

THE JERRY WJRF COLLECTION

Papers, 1936-1982
(Predominantly, 1952-1981)

6 1/2 linear feet

Accession Number 1132
L.C. Number MS

The papers of Jerry and Mildred Wurf were placed in the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in July of 1983 by Mrs. Wurf, and were opened for re-search in February of 1985.

Jerome Wurf was born in New York City on May 18, 1919, the son of Sigmund and Lena Tannenbaum Wurf. He received his B.A. in Economics from New York University in 1940. Before World War II and during the early 1940s, when he was working as a cafeteria cashier, Wurf was an active member of the Young People's Socialist League. By 1943 he had become an organizer for Local 448 of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union and by 1947 he was administering the local's welfare funds.

In the same year Wurf was hired by Arnold Zander, first president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), as an organizer for New York District Council 37, and he became a member of AFSCME Local 924. He remained a "general organizer" for the New York area until July 1956 when he became regional director of Council 37. By 1959 Wurf was both president of Local 924 and the new executive director of the New York council. In May of 1964, after a closely fought election, Wurf succeeded Zander as the head of the international union.

Wurf also served as a vice-president of the Industrial Union Department of the AFL-CIO, and in 1969 became a vice-president of the AFL-CIO itself, and a member of its executive board. He instituted an aggressive organizing policy and vastly expanded the membership of AFSCME during his tenure, bringing it from about 235,000 members in 1964 to over a million. In 1978 AFSCME became the largest component of the AFL-CIO when it absorbed the huge Civil Service Employees Association of New York. Wurf was still head of the union at his death, December 10, 1981, when he was succeeded by Gerald McEntee.

Throughout his life, Jerry Wurf was actively involved in civil liberties; the anti-nuclear and peace movements; workers' rights, health and education; Jewish concerns; and domestic politics, especially the Democratic Party. Reflecting these interests, Wurf was a member of the executive committee of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, of the Committee for National Health Insurance, and of Americans for Democratic Action, was a member of the Jewish Labor Committee, and a leader in both New York and Washington, D.C., where AFSCME headquarters were located, against housing discrimination. He also personally participated in the 1968 Memphis Sanitation Strike of AFSCME Local 1733.

In 1941 Wurf married Sylvia Spinrad, whom he later divorced. In November of 1960 he married Mildred Kiefer. She was born in San Francisco on September 1, 1926, and received her B.A. from the University of California in 1947. She

began work at Council 37 in May of 1951 as a researcher and writer. She later undertook such varied tasks as office manager, organizer and first education director of the council. She resigned in July 1959. While with the council, Kiefer was especially involved in worker education programs and the training of union stewards. She was a member of AFT Workers Education local 189.

Jerry Wurf's papers relate both to his professional work with Council 37 and as AFSCME president, and to his efforts for civil and workers' rights. His papers also contain correspondence with a great number of prominent union, political and civil rights leaders of his era. Mrs. Wurf's papers, which constitute the last series of this collection, reflect her interest in labor education.

Important subjects covered in the collection are:

AFT Workers Education Local 189, 1959-1962	New York District Council 37, 1952-65
Blacks, 1965-1972	Ohio Council 8, 1962-1964
Civil rights, 1952-1970	Swedish trade unions, 1953-1972
Committee on Union Responsibility (COUR), 1962-1964	Teamsters, International Brotherhood of, 1964-1978
Conventions, 1960-1972	UAW, 1952-1962
Gotbaum, Victor, 1967-1980	Union Leadership Academy, 1958-1961
King, Martin Luther, Jr., 1967-1968	Workers' education and health
Lucy, William, 1972-1977	Zander, Arnold S., 1962-1975
Memphis, Local 1733, Sanitation Strike, 1968	

Among the important correspondents are:

Ames, Joseph	Meany, George
Blatz, Father Albert	Nelson, Clifford
Gotbaum, Victor	Rauh, Joseph L., Jr.
Kirkland, Lane	Wurf, Al
McEntee, Gerald	Zwerdling, Abe

An index to subjects and correspondents will be found on p. 8.

Contents

11 manuscript boxes
1 storage box

Series I, New York District Council 37 Materials, 1952-1967, Boxes 1-3:

Correspondence, speech notes, clippings, flyers, brochures and pamphlets, convention and reference materials and court transcripts relating to Wurf's various positions with and activities at Council 37. There is considerable material on the 1962 and 1964 international conventions.

Series II, Presidential Materials, 1946-1978, Boxes 3-5:

Correspondence, clippings, papers, speeches, organizing, convention and reference materials reflecting Wurf's activities and interests as AFSCME's president. There are also several folders of clippings about the sanitation strike of Memphis Local 1733 in 1968.

Series III, Appointment Books, 1955-1981, Box 6:

Appointment books kept by Jerry Wurf both when he was with Council 37 and as international president.

Series IV, Personal Papers, 1936-1982, Boxes 7-9:

Correspondence, passports, birth certificates and a yearbook, birthday and condolence cards, clippings, telegrams, jury notices, mementos on his death and reference materials mainly from the period Wurf was at Council 37 and as president. These papers reflect his acquaintance with numerous political and civil rights leaders, and his interest in civil rights, domestic politics and issues of concern to workers, both nationally and internationally.

Series V, Mildred Kiefer Wurf Papers, 1952-1982, Boxes 10-12:

Some correspondence, but generally reference materials consisting of brochures, flyers, pamphlets and papers relating to Mildred Kiefer Wurf's activities with Council 37 in labor education and the training of stewards. Considerable material is included on the Union Leadership Academy.

Non-manuscript Material:

Books, copies of AFSCME constitutions, convention materials, union publications and pamphlets and materials from other American and foreign unions received with this collection have been added to the Archives Library.

Numerous photographs, documents, posters, prints and some tapes have been transferred to the Archives Audio-Visual Collection. In addition, a considerable amount of memorabilia has also been placed there, including such items as plaques, buttons, pins, hats, plates, ashtrays, statuary, pens, coins, wall hangings, framed pictures and honorary awards.

Series I
New York District Council 37 Materials, 1952-1967
Boxes 1-3

Correspondence, speech notes, clippings, flyers, brochures and pamphlets, convention and reference materials and court transcripts relating to Wurf's several positions with the New York council. There is considerable documentation of his legal battle with John DeLury, 1960-1965, and the crucial 1962 and 1964 international conventions, including election tables from the latter and materials from the Committee on Union Responsibility (CCUR), formed by Wurf and others. Documents are arranged alphabetically and then chronologically, with general information placed first.

Box 1

- 1-4. Correspondence, 1952-58
5. Correspondence; Council conference, Oct 1958
- 6-7. Correspondence, 1959
8. Correspondence; Council conference, Oct 1959
9. Correspondence, 1960-61
- 10-12. Correspondence; Wurf vs. DeLury, 1960-65

Box 2

- 1-3. Correspondence, 1962-64
4. Correspondence; Miscellaneous materials, 1966-67 & n.d.
5. International conventions; General materials, 1960
6. International conventions; Amendments, 1960
7. International conventions; Reports, 1960
8. International conventions; Resolutions, 1960
9. International conventions; General materials, 1962
10. International conventions; Correspondence, 1962
11. International conventions; COUR and the opposition, 1962
12. International conventions; Unity Committee for Zander, 1962

Box 3

1. International conventions; General materials, 1964
2. International conventions; Correspondence, 1964
3. International conventions; COUR and the opposition, 1964
- 4-5. International conventions; Elections, 1964
6. International conventions; Members for Progress & Zander supporters, 1964
7. International conventions; Newspaper clippings, 1964

Series II
Presidential Materials, 1946-1978
Boxes 3-5

Correspondence, clippings, papers, speeches, organizing, convention and reference materials reflecting Wurf's activities and interests as president of AFSCME. There are a number of folders on foreign labor groups, especially in Sweden, and several others of clippings on the sanitation strike by Memphis Local 1733 in 1968 and the death of Dr. King. The papers are arranged alphabetically and then chronologically, with general materials listed first.

Box 3

- 8-11. Correspondence, Jul 1964-67
- 12-13. Correspondence; Survey materials, Dec 1967

Box 4

- 1. Correspondence; Memphis Sanitation Strike, Apr-May 1968
- 2-4. Correspondence; Memphis Sanitation Strike, clippings, Feb-Jun 1968
- 5-6. Correspondence; Jul 1968-78
- 7. Correspondence; Local 465 organizing materials, 1975-78
- 8. International conventions, 1966
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- 10. International conventions, 1972
- 11-12. Reference; AFSCME general materials, 1946-59 & n.d.
- 13. Reference; AFSCME insurance materials, 1958-61 & n.d.
- 14. Reference; AFSCME Organizers Manual, 1954?
- 15. Reference; Automation, 1954-65

Box 5

- 1. Reference; Bargaining and wage materials, 19567-63
- 2. Reference; Civil rights and union ethics, 1958-67
- 3-6. Reference; Foreign labor materials, 1953-72 & n.d.
- 7-8. Reference; Worker education, 1955-62 & n.d.
- 9. Reference; Worker health, 19587-60
- 10. Reference; Workers Defense League, 1953-58
- 11-12. Reference; Miscellaneous materials, 1957-78 & n.d.

Series III
Appointment Books, 1955-1981
Box 6, storage box

Appointment books kept by Wurf as an employee of New York Council 37 and as AFSCME president. There are some duplicate years and some of the books are more detailed than others. Arrangement is chronological.

Box 6

- 1-7. Appointment books, 1955-61
8. Appointment book, May-Nov 1964
9. Appointment book, May-Dec 1964
10. Appointment book, 1965
- 11-12. Appointment books, 1966 (two)
- 13-14. Appointment books, 1967 (two)
15. Appointment book, 1981

Series IV
Personal Papers, 1936-1982
Boxes 7-9

Correspondence, passports, birth certificates and a yearbook, birthday and condolence cards, clippings, telegrams, jury notices and reference materials mainly from the period Wurf was with the New York council and as union president. These papers reflect his acquaintance with numerous political, union and civil rights leaders, and his active interest in civil rights, domestic politics and issues of concern to workers both nationally and internationally. Some documents date from before his association with AFSCME, some touch on purely family matters and there is a folder about Wurf's death. Arrangement in alphabetical and then chronological.

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1. Correspondence; High school yearbook, 1936
- 2-8. Correspondence, 1940s-71
9. Correspondence; Condolences on mother's death, Apr-May 1971
- 10-13. Correspondence, 1972-73

Box 8 1-14. Correspondence,
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- 1-6. Correspondence, 1979-81
7. Correspondence; Materials on the death of Jerry Wurf, 1981-82
8. Reference; Automation, 1962
9. Reference; Civil rights, 1952-59
10. Reference; Co-existence and disarmament, 1955-58 & n.d.
11. Reference; Economic materials, 1958-59
12. Reference; Jews, 1949 & n.d.
13. Reference; Socialism and socialized medicine, 1955-60
- 14-15. Reference; Miscellaneous materials, 1951-82 & n.d.

Series V
Mildred Kiefer Wurf Papers, 1952-1982
Boxes 10-12

Reference materials consisting of brochures, flyers, pamphlets and other documents and some correspondence relating to Mildred Kiefer Wurf's activities at the New York council in labor education and the training of stewards. There is considerable material on the Union Leadership Academy, some on workshops sponsored by various labor institutes and universities and a manual on steward training by Mildred Kiefer. The papers are arranged alphabetically and then chronologically, with general materials placed first.

Box 10

1. General correspondence and personal materials, 1953-82
2. AFL-CIO Unity Convention, 1955-56
3. AFT local 189, 1959-62
4. Cornell University, workshop correspondence, 1957-58
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- 6-8. Labor education; General materials, 1957-65
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10. Labor education; National Institute of Labor Education, 1961
11. Labor education; UAW materials, 1957-59
12. Labor education; University of Chicago, 1958-59
13. Labor education; Workers' Educational Association, 1960

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1. Peace materials, 1959-60
- 2-3. Shop stewards; General materials, 1958-63 & n.d.
4. Shop stewards; Manual by Mildred Kiefer, 1955
5. Union leadership; IUE materials, 1962
6. Union leadership; UAW materials, 1957-58
7. Union leadership; UBW materials, 1959
- 8-9. Union Leadership Academy, 1958-61
10. Union Leadership Academy conference, 20-21 May 1961

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- 1-2. Union Leadership Academy conference, 20-21 May 1961
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