
“THE BLACKS SHOULD NOT BE ADMINISTERING THE PHILADELPHIA PLAN”

Nixon, the Hard Hats, and “Voluntary” Affirmative Action

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The conventional history of the rise of affirmative action in the late 1960s and early 1970s tends toward a too simple dialectic. The early creation and extension of affirmative action law is often described as an extension of the civil rights movement, whereas organized opposition to affirmative action is described as something that occurred later, as a backlash or reaction that did not fully take hold until Ronald Reagan was elected president in 1980.¹

In this chapter, I tell a different story. I describe the role that labor union resistance to affirmative action played in limiting the ability of the federal government to enforce new civil rights laws well before the more overt backlash against affirmative action became ascendant in U.S. political culture in the 1980s and 1990s. There was no heyday for attempts by federal regulatory agencies to impose affirmative action on U.S. industry. There was no pristine origin against which a backlash could define itself, because enforcement of affirmative action had accommodated its opponents from the beginning.

Affirmative action law emerged out of and in response to civil rights movement protests against the racism of federal construction contractors, whose discriminatory hiring policies were defended and often administered by the powerful building trades unions.² But the resistance of those unions to the 1969 Revised Philadelphia Plan—the first government-imposed affirmative action plan—severely curtailed the ability of the federal government to enforce affirmative action in all industries. By undermining the capacity of the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Contract Compliance (OFCC) to enforce executive orders against racial discrimination by federal contractors, unions played a crucial role

in shifting the enforcement of equal employment law to the courts, which lacked the administrative capacity to effectively oversee complex workplace desegregation orders.

The fact that the building trades unions were not able to completely stop affirmative action has caused historians to overlook the effect that union resistance had on the evolution of public policy. The building trades unions believed that the intervention of the Philadelphia Plan in the construction industry would compromise their hiring halls and their apprenticeship programs, and violate the prohibition against racial quotas in Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Convinced that they were the targets of a Republican Party conspiracy against organized labor, they lobbied their Democratic Party allies in Congress and the Department of Labor in 1969 to stop the plan. Rather than acceding to the desegregation orders of the state and federal government fair employment agencies, the unions used aggressive litigation throughout the 1960s and early 1970s to forestall their regulation. Both their legal and legislative resistance failed in the short term. In addition, the union rallies against the Philadelphia Plan in 1969 undermined their cause by producing media images of white workers whose rage against "forced integration" crossed over into over antiblack racism.

Yet, even though they failed to completely stop affirmative action, the building trades unions were neither innocent victims nor passive objects of reform. Considering their labor rights inalienable, many white workers responded to the implementation of the Philadelphia Plan in 1969 and 1970 by walking off the job. When forced to return, hostile union journeymen hazed new black journeymen off jobs with impunity, and others simply refused to teach black apprentices. Lacking the resources and political will to overcome union resistance, the Department of Labor backed off from enforcing the Philadelphia Plan by promoting voluntary desegregation plans for the construction industry over government-imposed plans, local "hometown plans" over a single national one, and conciliation over punishment when "goals and timetables" were not met. Rather than securing everyone's cooperation, the return of the Department of Labor to voluntarism allowed unions (and contractors) to openly violate the plans. By 1971, the resulting chaos pressured the Richard Nixon White House to either redouble its efforts or abandon workplace desegregation, as it had school and housing desegregation, as too politically costly.³

The choice facing Nixon of whether to enforce the Philadelphia Plan was not as simple as it may appear in retrospect. Nixon believed that affirmative action was necessary, although he was wary of its political costs. Because the building trades unions were solidly enmeshed in Democratic Party politics, he originally felt little allegiance to them. But when construction workers organized a wave of pro-Vietnam War demonstrations across the country in support of Nixon's

foreign policy in May and June 1970, they transformed Nixon's political calculus. Branding themselves instant spokesmen for Nixon's previously abstract and rhetorical "silent majority," New York City building trades union leaders disavowed ulterior motives for their patriotic rallies. Their new hard hat cultural politics promoted a shared commitment to masculinity, law and order, and anticommunism that supposedly transcended partisan politics. Nixon was extremely grateful—indeed desperate—for their support. Reaching out to the unions, he and union leaders cocreated a hard hat movement whose media representations staged the racial reconciliation between the white working class and the Republican Party. Presenting this movement as a restoration of white men's moral authority against liberal permissiveness, both union and Nixon officials used the media icon of the hard hat to shore up their power against critics on the left.

Although the hard hat movement did not explicitly evoke the politics of race, the subversion of the Philadelphia Plan was the essential precondition that made it possible for the unions to ally themselves with Nixon. The New York building trades unions made their support for Nixon's reelection in 1972 contingent on his backing off from enforcing the desegregation of the construction industry. Forced to choose between the Philadelphia Plan and an alliance with the building trades unions on support for his foreign policy, Nixon chose the unions. It was this choice, forced by union pressure and not the inevitable result of a coherent domestic political program against the unions or the civil rights movement, that finalized Nixon's decision to court the support of the unions instead of trying to smash them.

Thus, less than two years after creating the Philadelphia Plan, Nixon gave the green light to reversing his always tentative support for affirmative action. While his staff hollowed out the substance of the Department of Labor's affirmative action enforcement within and outside the construction industry, Nixon declared himself to be against "quotas" and removed Art Fletcher, the architect of the Philadelphia Plan, from the Department of Labor. The busting of the building trades unions, which he had briefly flirted with, would be, Nixon quipped, "somebody else's problem."⁴

The Nixon-hard hat alliance had two profound effects on the politics of the 1970s. First, it shaped the evolution of government power over the workplace. The building trades unions had lost control of the Department of Labor when Nixon took office in 1969. But their resistance to its affirmative action decrees stalled its plans, while the aggressive courting of Nixon by the New York unions effectively stymied its capacity to adapt. The union pressure paid off. The building trades unions effectively recaptured the Department of Labor when, as an expression of gratitude for their support, Nixon made Peter Brennan, the head of the New York Building Trades Council, the U.S. secretary of labor in 1973.

Brennan, in turn, did not abolish affirmative action as much as he shifted its enforcement to the courts. Without a cabinet-level agency such as the Department of Labor to enforce equal employment law, employers adopted new affirmative action guidelines largely to defend themselves against the threat of litigation. The retreat from the Philadelphia Plan thus contributed to the transformation of affirmative action, as Kevin Yuill puts it, from a "civil rights demand to a watered-down bureaucratic program."⁵

Second, the building trades union leaders' creation of a hard hat movement played a key role in developing Nixon's outreach to white ethnic and blue-collar voters in the urban North through "social" rather than economic issues. This movement helped delink the cultural symbols of an implicitly male white working-class consciousness from Democratic Party politics outside the South.

The broad outlines of Nixon's attempt to reach out to so-called white ethnics and his "romancing [of] the new right worker" are well known.⁶ But most histories of the strategy describe Nixon's alliance with conservative unions as only tangentially related to the politics of the Philadelphia Plan. Numerous works have contributed to our understanding of how the hard hats came to be seen as "the shock troops for the emerging New Right" in the 1970s.⁷ Previously overlooked conversations in the Nixon tapes and recently disclosed documents in the Nixon papers reconnect these studies to the development of affirmative action as public policy. These sources shine a light on a part of labor history that union leaders have never wanted to acknowledge—that some conservative labor leaders, rather than being the victims of identity politics, cultivated and benefited from a class consciousness that was exclusively white and male. Although the hard hat alliance collapsed in the wake of the Watergate scandal, the heroic quality that Nixon imparted to the defection of white working-class men from the Democratic Party allowed Nixon and the unions to reconnect opposition to the civil rights movement with mainstream discourses of U.S. liberalism that persist to this day. They did this not by opposing civil rights laws per se but by finding common cause in making the law unenforceable.

Subverting the Revised Philadelphia Plan

The Philadelphia Plan fused the politics of civil rights and union-busting rather than treating the former as a smokescreen for the latter. Although acting in response to African American protest movements, Nixon's Department of Labor had its own multiple and independent motivations for taking the unprecedented step of imposing involuntary affirmative action requirements on the construction industry in 1969. Republicans had a long-standing hostility to the powerful

building trades unions and the Democratic Party machine politics they helped prop up in cities across the country. Labor Secretary George Shultz believed that bypassing the construction industry apprenticeship programs would increase the labor supply and put downward pressure on wages that could spur new construction, create more jobs, and curb government spending. And Shultz had a complementary commitment to make jobs available to racial minorities in a civil rights program that would supposedly reduce the need for welfare.⁸

Nixon tentatively embraced the revival of the Philadelphia Plan by the Department of Labor for these reasons, as well as to reduce inflation.⁹ It was not until a few months after the Department of Labor had initiated the revival of the Philadelphia Plan, when union resistance became fierce, that Nixon became interested in its potential to exacerbate conflict between two of the key constituencies of the Democratic Party—white union members and African Americans.¹⁰ But from late 1969 through early 1971, even that idea was tentative, contested, and not well thought out.

As the Nixon administration charted this uncertain course, it created what Hugh Davis Graham, an historian of affirmative action policy, has described as policy “incoherence,” or contradictory tendencies. Only in retrospect were these contradictions clearly resolved into what we might call classic Nixonian politics: preempt your enemies’ agendas to confound their expectations, divide their loyalties, defer follow-through to a divided electorate, and then gain new followers by blaming the policy for its own failure to produce a compromise. With the federal government moving in multiple directions at once, local struggles informed the creation of new political blocs. And battles within the Nixon administration over the enforcement of the Philadelphia Plan became increasingly heated as interest groups—particularly within organized labor—began to pressure the administration.¹¹

Nixon did not have a preconceived plan to impose affirmative action when he was first elected president. But when he tapped Arthur Fletcher to be his undersecretary of labor for wage and labor standards in spring 1969, he inadvertently set change in motion. Fletcher, a black Republican who had run a strong but unsuccessful race for lieutenant governor of Washington state in 1968, was one of few black Republicans whose career seemed to be on the rise at the time. Fletcher had served in leadership roles in Kansas and California Republican Party politics in the 1950s and 1960s, including a stint on Nixon’s presidential campaign in California in 1960. He had moved to the Tri-Cities, Washington, in 1965, where he promoted fair employment at the Hanford Nuclear Power Reservation, administered a War on Poverty job-training program, and was elected to the Pasco City Council. Signaling his commitment to take leadership of Nixon’s fair employment politics, Fletcher attached two conditions to his appointment:

(1) that equal employment be considered a "labor standard" (implicitly within the purview of his job title), and (2) that, because the OFCC would be reporting directly to him and not to the Secretary of Labor as it had previously, he be given the power to appoint the new OFCC director.¹²

The OFCC had a credibility problem among civil rights organizations when Fletcher arrived. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) had recently accused the small and ineffectual OFCC of being captive to "bigoted labor unions" because, under the Lyndon Johnson administration, it had drafted but then refused to implement the Philadelphia Plan. In addition, nearly two decades of aggressive criticism of racism in the building trades unions by NAACP Labor Relations Director Herbert Hill, along with open and steadfast refusal by the unions to compromise, had made these unions, according to Fletcher, "the central symbol for our time of the quest for equality in employment opportunity."¹³

Having set out to change the image of the OFCC, Fletcher quickly rose to become the most outspoken advocate of the Philadelphia Plan. In that role, he became, according to the *Washington Post*, "the go between for any black, Chicano, or Indian who tries to deal with the Nixon administration." Fletcher personally announced the issuance of the Revised Philadelphia Plan during a press conference in Philadelphia on June 27, 1969. The Revised Plan took effect in the city of Philadelphia immediately, but Fletcher also claimed that the plan "will be put into effect in all the major cities across the Nation as soon as possible."¹⁴

According to William Gould, professor of fair employment law, between late June and September 1969, during the comment period before the Philadelphia Plan could be expanded to other cities, "the winds of Philadelphia were being felt throughout the land." Mass protests by African Americans in cities around the country demanded the immediate expansion of the Philadelphia Plan, forcing both Democratic and Republican elected officials at the local level to reach out to the Department of Labor for help with "crisis management." Fletcher then positioned himself to reinforce support for the Philadelphia Plan as the only way to resolve the urban crisis.¹⁵

The resistance of the building trades unions to the Philadelphia Plan and its expansion was immediate and intense. Union leaders marshaled their allies in the Department of Labor and Congress in an attempt to quash the plan. They also organized massive counterdemonstrations against the extension of the plan to other cities, at which they demanded compensation for wages lost during the protests and called on politicians to use the police to protect their workplaces. When contractors and freedom movement activists negotiated ad hoc affirmative action deals across the country in anticipation of federal intervention, union members raised the specter of hate strikes by walking off the job. In all these

activities, union leaders claimed to be color-blind, championed the token and often ineffectual minority preapprenticeship plans they had adopted to deflect criticism, and stated that they opposed the Philadelphia Plan's bypassing of government-certified apprenticeship programs and collective bargaining rights.

The union criticism of freedom movement activists as the misguided tools of corporate interests revived old stereotypes of black workers as union-busters and enabled overt racism to come to the fore during union-led counterdemonstrations. Protests by the building trades unions in Pittsburgh in August and September 1969 were especially hostile. In Pittsburgh, after a protest by a few hundred the day before, over 4,000 white construction workers demonstrated on August 29, 1969. They invoked labor politics by wearing hard hats and demanding wages lost during the protests. But many carried signs and chanted slogans supporting arch-segregationist George Wallace for president in 1972, putting on display what one commentator called "labor's double standard" in conflating union rights with racial privilege. Similar protests of thousands of workers—with a pageantry of U.S. flags and inverted black freedom movement slogans such as "equal rights for whites" and "we build not burn"—took place in Chicago in September, in Seattle in October, and elsewhere on a smaller scale during fall 1969.¹⁶

It was in Chicago where the confluence of the national politics of the Philadelphia Plan and local resistance from the building trades unions was most intense. Fletcher convened public hearings in Chicago in September 1969 to provide a legal foundation for the expansion of the Philadelphia Plan to other cities. Yet his first attempt to hold a hearing was stifled when hundreds of construction workers, seemingly with the assent of the Chicago police, filled the hotel conference room where the meeting was being held, causing the meeting to be canceled. Afterward, according to Fletcher, "the management of the hotel asked us not to hold the hearing and, in effect, told us to get out, because of the trouble." Workers' angry catcalls and jostling of his entourage portended violence. Fletcher later learned that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) had picked up rumors of a contract put out on his life. "Here in Chicago," he recalled, "the apparent helplessness of the federal government would destroy not only the EEO [Equal Employment Opportunity] program but many other programs as well. It could not be that a mass of hard hats could stop the federal government from functioning." Fletcher successfully reconvened the hearings under federal guard on federal property, but he and black activists required police escorts to keep from being assaulted. Fighting later broke out outside among blacks, union members, and police.¹⁷

The firestorm that Fletcher weathered in Chicago had a transformative effect on him. He described his experience as a moment when he "faced the

elementary forces of life, racism and fear of loss of jobs," resulting in a battle of "naked power."¹⁸ With his illusions thus stripped from him about what would be required to overcome resistance to affirmative action, he became an unabashed opponent of the building trades unions. Removed from the context of his experience in Chicago, Fletcher's criticism of labor-union racism has often been misconstrued as evidence that he was antiunion; actual evidence for such accusations is sketchy.¹⁹ Believing that Chicago presented a northern form of massive resistance, Fletcher viewed the hearings there as a historic breakthrough for racial equality and as a confirmation of his belief that only the Republican Party could help blacks achieve equal economic opportunity.

Yet Nixon's commitment to the Philadelphia Plan, as Fletcher probably knew but did not admit, was uneven. Nixon was well aware that he had received little support from black voters during his campaign and that George Wallace's strong showing in 1968 demonstrated a growing backlash against the enforcement of civil rights law. Having been elected president of the United States with 43 percent of the popular vote, Nixon spent his first term in office obsessed with creating a "new majority" for the Republican Party.²⁰

Invoking presidential privilege to enforce executive orders, the White House effectively beat back the opposition to the Philadelphia Plan in Congress before the 1969 Christmas holiday. But it did not take long before Nixon reconsidered his actions. During and after the 1968 election, Kevin Phillips, Republican Party strategist, had advised Nixon to pursue a "Southern strategy" by appealing to segregationist Democrats to switch their party allegiance to the Republican Party, popularizing the idea after the election in his book, *The Emerging Republican Majority*. During the winter holiday, Nixon read Phillips's book, and in early January he told his aide H. R. Haldeman to "use Phillips as an analyst—study his strategy—don't think in terms of old-time ethnics, go for Poles, Italians, Irish, must learn to understand Silent Majority... don't go for Jews and Blacks."²¹

As pressure from the construction unions grew, the White House showed signs of retreat on the Philadelphia Plan, even though it had successfully divided liberal Democrats. On January 11, 1970, George Meany, the executive secretary of the American Federation of Labor–Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) and a plumber from New York City, held a press conference at which he dismissed the Philadelphia Plan as "bunk" and as an attempt to win "brownie points" from civil rights groups. On January 13, Nixon, reading a news summary of Meany's remarks, uncomfortably noted, "this hurts us. With our constituency we gained little on the play." On January 28, Nixon met with Richard Scammon, coauthor of *The Real Majority*, to discuss how "the social issue" (which Phillips summarized as concern about "law and order, permissiveness, campus anarchy, [and] racial engineering") could be tapped to galvanize the "silent majority."

During the meeting, Nixon praised Meany for his “guts and courage.” Two months later, in a meeting with prominent academics from around the country at Harvard University, Nixon complained, according to the *Washington Post*, that “there is little political gain” in civil rights advocacy and that the Philadelphia Plan “was giving him no credit among Negroes.” The day after the meeting, a January 1970 memo from Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a Nixon advisor, recommending that the president pursue a policy of “benign neglect” toward African Americans was leaked to the press. By April, Nixon had become even more cynical, telling Haldeman that the only blacks who would work with him were “Uncle Toms, and we should work on them and forget militants.”²²

It was in this context of fierce union resistance, Nixon’s cynicism about civil rights, and his desire to reach out to a “silent majority,” that the Department of Labor quietly subverted the Philadelphia Plan. In late September 1969, Fletcher had announced that the Department of Labor sought to extend the Philadelphia Plan to nine other cities: New York, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Boston, St. Louis, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Seattle. But the OFCC at the time had only twelve contract compliance officers for a decentralized industry with thousands of employers and millions of seasonal employees.²³ In the face of massive resistance in the North, Secretary of Labor George Shultz lacked the administrative capacity and political will to impose affirmative action orders across the country. So he used the threat of an imposed plan to inspire the negotiation of voluntary, local, hometown solutions on a city-by-city basis.

Whether Shultz shifted the expansion of the Philadelphia Plan from imposed plans to voluntary ones at the behest of the White House is unclear. As early as August 11, 1969, Fletcher himself acknowledged, “the federal government simply cannot involve itself in manpower planning in every city in the country. It cannot even develop the framework—a Philadelphia Plan—for every city in the country. It doesn’t have the resources, and basically it’s not the right level of government anyway.” What affirmative action had thus initiated was a fierce debate over what constituted the “right level of government.” By March 1970, Nixon began providing an answer by defending hometown plans to building trades union leaders as the kind of “voluntary approach” to affirmative action he stood for.²⁴

The capitulation by the Department of Labor to Mayor Daley’s political machine in Chicago months after the September hearings showed just how ineffective the voluntarism of the Nixon administration would be. The Department of Labor certified the Chicago hometown plan—the second such plan after Boston—on January 12, 1970. The plan was a success in principle because it included “minority community” representatives in construction industry labor negotiations, extended OFCC power to regulate private industry as well as federal contracts, and enabled the Department of Labor’s Manpower Administration

to fund the plan. But the blueprint for negotiating hometown plans was fatally weakened by the certification of the Chicago Plan. Fletcher himself was at pains to explain to reporters why the voluntary Chicago Plan lacked the craft-specific hiring goals of the Philadelphia Plan and lacked its penalties for not meeting these vague goals.²⁵ With Chicago minority community representatives rendered ineffective by Daley machine pressure, the Department of Labor certified a plan that subverted the whole point of affirmative action—to set measurable goals so as to punish noncompliance when voluntary desegregation failed.

Just as it was watering down the Philadelphia Plan, the Department of Labor also weakened the broader affirmative action decree modeled after it. Less than two weeks after issuing Order No. 4, the Department of Labor qualified its requirement that all federal contractors meet statistical benchmarks for hiring nonwhite workers to, according to the *New York Times*, “take into account the availability and eligibility of minority group workers.”²⁶ The order still inspired the adoption of contract compliance programs by local and state governments across the country, but the enforcement of those programs could now be subject to further bias, debate, equivocation, and delay.

The Nixon administration had thus established the legal foundation for affirmative action while simultaneously backing away from its enforcement. This set the stage for chaotic battles that fused the emerging culture war with debates over the limits of federal government authority. When Secretary Shultz announced the extension of the Philadelphia Plan to nineteen more cities on February 9, 1970, the threat remained heavily, although not totally, symbolic.²⁷ Local building trades unions, although publicly howling against racial quotas, still had the ability to hollow out the substance of those plans, using their negotiating savvy to make the plans weak and unenforceable. Or, because the hometown plans required the assent of all parties, the unions or contractors could simply drag the negotiations on interminably. By refusing even basic concessions as violations of collective bargaining agreements or employer prerogatives, they pushed the meaning of voluntary cooperation to its limit and challenged the Department of Labor to impose a plan that it could not enforce. Both forms of resistance were especially prevalent before October of 1971, when legal challenges to the Philadelphia Plan were exhausted when the Supreme Court declined to rule the plan unconstitutional.²⁸

This resistance to the Philadelphia Plan sapped the energy from the direct action campaigns of 1969 by initiating interminable negotiations that produced few immediate concessions. When the plans failed to meet their weak goals or when negotiations stalled, internal divisions within the local civil rights coalitions often became more intense, as groups wanting to administer the plans (usually allied with organized labor or the Urban League) found themselves at odds with

more insurgent and activist voices in the black community. Multiracial coalitions of nonwhite men seeking access to the trades were also strained in places such as Chicago and New York as differences over how confrontational they should be inflamed preexisting tensions between minority communities.

The Department of Labor had set itself up for failure. It was reticent to impose the plans or void federal contracts in the face of rampant noncompliance, but it was too understaffed and ill-equipped to impose more specific penalties on unions or contractors who openly violated its plans. "We were soldiers fighting a lost cause," Fletcher reflected four years later. "The result was two years lost, a long series of futile and fruitless negotiations, no really successful Plans, and a new and deeper level of bitterness in the black community."²⁹

Despite Fletcher's frustration, the existence of the Philadelphia Plan and the threat of imposed plans still provided activists around the country with some leverage to force moderate concessions through the hometown plan process. In addition, the Philadelphia Plan and Order No. 4 pushed state, county, and local government agencies—as the major recipients of federal funds—to set up their own nondiscrimination laws and contract compliance programs, some of which were stronger than federal law. This, in turn, provided minority and also some women activists another means to gain entry to professions historically reserved for white men. Even if none of the plans could be considered a success, they produced hundreds of new fronts in the war against the politics of whiteness and masculinity that had long rationalized economic inequality in the United States.

Absent aggressive government support and without full employment programs to lessen the stakes of desegregation, activists seeking to transform the U.S. workplace during the 1970s faced poor odds. As the economy entered a recession in 1970, the Nixon administration added to the woes of the construction industry by cutting federal construction spending by 75 percent.³⁰ The Department of Labor hometown plan "goals" for minority hiring—focused largely on federal contracts, based on the percentage of nonwhite people in the population, and independent of the variable cycles of the construction industry—further increased unemployment for white construction workers while providing remarkably few jobs for nonwhite workers.

It was in this context that, during 1970 and 1971, local on-the-job resistance by white workers to affirmative action in the construction industry spread like wildfire while the federal government proved either unwilling or unable to stop it. As in Seattle (Griffey, chap. 7 in this volume), white workers hazed nonwhite workers until they left the job or simply gave nonwhite workers nothing to do and refused to teach them the trade. Contractors, meanwhile, moved nonwhite workers from job to job to keep multiple sites in what was cynically referred to as "paper compliance." Because hell came to those who fought, graft and

mismanagement (most spectacularly in Chicago and Pittsburgh) became the paths of least resistance in the face of open resistance to new, nonwhite, non-union labor entering the construction workplace through affirmative action. The hometown plan system made it easy for nonwhite workers who showed up to jobs but made no effort to learn, and it rewarded administrators who certified such dishonesty as "affirmative action." But with the goals met only on paper and corruption rampant, no one was satisfied. As a result, a shared disillusionment in government grew as the law was flouted on all sides. Animosity over this state of affairs on the job provides a crucial context for understanding the significance of the hard hat revolt of the early 1970s.

Naming the Backlash: The Invention of the Hard Hat

John Ehrlichman, Nixon's aide in charge of his domestic policy, later recalled the enthusiasm with which the White House saw white and black workers fighting over the Philadelphia Plan.³¹ But how open to be about setting these two major Democratic Party constituents against one another, and how far to pursue it, was never agreed on.³² Beginning in spring 1970, books such as *The Emerging Republican Majority* and *The Real Majority* and a Department of Labor report titled "The Problem of the Blue-Collar Worker" provoked a spirited debate within the Nixon administration about whether and how to appeal to organized labor—a debate that continued through the rest of 1970 and was not resolved until mid-1971.

This debate over Nixon's relationship to the white working class became increasingly urgent on May 8, 1970. That day, hundreds of New York City construction workers descended from the buildings they were working on to viciously attack anti-Vietnam War protesters. The protesters were marching through Wall Street to protest Nixon's invasion of Cambodia and the shooting of four student protesters at Kent State on May 4. Wielding construction tools and wearing hard hats, the construction workers violently dispersed the protest and then marched on City Hall to demand that city leaders fully hoist the flag (it was at half mast for the Kent State victims). More construction workers, seemingly coordinated, arrived in waves to join the attacks, swelling the mob's ranks to as many as five hundred as they shouted patriotic chants and assaulted long-haired people whom they assumed were opposed to the Vietnam war. After leaving City Hall, the mob attacked students at Pace College and chased bloodied and beaten victims of the melee into Trinity Church, where they ripped down the church Red Cross banner and twice tried to break through its gates. The unprovoked rampage lasted

four hours and left over seventy people injured, some very seriously—including a twenty-nine-year-old Democratic candidate for State Senate, who was rushed to the hospital with “his right eye completely closed, a large welt on his head, and five boot marks were imprinted on his back where he had been stomped after he was down.”³³

The riot had clearly been planned, but by whom and to what degree have never been proven. A seemingly more spontaneous event had occurred the day before, when several dozen construction workers reportedly threw debris at antiwar protesters on Wall Street. But on May 8, according to *The Nation*, workers had been paid during their time off work (some reports claimed they were paid as much as double a regular day’s wage). The police knew the attack was coming ahead of time, but did not intervene or make any arrests. Workers had U.S. flags at the ready for their violent march. And “agents of a small, right-wing sheet, the New York *Graphic*” were immediately on the scene distributing handbills and giving orders and speeches through megaphones. The *Wall Street Journal* reported that one worker “who said his life would be in danger if he was identified, claimed the attack was organized by shop stewards with the support of some contractors. He said one contractor offered his men cash bonuses to join the fray.”³⁴

White House outreach to the union leaders following the riot was extremely swift. The day after the Kent State shootings, Charles “Chuck” Colson, the special counsel to the president tasked with cultivating interest group support for Nixon, went to work. Colson met with Jay Lovestone, the head of the AFL-CIO International Affairs Division and an ardent anticommunist whom Colson later described as “too hard-line [about détente] for reason.” At the meeting, the two discussed a plan to get the formal endorsement of the AFL-CIO for the Vietnam War. As Colson sought labor movement support, the president avoided Washington, D.C., and worried those close to him by engaging in erratic behavior as waves of student strikes against the war closed universities and gripped the nation.³⁵

Conservative members of the AFL-CIO, concerned by the growing radicalization of the labor movement, began reaching out to the White House to offer their support. As Philip Foner documented, Nixon’s escalation of the war to Cambodia “brought into the antiwar movement huge sections of the trade unions never before involved in such protests.” In the San Francisco Bay Area, even building trades union leaders and Teamsters joined the regional labor movement to demand an immediate cease-fire in Vietnam. The death on May 9 of the potentially most prominent labor movement spokesperson against the war, United Auto Workers (UAW) President Walter Reuther, reduced the visibility of the growing antiwar sentiment in the labor movement, but the AFL-CIO still felt it had to respond to the antiwar activism within labor. As a result, on May 13 the AFL-CIO Executive Council officially endorsed the Vietnam War.³⁶

Although the AFL-CIO presented its endorsement as a nonpartisan patriotic act, Nixon's advisers treated it and the construction worker riot as a potentially historic breakthrough for the Republican Party. Tom Huston, White House deputy counsel, captured this feeling with impassioned memos calling for the aggressive courting of organized labor because the hard hat violence provided the only real evidence of grassroots support for Nixon. On May 12, Huston wrote to the president's aides demanding that they block any Department of Justice inquiry into the riot. On May 13, he explained, "what we saw in New York on Friday was the first manifestation of a willingness to fight for the America the blue-collar American loves," adding that "the greatest bulwark against revolution in America is the working class" and "we need to quit talking about the great Silent Majority and start talking to it."³⁷

Meanwhile, New York building trades union leaders, stigmatized by accusations of racism and under pressure from Mayor John Lindsay and the Department of Labor to desegregate, were emboldened by their new celebrity status. In the week following the riot, Peter Brennan, head of the New York City Building and Construction Trades Council, accelerated his pro-war organizing among the 200,000 council members and over 110 union locals. On May 11 and 12, thousands of construction workers "roamed through Lower Manhattan in organized bands," occasionally assaulting passersby, as some downtown workers cheered. On May 15, the crowds became more diverse as between 2,500 and 5,000 "construction workers, longshoremen, and white-collar workers" marched together through the New York financial district. The *New York Times* later reported that the workers' march received a "'Hero' Welcome": "There was applause, confetti and data tape from the Wall street canyons at times, as if the hard hats were hero astronauts."³⁸

Meanwhile, Brennan announced plans for a massive march in New York on May 20 and worked with other building trades leaders to encourage similar demonstrations elsewhere to "set an example to the rest of the country and be a source of inspiration to our men overseas." The White House, which had already been considering Reverend Billy Graham's advice that Nixon stage a "pro-America rally" to counter the antiwar protests, supported the march, with Lovestone serving as liaison between Brennan and Colson during the lead-up. But the organizing came mainly from the New York Building Trades Council, with support from Thomas "Teddy" Gleason, head of the International Longshoremen Association (ILA).³⁹

The resulting demonstration on May 20 was massive, mobilizing over 100,000 construction workers (who were encouraged by their unions to wear hard hats) and their allies. The pageantry of the march combined the celebration of militaristic patriotism, masculine toughness, and working-class populism. It marshaled

a striking imagery that, whether viewed as creeping fascism or a restoration of moral order, most observers saw as a portentous rupture with 1960s liberalism. Heeding New York leaders' call for solidarity, thousands of construction workers in Buffalo, Pittsburgh, and San Diego organized similar marches, some of which were marred by violence against antiwar counterdemonstrators.⁴⁰

The New York march deeply impressed White House officials, with Colson later referring to it as "a seminal event." Steven Bull, Nixon White House staffer, wrote to Charles Colson afterward, speculating that "Obviously, more of these will be occurring throughout the Nation, perhaps partially as a result of your clandestine activity." He added approvingly, "This display of emotional activity from the 'hard hats' provides an opportunity, if under the proper leadership, to forge a new alliance and perhaps result in the emergence of a 'new right.'" ⁴¹

It was an opportunity soon seized, with Colson anointing himself the "custodian of our Hard Hat constituency"—a position through which he gained increasing power within the White House. At Colson's suggestion, the president personally thanked Brennan for organizing the May 20 march. Colson then set a meeting between Nixon and New York City building trade union leaders "to present a hard hat to the President . . . as the symbol of freedom." This was done, Colson later recalled, over the "almost a unanimous opposition" of White House staff, who saw the move as crass "pandering." Before the meeting, Colson advised the president to not mention the riot because "The construction workers, while a symbol to most Americans of loyalty and patriotism, are also a symbol to some of repression and anti-intellectualism." Instead, Colson counseled Nixon to "express your appreciation for their demonstration of loyalty to the country (I would recommend emphasizing country rather than this Administration since many of these men feel that the Secretary of Labor has not been friendly and they disagree with some of our labor policies)." ⁴²

Nixon's meeting with New York construction union leaders provided the presidential imprimatur to the hard hat movement. By seizing on the hard hat iconography, he disassociated the movement from its vigilante origins to make construction workers the representatives of a "silent majority" that had previously been a political abstraction. With this encouragement, and probably behind-the-scenes coordination, hard hat marches (and violence) soon spread to other cities, many with the sponsorship of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Council. On May 31 in Tempe, Arizona, approximately 300 construction workers violently waded into an antiwar rally of 2,000, requiring more than 100 police to break up the resulting fistfights. On June 8, 45,000 construction workers paraded through the streets of St. Louis to show their support for the war and assaulted antiwar protesters who dared display dissent. On June 11, building trades union leaders in Seattle staged a Civil Responsibility Rally, bringing together 2,500

construction workers, police officers, and their families to protest "a complete breakdown of law enforcement" in the supposed coddling of antiwar protesters and black militants (they failed to get the 14,000 they had hoped would attend). On June 15, roughly 75 percent of Baltimore's construction trade union members marched along with firemen in a parade of 15,000 people to honor the flag, support the war, and oppose both the New Left and hippie counterculture. On June 25, Nixon staff sought to finally add his presence to these movements by organizing a massive pro-Nixon parade and rally of tens of thousands of people in St. Louis to celebrate "what is right about America." The event, meant to stage Nixon's supposed popularity in "Middle America," relied in part on Ironworker Union President John Lyons's "building a crowd" at the last minute.⁴³

By the end of June, the cumulative effect of one month of aggressive pro-police, pro-Vietnam War events took hold. Throughout the rest of 1970, the term *hard hat* spread like wildfire through the popular culture to become what the *Washington Post* described as a "new political catch-all label" to describe a structure of feeling for the New Right. Hard hats became symbols of opposition to the New Left and support for the Vietnam War, reframing a broader cultural war already underway. Although Merle Haggard had released his antihippie anthem "Okie from Muskogee" in 1969, it was not until after the events of May 1970 that the press began to refer to Haggard as the "poet laureate of the hard hats." Innumerable newspaper pieces about everything from hard hat hairstyles to film characters proliferated in the months and years that followed. Through them, working-class conservatives—and often the whole white working class—were celebrated or stigmatized for supposedly having a hard hat aesthetic. So when the TV sitcom *All in the Family* launched in January of 1971, featuring a bigoted white male character named Archie Bunker, the immediate popularity of the show rested on its controversial portrayal of Bunker's "stereotyped, hard hat interpretation of modern morality."⁴⁴

The power of the hard hat image came partly from its ideological flexibility but also from its expression of an explicitly male sensibility. Its populist anti-elitism evoked New Deal sensibilities, but its celebration of masculine force against the supposed excesses of liberal tolerance was distinctly reactionary. Brennan personally helped the White House understand the fundamentally emotive, gendered, and nonpartisan nature of the movement. Colson later wrote to Nixon describing Brennan's explanation "for the 'hard hat' support of you more perceptively than I think we have analyzed it."

He said that the "hard hats" wave the flag and cheer the President but that, in and of itself, does not translate into votes. Moreover most of the "hard hats" don't like our economic policies and feel that we are pushing

them too hard in the civil rights area. What is winning their political loyalty is their admiration for your masculinity. The “hard hats”, who are a tough breed, have come to respect you as a tough, courageous, man’s man. Brennan’s thesis is that this image of you will win their votes more than the patriotism theme.⁴⁵

While the cultural politics of the hard hat movement took on a life of its own in popular culture, the first test of its political possibilities came during the 1970 mid-term elections. Following the hard hat march, some of the most powerful New York labor leaders began to offer their clandestine support for the Conservative Party campaign of James Buckley for U.S. Senate in 1970. Toward the end of June, Haldeman ordered Pat Buchanan, Nixon speech writer and adviser on outreach to Catholic voters, to “put someone on to the New York senate race... who can counsel Buckley on strategy and planning” by “going for the Catholic Democrats and the Nixon Republicans and really playing this up.” By September, Colson was secretly organizing what he called “hardhat support for Buckley,” facilitated by Brennan; Mike Maye, New York firefighter union leader; and others who were also engaged in what Colson cryptically called “political chicanery.”⁴⁶

Buckley’s election as a pro-war third-party candidate and the willingness of the unions to organize their communities to break ranks with the Democratic Party deeply impressed Colson. Soon after, he began to obsessively follow internal discussions in the AFL-CIO in the hopes that he could facilitate the unlikely defection of the unions to Nixon in 1972. Lovestone nurtured Colson’s hopes by providing him with information during biweekly meetings. Meanwhile, Colson became closer to conservative New York union leaders following Buckley’s election. Colson was soon referring to Brennan as one of his union “spies” and listed Thomas Gleason, ILA president; Jesse Calhoun, Marine Engineers leader; and Harry Van Arsdale, Central Labor Council leader and former president of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 3, as his other “lines of communication in New York.” Politically speaking, this group of labor leaders, and especially Brennan, determined the shape of hard hat politics and Nixon’s outreach to organized labor in the years that followed.⁴⁷

Affirmative Action and the “Social Issue”

Despite Colson’s union allies in New York, Nixon’s support from organized labor decreased rather than increased during late 1970 and early 1971, mainly because of the worsening economy. The poor performance of Republicans in the 1970 elections, and the fewer-than-anticipated union votes for Republican Party

candidates, inspired some White House officials to argue that the hard hat alliance had produced only marginal results and that it was time to "take the gloves off." As organized labor continued to criticize Nixon's economic policies during the first few months of 1971, these debates raged within the White House, and Nixon's domestic programs evolved in ways that were often at odds with one another.⁴⁸

Nixon's choice in late February to suspend the Davis-Bacon guidelines, which required the federal government to pay prevailing (i.e., union) wages in the construction industry, brought the debate to a head.⁴⁹ Nixon's economic advisers worried about the control that the construction unions wielded to force high wage settlements (thereby driving up the cost of construction), which many felt contributed to inflation. But attacking one of the bedrocks of building trades union power drew open and intense criticism from George Meany of the AFL-CIO as well as other union leaders.

When Nixon sought to recoup his image by retreating to the "heartland" to stage a pro-Nixon rally in Des Moines, similar to St. Louis rally a year earlier, he confronted an ad hoc alliance that threatened to undermine his use of cultural politics to shield his economic policies from criticism. "An unusual joint protest of hard-hat construction men, antiwar students and angry farmers" organized itself in response to the President's visit, and subjected him to a barrage of boos, catcalls and even snowballs. The *Wall Street Journal* took note, reporting that "on recent trips around the country, Mr. Nixon has been picketed by angry groups of construction workers. Suspension of Davis-Bacon seemed to have undone all the administration's careful cultivation of the blue collar vote."⁵⁰

The negative publicity spurred Colson to desperately reaffirm his connection with Brennan (who had publicly denounced the suspension of Davis-Bacon as "union busting" but had stopped short of personally criticizing the president).⁵¹ Colson could not comprehend what he called the "Des Moines disaster," preferring instead to believe his union contacts, who reassured him that "many of the 'hard hats' were not, in fact, 'hard hats' but students posing as 'hard hats.'" Regardless, Colson pushed officials in the Nixon administration to schedule a meeting with New York building trades leaders in an attempt to "avoid a demonstration" there.⁵² He also continued to work behind the scenes in an unsuccessful bid to have Brennan replace C. J. Haggerty as the head of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Council while also pushing for the president to meet directly with Brennan for the first time since the previous May.⁵³ The president held off for a few months, but Colson justified the importance of the meeting by explaining:

Brennan has 250,000 building tradesmen under him in New York. He exercises tight, tough control; he can swing a large block of them politically as demonstrated in 1970: he strongly backed Rockefeller and

Buckley; even in a 3-way race Buckley got almost 50% of the blue collar vote in New York and heavily carried wards that Brennan “controls.” [In January] Brennan told me that he would do for you in New York what he did for Rockefeller and Buckley.⁵⁴

Just as Colson was seeking to salvage his union outreach, the negotiations in New York City over its prospective hometown plan broke down. A plan had been finalized in December 1970, but had a number of weaknesses as a result of the unions, contractors, and politicians locking civil rights groups out of the negotiations. The plan caused immediate outrage among freedom movement activists, who labeled it a fraud. Mayor Lindsay, swayed by the pressure, opposed the plan in January and requested that the Department of Labor not certify it. The New York negotiations descended into chaos as the unions refused to budge and the Lindsay administration blocked tens of millions of dollars of government construction contracts as the economy worsened.⁵⁵

Art Fletcher and his staff refused to override Lindsay and certify the original affirmative action plan of the New York unions. OFCC Director John Wilks rejected the New York Plan as inadequate, citing it as a potentially bad precedent for other plans. Fletcher, meanwhile, decided that he needed to take action to salvage the entire Philadelphia Plan and hometown plan process—which meant not certifying any more unenforceable plans. “In the spring of 1971,” Fletcher recalled, “the delay [in implementing hometown plans] had become intolerable to me.” To boost enforcement, he oversaw a “stem-to-stern reorganization” of the OFCC, and increased the OFCC staff from twenty-six to ninety-six to enforce its hometown plans. He also expanded the scope of the Philadelphia Plan hiring goals to cover all projects—public or private—overseen by federal contractors. “I could say that we were ready, not only in the field of construction, but also in the rest of our area of responsibility, to become an effective law enforcement agency.”⁵⁶

But Fletcher was dispirited to see his entire program, not just the Philadelphia Plan, languish. At least ten federal government agencies and departments either willfully ignored OFCC mandates or refused to take remedial action when they were found to be in violation of rules requiring federal construction contractors to engage in affirmative action. “We were becoming another typically inactive agency,” Fletcher recalled, “more concerned about our internal affairs, because we suffered the frustration of not being able to implement our program.”⁵⁷

So, Fletcher fired off a memo to the secretary and undersecretary of labor in February proposing a last-ditch effort to save the Philadelphia Plan and rescue the OFCC from irrelevance. In it he recommended the immediate imposition (rather than negotiation) of areawide plans in Chicago, St. Louis, and San

Francisco to put pressure on other cities to negotiate. He also argued for the development of a hometown plan for Atlanta to be used as a template for other southern cities (none of which had adopted voluntary plans).⁵⁸

When Fletcher, at a March 12, 1971, conference of minority construction contractors, announced this push for a new round of imposed plans, he confirmed the worst fears of the building trades unions. "The era of union domination of the employment pattern in the construction industry is over," he told the audience and gloated, "the unions were whipped" when "the union movement was not able to kill off the Philadelphia Plan." With the attempts to get cities to voluntarily adopt the Philadelphia Plan struggling, Fletcher announced, "We shall impose plan after plan in cities where the hometown solution doesn't work, until we move toward the concept of a nationwide plan.... And the craft unions no longer have the power—in Court, in Congress, or with the President—to stop such a plan."⁵⁹

News of Fletcher's speech spread quickly, with newspapers announcing that a Nixon administration official had declared open war on the powerful building trades unions.⁶⁰ Union leaders were outraged and began circulating copies of the speech to building trades locals throughout the country as evidence of what they had long claimed—that the Philadelphia Plan was a Trojan horse for union-busting. In March and April, union leaders began openly calling for Nixon to fire Fletcher.⁶¹ Behind the scenes, Donald Rodgers, New York construction union leader and Brennan protégé, sent an urgent letter to Nixon staff demanding a meeting. By the end of the month, Rodgers delivered the message that the New York building trades unions were now calling in their favors. They wanted the New York Plan—which Fletcher and his staff had refused to approve—certified by the Department of Labor. They demanded "a 'yes' or 'no' answer" and wanted it now.⁶²

When Fletcher then announced that new plans would be imposed in San Francisco, St. Louis, Chicago, Atlanta, Detroit, Buffalo, Houston, and Miami in time for the 1972 election, he gave Colson the pretense he needed to fire him. "I think I understand basic arithmetic," Colson bitterly complained to Haldeman.

We got less than 10% of the black vote last time and I do not think we will get any more next time. We had close to 40% of the labor vote (higher among construction workers) last time and we could do better, except that we appear to be trying not to....

I don't want to argue the merits. I am sure that the Department and Mr. Fletcher are absolutely right. I am equally convinced that this is political dynamite especially when one recognizes that George Meany is a hard-hat and regards the building trades as the heart of organized labor. We must deal with this.⁶³

On May 7, 1971, Colson took his message to the president. In a phone call, ostensibly to prepare Nixon for a meeting later that day with Meany, Colson attempted to sway Nixon to rein in Fletcher. "Of course, the building trades need...some modification," Nixon responded. "They are ingrown and so forth. But hell. Why fight that battle? That's somebody else's problem. There's no votes in it for us." With the Philadelphia Plan, Colson added, "we turn off the Italian carpenters in Pittsburgh and the Irish in New York. San Francisco, Chicago. Everywhere where they're strong, and they've been for us. And they are for us." During his meeting with Meany later in the day, Nixon promised "that this administration is not going to be a party to anything which is detrimental to the building trades," although Meany had expressed only passing interest in the issue, focusing his attention on foreign policy and the economy.⁶⁴

Soon after Nixon's meeting with Meany, Fletcher found his plan to redeem affirmative action mired in roadblocks and delays. He followed through on his threat and imposed an affirmative action plan on the San Francisco Bay Area; he also resisted pressure to certify the New York Plan. But "within the Labor Department," Fletcher recalled, "bureaucratic maneuvers continued to attempt to restrict my authority. The pressures from unions in the construction industry continued to mount."⁶⁵

Colson was the key conduit of such pressure. On May 14, one week after he had failed to convince Ehrlichman to force Fletcher to certify the New York Plan, Colson sent him an almost hysterical follow-up memo. Colson demanded that the White House kill Fletcher's plan to rejuvenate the Philadelphia Plan, calling it "the most critical political question that we face with respect to our relationship with the building trades unions." Colson, later that month, complained, "we are on the verge of being irreparably damaged with the 'hard hats' even though 6 months ago this represented one of our most fertile fields for political gain." By June, he became desperate, complaining in an "eyes only" memo to Ehrlichman on June 7 that White House efforts to certify the New York Plan "are being sabotaged."⁶⁶

Colson's constant lobbying and his emphasis on the damage done by Fletcher's attack of the icons of the new majority as racist finally won Nixon over. By the end of June, the question was not whether to get rid of Fletcher but how. In a conversation during which Colson was prepping Nixon for a meeting with Brennan on July 2, 1971, Colson and Nixon talked about the plan to remove Fletcher from the Department of Labor and put him in a powerless advisory committee on urban affairs. Nixon added that before Fletcher left Colson had to "get the New York Plan approved. Get something approved before the meeting [with Brennan] if you can." Colson responded by saying, "The Fletcher news is probably the biggest thing we could do for them. When that happens, they'll

understand it." Nixon concluded the conversation about Fletcher's firing by noting approvingly, "that will be so we can produce something for Brennan."⁶⁷

When Brennan met with Nixon later that day for an "off the record private talk," he handed Nixon a frank, one-page memo that described Nixon's affirmative action program as the single largest barrier preventing craft unions and the Republican Party from joining forces to oppose the New Left.⁶⁸ The memo, which the president wrote on as he read it, described the U.S. labor movement as "one of the strongest bulwarks against communism. . . . were it not for the Building Trades it is safe to assume that American Labor would be on the extreme left and highly politically oriented." Next to Brennan's claim that "The political forces on the left (both within and without the labor movement) must cripple the Building Trades and reduce their influence in the whole of the Labor Movement in order to dominate that Labor Movement (and eventually the government of the U.S.)," Nixon wrote "Absolutely *true*." Where Brennan wrote that the hard hat riot had "scared hell out of the leftists," Nixon wrote "correct," although Brennan's sentence continued: "and pointed up the need for the dismemberment of the Building Trades as a force in America! . . . The attack plan has been to use the racial issue to put the Building Trades 'out of business.'" "Unfortunately," Brennan wrote, "it's working."

The Building Trades are being persecuted, prosecuted and murdered—and it's all being done in the name of Richard Nixon. . . . If the picture is not immediately reversed, Richard Nixon *inadvertently* must be credited with crushing the Building Trades, destroying a free Labor Movement (economically motivated) and bringing about a politically motivated (European) *non-American* Labor Movement.⁶⁹

But Brennan had no need to worry. During their conversation, Nixon explained his decision to fire Fletcher and certify the New York Plan in roundabout fashion, disavowing a quid pro quo and thanking Brennan for his support for Nixon's foreign policy. "You fellas came to our need when frankly, the business community did not, the education community did not, and the great newspapers did not, except for a few . . . and I am aware of that."⁷⁰

Brennan's cultural politics—which, in the name of fighting communism at home and abroad, invoked economic populism to repress rather than join forces with the antiwar left and black freedom movement—shaped Nixon's outreach to organized labor as a whole. Three weeks after meeting with Brennan, the president and his top aides met to finally resolve the debate within the White House over his blue-collar strategy. Confirming where Nixon stood on the labor question after over a year of debate and two years of going in multiple directions at once, the president, according to Colson's notes, "said that the farmers and the

hard hats represent 'whatever is left of the character of this country.' ... Regardless of the politics, he held it vital that we continue to recognize and work with this group and that we not attack unions which represent the organized structure of the working man."⁷¹

The subsequent retreat from affirmative action was swift. The Department of Labor certified the New York Plan on August 11, 1971. In September, Fletcher was transferred out of the Department of Labor and became the U.S. alternative representative to the United Nations—a position he quit less than three months later, joining the exodus of high-profile black appointees from Nixon's first-term administration. When Labor Secretary Hodgson nominated Lowell Perry, an auto industry executive from Detroit, to replace Fletcher, Colson successfully blocked Perry's appointment solely because he was black. As Ehrlichman explained to Nixon, Colson "is just adamant... [that] the blacks should not be administering the Philadelphia Plan at least for a while until we get well with the unions."⁷²

"Getting well with the unions" took far more than firing Arthur Fletcher and putting the kibosh on the administration's enforcement of affirmative action, however. In Fall 1971, James Suffridge, head of the Retail Clerks Union and a Nixon supporter, advised the White House that, because of outreach blunders and heavy-handed economic regulations, "our relationship with labor leadership has steadily deteriorated and is now at an all time low." Colson responded by working clandestinely to shore up support among organized labor while employing "dirty tricks" against Democratic Party presidential candidates. Colson also worried that George Meany wanted the Teamsters Union to rejoin the labor movement. Fearing that the ability of the Teamsters to "quietly work very hard for us, with money and organizational support" would be compromised if it rejoined the AFL-CIO, Colson successfully negotiated Nixon's pardon of former Teamsters President Jimmy Hoffa in December 1971.⁷³

In spring 1972, Colson hired Donald Rodgers, who had negotiated the New York Plan with Brennan, to organize a Labor Committee for the Nixon reelection campaign. Colson hired Rodgers for his contacts with "building trades leaders in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Illinois, the very labor constituencies that we need to make our major efforts with." But Colson also had Rodgers do favors for Nixon allies in the labor movement, including stifling a Department of Justice investigation into Jesse Calhoun's Marine Employees union; blocking a Department of Labor investigation into the election of Paul Hall, Seafarer union president; granting exemptions to wage freezes for Gleason's longshoremens; and providing assorted favors to Teamsters President Frank Fitzsimmons.⁷⁴

How much Colson and Nixon knew about corruption in the unions they courted is unclear. When a small publication called *Scanlan's Monthly* documented the criminal backgrounds of the union leaders who met with President

Nixon after the hard hat riot, Colson, instead of refuting the charges or cutting ties with these labor leaders, teamed up with Brennan to drive *Scanlan's* out of business. In the New York construction industry, corruption became so pervasive in the 1970s and 1980s that James Jacobs, a law professor, labeled the city building trades unions a "cosa nostra fiefdom." State and federal government investigations during the 1980s documented the extent of labor racketeering and mob ties—including Cosa Nostra control of some laborer union locals for half a century and the Genovese crime family's effective control of the Carpenters Union New York District Council. These facts lend credence to Larry Summers's difficult-to-verify claim that the New York Building Trades Council "was mob-linked, and Brennan routinely carried a loaded gun and traveled with bodyguards."⁷⁵

But, regardless of what he knew, Nixon's bending of the law for the conservative unions raised the question of whether the labor support for Nixon was ultimately less about the "social issue" and more about seeking protection from the enforcement of the federal civil rights, labor, and racketeering laws. Playing hardball with the enemies of labor certainly emboldened Colson, who soon developed a public swagger as Nixon's "hatchet-man." So when the OFCC director resigned in protest over the retreat of the Department of Labor from affirmative action in mid-1972, Colson, rather than suppressing the story, played it up. "The reason this guy is quitting," Colson told Rodgers,

is because we are suppressing his minority hiring practices program. We are doing this because of your goddamn Building Trades. At least if we are going to have the Blacks up in arms at us, we ought to be getting some brownie points from the Pete Brennans of this world and others....we do have the Labor Department under control and it is now [John] Mitchell's job to get Justice under control. Can't you get someone to write an article that Rodgers is hired, he's here a month and the head of OFCC resigns?⁷⁶

With inside knowledge about the labor movement and contacts with conservative union leaders in the building trades, Rodgers and Brennan proved invaluable to the Nixon campaign. Together, they helped ensure that the AFL-CIO Building Trades Council remained neutral in the presidential election, built a coalition within the AFL-CIO to do the same, and helped secure individual endorsements from union locals and their leaders across the country.⁷⁷

The success of Nixon's labor strategy should not be overstated. It would have been impossible to ensure union neutrality in the election had the Democratic Party presidential nominee supported the Vietnam War. Busing proved to be a much more charged issue than affirmative action during the 1972 election,

with Dick Scammon, author of *The Real Majority*, secretly advising Colson to “exploit” the issue in “15 to 20 critical cities across the country” (which Colson often did by spreading false rumors to stir racial anxieties). And many white workers supported local Democrats while voting for Nixon in 1972. Yet Nixon’s labor outreach still helped mold and give voice to dissidence among Democratic Party stalwarts. And his victory lent credence to his strategy of building a new Republican Party majority through cultural rather than economic politics. As the president watched the results come in on election night, he toasted Colson, reportedly saying, “Here’s to you, Chuck. Those are your votes that are pouring in, the Catholics, the union members, the blue-collars, *your* votes, boy. It was your strategy and it’s a landslide!”⁷⁸

Nixon’s Cultivation of Labor: Institutional and Cultural Legacies

Colson, exhausted by the campaign and worn down by questions regarding his role in the Watergate burglaries, nonetheless felt a sense of triumph. “I believe,” he wrote the president immediately after the election, “we are on the threshold of one of the most significant realignments in American political history... We have cracked the solid foundation of the Democratic Party; its traditional base of labor, blue-collar, white ethnics have now become part of the Nixon Majority... Our challenge, it seems to me, is to convert the Nixon personal New Majority into a permanent institutional majority.”⁷⁹

The Department of Labor, he believed, could be a “magnificent vehicle for making the New Majority permanent.” But, Colson believed, its nonpartisan reporting of the worsening state of the economy, its employment programs for minorities, and its prosecution of union corruption had supposedly made it a “disaster.”⁸⁰

Yet Nixon’s celebration of Colson was overblown and fleeting. Colson wanted Nixon to appoint him secretary of labor “to direct more effort into ‘our’ constituents... not the deadbeat minority worker who cannot be helped by any amount of federal money and who will never be part of the Nixon Majority.” But Nixon, wanting someone from the labor movement, opted instead to appoint Brennan. At the same time, Don Rodgers, the other major hard hat in the administration, stayed on in the White House as the consultant to the president for labor, drawing up a plan for transforming the Labor for Nixon committee into what Colson hoped would become a “permanent, continuing organization.”⁸¹

From their new positions of power, the New York building trades union leaders deepened the institutional foundation of the backlash against affirmative

action. As secretary of labor, Brennan shifted from departmental enforcement of fair employment executive orders to increased voluntarism and localism and overruled local affirmative action plans that had strict standards. He then decentralized OFCC functions throughout the Department of Labor. These institutional changes, and the cultural politics that Nixon used to rationalize them, had a lasting effect on U.S. politics despite the fact that neither Fletcher's, Brennan's, nor Colson's visions for the future survived Nixon's resignation and the after-shocks of the Watergate scandal.⁸²

Absent support from the Department of Labor, the 1970s activist campaigns to the desegregate the U.S. workplace became increasingly dependent on (1) Title VII litigation, mediated by a court system that lacked the administrative capacity to enforce wide-ranging affirmative action decrees; (2) discrimination complaints submitted to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), a weak and underfunded federal agency whose backlog of unresolved cases swelled into the hundreds of thousands by the mid-1970s; and (3) the enforcement of local fair employment laws to desegregate the U.S. workplace on a piecemeal rather than industrywide basis.⁸³

Nixon, under pressure from Haldeman and Ehrlichman (who had long resented Colson's power and who sought to make him a scapegoat for the Watergate burglaries), pushed Colson out of the White House after the 1972 election. Betrayed, Colson returned to his law firm, where he was put on retainer by the Teamsters before being convicted for his role in the Watergate coverup. Colson's collapse mirrored the fate of his plans for a new majority. The electoral alliances that Nixon sought to solidify were discredited and disassembled by the Watergate scandal. President Gerald Ford responded by distancing himself from Nixon's allies in organized labor, and both he and Jimmy Carter purged the federal government of tainted Nixon appointees, including Brennan. A few prominent union members of Democrats for Nixon had been prosecuted for corruption during the 1972 election, but that trickle became a flood after Nixon resigned and the Departments of Justice and Labor resumed their prosecution of organized crime in the labor movement.⁸⁴

Nixon's failure to create a new majority was still productive, however. His choice to adopt the union opposition to affirmative action contributed to a new language for U.S. politics that persisted well beyond his own political career. The hard hat-inspired alliance between white workers and the Nixon administration reframed the solidarities of whiteness around a coded rhetoric of color-blindness that had a national appeal. Framed as a backlash against the supposed excesses of Black Power and affirmative action, hard hat politics conveniently erased the history of the grassroots movements against open housing, school desegregation, fair employment, and police accountability. Framed as a working-class, white

ethnic phenomenon, it downplayed the role that middle- and upper-class people of all ethnicities played in the supposed backlash against civil rights. Although not leading in any simplistic way to the creation of the Reagan Democrats or the culture wars of the 1980s and 1990s, hard hat politics provided a language for expressing the trauma of economic dislocation, blaming affirmative action instead of neoliberalism or deindustrialization for the decline of the middle class in the 1970s.

Perhaps one of the most bitter ironies of this new, post-civil rights cultural politics was how paltry its “wages of whiteness” were, how little the conservative unions and their members benefited from their defection from the Democratic Party. Workers who felt common cause with the Republican Party on the “social issue” were hardly prepared for the antiunion campaigns of the 1970s and 1980s. In the construction industry, business leaders and politicians—while paying lip service to hard hats in electoral politics—pushed to replace union journeymen with narrowly specialized and lower-paid nonunion workers throughout the construction industry from the late 1960s to the early 1980s. The long, bitter campaigns against affirmative action drew the resources and energy of the building trades unions away from effective responses to these challenges. And, as the economy worsened, many construction workers further hastened the erosion of the power of their unions by working nonunion jobs to make ends meet. The building trades unions have never recovered from these defeats, nor have they fully reckoned with the costs they incurred as defenders of a narrow vision of craft unionism.⁸⁵

Yet, no matter how misleading hard hat stereotypes were or how little white men stood to gain from them, real construction workers and their unions helped create the hard hat image and were partly responsible for its effects. The unions and their leaders were not merely the victims of stereotypes in the media or of Nixon’s cynical ambitions. Nixon’s embrace of the hard hats was reactive and profoundly shaped by union leaders’ protests and guidance. Nixon’s betrayal of Fletcher and retreat from the Philadelphia Plan came at the request of union leaders. This retreat silently facilitated the coordinated appeals of the unions and the Republican Party to a patriotic white working class rather than a multiracial working class. Similar divisive campaigns for a supposedly color-blind economic populism continue to pit calls for equal opportunity against affirmative action, and class against racial justice, while giving us neither.

97. “Negroes Pack Civic Center Plaza in Protest of Job Discrimination,” *Chicago Tribune*, September 23, 1969; Attendance Lists, Minority Construction Committee, n.d. [1970s], folder 1687, box 153, series III, CUL Papers.

98. “Ruling Offers Welcome Chance to Revisit Set-Aside Contracts,” *Chicago Sun-Times*, December 31, 2003; “City Told to Change Law on Set-Asides for Minorities, Women,” *Chicago Sun-Times*, December 30, 2003.

99. My interview with Taylor.

100. Vivian, *Black Power and the American Myth*, 75.

101. Richard Nixon, White House telephone conversation with Tricia Nixon Cox, April 18, 1972, no. 23–21, available at: <http://nixon tapes.org>.

6. “THE BLACKS SHOULD NOT BE ADMINISTERING THE PHILADELPHIA PLAN”

1. For an example of this conventional narrative, see Terry H. Anderson, *The Pursuit of Fairness: A History of Affirmative Action* (New York: Oxford, 2004).

2. Thomas J. Sugrue, “Affirmative Action from Below: Civil Rights, the Building Trades, and the Politics of Racial Equality in the Urban North, 1945–1969,” *Journal of American History* 91 (June 2004): 145–73.

3. Chris Bonastia, *Knocking on the Door: The Federal Government’s Attempt to Desegregate the Suburbs* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Gareth Davies, “Richard Nixon and the Desegregation of Southern Schools,” *Journal of Policy History* 19, no. 4 (2007): 367–94.

4. Nixon White House Tapes (NWHHT) 6-93, July 2, 1971, Nixon Library, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Md. [hereafter NL]. (All transcriptions are my own.)

5. Kevin Yuill, *Richard Nixon and the Rise of Affirmative Action: The Pursuit of Racial Equality in an Era of Limits* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 5.

6. Thomas Sugrue and John Skrentny, “The White Ethnic Strategy,” in *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*, ed. Bruce Schulman and Julian Zelizer, 171–92 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008); Paul Frymer and John Skrentny, “Coalition-Building and the Politics of Electoral Capture during the Nixon Administration: African Americans, Labor, Latinos,” *Studies in American Political Development* 12 (spring 1998): 131–61; Joe Merton, “The Politics of Symbolism: Richard Nixon’s Appeal to White Ethnics and the Frustration of Realignment, 1969–72,” *European Journal of American Culture* 26, no. 3 (2007): 181–98; Edmund Wehrle, “‘Partisan for the Hard Hats’: Charles Colson, George Meany, and the Failed Blue-Collar Strategy,” *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 5, no. 3 (2008): 45–66; Jefferson Cowie, “Nixon’s Class Struggle: Romancing the New Right Worker, 1969–1973,” *Labor History* 43, no. 3 (2002): 257–83.

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8. Hugh Davis Graham, *The Civil Rights Era: Origins and Development of National Policy, 1960–1972* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 278–300, 322–45; Dean J. Kotlowski, *Nixon’s Civil Rights: Politics, Principle and Policy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002), 97–124; John Skrentny, *The Ironies of Affirmative Action: Politics, Culture, and Justice in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 193–221; Yuill, *Richard Nixon*, 135–58; Judith Stein, “Affirmative Action and the Conservative

Agenda: President Richard M. Nixon's Philadelphia Plan of 1969," in *Labor in the Modern South*, ed. Glenn Eskew, 182–206 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001).

9. Stein, "Affirmative Action and the Conservative Agenda," 186–90.

10. Kotlowski, *Nixon's Civil Rights*, 106–9.

11. Hugh Davis Graham, "The Incoherence of the Civil Rights Policy in the Nixon Administration," in *Richard M. Nixon: Politician, President, Administrator*, ed. Leon Friedman and William Levantrouser, 159–72 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1991).

12. Robert Smith and Ronald Walters, *We Have No Leaders: African Americans in the Post-Civil Rights Era* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996), 145. Fletcher ended up appointing John Wilks, a black Republican from San Francisco whom Fletcher knew from his days in the San Francisco Bay Area.

13. Graham, *Civil Rights Era*, 297; "Wirtz Says No to Race Quotas," *Washington Post*, June 27, 1968; Arthur Fletcher, *The Silent Sell-Out: Government Betrayal of Blacks to the Craft Unions* (New York: Third Press, 1974), 64.

14. "Potomac Profile: Arthur A. Fletcher, Who Has a Degree from Malcolm X College, Is a Rare Bureaucrat," *Washington Post, Potomac Magazine*, February 7, 1971, 250; Graham, *Civil Rights Era*, 326.

15. William Gould, *Black Workers in White Unions: Job Discrimination in the United States* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 339–40; Skrentny, *Ironies of Affirmative Action*, 67–110.

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17. Fletcher, *Silent Sell-Out*, 70–72; NBC News, September 25, 1969, available at: Vanderbilt University TV News Archive, <http://tvnews.vanderbilt.edu/>.

18. Fletcher, *Silent Sell-Out*, 71.

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20. Charles Colson, "The Silent Majority: Support for the President," in *Richard M. Nixon: Politician, President, Administrator*, ed. Leon Friedman and William Levantrouser (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1991), 275.

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30. Yuill, *Richard Nixon*, 100.
31. John Ehrlichman, *Witness to Power: The Nixon Years* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), 228–29.
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48. Banks, “‘Last Bastion of Discrimination,’” 326–28; Cowie, “Nixon’s Class Struggle,” 271–73.

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53. Hodgson to Colson, March 1, 1971, folder “Hard Hats—Building and Construction Trades,” box 69, WHSF, Colson Papers, NL.

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55. Banks, “‘Last Bastion of Discrimination,’” 329–41; misc. docs. in folder “NY Plan,” box 20, Undersecretary Laurence Silberman Papers, RG 174, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

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62. Rodgers to Cashen, April 5, 1971, and Cashen to Colson, April 28, 1971, folder “Hard Hats—Building and Construction Trades,” box 69, WHSF, Colson Papers, NL.

63. Colson to Haldeman, May 6, 1971, folder “Arthur Fletcher,” box 65, WHSF, Colson Papers, NL.

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65. Fletcher, *Silent Sell-Out*, 79–80.

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folder “Building and Construction Trades,” box 40, WHSF, Colson Papers, NL; Colson to Haldeman, May 21, 1971, folder 22, box 55, CM, WHSF, NL-YL; Colson to Ehrlichman, June 7, 1971, folder “Arthur Fletcher,” box 65, WHSF, Colson Papers, NL.

67. NWHT 2-121, May 7, 1971, NL; NWHT 6-93, July 2, 1971, NL.

68. Colson to Nixon, July 2, 1971, available at: http://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtual-library/documents/jun09/070271_Colson_President.pdf.

69. Untitled document, folder “Brennan, Peter,” box 6, White House Central Files [hereafter WHCF]: President’s Personal File, NL.

70. NWHT 535-5, July 2, 1971, NL.

71. “Memo for President’s File,” July 26, 1971, folder “Nixon and Labor/ Political,” box 96, WHSF, Colson Papers, NL.

72. Banks, “‘Last Bastion of Discrimination,’” 347; “Blacks Dismayed by Resignations,” *New York Times*, May 5, 1971; NWHT 590-3, October 13, 1971, NL.

73. Bull to Colson, September 20, 1971, folder 32, box 3, CM, WHSF, NL-YL; Colson to Haldeman, July 23, 1971, folder 28, box 4, and Colson to Haldeman, August 11, 1971, folder 12, box 3, CM, WHSF, NL-YL.

74. Rodgers to Colson, October 12, 1972, folder “Nixon and Labor/Political,” box 96, WHSF, Colson Papers, NL; Colson to Haldeman, May 2, 1972, folder 12, box 3, CM, WHSF, NL-YL; misc. memos in folder “Don Rodgers,” box 11, WHSF, Colson Papers, NL; John Dean, *Blind Ambition: The White House Years* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1976), 111.

75. “Nixon and the Bums: An Editorial,” *Scanlan’s Monthly*, September 1970; Colson to Brennan, April 17, 1971, folder “Hard Hats—Building and Construction Trades,” box 69, WHSF, Colson Papers, NL; James Jacobs, *Gotham Unbound: How New York City Was Liberated from the Grip of Organized Crime* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), chap. 7; Ronald Goldstock, *Corruption and Racketeering in the New York City Construction Industry: Final Report to Governor Mario M. Cuomo from the New York State Organized Crime Task Force* (New York: New York University Press, 1990), 79–82; James Jacobs, *Mobsters, Unions, and Feds: The Mafia and the American Labor Movement* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 183–84; Summers, *Arrogance of Power*, 358.

76. Colson to Rodgers, June 15, 1972, folder “Don Rodgers,” box 11, WHSF, Colson Papers, NL.

77. Misc. memos in folder “Don Rodgers,” box 11, and folder “Nixon and Labor/ Political,” box 96 in WHSF, Colson Papers, NL; Wehrle, “‘Partisan for the Hard Hats,’” 62–66; Colson to Haldeman, May 2, 1972, folder 12, box 3, CM, WHSF, NL-YL.

78. Lovestone told Colson in 1971 that “unless [Henry] Jackson is nominated, the labor machinery will be relatively inactive.” Colson to Haldeman, May 28, 1971, folder 4, box 3, CM, WHSF, NL-YL; Colson to Nixon, May 19, 1972, folder 1, box 3, CM, WHSF, NL-YL; Charles Colson, *Born Again* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Chosen Books, 1976), 15.

79. Colson to Haldeman, November 10, 1972, available at: http://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/jun09/111072_Colson.pdf.

80. *Ibid.*

81. *Ibid.*

82. This conclusion cuts against Nixon revisionists, such as Dean Kotlowski, who downplay the effect of Nixon’s choice to defer civil rights law enforcement to the courts on most issues, and against labor historians, such as Edmund Wehrle, who downplay the role that conservative unions had in shaping Nixon’s campaign strategies.

83. Political scientists, by ignoring Fletcher’s unsuccessful attempts to restructure the OFCC, have provided overdetermined explanations for why the courts became the lead enforcement agency for equal employment law. See, for example, Anthony Chen, *The Fifth Freedom: Jobs, Politics, and Civil Rights in the United States, 1941–72* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

84. Michael P. Balzano, “The Silent versus the New Majority,” in *Richard M. Nixon: Politician, President, Administrator*, ed. Leon Friedman and William Leventrosser, 159–72 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1991), 271–72.

85. David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991); Linder, *Wars of Attrition*; Herbert Northrup, *Double-breasted Operations and Pre-Hire Agreements in Construction: The Facts and the Law* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1987); Kris Paap, *Working Construction: Why White Working Class Men Put Themselves—and the Labor Movement—In Harm’s Way* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

7. FROM JOBS TO POWER

1. “Pressure On for Minority Trainee Jobs by Monday,” *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, June 10, 1972, A-1.

2. *United States v. Ironworkers, Local 86*, Civil Case 8618, June 5, 1970.

3. “UCWA Struggle: Understanding How to Win,” *Seattle Flag*, July 5, 1972, 32.

4. Minutes of the Court Order Advisory Committee [hereafter COAC Minutes], June 7, 1972, folder “1972 Minutes,” box 12, Tyree Scott Papers [hereafter TS], University of Washington Libraries Special Collections [hereafter UWSC].

5. “Scott Pledges a New Site Closure,” *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, June 21, 1972, A-3.

6. Herbert Hill, “Labor Union Control of Job Training: A Critical Analysis of Apprenticeship Outreach Programs and the Hometown Plans,” Institute for Urban Affairs and Research, Howard University, 1974.

7. On Harlem Fight Back, see Gregory Butler, *Disunited Brotherhoods: Race, Racketeering and the Fall of the New York Construction Unions* (Lincoln: iUniverse, 2006). On the UCCW, see Mel King, *Chain of Change: Struggles for Black Community Development* (Boston: South End Press, 1981), 95–100, 169–94. On the UCWA, see William Little, “Community Organization and Leadership: A Case Study of Minority Workers in Seattle,” PhD diss., University of Washington, 1976); William Gould, *Black Workers in White Unions: Job Discrimination in the United States* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 338–62; Vanessa Tait, *Poor Workers’ Unions: Rebuilding Labor from Below* (Cambridge, Mass.: South End Press, 2005).

8. Interview with Michael Fox conducted by William Little, 1975, box 1, William A. Little Papers, Acc. 2610-3 [hereafter WL], UWSC.

9. Nancy MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough: The Opening of the American Workplace* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006), 76; Hanes Walton, *When the Marching Stopped: The Politics of Civil Rights Regulatory Agencies* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988); Bayard Rustin, “From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement,” in *To Redeem A Nation: A History and Anthology of the Civil Rights Movement*, ed. Thomas West (New York: Brandywine Press, 1993), 232–35; Paul Moreno, *From Direct Action to Affirmative Action: Fair Employment Law and Policy in America, 1933–1972* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997). MacLean misleadingly refers to all Title VII organizing as “movements for inclusion,” thereby overlooking the role of the left in organizing campaigns to enforce Title VII law; *Freedom Is Not Enough*, 332.

10. “4/6/49 Building Trades Council,” folder 21, box 34, Seattle Urban League Papers [hereafter SULP], UWSC.

11. Little, “Community Organization and Leadership,” 75; *Howard Lewis and Jet-tie J. Murray v. Ironworkers Local No. 86*, Washington State Board Against Discrimination Tribunal, March 12, 1969, 32, RG AR74-1-1, Washington State Archives, Olympia [hereafter WSA].

12. Deposition of Donald Kelly, box 102, Record Group (RG) 403, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Seattle.