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A Look Ahead to 2008 (Part II)

By Terry Mitchell

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Last week, I began my look ahead to the 2008 presidential campaign with the potential Republican candidates. Today, I will continue by taking a look at the potential Democratic candidates. Among them are New York Senator and former First Lady Hillary Clinton, former Vice President Al Gore, New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, Indiana Senator Evan Bayh, Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack, former Vermont Governor Howard Dean, North Carolina Senator John Edwards, Illinois Senator-elect Barack Obama, Nevada Senator Harry Reid, and Virginia Governor Mark Warner.

Hillary Clinton would seem to have the inside track to the Democratic nomination for 2008. However, she could be seen as a far too polarizing figure whose candidacy in the general election could bring out the evangelicals in droves for the Republicans as John Kerry's did this year. She will probably have to moderate a bit over the next three years in order to prove that she could win a general election. If she can't do this, the Democrats may seek a candidate with broader appeal. Right now, though, the nomination appears to be hers to lose.

After losing such a close election to George W. Bush in 2000, I believe Al Gore will make another run for the presidency. Those who would summarily dismiss him as no longer being a viable future presidential candidate are ignoring history. Richard Nixon was written off by almost everyone after losing to JFK in 1960 and then losing his California gubernatorial bid to Pat Brown in 1962. He came back six years later to win the presidency and then win re-election four years after that. However, Democrats are apparently less tolerant of their former losers than Republicans are. Democrats seem to be constantly looking for a fresh face. Gore would have to convince Democratic primary voters that he's more "electable" than their up and coming stars. That could ultimately prove to be a difficult task.

Bill Richardson served 15 years in the House of Representatives before becoming U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations and subsequently Energy Secretary under Bill Clinton. Richardson is known as a moderate Democrat and is a member of that wing's Democratic Leadership Council (DLC). Being the governor of western state could work to his advantage, although New Mexico switched from "blue" to "red" in the recent presidential election. He may take a hit politically because of that. Due to his previous ties to the Clinton Administration, he might be viewed as an acceptable alternative to Hillary,

should her candidacy not catch on.

Many Democrats may see Evan Bayh as just the candidate they need in the wake of Kerry's recent loss. He is a strong Democrat from a solidly "red" state, i.e., he was overwhelmingly elected to a second term as senator even as George W. Bush overwhelmingly carried his state in the presidential election (as all Republican candidates have in recent presidential elections). Bayh had previously served two terms as governor of Indiana. He is one of the leaders of the moderate Democrat movement. His father, Birch Bayh, was also a U.S. Senator and ran in the Democratic primaries for president in 1976, but was defeated by Jimmy Carter. Bayh is my dark horse pick to take the nomination. The only negative about him is that he seems to have a smirk on his face all the time and looks like he belongs on a TV show like Saturday Night Live!

In 1998, Tom Vilsack was elected Iowa's first Democratic governor in over 30 years and was re-elected in 2002. He is one of the most well respected and influential governors in the U.S. He is one of the established, but relatively unknown, players in the Democratic Party. Vilsack may be one of the people whom Democrats will look to following Kerry's loss. He refused to take sides prior to January's Iowa Democratic Caucuses, although his endorsement was sought by all the leading candidates. His wife endorsed Kerry and that seemed to help propel him to victory there. As is the case with Bill Richardson in New Mexico, Vilsack might have to explain why Iowa went from "blue" to "red" in the last presidential election. Vilsack's candidacy would render the 2008 Iowa Democratic Caucuses meaningless and place all the early emphasis on New Hampshire. A similar thing happened in 1992 when Iowa Senator Tom Harkin ran for president.

Howard Dean will likely make another run for the presidency. However, with a much stronger field, he will find the going tougher this time. Money will be even tighter as the big names will be pulling in most of it. His collections in small amounts might still work, to a certain extent. He will not be able to sneak up on anyone this time and the war in Iraq may no longer be an issue by the time 2008 rolls around. His best chance for the nomination is to play the "liberal" card while most everyone else will undoubtedly be playing the "moderate" card this time. At least that strategy might garner him enough delegates to allow him to cut a deal for the vice presidential nomination. Rumors have it that Dean is interested in taking the chairmanship of the Democratic National Committee. If he does, that would preclude him from running for president or vice president in 2008.

John Edwards will face an uphill climb for the Democratic nomination. Within a couple of months, he will just be a former one-term senator, as he didn't seek re-election this year. However, the biggest obstacle for him will be his status as a vice presidential nominee on a losing ticket. Candidates in both parties who lose in their bid for vice president, without having first won, have great difficulty getting a presidential nomination. For example, Joe Lieberman's primary campaign crashed and burned after the New Hampshire Primary in January. Before this year, Sargent Shriver (in 1976) and Edmund Muskie (in 1972) were the last failed vice presidential nominees to seek the Democratic presidential nomination and they were both rejected. On the Republican side, Bob Dole was finally able to capture his party's nomination in 1996 after a failed bid for vice president in 1976. However, even he was turned away in his first two attempts (1980 and 1988). On the positive side for Edwards, he will have more time to campaign than most of his opponents. Only Gore, Dean, and Mark Warner might have similar amounts of free time to campaign.

Barack Obama is seen as a very promising young future star for the Democratic Party. He is a state senator who was just elected in a landslide (and that's an understatement) to the U.S. Senate from Illinois. He was featured as the keynote speaker at the Democratic convention in Boston this summer. However, Obama is still a relatively unknown quantity and he'll have to prove himself in the Senate. He has, by far, the least political experience of all the candidates on this list. There have been many politicians from the past with similar potentials whose careers have fizzled out before they ever really got started. Even if Obama can live up to all the hype surrounding him, he still might not be viewed as presidential timber until 2012. A vice presidential nomination in 2008 might be a better bet for him.

Harry Reid has just been elected to his fourth term in the U.S. Senate and will likely take over as Minority Leader from Tom Daschle, who was recently defeated. Before coming to the Senate, Reid served as Nevada's Lieutenant Governor and served two terms in the House of Representatives. Since 1999, he has been the Assistant Democratic Leader in the Senate. Should Reid decide to run, the one advantage he'll have over his opponents is that he'll be acting as the official spokesman for the party on many issues and will therefore get plenty of free media exposure.

Mark Warner was elected governor of Virginia in 2001 after losing a closer than expected Senate race to John Warner five years earlier. Virginia law does not permit its governor to succeed himself, so Warner will not be allowed to run for re-election next year. Therefore, he will be able to devote himself to full-time campaigning for president, beginning in January 2006, if he so chooses. The fact that Warner is a Democratic governor in a strong "red" state will be a positive for him. However, even though the Republican presidential candidate has carried Virginia every time since 1968, a Democratic governor in the state is not unusual. In fact, since 1977, Virginia has elected a Democratic governor every time a Republican is in the White House. The opposite has been true when a Democrat is in the White House. If Warner is nominated by the Democrats and George Allen is nominated by the Republicans, the Mother of Presidents will be guaranteed to have produced our next Chief Executive.

Obviously, not all the candidates on the Republican list I discussed last or this week's Democratic list will actually run for president in 2008. Chances are, only about half on each list will run. At this point, however, no one can really say with a great deal of certainty which ones they will be. In addition, some candidates whom no one is predicting right now will decide to run. At this time in 2000, who would have predicted that Howard Dean would run in 2004? Who outside of Vermont even knew who he was back then? In politics, the only thing you know for sure is that you don't really know anything for sure. Uncertainty and unpredictability are what make politics interesting to me, but it's still fun to try to guess things and match wits with other pundits once in a while.

Terry Mitchell is a software engineer, free-lance writer, and trivia buff from Hopewell, VA. He operates a website, <http://www.commenterry.com>, on which he posts commentaries on various subjects such as politics, technology, religion, health and well-being, personal finance, and sports. His commentaries offer a unique point of view that is not often found in mainstream media.

2.5Mn Converged Devices Units Push GPS Driven European Handheld Markets by 19%

By James Marriot

The use of Global positioning system (GPS) receivers has increasingly become affordable to the masses during the last 18 months, as these units are now available for less than \$100.

A number of other recently studies conducted, worldwide, also examines the market for GPS integrated circuits (ICs). Though unit growth will be very strong in the GPS market, continued pricing pressure for ICs will temper overall revenue growth to about that of the overall equipment market.

The latest development and evolution of surveying and mobile mapping technologies opens new avenues for the acquisition, update, fast, and real-time online processing of data. Currently mobile mapping systems are supported by a series of advanced technologies, including GPS and inertial navigation systems (INS), imaging sensors of high-resolution charge coupled device (CCD) camera, satellite synthetic aperture radar (SAR), multi spectral and hyper spectral sensors, portable computers and highly intelligent processing/automation algorithms.

Experts, Analysts, Corporate Heads Believe that the current role of government in global competition for GPS-related sales is relatively limited, largely involving regulatory matters such as certification of GPS in safety-of-life applications and export controls on military-grade GPS equipment.

"This consistent growth in existing markets along with the emerging applications, has forecasted the global GPS market to reach \$ 22bn by 2008." Quotes a Technology & Market research firm RNCOS.

Talking about the technological front of GPS Industry Market, Experts at RNCOS believe that, "GPS is the engine driving much of the telematics industry. It has also reformed the automotive platform by enabling tracking a teen's use of the family car to automatic tax collection for interstate trucking companies".

The study, "World Global Positioning Systems Market Update (2006-2008)" examines the current status and trends of the global positioning systems industry. Covered areas include wireless and in-vehicle navigation, as well as growing segments such as recreation, communication, people tracking, marine and surveying, among others.

As per the report the Analysts at RNCOS predict that "Although new GPS markets are anticipated to reach mass-market status increasing at a rapid speed with unit sales expected to reach 30 million by 2010 the GPS industry will continue to spin off new application markets followed by demand for Satellite radio valued 15.7 million in next 5 years."

For each segment, total market value is forecasted to 2008 in addition to regional totals. An analysis of key market drivers and barriers for each segment is presented. The report also quantifies the market for GPS IC shipments, ASP and revenue to 2008.

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