

# Taming the Storm

Jack Bass

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**Jack Bass : Taming the Storm** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Taming the Storm:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent story of the life of Judge Frank Johnson from ...By CustomerExcellent story of the life of Judge Frank Johnson from Alabama who was so instrumental during the Civil Rights years. If not for Judge Johnson, important changes would not have taken place. Fascinating.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy TRACY L. DAWKINSInteresting read3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. THE JUDGE WHO BROUGHT THE CONSTITUTION TO DIXIE AND WOULDN'T BOW DOWN

TO THE BIGOTS. By Elliot Stamler  
Federal Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr., an Alabama Republican back when there were almost none, was appointed to the Federal bench by Pres. Eisenhower and served for well over 30 years first as a district judge and in the end of his career as an appeals judge. It fell to Judge Johnson to become the most prominent of the small group of courageous Federal judges to enforce the constitution and the civil rights laws after *Brown v. Board of Education* and throughout the 30+ years of his service. To do so in central Alabama, perhaps the most racist state in the nation (Mississippi next door may have been worse) forced him and his family to make enormous personal sacrifices—it was he who stopped George C. Wallace, his nemesis and the ultra-segregationist governor; who presided over the desegregation of all of the levels of education in his benighted state, who faced decades of murderous threats requiring constant protection from US Marshals. He was also the national judicial leader in the formulation of the civil rights of the mentally ill including the hospitalized, of prisoners (in the horror house prisons of his state), and so many other things. This biography is the most complete one written of Judge Johnson's life, from youth until near retirement..it is lengthy, extremely well written, intensely interesting and is a magnificent commendation of a judge who by the end of his career was recognized by the entire bench and bar including in Alabama, as a legal giant. But for Richard Nixon's political crony and later felon Atty General John Mitchell and his political considerations, Johnson would have been nominated to the Supreme Court. The book deals with all of the well known and not so well known figures of the decades long civil rights struggle and gives marvelous insight to their personalities and doings: Wallace, Lyndon Johnson, John Doar, Robert Kennedy and so many more. I recommend this book enthusiastically...it is a tribute to a truly great American judge who displayed the quintessential qualities we would want in all of our judges. He paid the price for many years without complaint. Frank Johnson has been vindicated by history. It is indeed an irony that nowadays in Alabama all of those who were ideologically his opponents and who were then Democrats in an overwhelmingly Democratic state are now, unchanged at heart and mind, Republicans in a now overwhelmingly Republican state.

A biography of the southern judge describes how, in the explosive years of the civil rights movement, Johnson issued a series of landmark decisions that were instrumental in turning the tide of white resistance. 15,000 first printing.

From Publishers Weekly  
The unelected federal judge who, in Bill Moyers's words, "altered forever the face of the South," comes alive in this substantial biography. Bass, author of a previous book on Southern judges ( *Unlikely Heroes* ), first depicts Johnson as a product of the fiercely independent hills of northwest Alabama and the son of a mother with strong convictions. Drawing on extensive interviews with Johnson and his associates, Bass describes Johnson's early years, including his influential experiences in law school, before he became a judge and intersected with the civil rights movement: ruling on bus segregation, voting rights and school desegregation, and suffering the bombing of his mother's house and vitriol from his law school chum, Alabama governor George Wallace. Not just a moral beacon, Johnson, who recently retired, was a legal innovator, developing new judicial doctrines regarding state prisons and mental health institutions. Johnson claims his judicial approach is strictly legal with "no interest in social change" and the book's account makes that claim plausible. In a few chapters, such as one on the suicide of the judge's adopted son, Bass could have used less detail, but this book is a valuable piece of history. Photos not seen by PW.  
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