

Page of Opinion

NEW EXECUTIVE NEEDS UNITY

President Dies; Nation Endures

A president dies; a country endures.

The sorrow — and the anger — over President Kennedy's assassination will long linger, but now we must face up to the country's continuity.

In the midst of grief, we must give support to the new President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Experienced as he is in the world of politics, he knows better than anyone that he will need help in the days to come.

That is why he asked for everyone's help, and for God's. We should pray that he receives such help.

Death, especially such a tragic one as President Kennedy's, can unite a people.

The nation is united in grief now.

And it is united in a demand that in a world slowly becoming civilized (or is it?), such a tragic happening shall not come again. The guilty must be punished, yes, but the great question remains: Why did it happen?

We all must take a deep look at the question to see if we share some of the guilt in the answer.

Our founding fathers planned well in establishing a chain of command, and in recent years we have improved it.

Too often, we have dismissed the vice-president as an oddity, just a running mate and a geographical handy man for the No. 1 choice. We have had another lesson in the need for choosing well on the No. 2 candidates.

Many felt, after the last election, that Lyndon Johnson would fade from the scene under the vigorous leadership of John Kennedy. In a sense, Johnson did seem to retire, but while he was in the background, he continued to absorb vital information on vital problems.

Blessed with ability and acumen, Johnson will carry on.

All of us now join in wishing him well and praying for successful leadership.

His is a difficult task. His sense of loss is deeper than others'; he knows what a big load he must take up.

Politics aside, the nation must get behind him.

Now, more than ever, we need to show that we comprise a union.

Again, there is a lesson for assassins:

Democracy's strength is in its resiliency, its ability to withstand tragedy and shock.

The real chain of command is in the people.

It will never be given up.