

## The American Federation of Teachers Collection

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT), AFL-CIO, the only teachers' organization in American education affiliated with organized labor, was founded in Chicago in 1916. The Chicago Teachers Federation, the Federation of Men Teachers, and the Federation of Women High School Teachers, founded in 1897, 1912, and 1914, respectively, faced with salary cuts, a "yellow dog" contract, and other forms of harassment and discrimination took the initial steps to form a national teachers' union. In June 1915, Florence S. Hall of the Women Teachers advised Freeland G. Stecker, Secretary of the Men Teachers and a Committee on National Organization, that the Chicago Federation of Women High School Teachers had unanimously accepted a draft constitution "for the formation of a national federation of teachers' organizations, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor." The Women Teachers also resolved that "other eligible organizations . . . take similar action, in order that a large and enthusiastic meeting may be held this summer and a national organization definitely formed."

On April 15, 1916, delegates from locals in Gary, Indiana; New York, New York; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Scranton, Pennsylvania; and Washington, D.C. joined with representatives from the Chicago locals and founded the American Federation of Teachers. Charles B. Stillman and Freeland G. Stecker were elected as the first administrative officers. Less than a month later, on May 9, the American Federation of Labor chartered the AFT. The New York local made two significant contributions to the AFT at this time. *The American Teacher*, published privately by members of the New York group, became the official AFT publication. Also the credo, "Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy" was adopted to guide and express the objectives of the AFT.

The AFT Collection at Wayne State University is a storehouse of information concerning the growth and status of public education and the national teachers' union. The major and minor education oriented issues which have garnered the attention of AFT members over the years have achieved a certain timelessness. In recent years cases involving the personal appearance, partic-

ularly hair length, of teachers and students have stirred debates across the country. In 1924, the *Semi-Monthly Bulletin* of the AFT reported that a local school board in Pennsylvania denied pay increases to teachers who bobbed their hair.

If the hair is kept "up" by hair nets when bobbed the customary increase of \$100 a year will be paid. Most of the teachers involved have signed their contracts being informed that if they did not do so Monday their places would be declared vacant.

The issue of AFT cooperation, and possible merger, with the National Education Association (NEA) has been hotly debated at recent AFT Conventions. The question has evidently been a sensitive one since the inception of the AFT. In October 1918, AFT President Charles B. Stillman wrote Henry R. Linville, editor of *The American Teacher*.

I have been corresponding extensively with the A. F. of L. as to the drafting of the bills, wisdom of cooperating with the N.E.A. if we can secure the changes we want in their proposed bills, or of proceeding separately . . .

Stillman also expressed some dismay over an anti-NEA editorial approved and published by Linville. Stillman responded,

I think your opening roast of the N.E.A. in that editorial is less deserved now than ever before. In the correspondence of Lampson (AFT First Vice-President) and myself with Crabtree, Swain, and Brooks (NEA officers) we have found them sympathetic with our movement and anxious for cooperation. I hope they won't take the editorial as a slap in the face just when we were reaching a better mutual understanding. Undoubtedly the N.E.A. as a whole deserves it, and of course it pays to still be on our guard with the leaders, even.

A myriad of other subjects are reflected in the AFT Collection. These include child labor, federal aid to education, state legislation, integration and civil rights, political and ideological roles of teachers, public employee strikes, workers education and Brookwood Labor College, achieving "quality" education, the Progressive Movement in education, ROTC in secondary education, college and university unionization, tenure, academic freedom, black teachers' unions, the AFL, CIO and AFL-CIO, "Americanization," pacifism, the question of compulsory professionalization versus voluntary unionism,



the World Federation of Education Associations, and related subjects.

The AFT Collection, one of the Archives' largest, comprises 190 linear feet of material and covers the period 1916 to 1967. Additional inactive files are also received periodically from the AFT. The collection is open to researchers, with the exception of the membership records which are closed for five years. An inventory to the various record series is available.

Among the major record groups in the AFT Collection are the files of the President, for the period 1914-1967, which cover nearly every phase of the union's activities. Included among the files is information on civil rights, collective bargaining, political action, organizing, international and domestic labor bodies, senior citizens, strikes, NEA, tax reform, legislation, and a host of other subjects. Material, such as proceedings, ballots, and correspondence, pertaining to the meetings of the AFT Executive Council since 1930 is also available.

Two important series in the collection that document the growth and issues confronting the AFT since 1916 are the files of active and defunct locals. These files, covering the period 1916 to 1963, contain official and personal correspondence, clippings, per capita reports, surveys, local bulletins and newspapers, charter applications, membership reports, and hearings and correspondence concerning local defense cases. Even though these locals folded, the issues, internal political decisions, and community pressure involved at the local level have great historical value.

Correspondence between the AFT national office and various State Federations for the period 1922 to 1967, and files concerning completed defense cases, mainly from the 1960's, are also contained in the collection. National office communications to Executive Council members and AFT locals; proceedings, resolutions and committee reports from AFT Conventions; and miscellaneous office files including correspondence, memos, and mimeographed material are also important sources of information about the internal operations of the AFT and issues affecting education and the union. Complete sets of *AFT Proceedings* and *The American Teacher*, the latter on microfilm, are also available.

## Related AFT Collections

The cooperation of AFT officers, Executive Council and local members in preserving historical records of their union has enabled the Archives to collect the records of several AFT affiliates.

**MICHIGAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS.** The records of the Michigan Federation of Teachers were placed in the Archives in 1968. The collection, covering the period 1951-1967, consists of correspondence, minutes of meetings, and reports concerning legislative lobbying activities, local affiliates, membership campaigns, institutes and conferences, Michigan Constitutional Convention in 1961, White House Conference on Children and Youth in 1960, teachers' salaries and fringe benefits surveys, American Federation of Teachers, and teacher education

and certification. Among the correspondents included in the collection are Jerome Cavanagh, former Mayor of Detroit; Congressmen John D. Dingell and James O'Hara; Senator Philip S. Hart; Walter and Victor Reuther of the United Auto Workers; August Scholle, President of the Michigan AFL-CIO; and John B. Swainson and G. Mennen Williams, former Governors of Michigan.

**TOLEDO FEDERATION OF TEACHERS.** In 1968, the members of the TFT deposited their union's records for the period 1933-1968 in the Archives. The collection contains correspondence, minutes of meetings, research and committee reports, circulars, clippings, tapes, and scrapbooks.

Information concerning the Ohio Federation of Teachers, Toledo Central Labor Union, Toledo Board of Education, academic freedom, tenure, COPE, Labor's League for Political Action, National Education Association, Progressive Education Association, and local Ohio labor organizations is contained in the collection.

**EAST DETROIT FEDERATION OF TEACHERS.** The records of the East Detroit Federation of Teachers, covering the period 1953-1964, came to the Archives in 1967. The collection contains material relating to the policies and constitution of the local, legislation, relations with the Michigan Federation of Teachers, grievances, merit rating, academic freedom and tenure, conferences and institutes, millage campaigns, and the School District of East Detroit. Correspondence, minutes of meetings, reports and memoranda, press releases, clippings, and related items comprise the collection.

**ST. PAUL FEDERATION OF TEACHERS.** This local, first chartered in 1918, as the St. Paul Women Teachers' Union, is the fifth oldest AFT local in existence and the first teachers' union formed in the State of Minnesota. In 1957, the women and men teachers' union merged to form the present federation.

The records, 1898-1970, contain correspondence, minutes of meetings, clippings, bulletins, and related items. Additional information concerning the early history and struggles of the St. Paul local and the AFT are contained in oral interviews with Mary McGough and Lettisha Henderson, two prominent leaders of the local.

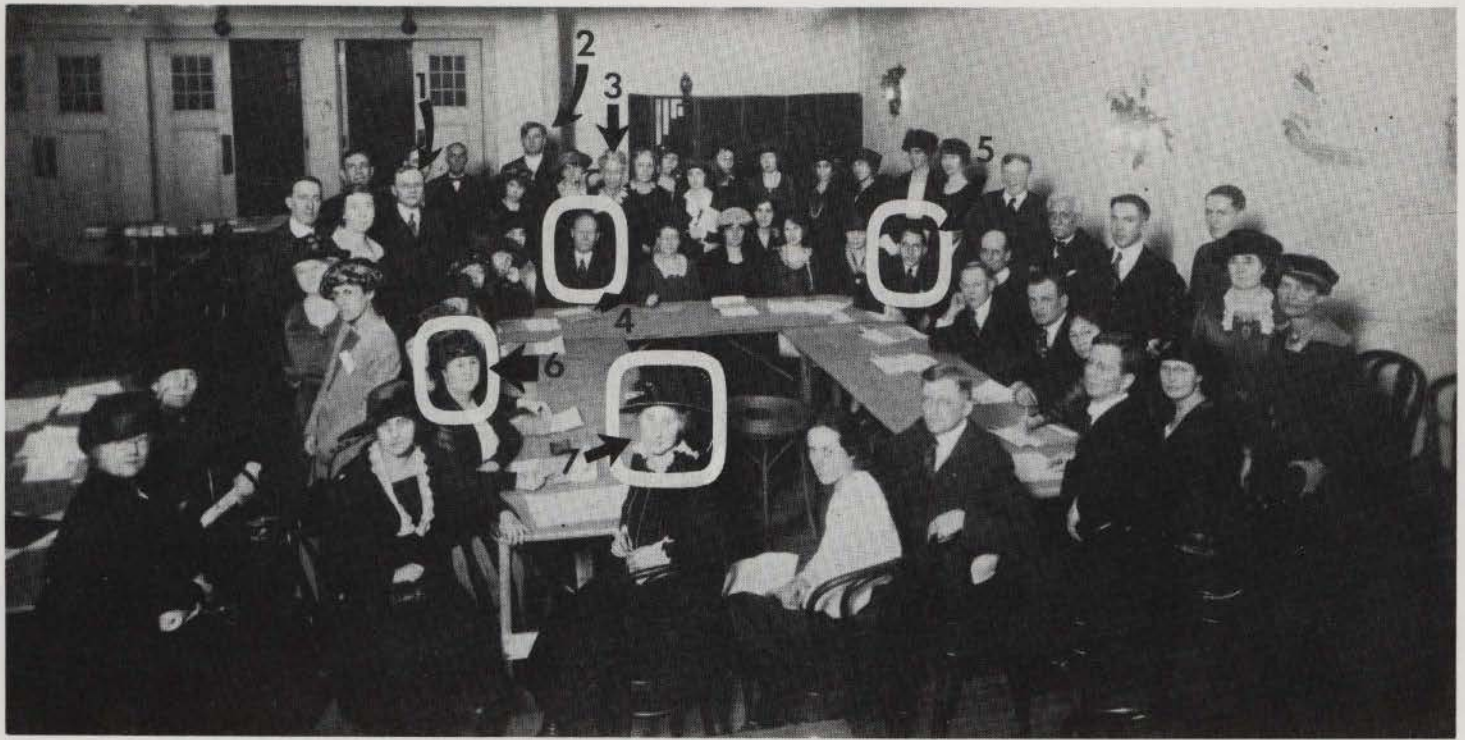
**ST. LOUIS FEDERATION OF TEACHERS.** The records of Local 420 came to the Archives in 1971, and are as yet unprocessed. The collection contains correspondence, bulletins, clippings, and minutes of meetings, for the period 1962-1968.

Historical material concerning the ECORSE, HAM-TRAMCK, and WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY FEDERATION OF TEACHERS has also been placed in the Archives.

## Educational Association Collections

The Archives has also collected the records of five educational associations affiliated with the National and Michigan Education Associations. Records from the Ann Arbor Educational Association, 1911-1968; Detroit Education Association, 1914-1968; Grand Rapids Education





*Delegates to the American Federation of Teachers Convention in 1920. Those identified are: 1. Charles B. Stillman, President. 2. Freeland G. Stecker, Secretary-Treasurer. 3. Jennie A. Wilcox, President of the Chicago Federation of Women High School Teachers, Local 3. 4. Henry R. Linville, Editor of *The American Teacher*. 5. Abraham Lefkowitz, Teachers' Union of New York City, Local 5. 6. Florence Rood, St. Paul Women Teachers' Union, Local 28. 7. Lucy Allen, Chicago Federation of Women High School Teachers, Local 3.*

Association, 1907-1967; Livonia Education Association, 1945-1968; and Owosso Education Association, 1914-1968, are opened to interested researchers and type-written guides to the collections are available.

These collections afford interested researchers with information concerning the evolution of these organizations from social and beneficent teachers clubs to more formal bargaining agents for their members. The records included in the collections consist of correspondence, minutes of meetings, school board minutes and memoranda, clippings, bulletins, newsletters, reports, surveys, and collective bargaining and election files. The material relates to many subjects, ranging from teacher oriented issues such as class size, tenure, and salaries to each association's participation in political and social activities affecting education.

## Personal Papers

### THE ARTHUR ELDER COLLECTION

In 1964, Mrs. Arthur Elder, on the advice of Frances Comfort, Blanche Rinehart, and Florence Sweeny of the Detroit Federation of Teachers and supporters of the Archives' program, placed her husband's papers in the Archives. Arthur Elder, a Vice-President of the AFT and President and Secretary of the Michigan and Detroit Federation of Teachers, also served as Director of the Workers Education Service at the University of Michigan. Mr. Elder, a labor leader who chose anonymity, had an extremely important role, not only in the AFT, but in the labor and reform movements.

The papers contain correspondence, reports, hearings,

scrapbooks, clippings, bulletins and photographs concerning the Detroit Federation of Teachers, Michigan Federation of Teachers, American Federation of Teachers, and American Federation of Labor.

Among the subjects discussed in the papers for the period 1921-1953, are the AFT and the Communist issue; the New York Teachers' Union controversy of the early 1940's; the Workers Education Service, particularly General Motors Corporation's efforts to remove Elder from his post at the University of Michigan; tenure for teachers; Elder's role as the leading tax consultant for the AFL; and the dismissal of Flint, Michigan, teachers for supporting the UAW "sit-down" strike at General Motors in 1937. Correspondents in the collection include Selma M. Borchardt, Jerome Davis, and Mark Starr of the AFT; Frank Murphy, former Michigan Governor; Arthur Vandenberg, former U. S. Senator; Frank Martel, President of the Detroit Federation of Labor; and Richard T. Ely, noted economist at the University of Wisconsin.

### THE SELMA M. BORCHARDT COLLECTION

The papers of Selma Munter Borchardt of Washington, D.C., were placed in the Archives in 1969, by Louis Camera, the Executor of Miss Borchardt's estate. The collection covers the period 1911 to 1967, with emphasis on the years 1922 to 1962, and contains over ninety-five linear feet of material.

Miss Borchardt served as Legislative Representative and Vice-President of the AFT from 1924 to 1935 and 1942 to 1962. From 1927 to 1946, Miss Borchardt was



Director of the World Federation of Education Associations and helped establish the successor organization, the Institute of World Studies. Her work also included service with the Women's Joint Congressional Committee, National Youth Administration, Office of Education Wartime Commission, Secretary of the Education Committee of the Washington Central Labor Union, and Director of the Washington Self-Help Exchange.

Among the subjects discussed in the collection are AFT Executive Council and Conventions, 1925-1961; AFT factionalism and the Communist issue, 1933-1940; National Women's Trade Union League, 1918-1948; Greater Washington Central Labor Union, 1936-1966; legislation involving federal aid to education, academic freedom, compulsory military training, the District of Columbia, child labor, senior citizens, domestic workers, taxation, equal pay and rights for women, and workers education, 1938-1962; Washington Trade Union College, 1919-1924; Washington Teachers Union, including complete minute books, 1916-1930; Maryland and District of Columbia Federations of Labor; International Relations Committee of the AFT; World Peace Through Education, including correspondence with David Starr Jordan, 1925-1933; the Progressive Caucus within the AFT; the dismissal of Irwin Kuenzli as AFT Secretary-Treasurer, and many other subjects.

Correspondents include Mary C. Barker, George S. Counts, Mary C. Dent, John M. Eklund, Arthur Elder, Mary J. Herrick, Irwin Kuenzli, Henry R. Linville, Florence Rood, Rebecca Simonson, Mark Starr, Freeland G. Stecker of the AFT; U. S. Senator George D. Aiken; Congressman Emanuel Celler; William Green, President of the AFL; Jay Lovestone; A. J. Muste, and others.

#### THE HENRY RICHARDSON LINVILLE COLLECTION

Mrs. Rhoda Eichholz and Byron Linville, the daughter and son of Henry Richardson Linville, placed their father's papers in the Archives in 1969 and 1970. Mr. Linville, the President and Executive Director of the Teachers' Union of New York City, 1916-1934, also served as Editor of *The American Teacher* during this period. From 1931-1934, Mr. Linville was President of the AFT and in 1935 he was elected President of the New York Teachers Guild.

The Linville Collection contains correspondence, radio addresses, speeches, news clippings, and chapter drafts of his book, *Communists At Work*. The bulk of the collection consists of correspondence for the period 1912 to 1919, and concerns the AFT, the Teachers' Union of New York City, and *The American Teacher*. The publication was principally adopted and utilized to interest teachers in joining the AFT. In September 1918, Linville published an editorial commenting on the conviction of members of the Industrial Workers of the World under the Espionage Act. President Stillman, on an organizing trip in Indiana, wrote Linville, "the I.W.W. editorial has been a fatal handicap in using the Sept. number for propaganda purposes." After recounting the negative reactions of some Indiana teachers to the editorial, Stillman observed,

You evidently did not realize the IWW to the great mass of teachers as of all citizens, is a symbol of a venomous snake in the grass . . . I confess I cannot see where you thought that particular subject for an editorial, however treated, would help us organize new unions, or strengthen those we have.

#### THE MARY J. HERRICK COLLECTION

Miss Herrick, past President of the Federation of Women High School Teachers in Chicago, 1933-1936, Vice-President and Director of Research of the AFT, placed her papers in the Archives in 1970.

The collection contains information on such subjects as activities of AFT locals, Executive Council policy and procedures, National Teachers Corps, constitutional rights of married women teachers, and national AFT Conventions and caucus material.

The collection, covering the period 1932-1960, contains correspondence with Lillian Herstein, Selma M. Borchardt, Jerome Davis, Rebecca Simonson, Carl Megel, John N. Fewkes of the AFT and others.

Additional papers of Miss Herrick have been placed with the Chicago Historical Society and the University of Illinois-Chicago Circle.

#### THE MARY R. WHEELER COLLECTION

In 1970, Miss Wheeler, past President and Executive Secretary of the West Suburban Teachers Union, Local 571 located in Westchester, Illinois, and Vice-President of the AFT, placed her papers in the Archives.

The collection contains correspondence, reports, minutes of meetings, negotiation and legal files, and clippings concerning the AFT, the Illinois Federation of Teachers, and Local 571.

#### THE HERRICK S. ROTH COLLECTION

Herrick Roth, past President of the Colorado and Denver Federation of Teachers and currently Vice-President of the AFT and President of the Colorado Labor Council, AFL-CIO, placed his papers at Wayne State University in 1970.

Information concerning organizing and local activities in the Western States, the AFT Executive Council and committees, AFT-NEA relationships, the Colorado and Denver Federations of Teachers, and the National Committee for Support of Public Schools is contained in the collection. Correspondence, minutes of meetings, Convention Proceedings, bulletins, clippings, and reports comprise the collection which has now been partially processed.

Several small collections concerning various AFT members and locals have also been received. Six collections related to the teachers union movement in New York have been placed in the Archives. Mrs. Cuthbert Daniel deposited speeches, clippings, and pamphlets concerning her mother, MRS. S. S. GOLDWATER, and the New York Teachers Guild Associates. The late JOSEPH JABLONOWER presented correspondence, speeches, clippings, and diaries covering the period 1936-1968, related to his association with the New York teachers unions, Board of Examiners, and Society for Ethical Culture. A transcript of Mr. Jablonower's oral history interview for the Columbia University Oral History



Project was also acquired. The clippings, speeches, and correspondence of the late ABRAHAM LEFKOWITZ concerning his work with the New York Teachers Guild and the Empire Federation of Teachers were placed in the Archives by his wife. GABRIEL MASON, one of the early members of the Teachers' Union of New York, has placed a chapter draft of his autobiography in the Archives. Six letters from John Dewey, tributary statements, programs, and photographs concerning the Memorial Lecture for Henry Richardson Linville were presented to the Archives by the late TRUDA WEIL. A copy of the oral history transcript of BEN DAVIDSON, a central figure in the Local 5 and Teachers Guild controversy in New York, has been obtained through the cooperation of Mr. Davidson and Cornell University.

JOHN M. EKLUND, President of the AFT 1948-1951, has placed correspondence, clippings, photographs, and publications in the Archives. CHARLES F. KINCAID and ISADORE W. MILES have presented small amounts of material concerning AFT Local 420 in St. Louis and AFT Local 6 in Washington, D.C., respectively. Copies of briefs submitted by the AFT's Committee for Democratic Human Relations in the Brown vs. the Board of Education case, clippings, pamphlets, and speeches concerning blacks and the AFT were donated by LAYLE LANE.

## Recent Acquisitions

### THE UAW INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT COLLECTION

The records of the International Affairs Department, 1943-1964, consist of correspondence, minutes of meetings, clippings, reading files, press releases, legal and research files, publications, telegrams, and tape recordings.

Information concerning the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Office of Price Administration, Consumer Advisory Committee, Congress of Industrial Organizations, AFL-CIO and affiliated unions, foreign labor unions, civil rights, cultural exchange, fair practices, economic development, reconversion pricing, political campaigns, UAW regions, locals, and conventions and a myriad of other topics are contained in the files. Separate files of correspondence and subject files of Victor G. Reuther, Director of the International Affairs Department, were also included.

All UAW records placed in the Archives are subject to a twenty year restriction. Within the next year the files of the International Affairs Department for the years 1943-1952, will be opened to qualified researchers.

**THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR AGRICULTURAL DEMOCRACY COLLECTION.** The files of the NCAD, a legislative lobbying and information organization concerned with agricultural and migrant workers, were placed in the Archives this year by its Director, Eugene Boutilier. The files contain correspondence, minutes of meetings, leaflets, clippings, and transcripts of public and Congressional hearings.

Included with the NCAD records are the files of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee Boycott



*Certificate of Affiliation of the American Federation of Teachers with the American Federation of Labor, May 9, 1916.*

Office in the District of Columbia. Both the NCAD and UFWOC Boycott Office files cover the period 1967-1970. The NCAD files will be opened to researchers after processing, but the UFWOC material has been temporarily closed. All UFWOC records placed in the Archives are subject to this restriction.

**THE JEAN GOULD COLLECTION.** The Archives has also received one folder of Eugene Debs letters. The twelve letters and a fragment of a thirteenth were the gift of Miss Jean Gould, a biographer of Walter P. Reuther and editor of *Homegrown Liberal*, the memoirs of C. W. Ervin. The collection of letters are from Debs to C. W. "Charlie" Ervin, publisher and editor of the *New York Daily Call*. They cover the period 1907-1910, when Ervin was in Philadelphia, with only one being from a later year, 1922. The correspondence contains Debs' reactions to the events in Philadelphia, comments on Socialist factional struggles, and various subjects related to the Socialist movement.



## Archives Research and Development Fund

In 1968, shortly after the death of Nicholas Hyshka, his family and friends set up a special fund in the University to foster the educational and research program of the Archives. This gift was particularly appropriate since Nicholas Hyshka was a dedicated trade unionist and active in the educational program of the UAW. He was also one of the early supporters of the Labor Archives, assisting in locating important collections, interpreting the Archives' program to union leaders, and encouraging the study of labor history.

Other interested persons have also given grants to the Archives Research and Development Fund and the Archives Memorial Fund to support the Archives' program. These grants have made possible a number of Archives publications, including the *Newsletter*, a forthcoming *Guide to the Archives Collections*, and a series of brochures. Other bequests and gifts by individuals and organizations have been designated to encourage research in various aspects of labor history and social, economic and political reform movements. Within a few years the Archives hopes to have sufficient funds to establish a series of fellowships to assist scholars in conducting their research in the Archives at Wayne State University.

For further information about the Archives' Research and Development Fund please contact the Director.

## Research in the Archives

During the past academic year over 800 researchers utilized the manuscript and audio visual collections, vertical file material, newspapers, and books in the Archives.

Hideyo Naganuma, a visiting scholar from the University of Tokyo, spent five months at the Archives during his research on the political activities of the CIO. Lorin L. Cary of the University of Toledo utilized several collections for his biography of Adolph Germer. Stuart N. Dowty, a member of UAW Local 306, has also researched Archives' material in compiling a history of his local union.

Donald L. Haynes, instructor of the American Labor History course at Wayne State University, has reported a number of excellent research papers by students using Archives' collections. Among the topics were studies of the internal discipline among strikers at the Dodge sit-down strike in 1937; Aaron Henry and the political-social programs of the Mississippi NAACP; the types of grievance claims filed during a period of labor unrest; the role of the Labor Press in reporting on the Detroit Race Riot of 1943; and the civil rights role of the Textile Workers Union of America.

*Newsletter Editor, Dennis East*

## ARCHIVES OF LABOR HISTORY AND URBAN AFFAIRS

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY  
*Detroit, Michigan 48202*

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U. S. POSTAGE

**Paid**

Detroit, Mich.  
Permit No. 3844