

A Strategist for 3 Presidents

Clark McAdams Clifford

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 19— Clark McAdams Clifford, who was selected today to be Secretary of Defense, was first called to the White House in 1946 as a naval aide; he has not been out of its shadow since. Three Democratic Presidents have been summoning him there since

Man
in the
News

he planted his one-man law firm, with one of the most lucrative practices in town, a block and a half away. President Kennedy, an admirer of Mr. Clifford, once said that other men wanted a reward for helping to establish his Administration, but that "you don't hear Clark's clamoring. All he asks in return is that we advertise his law firm on the backs of one-dollar bills."

Without the benefit of such flamboyant advertisements, however, Mr. Clifford has acquired as clients Standard Oil of California, Phillips Petroleum, General Electric, du Pont, Hughes Tool, some mutual funds and cocoa manufacturing interests.

Six feet two inches tall, and considered handsome, charming and humorous, the lawyer from St. Louis might have become a charismatic political leader. But he chose the quieter role of adviser to Presidents and counselor to clients who preferred to get things done out of court.

'White House Calling'

It is said of Mr. Clifford that whenever he visited a Government office on behalf of a client, his host's secretary would find it necessary to break into the conference to announce: "The White House is calling Mr. Clifford."

In 1964, when Walter W. Jenkins, a White House aide, was arrested on a morals charge, Mr. Clifford and Abe Fortas, who is now on the Supreme Court, visited Washington newspaper editors before the arrest became public knowledge.

One editor said that the two lawyers made "What I regarded as a plea" against publishing an article about the incident.

Mr. Clifford said later that he and Mr. Fortas had not been acting on behalf of President Johnson, but on behalf of Mr. Jenkins, a close friend. He said they had made no specific plea to the editors to withhold the news, but had only questioned if all the facts had been established.



United Press International
Invaluable to President Truman in 1948.

Mr. Clifford is credited with laying down the strategy that elected President Harry S. Truman in 1948. It called for Mr. Truman to get on a train, shake hands from the back platform, and make two statements a day, one for the morning and one for the afternoon newspapers. Mr. Clifford was one of the three men who wrote the statements.

At Washington University in St. Louis, where he got his undergraduate and law

degrees, Mr. Clifford was noted as a leader in cultural activities, an outstanding tennis player and a noted practical joker.

He and another student called the St. Louis Republic just before press time one evening to report the death of the chief of the campus police, whom the students regarded as a tyrant. The published report was a source of great hilarity to nearly everyone except the chief.

Mr. Clifford was born into a well-to-do family in Fort Scott, Kan., near St. Louis, on Christmas Day in 1906. He was serving in the Naval Reserve in California when he got the first call to the White House. He later served as Special Counsel to President Truman.

When President Kennedy was elected he picked Mr. Clifford to be his liaison with the retiring Eisenhower Administration. He later gave Mr. Clifford many delicate, special assignments, as did President Johnson.

In Intelligence Post

He is still serving as chairman of the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, a panel established by President Kennedy after the Bay of Pigs disaster to keep the intelligence effort under review.

In 1931, Mr. Clifford married Margery Pepperlell Kimball, a tall, striking blonde. They have three daughters—Mrs. William H. Langagan Jr., Mrs. Richard D. Barrett and Mrs. Edward I. Wight—and 10 grandchildren.

When Mr. Clifford switched from tennis to golf, he took his lessons seriously and was never a duffer. He loves to gather with friends and family around a piano and sing. Everybody who heard about his New Year's party coveted an invitation.

Mr. Clifford was spending a quiet day with his family and a few friends last Christmas when the peace was broken by a visit from President and Mrs. Johnson and their daughter Lynda and her new husband, Capt. Charles S. Robb.

A lawyer, who is a friendly rival of Mr. Clifford, was doubly pleased today at the news of his selection as Secretary of Defense.

"An extremely successful lawyer—I'm glad he's gone," he chuckled. "Maybe the rest of us can get something now."