

Fletcher Under Surveillance?

No one is more irked by the insistent pressuring tactics of Arthur Fletcher than crusty old George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO. The ex-plumber is growling over the Philadelphia Plan and its counterparts in other cities whereby blacks are fighting their way into the skilled jobs so long dominated by the white hard-hats. Fletcher, the powerfully built former professional football player, is bare handedly defending the plan which he launched under former Secretary of Labor George Shultz, but he is meeting with stiffening opposition from the sultans of organized labor and from within the Administration. Now, the word is around that Meany has investigators out on the West Coast looking into Fletcher's background hoping to find something enough to discredit him and thus force him out of the department. Meany, a long-time supporter of Democrats; nevertheless, carries a big clout within the Nixon Administration. He supports the President's policy in Vietnam. The situation about Fletcher points up the mounting dissatisfaction among blacks in the trade union movement over racism, both at the staff level and in union shops.