

## Decade of INDem statewide futility

Tallian, Weinzapfel hope to change party's 2-17 record in statewide races

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – As Indiana Democrats meet over the next several days for their pandemic-altered state convention, the party appears to be wandering the desert like Moses, virtually unable to win statewide. November will be the final election of this



second decade of the 21st Century. Of the 19 statewide races of the past decade (including 2010), Indiana Democrats are just 2-17, or winning just 11%.

The gubernatorial nominee, Dr. Woody Myers, reported \$376,692 in total contributions on his April 15 pre-primary report, and a mere \$22,155 cash on hand, and no recent large donations since (compared to \$7.1 million for Gov. Eric Holcomb's reelection committee). The party con-



trols around 20% of county offices (around 10% of county commissioners), two of 11 federal seats, none of the six Statehouse constitutional offices, and has been mired in super-minority status in the General Assembly since 2014.

Arguably its most conspicuous rising star, former

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## America's race reckoning

By **KELLY HAWES**  
 CNHI News

ANDERSON – In the summer of 1966, Mike Wallace of CBS News interviewed Martin Luther King Jr. about the ongoing struggle for civil rights.

"How many summers like this do you imagine we can expect?" Wallace asked. The summer before, the Watts riots had erupted in South Central Los Angeles in response to accusations of police brutality toward the city's African-American community.

The summer of 1966 had brought the White House Conference on Civil Rights, and King was among the 15,000 people participating in the March



**"We can't act like this virus isn't continuing to spread across the state of Indiana, but we have the intensity at a managed level."**

- Gov. Eric Holcomb, announcing Wednesday the state was moving to Stage 4 of the state's five stage pandemic reopening.



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**Jack E. Howey**  
 editor emeritus  
 1926-2019



Against Fear, the largest civil rights demonstration ever in the state of Mississippi. King also led the open housing movement in Chicago.

"Well, I would say this," he told Wallace. "We don't have long. The mood of the Negro community now is one of urgency, one of saying that we aren't going to wait, that we've got to have our freedom. We've waited too long. So I would say that every summer we're going to have this kind of vigorous protest. My hope is that it will be non-violent."

Two years after that interview, King was killed by an assassin's bullet.

Now, more than five decades later, American cities are again the scene of violent protests. The death of yet another black man at the hands of police officers set off an explosion that has reverberated around the world. The anger was sparked by the death of George Floyd, but it was about

so much more than that. It was about Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown and Eric Garner and Freddie Gray and Philando Castile and so many more.

It was about the African-American father who feels the need to tell his 8-year-old son how to react in an encounter with police.

**It was about** Keisha Lance Bottoms, the African-American mayor of Atlanta and her reaction when she learned of the protests forming across her city. In an essay for The New York Times, she wrote that she knew in that moment what the parent of every other black child in America knows. She knew she could not protect her teenage son.

"Baby, please come home now!" she told him. "It's not safe for black boys to be out today."

King would be disappointed by what is happening in the United States today. He would be saddened by the riots, something he called "self-defeating and socially destructive," and his heart would be broken by how

far our nation remains from achieving that dream he spoke so eloquently about in the summer of 1963.

In that speech, King had expressed the hope that one day his four children would live in a nation where they would be judged not "by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." He had expressed hope for transforming "the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood."

Were he alive today, King would understand the frustration that



has boiled over in recent demonstrations. "I think we've got to see," he told Wallace, "that a riot is the language of the unheard."

The language of the unheard. A black person dies in a confrontation with police, and members of the community raise their voices in protest. It happens again, and the protests grow louder. It happens hundreds of times, and the anger boils over.

**Responding to** Wallace's question, King said it was up to white Americans to determine how many more summers of racial strife we could expect. More than 50 years later, that's still true. To make King's dream a reality, far more white Americans must join the fight. It's long past time. ❖

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## INDems, from page 1

South Bend mayor Pete Buttigieg, opted for the 2020 presidential race and could be destined for a cabinet post in a possible Biden administration. Another potential statewide hopeful, Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr., lost in the 1st CD primary last week. Former lieutenant governor nominee Christina Hale has raised more than \$1 million in a 5th CD showdown with State Sen. Victoria Spartz, but even if she wins, faces redistricting where she is likely to end up in a CD with U.S. Rep. Andre Carson.

Epitomizing this legacy of futility, Democratic Chairman John Zody sought the open SD40 seat in the June 2 primary, and lost to Shelli Yoder 80% to 17.6%. But long-time Democratic operative Jeff Harris told HPI that building blocks are now in place with the Emerging Leaders and Hoosier Women Forward programs now recruiting and training young people for office. "That will bear fruit down the road," Harris said.

The two Democratic statewide wins both came in 2012, when Joe Donnelly won the U.S. Senate seat after Sen. Richard Lugar was defeated in the Republican primary by Treasurer Richard Mourdock, and Glenda Ritz upset controversial Supt.



of Public Instruction Tony Bennett. Both Donnelly and Ritz lost their reelection bids in 2016 and 2018.

Of the six constitutional statewide offices, Indiana Democrats have been competitive on two fronts, governor and superintendent of public instruction, with John Gregg and Glenda Ritz polling 46% while going 1-3 in those races. The superintendent position becomes a gubernatorial appointed position in 2021.

In U.S. Senate races, the party is averaging just 45% of the vote. And the further down ballot you go, the less competitive Democrats become, with 2018 treasurer nominee John Aguilera cresting at 41.4%. Most of these Democratic nominees, including 2020 Democratic presidential phenom Pete Buttigieg in 2010, poll around 37%.

In his 2019 book, "Shortest Way Home," Mayor Buttigieg described his 2010 race against Treasurer Richard Mourdock, who the previous year had sought a U.S. Supreme Court ruling to block the sale of Chrysler as part of the auto industry bailout that began under Republican President George W. Bush and was completed by Democratic President Barack Obama. Had Mourdock prevailed, it would have eliminated thousands of Indiana jobs and millions of dollars in personal and corporate income revenues for the state.

"When I investigated who was looking to run against him from the Democratic side, the answer was no one," Buttigieg wrote. "I was surprised, I knew down-ticket races, especially for Democrats in Indiana, were thankless, difficult and hard to recruit for. But a candidate as extreme as Mourdock seemed beatable, at least if there were a favorable national atmosphere, a flawless campaign and a little bit of luck. Surely someone would take him on, in the name of the people and communities who could have

## A decade of Democrat futility in statewide races

### 2018

#### U.S. Senate

|                  |           |       |
|------------------|-----------|-------|
| Mike Braun (R)   | 1,158,000 | 50.7% |
| Joe Donnelly (D) | 1,023,553 | 44.8% |
| Luce Brenton (L) | 100,942   | 4.4%  |

#### Sec of State

|                     |           |       |
|---------------------|-----------|-------|
| Connie Lawson (R)   | 1,263,074 | 56.2% |
| Jim Harper (D)      | 911,546   | 40.6% |
| Mark Rutherford (L) | 71,234    | 3.2%  |

#### Auditor

|                        |           |       |
|------------------------|-----------|-------|
| Tera Klutz (R)         | 1,235,579 | 55.5% |
| Jocelyn Whitticker (D) | 913,701   | 41.0% |
| John Schick (L)        | 71,101    | 3.5%  |

#### Treasurer

|                    |           |       |
|--------------------|-----------|-------|
| Kelly Mitchell (R) | 1,300,631 | 57.6% |
| John Aguilera (D)  | 917,592   | 41.4% |

### 2016

#### U.S. Senate

|                  |           |       |
|------------------|-----------|-------|
| Todd Young (R)   | 1,423,012 | 52.1% |
| Evan Bayh (D)    | 1,157,692 | 42.4% |
| Lucy Brenton (L) | 149,367   | 5.5%  |

#### Governor

|                  |           |       |
|------------------|-----------|-------|
| Eric Holcomb (R) | 1,396,460 | 51.4% |
| John Gregg (D)   | 1,234,546 | 45.4% |
| Rex Bell (L)     | 86,964    | 3.2%  |

#### Attorney General

|                       |           |       |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------|
| Curtis Hill (R)       | 1,642,623 | 62.3% |
| Lorenzo Arredondo (D) | 933,209   | 37.7% |

#### Superintendent of public instruction

|                        |           |       |
|------------------------|-----------|-------|
| Jennifer McCormick (R) | 1,420,133 | 53.4% |
| Glenda Ritz (D)        | 1,238,728 | 46.6% |

### 2014

#### Sec of State

|                      |         |       |
|----------------------|---------|-------|
| Connie Lawson (R)    | 762,223 | 57.2% |
| Beth White (D)       | 527,379 | 39.4% |
| Karl Tatgenhorst (L) | 45,393  | 3.4%  |

#### Auditor

|                     |         |       |
|---------------------|---------|-------|
| Suzanne Crouch (R)  | 793,633 | 59.6% |
| Michael Claytor (D) | 479,109 | 35.9% |
| John Schick (L)     | 58,332  | 4.3%  |

#### Treasurer

|                    |         |       |
|--------------------|---------|-------|
| Kelly Mitchell (R) | 768,261 | 58.3% |
| Mike Boland (D)    | 487,088 | 36.9% |
| Mike Jasper (L)    | 63,780  | 4.8%  |

been devastated by his adventure.”

National trends helped make Buttigieg part of the “37% Club.”

“Democratic members of Congress were still licking their wounds from the tongue-lashings they got in town halls across America over the summer of Tea Party rage, heaped with abuse from voters who had been led to believe that the health care bill amounted to red socialism, complete with ‘death panels’ and all manner of evil,” Buttigieg said of the 2010 election cycle. “This was not good news for me. In a state like ours, a down-ticket Democrat stood a chance of winning only under the best of circumstances, and these were clearly not going to be the best of circumstances.”

This cycle is shaping up to be potentially more fertile for Democrats nationally. President Trump has been widely panned over his handling of the pandemic, with 55% disapproving in an NBC/Wall Street Journal Poll released on Sunday. Some 80% felt the nation was “spiraling out of control.” A CNN/SRS survey on Monday revealed Trump’s approve/disapprove at 38/57% and Biden had a huge 55-41% lead. Only 43% approved President Trump’s handling of the pandemic. On the economy, NBC/WSJ revealed 77% felt the economy was either “poor” or “only fair.” In the NBC/WSJ poll, Democrats held a 51-40% congressional generic lead. CNN’s last poll prior to the 2018 election showed Democrats with a 53% to 42% edge on the generic ballot question and Democrats netted 40 seats and retook the majority days later. In the 2010 midterms, the last CNN poll showed Republicans with a 6-point lead and they won 63 seats and the House majority.

In 2019, polls in Indiana showed Hoosiers mixed on Trump’s approval, with 48/46% approve/disapprove in an August NBC/Marist Poll, and a 47% split in a Gravis Poll. Morning Consult put Trump’s approve/disapprove in Indiana at 53/44% in February 2020, coming after his Senate impeachment acquittal but before the pandemic and George Floyd fallout.

### Tallian v. Weinzapfel

In the convention’s lone contested race, for attorney general, former Evansville mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel had a beginning balance of \$609,310, raised \$178,636 and had an ending cash balance of \$662,724. He has received \$30,000 (\$10,000 each) from Jeffrey Justice of Evansville, the Northern Indiana Operators Joint Labor Management PAC and the IN KY OH Regional Council of Carpenters.

State Sen. Karen Tallin had a beginning balance of \$144,159, contributions of \$10,198 and an April 15 pre-primary ending balance of \$101,528. Major donations came from James McKamey of Portage (\$15,000); \$80,000 from her Senate campaign committee; and \$25,000



## 2012

### U.S. Senate

|                      |           |       |
|----------------------|-----------|-------|
| Joe Donnelly (D)     | 1,268,407 | 49.9% |
| Richard Mourdock (R) | 1,126,832 | 44.3% |
| Andrew Horning (L)   | 146,453   | 5.8%  |

### Governor

|                    |           |       |
|--------------------|-----------|-------|
| Mike Pence (R)     | 1,268,076 | 49.6% |
| John Gregg (D)     | 1,187,508 | 46.4% |
| Rupert Boneham (L) | 101,326   | 4.0%  |

### Attorney General

|                  |           |       |
|------------------|-----------|-------|
| Greg Zoeller (R) | 1,444,601 | 58.1% |
| Kay Fleming (D)  | 1,040,338 | 41.9% |

### Superintendent of public instruction

|                  |           |       |
|------------------|-----------|-------|
| Glenda Ritz (D)  | 1,332,755 | 52.0% |
| Tony Bennett (R) | 1,190,716 | 48.0% |

## 2010

### U.S. Senate

|                         |         |       |
|-------------------------|---------|-------|
| Dan Coats (R)           | 952,116 | 54.6% |
| Brad Ellsworth (D)      | 679,775 | 40.0% |
| Rebecca Sink-Burris (L) | 94,330  | 5.4%  |

### Sec of State

|                   |         |       |
|-------------------|---------|-------|
| Charlie White (R) | 974,708 | 57.1% |
| Vop Osili (D)     | 630,369 | 37.0% |
| Mike Wherry (L)   | 100,846 | 5.9%  |

### Auditor

|                |         |       |
|----------------|---------|-------|
| Tim Berry (R)  | 984,232 | 58.4% |
| Sam Locke (D)  | 623,810 | 37.0% |
| Eric Knipe (L) | 78,097  | 4.6%  |

### Treasurer

|                      |           |       |
|----------------------|-----------|-------|
| Richard Mourdock (R) | 1,051,237 | 62.5% |
| Pete Buttigieg (D)   | 631,477   | 37.7% |

from the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers. She said that money won’t be a debilitating factor for the fall. “There’s a lot of money sitting on the sidelines until somebody wins,” she said of the nomination.

“We need to talk about the party,” Tallian told HPI on Tuesday. “We need to turn protesters into voters.”

She recalled the Watergate era “Saturday Night Massacre” in 1973 when President Nixon fired Attorney General Elliott Richardson and deputy AG Bill Ruckelshaus (a former Indiana state senator). “I’m doing that because it was the first time in my life I was afraid for American democracy. It was the first time we had one desperate man threaten the entire democratic structure.” Now, Tallian said, “There’s a lot at stake.”

She believes she has a good shot at winning the general election race, whether it’s against Attorney General Curtis Hill, Todd Rokita, Decatur Prosecutor Nate Harter, or John Wester-

camp. "We did an informed poll and it showed myself at least 7% ahead of every Republican man," Tallian said. "Curtis Hill's misbehavior is one thing, but it was the Obamacare lawsuits that I just decided somebody had to step up."

Tallian said that because of her pro-marijuana reform stance, Indiana Libertarians won't field a candidate for attorney general. "That's a 2% to 5% advantage for us," she said. "Part of this election will be decided on marijuana, policing and women's issues." She added, "It takes fortitude to be a woman in the Senate for 15 years. I have been in the middle of the fight. I know all these issues, I've defined all of the issues."

"I think I'm the liberal Democrat that Republicans fear."

### Weinzapfel on changed race dynamics

When Jonathan Weinzapfel entered the race in December, he believed the main issue would be Curtis Hill. "What started off as a race about Curtis Hill's ethical issues and his efforts to destroy the Affordable Care Act has become much more than that," Weinzapfel told HPI on Tuesday. "Over the past two months we've been in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic and the death of George Floyd. We've had other issues that have surfaced. The dynamics have changed since I entered the race in early December. It provides an opportunity for a much broader discussion that a candidate for attorney general can be involved with in what Indiana should look like; how we can create an Indiana more fair and just society."

"This is an environment where people are concerned about their livelihood, they're concerned about their families, loved ones in nursing homes, their kids going back to school in August and are they going to be safe," he explained. "What's the educational system going to look like? Am I going to be safe at work? These are some very existential challenges facing a lot of Hoosier families that are going to be outlined in this campaign. In addition to the ramifications of George Floyd's murder and how do we reform our criminal justice system and our policing tactics here in Indiana to create a safer and more just society, there are going to be issues at the forefront that are going to lend independent reviews of voters."

Weinzapfel said he's made about a thousand calls to delegates, with the list finalized last Friday. "We've done everything," he said. "We've had field staff working with county chairs, contacting delegates themselves, I've made about a thousand calls to delegates personally, along with direct mail, email, text messages. We feel good about it."

"One issue is making sure they know who I am as a legislator, mayor of Evansville, and chancellor of the Ivy Tech Evansville campus," Weinzapfel continued. "It's also a discussion about how I'm in the best position to represent the Democratic Party. It's a focus on issues."

As for the futility of statewide Democrats over the past decade, Weinzapfel said, "It would help if the presidential race in Indiana is competitive. I don't think Joe Biden needs to win in order for down ballot Democrats to be successful, but it helps if the race is close. I haven't seen any recent polling, but I would suspect it isn't the 19% gap for Donald Trump like it was in 2016. I think the dynamics have changed pretty dramatically."

Another change has been the demise of local media and President Trump's domination over cable news TV networks. "You recall the good old days, when you were a candidate for Congress or statewide office, you would stop at the county seat because they would have their own local newspaper," he said. "You would sit for interviews. Those were very important outlets. Those have largely gone by the wayside. You now have to raise money to communicate directly through mail, or TV, but probably more importantly, via social media."



**Evansville Mayor Weinzapfel greets Hoosier rocker John Mellencamp at a 2008 Barack Obama rally at Roberts Stadium. (HPI Photo)**

Weinzapfel added, "I have a proven track record as a fundraiser. I've run against Republicans in the past and won in a very competitive area of the state. But more importantly I think my experience and background ... that's a background that's going to be pretty appealing to moderate Republicans and independents. I've been someone who has had to be held accountable every single day, has had to involve a lot of different people from a lot of different perspectives with different political backgrounds when seeking input, building consensus and finding solutions to the challenges we face. That's the skillset I want to bring to the office of

attorney general."

If the winner of the nomination prevails in November, that candidate becomes the 2024 gubernatorial frontrunner. Weinzapfel has more money and an long endorsement list. Tallian has been endorsed by LG nominee Linda Lawson. "What a windfall about what we've got to Karen Tallian," Lawson said. "She's a tiger. She goes after everything." **HPI Convention Horse Race Status:** Leans Weinzapfel.

### Epilogue

Pete Buttigieg wrote that "In the final days" of his 2010 experience, "the obscurity of our race added to a sense of doom." Instead of the tailwind Democrats face today because of the pandemic response and the Great Depression-level jobless stats that have created an opening this cycle, he faced the headwinds of President Obama's

first mid-term election, the Tea Party movement and negative reaction in Indiana to Obamacare. "I had crisscrossed the state for months generated mostly positive press coverage, made friends in every corner of the Indiana and raised more money than any candidate for this office in years, and yet we finished with less than 40% of the vote," he wrote in his book, more than a year before he won the Iowa presidential caucuses. "The very first time I put my name on a ballot for office, fully one million people had voted for the other guy."

The 37% loss has become the norm for down ballot Hoosier Democrats. In 2012, good luck (Mourdock's last debate fiasco) sent Joe Donnelly to the U.S. Senate and Glenda Ritz to the Statehouse. Four years later, it was bad luck when vulnerable Gov. Mike Pence joined the Donald Trump presidential ticket, which forged a 19% plurality that swamped John Gregg and Supt. Ritz.

Harris summed up what Hoosier Democrats need to break out of that 37% funk and an 11% winning percentage. "It takes luck and timing," he said.



## Convention lineup

On Friday evening, Cheri Bustos, Illinois congresswoman and chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, will keynote the party's Hoosier Hospitality Dinner and on Saturday, Democratic state delegates will hear a special message from Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

The virtual speaking program will begin at 5:30 p.m. (ET) Friday. Rep. Bustos and Chairman Zody will sit down for a virtual fireside chat about how Hoosier Democrats can make progress in 2020. Speakers and special messages will include Zody, lieutenant governor nominee Linda Lawson; Dr. Woody Myers; House Leader Phil GiaQuinta; Senate Leader Tim Lanane; Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett; U.S. Rep. André Carson and Rep. Bustos (IL-17).

On Saturday, nearly 2,500 Democratic delegates will gather online to conduct the convention virtually and hear from Gov. Whitmer and from the 2020 statewide ticket. The general session will be gavelled to order at 2:30 p.m. Other speakers will include Sen. Tallian, Mayor Weinzapfel, Lawson and Myers. ❖



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# Hill seeks to fend off 3 GOP challengers

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS — A week from today Attorney General Curtis Hill and three challengers will be making virtual video presentations to Indiana Republican Convention delegates. By July 10, the nomination will be known and its impact will likely reverberate over the next four years and over two election cycles.

For Hill, winning a second nomination after Gov. Eric Holcomb, Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch, legislative leaders from both parties and U.S. Sen. Mike Braun called for him to resign two years ago following sexual harassment allegations, will put him on a path toward reelection and, perhaps, the open 2024 gubernatorial nomination. With Democrats winning an anemic 11% of statewide races over the past decade, this gives the GOP nomination added weight.

Hill is being challenged by former congressman and secretary of state Todd Rokita, Decatur County Prosecutor Nate Harter, and Zionsville attorney John Westercamp. A number of Republicans Howey Politics Indiana has talked to believe that if Hill doesn't win with 50% plus one delegate on the first ballot, a shakeup will be likely. Hill maintains that outside of Indianapolis, his support remains robust.

Delegates will receive ballots around June 22 and can list between one and four candidates, designating first, second, etc. choices. The balloting is being sent to delegates by ES&S and once completed, will be sent to the accounting firm Katz Sapper & Miller, which must receive them by mail no later than 5 p.m. July 9. Indiana Republican Party officials, with candidate watchers on hand, will then count and announce the nomination on July 10.

The four candidates will make their video appeals to delegates at 5:30 p.m. June 18 on WISH-TV and other Indiana affiliates.

## Hill channels Kavanaugh

Attorney General Hill believes that his three-plus years in the office and the fact that he was cleared of criminal charges by a special prosecutor have him poised

for a second term. Speaking on Rob Kendall's WIBC radio show last week, Hill made connections between his case and allegations made against President Trump and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh.

"People say I'm damaged goods and can't win the November election," Hill told Kendall. "President Trump was investigated by a special prosecutor and cleared, and so was I. And yet so many people are going to vote for President Trump despite the fact he was impeached. How many of those people are going to vote for President Trump and then turn around and split their ticket for a candidate who's for big government, pro-abortion, and a soft-on-crime liberal. It's not going to happen."

He said the double standard extends to sexual harassment allegations that surfaced during Justice Kavanaugh's Senate confirmation hearing. "Many Indiana Republicans were supportive" of Kavanaugh, Hill said. "Many of those people took a different approach under my circumstances. It's a small number of people, not the Republican Party. Our support is off the charts. I'm very pleased we have the support."

He depicted his GOP detractors as the "so-called Indianapolis crowd that weren't necessarily interested in an independent-minded conservative from northern Indiana. There are some who want the attorney general to be at their beck and call." He added that "it is an interesting can of worms the state party has opened up."

Sullivan County Republican Chairman Bill Springer, one of two original Donald Trump Republican National Convention delegates in 2016, explained, "I support Curtis Hill for attorney general because he cares about us at the local level. When a local Sullivan County officeholder needed help over the 4th of July weekend, Curtis Hill was available and took care of the problem. He regularly calls county chairmen and asks us how we are getting along. This is unique in today's Indiana

Republican Party."

Kendall portrayed Gov. Eric Holcomb as a "hypocrite" who perceived Hill as a potential 2020 primary threat. "It's been an interesting episode in fairness," Hill responded, without mentioning the governor. "We have been very pleased that we have support across the state. I received 80,000 more votes than President Trump. People see my authenticity of service and that translates into popularity. It does send a message. It's not without hypocrisy because it doesn't apply evenly. There are always examples that are out there of people who may be connected or friends of an individual who are treated one way, and people who are not treated another way."



**President Trump greets Attorney General Hill in the Oval Office in 2017.**

"One reason people like me is I do what I say I'm going to do," Hill said. "I've done more to protect the unborn than anybody." He cited the 2,000-plus Hoosier fetal remains found on the Illinois property of the late Dr. Ulrich Klopfer. "We've taken more responsibility to protect the unborn," he said, adding that he had "no statutory authority" in the case. "We went to Illinois, brought them back for a dignified burial. That's called leadership. We need to be the kind of people, the kind of party to get things done."



As for the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police, Hill said, "There's a problem that's moving toward African-American males and we need to address it. There is a problem in this country." Hill added, "We have to understand the distinction between protesters and anarchists. I think the concern is we're not mixing up those bags. We have to protect life and property rights. We've seen some lapses and I think that's out of fear. We need to develop empathy on both sides. It's important we understand the angst in the black community. The history in America has been very difficult."

Hill reminded WIBC listeners that he's undefeated in politics, winning four terms as Elkhart County prosecutor and the GOP nomination, and led the ticket in 2016. "I've never lost a campaign," he said. "Part of that process is staying above the fray. These distractions are unfortunate, but it hasn't kept me from doing my job. I'm tough. I can take a punch. With what's going on now, with the riots, and strife, you want solid leadership. You don't want hand-wringing. Folks are craving leadership."

"I'm not running against anybody," Hill said. "The state party folks can offer anybody they want. My focus has been on my record. I don't have to engage in rhetoric in what I'll do if I'm elected. I've been elected and I've done the job. Let them bring who they want to bring. My ability to win has not been lessened one iota."

### Rokita on Hill, Kavanaugh

Todd Rokita also drew distinctions between the allegations made against Hill and Kavanaugh. "Brett Kavanaugh was attacked by the liberal left because he was being picked by President Trump and because he followed conservative values," Rokita said

in a Facebook post. "What we have learned since is that some of the accusers of Brett Kavanaugh have recanted their accusations. This is a far cry from the Curtis Hill incident that earned him a 30-day law license suspension, unanimously, from the Indiana Supreme Court, which are all Republicans, appointed by three different governors. The Brett Kavanaugh allegations were unfounded and the allegations against Curtis Hill were found convincingly criminal battery."

Rokita added, "Curtis Hill used terrible judgment in his actions on the night in question and the four victims have stood fast in their allegations. There were also two unrelated victims of other incidents that came forward to show a pattern of actions by Hill. Republicans need to not only look at who they are nominating for attorney general, but also need to realize the ramifications of what having a damaged candidate at this high-level office can do up and down the ticket in Indiana. Holding Curtis Hill accountable in the election can help conservative Hoosiers keep more than just the AG office, but also any other tightly contested race."

Rokita, who won a 2002 GOP convention floor fight for secretary of state, added that liberal billionaire

George Soros is likely to target the Indiana AG race. "Soros and those alike look for weak, wounded candidates," Rokita said. "Enter Curtis Hill, and pump money into that state, enter Indiana. Look up and down this fall's ticket and realize what casting a delegate vote for Hill could do to our conservative state. Don't cast your vote in the moment on emotion! Indiana delegates need to vote



with a clear mind for Hoosier futures.”

The stakes are also high for Rokita. Like Hill, if nominated and elected, he will almost certainly seek the GOP gubernatorial nomination in 2024. Rokita finished a distant third to Lt. Gov. Holcomb and U.S. Rep. Susan Brooks in the July 2016 Indiana Central Committee caucus to replace Gov. Mike Pence on the ticket after Donald Trump chose Pence for the national ticket.

**Harter promises legal defense**

Prosecutor Nate Harter made a delegate pitch on Facebook. “It’s really important that we return a conservative attorney general office this fall,” Harter said, who is backed by Clark County Sheriff Jamey Noel, who is Gov. Holcomb’s campaign chairman. “We’ve seen in other states where the Democratic attorney general has simply decided not to defend the law passed by the elected representatives of the people of their states. In California, for example, a Democratic attorney general refused to defend the will of the people as passed by a referendum.



“My job will be to work to partner with our legislators and our governor to defend the laws they pass as representatives of the people,” Harter continued. “That’s why it is critical in these coming years with redistricting and a budget year that we have a Republican attorney general who will defend those values. Now more than ever, Americans depend on our 2nd Amendment rights to defend themselves, their families, and their homes. As attorney general, I’ll fight to defend the natural right of all citizens to own and carry firearms.

As the state’s chief law enforcement officer, we need a tested litigator with courtroom experience in the attorney general’s office. I’m 100% pro-life, and I’ll fight to defend that right as attorney general.”

**Westercamp’s pitch**

Westercamp, who was the first Republican to challenge Hill, described himself on Facebook as “an experienced Indiana attorney who advocates for job creators and Hoosier families.” He listed “Life, freedom of speech and the right to bear arms” as freedoms he would defend if elected. “I’ll fight against government overreach, promote government transparency and I’ll make sure the office is prepared to take on legal battles the state faces. And I will faithfully execute the laws of the land.”

**Horse Race status**

HPI expects Lake and Marion county delegations to back someone other than Hill, though sources tell us that a number of attorney general office employees filed as delegates in the Marion County and neighboring delegations. Gov. Holcomb isn’t overtly backing a candidate, but the fact that his reelection campaign Chairman Jamey Noel is backing Harter implies that this is an alternative.

But this is not the Doc Bowen era, where the governor greeting delegates outside his preferred candidate’s suite was tantamount to extending his imprimatur. And Holcomb was on Gov. Mitch Daniels’ team when 2008 convention delegates rebuked his endorsement of Valparaiso Mayor Jon Costas, resulting in a floor win by Greg Zoeller.

Our sense is that beyond the Indianapolis beltway, Hill has not lost a great deal of support. The fact that social conservatives still backed President Trump after the “Access Hollywood” audio in 2016 and the 24 women who have accused him of sexual harassment and/or assault is indicative that even in the #Metoo era, a credible sexually oriented allegation isn’t a disqualifying situation within the Republican Party. That Hill will tell delegates that he traveled to Washington to defend President Trump during the



impeachment proceedings will also play in Hill's favor.

Having said all that, the fact that this is a "virtual convention" with the scheming occurring via phone calls, texts and emails lends a bit of a mysterious dynamic to this unprecedented situation. There could still be a surprise, but at this writing, the incumbent is still the man to beat. **HPI Convention Horse Race Status:** Leans Hill.

## Congress

### 1st CD: Mrvan to continue Visclosky legacy

North Township Trustee Frank J. Mrvan, if elected in November as Northwest Indiana's next congressman believes he's ready to take on the social and economic challenges facing The Region and the nation (Carden, NWI Times). "For 15 years, I've trained for this position to be able to assist people who are facing financial crisis, who are uncertain, and in this moment in history, that's exactly what we have," said Mrvan in an exclusive interview with The Times. "It's a serious job. These are very, very serious times. I campaigned on serious issues, and I'm going to continue to do that." Mrvan prevailed Tuesday in a 14-candidate Democratic primary for the chance to succeed retiring U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, D-Gary, in Congress. The four-term trustee of Lake County's most populous township won Visclosky's endorsement in the hotly contested race, and Mrvan said he largely intends to continue the work of his political mentor, albeit with the personal touch that comes with many years of providing direct assistance to Hoosiers in need. "First and foremost, I want to be present in my community to make sure we find ways to find peace and harmony, and be able to work with the faith-based community, and be able to work with all cultures to make sure that we understand that we are better together than we are divided," Mrvan said. "Just as Congressman Visclosky has stayed in touch with people, I will continually be accessible and use this position to make sure people find jobs, have access to health care, uplift and bring the community together."



### Mrvan won on Lake County strength

Mrvan won the primary election by piling up 37% of the vote in the Lake County, which has the majority of the 1st Congressional District's population, compared to 30% for his nearest rival, Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr. (Carden, NWI Times). In Porter County, Mrvan's 24% share of the vote was less than Valparaiso attorney Jim Harper's 29%, and Mrvan actually came in fourth place in the LaPorte County portion of the district, behind McDermott, Jim Harper and State Rep. Mara Candelaria Reardon. "I know you have to stay in contact with all three counties, you have to build relationships,

and you have to have support," Mrvan said. "I'm going to be focused on making an effort with the elected officials. But, more importantly, with the people, as I have done throughout my career." "Porter and LaPorte counties are going to be well taken care of and well represented."

### 5th CD: DCCC cites Spartz's 'dark money'

State Sen. Victoria Spartz's emergence from last week's clown car primary shouldn't come as a surprise given how much one dark money group spent to boost her and attack her opponents, according to the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. Club For Growth spent more than half a million in the primary, with one Republican operative noting that "they've bought the race" for Spartz. "Hoosiers are right to wonder whether Spartz is running to represent their interests or those of the dark money group which spent hundreds of thousands of dollars pushing her through a crowded primary," said DCCC Spokesperson Courtney Rice. "From the mysterious nature of her business dealings to her disavowing of government subsidies unless she personally benefits, it's unclear who Spartz is running to represent... but it's clearly not Hoosiers."

### Democrats have 11% generic lead

With all the focus on a slew of new polls that show President Donald Trump falling further behind former Vice President Joe Biden, one number has largely slipped through the cracks, and it is a blaring warning signal to Republicans on the ballot this fall (Cillizza, CNN). Here it is: 51% of registered voters said they would prefer a Congress controlled by Democrats in 2021, while just 40% preferred a Republican-controlled Congress, according to a new Wall Street Journal-NBC poll released Sunday. CNN's last poll prior to the 2018 election showed Democrats with a 53% to 42% edge in the generic ballot question. Democrats netted 40 seats and retook the majority days later. In the 2010 midterms, the last CNN poll showed Republicans with a 6-point lead in the generic. They won 63 seats and the House majority.

## Presidential 2020

### Trump, Biden find Hoosier opposition

Democratic and Republican voters in Northwest Indiana seemingly are not 100% on board with their party's presumptive presidential nominees. Neither former Vice President Joe Biden nor President Donald Trump managed to win the backing of every party voter in the primary elections held last week in Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties (Carden, NWI Times). In the Democratic contest, Biden was held to less than 80% support in all three counties due to a strong protest vote by supporters of Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, along with a scattering of votes for the seven other Democratic candidates on the bal-

lot, including former South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg. In the GOP race, Trump failed in all three counties to reach his often touted "96% approval" in the Republican Party. Unofficial results show Trump won 94.5% of the Repub-

lican vote in Lake County, 92.8% in Porter and 93.2% in LaPorte. Statewide, Bill Weld received 7.8% of the vote from Indiana Republicans opposed to Trump being nominated for a second term. ❖

## Can Hackett overcome President Trump?

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND – Can Pat Hackett overcome Donald Trump? Or to put the possibility of a big upset another way, can President Trump drag down Congresswoman Jackie Walorski? Trump's name will be on the ballot for president, not for Congress in Indiana's 2nd District, but even as the congressional candidates discuss many issues, Trump will be the elephant in the room.



If Trump wins again by a landslide in Indiana, Hackett, who won the Democratic congressional nomination in a landslide of her own on Tuesday, will have little chance. If Trump slips badly, with a significant percentage of his 2016 supporters in the district abandoning

him over his handling of the coronavirus, protests and the economy, that could hurt Walorski, his supporter in Congress, and give Hackett a better chance for an upset win.

Vote totals provided good news for Hackett in two areas, bad news in another. First the good news. The South Bend attorney, in her second quest for the congressional nomination, won this time with an impressive show of strength, three to one over Ellen Marks, also an attorney from South Bend, who spent well over a quarter million dollars on the campaign.

Hackett, who matched the funding challenge, was expected to win. The question was whether she would win with momentum for the general election. She won with real momentum. Her effective TV spots were an important factor.

While Hackett, forced to spend heavily in the primary, reported only \$58,000 cash on hand in her final Federal Election Commission report – contrasting with \$922,500 reported on hand by Walorski – Hackett's spending wasn't a waste. Her extensive TV provided a positive introduction of herself to the voters. She tested an organization that obviously delivered. And the show of momentum will bring more contributors.

A second bit of seemingly good news for Hackett was that a virtually unknown Republican primary opponent of Walorski got about 21% of the vote. Why did a fifth of Republican voters pick an unknown over their four-term congresswoman? A sign of Republican defections in the fall? Well, an unknown opponent also got 21% of the vote against Walorski in the 2018 primary. And Walorski went on then to win big for reelection, carrying nine of the 10 counties in the district.

Now the bad news for Hackett from the Tuesday results. The elephant in the room remains the Republican elephant, symbol of the party in Indiana. President Trump captured about 92% of the vote statewide in the Republican primary. He obviously was going to win. But former Massachusetts Gov. Bill Weld was on the presidential primary ballot to give any Republicans displeased with the president a way to send a message of dissatisfaction. The message? Approval by 92%.

Biggest surprise: Voters, despite tough times, said "yes" to higher taxes for many of themselves in approving both parts of a referendum on \$220 million for South Bend schools. Early in the year, chances of approval appeared to be slim, and Slim was leaving town. The school administration and school board were held in low esteem, deservedly so for controversies over many years.



But community leaders pleaded for approval of needed funding for the struggling school system for the sake of the kids, for the needs of those who teach them, for the future of the community. School officials got their act together with pledged strategic planning.

Could there actually be approval? Slim at least was back in town.

The big surprise was that there wasn't a slim victory. It was big; 60% approval for one part, 57% for the other part of the ballot question. Voters decided the kids are worth it. The school administration and school board could finally be showing, with prodding from city officials, that they are, too. ❖

**Colwell has covered Indiana politics over five decades for the South Bend Tribune.**

# Why representative democracy matters

By **LEE HAMILTON**

BLOOMINGTON – Over the last few years, the health of American democracy has come under great scrutiny. Polling routinely shows that Americans are concerned that democratic institutions aren't working as well as they ought to. Inevitably, this brings up the question of whether



we can mend our problems or if the system of representative democracy itself is fundamentally broken.

I'm biased. I served as a representative for a good bit of my life, watched the system from the inside with all its faults and all its glories, and believe firmly in it. Our strengths as a nation – our wealth and culture, our opportunities and human resources – developed in an environment that

was built from our founding documents, giving an ever-greater swath of Americans the opportunity to reach their potential, solve the problems that face their communities, and work together to move their neighborhoods and their country as a whole forward. It's allowed us to experiment, to approach issues pragmatically, and to shift approaches if the first or second or third doesn't work.

In fact, I would argue that some of our key characteristics as a people spring from the demands of self-governance and electing representatives. Wherever I've gone around the country, I've noticed an impressive and restless desire to make things better, to improve our communities and states for everyone who lives in them. A representative democracy, in which every few years we choose the people who will be making the decisions that shape how we spend our money and regulate our activities, encourages this.

**As concerns about** our institutions have grown, however, so has interest in alternatives. A 2018 poll by Vox, for instance, found that young people were "less likely to say that democracy is 'always preferable' to any other type of government, and less likely to agree that 'democracy serves the people'" than people 40 and older. By the same token, they were more likely to say that "non-democracies can be preferable" in some circumstances and to believe

that "democracy serves the elite." Many of these people are pushing for more direct democracy.

At the same time, militia groups, political entrepreneurs, and big-money interests are also pushing for changes to how the system operates. They often want to move away from representative democracy, limit the power of the legislature, dismiss the professional civil service, rearrange the federal structure, and in some cases see an advantage in a strong-man leader.

I have to confess I have trouble seeing us move in either direction. A lot of Americans like the idea of direct democracy; indeed, in a poll a few years ago, the Pew Research Center found that 55% of those surveyed thought that ordinary Americans would do a better job solving the country's problems than elected officials. Yet while I see the value of direct democracy at the town level, as is practiced in parts of New England, I have trouble seeing how 325 million people could make decisions on even major policy questions at the federal level. It would make it impossible to have the kind of deliberation or common-ground-seeking that Congress, when it's working, can practice.

**Those attracted to strong-man** leadership see value in a president who can make policy with little or no consultation with the Congress or other elected bodies. This, of course, is a system of authoritarianism you can find in various spots around the world; Russia, Turkey, the Philippines, and Venezuela come to mind. This is not, however, an idea many Americans find attractive for governing the country.

My point is this: We can't look at representative democracy in isolation, but have to compare it to the alternatives. And the alternatives, I'd argue, don't stack up. Even 230 years on, our system remains an experiment in self-government. It is still aiming to achieve equal political rights and economic opportunity, equal access to the protection of the laws, and equal access to political representation. It seems to me that the question is not: "Is it perfect?"

Rather, it is: "Can it improve itself?" The answer lies with ordinary citizens to step up and take advantage of the opportunities the system affords us to do just that. ❖

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**YOUR FRIENDS ALL HANG OUT HERE... DO YOU?**

**Lee Hamilton is a Senior Advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government. a Distinguished Scholar at the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice at the IU O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.**

# Remember Officer Leath in the wake of George Floyd's murder

By CRAIG DUNN

KOKOMO — There was a brief moment following the death of George Floyd when people of all races, creeds and colors shared the shock, horror and revulsion about



his wanton murder at the hands of an out-of-control law enforcement officer. Virtually no one who saw the video of police officer Derek Chauvin snuffing the life out of a human being by jamming his knee down on the throat of Floyd could find a single excuse for taking this human life. No excuse could be remotely acceptable for this death. It was an excellent opportunity for our society to take a much needed look at race relations and to discuss the difficult duty that the police have of balancing the enforcement of laws and the use of appropriate force. And then the opportunity died.

Somewhere along the way, the legitimate expressions of grief and anger of the citizenry of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, were replaced by those who were bent on dishonoring the life and death of George Floyd by common lawlessness, theft, looting, burning, assault and general mayhem. The sympathetic views of much of our population were replaced by disgust and anger at those who would use the death of Floyd to launch anarchic campaigns against the public peace and its institutions. To put it simply, George Floyd did not die at the hands of a police officer only to be memorialized by a looter carrying off a big screen television from your local Target store.

He deserves much better than this. Unfortunately, the massive destruction in Minneapolis, much of it inflicted on small black-owned businesses, did not confine itself to that community. The murder, larceny and destruction spread like wildfire across our country. In each community, well-meaning citizens of all races gathered to exercise their God-given constitutional rights to peaceably assemble and speak their minds were replaced by the violence of the mob. In many cases there was evidence that well-organized anarchist organizations such as Antifa and other George Soros-funded radical groups fueled to turn protests into destructive riots. When trucks drop off pallets of bricks and stones in

a convenient downtown location, you can only presuppose that the resulting destruction was premeditated. When this occurs, thoughts about the tragedy of George Floyd fade and public safety becomes an overriding concern.

I place much of the blame for this evolution of peaceful protest turning into destructive looting firmly on the shoulders of the media, the pimps of protest and the usual suspects who emerge from their holes to try and exploit any opportunity for the degradation of our American civilization.

**The people who hate** our political system, our economy and our way of life just can't resist using any means available or situation presented to them to strike at the heart of what most of us hold dear. The relentless 24-hour news cycle coupled with the passionate goal of taking down President Trump led the major networks and newspapers to take every step necessary to try and turn this situation of the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer and make it look as if it was Trump's knee on Floyd's throat. Their coverage was disgusting and a natural evolutionary process from impeachment to pandemic failure to Trump's a racist. That dog just doesn't hunt.

I understand the drive to tear down Confederate statues and monuments as symbols of a disgraceful past. As a historian, I hate to see this happen, but I fully understand the anger. My great great grandfather spent a few nasty months in Andersonville Prison being starved by those same Confederates. I don't approve of the use of the Confederate flag any more than I would a swastika. However, I tend to separate the symbols of the Confederacy from monuments to the common soldiers who fought for what they perceived to be their-God given freedoms. For those of you who don't read history, very few young men who fought and died fighting for the Confederacy did so in an effort to preserve slavery. These boys still deserve their places of honor.

I was particularly horrified to see the damaging and defacing of the Indiana Soldiers and Sailors Monument in downtown Indianapolis. Folks, these men fought to put an end to slavery and many of these soldiers were black volunteers. Spraypaint is no way to honor your brave ancestors. And now we are presented with the political movement to "defund" the police. I'm not sure what moron originally came up with this idea, but it certainly takes a special kind of stupid. The amazing thing is that a litany of Hollywood hairbrains and professional sports windbags are chiming in with their approval and support for doing away with the police.

This asinine proposal to defund the police leads to some very interesting questions: An intruder breaks into your home and steals your possessions. Who are you going to call? Someone speeding down the road in a stage of drunkenness crashes their car into yours and hurts a



member of your family. Who are you going to call? Your daughter is raped on the way home from school. Who are you going to call? A drug crazed junkie murders your friend while attempting a robbery. Who are you going to call? Al Sharpton? CNN?

**The New York Times?** John Legend? No, you are going to want to call law enforcement and you want them to come quickly and with enough force to make your problem go away. You know it. I know it. So why go through the silly charade of talking about defunding the police?

The reasonable step to take at this time is for government at all levels to sit down with community leaders and have a dialogue about what are reasonable and necessary police actions and responses to the enforcement of our laws. I would personally like to ask John Legend what should be the necessary police response and degree of force to be used if someone is in the act of assaulting Chrissie Tiegen. How should the police react when a suspect is confronted for breaking the law and tells the arresting officer, "I'm not going to let you arrest me"?

The most important dialogue should be how to reduce black-on-black crime in the inner cities of this country. These murder rates are disgusting and deserving of real protest. Reducing black-on-black murder rates should be the number-one focus of anyone who is seri-

ous about the health and safety of African-Americans. The dead young bodies pile up relentlessly and no one seems to even remotely care.

For those of you who see police officers as evil and racist sadists who abuse their authority and look for opportunities to arrest or assault a black person, I'd like to remind you of a young lady, a mother of three small children, who wore the badge. She was called to come to the assistance of a woman experiencing domestic abuse. Officer Breann Leath approached the front door of the home and was greeted with automatic rifle fire that cruelly ended her life.

**Officer Leath should** be the face of a call for improved police and community relations. Her death should have led to the greatest community protest that could have been mustered but there was no CNN, no New York Times and no Al Sharpton. Her death did not fit the narrative. Breann Leath was a force for good in Indianapolis and she is the one who should be honored for her service.

If you are going to tear down a memorial to Confederate prisoners who died in captivity in Indianapolis Mayor Hogsett, how about erecting a new monument to a black hero, Breann Leath? ❖

**Dunn is the former Howard County Republican chairman.**

## The triple whammy on black Hoosier income

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS — Some see the protesters and their eyes fill with tears. Others, however, only see the looters and their hearts fill with rage.



The looters are opportunists taking advantage of a storm raised by the protesters. Some protesters are the thunder released by the guilt of being silent too long. And those of us who do not rise up in protest, who allowed decades of injustice to pass, we wait out the storm, knowing without our efforts the clouds will never disperse. Whether we protest now or not, by our prior silence we have been complicit in an injustice.

No matter how sophisticated the analysis of the data, one simple fact summarises the result of many factors contributing to the conditions faced by African Americans. The median income of African-American households in the United States was 33% below that of all households in 2018. Indiana's African-American households were 38%

below all Hoosier households. (I will not apologize for all the numbers; the data provide a basis for measuring progress over time.)

The median is the number that separates the top half of a population from the bottom half. In dollars, those figures are astounding. Nationally, the median income of African-American households was \$41,511, \$20,426 below the median of \$61,937 for all households. Here, in the Hoosier Holy Land, the median for African-American households was \$34,290, \$21,456 below the median income \$55,746 of all Indiana households.

**It's a triple whammy.** The difference between the median income of all U.S. households and that of African-American household in Indiana was \$27,647. Of that amount, 74% results from being African American in America. Another 22% is the result of being a Hoosier household with an additional 4% for being Black in Indiana.

This breakdown of the numbers doesn't suggest racism is a trivial issue in Indiana; it clearly indicates the problem is a national one, exacerbated by being both African American and a Hoosier.

You may easily explain these results by citing single parent households with children under age 18 and the education levels of the parents. Occupation is a contributor to the observed differential. Fault may be laid at the door of the schoolhouse, or decades of imprisonment in that other school, the penitentiary.

Outrage and other forms of emoting will not

eliminate the causal factors of this income inequality nor create the outcomes being sought. The egregious behavior of some police officers and their departments are but a distillation of pervasive bigotry. Remedies have abounded for decades.

Yet without dealing with the larger picture, we'll not be able to eliminate the offense of DWB (Driving while

Black) or being a young Black man running.

"How many roads must a man walk down ... Before you call him a man?" ❖

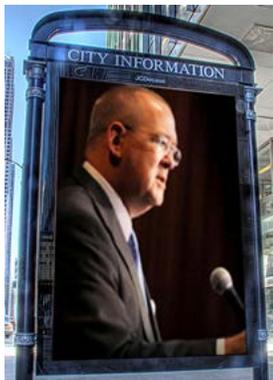
**Mr. Marcus is an economist. Reach him at [mortonjmarcus@yahoo.com](mailto:mortonjmarcus@yahoo.com). Follow his views and those of John Guy on "Who gets what?"**



## Nearly 1 in 5 Americans have lost their job

By **MICHAEL HICKS**

**MUNCIE** — The federal Employment Situation Summary, published on June 5, caused quite a firestorm. The reason is a data irregularity, perhaps a miscoding of survey data that had the official unemployment rate drop to 13.3%. Every economist, including myself, expected the rate to rise, not fall. There is much to be puzzled about, but digging into the numbers is revealing.



First, it is clear this was not a political misrepresentation of the data, as at least one prominent economist initially claimed. The Bureau of Labor Statistics itself reported the error, and hinted it will be remedied in later jobs reports. Actually, falsifying this data for political purposes would require both the collaboration and support of hundreds of career Department of Labor staff

members and some minimal organizational competence by the Trump Administration. There is no precedent for either. Rather, this is a foible of two ways we gather data about labor markets.

The monthly Employment Situation Summary, known colloquially as the "jobs report," is gathered from surveys of businesses and households. These surveys are conducted in the second week of each month and ask some specific questions. Because of COVID-19, the surveyors are working from home, and they ask workers many questions, some of which might be difficult to interpret.

**For example, if a respondent** is asked whether they have a job, they are also asked if they worked last week. With millions of people on temporary layoff, this appears to have been miscounted for some number of workers. Another question is simply designed to determine if a person is part of the labor force: Do they have or are they looking for a job? Given the large number of recently unemployed people who have children to look after because of school closings, the labor market shrank by more than 6 million workers in three months. The five-year average

was an increase of 121,000 per month.

Normally, data errors like this might be invisible to us, but we also have administrative data from each state on the number of workers who have made unemployment insurance claims. This number has been huge over the past three months, with more than 43 million workers claiming benefits since the beginning of March. That is more than 15 times the total losses for the same three-month period before COVID. Moreover, some unknown additional number of workers have yet to officially make claims, or are stuck in the system overload.

Typically, the survey data has 4 million to 5 million more unemployed workers than does the unemployment insurance records. That is because not everyone is eligible for unemployment insurance when they lose their job. However, in May, that difference vanished. So, it looks like the survey data missed four million or more workers.

**The missing people** could be the result of imprecise survey wording, but it could also be an artifact of the extreme job churning that is now happening. For example, my nephew, a manufacturing worker in Indiana, has been through two bouts of two-week layoffs since March. The system cannot quickly reconcile that type of churning.

All this means that the corrections to jobless data in the coming months are going to be wild. But, I think two things are clear from the jobs report, and one issue remains unclear. The coming months will give us a better idea on all these issues.

First, the initial job losses from COVID-19 appear to have turned a corner in later April or early May. This is unambiguously good news and should cause everyone to breathe a very, very small sigh of relief.

Second, labor markets are in much worse shape than the official unemployment rate suggests. At 13.3%, the official number is higher than at any time since the Great Depression. However, if you count everyone who was working in February as currently unemployed, regardless of how they might have answered a survey, the real unemployment rate is close to 20%. We are in Great Depression levels of joblessness.

What we do not clearly know from these data is how bad the secondary effects of COVID-19 may be. Even with the recalls that dominated May's report, permanent job losses were near record levels. It's these permanent job losses, not the temporary layoffs, that will determine how long it takes to return to January's employment level. From where we are right now, it will take several years to

recover.

We also don't know yet how successful the CARES Act has been. Certainly, the Payroll Protection Plan, which offered forgivable loans to businesses, appears to have helped. Also, the generous unemployment benefits may have postponed big declines in the demand for goods and services. These expire in July, at which time we should expect another deep dip in employment. Moreover, state and local tax revenue losses will soon lead to drops in state employment and spending. That will add another blow to the weakest economy since the 1930s. By my calculations, the likely reduction in state and local spending is alone

sufficient to cause a mild recession in 2021.

There is some small reason to celebrate the May jobs report, but our economy remains as deeply damaged as it has been in living memory. There is much to worry about in the months to come. ❖

**Michael J. Hicks, PhD, is the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research and the George and Frances Ball distinguished professor of economics in the Miller College of Business at Ball State University.**



## Landslide elections and policy mandates

By **GERALD POMPER**  
**Sabato's Crystal Ball**

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — As we approach the culmination of the critical election of 2020, we might get useful perspective by looking at past presidential elections. Begin with a simple question: Why do we care about elections? Alexis de Tocqueville, the great early analyst of American life, was astonished at the tumult of our political contests: "Factional ardor is redoubled, and all the artificial passions which the imagination can create in a happy and peaceful land are agitated and brought to light...[W]ho can refrain from astonishment that such a storm could have arisen?"

An easy answer would be that elections create the future of the country, as the electorate determines the policy choices of the nation. But decades of studies of voting have demonstrated that policy decisions are only one, and often only a minor, consideration in voters' minds. Indeed, much research presents considerable evidence that the electorate is uninterested, perhaps incapable, of making specific policy choices.

**But elections are different** from a summation of the actions and motivations of individual voters. Elections are collective acts that have consequences. Whatever the character of the electorate, we can begin with the most obvious effect of elections. Even if voters don't care about policy, their votes are the means by which the nation chooses its leaders for the next two to four years. At the least, these choices vaguely endorse the present directions of government ("Stay the Course") or envisage ambiguous new policies ("Time for a Change"). More ambitiously, depending on the alternatives presented by candidates, elections may imply or command specific programs.

Ballots are the language of democratic govern-

ment. The vocabulary of this language may comprise only two words, "Yes" and "No," and even these monosyllables may be mumbled in the dialogue between voters and leaders. But the dictionary of this language can expand as leaders speak and voters respond to additional words, still vague but more evocative, such as "A New Deal for the American People" or "Morning Again in America." And sometimes leaders can enlarge the political thesaurus -- as did Lyndon Johnson in 1964 -- and "ask the American people for a mandate -- not to preside over a finished program -- not just to keep things going, I ask the American people for a mandate to begin."

**There are some** interesting lessons to be gained from our recent national contests. The focus here will be on landslide, one-sided elections, and the possibility of electoral mandates. Let's look at the historical record, going back a century, to the 25 elections beginning in 1920.

In the first 10 elections in this set (1920-1956), there were five Democratic and five Republican victories. The parties rotated wins by large margins overall, the average number of electoral votes won was 431 out of a constant base of 531, the average margin of victory was 336 electoral votes, and the cumulative electoral votes for Republicans and Democrats were similar. This period includes only one close election, that of Truman in 1948. Landslides of over 400 electoral votes were achieved by unspectacular candidates such as Warren Harding and Herbert Hoover, as well as the imposing figures of Franklin Roosevelt and Dwight Eisenhower -- and even Calvin Coolidge came close in 1924.

In the last 10 elections (1980 to 2016), in contrast, winning candidates have achieved an average of only 375 tallies on an enlarged base of 538 (now including Alaska, Hawaii, and District of Columbia), and the average margin has shrunk more than a third, to 212. Republicans have won six of 10 elections, and achieved a clear predominance of electoral votes. Yet the GOP has lacked popular vote pluralities in two of these elections.

The last five winners have done even worse, barely squeezing into office, winning an average of only 312



electoral votes. These small victories still had large consequences, as Donald Trump exemplifies, but any claims to a popular mandate are illusory.

The same declines in electoral support are evident in the popular vote. In the earlier period, the median vote for the presidential winner was 56.2% of the overall national vote, a solid endorsement and only one of the 10 winners failed to get a national majority. Even that exception, Truman in 1948 at 49.6%, came within a rounding count of half the country's support.

**Popular endorsement** declined considerably in a transitional period, (1960-1976), when three of five winners — Kennedy, Nixon in 1968, and Carter — lacked a convincing national majority. Then, in the 10 recent contests, the median winning percentage fell to only 50.7%, a thin margin. Moreover, four of 10 winners fell short of a national majority, and three others — Reagan in his first term, Bush and Obama in their second terms — barely scraped above half the national total. The absence of clear popular support has now become accepted as a structural condition of presidential elections. Trump not only won in 2016 while gaining only 46% of the national vote; he also now makes that standard a basic part of his re-election strategy (as reported in the New York Times).

These patterns are not important because of statistical differences. Their significance may be an unnoticed, but important change in the legitimacy of presidential elections in the absence of policy mandates. The pattern of the earlier period advantaged the winning party and candidate in subsequent policy disputes. They had the rhetorical wind to their backs by virtue of the solid endorsement of the electorate in their landslide margins. Moreover, being large, these victories were essentially immunized against charges of election fraud or maladministration. Their electoral success also gave them the power to set the governmental agenda. Even if the winners had only a thin program — such as Harding's "normalcy" or FDR's hopeful but vague promise of "a New Deal," they could at least say that they had won some sort of clear and clean "mandate" because of their avalanche of votes. They could act, undergirded by the premise that they had democratic sanction for their actions.

**But these mandates also** were limited because the voters were ready to switch to the opposition, giving it, in turn, a different landslide victory. Again, the opposition might not have a specific program at hand, but at least the parties would worry that voter sentiment might decide it was "time for a change," and therefore would pay attention to the electorate's passing fancies, i.e. heed the popular will.

| Year | Democrat | Republican | Winner % |
|------|----------|------------|----------|
| 1920 | 127      | 404        | 60.3     |
| 1924 | 136      | 382        | 54.0     |
| 1928 | 87       | 444        | 58.2     |
| 1932 | 472      | 59         | 57.4     |
| 1936 | 523      | 8          | 60.8     |
| 1940 | 449      | 82         | 54.7     |
| 1944 | 432      | 99         | 53.4     |
| 1948 | 303      | 189        | 49.6     |
| 1952 | 89       | 442        | 55.2     |
| 1956 | 74       | 457        | 57.4     |
| 1960 | 303      | 220        | 49.7     |
| 1964 | 486      | 52         | 61.1     |
| 1968 | 191      | 302        | 43.4     |
| 1972 | 17       | 521        | 60.7     |
| 1976 | 297      | 241        | 50.1     |
| 1980 | 49       | 489        | 50.7     |
| 1984 | 13       | 525        | 58.8     |
| 1988 | 112      | 426        | 53.4     |
| 1992 | 370      | 168        | 43.0     |
| 1996 | 379      | 159        | 49.2     |
| 2000 | 267      | 271        | 47.9     |
| 2004 | 252      | 286        | 50.7     |
| 2008 | 365      | 173        | 52.9     |
| 2012 | 332      | 206        | 51.0     |
| 2016 | 232      | 306        | 45.9     |

Harding, for example, relied on this democratic premise in his inaugural address. Renouncing any American involvement in the League of Nations, he invoked the presumed mandate in the election of 1920: "We turned to a referendum, to the American people. There was ample discussion, and there is a public mandate in manifest understanding, intelligent, dependable popular will of America." A dozen years later, Franklin Roosevelt would also invoke a popular call for a very different program: "The people of the United States have not failed. In their need they have registered a mandate that they want direct, vigorous action.... They have made me the present instrument of their wishes. In the spirit of the gift I take it."

Politicians often regard their victories as a "mandate" for their pet programs. Landslide victories particularly are treasured for such enablement. But

the reams of data on voters' views do not consistently support these claims. Academic studies of public opinion see the mass electorate as often confused about policies, wavering in its sentiments, and superficial in its judgments.

**Yet voting is still** important and potentially beneficial, if we recognize the important difference between "public opinion," which is often no more than individuals' transient views about distant matters, and "electoral opinion," which is the judgment that politicians must consider, because their jobs depend on paying attention. As political scientist Stanley Kelley acutely wrote, "Among the institutions of democratic states it is elections that give political leaders the most direct and obvious incentive to take note of the wishes and views of ordinary people." A landslide is an electoral reality, but the meaning of the landslide is not obvious or certain. Nevertheless, the landslide's redefinition as a mandate does promote the core democratic principle -- that government rests on the consent of the governed; that political reality tells candidates that they should pay attention to these voters.

Contrast this relationship of voters and parties in the more current period. With narrower margins between Republicans and Democrats, even winning politicians cannot claim much of a mandate, while losers become more tempted to dispute the meaning, legitimacy, and even the accuracy of ballot tallies. What plausible mandate could Clinton claim with 43% of the popular vote in 1992, George W. Bush with a margin of two electoral votes in 2000, or Donald Trump with a deficit close to three million popular votes in 2016? As politicians are less empowered to attempt solutions, the overall political system becomes more prone to deadlock, and less equipped to solve problems. ❖

**John Krull, Statehouse File:** Guys with guns keep showing up at the protests following George Floyd's death at the hands of four Minnesota police officers. They've been seen at rallies in several cities. Minneapolis. Buffalo. Even Indianapolis, Crown Point and Evansville. Sometimes they form lines along the streets through which the protesters walk. Sometimes, they just stroll through the crowd. Whatever posture they adopt, they make sure their guns are seen. Generally, their weapons are assault rifles they have slung over their shoulders with straps. It's hard to know what they're trying to accomplish. Maybe they're trying to intimidate the protesters. Maybe they're trying to incite them. Maybe they're trying to prevent violence. Maybe they're trying to provoke it. Maybe they just want to show off their guns. Again, it's difficult to know. What is clear, though, is that these exhibitionist gun-toters represent a big part of the problem that now confronts this nation. Police all around the country have been equipped with weaponry that would have been unthinkable two generations ago. And police officers now often are trained in ways that once would have been considered appropriate only for elite military units. What we Americans don't ask often enough is what brought us to this point. That question can be answered in one word. Guns. The United States has about 4.5% of the world's population. But we Americans own more than 50% of the world's privately owned firearms. ❖



ally assaulting women. But Biden's lead is not only larger than that, it's more secure. Even on October 18, Clinton was only at 46% in the polls with Trump doing terribly at 39 and plenty of undecided and third-party voters. Today's average, by contrast, has Biden at 50% with Trump at 42.

That much smaller number of undecided or third-party voters augurs a more stable race and a more difficult road for Trump to a come-from-behind victory. Of course, people who remember confident forecasts of a Clinton win may have their doubts.

But it's important to recall that this was more a case of bad forecasting than of bad polling. In the 2016 cycle, the non-FiveThirty Eight forecasters generally modeled each state separately. That meant that if Clinton had a narrow polling lead in Pennsylvania, and a narrow lead in Wisconsin, and a narrow lead in Michigan, and a narrow lead in Florida, and a narrow lead in North Carolina, the models treated it as reasonably likely that she might in fact lose one of those states but incredibly unlikely that she would lose all five. ❖

**Jason L. Riley, Wall Street Journal:** Chicago has long been one of the nation's most dangerous big cities, and it seems determined to keep that distinction. The Chicago Sun-Times reports that 18 people were killed on one Sunday, May 31, "making it the single most violent day in Chicago in six decades." Over the full weekend, "25 people were killed in the city, with another 85 wounded by gunfire." Sadly, the only thing remarkable about the episode is that it occurred in the middle of a national discussion about policing. The political left, with a great deal of assistance from the mainstream media, has convinced many Americans that George Floyd's death in police custody is an everyday occurrence for black people in this country, and that racism permeates law enforcement. The reality is that the carnage we witness in Chicago is what's typical, law enforcement has next to nothing to do with black homicides, and the number of interactions between police and low-income blacks is driven by crime rates, not bias. According to the Sun-Times, there were 492 homicides in Chicago last year, and only three of them involved police. So long as blacks are committing more than half of all murders and robberies while making up only 13% of the population, and so long as almost all of their victims are their neighbors, these communities will draw the lion's share of police attention. There's nothing wrong with having a debate about better policing strategies, how to root out bad cops, the role of police unions and so forth. But that conversation needs perspective and context, and the press rarely provides it. People are protesting because the public has been led to believe that racist cops are gunning for blacks, yet the available evidence shows that police use of deadly force has plunged in recent decades, including in big cities with large populations of low-income minorities. In the early 1970s, New York City police officers shot more than 300 people a year. By 2019 that number had fallen to 34. ❖

**Matthew Yglesias, vox:** A Monday morning CNN poll showed Joe Biden with a staggering 14-point lead over President Trump as the electorate's stated level of concern with "race relations" soars and the former vice president is seen as much better equipped to handle the issue. Winning the popular vote by such a large margin would likely mean Democrats overperformed in battleground states and in places like Georgia, Iowa, and Texas that would put the Senate clearly in play. And while the CNN poll is just one poll, and something of an outlier at that, there is now a very clear trend in national polling — Biden was winning before the outbreak of massive national protests in the wake of George Floyd's death, and that lead has gotten bigger. Maybe not 14 points bigger, but bigger than it was before and clearly larger than any lead Hillary Clinton ever held in the 2016 campaign. The polls are getting better for Biden across the board. As Nate Cohn, the New York Times's polling and data guru, explains, every single high-quality national poll with proper education weighting had Biden leading two months ago. And almost all of them have him leading by more today. The exception is the NBC/WSJ poll, which has him flat at a 7-point lead. This is different from Hillary Clinton's polling lead in early June 2016. He's up by about 8 points in the current RealClearPolitics average while Clinton's lead was closer to 5 points. Clinton did break out to about a 7-point lead in mid-October after widespread discussion of a recording in which Trump can be heard talking about sexu-

## Holcomb moves state to Stage 4

INDIANAPOLIS — Life in Indiana is taking another step toward returning to normal amid the coronavirus pandemic (Carden, [NWI Times](#)). Gov. Eric Holcomb announced Wednesday he's authorizing the entire state, including Lake County, to advance to stage 4 of his "Back on Track" reopening plan on Thursday. At stage 4, Hoosiers can gather in groups of up to 250 people, restaurant dining rooms may operate at 75% capacity, bars and nightclubs can reopen at half capacity, and retailers, shopping malls and office workplaces may return to full capacity. In addition, movie theaters, bowling alleys, water parks, amusement parks, museums, zoos, aquariums, and other cultural and tourism sites all are permitted to reopen at 50% capacity. Public playgrounds also are reopening in stage 4, as well as horse and auto racing tracks, albeit initially without spectators. Indiana's casinos are reopening at 6 a.m. Monday. Holcomb still is recommending Hoosiers strongly consider wearing a mask or another face covering while in public, maintain 6 feet of social distancing from others, regularly wash their hands, and take other precautions aimed at minimizing the spread of COVID-19.



## As cases spike, states staying open

WASHINGTON — The coronavirus is spiking in more than a dozen states and intensive care beds are filling again, but several governors have no plans to reimpose shutdown measures or pause reopenings, a sign that the political will to take drastic measures has dissipated even as the virus is still raging ([Politico](#)). In Texas, where total cases have shot up by one-third in the last two weeks, Republican Gov. Greg Abbott is moving ahead with plans to let virtually

all businesses keep expanding capacity by the end of this week. Arkansas Republican Gov. Asa Hutchinson, who insists recent surges in infections and hospitalizations aren't tied to his lifting restrictions, on Wednesday announced the state's reopening will move forward as planned next week.

In North Carolina, which is reporting its highest-ever levels of new infections and hospitalizations, Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper said reimposing restrictions would be a last resort.

Just one state, Utah, has paused the next phase in its reopening plan amid a two-week spike in new cases. "We want to avoid going backwards if we possibly can," said Cooper.

## Legal case against AG Hill stalls

INDIANAPOLIS — A lawyer maintains the Indiana attorney general's office is trying to stymie a court fight on whether Republican Attorney General Curtis Hill can be ousted from office while his law license remains suspended until next week for groping four women during a party ([AP](#)). No action has been taken on the lawsuit filed May 21, four days after Hill began a month-long suspension that was ordered by the state Supreme Court. The court, however, declined to take up a request from Gov. Eric Holcomb on whether he could appoint someone to replace Hill as the state government's top lawyer. The lawsuit filed in Marion County by Democratic lawyer William Groth on behalf of four Indianapolis residents argues Hill no longer meets state law's requirement that the attorney general be "duly licensed to practice law in Indiana" and that he doesn't have the authority to give his legal duties to a deputy until his suspension ends June 17. Groth said lawyers for the attorney general's office objected to his motion for a speedy ruling and slowed down the process of selecting a new judge after the original one assigned to the case stepped down. "The other side is engaged in a game of trying to run

out the clock," Groth said.

## Special prosecutor seeks ISP probe

INDIANAPOLIS — The special prosecutor named to oversee the May 6 shooting death of a black man by an Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department officer asked the Indiana State Police on Wednesday to handle the investigation ([AP](#)). Madison County Deputy Prosecutor Rosemary Khoury says it is best that an independent agency look into the fatal shooting of Dreasjon Reed, 21.

## Biden says Trump seeks to 'steal' vote

NEW YORK — Joe Biden used an appearance on a late-night comedy show Wednesday to address a popular topic of speculation among Democrats: Would President Trump peacefully give up power if he loses November's election? If Trump doesn't, Biden told host Trevor Noah of Comedy Central's "The Daily Show," then he's "absolutely convinced" the U.S. military would step in to assure a transition to a new president ([Fox News](#)). "I promise you," Biden told Noah, "I am absolutely convinced they will escort him from the White House with great dispatch." Biden's confidence may have been bolstered in recent days by the number of military figures who've spoken out publicly against the president after peaceful protesters were forcefully removed from the Lafayette Square area. "This president is going to try to steal this election," Biden said.

## Trump falls to 39% job approval

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- President Donald Trump's job approval rating has fallen to 39% in [Gallup](#) tracking amid nationwide protests about racial injustice.