

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Senator Robert Mitchler

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Illinois Statecraft Oral History project

Interview # ISL-A-L-2011-029

Senator Robert Mitchler, a Republican Illinois state Senator from 1965 through 1980 from Kane County, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Statecraft* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: June 30, 2011 Location: Mitchler residence, rural Oswego, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Interview being
processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 3:42 / 3.7 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on Aug 5, 2011

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

© 2011 Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Abstract

Sen. Robert Mitchler, *Illinois Statecraft*, ISL-A-L-2011-029

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Robert (Bob) Mitchler was born on June 4th, 1920 in Aurora (Kane County), Illinois. He grew up during the depression and World War II, with his Austrian immigrant father instilling in him the values of hard work and being a friend to all. Mitchler graduated from high school in 1937. He served in the U.S. Navy as a petty officer and stenographer during both World War II and the Korean War. (See Mitchler's interview on his wartime experiences in the ALPL *Veterans Remember* project.) Upon his resignation from the Navy in 1952, he returned to college, and to his new wife, Helen (Drew) Mitchler.

Mitchler tried his hand at several positions before being hired by the Northern Illinois Gas Company. He also became active in numerous organizations, including the Young Republicans in Kane County. In 1964 he ran for the Illinois State Senate and won. He held that office until being defeated in the Republican primary in 1980, having elected to not campaign vigorously that year. During his long tenure in the Senate, Mitchler saw the legislature evolve from a body of citizen legislators that met for several months every other year, to a group of professional legislators meeting yearly. Throughout his years in the legislature he consistently fought for smaller government and lower taxes, championed veterans concerns, worked on important clean water legislation, and in 1970 voted against the imposition of a state income tax and against the state's new Constitution due to its position on taking bonding decisions away from the citizens of the state. Mitchler voted several times against the Equal Rights Amendment, which came up for a vote every year from 1972 through 1982. Following his legislative career, he spent several years as a legislative liaison officer for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Bedsheet Ballot of 1964; professionalization of the Illinois state legislature; Sen. W. Russell Arrington; imposition of Illinois income tax; Gov. Richard B. Ogilvie; 1970 Illinois State Constitution; Equal Rights Amendment; Mayor Richard J. Daley; Kane County politics; Oswego, Illinois; American Legion; Northern Illinois Gas Company; Gov. Dan Walker; Gov. Jim Thompson; IL Department of Veterans Affairs

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

COPYRIGHT

The following material can be used for educational and other non-commercial purposes without the written permission of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. "Fair use" criteria of Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976 must be followed. These materials are not to be deposited in other repositories, nor used for resale or commercial purposes without the authorization from the Audio-Visual Curator at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, 112 N. 6th Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701. Telephone (217) 785-7955