



President Bush's 'personal' appeal to the Hoosier voter is intense

Many question his policies, but like the man

By BRIAN A. HOWEY in French Lick

Lunching last week with Democratic State Rep. Jerry Denbo near his 60 percent Republican district, the lawmaker was asked whether his constituents favor the War in Iraq. "No," Denbo said, "They're not happy with the war." They think the economy is soft, question the Patriot Act, and worry about the Medicare reforms. And don't get started on No Child Left Behind. "But they personally like the President," Denbo said.



National Guard personnel salute to President Bush as he arrived in Las Vegas on Tuesday. (White House Photo)

The *Baltimore Sun* found similar sentiments in Dunbar, W. Va., where Shirley Irwin scowled when she says she's going to vote for George W. Bush again. Irwin, a 64-year-old lifelong Democrat, says things have been "terrible" during the nearly four years that Bush has been in the White House. She's scared that he's "ruined" Medicare and would do the same to Social Security, and that he bungled the war. "I don't like Bush either, but if I've got to choose between the two, count me for Bush," Irwin said.

At Bobby Plump's Last Shot in Broad Ripple last Friday, stalwart Democrats who gather once a month fretted at Sen. Kerry's campaign. The consensus was that the general public has discovered that Kerry, in not defending himself adequately to the Swift Boat ads, was conveying a message to regular folks that he won't be there to defend them.

HPR Washington analyst Mark Schoeff Jr. says the presidency is a personal thing for most Americans. "The President is, for a lot of people, the third most intimate person in their lives, after their wives and kids," said Schoeff (See column on page 10). "People can't envision having John Kerry in the bedroom every night."

Dr. Larry Sabato, who will keynote the 2004 HPR Forum the day after the first



"It's nice to see polls when we're in the lead. But there's a problem. (The quality of) polling in the U.S. has been deteriorating."

— Mitch Daniels campaign manager Bill Oesterle

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presidential debate on Sept. 30, explained of Bush, "His strength is two-fold. He is extremely likeable and Kerry is not at this point. And second, the memories of 9/11 and his leadership in the War on Terror has given him a massive advantage over Kerry in one of the two top issues. He's a danger in becoming another Dukakis, but this election is far from over."

Actually, this past week saw a tightening of some polls (See below). Charlie Cook of the *National Journal* explained, "Kerry has gone through his worst six weeks of the year, and it's unlikely that the next 49 days will be as bad for him as the last 42 days have been, hence the expectation that this race will close a bit. My hunch, though, is that Bush will hold an edge, albeit a narrow one, until something happens to change these dynamics, just as Kerry had the advantage until his squandered convention opportunity and his delayed reaction to attacks by some Swift Boat veterans took the edge away from him."

While the polls show some tightening, a TIME survey showed that women voters now favor Bush over Kerry 45-44 percent -- a stunning development. Men are breaking for Bush by 56-34 percent.

Kerry has gone on the offensive. Speaking in Ohio, Kerry said, "All you have to do is see it on the evening news. The situation in Iraq is worse, not better. Whole parts of Iraq are under control of terrorists and jihaddists." A classified National Intelligence Estimate prepared for President Bush in late July spells out a dark assessment of prospects for Iraq,



Kerry with Indiana resident John Fogarty, who wrote the hit Credence Clearwater Revival song, *Fortunate Son*.

government officials said Wednesday (*New York Times*). "There's a significant amount of pessimism," said one government official who has read the document, which runs about 50 pages. One scenario is civil war. On Monday, U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar expressed anxiety over a shift of Iraqi reconstruction money to security, and that only \$1 billion of \$18 billion earmarked for reconstruction has been spent. "This slow pace of reconstruction spending means that we are failing to fully take advantage of one of our most potent tools to influence the direction of Iraq," Lugar said.

President Bush was speaking to a National Guard Convention in Las Vegas on Tuesday and ignored the controversies swirling around his own service in the Guard. "Nineteen individuals have served both in the Guard and as President of the United States, and I am proud to be one of them," Bush said. Many at the convention wanted to "stay the course," but one told *NBC News*, "I think there's an irony he pressed the National Guard into combat duty when he himself used the National Guard as a way to avoid combat duty."

You might think that would be a damning statement, especially to Hoosiers. In his bimonthly radio address last weekend, Gov. Joe Kernan noted that "8,700 men and women with the Indiana Army and Air National Guard have served on active duty since Sept. 11. This number represents over half of the 14,000 troops that make up the Indiana National Guard, the fifth largest guard unit in the country."

But no one is suggesting that Bush's double-digit lead in Indiana is in any jeopardy and, in fact, his plurality could approach 400,000 votes even as the United States loses control of most of Iraq's largest cities. *ABC News*' Terry Moran explained, "But for now, Democrats still seem to be focusing their attacks on the actions of Lieutenant Bush long ago, which seems just fine with the incumbent President in this campaign." ❖



Bush-Kerry



Presidential Polls

Rasmussen Tracking, Sept. 13-15

Bush 47, Kerry 46

Harris/Wall Street Journal, Sept. 9-13 +/-4

Kerry 48, Bush 47

Christian Science Monitor, Sept. 7-12, +/-4

Bush 47, Kerry 47, Nader 4

Newsweek, Sept. 9-10 +/-4

Bush 49, Kerry 43

Zogby America, Sept. 8-9, +/-3.2

Bush 46, Kerry 42, Nader, 2

AP-Ipsos, Sept. 7-9 +/-2.5

Bush 51, Kerry 46, Nader 1

ABC/Washington Post Sept. 7-9, +/-3.5%

Bush 52, Kerry 43, Nader 2

CBS News, Sept. 6-8, +/-3

Bush 50, Kerry 42

USA Today/CNN/Gallup Michigan, Sept. 10-13, +/-4

Kerry 50, Bush 44 ❖



Sabato and Howey survey the '04 Election homestretch

On Monday afternoon, HPR Publisher Brian A. Howey and Dr. Larry Sabato of the University of Virginia's Center on Politics talked about the unfolding homestretch sequence of the 2004 campaign. Sabato will keynote the HPR 2004 Forum on Oct. 1, a day after the first presidential debate.

HPR: What's at stake for President Bush and Sen. Kerry in the first presidential debate on Sept. 30?

Sabato: Historically, the most important debate has been the first debate. Usually, but not always, the first debate gets the largest audience. Normally, especially this year, that first debate will really attract attention. Look, for John Kerry, the stakes couldn't be higher. People think debates don't matter because it's just partisans who tune in to cheer on their team. That's a large part of it. But research indicates that undecideds and persuadables are affected by debates. Especially if there's a clear winner or if the news media declares a winner. So I think that first one is going to be critical. We'll see what topics they select and whether it's international or domestic. As I understand it, they're still working on all the details. For Kerry, the stakes couldn't be higher. He's behind and he has not passed the threshold of presidential credibility. The debates give him that opportunity since it's one of the few moments in a president's term when he is stripped of all the prerequisites of office. There's no presidential seal, you can't see the Secret Service, there are no flags or banners. They're equal up on the stage. For Bush, it's more a matter of not committing any verbal faux pas or dance and he gives a good accounting of himself against Kerry.

HPR: When you watched Sen. Kerry's acceptance speech, did you realize the flaws that we're now seeing ... the lack of talk about his Senate record, lack of a clear vision?

Sabato: Many times I miss the obvious but this wasn't one of them. I've got the news clippings to prove it. During the week, many analysts kept saying, "Is this all there is? Are we going to have four days based on four months of Vietnam?" And darnned if we didn't. I understand what they were trying to do: build Kerry's commander-in-chief record and make him acceptable as a presidential alternative. But even at the time many of us said there wasn't a whiff about his 19 years and thousands of votes in the U.S. Senate. He had a golden opportunity to inoculate himself to a certain degree about his record; defending it himself and having others promote and defend that record. He left himself wide open to these attacks and sure enough, they've had an impact.

HPR: A lot of people in Indiana, Bush supporters, don't like the war. They think the economy is soft. They don't like the Patriot Act. But they like the president. Are you seeing



HPR 2004 Forum

HPR Forum Deadline Sept. 27

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7:30 a.m. Registration

8 a.m. Opening Remarks by Brian A. Howey and Dan Seitz, BoseTreacy.

8:15: a.m. 2004 Election Overview

Dr. Larry Sabato, University of Virginia
Brian A. Howey, HPR
Mark Schoeff Jr., HPR
Vince Robinson, Fort Wayne Ink
Jeff Lewis, TeleResearch
Moderator: Dan Seitz

9:15 a.m. Indiana House Election Overview

State Rep. Ed Mahern, D-Indianapolis
State Rep. Luke Messer, R-Shelbyville
Paul Mannweiler, BoseTreacy
Andy Miller, BoseTreacy
Moderator: Brian A. Howey

10:15 a.m. Power Realignment in the Indiana Senate

Sen. J. Murray Clark, R-Indianapolis
Sen. Robert Meeks, R-LaGrange
Sen. Jeff Drozda, R-Westfield
Brad Hiller, BoseTreacy
Moderator: Patricia McGuffey, BoseTreacy

11:15 a.m. Remarks by Gov. Joe Kernan

Noon: Luncheon

12:30 p.m. Dr. Larry Sabato Keynote

1:15 p.m. Remarks by Mitch Daniels

2 p.m. The Case for Government Reform

Brian A. Howey, HPR
State Sen. David Long, R-Fort Wayne
Lawrence Township Assessor Paul Ricketts
Indianapolis Deputy Mayor Mike O'Connor



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that throughout the nation?

Sabato: His strength is two-fold. He is extremely likeable and Kerry is not at this point. And second, the memories of 9/11 and his leadership in the War on Terror have given him a massive advantage over Kerry in one of the two top issues. There's the economy obviously.

HPR: With Sen. Kerry not adequately defending himself during the Swiftboat sequence, the subtle message Hoosiers are getting is hey, if this guy can't defend himself, how can we expect him to defend us?

Sabato: You know, Brian, you're not only right, but when was the last time a candidate communicated that message? Michael Dukakis, the last Massachusetts liberal to run for president. All along John Kerry told his fellow Democrats that he would not be another Dukakis. He would respond to criticism and give double back. Well, I haven't seen it. I know the 527s have. But that's not the same thing as the candidate doing it. He's in danger of becoming another Dukakis, but this election is far from over. I think that the gap is 5 points in real terms and certainly isn't at the point that some are reporting. It's about 5 points and a little bit of that is bounce that will fade. I wouldn't be surprised at all to see this within the margin of error once or twice during the election again. Get out the vote on Election Day may well determine the winner.



HPR: Vice President Cheney's remarks last week about terror will strike if Kerry is elected reminded me of an old LBJ ploy where he got an early opponent in his career to deny he had had sex with barn yard animals. Just getting the guy to refute the charge drew the blood. Do you think that was a calculated move by Cheney?

Sabato: You wonder. I always lean toward the non-conspiratorial explanation. People are out on the trail. They are tired. They say dumb things frequently. So would we if we were in that situation. My best guess is it was a poorly worded attempt to boost Bush. I think the Cheney people quickly realized that Cheney had gone too far. I doubt that's the case. But maybe I'm wrong. Maybe it will come out in a post-election book and they'll boast about it.

HPR: The Cheney interview with Good Morning America on his Wyoming ranch seemed to underscore that Western mentality. The President's European critics may not like that cowboy mentality, but the voter that they're trying to attract in the South, Midwest and West eats it up.

Sabato: It does play. It helps. Just because it was a mistake doesn't mean it doesn't help. Cheney got the best of both worlds. He tried to communicate that message, which he did. It got a lot of attention. Now he's taking it back so he won't be criticized. So far it's worked. People seem to have moved on.

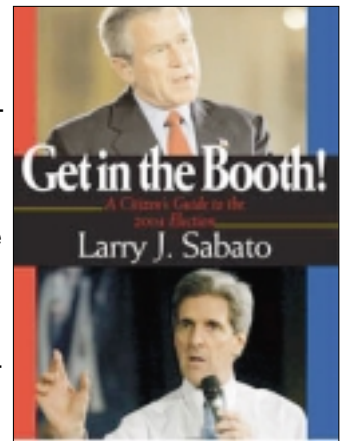
HPR: Have you seen Sen. Edwards lately? It seems

like he kind of faded out after that goofy convention speech and has almost become a non-factor. Is that just my perception?

Sabato: Very much so. I've got a lot of e-mails from Democrats asking the same thing: Where is John Edwards? The chant out of the 1988 Democratic convention was "Where was George?" Maybe the new chant is "Where is John?" But look, I don't blame him. He's been sent out before the cameras to attack and defend Kerry. The problem for him is the same one that all vice presidential candidates have. By October, you have to look through the newspaper to find out where the vice presidential nominees are campaigning. It's just not big news because people don't vote for vice president. They never have and they never will.

HPR: You're writing two books about this presidential election cycle. Can you tell us a little about them?

Sabato: By the way, they make wonderful holiday gifts. One is "Get in the Booth." The printed edition has just come out. It is a citizens guide to the 2004 elections. In this volume we have covered every single major issue in the election. It is a non-partisan, non-biased view of both parties' viewpoints and the candidates' viewpoints on the issues. Now, of course those issues change. So how can we keep this up to date? Well, this is actually the first book that is not published with the print edition. We have the preliminary edition out and as long as you buy the book, you get the access code to weekly updates from each of the authors on the election and each of these issues ... right up to Nov. 2. It is a combination website and book. We call it a webbook. It's the first of it's kind. We think it will be standard in the future on anything that is breaking news, which essentially is what this election is.



HPR: Can they find the book on the Internet?

Sabato: Inthebooth2004.com. I think you can even order it from that website.

HPR: Then are you doing a post-mortem on the election?

Sabato: We're doing a post-election book that will come out, not necessarily in 2005 because we want to get as many people on both sides to spill their hearts and guts and tell us what really happened. Plus the data analysis and exit poll analysis can really be revealing to people.

HPR: In the last 50 days or so of this campaign, do you think the emphasis will be the war in Iraq or the economy?

Sabato: I hope it returns to Iraq, the War on Terror



and the economy. Those are the things that Americans are interested in. There may be some who are interested in Vietnam because they view this as a prism on the candidate's character. But this is a macro election year. It's really big. The issues are big. I think we've had enough discussion on Vietnam and I bet 95 percent of the public agrees. It's time to move on to the critical decisions the next president will make. They can't be any bigger.

HPR: Why is this election bigger than, say, 1988 or 2000?

Sabato: Because rarely do you have a combination of war and peace and the economy in the same year. The equivalent macro years in the modern era were 1968 and 1980. Since the 1960 election, I'd say this is one of the big three: '68, '80 and 2004. Because war and peace is a very pressing concern, not just because of Afghanistan and Iraq, but the continuing War on Terror that may take us into other countries. And, of course, the continuing problems with the economy.

HPR: We saw Sen. Lugar saying in the *Washington Times* that we may have to use force against the Iranian nuclear program. Is that the kind of thing we may be talking about in the homestretch of this campaign?

Sabato: Let's hope so, because it's worth discussing. It's an important issue. The voters need to get a reasonable idea about what these two candidates might do about Iran, about North Korea, about the Sudan. About all kinds of pressing foreign policy issues. And let's not forget the domestic side, whether it's jobs or health care or education. These things are so much more important than Vietnam. They are a window in the character and soul of the candidates.

HPR: President Bush and Vice President Cheney have conveyed the message every chance they get that America is safer now and that they've done a good job on the War on Terror. How does a domestic terror attack, which a lot of my Congressional sources have been telling me for months we should expect, play in the homestretch of this campaign?

Sabato: That's the final Jeopardy question. I wish I had the final Jeopardy question to the final answer because the truth is, we don't know whether it's going to happen and if it does, will we rally around the president like we did after 9/11? Will the American public respond more like the Spanish electorate did after that March train attacks? I don't know. I don't think there are analysts who can reasonably say. We're in the middle of a highly charged and polarized election campaign and that means the situation is very different. The climate is very different than it was on Sept. 11 when George Bush had three and a half more years to serve. It's unpredictable. The details of the attack will matter.

HPR: The 1968 election was a cliff hanger. A lot of

people remember 1980 as a Ronald Reagan landslide, but it was really close until that final weekend.

Sabato: That's right.

HPR: A lot of people have been saying this will be a really close election, but presidential re-elects usually aren't very close at all.

Sabato: And you know, Brian, it's been more than a century since we had two very close presidential elections in a row. You have to go back to the 1870s and 1880s to find two very close elections in a row. Does that mean it's not pos-

'This is a lot like 1968 and 1980 in various ways, it could end up very close like '68 or it could end up being a blowout like '80'

- Dr. Larry Sabato

sible? Of course not! It's rare. You mention the 1980 election. This is a lot like 1968 and 1980 in various ways, it could end up very close like '68 or it could end up being a blowout like '80. It all depends. And no one knows what circumstances will define the nature of the campaign. So frequently the best analysts are the most humble analysts. They don't try and pretend they know exactly what's going to happen. There's no way to know.

HPR: Have you followed the Indiana governor's race between Gov. Kernan and Mitch Daniels? Any observations?

Sabato: I think it's a heck of a race and it's going to be very close. You've got incumbency versus a natural desire for change after a long period of Democratic incumbency and in a year when the Republicans are guaranteed to win the presidential race handily. To me, that's what it's going to come down to. Now, let me turn it around to you and ask you what's going to happen?

HPR: I'd say it's probably Daniels' race to lose, particularly if Bush is going to win the state by 400,000 to 500,000 votes, which might be possible.

Sabato: I've heard that many people expect Daniels to win, but I also hear people say that it's going to be real close if Mitch makes some mistakes along the way and people feel comfortable with Kernan and go back to him.

HPR: The Kernan campaign has really been an under-achieving effort this summer, but they've just turned to the health care/prescription drug issue that draws a very sharp contrast with Daniels, the former Eli Lilly executive. That's a fascinating way to draw a distinction between the two.

Sabato: You can go back and read what you wrote two months ago and see how silly it seems. I mean, two months ago, people were writing Bush off and now they are writing Kerry off. Both groups are premature. ❖



Indiana 2004 Statewides

Governor 2004: Republican: Mitch Daniels. Democrat: Gov. Joe Kernan. Libertarian: Kenn Gividen. **1996 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,075,342, Goldsmith (R) 997,505, Dillon (L) 35,261. **2000 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,230,345, McIntosh (R) 906,492, Horning (L) 38,686. **2004 Forecast:** The independent polling on this race is all over the map. A SurveyUSA automated poll of 687 likely Indiana voters (+/- 3.8%) taken Sept. 7-9 for WXIN-TV of Indianapolis shows Daniels leading Kernan 53-41 percent with 6% undecided. A *South Bend Tribune/WSBT* poll (+/-4%) had Daniels leading 44-42 percent with 14 percent undecided. Kernan's favorables were at 52 percent, but his job performance was at 48 percent. What's HPR's take? You could probably split the difference and speculate that Daniels has a lead near the margin of error. Kernan spokeswoman Tina Noel believes the SurveyUSA poll is an anomaly compared to the other polls that have been released publicly. "This race remains extremely close, and that's exactly where we thought it would be right now," Noel said. Bill Oesterle, Daniels' campaign manager, said he didn't think he had an idea where the range of poll numbers fell. "Frankly, the numbers probably move every day,"



Oesterle said (*South Bend Tribune*). "When they're that imperfect, you just have to run the campaign and run the campaign assuming you're a couple of points behind." Both campaigns expressed doubts about the current nature of polls (*Indiana Daily Student*). Noel said the Kernan campaign conducts its own internal polling, which as a policy is not released to the media. She said it's necessary to proceed with caution when analyzing polls. "I can tell you that most of the polling that is done by outside groups is either skewed because it is conducted on behalf of partisan organizations or doesn't adequately represent Democrat voters in Indiana," she said. Oesterle said the Daniels campaign does not conduct its own internal polling. The campaign will see research conducted by the state Republican Party or the Republican Governors Association, but Oesterle said Daniels did not want a poll-driven campaign. "From my standpoint, as a campaign manager, it's nice to see polls when we're in the lead," he said. "But there's a problem. (The quality of) polling in the U.S. has been deteriorating." Oesterle said much of the problem extends from an inability to contact and accurately rate voters. "The no-call list, people only using their cell phones, caller I.D. -- those things reduce the statistical quality of polling. There have been some horrible, horrible errors in



First Lady Maggie Kernan and Gov. Joe Kernan have been criss-crossing the state this past week. (HPR Photo)

polling in Indiana in the last three or four election cycles, and the polling was dead wrong," Oesterle said. In the *Tribune/WSBT* poll, of the 24 percent with something negative to say about Kernan, 7 percent mentioned the College Football Hall of Fame (see *Ticket Tape*, page 11), 6 percent said he was a taxpayer and a spender, 6 percent said he was a liberal and 5 percent said he was too pro-South Bend. Kernan pushed construction of the Hall of Fame while mayor of South Bend but has since been the target of criticism that it has not been as successful as he promised and has cost tax dollars despite an initial promise that it would not do so pollster Del Ali said he thought the references to Kernan being a liberal and "pro-South Bend" stood out. The reference to the governor being too close to South Bend obviously came, Ali said, from people living in Terre Haute, Indianapolis or elsewhere who believe that everything Kernan does will be for South Bend. "None of those people are voting for him," Ali surmised. Of the 22 percent with something negative to say about Daniels, 8 percent remembered the candidate's involvement with IPALCO. In a story HPR first covered on Sept. 3, the *Indianapolis Star* reported Sunday that after hovering for months over the race for governor, the IPALCO stock swap could be emerging as a campaign controversy and a potentially thorny issue for Daniels. A local advertising executive is preparing radio commercials criticizing the Republican gubernatorial candidate for his role in the IPALCO sale that left many of that company's workers with depleted retirement accounts. John F. Miles, of Greenwood, has formed a company to run the ads highlighting the stories of workers who lost their savings -- and power company officials such as Daniels who left with hefty profits. Miles said he created a corporation and not a political action committee to avoid Indiana election laws. HPR had predicted the IPALCO story would surface during the homestretch of the campaign. But we believe a far more effective strategy for Gov. Kernan has been his stance on reducing the cost of prescription drugs. This is an issue that will not only resonate with voters, but will draw a sharp



contrast with Daniels, a former Eli Lilly executive who opposes reimportation of drugs. On Wednesday, Kernan said government employees and teachers across Indiana, as well as taxpayers, stand to save money as Indiana puts in place a new prescription drug-buying pool (*Indianapolis Star*). In a news conference in his Statehouse office this afternoon, Kernan said Indiana has picked health insurance giant Anthem Inc. to administer the pool, which was created by the legislature earlier this year. The plan -- which does not affect employees who opt for an HMO will go into effect Jan.

1. Kernan's campaign is using a new TV ad to tout his position on lower costing prescription drugs. A female announcer notes the 33,000 senior Hoosiers taking advantage of the HoosierRX program. And, she says, "If Washington fails to act, Joe Kernan will act to reimport prescription drugs from Canada." At an AFL-CIO rally in South Bend, at three African-American churches in Fort Wayne, and stops in Marion, Linton and Vincennes, Kernan hit on the health care issue. "There are 600,000 Hoosiers without health care coverage, and we have to do something about that." Kernan said (*Vincennes Sun-Commercial*). "We're fighting this here in Indiana, because we aren't getting any leadership from Washington," Kernan said (*Marion Chronicle-Tribune*). "If things don't change, I will support the importation of drugs from Canada at a lower cost. But that's not my preference -- I think we can figure this out."

Thus far, the Daniels campaign response has been tepid, reiterating the candidate's opposition to drug reimportation. We could see Daniels losing ground largely on this issue. Early this summer, Sen. Becky Skillman noted the health care crisis with the elderly and poor, when, in fact, it is financially swamping middle class families. When Kernan proposed state government creating insurance pools for small business, Daniels responded by saying the Indiana Chamber already offers a program. His campaign was surprised to learn that the Chamber/Anthem coverage is fraught with problems, particularly those with any kind of pre-existing condition. The



Daniels speaks to the Indiana Famr Breau in 2003. (HPR Photo)

Daniels campaign has yet to articulate a different message and it may pay a price. The Daniels campaign is preparing to release a Spanish language version of a TV commercial. Daniels speaks in Spanish and repeats lines spoken in other

TV ads. With English translation at the bottom of the screen, Daniels says, "We are always on the road to bring the message that in Indiana, everybody counts." Daniels continues, "The time has come for a new beginning." Daniels stumped at Gene's Root Beer Stand in Anderson Wednesday, fielding countless questions about property taxes while enjoying a slaw dog. "There were a lot of mistakes made," he said (*Anderson Herald-Bulletin*). "I've heard this story many, many times. State government created this problem. Local government, in some cases, has compounded the problem," citing Lake County, which spends five to 10 times more per capita compared to other counties. "I don't want to blame it all on Gov. Kernan," the Republican candidate said. The solution is a challenge. "There is not a silver bullet." Lt. Gov. Davis and former First Lady Judy O'Bannon will campaign in Lawrenceburg, Madison, Salem and Brownstown on Saturday. Finally, the Daniels stance on the debates has been ... bizarre. It wants to tie the number of debates to that of the Bayh/Scott Senate race. That would have credibility if Scott was running a credible campaign, but he is not being supported by the GOP establishment financially and all polls show Bayh with a 40 percent lead. Just at a time when it appeared Daniels was becoming a clear frontrunner, the decision to duck two of the three traditional debates is causing some to speculate that the Republican is not good on his feet, as evidenced by his first debate with Eric Miller last April. This is a surprising development given Daniels' legendary cerebral prowess. It could be as simple as not wanting to give Kernan any more openings than necessary to retake command of the race.

And, in the long run, it may have lowered expectations. On Wednesday, Daniels appeared to be reconsidering his worst campaign decision to date. "So our discussions have continued through our first announcement and they are ongoing and there's a shot that there will be more debates." said Oesterle (*WISH-TV*). The debate situation is disappointing because going into this election, we believed both Kernan and Daniels would thrive in a debate format and were looking forward to three debates. The Sept. 28 debate at Franklin College comes three days prior to the *HPR Forum* on Oct. 1. **Status: Tossup.**

Indiana 2004 Congressional

U.S. Senate: Republican: Marvin Scott. Democrat: U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh. **1992 Results:** Coats (R) 1,267,972, Hogsett (D) 900,148. **1998 Results:** Bayh (D) 1,012,244, Helmke (R) 552,732. **2004 Forecast:** A *South Bend Tribune*/WSBT poll has Bayh leading Scott 62-26 percent. **Status: Safe Bayh.**

Congressional District 2: Republican: U.S. Rep. Chris Chocola. Democrat: Joe Donnelly. **Geography:** South Bend, Michigan City, Mishawaka, Elkhart, Kokomo, Plymouth,



Logansport; LaPorte, St. Joseph, Starke, Marshall, Pulaski, Fulton, Cass, Carroll and parts of Howard, Porter, Elkhart and White counties. **Media Market:** South Bend-Elkhart, Indianapolis, Lafayette, Chicago. **People:** Urban/rural 73/27%; median income\$40,381; Poverty 9.5%; Race 84% white, 8% black; 5 Hispanic; Blue/white collar: 34/50%. **2000 Presidential:** Bush 53%, Gore 44%; Cook Partisan Voting Index: R+5; 2002 Result: Chocola 95,081 (50%), Long Thompson 86,253 (46%); **2004 Forecast:** Chocola and Donnelly both claimed victory Sunday after the first of four debates scheduled for their 2nd Congressional District race (James Wensits, *South Bend Tribune*). The claims were probably more subjective than objective. Neither candidate varied much from positions staked out earlier in the campaign, and neither made any mistake or statement likely to come back to haunt him. The debate covered such topics as term limits, the war in Iraq, jobs, the economy and prescription drug benefits. The debate, held at Rochester High School, drew a strong turnout but was marred somewhat by disagreements over ground rules that had been laid down weeks ago. The Chocola side insisted that both candidates had agreed to four-minute-long opening and closing statements, while the Donnelly folks said the statements should have been limited to three minutes. Chocola spokesman Brooks Kochvar complained about the number of people in the audience wearing Donnelly stickers and T-shirts, another breach of the rules. There was a third disagreement. Donnelly campaign manager Mike Marshall based his claim that his candidate won on the strong applause Donnelly received in response to questions regarding the effect of free-trade agreements on jobs and on the practice by Illinois and some eastern states of dumping their trash in the Fulton County landfill. The applause on the latter issue came after Donnelly declared that Fulton County "should not be the dumping ground" for those states because "their trash is not our business." Five local democratic mayors including the mayors of South Bend, Plymouth and Knox publicly announced their endorsement of Donnelly (*WNDU-TV*). "My job in Washington is not to go there and push some partisan agenda. It is to go there to help create jobs for Knox, South Bend, for Plymouth and every other city," said Donnelly. He also picked up endorsements from the mayors of Michigan City and Logansport. **Status:** *Leans Chocola.*

Congressional District 8: Republican: U.S. Rep. John Hostettler. Democrat: Jon Jennings. Green Party: Clark Gabriel Field. **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. **Media Market:** Evansville, Terre Haute, Indianapolis. Lafayette. **People:** Urban/rural 58/42%; median income\$36,732; poverty 10.7%; race white 93.7%, black 3.7%, Hispanic .9%; blue/white collar: 32/52%. **2000 Presidential:** Bush 56%, Gore 42%; Cook Partisan Voting Index: R+8. **2002 Results:** Hostettler 98,952 (51%), Hartke 88,763 (46%), **2004 Forecast:** Jennings toured an underground Indiana coal mine on Tuesday and met with coal miners. He promised to be an advocate for Indiana working families by supporting preservation and improvement of health care programs. Jennings also pledged support for aggressive clean-coal technology programs." Coal mining is dangerous, courageous and vitally necessary work undertaken every day by many of our neighbors," Jennings said. "Coal miners and their families need to be assured they have safety and health protections. **Status:** *Tossup.*



Indiana 2004 Legislative

House District 31: Republican: Tim Harris. Democrat: Blackford County Commissioner Larry Hile. **2002 Results:** Rep. Dean Young 9,046, Raju (D) 3,909. **2004 Forecast:** The Indiana Farm Bureau ELECT Committee endorsed Hile, a Blackford County commissioner and three-generation farmer. The PAC said Hile has a "good understanding of agriculture issues." **Status:** *TOSSUP.*

House District 33: Republican: Bill Davis. Democrat: State Rep. Ron Liggett. **2002 Results:** Liggett (D) 9,143, Thornburg (R) 6,895. **2004 Forecast:** The Indiana Farm Bureau endorsed Davis. Local and state Farm Bureau organizations are expected to donate over \$10,000 to Davis's bid to upset Liggett (*Muncie Star Press*). Liggett recently said a moratorium should be considered for CAFOs to assess the possible health risks and impact on economic development in smaller communities. While the Farm Bureau has never endorsed Liggett, the state lawmaker said he voted against the last state budget that included a large tax hike for farmers. "I don't think farmers are being well informed by the Farm Bureau," Liggett said. "We have to protect the family farm and agriculture, and we don't need any more regulations on small businesses," said Davis, who got the Farm Bureau nod Saturday during a Portland fundraiser for his campaign attended by over 200 people. **Status:** *Leans D*

House District 56: Republican: Ed Yanos. Democrat: Rep. Phil Pflum. **2002 Results:** Pflum 6,511, Hamm (R) 6,096. **2004 Forecast:** The Indiana Farm Bureau endorsed both Pflum and Yanos. Pflum is a Milton farmer, and Yanos is a Henry County grain farmer. "It is a win-win for us if either is elected," said said Pete Hanebutt, the PAC's political director (*Muncie Star Press*). **Status:** *TOSSUP.* ❖



Sodrel looks to the 'L' word to define Rep. Hill

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.
The Howey Political Report

WASHINGTON--In the 9th CD, Republicans believe the best way to oust incumbent Democratic Rep. Baron Hill is to put a scarlet "L" on his chest.

The emerging theme from the campaign of Republican challenger Mike Sodrel is that Hill, who aligns himself with moderate Democrats, is drifting to the left. Citing recent Hill votes against making permanent a variety of tax cuts favored by President Bush, Sodrel asserts that Hill is losing touch with the southeast Indiana district, where Bush won 56 percent of the vote in 2000.

"Over the last few years, he's made a sharp turn to the left," said Sodrel campaign manager Kevin Boehnlein. "He's vulnerable on those issues. People have a genuine sense that this is a winnable race."

The National Republican Congressional Committee said it has Hill on its radar. "We see him as one of the top targets in the country because he has abandoned any pretense of being a moderate Democrat and has voted with the Democratic (House) leadership, which is much more liberal than voters in his district would be comfortable with," said Bo Harmon, an NRCC spokesman.

Hill Touts Fiscal Responsibility

Hill's campaign said that Republican attempts to label Hill a liberal won't resonate. "It's a symbol of how out of touch the Sodrel campaign and NRCC are," said Hill campaign manager Luke Clippinger. "The testament to Baron's moderate record is that he gets re-elected."

Voters send Hill back to Washington because his message strikes a chord, said Clippinger. "Baron's worldview is very simple when it comes to fiscal matters: he's a deficit hawk. The tax cuts that Sodrel supports are going to be paid for with tax increases on future generations. We're borrowing too much money. Families across the ninth district understand what it means to budget responsibly; they have to."

Votes in the House next week may provide fodder for both sides on the tax issue. House and Senate leadership have pledged action on a bill to extend for five years tax breaks that are set to expire: the \$1,000 per child tax credit, marriage penalty relief, and an expansion of the 10 percent tax bracket. Hill called for a bill that wouldn't increase the deficit. "I support fiscally responsible tax relief for working families, as I always have," he said in a Sept. 8 statement. "The questions here is not whether to extend tax relief, but rather how it will be done. We should not pay for tax cuts by borrowing money against our children's future."

Cultural Conservatism

Cultural issues will also likely be prominent in the 9th CD race. The Sodrel campaign says that opposition to same sex marriage pervades the district. Sodrel supports a constitutional amendment barring such unions. "I know America's stronger when we defend traditional moral values," Sodrel said in a speech at the Republican convention in August. His campaign asserts that Hill has been inconsistent on same sex marriage. Clippinger disputes that characterization, saying Hill voted against it in the Indiana legislature. "Baron is not for same-sex marriage," he said. "He doesn't believe we need to be playing fast and loose with the Constitution."

Hill is addressing the values theme in his current radio and television advertising. Featuring Hill and his wife Betty, the spot extols the small-town virtues of Seymour, emphasizing that his family still lives there, Hill returns every weekend and has walked the district five times. "Honest talk. Hoosier values. That's our Baron Hill," says the voiceover.



Sodrel



Rep. Hill

Campaign momentum

Hill has the wherewithal to buy a lot of air time, thanks to a big fundraising lead over Sodrel. As of the June 30 Federal Election Commission filing, Hill had \$783,141 on hand compared to Sodrel's \$307,123. Both campaigns claim to have momentum in this year's rematch. Hill won 51-46 in 2002 over Sodrel. "People in the district have a heightened energy level that we have not seen before; there's a large groundswell of activity," said Boehnlein. Within the last two weeks, Sodrel drew about 250 donors to a fundraiser in Ripley County, 300 for one in Clark County, and 100 in Orange County. On Monday, the campaign will welcome Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson to New Albany for an event on health care.

Clippinger said the Hill campaign is humming. "We still feel a lot of energy coming from Democrats and other people who are tuned in to this election and are campaigning and volunteering," he said. "We're getting a good vibe and feeling positive about where things are in the campaign."

Going beyond shoe leather, both campaigns now have ads up. "We're spending a significant amount on cable and radio," said Clippinger. "We're on across the district." The Sodrel campaign went up on radio this week and plans to keep pace with Hill. "It will be stronger and more potent than two years ago," Boehnlein said of Sodrel's advertising. **HPR**

Race Status: Leans Hill ❖



Mark Schoeff Jr., *Howey Political Report* - If ever there was a weak incumbent president, surely George W. Bush is exhibit A. The economy stubbornly refuses to take off, businesses are reluctant to hire, health care and other living costs have risen dramatically, pensions for tens of thousands of Americans teeter precariously on the edge of oblivion, the country's finances are mired in a record deficit, and most Americans now believe that going to war in Iraq was a bad idea. On top of all that, three years of waging a war on terrorism have brought us to an uninspiring precipice: It's probable that the U.S. homeland will be attacked again. The targets on Bush's back would be inviting for any Democratic presidential nominee. In fact, the Democrats may be asking themselves, why aren't we beating this guy? The answer lies in how the party selected its nominee, Sen. John Kerry. He's the tautological candidate. He became the party's standard-bearer primarily because he was the one designated as most likely to beat Bush. He won because Democrats thought he could win. Back in January, when Kerry was resurrecting his campaign in the frozen corn fields of Iowa, formulating an agenda to differentiate himself from Bush wasn't important. All that mattered was he was the one thought to have the stature and gravitas required to battle-and prevail over-Bush. But in the heat of the summer, a basic tenet of American politics rose up like heat off simmering asphalt. An election is about choosing a president, not voting against one. Sure, there are millions of Americans who are incensed by the policies and pronouncements of the Bush administration. In fact, the number could be almost half the electorate. But even if the Bush haters coalesce, they alone can't send the president back to his Crawford, Texas, ranch. They must be joined by people genuinely enthusiastic about John Kerry. Kerry failed to make that sale because he has not differentiated himself enough from Bush. He continues to run as a Bush-lite alternative to the real thing. He favors all the Bush tax cuts except those on the "wealthy." But it's not clear that Americans have a firm idea of who is defined as "wealthy." He has promised hefty spending increases while claiming to be able to reduce the deficit by half-almost exactly the same prescription that Bush espouses. He attacks Bush's policy in Iraq, but he hasn't articulated an alternative beyond promising that he'll internationalize the effort. That's exactly the same pledge Bush has made. For Kerry to develop a group of true-believer followers, he has to outline an agenda they can embrace. That agenda didn't emanate from his Senate career, which even he ignores, nor has it emerged on



the campaign trail. Supporters can't wrap their arms around-and put their hearts into-a candidate who's running simply because he can win. If Bush can't put too much distance between himself and John Kerry on policy, he certainly can beat him decisively on personality. He's got to wear well. Bush does. Kerry doesn't. Somehow, John Kerry has made a living in a profession that demands warmth. For John Kerry, smiling is work. With his stiff body language, stentorian voice, and furrowed brow, it seems as if Kerry should be running for headmaster of a private school rather than for president. For Kerry, campaigning seems like a chore. For Bush, it seems like a joy. Bush does not have Bill Clinton's political skill. But he exudes a certain confidence and alacrity on the hustings that eludes Kerry. Even Bush's malapropisms can be an asset. More people can relate to them than to Kerry's flawless, rigid cadence. It may come down to this: Who would you rather go bowling with? John Kerry or George W. Bush? For most people-other than the millions who want to drop the ball on his foot-it would be Bush. This dimension of Bush and Kerry has nothing to do with what kind of commander in chief either would be. It has no bearing on their character. But it has everything to do with whether the American people connect with them. That connection can swing an election. ❖

Leslie Stedman Weidenbener, *Louisville*

Courier-Journal - A former colleague recently quipped: Covering Gov. Kernan must not be very interesting. He doesn't seem to have any personality. I was shocked. The one thing that most people -- Republicans, Democrats, proponents, opponents, reporters and lawmakers -- can agree on is that Joe Kernan, the incumbent Democrat in the governor's race, has a lot of personality. He's vibrant, bright and funny, a little loud with a booming laugh. He's the kind of guy you'd want to take to a football game, who engenders great loyalty among his friends and staff, and who seems most comfortable in jeans and a casual shirt. But my colleague only knew Kernan from the campaign commercials he saw on Louisville television. And there's no doubt that the majority of those ads have done nothing to showcase that personality. If anything, some have hidden it. That's not to say the ads have been bad. One talked about his experiences as a prisoner of war in Vietnam; others showed the governor at work. But finally, one of Kernan's latest offerings gives voters a little glimpse of his persona. If you watch television -- especially network television -- you've probably seen it. The governor is sitting in the barbershop getting his hair cut. He's chatting with the barber, Armando, who has been Kernan's barber for decades. ❖



Mayor Pastrick will seek re-election in East Chicago

With only six weeks until voters head to the polls, East Chicago Mayor Robert A. Pastrick announced the start of a campaign to vindicate his fraud-tarnished victory in the 2003 Democratic Primary (*Post-Tribune*). "I am definitely going to be a candidate for mayor," Pastrick said Wednesday, touching off applause from the small crowd of city officials and public employees. "We feel that we have accomplished some good things for our community," Pastrick said. "We have a great many projects, programs that yet need accomplishment and yet need the assistance of the people... in place in my administration." The 76-year-old Pastrick said he plans to serve the entirety of what would be his ninth term, which would end in 2007. "I have every intention of finishing," he said. "I've never felt as good in my life as I do right now... I love this job." Lake County Democratic Chairman Stephen Stiglich said he would be neutral. "I wouldn't touch that with a 10-foot pole," Stiglich said.



South Bend Council votes to cut Football Hall of Fame \$\$

After spending more money each year to keep the College Football Hall of Fame afloat, the South Bend Common Council is drawing the line (*South Bend Tribune*). The council will act Sept. 27 on a 2005 budget that, for the first time, would reduce the amount of public money the hall uses for operating costs. The cut came in a budget amendment introduced Monday night by Council Member David Varner, who says it is time for the hall, operated by the Morristown, N.J.-based nonprofit

group, the National Football Foundation, to start supporting itself. His amendment, which passed 5-4, would trim city spending next year on the hall from \$829,000 the hall requested to \$629,000, about a 25-percent cut. "When you look at museums, museums just don't make money," Luecke said, noting that the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y., is subsidized by Major League Baseball and the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio, relies on funding from the National Football League. "The hall has been a great benefit to South Bend and one of the key things in the progress we've been making downtown."

O'Connor joining BoseTreacy Associates

Mayor Bart Peterson's right-hand man, Chief Deputy Mayor Michael O'Connor, will leave his city post next month to become a political consultant (*Indianapolis Star*). Since 1997, O'Connor, 40, has helped craft Peterson's political agenda -- he orchestrated the mayor's 1999 and 2003 campaigns -- and has been an architect of many of the city's most important undertakings of the past 4 1/2 years. O'Connor, who makes \$97,510 annually, will work for Indianapolis lobbyist BoseTreacy Associates and will create a political consulting firm called High Road Communications. His last day in his current job will be Oct. 1. "It is with a great deal of personal emotion but also a great deal of satisfaction that we wrap up this chapter in both of our lives," said Peterson, who appeared to be choking back tears. O'Connor was deeply involved in helping the city purchase the Indianapolis Water Co. two years ago and helped land a long-term deal to



Mike O'Connor

bring the NCAA men's Final Four to the city an average of once every five years. In 1999, he helped lead Democrats into the mayor's office for the first time in three decades and sat at the helm of a staff that is consistently on message and free of turnover. "This has been the best place I've ever worked and the best boss I've ever had," said O'Connor, a graduate of Greenfield-Central High School and Indiana University.

Hogsett would target gangs

Joe Hogsett, Democratic candidate for Indiana attorney general, wants the office to get involved in the fight against gang violence by championing stiffer state laws and creating an anti-gang unit (*Indianapolis Star*). Hogsett pledged Wednesday that if elected, he would pursue a legislative agenda that includes giving mandatory prison time for those convicted of intimidating witnesses in a criminal trial or participating in gang activity. Those offenses now can result in suspended prison sentences. "We need to send an important message that if you are convicted of one of these crimes, you are going to spend time in jail," said Hogsett.

Feigenbaum condition continues to improve

INGroup's Mary Jane Hendershot said *Indiana Legislative Insight* Publisher Ed Feigenbaum has been moved from intensive care to progressive care Wednesday night at Methodist Hospital, beginning physical therapy. Feigenbaum was critically injured in an accident on I-69 on Saturday. "He also began using fine motor skills yesterday -- wiggling his toes and fingers, giving the thumbs up sign, etc -- again, all good signs," Hendershot said. She added that Ann Feigenbaum "continues to be amazed by the outpouring of support, concern, and prayers being sent. Thank you all for everything." ❖