

## The Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs

The Walter P. Reuther Library housing the Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs came one step closer to reality with groundbreaking ceremonies on March 15 at the Wayne State University campus. Among the distinguished participants and guests were Leonard Woodcock, Irving Bluestone, and Carroll Hutton of the United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers Union; President George E. Gullen, Executive Vice-President Edward Cushman and members of the Board of Governors, Kurt Keydal, Norman O. Stockmeyer, George Edwards, Max Pincus, of Wayne State University; Fania Reuther, widow of the late Roy Reuther; John Reuther, son of Victor G. Reuther; Eleanor Wolf, sister of the late Mrs. Walter

P. Reuther; and Tom Turner of the Metropolitan Detroit, AFL-CIO.

President Gullen called the groundbreaking a "ceremony of tremendous significance" and described the Reuther Library as a "very suitable memorial, one of great beauty, one of great utility" to a student from "our university who influenced the world in matters of significance and importance." Leonard Woodcock, President of the UAW, referred to the Walter and May Reuther Family Education Center and the Reuther Library as "twin memorials" to Mr. Reuther's life and spoke of the "great city of Detroit with which Walter was associated for so many years" as the appropriate site for the new building.



Artist's rendering of the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs





*John Reuther, Eleanor Wolf, and Mrs. Roy Reuther, members of the Reuther family, (left to right) pose with Leonard Woodcock and George E. Gullen at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs. Photo: George Booth.*

The Reuther Library was made possible through a grant from the UAW, the union Mr. Reuther served as President from 1946 to 1970. Additional funds were received under the Higher Education Act administered by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Delegates to the UAW's Twentieth Constitutional Convention in May, 1966 honored Walter P. Reuther accordingly:

That to honor our President, Walter P. Reuther, on the thirtieth anniversary of his career as an officer of the International Union, and in order to insure as far as possible the most extensive collection and preservation of original documents of labor history and related matters, including President Reuther's own papers, this 20th Constitutional Convention authorizes and directs the International Executive Board to take the necessary steps to cause to be built on the campus of Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, a new, freestanding building to be known as the Walter P. Reuther Library and Labor History Archives.

Since 1962, when the UAW designated Wayne State University as the official depository for its historical records and papers, Walter P. Reuther consistently supported the Archives program to collect and preserve papers and records regarding the men, women, and organizations involved in forwarding the American labor movement. The new building, housing many of the collections in which Mr. Reuther was interested and instrumental in securing, is a fitting and lasting tribute to his

vision of organized labor and its role in the national life.

Architects from the firm of Odell, Hewlett and Luckenbach of Birmingham, Michigan, have produced an innovative, aesthetically pleasing structure that fully conveys the memorial nature of the Reuther Library and meets the diverse requirements of the Archives' program. The Reuther Library comprises two four-story L-shaped elements divided into a secure, environmentally controlled storage building and a glass-enclosed office building and library. The space inside of the two L's forms a vertical shaft courtyard extending upward four stories, ending in a skylight.

#### *Public-Research Functions and Facilities*

The first floor of the Reuther Library has been designed as the most public and memorial area of the building. An exhibit area of approximately 1000 square feet will be located in the courtyard near the building entrance. It is in this area that many of the items of sculpture, paintings, and artifacts received and collected by Walter P. Reuther will be adequately and attractively displayed.

The exhibit area will also enable the Archives to present a series of changing exhibits showcasing historical photographs related to labor events and personages, the original twenty-eight oil paintings of John Gelsavage's "This Union Cause," and many other photographs and three-dimensional objects housed in the Archives.



A monumental, circular staircase ascends to a seminar-conference room on the second floor. This room, capable of accommodating between forty and seventy-five people, will enable the Archives to sponsor conferences, workshops, and seminars. Motion picture, slide, and opaque projectors and screens and a small pullman-type kitchen will be included in the room.

Patrons, utilizing the Archives' collections and library, will find a reading room capable of seating a maximum of forty persons. In addition to table type seating, the room will feature informal seating for ten persons. An important feature of the reading room will be a two-story ceiling creating a spacious, aesthetic effect. The room will also contain appropriate microform reading equipment including microfilm and microfiche readers and a reader-printer. Listening carrels in the reading room will enable researchers to utilize the oral history interviews, speeches, and other taped and recorded items in the Archives.

The Archives' library, containing the Brookwood Labor College library and the personal libraries of such donors as Mary Heaton Vorse, Phyllis Collier, Mark and Helen Starr, and others, will be directly available in the main reading room. The addition of shelving for approximately 3000 volumes will greatly facilitate research and service in this area.

A room, apart from the main reading room, will serve as an oral history interview room. This tastefully furnished facility will include tape recording equipment and a fixed focus camera. The availability of this acoustically private room will allow greater emphasis on oral history as a part of the total labor and urban history aspects of the program and permit both researchers and staff members to interview people.

#### *Storage-Technical Functions and Facilities*

The archival storage area forms a solid, windowless, four-story L-shaped unit at the rear of the building site. The space will accommodate approximately 100,000 standard size manuscript boxes. Static shelving, with thirty inch wide aisles, will hold both manuscript and record center boxes. Rigid environmental controls for the storage area include restriction of admission of natural light and regulation of temperature and humidity.

The audio-visual curator will have a variety of equipment and facilities necessary for the processing and maintenance of the extensive photographs, tapes, and films housed in the Archives. In addition to lamination and dark rooms in the Reuther Library, a special services area containing dry-mounting, tape recording and editing, and film editing and splicing equipment will be available.

## The UAW Presidents' Files

### THE WALTER P. REUTHER COLLECTION

Walter Philip Reuther was born in Wheeling, West Virginia, on September 1, 1907. He moved to Detroit in 1926, where he worked in several automobile plants until 1933 when he and his brother Victor embarked on a tour of eleven European and Asian countries. Upon returning to the United States in 1935, he worked to organize United Auto Worker locals on Detroit's west side and was elected President of Local 174 the next year. At that time he also gained a seat on the UAW International Executive Board where he served as a Regional Director, 1936-42; Director of the General Motors Department, 1939-48; and Vice-President, 1942-46.

In March 1946, he was elected President of the UAW and later that year became a Vice-President of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Mr. Reuther was Co-Director of the UAW-CIO Fair Practices and Anti-Discrimination Department and directed the International Union Skilled Trades Department and Consumer Division. In 1952, he was elected President of the CIO, succeeding the late Philip Murray, and

served in that position until the merger of the AFL and CIO in 1955.

The official files of Walter P. Reuther as President of the UAW comprise the largest, single collection of papers in the Archives. Installments from the UAW President's Office were received in 1967, 1969, and 1970. Approximately fifty linear feet of material for the period 1937 to 1970 has been processed. The largest installment of files, containing 350 linear feet, plus forty cartons of memorabilia, came to the Archives after Mr. Reuther's death in 1970. The processed files falling within the twenty year restricted period established by the UAW are now open to interested and qualified historians and researchers. Thus, all processed files prior to 1950 are now available to the scholarly community.

Walter Reuther's personal papers, including correspondence, photographs, and memorabilia, have also been placed in the Archives. These files have been indefinitely closed at the request of the Reuther family and will not be available to interested researchers in the near future.

Mr. Reuther's files as UAW President contain a tremendous variety and amount of material including correspondence, inter-office memos, form letters, appointment books, meeting notes, bulletins, leaflets, minutes, reports, shop papers, speeches, clippings, press releases, and related items for the period 1936 to 1970.

The subjects discussed in the initial installment of processed files received in 1967, concern auto workers conferences, 1938-39; the "No Strike" policy during World War II; national and state CIO conventions; the CIO's "Southern Drive"; Political Action Committee activities, 1946-48; the General Motors strike, 1945-46; the Farm Equipment Workers-UAW merger question, 1940-49; the Presidential election of 1948; War Labor Board; Mead Committee; Office of Production Management; Manpower Commission; and Defense Mediation Board, 1942-46, and related subjects of women's wage rates, maintenance of membership, defense employment and absenteeism; and activities of the UAW's Fair Practices, Ford, General Motors, Veterans, and Unemployment Compensation Departments.

Communications to and from UAW Regional Directors and International Representatives, political figures, and CIO officials abound throughout the files. A partial listing of the correspondents includes George F. Addes, George Burt, Richard T. Frankenstein, Delmond Garst, Martin Gerber, Richard Gosser, Allan Haywood, Edward J. Jeffries, Russell Lentner, Richard Leonard, John William Livingston, Emil Mazey, Philip Murray, Roy and Victor Reuther, Franklin D. and Eleanor Roosevelt, Nelson Rockefeller, Maurice Sugar, R. J. Thomas, Harry S. Truman, and Leonard Woodcock.

The files of Walter Reuther received in 1969 focus on the period 1944-53, and contain information on UAW Conferences and Conventions, 1949-61; Defense Mobilization Organization, 1950-53, including relationships with the Executive Office of the President, National Advisory Board, Wage Stabilization Board, Defense Production Administration, and National Production Authority; production and manpower questions, 1949-52; the Tractors for Cuba Committee, 1961; public controversies involving Mr. Reuther; and speeches on a variety of national and labor issues, 1961-70.

Correspondents in this portion of the files include Dean Acheson, Ralph J. Bunche, Fidel Castro, Milton Eisenhower, Henry Ford II, Arthur J. Goldberg, Martha W. Griffiths, Hubert H. Humphrey, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr., George Meany, Richard M. Nixon, Victor G. Reuther, Eleanor Roosevelt, Upton Sinclair, Harry S. Truman, Charles E. Wilson and many others.

### THE ROLLAND J. THOMAS COLLECTION

R. J. Thomas, the second elected President of the UAW, joined the UAW in 1934 and served as a representative on the Automobile Labor Board of the NRA. In 1936, he was elected President of Chrysler Local 7, and the next year was elected Vice-President of the UAW. In 1939, he obtained the Presi-



dency of UAW-CIO. After his service with the UAW, Thomas became an assistant to Philip Murray in 1947 and to George Meany in 1956, before retiring in 1964.

Mr. Thomas' papers comprising fifteen linear feet of material came to the Archives in installments in 1964 and 1967. The initial installment contains a complete set of UAW Executive Board Minutes from March, 1940 to September, 1947, plus correspondence, scrapbooks, and photographs for the period 1936-64. Mr. Thomas contributed to the oral history of the UAW and a transcript of his interview is available.

The collection is important to the study of the early struggles of the UAW in organizing locals in various plants and overcoming factionalism within its ranks and the labor movement. The subjects discussed in these papers are the Homer Martin factional controversy, the General Motors strike in 1945-46, the Allis-Chalmers strike of 1947, organization of the West Coast aircraft industry, and the UAW's participation in the war effort.

The second installment of the Thomas papers covers the period 1942 to 1946 and contains information on a variety of subjects. Among those subjects are child care, housing, Soviet-U.S. relations, fair practices and employment, labor legislation, and the World Trade Union Conference. Correspondents include many UAW officers and Regional Directors, plus John Dingell, Homer Ferguson, John Lesinski, Vito Marcantonio, Frances Perkins, Arthur Vanderberg, and Robert F. Wagner.

#### THE WARREN HOMER MARTIN COLLECTION

Homer Martin, the first elected President of the UAW, was born in Illinois in 1901. After receiving a degree from William Jewel College, he attended the Kansas City Baptist Theological Seminary. While serving as a minister in Kansas City, Missouri, he began working in the automobile plants. He became active in Federal local 19320 in Kansas City and was elected President of the local in 1934. He was appointed Vice-President of the UAW in 1935. The next year Mr. Martin gained the presidency of the UAW-CIO where he served until 1939, when he withdrew to help form the rival UAW-AFL (American Federation of Labor). He left the union movement in 1941 to work in organizing small investors and milk producers.

The collection, containing two linear feet of correspondence, news clippings, songs, poems, speeches, radio addresses, articles, and photographs, covers the period 1934-41. Homer Martin's ability as an orator contributed greatly to his meteoric rise in the UAW and many of his speeches and radio addresses reflecting his "social gospel" message and workingman appeal form a vital part of this collection.

Subjects included in the material concern automobile worker attitudes toward the Automobile Labor Board, 1934-35; the Chevrolet Strike in Toledo, 1935; discussion of the issues of union recognition and collective bargaining; Martin's break with Francis Dillon in 1936; negotiations with General Motors and Chrysler and organizing attempts at Ford Motor Company in 1937; Martin's charges against the other officers of the UAW in 1938; information on communist activity in the union; and the issues surrounding the formation of the UAW-AFL under Martin's leadership. Correspondents include William Collins, Father Charles Coughlin, Francis Dillon, Ed Hall, and Frank Morrison, among others.

#### THE FRANCIS J. DILLON COLLECTION

Francis J. Dillon, a native of Ohio, served as business agent for the Pattern Makers League from 1914-34, at which time he was assigned as an organizer in the automobile industry for the American Federation of Labor. In 1935, William Green, President of the AFL, appointed Mr. Dillon as President of the United Automobile Workers of America. Between 1936 and 1941, he served as National Representative and organizer for the AFL

and in 1941 he joined Seagrams Distillers as Counselor for Industrial Relations.

The Dillon papers for the period 1934 to 1943 were placed in the Archives by Mr. Dillon in January 1971. The collection contains correspondence, official communications of the UAWA, 1934-36; minutes of the National Council of UAWA Federal Labor Unions, 1934-35; press releases, newsletters, clippings, resolutions, six scrapbooks, and one transcribed oral history interview.

The collection, relating primarily to AFL organizing efforts in the automobile industry and formation of the UAW, also contains information on such subjects as the Automobile Labor Board, collective bargaining with General Motors in 1935, communists in the unions, Labor Advisory Board, legislation, strikes at Fisher Body in 1934 and Hupp Motor Car in 1935, proposals for a thirty hour week, union dues, and finances, and the Wagner Act.

Correspondents in the collection include William Collins, William Green, Ed Hall, Otto Kleinert, Homer Martin, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Robert Wagner. The collection contains one linear foot of material and is open to researchers.

## RECENT ACQUISITIONS

#### THE PHILLIPS L. GARMAN COLLECTION

Phillips L. Garman joined the staff of the AFL in 1934 and until 1937 he worked in and around Detroit for the AFL and the Automobile Labor Board. From 1938 to 1941, he was Director of Research for the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union. Mr. Garman entered government service in 1941 when he became chief of the War Production Board's Industrial Relations Division. He subsequently served as co-chairman of the Wage Stabilization Board after June, 1945. Mr. Garman is now teaching at the University of Illinois in Urbana.

The collection contains correspondence, clippings, leaflets, pamphlets, articles, notes, reports, resolutions and related items. Among the subjects revealed in the papers are the AFL's relations with the Federal Labor Unions and automobile unions, 1934-36; company unions, 1934-36; formation of the CIO; factionalism in the labor unions; the General Motors strike, 1945-46; the Labor-Management Conference of 1945; unionization of the newspaper and publishing industries; automobile industry studies, 1934; Blacks in unions, 1933-35; the sit-down strikes of 1937; the Krug-Lewis agreement and coal dispute of 1946; and government administration of the coal mines. The principal focus of the collection is on the rise of unionism in the automobile industry and the International Printing Pressmen and Assistant's Union.

Correspondents in the collection are Francis Dillon, Frances Perkins, Alfred P. Sloan, and Leo Wolman, among others. The collection is open to researchers. These papers were made available to the Archives by the International Socialists in Detroit with the permission of Mr. Garman.

#### THE MATTHEW AND ELIZABETH SERVISS FOX COLLECTION

Matthew Fox, a member of the Industrial Workers of the World, and his wife, Elizabeth Serviss, former secretary to William D. Haywood, General Secretary of the I.W.W., have placed copies of three Haywood letters in the Archives. The letters dated September 5, 1918, February 2, 1921, and May 18, 1921, are written to Elizabeth Serviss and Haywood's daughter. These three letters, although composing a very small collection, are important for the insights and information they





*Elizabeth Serviss Fox (left) and William D. Haywood (right) at work in the I.W.W. office in Chicago before the police raid of June 1917.*

provide about William D. Haywood during his incarceration in the Cook County, Illinois, jail and his stay in Moscow after leaving the United States.

Haywood's letter of September 5, 1918, is written to Elizabeth Serviss so that "sometime in the future you can in some way see that the information I am going to give you now is conveyed to Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis." Haywood expressed the hope that the information would enable Judge Landis to know the "ancestry of at least one of the men he condemned to prison for twenty years." After reciting the accomplishments and contributions of his ancestors to the United States, from participation in the Revolutionary War to his father's pioneering efforts in Utah, Haywood makes the following statement for Judge Landis:

It may cause him to realize the courts are not infallible and that the world's greatest law is humanity. No part of this letter can benefit any of us, the Judge has done his 'bit' but he is on the bench for life, it may cause him to think should another such case come before him.

On March 31, 1921, Bill Haywood fled to Russia from the United States rather than face imprisonment. In a letter of May 18, 1921, he wrote to his daughter of some of his experiences in Moscow and thoughts on his departure from his country.

Think if you can, of living in a country where the workers control and operate everything. Should you come to this country, when you crossed the border everything is free.

Railroads, automobiles, hotel, clothing orders are issued to those who need.

Haywood also wrote of meeting Lenin, Gorky, Radek, and others, and concluded, "the I.W.W. stands high, many in responsible positions, both as fighters and workers have made good."

#### THE SOL DANN COLLECTION

Sol Dann was born in Detroit in 1903 and practiced law in Detroit from 1924, when he graduated from the Detroit College of Law, until his retirement in 1970. During his career, Mr. Dann was active on behalf of civil rights, freedom movements, and the protection of stockholders' interest in corporations.

The collection, containing fifteen linear feet of material, covers the period 1946 to 1970. The collection relates to four principal topics: stockholder suits against the Studebaker-Packard and Chrysler Corporations; Jack Ruby's involvement in the Lee Harvey Oswald case; and the Middle East crisis, with emphasis on the rights of Jews to a Palestinian homeland. Included in the collection are correspondence, articles, clippings, court cases, appeal cases, collateral suits, and related legal documents.

The material concerning lawsuits initiated by Mr. Dann and other shareholders against the Studebaker-Packard Company covers the period 1950-61 and contains correspondence with Martha Griffiths, Louis Rabaut, Clifford Case, John Dingell, and John Voelker. The largest amount of material in the collection



concerns stockholder suits against Chrysler Corporation for mismanagement and conflict of interest, 1960-66.

Melvin Belli, Louis Wolfson, Joe Tonahill, Marguerite Oswald, William Kunstler, and members of Jack Ruby's family are among the correspondents in the material relating to the trial of Jack Ruby and the issue of dismissing Joe Tonahill as Ruby's lawyer. Information concerning the appeals and court cases arising from Judge Joseph Brown's book, *Dallas, Ruby, and The Law*, and the Garrison investigation are also contained in the collection.

That portion of the collection concerning the Middle East, contains information on the Balfour Declaration, the Palestinian Mandate, Russian influence in the Middle East, and the political importance of oil in the entire question. Correspondents include Moshe Dayan, Harry Golden, and Hubert H. Humphrey.

The Dann Collection has been processed and is open for research.

## Research in the Archives

Among those researchers utilizing collections in the Archives, have been Chris Paige and Nelson Lichtenstein of the University of California at Berkeley. Mr. Paige is engaged in a community-oriented study of mass production workers in the pre-CIO period, with special emphasis on automobile and steel workers. Mr. Lichtenstein's doctoral study concerns politics within the CIO during the World War II period.

Other researchers include Robert A. Zieger of the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point, who is doing general research on the labor movement in the 1930's; Donald N. Grubbs of the University of the Pacific, who is studying Black migration to the North during the New Deal; Dorothy J. Rupprecht, who is studying women's contributions to the labor movement; Leo W. Kazaniwskyj of the University of Illinois, who is studying the

I.W.W. and the southern and eastern European immigrants; Leland W. Robinson of Northwestern University, who is researching the internal operations of the I.W.W.; and Lisa Anderson, who is working with Sheila Tobias of Wesleyan University, on a study of female demobilization after World War II.

## BITS AND PIECES

Warner W. Pflug of the Archives has completed compilation of the *Guide to the Collections of the Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs*. The *Guide*, which is now being edited, will be published in the Fall of 1973.

The *Transactions* of the Conference Group for Social and Administrative History will publish the papers delivered at the "Conference on Ideology and Labor Movements" last Spring. The portion of the conference concerning American labor history included papers by Melvyn Dubofsky on the "Radical Wing" and Robert Ozanne on the "Mainstream." Those interested in either obtaining copies of the *Transactions* or information about the Conference Group for Social and Administrative History, should contact Werner Braatz and N. Stephen Krane, P. O. Box 1293, Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901.

M. B. Schnapper's *American Labor: A Pictorial Social History* and William Cahn's *A Pictorial History of American Labor* are two "must" books for anyone interested in American labor history. Both books have been widely and most favorably reviewed. Information concerning purchase of Mr. Schnapper and Mr. Cahn's books can be obtained from the Public Affairs Press, Inc., 419 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., Washington, D. C. 20003 and Crown Publishers, Inc., 419 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016, respectively.

Dennis East, Newsletter Editor

## ARCHIVES OF LABOR HISTORY AND URBAN AFFAIRS

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