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seizures of neutral American ships. According to Frankel, a Berkeley economist, British imports from America dropped 73 percent the following year; exports fell 56 percent. Some trade continued because the Embargo Act was at first loosely enforced and because some ships had already embarked on their long Atlantic crossing when the Act was passed. Smugglers also accounted for some trading.

But not much, says Frankel. Cotton was the chief U.S. export to Britain, accounting for as much as 65 percent of sales. In 1808, British imports of cotton from all sources other than North America remained at the 1807 level, 31 million pounds, suggesting that little U.S. cotton was smuggled through third countries.

The embargo affected the two countries quite differently. In the United States, New England shipbuilders and seafarers were hit even harder than were cotton and tobacco farmers, who at least retained their domestic markets. But the cost of nails, glass, and other imported manufactured goods changed very little, as domestic entrepreneurs moved rapidly to meet demand. Britain, deprived of key raw materials, suffered more. Total production fell by 4.8 percent in 1808 according to one index, and textile output dropped by 33 percent.

In March 1809, Thomas Jefferson left the White House. Arguing that the embargo was damaging the American economy more than the British, Federalists led Congress in lifting the ban. But the real movers behind the turnaround, notes Frankel, were New England's shippers, the Federalists' chief backers. In the end, observes Frankel, it was not national economic considerations that brought down the embargo, but "a lack of political will."

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Blacks Win Better Jobs

"Blacks in the 1970s: Did They Scale the Job Ladder?" by Diane Nilsen Westcott, in *Monthly Labor Review* (June 1982), Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

During the 1960s, a thriving economy and new civil rights legislation helped black Americans make strong economic gains. Three recessions slowed progress during the 1970s, says U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics economist Westcott, but blacks continued to climb the job ladder to more skilled and more lucrative employment.

Overall, blacks earned 81 percent of what whites did in 1980, up from 79.6 percent in 1973. Yet that small change conceals significant movements within the job market. Black employment in white-collar professions grew by 55 percent between 1972 and 1980, compared to 27 percent for whites. But for many blacks, the move into the white-collar

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world occurred in lower paying professional jobs, such as nursing and teaching. As a result, black professional income actually declined as a percentage of whites' from 91 percent in 1973 to 86 percent in 1980.

Within blue-collar occupations, however, blacks moved from lower echelon jobs to more skilled work. By 1980, 32 percent more blacks worked in the craft trades—carpentry, plumbing, printing—while 15 percent fewer worked as laborers. The black-white income ratio in blue-collar fields was 81 percent in 1980, compared to 78 percent in 1973. Meanwhile, the number of black household workers dropped by 42 percent, and black farm employment fell by 32 percent.

The earnings of black and white women were more nearly equal than those of black and white men. The earnings ratio of black to white women was 92.2 percent overall, compared to 75.1 percent for black and white males. Black and white female white-collar workers earned virtually identical salaries, while the income of black men in white-collar jobs was 79 percent of their white counterparts'.

Overall, the number of blacks in professional and skilled blue-collar jobs increased only about half as quickly during the '70s as during the '60s, notes Westcott; the rate of advance for whites also slowed. Still, between 1973 and 1980, black Americans posted a 68 percent earnings increase, compared to 65 percent for whites. The move up the job ladder slowed but did not stop.

Paranoid Politics

"Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style: Causality and Deceit in the Eighteenth Century" by Gordon S. Wood, in *The William and Mary Quarterly* (July 1982), P.O. Box 220, Williamsburg, Va. 23187.

Several American historians have traced the "irrational" paranoia of 1950s McCarthyism back to a "paranoid style" of politics that took root during the American Revolution. But Wood, a Brown University historian, explains that the Founders' apparent paranoia was not the clinical variety we think of today.

In two 1965 essays, historians Richard Hofstadter and Bernard Bailyn demonstrated that the colonists were constantly on guard against British plots and conspiracies. Thomas Jefferson, for example, complained before the Revolution of London's "deliberate, systematic plan of reducing us to slavery." But Wood argues that such apprehensions were common throughout the West during the Enlightenment. Novelist Daniel Defoe (1670–1731) called it "an Age of Plot and Deceit, of Contradiction and Paradox."

Far from being irrational, the 18th-century conspiracy-watch was "a last desperate attempt . . . to hold men personally and morally responsible" for events caused by chance or such impersonal forces as industrialization and modernization. Leaders of the Revolutionary era lacked the faith of their forebears that "Providence" accounted for the inexplicable. They struggled to believe that men could understand "the