



An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

Reference Code: 2021/97/11

Creator(s): Department of the Taoiseach

Accession Conditions: Open

Copyright: National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

AMBASÁID NA HÉIREANN

TELEPHONE: (202) 462-3939

FAX: (202) 232-5993



EMBASSY OF IRELAND

2234 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008

FAX NO: 114**15 FEBRUARY 1995****TO HQ FROM WASHINGTON
FOR G CORR FROM M COLLINS****RE: SENATOR MITCHELL**

I attach a general biographical note on Senator Mitchell as promised. The following supplemental points may also be useful:

- In taking up the job as Special Adviser to the President and Secretary of State for Economic Initiatives in Ireland, Senator Mitchell gave clear expression to the pride that he has in his Irish roots. It was the first appointment that he took upon his retirement from the Senate. While in the Congress he kept a watchful eye on Irish affairs; he has met most Irish political leaders over the years. Most recently, he met the Tánaiste in Washington last September.
- Since his appointment (which is of 130 days duration) Senator Mitchell has underlined the inclusive nature of the Washington Conference on Investment which he is particularly mandated by the White House to organize. He has made a point of engaging the support of Congress for this initiative and has met with a number of key members to brief them on his work. He plans also to meet with members of Congress following his return to brief them on his visit to Ireland.
- Senator Mitchell's genial temperament, shrewd political instinct, dedication to the task at hand and commitment to finding compromise without sacrificing goals earned him both popularity and respect. Towards the end of the last Congress he was considered both for membership of the Supreme Court and as Commissioner for Baseball, but he was prevailed upon to remain as Majority Leader to assist in the passage of health care reform (this, of course, did not make it through the last Congress).
- Senator Mitchell had announced his retirement from the Senate early last year and did not stand for re-election in November.
- At the end of last year, Senator Mitchell married his longtime companion, Heather Machlachlan (this is Mitchell's second marriage).

(2)

In 1979, he was appointed a U.S. District Court Judge. In 1980, he resigned to accept appointment to the Senate to complete the unexpired term of Senator Muskie, who had resigned to become Secretary of State. Senator Mitchell is the only former Federal Judge serving in the Congress.

After trailing in the public opinion polls by 36 points, Senator Mitchell rallied to win election to the Senate in his own right in November, 1982, receiving 61 percent of the votes cast.

Since 1981, Senator Mitchell has served on the Veterans Affairs Committee. He is a member of the American Legion, Amvets, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. He has been particularly active on the issue of veterans' health care.

Senator Mitchell has served on the Environment and Public Works Committee since 1980. He is particularly active in clean air issues, the Superfund toxic cleanup effort, nuclear power plant safety, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act and resource recovery and recycling.

In his work on the Finance Committee, of which he has been a member since 1981, Senator Mitchell has concentrated on health care, particularly the Medicare program, welfare reform, and the 1986 tax reform act. He has played a leading role in support of affordable housing programs as well as programs affecting children, such as foster care and child care.

Senator Mitchell is a member of the Senate's National Ocean Policy Study group, which focuses on issues crucial to the fisheries industry in New England and the marine science community.

From 1984 to 1986, Senator Mitchell served as Chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, heading the successful effort to regain a Democratic majority in the Senate.

In the 100th Congress, Senator Mitchell was named Deputy President Pro Tempore of the Senate. He also served as a member of the Senate Committee investigating the Iran-Contra affair.

Legislatively, Mitchell led the effort for re-enactment of the Clean Water Act over a presidential veto in 1987 and authored the groundbreaking Indoor Air Pollution Act, to protect against radon and other indoor air pollutants.

2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
1

(3)

Mitchell's work led to the enactment of nursing home standards and evaluation of medical care outcomes in 1987. He is spearheading the effort to provide health care access to all Americans today and for comprehensive long-term care coverage for Medicare beneficiaries. He wrote the law that helps save America's historic lighthouses, and the law that makes Daylight Savings Time begin the first week of April each year.

In November, 1988, Senator Mitchell was elected to his second full term of office, winning with 81 percent of the votes, the highest percentage ever received by a candidate in a state-wide election in Maine history.

At the conclusion of the 100th Congress, his colleagues elected him to be the Senate Majority Leader, a post he assumed in January 1989. He was reelected unanimously to that leadership role in the 102nd Congress.

In the 101st Congress, he led the effort to enact oil spill legislation and spearheaded the successful 1990 reauthorization of the Clean Air Act, including new controls on acid rain and air toxics, the first rewrite of this crucial legislation in 13 years.

Mitchell was also instrumental in passage of an increase in the minimum wage, the nation's first child care bill, landmark legislation extending civil rights protections to the disabled, and helped negotiate the 1990 budget agreement, a record \$490 billion federal deficit reduction. As Majority Leader, Senator Mitchell is also an ex officio member of the Senate Intelligence Committee.

For three consecutive years, 1988 - 1990, a poll of senior-level Congressional staff found that Mitchell is regarded by this knowledgeable group as "the most respected Member of the Senate."

Senator Mitchell is the author of two books. With his colleague, Senator Bill Cohen of Maine, he wrote, Men of Zeal, describing the Iran-Contra investigation. In 1990, Senator Mitchell wrote his second book, World on Fire, describing the threat of the greenhouse effect and recommending steps to curb it.

Senator Mitchell has one daughter, Andrea, and makes his home in Portland, Maine.

**Biographical Information****Senator George
Mitchell****of Maine****U.S. Senate Majority Leader**

George J. Mitchell was born in Waterville, Maine, on August 20, 1933. He is the fourth of five children of the late Mary Saad and George Mitchell. Mary Saad Mitchell emigrated as a child from Lebanon and was a factory worker in textile mills in the Waterville area. George Mitchell was the orphaned son of Irish immigrants, adopted by a Waterville family. He worked as a laborer.

Senator Mitchell attended Waterville public schools and Bowdoin College. In high school and college he played basketball. He graduated from Bowdoin in 1954 and then served in Berlin, Germany, as an officer in the U.S. Army Counter Intelligence Corps until 1956.

Senator Mitchell received an LL.B. degree from Georgetown University Law Center, where he attended night school and worked during the day as an insurance claims adjuster. After earning his law degree in 1960, he was a trial lawyer in the Antitrust Division of the Justice Department in Washington until 1962, when he became Executive Assistant to Senator Edmund S. Muskie of Maine.

Senator Mitchell returned to Maine in 1965 and entered private law practice with the firm of Jensen, Baird, Gardner and Henry. He was active in the Maine Democratic Party, serving as State Chairman from 1966 to 1968. In 1969, he became the Democratic National Committeeman from Maine, a post he held until 1977.

In 1971, Senator Mitchell served as an Assistant County Attorney for Cumberland County, and in 1977 he became the U.S. Attorney for Maine.