

AI search

Johnson did not want to leave the Senate.....

Lyndon B. Johnson faced a surprising political setback after the 1960 election. Despite being elected Vice President on the Kennedy ticket, Johnson attempted to retain influence in the Senate by seeking to chair the Senate Democratic Conference, a role traditionally held by the Majority Leader.

Initially, Johnson persuaded Mike Mansfield—who was stepping into the Majority Leader role—to support the idea, believing it would be an honorary position. Johnson even planned to keep his old Senate office and continue attending key committee meetings. But when the Democratic Conference convened on January 3, 1961, Johnson's plan unraveled. The Senate chose Mansfield as leader and Hubert Humphrey as whip, effectively sidelining Johnson from the leadership structure he once dominated.

It was a moment that underscored the limits of the vice presidency at the time—and Johnson's struggle to maintain the power he wielded as Senate Majority Leader. Quite the twist for someone who had been the master of Senate maneuvering.