
Register of the Citizens Committee to Preserve American Freedoms Records, 1947-1971

Collection number: MSS 005

Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research

Los Angeles, California

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Citizens Committee to Preserve American Freedoms Records,

Date (inclusive): 1947-1971

Collection number: MSS 005

Creator: Citizens Committee to Preserve American Freedoms

Extent: 5 document cases

1 2/3 cubic feet

Repository: Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research.

Los Angeles, California

Language: English

Access

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History

In 1952, the Citizens Committee to Preserve American Freedoms (CCPAF) was formed to oppose the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC). CCPAF argued that HUAC violated the First Amendment rights of the citizens who were called before it to testify about their political beliefs and associations. To further the work of the organization, CCPAF held rallies, placed newspaper ads, distributed pamphlets, initiated letter writing campaigns and put on fundraising events.

Frank Wilkinson, who helped found CCPAF after losing his job with the City of Los Angeles Housing authority because he refused to take a loyalty oath, served as CCPAF secretary. Chair of the organization was Dorothy Marshall and subsequently Reverend A.A. Heist.

In March of 1954, the CCPAF formed a coalition with the National Council of the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee (ECLC). It was as a representative of ECLC that Wilkinson was subpoenaed by HUAC in 1958 to appear before the HUAC hearings in Atlanta, Georgia; Wilkinson was ultimately cited for contempt of Congress and was sentenced to a year in prison.

By 1956, strategies were being developed to abolish HUAC or at least stop appropriations to sustain it. In 1957, the CCPAF and ECLC initiated a campaign to abolish it. Previously, the organizations had supported the victims of the hearings, opposed its activities and questioned the legality of its existence, while not necessarily focusing on its abolition.

In November 1956, 66 subpoenas were served on the West Coast with 31 going to Los Angeles. Most of these were served to the Los Angeles Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born. Others went to the secretaries of the National Lawyers Guild, the Jewish Information Service and the CCPAF, as well as to the former secretaries of the Civil Rights Congress and the Negro Labor Council. Reverend Stephen Fritchman of the First Unitarian Church was also subpoenaed. The hearings were scheduled for December 6 and 7, 1956. CCPAF intervened by raising legal fees, providing collective legal briefing, distributing leaflets and publicizing the hearings through press releases, radio, television and newspaper ads urging the public to attend.

CCPAF continued as an organization until 1966 when the executive board dissolved it and joined forces with the National Committee Against the House Un-American Activities (NCAHUAC), CCPAF then became known as Southern Californians to Abolish HUAC with officers Dorothy Marshall (chair), Bernice Belton (executive secretary) and Betty Rottger (treasurer). Frank Wilkinson, who had been secretary of the CCPAF continued in his position as Field Representative/Executive Director of NCAHUAC, a post he had held since 1960.

When, in 1969, HUAC's name was changed to House Committee on Internal Security (HISC), NCAHUAC became NACHUAC/HISC. In 1970, the name was changed to National Committee Against Repressive Legislation (NCARL) as the organization recognized the need to broaden its work beyond the abolition of HUAC/HISC. The Congressional committee had not held a major hearing since 1965. Frank Wilkinson, based in Los Angeles, continued to be its Field Representative/Executive Director, working with affiliates in San Francisco, Mountain View, California, Seattle, Washington, DC., Cambridge, Memphis, Louisville and Chicago.

HUAC/HISC was abolished in 1975. NCARL has continued its work against legislative violations of the Constitution. A major project in the late 1970s was the campaign against passage of the Criminal Code Reform bill which contained several sections NCARL believed to be in violation of the First Amendment.

Scope and Content

The collection is arranged into series: GENERAL FILE, CCPAF AND AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS, CCPAF FINANCES and NCAHUAC AND AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS.

The GENERAL FILE (folders 1-7) contains material from other organizations who opposed HUAC or worked on other civil liberties issues. It also contains articles in pamphlet or flyer form. For example the Harvard Law Review on the Report of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, October 1947; The Nation Tooling Up for Mass Repression: The Subversive Activities Control Board by Laurent B. Frantz, December 12, 1955; a speech by Representative James Roosevelt (1960); and a reprint from The Christian Century Why The HUAC Should Go, by Harold E. Fey.

There are resolutions and statements adopted by the California Democratic Council, the San Francisco Labor Council, the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, and the Youth Committee for Civil Liberties protesting the tactics of HUAC; the Youth Committee for Civil Liberties called for HUAC's abolition.

There is a list of names and addresses, mainly Massachusetts residents, who petitioned the House of Representatives to abolish HUAC, in addition to a mimeographed brochure on opponents of McCarthyism, which includes a bibliography. Also included is a copy of Excerpts from Transcript of Hearings, House Committee on Un-American Activities, for Thursday, December 6, 1956 (page two is missing), and a copy of a subpoena to appear before HUAC issued in brochure form by the ACLU Pasadena chapter protesting HUAC's subpoena of 70 teachers in the Los Angeles Area.

The Emergency Civil Liberties Committee file (folder 4) contains reprints of articles regarding HUAC and a couple of pamphlets calling for the abolition of HUAC.

There are other flyers, leaflets, articles, petitions and announcements from other organizations who were concerned about HUAC and the absence of civil liberties; not all groups are named. The Defenders of Three Against HUAC (Russ Nixon, Dagmar Wilson and Donna Allen)

folder (#7) contains an appeal letter, a flyer and an article on Three Against HUAC in Four Lights, March 1965 published by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

The list of subversive organizations in this collection is from the Attorney General, but issued by the Better Business Bureau of Long Beach. The CCPAF AND AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS file (folders 8-11) contains flyers, leaflets, appeal letters for funds and letters giving information on HUAC and its abuses in addition to announcing progress made against HUAC by the CCPAF. There are statements opposing HUAC, instruction letters and a brochure on Facts and Opinions on the Brownell-Butler Letter (1954).

There is some correspondence. There is a letter that was sent to other committees in the form of a contract to sponsor CCPAF activities and a copy of a letter from Stephen Young, U.S. Senator from Ohio to Neil E. Wettermen criticizing Wettermen's superpatriotism and censure of free speech.

Included in the file are reports on hearings, speeches, grants, a copy of the testimony by Frank Wilkinson in US of A vs. Frank Wilkinson January 23, 1959, and pamphlets Behind The Bars for The First Amendment.... March 1960 and A Collection of Editorials and Resolutions in Opposition to The Un-American Activities Committee January 1962.

The Teachers Defense Committee (folder 11) was formed in Los Angeles and San Francisco in support of the 110 teachers who were served with subpoenas in June 1959. The hearings were ultimately cancelled. The folder contains flyers and mimeographed copies of statements surrounding the issues of the 110 teachers. The Teachers Defense Committee may not have been an affiliate of CCPAF.

CCPAF FINANCES (folders 12-30) contain the receipts, tax forms, financial reports and bank statements of the CCPAF. Most of the receipts cover the day to day operating expenses of CCPAF, such as receipts for office supplies, postage, printing costs and expense accounts submitted by Frank Wilkinson. The tax forms deal with the payroll; Dorothy Marshall and Frank Wilkinson were paid staff members. The payroll records go up to 1957. The correspondence file in the CCPAF FINANCES series relates to the IRS investigation on the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU). The IRS was corresponding with CCPAF and the ILWU regarding the ILWU purchase of some CCPAF pamphlets.

The NCAHUAC AND AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS series (folders 32-41) contains some issues of Abolition News, the newsletter of NCAHUAC, later NCARL. The series also contains petitions, flyers, pamphlets, bulletins, press releases, reprints of articles on why HUAC must be abolished and who supports its abolition, and progress reports on the activities of NCAHUAC. There are appeal letters for funds, a letter from Frank Wilkinson to Leslie [?] regarding a program honoring Donna Allen and flyers and leaflets from the Bay Area Student Committee, the Northern Californians to Abolish HUAC and the Southern Californians to Abolish HUAC. The file (folder 41) that contains material from NCARL consists of bulletins, flyers and leaflets.

GENERAL FILE

Box 1, Folder 1 **Pamphlets and Reprints. 1947, 1955, 1957, 1960-1967.**
Box 1, Folder 2 **Resolutions and Statements. 1959.**
Box 1, Folder 3 **General Literature on HUAC Activities and Support Groups Against HUAC. 1950s, Nds.**
Box 1, Folder 4 **Emergency Civil Liberties Committee. General Literature. 1960-1961.**
Box 1, Folder 5 **General Literature on HUAC Activities and Support Groups Against HUAC. 1960-1962, 1965, 1967-1968,
1971-1972, 1981, Nds.**
Box 1, Folder 6 **List of Subversive Organizations. 1964.**
Box 1, Folder 7 **Defenders of Three Against HUAC. General Literature. 1965.**

CCPAF AND AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS

Box 1, Folder 8 **General Literature. 1950s.**
Box 1, Folder 9 **Reports and Correspondence. [1965?], 1959, 1961-1962, 1965, 1967-1968.**
Box 1, Folder 10 **General Literature, 1959-1966.**
Box 1, Folder 11 **Teachers Defense Committee. 1959.**

CCPAF FINANCES

- Box 1, Folder 12 **Cash Account and Tax Returns. 1953-1954.**
- Box 1, Folder 13-14 **Receipts, Tax Returns, Financial Statements. 1955-1956.**
- Box 2, Folder 15 **Receipts, Tax Returns, Financial Statements. 1957.**
- Box 2, Folder 16-17 **Receipts. 1958-1959.**
- Box 2, Folder 18 **Receipts, Expense Reports. 1960, 1962, 1970.**
- Box 2, Folder 19-20 **Bank Statements. 1953-1954.**
- Box 3, Folder 21-24 **Bank Statements. 1955-1958.**
- Box 4, Folder 25 **Check Stubs. 1954-1958.**
- Box 2, Folder 26 **Correspondence. IRS. 1957.**
- Box 2, Folder 27 **Deposit Slips. 1960.**
- Box 2, Folder 28-30 **Receipt Books. 1957-1959.**

NCAHUAC AND AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS

- Box 5, Folder 31 **Abolition News. 1963: Jan., Feb., Nov., Dec.; 1964: Feb., Nov.; 1965: Feb.; 1966: Jan.; 1967: Jan., Feb., June; 1968; 1973.**
NCAHUAC
- Box 5, Folder 32 **General Literature. 1960-1961, Nds.**
- Box 5, Folder 33 **Receipt Book. 1960.**
- Box 5, Folder 34 **General Literature. 1962-1964.**
- Box 5, Folder 35 **Correspondence. 1965.**
- Box 5, Folder 36-38 **General Literature. 1965-1969.**
- Box 5, Folder 39 **Bay Area Student Committee and Northern Californians to Abolish HUAC. 1960, 1964, 1967.**
- Box 5, Folder 40 **Southern Californians to Abolish HUAC. General Literature. 1966-1969.**
- Box 5, Folder 41 **National Committee Against Repressive Legislation. General Literature. 1970-1971.**