

THE LEWIS H. MICHENER COLLECTION

Papers, 1938-1974

6½ linear feet

Accession Number 178
LC MS

The papers of Lewis Herbert Michener Jr. were placed in the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs by Mr. Michener in February 1966, and by Martha Michener, his wife, in March 1976. They were opened for research in July 1986.

Lewis Michener was born in Bozeman, Montana, on December 1, 1908. After completing eighth grade he worked in the Butte mines and in a packing house, and joined the Butte Butchers Union, AFL, in 1924. He went to California in 1933 and began work at the Ford Motor Company in Richmond where he became assistant foreman in the enamel department and was involved in attempts to organize workers. By 1935 he had transferred to the Ford Long Beach plant and was active in organizing auto and aircraft workers all over southern California. In December 1936 he moved to Chrysler Corporation at Maywood, California, and joined the UAW when a local was chartered in his plant in March 1937.

In 1938 Michener was elected secretary of the District Auto and Aircraft Council and president of the Los Angeles CIO Industrial Union council. He was also appointed secretary of the CIO Unemployment and Social Security Committee.

Michener attended the 1939 UAW Constitutional Convention in Cleveland where he was elected West Coast (Region 6) Director and International Executive Board member. During the 1941 UAW-North American Aviation negotiations Michener appeared before the War Labor Board in Washington, D.C. with Richard Frankenstein to present the case for higher wages. When NAA workers walked out on June 5 he returned to Los Angeles and supported the rank and filers in their controversial strike. In August 1941, the UAW Convention in Buffalo disciplined Michener for his actions during the strike by disqualifying him from elective or appointive office that year. He served as Regional Director again in 1943 and 1944.

After a year in the Merchant Marine, Michener returned in September 1945 to work at Ford Long Beach. He served as president and committeeman of Local Union 406 until the plant site was moved in 1959. The local merged with Local Union 923, and Michener served as its president and executive board member at various times over the next eight years.

Michener married Martha Forsyth, an active unionist and member of the Utility Workers of America, in 1955. He took an early retirement from Ford, following her serious illness, in 1966. He remained active in the L.A. Area Retiree Council, of which he was president from 1960 until 1968,

and as Region 6 representative to the UAW International Retired Workers' Advisory Council from 1968 until his death on March 29, 1974.

Important subjects in the Michener Collection include:

Aircraft Organizing	UAW Local 406
Retiree Councils	UAW Local 923

Important correspondents in the collection are:

George Addes	Emil Mazey
John Allard	Dave Miller
Ken Bannon	Walter P. Reuther
Charles Bioletti	Paul Schrade
Richard Frankenstein	

Contents

13 manuscript boxes

Series I, UAW Region 6, 1938-1944, Boxes 1-2:

Correspondence, reports, memoranda, UAW International Executive Board proceedings, and transcripts relating to Michener's role in early UAW organizing on the west coast and as director of Region 6 during 1939-1941 and 1943-1944. Some of the material also concern the strike at North American Aviation in June 1941 and the consequences for Michener and other participants.

Series II, UAW Local Union 406, 1945-1959, Boxes 2-6:

Correspondence, memoranda, reports, executive board meeting notes, copies of the L.U. 406 Reporter, trial board transcripts, and other materials from Michener's files as president of the local during these years. Included at the end of the series are files relating to the merger of L.U. 406 with L.U. 923 when the Ford Long Beach plant operations were moved to a new site at Pico Rivera, California, in 1959.

Series III, UAW Local Union 923, 1959-1973, Boxes 7-8:

Correspondence, memoranda, bulletins, election materials, L.U. 923 newspapers, and Ford Department information.

Series IV, UAW Retiree Councils, 1956-1974, Boxes 9-11:

Correspondence, reports, meeting minutes, and newsletters of the Los Angeles Area Retiree Council and the UAW International Retired Workers' Advisory Council. Michener was active in both after his retirement, until his death in 1974.

Series V, Personal Files, 1930 -1974, Boxes 12-13:

Correspondence, selective service documents, article written by Michener, and files from various civic and political organizations with whom he and his wife were involved as residents of Pico Rivera, California.

Non-manuscript Material:

Approximately 25 photographs, primarily of Michener and others involved in union activities, were given to the Archives Audio-Visual Collection. Five cartons of books, pamphlets, agreements, and convention proceedings were placed in the Archives Library.

Series I
UAW Region 6, 1938-1944
Boxes 1-2

Correspondence, reports, memoranda, UAW International Executive Board proceedings, and transcripts relating to Michener's role in early UAW organizing on the west coast and as director of Region 6 during 1939-41 and 1943-44. Some materials also concern the strike at North American Aviation in June 1941, and the consequences for Michener and others who supported the strike. The series is arranged chronologically with IEB proceedings filed at the end.

Box 1

- 1-14. Correspondence, 1938-44
- 15. UAW-NAA Negotiations; Transcript, 21 Jun 1944
- 16. UAW International Representatives; Correspondence, 1944

Box 2

- 1. UAW IEB Proceedings, 7-8 Oct 1940
- 2. UAW IEB Proceedings, 7 Feb 1941
- 3. UAW IEB Proceedings, 27 Apr and 17 May 1941
- 4. UAW IEB Proceedings, 9-14 Jul 1941
- 5. UAW IEB Proceedings, 1-10 Mar 1943
- 6. UAW IEB Proceedings, 1-2 May 1944

Series II

UAW Local Union 406, 1945-1959

Boxes 2-6

Correspondence, memoranda, reports, executive board meeting notes, copies of the L.U. 406 Reporter, trial board transcripts, and other materials from Michener's files as president of the local during these years. Included at the end of the series are documents concerning the merger of L.U. 406 with L.U. 923 when the Ford Long Beach plant operations were moved to a new site at Pico Rivera, California, in 1959. The series is arranged with correspondence in alphabetical sequence first, followed by other local union office files in alphabetical order, and Region 6 and UAW materials filed at the end.

Box 2

- 7-17. L.U. 406; Correspondence, 1946-57
- 18. L.U. 406; Correspondence; Health Insurance, 1957

Box 3

- 1-4. L.U. 406; Correspondence, 1958-59
- 5. L.U. 406; Audits and Expenses, 1954-57
- 6. L.U. 406; Bylaws, 1950
- 7. L.U. 406; COPE, 1958
- 8-9. L.U. 406; Elections, 1950-58
- 10-15. L.U. 406; Executive Board, 1953-59
- 16. L.U. 406; Recreation, 1950s

Box 4

- 1-3. L.U. 406; Reporter, 1952-58
- 4. L.U. 406; Reporter Correspondence, 1952-55
- 5. L.U. 406; Reporter Materials, 1950s
- 6. L.U. 406; Reporter Layout, 1950s
- 7-9. L.U. 406; Trial Board, 1948-1950
- 10-11. Region 6; Correspondence, 1955-59
- 12. Region 6; Quarterly Conference, May 3-4, 1952
- 13. Region 6; Quarterly Conference, Jul 31 - Aug 1, 1954
- 14-17. Ford Subcouncil; Meetings, 1945-54

Box 5

- 1-2. Ford Subcouncil; Meetings, 1955-58
- 3-4. National Ford Conference, 1948
- 5-7. National Ford Council; Contract Demands, 1955
- 8-15. National Ford Department; Correspondence, 1952-59
- 16-17. UAW Correspondence, 1955-57

Box 6

- 1-3. UAW Correspondence, 1958-59
4. UAW Special Convention, Jan 1958
5. California CIO Council, 1954
- 6-8. L.U. 406 and L.U. 923; Merger and Transfer Agreement, 1959
- 9-14. Seniority Lists, 1949-1959
- 15-16. Wage Schedules, 1948, 1953, 1956-57

Series III
Local Union 923, 1959-1973
Boxes 7-8

Correspondence, memoranda, bulletins, election materials, local union newspapers, and other materials relating to Michener's membership and sometime presidency of Local Union 923. The series is arranged with correspondence in alphabetical sequence first, other local union office files following in alphabetical order, and ending with Ford and Ford Department files.

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- 1-7. LU. 923; Correspondence, 1959-73
- 8-9. LU. 923; Bulletins, 1959-63
- 10. LU. 923; Bylaws, 1957-60
- 11. LU. 923; Convention Resolutions, 1959
- 12-13. LU. 923; Elections, 1959 and 1961
- 14-16. LU. 923; Elections Public Review Board Case 87, 1961
- 17. LU. 923; Election, 1962

Box 8

- 1-2. LU. 923; Elections Public Review Board Case 87, 1962
- 3-5. LU. 923; Elections, 1963-71
- 6. LU. 923; Executive Board, 1961
- 7. LU. 923; Financial Reports, 1958-60
- 8. LU. 923; Grievances, 1961
- 9-10. LU. 923; Rank and File, 1959-62
- 11. LU. 923; Reporter, 1963-64
- 12. LU. 923; Rank and File, 1965-71
- 13. Retiree Roster, Ford L.A. Assembly Plant, 1965-69
- 14. Ford Department; Correspondence, 1961 and 1968
- 15. Ford Council, 1964
- 16-17. Ford Agreement, 1964

Series IV
UAW Retiree Councils, 1956-1974
Boxes 9-11

Correspondence, reports, meeting minutes, and newsletters of the Los Angeles Area Retiree Council and the UAW International Retired Workers Advisory Council. Michener was active in both from his retirement until his death in 1974. The correspondence and meeting files for each of the two councils are arranged chronologically.

Box 9

1. UAW Handbook on Retired Workers, c1956
2. UAW Guide to Local Union Retirement Committees, c1958
3. UAW Medicare Counseling Program, c1968
4. Los Angeles Area Retirees; Correspondence, 1955-1961
- 5-18. Los Angeles Area Retirees Council; Correspondence, 1962-74

Box 10

- 1-8. Los Angeles Area Retirees Council; Meetings, 1959-73
9. Los Angeles Area Retirees Council; Bylaws, 1971-72
- 10-11. Los Angeles Area Retirees Council; News Notes, 1973-74
12. UAW International Retired Workers' Advisory Council; Correspondence, 1966
13. UAW Retiree Information, c1968
- 14-15. UAW International Retired Workers' Advisory Council; Correspondence, 1968-69

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- 1-7. UAW International Retired Workers' Advisory Council; Correspondence, 1970-73
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- 9-16. UAW International Retired Workers' Advisory Council; Meetings, 1968-74
17. National Council of Senior Citizens Conference, 1971

Series V
 Personal Files, 1938-1974
 Boxes 12-13

Correspondence, selective service documents, files from various civic and political organizations with whom Michener and his wife were involved, and article drafts. The files are arranged chronologically with correspondence and articles at the end.

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1. Membership and Identification Cards, 1938-73
2. Maritime Service Documents, 1944
3. Harry Bridges Trial, 1949-50
4. Decision, California Emergency Defense Fund, 1952
5. Utility Workers of America, 1956-57
6. LA Examiner "Notebook," 1959-61
7. Pico Rivera Democratic Club, 1961-64
8. Committee to Reelect Governor Brown, 1962 and 1966
- 9-10. California Democratic Council, 1962-64, 1974
11. 51st Assembly District Council, 1963-64
12. Rio Hondo Junior College, 1963-66
- 13-17. Los Angeles District Attorney's Advisory Council, 1965-67

Box 13

- 1-2. Los Angeles Attorney General's Volunteer Advisory Council, 1969-74
3. Diaries, 1940-42
- 4-6. Draft Deferment Correspondence, 1943-44
- 7-10. Personal Correspondence, 1954-74
11. Correspondence re: Michener's Death, 1974
12. NAA Strike; Article Drafts, n.d.
13. UAW 1941 Constitutional Convention Proceedings, Copies
14. "Is Walter Reuther a Dictator?" Drafts, c1959
15. "Butte Memories," Draft, c1963
16. The Justin Johnson Story, by Jack L. Rugh, 1963
17. "American Revolution," Draft, n.d.
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