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Dems calling GOP on taxation issue

It's all rhetoric until high court rules

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS - As Hoosiers emerge from their Monica & Bill hangover, the issue of tax reform is beginning to take shape in some legislative races and newspaper coverage around the state.

Republicans announced $326 million in spending cutbacks in what Rep. Jeff Espich calls Phase II of the united House/Senate GOP's billion-dollar property relief plan. Espich said the plan calls for austerity cuts in such services as prisons, police and parks. "We must put a halt to excess government spending because it results in an even bigger government and much smaller choices for Hoosier families," said Espich (David Smith, *Lafayette Journal and Courier*).

But House Democrats are saying it's all hot air. "Until we have the Supreme Court decision, it's all rhetoric," said State Rep. Win Moses Jr. "I have been flabbergasted by their ambiguity."

Ways and Means Chairman B. Patrick Bauer called the GOP plan "gobbledygook" and countered, "Are you going to let hundreds if not thousands of felons go?"

Senate Minority Leader Richard Young added, "Indiana has a $2 billion surplus and yet the House Republicans want to slash funding for safe schools, state parks, environmental protection and job training."

Bill Styring of the Hudson Institute noted that Republicans are trying to steer the debate on tax cuts and spending caps, while the Democrats and Gov. Frank O'Bannon are "taking cover" behind the Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Tax Reform. With the Supreme

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"QUOTE" OF THE WEEK

"I can imagine a few of them slept on the couch last weekend...."

- Indianapolis Star City Editor Jon Schwantes on rumors of an expose of other legislators sexually involved with interns. The paper is still working on the story.

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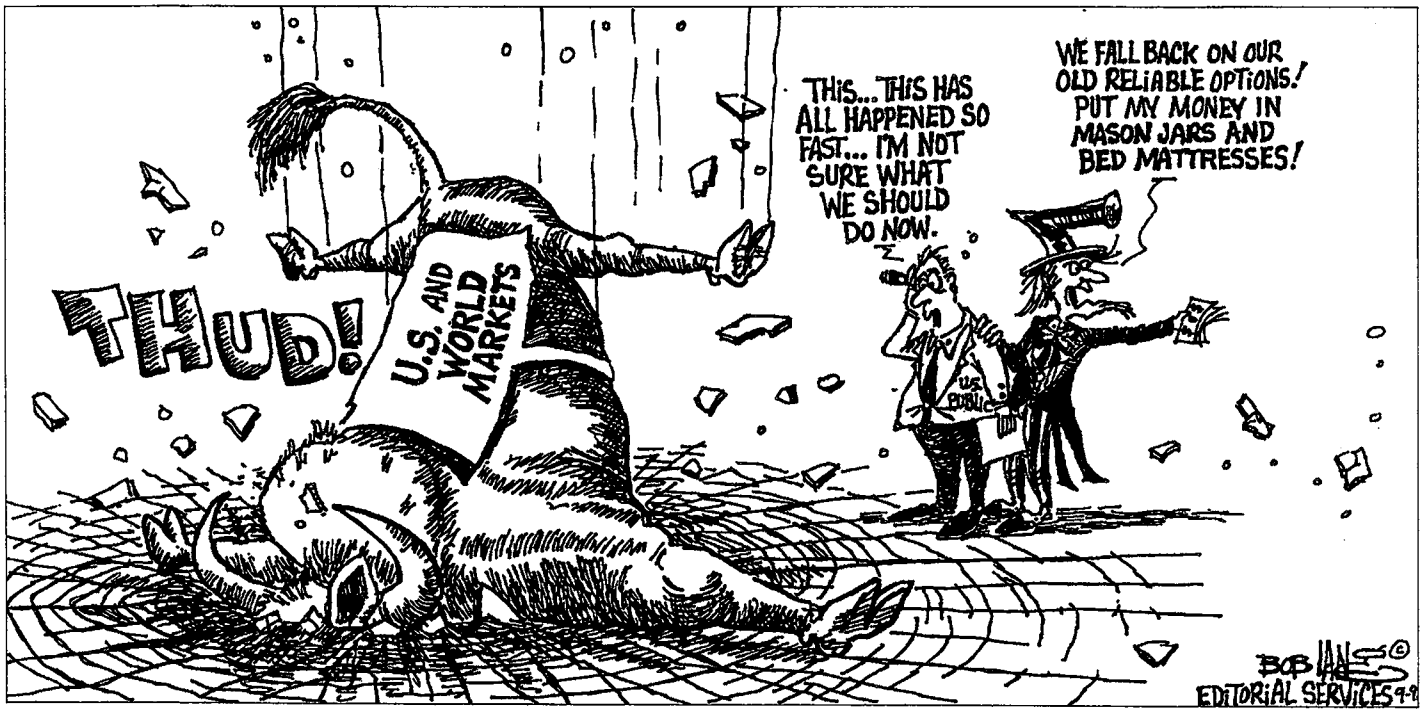
BOB LANG



TICKER TAPE

State Sen. Steve Johnson will not resign, Indiana Republican Chairman Mike McDaniel told the Indianapolis Star. Johnson has acknowledged he had a sexual relationship with a Senate intern in 1997. "He says he is going to let the process work its course through the Senate," McDaniel said. Both McDaniel and Howard County Republican Chairman Ron Metz have called for Johnson to resign.

Meanwhile, the Statehouse was alive with rumors that the Indianapolis Star/News is working on a story that reportedly reveals that up to half a dozen other legisla-

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Taxes, *from page 1*

Court decision on fair market valuation in property taxes likely to come after the Nov. 3 election, "essentially what will happen is that decisions will go from the voters and legislators and into the hands of lobbyists."

Styring said the Democrats are compelled to be vague because of an "internal conflict" in the party between the "spending wing" and the "tax cut" wing. "They've got to placate the spending wing - the teachers, public employees and to a lesser extent the universities," he said.

Moses countered that GOP rhetoric is irresponsible. "Even Larry Borst said it would be foolish to tell you what these things will cost," h said. "The $2 billion surplus isn't as large as it would appear. Some - about $600 million - has to be kept in the Rainy Day Fund, and $400 billion for the Tuition Reserve Fund."

Moses said the worst example of legislating - the tax cuts in 1979 and 1982 - created the deficit crisis after the '82 elections. "The people who did that are the exact same people who are doing this - Mills, Borst, Espich and Garton," he said.

The Fort Wayne Democrat added that the "govenor is prudently holding back" until the Supreme Court rules. "When that happens, the entire playing field changes," Moses said. "We are likely to see market place numbers on older homes increase by 30 to 40 percent. When that happens, all these other promises will fall by the wayside."

Styring insisted that the GOP plan, if accompanied by restraint on cuts and an increase in public spending "barring an economic meltdown" can work. He insisted a de facto spending cap tied to inflation and population growth "has a lot more legs than people think."

What Indiana voters don't seem to realize is the 1999 legislative session will be historic and impact everyone. "This is going to be a pivotal session," said Styring. "It is going to be one of the biggest bloodbaths we have ever seen. We're going to have a battle royale between spenders and those who want to give it back." ❖

Washington Republicans will be backing Leising with cash in 9th CD showdown

Television issue ads may follow; Hill up on the air

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.

WASHINGTON - Capitol Hill Republicans are putting their money where their mouths are when it comes to 9th CD hopeful Jean Leising.

The National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC), which has long touted Leising as a strong candidate, has decided to target and fully fund Leising's cash-strapped campaign, said spokesman Mike Donohue. The NRCC will give Leising $70,000, the maximum allowed under federal campaign laws. The funds are so-called hard money, meaning the Leising campaign can use the money for radio and television advertising and direct mail. Hard money also can be used to support polling.

"We always believed Jean Leising is a strong candidate; it took others a longer time to come to that realization," said Donohue. In his *National Journal* column this week, Washington political analyst Charlie Cook called the Hill-Leising race a toss-up.

The political manna from the NRCC will help Leising in one area where she needs it most. As of the June 30 Federal Election Commission financial filing, Leising had $63,751 in cash on hand. Her challenger, Democrat Baron Hill, had $391,322 available. They are competing for the seat being vacated by retiring Democrat Lee Hamilton. The Sept. 30 FEC reports are expected to show Hill with about $800,000 and Leising with $200,000, both campaigns have told HPR and the *Jeffersonville Evening News*.

Leising, a registered nurse and former state senator, may get another boost over the airwaves. The NRCC has launched a $37 million television advertising campaign called "Operation Breakout." The ads, which can't explicitly promote a candidate, focus on issues the Republican party wants to emphasize, legislation the party advocates in Congress, or Democratic positions Republicans criticize. So far, the ads have aired in Washington state, New Mexico, Ohio and Nevada. Indiana could be targeted in the future.

CONGRESS WATCH

"The larger campaign has yet to take place," said Donohue. Issue ads are "certainly a strong possibility in Indiana." Donohue said the ads are aired in areas where the GOP message is being drowned out by union advertising or where their candidates lack resources.

Both of those criteria may fit Leising. Hill has a substantial fund-raising lead and is supported by organized labor. The Indiana AFL-CIO believes Leising will be the beneficiary of issue ads. Steve Henderson, political director of the Indiana AFL-CIO, said that the "rumor-mill" indicates issue ads favoring Leising will air on Cincinnati and Louisville television. Labor also will run issue ads in the Cincinnati market.

In 1996, labor spent $20 million on issue advertising and $15 million on grass-roots efforts nationwide. Spending in 1998 on issue ads will depend on votes in Congress that labor wants to attack or support, such as fast track trade authority or Social Security, according to spokeswoman Deborah Dion. The main focus on their strategy is grass-roots: educating union members and registering them to vote at work sites, as well as conducting get-out-the-vote efforts.

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TICKER TAPE

tors have had sexual relationships with interns. Said City Editor Jon Schwantes Tuesday night, "Are we working on a story about the legislative intern program? Yes. Are we looking at other instances of other legislators' conduct? Yes. We don't see this as an issue that has worked itself out." Schwantes added that he suspected that several legislators probably had long talks with spouses in anticipation of a Star story last weekend. "I can imagine that a few of them probably slept on the couch last weekend," he said.

U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar called President Clinton's threat to veto the agriculture appropriations bill "outrageous and unconscionable" given support for targeted disaster payments. Lugar said a presidential veto could delay or jeopardize disaster assistance to farmers in the Dakotas. Minnesota, Montana, Texas and Georgia.

Evansville NAACP President Robert Allen Jr. said he plans to attend a Ku Klux Klan really in Boonville next month. "I want to hear it; I want to see what they've got to say," Rev. Allen said (Kevin Kinnaird, Evansville Courier). The rally is scheduled for Oct. 17.

Republican state auditor

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TICKER TAPE

candidate Connie Nass said the 2000 computer glitch "presents us with an explosive problem" and said planning and action are needed now. "I am committed to add my management and problem-solving skills to the consequences it presents to the state auditor's office and Indiana state government." Nass is seeking to replace Republican Auditor Morris Wooden.

Concerned about a fourth consecutive record homicide year, Indianapolis City-County Council Democrats called for 200 new police officers and were spurned by Republicans and Mayor Stephen Goldsmith. "We started this discussion over eight weeks ago by inviting Mayor Goldsmith to join with us to take a positive step toward lowering Indianapolis' rampant murder rate," said Councilor Rozelle Boyd. "The Mayor's response has been a series of excuses." Republican Councilor Phil Borst said Democrats failed to prove that 200 new police officers would have an impact. He said if they could quantify such an impact, he would reconsider. And Mayor Goldsmith said he would leave open the option of an additional appropriation of police in the near future.

Mayor Goldsmith is beginning to raise money for his election to a third term. A fund-raising letter signed

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Leising, *from page 3*

Although she trails badly on the money side, Leising's two previous runs against Hamilton have raised her name identification in the district. A recent NRCC poll shows her leading Hill by 10 points.

The Hill campaign is counting on its own television advertising campaign to raise his profile among voters. Hill made his first television buy Monday. His ads, centered on protecting Social Security, will run throughout the week in Louisville, said campaign spokeswoman Michele Muller.

Hill, a financial analyst and former state representative, has just completed a 404-mile walk around the district. During his strong but unsuccessful 1990 Senate race against Republican Dan Coats, Hill's signature was a walk across the state. He will employ similar shoe-leather tactics through the rest of his congressional campaign. He will go door-to-door, visit senior centers, health care facilities and schools, Muller said.

Hill will get some grass-roots help from labor, Henderson said. The Indiana AFL-CIO is promoting Hill among its members and distributing his literature at plant gates. In October, the national AFL-CIO will send a mailing to 28,842 union members in the 9th CD.

Observers believe that the impact of the sex scandal swirling around President Clinton will have the most impact in the 9th CD. The view from the ground shows Republicans may not benefit, said Muller.

Hoosiers have begun to believe that the GOP is pursuing the scandal too aggressively and went too far in releasing Clinton's videotaped grand jury testimony. They want the ordeal to end, said Muller.

"The release of the tapes pushed it over the edge for a lot of people," said Muller, who traveled with Hill as he toured the district. "People were coming up to us in droves, saying, "We're disgusted by what Clinton did but we're behind you." ❖

Indiana/U.S. Polling data

Here is a compilation of recent polling data in Indiana and nationally with regards to President Clinton, Congress:

Indianapolis Star/News/WTHR
Mason Dixon, Sept. 19-22, 819 registered, +/-3.5 percent.

What do you consider more relevant in this election - issues of public policy, or the character of the candidates:

Issues	72 percent
Character	23
Not Sure	5

What do you think Congress should do about President Clinton?

Begin removal	37 percent
Censure	34
Drop	23
Not Sure	6

Time/CNN Poll (Gallup)
(842 registered/373 likely, Sept. 23-24, +/-3.1 percent. President Clinton's approve/disapprove of handling of job:

Approve	61 percent
Disapprove	35
Not Sure	4

Congressional approve/disapprove:

Approve:	54 percent
Disapprove	36
Not Sure	10

Congressional generic:

Republican	49 percent
Democrat	45

Newsweek Poll (Princeton Survey)
750 adults, Sept. 24-25, Clinton job approval:

Approve	62 percent
Disapprove	35 ❖

COLUMNISTS ON INDIANA

Brian Howey, *HPR* - There is vital business to conduct. There are dangers lurking that could engulf our economy and breach our security. The future morality of the American presidency will be re-established in the 2000 presidential election. Congress should censure President Clinton in the strongest terms possible. It should do it as soon as possible. Voters can punish his party in the Nov. 3 election. Congress should leave in place the ability to take Bill Clinton to court to answer for his perjuries and obstructions of justice after Jan. 20, 2001. To keep on our present course is a flirtation with disaster. ❖

Charles Krauthammer, *Chicago Tribune* - "Three words he fears most in the English language: Tell the truth." - Dan Quayle on Bill Clinton, vice presidential debate, Oct. 13, 1992. The most likely outcome of this sordid mess? A Senate trial for William Jefferson Clinton, presided over by the chief justice of the Supreme Court. Horrible as it would be, it would also be strangely fitting. At the very end of Clinton's political career, the nation will be asking itself the question it should have asked in the very beginning: Is this man fit to be president? To be fair, this is precisely the question the much-maligned Dan Quayle raised in his 1992 vice presidential debate with Al Gore. Poor Quayle. He could not spell potato, but he sure had Clinton pegged. With monomaniacal intensity he kept repeating - five times, seven if you allow variation - "Bill Clinton has trouble telling the truth." He was ridiculed, of course. Perhaps the *Atlantic* owes him another "Dan Quayle was right" cover. ❖

Larry Riley, *Muncie Star Press* - The surplus, or how not to do property tax reform.

State Rep. Dean Young's timing in declaring his plan for tax restructuring seems both strange and wonderful. The Hartford City Republican announced his proposal 10 days ago. But that was two weeks after the state Republican Party announced its tax restructuring idea. What gives? Perhaps he read the proposals by his GOP colleagues, saw that they were as zany as their idea last spring, and concluded that he better come up with his own plan and fast. The "unified" GOP proposal is to reduce property taxes by $1 billion over two years and not - repeat not - raise any - repeat any - other taxes. Read and reread their lips. Replacing much of the tax cut, of course, is The Surplus. The words that say it all for Hoosier legislators like "Monica" and "cigar" do for Congress. If you think that just because legislators touted The Surplus for a year we really have one, be sure. Unfunded state liabilities in teacher pensions alone exceed The Surplus. If, however, you agree, then we just pay for property tax reform with The Surplus. And when it's gone, we just, well we just, we just worry about it later.❖

Mary Beth Schneider, *Indianapolis Star*- (Bob) Kern was interviewed (on Comedy Central's *The Daily Show*) by A. Whitney Brown, whose deadpan style made Kern's performance alternately hysterical and pathetic. "Are you a cross-dresser?" Brown asks. "No I'm not," says Kern. "Were you a cross-dress?" "No." "Did you dress up like a woman?" "Yes." Of course, Kern isn't the only candidate creating comic inspiration in this race. Burton has been doing that for months, maybe years. And it caught the attention of a nationally broadcast National Public Radio quiz show, *Wait, Wait; Don't Tell Me*. Peter Sagal, host of the show, has named Burton the show's official congressman. Why Burton? "Who

TICKER TAPE

by, among others, John Mutz, Mitch Daniels, Christel DeHaan and Jim Morris, was sent out to supporters last week. The Indianapolis Star/News printed quotes of Goldsmith in 1991 saying he would only serve two terms. Hoosiers have a history of denying politicians who go back on their words. Mayor William Hudnut ran and lost for secretary of state because he wouldn't vow to serve out a full term. Joe Hogsett, who defeated Hudnut, did make that pledge, and then broke it in 1992 when he ran against U.S. Sen. Dan Coats. Coats went on to defeat Hogsett in a landslide after the Republican raised that issue early in the campaign.

Marion County Democratic prosecutor candidate Joe Champion vowed to reveal Prosecutor Scott Newman's "broken promises" in a series of press conferences through Nov. 3. On Sept. 22, Champion said, "Scott Newman promised the citizens of Marion County during his election campaign and again in April 1995 that he would make no plea deals with adults who recruit kids to commit crimes." He said that Newman broke that promise in the case of a youth counselor at the Marion County Juvenile Center and two collaborators who recruited a 17-year-old detainee to steal a chemical used in the

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TICKER TAPE

ways to increase awareness of educational needs and to promote the positive educational achievements that are taking place throughout the state," Reed said. The superintendent hosted six meetings last spring and 15 are scheduled for the next few months.

The South Bend Tribune reported that the Year 2000 computer glitch could lead to a shutdown in electricity supply in the Michiana region on Jan. 1, 2000. It reported that American Electric Power Co. and NIPSCO have set target dates for readiness at the end of September 1999 - three months later than the target recommended by a national council. ❖

House District 56: Republican: Ken Paust **Democrat:** Rep. Richard Bodiker. **Geography:** Richmond, Wayne County. **1994 Results:** Bodiker 7,142, Hamm 7,087. **1996 Results:** Bodiker 10,772, Hamm 8,159. **1998 Forecast:** Democrats believe Bodiker is in better shape than they expected and tracking shows him ahead. But this will still be a close race by the nature of the district. **Status:** *Toss-Up.*

House District 60: Republican: Jeff Ellington. **Democrat:** Peggy Welch. **Geography:** Bloomington, Bloomfield, Lawrence. Greene and Monroe Counties. **1994 results:** Bales 11,825, Anderson 5,210. **1996 Results:** Bales 15,743, Germann (L) 1,931. **1998 Forecast:** This is a 60 percent Republican district and a real uphill battle for Welch. Democratic tracking shows that it is closer than some observers expected. We believe Ellington has already won his toughest race - defeating Bales. **Status:** *Leans R.*

House District 80: Republican: John Becker. **Democrat:** Rep. Ben GiaQuinta. **Geography:** Southern Fort Wayne. **1994 Results:** Becker 5,206, GiaQuinta 5,199. **1996 Results:** GiaQuinta 7,707, Becker 6,365. **1998 Forecast:** Democrats insist GiaQuinta is well ahead.. Hard to see how Becker pulls this out without help from the national dynamic. GiaQuinta's biggest worry is turning out the vote. **Status:** *LEANS D.*

House District 94: Republican: Rep. Candy (Morris) Marendt. **Democrat:** Jeb Bardon. **Geography:** NW Indianapolis. **1994 Results:** Morris (Marendt) 7,838, Reasoner 5,537. **1996 Results:** Marendt 10,396, Hinman 9,586, Neal 422. **1998 Forecast:** Republicans are prepared to defend this seat to the max. Marendt is already running radio in Indy, suggesting she is expecting a stiff challenge. Bardon is working hard, having knocked on 8,000 doors to date and the Democrats are expected to push this seat in hopes of knocking off one incumbent. That will be mighty difficult, particularly with Republican incumbents Sheriff Jack Cottey and Prosecutor Scott Newman running very strongly, but this race is worth watching. **Status:** *TOSS-UP.*

House District 97: Republican: Ray Schultz. **Democrat:** Rep. Ed Mahern. **Geography:** Southern Indianapolis. **1994 Results:** Heffley 4,782, Cantwell 4,037. **1996 Results:** Mahern 6,368, Heffley 5,372. **1998 Forecast:** Control of the House could come down to this seat. Many observers say Mahern's fate is tied to that of U.S. Rep. Julia Carson. But Carson always turns out her vote and her African-American base seems the least likely Democratic segment to abandon her in the wake of the Clinton scandals. Democrats insist Mahern has lead right now, but Republicans will be throwing in the kitchen sink on this one. **Status:** *Toss-Up.*

- ***BRIAN A. HOWEY*** ❖

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