

DRAFT EDITORIAL

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"One of the things that counts most is earning power. Nothing is more unfair than that the same Americans who pay taxes should by any pattern of discriminatory practices be deprived an equal opportunity to work on Federal construction contracts.

The Philadelphia Plan does not set quotas; it points to goals. It does not presume automatic violation of laws if the goals are not met; it does require affirmative action if a review of the totality of a contractor's employment practices shows that he is not affording equal employment opportunity."

Richard M. Nixon, President
United States of America
December 19, 1969

In this post Trent Lott era of perceiving all Republican Conservatives as biased and anti-affirmative action, it is important to note that true Republican Conservatives such as Nixon, Eisenhower, Ford and George Walker Bush were and are staunchly pro affirmative action – both in employment and in access to educational opportunities.

In October 1969, as Assistant Secretary for Employment Standards in the U. S. Department of Labor, I instituted what is now popularly referred to as the "Philadelphia Plan." Contrary to what many civil rights supporters (as well as antagonists) believe, the Philadelphia Plan was instituted through powers granted in Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act – not Title VII. The difference being that Title VI does not depend on a persons race, gender or ethnicity, but on their standing as taxpaying citizens.

Unfortunately we have been at war over the past 35 years with certain right-wing extremist elements who have been far too successful at making war against legitimate citizens who attempt to use civil rights advances in furthering the economic welfare of the nation.

For those who are taken back by my argument that affirmative action efforts are America's only chance of maintaining our leadership as a global power, let me offer you the record that demonstrates that each of our Presidents over the past fifty years have come to the same conclusions.

We should not forget that in 1970 Vincent T. Ximenes, then head of the U. S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, said "Discriminatory practices cost the nation billions of dollars annually in wasted productivity. Some economists estimate this loss at over 30 billion..."