

A pocketful of politics

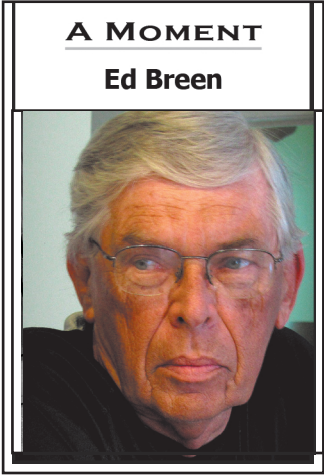
A pocketful of politics, scraps and notes left over and buried under the trauma of 2020.

An Indiana boy is about to become the world's most influential traffic cop and gatekeeper. Ron Klain, who graduated from North Central High School in Indianapolis more years ago than he wants to talk about, has been named the chief of staff in the Biden White House, presuming Mr. Biden is allowed to move in anytime soon.

Klain and Biden go back a long way to Senate and vice presidential days. Klain was Biden's go-to guy when Biden was vice president to Barak Obama. In fact, Ron Klain's first taste of big-time politics was 40 years ago when he worked for Birch Bayh back in 1980 when Bayh made a short-lived run at the White House.

"His deep, varied experience and capacity to work with people all across the political spectrum is precisely what I need," Biden said of Klain last week.

Klain is close to Indi-



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ana Democrats and participated in a Zoom meeting of grassroots volunteers before the election.

"There's no one doing more to help our party win than Mayor Pete Buttigieg," Klain said on that call. Klain also advised Sen. Joe Donnelly during the 2018 election cycle.

It's usually good to have a Hoosier somewhere in the White House.

On a less grand scale, a Homestead High School alum from suburban Fort Wayne has joined the Biden presidential transition team. She is Afua Bruce, a 2005 Purdue University grad in computer engineering who

worked in the White House when Biden was vice-president. She and her parents, Adolph and Amma Bruce lived in Fort Wayne before moving to Michigan in the late '90s.

She is one of 29 volunteers assigned to reviewing jobs and needs in the Justice Department. Not incidentally, there are already 500 members of the transition team at work on reshaping the government starting January 20.

As some prepare to move in, obviously others are readying to vacate – or so we assume. Among them, of course, is Vice President Mike Pence, and that begs the question: Just what will Mr. Pence do to make a living? Not that there's any danger of going on food stamps or anything like that; he does have a Congressional pension and an Indiana governor's pension and now a vice presidential pension check coming in. But still, he has to do something and the best guess right now is that he and Karen will move back to Indianapolis, at least short term,



Ron Klain

and he'll haul in \$50, \$60, \$70,000 a gig doing Republican dinner speeches.

There's also speculation that he will be courted big-time by Fox News. Remember, his day job used to be radio broadcasting. As an aside, the Pences do not own a home. Four years ago they moved from the Governor's mansion on North Meridian Street in Indianapolis to the old Naval Observatory in northwest Washington, the official veep residence.

Yet to be determined is what will become of a whole busload of Hoosiers who went to Washington when Pence was charged with popu-

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lating a government in 2016, mainly because Donald Trump had no idea how to do it.

Alex Azar is Secretary of Health and Human Services, Seema Verma runs the Medicare program, Steve Akard is in the State Department, Marty Obst is Pence's political chief, Kara Brooks was communications director at the White House, Brandye Hendrickson has been running much of the U. S. Department of Transportation, and Dr. Jerome Adams is Surgeon General, and the list goes on. All have Hoosier roots and ties and it seems likely that some will return to the home place.

One headed the other way is another member of the Bayh family. This time it's Beau Bayh, son of Birch and his second

wife, Kitty, whom he married years ago after Marvella died of cancer. Thus Evan Bayh and Beau Bayh are half-brothers.

Anyway, Beau, who was born and reared in Washington and Maryland and graduated from Indiana University, was introducing himself to Hoosiers this fall while working for Democratic gubernatorial candidate Woody Myers.

Reminiscent of the '80s when brother Evan was trotting around Hoosierland while working in Wayne Townsend's campaign. A reporter got confused when Wayne and Evan walked into an Elkhart gathering and asked young Evan what he was running for. Wayne handled that with his usual aplomb.



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