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YOUR NEWS AND ENTERTAINMENT SOURCE

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# OPINION

## What would Daniels do?

BY RICH LOWRY

In a new Gallup Poll asking who is the national leader of the Republican Party, Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels didn't even rate an asterisk. That's unsurprising. The governor of the country's 16th most populous state won't normally garner much national attention, especially when he's an unassuming, old-school budget cutter.

It's also a shame, because more than any other Republican officeholder, Daniels points the way ahead for his bedraggled party. He's a Reaganite who's not trapped in 1980s nostalgia; he's a fiscal conservative who believes not just in limiting government, but in reforming it to address people's everyday concerns; he's a politician of principle who refuses to sell his program in off-puttingly partisan or ideological terms.

As they grapple with President Barack Obama, Republicans at the national level could do worse than ask themselves: What would Daniels do?

At a recent forum in Washington sponsored by the Bradley Foundation and Hudson Institute, Daniels noted that Ralph Waldo Emerson said every polity

tends to have a party of memory and a party of hope. "We must be, as we have been in our better days, our more successful days, a party of hope," he said.

When Daniels took office, Indiana had an \$800 million deficit. He turned it into a \$1.3 billion surplus (although it will be eaten into in the current downturn). Since 2005, he's saved roughly \$450 million in the state's budget and reduced the state's rate of spending growth from 5.9 percent to 2.8 percent. "I tell you with certainty," Daniels told his Washington audience, "concern about the debt and deficit has not gone out of style."

"Mitch the Knife," as he was nicknamed when he headed George W. Bush's Office of Management and Budget, has matched his fiscal probity with the restless innovation of a devoted policy entrepreneur. He leased the state's faltering toll road to a European operator for nearly \$4 billion. He created health savings accounts for Indiana's poor. He deregulated telecommunications. And he attracted business to the state, with Indiana winning more foreign investment than any other state during the past two years.

A populist outcry against the toll-road

deal dragged Daniels' approval rating down to 37 percent at one point, and his tenure seemed a warning against putting a tightfisted technocrat in elected office. But opinion turned. He won re-election by 18 points last year.

Daniels counsels national Republicans to adopt a "no, but" approach. As he told an interviewer from National Journal, on cap-and-trade he'd say: "No, let's not double the tax on poor people in the vain hope of moving the world's thermometer. Here's a way to conserve energy and protect the environment that doesn't impoverish the nation." On health care, he'd say, "Sure, let's get people covered with health insurance, but here's a much better way."

His success has stoked speculation about a possible 2012 presidential run. Daniels has made Shermanesque disavowals of national ambitions, and expressed confidence that new national leaders will soon emerge. When they do, they should heed the lesson and message of Mitch Daniels, an exemplar of a winning conservatism. ■

— Rich Lowry is editor of the *National Review*.

## GUEST OPINION

### Youths sparkle at CEO Academy

#### Junior Achievement event prompts bright ideas

On June 19, I was privileged to attend the final session of the Junior Achievement CEO Academy at Florida Gulf Coast University's Lutgert College of Business. This weeklong program sponsored by Junior Achievement of Southwest Florida involved 21 high school students from Lee and Collier counties, 15 business and academia leaders and five former Business Hall of Fame laureates.

The students, split into five groups, had four days to work with the business leaders to develop a business plan and to prepare a presentation of same for the final program on June 19. At that time they would have 10 minutes to present their plan, using Power Point, and the panel of the five honorees would judge them. The judges also had 10 minutes during which time they could ask questions and challenge the presenters. When all five teams had completed their presentations, the panel deliberated and ultimately chose the winner of this competition.

To be present and watch and listen to what these young people had accomplished in four short days was remark-

able. Of course, kudos must also go to the business experts who coached them, but to come up with such fabulous ideas and to fully develop a complete business plan in such short time was absolutely remarkable. Those of us in the audience. We all agreed it would take us four days just to come up with an idea, and even then it would probably not be as good as what these students presented.

The winning team chose as its vehicle an electronic bracelet that would be rented by parents visiting a theme park. The bracelet would be applied to the child's wrist and locked in place. The parents would receive a card that would allow them to insert it into any of a series of monitoring stations throughout the park to see exactly where their kids were at that moment. The park would charge \$15 for each bracelet rented and before leaving the park, the staff would unlock the bracelet and it would be returned to them. The business plan involved setting up the project and selling it to the theme parks that would then set up the monitoring stations and a central scanning tower that would capture the electronic information. If a child were to leave the park without returning the bracelet or if an abduction would occur and the child was forcibly removed from the park, sensors at all exits would

immediately sound an alarm to not only let the staff know that a bracelet is being taken out of the park, but also at what exit. So if abduction were in progress, it would be easy for security to stop the crime and arrest the culprits.

The business plans included complete financials and logistics for accomplishing what was being proposed. During the questioning by the panel, the kids did a remarkable job of providing answers to questions raised and countering challenges that were posed.

To witness such a performance is to see the kind of training that has been and is being provided by Junior Achievement in our schools. If anyone is worried about the future of this country, a demonstration such as the one we witnessed sets aside any such fears.

Junior Achievement needs volunteers from the business world and financial support to expand its programs in the schools that it serves. For those of you familiar with what Junior Achievement accomplishes, please tell your friends. For those not familiar with this wonderful organization, contact Junior Achievement at: 225-2590, or visit their Web site [www.jaswfl.org](http://www.jaswfl.org). ■

— Dr. Max J. Kalm  
*Bentley Village*

## MOMENTS IN TIME

► On **July 1, 1941**, NBC broadcasts the first TV commercial to be sanctioned by the Federal Communications Commission. Advertiser Bulova paid \$9 to advertise its watches on the air during the broadcast of a Dodgers-Phillies game.

► On **July 2, 1937**, the Lockheed aircraft carrying American aviator Amelia Earhart and navigator Frederick Noonan is reported missing near Howland Island in the Pacific. The pair was

attempting to fly around the world, and no trace of them has ever been found.

► On **July 3, 1908**, writer Mary Frances Kennedy Fisher is born in Albion, Mich. She was a highly productive writer, producing nine books on food, including "How to Cook a Wolf" (1942).

► On **July 4, 1826**, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the second and third presidents of the United States, die on the 50th anniversary of the adoption of

the Declaration of Independence. Both men had been central in the drafting of the historic document.

► On **July 5, 1865**, in the East End of London, revivalist preacher William Booth and his wife Catherine establish the Christian Mission, later known as the Salvation Army. Soup kitchens were the first in a long line of various projects designed to provide physical and spiritual assistance to the destitute. ■