

THE NORMAN SMITH COLLECTION
Papers 1935-1964
(Predominantly 1935-1938 and 1945-1946)
1/2 linear foot

Accession No. 574
L.C. Number

The papers of Norman Smith were placed in the Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs in October of 1972 by Ms. Mildred Reeves and Mary Smith and were opened for research in February of 1973.

Norman Smith was born in Missouri in 1899. Early in his life, he was a farmer, preacher and odd-job man. In the early 1930's he was employed by General Motors Corporation in St. Louis, Missouri. In 1934 he led an unseccessful attempt to organize workers of the Fisher Body and GMC plants of that city under the AFL. Beginning in 1936 he was instrumental in organizing the plants for the CIO. From 1936 to 1942 he worked as a union organizer, speaker and radio broadcaster in St. Louis, Memphis, Detroit and other cities. Smith enlisted in the Navy in 1942. After World War II, he worked in a steel mill in California, but continued as an official of the CIO until retirement in 1964. Smith died in 1972.

Subjects touched upon in this collection include:

Union organizing in St. Louis, Memphis and Detroit, 1936-1942 UAW
Factional issues, 1946

Contents

1 manuscript box

Folders 1-7

Correspondence 1935-1964. Mostly personal letters. The majority were written in 1946 to Smith in California from friends in St. Louis and Detroit, giving some views on factional problems within the UAW that year. A 1938 letter from Governor Gordon Browning of Tennessee refers to "lawlessness" in union organizing in Memphis. A 1943 letter from Max Michelson describes Smith's personal history and difficulties encountered during the war.

Folders 8-28

Radio broadcasts, speeches and press releases, 1936-1937

8. G.A. Hoehn, "Lawlessness in Labor Strikes" (a short history of labor violence in St. Louis) January 12, 1936.
- 9-11. Broadcasts over WTMV, East St. Louis, November, 1936 - January, 1937, by Delmond Garst, Smith, A.J. Pickett and John Kociscak, concerning organizing of the Chevrolet and Fisher Body plants in St. Louis.
- 12-15. Broadcasts over WCFL, Chicago, June, 1936 - January, 1937 by Homer Martin, Sarainne Loewe and Paul Kimberley. General issues facing the UAW discussed.
16. Broadcast over WJIM, Lansing, July 18, 1936 by Homer Martin.
17. Broadcast over WMBC, Detroit, November, 1936 - January, 1937.
18. UAW Press Releases, Detroit, November, 1936 - January, 1937.
19. Broadcasts over CKLW, Windsor, January, 1937 by Frank Winn.
- 20-26. Broadcasts over WMPS, Memphis, October, 1937 - November, 1937 by Smith and Harry Elder. General union issues discussed.
27. Fragments of broadcasts or speeches by Smith, 1936-1937.
28. Roosevelt statement issued to Chevrolet employees, undated.

Folders 29-30

Miscellaneous

29. Smith's Missouri State Employment Service card, August 22, 1935.
30. 1940 Diary with appointments marked from March to June.

Folders 31-32

Clippings, 1945-1946

Non-manuscript material

8 convention badges (UAW, CIO and AFL-CIO conventions, 1937-1966).