

103^D CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3017

For the relief of John Mitchell.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 6, 1993

Mr. BILIRAKIS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

For the relief of John Mitchell.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS.**

4 The Congress finds as follows:

5 (1) The successful interception and destruction
6 on April 8, 1943, of a Japanese bomber carrying the
7 architect of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor
8 and Commander in Chief of the Japanese Combined
9 Fleet, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, was a mission
10 exemplifying a level of skill, daring, and courage
11 rarely seen in the annals of war.

1 (2) The successful interception of the bomber
2 was militarily important because it substantially
3 damaged the Japanese war machine and was com-
4 parable in its symbolic significance and odds against
5 success to the surprise bombing raid on Tokyo car-
6 ried out a year earlier by General Jimmy Doolittle's
7 bombing force launched from the aircraft carrier
8 Hornet.

9 (3) The successful mission to intercept the
10 bomber was due in large part to the astute and thor-
11 ough planning and leadership skills of Colonel John
12 W. Mitchell, then Major Mitchell, commander of the
13 339th Fighter Squadron based on Guadalcanal in
14 the South Pacific Ocean.

15 (4) Major Mitchell planned and executed with
16 split second precision the longest fighter intercept
17 mission ever flown.

18 (5) Flying a 5-legged, 400-mile course, low over
19 the waters to avoid detection, west over the Japa-
20 nese-occupied Solomon Islands, Major Mitchell and
21 his raiders defied unbelievable odds to arrive unseen
22 at the exact location and the precise time to spot the
23 Japanese bombers, with their fighter escort, de-
24 scending for landing at the Island of Ballale.

1 (6) Climbing to meet the adversaries, Major
2 Mitchell ordered 4 of the “Lightening” P-38 fighters
3 to attack the bombers, 1 of which was believed to be
4 carrying Admiral Yamamoto, while Major Mitchell
5 led the remaining fighters to a higher position.

6 (7) Within minutes, the bomber later confirmed
7 to be carrying Admiral Yamamoto was in flames on
8 the floor of the Bougainville jungle on the Island of
9 Ballale, while the 2d bomber, now known to have
10 been carrying Admiral Matome Ugaki, Chief of Staff
11 of the Japanese Imperial Fleet, was downed at sea.

12 (8) Following the mission, Admiral Marc
13 Mitscher, then Commander of the United States
14 Naval and Air Forces on Guadalcanal, recommended
15 that Major Mitchell and 4 other pilots involved in
16 the mission receive a medal of honor for their part
17 in eliminating Japan’s foremost naval strategist, but
18 the tribute was wrongly denied because of an alleged
19 security compromise for which Major Mitchell was
20 not responsible.

21 **SEC. 2. AWARD OF MEDAL OF HONOR TO JOHN W. MITCH-**

22 **ELL.**

23 Notwithstanding the time limitations of section
24 3744(b) of title 10, United States Code, the President
25 shall award a medal of honor to John W. Mitchell of San

1 Anselmo, California, in accordance with the recommenda-
2 tion of Mr. Mitchell's commanding officer and pursuant
3 to section 3741 of such title, for his outstanding service
4 to the United States while serving as a major in the Army
5 Air Corps during World War II.

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