

"Steelman, as Director of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, was constantly being played up in the press as the President's confidential adviser and as being in and out of the President's office every day. He has now been returned to the post of assistant to the President and taken his deputies and some staff with him. Meanwhile, Clark Clifford has become the twin star to Steelman in the local firmament. I attach two clippings from among a large number which could be cited as indicating the complete reliance of the President on counsellors other than the CEA. One commentary on this situation is that the President seeks political advice rather than economic service at the professional level in determining his policy on all these matters. I cannot help wondering whether he ever had a look at the newspaper and radio comment that was made at the time of my appointment or at the extraordinarily favorable reception that was given to our First Annual Report. The note which runs through it is that the country endorses the idea that an agency for the consideration of economic questions on the professional level is welcome. I see no evidence that the President either accepts or understands such an idea.

"A great deal of comment is being made at the present time about the President having asserted a new independence of thought and action since the November elections. It is also commented that this seems to be a reliance on "instinctive" decisions of his own, subject only to the personal and political check of the cronies on whom he relies for day-to-day advice. One piece was headed "The Truculent Truman." Another commented on the decline of George Allen, Vardaman, and one or two others of the most objectionable members of the earlier "White House Gang," and listed Snyder, Ross, Clifford, and Steelman as the four who now really have the greatest possibility of influencing the President."

Note on consultation with President
Personal Diary
December 28, 1946