

William Michael “Billy” Bulger

Early Life:

- Born in Dorchester, MA: February 2nd, 1934 to parents James and Jane Veronica “Jean”
- 3rd of 6 children, younger brother to James “Whitey” Bulger.
- Moved to Old Harbor Housing Projects of South Boston, “Southie,” MA->Maintains lifelong friendships and connections in the area.
- Attended Boston College High School and Boston College, but dropped out in 1952 to serve in the army.
- Served from September 1953 to November 1955, later returned to BC for an undergraduate degree in English Literature(with help from the GI Bill.)
- Later attended BC Law School to receive his J.D. in 1961.

Personal Life:

- Raised Irish Catholic
- Married wife Mary Bulger in 1960.
- Has 9 children; Bill, Jim, Patrick, Dan, Chris, Brendan, Sarah, Mary, Kathleen.

Political Career:

- Elected to Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1961: served 4 terms.
- First elected to Massachusetts State Senate in 1970 representing the First Suffolk District.
- Named Second Assistant Floor Majority Leader in 1973.
- Succeeded Joseph DiCarlo in 1977 as Senate Majority Leader(following DiCarlo’s conviction for extortion.)

- Elected President of the Massachusetts State Senate in 1978, re-elected ever two years to 1996: Longest tenure of State Senate president in MA history (17 years total.)
- Led efforts in child abuse reporting laws, charter schools, public schools and libraries, and welfare reform.
- Resigned in 2003 due to pressure from Governor Mitt Romney after refusing to cooperate with authorities in the search for his brother.
- Appointed by the UMass Board of trustees as the 24th president of UMass from 1996 to 2003, increasing private support, researching funding, scholarship programs, and alumni activity.

Personality:

- Billy described himself as an “autocratic, dictatorial boss.” -*60 Minutes* interview(1992).
- “Billy controlled the streets in a very, very, very political neighborhood. And Jimmy Controlled the streets in a very tough neighborhood.” –Peter Gelzini, South Boston native.
- “They’re both very tough in their respective fields. Whitey Bulger was a stone cold killer. He’s a master chess player in the game of life in the underworld..... Bill Bulger was a master at the exercise of political power. You didn’t mess with Bill Bulger. People were frightened of him, politically speaking.” –Dick Lehr, author of *Black Mass* and *Whitey: The Life of America’s Most Notorious Mob Boss*, former *Boston Globe* Reporter.
- "If you want to get something done in Massachusetts, you need him."-Morley Safer, *CBS News*.
- “The perception of power is the same thing as having power. If people think you have it, you have it.... And there’s value in that, for me.” -William Bulger.
- “I think the healthiest thing in the democracy is that the people who are elected are not afraid to assert power. I think it’s a good thing.” –William Bulger.

Relationship with Jimmy:

- “He’s my brother, I care about him. I encourage him to come by all the time.”
–William Bulger.
- “This entire situation has been a source of great anguish for me. Just because I visit him, doesn’t mean I condone it.” –William Bulger, on visiting his brother in jail.
- "I always knew there was fact and fiction. I couldn't sort it out. I try to be rational about all of this.... All that has come out doesn't come out of thin air. I don't know what is true or not.... I don't try to sort it out any longer. I just try to be a brother." - William Bulger, concerning his brother’s trial.
- “The Bulger Brothers: The bad one (Jimmy) and the good one (Billy). And yet, (with Billy), true or not, there is a shadow of menace.” -Morley Safer, *CBS News*.
- “I don’t know of anyone that he’s (William Bulger) done anything to, but there is this myth that a lot of people live with, that ‘If I do this and he doesn’t like it, that he will get me or God forbid, he might say my name to Jimmy (Whitey) at lunch...’” –Mike Barnicle, writer for *The Boston Globe*.
- "My name is James Bulger. I kill people for a living. What you're saying about my brother has to stop." –James Bulger to Paul Corsetti, reporter who wrote critical things about William Bulger in the *Boston Herald American*.
- "We're immigrants' kids... And one thing, when you're part of a minority group that's trying to break in and make it is loyalty, loyalty to the group members. He was his brother. He was loyal to him. And he loves his brother."
–Joe Oteri, friend and Southie native.