

Thomas Bernick Papers

5 linear feet (5 SB)

1995-2001

Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

Finding aid written by Meghan McGowan on January 27, 2015.

Accession Number: LP001838

Creator: Thomas Bernick

Acquisition: The Thomas Bernick Papers were donated to the Reuther Library by Thomas Bernick on July 27, 2004.

Language: Material entirely in English.

Access: Collection is open for research.

Use: Refer to the Walter P. Reuther Library *Rules for Use of Archival Materials*. **Restrictions: Researchers may encounter records of a sensitive nature – personnel files, case records and those involving investigations, legal and other private matters. Privacy laws and restrictions imposed by the Library prohibit the use of names and other personal information which might identify an individual, except with written permission from the Director and/or the donor.**

Notes: Citation style: “Thomas Bernick Papers, Box [#], Folder [#], Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University”

Related Material: Newspaper Guild Local 22: Detroit Records, Detroit Typographical Union Local 18 Records, Nancy E. Dunn Papers, Action Coalition of Strikers Records.

Floppy disk containing two images of flyers transferred to Reuther’s Digital Repository.

PLEASE NOTE: Folders in this collection are not necessarily arranged in any particular order. The box folder listing provides an inventory based on their original order. Subjects may be dispersed throughout the collection.

Abstract

Thomas Bernick was a journalist and active protester of The Detroit Newspaper Strike, which began on July 13, 1995 and lasted until 2000. An estimated 2,000 to 2,500 workers from six local unions joined the strike and participated in the lengthy battle against the Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press in the courtroom. Battle outside the courtroom took place as well, with protesters making numerous reports of violence by a private security firm and the Sterling Heights Police Department. Journalists fought back by creating their own paper in 1996, the Detroit Sunday Journal. The Journal achieved a circulation of 300,000 in its first year and was widely hailed for reporting throughout its run, which ended in 1999.

In 1997, the unions ordered an unconditional return to work, but the newspapers chose to keep their replacement workers on staff, stating they would only hire strikers as positions opened up. The strike finally came to an end in 2000, but many of the strikers did not return to work for the newspapers, and the circulation of both the Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press was greatly reduced from that of the 1980s and early 1990s.

The Thomas Bernick Papers contains court documents, meeting materials, photocopies of articles about the strike, and a full series of the Alliance Strike Bulletin, a newspaper run by the Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions. Additionally, this collection holds correspondence, circulation numbers, strike-related periodicals, and meeting materials for the Workers Justice Committee, as well as many of the flyers and pamphlets distributed throughout the strike, both for and against it.

Important Subjects:

Detroit Typographical Union No. 18 (Mich.)
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
Gannet Newspaper Foundation
Knight-Ridder Newspapers, Inc.
Newspaper Guild of Detroit
Newspaper Strike, Detroit, Michigan, 1995-2000
Strikebreakers
United Automobile Workers of America

Important Names:

Bernick, Thomas
Detroit Free Press
Detroit News
Hoffa, James P. 1941-
Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions
Mleczo, Lou
Religious Leaders for Justice
Sterling Heights Police Department (Mich.)

Arrangement

Folders are listed by their location within each box. They are not necessarily arranged, so any given subject may be dispersed throughout the entire collection.

Box 1

1. Advertising boycott materials, 1997
2. Advertising boycott materials, 1997
3. Advertising boycott materials, 1998
4. Advertising boycott materials, 1996
5. Advertising boycott materials, 1996
6. The Alliance Strike Bulletin, 1996
7. The Alliance Strike Bulletin, 1996
8. The Alliance Strike Bulletin, 1997-1998
9. The Alliance Strike Bulletin, 1998-2001
10. Photocopies of news articles supporting argument that Detroit News is anti-teacher
11. Detroit News and Detroit Free Press: anti-teacher and anti-union posters, 1996
12. Articles by Thomas Bernick, undated
13. Photocopies of newspaper articles, 1996
14. Records of reporters at strike meetings, undated
15. Against the Current, 1997-2001
16. Correspondence, 1995-2000
17. Newspaper agreement between Detroit Newspaper Agency and Detroit Typographical Union, undated
18. Circulation numbers, 1998-2000
19. Crain's Detroit Business, 1997
20. Crain's Detroit Business, 1996
21. Detroit Journal, 1995-1996
22. Detroit Union Newspaper, undated

Box 2

1. Battleground Detroit, 1996-1997
2. An open letter to Gannett and Knight-Ridder Corporations, undated
3. Meeting materials and correspondence, 1998-1999
4. Meeting materials, 1998-2000
5. Flyers and advertisements for and against the strike, 1995-2000
6. Flyers and press releases, 1995-2000
7. Flyers and press releases, 1995-2000
8. Sunday Journal ad campaign, undated
9. The Newspaper Strike and You, by Representative John Conyers, Jr., undated
10. Correspondence, 1995-1997
11. Newsletters and pamphlets, 1996-1998
12. Flyers and advertisements for the strike, 1995-2000
13. Flyers, 1995-2000
14. The South End, 1996
15. Formal complaint by unions against Vance International, Detroit Newspapers, Sterling Heights, Thomas Derocha, Steven Duchane, 1995
16. Flyers, 1995-1996
17. Detrouiter, 1995-1996

18. Legal documents, 1998-2000
19. Legal documents, 1998-2000
20. Legal documents before the National Labor Relations Board, 1998-1999
21. Media packets, 1997
22. Teamster Convoy Dispatch, 1995-1996

Box 3

1. Strike-related articles, January-March 1996
2. Strike-related articles, November-December 1995
3. Strike-related articles, April-August 1996
4. Strike-related articles, November 1996-January 1997
5. Strike-related articles, September-October 1996
6. Strike-related articles, October 1995
7. Strike update flyers, 1995-2000
8. United Auto Workers newsletters and pamphlets, 1996-2000
9. Detroit Sports Confidential, 1997
10. Detroit newspaper circulation, 1998
11. The Freedom Forum, 1997
12. Voices of the Strike, by George Waldman, 1997
13. The Agenda, 1996-1997
14. Teamster newsletter, 1995-1997
15. Economiste, 1996
16. Knight-Ridder annual reports, 1996-1997
17. Communications Workers of America News, 1997
18. The Organizer, 1997
19. Typographical Reporter, 1998
20. Metro Council of Newspaper Unions, news ads directed at school kids, 1996
21. Advertisements that ran during strike, 1995-2000
22. Advertisements that ran during strike, 1995-2000

Box 4

1. Strike-related articles, News and Free Press, February-April 1997
2. Strike-related articles, May-July 1997
3. Strike-related articles, February-April 1997
4. Strike-related articles, August 1997-July 1998
5. Strike-related articles, August 2000
6. Strike-related articles, August 1998-July 2000
7. Strike-related articles, July-August 1995
8. Strike-related articles, August-December 1995
9. Strike-related articles, January-May 1996
10. Strike-related articles, June-September 1996
11. Strike-related articles, October 1996-January 1997

Box 5

1. Strike-related articles, May-August 1997
2. Strike-related articles, September-October 1997

3. Strike-related articles, November 1997-February 1998
4. Strike-related articles, March-August 1998
5. Strike-related articles, News and Free Press, September 1998-July 1999
6. Strike-related articles, News and Free Press, August 1999
7. Strike-related articles, News and Free Press, scabs, 1997-2000
8. Articles about historic strikes, undated
9. Why we strike, undated
10. Workers Justice Committee, 1999-2000