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Maine in the 104th Congress: Life without Mitchell

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For many Mainers, the significance of the last election had little to do with the Republican "sweep" throughout the nation, but had much to do with the retirement of Senator George Mitchell. This article summarizes Senator Mitchell's most critical policy contributions and the results of his influence at the state and national levels. His absence from Congress presents the current Maine delegation with a new set of challenges. These issues are explored, in part, from the broader perspective of Maine's history in Congress.

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Introduction

The 1994 congressional elections may have been a watershed in Maine's relations with the national government. The state sent two new members, John Baldacci and James Longley, Jr., to the U.S. House of Representatives, and elected as a new U.S. Senator, Olympia Snowe, a former member of the House. Only Senator William Cohen continued in the same position in the state delegation. The last year when Maine experienced as much turnover was 1960, when the state also sent two new members to the House. Still, in the eyes of many Mainers, the significant change in 1994 was the retirement of Senator George Mitchell, after twelve years of service in the Senate, and six years in the powerful position of majority leader.

This article assesses the likely consequences of the elections on the state's relations with the national government, particularly in the next couple of years. What were Senator Mitchell's most critical policy contributions affecting Maine? How much will the state's influence in Congress be affected? In the light of the new Republican control of Congress, what changes may be expected in terms of state-federal relations? It may be appropriate to consider these issues, in part, in the context of Maine history. What light can Maine's past experience in Congress shed on the prospects for the present delegation?

The election

In 1840, Maine earned its familiar political characterization: "As Maine Goes, So Goes the Nation" (Robinson, 1932). The occasion was the presidential election featuring Democratic President Martin Van Buren and his Whig challenger William Henry Harrison. Van Buren was thought to lead as the campaign got underway that summer. Maine at that time held its state elections in September. As a generally Democratic state, Maine surprised the nation by electing mostly Whigs to state office. The state election proved to be prophetic when, in November, Harrison won the national race and became our ninth president. In actuality, the characterization has not held up well in recent times. As Maine has become a two-party state, it has more often than not voted for the loser in close presidential contests. Thus the state supported Dewey over

Truman in 1948, Nixon over Kennedy in 1960, Humphrey over Nixon in 1968, Ford over Carter in 1976, and almost backed Carter over Reagan in 1980. This contrariness has sometimes spilled over into state elections. In 1980, as Republicans were winning a landslide victory nationally, Maine was one of the very few states where Democrats gained seats in the legislature (Barone and Ujifusa, 1994).

In the 1994 elections, the state continued to show electoral independence. To be sure, Republicans gained seats in both houses of the state legislature (gaining party control in the state senate), and picked up a seat in the First Congressional District, where James Longley defeated Dennis Dutremble. This swing seat had previously been held by Democrat Tom Andrews (1990-1994), Democrat Joe Brennan (1986-1990), Republican John McKernan (1982-1986), and Republican David Emery (1974-1982). However, in the Second Congressional District, Democrat John Baldacci won over Republican Richard Bennett, enabling the Democrats to pick up a seat long in Republican hands (Olympia Snowe, 1978-1994, and William Cohen 1972-1978). In terms of electoral history, the Democratic win in the Second District was the greater upset. Baldacci was one of only 14 Democrats nationally to win an open congressional seat, and one of an even smaller number of Democrats to gain a seat formerly held by a Republican (Moen, 1994).

The 1994 elections seemed to show that Maine both responds to, and insulates itself from, national tides. It is unlikely that James Longley would have been elected had it not been a banner year nationally for the Republican party. His campaign organization was widely perceived as less effective than Dutremble's, and he lacked the strong base of support in key cities (such as Biddeford) that his opponent enjoyed. Further, much of Maine's in-migration in the past two decades has taken place in the First District, especially in Cumberland and York counties, which may have contributed to their being more sensitive to regional and national tides.

In contrast, in the Second District, John Baldacci overcame the general Republican sweep, largely on the basis of local factors. A long-time state senator, and a member of a well-known Bangor family, his campaign featured spaghetti suppers (from his family's restaurant) and related through T.V. ads his extensive constituent service performed while in the legislature. Though Baldacci's opponent was a conservative who strongly supported the Republican's "Contract with America," the injection of national issues into the race seemed to create little trouble for the Democrat's campaign. Overall, while Republicans did better than Democrats in the state, the 1994 results did little damage to the idea that national tides run into resistance at Maine's borders.

The Mitchell record

George Mitchell's retirement from the Senate was largely described in the media in personal terms—his putative interest, for example, in other positions such as Major League Baseball Commissioner and U.S. Supreme Court Justice. Less attention was given to the fact that retirement in "mid-career" has become somewhat more frequent in Congress. In the 1960s, retirement almost never occurred except when a politician was very old, in ill-health, or politically vulnerable. One study found that of the 22 retirements in the 1960s in the Senate, only two senators (Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota and George Smathers of Florida) were electorally

secure and in good health (Hook, 1991). Retirements for other reasons, such as the demands of the position, the longer sessions, pressure to campaign and to raise campaign funds, slowly grew in the 1970s and have taken their toll in more recent elections. In 1992, Tim Wirth of Colorado unexpectedly left a successful Senate career (after one term) in a manner not unlike Senator Mitchell.

In his position as majority leader, Senator George Mitchell was usually able to represent effectively Maine interests even as he took major responsibility for the enactment of Democratic programs. That obligation assumed particular significance during the first two difficult years of the Clinton presidency. "I don't think he'll go down as a great historical figure, because he didn't run the Senate at a time of grand accomplishment," said Allan J. Lichman of American University, of Mitchell. "I think he'll be known as a consensus builder and a person of integrity, who stood for certain things" (Campbell, 1994). Another analyst of Congress, Professor Steven Smith of the University of Minnesota, rates the Senator's achievements somewhat higher; he believes that Mitchell will "be remembered as one of the most effective leaders of the Senate" (Campbell, 1994). Smith noted that Mitchell was generally able to keep party ranks together on divisive issues. Within Maine his retirement was greeted with wide-spread dismay, and newspapers in New England despaired of losing his clout. As the Boston Globe (March 5, 1994) put it: Mitchell's "departure from Capitol Hill is expected to be a major setback for this region, from the potato fields of northern Maine to the Long Island Sound." One notable example of Mitchell's influence was the 1992 transportation bill, which awarded Maine some \$714 million over six years, including funds for new bridges between Portland and South Portland and between Winslow and Waterville and a new bypass between Brunswick and Topsham. During the previous six years, the state had received slightly over half that amount, about \$400 million (Maine Sunday Telegram, March 8, 1992).

Mitchell's national legislative achievements nearly always contained provisions that provided assistance for Maine (U.S. Senate, 1994). He was the sponsor of the Deficit Reduction and Economic Growth Act of 1993 that cut the federal deficit by about \$500 billion over a five year period. The legislation broadened the earned income tax credit for lower income families, which aided an estimated 80,000 Maine families. The same measure also repealed a ten percent luxury tax on boats costing more than \$100,000. That measure, designed to tax wealthy citizens, had led to a much reduced demand for expensive pleasure craft and consequent layoffs in Maine boatyards. The entire delegation had worked for three years to remove the tax.

Senator Mitchell built upon Senator Edmund Muskie's environmental legislation with several initiatives of his own. Passage of the 1990 Clean Air Act was a personal victory, since nine years before Mitchell had introduced the first acid rain control bill in Congress. The 1990 measure helps control the emission of various pollutants that cause acid rain, and thereby threaten Maine's forests and lakes. It also phases out the use of chlorofluorocarbons, which destroy the protective ozone layer. In related environmental measures, Senator Mitchell's staff estimated that he had secured several millions of dollars to purchase land for Acadia National Park, Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge, Petit Manan National Wildlife Refuge, and Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge, among others.

Education was a third area of particular emphasis in Senator Mitchell's career. He helped bring about passage of the Higher Education Act of 1992, which expanded the level of grants and loans to students, the Clinton administration's National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, which helps students finance their college education through community service, and the Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994, which commits the nation to eight educational goals to be attained by the year 2000. Under the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, which deals with apprenticeship programs for students making the transition between high school and the workplace, Maine received a grant to establish a program known as Career Opportunities 2000. It was one of the first states to receive funding.

During Mitchell's tenure, perhaps the most critical issue in Maine was job creation and the preservation of existing jobs. He played an active role in defending the continued operation of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and the Brunswick Naval Air Station, especially when the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission included the Portsmouth Shipyard for review in 1993. After the closure of Loring Air Force Base, the Senator helped bring a Defense Finance and Accounting Service Center to the Limestone area, and also a Job Corps center under the auspices of the Department of Labor. Senator Mitchell's office reported in 1994 that the number of civilian jobs added in the Limestone area since 1993 was about the same number lost from the closure.

Some dramatic efforts to save jobs reflected Senator Mitchell's power and influence with the Clinton administration. In the Senate, he helped fashion an Economic Development Administration's program to support job-creating activities in areas affected by defense spending layoffs. He helped Freeport win a \$2 million EDA grant for an extension of water and sewer lines to help businesses expand, and he aided Pittsfield in securing a nearly \$700,000 grant for a product-testing facility to protect jobs in that community. Mitchell also worked closely with industries that were affected by new federal requirements. When a proposed executive order over the use of sawdust in recycled paper threatened the continued operation of two paper mills (in Brewer and Lincoln), Mitchell persuaded President Clinton to alter the proposed regulation to maintain an environmentally sound policy and still allow the mills to operate. Senator Mitchell said of that situation: "I doubt that things would have turned out the way they did had I not been majority leader, and been in a position to make the mills' case to the administration" (Maine Sunday Telegram, March 6, 1994).

Not surprisingly, among professional observers Mitchell was regarded as an extremely able senator. A survey of congressional staff members conducted by the Washington-based public relations firm of Fleishman, Hillard, Inc. in 1994 found that he and Senator Robert Dole were seen as the two "most effective" members of the Senate. Some 87 percent of the congressional staffers questioned ranked Mitchell and Dole as "excellent, very good, or good" in their work as senators. A survey conducted by the Orlando [Florida] Sentinel (October 3, 1994) calculated that of some 296 legislative bills introduced by Senator Mitchell in the 1991-92 session, 249 ultimately became law. Senator Mitchell's success undoubtedly boosted the reputation and effectiveness of Maine's delegation in both chambers. In the Orlando Sentinel survey, the "batting average" of the Maine delegation in securing enactment of its legislative proposals was 0.734 in 1991-92, the highest score of any state. Speaking of congressional delegations as if they

were baseball teams, the Sentinel opined that "without Mitchell, Maine would have been a second division squad."

How much loss in power and influence will the Maine delegation sustain as a consequence of Mitchell's retirement? That question is best examined in the light of the traditions of the Maine delegation in Congress. Mitchell once worked as administrative assistant to Edmund S. Muskie, another distinguished Maine senator, and in some measure developed his political and policy approaches from that experience. There is historical evidence to suggest that the presence of senators such as Mitchell and Muskie is not a fortuitous or isolated occurrence, but a part of a broader pattern. In fact, Maine seems to have had a strong congressional delegation for much of its history.

The delegation in historical perspective

Looking back to the end of the nineteenth century, the delegation's influence rested significantly on its prominence in the reigning Republican party, especially in the House. The most notable figures were James G. Blaine and Thomas Brackett Reed. Blaine served in both House and Senate and was the unsuccessful Republican presidential candidate in 1884. Reed served as Speaker of the House in the 1890s. Reed assumed the Speakership at a time when the responsibilities of Congress were growing rapidly due to urbanization and industrialization and when the House required firm leadership over a membership that was marked by rapid turnover and a high level of partisanship (Peirce, 1976). Reed established the rule that a member seated on the floor would be considered present whether or not he responded to a quorum call. By that device, he made it more difficult for recalcitrant lawmakers to obstruct the conduct of business and prevent consideration of legislation to which they were opposed.

An indication of the prominence of Maine's Republican politicians in the national government can be gleaned from a story related by historian Samuel Eliot Morison, originally told by Speaker Reed's private secretary in about 1889:

John Sergeant Wise, a New York financier, was shown into the Speaker's office. "Who's running this government, anyway?" he blustered. "The great and the good, John, of course. Be calm!" said the Speaker in his Down-East twang, with a twinkle in his eye. "Well the great and the good must all live in Maine, then. I come up here on business with the secretary of state, Mr. Blaine of Maine. I call to pay my respects to the acting vice president, Mr. Frye from Maine. I wish to consult the leader of the United States Senate, Mr. Hale from Maine. I would talk over a tariff matter with the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. Dingley from Maine. There is a naval bill in the house in which I am greatly interested, Chairman Boutelle from Maine. I wish an addition to the public building in Richmond, Chairman Milliken from Maine. And here I am in the august presence of the great Speaker of the greatest parliamentary body in the world, Mr. Reed from Maine!" (Morison, 1965).

The party factor has, of course, been less important as a base of power for the delegation in more recent times. Granted, Maine members have done well in rising to leadership positions in their parties. In addition to Senator Mitchell, Senator Edmund Muskie became head of the Senate Budget Committee in the 1970s. Earlier, Wallace White was the Senate majority leader in the

Republican-controlled 80th Congress (1947-48). Senator Margaret Chase Smith was briefly chairperson of the Senate Republican Conference. However, the Maine delegation is no longer tied to one party, and it must work in a Congress that has itself recently moved away from one-party domination. There appear to be several structural factors that, in addition to party and seniority, help the state produce on a regular basis unusually effective delegations.

One is the means by which Maine politicians attain seats in Congress. Unlike many other states, Maine's political system provides no ready career route to seats in Congress. In certain large, urban states, such as Pennsylvania and California, service in the state legislature is a steppingstone to national office. In others, statewide elective office provides a launching pad to national office. In Maine, the size of state legislative districts (about 8,000 people in a House district; about 35,000 for the Senate) is too small for a seat in the legislature to provide a ready launching pad for national office. (California's state senate districts hold, in contrast, about 700,000 people.) Many members of Congress from Maine have, of course, had experience as state legislators, but their rise has generally been due to other factors. Former governors have occasionally gone to the U.S. Senate, but the state has no other statewide elective offices in which prospective members of Congress might acquire political experience and support.

The absence of a structure of lesser offices—and, for that matter, the shortage of other ready means of ascent such as a single dominant industry (e.g., the DuPont Chemical Corp. in Delaware) or a powerful political machine (e.g., the Chicago-based Democratic party in Illinois)—leaves candidates for Congress in Maine pretty much "on their own." Personal skills assume great importance in this context. Candidates must develop political support through intensive traveling among the state's nearly 500 towns and cities, attending meetings of small groups of voters, talking individually with as many as possible, all the while looking after the necessities of fundraising and campaign publicity. While more celebrated than most other campaigns, Edmund S. Muskie's race for governor in 1954 illustrated the trials of an amateur's campaign in a large, rural state. While running for Vice President in 1968, Muskie recounted for a Texas crowd his thoughts on the election night of 1954:

I never had an experience like that... We won against hopeless odds. We won with almost no resources. We had to literally walk that state from one end to the other. We had to talk to Republicans who had never seen a live Democrat in their lives. We had to learn the political skills none of us had ever developed... (Peirce, 1976).

A second factor in Maine's success in Congress is the diversity of the state's interests. Unlike some states with economies that are heavily dependent on a particular commodity or industry, where its claims in congressional policy-making revolve around that enterprise, Maine's stakes at the national level are complex and protean. The state's concerns have long included agriculture and forestry, but in more recent decades, they have embraced defense and environmental issues. The state's substantial coastline has brought Maine's congressional delegation into the center of discussions on many issues of international law, tariffs, and foreign policy—unusual for a small, rural state. Delegation members must be able to balance many competing interests to win an election, and that skill has sometimes translated into congressional leadership positions.

Third, in contrast to its northern New England neighbors, Maine has for the most part favored candidates who are political moderates. The state has been little colored by the type of deeply conservative ideology that has marked New Hampshire, nor by the very liberal politics with which Vermont has sometimes experimented. Winning candidates generally avoid ideology in favor of pragmatic positions that focus on problem-solving and specific issues. Races for the U.S. Senate in the past two decades are illustrative. In 1978, Representative William Cohen, a moderate Republican, defeated Senator William Hathaway, whose voting record appeared to place him among the most liberal of Senate Democrats. In 1982 Senator George Mitchell beat back an attempt by Representative David Emery to take his seat. Emery ran on a very conservative platform. In 1994, Representative Olympia Snowe won retiring Senator Mitchell's seat overwhelmingly against Representative Tom Andrews, whose liberal campaign focused on national questions more than on Maine issues. The delegation's moderate political posture places it in a favorable position to gain support for state needs in the coalition-building processes in Congress.

A final element enhancing the delegation's strength has been its long-standing interest in the reform of governmental institutions and practices. This concern was prominently seen in the career of Edmund Muskie, who in the 1950s and 1960s led successful efforts to create modern environmental-protection laws, the Senate and House budget committees, and the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations to deal with federalism issues. For her part, Senator Margaret Chase Smith was a major force in the Senate in the early 1950s, through her "Declaration of Conscience," in denouncing the reckless acts of Senator Joseph McCarthy in addressing the problem of communist influences in the U.S. State Department. At the turn of the century, Speaker of the House Thomas Brackett Reed, despite his conservative policies in other areas, emerged as a major supporter of women's suffrage. Reed also favored civil service reform (Judd, 1995). During his recent tenure as floor leader in the Senate, Senator George Mitchell favored reforms in campaign and lobbying practices, though he was not particularly successful in enacting legislation in these areas.

Maine in Washington

In recent congressional sessions, the state's prestige in Congress has been evidenced in several ways. In 1987 Maine was the only state to have both its U.S. Senators (William S. Cohen and George J. Mitchell) named to the joint Senate-House committee assigned to investigate the Iran-Contra affair. Representative Olympia Snowe served as a deputy whip in the House Republican Caucus and a co-chairperson of the House Women's Caucus. Representative Tom Andrews was elected president of the class of freshman members in 1991. When the institutional prestige of the House or Senate has been involved, Maine delegates seem to be among those officials called for service.

In recent years, three difficult problems involving the federal government illustrate the role of the delegation. These were the American Indian land claims, defense spending, and grants-in-aid (Palmer, Taylor, and LiBrizzi, 1992).

The land-claims dispute began in the mid-1970s when the Passamaquoddy Indian tribe sued the state of Maine for lands they alleged had been taken from them in violation of the Non-

Intercourse Act of 1790. That Act held that no state could acquire any lands owned by Indians without the express consent of Congress. Because of the Act, a 1794 treaty between Massachusetts (of which Maine was then a part) and the Indians was deemed void because it had not been ratified by Congress. The territory involved encompassed 12.5 million acres, or more than half the land mass of the state. During the dispute, land titles were put into question, and plans for some commercial development projects were suspended.

Maine public officials disagreed over whether to fight the matter in the courts or work toward a negotiated settlement. State government leaders, notably Governor James Longley and Attorney General Joseph Brennan, wanted to pursue the matter in court. Members of the congressional delegation generally preferred to negotiate the matter, and a settlement was finally reached by a presidential task force, under which the federal government paid the Native Americans slightly over \$80 million. The key figure in the complex process was Senator Edmund S. Muskie. At the time, Muskie was chairperson of the Senate Budget Committee and had a close relationship with the Carter administration. Soon after the settlement, Muskie became President Carter's secretary of state.

A continuing area of concern has been defense spending. In the 1980s, defense spending was about as important as the pulp and paper industry to the state's economy. Each added about eight percent to Maine's annual gross state product. Several members of the delegation, including Senators Margaret Chase Smith and Bill Cohen and Representatives David Emery and Tom Andrews, held or continue to hold seats on the armed services committee of their respective chamber. Cohen's position on the Senate Armed Services Committee has made him a leading Republican spokesman on defense and military policy. In 1983, for instance, he was instrumental in helping to persuade the Reagan administration to agree to a build-down proposal in return for support for the MX missile.

The delegation has struggled over the past decade, with mixed success, to protect Maine's three major installations: Loring Air Force Base, Bath Iron Works, and the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. Each has been threatened as the nation's defense facilities have been downsized. Loring Air Force Base, established in 1953, was initially slated for closure in 1976, but the closure decision was reversed by Secretary of Defense Brown in 1980. Senators Muskie and Cohen played a major part in that effort. One probable consideration was the re-election campaign of President Jimmy Carter, who faced opposition from Senator Edward Kennedy, and for whom the Maine Democratic caucuses were an important step on the road to re-nomination. In 1991, however, the Air Force recommended once again that the base be closed, and this time the decision was eventually upheld despite the strong protests of the delegation (with the exception of Representative Tom Andrews).

Battles over Bath Iron Works (BIW) and the Portsmouth shipyard have been more successful. In 1970 the Bath shipyard lost a major contract to its principal rival, the Litten shipyard in Mississippi. On the other hand, in 1981, it secured a new \$1.2 billion contract with the U.S. Navy. While it has escaped major reductions in the 1990s, BIW always faces a threat of closure should the Defense Department elect to concentrate its contracting with one shipyard, since the Litten shipyard is somewhat larger. The Portsmouth Naval shipyard was spared closure by the Base Closure Commission in 1993, and appears likely to survive the 1995 cycle of reductions

and eliminations. It, too, has a larger rival in the Norfolk shipyard (Virginia), and its future is uncertain. The strength of the Maine delegation, especially the influence of Senator George Mitchell, has been of particular value here.

A key task of the delegation is to secure federal grants-in-aid for state and local government and other forms of federal assistance. Mostly, the state has been a "winner" in this regard. In the early 1980s, for instance, Maine obtained about \$1.30 for each tax dollar it sent to Washington. It has generally ranked among the top ten states in securing more federal dollars than it contributes to the federal treasury in the form of taxes. Further, federal spending in Maine on a per capita basis has generally been substantially higher than the national average. In 1993, for instance, the federal government spent \$5,379 on the average Mainer, or \$780 more than the national average for that year (Lewiston Journal Tribune, April 4, 1994). An important factor that makes federal spending high in Maine is the state's relatively generous spending for welfare, since federal dollars are triggered by state dollars. In the late 1980s, the state ranked among the top five in welfare spending as a portion of state budget, and was third in federal spending on the Medicaid program on a per capita basis. Another factor has been the substantial number of jobs connected to defense spending. In 1987, before the closure of Loring Air Force Base, Maine ranked tenth among the states in the number of federally paid civilian employees per capita.

Other New England states have fared more poorly with the federal government. In 1993, New Hampshire paid nearly \$1,500 more per person to the federal government than it received in payments. While its per capita income is only slightly higher than Maine's, New Hampshire's social welfare expenditures—critical in securing federal dollars—are among the lowest in the country. In Connecticut, a multi-billion dollar nuclear-powered submarine program based in Groton helped maintain a high level of federal support during the Cold War, despite the state's having a relatively high-income population. More recently, defense cuts have caused federal payments in Connecticut to drop well below federal tax collections. In 1993, the loss per person was slightly over \$1,800 (Bangor Daily News, Aug. 4, 1994).

Maine's federal assistance in the next few years will probably depend less on the maneuvers of its congressional delegation than on the statutory formulas of entitlement programs and on national defense requirements. Federal grants to states and localities increased by about one-third between 1980 and 1994 (from \$127.6 billion to \$169.3 billion, in constant 1987 dollars)—a time of conservative national administrations, it should be noted— mostly because of the huge growth in entitlements, especially Medicaid expenditures (Walker, 1995). Entitlement programs make up an ever increasing share of the total grant-in-aid package. In 1992, Maine received from the federal government \$3.2 billion in payments to individuals and only about \$1 billion in grants to state and local governments for such programs as community development, job training, and highway construction. A major restructuring of entitlements by Congress and/or the downsizing of a major defense facility, particularly Bath Iron Works (which, in 1992, obtained \$1.3 billion in federal prime contracts) would alter the state's presently favorable status. However, the delegation will probably have only marginal influence over decisions of that magnitude. Maine's dependence on federal assistance has declined somewhat of late because of problems with the state budget. Between 1980 and 1990, federal funds declined from one-third to one-quarter of total state spending (Wilson, 1992). Maine seemed less inclined than in earlier years to apply for new grants because of concern over the costs of required matching funds.

Delegation prospects

What are the prospects for the Maine delegation in the new Congress? Senator Mitchell's retirement means at the least a period of adjustment for the delegation, since the quick access to the White House he provided is missing. An article in the Bangor Daily News (January 21, 1995) reported that, according to one survey, the "power" of the Maine delegation shortly after the election dropped from 31st to 43rd in a ranking of state delegations. Additionally, the switch of Senator Snowe from the House to the Senate means that the seniority advantage she had obtained in the House—she was a deputy Republican whip and ranked fifth of 17 Republicans on the House Budget Committee—is no longer available. In general, the state's fortunes on Capitol Hill will be limited by the Republican majority's concentration on budget reductions, so the kinds of projects that Senator Mitchell worked to secure for Maine will simply no longer be as available.

However, Maine now has three of its four members in the majority party, and enjoys fair influence through the standing committees. Senator Cohen is the third ranking member of the Armed Services Committee, and as a moderate Republican in a closely divided Senate, he is in a good position to negotiate legislation affecting defense and military matters. On that committee, he chairs the Seapower Subcommittee. He is also chair of the Special Committee on Aging, is a member of the Select Intelligence Committee, and ranks third in seniority among Republicans on the Governmental Affairs Committee. He chairs for the latter committee the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management and the District of Columbia, which has major responsibility for investigating fraud in welfare, health, and social service programs. Senator Snowe serves on the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, with memberships on three subcommittees whose jurisdictions encompass Maine businesses: Oceans and Fisheries, Consumer Affairs, Foreign Commerce and Tourism, and Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine. She is also a member of the Foreign Relations Committee (chair of the Subcommittee on International Operations), the Budget Committee, and the Small Business Committee.

Representative John Baldacci is a member of the Agriculture Committee, and serves on two subcommittees: Department Operations, Nutrition, and Foreign Agriculture; and Resource Conservation, Research, and Forestry. A major task of the Agriculture Committee this session will be the re-authorization of a major farm bill containing subsidies for various crops. Because federal budget reductions make up a key part of the Republican's "Contract with America," political fireworks are anticipated over the amount of subsidies. Representative James B. Longley, Jr. is a member of the Small Business Committee (subcommittee: Regulation and Paperwork), the National Security Committee (subcommittee: Military Procurement), and the Resources Committee (subcommittees: Fisheries, Wildlife, and Oceans; Native American and Insular Affairs). His committee and subcommittee assignments reflect the re-organization of the committee system in the House under Republican leadership. In 1993-94, Representative Tom Andrews was on the Armed Services, Merchant Marine and Fisheries, and Small Business Committees.

Thus far the delegation appears to have gained a measure of institutional prestige. Representative Baldacci was elected vice-chairman of the first-term House Democrats; Representative Jim Longley was one of the first of the House Republicans named to respond (in January) to President Clinton's weekly Saturday radio talk. In the Senate, Senator Snowe took an active part

in the debate on the balanced budget amendment. This session will be the first since 1977 that Maine has had two senators in the majority party.

Having two senators in the Republican majority in 1995 will be highly relevant to Maine's prospects in the 104th Congress. The present Congress has exhibited a high degree of party solidarity as Republicans, especially House Republicans, have endeavored to enact several parts of their "Contract with America." Representative Longley has been a stalwart member of the Republican caucus, and has supported "Contract" legislation that will diminish the amount of dollars going to Maine. In mid-March, for instance, he voted for a bill to eliminate low-income home energy assistance funds. If enacted, the measure would translate in Maine into a reported loss of \$17 million that helps approximately 60,000 state residents pay for winter fuel (Portland Press Herald, March 17, 1995). The Home Energy Assistance Program is one that former Senator Mitchell had worked hard to protect. It is unclear at this stage how much of the House Republicans' "Contract" legislation Senate Republicans are prepared to support. If they endorse the plan strongly, Maine will surely lose substantial federal assistance. If, as seems more likely, Senate Republicans modify and place their own imprint on House legislation, the state is likely to fare better. What can be said is that the delegation is reasonably well positioned— despite the absence of Senator George Mitchell—to present Maine's case as a new relationship between the nation and the states unfolds in Congress this year.

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