

Hard Hat Leaders Visit With Nixon

New York Times

Washington

President Nixon told leaders of the Building Trades and Longshoremen's Unions of New York yesterday 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—will 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 between the President and the union leaders, which lasted for 47 minutes.

DIFFERENCE

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

In any event, there was rare unanimity in the oval office yesterday as the President, who has not been reading or hearing many kind words about his Indochina policies in recent days, re-

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ceived declarations of support and symbols of solidarity.

Among these were a small metal American flag, which Brennan pinned to Mr. Nixon's lapel, and a construction worker's hard hat labeled "Commander in Chief."

ABRAMS

Brennan also left behind a second hard hat, painted with four stars, to be passed along to General Creighton W. Abrams, United States commander in Vietnam.

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

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

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

OFFICIALS

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 AFL-CIO.

The statement which Brennan gave the President read:

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



UPI Telephoto

At the meeting were (from left) Sidney Glasser of the Building and Trades Council executive committee; Thomas Gleason, International Longshoremen's Association; Peter J. Brennan, Building and Construction Trades Council of New York; President Nixon; Charles Johnson Jr., Building and Construction Trades Council, and Thomas Maguire, Building and Construction Trades Council.