



Wayne State University

Wayne State University

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Newsletter

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ARCHIVES OF
LABOR and
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ELEANOR ROOSEVELT CENTENNIAL EXHIBIT



Eleanor Roosevelt
(1884-1962)

The Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs is presenting an exhibit, "Eleanor Roosevelt from the Collections of the Archives," to commemorate the centennial of the birth of Eleanor Roosevelt October 11, 1884. The exhibit, displayed in the gallery of the Reuther Library, 5401 Cass Avenue on the Wayne State University Campus, documents her career with photographs, letters, and printed items taken exclusively from the holdings of the Archives. During

her many years of sustained effort in behalf of labor, farm workers, social reform, women's rights and many other causes, she worked closely with many of the individuals and organizations whose papers are in the collections of the Archives.

The exhibit is open to the public from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the gallery of the Reuther Library located on Cass Avenue at Kirby on the Wayne State University Campus.

A Note To Readers:

The next several issues of the Newsletter will focus on specific topics which have particular relevance to today's researchers. This issue highlights collections that deal with important social reform movements in the United States from the years of the Great Depression to the present time.

The primary collecting plan of the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs was concentrated on the labor movement in the United States, focusing on industrial and urban oriented unions. By their very nature, unions and their members are inseparable from the social, political and economic affairs of their communities. Over the years, various issues have surfaced and then receded or gained in importance. Two such issues — civil liberties and civil rights — remain inextricably linked with the aims and purposes of American labor.

CIVIL LIBERTIES

Probably the best known organization dealing with civil liberties on all fronts from the local to the national level is the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) with branches in the various states and major cities. The Archives is the official depository for the papers of the Detroit and Michigan ACLU. This voluminous collection is currently being reviewed to determine which portions can be made available for research relatively soon.

A sampling of related collections in the Archives includes:

THE CIVIL RIGHTS CONGRESS OF MICHIGAN COLLECTION

The papers of the Civil Rights Congress of Michigan (CRC) comprise almost 50 linear feet and reflect activities of the organization from 1933 to 1963 with most papers representing the years from 1935-1955.

The CRC was begun in 1935 as the Conference for the Protection of Civil Rights and in the early years, supported labor in the Ford and General Motors strikes while it opposed police brutality, censorship and discrimination. At the same time its members worked against such organizations as the Black Legion and the Ku Klux Klan. In conjunction with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), American Federation of Labor (AFL) locals, churches and other groups, the CRC was involved in court actions to force legal decisions on civil rights issues.

In the late 1930s, the name of the group changed to the Civil Rights Federation and in 1940, Reverend Owen Knox of the Bethlehem Methodist Church became Chairman. The stated purpose of the organization was:

the defense of civil rights on the part of widely divergent groups throughout Michigan . . . labor, farm, church, fraternal, language, racial, political, civic, professional, women and youth groups.

Civil rights were defined as the right to free speech, press, assembly and worship; the right of labor to organize and bargain; and equal rights for all minorities. From 1941 on, the emphasis of the group's activities was on cases of discrimination and such government policies as the Dies Committee, the Mundt-Nixon Bills and the Smith Act.

About 1945, the organization became the Civil Rights Congress of Michigan with Jack Raskin, Arthur McPhaul and Anne Shore holding executive positions through 1955.

Contained in Part I of the collection are the CRC office files for 1935-1955 as well as papers reflecting contemporary matter of special importance in the field of civil liberties such as the Black Legion and Ku Klux Klan (1936-1952); Fascism (1933-1947); Un-American activities (1935-1955); organized labor (1935-1954); police activities (1935-1953); and academic

freedom (1935-1954). The second section contains CRC office files for 1937 to 1960 and materials on civil rights issues from 1933-1963.

Included under these overall topics are administrative reports of the CRC, committee minutes, correspondence, clippings and resolutions relating to specific issues and events. Some of these are the Paul Robeson meeting and concert, 1947; the Mary Van Kleeck Conference, 1937; Anti-Nazi activities, 1937-1939; the Dies Committee, 1938-1943; the Joseph McCarthy era; and the Un-American Activities Committee. Some of the prominent individuals covered include William Patterson, Father Charles E. Coughlin, Charles Lindbergh, Earl Browder and Harry Bridges.

Anyone researching the general area of civil liberties as well as specific instances of repression, discrimination and/or advocacy will be interested in this fascinating collection.

THE HARVEY O'CONNOR COLLECTION

The Archives has recently received an important addition to its Harvey O'Connor Collection. These new papers document his activities from the World War I period to the present and consist largely of correspondence between him and other civil libertarians and reformers in which they discuss the issues which engaged their energies. When processed, this new accession which is of great research value, will be added to the approximately fifty linear feet of records from Harvey O'Connor that are presently open for research.

In addition to authoring several books including *Mellon's Millions* (1933) and *World Crisis in Oil* (1961), Mr. O'Connor was a bureau manager for the Federated Press from the late 20s



Harvey O'Connor (c 1950) from the O'Connor Collection

and editor for several publications. At the same time, he was very active in organizations geared to the protection of individual civil liberties, notably the Pittsburgh and Chicago Civil Liberties Committees during the 1930s and '40s and the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee from 1954-1963. His papers include correspondence, reports, transcripts and other materials relating to his work with these organizations as well as the ACLU, the Citizens Committee to Preserve American Freedom, the American Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born and other ad hoc groups. Moreover, his papers provide

considerable information on the research done for his writings on the oil, steel and meat packing industries and the impressions gained on his extensive travels.

THE HAROLD NORRIS COLLECTION

The papers of Harold Norris relate to his career as an attorney and a member of the faculty of the Detroit College of



Harold Norris

Law from 1941-1968. In addition to being a member and later chair of the Detroit branch of the American Civil Liberties Union during the 1950s and '60s, Mr. Norris served on a number of state committees and special study groups. He was a delegate to the Michigan Constitutional Convention and helped to write the civil rights provisions of the Michigan Constitution.

This collection contains ACLU materials from 1952-58 and includes annual reports, letters and committee files dealing with a wide range of issues such as government loyalty programs, minority rights and censorship and encompasses 15 linear feet of materials.

A prominent portion of these papers is comprised of the files of the Citizens for Michigan, the organization which led up to the formation of the Constitutional Convention, including correspondence, reference materials and publications. Also included are files of the Constitutional Convention itself from 1962-63.

THE JEWISH LABOR COMMITTEE—MICHIGAN REGION

The Jewish Labor Committee (JLC) was founded in 1934 by Jewish labor groups interested in helping Jews escape from Nazi Germany and other totalitarian countries as well as to ease their immigration into the United States. During World War II, the Committee was active in the European underground in efforts to save the Jews. After the war, the JLC organized relief programs for the resettlement of refugees and vigorously supported the State of Israel.

In addition, the JLC encouraged the battle for civil liberties for all citizens and the papers from the Michigan Region collection cover such topics as anti-Semitism, the Civil Rights movement, bombings in the south, Michigan Civil Rights legislation, school desegregation and the Michigan Constitutional Convention.

Much of the material in the 22.5 linear feet which comprise

this collection covers activities in the Detroit area with files concerning such groups as the Detroit Round Table, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE); Greater Detroit Committee for Fair



Jewish Labor Committee Meeting (1956)

Housing Practices; Jewish Defense League; NAACP; and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights.

These papers cover the period from 1947 to 1973, but predominantly deal with the years 1955-1970 when the JLC helped lead the campaign for civil liberties legislation in Michigan.

THE ROLLAND R. O'HARE COLLECTION

A graduate of the Wayne State University Law School, Mr. O'Hare actively participated in the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) on the national as well as the local level. He was Chairman of the Detroit Branch from 1961-1966, simultaneously serving as the first Chairman of the Michigan ACLU. Thereafter, he moved to the national organizational level and it is to this period of his service that the bulk of his collection is related.

More than two linear feet of correspondence, reports and studies cover such topics as Church-State shared time; equal protection under the law for homosexuals; freedom of speech — Cable TV; and the "Tokyo Rose" pardon. Also included are files containing the quarterly reports on various national ACLU projects, National Executive Committee actions and coverage of the 1976 Bicentennial Conference of the ACLU.

THE DAVID Y. KLEIN COLLECTION

Attorney Klein began his labor related activities in 1959 with National Labor Relations Board cases and in 1960 became Executive Director of the UAW Public Review Board. During the early 1960s, he became heavily involved in law work connected with civil liberties locally and in the South and in 1965, became President of the Detroit Chapter of the ACLU. This 2.5 linear foot collection provides briefs of civil rights and workmen's compensation cases; correspondence, minutes and reports of the Detroit ACLU; and materials pertaining to Mr. Klein's service with the National Lawyer's Guild and its civil liberties activities.

THE ERWIN B. ELLMAN COLLECTION

Mr. Ellman, an attorney and General Counsel for the ACLU in Michigan, was an Executive Board member of the Metropolitan Detroit Branch of the ACLU and Chairman of the Board of the Michigan ACLU during the late 1960s. He also served as chairman of the Civil Rights Committee of the Detroit Bar Association. These papers (4 linear feet) chronicle national ACLU activities as well as those dealing with state and local issues for the years 1969-1971. Correspondence, minutes, legal briefs and testimony before government committees cover such topics as the rights of public school students, the John Sinclair case, search and seizure and other controversial issues of the day.

CIVIL RIGHTS

Closely tied to organizations fighting for civil liberties for all citizens are those civil rights groups which were primarily concerned and involved with the struggle of Blacks for equal rights. One of the best known of these is the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Some Archives holdings of this collection and related materials are briefly described here.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP), DETROIT

The NAACP was established in 1910 to help Negro citizens secure their rights, obtain legal justice and to gain equal economic, social and political opportunities.



*Early gathering of Detroit NAACP
(Coleman A. Young, 2nd from top on right)*

Senior branches of the national organization were established in more than 1100 major cities throughout the United States; one of the first was in Detroit in 1911. By 1943, the membership of the Detroit NAACP had increased to 25,000 and since 1932, Detroit has always been among the leaders in total membership.

The Detroit Branch has received national recognition for its

work in housing, employment, education and police-community relations, all of which are covered in the 17 linear feet comprising this collection. Part I covers the years 1943-1966 with some records concerning the Detroit race riot of 1943.

The second section covers the period from 1960 to 1970 and is primarily composed of the office files of Executive Secretary Robert Tindal. During this period, Reverend James Wadsworth was local president. Important subjects include civil rights violations complaints, the Detroit Public Schools, police relations, and legal redress actions. Some papers relating to the 1967 riots in Detroit can be found in this collection.

THE JAMES M. McCLENDON COLLECTION

After graduation from Meharry Medical College in 1926, Dr. McClendon established a medical practice in Detroit and became active in the local NAACP, serving as President from 1938-1943. It was during his tenure that the Detroit Branch became the largest in the country. After he stepped down from the presidency, Dr. McClendon continued to hold positions of leadership in the organization through the early 1950s. Subjects in this small (.5 linear foot) but important collection include the fight of the local NAACP against discrimination in Detroit and segregation in the Armed Forces as well as fund-raising activities of the NAACP. Also part of this collection are papers relating to Dr. and Mrs. William A. Thompson. Mrs. Thompson served as treasurer of the Detroit branch for several years and she and her husband were both active in the Detroit NAACP.

THE AARON HENRY COLLECTION

In 1952, Aaron Henry helped to establish and became the first president of the Clarksdale, Mississippi branch of the NAACP. By 1959, he was State President and a member of the National Board. He was also President of the Mississippi



Aaron Henry (right)

Freedom Democratic Party and Delegate for that group to the 1964 Democratic National Convention. Some 6.5 linear feet of files span the years from 1963-1970 and in addition to Mr. Henry's work with the NAACP, deal with such topics as Democratic politics, the Citizens Advisory Committee on Civil Rights, Freedom Schools, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, school desegregation and the White House Conference on Civil Rights.

THE RICHARD MCGHEE COLLECTION

Richard McGhee joined the Michigan Civil Rights Commission in 1966 and became its police-community relations specialist. From 1970 until he moved from Detroit in 1973, he worked in the Office of Contract Compliance for the Department of Defense in Detroit.

Mr. McGhee was extremely active in a great number of cultural, civil rights, and political groups and the 12.5 linear feet of his papers reflect his association with organizations such as the Russell Woods-Sullivan Area Association, the Metropolitan Educational and Cultural Activities Association (MECA-A) as well as the Michigan Civil Rights Commission.

The first part of this collection deals with his participation in groups fostering integration of Detroit's schools and neighborhoods by means of improved community relations and cultural programs. Several of these programs featuring prominent Black performers were held in schools where students could meet with and learn from them. Correspondence, contracts and reference materials on these events are included in this section. Part two also contains materials relating to these events as well as to Mr. McGhee's role as a board member with the Afro-American Cultural Development Foundation. The remainder of his files cover his service on the Michigan Civil Rights Commission, National Association of Human Rights Workers, Americans for Democratic Action and the Michigan Democratic Party — all related to his interest in civil liberties.

THE GLOSTER B. CURRENT COLLECTION

Mr. Current served as Chairman of the Youth Council of the NAACP from 1941-46 and as Executive Secretary of the Detroit Branch. Although small, this collection contains minutes of meetings of the Detroit Branch from 1942-44.

RELATED COLLECTIONS

Many other collections in the Archives, while not devoted specifically to Civil Rights/Civil Liberties, do contain varying amounts of materials which would be of interest to anyone researching these topics. Some examples are the collections of: **Richard Austin** — Civil Rights Commission, 1967-70, Detroit Urban League and other related organizations; **Tom and Janet Canterbury** — The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) working against segregation and to register Blacks during mid-1960s; **Oscar Cohen** — Detroit Coordinating Council on Human Relations, 1947-48; **Sol Dann** — ACLU, 1966-67, various civil rights and freedom movements; **Judah Drob** — NAACP and materials on race relations; **Ernest Mazey** — Board member of the Detroit ACLU for many years and Director from 1961-74; **James H. Williams** — Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and student civil liberties groups; **Workers' Defense League** — more than 50 folders dealing with civil rights and civil liberties groups as the ACLU, 1935-49.

Because of the far-reaching effect the struggle for civil liberties and equal rights had on workers and the labor movement, most of the Union collections on deposit here also contain varying amounts of files dealing with these issues.

Researchers interested in the collections described here as well as other relevant holdings should contact the Archives for further information and assistance.

PREVIEWS

The UAW is preparing to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the union during 1985-86. In 1985, the Archives will observe the 10th anniversary of the Walter P. Reuther Library dedication. Special programs, exhibits and other appropriate observances of both events are being planned and will be reported on in future issues of this newsletter.

ARCHIVES PROJECTS

Talking About . . . Film Series

The third and final film in the Talking About . . . series has been released. *Talking About . . . Dreams and Aspirations* provides an insight into the contrast between what people expect when they are young and just entering the work-force and the realities of life they face as they mature. Men and women



Participants in *Talking About . . . Dreams and Aspirations*

of varying ages talk about their expectations, their disappointments, their fulfillments and how their early decisions affected their later lives. Participants, who are all workers in manufacturing plants in various parts of the country discuss their heroes and heroines and exchange ideas on the degree to which luck determines destinies. Young workers look forward — older workers reminisce, and it is revealing to compare their feelings about their lives, past and future. Despite some differences of opinion, almost all workers agree that “. . . everybody should have dreams” because they “give you something to hang on to, something to hope for.”

Available in 16mm color film as well as 1/2 and 3/4 inch videocassettes, this film complements the first two in the series. *Talking About . . . Women Workers* and *Talking About . . . Younger Workers — Older Workers* to form a complete picture of working men and women and their views of work and the work-place in the 1980s. Interested persons should call (313) 577-1980 for information on rentals and sales.

The Rockefeller Residency Program in Humanities

The Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University announces the Rockefeller Foundation

Residency Program in the Humanities. Two full-time residents will be selected each year from 1985-1988. These fellowships are open to junior and senior faculty members and other qualified writers and scholars. They are designed to encourage and facilitate the publication of scholarly humanistic studies based upon the archival sources at the Reuther Library and to contribute to the intellectual life of the community. Although the application deadline for this academic year is December 1, 1984, application materials and information for the remainder of the program may be obtained by contacting Philip P. Mason, Director, Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University, 5401 Cass Avenue, Detroit, MI 48202, (313) 577-4003.

RESEARCH IN THE ARCHIVES

During the past several months, researchers from several states and foreign countries have availed themselves of the extensive materials in the Archives collections to conduct research into a number of varied and interesting topics. Gary Bailey of the Oral History Research Center at Indiana University consulted several oral histories and the papers of various UAW locals for material for a book on the Studebaker Corporation. Lindy Biggs of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology used selected collections for an insight into factory design problems.

Many of our women's collections were useful to Margo Culley of the University of Massachusetts who is investigating diaries of working women and to Rosalind Feldberg of the Murray Research Center, Radcliffe College who gathered data from several regional and local collections for an article on organizing clerical workers. An interesting project was conducted by Johanna Halbeisen of the New Song Library in Northampton, Massachusetts who used several collections including the Peoples' Song Library, as well as tapes of songs from our Audio-Visual Department in order to find labor music for her topical song library.

Henry Blid of the Brunnsvik's Folk High School in Ludvika, Sweden consulted the vast IWW materials to gather information for an article on workers' education and Alan Dawley of Trenton State College in Pennsylvania researched UAW and CIO papers for a book on the relationship between labor and the state. In preparation for the 50th anniversary publication of the Michigan Federation of Teachers, Reginald Gerlica consulted both our American and Michigan Federation of Teachers collections. Copies of several newspapers from the 1940s and '50s available in our library collections were helpful to Robert Gabrielski of the University of Massachusetts who is writing about the Foremen's Association of America.

The publications of UAW Local 600 as well as back issues of *Ford Facts* were used to support a paper on Local 600 by Bert Klandermans of the Free University, the Netherlands. The role of Poles and other Slavic peoples vis a vis the organization of the UAW was researched by Thad Radzialowski of Southwest State University in Minnesota. He found oral histories of

several local Polish community leaders as well as issues of the *Dodge Bulletin* and a Polish language newspaper, *Glos Ludowy*, helpful.

Dr. Heinrich Siegmann of the Science Center, Berlin, used issues of *Solidarity* and other periodicals to study the role of the UAW in deregulation as it related to safety, health and the environment during the period of 1981-84. A Fulbright visiting scholar at Columbia University, Professor Yoshimi Tsuboi of the Aichi University of Education, Japan, consulted various collections and the *Detroit Teacher* for his research into the decentralization of Detroit schools.

Many of our UAW related collections were helpful to Mette Visti of the University of Copenhagen who is writing a book on the development of the labor union movement in the Ford River Rouge Plant after 1945. The papers of several contemporary labor leaders were consulted by Stephen R. Wiley of the University of Minnesota to research an unusual topic, the 1929 Gastonia, North Carolina strike in radical novels.

The editor of the *Detroit Labor News*, Aldo Vagnozzi, who is gathering materials for the 70th anniversary edition of his publication, discovered that the Archives was able to supply him with a copy of the 1914 edition of his paper. David J. Goldberg of Columbia University found valuable source materials for his project on the Amalgamated Textile Workers as did Ellen Kay

Trimberger who gathered background material for a publication on early 20th Century Greenwich Village.

Dr. Andrzej Kapiszewski of the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland consulted several collections and issues of Polish language newspapers for background material on his study of Polish-Black relations in the Detroit area.

As the official depository for University archival materials, we were able to offer assistance to several researchers on such topics as campus architecture, the history of the Law School, the Athletic Hall of Fame, the Grossberg Religious Center and the histories of several departments gathering information for their 50th anniversary observances.

Other researchers included representatives of WDIV-TV, Channel 4, Detroit, *Metropolitan Detroit* magazine, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the *Detroit Free Press* and the *Detroit News*.

Interested researchers should contact the Archives for information as to the availability of materials pertinent to their projects.

NOTICE

To add names of individuals and/or organizations to our mailing list, please write the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University, 5401 Cass Avenue, Detroit, MI 48202, or call (313) 577-4024.

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