

THE OTTO PRAGAN COLLECTION

Papers 1941-1961
(Predominantly, 1949-1959)

3 linear feet

Accession Number 617
L. C. Number MS

The papers of Otto Pragan were placed in the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in September of 1973 by Mrs. Gina Pragan. The papers were opened for research in September 1983.

Otto Pragan was born in Vienna, Austria on March 3, 1904. He received his law degree from the University of Vienna in 1932, with a specialization in economic studies. Upon his arrival in the United States, he attended Western Reserve University and received a degree in library science in 1942. He worked in the Cleveland Public Library's, Business Information Bureau, from 1942-1944 and was in charge of their War Information Center. From 1944-1949, he developed, and headed, the Business and Labor Service at the Akron Public Library.

In 1949, Mr. Pragan left library service to become Education and Research Director for the International Chemical Workers Union (ICWU). He was selected, in 1956, to serve on the Joint Organizing Committee assisting in the merger negotiations between the ICWU and the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW). He continued to serve on the committee until 1959. After completion of his term as a committee member, he remained as the research consultant specializing in such topics as collective bargaining and automation.

The papers of Otto Pragan reflect his work with the ICWU, labor education and economic research which he continued to be involved with until his death.

Important subjects covered in the collection are:

Economics
Labor Education
ICWU Internal Conflicts, 1953-1954
ICWU-OCAW Merger, 1955-1959

Among the important correspondents are:

Walter Mitchell
Edward R.
Moffett

An index to subjects and correspondents will be found on p. 6.

Contents

6 manuscript boxes

Series I, Office Files 1949-1961, Boxes 1-5:

Sub series A: Educational and Research Director, 1949-1961, Boxes 1-3:
Correspondence, reports, clippings and other materials relating to Mr. Pragan's position as Educational and Research Director with the ICWU. Includes materials concerning the internal conflicts surrounding the Bradley-Moffett presidential race, 1954.

Sub series B: ICWU-OCAW Merger Committee, 1955-1960, Boxes 3-5:
Correspondence, reports, minutes, clippings and other material relating to the merger between the ICWU and OCAW.

Series II, Personal Files, 1941-1957, Box 6:

Correspondence, speeches, reports, pamphlets and other items relating to Mr. Pragan's positions at both Cleveland and Akron Public Libraries. Additional post 1949 material cover his continued work with library and educational affiliated groups.

Non-manuscript Material:

One ICWU majority rule button has been placed in the Archives Audio-Visual Collection. Numerous pamphlets concerning labor education plus ICWU publications and convention proceedings have been transferred to the Archives Library Collection.

Series I

Office Files, 1949-1961
Boxes 1-5

Files relating to Mr. Pragan's position with the ICWU:

This series is divided into the following two sub series:

Sub series A: Educational and Research Director, 1949-1961, Boxes 1-3:

Correspondence, reports, pamphlets and other items relating to the ICWU and labor education. Contains some further items of interest to the chemical industry. Files are arranged alphabetically by subject or type of material.

Sub series B: ICWU-OCAW Merger Committee, 1955-1960, Boxes 3-5:

Correspondence, reports, minutes and items concerning the merger negotiations between the ICWU and the OCAW, including plant selection and membership distribution. Files are arranged chronologically, then alphabetically by subject or type of material.

Sub series A: Educational and Research Director, 1949-1961

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1. AFL; convention report, excerpt, 1949
2. Atomic research; publications
3. Bradley-Moffett presidential race; clippings, 1954
4. Bradley-Moffett presidential race; flyers, 1954
5. Bradley vs. IEB, 1954
6. Chemical, Rubber, Oil & Textile Unions; proposed Int. Council, 1960
7. Clippings, 1955-60
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9. Conferences, 1953-1954
10. Conventions, 1955, 1960
- 11-15. Correspondence, 1953-61
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17. Financial statements, 1953, 1955
18. History
- 19-21. ICWU Local Union Directory, 1960
22. IEB; majority position, 1954
23. IEB; minutes, 1953-54
24. IEB; presidential statement, 1957

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1. John Herling's Labor Letter, 1954, 1957
2. The Labor Union; BBB reports, 1949-53
3. Local 467, 1954
4. Local 521, 1954
5. Locals 525 & 526, 1954
6. Locals 40 & 85, 1956
7. Local 587; clippings, 1957
8. Locals; amalgamated, c. 1960
9. Locals; organizing & training programs, 1960
10. Locals; regional listings, 1960-61
11. Moffett-Mitchell presidential race, 1956
12. Moffett-Truatt alliance, 1956
13. NLRB; case listings, 1960
14. Nuclear disarmament; articles, 1960-61
15. Publications; union
16. Senate Economics Committees; statements, 1959
17. Unions; headquarters' listings, 1959
- 18-21. Weber, A.; "The ICWU: A Study in Structural Adjustment", 1958

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- 1-7. Weber, A.; "The ICWU: A Study...", 1958 (cont'd from Box 2)

Sub series B: ICWU-OCAW Merger Committee, 1955-1960

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15. 1956; Organizing Comm., notes
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3. 1957; conferences & conventions
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5. 1957; Organizing Comm., correspondence
6. 1957; Organizing Comm., reports
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Series II
Personal Files, 1941-1957
Box 6

Correspondence, speeches, reports and other items relating to Mr. Pragan's positions at the Cleveland and Akron Public Libraries, Business Service Divisions. Other material relates to his continued affiliation with library and educational groups after he left library service, post-1949. The files are arranged alphabetically by subject or type of material.

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4. Business Labor Service; economic research
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19. Subject headings; labor
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