

**A note to readers:**

With this issue, the Newsletter resumes publication after a lapse of three years since Volume 3, #1 appeared in the Summer of 1976. This issue focuses on collections acquired since 1976, especially those relating to the United Automobile Workers. The next issue, planned for Winter, 1980, will cover manuscript accessions in other areas followed by a special issue devoted to audio-visual materials in the Archives.

**THE UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE,  
AND AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS  
COLLECTION (UAW)**

Last year the UAW agreed to lower the period of closure applying to its records from twenty years after date of creation to ten years. Thus UAW records for the years prior to 1969 which have been processed are now open to researchers, subject only to the Archives' standard criteria of serious scholarly purpose. As before, use of more recent records requires the written permission of the UAW official responsible for the files, e.g. department head, local union president, etc.

**UAW COLLECTIONS ACQUIRED SINCE 1976**

**Office of the President: Leonard Woodcock**

Leonard Woodcock, former UAW President and now United States Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, placed more than 120 linear feet of his UAW office files in the Archives after his retirement from the union in 1977. Woodcock was named to the Presidency of the UAW in 1970 following the death of Walter P. Reuther and was subsequently elected to two more terms in 1972 and 1974. Prior to that he had been a UAW Vice-President since 1955 in charge of the Agricultural Implement Department, the Aerospace Department and the General Motors Department at various times. From 1947 to 1955 he served as Director of Region 1-D which includes most of western and northern Michigan.

The collection includes correspondence, memos, speeches, resolutions, clippings, reports and publications concerning a wide variety of subjects during Woodcock's presidency and also the late 1960s: negotiations with the auto companies and other large employers; national economic conditions; political action; civil rights; and a large number of organizations to which Woodcock belonged.

The Archives also received approximately 30 linear feet of papers from the office of Woodcock as UAW Vice-President. Both collections are unprocessed as yet. The files of the President's office are closed under the ten-year restriction applied to UAW papers except by permission of the

union. The Vice-Presidential papers will be opened as soon as they are processed.

**Political Action Department/Citizenship Department**

The collection from the Political Action Department which served as the political arm of the UAW includes 32 linear feet of material covering the years 1947 to 1957. Beginning in 1949, Roy Reuther directed the Department's activities and much of the correspondence is his. Others whose work is reflected in the papers are: the previous director John Livingston, and staff members Ralph Showalter, Edward Tonat, Edward Purdy and William Dodds. In 1957 the Department was reorganized and the name changed to the Citizenship Department. The files of this Department, organized as a separate collection, comprise 20 linear feet and cover the years 1957 to 1962 during which Roy Reuther remained as Director.



*"UAW Vice-President Odessa Komer, Director of the union's Women's Department is pictured with Detroit sculptress Bernadette Zachara, who was commissioned by the union to prepare a work commemorating International Women's Year in 1976 and to pay tribute to the women workers in the UAW. The plaque, which can be seen behind them, hangs in the lobby of Solidarity House, the national headquarters of the union."*

In 1962, the Department was merged with the Legislative Department and the name changed again to the Citizenship-Legislative Department. The papers generated by the organization under its two earlier names have now been processed and are available for research. The papers of the Citizenship-Legislative Department are still being processed.

Among the topics included in the two processed collections are: the Committee on AFL-CIO Political Education (COPE); Civil Rights legislation and enforcement; national, Michigan and Detroit election campaigns and fund raising; voter registration campaigns; reapportionment of the Michigan legislature; and the Michigan Constitutional Convention.

### **Research Department**

The UAW Research Department (formerly the Research and Engineering Department) carries out a wide range of background investigations for the union concerning the state of the U.S. economy, trade and the economic status of American workers, conditions at home and abroad, the economic situation of major UAW employers, technology and its effect on the work place and general conditions on the shop floor.

The Research Department Collection covers the years 1938 to 1977, but predominantly 1941 to 1965. Occupying 140 linear feet, it includes correspondence, statistical tables, financial reports, minutes of meetings and drafts of speeches and news releases. The emphasis of the collection is largely economic and often the original calculations employed by the union in contract negotiations may be found. One major record series includes subject files dealing with the war effort during World War II, reconversion, women and blacks in the labor movement, discrimination, shop safety, war and post-war employment, the growth of aerospace and military production, and automation and its impact on the worker. Other series include: the office files of Harry L. Chester, an economist with the UAW between 1947 and 1971, who researched such topics as productivity, the consumer price index, the guaranteed annual wage and unemployment compensation; files pertaining to the operations of the four major American auto makers; and UAW presidential policy statements.

### **Women's Auxiliary**

This collection was presented to the Archives in February, 1979 by the UAW Women's Department. The Auxiliary was established in 1936 to help enlist the spouses of UAW members in support of the union and various causes promoted by the union. Its activities ranged from strike support to political lobbying in the realm of women's and minorities' rights and consumer matters to social affairs. In 1971, on the retirement of its longtime coordinator Catherine Gelles, the functions of the Women's Auxiliaries were transferred to the Women's Department for continuation.

There are four linear feet of papers covering the years 1940 to 1975. The material includes the proceedings of numerous conferences of local delegates, topical reports on political and social action, correspondence of the coordinator describing her activities with the locals, reports from branches, and newsletters which describe the projects undertaken by the membership.

### **Women's Department**

In 1978, the Women's Department deposited almost 28 linear feet of records in the Archives. Originating in the early years of the UAW as the "Women's Bureau," this

Department was formally established in October, 1955, as a result of the union's decision to place a new emphasis on the concerns of women workers in the union.

The records cover the years from the late 1940s to the late 1960s and include material from the UAW National Women's Advisory Council; UAW Regional Women's Conferences; Departmental staff and subject reference files; grievance files relating to cases of discrimination against women; and files on the activities of women's committee in local unions.

### **Local 3**

Representing workers at the huge "Dodge Main" plant in the municipality of Hamtramck within the Detroit city limits, Local 3 was one of the early locals of the UAW. Unable to obtain sole collective bargaining rights from Chrysler Corporation, the Dodge workers began a "sit-down" strike in early March, 1937 which ultimately succeeded in gaining them a contract. Efforts by the company to break the union in 1939 with a "lockout" failed and the union became solidly established, maintaining a tradition of militancy over many years. The future existence of the local and the workers' livelihood has been threatened by a company decision in 1979 to close the "Dodge Main" plant as uneconomical.

The collection presently contains about thirty linear feet of material, of which about one-fourth dates from the years 1939-1946 and most of the remainder from 1951 and 1952. Included among the documents are officers' correspondence, grievances, financial reports and subject files of the Educational Committee containing material on labor activities both within and outside the union local. Material relating to the history of Local 3 can also be found in the collections of Richard Frankenstein, John Zaremba and Harry Ross which the Archives obtained earlier.

### **Local 32**

The papers of Local 32 go back to the union's charter meeting in August, 1933 when it was established as Federal Labor Union 18463, affiliated with the AFL. Local 32 represents employees of the White Motor Company, Inc., Cleveland, Ohio and played a very important role in the founding of the United Automobile Workers International Union with whom it affiliated in September, 1935. Two early leaders of this local who rose to prominence in the International and who are represented in the records are Wyndham Mortimer and Richard E. Reisinger. Mortimer was elected First Vice-President of the UAW in 1936 and Reisinger became Regional Director of Region 2 in 1937.

The papers occupy 4.5 linear feet and cover the years 1933 to 1968. They contain a rather complete set of minutes of steward, executive board and membership meetings beginning with the charter meeting. Officers' correspondence, primarily that of the recording and financial secretaries, falls in the 1954-1966 period and an incomplete series of grievances and grievance committee minutes spans the years from 1943 to 1968.

### **Local 45**

This local, representing workers at the Fisher Body plant in Cleveland, Ohio, was one of the founding locals of the International. Its members initiated the first sit-down strike at a General Motors plant in late 1936. The papers accessioned comprise about thirty linear feet and cover the years from the early 1940s to the 1960s. The files include minutes of membership meetings and shop committee meetings,

grievances and some correspondence. In addition, Leo Fenster, who held the positions of Secretary and Editor of the local paper the Eye Opener, has donated a personal collection of documents and publications totaling more than ten linear feet. A collection of materials from the late Charles Beckman, the former President of this local was also presented to the Archives last year.

#### **Local 49**

A sizable collection of papers and recordings of United Auto Workers Local 49 were placed in the Archives in mid-1977. Founded in 1938, Local 49 has its offices located in Detroit and is one of eight UAW locals representing workers employed by the Ex-Cell-O Corporation. This company, which is one of the nation's 300 largest industrial enterprises, produces precision parts and assemblies, machine tools and accessories, packing equipment and expendable tools. The collection covers the years 1945 to 1965, with the predominant focus being 1949 to 1960. An unusual feature of this collection is the presence of 143 reels of tape recordings and 4 linear feet of phonograph records which

document, verbatim, general meetings, grievance meetings, and contract negotiations. In addition, there are ten linear feet of paper records reflecting a wide range of the day to day local union activities.

#### **Local 1112**

This local is based in the General Motors Assembly Division plant at Lordstown, Ohio, and was chartered in 1966 shortly after the huge sprawling ultra-modern facility was opened. Starting in the early 1970's the membership became widely-publicized for its militancy, culminating in a three week strike in 1972. The papers placed in the Archives are basically those from the Recording Secretary's office and include minutes of membership and Executive Board meetings, and correspondence. There are about five linear feet of files. In addition, both the incumbent Recording Secretary, Charles White, and his predecessor, Robert Guthridge, donated personal collections of documents relating to their union activities which form a valuable supplement to the official local collections.



*Crowd of Chrysler strikers from Dodge Local No. 3 cheering news of the settlement of the sit-down strike on April 6, 1937.*

## **PERSONAL COLLECTIONS**

### **The Victor G. Reuther Collection**

Victor G. Reuther, who played such a prominent role in the establishment and direction of the United Auto Workers over the years, recently made several major additions to his collection in the Archives. In the course of his career,

Victor Reuther served as Assistant to the President of the UAW and Director of the UAW International Affairs Department. Earlier, he had served in comparable positions in the CIO prior to the merger with the AFL and in the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department after the merger. He retired in 1972 and devoted himself to writing, speaking and traveling. In 1976, Houghton Mifflin published his memoir The Brothers Reuther and the Story of the UAW.

The ninety linear feet of material recently donated primarily covers the years from the late 1940s through the 1960s and includes correspondence, minutes, resolutions, clippings, publications and photos. The manuscript materials deal with UAW and CIO domestic and foreign policy, AFL-CIO foreign policy, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the International Metalworkers Federation and various international agencies. Also included are U.S. government files obtained under the Freedom of Information Act relating to the FBI investigation of the attempted assassinations of Walter and Victor Reuther in the late 1940s. The manuscript drafts of the book The Brothers Reuther are in the collection as well as papers and photos relating to the Reuther family. Since access to parts of this collection is restricted, researchers wishing to use it are advised to contact the archives in advance.

### The Clayton W. Fountain Collection

In 1978 the Archives received a collection of materials from Clayton W. Fountain, a former UAW staff member and author of the book Union Guy published in 1949. He became active in the fledgling UAW Local 235 in early 1937 and joined the Communist Party for a short time before breaking with them politically. He wrote frequently for the local union newspaper and in 1942 was appointed to the UAW-GM staff of Walter Reuther. In 1946 he became Associate Editor of the UAW paper, the United Automobile Worker.

After leaving the UAW staff in the mid-1950s, he worked at a number of jobs eventually becoming the Postmaster of El Granada, California in 1966. Since retiring he has been active around ecological and senior citizens' issues. His collection includes the manuscript drafts of his book Union Guy, various writings for labor papers, and some poetry as well as memorabilia from the labor movement of the 1930s and 1940s.

### The Sam Sweet Collection

The Archives received six linear feet of material in 1978 from Sam Sweet, a retired UAW member who served for a number of years as Educational Director and Editor of the Beacon for Local 51 which represented workers at the Plymouth plant in Detroit. He also was the Housing Director and Publications Editor for the Wayne County CIO Council and an officer in UAW Local 155.

The collection covers the period from the late 1930s through the 1950s and includes leaflets, pamphlets, resolutions, reports, and correspondence relating to political and educational activities inside and outside Local 51 and several other locals. There is extensive material on the Progressive Party candidacy of Henry Wallace for President in 1948. Also included are research materials, reports and other items dealing with housing conditions in Michigan and campaigns for better housing.

## ARCHIVES PROJECTS

### Grant for Labor Films

The National Endowment for the Humanities has granted \$350,000 to the Archives for a labor film project to be produced in cooperation with the United Auto Workers. The Archives will make three short films using oral interviews and audio-visual materials dealing with the issues of on-

# \$200,000 REWARD

**Will be paid by the International Union, UAW-CIO, for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons who shot and attempted to kill Walter P. Reuther and Victor G. Reuther.**

At about 11:50 p.m., May 24, 1949, Victor Reuther, white, 37, Educational Director of the UAW-CIO International Union, City of Detroit, was shot while sitting in the living room of his home by an unknown person or persons with a shotgun; 00 buckshot Remington clean bore ammunition was used.

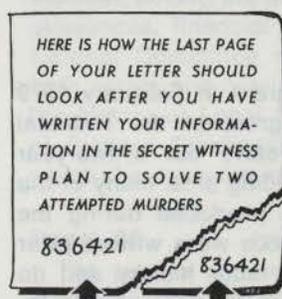
This shooting resulted in Mr. Reuther losing his right eye, receiving a broken shoulder and injuries to the face and mouth. His brother, Walter Reuther, President of the UAW-CIO International Union, was shot in his home under similar circumstances April 20, 1948, resulting in the partial disability of his right arm.

The Shotgun Left and Recovered at the Scene of the Victor Reuther Shooting



Description of the gun used and left at the scene: 12 gauge, 28 inch double-barrel J. Stevens shotgun, Model 530 L.P., Lyman synthetic ivory sights, a large one at the muzzle and a small one in the middle of the ribs between the two barrels. Letters on all parts of this gun are as follows: capital L.H., capital A in a circle, capital F in a circle, capital X and capital S. The most important letters, J.H., are the factory lot numbers, designating the date of manufacture, July 21, 1947. Only 20 of these guns were manufactured with the initials J.H. on them. The A and F in a circle are the factory assembly numbers. The S is the barrel lock assembler's mark; and X is the mark of the man who finally assembled the gun.

### How to send in secret clues



Send this portion of your letter to UAW-CIO. Tear off and keep this corner of the CIO P. O. Box 1714, Detroit 21, Michigan. Use this page as your identification.

### IN ORDER TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THIS REWARD

(Identity need not be revealed)

Any person having information that would lead to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for, or in any way connected with, the shooting of either or both the Reuther brothers, should type or print his information on plain white paper. He should give all the facts he knows—names, places and times stated as accurately as possible. On the last page he should print or type a number, chosen at random, of not less than six figures, such as 123456. He need NOT sign his name, —not in a straight line but a curved or jagged line. He should put the name number in the same way on the corner piece he has torn off. He should put this piece of paper in a safe place. Then he should mail his information—in a plain envelope—to the following address:

UAW-CIO, POST OFFICE BOX 1714, DETROIT 21, MICHIGAN

If any such information thus received makes the informant eligible for reward money, the UAW-CIO will make public through the press and radio the number printed on the letter containing the information.

The person who used that number should then take the corner piece of paper he has torn off to his lawyer or other representative.

Your representative should present the torn piece of paper corresponding, and if the torn edges fit, he will be given the reward money in bills of small denomination which he can then turn over to the informant as arranged between them.

Thus if the informant has kept his own counsel, only one person in the world—his own representative—will know his identity in this connection.

Any reward money paid through this method will be subject to the conditions outlined in the UAW-CIO reward offer.

Circular No. 2574  
June 25, 1949  
Complaint No. 14-71623

EDWIN MORGAN  
Superintendent of Police  
Detroit, Michigan

The shootings of Walter and Victor Reuther in April, 1948 and May, 1949 respectively led to the UAW offer of a reward for information which would lead to the arrest and conviction of the would-be assassins.

the-job treatment of women and minorities and contrasting attitudes among workers of different ages towards their jobs.

The programs are intended to inform and stimulate discussion about values, attitudes and experiences of the workers involved. The project will prepare accompanying discussion guides to be used by trained discussion leaders. These presentations will be made available to educational institutions and community groups through Wayne State University. The UAW Education Department under the directorship of Carroll Hutton will facilitate the distribution throughout the UAW and other unions.

### Appraisal of Labor Union Grievance Records

In 1977 the National Historical Publications and Records Commission awarded a grant to the Archives for a study of problems relating to the collection of labor union grievance records. These records are accumulated in great quantity on all levels of most trade unions and their sheer bulk constitutes a major problem for archives desiring to preserve them. The study was carried out by Dr. Richard Kesner who served as a Research Associate.



"Roy, Victor, and Walter Reuther pictured outside the office of the Mayor of Milwaukee during the 1937 UAW convention in that city."

The purpose of the project was to examine all aspects of the grievance procedure using the United Auto Workers union as a representative organization and to prepare recommendations for the selection and preservation of grievance files. Copies of the final report, which was recently completed, may be obtained by writing the Archives.

### Revision of Finding Aids

The Archives received a \$56,000 grant in February 1979 from the Research Collections Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities to carry out a two-year model project on the revision of its finding aids. Many of the finding aids to important collections produced during the early years of the Archives in the 1960s were written prior to dramatic changes in the study of labor history and do not reflect such new research trends as studies of women, ethnicity, rank and file movements, the work environment and the work ethic. These collections often contain extensive materials on these topics, but the guides do not reflect the richness of the sources.

The project will undertake a re-analysis of the most important collections acquired during the early period and will prepare more comprehensive, expanded guides to the material. It is planned that the final report will serve as a potential model for similar projects undertaken elsewhere.

Joan Rabins has been hired to carry out the project under the direction of Warner Pflug, the Assistant Director. She has a Master's Degree in History and course work towards a Ph.D. degree in American History. She completed her archival training at Wayne State University and has worked at the Smithsonian Institution.

### RESEARCH IN THE ARCHIVES

In recent years a number of publications about the United Auto Workers have appeared based to a greater or lesser extent on the Archives' holdings. In addition to Victor Reuther's book The Brothers Reuther mentioned earlier, Frank Marquart published An Auto Worker's Journal and Peter Friedlander authored The Emergence of a UAW Local, 1936-1939, both appearing in 1975. Sidney Fine published the first of a multi-volume biography of former Michigan

Governor Frank Murphy whose career was intimately associated with the rise of the UAW. The most recent book to be based heavily on the UAW collections is Black Detroit and the Rise of the UAW by August Meier and Elliot Rudwick which was published this summer by Oxford University Press.

Several articles have also appeared on the auto union: William Andrew, "Factionalism and Anti-Communism: Ford Local 600," in Labor History, Spring 1979; Ray Boryczka, "Seasons of Discontent: Auto Union Factionalism and the Motor Products Strike of 1935-36," in Michigan History in 1977 and an article entitled "Militancy and Factionalism in the UAW, 1937-1939," in a special labor issue of the Maryland Historian in 1977; and Roger Keeran, "The Communists and UAW Factionalism, 1937-1939," in Michigan History in 1976 and "Communist Influence in the Automobile Industry, 1920-1933: Paving the Way for An Industrial Union," in Labor History, Spring, 1979.

### NEWS OF THE ARCHIVES STAFF

Since the last newsletter, a number of new people have joined the Archives staff.

Carrolyn Davis was appointed to the position of Archivist-Librarian in March, 1979, replacing Angelita Espino-McGhee who accepted a post with the Detroit Public Library System. Ms. Davis earned both a B.S. degree and a Master of Science in Library Science at Wayne State University and had previously worked for five years in the Library of Shaw College at Detroit.

Thomas Featherstone was appointed to a new staff position as Archivist working primarily in the Audio-Visual Division with the Curator, Mrs. Margery Long. Mr. Featherstone, whose major interest is photographic archives, received his B.A. degree in anthropology at the University of New Mexico and is presently completing an M.A. degree in History at Wayne State University where he also received his archival training.

Last year Virginia Kmiec replaced Carolyn Majewski as Archivist in charge of the United Farm Workers Collection and related collections after Ms. Majewski accepted a position at the Texas State Archives in Austin. Ms. Kmiec has an M.A. degree in anthropology from Wayne State University and is enrolled in a Ph.D. program in ethnohistory there. She also received her archival training at Wayne State. Prior to coming to the Archives, she worked for several years in records management for the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company in Fairbanks, Alaska.

Patricia Painter was appointed to a new staff position in May with responsibilities in the areas of processing collections, assisting the Director in the coordination of all graduate archival administration education programs at Wayne and maintaining the reference library on the archival profession. She received her B.A. from Michigan State University and an M.S.L.S. from Wayne State along with her archival training. For the past year Ms. Painter has served as graduate instructional assistant in the Department of History.

George Tselos replaced Dennis East as field representative after the latter left to become the Director of the Archives and Manuscripts Division of the Ohio Historical Society. Mr. Tselos has a Ph.D. degree in labor history from the University of Minnesota where he also received his library and archival training. Prior to coming to the Archives, he taught American history for six years at Monmouth College in Illinois and the University of Minnesota.

## STAFF ACTIVITIES

In February 1979, Philip P. Mason, the Director of the Archives, was named Co-Director of the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations of the University of Michigan/Wayne State University by Wayne State President Thomas N. Bonner. Mason will hold the new position concurrently with his present position as Director of the Archives and Professor in the Department of History.

Warner Pflug was promoted to the position of Assistant Director of the Archives in mid-1978. He is presently serving as the Secretary of the Michigan Labor History Society and has been Chairperson of the Labor Archives Committee of the Society of American Archivists this past year.

Patricia Bartkowski of the University Archives finished serving a two-year term as the President of the Michigan Archival Association in 1978 and was Program Chairperson for the Spring meeting of the Midwest Archives Conference this year.

Valerie Gerrard Browne is presently serving on the Executive Board of the Michigan Archival Association and was elected recently to the Nominating Committee of the Midwest Archives Conference. She is the co-author of a Guide to the State Archives of Michigan: State Records which won an Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History in 1979.

Margery Long, the Curator of the Audio-Visual Collection taught a seminar in May 1978 on the "Administration and Care of Photographic Collections" sponsored by the American Association of State and Local History in Rochester, N.Y. She also presented a paper on this topic to the Midwest Archives Conference this past Spring and

had an article published on the care of historic photos in the magazine History News in 1977.

Dione Miles, Reference Archivist, is preparing for publication a comprehensive bibliography of printed materials and major manuscript collections relating to the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) which is among the organizations which have designated the Archives as their official depository.

## BITS AND PIECES

### Michigan Labor History Society

The Michigan Labor History Society, which was launched in the summer of 1977, has sponsored a number of programs in various locations around the state. In May, the Society held a meeting in Flint where the audience heard Larry Jones, a leading activist in the sit-down strikes, discuss the writing of labor history from a worker's perspective. The annual business meeting of the Society was scheduled for September 23rd at the UAW Region 1-B headquarters in Madison Heights featuring as the main speaker, Brendan Sexton, the former Director of Education for the UAW. The election of officers for the following year was also held.

### Freedom of Information Act

Under the Freedom of Information Act several donors to the Archives have obtained files compiled on their activities by the FBI and placed these files in their personal collections. If any readers of the Newsletter wish to follow a similar course of action, the Archives will be happy to provide them with information on the procedures required by the government. Inquiries should be addressed to the Archives Director, Dr. Philip P. Mason.

## ARCHIVES OF LABOR AND URBAN AFFAIRS

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