THE HOWEY POLITICAL REPORT

The Weekly Briefing On Indiana Politics

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O'Bannon cautious, steady, eyes destiny

Some early insights into Indiana's new governor

INDIANAPOLIS - "Hello, Governor."

As the Statehouse press corps filed into Room 201, there stood a glowing but tired Gov. Frank O'Bannon, who had just taken his oath of office and then pumped thousands of hands and signed hundreds of autographs for icicled fourth graders. As the last of the citizens walked out, O'Bannon sat in front of the fireplace in his office, catching his breath in a manner that seemed dignified.

"Hello, Governor," many of the reporters said as they peered into his eyes. It was the ultimate compliment a Hoosier political warrior who had probably peeked at the highest office in the state in a Walter Mitty sense years ago, could hear. Today, he was governor.

What kind of governor will Frank O'Bannon be?

Listen to the words spoken at in augural about Frank O'Bannon by U.S. Rep. Lee Hamilton and Father Theodore Hesburgh: Wisdom, justice, humanity, calm, cautious, steady, unhurried.

And from O'Bannon himself: family, faith, history, destiny, strong foundation and, of course, "smart-wired for technology."

O'Bannon himself put it this way when talking to the press: "My style of leadership is somewhat different because it is so open and inclusive which means sometimes it moves more slowly."

O'Bannon is a Butternut Hoosier from the courtly town of Corydon - a bit more Southern than Midwestern. Where Evan Bayh was quick, but methodical, all while perennially late, and Stephen Goldsmith would have touched off a manic pace at the Statehouse months long ago, O'Bannon plods, but with purpose and vision.

Republican attorney general candidate Gregory Zoeller - from New Albany - summed up the Butternut style after the frenzied two-minute speeches before Congressional delegations at the state convention last June. The process, he said, was weighted against Southern Hoosiers because a candidate had to talk fast.

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"QUOTE" OF THE WEEK

"Oh, I couldn't stand it every day. I don't want to hear about Notre Dame every day...."

-Gov. Frank O'Bannon, joking to reporters about whether he'll meet with LG Joe Kernan on a daily basis.

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Indiana's fastest growing source of political news

TICKER TAPE

PLAY OF THE WEEK: U.S. Rep. John Hostettler was snubbed last week for voting "present" in the vote for Speaker of the House. Following that vote Hostettler was told by the Republican National Committee to stay away from its gala dinner. "They called over to say, 'We've got a couple of donors expressing reservations,'" chief of staff Curt Smith told the Evansville Press. "We just said, 'If it's a problem for anyone, he was just happy to skip this one.'" The irony is, that vote may be crucial in Hostettler's 1998 re-election, just like Speaker Newt Gingrich's last snub in 1996 when he withdrew from an Evansville fundraising dinner. Both Evansville newspapers lauded Hostettler for vot-

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O'Bannon, from page 1

A friendly press glided in on the tired but happy governor. Did he think Rep. B. Patrick Bauer was moving in too many directions on the tax cut front?

"I think those are his initiatives," O'Bannon said. "I'll be presenting my program over the next two weeks and to a great extent, it's what you already know. I guess there will be some room through the process that the legislature can work its will also. I just hope some of the initiatives I have will be fulfilled, if not in specifics like I have. We can work with them."

In fact, the governor said, the caucus should move with "freedom" both as a caucus and as individuals.

And would a tax overhaul come in 1998? "Could be. Could be '98," O'Bannon said, before taking his hat off to the three-headed Republican monster - the Northwest Indiana Forum, the Chamber of Commerce and the Indiana Manufacturer's Association. There was their "demand" for action against the inventory tax. "Something like that could be a step that might be taken during this General Assembly," he said (See HPR Interview, pages 4 and 5).

What is developing here is a governor with deep roots and respect for legislators, moving at a deliberate pace. He has the potential to be a master compromiser as governor, a synthesizer of opinions and viewpoints poised to mesh with the array of interests that pull at the process.

His administration, led by chief of staff Tom New, mirrors the boss. Steady, cautious, a low threshold of risk-taking. The member of the campaign team most responsible for pushing the parameters in the war vs. Goldsmith - spokeswoman Rachel Gorlin - heads back to Washington later this month. None of O'Bannon's appointees have reputations as risk-takers or bomb-throwers.

And yet there is that quiet confidence that suggests that O'Bannon may have some cards up his sleeve that will surprise folks. Throughout the campaign, O'Bannon talked about education as being his foremost priority. He talked at his inaugural festivities of changing the goals of the Department of Education and of fostering more local control. But both Govs. Robert Orr and Evan Bayh fashioned themselves as "Education Governors."

Legislative assistant Craig Hartzer gave this tantelizing clue about O'Bannon's regard for education. Hartzer placed what O'Bannon will do for education in the light of "Only Nixon could go to China."

The O'Bannon era commences with the governor telling us he feels good about his appointees who will work in public service for "a short time."

And then he said, "That short time may be eight years."

McIntosh forces are putting out the "clear the decks" message

HORSE RACE

TRENDLINE: The word emanating from Republican circles is that U.S. Rep. David McIntosh is signalling to other possible 1998 senatorial contenders through his staff to clear the field. HPR ran into McIntosh at a Statehouse elevator on Monday and asked if such a signal was being sent. He answered by saying he was headed to Fort Wayne later in the week for talks. The hunch here is, no decision has been made, but the second-term congressman from Muncie is giving it deep, deep thought.

■■■

STOWE, VT. - "Evan Bayh can be beaten."

The authority on that statement is Stuart Stevens, a master Republican strategist who has worked on past Sue Anne Gilroy and Dan Coats campaigns. Stevens' rationale for making such a statement as many Hoosier Republicans stare down the deck of the titanic, unsinkable Evan Bayh, comes forth like a methodical iceberg.

"There's a very different criteria in running for Senate than governor," Stevens said. He uses the caustic Sen. Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania as an example. "He twice lost for governor because he was too abrasive. But the voters thought he was a good guy to have in the Senate."

There are the popular governors William Weld of Massachusetts and Ben Nelson of Nebraska who lost Senate races in 1996. In 1994, popular Gov. Ann Richard, with a good favorable/unfavorable rating, lost her re-election bid to George W. Bush. "It's possible to like a guy and not vote for him," Stevens explained, "because of ideology. Evan Bayh is out of step at the party level. And he can't run as Mr. Nice Guy. The purpose of the Senate is to vote. Will he vote like Dick Lugar and Dan Coats, or Ted Kennedy and Paul Sarbanes? Will Indiana voters want Evan Bayh's vote to cancel out Dick Lugar's nine out of 10 times?"

In essence, Evan Bayh "has to prove the unprovable: that he will vote like a mainstream conservative and prove he is comparable ideologically with Coats and Lugar."

Stevens said that in 1992, Joe Hogsett failed to make a case against Dan Coats. "That race came down to this guy votes like you want him to, but fire him," Stevens said.

■■■

One Democratic consultant - who asked for HPR's shield of anonymity - said Democrats are hoping that U.S. Rep. David McIntosh decides to run against Evan Bayh. "Democrats don't like him," the Washington-based consultant said. "They think he's arrogant - brash and arrogant - and he's the one they'd like to get rid of the most."

Does this highly successful consultant think Bayh could defeat McIntosh? "The Bayh people would find him tough and I think Bayh will beat him in any event."

■■■

The "game plan" for 1998 is for Tom Sugar to head up the Bayh Senate bid for the interim, and then former Secretary of State Joe Hogsett comes back from his second tour of duty at Bingham Summers Welsh & Spilman in 1998 to run the Holy War. There's great irony there of Hogsett managing a race against McIntosh for Dan Coats' old Senate seat.

TICKER TAPE

ing for principle over politics.

■■■

U.S. Rep. Mark Souder told Jim O'Connell of the Evansville Courier that Hostettler's "present" vote will not likely have a long-term impact, particularly since the Repubicans have a mere 227-208 majority. "If they try to kill somebody because they voted against you on this vote, you will need them on a vote five minutes from now. I don't think there will be retribution."

U.S. Rep. John Hostettler is again sponsoring legislation that would give farmers tax relief in years when they have higher than expected profits (Gerard Shields, Evansville Courier). "Farmers need some help in leveling out these fluctuations," said Hostettler. "It's not as much tax relief, but more letting farmers keep their own money."

The Senate Rules Committee and the Architect of the Capitol are working with former Vice President Dan Quayle's family to find an artist to do his bust, Roll Call reports. Senate Curator Diane Skvarla predicts the Quayle bust will cost about $50,000. "That's about the going rate," she said. Quayle's bust will join those of Gerald Ford, Nelson Rockefeller, Walter Mondale, George Bush and Al Gore in a

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O'Bannon talks of emotions and themes in first press conference

HPR INTERVIEW

"Life is no brief candle for me. It is a sort of a splendid torch which I got hold of for a moment. And I want to make it burn as brightly as I can before turning it over to future generations...."

- Frank O'Bannon quoting George Bernard Shaw

INDIANAPOLIS - Moments after Gov. Frank O'Bannon had finished pumping flesh with thousands of people - after five hours of sleep and a bitterly cold inauguration - he found himself face-to-face with the Statehouse press corps.

Brian Howey: Have you talked with Rep. Bauer lately?

O'Bannon: I have conversations with Pat periodically.

Howey: Does the governor have problems with Bauer taking the lead on the tax cuts?

O'Bannon: I think those are his initiatives. I'll be presenting my program over the next two weeks and to a great extent, it's what you already know. The initiatives I had are pretty specific as to how much it will cost and how we'll pay for it. We'll follow that pretty much. Then, after we get that in, we'll set some kind of parameter as to what the surplus should be. Then we can see what the priorities of the legislature (are) and I'll just try to work with them and get it accomplished. I'm thinking of a tax cut. I've been told by Senate Republicans that that's not be their cup of tea. But it doesn't mean that there aren't other tax cuts like increasing the homestead credit or something on excise tax. I'll be looking at it in a broad sense with the money available in the surplus, some of it ought to get back to the taxpayer at the same time we need some additional spending in the budget which I haven't analyzed that yet. I guess there will be some room through the process that the legislature can work its will also. I just hope some of the initiatives I have will be fulfilled, if not in specifics like I have. We can work with them.

Susan Dillman: What were some of your thoughts when you were sworn into office today. You seemed to choke a bit with emotion when you quoted George Bernard Shaw.

O'Bannon: It was a great experience being sworn in. It was a great experience sitting on the platform and seeing the bright sun shining against the some of the office buildings and people who participated in public service. I guess the high point was Judy and the kids there, and taking the oath. The speech itself, that quote from George Bernard Shaw is one of my favorites in my time of public service. When you think of all the people at the ceremony who are a part of community service, the focus is on community and it is so important that it does tend to choke you up sometimes.

John Ketzenberger: Where did you get the quote from?

O'Bannon: I got the quote from my staffer, Chuck Coffey. I never really thought of what it came out of, it was so complete in itself. I never really put it into any other context.

Dillman: In your speech, you talked about how everyone was going to get along. Do you really think the good will will last?

O'Bannon: (Chuckles) I think it will last in the process because I think we all will be working to do almost all the things that will help the people of the state Indiana. I know that's general, but what I'm getting at is at times there will be a difference as to what we think will be most important or what I think or the House Democrats or the Senate Republicans. Even when we reach the parts we don't agree, I think we'll talk ourselves through that. The key is to keep the lines of communication open, keep talking about if this doesn't work, can we do this. As I've said a couple of times, George Reedy, the press spokesman for President Johnson, wrote a book called "The Twilight of the Presidency" and in it he said the job of the president is this. I changed it to the job of the governor is this and that is to see the urgent needs of the state, to develop strategies to meet those needs, and then persuade half the people the governor is right. That's what we'll be working on.

Howey: There is a perception that the Republicans in the legislature are holding back and awaiting your lead and yet Pat Bauer and the House Democrats are charging off in different directions on tax cuts. Is that going to cause problems for you?

O'Bannon: I don't think so. I was cer-

tainly giving them to understand the freedom for them to move as a caucus or even some individuals to move with their own legislation. Certainly when I get my legislation filed, we'll want to compare it to see if that's important to them.

Dillman: What do you want to get done this week?

O'Bannon: No. 1 is to continue to make some of the appointments that need to be made. That will be an ongoing process for the next 30 to 60 days. The second thing is to get the legislation in final form and get it filed. I think we're on schedule with that. I feel good about the appointments, mainly because of the enthusiasm of people who want to be in public service for a short time. That short time may be eight years. The third thing is to get moved from our house on Broadway to our house on Meridian, which means moving a little bit of furniture and books to the governor's residence and a lot of furniture to the barn in Harrison County.

Question: The one specific thing you said in your speech was the role of government in education. What does that mean?

O'Bannon: There's no question in my mind the most important function that I have as governor of Indiana - as long as we're safe - is education. It's our biggest budget item. It's our biggest concern to develop public schools that have the best education and training and that's followed by the strongest workforce where people can get good jobs to make their living and raise their family here in Indiana. It really is the most important thing I'll do in the next four years and I hope I can change the mission of the Department of Education, and change direction. Even though there has been a lot of small steps, I want more local control, local decision-making by the teachers, parents and local leaders that dominate, dominate.

Howey: I asked this question at your last press conference as a candidate so I might as well ask it at your first as governor. You talked about selecting a bipartisan commission to look at overhauling the entire tax structure. When will we see your attempt to do this? In the 1998 session? Or 1999? And if it's then, won't that be late for your re-election campaign?

O'Bannon: There is a sequence. The ruling of the Supreme Court took the pressure off and also said to us that we'd have to use the present system in the mix of all the taxes in the state. The commission on taxes will be appointed and its real focus will be to analyze and review the complete tax structure in Indiana, whether it be local or county or state, to see if there's a way we can make the system more fair and easier to administer, hopefully lower property taxes and enhance business. So that will be some of the parameters to look at. At this point, I don't have a goal to get something done in this session. The reason is that to be a part of the commission, you have to be able to talk to all people that are affected by property tax. And if you're going to make changes or a shift, how are you going to do it? What you're going to substitute. And then see if we can get half the people persauded that that's the best thing to do.

Howey: Will it be 1998?

O'Bannon: Could be. Could be '98. I haven't seen any legislation put forward by either party. There is a chance, if you're looking at tax cuts, if you're going to consider a tax cut, the demand from Northwest Indiana, down through the Chamber of Commerce, the Manufacturer's Association, to have some kind of a tax credit for income tax for the inventory tax they pay. Something like that could be a step that might be taken during this General Assembly. I won't propose it until I see the entire mix of taxes. My tax proposal is still the one where you get an individual tax deduction or credit on your income tax depending on the amount you're paying on property taxes.

Mary Beth Schneider: Are you going to meet with Joe Kernan daily?

O'Bannon: Oh, I couldn't stand it every day (laughs). I just love him. I went to a football game with him and Notre Dame was playing USC ... and they were behind 14-10. I thought they were praying. About that time, (Rocket) Ismail took a pass and went in from 60 yards and scored a touchdown and after the game, Kernan said that for him that was an out-of-body experience. But anyway, I don't want to hear about Notre Dame every day. I'll use a form of leadership that includes clusters of department heads, whether it's about economic development or human services, and Joe will always be a part of that to the extent that he could always chair that if I'm not available.

TICKER TAPE

hallway outside the Senate Reception Room.

Best line of the day from Gov. Frank O'Bannon's inaugural came from WTHR-TV's Rich Van Wyk, who noting the Statehouse as a huge backdrop to the outdoor ceremony in 3 degree temperatures and a -11 windchill, said, "In a place known for excessive hot air, everyone is wondering where it is today."

Senate President Pro Tem Robert Garton welcomed Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan to his job in the Senate by chuckling over Kernan's inaugural quip that when it got that cold in South Bend "we have a picnic." Said Garton, "It was one of the funnier things I've heard."

Senators bade farewell to outgoing Sen. Kathy Smith, who is joining the O'Bannon administration as an assistant on education. Many emotional senators took to the floor to wish Smith well and recall her tenure in the upper chamber. She is being replaced by Sen. Connie Sipe, also of New Albany.

More O'Bannon administration appointments include Kenneth J. Zeller as Indiana State Commissioner of Labor, a position he has held since 1989. O'Bannon also appoint-

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TICKER TAPE

ed Kathy Gifford as director of the Office of Medicaid Policy and Planning and Mark D. Brown as deputy director of the Indiana State Budget Agency.

State Rep. Ben GiaQuinta, reacting to a comment in the Jan. 8 edition of HPR that he might retire in 1998, said he plans on seeking re-election. "I want to break Strom Thurmond's age record," GiaQuinta said.

Former State Rep. David Lohr confirmed that he will seriously consider a rematch against State Rep. Vern Tincher in 1998. The two have met twice with each winning one race - Tincher by less than 100 votes in 1996.

State Rep. Win Moses vented some steam at an old adversary, Fort Wayne Mayor Paul Helmke, after reading last week's HPR. In the Horse Race, Helmke portrayed himself as a mayor who has kept the tax rate low. Moses, who was defeated by Helmke in a brutal 1987 mayoral race, noted that Helmke had instituted CCIT, CEDIT and garbage pickup user fees. "We won't let him portray himself as a low tax mayor," Moses vowed.

Sources tell HPR that former Rush County Republican chair

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COLUMNISTS ON INDIANA

Jack Colwell, *South Bend Tribune* - Remarkable or inevitable? You can look at it either way. Frank O'Bannon will be sworn in as governor of Indiana. Remarkable? Yes, that argument can be made. After all, doesn't it seem remarkable that a Democrat will be taking the oath as governor for a third conservative time in Indiana? Inevitable? Yes, that argument can be made, too. If ever there was a candidate who had all the credentials to be governor - the background, the state government experience, the knowledge - it is Frank O'Bannon.

Garret Mathews, *Evansville Courier* - It will come to pass. The only question is when. Terminally ill people who are in unbearable pain will be able to take their own lives and caregivers who assist them will not face criminal charges. Legal clearance could come from the current Supreme Court that this week began deliberations on the right-to-die issue. If this batch of justices doesn't see it our way, then the next one will. The men and women of my generation will demand it.

Dick Cady, *Indianapolis Star* - There's nothing like beginning a legislative session with a $200,000 mystery. The $200,000 appears to be part of the pot gambling interests put together for a formidable lobbying team under controversial lobbyist James A. Purucker. Former representative Austin "Buzz" Barker of Attica is a registered lobbyist with a small but important clientele. Two of his clients are Argosy Gaming Co., a partner in the riverboat casino at Lawrenceburg, and Rod Ratcliff, a minority owner in both the Lawrenceburg venture and Hoosier Park. Barker says he was representing Ratcliff and Argosy long before Conseco, Inc. James A. Purucker is Conseco's principal lobbyist. If $200,000 for lobbyists sounds like an astonishing outlay, here's Barker's story. "Rod asked me if I wanted to manage the money that was going to be set aside for lobbyists. I told him to turn it over to Jim Purucker. I just stayed out of it. I wouldn't have handled that kind of thing anyway. I sure as hell didn't see $200,000."

Brian Howey, *HPR* - The overall notion when it comes to Evan Bayh is that his years have been good for Indiana. We landed huge economic development projects like United Airlines in Indianapolis, Toyota in Princeton, Chrysler in Kokomo and steel plants in DeKalb and Gibson counties. There are more jobs and more people moving into the state. While there are record homicide rates in cities like Indianapolis and South Bend, there is a general feeling that Indiana is quietly poised to be an economic, social and political powerhouse as we enter the 21st Century. Evan Bayh's governorship cannot be fully judged at this time. There are flashes of greatness and an overall steadiness. He is well liked, but, perhaps, not yet beloved. He can leave office Monday as a satisfied man with the sky as his limit.

John Krull, *Indianapolis News* - Perhaps the most frightening thing about Richard Nixon was his tendency toward meglomania. Too often, Nixon behaved as if the voters had elected him emperor rather than president. That's why his departure from his office was as much a glorious triumph as it was a painful national tragedy. His resignation demonstrated that our basic principles would be upheld. Nixon's fall offered a valuable lesson. It's a pity that Bill Clinton didn't seem to have learned it. In struggling to deny Paula Jones her day in court, Clinton's lawyers have resorted to a Nixonian defense: as president, Clinton is too important to be restrained by the legal considerations that govern the rest of us. Jones has provided enough evidence to merit a hearing. In equating his political fortunes with the needs of the country, Bill Clinton is showing some familiar and disturbing signs of meglomania.

McDaniel supports Fry, Young in efforts for gubernatorial convention

INDIANAPOLIS - Some are calling it the "Rex Early Bill" - legislation introduced by Rep. Mike Young to return the gubernatorial nominations to conventions from the current primary system.

Many observers believe that if the 1996 Republican nominee had been chosen in convention, Rex Early would have won the right to face Frank O'Bannon. Up to almost two-thirds of the party's delegates were Earlyites. It set a scenario where the primary-elected nominee, Indianapolis Mayor Stephen Goldsmith, fearing an insurrection from the party regulars, threw open the lieutenant governor's nomination to the convention as a bone to prevent a party split.

Young was Early's campaign manager and insists that the bill wasn't written for Early. "He won't run again," Young said.

Early himself told *The Howey Political Report* that his wife, Barbara, won't let him run. "I already have four fouls on me after last year," Early said, "and I'm not playing in the NBA."

Young said the current system favors "millionaires or only those who can raise a million dollars, so it keeps a lot of good people out of the process. Look at Bob Garton. He is one of the most influential legislators in the state and he could only raise $250,000."

Young said the primary process has aided in the demise of Indiana's political parties. "We can't find enough people interested in working the precincts or the boards. We've got to get our people involved in the political process. Since 1972, voter participation has fallen off."

Indiana Republican Chairman Mike McDaniel favors Young's bill. "I think if you're serious about campaign finance reform, one of the biggest reforms you could make would be to put the governor's nomination back in the convention," said McDaniel. "It would re-energize the two political parties, there is no doubt about it."

McDaniel said he would go even further and eliminate primaries altogether - even to the point of nominating legislators by district caucus. That would allow Indiana to move up its presidential primary to an earlier date where it could become the national player it was back in 1968. But McDaniel said that move would likely find great resistance from legislators, who would have to fend off opposition while they were still in session.

McDaniel added that not only would a convention and caucus process revitalize the parties, but it would save counties money by not having to run elections with low turnout.

Indiana Democratic Chairman Joe Andrew was still sorting out the issue Tuesday morning. "Well, I think it's one of those great two- edge swords," Andrew said. "Obviously all of us are concerned about campaign finance reform and the cost of campaigns. This would reduce the money in the primary process. There was more spent in the GOP primary than in the Hoosier Lottery. It would return politics to retail level and put power to the people. But on the face of it, it appears to be anti-Democratic because the people on the streets are cut out."

UNDER THE DOME

Andrew said a convention nominating process would prevent millionaires like Patrick Rooney of Golden Rule Insurance from coming in and buying an election. "And I think it would have been highly unlikely that Steve Goldsmith would have won the Republican nomination" via a convention process, "but Frank O'Bannon would have won. But I don't think it would have changed the results in the fall."

As for supporting either Young's bill or a similar one offered by Rep. Craig Fry, D-Mishawaka, Andrew was noncommittal. "It's not in our party platform so we won't take a position. But anger and cycnicsm are so high that we need to look at the entire process."

TICKER TAPE

Jean Ann Harcourt believes it will be a mistake for U.S. Rep. David McIntosh to run against Evan Bayh in the 1998 Senate race.

Former 42nd Senate District nominee J.D. Lux of Shelbyville has joined the office of Attorney General Jeff Modisett as legislative liaison. Lux was narrowly defeated by State Sen. Robert Jackman in 1996.

Modisett announced this week that most of outgoing AG Pam Carter's staff is remaining in his administration. Modisett said two words - "law enforcement" - will mark his tenure. "Law enforcement will be the watchword in my administration. Consistency will also be a hallmark of our efforts." That includes a newly formed Law Enforcement Division that is designed to operate in investigations at the request of local or county jurisdictions. Modisett has hired four current or former Marion County deputy prosecutors to form the structure of the new division.

Former AG Pam Carter has joined the staff of House Speaker John Gregg as House parliamentarian.

Names already coming up as a potential 8th CD Democratic opponent to U.S. Rep. John Hostettler include

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TICKER TAPE

Bloomington Mayor John Fernandez, 1996 nominee Jonathon Weinzapfel, and freshman State Rep. Brian Hasler. Hasler said his first priority is to serve in the Indiana General Assembly but that he would keep his options open. A number of 8th CD Democrats have expressed disappointment that Weinzapfel failed to define his candidacy, which lost by a narrow 3,400 votes. They also note that in modern Indiana history, no congressional candidate has been successful in a second campaign.

House Republicans were miffed at the attempted reprimand of former Ways and Means Chairman Sam Turpin, who did not seek re-election last year. On Monday, the House issued its first ever reprimand to State Rep. Charlie Brown, D-Gary, for failing to report $77,000 on income from NIPSCO. Brown insists he was thrown in as a political counterweight to Turpin, who failed reported $1,500 a month ~~to his own company~~. Republicans maintained that a private citizen such has Turpin can't be reprimanded. "It clearly states that action can be taken against members only," said Rep. Jeff Espich. Others were upset that most of the Ethics Committee report dealt with Turpin, rather than Brown.

PERHAPS... WE WANDER

By Brian Howey

McIntosh on a lack of the 'indispensible man'

WASHINGTON - It is striking that the first week that saw ethical allegations and lapses lap at the feet of Speaker Newt Gingrich, President Clinton was also the first one without former congressmen Andy Jacobs and John Myers, the two Hoosiers from both sides of the aisle that preached civility and kindness.

Washington is awash with backstabbing, taped cellular phone calls and ethical indescretions on the part of those doing the investigations.

Michael Tackett, an Indiana University journalism graduate and a member of the *Chicago Tribune's* Washington bureau, wrote the best story on the wrangling going on at Capitol Hill. Playing off James Flexnor's "Washington, the Indispensible Man" - an award winning study and book on our first president - Tackett sees a national ruling class in an era of few indespensible people. His lead:

"House Speaker Newt Gingrich of George, the current object of the capital's penchant for ritual hazing, provided a rich script for what passes for drama here. His was a seemingly consuming personal saga with monumental stakes. But it was so much less than that.

"As a practical matter, though, the institution Gingrich leads likely would have continued to function with much the same agenda regardless of his fate."

And Tackett quoted U.S. Rep. David McIntosh, who observed that "people didn't pick either personalities or parties."

Added McIntosh, "There was a substantive agreement about the direction things should go - a balanced budget, smaller government ... social problems like crime and drug use. That agenda would occur regardless of who was in the chair.

"There have been figures the country has been blessed to have as leaders," McIntosh continued. "Lincoln during the Civil War, Roosevelt at the start of World War II. Everyone assumed (Roosevelt) was indispensible, but Harry Truman did a great job at leading us up to the Cold War.

"Nobody's indispensible."

Return of The Howey Political Report's

The Smoke-Filled Room

5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Thursday Jan. 23, 1997
The Rathskeller Restaurant at the Athenaeum
401 E. Michigan St, Indianapolis

(At the last Smoke-Filled Room, pollster Brian Vargus was to give coherent analysis, but never showed up, and nobody missed him until the final 15 minutes).

Join us for shameless gossip, stories and gross speculation on the Indiana political environment.
Cigars welcome.