"For example," I say, "2015 township population estimates are based on housing counts for 2015. Then Census multiplies that number of housing units first by

that township's 2010 occupancy rate and then by the number of persons per household in 2010. After that they adjust (force) the township totals to equal the predetermined county totals."

"So the township data are a controlled melding of old and new numbers," she says. "Sounds OK to me."

"We live in a changing world," I protest. "I won't foist these weak data on my readers."

"As if they're still reading," Myrtle says and disappears. ❖

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

A bad jobs report in every way

By **MICHAEL HICKS**

MUNCIE – The May 2016 jobs report was bad news in every meaningful way. Even ignoring the ongoing CWA strike, job creation was too low to absorb new workers. Nearly a half of a million folks quit looking for work and job losses plagued nearly every sector. A spike in involuntary part-time work erased months of full-time job gains and inflation-adjusted hourly wages declined. In total, this report was too bad to be

merely a white noise error or data gathering anomaly. The reason why it was bad is another issue.

Labor markets are lagging economic indicators, and so the only solace in these numbers is that they may be a hangover from the global slowdown that already appears to be stabilizing. Still, this challenges the Federal Reserve to reconsider the expected interest rate hikes later this month. It also begs the question

of just how much policymakers can rely on macroeconomic models to explain the world.

Macroeconomic forecasts perform fairly well in every domain except one; the timing and magnitude of a downturn. Given that there have been only a dozen U.S. recessions since the computer was invented, that's not too surprising.

Imagine how accurate weather forecasters would be after only a dozen storms. Still, forecasting recessions would offer a huge opportunity for policymakers, businesses and households to mitigate or eliminate the downside of a business cycle. However, forecasting a recession (or its precursors like a financial bubble or global

shock to oil prices) is not the same thing as preventing one. For that, we have to evaluate what economic theory offers policymakers.

The current slow growth recovery is largely consistent with predictions from two competing models of the economy. One set of models focuses on failures in financial markets, which lead to the bad investments that trigger a recession, e.g. the overbuilding of homes. In that model, failure to allow the recession to run its course would result in the current economy we now suffer. This is often called the Austrian model.

The second set of models allows for many of the same causes to a recession. But, this view credits the slow recovery to workers and businesses recalibrating their purchasing and investment decisions to lower expectations. In this model, increased government spending, lower taxes and loose monetary policy would all increase the speed of recovery. This is often called the new Keynesian model.

Both of these approaches can be convincingly argued and it is easy to see how someone who isn't a trained economist might be attracted to one or the other based on their existing world view. For those of us who are trained economists, the performance of these models depends on how well they perform empirically, across more than predicting a slow growth recovery.

For what it's worth, my money is on the new Keynesian models. Still, after close to a decade of fiscal stimulus and easy money, whatever policy choices we have are limited by the huge federal deficit and the Fed's balance sheet, not economic theory. ❖

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Jon Webb, Evansville Courier & Press: Good job, Mike Pence. He was the first governor in Indiana history to secure state funds for a public preschool program. On My Way Pre-K officially launched in January 2015 and provided schooling for 2,300 4-year-olds — including 196 in Vanderburgh County. Nobody else did that. Not Mitch Daniels. Not Evan Bayh. Not even Ratliff Boon. Of course, in October 2014, Pence abruptly decided not to pursue a chunk of \$80 million in federal funds that could have almost tripled the size of the program. Because of that, thousands of children were denied a year of preschool — about 3,000 in Marion County alone, and 70 or so in Vanderburgh County. So he took away preschool for more kids than he provided it to. But! Schooling for 2,300 is better than schooling for none. In a letter to U.S. Health and Human Services released on Thursday, Pence said he's now open to taking federal cash. "By not expanding the pilot program prematurely, I kept a promise I made to key legislative leaders in order to gain their support for my prekindergarten program," he wrote in the letter. Of course it's odd that such a promise had to be made, and that state legislators would adopt such a careful approach to funding. They never cared about wasting money before. But! Pence and the legislators were right to be wary. We're not talking about normal money here. We're talking about federal money. Scary Barack Obama money. The kind of money that steals your guns and winks at your wife. "Anytime you bring federal dollars, you have to count the cost and determine what kind of flexibility you're losing," Pence told Indy Politics on Friday. What kind of flexibility would the state lose? A two-day series of emails with Pence spokeswoman Kara Brooks rendered few specific answers aside from "you have to walk before you run." But you know that darn federal government. Always trying to tell us how to do our business. Why, I even hear they want schools to teach science. ❖



every significant element of this agenda — entitlement reform, the rule of law, revival of Congress as a counter to the executive overreach that Obama has practiced and that Trump promises to enlarge upon. On May 12, a Trump meeting with Ryan resulted in a cringeworthy joint statement that had to be read to be properly disbelieved. The two spoke about the "great conversation" they had about "our shared principles." They celebrated their "many important areas of common ground" while offhandedly mentioning "our few differences." Those who know, or thought they knew, Ryan doubted that he could name a single shared principle, and he did not do so. Instead, Trump dragged a personal problem, his coming trial on fraud charges associated with Trump University, into the presidential campaign. ❖

Dave Bangert, Lafayette Journal & Courier: File this under: Should Have Seen That Coming. As Donald Trump's latest outrageous comment — this one questioning the impartiality of Indiana-born Judge Gonzalo Curiel because of his Mexican heritage — left Republican leaders twisting on a hot spike of their own endorsements of the New York billionaire, U.S. Sen. Dan Coats found himself on the spot on Tuesday. "Asked which of Mr. Trump's policy statements he preferred over Mrs. Clinton's, Senator Dan Coats, Republican of Indiana, paused for 11 seconds before saying, 'I don't know that I want to deal with that.'" Well, we're just getting started. "If I wanted to comment on everything being said in a presidential campaign, I would have run for president," Indiana Gov. Mike Pence told reporters Tuesday, after calling Trump's comments about Curiel "inappropriate." (This was after Pence waited a day after being called out for his silence on the matter.) Why GOP establishment candidates, including Pence, who spent the winter and spring with such antipathy for Trump felt compelled to formally endorse Trump is a mystery. ❖

George Will, Washington Post: The Caligulan malice with which Donald Trump administered Paul Ryan's degradation is an object lesson in the price of abject capitulation to power. This episode should be studied as a clinical case of a particular Washington myopia — the ability of career politicians to convince themselves that they and their agendas are of supreme importance. The pornographic politics of Trump's presidential campaign, which was preceded by decades of ignorant bile (about Barack Obama's birth certificate and much else), have not exhausted Trump's eagerness to plumb new depths of destructiveness. Herewith the remarkably brief timeline of the breaking of Ryan to Trump's saddle. On May 3, Trump won the Indiana primary, ending competition for the Republican nomination. On May 5, Ryan said he still was not prepared to endorse Trump. That day Trump responded that he was not ready to endorse Ryan's agenda. This was not news, considering that Trump has campaigned against

Rich Lowry, Politico: The astonishing spectacle of a speaker of the House not endorsing a presidential nominee of his own party has been supplanted by the astonishing spectacle of a speaker of the House declaring that the nominee he endorsed said something racist. Paul Ryan endorsed Donald Trump just in time for the Gonzalo Curiel furor. Ryan unloaded on Trump's attack on the judge's heritage — "the textbook definition of a racist comment" — while continuing to back the mogul, in either the most awkward denunciation or the most awkward support ever, or perhaps both. Naturally enough, Ryan's slap at Trump came during, and overshadowed, an event rolling out the speaker's thoughtful and creative anti-poverty agenda. In other words, Trump's heedlessness stepped all over Ryan's earnestness. It may be an apt metaphor for how the rest of 2016 will play out. The Curiel flap is a window into what is the worst case for the GOP: Trump as a little bit of Todd Akin every day. ❖

FBI raids Vigo County Schools

TERRE HAUTE — FBI agents raided the offices of the Vigo County School Corp. in Terre Haute yesterday morning (Associated Press). At least a dozen FBI agents entered the offices and cordoned off the parking lots outside the offices. FBI spokeswoman Cathy Burton says the agency is “conducting investigative activity in the Terre Haute area” but says she can’t disclose any additional information. School attorney Chuck Rubright says the corporation received search warrants for three locations: its administration building, facilities support and an information technology center. He says the school corporation plans to cooperate fully with federal prosecutors. The school corporation released a statement Wednesday afternoon saying it “is fully cooperating with law enforcement and understands that there has been no formal identification by law enforcement of any VCSC employee as a target in this matter.” The FBI confirms no arrests have been made. The Vigo County School Board scheduled a meeting in a closed-door executive session at 4 p.m. and the agenda included these items: (1). With respect to any individual over whom the board has jurisdiction, to receive information concerning the individual’s alleged misconduct and to discuss, before determination, the individual’s status as an employee or an independent contractor who is a physician. (2). For discussion of records classified as confidential by state or federal statute.

Sanders supporters ponder Clinton

ELKHART — Just because Hillary Clinton is now the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee doesn’t mean Dan Kmitta will automatically switch his allegiance to her.



Kmitta, who has backed Clinton’s primary rival, Bernie Sanders, as the primary season has progressed, first wants to see if Clinton embraces some of Sanders’ causes, including his push to fight income inequality (Vandennack, Elkhart Truth). “I’m willing to compromise some,” the Elkhart man said Wednesday, a day after several decisive primaries pushed Clinton well beyond the delegate count needed to secure the Democratic nomination. Still, Kmitta voted for the Green Party in prior presidential elections, he said, and he’s “keeping an eye on it.” Shari Mellin, chairwoman of the Elkhart County Democratic Party, hopes Democrats start coalescing around Clinton. She’s a Clinton backer and will serve as one of nine superdelegates from Indiana at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia next month. Her message to Sanders backers “would be he’s run a great campaign, he’s got a lot of people interested in the election process that weren’t interested,” Mellin said. But just as Clinton threw her support to Barack Obama in the 2008 Democratic primary after it became clear he was headed to the nomination, she hopes Sanders throws his support to Clinton.

Obama seeks to unite Democrats

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama opened a determined fence-mending mission Wednesday, hoping to use his popularity among Democrats to unite the party behind Hillary Clinton and draw in Bernie Sanders supporters reluctant to give up after a grueling primary fight (Associated Press). In his first public remarks on the primary since Clinton clinched the nomination, Obama acknowledged the lingering bruised feelings and sought to shower praise on both candidates. He skirted a formal endorsement or a call on Sanders to drop out— even as he spoke of the Vermont senator’s campaign in the past tense. “It was a healthy thing for

the Democratic Party to have a contested primary. And I thought Bernie Sanders brought enormous energy and his new ideas and he pushed the party and challenged them. I thought it made Hillary a better candidate,” Obama said during a taping of NBC’s “Tonight Show.” “My hope is that over the next couple of weeks we’re able to pull things together.”

Kasich signs medical pot bill in Ohio

COLUMBUS - Gov. John Kasich signed a plan to legalize medical marijuana into law Wednesday, making Ohio the 25th state to approve its use. Those suffering from epilepsy, chronic pain and the side effects of cancer treatments could soon be able to treat their pain with marijuana. Despite years of delays and opposition, state lawmakers passed a plan in May to legalize medical marijuana for those with a doctor’s referral. Groups working to place a rival medical marijuana proposal on the fall ballot put pressure on legislators, but ultimately dropped their efforts after the lawmakers approved a plan. Kasich was quiet about whether he supported legalizing medical marijuana, saying only that he would follow doctors’ recommendations and wanted to help children in pain.

Trump tells GOP to ‘man up’

WASHINGTON — Donald J. Trump has some advice for panicked Republicans in Washington who are melting down over his most incendiary statements: Man up (New York Times). “Politicians are so politically correct anymore, they can’t breathe,” Mr. Trump said in an interview Tuesday afternoon as fellow Republicans forcefully protested his ethnically charged criticism of a federal judge overseeing a lawsuit against the defunct Trump University. “The people are tired of this political correctness when things are said that are totally fine,” he said.