

UNITED FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

WALTER C. LAIDLAW COLLECTION

Papers, 1944-1972
(Predominantly, 1949-1968)

21 linear feet
1 oversize box

Accession Number 1289
L. C. Number MS

The papers of Walter C. Laidlaw were placed in the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs by H. Clay Howell, president of the United Foundation, in October of 1986 and were opened for research in June of 1988.

Walter C. Laidlaw was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1906. After obtaining a business degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1929, he worked in marketing and public relations for several Detroit banks, promotional skills he was able to apply to the problems of fund-raising when he joined the Detroit Community Fund in 1936.

In 1949 Mr. Laidlaw and prominent local business and labor leaders, including Henry Ford II, C. E. Wilson, August Scholle, and Walter P. Reuther, organized the nation's first federated fund-raising campaign, a concept he had experimented with while directing the War Chest drives during World War II. Reducing administrative costs and the annoyance of continual solicitation, Detroit's Torch Drive combined the multitude of charity drives mounted by local and national health and welfare organizations under one banner, "Give Once for All." Its success, both financially and in terms of the number of volunteers recruited, made it the model for all other united funds.

In the 1940s and '50s Mr. Laidlaw organized the Greater Detroit Hospital Fund and its successor, the Metropolitan Detroit Building Fund (which became the Capital Fund Division of the United Foundation in 1963), to promote the capital financing of hospitals and health and social service facilities.

In addition to his work as executive head of the United Foundation, Mr. Laidlaw held office in a number of civic, cultural, and health and community service organizations, including the Founders Society of the Detroit Institute of Arts, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, the Greater Detroit Area Hospital Council, and the United Health Foundations.

Mr. Laidlaw retired from the United Foundation in May of 1968 for reasons of ill health. He died in 1972.

The papers of Mr. Laidlaw reflect his work with the United Foundation and the capital financing of hospitals in Detroit, and in furthering the united fund concept nationally.

Important subjects covered in the collection are:

American Cancer Society	Public Welfare
American National Red Cross	Torch Drive
Greater Detroit Area Hospital Council	United Community Funds &
Metropolitan Detroit Building Fund	Councils of America
Michigan United Fund	United Community Services
National Foundation	United Funds
Private Philanthropy	

Among the important correspondents are:

Ralph Blanchard	John E. Hall
Edward N. Cole	H. Clay Howell
Jacques Cousin	Richard Huegli
John Dillencourt	Robert Loosley
Ray Eppert	Robert MacRae
Max Fisher	Allen Merrell
Henry Ford II	Kenneth W. Miller
Lyman Ford	Egbert Neidig
George Haggarty	Bertram Williams

An index to subjects and correspondents will be found on p. 16.

Non-manuscript Material:

Several photographs of Mr. Laidlaw have been placed in the United Foundation photograph collection. An audiotaped interview with him, done by WWJ's Fran Harris in 1966, can be found in the United Community Services Women's Committee Collection.

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1 oversize box

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Correspondence, minutes, and other material relating to the work of various United Foundation committees on which Mr. Laidlaw served.
- Series III, Administrative Files, 1948-1968, Boxes 10-18:
Correspondence, reports, and printed material from executive office subject files used in the administration of the United Foundation.
- Series IV, Torch Drive, 1949-1967, Boxes 19-25 & 1 oversize box:
Correspondence, agenda, promotional, and other material relating to the organization of the annual Torch Drive campaigns.
- Series V, General Correspondence and Speeches, 1948-1972, Boxes 26-32:
General office correspondence and requests for information about the organization of the United Foundation, and speeches delivered by Mr. Laidlaw and other speakers. Included are Mr. Laidlaw's obituaries.
- Series VI, United Funds, 1950-1968, Boxes 32-36:
Correspondence, clippings, and printed material chronicling Mr. Laidlaw's relationship with united fund executives in other cities.
- Series VII, Other Organizations, 1944-1971, Boxes 36-42:
Correspondence, minutes, and reports relating to Mr. Laidlaw's membership in organizations other than the United Foundation.

Series I
Board of Directors, 1949-1968
Boxes 1-6

Correspondence, agenda, minutes, reports, and membership lists documenting United Foundation board and executive committee meetings and activities, including a complete set of annual reports. Files are arranged alphabetically by type of material.

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- 1-22. Agenda, Apr 1950 - Jan 1968
- 23-25. ; Annual Meeting, 1950-52

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- 1-16. Agenda; Annual Meeting, 1953-68

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- 1-22. Agenda; Executive Committee, Jan 1950 - May 1968
- 23-27. Annual Report, 1949-58

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- 1-5. Annual Report, 1959-68
- 6-12. Correspondence, 1949-68
- 13-25. ; Annual Meeting, 1951-68
- 26-28. ; Executive Committee, 1951-68

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- 1-19. Elections, 1949-67
- 20-23. Minutes, Jan 1949 - Sep 1953

Box 6

- 1-11. Minutes, Sep 1954 - Jan 1968
- 12-20. Minutes; Annual Meeting, 1950-68
- 21-36. Minutes; Executive Committee, Aug 1949 - Jan 1968

Series II
United Foundation Committees, 1949-1967
Boxes 7-10

Correspondence, agenda, minutes, reports, and membership lists relating to the work of various United Foundation committees on which Mr. Laidlaw served, especially those charged with setting the campaign goal and with determining agency allocations and capital funding needs. Of particular interest are the files of committees examining the relationship between United Community Services and the United Foundation. Files are arranged alphabetically by committee.

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1. Admissions & Distribution Comm.; corres., 1949-50
2. ; grants questionnaire, 1949
3. ; Hogan's Inst, of Technology,
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- 4-5. ; minutes, Jan - Jul 1949
6. ; minutes, Aug 1949 - Apr 1950
7. ; Path-Finder Guide Dogs,
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8. ; preferential treatment, 1949
9. ; reports, 1949-50
10. Area Study Committee, 1956
- 11-13. Building Committee, 1956 - Feb 1961
14. Building Fund Advisory Comm.; agenda & minutes, Jun - Jul 1953
- 15-16. ; corres., Jan - Jul 1953
17. ; League for Handicapped, 1953
18. Capital Fund Planning Comm., 1951
- 19-20. Citizens' Administrative Survey Comm., 1952-53
21. Comm. for Coordinating Polio Services, 1950-51
22. Committee for National Defense, 1950-51
- 23-25. Economic Survey Committee, 1952-55, 1959
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4. Goal and Allocations Comm.; agenda, 1954
- 5-8. ; corres. & reports, 1950-54, 1957,
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21. Structure Study Comm.; minutes, 1962
22. Study Comm. on Unification of Campaigns, Jun 1949 - Jan 1950

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1. Study Comm. on Unification of Campaigns, Feb 1950 - Mar 1951
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4. Suburban Advisory Comms.; Birm-Blmfld-Franklin Survey, 1951
5. ; corres., 1950-57
6. ; membership, 1954-57
- 7-8. ; minutes, 1950-57
9. UF-Chest-Council Liaison Comm., Jun 1950

Series III
 Administrative Files, 1948-1968
 Boxes 10-18

Correspondence, clippings, reports, budgets, and material relating to the administration of the United Foundation, especially in the areas of labor and public relations. Other areas of documentation include the association between the United Foundation and United Community Services and their response to the 1967 Detroit riot, and the organization of charitable giving among federal government employees. A few items concerning the Detroit Patriotic Fund and the Detroit Community Fund predate the series inclusive dates. Much of the material from the period of Mr. Laidlaw's illness, 1967-68, comes from the offices of Jacques Cousin and H. Clay Howell, his executive successors. Files are arranged alphabetically by subject.

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10. Adoptions, 1953, 1961
11. American Social Hygiene Assn., 1949-50, 1954, 1956
12. Anti-Poverty Programs, 1964-66
13. Associated Services for the Armed Forces, 1950
14. Board Minutes Agency Circulation Survey, 1962
15. Budget, 1949-50
16. Citizens Research Council; Michigan tax system, 1967
17. ; newsletter, 1966-67
18. Citizens Research Council Study, 1968
19. ; corres., 1967-68
20. ; draft, 1967
21. City Income Tax & Pledge Cancellations, 1962

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- 15-17. Community Chest of Metro. Detroit, 1950-51
18. ; Corporation Gifts Coram., 1948

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- 3-4. Detroit Charitable Solicitations Ordinance, 1953-54
5. Detroit Community Fund, 1923-27
6. Detroit Fund-raising; history
7. Detroit Patriotic Fund, 1918
- 8-11. Detroit Riot, Jul 1967 - 1968
12. Diabetes Research Grant, 1965-66
13. FCC; utilities contributions, 1963-64
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- 1-14. Labor, 1949-67
 - 15. Mayor's Comm. for Community Renewal, 1967
 - 16. Mayor's Comm. for Human Resources Development, 1967-68
 - 17. MDBF; Detroit Comm. on Community Relations, 1962-63
 - 18. Medical Research Coordination Proposal, 1956-60
 - 19. Michigan Public Health Appropriation, 1960
- 20-23. Michigan United Fund, 1956-58

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- 1-3. Michigan United Fund, 1959-64
- 4-11. Misc. Philanthropic Appeals; A-Y, 1950-67
 - 12. N.A.A.C.P./Urban League, 1963-64
- 13-17. New Detroit Committee, Jul 1967 - Jan 1968
- 18. Newburgh, N. Y. Welfare Program 1961-62

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- 1. Peoples Community Hospital Authority, 1966
- 2. President's Council on Youth Opportunity, 1967
- 3. Providence Hospital Campaign, 1963-64
- 4. Public Relations; clippings, 1949, 1954
- 5-22. ; corres. & reports, 1949-68
- 23-25. ; Cosmopolitan article, Jun - Oct 1952
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- 1-2. Public Relations; Newsweek article, 1963
- 3. ; Speakers Bureau, 1949, 1956
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- 5. Public Relations Committee, 1953, 1968
- 6. Public Relations Study, 1967
- 7. Racetrack Solicitation, 1955. 1960
- 8-9. Recording for the Blind, 1956-58
- 10. Religious Assistance & Protective Services, 1966-68
- 11. State Employee Payroll Deduction, 1963
- 12-15. Suburban Divisions; corres. & reports, 1949-65
 - 16. ; Dearborn, 1964
 - 17. ; Livonia, 1961
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- 21. ; Tri-Co. Campaign Program, 1956-58

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- 1-3. Tax Reform Legislation, 1963
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- 6-8. UF-MUF-UCS Budgeting Process, 1963
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- 1-6. United Community Services, 1959-64
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21. Women for the United Foundation, 1964

Series IV
Torch Drive, 1949-1967
Boxes 19-25 & 1 oversize box

Correspondence, reports, contribution analyses, agenda, press releases, and other documents outlining the organizational structure, planning, and conduct of the annual Torch Drive campaigns. Much of the material from 1967-68 originated in the offices of Jacques Cousin and campaign director John E. Hall. The oversize box contains Torch Drive booklets, posters, and publicity. Files are arranged alphabetically by subject.

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Correspondence, memoranda, reports, and speeches dealing with, among other subjects, the concept of unified fund-raising, including the conflict with national health and welfare agencies, the establishment and operation of the United Foundation, agency requests for funding, and Mr. Laidlaw's speaking engagements. Some of the material from late 1967 and early 1968 comes from the office of Jacques Cousin, who assumed leadership of the United Foundation during the illness which forced Mr. Laidlaw's retirement. Files are arranged chronologically and by type of material, with general correspondence first.

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United Funds, 1950-1968

Correspondence, clippings, reports, and printed material detailing Mr. Laidlaw's relationship with united fund executives in other cities, many of whose operations he helped organize. Issues discussed include private philanthropy versus government aid, the role of the united fund movement within the United Community Funds & Councils of America and the national health agencies' hostility towards it, and campaign and administrative techniques. Files are arranged alphabetically by city or state.

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- 9. Rochester, N. Y., 1955-68
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- 17. Seattle, 1955, 1965-66
- 18. Springfield, Ill., 1958
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Correspondence, reports, minutes, and printed material relating to Mr. Laidlaw's membership in and work on the committees of various organizations, especially the Greater Detroit Area Hospital Council, the United Health Foundations, and the United Community Funds & Councils of America. His attempt to organize cooperative efforts in the areas of medical research and education and capital funding of health care facilities is particularly well-documented. A few files date from his years with the War Chest and Community Chest of Metropolitan Detroit. Files are arranged alphabetically by organization.

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- 1-2. CCC; Special Comm. on United Funds, Jan - Feb 1955
- 3. Detroit Olympic Committee, 1963
- 4. Fund Raising Institute, 1964
- 5. Grtr. Detroit Area Hosp. Coun. (GDAHC); bed needs study, 1955
- 6-22. GDAHC; corres. & reports, 1955 - May 1961

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- 1-9. GDAHC; corres. & reports, Jun 1961 - 1965
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