The Howey Political Report

The Howey Political Report is published by NewsLink Inc. Founded in 1994, The Howey Political Report is an independent, non-partisan newsletter analyzing the political process in Indiana.

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Subscriptions: $250 annually via e-mail or fax. Call 317-254-1533.

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"QUOTE" OF THE WEEK

"The Kitchen Cabinets, hangers-on, and those who like to be on the inner circle always have advice. Usually the advice is because they have an agenda...."

- Outgoing Evansville Mayor Frank McDonald II to new Mayor Russell Lloyd Jr. (Courier & Press)

Lugar, Bayh, new mayors head Top 50

2nd Annual HPR Most Influential List

By BRIAN A. HOWEY *in Indianapolis*
MARK SCHOEFF JR. *in Washington*

Who are the 50 most influential political figures in Indiana? The 2000 list is the product of more than a hundred e-mails from HPR readers, as well as our own analysis.

The most significant development was Evan Bayh's ascension to No. 2, ahead of Gov. Frank O'Bannon, and the emergence of new mayors as regional power brokers in Indianapolis, Fort Wayne, Evansville and South Bend.

The overall strength of the Indiana Congressional delegation is also well represented, with 11 out of the 12 members making the list. Only U.S. Rep. John Hostettler failed to make the cut.

We also saw a further decline in the political parties, with only one county party chair making the list while the state's two largest political organizations - Marion County Republicans and Lake County Democrats - remain embroiled in contention.

Controversial? Did anyone say controversial? Hell yes it is. This is our annual version of the Hot Stove League. Read 'em and weep (or bleat).

1. U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar: *Congressional Quarterly* named him one of the top 50 members. He's got $2 million in the bank for his campaign. He continues to strengthen his position as the most thoughtful conservative in Congress. Washington listens to Lugar on foreign policy. His warm endorsement of Texas Gov. George W. Bush is sure to generate speculation about a potential appointment as Secretary of State, should Bush win the GOP presidential nomination.If Sen. Jesse Helms does what is expected and does not seek re-election in 2002, Lugar will likely head the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The only asterisk comes with the controversies surrounding the 1996 Freedom to Farm Act, and even now it's too early to tell if it will need major reworking. Victory-starved Hoosier Republicans look to Lugar to lead the ticket to victory next fall, just as he did in 1994. For that reason, Lugar will have maximum clout in Indiana in 2000. Lugar is a once-in-a-century politician, and he heads our list for the second year.

2. U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh: The best in the punditry business have Bayh forecast for the national ticket, if not this year, then by 2004 or 2008. There have been other senators

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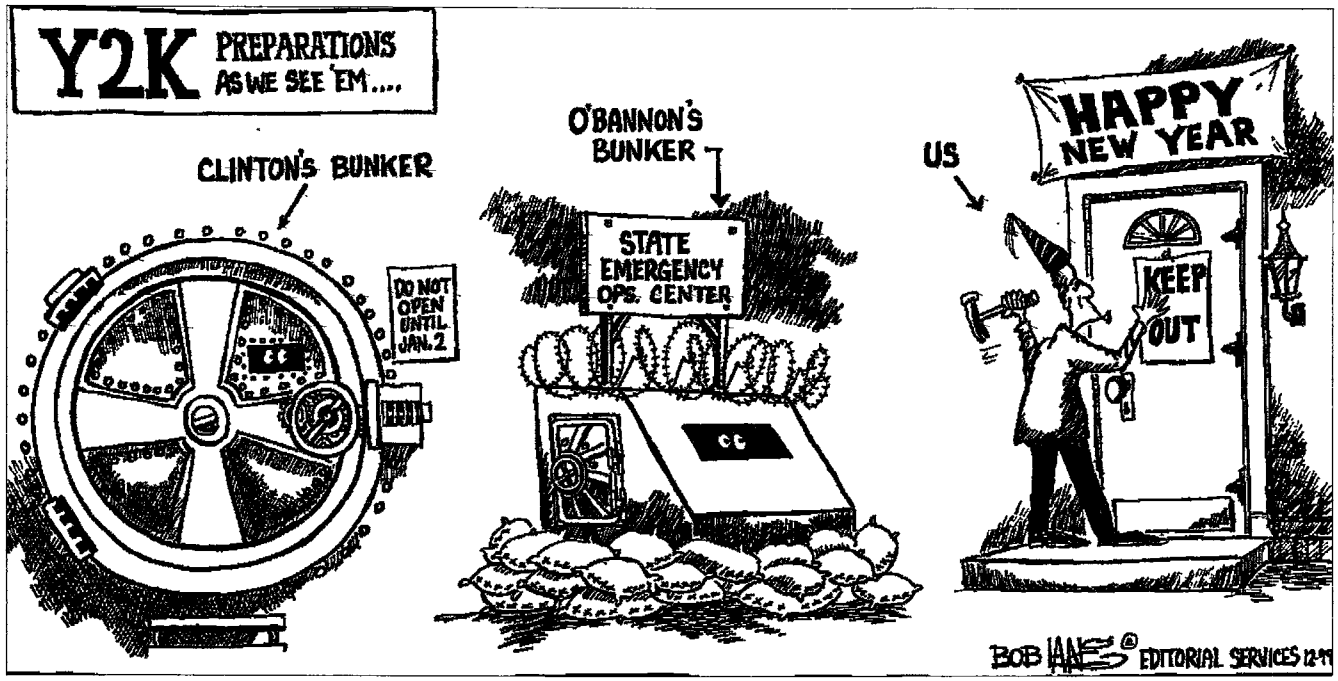

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AGENCIES RESISTED: The Anderson Herald-Bulletin reported that "as various city and state agencies learned of a possible contamination of the White River, there was no interaction between agencies to thwart a potential environmental disaster." Meanwhile, Guide Corporation of Anderson denied having anything to d with the chemical spill that resulted in a massive White River fish kill beginning on Dec. 9

NEW MAYORAL CLASS TAKES OVER: Indiana's three largest cities ushered in new mayors over the weekend. Democrats Bart Peterson in Indianapolis, Graham Richard in Fort Wayne and Republican Russell Lloyd Jr. took their

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with such lofty potential that did not make it. Bayh is about as well positioned as one can be. He handled the Clinton impeachment adroitly and then was able to offer his first major legislative initiatve with Senate Finance Chairman Pete Dominici as a co-sponsor. How many freshmen senators from the minority party can claim something such as that? Bayh deftly inserted himself into the tax debate last summer by championing the New Democrat approach. He also established a leadership PAC, which will help him build support for his political future through numerous IOUs for the cash he doles out.

3. Gov. Frank O'Bannon: The governor didn't have a real good year in 1999, losing his top legislative initiative (full-day kindergarten), and then enduring a series of controversies such as state trooper pay, the loss of certification at the Muscatatuck Developmental Center, and the Sexcise Police scandal. Even House Democrats have been grumbling about his program. All of this leaves open the debate on his leadership quality, a notion that makes the normally mild-mannered governor bristle. However, O'Bannon appears to remain personally popular and a thriving economy and record highway spending program should be a big boost. Since governors could serve two terms, none of them has even come close to losing. Upsetting O'Bannon will be tough, but he's not in as good a position as he was a year ago.

4. U.S. Rep. David McIntosh: Indiana Republicans have probably never had a candidate in such a critical position. If McIntosh wins the primary and upsets Gov. O'Bannon, he will be seen as the savior of a moribund party that has steadily lost ground in the last dozen years. If he loses, the GOP is in a start-from-scratch position. McIntosh is far better poised to pull in the traditional GOP constituency that peeled off to vote for Bayh and O'Bannon. He will strike hard at O'Bannon's vulnerabilities on education and property taxes. If legislative Republicans are seen as having their act together in this coming session, that will be because McIntosh is helping with the strategy (since legislators begged him to enter the race). He is much better at retail politics that Stephen Goldsmith. He approaches politics like a chess master, each move strategically dove-tailed into

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HPR's first-ever 1999 50 Most Influential List

1.) U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar
2.) Gov. Frank O'Bannon
3.) U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh
4.) State Sen. Larry Borst
5.) Chairman Joe Andrew
6.) Dan Quayle
7.) Mel & Herb Simon
8.) Steve Hilbert
9.) Speaker John Gregg
10.) Marty Morris
11.) U.S. Rep. David McIntosh
12.) U.S. Rep. Tim Roemer
13.) U.S. Rep. Ed Pease
14.) State Rep. B. Patrick Bauer
15.) Mitch Daniels
16.) GOP State Chair Mike McDaniel
17.) Pat Kiely
18.) Judy O'Bannon
19.) Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan
20.) U.S. Rep. Mark Souder
21.) Chair Robin Winston
22.) Prosecutor Scott Newman
23.) Ken Zeller
24.) U.S. Rep. Julia Carson
25.) U.S Rep. Steve Buyer
26.) State Sen. Bob Garton
27.) Tom New
28.) State Rep. Paul Mannweiller
29.) Secretary of State Sue Anne Gilroy
30.) Tom Sugar
31.) U.S. Rep. Dan Burton
32.) David Gogol
33.) Bernie Toon
34.) Stephen Stiglich
35.) Steve Shine
36.) Butch Morgan
37.) Mayor Stephen Goldsmith
38.) Mayor Paul Helmke
39.) Michael K. Phillips
40.) Gordon Durnil
41.) Mayor John Fernandez
42.) AG Jeff Modisett
43.) Lee Hamilton
44.) Bart Peterson
45.) Supt. Suellen Reed
46.) Nancy Pappas
47.) Dick Freeland
48.) Teresa & Mark Lubbers
49.) Ed & Ann DeLaney
50.) Jeff Smulyan

Honorable Mention:
State Sen. Vi Simpson
Sheriff Jack Cottey
Rex Early
Peter Rusthoven
John Hammond
State Rep. Jeff Espich
Eric Miller
Karl Berron
Mike Smith
Jim Purucker
State Rep. Peggy Welch

the last. If O'Bannon's cornerstone strategy is to portray McIntosh as an extremist, then Indiana Democrats may be in for a rude surprise next November.

5. State Sen. Larry Borst: The ol' dog doctor may hold the key to the governor's race. Does he go along with O'Bannon's need for a reassessment delay? If he does, he helps the governor get off the hook on a tax dilemma that could hurt him with his Lake County base. If he resists, he could set up McIntosh and Indiana Republicans as keeper of Pandora's Box. The Senate Finance Chair will end his legendary career just the way he likes it - right in the thick of crucial events.

6. Democratic Chairman Robin Winston: He reluctantly took over the party in '99 and had Joe Andrew's big shoes to fill. By year's end, he was 570 votes away (the margin of Rick Borries loss in Evansville) from sweeping the state's four largest cities. Winston directed hundreds of thousands of dollars, top-flight technology and a half million phone calls into the Fort Wayne, Evansville and Indianapolis mayoral races and ended up 3 out of 4. He perfected a city-base power strategy that even Gordon St. Angelo would have to admire.

7. Chairman Joe Andrew -The man from Poe's ease with the media will make him a formidable obstacle for the GOP presidential candidate this year. The telegenic, articulate Andrew has proven to be a reliable source for a snappy quote. He's already led at least one truth-squad attack on Bush. Andrew may remain a force in Indiana politics. One of his first moves upon assuming the national Democratic chairmanship was to declare his intention to help the Democrats capture CD 8 and send incumbent Republican John Hostettler into retirement. Andrew is bringing not only his media savvy but also

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oaths of office.

INDIANAPOLIS: Peterson stressed bipartisanship and faith in the city's controversial transportation system. Following his inaugural speech at Shortridge MS, Peterson took an IndyGo bus to a reception at the City-County Building. Peterson reaffirmed his campaign pledge to take aim at illegal drugs in Indiana's capital city. Peterson hosts an inauguarl ball Thursday night at the Indiana Roof.

EVANSVILLE: Indiana Chief Justice Randall Shepard swore in Russell Lloyd Jr., saying, "We like your vision. Won't you take us there?" (Susan Taylor, Courier & Press, courierpress.com). In his speech, Lloyd said, "In the coming four years, I expect the Lloyd administration to be known for the basic principles which I have shared with my transition team and won this election." Earlier in the week, Lloyd met with members of the Evansville City Council for dinner.

FORT WAYNE: Democrat Graham Richard celebrated his 53rd birthday by being sworn in Saturday. Said Richard, "It's not just all symbolism or celebratory. It really is a little bit of human magic, human desire, for the world to be better," (David DeCamp, Fort Wayne

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Journal Gazette).

INDIANA CELEBRATES Y2K: There were a lot of sheepish people when the vaunted Y2K rolled around and nothing much happened. The Indiana State Emergency Management Agency kept in touch with all 92 counties every two hours and actually sent personnel home early on Sunday.

GARY HOMICIDE RATE FALLS: The infamous Murder City USA recorded 75 homicides in 1999, down from 132 during its record year of 1995. The Associated Press reported that homicide rates were falling across America due to the aging Baby Boom generati n and a rejection of crack cocaine by younger people.

2ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Melina Fox, the CD's Democratic vice chair, has decided not to enter the race and has thrown her support to Robert Rock Jr. of Anderson. Fox believes Rock has the full support of the Anderson and Madison County Democratic organizations and that she can pull him support from the district's five southernmost counties. Rock declared his candidacy on Tuesday.

NATIONAL POLITICS: Former Sen. Bill Bradley out-raised Vice President Al Gore $6.1 million to $3 mil-

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his technological skill in building voter lists to Democratic headquarters.

8. Speaker John Gregg: The speaker will always command a top position on this list (or he wouldn't be speaker). Gregg has been instrumental in building up the 53-47 Democratic House majority and he is poised to defend not only that, but the governor, not only from Republicans but members in his own caucus who don't realize who butters their bread.

9. Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson: The first Democratic mayor of Unigov now commands the state's largest media market reaching almost half the state. He has brought in key members of the Bayh/O'Bannon gubernatorial teams and will charge them with an activist agenda. He is palatable to the business community and has a Republican council which likely won't know when to get with the program.

10. U.S. Rep. Tim Roemer: If Democrats wrest control of the House from the GOP, Roemer will be in a prime position to make things happen. As one of the leaders of the centrist New Democrats, Roemer is an influential voice among moderates - the group that will provide the swing votes on many issues. He is usually at the forefront of the fiscally conservative House members when it comes to budgetary and social issues. His Ed Flex legislation, which would give communities greater control over education spending, is a model for federal education policy that is praised by Republicans and Democrats alike. He emerged as a leading voice among the New Democrats during the summer debate over tax cuts. Watch for Roemer to become a barometer during the China normal trade status debate. If it's a close vote, Roemer could get a lot of attention from the media-and the White House.

11. U.S. Rep. Mark Souder: The Fort Wayne Republican possesses an extraordinarily nuanced political mind. He can count votes in the House and accurately predict the outcomes of races around Indiana. He can go into great detail explaining what will happen in Congress and why. He's not afraid to say exactly what he thinks - on the record - and that can tend to limit his effectiveness. But it does give him a refreshing aura. He's a true conservative believer, but he doesn't run the highly charged right-wing issues, such as abortion, into the ground. In a House where the GOP holds only a five-vote majority, Souder is becoming increasingly influential as a voice for about three dozen. They can provide the margin on many votes. Souder was recognized this year as one of the top 50 members of Congress by *Congressional Quarterly*.

12. U.S. Rep. Ed Pease: He is the Indiana delegation's real comer. Pease continues to be quietly impressive. He doesn't show up in the media nearly as much
as McIntosh and Souder because he tends to be more measured in his statements. But he is consistently thoughtful and articulate. He never launches partisan diatribes. If you want to get a feel for where his district stands on an issue, he'll tell you without couching it in spin. If you had listened carefully to Pease, you would have known in August that the GOP $792 billion tax-cut plan wasn't generating support at the grass-roots level. If you had listened closely to Pease, you would have known that the impeachment process would end up pretty much where it did. Pease has the potential to be a House leader - and a statesman. He's a House version of Lugar. What's more, he knows how to bring home money for roads.

13. Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan: Key Democrats describe Kernan as "the muscle behind the administration." He has quietly moved into a position of real power behind the governor. Need to move O'Bannon on an idea? There is no one better. No one. Kernan '04 Governor.

14. State Rep. B. Patrick Bauer: Does Pat agree with the bill? He'd better

if you want it to pass the House. Gov. O'Bannon learned that on full-day kindergarten last year.

15. State Rep. Jeff Espich: Our most serious omission from the inaugural '99 list. Espich is the GOP's most knowledgeable and articulate point man on the budget. He is studious and damned partisan - a Republican attack dog in an era when they really need some teeth in their strategy.

16. Fort Wayne Mayor Graham Richard: This Democrat has the reins of the state's second largest city and media market. He won a tough race without bloodying himself up. His experience in the Indiana Senate and on a state ticket makes him potentially a statewide player.

17. Evansville Mayor Russell Lloyd Jr.: This Republican is a political legacy, assuming the office that his father once held for two terms. Lloyd is mild-mannered and articulate and will command center stage in the state's third largest media market.

18. Marty Morris: As Lugar's chief of staff, Morris remains off the media radar but wields fundraising and political muscle. His position likely has been strengthened after the GOP lost the mayor's offices in Indianapolis and Fort Wayne. While the state party is floundering, Morris continues to keep the Lugar political machine running. Although David Johnson is a credible candidate for the Democrats against Lugar in 2000, no one is giving him a chance. A large chunk of the credit for that should go to Morris. It will be interesting to see whether Morris can make Lugar's coattails as strong in 2000 as they were in 1994 for State House candidates.

19. Republican Chairman Mike McDaniel: The last time we saw McDaniel, it was at the Bulen Symposium and he had an old Gerry Ford-style leather football helmet he was dropping off. McDaniel has taken a lot of lumps from HPR this past year and from a lot of victory-starved Republicans from throughout the state. Two things stand out: the loyalty he commands from his state committee and the bad luck he's had since he became chairman in 1995. Having said that, numerous party regulars tell us the lists have slipped. And few took issue with us when we pointed out how lean the GOP bench is after Lugar and McIntosh. As we said last year, McDaniel really needs a victory. Chairs are like baseball managers - you can have all the wisdom and talent, but at some point you have to start winning

20. Judy O'Bannon: Don't think for a minute that if things get tough for the governor next fall the First Lady won't come out in some illuminating display. She has become Indiana's goodwill ambassador with an excellent speaking style, generating nothing but good news. And she has the ear of the governor almost every night.

21. Mitch Daniels: Want something done in the Republican world? Daniels is the go-to guy.

22. State Sen. Teresa Lubbers: In late 1999 HPR wrote about how weak the Republican bench of potential statewide candidates is. Here in their midst is a prototype for the future - a no-nonsense woman who has championed education, comes from Indianapolis (which the GOP lost in 1996), and deserves to move up. We can easily picture her on the ticket later this year.

23. Jeff Smulyan: Gives the Democrats money, gives John Gregg the microphone of Mike Pence, hosts the inaugural bash for Bayh, and opens a new castle on the Circle. And Emmis stock is hot, hot, hot (are you listening, Steve Hilbert?) Not a bad year for this king of the media in Indiana.

24. U.S. Rep. Baron Hill: During his first year in Congress, he received mostly accolades for his performance. He has displayed a workmanlike approach to issues and has established a signature-fiscal conservatism. He has joined the Blue Dog Democrats, which will be an influential group if Democrats take over the

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lion during the final quarter of 1999 (Washington Post, Washingtonpost.com)

40,000 KIDS GET INSURANCE: Indiana officially expanded health care coverage for 40,000 children from low to moderate income families. The expansion of the program covers kids in families up to twice the federal poverty level - $25,056 a year for a family of four. "We've expanded Hoosier Healthwise to help working families," said Gov. Frank O'Bannon.

COTTEY WON'T SEEK ANOTHER OFFICE: Mari n County Sheriff Jack Cottey told NUVO Newsweekly writers that his political career will end in three years when his sheriff term is up (www.nuvo.net). "I am not going to seek another office," he said. Cottey has been widely mentioned as a potential successor to embattled Marion County GOP Chairman John Sweezy.

HILLARY RUNS TO AVOID JAIL: U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer told the Mike Pence Show last Thursday that First Lady Hillary Clinton is running for the U.S. Senate in New York in order to stay out of jail (Joe Follick, Thomson Indiana). "Hillary Clinton was facing a pending criminal referral - an indictment from the office of the independent counsel.

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They knew that," Buyer said of the First Lady's legal defense team. "The best way they could protect Hillary Clinton was to pull her into the political arena."

LUGAR RAISES $2 MILLION: The Friends of Dick Lugar Committee reported $2,037,960 cash on hand at the Dec. 31, 1999, FEC deadline.

HEFFLEY TO CHALLENGE SEN. PAT MILLER: Former State Rep. Irene Heffley announced her exploratory committee to challenge State Sen. Pat Miller in SD32 in the May Republican primary. "No politician should overstay their welcome," Heffley said.

SAMUEL VISITS 2,000TH HOME: Tony Samuel, a 10th CD Republican candidate, announced he visited his 2,000th home on Jan. 1 in his bid to unseat U.S. Rep. Julia Carson.

NO BAC BILL: State Sen. Thomas Wyss, R-Fort Wayne, announced he would not file a bill to lower the blood alcohol content for which a driver would be considered drunk.

EVANSVILLE CREDIT RATING RISES: The City of Evansville's credit rating was increased from A+ to AA- by Standard & Poor, according to outgoing controller Rebecca Dixon. She announced the increase on

House. His efforts to promote debt reduction landed him on the front page of the New York Times in August. He convinced the Times that most people in his conservative-leaning district favored debt reduction over tax cuts. So far, he has proven to be a good fund-raiser. His congressional colleagues helped him by appointing him to the Agriculture and Veterans Affairs committees. He should be able to generate good press in the district by virtue of those postings. Potential danger for him at home, however, lurks in his votes on flag burning and tax cutting and he will have a dogfight on his hands against Kevin Shaw Kellems in a race next November that will command national attention.

25. Tom Sugar: As Bayh's chief of staff, he's in a position to shape Bayh's Senate career. He is among those who has Bayh's ear during crucial policy and political debates. Like Lugar's Morris, he stays off the media radar. But he's much in demand by those who want to get to Bayh.

26. Mel & Herb Simon: These Democratic financiers have been instrumental on the money front for the party. When Mike McDaniel talks of a lack of money, we think of the Simons. Now, if they could only deliver an NBA title.

27. Stephen Goldsmith: Texas Gov. George W. Bush says of the ex-mayor of Indianapolis, "He's what we call *on the inside*." After a riotous political career in Indiana, Goldsmith rebounds immediately to the national scene as Bush's top domestic adviser and poised for a cabinet (or chief of staff) job in the West Wing. He'll be working for Baker & Daniels this year before he ascends (should Bush win). If he does ascend, will he remember Indiana?

28. U.S. Rep. Dan Burton: He's slowly beginning to make more sense in his pursuit of Clinton scandals. If he can keep his tongue under control, he might make some progress yet. He was successful in getting John Huang to testify about 1996 campaign finance irregularities. Perhaps more on that issue will trickle out in 2000 and hurt Vice President Al Gore's campaign. On the Waco incident, he seems to be waiting to get his ducks in a row before moving forward. Like an overmatched football team in a big game, he keeps hanging in. And the longer he stays within striking distance, the more likely it is that he might finally win.

29. U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer: The Monticello Republican made a splash as one of the House's impeachment prosecutors. His earnest and enthusiastic presentations deserved better and more respectful press coverage than they received. But he tends to become surly and mangle syntax in his public discourse - an Achilles heel that may eventually hurt him. He is carving a niche for himself in military affairs. No one in Congress has more doggedly pursued the Gulf War syndrome issue nor has been more steadfast in support of strengthening the armed forces budget and military culture.

30. State Sen. Bob Garton: As he heads into what may be his final term, Garton has held a tenacious grip on power despite a restless middle-tier of GOP senators. Garton maintains a seat at the table on important legislation.

31. Pat Kiely: The former Ways and Means Committee chairman heads the Indiana Manufacturers Association and is extremely influential in the Statehouse. When the IMA studies an issue, it's apt to get the facts right.

32. Ken Zeller: He leads the Indiana AFL-CIO and will be instrumental in directing the flow of Big Labor money into the three competitive congressional races and in defense of the Democrats' hold on the Indiana House.

33. U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky: Northwest Indiana's congressman has made a name for himself by sticking to his knitting in The Region. He played a central role in pushing the steel quota bill through the House, overcoming a strong White House campaign against the legis-

lation. Visclosky knows his constituency and how to deliver for it. No one is more earnest in keeping his finger on the pulse of the folks back home. For those who are leery of the new global economy, Visclosky is an earnest spokesman. His political position is virtually untouchable.

34. U.S. Rep. Julia Carson: She seemingly has a lock on the10th CD with her strong organization. That organization was instrumental in helping Bart Peterson break the GOP lock on Unigov. In Congress, her record isn't deep or wide. She pushed through the Congressional Medal of Honor for Rosa Parks, and she coauthored a bill with Sen. Lugar on children's health. But her own health may be limiting her vigor. Still, she remains in a strong position and connects with her constituency. She'll probably be around as long as she wants to be.

35. David Gogol: He runs Sagamore Associates, the premier lobbying firm in D.C. for Hoosier interests. He has strengthened the Sagamore staff by adding Stephen Goldsmith. Not only will Sagamore probably gain more municipal clients, it also will be in a prime position to become a darling firm of the Bush administration - if the Texas governor makes it to the White House and appoints Goldsmith to a Cabinet or other high-ranking position.

36. Margaret Burlingame: She's the governor's chief of staff and a key gatekeeper.

37. John R. Price: He is a tenacious campaigner who expertly uses earned media to make up for the dollars he lacks. HPR figured him out in February 1998 and he made a believer out of many others when he finished second to Paul Helmke in the Senate primary - losing by 1 percent. Now he's taking on McIntosh in the GOP gubernatorial primary and could well carve a niche for himself either as LG or AG nominee.

38. State Rep. Paul Mannweiler: What Mannweiler does in the Indiana House this upcoming session could help pave the way for a McIntosh governorship.

39. East Chicago Mayor Bob Pastrick: Here's a living legend who commands one of the last true political machines in the Midwest. He fended off Lake County Chairman Stephen Stiglich in the primary to notch his 8th term.His son sits on the Democratic National Committee. They ought to make a movie about this guy.

40. Tom New: He will run Gov. O'Bannon's re-election campaign. O'Bannon runs the party and New runs the governor's political operations.

41. Lee Hamilton: As head of the Wilson Center, a policy organization in D.C., Hamilton is becoming an elder statesman and sage. He's still in demand by the media when they seek a thoughtful, nuanced analysis of foreign policy issues. He may be able to help Baron Hill one more time at a crucial moment during his first re-election campaign.

42. Chris Jones: As deputy chief of staff for McIntosh, Jones has expanded his realm beyond press to include policy and political strategy in the McIntosh office. He is as authoritative a press secretary as can be found. When you talk to Jones, you are sure he knows every position his boss is taking-or going to take-and why, has a handle on campaign strategy, and firmly controls access to his boss. He also responds quickly and professionally to reporters, which helps keep his boss in the national media. Should McIntosh beat O'Bannon, Jones will probably be offered a high-ranking position in the administration.

43. Butch Morgan: The St. Joseph County Democratic and 3rd CD chairman is the go-to guy in Northern Indiana.

44. Bloomington Mayor John Fernandez: He was so popular after one term that the Republicans didn't even run a candidate against him. He will be a real comer in the Democratic Party and a possible attorney general candidate.

45. Auditor Connie Nass: She has

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her last day in office. "I cannot think of a better way to end the year," said outgoing Mayor Frank McDonald.

NEW ASSEMBLY HALL? Indiana University Athletic Director Clarence Doninger has raised the possibility of replacing Assembly Hall. "This facility has been very good for our program, but it has some glaring deficiencies," said Doninger (Evansville Courier & Press). "As we look into the next century, we need to look at another facility." Doninger would like to have a 20,000 to 22,000 seat stadium built strictly for basketball. "It was constructed like a football stadium," Doninger said of the current AH. "The pitch of the stadium is too steep and the balcony seats are just no good. Don't take it from me. Take it from everybody who writes letters to me."

ASSASSINATION PLOTS: Muncie area judges and top law enforcement officials were targets for assassination attempts from a group called the Delaware County Army of God. The threats were made to county judges, Sheriff Steve Aul, Prosecutor Richard Reed and Muncie Police Chief Joe Winkle. Reed said he was contacted by anti-terrorism agents from the Indianapolis FBI office last week (Muncie Star Press). At the time, the FBI told local officials they

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believed the threats were serious.

HELMKE VISITS COUNCIL: Outgoing Fort Wayne Mayor Paul Helmke paid a visit to the City Council during his last week in office. "I don't come down here every week," said Helmke, who will join the Barnes & Thornburg law offices. Helmke's last visit before the council came in 1992. "I've advised mayors around the state, you don't have to come to council." Helmke received a standing ovation (Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). Helmke noted that the city is on pace for a 13-percent crime decrease from 1998 and a 25-year low, based on federal statistics.

REED PUSHES DATE CHANGE: Supt. of Public Instruction Suellen Reed will push the need to change the date on which kids can attend kindergarten. Reed wants to change the date from the current Sept. 1 to June 1. It is estimated it would cost nearly $50 million when implemented.

LUGAR HONORED BY KAZAKHSTAN: President Nursultan Nazarbayev honored U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar for his "extraordinary contribution to world peace and nuclear disarmament." ❖

been an aggressive critic of Gov. O'Bannon on issues like Muscatatuck and the use (or misuse) of state dollars. She's on most LG short lists and would offer geographical balance for McIntosh.

46. Steve Hilbert: His stock didn't fare as well as Smulyan's. But he is divesting himself of gambling interests which could make him more of a money player on the Indiana political scene. He's got a theatre named after him on the Circle and a new NBA arena named after his company. We just wish a sequined-gowned Tommie Sue had popped out of a cake at mid-court on opening night.

47. South Bend Mayor Steve Leucke: He emerged from Kernan's shadow to win big last fall, and commands the Northern Indiana media market.

48. Supt. of Public Instruction Suellen Reed: With a significant percentage of the class of 2000 poised to flunk out, Reed is going to command a great deal of attention. Whether that comes in the form of blame or a "stay the course" call remains to be seen. She could face a serious convention challenge. No matter what happens, education is going to be a top issue in 2000 and Reed stands to be in the center of the debate.

49. Budget Director Betty Cockrum: She has the ear of many people and presides over a $20 billion budget. When she calls, you know it's important.

50. Scott King: Gary mayor survives to win a second term, defeats a recalcitrant city council while displaying the better face of the Stiglich faction in Lake County. But his biggest accolades for what may be the toughest political job in Indiana is the plummeting homicide rate. It's much better to call Gary the "Steel City" that "Murder City, USA." ❖

Honorable Mentions:

(alphabetically listed)

Karl Berron: The Realtors top guy will be heard on property taxes.

Norm Cox: WRTV's Statehouse reporter is a seasoned voice.

Dick Freeland: Bombed with Joe Squadrito in Fort Wayne but is the big GOP money guy.

John Hammond: A seasoned lobbyist who delivers.

Al Hubbard: Making points for McIntosh with his weekly faxes and a confidant of GWBush.

David Johnson: His challenge against Dick Lugar pits two Rhodes Scholars in one race. We can't wait to hear them debate.

Kevin Shaw Kellems: If he presses Baron Hill, he'll be in the national limelight in the battle for control of Congress.

Bob Knight: Funny what a 10-1 start will do for restoring your clout.

Jeff Modisett: We had you at No. 23 until you resigned to go surfin'.

State Rep. Win Moses: He's become a quiet force in the House.

Mike Pence: Candidate-turned-broadcaster-turned-candidate hopes third time is a charm in the 2nd CD.

Jim Purucker: The survivor.

Scott Newman: His prosecution of Jim Purucker and Sam Turpin fell flat, so he falls off the main list.

Chris Sautter: Hoosier-bred Democratic consultant in Washington knows the state from East Chicago to Evansville.

Steve Shine: The Allen County GOP lost all three mayoral races. Time for a rebound.

Stephen Stiglich: Lake County Democratic chairman loses to arch-enemy Bob Pastrick. When a powerful chairman says, "Consider it done," he has to deliver.

State Sen. Becky Skillman: Another potential GOP running mate.

George Van Til: In attempting to understand the Lake County clout picture (a place where a lot of people can stop things from happening, but few can make them happen), the county surveyor's name kept coming up as a voice of sensibility.

Harrison J. Ullmann: NUVO's editor emeritus is the sage of Indiana.❖