

George Mitchell and Wyche Fowler: November 2, 1991

- I didn't tape Mitchell's remarks at the dinner. He spoke of the southern senators (five of whom were also there--Nunn, Graham, Heflin, Sasser, Sanford) as "the voice of the Dixie Limited" and he went on "the voice I most often hear is that of Wyche Fowler." (as Assistant Floor Leader.)
- "The reason I chose him is for his uncanny ability to work with senators on both sides of the Senate. His wit, his intelligence and his grasp of issues enables him to build consensus...he rarely seeks the spotlight on the Senate floor. He works behind the scenes on the important issues of our day. Wyche Fowler's opinions are a guiding force in the Senate and the needs of Georgia are the guiding force for Wyche Fowler."
- Wyche introduces his family and "my mentor" and thanks the senators for coming. He notes that in the things he tried to accomplish "from Chatanooga to the Savannah Bridge," he needed all of them.
- When we talked, Wyche had said that these five were the only ones he had invited to the banquet and that they had all agreed to come and give up a weekend for him.
- He praised Sam Nunn at great length, "a rare man of earned distinction and no ego."
- Said some pairs even of the same party didn't get along, but that they did. "A lot of the light that shines on me is reflected light from Sam, not just because he helps me, but because of his character that puts the U.S. before Georgia. Without him, I'd be suffering for the lack of that relationship."
- Calls it "most successful fund-raising effort in Georgia history."
- His talk was serious and pitched to the idea that "these are tough times for incumbents...the winds blow and the waves crash on the beach. People are quick to fight for ideals, but reluctant to do the day-to-day work that makes the system work."
- The striking thing about the talk--and what it reveals most about WF--is how many times he used the word "together." As in, "it can only be done if we do it together." Next in line was the use of "consensus." He used "together" at least a dozen times. He's trying to bridge the constituent-incumbent gulf somehow; and it seems to make him want to emphasize that we're in it together and need to get out of it together. He does not give an "I, I, I" speech.
- Two House members came, Buddy Darden and Richard Ray. They weren't asked to speak! And Wyche didn't mention them. *like Dalton with Donna Rome*
- Mitchell told the crowd that Nunn and Fowler gave them "the best, most aggressive representation of any state in the U.S. and you ought to be damn proud of senators Nunn and Fowler." He probably says that about all the Democratic pairs!

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