

The Howey Political Report



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“QUOTE” OF THE WEEK

“Are you better off now than you were two years ago?”

- Former Vice President Al Gore, Tuesday night in New Mexico

Carson maintains lead, but under 50% McVey running well with independents

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY** in *Indianapolis*

Republican challenger Brose McVey faces an uphill challenge in his attempt to unseat U.S. Rep. Julia Carson in the 7th CD, according to a TeleResearch/Howey Political Report poll released today.

Among 321 likely voters in the 7th CD, Carson maintained a 45 to 31 percent lead over McVey, with an additional 6 percent going to Libertarian Andy Horning. Another 18 percent are undecided. The poll included 45 percent Democrats, 31 percent Republicans and 24 percent independents and was conducted Sept. 21-24.

The Carson/McVey horse race numbers were identical to a Public Opinion Strategies Poll in February.

The silver lining for McVey is that Carson is well below the critical 50 percent mark six weeks before the Nov. 5 election. And among independent voters who represent the swing bloc in the 7th, Carson has a 43-52 favorable/unfavorable rating, compared to a 42/29 percent fav/unfav for McVey. In the horse race among independents, Carson leads 32 to 21 percent, with Horning getting 13 percent and 34 percent undecided.

“He’s got a leg up with independent voters,” said TeleResearch pollster Jeff Lewis. “He’s doing well with the independent voters early in the campaign. Carson is at 45 percent in the horse race and getting 32 percent of the independent vote,” Lewis explained. “If she closes that, she’ll win.”

McVey campaign manager Tim Searcy responded, saying, “She’s 5 points under 50. If you’re under 50 when you’re a six-year incumbent, start planning for your retirement. We had been up just six days on TV when this poll

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TIGHT RACE FOR MARION COUNTY PROSECUTOR:

The race for Marion County prosecutor is a statistical dead heat, according to the latest HPR/TeleResearch Poll. The poll conducted Sept. 21-24 with 440 likely voters has an error rate of +/-4.8 percent and shows Democrat Jim Osborn leading Republican Carl Brizzi 34-32 percent. Another 2 percent went to Libertarian Kurt St. Angelo and 32 percent were undecided. In the Marion County sheriff race, Democrat Frank Anderson had a 56-25 percent lead over Republican Tom Schneider, with 4 percent for Campbell and 15 percent undecided. The poll showed that 24 percent of Republicans are undecided, while Anderson has a 51 percent favorability rating with GOP voters.

CBS HAS BUSH APPROVAL AT 66 PERCENT:

A CBS News poll of 903 adults, conducted over Sept. 22-23 (+/- 3%), shows: 66% approve of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as President; 27% disapprove; 7% don't know. 58% approve of the way George W. Bush is handling foreign policy; 34% disapprove; 8% don't know. 49% approve of the way George W. Bush is handling the economy; 41% disapprove; 10% don't know.

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was taken. There's 18 percent undecided and the vast majority of those tend to break toward the challenger."

The bad news for the Republican is that Horning is siphoning off his 6 percent from voters who would otherwise tend to vote Republican. Now Horning stands to play the role of spoiler. His 6 percent is a strong showing for him, but is probably that high because Horning got wide exposure in the district in his 1999 run for mayor, a column in the *Indianapolis Star* and 2000 challenge against Gov. O'Bannon.

O'Bannon.

"In the early light, Horning is going to have higher name ID because of his newspaper column and his past runs," Searcy said. "As we get closer, we think he'll be less of a factor."

The poll also shows intriguing aspects of this race, which is being scrutinized by national Republicans. Carson is running 93 percent among Democrats (Gov. O'Bannon and Sen. Bayh run at 88 percent); while 73 percent of Republicans support McVey. In the fav/unfav, 28 percent of the Republicans are "uncertain." Said Lewis, "They don't know him."

Searcy observed, "The fav/unfav

looks like about 30 percent don't know who he is yet. Her unfavs are unbelievable - 52 percent among independents."

Searcy said he believes the poll under-samples Republicans. In 2000, Democrat Al Gore won what is now the 7th CD with 54 percent of the vote.

Marion County Democratic Chairman Ed Treacy observed, "I don't know if there's ever been a poll where Julia had more than 50 percent before the election. Julia's vote always comes out on Election Day."

Treacy acknowledged that many Marion County voters may be cherry picking races between the two major parties on Nov. 5. "Marion County is equally divided and will be for the next 10 years. It will be predicated on who has the best candidates," he said.

New McVey TV ad

McVey went up with his second TV ad on Tuesday, showing video of bored-looking Carson while McVey notes that Indiana leads the nation in job loss and mortgage foreclosures while personal income is declining. Searcy called the new ad legitimate issue comparison.

Carson has not begun her TV ad campaign, nor has she bought media time to date.

"The campaign's new television advertisement frames the race for Congress by asking questions that every voter has to ask themselves: 'Is it time to replace Julia Carson in Congress?' and in the face of tremendous economic difficulties in this district, 'What is Julia Carson doing?' said Searcy. Over the last six years, Julia Carson has held a seat of power that could make a difference.

Carson and war

McVey spent the weekend trying to draw Carson out on her stance on war with Iraq. At a joint appearance at Robin Run Village Sunday night, McVey reiterated his basic support for President Bush, saying, "If we can't define the threat, we need to use diplomacy. If the threat exists, and I believe it does, I would support the actions of the President."

On Friday, McVey challenged Carson to take a stance, saying, "I can respect Rep. Carson taking a position in opposition to action, based on her con-

science. But what I don't accept is silence at this important time. Additionally, I am concerned about her taking any position on national security based on her website poll."

At Robin Run, Carson noted her website poll, saying, "What I have done is listen intently. I believe it is incumbent on me to listen. If any of you have looked at my website, you will see that the people are voting overwhelmingly against a military attack against Iraq. The President has access to briefings that I don't have. I think whatever action we take -- this is not a political stance -- we cannot take a military strike lightly." Carson added, "We have to understand fully and completely what America is doing; whether or not there really does exist a threat; whether there is indeed a threat against this country. The resolution is far reaching, giving the President unlimited rights to bomb wherever he pleases. We gave that same right to Lyndon B. Johnson and the Gulf of Tonkin resolution and eventually the American people wanted to get out of Vietnam."



HPR Pre-Election Briefing Oct. 30 at Press Club

The Howey Political Report in connection with TeleResearch, the Indianapolis Press Club, DLZ and the Indiana Republican and Democratic parties will conduct its 2002 Pre-Election Briefing at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, Oct. 30.

The briefing will include Tele-Research polling data from the 2nd and 7th Congressional Districts, Marion County races, and analysis from HPR's Brian Howey, Jeff Lewis of TeleResearch, John Ketzenberger of the *Indianapolis Business Journal*, Amos Brown from the *Indianapolis Recorder*, Terry Burns from the *Indianapolis Star* and former Republican Chairman Mike McDaniel.

Tickets are \$20 for Indianapolis Press Club members and \$25 for non-members and can be ordered at the Press Club or by e-mailing TeleResearch@aol.com or brianhowey@howeypolitics.com. ❖

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GOP SUCCEEDS IN CHANGING THE ISSUES: There are indications that Bush and the GOP have succeeded in directing voters' concerns to Iraq rather than the economy. A new poll by the Gallup organization found that by a 49 percent to 41 percent margin, voters are now more concerned about Iraq than the state of the economy when deciding for whom to vote this fall. This marks a 16-point shift in voters' attitudes from three weeks ago. Similarly, a poll released Monday by Ipsos Public Affairs, found that Americans, by a six-point margin, now believe the country is on the right track, a 13-point improvement.

70 PERCENT VIEW ECONOMY NEGATIVELY: An ABC News/Money magazine poll of 1,018 adults conducted in the month ending Sept. 22 (+/- 3%), shows: The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort index stands at -15 on its scale of +100 to -100, same as last week. 30% rated the national economy as excellent or good; 70% rated it as not good or poor. 58% rated their personal finances as excellent or good; 42% rated their finances as not good or poor. 40% said now is an excellent or a good time to buy the things they want and need; 60% said it is not a good time or a poor

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time.

SOUDER: U.S. Rep. Mark Souder took to the floor of the House Wednesday to speak in support of passage of H.R. 4691, the Abortion Non-Discrimination Act, which he cosponsored. The bill passed the House by a vote of 229-189. "Those who are fundamentally opposed to abortion should not be forced to pay for something they find morally abhorrent," Souder said. "And religious-based health care organizations, such as the Catholic Hospital HMO of New York City, that do not support abortion should not be discriminated against through denial of government funding. Many hospitals are run by religious organizations. How can we in good conscience force those institutions to support a practice that goes against their deepest-held beliefs? That is wrong." H.R. 4691 would prohibit the federal government, and any state or local government that receives federal financial assistance, from discriminating against any health care entity because the entity refuses to provide coverage of, or pay for, induced abortions. This prohibition would apply to physicians, other health professionals, a hospital, a provider-sponsored organization, a health maintenance organization, a health insurance plan, and any other kind of health care facility, organization, or

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PERHAPS... WE WANDER

By Brian Howey

War and the Class of '74

INDIANAPOLIS - Going to war.

If you were a member of the Greatest Generation, it was something you just did. In World War II, Korea and the early stages of Vietnam, it was defending liberty, freeing the enslaved, containing communism, keeping the dominos up.

Beginning in 1946, the war became a conspicuous and celebrated part of the political resume. John Kennedy and Richard Nixon were two freshmen members of the Class of '46; both were fresh off the Big One.

I spent my childhood pretending I was a member of the class of '46, spending hours upon hours in the dunes and woods around Michigan City playing Kilroy, Striker and Audie Murphy. We got toy guns and grenades for Christmas and birthdays. We watched the D-Day invasion re-enactment at Washington Park.

But I wasn't in the Class of '46. I was in the high school Class of '74 (*Jonathon Livingston Seagull; We Will Never Pass This Way Again; Today Is the First Day of the Rest of Your Life*). I along with others such as Evan Bayh and Joe Hogsett. We saw war differently than our fathers and uncles. We wanted to be patriotic; in fact, had I not had a draft number of 362, but something like 62, I'm sure I would have gone.

But while the guys in the Class of '74 saw Audie Murphy late at night on TV, on the *CBS Evening News* we saw blood and guts; sweaty GIs smoking pot and shooting heroin on patrol in the jungle. We saw Morley Safer describe how American soldiers "saved" villages with Zippo lighters. We saw My Lai. We watched transport planes shudder out of Khesanh with flak exploding around their wings. We saw Saigon and corruption and zombie veterans and a President with a secret plan that took almost four years to

execute. We saw Moratoriums on the Mall and hippie veterans flinging their medals with utter anguish on their faces. We saw the SDS and Weathermen and we heard Neil Young screech, "Tin Soldiers and Nixon's coming; we're finally on our own" We saw "peace at hand" and peasants hanging from helicopters about 18 months later. Our war history was explained by Jim Morrison and Francis Ford Coppola. And, years later, after Evan Bayh and I and others watched that opening scene from "*Saving Private Ryan*," we wished our class had met such a noble challenge with such acute bravery.

When the Class of '74 turned the tassles on their mortarboards, as I did at Peru High School's Tig-Arena on a humid May evening, we didn't think about joining the Army out of patriotic duty. We were confused kids in a humiliated country. We went to IU or got a job or drove out to California to check out babes. We loved our country, but we didn't dis the guys who fled to Canada. We felt terrible about those families who sent older classmates off to Vietnam, only to return in boxes, for a cause that Robert McNamara would later acknowledge was doomed from the get-go. Even LBJ, the president-turned-freak flagger, knew it was a colossal mistake as he called up the reserves.

This year as the war drums beat once again we find some political figures touting their military credentials. Mike Sodrel is campaigning in the 9th CD as a former master sergeant. Guys such as he had to be special Americans, signing up during such a controversial time. A lot of the guys who are talking war now, weren't so hyped on it back then. Andy Jacobs calls them "war wimps," and the media talks of "chicken hawks."

And there's a political generation afoot -- the sons of the Greatest Generation -- who don't have USMC on our resume. It's a tough thing to explain. ❖

COLUMNISTS ON INDIANA

Jack Colwell, *South Bend Tribune* - Don't get so frustrated over negative TV spots in the 2nd Congressional District race that you throw away your vote. Don't think you are showing them by reacting to back-and-forth attacks from Chris Chocola and Jill Long Thompson by wishing a plague on both their campaign headquarters and tuning out the whole campaign. Don't be silly. Vote for yourself. Vote for what you want. And as close as this race is -- a virtual tossup in the most recent independent poll -- your vote could really count. ❖

John J. Miller, *National Journal* - There's a movement afoot in Congress to strip J. Edgar Hoover's name off the FBI Building, and it may even succeed. Six House members (three Democrats and three Republicans, including Dan Burton) sent around a "Dear Colleague" letter two weeks ago saying the FBI's Hoover years "can be described only as a dark episode in American law enforcement." In addition, says the letter, "Hoover demonstrated a fundamental contempt for the rule of law." Since the letter was distributed on Sept. 12, Burton and his colleagues have quadrupled their support. H.R. 5213 now has 24 co-sponsors, including seven Republicans. The brief against Hoover is, well, not very brief. It includes everything from petty corruption to letting innocents spend decades in prison. "Hoover did a little good and a lot of harm," says Eli Lehrer, a crime expert at the American Enterprise Institute. Taking Hoover's name off the FBI building begs another question: Whose name should go on it? Burton and his colleagues don't offer any suggestions. Indeed, there's a case to be made that nobody's name should replace Hoover's, as we're a government of laws rather than men. But just about everything

in Washington is eventually named after somebody: The best man for the honor may be Melvin Purvis, the field agent responsible for capturing John Dillinger in 1934. Purvis didn't actually fire the gun that killed Public Enemy Number One, but he did run the operation (and kept the shooter's identity a secret to protect him from revenge attacks). He became well known as "The Man Who Got Dillinger" and the "Ace G-Man." Purvis also ended the criminal careers of Pretty Boy Floyd and Baby Face Nelson. ❖

Sylvia Smith, *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette* - Images of kids with the tell-tale sign of starvation -- ironically swollen bellies -- makes anyone cringe. Especially someone reading the morning paper during bites of a cream cheese-smear bagel washed down with OJ and ample coffee. The natural reaction is: Can't the well-fed United States do something? The answer, of course, is yes. The United States does plenty, both with cash contributions to international feeding programs and food (usually in the form of grain) donations. This year, those donations add up to about \$2 billion. The problem is, that's not enough to feed everyone in the world who is hungry, even when other countries' donations are added in. The World Food Program, a Rome-based UN agency headed by Hoosier Jim Morris, estimates the program will collect \$1 billion less than it needs for feeding programs this year because of declining levels of food aid from donor countries. Remarkably, the Bush administration's proposed budget for next year includes a drop in the amount of money allocated for international food aid to just under \$1.7 billion. ❖

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plan. The measure clarifies current law to protect health care entities (including hospitals) from being forced by the government to provide abortions.

SOUDER HEARING DOMINATED BY ANTI-WAR SENTIMENT: U.S. Rep. Mark Souder conducted a hearing to learn opinions in the community on a potential war with Iraq as Congress considers a resolution granting President Bush the power to take military action against Iraq. Largely, the crowd at an Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne lecture hall opposed the Bush administration's approach to ousting Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. Most speakers simply called for peace, while others shared complex and cautionary tales about mistakes of the past (David Griner, *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*). Many likened the president's proposed resolution to Lyndon Johnson's 1964 Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. "This is the Gulf of Tonkin all over again, and in some respects even more sweeping," Auburn resident Mike Walter said. "It is a blank check." Of more than 100 attendees, just a few favored a military strike against Iraq. Souder made few comments during the forum, pausing only to toss out a few questions. Despite his conservatism, Souder

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said, he is not necessarily sold on the president's call for military action.

CHARGES FILED IN BUILD INDIANA FUND CASE IN EAST CHICAGO: The Marion County prosecutor's office was to file criminal charges in connection with a year-long investigation into the use of taxpayer money from the Build Indiana Fund (Michele McNeil Solida, *Indianapolis Star*). Lee Gilliam, a 50-year-old church pastor from East Chicago, was expected to be charged with theft. Prosecutors claim he took public money that was supposed to be used to build a shelter for battered women and instead spent the money on himself, Mark Massa, chief counsel for Prosecutor Scott Newman, said details of the charges would be released today at a news conference. State Sen. Sam Smith, D-East Chicago, also is under investigation for his part in securing \$445,000 in taxpayer grants for what investigators say is a nonexistent women's shelter. Grand jury investigators discovered that Smith failed to file tax returns in 1999 and 2000 and failed to pay sales tax from his funeral home business in 1999 and 2001, according to Marion Superior Court records. Massa would not comment on whether Smith will face criminal charges. Smith did

Indiana 2002 Racing Form

Trend Line: We still think this could be a "pocketbook election" that would favor Democratic Congressional and legislative candidates. The Nasdaq composite index slid to a six-year low Monday, and the rest of Wall Street fell equally hard amid a worsening outlook for the U.S. economy. The selloff carried the Nasdaq to its lowest close since September 1996, and the Dow back toward the four-year low it reached July 23. Since Aug. 22, the Dow has lost nearly 1,200 points. Investors have increasingly lost confidence due to mixed economic news, earnings warnings, and concerns about a war with Iraq.

Indiana Congressional Races

Congressional District 2: Republican: Chris Chocola. **Democrat:** Jill Long Thompson. **Geography:** South Bend, Michigan City, Mishawaka, Elkhart, Kokomo, Plymouth, Logansport; LaPorte, St. Joseph, Starke, Marshall, Pulaski, Fulton, Cass, Carroll and parts of Howard, Porter, Elkhart and White counties. **Media Market:** South Bend-Elkhart, Indianapolis, Lafayette, Chicago. **Websites:** www.jilllongthompson.com; www.chocolaforcongress.com **2000 Result:** Roemer (D) 107,076, Chocola (R) 98,367. **2002 Forecast:** Chocola suggested that Long Thompson had turned to the mails after a "corporate greed" TV spot paid for by the Indiana Democratic Party was pulled from the air by the four commercial TV channels (Jack Colwell, *South Bend Tribune*). The mailing and a new TV spot by Long Thompson eliminate the suggestion in the dropped spot that Chocola's corporate practices can be compared with Enron's. That allegation was a key factor in the stations rejecting the Democratic TV spot. But the mailing and new spot retain the contention that CTB International, Chocola's firm, cut health benefits while providing executive bonuses. The reference in the mailing to which Chocola, the CTB board chairman, objected to the most during a news conference was this: "Despite growing revenues, Chocola wanted more. So he cut 500 workers to make his profits bigger -- 40 of those employees were hardworking Hoosiers!" "A total lie," Chocola charged. He said CTB total employment is about 1,300 and that if there had been a 500-employee cut, "we'd have to close our doors." Matt Burgess, spokesman for the Long Thompson campaign, said the cut reference is based on CTB filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, showing corporate employment at 1,600 on March 24, 1999, and 1,100 on Dec. 31, 2001.

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Status: TOSSUP.

Congressional District 3: Republican: U.S. Rep. Mark Souder. **Democrat:** Jay Rigdon. **Geography:** Fort Wayne, Goshen; Kosciusko, Whitley, LaGrange, Steuben, DeKalb and parts of Elkhart and Allen counties. **Media Market:** South Bend-Elkhart, Fort Wayne. **Websites:** www.jayrigdon.com; www.house.gov/souder/ **2000 results:** Souder (R) 131,051, Foster (D) 74,492. **2002 Forecast:** Souder said he will debate Democratic opponent Jay Rigdon at least once. But Rigdon called Souder "invisible" and said he has been "ducking" making a commitment (Sylvia Smith, *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*). Souder is undecided on his war resolution vote, saying, "to me it's a choice between poor options." **Primary Status:** Safe Souder.

Congressional District 7: Republican: Brose McVey. **Democrat:** U.S. Rep. Julia Carson. **Libertarian:** Andy Horning. **Geography:** Indianapolis. **Media Market:** Indianapolis. **Websites:** www.juliacarson.org; www.broseforcongress.org **2000 Results:** Carson (D) 91,300, Scott (R) 61,818, Ali (L) 2,513. **2002 Forecast:** Carson and McVey will debate on Saturday, Oct. 19, on WTHR-TV. Our sense on this race is that McVey can make it competitive unless the

economy becomes the key motivating factor. Carson's 45 percent in the latest HPR/TeleResearch Poll will raise eyebrows in Washington because it falls well under the 50 percent zone. Carson always responds that polls don't win elections, people do and Democrats express confidence that her machine will turn out the needed vote, helped in part by Sheriff Frank Anderson. However, virtually everyone is forecasting a low-turnout election, and Anderson's huge lead will give Democrats the "complacency" dilemma. We also believe that Marion County voters will be cherry picking, as opposed to pulling the party lever, which is something McVey has to count on. As we've said before, keep a close eye on this race. **Status:** *Leans Carson.*

Congressional District 8: Republican: U.S. Rep. John Hostettler. **Democrat:**

Bryan Hartke. **Geography:** Evansville, Terre Haute, Greencastle; Posey, Vanderburgh, Warrick, Gibson, Pike, Martin, Daviess, Knox, Sullivan, Greene, Owen, Clay, Vigo, Vermillion, Parke, Putnam, Warren and part of Fountain counties. **Websites:** www.bryan-hartke.com; www.house.gov/hostettler/ **Media Market:** Evansville, Terre Haute, Indianapolis. Lafayette. **1994 results:** Hostettler (R) 93,529, McCloskey (D) 84,857. **1996 Results:** Hostettler (R) 109,582, Weinzapfel (D) 106,134, Hager (L) 3,799. **1998 Results:** Hostettler (R) 92,227, Riecken (D) 81,381, Hager (L) 3,395. **2000 Results:** Hostettler 116,860, Perry 100,461. **2002 Outlook:** Hostettler is scheduled to speak at an Oct. 8 dinner at the Holiday Inn sponsored by the Crossroads of America chapter of Business and Professional Women (Melissa Vogt, *Terre Haute Tribune-Star*). Hostettler attended the American Cancer Society's signature event, the Relay for Life on Capitol Hill last week. Interviewed after his visit, Hostettler said he wants to make sure that National Institutes of Health funding is effective -- that grants offered through the program are put to effective use. "This is a new initiative of the president," he said (Jessica Wehrman, *Evansville Courier & Press*). "Congress must take this initiative and fashion it in a way that's a responsible use of taxpayer money." **Status:** *Leans Hostettler.*

Congressional District 9: Republican: Mike Sodrel. **Democrat:** U.S. Rep.

Baron Hill. **Media Market:** Evansville, Indianapolis, Louisville, Dayton, Cincinnati. **Websites:** www.house.gov/baronhill/, www.mikesodrel.com **1994 results:** Hamilton 91,459 (D), Leising (R) 84,315. **1996 Results:** Hamilton (D) 128,885, Leising (R) 97,747, Feeney (L) 2,315. **1998 Results:** Hill (D) 92,477, Leising (R) 87,278, Feeney (L) 2,397. **2000 Results:** Hill 125,978, Bailey (R) 101,790, Chambers (L) 4,634. **2002 Forecast:** Sodrel began airing his second TV ad with an endorsement by Sen. Richard Lugar. The national and local chapters of the VFW endorsed Hill, who serves on the Armed Services Committee. **Status:** *Leans Hill*

Indiana House Races

House District 27: Republican: Bob Hicks. **Democrat:** State Rep. Sheila

Klinker. **Geography:** Lafayette, West Lafayette, Tippecanoe County. **1998 Results:** Klinker 10,553, Julian (R) 5,512, Rumps (L) 287. **2000 Results:** Klinker (D) 12,544, O'Brien (R) 8,095. **2002 Forecast:** The Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles soon will open a new branch on Navajo Street in West Lafayette, within sight of a storefront that has been vacant since 1999. That development, and the results of a recent customer survey, prompted Hicks on Monday to level criticism at the BMV. "We're in economic hard times and need to better use state funds," said Hicks, a Lafayette Republican who is running against 10-term Democrat Sheila Klinker in the Nov. 5 general election. "If the building had been used, maybe it would have enticed some other businesses to come in. We need economic development to trickle down." Klinker could not be reached for comment. Hicks and campaign volunteers surveyed 84 people at the Lafayette license branch during the past two weeks and found 60 percent were satisfied with the service they received, 40 percent were unsatisfied and 35 percent had to make more than one trip to finish their transactions. "If any private business gave such service, they would go out of business. The BMV won't go out of business, no matter how poorly it performs," Hicks said. "The way the BMV does business must change." **Status:** *LEANS D.* ❖

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not return a call seeking comment.

O'BANNON EXPRESSES OUTRAGE OVER PERF SCANDAL: Gov. Frank O'Bannon released an interim independent report Monday that detailed how the Public Employees Retirement Fund hired Kevin Scott. O'Bannon also issued a series of recommendations on how to restore PERF's integrity and improve the hiring process that led to the hiring of Scott, a convicted felon, as its benefits director. The governor said that the report, prepared by Indianapolis attorney Forrest Bowman Jr., made it clear that two things went very wrong during the process that resulted in Scott's hiring: 1. Three executives at Cook Inc., the Bloomington medical device company from which Scott was fired, misled a PERF employee checking Scott's references; and 2. PERF did not undertake a review of Scott's former employment history beyond Cook. "I'm outraged that the hiring process at PERF was so haphazard, and was not going to include a background check . . . I'm outraged that someone with a criminal history who was fired from his job can get excellent references from high-ranking corporate leaders," O'Bannon said. "This office did not hire Kevin Scott. Only PERF could do

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that. But I know that the buck stops here, and so I will do whatever it takes - and I will hold people accountable - to make sure this kind of thing never happens again."

LUGAR, BAYH SEEK DISASTER AID: U.S. Sens. Evan Bayh and Richard Lugar today urged President Bush to make federal disaster aid available to Indiana residents and communities in the Central and Southern parts of the state that were affected by the tornadoes that struck the area last Friday. "Hoosiers in Central and Southern Indiana desperately need federal aid to help them rebuild homes and businesses that were damaged or destroyed by the tornadoes that swept through the state last Friday," Bayh said. "Our goal is for the Bush administration and FEMA to make available much-needed aid immediately."

NEWMAN HAS PARKINSON'S DISEASE: Marion County Prosecutor Scott Newman wants you to know two things: He has Parkinson's disease, and he is by no means slowing down because of it (Mary Beth Schneider, Indianapolis Star). "I'm not ready for the scrap heap," Newman said. "One of the greatest worries I had about going public is the fear of being dismissed or set to the side, as no longer of use. I want people to know

Challengers Find Themselves Outside Iraq Loop Issue's Intensity Stronger in D.C. Than on Trail

By **MARK SCHOEFF JR.**

WASHINGTON -- Ask congressional challengers where they stand on whether the United States should attack Iraq and their answers are likely to begin with a disclaimer.

"It's so difficult being a candidate," said Melina Fox, a Democrat running in the new 6th CD. "Members (of Congress) are privy to intelligence that I don't have." Fox goes on to explain that she doesn't think that President Bush has made the case for the use of U.S. military force. Her opponent, incumbent Rep. Mike Pence, said in a statement last week that the U.S. should declare war on Iraq.

The outside-looking-in phenomenon is bipartisan. "I don't have all the information available to me," said Mike Sodrel, the Republican challenger to 9th CD incumbent Democrat Baron Hill. Sodrel favors a resolution giving Bush a wide range of options in going after Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

An incumbent's "insider" perspective can come from participating in congressional hearings and attending meetings with administration officials. Even access — when the White House is willing to provide it — doesn't lead to quick decisions about Iraq. In fact, Members and staffers are scrambling to gather background on Iraq from think tanks and other outside experts.

After talking to National Security Adviser Condoleeza Rice and CIA Director George Tenet late last week, Rep. John Hostettler (R-8th CD) was undecided. Hostettler is waiting to see the language in the final resolution before he takes a position.

"The congressman is still looking at the case to be made for a resolution," said Michael Jahr, Hostettler's spokesman. "He's working with the administration to make sure that they have connected all the dots between Iraq and the war

against terrorism before he would support such a resolution."

JLT, Chocola Outside Loop

In the new 2nd CD open seat, a marquee national race, both candidates are essentially challengers because incumbent Democratic Rep. Tim Roemer is retiring. But Democrat Jill Long Thompson and Republican Chris

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Chocola are each plugged into the Washington network.

The National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee help challengers with fundraising and keep them apprised of what's happening on Capitol Hill. Someone like Chocola can get in touch with GOP House leaders to discuss Iraq -- and to advocate local issues.

"It's certainly a give-and-take that puts a Republican candidate at an advantage," said Lea Anne McBride, NRCC spokeswoman. Chocola "is well known here because he's one of the Republicans in the mid-term who is going to help us grow the majority."

But much of the time, Chocola is in the same boat as the voters when it comes to following Iraq developments. "The information we get is from news sources and what we see on the screen when the president or a member of the administration speaks," said Laura Zuckerman, Chocola campaign spokeswoman.

As a former member of Congress, Long Thompson relies in part on her former colleagues to stay current on the Iraq debate. "This is an issue she's on top of for a variety of reasons," said Chris Sautter, a Washington media consultant

working on Long Thompson's campaign. "She has strong support from many members of the (Democratic) caucus. She speaks with them from time to time. I know that she's called Lee Hamilton at least once, so she's been briefed by no less than Lee Hamilton."

She may be listening to Hamilton, but that doesn't mean she's taking his position. Chocola and Long Thompson both support U.S. action against Iraq. For Long Thompson, this a change from 1991, when she voted against war with Iraq after it invaded Kuwait. "She's convinced by what she has heard that Saddam Hussein has in his possession weapons of mass destruction and that the U.S. needs to act," said Sautter.

Hamilton said that key questions remain to be answered about the seriousness of the Iraqi threat, how a war would be funded, and what will happen in the aftermath of Hussein's fall. "How long is it going to take to build a democracy, a pluralistic society," Hamilton asked at a forum last week at George Mason University in Virginia. "I don't think there's any such thing as certitude in this situation. No one can predict the consequences of war." He supports sending

United Nations inspectors into Iraq as quickly as possible to test Hussein's willingness to live up to his pledge of access to Iraq's weapons facilities. If the inspectors don't get into the country soon, it will impede preparation necessary for the military option, Hamilton said.

Voters Interests Beyond Iraq

Formulating policy toward Iraq is a complex undertaking. Evaluating the efficacy of inspections, determining how much latitude to give Bush and what triggers a war, and calculating the impact of U.S. action on the region is more art than science. But voters don't seem to be pressing candidates on the details.

"It's one of the top issues, but it's not the dominant issue it has been in Washington the last several days," Sautter said of the atmosphere on the campaign trail. "I don't think (Long Thompson) is hearing a lot about it on the stump day-to-day."

The Republican side in the race provides a similar take. "Their priority is jobs and the economy," Zuckerman said of the 2nd CD voters. "Jobs are the most important thing in this district." ❖

TICKER T A P E

that I can continue to be of great use to this community." Newman, 42, confirmed Monday that he is one of more than a million Americans with Parkinson's, a nervous system disorder that robs people of the ability to control movement. Newman, a Republican first elected prosecutor in 1994, said his illness isn't the reason he decided in December 2000 not to seek a third term or another political office. He said he's going into private practice -- as a partner at Barnes & Thornburg -- to end the emotional toll of dealing with the daily trauma of people's lives.

NORTH TO KEYNOTE ALLEN COUNTY GOP EVENT: Oliver North, a decorated military figure who has rebounded from scandal to become a conservative media pundit, will be the keynote speaker for the Allen County Republican Party's Bean Dinner next month (Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). Host of the Fox News show "War Stories" and the nationally broadcast "Common Sense Radio," North will speak at 8 p.m. Oct. 22 at Fort Wayne's Scottish Rite Auditorium, 431 W. Berry St.

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what are people talking about? what do they need to know?