EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewer’s Briefing Materials
George Mitchell Interview, 09/06/2011

Robert A. Martin, Research Director

Miller Center Documents¹

- George Mitchell Timeline.
- George Mitchell Fact Sheet.

Secondary Source Materials

- Adam Clymer interview with Nick Littlefield, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, 01/30/1999.

Oral History Interviews

- Samuel Beer interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 02/17/2005.
- Jeff Blattner interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 03/30/2007.
- David Broder interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 12/01/2006.
- Sheila Burke interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 07/27/2007.

¹ These are original documents created by Miller Center researchers for the Edward M. Kennedy Oral History Project. Please acknowledge credit for any use of these materials.
Health care consultation, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 12/12/2007.

John Danforth interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 10/25/2005.

Thomas Daschle interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 04/29/2009.

John Farrell interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 07/13/2006.


Ira Magaziner interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 11/19/2007.

Nick Littlefield interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 02/14/2009.

Barbara Mikulski interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 09/26/2006.

Martin Nolan interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 09/14/2006.

Carey Parker interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 11/10/2008.

Albert Reynolds interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 09/25/2005.

James Sasser interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 05/25/2006.


Trina Vargo interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 11/07/2008.

Sharon Waxman interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 12/19/2008.


Edward M. Kennedy interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 03/20/2006.


Edward M. Kennedy interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 05/28/2008.

**George J. Mitchell Timeline**
*Prepared by Andrew Meade McGee and Bryan Craig*
*Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia, 12/08/2009*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>George John Mitchell is born in Waterville, Kennebec County, Maine.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1954-1956</td>
<td>Mitchell serves in the U.S. army as an officer in the Counter-Intelligence Corps in Berlin, Germany. (<em>Biographical Directory of the United States Congress</em>)</td>
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<td>1962-1965</td>
<td>Mitchell is executive assistant to Senator Edmund Muskie (D-ME). (<em>Encyclopedia of World Biography</em>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1966-1968</td>
<td>Mitchell is state chair for the Maine Democratic Party. (Gould, p. 33)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Mitchell serves as deputy campaign manager for Muskie’s vice presidential campaign. (<em>Encyclopedia of World Biography</em>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Mitchell serves as deputy campaign manager for Muskie’s presidential campaign. (Gould, p. 38)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Mitchell runs for governor of Maine. He wins the Democratic primary, but loses the general election to Independent James Longley. (Gould, pp. 44-45)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Mitchell is appointed a U.S. district judge in northern Maine. (Gould, p. 46)</td>
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May

Mitchell is appointed by Maine Governor Joseph Brennan to complete Muskie’s Senate term after Muskie becomes U.S. Secretary of State under Jimmy Carter. (Encyclopedia of World Biography)

August

Edward M. Kennedy (EMK) withdraws his bid for the presidency in a powerful speech to the Democratic National Convention.

November

Reagan wins the 1980 presidential election. The Republicans win control of the Senate and EMK loses chairmanship of the Judiciary Committee.

1982

November

Mitchell is elected to the U.S. Senate with 61% of the vote over Republican Congressman David F. Emery. He privately decides to run for only two terms. (Encyclopedia of World Biography; George Mitchell, Making Peace, New York: Alfred Knopf, 1999, pp. 8-9)

December

EMK announces he will not run for president in 1984.

1983

January

Mitchell becomes a member of the Subcommittee on Health in the Finance Committee. He remains on this committee until 1994. EMK begins serving on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

1985-1986

Mitchell serves as chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC). (The George J. Mitchell Papers Website)

1985

Important issues that EMK works on in 1985 include the Drug Export Act, Medicare-Medicaid fund restoration, and emergency hospital care for the poor.

1986

Important issues that EMK works on in 1986 include Medicare deductible, the Omnibus Health Act, infant mortality, catastrophic health insurance, and AIDS research.

November

The Democrats regain control of the Senate in the mid-term elections. Mitchell is rewarded by becoming the deputy president pro tempore while Senator John Kerry (D-MA) takes over the DSCC. This largely ceremonial position has not been filled since its creation in 1977, but it keeps Mitchell within the Senate leadership. (1986 Congressional Quarterly Almanac, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, Inc, 1986, pp. 3-4)

The Iran-Contra scandal breaks in the media.

1987

Important issues that EMK works on in 1987 include minimum health benefits for workers.
Mitchell divorces his wife Sally. (Gould, p. 72)

January  EMK becomes chairman of the Labor and Human Resources Committee, as well as the Judiciary’s Immigration and Refugee Affairs Subcommittee. Mitchell becomes Chairman of the Subcommittee on Health in the Finance Committee.

On the 6th, Mitchell becomes a member of the Senate Select Committee on Secret Military Assistance to Iran and the Nicaraguan Opposition. Eight of these eleven members had voted in favor of the $100 million in Contra aid in March 1986. Mitchell did not vote for aid. (*1986 CQ Almanac*, pp. 432, 435)

February  Congress passes the Clean Water Act with EMK and Mitchell as co-sponsors. Mitchell is one of the leaders to pass the law, and it includes a $100 million grant to clean up Boston Harbor. (*1987 CQ Almanac*, pp. 291-296)

May  Mitchell co-sponsors a bill on catastrophic medical expenses (S 1127) that passes the Finance Committee. During mark-up, Mitchell and Finance Committee Chairman Lloyd Bentsen (D-TX) promise to work on a drug prescription benefit and a limit to out of pocket expenses. (*1987 CQ Almanac*, pp. 500-501)


Fall  EMK leads the fight in the Senate to defeat the Bork nomination.

October  The Senate passes a bill to provide the elderly with insurance against catastrophic illness. The measure entitles Medicare beneficiaries to increased nursing home coverage, an outpatient drug benefit, and places limits on out of pocket expenses. The bill includes an amendment offered by EMK and Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) that guarantees that if one spouse enters a nursing home, the other would not be left impoverished. (*The Washington Post*, 10/28/1987, 11/08/1987)

November  EMK co-sponsors Mitchell’s bill to amend the Clean Air Act. This is the third attempt since 1982 to overhaul the 1977 law. (*THOMAS on S 1894; 1987 CQ Almanac*, pp. 299-300)

On the 19th, the Iran-Contra Committee report is published placing the responsibility directly on President Reagan. (Cohen and Mitchell, p. 275)

1988
April
On the 12th, Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV) announces his retirement as Senate Majority Leader. Mitchell is deemed an early front-runner for the post. *CQ Quarterly* later notes his appeal “to younger members, liberals, Easterners and those with strong interest in environmental issues.” (*CQ Weekly, 12/03/1988*)

On the 21st, Mitchell introduces legislation to create a federal program to help pay for the costs of long-term care at a cost of $14 billion per year. It creates a long-term care fund within Medicare to help pay for nursing home stay, home health care, and respite care for families. It goes to the Finance Committee where hearings are held in June. (*1988 CQ Almanac, p. 295*)

Summer
Reagan signs the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act, which includes EMK’s and Mikulski’s spousal impoverishment amendment. Mitchell states, “As the benefits become clear to people over time, I think the program will become widely accepted.” (*1988 CQ Almanac, p. 291*) The law is repealed in 1989, but the spousal impoverishment amendment is retained.

Mitchell negotiates with United Mine Workers of America (UMW), Byrd, and other Senators historically opposed to clean air legislation to develop a less stringent bill. Although legislation does not pass this year, his stature as a negotiator and candidate for Majority Leader rises. (*1988 CQ Almanac, p. 137*)

November
Mitchell is re-elected to the U.S. Senate with 81% of the vote over Republican challenger Jasper Wyman. (*Encyclopedia of World Biography*)

On the 27th, EMK endorses Mitchell for Majority Leader. EMK states, “He will be an eloquent and effective spokesman for Democrats and the Senate… He will be an excellent negotiator in dealing with the White House, especially on the deficit.” (*The Boston Globe, 11/27/1988*)

On the 29th, Mitchell receives 27 of the 55 total first ballot votes cast for Majority Leader in the Senate Democratic Caucus. His opponents, centrist J. Bennett Johnston of Louisiana and Daniel K. Inouye of Hawaii, each receive 14 votes. Unable to expand on their voting blocs, both men move for Mitchell’s vote by acclamation. (*CQ Weekly, 12/03/1988*)

1989
Important issues EMK works on this year include national service legislation, the minimum wage, national health insurance legislation, the Employee Pension Protection Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), flag burning, aid to Poland and Hungary, the Motor Voter Act, elderly health care, air travel smoking ban, the Tower nomination, aid to El Salvador, SDI, Tienanmen Square, nurse immigration, and VISTA.

EMK and Don Riegle (D-MI), chair of the Finance Committee’s Subcommittee on Health for Families and the Uninsured, create the Bi-Committee Bi-Partisan Senate Working Group on Universal Access for universal health care reform.
They invite Mitchell, Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Robert Dole (R-KS), Daniel Moynihan (D-NY), John Rockefeller (D-WV), David Durenberger (R-MN), Robert Packwood (R-OR), David Pryor (D-AR), Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH), and John Chafee (R-RI). For the first six months, it is mostly staff level meetings. Over the next year or two, members meet every week or two in Riegle’s office. (1989 CQ Almanac, p. 171; Clymer interview with Nick Littlefield, Cambridge, Mass., 01/30/1999, p. 2; Mark A. Peterson, “Report from Congress: Momentum toward Health Care Reform in the U.S. Senate,” Journal of Health Politics, Fall 1992, pp. 556-557)

**January**

Mitchell begins to serve as chairman of the Democratic Policy Committee.

**July**

EMK, Mitchell, and other Democrats announce that they have merged a half dozen or so national service proposals into one bill (S 1430). But the bill goes nowhere. Bush, who had announced his “thousand points of light” initiative in May, criticizes EMK’s proposal which would pay “volunteers.” EMK responds saying: “We have always had aspects of volunteerism in this country which are completely voluntary and some of which are paid for.” EMK mentions the Peace Corps created during his brother’s administration as an example. (1989 CQ Almanac, pp. 195-196)

**September**

Mitchell appoints EMK as chairman of a Senate education task force. This is announced a week before a White House summit on education. (The Boston Globe, 09/21/1989)

**November**

On the 7th, EMK co-sponsors Mitchell’s North American Wetlands Conservation Act of 1989. It becomes law in December. It establishes a long-term, joint commitment with Mexico, Canada, and the U.S. to implement a plan to conserve wetlands and waterfowl. (THOMAS on S 804)

On the 8th, Congress passes legislation to increase the minimum wage from $3.35/hr. to $4.25/hr. effective over two years with a lower training wage for teenage employees. EMK and Mitchell had sponsored a bill that would set the wage at $4.65/hr., but Bush had threatened to veto any bill higher than $4.25/hr. (Adam Clymer, Edward Kennedy: A Biography, New York: William Morrow & Company, 1999, p. 449; 1989 CQ Almanac, pp. 333-340)

**1990**

Important issues EMK works on in 1990 include the ADA, civil rights legislation, the Ryan White Comprehensive Aids Act of 1990, Nutrition Labeling and Education Act of 1990, Head Start Improvement Act of 1990, child care, vocational education, the National Community Service Act of 1990, NEA funding, the National Health Service Corps Revitalization, NIH funding for women’s research, Housing Trust Fund, aid to Chile, trip to Soviet Union, organ transplantation, TB, home health care, Family and Medical Leave, Immigration Act of 1990, Ireland, age discrimination, math-science education, the Souter nomination, and the homeless.
The Bi-Committee Bi-Partisan Working Group develops two smaller groups. EMK and Riegle represent the Democrats and Hatch and Chafee the Republicans. By the end of the year and into 1991, EMK and Hatch work on the private employment-based portion, while Riegle and Chafee work on the new public program. (Peterson, p. 557)

January
EMK and Mitchell are among the 43 co-sponsors of Senator Chris Dodd’s (D-CT) Act for Better Child Care Services of 1989. It provides federal money to states to help families pay for child care and improve day care facilities. It becomes law later in the year. (THOMAS on S 5)

April
EMK and Senate Democratic Whip Alan Cranston (D-CA) deliver a series of speeches on the need to boost federal domestic spending by shifting funds from deficit reduction to education, health care, and other social issues. EMK speaks of this being a way to reorder Democratic Party ideas, but Mitchell, like House Speaker Tom Foley (D-TX), continues to favor deficit reduction. (New York Times, 04/14/1990)

May
Mitchell is hesitant to push EMK’s Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) bill on the floor unless it has the votes to break a filibuster. The Ryan White connection secures 64 co-sponsors, so the Senate takes up the legislation on the 14th. EMK introduces several amendments in the hopes of cultivating additional support among nervous Senators like partner notification, needle exchanges, and the banning of high-risk donors. On the 16th, the Senate passes the bill. (Clymer, pp. 464-466)

June
EMK urges Mitchell to use the impending arrival of Nelson Mandela as leverage to press the White House on the Civil Rights Act of 1990, suggesting Mitchell embarrass the Republicans into agreeing to bring the bill to the floor before Mandela’s joint address to the Congress on June 26th. On the 25th Mitchell brokers an agreement with the Republican leadership to delay discussion of the civil rights bill until after the July 4th holiday (and Mandela’s visit). The bargain permits Mitchell to bring up the bill any time he chooses. (The New York Times, 06/26/1990)


August
In the wake of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, Congress passes the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 that updates laws regarding the prevention of oil spills and increasing industry liability. The Senate version of this act was introduced by Mitchell and co-sponsored by EMK. (THOMAS on S 686; 1990 CQ Almanac, pp. 283-287)
Iraqi forces invade Kuwait on the 2nd. Bush deploys troops to Saudi Arabia, stating the invasion “will not stand.” (*1990 CQ Almanac*, p. 680; Clymer, p. 480)

**July**  
On the 11th, Mitchell introduces a bill, with EMK as co-sponsor, to deny China most-favored-nation trading status due to a lack of progress on its human rights record. (*The Boston Globe*, 07/12/1990)

**September**  
On the 12th, the Senate passes a Mitchell-Leahy bill that requires the USDA to oversee fish inspection and the Commerce Department continues to inspect fishing waters. Mitchell and the Senate vote down EMK’s competing bill that puts fish inspection under the FDA and Commerce Department. The Mitchell-Leahy bill dies in conference. (*1990 CQ Almanac*, p. 398)

**October**  
Congress passes the National Community Service Act of 1990, introduced by EMK and co-sponsored by Mitchell. The act authorizes grants to establish national, community, and school based volunteer programs. Bush threatened to veto the bill if it included too many financial incentives for people to join the programs. After removing a student-loan forgiveness program and initiating Bush’s “Points of Light Initiative Foundation,” Bush signs the bill. (*1990 CQ Almanac*, p. 559)

The House and Senate pass non-binding resolutions on the 1st and 2nd, respectively, endorsing Bush’s economic embargo against Iraq and the deployment of 100,000 U.S. troops to Saudi Arabia. They do not, however, provide explicit authority to go to war. EMK votes against the resolution, calling it a “blank check endorsement for future actions … in effect, a Tonkin Gulf Resolution for the Persian Gulf.” Only Senators Mark Hatfield (R-OR) and Bob Kerrey (D-NE) vote with EMK. Mitchell tells his colleagues that “this resolution is not an authorization for the use of force, now nor or in the future…” (Clymer, p. 483; *1990 CQ Almanac*, pp. 717, 734; *The Boston Globe*, 10/03/1990)

On the 21st, Mitchell gives a television interview insisting that it would be inconsistent with the Constitution if Bush went to war without congressional approval and “only Congress can make that grave decision.” (*1990 CQ Almanac*, p. 736) While Congress is out of session, Mitchell and Foley put together a consulting group of lawmakers and write a resolution to call Congress back if necessary. (*1990 CQ Almanac*, pp. 736-737)

On the 27th, Congress passes the Clean Air Act to impose stricter federal standards on urban smog, car exhaust, acid rain, and toxic air pollution. The act is spear-headed by Mitchell and co-sponsored by EMK. It also includes an EMK amendment for the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to establish grant programs to study the health effects of air pollution. (*1990 CQ Almanac*, pp. 229-238)
November

On the 8th, Bush announces a substantial troop buildup to the levels of 430,000 in the Persian Gulf, provoking a firestorm of criticism from Congress. EMK argues it makes war “inevitable.” (1990 CQ Almanac, pp. 717, 738)

On the 14th, Bush meets with congressional leaders including Foley and Mitchell about allowing time for the economic sanctions to work. Both Foley and Mitchell say Bush has not abandoned sanctions. (1990 CQ Almanac, p. 738)

On the 29th, the UN Security Council adopts Resolution 678 setting January 15, 1991 as the deadline for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

December

On the 5th, EMK urges a special session of Congress to debate the Persian Gulf Crisis rather than wait until the new Congress convenes in early January. Mitchell reportedly opposes the idea since ten percent of the next Congress will be new members, and they deserve a voice in the debate. (The Boston Globe, 12/06/1990)

1991

Important issues EMK works on this year include higher education legislation, the Civil Rights Act of 1991, Gulf War, emergency unemployment benefits, CFE, free trade with Mexico, economic stimulus, Soviet aid, family planning, family leave, capital punishment, habeas corpus, women in combat, comprehensive health reform, WIC, the Thomas nomination, and Medicare funds for hospitals.

January

On the 4th, the Senate begins debate on the Gulf crisis. Mitchell again argues that only Congress has the authority to declare war. EMK states going to war without Congress’ consent would precipitate a “constitutional crisis.” (1991 CQ Almanac, p. 439; Clymer, p. 483)

Bush formally requests an authorization from Congress for the use of force against Iraq on the 8th, the first such request by a president since the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. (1991 CQ Almanac, p. 439; Clymer, p. 483)

On the 12th, the House and Senate vote in favor of S.J. Res. 2 authorizing the president to use military force against Iraq pursuant to U.N. Security Council Resolution 678. The Senate passes the authorization 52-47. EMK and Mitchell vote against it. They instead had supported the Mitchell-Nunn substitute authorizing “the use of American military force to enforce the United Nations (U.N.) economic embargo against Iraq; to defend Saudi Arabia from direct Iraqi attack; and to protect American forces in the region.” (S.J. Res. 1, Library of Congress) The resolution also called for continued sanctions and diplomatic pressures and declared that Congress, vested with the power to declare war, will consider future requests by the president for a declaration of war and for authority to use military force against Iraq. The resolution failed in the Senate 53-46. (1991 CQ Almanac, pp. 438-441, 2-S)

On the 16th, Bush orders an air campaign against Iraq, transforming Operation Desert Shield into Operation Desert Storm.
On the 17th, the Senate unanimously approves a resolution backing the president, a resolution proposed by Foley and Mitchell. (*1990 CQ Almanac*, pp. 753-754)

**April**

With Mitchell and Foley’s approval a day before a nationwide rail strike, EMK plays a pivotal last minute role to prevent it. A presidential emergency board proposed a settlement that railway unions did not support. EMK successfully leads the effort to create a second review board composed of members chosen by the National Mediation Board and not by Bush. (Clymer, pp. 488-489; *1991 CQ Almanac*, pp. 154-155; *The Boston Globe*, 04/18/1991)

**Spring**

The Bi-Partisan Working Group falls apart reportedly over Hatch not willing to compromise on the issue of employer mandates. Around this time, EMK, Riegle, Mitchell, Metzenbaum, Pryor, and Rockefeller form a Democratic leadership group to develop a bill. In April, the Finance Committee holds hearings on health care reform. (Peterson, pp. 557-558, 562-563)

William Kennedy Smith is charged with sexual battery in Palm Beach, Florida.

**May**

As chairman of the Democratic Policy Committee, Mitchell hosts breakfast meetings with fifty business leaders on health care reform. He and the committee also hold weekly luncheons with Senate colleagues to discuss the health care bill being composed. (Peterson, p. 559)

**June**

Mitchell introduces the HealthAmerica: Affordable Health Care for All Americans Act, the product of the Democratic leadership group. Knowing that a single-payer public plan would not pass Congress, the group decides on a “play or pay plan” that requires companies to either insure their employees or pay into a public health insurance plan. It also creates a national board to set health-care spending goals every year and to organize negotiations between purchasers and providers of care to develop payment rates. EMK is a co-sponsor. It is sent to Mitchell’s Finance Committee with Bentsen reportedly concerned about the cost of the program on small businesses. (THOMAS on S 1227; Peterson, pp. 560-563; *1991 CQ Almanac*, p. 351)

**July**

EMK votes for Mitchell’s less stringent parental consent amendment for abortions, which passes the Senate. It requires consent for a minor to have an abortion, but if it is not forthcoming, a physician can give guardians 48 hour notice. EMK and Mitchell oppose Senator Daniel Coates’ (R-IN) more stringent amendment that also passes. A compromise proposal is reached that includes exceptions for consent, but it is vetoed by Bush. (*1991 CQ Almanac*, pp. 342, 18-S)

The Senate approves an amendment (99-0) offered by EMK, Dole, Mitchell, and Hatch requiring states to adopt guidelines for health care workers who have AIDS. The amendment is offered after passage of a Helms amendment (81-18)
that calls for prison terms for health care workers with AIDS who fail to notify patients. In conference, the Helms amendment is dropped. (*1991 CQ Almanac*, p. 591)

**October**

In the wake of the Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings in September and early October, and the unprecedented focus on sexual discrimination issues, the White House appears more willing to compromise on civil rights legislation. On the 24th, after twelve hours of meetings, Danforth, Mitchell, EMK, the White House, and Republican Senate leaders reach a compromise for a no-quota employment discrimination bill. The bill, referred to as the Civil Rights Act of 1991, makes it easier for workers to file and win job discrimination suits. It also amends Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to permit sexual harassment victims to seek damages but caps them at $300,000. (Clymer, pp. 500-501; “Clymer Interview with Orrin Hatch,” 02/27/1992, p. 8; *1991 CQ Almanac*, pp. 251-261; *The New York Times*, 10/25/1991, 10/26/1991)

On the 24th, Senators Durenberger and Bentsen introduce their Better Access to Affordable Health Care Act of 1991, which has bipartisan support, including Mitchell’s co-sponsorship. It sets down minimum federal requirements for health insurance for businesses with 50 or less employees, but does not require employers to insure its workers. It does prohibit insurers from denying coverage and self-employed individuals can deduct 100% of their health costs. It is sent to the Finance Committee. (*THOMAS on S 1872; 1992 CQ Almanac*, p. 406)

EMK gives a speech at the Kennedy School at Harvard University in which he acknowledges that he has made mistakes in the conduct of his private life.

**1992**

Important issues EMK works on this year include national health care and fetal tissue research, Family and Medical Leave, Older Americans Act, abortion, women’s health, fetal tissue research, FDA prescription drugs, Religious Freedom Restoration Act, L.A. riots, bilingual voter assistance, campaign finance reform, law enforcements and education issues, including aid to higher education and school reform.

**January**

The Labor Committee approves a revised HealthAmerica bill (S 1227) by a party line vote (10-7). EMK helps redraft Mitchell’s 1991 bill for consideration by the Labor Committee. Among other things, the revised health care bill changes its cost containment provisions. It includes more than a dozen separate provisions for slowing rising health care costs, including giving the national board the power to set annual rates if negotiations fail. Some Democrats on Labor, who favor a national single-payer system, criticize the bill for not going far enough. (Clymer, pp. 508-509; *1992 CQ Almanac*, pp. 401-412; Clymer interview with Littlefield, 01/30/1999, p. 2)

**February**

Bush unveils his health care plan. The central feature is to provide the uninsured with private health insurance through a voucher system and provide tax
deductions for premiums. However, Democrats attack Bush for the lack of details on the kinds of insurance plans that would be available, and how it was to be financed. Mitchell responds, “This is not a proposal to deal with the problem of health care.” (1992 CQ Almanac, pp. 405-406)

March

On the 3rd, The Finance Committee passes its health care bill within a larger tax bill (S 1872) in a party line vote (11-9) where no one raises an objection about the health provisions. It passes the Senate on March 13th with EMK and Mitchell supporting it. However, the health care provisions are stripped out of the bill in conference when House members objected to the fact that it does not make sense to overhaul a small market without changing it in other ones. (1992 CQ Almanac, pp. 406-408)

April

On the 9th, Mitchell introduces the Long-Term Care Family Security Act of 1992 (S 2571) to provide universal long-term care for the elderly. It is co-sponsored by EMK. Senate hearings are held, but the bill goes no farther. (Thomas on S 2571; The Boston Globe, 04/10/1992)

June


July

EMK marries Vicki Reggie in McLean, Virginia.

September

Bentsen and Durenberger try to attach their health care plan to an urban tax bill, but again House members force them to take it out. (1992 CQ Almanac, pp. 410-411)

October

Mitchell pulls EMK’s fetal research bill (S 2899) from the Senate floor, because Hatch wants a longer ban on fetal tissue transplantation. Both EMK and Mitchell announce it will be a top priority in the new Congress. (Clymer, p. 515)

November

Clinton is elected president, as the Democrats win the House, Senate, and White House. Mitchell expects “a good, positive, productive working relationship.” (1992 CQ Almanac, p. 146-A)

EMK reportedly urges president-elect Clinton to nominate his sister, Jean Kennedy Smith (JKS), as Ambassador to Ireland. She is confirmed the following June. (Clymer, p. 521)

Nov.-Dec.

1993

Important issues EMK works on this year include national health care, NIH reauthorization, family and medical leave, abortion access, Stephen Breyer nomination to the Supreme Court, and national service legislation.

Mitchell holds meetings for Senators interested in healthcare. Gradually the group is reduced to Mitchell, EMK, and Tom Daschle (D-SD).

January

Clinton appoints Hillary Rodham Clinton to head the Health Care Reform Task Force. Mitchell has one staffer on the task force, while EMK has six. Various congressional committees take up the issue of health care reform and for the rest of the year struggle to draft versions of a health care bill. (Clymer, pp. 523-525; 1994 CQ Almanac, pp. 320-321; The New York Times, 03/27/1993)

March


Mar.-April

Concerned by large deficit and recession, Clinton is faced with the question of whether to present its budget reconciliation proposals to Congress, with their tax increases, before presenting a health care package. To avoid having to make this choice, EMK and Clinton first try to get Byrd to waive the “Byrd rule” to allow health care reform to be considered as part of the budget reconciliation bill, but Byrd rebuffs EMK. After considerable internal debate, Clinton decides to give first priority to the budget.

May

The White House health care task force disbands after failing to meet its deadline.

Mitchell co-sponsors EMK’s bill (S 898) for D.C. statehood. It never reaches the Senate floor and the House rejects a similar bill. (1993 CQ Almanac, p. 209)

Spring

The National Federation of Independent Business, composed of 600,000 small businesses across the country, launches a sophisticated public relations and grassroots lobbying campaign in opposition to employer mandates, a central feature of the Clinton program. (Ayers, pp. 200-221)

Summer

An insurance industry trade group HIAA, which had previously endorsed the goal of universal coverage with employee mandates as the financing mechanism, changes its position and launches the “Harry and Louise” TV ads to oppose Clinton’s health care plan.

July

On the 29th, Mitchell pulls EMK’s national service bill from the floor due to a failed cloture vote. Republicans reportedly worry about the cost of the program, so EMK offers to restrict spending and specify caps for each year. Mitchell states
another reason for the delay is that Clinton made national service part of his domestic agenda. Congress passes the bill and Clinton signs it into law in September. (1993 CQ Almanac, pp. 402-403)

**September**
Clinton gives a national televised address on his national health care plan. (Clymer, p. 530)

**November**

The Senate stalemate over anti-crime legislation is broken on the 4th when the Senate passes (95-4) an omnibus anti-crime bill (HR 3355). The bill is nearly killed when EMK suggests attaching an amendment that would make it a federal crime to block access to abortion clinics. Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) offers a similarly controversial amendment to overhaul habeas corpus laws. Through a compromise orchestrated by Mitchell, both measures are taken up at a later date as separate bills. Though passage seems imminent, consideration of the whole bill is delayed until 1994. (1993 CQ Almanac, pp. 293-298)

On the 4th, Mitchell introduces a bill to implement the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Although EMK has strong ties with labor, he endorses the plan because of Mexico’s strong trade possibilities. Congress passes NAFTA and Clinton signs it in December. (1993 CQ Almanac, p. 179)

On the 20th, the last day of the congressional session, Clinton’s universal health care bill (HR 3600, S 1757) is introduced in Congress. The plan would require all Americans to enroll in a health care plan offered through new quasi government health alliances. Employers would pay about 80% of the cost of the plan and employees the rest. The government would insure the unemployed and subsidize low income individuals and families and small businesses. The bill would also create a federal entitlement program for long term care, and a new prescription drug benefit under Medicare. The bill would create a new National Health Board to oversee the new system. There would be various cost control mechanisms, including a cap on premiums. A new tobacco tax and changes in the tax code would raise money to help pay for the new system. Senate, Finance Committee chairman Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY) and Labor Chairman EMK cannot agree on which committee should have primary jurisdiction over the bill, and the Senate leadership decides to refer the Clinton bill directly to the floor in 1994. In the meantime, both committees work on their own bills to be introduced as amendments to the Clinton bill. Mitchell tells EMK not to get into a race with the Finance Committee. EMK holds “dozen of hearings” to generate support for the plan. (Clymer, pp. 530-531; 1994 CQ Almanac, pp. 321-323; C. Lawrence Evans, “Committees and Health Jurisdictions in Congress,” Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein, eds., Intensive Care: How Congress Shapes Health Policy, Washington, D.C.: A.E.I. and The Brookings Institution, 1995, p. 43)

Congress passes the Brady Bill, the first major gun control legislation since the 1968 deaths of Martin Luther King, Jr. and EMK’s brother, Robert. The law institutes a five-day waiting period for all handgun purchases. In an attempt to
pass the bill in the Senate, Mitchell and Dole try to eliminate the five day waiting period once an “instant-check” system with a computer network of criminal records is established, but they fail. EMK votes for the waiting period elimination. Also, EMK sits on the conference committee. (*1993 CQ Almanac*, pp. 302-303)

**December**

Mitchell, EMK, Moynihan, and Clairborne Pell (D-RI) sign a letter appealing to Northern Ireland that “all those who have relied on bullets and bombs in the past lay down your arms.” (*The Irish Times*, 12/02/1994)


EMK and Vicki Kennedy travel to Ireland to visit with JKS. They discuss the possibility of issuing a visa for Sinn Fein leader, Gerry Adams, to travel to the United States. While EMK is initially hesitant to support this initiative, meetings with author Tim Pat Coogan and Taoiseach Albert Reynolds help to persuade him that this is a wise course of action. (Clymer, pp. 536-537; Thomas Maier, *The Kennedys: America’s Emerald Kings*, New York: Basic Books, 2003, pp. 572-579)

1994

Important issues EMK works on this year include the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Reauthorization, the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the Clinton health care plan, and abortion clinic access.

**January**

EMK speaks to John Hume at Tip O’Neill’s funeral, and the Irish politician convinces EMK that granting Adams the visa is the right course of action. EMK begins to rally support for Adams, and when Adams applies for the visa on the 14th, EMK sends a letter to President Clinton arguing, “It is important for the United States to facilitate the emerging dialogue as an alternative to violence.” Mitchell and twelve other Senators and twenty-eight representatives also sign the letter. (Clymer, pp. 536-537; Mitchell, *Making Peace*, p. 113)

Despite the opposition of the State Department and the British government, Clinton follows grants Adams a forty-eight hour visa. Critics denounce Clinton’s decision as an attempt to gain the support of EMK and Moynihan for his health care initiative. (Clymer, p. 537; Conor O’Clery, *Daring Diplomacy*, Colorado: Roberts Rinehart Publishers, 1997, pp. 94-95; *The Washington Post*, 08/31/1995; *The Irish Times*, 03/09/1996)

**March**

On the 4th, Mitchell announces his intention not to seek reelection in November. (*The Boston Globe*, 03/05/1994)
April

On the 6th, Justice Harry Blackmun announces his retirement from the Supreme Court. Clinton has said he would like to place an individual with real-world political experience on the bench, and Mitchell reportedly becomes the leading contender to replace Blackmun. (Clymer, p. 539; 1994 CQ Almanac, p. 303)

On the 12th, Mitchell announces that he will not take the post, claiming that it would compromise his ability to get health insurance legislation passed. EMK responds, “George is a perfectionist…he always wants to do it right.” (The Washington Post, 04/13/1994)

On the 26th, Mitchell hosts a luncheon for White House aids and Congressional Democrats including EMK to outline compromises to win over moderates like Senator John Boreaux (D-LA) of the Senate Finance Committee. One major concession is the exemption of the employer mandate for firms with 10 or smaller employees. However, Boreaux still opposes the mandate. (The Boston Globe, 04/19/1994, 04/27/1994)

May

EMK’s Labor Committee votes 11-6 to approve a health care bill modeled on Clinton’s plan, with a three-year phase-in of universal coverage. Senator James Jeffords (R-VT) is the only Republican to vote for it, but the bill does reflect Republican input. Like the Clinton plan, the legislation provides universal coverage and requires employers to pay for the bulk of the cost. The bill also includes premium caps to control costs, although EMK originally opposes them. But it departs from it in three important ways. It provides significant exemptions and subsidies for small businesses. It does not require participation in health alliances. And it calls for a more comprehensive benefit package. EMK insists on expanded benefits, which include special care for women, adolescents, the disabled, and the elderly. A national health board would review the benefit package to determine its fiscal impact and recommend changes. The bill also contains an EMK-Nancy Kassebaum (R-KS) amendment to fund clinics in public schools. EMK calls the bill “really the beginning” of the process of drafting a health care reform bill. He acknowledges that winning Republican votes for final passage is “still an uphill battle.” He continues to stir public interest in universal health insurance through hearings and press conferences. (Clymer, p. 543; 1994 CQ Almanac, pp. 336-337)

July

After months of discussions, the Senate Finance Committee approves the only bipartisan health care plan (S 2351) by a vote of 12-8 on July 2nd. It deviates both from Clinton’s and EMK’s bill. It does not require mandatory employer insurance payments, but federal subsides to low-income families. It does not meet universal coverage, but if 95% are not covered by 2002, then Congress could consider a employer mandate. To gets more moderate votes like Chaffee and Boreaux, the bill reduces many taxes on tobacco, ammunition, and big business. To control costs, rather than rely on imposed limits on growth of private health insurance premiums, there is a new tax on high-end insurance plans and other punitive measures. Two Democrats, Rockefeller and Max Baucus (D-MT), vote
against the bill, while Mitchell votes for it to keep the whole process going. (1994 CQ Almanac, pp. 338-339; The Washington Post, 07/03/1994)

On the 21st, Clinton meets with Mitchell, Gephardt, and House Speaker Foley. They tell Clinton there might be a long phase in for the employer mandate and exemptions for small businesses in a final bill. (1994 CQ Almanac, p. 348)

**August**

With no consensus emerging behind any single health care reform bill, Mitchell proposes his own bill on August 2nd, which is similar to the Finance Committee’s bill than EMK’s. It will achieve health care coverage for 95% of Americans by 2000 by delaying employer mandates and drop price controls, but provide coverage for the unemployed. Despite misgivings, EMK supports the bill saying it is “designed to achieve” universal coverage. Clinton also supports the bill thus dropping his idea of universal coverage. The Senate begins debate on the 9th. (Clymer, pp. 544-545; Laham, p. 170; 1994 CQ Almanac, p. 351)

On the 13th, Wellstone attacks Mitchell’s bill on the Senate floor sending a message to Mitchell that liberal Democrats in the Senate and House will still reject a bill that falls short of universal coverage. (Laham, p. 162)

A bipartisan group of Senators under the leadership of Chaffee, known as the Mainstream Group, emerges to oppose the Mitchell plan and propose their own compromise bill on the 19th. It is a more incremental plan with 93% coverage by 1999 and no mandatory employer insurance payments. It has its own problems, especially with liberals as it scales back on the subsidies for the poor. Clinton urges EMK and Mitchell to continue their work in forging bipartisan agreement. EMK’s staffer, Nick Littlefield, comes to help aides from Chafee and Mitchell’s office. (Clymer, p. 547; 1994 CQ Almanac, pp. 350-355)

On the 25th, the Senate starts its August recess and Mitchell withdraws his bill. A battle over the Administration’s crime bill has tied up the health care legislation, which is essentially killed by the ability of neither the House nor the Senate to rally both liberal and conservative Democrats. (1994 CQ Almanac, p. 321; The New York Times, 08/29/1994)

**September**

As a result with negotiating with the Mainstream Group, Mitchell presents a last-minute compromise bill. Senators Rockefeller, EMK, and Daschle pressure Mitchell to force a cloture vote, but Mitchell does not have enough votes to break a filibuster. On the 26th, Mitchell declares health care reform dead, while on the Senate floor, EMK vows not to give up. (Clymer, pp. 547-548; 1994 CQ Almanac, p. 321)

**November**

The GOP wins control of both the House and Senate in the “Republican Revolution,” including Mitchell’s seat going to Republican Olympia Snowe. EMK narrowly defeats Mitt Romney to win reelection to the U.S. Senate, but loses his chairmanship of the Labor Committee.
December

Clinton appoints Mitchell as special economic envoy to Northern Ireland. Mitchell’s main goal is to set up a conference in Philadelphia on trade and investment in Northern Ireland. (The Boston Globe, 12/02/1994)

Mitchell talks with Adams over the phone while Adams is in Washington, D.C. where he meets political leaders like EMK and Dodd. (Gerry Adams, A Further Shore: Ireland’s Long Road to Peace New York: Random House, 2003, p. 193)

On the 10th, Mitchell marries Heather MacLachlan, a former agent for pro tennis players. (Encyclopedia of World Biography)

1995

January


Rose Kennedy dies.

February

Clinton announces Mitchell will stay on as economic envoy through the rest of the year. His primary contacts are Anthony Lake, Clinton’s national security adviser, and Nancy Soderberg, a former EMK staffer. (Mitchell, Making Peace, pp. 20-22)

March


November

The British and Irish governments announce the adoption of a twin-track scheme – including multi-party discussions and an independent decommissioning body led by Mitchell – a new approach designed to break the current deadlock. The two other members of the International Body on Decommissioning of weapons are Harri Holkeri, former prime minister of Finland, and John de Chastelain, retired chief of the Canadian Defense Forces. (Mitchell, Making Peace, p. 27)

Nov.-Dec.

Clinton visits Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. In Belfast, Mitchell, Adams, and Paisley meet with Clinton. In Dublin, Clinton meets with Robinson and Bruton. Clinton stays at JKS’ residence and makes several references to JFK’s trip to Ireland. (Mitchell, Making Peace, pp. 28-29; O’Clery, p. 241; Maier, pp. 584-585; The Boston Globe, 12/02/1995; www.state.gov)
December  Mitchell, Holkeri, and de Chastelain shuffle between Belfast, London, and Dublin to meet with political leaders to discuss the issue of whether to disarm before or after the peace negotiations. They learn that Adams has little control over the IRA, so decommissioning prior to talks would be very difficult. They begin to look at concurrent action like in El Salvador. (Mitchell, Making Peace, pp. 29-30)

1996

January  The International Body releases the Mitchell Report on the 24th which recommends that arms decommissioning and talks begin concurrently. To enter talks, the parties must adhere to certain principles such as democratic and peaceful means to resolve political issues, disarm and avail to verification, and renounce and oppose any effort to use force to influence negotiations. These would be called the Mitchell principles. Major rejects the report and calls for elections to a forum for Northern Ireland instead of simultaneous negotiations and decommissioning. (Mitchell, Making Peace, pp. 35-36; Loughlin, p. 166; Mac Ginty and Darby, pp. 31-32)

February  Mitchell gives an interview for David Frost on the 3rd. He warns that the cease fire might end. This statement is not based on inside information, but the fact that the IRA has an 18 month cease-fire with no negotiations and the IRA leadership is divided over the cease fire. (Mitchell, Making Peace, pp. 40-41)

On the 9th, the IRA ceasefire collapses when a bomb goes off at Canary Wharf in London’s Docklands, killing two people. Mitchell, now in the U.S., condemns the act. That evening Adams calls Lake and EMK in order to pledge to them that he was not involved in the bombing. (Mitchell, Making Peace, p. 41; Clymer, p. 577; David Sharrock and Mark Devenport, Man of War, Man of Peace, London: Macmillan, 1997, p. 400)

March  Adams travels to the U.S. for St. Patrick’s Day, but he is not invited to the White House party and EMK refuses to meet with him. (Sharrock and Devenport, p. 404)

April  On the 17th, EMK meets with loyalist Protestant politicians, and commends them for not retaliating to the IRA bombs. (Clymer, p. 577)

June  After the elections to select representatives for a forum, all-party talks begin in Northern Ireland. Mitchell is appointed to be chairman of the plenary sessions of the negotiations along with Holkeri and de Chastelain. Two unionist parties, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and the United Kingdom Unionist Party (UKUP), protest Mitchell’s appointment describing him “from the same stable as the Kennedys.” (The Boston Globe, 06/07/1996) The demise of the ceasefire also leads to the exclusion of Sinn Fein. (Mitchell, Making Peace, pp. 46-53; Loughlin, pp. 168-169; Mac Ginty and Darby, pp. 33-34)
July  The annual Unionist Orange Order parade in Dumcree leads to rioting, widespread civil disorder, and sectarian attacks. As a result of the turmoil, the Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP) leaves the talks and a serious disagreement occurs between the British and Irish governments. (Loughlin, pp. 169-170; Mac Ginty and Darby, pp. 35-36)

Mitchell’s brother, Robbie, dies. Mitchell returns for the funeral and stays in the U.S. until October. (Mitchell, Making Peace, pp. 68-69)


Mid-Oct.  The plenary session develops an agenda for talks. It includes discussions on decommissioning and three topics or Strands: political structures in Northern Ireland, developing councils between Ireland and Northern Ireland, and Irish-British relations. Mitchell chairs Stand two. (Adams, p. 301; Mitchell, Making Peace, p. 85)

1997

Winter  Lake and Soderberg do not remain in the NSC for Clinton’s second term. The new NSC adviser is Sandy Berger and his second in command, who will deal most directly with Northern Ireland, is another former EMK aide, Jim Steinberg. Steinberg is also a friend of Mitchell’s. (Mitchell, Making Peace, p. 99; The Irish Times, 02/03/1997)

Peace talks resume after a Christmas break, but remained stalled over decommissioning and then an up-coming British election. (Mitchell, Making Peace, pp. 96-97)

March  In a speech, EMK urges the British government to establish a date for Sinn Fein to enter into negotiations if there is an IRA ceasefire. (Adams, pp. 237-238)

During a visit to the U.S., Hume discusses with Clinton the possibility of obtaining another IRA ceasefire. Hume is also the keynote speaker at Irish America magazine’s Person of the Year awards, which is being given to EMK. During his acceptance speech, EMK reaffirms America’s commitment to the peace process and argues that the British government should abandon preconditions to including Sinn Fein in return for an unconditional ceasefire. EMK denounces decommissioning as a “phoney issue” because there is nothing stopping the paramilitaries from quickly rearming. (The Irish Times, 03/08/1997, 03/19/1997)

May  The British Labour party wins a majority in Westminster and Tony Blair becomes the Prime Minister bringing in Mitchell what calls “new people and new energy to
the task of completing what the Conservatives had started.” (Mitchell, Making Peace, p. 103) The new government abandons the prerequisite of decommissioning, works to bring Sinn Fein into talks, and sets May 1998 as a deadline for concluding negotiations. (Loughlin, p. 172; Mac Ginty and Darby, p. 36)

June  
Fianna Fail leader Bertie Ahern becomes Taoiseach. (Loughlin, p. 172)

July  
The IRA reinstates the ceasefire. (Clymer, p. 594; Mac Ginty and Darby, p. 37)

September  
Sinn Fein agrees to the Mitchell principles and enters the peace talks. An IRA spokesperson gives an interview saying that the IRA would have some problems with the Mitchell principles. In response, Mitchell delivers a public statement about the importance of those principles. (Clymer, p. 594; Loughlin, p. 180; Mac Ginty and Darby, p. 38; Mitchell, Making Peace, pp. 115-116)

Adams and Martin McGuinness travel to the U.S. for a fundraising event as well as to meet with Berger, Secretary of Commerce William Daley, EMK, Dodd, and New York Mayor Rudolph Guilliani. (The Irish Times, 08/30/1997, 09/01/1997, 01/04/1998)

December  
Mitchell presides over one last session before the Christmas break. It is not a successful one as all sides argue about the symbolism of future meetings taking place in London and Dublin, and the UUP refuses to talk to Sinn Fein. Mitchell ends the session with a positive statement that the group must make serious efforts to move forward and believes they can. (Mitchell, Making Peace, pp. 125-130)

In Boston, EMK meets with Ahern. (The Irish Times, 12/13/1997)

After Christmas, a republican paramilitary group assassinates a leader of the Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF), a unionist paramilitary, setting off a spiral of violence which results in ten deaths. (Mac Ginty and Darby, p. 39)

Mitchell works with the British and Irish governments on the “Propositions on the Heads of Agreement.” It is an outline to give self-government to Northern Ireland with an Assembly, a Bill of Rights, and a new Anglo-Irish agreement with institutions representing England, Ireland, and Northern Ireland. Many of these measures will be adopted in the Good Friday Agreement. (Mitchell, Making Peace, p. 133)

1998

January  
EMK visits Northern Ireland at a time in which the negotiations have stalled and violence is rising. EMK addresses an audience at the University of Ulster in which he makes a concerted effort to reach out to Irish Protestants. EMK next
travels to Belfast and speaks with David Trimble, the UUP leader. (Clymer, pp. 594-595)

**Jan.-Feb.** The new round of peace talks begin on January 12th. The biggest hurdle for the next two months is the issue of violence leading to the temporary expulsion of Sinn Fein and the UDP from the talks due to the breech of the Mitchell principles. (Mitchell, *Making Peace*, pp. 134-142)

**March** While visiting Washington, Ahern meets with EMK in order to urge him “to assist us in going that extra mile to try to find a conclusion to what we have been doing.” (*The Irish Times*, 03/17/1998)


**May** On the 22nd, the Good Friday Agreement is voted on in a referendum. 71% of Northern Ireland’s voters support the agreement with unionists evenly split and 94% of voters within the Republic of Ireland favor of the agreement. (Loughlin, p. 194; Mac Ginty and Darby, p. 44)

**July** The Northern Ireland Assembly holds its inaugural meeting and elects Trimble as First Minister. (Loughlin, p. 195; Mac Ginty and Darby, p. 44)

**September** Clinton makes his second trip to Ireland and Northern. While in Ireland, Clinton also meets Ahern. (*The Irish Times*, 09/04/1998; [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov))

For the first time, Adams and Trimble meet face-to-face, but refrain from shaking hands. Their meeting indicates a shift in the structure of the peace process; the British and Irish governments are to be less involved with the burden of solving the decommissioning issue among the parties themselves, especially the UUP and Sinn Fein. The UUP maintains that Sinn Fein should not join the government until decommissioning has begun, while Sinn Fein claims that their electoral victory is sufficient for their entry into the government. (Mac Ginty and Darby, pp. 45-46)

On the 4th, Ahern announces a new scholarship program for U.S. scholars to study in Ireland called the “Mitchell Scholarship.” It will be administered by the U.S.-
Ireland Alliance headed by EMK’s former foreign policy adviser, Trina Vargo.  
*The Irish Times, 09/05/1998*

On the 17th, JKS ends her ambassadorship and leaves Ireland.  
(http://usembassy.state.gov/ireland/former.html)

**December**  On the 7th, Mitchell and seven Northern Irish political leaders are presented with a special John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award in a ceremony at the JFK Presidential Library. In a speech at the ceremony, EMK praises Mitchell for “perform[ing] an indispensible service to the cause of peace, by making the Good Friday Agreement possible” and for “special skill in extracting a maximum of consensus and a minimum of conflict, among intensely opposing parties.”  
(Transcript of Proceedings of the Profile in Courage Award Ceremony Honoring the Peacemakers of Northern Ireland, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston, Massachusetts, 12/07/1998)

On the 31st, it is announced that Mitchell will receive the honorary title Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire.  
*The London Times, 12/31/1998*

**1999**

**March**  On the 17th, Mitchell is awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.  
*The Boston Globe, 03/10/1999*

**July**  In a desperate attempt to salvage the stalled peace process, Mitchell is recalled to Northern Ireland in order to review the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.  
(Loughlin, pp. 203-204; Mac Ginty and Darby, pp. 49-50; The Irish Times, 07/21/1999)

**November**  The Mitchell review—his proposal to save the peace process—is released. Mitchell advises that the UUP concede to the formation of a power sharing executive in return for the IRA sending a representative to the Independent International Decommissioning Council led by de Chastelain. The agreement stipulates that if the IRA does not decommission or devolution fails to take place, the institutions will be suspended.  
On the 27th, the Ulster Unionist Council—the governing body of the UUP—passes the Mitchell plan.  
(Loughlin, p. 205; Mac Ginty and Darby, p. 51)

**December**  Devolution takes place on the 2nd. Trimble is again First Minister, but still refuses to take part in cabinet meetings with Sinn Fein. In addition, the North-South and British-Irish Councils are also created, the Irish Republic removes articles 2 and 3 of its constitution (which assert claims to Northern Ireland), and the IRA appoints an interlocutor to the Chastelain Commission.  
(Loughlin, p. 206)

Mitchell is nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.  
*The Irish Times, 12/13/1999*

2002

December  Mitchell declines an offer to serve as vice chairman of the 9/11 Commission because he cannot afford to leave his law practice. (USA Today, 12/12/2002)

2006-2007  Mitchell leads an investigation into alleged steroid use by major league baseball players. He releases his report the next year identifying 85 players having used the drug. (Encyclopedia of World Biography)

2008

January  EMK announces his support for Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama.

May  Ahern visits the JFK Library on the 2nd to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Good Friday Accords. In his remarks, Ahern praises both EMK, “[who] walked with us on the path to peace and reconciliation,” and Mitchell “a genuine hero of the peace process.” (Transcript of Speech by the Taoiseach, Mr. Bertie Ahern T.D., at the Kennedy Library, Boston, 05/02/2008)

EMK is diagnosed with a brain tumor.

August  EMK makes a surprise appearance and speech at the Democratic National Convention.

September  Mitchell and EMK advise Obama about Irish-American issues on the campaign. (The Irish Times, 09/03/2008)

2009

January  President Barack Obama appoints Mitchell as a special peace envoy to the Middle East. (The Washington Post, 01/23/2009)

August  EMK dies at his home in Hyannis Port.
GEORGE MITCHELL FACT SHEET
Prepared by Bryan Craig
Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia, 12/08/2009

Senate Career: 1980-1995

Committees with EMK:
• None.

Other Senate committees:
• 1987: Select Committee on Secret Military Assistance to Iran and the Nicaraguan Opposition.
• 1989-1995: Select Intelligence Committee.

Clinton Administration:
• June 1996-April 1998: Co-Chair of Plenary Sessions for peace in Northern Ireland.
• Fall 1999: Reviewed Northern Ireland peace process since Good Friday Agreement.
• 2000-2001: Chairman of the Sharm el-Sheikh International Fact-Finding Committee

Obama Administration:
• 2009-Present: Special Envoy for Middle East Peace.

Other positions:
• 1962-1965: Executive assistant to Senator Edmund Muskie (D-ME).
• 1968: Deputy Campaign Manager for Muskie’s vice presidential campaign.
• 1972: Deputy Campaign Manager for Muskie’s presidential campaign.

Issues that Mitchell worked on with EMK:
• Civil Rights Act (1991). Both work with the White House and Senate Republicans to draft a compromise bill to pass Congress.
• Health care reform. Mitchell and EMK worked to pass catastrophic coverage (1987-1988), the Ryan White CARE Act for AIDS (1990), and worked together on the Bi-Committee Bi-Partisan Senate Working Group (1989-1991) to create a bill for universal health care. In 1991-1992, they developed and revised the HealthAmerica Act (1991) for universal health care, and EMK’s co-sponsored Mitchell’s Long Term Family Security Act (1992) for insurance coverage for the elderly. Both men led the failed effort to pass universal health care legislation under the Clinton’s first two years in office. They first supported Clinton’s plan, but as Republican and moderate Democrats in the Mainstream Group oppose it, the two Senators worked on a compromise bill, but they could not get enough votes to pass it.
• Minimum wage. EMK and Mitchell led the effort to raise the wage from $3.35/hr. to $4.25/hr in 1989.
• Education. Mitchell helped pass the 1990 Child Care and Development Act, a Chris Dodd’s bill co-sponsored by EMK and Mitchell that provided grants to states for child care.
• Community Service. Mitchell co-sponsored EMK’s National Community Service Act (1990).
• Persian Gulf War. Both supported the powers of Congress to declare war. In October 1990, EMK saw a resolution supporting the deployment of troops as a “blank check” for future actions, while Mitchell never saw the resolution that way. EMK wanted a special session of Congress at the end of 1990 to discuss the crisis, but Mitchell opposed the idea. In January 1991, EMK supported the failed Mitchell-Nunn amendment (1991) that would have allowed more time for sanctions and diplomatic pressure before using military force.
• Northern Ireland. Mitchell was co-chair of a decommissioning body (1995-1996) and then co-chair in the plenary sessions for the peace talks (1996-1998) leading up to the Good Friday Agreement. During these years, EMK worked to get a U.S. visa for Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams and met and talked with Irish politicians, Clinton, Tony Lake, and his former staffer, Nancy Soderberg, to support the peace talks.

Other Issues:
• Trade. EMK and Mitchell did not favor China getting most-favored-nation-status in 1990 due to its human rights record. Both supported the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).
• Brady Bill (1993). Both men supported this gun-control measure.