

Research

Writing

Presidential Succession Analysis

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Hon. Gerald Ford,
House Office Building,
Washington, D.C.

President Johnson told newsmen: "Hubert Humphrey is the best Vice-President I have ever known". This gives rise to a surmise that very important persons may have been questioning the fitness of Mr. Humphrey to become President.

I see 1965 as a time for the Congress to exercise great caution in the matter of being rushed into a Constitutional Change of the question of who shall become President if the President dies or is mentally disabled. Right this February there is a rush on to nail the matter down. Is this because of the present control of Senate and House to be sure that the controllers will have it done to their satisfaction?

The word "Succession" is foreign to the practices of a true democracy. When our Constitution was drawn up the Monarchies were many in the world. The writers of the Constitution may have felt that it was necessary to use the word "Succession" to make the constitution sound authentic.

If we are to be a "True Democracy" then the New President should be selected by election of the people, which could be had in about ninety days or thereabouts. During the 90 days someone could serve as Acting President. For fourteen months the "Speaker-of-the-House" was a heart beat away. In giving the oath to Humphrey his raised right hand was out of control, and he read long passages of the Oath that almost confounded Humphrey to remember and repeat. There is a need, and has been, to nail the trouble down, but let's not leave the "People" out.

Respectfully Yours - Lloyd E. Ashe