

**Michigan Coalition for Human Rights Records**

4.5 linear feet

1975-2005 (bulk 1981-1995)

Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit MI

Finding aid written by Todd M. Butkovich on April 3, 2010.

**Accession Number:** 1790

**Creator:** Michigan Coalition for Human Rights

**Acquisition:** The Michigan Coalition for Human Rights records were first deposited at the Reuther Library on November 14, 2002 with a subsequent deposit on June 6, 2006.

**Language:** Materials entirely in English

**Access:** Papers are open for use. **Restriction: Personal information related to members and donors may not be published.**

**Use:** Refer to the Walter P. Reuther Library *Rules for Use of Archival Materials*.

**Notes:** Citation style: "Michigan Coalition for Human Rights Records, Box [#], Folder [#], Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University."

**Related Material:** Reuther Library Collections: Organization in Solidarity with Central America Records, Mildred Jeffrey Papers, Ernest L. Horne Papers

Photographs, oversize items including awards, and other items were transferred to the Reuther Library's Audiovisual Department.

## **History**

The Michigan Coalition for Human Rights (MCHR) was formed in Detroit in December 1980 by a group of Detroit-area religious leaders representing a broad range of Judeo-Christian and Muslim denominations. Initially organized with the goal of providing a liberal alternative to conservative Christian organizations such as The Moral Majority, the group's primary issues included racism, militarism, gay rights, unemployment, poverty, and other socio-economic and local political topics.

In 1981, the Steering Committee (later re-named the Board of Directors) began holding meetings at the Episcopalian Diocesan Center in Detroit. This committee consisted of President Bishop H. Coleman McGhee Jr., Vice President Reverend Dorothy Boroush, Treasurer Reverend James E. Wadsworth, Secretary Erwin Brown, and Executive Director Lawrence M. Ventline. In 1984, Thomas Fentin joined the organization as its first full-time director.

Among the actions undertaken by the group under Fentin's tenure, which lasted until 1990, were a movement to abolish the death penalty and keep it from being enacted in Michigan, a boycott of the Coors Brewing Company practicing policies discriminatory to gays and lesbians, a campaign against President Ronald Reagan's Central American policies, and a campaign preventing the confirmation of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court.

One of the group's high profile activities was the annual Freedom Tour, begun in 1989. Started with the goal of educating local youths about the civil rights movement of the 1960s, these tours took dozens of local children on bus trips through the southern United States with stops at important places in civil rights history, including Selma, Birmingham, and Atlanta. Subsequent Freedom Tours were conducted to educate about Michigan's civil rights history and the role of Underground Railroad in the United States and Canada.

The organization was dedicated to improving race relations in the Detroit area and promoting social justice and other liberal causes in the state of Michigan and nationwide as well as the promotion of human rights in Africa and other international regions. In particular, the MCHR was heavily involved in the struggle against Apartheid in South Africa. This began in 1985 with a boycott of South American kruggerand gold coins that was expanded the next year to include all South Africa imports including lobsters and other food items. Over the course of the next several years, the group promoted several anti-Apartheid events in the Detroit-area including appearances by high-profile African dignitaries including Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Apartheid officially ended in 1994.

MCHR continues its operations today and is involved in international issues promoting peace in the Middle East and civil liberties in the United States.

## **Scope and Content**

The Michigan Coalition for Human Rights Records document its operations and activities between the organization's formal inception in 1981 and 2003, with some supplemental articles and materials on human rights issues from the period of 1975-1980. Materials reflect the goal of the MCHR to encourage those in the Detroit-area to participate in events and campaigns promoting better race relations, increased civil liberties, and a greater respect for human rights abroad. Issues including capital punishment, race relations in Detroit, gay rights, children's rights, apartheid in South Africa, US involvement in Central America, as well as the internal financial operations of the MCHR are documented.

The collection includes correspondence, board meetings minutes, staff reports, financial records, grant proposals and other related documents, newspaper clippings, newsletters and other printed materials, promotional fliers, mailings, and pamphlets, program booklets from annual dinners, speeches, educational materials, government documents, endorsements, intra-office memos, and media releases.

### **Important Subjects Include:**

- Africa
- Apartheid
- Archdiocese of Detroit
- Capital Punishment
- Central America
- Children's Rights
- Detroit, Michigan
- Environmentalism
- Freedom Tours
- Gay Rights
- Militarism
- Mozambique
- NAACP
- Racism
- United Automobile Workers

### **Important Names:**

- Anthony, Wendell
- Bond, Julian
- Ernst, Conrad
- Fentin, Thomas
- Jeffrey, Mildred
- Kidd, David
- Lapsley, Fr. Michael
- Mahaffey, Maryann
- Mandela, Nelson
- McGehee, Bishop H. Coleman Jr.

Melton, Reverend Fred  
Millet, Edmund  
Patterson, Brooks  
Paulsen, Fr. Casimir  
Rooney, Charles  
Savoie, Kathryn  
Simons, Rudy  
Tutu, Archbishop Desmond  
Watson, Joann  
Williams, Fred

**Series I: Administrative Documents, 1981-2000**

Correspondence, financial documents, minutes of board meetings, early foundation documents, information on prominent members, grant proposals, and other records.

**Series II: Events, 1981-2005**

Materials related to annual dinners, Freedom Tours, lectures, film presentations, and panel discussions organized or sponsored by the MCHR. Includes fliers, correspondence, promotional items, news clippings, and other records.

**Series III: State and Local Issues, 1982-2000**

Materials related to urban Detroit and race relations issues, state budgets issues, and other local concerns. Includes media releases, correspondence, news clippings, and other records.

**Series IV: National Issues, 1975-2000**

Materials related to capital punishment, gay rights, economic concerns, and other national concerns. Includes correspondence, news clippings, media releases, and other materials.

**Series V: International Issues, 1977-2000**

Mostly related to South Africa and Apartheid with some material related to other African nations, the Middle East, and Central America. Materials include correspondence, printed materials, news clippings, educational materials, government documents, news letters, and media releases.

## **Arrangement**

Arranged in five series – Series I (Boxes 1 – 2), Series II (Box 2), Series III (Box 2), Series IV (Box 3), and Series V (Boxes 3 - 5). Folders are arranged, in each series, alphabetically by subject and then chronologically by year, if applicable.

## **Series I**

### **Box 1**

1. Annual Meeting, November 5, 1992
2. Annual Meeting, November 18, 1993
3. Audit, 1996-1997
4. Awards, 1985-1993
5. Board of Directors Contacts/Resumes, 1987-1999, undated
6. Board of Directors Retreat, June 10, 1998
7. By-laws, Personal Policies, undated
8. Combined Federal Campaign, 1999
9. Corporate Campaign Mailing List, 1991
10. Correspondence, 1981-1989
11. Correspondence, 1990-1999, undated
12. Davenport, Curtis, 1990
13. Donations, 1999-2000
14. Executive Board Biographies/Resumes, 1993-2000, undated
15. Financial Statements/Budget Reports/Income Reports, 1981-1988
16. Financial Statements/Budget Reports/Income Reports, 1989
17. Financial Statements/Budget Reports/Income Reports, 1990
18. Financial Statements/Budget Reports/Income Reports, 1991-1992
19. Financial Statements/Budget Reports/Income Reports, 1993-1999
20. Founding Documents, Early Activities, 1981-1982
21. Founding Documents, Early Activities, 1983-1984
22. Fundraising, 1987-1993
23. Grant Information, 1984-1991
24. Grant Information, 1992-1995, undated
25. Grant Information; Black United Fund, 1987-1995
26. Grant Information; North Shore Unitarian Universalist VEATCH Program, 1991-1992
27. Grant Information; Proposals, undated
28. Grant Information; Racine Dominicans, 1990-1996
29. Grant Information; Skillman Foundation, 1989-1996 (Bulk: 1996)
30. History-Michigan Coalition for Human Rights, undated
31. Membership, 1991-1993
32. Membership, 1997-2000
33. Membership Committee, 1981
34. Membership and Funds Campaign, 1983
35. Michigan Department of Commerce Forms, 1986-1988
36. Minutes; Board of Directors, 1986
37. Minutes; Board of Directors, 1987

38. Minutes; Board of Directors, 1988
39. Minutes; Board of Directors, 1989
40. Minutes; Board of Directors, 1990
41. Minutes; Board of Directors, 1991-1992
42. Minutes; Board of Directors, 1993
43. Minutes; Board of Directors, 1994-1995
44. Minutes; Board of Directors, 1996-1999
45. Minutes; Executive Committee, 1989-1999
46. Minutes; Finance and Fundraising Committee, 1987-1989
47. Minutes; Finance and Fundraising Committee, 1990
48. Minutes; Finance and Fundraising Committee, 1991-1993
49. Minutes; General Membership, 1982-1984
50. Minutes; Other Committees, 1989-1998
51. Newsletters, 1982-1985
52. One Hundred for Human Rights, 1987-1992
53. One Hundred for Human Rights, 1995
54. One Hundred for Human Rights, 1996-1997
55. One Hundred for Human Rights, 1998-1999
56. Pamphlets, 1989-1999, undated
57. Projections, Proposals, 1982-1989, undated

## **Box 2**

1. Reports, 1987-1999, undated
2. Report; Avrushin, Adam (Intern)-1994
3. Resource Library, 1991-1995
4. Stack, Hal (Wayne State University Labor Studies Director), 1998-1999
5. Steering Committee 1981-1984, undated
6. Taxes, 1988-1989
7. United Auto Workers, 1987-1991
8. Want Ads, 1984, undated

## **Series II**

### **Box 2**

9. African Dinner and Market, 1992-1999
10. Annual Dinner, June 22, 1989
11. Annual Dinner, June 21, 1990
12. Annual Dinner, June 27, 1991
13. Annual Dinner, June 25, 1992
14. Annual Dinner, June 24, 1993
15. Annual Dinner, October 11, 1995
16. Annual Dinner, November 11, 1995
17. Annual Dinner Program Booklets, 1989-1995
18. Annual Dinner Program Booklets, 1996-2001
19. Annual Dinner Program Booklets, 2003-2005
20. Cross Colors/Common Ground Foundation, 1993
21. Detroit 300 Events, 2001

22. EarthFest, 1992
23. Environmental Justice, June 18, 1994
24. Events, 1985-1997
25. Event Fliers, 1981-1994
26. Event Fliers, 1995-2003, undated
27. *Eyes on the Prize*, 1987-1988
28. Films, 1986-1995, undated
29. *Four Little Girls*, 1997
30. Freedom Tour, 1989
31. Freedom Tour II, 1990
32. Freedom Tour III, 1991
33. Freedom Tours, 1992-1994
34. Freedom Tour: Freedom in Our Backyard, 1995
35. Freedom Tour: Canadian Underground, June 30, 1996
36. Freedom Tour, 1997
37. Freedom Tour: Michigan Freedom Tour, 1999
38. Freedom Tours; News Clippings, 1988-1989 (Bulk: 1989)
39. "God, Guns, and Old Glory: Where Did We Go Wrong?" Panel, May 31, 1995
40. Immigration Forum, 1987
41. "Prosecuting Children as Adults," April 4, 2000
42. "Question of Justice" Film/Lecture Series, 1993
43. Theater, 1987-1999
44. Woodward March Commemorations, 1988-1993 (Bulk: 1993)
45. World Conference Against Racism, 2001

### **Series III**

#### **Box 2**

46. Anti-Surveillance Ordinance, 1996
47. Archdiocese of Detroit, 1987-1993, undated
48. Bishop's Anti-Racism Committee, 1992-2000
49. Coalition for Human Needs, 1986-1990, undated
50. Dearborn Parks Coalition, 1986
51. Heidelberg Project, 1994
52. Holocaust Memorial Center, undated
53. Michigan Budget, 1982
54. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1989-1995
55. News Clippings, 1982-1988
56. News Clippings, 1989-1995, undated
57. Open School, 1990-1993
58. Patterson, Brooks; Protest, 1984
59. Product Liability, 1995
60. Stop the Violence Campaign, 1993

## **Series IV**

### **Box 3**

1. Ad Hoc Coalition for Commission on Peace, 1995
2. Arms Race, 1982
3. Coors Boycott, 1982-1986, undated
4. Death Penalty, 1978-1985
5. Death Penalty, 1986-1987 (Bulk: 1986)
6. Death Penalty, undated
7. Death Penalty, undated
8. Death Penalty; News Clippings, 1985-1987, undated
9. Gay Rights, 1983-1994, undated (Bulk: 1983-1988)
10. Jubilee 2000/USA Education Packet, 2000
11. King, Rodney, 1992
12. Michigan Coalition for a Just Supreme Court, 1987-1988
13. Moral Majority, 1975-1981 (Bulk: 1980)
14. Native Americans, 1991-1992
15. Other Organizations, undated
16. Printed Materials, 1979-1992
17. Religious Rights, 1985-1987
18. "Rights of the Child," 1989-1992 (Bulk: 1989)
19. Williams, Fred; News Clippings, 1988-1993
20. World Bank, 1995

## **Series V**

### **Box 3**

21. "Abolishing Apartheid/Ending Racism: The Struggle for Justice in Southern Africa and the U.S." March 6-8, 1992
22. "Abolishing Apartheid/Ending Racism: The Struggle for Justice in Southern Africa and the U.S.;" Evaluations/Reviews, March 6-8, 1992
23. "Abolishing Apartheid/Ending Racism: The Struggle for Justice in Southern Africa and the U.S.;" Sponsorship/Funding, March 6-8, 1992
24. Africa Fund, 1985-1993 (Bulk: 1991-1992)
25. *Africa News*; Selected Issues, September 1987-March 1988
26. *Africa News*; Selected Issues, April-September 1988
27. *Africa News*; Selected Issues, October 1988-April 1989
28. *Africa News*; Selected Issues, May 1989-February 1990
29. *Africa News*; Selected Issues, March 1990-February 1991
30. *Africa News*; Selected Issues, April-October 1991
31. *America's Watch*, 1984-1985
32. *America's Watch*, 1985-1986
33. Angola, 1982-1997, undated
34. Apartheid, 1988-1997, undated
35. "Apartheid is Wrong: A Curriculum for Young People," 1990

### **Box 4**

1. "Apartheid is Wrong: A Curriculum for Young People," 1990



2. "Apartheid is Wrong: A Curriculum for Young People," 1990
3. Apartheid; Local Events, 1986-1991, undated
4. Apartheid; Other Regions, 1991-1993
5. *Baobab Notes*, 1992-1997
6. Center for Global Education Travel Seminar: South Africa, 1992-1994
7. Center for Global Education Travel Seminar: South Africa, 1995
8. Center for Global Exchange Reality Tour: The New South Africa, 1997-1999
9. Central America, 1986-1991, undated
10. Diakonia Council of Churches, 1997-1998
11. Gcabashe, Sipha; Visit, 1992
12. Goad, Daphne; Visit, 1993
13. Hani, Chris; Assassination, 1994
14. Human Awareness Programme; South Africa, 1984
15. Human Rights Commission Repression Reports, 1991-1995
16. Krugerrand Campaign, 1985
17. Lapsley, Fr. Michael; Cancelled Visit, 1994-1997 (Bulk: 1997)
18. Merebank, 1995-1998
19. Middle East, 1988-1991, undated
20. Mozambique, 1986-2000
21. Mozambique: Apartheid's Second Front: A Resource Kit, undated
22. Mozambique Support Network Newsletter, 1988-1991 (Bulk: 1989)
23. Namibia, 1987-1995
24. Nigeria, 1994
25. Paulsen, Fr. Casimir, 1987-1993, undated
26. Philani Nutrition Centers, 1994-1999
27. Printed Materials; Mozambique, 1977-1988
28. Printed Materials; Mozambique, 1989-1992
29. Printed Materials; Mozambique, 1994-2000, undated
30. Printed Materials; South Africa, 1977-1984
31. Printed Materials; South Africa, 1985-1987
32. Printed Materials; South Africa, 1987-1989
33. Printed Materials; South Africa, 1990
34. Printed Materials; South Africa, 1990-1992
35. Printed Materials; South Africa, 1992-1994

#### **Box 5**

1. Printed Materials; South Africa, 1995-1997, undated
2. Printed Materials; Zimbabwe, 1982-1983, undated
3. Restoration and Development Program, 1985-1995, undated
4. *Sankofa* (film), 1995
5. Sisters of Mercy; Winterveldt/South African Medical Fund, 1988-1994, undated
6. Sisulu, Albertina; Visit, 1994
7. South Africa Boycott, 1985-1986
8. South African Divestment Bills, 1977-1988
9. South African Divestment Bills, 1989-1991, undated
10. South African Divestment Bills, undated

11. South African Divestment Bills; HB 4770, HB 4771, February 1986
12. South African Divestment Bills; HB 4770, HB 4771, February 1986
13. South African Election, 1994
14. South African Environmental Justice, 1994
15. South Africa Sister Community Project, 1989
16. South Africa Education and Action Kit, undated
17. TransAfrica: Report Card on U.S. Sanctions Against South Africa, June 16, 1991
18. Tutu, Archbishop Desmond; Visit, 1993
19. *Unity: The Voice of the Clothing Workers*, 1984-1985, undated