Simpson emerges; changes Dem vacuum

Hill may have waited too long

By BRIAN A. HOWEY in Indianapolis

By early this week, the inactivity after the big names passed on the Democratic 2004 gubernatorial race was nothing less than surreal.

It was almost as if Gov. Frank O’Bannon had placed a pox on his office, and marquee Democrats ranging from U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh, Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan, former U.S. Rep. Tim Roemer, and, finally, former House Speaker John Gregg were bailing.

Long-time Democratic operative Mike Harmless was amazed. He recalled the time he went to see former Terre Haute Mayor Pete Chalos, and said he was “thinking” about running for Congress. Chalos almost dismissed him then and there, saying, “Don’t waste my time.”

“Let me rephrase that,” Harmless countered. “I am going to run for Congress and I’m seeking your help.”

As Harmless surveyed the littered Democratic gubernatorial dustbin, he said, “Someone is just going to have to step up and say, ‘I’m running.’”

That first act of boldness occurred this morning, when a hoarse State Sen. Vi Simpson, riding a wave of indignation over comments made by IUPUI pollster Brian Vargus that Indiana isn’t ready for a woman governor, said she is forming an exploratory committee.

“I do so not to satisfy personal ambition, nor am I interested in making history, I am taking this step today because I owe Indiana more than it will ever owe me,” Simpson said to several hundred supporters outside the governor’s office, including the entire Senate Democratic caucus in an electrifying speech. “Today, Indiana needs strong leadership. I put my record of fiscal responsibility against any-
SEN. FORD SEEKS LG NOMINATION: State Sen. David Ford, R-Hartford City, has officially launched a campaign for lieutenant governor in 2004. He has a website dedicated to the campaign at http://www.davidford2004.com. Ford joins former national Republican committee-woman Jean Ann Harcourt as candidates seeking the job. “I am convinced that Indiana will elect a Republican governor in 2004,” Ford said on his website. “I am fortunate to have had an opportunity to get to know each of the current Republican candidates. We will have a stronger ticket if there is also support and confidence in the governor’s running mate. Hoosiers should have the opportunity to get to know both members of the GOP team well before the 2004 primary election and convention. I have given the idea of seeking the office of lieutenant governor a lot of thought and prayer. Many Hoosiers would consider it a privilege to serve with a Republican administration, and many could serve well. I will not suggest that I am the only choice for the office of lieutenant governor, but I believe, for the reasons set forth below, that I am uniquely qualified.”

REED PRESSES FOR EDU-
of a schmoozer with a high degree of retail appeal, whereas firebrands and ideologues (which Hill is not) may be better suited for Congress.

For the record, Hill thrives at retail politics, jogging across the state in 1990 when he ran against U.S. Sen. Dan Coats, as well as in his three CD races.

Clearing the field?

The hope of Manous, Bayh and others was to “clear the field” in order to preserve resources while taking on OMB Director Mitch Daniels, Ambassador to Germany Dan Coats (who is vividly signalling to Hoosier friends his interest in a gubernatorial run), or State Sen. Murray Clark or McIntosh.

But as Andrew stated, Bayh may have been the only one strong enough to do it. Hill might have had a narrow window of opportunity -- Monday and Tuesday -- to enter and come across strong enough to keep others out. But that opportunity probably is past. And anyone who watched Simpson kick off her candidacy could feel real energy.

Asked about Manous’ apparent support of Hill, Simpson said, “I don’t think the party chairman chooses the candidate” before the atrium exploded in applause. “I will pursue them the same way I will voters. I’m the candidate with the most experience, the candidate with the best ideas, the highest level of energy, I’ll work the hardest and I hope to make that case.”

Gender outrage

Following Dr. Vargus’ comments to Shannon Lohrmann of Gannett News Service, my newspaper column of Dec. 26 (which ran in about two dozen newspaper and the Indianapolis Eye) questioned the notion that Indiana couldn’t elect a woman governor. The column said, “If this is the case, that women aren’t capable of being governor, then maybe we ought to dust off the idiotic vestiges of the Jim Crow era and start marking drinking fountains with ‘men only’ and ‘women only’ signs. Maybe we ought to make women go to the back of the bus. Or maybe, just maybe, opinion makers from across the state, and, more importantly, the political parties, ought to be doing some soul searching as to why it’s deemed acceptable and something that induces so little outrage as to rule out half our population.”

Simpson told HPR a week later, “There are many conversations going on throughout the state. It is not an exaggeration to say that I have heard from women (and men) from north and south who are outraged by the obvious oversight and who are encouraging me to take the leap.

“Is it possible that we have moved beyond? There are obstacles -- put in place by the party, by legislative leadership and by the press -- very few can ‘imagine’ a female chief exec,” Simpson asked. “Most are surprised to know that 19 women have served as governor of their respective states, Arizona and Kansas have had two. Ten female candidates ran this year, and six women are currently serving as governor. Even Kentucky had a woman, and it did not disintegrate nor did it surrender to Indiana.”

Asked by the Star’s Mary Beth Schneider about whether Indiana is ready for a woman governor, Simpson replied, “Amazingly, I haven’t heard that very much. In fact, I’ve heard a lot of people say it’s time. I think Indiana is ready for the very best candidate and the very strongest leader we can put forward. And I believe that I’m that person.”

Bayh noted that Kentucky elected a female governor and Gregg said of Simpson, “Vi, on paper, is very, very credible. I think we’re at a point where a woman could run for governor in either party.”

As for his own decision not to run, Gregg told HPR, "It's true, I just wanted to spend more time with my family. Nothing's changed other than Joe Kernan's seismic announcement.”

continued on page 4
Bayh, Quayle (and Hillary Clinton)

By BRIAN A. HOWEY
Indianapolis Eye

Two of Indiana’s most successful modern politicians, Evan Bayh and Dan Quayle, had to consider a run for governor in the context of their presidential aspirations.

Both turned it down.

U.S. Sen. Bayh announced his decision last weekend, saying, “I can best serve the people of the State of Indiana by devoting my undivided energy to the job they hired me to do – United States senator. It’s a full-time job and with the magnitude of issues like national security, affordable health care and the economy, I will devote my undivided attention to the job they hired me to do.”

Former Vice President Quayle faced the same dilemma before the 1996 race. He had served one term in the White House before he and President George H.W. Bush were defeated by Bill Clinton in 1992. Many Hoosier Republicans urged Quayle to return to politics as Indiana governor.

They believed that a successful term as governor would erase some of the miscues that earned Quayle ridicule by the media and Democrats during the 1988 presidential campaign, and that being governor of a state offers more chances of success in getting to the White House.

Quayle, after four years of world travels and East Room state dinners, had trouble seeing himself giving Lincoln Day dinner speeches at Nelson’s Golden Glo Port-a-Pit Hall in Wakarusa, or squabbling with Sen. Bob Garton and Rep. B. Patrick Bauer over Hoosier biennial budgets. He passed, and was an early casualty in the 2000 presidential race to George W. Bush. Many felt that Quayle made a huge political miscalculation in doing so.

The calculation that Evan Bayh just made seems at first pass to be the right one. There’s a central figure in both the Quayle and Bayh dilemmas, and her name is Hillary Clinton.

She helped her husband defeat Bush-Quayle in 1992. Now, a decade later, U.S. Sen. Hillary Clinton occupies one of the most unique catbird seats in American political history. A recent CNN-Gallup Poll rated Sen. Clinton as the most popular female in America. And while the 2004 Democratic presidential nomination is truly up for grabs, many people believe that in 2008 it’s virtually certain that Sen. Clinton will be the Democratic nominee.

This kind of prognostication is fraught with danger. As Bayh pointed out, even two years in American politics is an eternity, let alone six. While the current President Bush remains highly popular (consistently in the 60th percentile), he faces an array of dangers from a recalcitrant Saddam Hussein who may try to poison our troops; to North Korean nukes; to a faltering economy; to renegade Republicans who now control Congress.

While Hoosiers take Bayh at his word that serving in the U.S. Senate during a time of war and economic duress is his best course, here’s some behind-the-frontal-lobe speculation that probably coursed through the mind of Indiana’s junior senator.

One, running for Indiana governor takes Evan Bayh back into something he’s already done, when he could stay in the Senate and deal with the hot topics of national security, prescription drug costs, and the economy. On national security, if he plays his cards right, he can take credit for his work on the Senate Intelligence Committee and blame President Bush for the miscues.

Republican commentator Rex Early put the whole third Bayh governor term aspect in this context: “Could you imagine coming back and having to deal with Bob Garton and Pat Bauer. I’d rather have syphilis.”

Second, if Bayh ran for governor it would virtually lock him out of a potential
vice presidential nomination in 2004. The chances of an Eastern Seaboard presidential nominee (i.e. John Kerry, his mentor Joe Lieberman, John Edwards, Howard Dean) needing a relatively young, handsome Midwestern senator as a running mate are fairly high.

**Should Bayh** get the vice presidential nod in 2004, even if the ticket lost to Bush, he’d be automatically positioned to show even as he faced the brunt of a Hillary for President juggernaut four years later. And if Clinton-style history were to strike twice (beating the Bush), he’s a heart-beat away.

Bayh said the vice presidential element “really didn’t enter into it and I’ll tell you why: I suppose it’s a possibility, but it’s so hypothetical.”

Which is a good point. Being the master politician that he is (the only election loss Bayh was associated with was his father’s 1980 defeat by Dan Quayle), Evan Bayh almost certainly worked through all the hypotheticals. Including these.

**He will, with the charm** of the boy next door, beg off, say he’s flattered, but he’s doing the right thing in doing the job he was hired to do. But in reality, a political figure such as Evan Bayh worked through all the hypotheticals and they included the keywords “veep,” “2004” and “Hillary.”

**Indiana 2004 Racing Form**

**U.S. Senate:** Republican: Marvin Scott. Democratic: U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh. 1992

**Results:** Coats (R) 1,267,972, Hogsett (D) 900,148. 1998 Results: Bayh (D) 1,012,244, Helmke (R) 552,732. 2004 Forecast: Marvin Scott, who lost a 53-47 percent race to U.S. Rep. Andy Jacobs in 1994, and a 59-40 percent race to U.S. Rep. Julia Carson in 2000, has entered the race. In 1994, Scott raised $69,852 (compared to $27,000 for Jacobs), and in 2000 he raised $82,504 (compared to $340,000 for Carson). In contrast, Bayh raised $3.9 million in 1998 compared to Paul Helmke’s $642,784. Dan Coats out-raised Joe Hogsett $3.8 million to $1.5 million in 1992. The point of all the money? The incumbent Hoosier senator will always maintain a commanding monetary position. Bayh is about as solid as one can get when it comes to victory prognostication. We doubt there will be another serious Republican candidate. But Scott could serve a vital function for the Indiana Republicans, who have been repeatedly stung by a variety of racial insensitivities, particularly in Marion County, over the past five years. Scott will help put a new face on the Republicans if they decide to back him and help him raise more than a pitance of money. Indiana Republican Chairman Jim Kittle has been pushing Mbari, the party’s African-American wing, and called for U.S. Sen. Trent Lott to resign his Senate Majority Leader post last month. Scott, a Butler University professor, is intense and a bit iconoclastic. He has not been seriously funded in either of his two congressional races. As for Bayh, the biggest question here is whether he will be chosen for the Democratic national ticket in 2004. As for what would happen if he was (and he won) ... well, that’s just too hypothetical.

**Governor 2004:** Republican: Ambassador Dan Coats, David McIntosh, Sen. Murray Clark, Sen. Luke Kenley, OMB Director Mitch Daniels, Eric Miller, Petersburg Mayor Randy Harris. Democratic: Joe Andrew, U.S. Rep. Baron Hill, State Sen. Vi Simpson. 1996 Results: O’Bannon (D) 1,075,342, Goldsmith (R) 997,505, Dillon (L) 35,261. 2000 Results: O’Bannon (D) 1,230,345, McIntosh (R) 906,492, Hornung (L) 38,686. 2004 Forecast: Coats is telling friends and supporters that he would really, really like to return to Indiana and run for governor. We still have a hard time seeing a Daniels-Coats primary showdown, though no one has ruled it out. Daniels, who will speak at the Boone and Hamilton county Lincoln Day dinners in early February, is the hottest GOP property now, but as we head into the next two months with war and potential “spectacular” domestic terror attacks looming along with an uncertain economy, it’s possible the Daniels glow could diminish. **Status: TOSSUP.**

**Horse Race**

**I-69 DECISION COMING**

**BEFORE JAN. 14:** Gov. Frank O’Bannon is reviewing a recommendation from state highway officials on the route for the Interstate 69 extension through southwestern Indiana and could make an announcement soon (Associated Press). The Indiana Department of Transportation provided O’Bannon with the recommendation, along with other alternatives, Mary Dieter, the governor’s spokeswoman, said yesterday. O’Bannon said he hopes to make an announcement before his annual State of the State address to the legislature Jan. 14.

**TERRE HAUTE MAYOR**

**SAYS INDOT IGNORING I-69**

**DATA:** Critics have accused Indiana Department of Transportation officials of forwarding their recommen-
Congress, Pence said, "The first priority of ing a speech on the House Anderson," Pence said dur- manufacturing jobs inplete elimination of over 400 people out of work. "I was shocked and dismayed yes- Anderson announced it was closing plants, putting 400 people out of work. "I was shocked and dismayed yes- Anderson," Pence said dur- manufacturing jobs in Anderson," Pence said during a speech on the House floor (Muncie Star Press). The first priority of Congress, Pence said,
Graham Richard. 1995 Results: Helmke 21,909, Essex (D) 11,033, Kempf (L) 1,029. 1999 Results: Richard (D) 21,607, Buskirk (R) 21,531. 2003 Forecast: Matt Kelty, the Republican who gave State Rep. Winfield Moses a recounted race, declined to enter, saying he will support Buskirk. Now there is major GOP pressure on Olinger to leave the race and allow the party to coalesce around Buskirk. General Status: Tossup.

Indianapolis Mayor: Republican: Treasurer Greg Jordan, State Rep. Phil Hinkle, Bob Parker. Democrat: Mayor Bart Peterson. Libertarian: Open. 1995 Results: Goldsmith (R) 64,209, Jimison (D) 39,539, Dillon (L) 7,175. 1999 Results: Peterson (D) 102,870, Gilroy (R) 83,044, Hornig (L) 7,772, Gibson (OP) 2,145. 2003 Forecast: McVey announced he won’t run. Bob Parker, who challenged Sue Anne Gilroy in the 1999 GOP primary, opted in and said he will spend up to $600,000 in the primary. Parker may be the GOP’s best shot at making this interesting. Neither Jordan nor Hinkle have raised any money and will be buried in the primary. Parker is a self-made man with a major ax to grind with Peterson over tracts of industrial land the city claimed, paying Parker only a fraction of what he maintained it was worth. If the Republicans want a motivated candidate who will be hard-charging and can finance a portion of the campaign, Parker is the guy. The fact that Hinkle and Jordan haven’t even begun raising money should tell John Keeler and his Republicans everything they need to know on what route to take. General Status: LIKELY PETERSON.

New Albany Mayor: Republican: Mayor Regina Overton. Democrat: Councilman James E. Garner. 1995 Results: England 6,845, Real (R) 5,886. 1999 Results: Overton (R) 5,512, England (D) 4,205. 2003 Forecast: Garner entered the race. “I wanted to show that James Garner is serious about it,” the candidate said, when asked why he decided to announce so early in the primary season. Floyd County Democratic Chairman Warren Nash said he was “impressed” by Garner’s dash out of the primary gate, with such an early showing of party support. But he added that as many as four or five other candidates may run in the Democratic primary, although he declined to name any. General Status: TOSSUP.

Terre Haute Mayor: Republican: Bill Dunbar. Democrat: Mayor Judy Anderson, Jim Jenkins. 1999 Results: Anderson (D) 6,791, Hooper (R) 2,608, Cronk (I) 1,178 Brou (I) 1174. 2003 Forecast: Former Mayor Jenkins is signalling to supporters that he will run, but won’t confirm it publicly. Democrats George Azar and Cliff Lambert and telling their potential supporters they will get in if Jenkins doesn’t. If Jenkins runs, expect a gloves off primary. Many people believe Mayor Anderson defeated Jenkins in the 1999 primary because of the incumbents administration, not in spite of it. General Status: Leans Anderson

Brian A. Howey

The 2003 edition of HPR’s 50 Most Influential List will be featured later this month after the Democrats sort things out.

Pssst ... nominations are still being accepted.
cination lawsuits. Armey said, “We have had a problem with getting vaccinations produced in America because of the lawsuits that have been brought against the companies. In 1998, I should remind people, Teddy Kennedy passed a bill that would relieve that sort of tort pressure on the companies so that we could have a reliable vaccine supply. The tort lawyers found a loophole by way of this additive, they’ve re-assaulted it, and I put in a correction that would reinstate the original Kennedy legislation to guarantee a reliable vaccine supply. I felt my responsibility in homeland security was to address the question of a reliable vaccine supply for all of America on the best scientific arguments available.”

ROBERTSON: Well, you know, I saw a piece on CBS News that seemed to act like there was a sinister plot between Eli Lily and, you know, Mitch Daniels and you, and everybody getting these enormous payoffs. That’s not true, is it? ARMEY: Nah, it’s not true. And you know, the news, bless their hearts – I always laugh, I said, “The news media in America is staffed by young idealists and old cynics and it’s hard to tell which one is going to be least productive in producing the news.”

Jack Colwell, South Bend Tribune -
When Republicans sought after the election to find some Democrat to defect -- just one was all they needed in order to gain control of the Indiana House -- maybe they should have tried to persuade Pat Bauer to join their ranks. After all, the South Bend Democrat, who now has become speaker of the House, will preside at the worst of times in a precarious situation. Speaker Bauer takes the gavel as the legislature faces a billion-dollar hole in the budget, lingering national economic woes that continue to curtail state revenue and constituents who don’t want either tax increases or education cuts. Bauer doesn’t have a vote to spare in the House -- 51 Democrats, 49 Republicans. The Senate is solidly Republican. The governor, though a Democrat, is a lame duck with little clout in the legislature. The lieutenant governor, also a Democratic duck who’s lame, joined the limping legions in forsaking a run for governor. And the Indianapolis Star savages him the way the Iraqi press describes George Bush. Hopeless? Sounds like it. Maybe they should have asked Bauer to vote with Republicans for speaker. “Tough times make interesting times,” says Bauer.

Mike McDaniel, Indianapolis Eye -
“Don’t tell my mother I’m a lobbyist – she thinks I’m a piano player in a whore house,” read the bumper strip that used to stick on the bulletin board at the Indianapolis Press Club. To lobbyists, this tongue in cheek declaration sums up the public’s misunderstanding of the important role played by those of us who represent “special interests,” another term which carries with it evil, if not slimy, connotations. So how did the terms “lobbyist” and “special interests” become generic for “slimy” and “evil”? Throughout our history, newspapers have used the term to describe underhanded dealings between those who wanted something from government and elected officials. Even today the media often uses the terms in derogatory ways to generically paint a negative picture of these individuals and the groups they represent. In some cases, politicians use the terms in the same way because they are vague, thus allowing the public to conjure up their own negative images. This is, of course, less risky to the politician than being specific about what people they are actually talking about or what specific groups they are referring to. The media and some politicians are not likely to change their reporting or their rhetoric when it comes to lobbyists and special interests because it is convenient and it works for them. They do it because the public has bought into these almost always false and negative images. Two of my favorite special interest groups are the Hoosier State Press Association and the Citizens Action Coalition. The Hoosier State Press Association represents newspapers. The next time you read a generic reference to special interests in The Indianapolis Star or some other newspaper, remind yourself that the newspaper you are reading is represented by a special interest group.

Brian A. Howey, Indianapolis Eye -
While President Garton never officially responded to the upstart Sen. Clark, in that flurry of phone calls he made to his minions last August, the President Pro Tempore said he would be a changed man; that there would be reform; that senators wouldn’t have to get details of the President’s doings (or those of Chairman Borst) in the newspapers. Essentially, President Garton told his senators that there would be a new, improved, wiser, more inclusive Senate President Pro Tempore. And now, as the legislature reconvenes this week, we’ll get to see the new boss, Robert D. Garton. Meet the new boss….