THE HOWEY POLITICAL REPORT

The Weekly Briefing On Indiana Politics

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"QUOTE" OF THE WEEK

"In two years they won't remember if it was the Republicans or the Democrats or Ross Perot or Mother Teresa who did this...." **- IU Pollster Brian Vargus, to Mike Smith of the AP, on the political inpact of the upcoming legislative special session.**

Whole new dynamic in GOP Senate race

Rusthoven, Helmke and Price seem committed

INDIANAPOLIS - When Peter Rusthoven received the official word last Sunday that Secretary of State Sue Anne Gilroy would not seek re-election, he was hopeful that it would be the first move in clearing the field for him to take on Evan Bayh in the '98 Senate race.

But Gilroy extinguishing her Senate hopes literally set off a series of brush fires that promise to give Republican primary voters a contested election a year from now.

The first surprise came from Indianapolis attorney John Price, who announced he was exploring the race. This was so unexpected that former State Rep. David Lohr, who had Price run his campaign for superintendent of public instruction last year, had already endorsed Rusthoven.

"I would call it a serious exploratory effort," Price said Wednesday. "It's more than just I'm thinking about it."

In Fort Wayne, Mayor Paul Helmke was emboldened by Gilroy's departure and stopped figuring out an exit strategy. "I don't mind a cleared deck," Helmke said. "Peter Rusthoven can get out. I've got the best chance of beating Evan Bayh."

"I believe it would be better for the party to coalesce around one who can unite Republicans, exclusively carry the message and raise the necessary resources to hold this seat," said Rusthoven, who has listed the endorsements of almost 50 party leaders, county and district chairmen. "But even if there is primary opposition, I am very confident that the Republican nominee will be me."

Price and Helmke weren't buying the cleared field sentiments or the impact of Rusthoven endorsements from former state chairs Rex Early and Gordon Durnil, district chairs Roger Chaibai, Roy Rogers, Briane House and John Myers, or those of former national committeewoman Jean Ann Harcourt and Allen County Sheriff Joe Squadrito.

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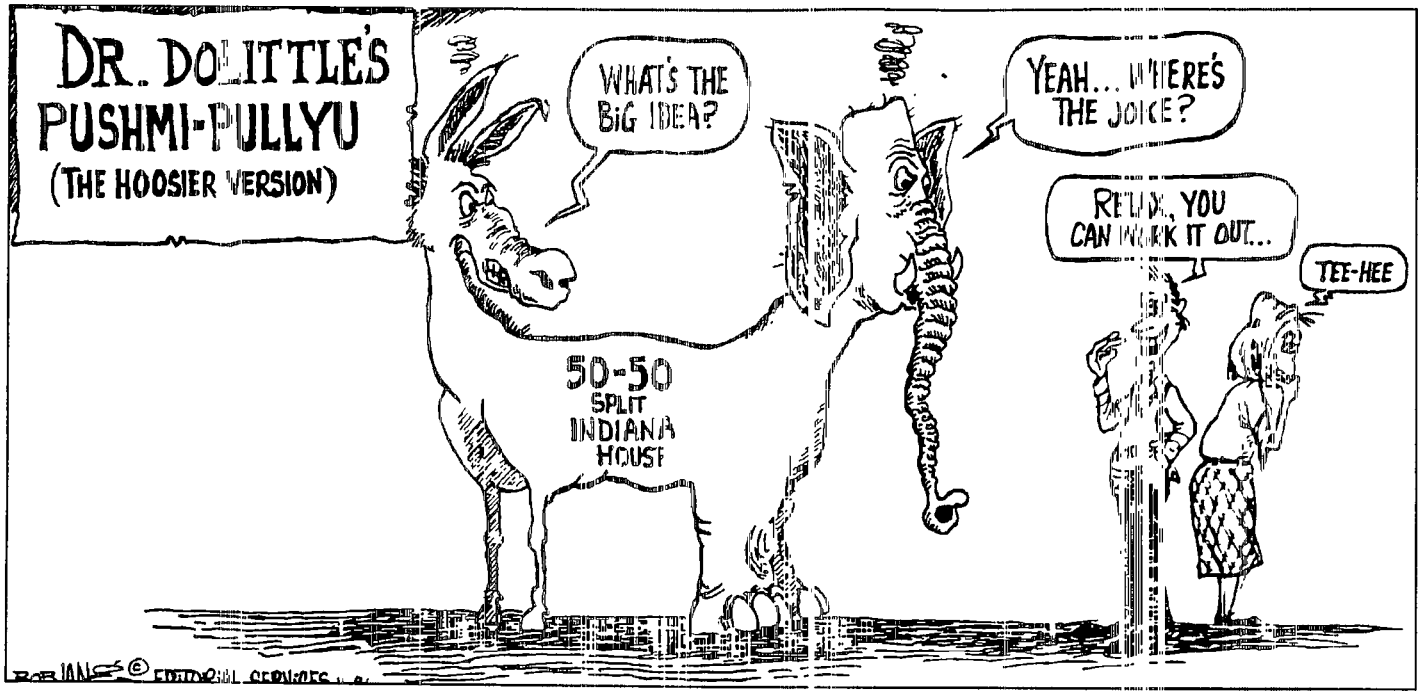

TICKER TAPE

PLAY OF THE WEEK: Believe us, folks, this little honor (honor?) isn't going to anyone in Indianapolis this week. No sireee! Too much unfinished business by everyone. We'll give it to former Vice President Dan Quayle, whose stewardship of the Campaign America PAC led the nation in money given to candidates. The PAC, which Bob Dole handed off to Quayle in 1996, gave $819,700 to federal candidates (Roll Call). By comparison, Speaker Newt Gingrich's Monday Morning PAC gave $771,500, and House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt gave $461,000 from his Effective Government Committee

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Here's another intriguing trend. House Republicans

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"Rex had a lot more endorsements than that and lost the primary," Helmke said of Early's 1996 primary race against Stephen Goldsmith and George Witwer. "This isn't a selection in a convention. It's a primary. I saw a recent poll and I had 18 percent name recognition and Peter Rusthoven was at 1 percent."

Helmke also asked, "Is the state going to want both senators from the city of Indianapolis?"

Price said, "When I was secretary of the party, our feeling was to elect candidates to office, not select them. Conventions back then had several well-meaning party leaders get together in the room, decide and pass the word on to delegates. A lot of people said that this is a participatory democracy and there was a major push for election reform.

"People who give Lincoln Day speeches for a half hour extolling the free market system and spirit of competition should not limit it to business, but to elected politics as well. If primaries are fractious, if that's true, then let's get rid of the primary."

Rusthoven has spent the now-concluding Lincoln Day season pushing a theme of an aggressive, issues-oriented campaign fought on a conservative agenda in more than 40 counties, speaking in 25. His speeches have been well-received and he has made a favorable impact on many rank and file Republicans as well as the party leadership.

Helmke has long bristled at the notion that he cleared the field to make way for someone like Rusthoven, whom he views as an electoral novice. He noted that he has won three general elections. An associate of Helmke's on the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns (which the mayor is president of) said the talk of him leaving the field seemed to make him more determined to run. Helmke even chided HPR for terming his candidacy "missing in action."

Helmke acknowledged he didn't extensively work the Lincoln Day circuit, attending three and speaking at two. He noted recent speeches to the North Manchester Chamber of Commerce, the Syracuse Rotary and recent front page coverage he received in the Hammond Times.

The mayor said that Rusthoven's active Lincoln Day schedule does not assure him the nomination. "Just because you get the attendance award doesn't mean you're the valedictorian."

Set in motion is a primary battle between the moderate and conservative wings of the party. The contrast of a Helmke v. Rusthoven/ Price race would provide a sharp ideological contrast, particularly over the abor-

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We need more data to call Senate front-runner

HORSE RACE

TRENDLINE: Mr. Governor!

Frank O'Bannon's veto of the Marion County innskeeper tax is a pure example that elephants aren't the only ones with long memories. It was a come-uppance aimed not only at Mayor Stephen Goldsmith, but the Indianapolis House Republicans who forced the special session and are now stewing over how to save face, as well as the Pacers, Colts and NCAA headquarters. They've learned you can play hardball with both footballs and basketballs.

■ ■ ■

■ **1998 U.S. SENATE:** Hmmmmmm. Yes, we did predict that the field would clear for Peter Rusthoven. Now Mayor Paul Helmke is threatening Horse Race with a trip to the glue factory. What we have here is a totally new dynamic in the race for the Republican Senate nomination. Here's how we see this field now that Rep. David McIntosh and Secretary of State Sue Anne Gilroy are apparently out of the mix:

PETER RUSTHOVEN: He has put together an impressive campaign superstructure and a burgeoning list of party endorsements. His speeches have been well-received and he has made impressive strides with the GOP rank and file. What Rusthoven doesn't have is name identification with the masses, although we suspect new polling would show him closer to Helmke than the 18 percent to 1 percent data that Helmke cites. Rusthoven has the tools necessary to win a contested primary. What occurs at this point is a race for the money, and Rex Early - who has brought on board Fort Wayne political financier Dick Freeland - as well as Mitch Daniels should give Rusthoven a crucial push on the money front. At this point, the endorsements for a previous unknown are critical only in the sense of momentum. As we saw in the 1996 Early-Goldsmith race, as well as the 9th CD county chairs unanimously endorsing a candidate who lost to Michael Bailey in 1990, nods from the party hierarchy have limited shelf life and impact. We can't really call Rusthoven the "front-runner" until some sort of polling data emerges. While he appears to be on the right track, the only way he's going to clear the field is to cut off the money to Helmke and Price.

PAUL HELMKE: We don't doubt that Helmke has higher name ID than Rusthoven at this point. The Fort Wayne mayor would have served his cause much better if he had circulated in party circles throughout the state this past Lincoln Day cycle. People in Central and Southern Indiana don't know his story and are more likely to remember Rex Early's 1993 put-down. Helmke is clearly a moderate and while that might play well in a general election, that won't be an asset in a primary where conservative activists tend to dominate. For Helmke to survive past this year, he is going to have to demonstrate that he can raise money and begin to tell his story throughout the state. There have been many good things that have happened in Fort Wayne since he took office in 1988 and he has a vivid record to run on. But Helmke is certainly one of the most controversial politicians in the GOP, if not Indiana. It will be fascinating to see how he presents himself to voters, and how they react, both in polls as well as donations.

JOHN PRICE: The campaign's ghost rider in the sky. He took everyone by surprise, including his ally, David Lohr, who had endorsed Rusthoven. Many in the Rusthoven wing think Price is crazy for entering, if for nothing else than having the potential to carve up the conservative vote and give Helmke a chance to win. Others think if Price ran and Helmke didn't, it would give Rusthoven a great chance to show his conservative credentials while looking moderate in contrast with Price. This is the longest of the longshots.

TICKER TAPE

received more PAC money than Democrats in 1996 federal races. Republican congressional candidates pulled in $79.7 million, compared to $79.4 million for the Democrats, which is a true trend reversal. In 1994, the Democrats had a $90.7 million to $44 million advantage. What this means is that PACs are inclined to support incumbents (Benjamin Sheffner, Roll Call).

Hammond and East Chicago officials took part in a march on a suspected crack house last Monday as part of a rally sponsored by the Northwest Indiana Federation of Interfaith Organizations (Daniel Yovich, Munster Times). Taking part were Hammond Mayor Duane Dedelow and his police chief Fred Behrens, East Chicago Police Chief Frank Alcala, Lake County Sheriff John Buncich and U.S. Attorney Jon DeGuilio. The three-block march included chants of "Hey, ho, dope must go." They were met with profanities by two people inside the dwelling. Earlier, 700 people had attended a rally at Bishop Noll HS.

Kevin Rader of WTHR-TV added up all the costs of special sessions over the past 10 years and came up with these totals: $5.8 million in 1989; $7.4 million in 1991; $6.8 mil-

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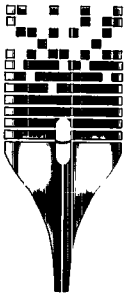
O'Bannon playing hard ball with Indianapolis, House Republicans

HPR INTERVIEW

" It meets our pledge of the importance that you can target the surplus of $1.6 billion over the next two years to give money, assets back to Indiana families...."
- Gov. O'Bannon



INDIANAPOLIS - In 24 hours, Gov. Frank O'Bannon would be sitting down with all four legislative leaders to talk about an end to the budget impasse when this HPR Interview was recorded during a press conference.

There is an added urgency to this impasse, unlike some of the recent other deadlocks, particularly in Indianapolis. A triple-headed sports monster - what to do about the Indiana Pacers, Indianapolis Colts and the NCAA headquarters bid - is messing with the psyche of people here. The loss of either sports team, as a Tuesday *USA Today* article essentially predicted (as did HPR's Horse Race last edition), would have a devastating political impact that would be hard to gauge.

Additionally, there are school and government funding deadlines that are hanging in the balance. O'Bannon has left his "cool and easy synthesizer" persona and has displayed a hardened streak - though not "mean" - that has caught House Republicans and Mayor Stephen Goldsmith by surprise. So aggressive was O'Bannon that he vetoed the Marion County innskeeper tax last Friday. Not only are the Colts hanging in the balance on that issue, it was a political rebuke to Goldsmith, who had accused him of never meeting a tax he didn't "hike."

Now roles were reversed. Obviously, the O'Bannon camp is taking a hard line with one eye on the 2000 re-election campaign.

It was in this atmosphere that O'Bannon hosted a press conference at his desk, with a big $232 million check as a prop for signing a tax cut into law.

O'Bannon: We still don't have a budget. But we do have a tax cut. It means about $232 million in tax cuts over the next two years. We'll see a homestead credit that this year was (6 percent), that will go up to 10 percent, which accounts for about $147.9 million in tax relief for those who own their own homes, which is about 71 or 72 percent of the families in Indiana. There's a dependent deduction - $500 per child that people will begin to take on Jan. 1 ...at a cost of $56.9 million. And there's an earned income deduction that costs about $28 million. Those under $7,500 get a deduction from all their taxes and up to $12,000, a percentage. That will helping the working poor get off welfare and give them help from their taxes. The earned income deduction will help 137,000 families. The increased deduction will help 1.7 million families. This is exactly what happens when the legislature works together. It was a very positive thing on the conference committee with Rep. Bauer and Espich in the House. In the Senate it was Sen. Borst and Gery. It passed both houses unanimously. It meets our pledge of the importance that you can target the surplus of $1.6 billion over the next two years to give money, assets back to Indiana families. That's exactly what this tax cut does. The other part of the surplus that would be spent, $170 million for funding on highways, $150 million toward the unfunded liability and pensions.

Norm Cox, WRTV: Governor this goes for four years. What happens at the end of four years?

O'Bannon: At the end of four years, we would hope to have a restructuring of taxes here in Indiana that would reduce property taxes, help low-income families and create jobs. I think this is a big step in that direction.

Eric Berman, WIBC: The Republicans have said they wouldn't be averse to opening this bill during the special session. How willing are you to revisit this?

O'Bannon: It's done. It's done unanimously. If leadership can get this done in one day, I would certainly look at it. I would probably predict there won't be any change.

Brian Howey, HPR: Why is Indiana acting like a bank holding a surplus? Why shouldn't the money be spent or returned to taxpayers?

O'Bannon: That's a good question. That's exactly what we're doing. At the end of two years that surplus will be a billion dollars. To me that's the cushion we should have, a little over 10 percent of the revenues and try to maintain that as long as we can. We've gotten the $1.8 billion down to $1 billion with a tax cut and with one-

time expenditures over the next four years.

Howey: What about the Rainy Day Fund? Wasn't that created to supply that buffer? And if that's the case, would you favor getting this to a zero balance?

O'Bannon: We try to look at it from the percentage of revenue coming into the General Fund and I've always said it should be at least 10 percent. That would be $900 million or a little more. The Rainy Day Fund is probably $500 million. The Tuition Reserve is ... is that up to $250 (million)? (Staff member agrees). So you're at $750 million that those two should fund. So that means there is $250 million of the surplus that is prudent to have. I think all four participants agree to that. That's been my impression as we've gone through four months of these budget talks. House Republicans may not agree to that. But we've worked in that framework. The reason I can't say what they propose is because all of their numbers are different.

John Ketzenberger, Gannett: Are you surprised its taken a week for House Republicans to have a meeting of the mind over where they would like to cut the budget or increase tax relief?

O'Bannon: Well, it's difficult when you have 50 members go along and come to some sort of an agreement. There's been a very dramatic and serious impasse that has forced us into a special session. I'm hopeful that when the budget committee meets tomorrow at 10 o'clock that they might have some movement. I'll have all four leaders meet here in my office at 3 o'clock in the afternoon along with one member of each caucus, whoever they want to bring. We'll talk about the possibilities of trying to set a time to get out of here. An agreement hinges on them satisfying caucus members and the need to suspend rules. I'm hopeful that might be possible next week. I have no information that would happen, but it's possible.

Cox: Now that we know what Rep. Bales' price tag is, could your strategy be to go with the old bill for another 20 minutes?

O'Bannon: That could get us out of the impasse and into a two-year budget, certainly. I don't think that's at all in sync with the House Republicans. They want to cut the budget.

Cox: Does it matter if you can get one vote?

O'Bannon: As long as we've got a balanced budget and a surplus, that's by far been our most important goal. Along with more funding for public schools and universities and 500 more police, alternative schools. I think we all agree you can't change too much or you'll start losing votes the other way. A lot of things are hinging on it and interrupting a lot of other things.

Mike Smith, Associated Press: Why not bring them back tomorrow if you can switch two or three votes? Are you worried about the hinted threats of not producing a quorum?

O'Bannon: Certainly. It will have to be based on hard facts as to what leadership says what they can get done in one day.

Smith: Did you say that could happen next week?

O'Bannon: I'm always hopeful. Last week I was hopeful we could do it this week.

Howey: From your perspective, when is the point of no return on some of the Indianapolis projects - the Pacers, the Colts are now front page news, and the NCAA headquarters?

O'Bannon: I don't think that's our decision. We intend to focus on the impasse of this budget, meet in a special session one day and get it out. What day that is could make a difference in some of these projects. But that's up to the City of Indianapolis on how to work that one.

Leslie Stedman, Journal Gazette: Don't you feel any responsibility to help work those out?

O'Bannon: I do. I do. I favor all those projects. The sooner we can get done, and we should have been done on April 29, the better off we are.

Cox: Do you feel any pressure from the NFL owner's meeting on May 28?

O'Bannon: That hasn't crossed my mind. But that's why I vetoed that innskeeper tax, because its all tied into the budget.

Howey: In vetoing that innskeeper tax, is that applying the appropriate kind of heat that you thought it might on the other side?

O'Bannon: It was the logical thing to do. The budget is not done. These other things can't be done.

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lion in 1993; and estimated the cost of this year's overtime will be in the $6 million range. The Legislative Services Agency estimates that a single day of a special session costs $19,361, just counting per diem and travel costs for legislators. A week would cost $69,761. That doesn't include extra staff costs approaching $25,000 a day in 1993.

State Rep. Bob Kuzman returned to his old school, Eisenhower Elementary in Crown Point (Adrianne Bacavis, Munster Times). Kuzman met with his old fourth grade teacher, Patricia Radu. "He was always an extremely hard worker and good boy," she said.

Secretary of State Sue Anne Gilroy convened about five volunteers late Sunday afternoon and they set into motion a series of calls explaining her decision not to seek the GOP U.S. Senate nomination, but instead to run for re-election. Gilroy walked between the callers, picking up the phone and talking briefly with party leaders. The thrust of her message was: "Although it would have been a great opportunity to serve in the Senate with Dick Lugar, to serve as his partner, I really believe I am best suited and most prepared to provide leadership right here

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at home."

Gilroy's decision has a number of Democrats pondering statewide 1998 races. Some who had been considering the secretary of state's race are now giving thought to challenging embattled Auditor Morris Wooden, said Democratic Executive Director Mike Harmless. The Democrats would like to run a female candidate against Wooden, with the top names including State Sen. Vi Simpson and 1994 state Senate candidate Jesica Webb. Harmless said several other legislators are looking at both races but have asked Harmless not to reveal their names. Another former state Senate candidate, Geoff Paddock of Fort Wayne, is also weighing a run for one of those offices.

One Democrat has already filed for the 4th CD to challenge U.S. Rep. Mark Souder. He is Mark Wehrle, president of a Fort Wayne bottled water company. Still contemplating that race is 1978 and 1980 nominee John Walda.

The memory of the 1984 controversy involving Indiana's 8th CD is being resurrected in California. Democrat Loretta Sanchez upset Republican Bob Dornan by 934 votes. Since then, a probe has shown that

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COLUMNISTS ON INDIANA

Phil Wieland, *Munster Times* - I have decided to put my two cents' worth in on the Lake County property tax debacle even though I understand the tax laws about as well as I understand quantum physics. As you've no doubt read, the delays in figuring last year's taxes, caused by glitches in the computer designed to speed up the process, reportedly didn't leave enough time for some township assessors to calculate the value of new construction and add it to the formula for figuring this year's tax rate. This meant the tax rates had to be calculated on the previous year's assessed property value because the county auditor wouldn't include new construction for some unless he could include it for all. This, in turn, meant tax rates were higher to compensate for the lower assessed value. All I know is that the state decided it wasn't worth its valuable time to halt the mailing of the tax bills and recalculate the tax rates because, while almost everybody will be paying more than they should be, the amount is "insignificant" and the state doesn't want to set a precedent. Lake County voters should set a precedent in the next election by giving everybody associated with this whole sordid tax mess an insignificant number of votes.

Linda Chavez, *Chicago Tribune* - Official Washington is drunk on the euphoria produced by last week's budget deal between congressional Republicans and President Bill Clinton. The pundits can't say enough nice things about the bipartisan compromise that produced the plan which promises to eliminate the deficit in five years. The last time official Washington was this happy about a bipartisan budget compromise was when President George Bush signed his pact with the Democrat-controlled Congress in 1990. Two years later, all that earlier pundit praise stood for nothing at the polls. Bush's faith in bipartisanship landed him back in private life. Republicans should be careful not to let history repeat itself come the 1998 congressional elections.

Harrison Ullman, *NUVO Newsweekly* - I meant it as a joke when I began writing about the Indiana General Assembly as America's worst legislature a few years ago. Sooner or later - sooner, I thought - one of our legislators would rise to defend the honor of the assembly. When that happened, I was going to admit my error and begin writing that the Indiana General Assembly is only the second worst state legislature in America. But it never happened. None of the 50 senators ever called, not one of 100 representatives ever wrote. I kept calling them the worst in America year after year and they never complained. I should have wondered why. But now I know why. The joke isn't funny any more. The bubbas and fools who fill our General Assembly have truly given us the worst state legislature in America.

Sylvia Smith, *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette* - By 11 p.m. Thursday, Hoosier Sen. Richard Lugar looked and sounded like a mother who had just given birth: His voice was raspy, his body language shouted "exhausted" but he was aglow. It was the end of an arduous - even tortuous - labor for Lugar: Nursing the Senate through ratification of a treaty to outlaw poisonous nerve gas weapons. Although the treaty was negotiated in one Republican administration (Reagan) and signed by another Republican president (Bush), it was Republicans who theatened U.S. ratification of it. All 45 Senate Democrats had long said they would vote for ratification. The number of Republicans who publicly supported ratification before Thursday's late-night vote didn't add up to enough. For months Lugar deluged his colleagues with a series of letters rebutting the arguments of the critics. He wrote articles that appeared on the op-ed pages of major newspapers. He nudged the White House to lobby more vigorously. "Dick Lugar is a leader in a party that is wrestling with whether or not it turned inward or outward," said Sen. Joe Biden. "The feat of getting 29 Republican senators to vote for this treaty is a testament to Dick Lugar."

PERHAPS... WE WANDER

By Brian Howey

'Danny' was a no-show for a sucker talk show host

INDIANAPOLIS - Producer Scott Johnston had been through some pretty turbulent times at WIBC-AM in Indianapolis. For instance, he was there for Stan Solomon's last night of 50,000 watt broadcasting years ago.

After that gig, Johnston was content to move from politics to sports.

Little did he know what he was in for when I, the political pundit, came in to do two hours of WIBC's "Night Shift" show on Friday, April 25. I wanted to do a political show, and the hottest property in town was U.S. Rep. Dan Burton. Or "Danny" to most WIBC listeners who would catch him doing a weekly Monday morning show with Democrat Andy Jacobs.

So I decided to get "Danny" on the airwaves this Friday night. I arranged this gig with "Danny's" new press aide, John Williams, who has been a political friend for some time. Four times that week of April 25 I called Williams to make sure that Danny could make the show and talk from 9:15 to 9:45. The congressman was to be in New York City that Friday night, but I was assured that he would be back at his hotel well enough in advance to do this gig.

I called that Friday morning to make sure. "Whatever happens, I don't want to get stuck with no congressman," I told Williams.

No problem, Williams said. Danny's chief of staff knew about the situation and had confirmed. But if for some reason Danny didn't appear, "Page me," Williams said. He gave me his pager number.

I tried to find a Democrat to offer balance. All the biggest of the wigs were in Fort Wayne that night for the 4th CD dinner. Former Marion County Chairman Kip Tew agreed to do it, but wasn't thrilled about it so I cut him loose. Instead, I brought with me Indiana Tourism Director John Goss to spend the last hour of the show talking about Turkey Run and Dusenbergs and the Fulton County Round Barn Festival.

Friday night arrived and so did I at WIBC around 8:50 - 15 minutes before airtime. But the front door was locked. I didn't have my cell phone. So I rushed to a nearby Shell station to ring 'em up. "Hi, I'm the guest host. I'm to be on the air in seven minutes and I can't get in."

I arrived at the studio with - easily - five minutes to spare. Johnston was busy arranging tapes and stuff. I barely got into the host's chair before I was on the air. But the headphones were blasting at jumbo jet decibels and the meticulous paperwork I had prepared on Congressman Danny: his role in investigating the White House; his "shaking down" a Pakistani lobbyist; his seeking help to get a daughter in vet school; *Congressional Quarterly* copy calling him a partisan "pit bull"; his Pebble Beach golf game with telephone execs; his tongue-in-cheek response to a government call for safety devices on golf carts, blurred into a bad broadcasting acid trip. I was awash in my own blaring voice and I rattled off my prepared material in about three minutes, with seven to spare.

And then ... no phone call from Danny. I was thinking, "#@%$*&!"

It was every guest host's worst nightmare: your own voice blasting back into your brain and the guest a no-show. I scrambled for Williams' pager number but couldn't find it.

I thought about telling Johnston that I felt a spasm of Tourette's Syndrome coming on - something that might make him forget all about Stan Solomon.

Still, no Danny. "I hope he didn't get in a New York City golf cart accident," I joked at one point (a real knee-slapper).

Luckily, the fact that Danny had become such a controversial congressman lured in six or seven unsuspecting callers that I peppered with questions in prosecutorial fashion for the next 45 minutes until Goss and I could discuss the otter population at Turkey Run State Park.

And to this day, I ponder, in journalist fairness as well as typical human bias: What

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547 people in Orange County did not hold citizenship, but even if Dornan was credited with those votes, it wouldn't be enough to give him his seat back. In 1984, Republican Rick McIntyre was certified the winner over Frank McCloskey by the Indiana Secretary of State Ed Simcox. But McCloskey was seated by Congressional Democrats after winning the recount by the General Accounting Office. Democratic consultant Chris Sautter, who worked with McCloskey, is involved in the Sanchez race and told Gerard Shields of the Evansville Courier, "The Republicans aren't contesting the count, they're contesting the election process." McCloskey recalled the 1984 experience, saying, "It's pressure beyond belief. I feel sympathy for anybody that has to go through a serious challenge. It shouldn't happen to anybody."

Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan spent May 7 observing the 25th anniversary of his "Shoot Down Day" - they day his Navy bomb-damage assessment flight was blown out of the air over North Vietnam. "I always take the day off, play golf if I can and have a pizza and a cold beer" (Jack Colwell, South Bend Tribune). Kernan said after a diet of pumpkin soup, he dreamed of pizz and cold beer at Rocco's in

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South Bend on Friday nights. "On Friday nights when we were in prison, that was one of the things I missed the most." Kernan spent 11 months in capitivity in 1972-73.

Allen County Republican Chairman Steve Shine had this to say about Mayor Paul Helmke's potential Senate candidacy: "I would respect his decision to run for the Senate but I would not make any decision on an endorsement of Paul Helmke. He will have an extremely difficult, uphill battle."

Senate, from page 2

tion issue. Both Rusthoven and Price carry a distinct conservative agenda while Helmke openly touts his appeal to independent and moderate voters.

There is also some personal baggage in the mix. Rex Early joined Mitch Daniels to boost the Rusthoven campaign from its inception. It was Early who, as state chairman in 1993, publicly rebuked Helmke for supporting the Clinton stimulus package. It essentially damaged Helmke's reputation enough in GOP circles that it kept him out of the governor's race. It rankles Helmke that, in his mind, Rex Early would get behind what he considers to be an "unknown" candidate and would expect the mayor to withdraw from the race in its first phase.

Republican leaders like Chairman Mike McDaniel and former Coats campaign manager Brose McVey fear that a contested primary would send PACs packing to Evan Bayh.

But Price is counting on potential legal problems with the President and First Lady to even the playing field in a race against Bayh. "If Clinton or his wife are in serious trouble and their popularity is below 40 percent and Evan Bayh is running against a recognizable pro-life candidate, Evan Bayh will have a great opportunity to raise his twin boys."

Price added that in a contested primary, the Republicans will get "high visibility, can get out and tone up the message, tweak the carburator, get volunteers lined up and gather a great deal of media attention and it puts you in a position to win. I just don't buy this compete and you don't win in the fall."

Two critical junctures could prevent a contested primary. One is if Helmke gets a chilly reception from the Republican Senatorial Committee next week. The second is who can raise the money and who can't. Those who don't raise money become the campaign's moot point.

The huge question is how many moot points will there be?

THE HOWEY POLITICAL REPORT

The Weekly Briefing On Indiana Politics

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