



Guide to the AFSCME Office of the Secretary-Treasurer: Government and Civic Employees Organizing Committee Records LR000682_GEOC

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English

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Walter P. Reuther Library

5401 Cass Avenue

Detroit, MI 48202

URL: <https://reuther.wayne.edu>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Walter P. Reuther Library
Creator:	AFSCME
Source:	AFL-CIO
Source:	Congress of Industrial Organizations (U.S.)
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Language of the Material:	Material entirely in English.
Abstract:	In early 1950, the United Public Workers union was expelled from the CIO for alleged communist activities, leaving behind an anti-communist group called the Government Workers Union. In February of 1950, the CIO chartered the Government Workers Union as the Government and Civic Employees Organizing Committee (GCEOC) and gave the new committee jurisdiction over federal, state, and local employees. In the next five years, GCEOC aggressively attempted to reach full union status within the CIO but failed to do so before the AFL-CIO merger in December 1955. After the merger, GCEOC was absorbed by the AFL's AFSCME. Some of the GCEOC personnel and many of its locals transferred into AFSCME, but by the late 1950s almost all traces of the old GCEOC had disappeared. These records detail the breakup of the United Public Workers and the formation of the Government Workers Union and the GCEOC. There is considerable documentation on GCEOC Local 1 in Washington, D.C., which became AFSCME Local 1, and of GCEOC organizing efforts in the 1950s in the United States, Canada, and Panama.

Citation Style

"AFSCME Office of the Secretary-Treasurer: Government and Civic Employees Organizing Committee Records, Box [#], Folder [#], Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University"

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History

In early 1950 the United Public Workers union was expelled from the CIO for alleged communist activities, leaving behind an anti-communist rump group called the Government Workers Union. In February of 1950, the CIO chartered this group as the GCEOC, and gave the new committee jurisdiction over federal, state, and local employees. In the next five years, the GCEOC aggressively attempted to reach full union status within the CIO, but had failed to do so by the time of the AFL-CIO merger in December of 1955. As a result of this failure, the organizing committee was absorbed by the much larger AFL state and local employee union, AFSCME, and most of its federal members eventually joined other former AFL unions, which represented federal workers. Some of the GCEOC personnel and many of its locals, retaining their original structures, transferred into AFSCME, but by the late 1950s almost all traces of the old GCEOC had disappeared.

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Scope and Content

These papers detail the breakup of the United Public Workers and the formation of the Government Workers Union and the GCEOC. There is considerable documentation on GCEOC Local 1 in Washington, D.C., which became AFSCME Local 1, and of GCEOC organizing efforts in the 1950s in Canada and Panama as well as in the United States.

Important subjects: American Federation of Government Employees, 1950-1958 AFSCME Local 1, 1965-1968 AFSCME-GCEOC merger, 1955-1957 Build the Union Committee, 1946-1949 Communism, 1940-1955 Discrimination, 1950-1957 Firefighter, organizing, 1950-1957 Flaxer, Abram, 1940-1955 Freedmen's Hospital, 1939-1961 GCEOC Local 1, 1950-1958 Government Workers Union, 1946-1951 Grievances, 1950-1958 Hospital workers, organizing, 1950-1957 Howard University, 1950-1960 Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America, 1948-1958 Murray, Philip, 1950-1952 Police, organizing, 1950-1957 Postal workers, organizing, 1950-1957 Prison workers, organizing,

1950-1957 School workers, organizing, 1950-1957 Teachers, organizing, 1950-1957 United Public Workers, 1940-1950 Welfare workers, organizing, 1950-1957

Important correspondents: Carey, James B.; Carroll, James F.; Chapman, Gordon; Federoff, Anthony J.; Haywood, Allan S.; Liftin, Morton; Mirengoff, William; Morse, Wayne; Murray, Milton; Murray, Philip; Reuther, Walter P.; Riffe, John V.; Thomas, R. J.; Wurf, Jerry; Zander, Arnold S.

Series Description: Series 1, Early Organizing, CIO, 1940-1951 Subseries A: United Public Workers, 1940-1949 Correspondence, newspaper clippings, bulletins, fliers and articles relating to the formation and dissolution of the United Public Workers.

Subseries B: Government Workers Union, 1946-1951: Correspondence, newspaper clippings, bulletins, newsletters, fliers, and articles pertaining to the emergence of the Government Workers Union from the dissident Build the Union Committee and its transformation in 1950 to the GCEOC.

Series 2, The Government and Civic Employees Organizing Committee (GCEOC), 1939-1968: Subseries A: GCEOC, National Office, 1948-1959: Correspondence, telegrams, memos, reports, and other materials relating to the operation of GCEOC headquarters in Washington, D.C., and its general staff.

Subseries B: GCEOC Local 1/AFSCME Local 1, 1939-1968: Correspondence, by-laws, collective bargaining and financial materials, minutes, candidate lists, job classification information, newspaper clippings, fliers and bulletins reflecting the concerns and activities of this Washington, D.C., local which emerged from the Government Workers Union into the GCEOC, and later became AFSCME Local 1. Many materials related to the efforts of AFSCME Local 1 to prevent the transfer of Freedmen's Hospital to Howard University.

Series 3, Government and Civic Employees Organizing Committee, Organizing, 1941-1961: Correspondence, charter applications, a few charters, newspaper clippings, by-laws, memos, telegrams, and contract agreements reflecting the organizing activities of the GCEOC, and, more specifically, of the office of its Secretary-Treasurer. The GCEOC organized locals in most of the states and in Canada and Panama.

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Arrangement

Arranged in 3 series – Series 1 (Boxes 1-2), Series 2 (Boxes 2-10), and Series 3 (Boxes 11-40). Folders are arranged alphabetically.

Series 2 and 3 are each further arranged into 2 subseries.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Acquisition

The AFSCME Office of the Secretary-Treasurer: Government and Civic Employees Organizing Committee Records were placed in the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in the fall of 1974 by AFSCME.

Processing History

Processed and finding aid written by Walter P. Reuther Library in December 1985.

Access

Collection is open for research.

Use

Refer to the Walter P. Reuther Library "Rules for Use of Archival Materials." Restrictions: Researchers may encounter records of a sensitive nature – personnel files, case records and those involving investigations, legal and other private matters. Privacy laws and restrictions imposed by the Library prohibit the use of names and other personal information which might identify an individual, except with written permission from the Director and/or the donor.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

AFSCME collections

Transfers

Two photographs were placed in the audiovisual collection.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Labor
- Labor unions -- Organizing
- AFL-CIO
- Chapman, Gordon Warner, 1907-
- Congress of Industrial Organizations (U.S.)
- Wurf, Jerry, 1919-
- Zander, Arnold S. (Arnold Scheuer), 1901-1975

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