# Sen. Johnson Then, Sen. Johnson Now

Early this year—on March 10, to be exact—Senator Lyndon Johnson stood on the floor of the U. S. Senate and proclaimed: *"Let me assure the Senate right now that surrender is not a Texas habit."*

The senator from Texas was asserting the determination of Texans to fight to the last ditch for their tidelands, to resist with all their might what he called the "federal power grab." That grab for power and property, as he was well aware, not only would take from Texas lands which it had owned for more than a century but would be a steal from the school children of Texas. From these lands the school children already have received $9 million, and they stand to receive many millions of dollars more in the future as the one-eighth royalty owners if they remain in possession of this potentially valuable oil-bearing area.

This has been belittled by one of Governor Stevenson's chief supporters in Texas, who claims that the money part is insignificant. It may be that from nine million to several hundred million dollars is insignificant to those in power in Washington, but to the school children of Texas it is quite a sum for education.

A distinguished lambaster of the tidelands has stated that the principal opponents of the government's steal of the tidelands from the school children of Texas are a few rich oil men. This statement is ridiculous and untrue. It makes no difference to the big oil operators because they will pay the same royalty to either the state or the federal government. But it does make a difference of hundreds of thousands of dollars to the school children of Texas, and don't let anyone misrepresent this fact and get away with it.

Senator Johnson had full knowledge of the value of this heritage to the state's school children, and of Texas' legitimate claim to the tidelands, when he stood before the Senate and argued for the passage of a bill that would do "the just, the fair and the honorable"—confirm for all time that the submerged lands belong to Texas and the other states bordering on the sea.

Senator Johnson voted for the bill, which passed the Senate as it previously had passed the House, only to run into a veto by President Truman.

The contrast between his actions then and his actions now is bound to cause wonderment in Texas. It is bound to arouse speculation as to whether Senator Johnson, after making a ringing declaration of "no surrender" only a few months ago, has now decided that surrender on the tidelands issue is the best policy—or the best politics.

Senator Johnson is sponsoring and supporting a presidential candidate who openly approved Mr. Truman's veto of the tidelands bill and thereby takes his stand against the state ownership principle for which the senator from Texas has fought. He will greet that candidate —Governor Stevenson of Illinois—when he arrives in Fort Worth Friday, will introduce him when he speaks here, and will accompany him on his campaign tour of Texas.

No wonder Senator Johnson's friends in Texas are wondering how he can sell Texas' school children down the river on the tidelands issue and how he can consistently and conscientiously support a candidate whose campaign statements have shown him strongly opposed to some of the other important issues the senator has championed most vigorously during his 15 years in Congress.

As a member first of the House and then of the Senate, Mr. Johnson has been a persistent supporter of the Taft-Hartley law and other legislation which would tend to strike a balance between the powers of organized labor leaders and the powers of management. In 1947, Mr. Johnson voted with a majority of the House to pass the Taft-Hartley law, and voted again with the majority to override the President's veto of that measure. Since that time, as a senator, he has voted repeatedly against administration-sponsored proposals which would weaken that law. He has voted for amendments which were designed to improve the administration of the labor law, remedy defects which have been revealed by experience and make it fair and equitable to both labor and management.

Governor Stevenson, the candidate whom Mr. Johnson now is vigorously supporting, has declared not for revising and improving the law but for its outright repeal.

Senator Johnson, during his years in Congress, has been a staunch defender of states' rights. Governor Stevenson, in his views on the civil rights issue, has taken a position which Southerners regard as an unwarranted invasion of the right of the states to manage their own affairs.

As chairman of the Senate preparedness subcommittee, Senator Johnson has worked diligently to ferret out and eliminate instances of waste and extravagance in the defense program. Now he is supporting the candidate who, if elected, will be the heir of the Truman administration under which this waste and extravagance have taken place and which has shown no great eagerness to eliminate it.

As President Truman has done in regard to General Eisenhower, whom he formerly lauded as a great American but now maligns, Senator Johnson seems to have changed his mind. His friends in Texas, including some whose ardent support contributed materially to his victory in the race for the Senate, are wondering why. They can only conclude he must be impelled by personal reasons which seem to him sufficient to justify turning his back on some of the issues for which he has fought so energetically. Friends and voters in Texas are wondering why this sudden change.