

The Howey Political Report



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“QUOTE” OF THE WEEK

“This campaign was not about the messenger but the message...”

- U.S. Rep. Mark Souder, declaring victory after defeating former Fort Wayne Mayor Paul Helmke

Souder, conservatives score big in primaries

Bush, McIntosh maneuvers critical

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY** in Fort Wayne,
MARK SCHOEFF JR in Washington,
and **BROOKE BOEGLIN** in Indianapolis

An accountant and attorney could be heard tapping the keyboard at one end of the Grand Wayne Center’s board room in Fort Wayne. It was about 9:30 p.m. Tuesday, and opposite them stood Paul Helmke, slightly bent over one of the padded leather chairs, hands on its back, alone and silent, deep in thought, his political career broadsided by a U.S. President. Outside the room were 300 Republicans waiting.

Helmke wasn’t fuming, but his frustration was evident after he was steamrolled by U.S. Rep. Mark Souder, 57 to 37 percent, in a devastating defeat that the incumbent would attribute to a “cultural battle” a few days before the verdict. It was a fierce race that left both Helmke and Souder personally rattled.

Primary night saw Hoosier movement conservatives strike with avenging clarity, swiftly setting Helmke aside, while retiring State Sen. Steve Johnson, recently censured for an affair with an adult female

legislative intern. Vengeance wasn’t limited to the GOP. State Sen. Mark Blade was upset by teacher Tim Skinner after resigning from his job with Terre Haute Schools following an on-premise affair was reported in the media.

But Souder’s victory over Helmke was the most fascinating because of its almost global implications. A dozen years before, it was young George W. Bush as White House liaison to Congressional movement conservatives who saw them bolt from tax-hiking father, George. H.W. Bush, costing the lip-reading family dynasty its first possession of the White House.

When G.W. Bush was elected, he spent his first eight months operating a presidency that veered significantly to the right, only to be jerked with the hideous force of Sept. 11 back into pre-inauguration moderate trajectory. Holding the line on spending has become a rival of “guns vs. butter” for Great Society social binging. Bush is “nation building” in Afghanistan. The president was ordering the Israelis away from their own assault on terror, unnerving Capitol Hill conservatives.

Special HPR Election Report

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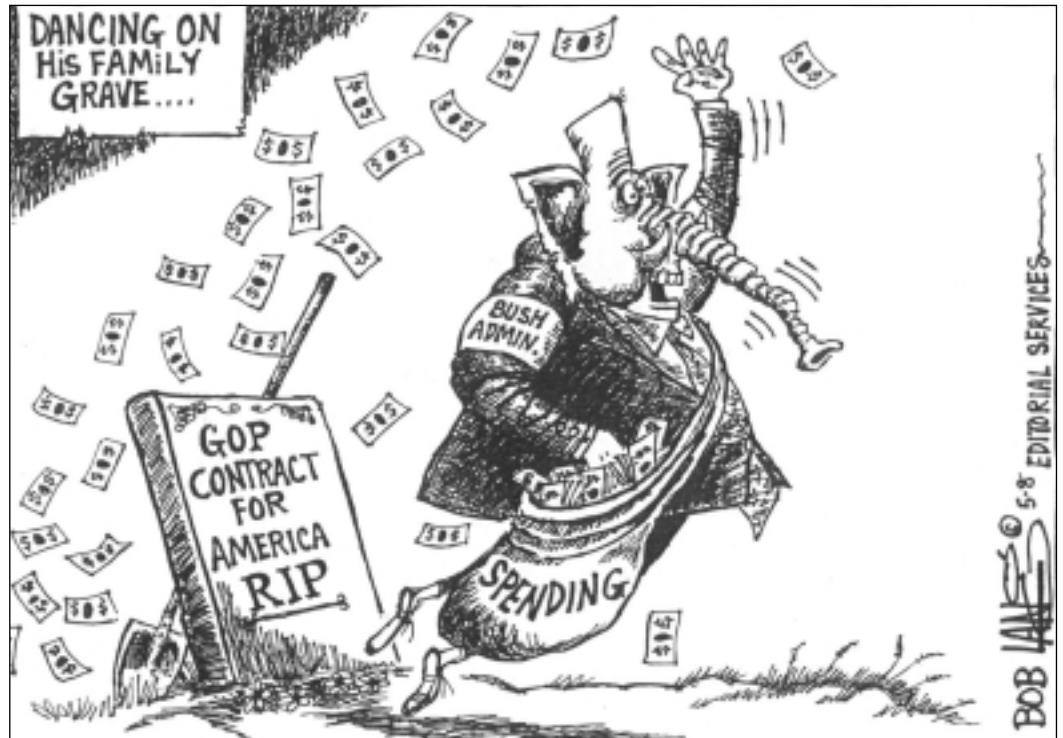
TICKER T A P E

PUNCH CARD SYSTEMS BREAK DOWN IN PORTER, KOSCIUSKO COUNTIES: Computer problems on Tuesday evening delayed the results of the Porter County primary election. More than an hour and a half after polls closed at 6 p.m., no results had been released (Times of Northwest Indiana). During the 2000 general election, the machines that count the punch cards used in Porter County overheated and had to be shut down. Results were not finalized until the following day.

SOUDER VOLUNTEER MURDERED: U.S. Rep. Mark Souder paid tribute to campaign volunteer John Carney, who was murdered Saturday night. "He was brutally murdered and we need to work hard to get control of crime in this city," Souder said.

KERNAN OBSERVES PAINFUL ANNIVERSARY: Lieutenant Governor Joe Kernan marked an anniversary Tuesday. It was the 30th anniversary of the day he ejected from his damaged Navy plane during a mission over North Vietnam. The event began an eleven-month ordeal for Kernan as a prisoner of war (WISH-TV). He ended up in a Hanoi prison the American POWs called "The Zoo." Kernan was in the last group

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To assuage movement conservatives in the uncertain and surreal Spring of 2002, there was an emphatic White House embrace of one Rep. Mark Souder, a man who just a year before was openly critical of Bush operations, style and motives.

Mark Souder

Helmke's decision to challenge Souder is one that was second-guessed even before he made it. Souder is the consummate politician with a precinct-by-precinct knowledge of his district, now one of the most Republican (68 percent) in the nation. Souder had dawdled at fundraising, but that quickly changed in February. "I knew Paul Helmke was one of the most established politicians in Indiana and when he chose to run in the primary it would be difficult," Souder said after declaring victory. "Every county we had a solid win and I appreciate the support."

He explained his resounding victory to Republicans at the Grand Wayne Center in terms not quite as harsh as the "cultural battle" rhetoric from a few days before, but it was close.

"This campaign was not about the

messenger but the message," Souder said. "Since I was 14 years old I've stood for lower taxes, smaller government and stronger national defense, strong moral values, and I will probably stand for those until they put me under. I believe those values represent what we stand for here in Northeast Indiana. I believe that's what we stand for in the Republican Party. If we stand for those values we will continue to attract Democrats. When we stand firm, when we have an unassertive trumpet, we won't attract people. When we have a certain trumpet that says this is what we're fighting for, this is what we believe, people like my last opponent, Mike Foster, will come over."

Souder rejected notions that Helmke had closed the gap, saying internal polling showed him with a 30 percent lead. But at the same time, he worried about the Democratic crossovers. With a little more than a week to go, Souder pulled the trigger on a tactic he had prepared from the beginning. He used his Presidential trump card.

"It was the amount of money spent by liberal Democratic groups in a Republican primary," Souder said. "We

had some precincts where there were 158 voters and only one was a Democrat. It looks like 30 percent of the vote in many areas was Democratic. This was not a primary, this was a general election. Jay Rigdon will not receive as much Democratic support as Paul Helmke did.”

Souder said he feared his polling would not pick up the Democratic crossover. “We could also not pick up what his last minute attacks would be. The presidential endorsement, which was planned from the very beginning, which we knew we could get if we sought it, was really a question as to how the primary would unfold,” Souder said. “When we realized the NEA, the gun groups, the League of Conservation Voters, the trial attorneys were coming into this as part of the Democratic coalition, we went to the administration and said we’re going to need help in this. This is a general election and not a primary. We did that and received the ad. It was basically to blunt all the phone banking and attacks from the other side. I believe we accomplished that.”

It was Souder at his tactical best. He had successfully tied the Bill Clinton millstone around Helmke’s neck, painting him as a liberal tax and spender. Like Stephen Goldsmith six years before, Helmke was unable to use his many successes as a big city mayor in the dogmatic world of Congressional politics.

Souder played hardball, even mentioning that Helmke’s daughter, Laura, had worked in the Clinton White House, enraging the challenger. There were limits. “I didn’t say she worked there as an intern, which I thought would have been inappropriate,” Souder said late last week.

As for his future, his 1994 six term limit is off because “this is an open seat.”

Paul Helmke

There was a sense by early last week that Helmke was building some momentum. The specter of Democratic

crossovers, once thought to be irrelevant, was evident. But on April 29, the air began rushing out of the Helmke balloon. “We got a blow today, of sorts,” Helmke spokeswoman Rebecca Fisher told HPR on April 29. “There will be a TV spot with President Bush supporting Mark, which is disheartening.”

It was not only disheartening, it was devastating that a sitting president with approval ratings in the 70th percentile would intervene in a primary. As Souder told HPR late last week, in the 1998 U.S. Senate race, Evan Bayh tried to paint Helmke as a liberal tax and spender, but not in the old 4th CD. “But now we’ve done that,” Souder said, suggesting that Helmke could be forever tainted.

“It’s hard to take an incumbent out,” Helmke sighed after the defeat. “It’s never happened in this area in a primary race. Three things happened: President Bush weighing in so heavily; the negative advertising, particularly the outside money that ran; and then the Aboite Supreme Court decision. We didn’t expect them and they hurt us.”

The U.S. Supreme Court decision on Helmke’s move to annex heavily Republican Aboite Township helped Souder jab into the former mayor’s Allen County bulwark. But the Bush decision to weigh in and send two cabinet secretaries into the district to campaign with Souder was a tornadic event for the Helmke atmosphere. The turmoil of the Middle East had impacted Northeastern Indiana’s monolithic GOP politics.

There were risks for the White House. What if President Bush had weighed in, and Helmke had won? It would have been a huge embarrassment. But Souder’s lengthy relationship with top Bush strategist Karl Rove was enough to allow Rove to pull the trigger.

“After 911, I thought people would respond to stronger support for the president,” Helmke said, hoping to usurp some of the Bush popularity for his own cause. “Part of my theme from the start was that

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brought home on March 27th, 1973. He is widely expected to be the Democratic nominee for governor in 2004.

PETERSON TO PUSH RESTRUCTURING: Mayor Bart Peterson will spend much of today speaking to various groups on the importance of immediate statewide tax restructuring to keep Indiana from the brink of fiscal turmoil, sky-high property taxes and setbacks in economic development and education. In each of the following events, the mayor will encourage Central Indiana leaders to urge their state legislators, during next week’s special session, to adopt a “smart, flexible and modern” tax structure that permits investment to keep the state moving forward in lean times and tax cuts when the economy is strong. “We have come together because we know that our state is at a crisis point,” said John Myrland, president of the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce. “We are asking our local legislators to give us strong, courageous and visionary leadership to resolve this crisis. This is the time for bold strategic decisions. This Alliance wants to help our leaders meet the challenges of Indiana’s future.”

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ELECTION RETURNS

With 100 percent reporting, as posted by the Election Division of the Indiana Secretary of State

1ST CD

Democratic

Visclosky 56,609
Spelbring 9,416

Republican

Leyva 7,865
Huerter 5,279

2ND CD

Democratic

Thompson 19,633
Meissner 7,153

Alexa 5,553
Farrand 2,792

Osborn 2,277

Republican

Chocola 30,181
Hass 8,419

3RD CD

Democratic

Rigdon 7,612

Republican

Souder 50,910
Helmke 31,815
Larsen 2,932

4TH CD

Republican

Buyer 42,380
Kerns 23,234

Young 5,559
Herr 2,586

Baynard 1,564
Smith 1,495

5TH CD

Democratic

Carr 4,453
Hall 3,479

Brinegar 2,833
Griese 1,148

Republican

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we'd do a better job of supporting the president; supportive on the education bills, supportive on Israel. Souder was originally seen as not being so supportive. Then he started to come around and I think that's part of what got into it. Obviously once the president came in with his strong endorsement, that undercut our momentum pretty significantly."

Knowing how the movement conservatives mortally wounded the first Bush presidency, Helmke said the current President Bush "is sending a message" at his expense. "I heard he was getting heat for supporting Liddy Dole in North Carolina, Lamar Alexander in Tennessee, (Richard) Riordan in California. Conservatives were angry about that, angry he signed the campaign finance bill, angry about his position on Israel and the social conservatives said, 'You've got to show us something' and what he gave them was supporting Congressman Souder."

The question late Tuesday night was whether Helmke is washed up politically. It was his third Congressional level defeat, but losing to Dan Coats (1980), Evan Bayh (1998) and Mark Souder is major league competition. Hoosiers such as John Brademas, Phil Sharp and Mike Pence along with Georgian Newt Gingrich absorbed multiple defeats before success came. Helmke's problem is there are not many places to go. Souder looks entrenched. He won't want to slam his hand in the Bayh car door again in 2004. The notion that OMB Director Mitch Daniels coming back to run for governor in 2004 helped seal Helmke's decision to challenge Souder. And it's too late for Helmke to jump into the secretary of state's race, which would have bored him anyway.

Unless Helmke decides to challenge Fort Wayne Mayor Graham Richard next year, a law career and making a lot of money appear to be his consolation prize.

Steve Buyer

It will gall U.S. Rep. Brian Kerns

that in the end; after U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer vanquished him in the new Frankenstein 4th CD; that Buyer will be running in the new 2nd CD after all.

When redistricting threw Buyer and Kerns together, with Buyer holding on to only a few townships of his old 5th CD, Kerns tried to talk him into running in the new 2nd, being vacated by U.S. Rep. Tim Roemer. Buyer said, no, that is Chris Chocola territory. But after the 19,000 vote drubbing of the strange, strange Kerns, who ran a campaign more akin to Bobby "Citizen Kern" Hidalgo, Buyer was looking north.

"What I will do tomorrow is talk to Chris Chocola," Buyer told HPR early election night. "My sights will easily turn to the 2nd Congressional District. Mark Souder and I will both pledge our support to Chris. Mark has the background on Ms. Thompson since he ran against her. I have represented many of her counties. So both of us are going to turn our sights to help Chris Chocola. He'll be a great Member of Congress. He is not a back bencher; he is varsity and he'll hit the ground running." In fact, Buyer said, he will offer his Monticello campaign office to Chocola to "work the southern end of the 2nd.

Both Buyer and Souder have nothing to fear in their general election coronations. The Buyer-Kerns race was originally seen as a potential donnybrook. But Buyer used his five terms of name ID and his position on the House Commerce Committee to easily out-raise Kerns.

In the end, it was a political phony war.

Brian Kerns

He did not return phone calls.

Actually, we stopped calling Rep. Kerns because it was futile. We originally thought he might have had some gripe with HPR, but more and more 4th CD editors and reporters found the same thing.

Kerns was lazy. He dedicated himself to maintaining a 100-percent voting record, even leaving a White House meet-

ing with an amazed President Bush to vote on an insignificant bill. His wife and father-in-law, former U.S. Rep. John Myers, did most of the in-district stump-ing. Kerns used his franking privileges to the tune of 792,500 pieces of legal but taxpayer-financed mail sent from October through December at a cost \$105,178 in postage to weigh in with voters.

It was that lack of character, most brazenly displayed on Sept. 11 when he said he witnessed Flight 77 plunge into the Pentagon. "It just banked into the building," Kerns told the *Indianapolis Star*. "I drove into the office and told my staff to go home." The problem was, that story was a fib. Kerns was in his office, incredibly with an officer from the American Legion, when Flight 77 hit the Pentagon out of their sight, creating one of the dumbest bits of Congressional level lore in Hoosier history.

Tuesday night, Kerns said of Buyer, "He and his supporters ran a good campaign and earned this win" (*Lafayette Journal & Courier*).

Kerns is headed for the dustbin of Hoosier one-term wonders such as Katie Hall (we won't sully the reputation of Bill Hudnut, who went on to more marvelous things), and the downright strange such as Earl Landgrebe.

Chris Chocola

Chocola was defeated by Roemer, 52-47 percent in 2000, but out-raised him \$1.088 million to \$734,000. Political analyst Charlie Cook calls the new 2nd CD "highly competitive" and writes in the 2002 edition of the *Almanac of American Politics*, "With Roemer retiring, Democrats are going to have a tough time keeping this seat in their column."

There is, however, one problem: Chocola's residency. Chocola blasted Roemer in the 2000 race for living in Washington rather than the district, making it the dominant theme in a race in which he garnered 47 percent of the vote. After Hoosier congressional boundaries

were redrawn this year to eliminate one district because of a decline in population, Chocola found himself living about a half-mile outside the new 2nd in Elkhart County, which hasn't sent one of its residents to Congress since trumpet maker C.G. Conn spent one term there more than a century ago.

"Voters want their representative to care enough about the district to live in the district," Long Thompson told HPR. "It's difficult to ask someone to vote for you when you're not going to be voting for yourself." Long Thompson and her husband live on a farm in Marshall County near Argos. She said she spent virtually every weekend there during her five-year tenure in the Clinton administration. Alexa has moved to a home in Porter County, which is in both his state Senate district and the new 2nd CD.

Chocola said that the new boundaries for 2nd CD were set with politics in mind. "I didn't move. The people who drew the lines did it in a crass political way that didn't take into account the community of interests standard by which they were supposed to operate. An artificial line on a map didn't take my family and me out of the community. Voters are clearly able to figure out the distinction."

Jill Long Thompson

Former congresswoman Jill Long Thompson took the first step of her political comeback with a 52-percent win over Mark Meissner, a former Tim Roemer and Evan Bayh aide, who followed with 20 percent. State Sen. Bill Alexa had 14 percent.

JLT possesses an odyssey of a career. A former Valparaiso council-woman, she was the Democratic sacrificial lamb against U.S. Sen. Dan Quayle in 1986, and once again in 1988 against U.S. Rep. Dan Coats. With Quayle's ascension to the vice presidency and Coats following his path to the Senate, Jill Long parlayed accrued voter name ID into a stunning 4th CD upset in 1989. She served

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Burton	55,073
Holland	10,701

6TH CD
Democratic

Fox	27,458
<i>Republican</i>	
Pence	55,142

7TH CD
Democratic

Carson	11,577
Hidalgo	1,015
<i>Republican</i>	
McVey	5,276
Reynolds	2,370

8TH CD
Democratic

Hartke	40,305
Graf	17,890
<i>Republican</i>	
Hostettler	29,707

9TH CD
Democratic

Hill	46,865
<i>Republican</i>	
Sodrel	14,120
Redmon	7,811
Ellington	4,409
Fowler	2,449

INDIANA SENATE
21st District Republican

Drozda	7,718	51%
Johnson	7,390	49%

26th District Democratic

Craycraft	9,653	81%
Leon	2,288	19%

38th District Democratic

Skinner	7,216	38%
Blade	6,650	35%
Ping	5,188	27%

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INDIANA HOUSE

8th District Democrat

Dvorak, Ryan 3,856
Republican

Baxmeyer 1,680
Ehrhard 802

(Rep. Mike Dvorak is retiring).

12th District Democratic

Aguilera 4,156
Kestic 2,557
Medina 714

17th District Democratic

Gidley 1,628
Rowe 585
Winters 1,753

Republican

Heim 1,798
Foley 850
Harman 836
Leavell 411

(Rep. Gary Cook is retiring)

35th District Republican

Lutz 3,469
Steele 3,174

(Rep. Bruce Munson is retiring).

36th District Republican

Kincaid 2,176 53%
Jackson 1,960 47%

44th District Democratic

Crosby 2,540
Republican

Thomas 4,564
Haynes 1,182

(Rep. Sue Crosby is retiring)

45th District Democratic

Chowning 5,090
Cullen 3,942

Republican

Borders 1,705
Brooksmith 1,341
Phegley 540

three terms and it took the politically astute Mark Souder and a historic national tidal wave to defeat her in 1994. She then became under secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"I am very honored and I am very pleased that it is a strong showing" Long Thompson said (Dave Kitchell, *Logansport Pharos-Tribune*). "To win with over 50 percent in a five-way race is just very significant. I'm also very honored because Sen. Alexa called to congratulate me and is endorsing me."

Both candidates will seek to capture the middle ground where the election will be decided in this "swing" district, Jack Colwell of the *South Bend Tribune* reported this morning. Chocola immediately sought to define Long Thompson as too far to the political left and not long a district resident, referring to her as "a former liberal congresswoman from Fort Wayne."

Colwell added that Long Thompson immediately sought to define herself as "living in the middle of the district" (in Marshall County) and being "very moderate, very much middle of the road."

Both Long Thompson and Chocola identified Social Security as a battleground issue for the fall.

With U.S. House Republicans maintaining a 10-seat margin, the 2nd CD will be on the national radar screen as in play. Long Thompson has spent \$100,000 on TV and radio already. Chocola has spent \$50,000 on TV, and he plans to continue his television advertising for a while even after the vote on Tuesday. The twist is that there may be three former and current Members of Congress (Buyer, Souder, JLT) and the wannabe Chocola weighing in next fall.

Baron Hill/Mike Sodrel

The other Indiana race likely to be on the national radar is the 9th CD. U.S. Rep. Baron Hill is seeking his third term. He will face Republican Mike Sodrel, who owns Free Enterprise System, Sodrel Truck Lines and Sodrel Logistics in

Jeffersonville. Sodrel, who has a reputation as a renaissance man, poured \$340,000 of his own money to win the primary and says both candidates will raise and spend \$1 million.

"We showed most voters we know how to put together a campaign and execute a campaign," Sodrel said (Lesley Stedman, *Louisville Courier-Journal*).

How vulnerable is Hill? A tenacious campaigner, he came back from an 11th-hour 10-point deficit to defeat Jean Leising, 51-48 percent in 1998, with help from Big Labor, Gov. Frank O'Bannon and former U.S. Rep. Lee Hamilton. In 2000, he defeated quirky anti-abortion activist Michael Bailey 54-44 percent.

This year, O'Bannon's popularity is waning. The Indiana AFL-CIO refused to endorse Hill after he voted for free trade with China.. While it's unlikely labor will seek out Sodrel, if the activists sit this one out it could crimp Hill. That's because the 9th CD votes Republican presidentially. In 2000, Bush shellacked Al Gore 136,878 to 94,990 (58-40 percent) and in 1996, the lethargic Bob Dole and President Clinton each polled 44 percent. While this is a mid-term election, this is one of several dozen districts in the U.S. where President Bush's popularity in the 80th, 70th or 60th percentile could affix some challengers with a tailwind. Remember that come Sept. 11, 2002, Americans will likely see a frenzy of patriotic fervor at the one-year anniversary. In that scenario, a Bush visit to Jeffersonville could boost Sodrel. However, a second wave of domestic terror attacks or a series of battlefield debacles could have the opposite impact.

As the National Weather Service might say, the "conditions are right" (credible, well-funded challenger, popular president, incumbent with core supporters angered) for an autumnal political hurricane in Southeaster Indiana.

Misbehavin' senators lose

It was a bad night for misbehavin'. Adulterous affairs cost State Sens. Steve

Johnson, R-Kokomo, and Mark Blade, D-Terre Haute, their jobs despite an atmosphere generally kind to incumbents. Blade lost to Tim Skinner, a government and economics teacher at West Vigo High School and a Vigo County Councilman. Blade became entangled in a bizarre story that began with a potshot at a local school superintendent and ended up with his resignation from the Terre Haute schools after an on-premise affair was revealed in the ensuing investigation.

Blade tried to counter that with a "family values" radio ad campaign that obviously backfired. Blade said he would support Skinner for the race. "If Tim Skinner is the winner, we'll support him," he said (Pete Ciancone, *Terre Haute Tribune-Star*). "If he comes out the winner, tomorrow I'll be calling him to congratulate him. We were hopeful of better results. Vicki and I have had five good years working for the people of Indiana."

Indiana Republicans are expected to fully fund SD38 nominee Jerry McMullen in hopes of picking up two more seats to form a majority party quorum.

In Kokomo, Republican Jeff Drozda claimed victory and attributed it to a strong grass-roots campaign and his anti-tax message. He said Johnson, a four-term senator, voted for the two-year state budget that is now badly out of balance and backed some tax increases during the regular session that ended March 14. "He voted to raise taxes on Hoosier families and businesses and people were very concerned with that," Drozda said.

How that rhetoric impacts next week's special session of the Indiana General Assembly remains to be seen.

However, the underpinning dynamic in this race was Johnson's affair with a 23-year-old female intern in 1998 that ended up with him being censured and stripped of his committee assignments. While the Senate Republicans backed him with \$28,000, the Indiana Family Council and 2000 gubernatorial nominee

David McIntosh worked to back Drozda financially and to motivate movement conservatives.

"It is very clear that the people wanted change in this Senate district," Drozda said (*Indianapolis Star*).

McIntosh's movement

Playing a largely subterranean role was 2000 gubernatorial nominee David McIntosh, who not only helped Drozda, but along with U.S. Rep. Mike Pence endorsed Mark Souder against Paul Helmke.

It was a page out of Richard Nixon's 1966 playbook. Stung by defeats in 1960 and 1962, Nixon held back for a period, then barnstormed across the country in 1966 and helped Republicans pick up dozens of seats.

McIntosh has been criticized for his 2000 gubernatorial campaign and now faces a 2004 flanking movement from Eric Miller on the right and the specter of OMB Director Mitch Daniels coming home for the gubernatorial nomination.

As Nixon picked up scores of IOUs in 1966, McIntosh is augmenting powerful relationships with Pence, Souder and social conservatives in the Indiana General Assembly, one of which will be Drozda.

"Conventional wisdom is to stay out of primaries," McIntosh said Wednesday afternoon from Washington. "In those particular cases it was very clear to me the conservative candidate could use the help and was the better representative of the right philosophy for Indiana."

Drozda, he said, he helped him in his Congressional and gubernatorial races. "I thought he'd be an excellent member of the legislature," McIntosh said. "That was biggest factor. I have no animus for Steve, but I thought Jeff was better. Agree with Mike McDaniel when he said Steve should move on and let someone move on." But, McIntosh noted, had it not been for that tax issue, "I

TICKER T A P E

(Rep. John Gregg is retiring)

48th District Democratic

Carter 1,291

Republican

Neese 3,531

Hannon 1,779

(Rep. Dean Mock is retiring)

50th District Republican

Leonard 3,067

Plew 2,692

Overdeer 2,593

Welker 1,176

(Rep. Gary Dillon is running for the Senate).

52nd District Democratic

Sturtz 577

Republican

Stutzman 3,295

Alligood 1,998

Gensic 1,567

56th District Democratic

Pflum 1,247

Hamilton 991

Brock 330

Republican

Hamm 3,329

(Rep. Dick Bodiker is retiring).

District 57 Democratic

Wheeler 1,555

Republican

Stine 3,159

Carlin 1,619

(State Rep. Mike Herndon is retiring).

65th District Republican

Koch 4,122 64%

Cassidy 1,057 16%

Kinser 300 5%

Patton 389 6%

Walton 577 9%

(Rep. Brent Steele is retiring).

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District 84 Republican

Borror 5,298
Wehrle 2,774

(Rep. Randy Borror had been appointed to fill the vacancy of the late Rep. Gloria Goeglein).

87th District Democratic

Otten 571

Republican

Noe 2,778
Mills 1,606
Macdonald 1,294

(Rep. Cindy Noe had been appointed to fill the term of Rep. Paul Mannweiler).

KERNAN HEADED TO RICHMOND:

Less than a week away from the start of the special session, Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan will stop in at a Richmond company tomorrow to talk about how the upcoming session could benefit both the state's job growth efforts and the families who need those jobs. Kernan will be joined at the news conference by Peter Wickman, president of Belden Electronics Division. Belden, which is a leader in the design, manufacture and marketing of specialty wire and cable products for the electronics and electrical markets, has been doing business in Richmond for 75 years.



don't think he would have won."

McIntosh said his role in the Souder and Drozda victories will help culminate his re-emergence. "I will be active this year with candidates. Someone playing it safe would have stayed out. What I'm going to do is try to exercise positive leadership in party and move it in conservative direction."

Aguilera rides Latino power

State Rep. John Aguilera, D-East Chicago, made a big deal out of his new maps that he emotionally said deluted Latino clout in his district. It prompted Democratic mapmaker State Rep. Ed Mahern to call him an "asshole" at last December's Bulen Symposium at IUPUI. Last week, pundits were predicting he would lose to Milan Kesic. Aguilera said he was expecting a close race. In his first election two years ago, Aguilera accused Kesic of not living in the district and tried to have him removed from the ballot. That year he won by only 222 votes. This year he continued to accuse Kesic of close ties to the machine politics of East Chicago Mayor Bob Pastrick.

"I'm trying to get the job done for my district and they were playing politics, and that message came through," Aguilera said (Steve Walsh, *Gary Post-Tribune*). He defeated Kesic 4,156 to 2,557. It was a black eye for the Pastrick machine in a dismal year of collapse of the steel industry and tax revenues, even though the mayor disavowed any involvement. It also restored the notion of Latino political power, which is expected to grow not only in Lake County, but throughout the rest of Indiana.

Rogelio "Roy" Dominguez won as Lake County sheriff, defeating rival Miguel "Mike" Arredondo. Dominguez, who lost eight years ago to the current sheriff, John Buncich, by a narrow margin in an 11-man race, closed the gap easily this year when running against only one opponent, who is Buncich's chief of police (*Times of Northwest Indiana*).

During his two terms as sheriff,

Buncich built a powerful political machine to which Arredondo hitched his political star, early on linking his campaign with Buncich by announcing he would name the sheriff as his police chief.

Marion County GOP assertive

A similar power stake was in play with Marion County Republicans. Once the Indiana GOP's bulwark, former sheriff Joe McAtee defied the slating convention and held a lead in the polls until Lawrence Mayor Tom Schneider unleashed a devastating TV ad three weeks ago that blamed McAtee for the carnage of the crack cocaine crisis in the early 1990s.

Schneider's victory was vindication. "I just know that I can make a difference and my whole goal was to make the community safer, our neighborhoods, our schools, reduce crime in Marion county," Schneider told supporters last night. "It is a tough, tough job and I know it has really taken a toll on my buddy, Jack Cottey."

Sheriff Cottey refused to hear the death knell of his GOP, even with former U.S. Marshall Frank Anderson preparing to become the second African-American sheriff in Indiana as the county begins to lean Democratic. "When I start looking at the numbers around this county, anyone who said that this organization is dead better go back and take a second look," Cottey said. "I don't think we've lost a contested race in Marion county. I can tell you Warren township, it was very sweet around 6:30, and everything I've heard around the county, it could've been a bad night for a few people."

Schneider added, "I have every confidence that as this campaign goes along, when Carl Brizzi and I unfold what we plan to do in the next four years, that I am certain of a victory in November."

At stake could be new state Chairman Jim Kittle's first attempt at turning around the GOP fortunes, having committed state party resources to Brizzi.

