

AFSCME: SECRETARY-TREASURER'S OFFICE-GOVERNMENT
AND CIVIC EMPLOYEES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE COLLECTION

Papers, 1939-1968
(Predominantly, 1950-1957)

20 linear feet

Accession Number 682

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The papers of the Government and Civic Employees Organizing Committee (GCEOC) were placed in the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in the fall of 1974 by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). They were opened for research in December of 1985.

In early 1950 the United Public Workers union was expelled from the CIO for alleged communist activities, leaving behind an anti-communist rump group called the Government Workers Union. In February of 1950, the CIO chartered this group as the GCEOC, and gave the new committee jurisdiction over federal, state and local employees. In the next five years, the GCEOC aggressively attempted to reach full union status within the CIO, but had failed to do so by the time of the AFL-CIO merger in December of 1955. As a result of this failure, the organizing committee was absorbed by the much larger AFL state and local employee union, AFSCME, and most of its federal members eventually joined other former AFL unions, which represented federal workers. Some of the GCEOC personnel and many of its locals, retaining their original structures, transferred into AFSCME, but by the late 1950s almost all traces of the old GCEOC had disappeared.

These papers detail the breakup of the United Public Workers and the formation of the Government Workers Union and the GCEOC. There is considerable documentation on GCEOC Local 1 in Washington, D.C., which became AFSCME Local 1, and of GCEOC organizing efforts in the 1950s in Canada and Panama as well as in the United States.

Important subjects covered in the collection are:

American Federation of Government Employees, 1950-1958	GCEOC Local 1, 1950-1958
AFSCME Local 1, 1965-1968	Government Workers Union, 1946-1951
AFSCME-GCEOC merger, 1955-1957	Grievances, 1950-1958
Build the Union Committee, 1946-1949	Hospital workers, organizing, 1950-1957
Communism, 1940-1955	Howard University, 1950-1960
Discrimination, 1950-1957	Industrial Union of Marine & Shipbuilding Workers of America, 1948-1958
Firefighters, organizing, 1950-1957	Murray, Philip, 1950-1952
Flaxer, Abram, 1940-1955	Police, organizing, 1950-1957
Freedmen's Hospital, 1939-1961	

Important subjects, con't:

Postal workers, organizing,
1950-1957
Prison workers, organizing,
1950-1957
School workers, organizing,
1950-1957

Teachers, organizing,
1950-1957
United Public Workers,
1940-1950
Welfare workers, organizing,
1950-1957

Among the important correspondents are:

Carey, James B.
Carroll, James F.
Chapman, Gordon
Federoff, Anthony J.
Haywood, Allan S.
Liftin, Morton
Mirengoff, William
Morse, Wayne

Murray, Milton
Murray, Philip
Reuther, Walter P.
Riffe, John V.
Thomas, R. J.
Wurf, Jerry
Zander, Arnold S.

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Subseries B: Government Workers Union, 1946-1951, Boxes 1-2,
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- Series II, The Government and Civic Employees Organizing Committee
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relating to the operation of GCEOC headquarters in Washington,
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Subseries B: GCEOC Local 1/AFSCME Local 1, 1939-1968, Boxes 6-10,
Correspondence, by-laws, collective bargaining and financial
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formation, newspaper clippings, fliers and bulletins
reflecting the concerns and activities of this Washington,
D.C., local which emerged from the Government Workers Union
into the GCEOC, and later became AFSCME Local 1. Many
materials relate to the efforts of AFSCME Local 1 to prevent
the transfer of Freedmen's Hospital to Howard University.
- Series III, Government and Civic Employees Organizing Committee,
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Correspondence, charter applications, a few charters, newspaper
clippings, by-laws, memos, telegrams and contract agreements re-
flecting the organizing activities of the GCEOC, and, more
specifically, of the office of its Secretary-Treasurer. The GCEOC
organized locals in most of the states and in Canada and Panama.

Non-manuscript Material:

Two photographs have been placed in the
Audio-Visual Collection.

Series I
Early Organizing, CIO, 1940-1951
Boxes 1-2

Files pertaining to the two CIO public employee unions which preceded the Government and Civic Employees Organizing Committee.

This series is divided into two subseries:

Subseries A: United Public Workers, 1940-1949, Box 1

Correspondence, newspaper clippings, bulletins, fliers and articles relating to the creation and dissolution of the United Public Workers. This union was formed in August of 1946 by a merger of the United Federal Workers and the larger State, County and Municipal Workers of America. At the union's first convention in May 1947 the Build the Union Committee (BUC) emerged in opposition to the union's leadership which it alleged was pro-communist. In October of 1947 the BUC broke off entirely from the parent union, officially establishing its independence. In February of 1950 the CIO expelled the United Public Workers from membership for communist activities. Files are arranged alphabetically.

Subseries B: Government Workers Union, 1946-1951, Boxes 1-2

Correspondence, newspaper clippings, bulletins, newsletters, fliers and articles pertaining to the emergence of the Government Workers Union from the Build the Union Committee in June of 1948. The Government Workers Union was recognized by the CIO and placed under the wing of the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers. Its headquarters was in Washington, D.C. Materials are arranged alphabetically.

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- 1-2. Correspondence and materials, 1940-49 & n.d.
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Series II
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Files relating to GCEOC national headquarters in Washington, D.C., and the transformation of GCEOC Local 1 (also in Washington) into AFSCME Local 1.

This series is divided into the following two subseries:

Subseries A: GCEOC, National Office, 1948-1959, Boxes 2-6

Correspondence, telegrams, memos, reports and other materials relating to the operation of GCEOC headquarters in Washington, D.C.. When the United Public Workers was expelled from the CIO, the Government Workers Union was transformed into the Government and Civic Employees Organizing Committee. This committee was chartered by the CIO in March of 1950 and was given jurisdiction over federal, state, county and municipal employees. However, the CIO failed to give the GCEOC full union status before the AFL-CIO merger of December 1955, and, as a result, existing AFL unions assumed control of the GCEOC membership. State, county and city workers were assigned to AFSCME, and most federal employees were absorbed by other former AFL unions. Milton Murray, former Secretary-Treasurer of the GCEOC, became Administrative Vice-President of AFSCME, and many other GCEOC staff members also joined AFSCME for awhile. But, at the 1958 AFSCME convention, Murray's post was abolished, and by the late 1950s the entire GCEOC structure had almost disappeared. Files are alphabetically arranged.

Subseries B: GCEOC Local 1/AFSCME Local 1, 1939-1968, Boxes 6-10

Correspondence, by-laws, collective bargaining and financial materials, minutes, candidate lists, job classification information, newspaper clippings, fliers and bulletins reflecting the activities of this local. After the formation of the GCEOC in March 1950, the former Government Workers Union Local 1013 in Washington, D.C., became known as GWU Local 1/GCEOC Local 1. Much of its original leadership was retained. However, its membership and local jurisdiction were greatly expanded. After the GCEOC was absorbed by AFSCME, many of its former locals were allowed to keep their original local numbers and structure. Thus, GCEOC Local 1 became AFSCME Local 1. As a GCEOC local, Local 1 had organized the federal employees at Freedmen's Hospital in Washington, D.C., and even as an AFSCME local these workers remained in the union. From 1956 through 1961 Local 1 fought the proposed transfer of the hospital to Howard University, which would deprive the employees of their federal civil service benefits. This local was disbanded in May of 1971. Materials are arranged alphabetically.

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Series III
Government and Civic Employees Organizing Committee,
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Boxes 11-40

Correspondence, charter applications, a few charters, newspaper clippings, by-laws, memos, telegrams and contract agreements reflecting the organizing activities of the GCEOC, and, more specifically, of the office of its Secretary-Treasurer, Milton Murray. Many locals transferred directly to the GCEOC from the Government Workers Union, from some other CIO union or from the CIO itself, and a number survived to become part of AFSCME. Most of these locals, like their AFSCME successors, were composed of state, county or municipal employees, although the GCEOC had jurisdiction over a few federal workers. The GCEOC had locals in almost every state, and waged a vigorous organizing campaign in the Panama Canal Zone. Materials in this series are arranged alphabetically by geographic designation, and then by council and local number.

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- 10-12. Connecticut; General organizing in, 1950-58
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