

Obit

'Liberal icon'

Mondale, Carter's VP, dies aged 93

MINNEAPOLIS, April 20, (AP): Former Vice President **Walter F. Mondale**, a liberal icon who lost one of the most lopsided presidential elections after bluntly telling voters to expect a tax increase if he won, died Monday. He was 93.

The death of the former senator, ambassador and Minnesota attorney general was announced in a statement from his family. No cause was cited.

Mondale followed the trail blazed by his political mentor, Hubert H. Humphrey, from Minnesota politics to the U.S. Senate and the vice presidency, serving under Jimmy Carter from 1977 to 1981.

In a statement Monday night, Carter said he considered Mondale "the best vice president in our country's history." He added: "Fritz Mondale provided us all with a model for public service and private behavior."

Mondale's own try for the White House, in 1984, came at the zenith of Ronald Reagan's popularity. His selection of Rep. Geraldine Ferraro of New York as his running mate made him the first major-party

presidential nominee to put a woman on the ticket, but his declaration that he would raise taxes helped define the race.

On Election Day, he carried only his home state and the District of Columbia. The electoral vote was 525-13 for Reagan - the biggest landslide in the Electoral College since Franklin Roosevelt defeated Alf Landon in 1936. (Sen. George McGovern got 17 electoral votes in his 1972 defeat, winning Massachusetts and Washington, D.C.)

"I did my best," Mondale said the day after the election, and blamed no one but himself.

"I think you know I've never really warmed up to television," he said. "In fairness to television, it never really warmed up to me."

Years later, Mondale said his campaign message had proven to be the right one.

Correct

"History has vindicated me that we would have to raise taxes," he said. "It was very unpopular, but it was undeniably correct."

In 2002, state and national Democrats looked to Mondale when Sen. Paul Wellstone, D-Minn., was killed in a plane crash less than two weeks before Election Day. Mondale agreed to stand in for Wellstone, and early polls showed him with a lead over the Republican candidate, Norm Coleman.

But the 53-year-old Coleman, emphasizing his youth and vigor, out-hustled the then-74-year-old Mondale in an intense six-day campaign. Mondale was also hurt by a partisan memorial service for Wellstone, in which thousands of Democrats booed Republican politicians in attendance. One speaker pleaded: "We are begging you to help us win this election for Paul Wellstone."

Polls showed the service put off independents and cost Mondale votes. Coleman won by 3 percentage points.

"The eulogizers were the ones hurt the most," Mondale said after the election. "It doesn't justify it, but we all make mistakes. Can't we now find it in our hearts to forgive them and go on?"

It was a particularly bitter defeat for Mondale, who even after his loss to Reagan had taken solace in his perfect record in Minnesota.

"One of the things I'm most proud of," he said in 1987, "is that not once in my public career did I ever lose an election in Minnesota."

Years after the 2002 defeat, Mondale returned to the Senate to stand beside Democrat Al Franken in 2009 when he was sworn in to replace Coleman after a drawn-out recount and court battle.

Mondale started his career in Washington in 1964, when he was appointed to the Senate to replace Humphrey, who had resigned to become vice president. Mondale was elected to a full six-year term with about 54% of the vote in 1966, although Democrats lost the governorship and suffered other election setbacks. In 1972, Mondale won another Senate term with nearly 57% of the vote.

His Senate career was marked by advocacy of social issues such as education, housing, migrant workers and child nutrition. Like Humphrey, he was an outspoken supporter of civil rights.

Mondale tested the waters for a presidential bid in 1974 but ultimately decided against it. "Basically I found I did not have the overwhelming desire to be president, which is essential for the kind of campaign that is required," he said in November 1974.

In 1976, Carter chose Mondale as No. 2 on his ticket and went on to unseat Gerald Ford.

As vice president, Mondale had a close relationship with Carter. He was the first vice president to occupy an office in the White House, rather than in a building across the street. Mondale traveled extensively on Carter's behalf, and advised him on domestic and foreign affairs.

Humor

While he lacked Humphrey's charisma, Mondale had a droll sense of humor.

When he dropped out of the 1976 presidential sweepstakes, he said, "I don't want to spend the next two years in Holiday Inns."

Reminded of that shortly before he was picked as Carter's running mate, Mondale said, "I've checked and found that they're all redecorated, and they're marvelous places to stay." Mondale never backed away from his liberal principles.

"I think that the country more than ever needs progressive values," Mondale said in 1989.

That year, Democrats tried to persuade him to challenge Minnesota GOP Sen. Rudy Boschwitz, but he decided against making the race, saying it was time to make way for a new generation.

"One of the requirements of a healthy party is that it renews itself," he said at the time. "You can't keep running Walter Mondale for everything."

That paved the way for Wellstone to win the Democratic nomination, and go on to upset Boschwitz. Wellstone had been preparing to take on Mondale in a primary but would have been a heavy underdog.

The son of a Methodist minister and a music teacher, Walter Frederick Mondale was born Jan. 5, 1928, in tiny Ceylon, Minnesota, and grew up in several small southern Minnesota towns.

He was only 20 when he served as a congressional district manager for Humphrey's successful Senate campaign in 1948. His education, interrupted by a two-year stint in the Army, culminated with a law degree from the University of Minnesota in 1956.

Mondale began a law practice in Minneapolis and ran the successful 1958 gubernatorial campaign of Democrat Orville Freeman, who appointed Mondale state attorney general in 1960. Mondale was elected attorney general in the fall of 1960 and was reelected in 1962.

As attorney general, Mondale moved quickly into civil rights, antitrust and consumer protection cases. He was the first Minnesota attorney general to make consumer protection a campaign issue.

After his White House years, Mondale served from 1993-96 as President Bill Clinton's ambassador to Japan, fighting for U.S. access to markets ranging from cars to cellular phones.



US President Joe Biden is being forced to go virtual for many of his leader-to-leader talks during the pandemic and the resulting Zoom meetings just aren't a natural fit for the back-slapping politician. Biden's big climate summit this week with dozens of world leaders is a moment for him to play cheerleader in the fight against global warming. (AP)

Climate

Biden's virtual climate summit

Diplomacy sans human touch

WASHINGTON, April 20, (AP): There will be no hands to shake or backs to slap, no way to look a foreign leader in the eye. The small human moments that define statecraft will be reduced to images on a screen.

President Joe Biden, a most hands-on politician, this week will host a major climate summit with dozens of world leaders - all of them stuck on Zoom.

Biden has made clear that he wants to reassert U.S. leadership on the world stage, including on climate change, after four tumultuous, often inward-looking years of President Donald Trump. But as much as the White House staff has tried to dress up the remote meetings he has held so far, while eyeing the climate summit Thursday and Friday as an important moment, the president has made no secret of how much he misses diplomacy with a more personal touch.

"There's no substitute for face-to-face discussions," Biden said Friday as he welcomed Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga to the White House for his first in-person world leader meeting.

"I greatly appreciate the chance to spend time with you in person and to exchange our ideas face to face," he added.

Biden has expressed to aides and advisers how much he misses the in-person interactions and friendly asides that typically happen on the sidelines of international meetings, moments that can often lead to foreign policy breakthroughs, according to three White House officials not authorized to speak publicly about private discussions. He was disappointed, at times, with the

stilted nature of his first remote bilateral meeting, held with Canada's Justin Trudeau in February.

The White House has announced that South Korea's Moon Jae-in will travel to Washington in May for Biden's second in-person foreign leader meeting. And there are hopes the president will make his own overseas trip in June. But until then, expectations for major diplomatic developments have been reined in - and the climate summit is no exception.

Streamed 100% live with no backstage give-and-take, the summit will be more geared to sending a message about America's return to the climate fight and nudging the world toward a greener planet than about specific deals or action.

Negotiations

The world is still trying to figure out what the climate gathering will be, but experts know what it's not: Don't expect negotiations akin to those that produced the historic 2015 Paris climate accord.

In Paris, "every comma, every period and every sentence was negotiated 100 times," said Christiana Figueres, the former U.N. climate chief who was one of the chief architects behind the 6-year-old pact. By contrast, this week's summit, she says, "is a public confirmation of intent for every country to come forward with its current best effort."

Climate activists may hope for dramatic moments when countries like Japan, South Korea or even China are suddenly inspired by Biden and announce they will stop funding other

nations' coal power plants. But Henry "Jake" Jacoby, who cofounded the MIT Center for Global Change Science, just laughs at the idea: "On a Zoom call with 40 nations of the world watching? Yeah, not a chance."

Restrictions

The summit instead is about planting seeds for a November climate meeting in Scotland, where expectations and stakes are higher. But because of in-person restrictions due to the coronavirus pandemic and the short time period since Biden took office, this week's meeting is more of a show-and-tell among leaders, all streamed to whomever wants to watch it. The real action comes later.

The bulk of the diplomacy over the next seven months will be done not by presidents, but behind the scenes by diplomats, such as the recent travels by special U.S. climate envoy John Kerry, said Nigel Purvis, a former State Department climate negotiator in the administrations of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush.

The in-person meetings in Scotland are meant to pull everything together, which still could work, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said Monday.

Biden has made clear he understands the necessity of doing meetings remotely: first, to safeguard the health of the leaders as well as the large traveling party that comes with a visit from a head of state. Moreover, keeping things remote helps set an example that his administration is still discouraging travel amid a rise in virus variants and COVID-19 cases.

But he has not always enjoyed the virtual substitutes. He struggled with the mute button at a remote fundraiser and watched as German Chancellor Angela Merkel forgot to silence her own feed and interrupted British Prime Minister Boris Johnson during a virtual Group of Seven leaders' meeting in February.

Biden's foreign policy outreach to this point has lacked the small moments amid summits and state visits meant to flatter and make memories for foreign dignitaries.

President Barack Obama took Dmitry Medvedev to a burger joint in 2010 when the Russian president visited Washington. Obama's younger daughter, Sasha, who was studying Chinese at her private D.C. school at the time, had a memorable moment trying out some simple phrases with China's Hu Jintao during his 2011 state visit.

Vladimir Putin's 2001 visit to George W. Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas, included a barbecue dinner, a lesson on how to dance the Cotton-Eye Joe and a ride in the Republican president's pickup truck.

Such moments are difficult to create in the pandemic era, but that hasn't stopped Biden and his team from trying to bring some small flourishes to virtual statecraft. For example, Biden opened his recent virtual meeting with the leaders of Australia, India and Japan with a video of George W. Bush talking about the coalition's beginnings after the 2004 earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean. It was part of an effort to stress bipartisanism and continuity in the alliance.

The first 15 companies that have been selected will benefit from this new initiative starting beginning of April. More will be joining in the future.

Huawei Eco-development launches its new program in the Middle East and Africa region to support mobile app startups

Huawei's Eco-development department has launched the first edition of its program to support Startups in the Middle East and Africa region. This first-of-its-kind initiative is designed to support regional companies that have recently launched their mobile app and to help them grow their base of users through the Huawei's official app distribution platform AppGallery - one of the top three marketplaces globally with more than 530 million monthly active users across 170 countries.

After releasing their apps on AppGallery leveraging Huawei Mobile Service Core (HMS), the selected startups will benefit from the Huawei ecosystem team's extended support. It includes many areas such as technology integration support in order to deliver the best quality app to users, free of charge feature placements on AppGallery and directly on Huawei devices in order to boost their user acquisition, and finally additional support to run dedicated campaigns through the Huawei ecosystem.

Among a wide range of Startups from various categories, the Eco-development team has selected the first 15 mobile



apps to join the program that is starting this week. The main selection criteria reside on the HQ location (Middle East and Africa based companies), the stage of business life cycle (companies that are still relatively early in their development), and the users' needs (apps with a specific value proposition from targeted categories, in demand

from Huawei's users).

The first edition of this initiative will include mobile apps from popular categories among users, such as shopping, education, social, sport & health, finance, food & drink, navigation & transport. From April onwards the following apps will be available to download from AppGallery for Huawei's

users: Baaz, Basketjo, Breadfast, Wajeez, FittiCoin, Homzmart, Invygo, Konnash, Okadoc, Munch: on, Petra Ride, Swan, TiLa Online Shopping, WaffarX, and Chefaa.

"As part of Huawei's strategy, we are proud to help startups to achieve their business goals by giving them the support they need within the app development community. At Huawei, we believe that most of today's startups will be the popular apps of the future, and we will ensure that they are available on AppGallery to meet our user's needs". Said Lu Geng, Vice President Middle East, and Africa Global Partnerships & Eco-Development

This new initiative places Huawei as an active player that supports the digital transformation of industries and enterprises and adheres to the global strategy "platform + ecosystem" that fosters teaming up with app developers to meet today's end users' needs. Small businesses featuring local apps play an essential role in developing AppGallery and overall user satisfaction.