

Nixon Meets Heads Of 2 City Unions; Hails War Support

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WASHINGTON, May 26 — President Nixon told leaders of the building trades and longshoremen's unions of New York today that he had found their public demonstrations of support for his Vietnam policy reassuring and "very meaningful."

They, in turn, pledged that their rallies—one of which was marked by violence two weeks ago — would continue, and handed him a statement urging "national support for our fighting men."

There was some difference of opinion over the genesis of the meeting, which lasted for 47 minutes.

Rare Unanimity

Peter J. Brennan, president of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York and New York State, told newsmen last night that Mr. Nixon had invited the group to the White House during a telephone call last Thursday. The Presidential press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler, said the initiative had come from the unions.

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In any event, there was rare unanimity in the Oval Office today, as the President, who has not been reading or hearing many kind words about his

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Indochina policies in recent days, received declarations of support and symbols of solidarity.

Among these were a small metal American flag, which Mr. Brennan pinned to Mr. Nixon's lapel, and a construction worker's hard hat labeled "Commander in Chief." Mr. Brennan also left a second hard hat, painted with four stars, to be passed along to Gen. Creighton W. Abrams, United States commander in Vietnam.

The President did not pose for pictures wearing the hard hat that had been presented to him.

On May 20, the construction workers organized a rally supporting Mr. Nixon's policies that brought out an estimated total of 100,000 persons near City Hall in New York. Five days before that, hard-hatted workers beat up antiwar demonstrators in Wall Street.

Mr. Ziegler said there was no discussion during the meeting of the violence during the Wall Street demonstration but that the union leaders themselves had told the President that their rallies would be "peaceful."

The President, Mr. Ziegler said, "does not condone in any way violence by any segment of society."

Mr. Brennan was accompanied by 22 union officials, including Thomas Gleason, general president of the International Longshoremen's Association and vice president of the Executive Committee of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations. The statement that Mr. Brennan gave the President read:

"It is our fervent hope and prayer that you will be suc-



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Peter J. Brennan, president of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York, presenting hard hat to President Nixon at White House meeting with union heads.

successful in your efforts and we call on all Americans to cooperate with you in giving your plan a chance.

"We all want peace, and we want to end this war in a safe and honorable way so that our men may come home as soon as possible to rejoin their loved ones.

"The hard hat will stand as a symbol, along with our great flag, for freedom and patriotism to our beloved country.

"We pray that our fighting men will be able to exchange their steel helmets very soon for hard hats and join with all of us in building a greater America, morally and physically for all Americans."

The President told the union leaders, according to Mr. Ziegler, that American troop morale had been lifted by the capture of large amounts of enemy supplies in Cambodia.

The press secretary further reported that the President had told the union leaders that he had received a letter from General Abrams commending the South Vietnamese troops and asserting that they were better equipped than ever to take over combat in South Vietnam.

The Building and Construction Trades Council represents 200,000 members and is affiliated with 110 local unions. Mr. Gleason's International Long-

shoremen's Association has 116,000 members.

Mr. Nixon has now met twice in the last two days with supporters of his Cambodian policy. Yesterday he conferred for about 30 minutes with David Keene, president of the Young Americans for Freedom, a conservative group that says it has 50,000 members on campuses across the country and has been a strong voice for the troop move into Cambodia.

In addition to Mr. Brennan and Mr. Gleason, the following union leaders attended the meeting:

Charles Johnson Jr., vice president of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York; Thomas Tobin, secretary-treasurer, Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York; and Donald Rodgers, executive director of Building and Trades Council Joint Boards.

Also, the following trustees of the Building and Trades Council: Pat J. Christiano, George Daly, Thomas Nolan.

Also, the following members of the Executive Committee of the Building and Trades Council: Thomas Clarkson, Edward Cleary, Michael Donovan, Mell Farrell, Sydney Glasser, George Koch, Biagio Lanza, Thomas Maguire, Joseph Salimbene and John Tracey.

Also, Donald Blair, president, Building and Construction Trades Council of Buffalo, Walter Colleran, counsel Building and Construction Trades Council; Wilbur Ealy, aide to Parade Committee, Building and Construction Trades Council; Ronald Martin, assistant to chairman of Parade Committee, Building and Construction Trades Council; Martin Dickson, labor representative from St. Croix, V. I.