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## Mourdock determined to not compromise on principles

By Kerry Hubartt

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**Politics is all** about compromise. Just ask Richard Lugar.

The veteran Indiana senator responded to Richard Mourdock's primary election victory a few hours after first graciously pledging to support him by condemning his partisan ways. "In effect," wrote Lugar, "what he has promised in this campaign is reflexive votes for a rejectionist orthodoxy and rigid opposition to the actions and proposals of the other party. His answer to the inevitable roadblocks he will encounter in Congress is merely to campaign for more Republicans who embrace the same partisan outlook. He has pledged his support to groups whose prime mission is to cleanse the Republican party of those who stray from orthodoxy as they see it."

And the 80-year-old six-term senator said that is "not conducive to problem-solving or governance.

"I don't remember a time when so many topics have become politically unmentionable in one party or the other," Lugar said.

"There is little likelihood that either party will be able to impose their favored budget solutions on the other without some degree of compromise," Lugar continued. "Our political system is losing its ability to even explore alternatives."

As Donald J. Boudreaux and Dwight R. Lee wrote some time ago in the *Cato Journal*, published by the Washington, D.C.-based libertarian think-tank the Cato Institute, "Regardless of the terms employed, few doubt that politics is indeed the art of compromise. Politicians unwilling to compromise are typically labeled ideologues — a label not regarded as a badge of honor among members of the political class. Moreover, politicians who refuse to compromise seldom win and hold on to office for the obvious reason that uncompromising politicians garner too little pork to send home to voters. Successful politicians early on learn the survival value of compromise."

Murdock says among his principles are reducing the size of government and lowering taxes. Any person committed to issues of principle may see the quest for compromise and bipartisanship as a betrayal of those principles.

Soledad O'Brien asked Mourdock about his notion of compromise on CNN Wednesday, saying, "In fact, the only compromise you'll do is really getting other people on the other side of the aisle to come to your side of the aisle, which I guess is the definition against compromise."

"Well, it is the definition of political effectiveness," Mourdock replied.

Does that mean he will not be effective in Washington as Lugar believes? Must he compromise the principles that may take him there if he wins the general election in November? Would that be a betrayal of those who voted for him?

As Mourdock said to O'Brien on Wednesday, "You never compromise on principles."

*Kerry Hubartt is editor of The News-Sentinel.*