

George Mitchell

Former U.S. Senate Majority Leader (D-ME) and Former Special Envoy for the Middle East

Senator George J. Mitchell is the former U.S. special envoy for the Middle East and a former U.S. senator (D-ME). In that capacity, he worked toward an end of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Mitchell's background gives him unique insights into the Middle East, the Israeli-Palestinian relationship, Ireland, diplomacy, conflict resolution, politics, and perspectives on the business of baseball.

A Storied Statesman. After having graduated from high school at the age of 16, George Mitchell attended college and then enrolled in the army, where he rose to First Lieutenant. In 1960, he began practicing as a trial attorney for the antitrust division of the Department of Justice, after graduating from Georgetown University Law Center. Appointed U.S. Attorney for Maine by President Carter in 1977, Mitchell served in that capacity for two years, and he was later appointed to the U.S. District Court. He served as a federal judge until he entered the Senate in 1980.

Mitchell served in the Senate for 15 years, six of which were as Senate majority leader. He acted as deputy president pro tempore from 1987 to 1988 and remains one of only two senators to have held the post. In 1994, he turned down an appointment by President Bill Clinton to the Supreme Court.

Ireland and the Middle East. After his retirement from the Senate, George Mitchell was chairman of the peace negotiations in Northern Ireland. Under his leadership, the governments of Ireland and the United Kingdom agreed to the historic "Good Friday" peace accord. He later served as chairman of an international fact-finding committee on violence between Israel and Palestine. The committee's recommendation, widely known as *The Mitchell Report*, was endorsed by the Bush administration, the European Union, and others. He also acted as the chancellor of Queen's University in Belfast, Northern Ireland and was a senior fellow and senior research scholar at Columbia University's Center for International Conflict Resolution.

Awards and Recognition. Mitchell has received numerous awards and honors, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor the U.S. government can bestow; the Philadelphia Liberty Medal; the Truman Institute Peace Prize; the German (Hesse) Peace Prize; and the United Nations (UNESCO) Peace Prize.

Other Appointments. Mitchell served as the Chairman of the Board of the Walt Disney Company and as Chairman of the International Crisis Group, the National Health Care Commission, and the commission investigating allegations of impropriety in the Olympic Games' bidding process. He was also the overseer of the American Red Cross Liberty Disaster Relief Fund, which helped victims of the 9/11 attacks. In 2006, Mitchell investigated steroid use in baseball, the results of which were outlined in the second report known as *The Mitchell Report*. Senator Mitchell is also the author of four books: *Men of Zeal*, *World on Fire*, *Not For America Alone: The Triumph of Democracy and The Fall of Communism*, and *Making Peace*.