
Inventory of the San Francisco Labor Council Records, 1902-1976 (predominantly 1965-1973)

Accession number: 85-3

Labor Archives & Research Center

San Francisco State University
San Francisco, California

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1987

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Descriptive Summary

Title: San Francisco Labor Council Records,

Date (inclusive): 1902-1976

Date (bulk): (predominantly 1965-1973)

Accession number: 85-3

Creator: San Francisco Labor Council

Extent: 56 cubic feet and 77 bound volumes of newspaper

Repository: San Francisco State University. Labor Archives & Research Center
San Francisco, California 94132

Shelf location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Center's online catalog.

Language: English

Provenance

Official records of the San Francisco Labor Council have been generated on a continuing basis since its organization in 1892. Early records were lost in the 1906 fires. Most of the records produced since that time until 1964 were placed in the Bancroft Library at U.C. Berkeley in 1969.

This group of records was placed in the Labor Archives and Research Center at San Francisco State University by the SFLC in 1985. The collection was appraised by LARC director Lynn A. Bonfield who organized the boxing and transferral of its contents during the summer and fall of 1985. Rough processing, arrangement and description of the collection was done by Bill Walker under the supervision of Lynn A. Bonfield and LARC archivist Leon Sompolinsky in the spring of 1987.

Access

Collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation

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History

The San Francisco Labor Council was organized in 1892 and received its charter from the American Federation of Labor in May of 1893. In 1958 it merged with the San Francisco Congress of Industrial Organizations' Industrial Union Council, some 3 years after the national AFL-CIO merger.

The SFLC is the primary voice of organized labor in San Francisco, currently representing (1987) 130 affiliated union locals with close to 80,000 total members. In the late 1960s membership stood at over 200,000 represented by 150 local bodies. The largest locals came from the service and retail trades, the various machinist and building trades and the numerous marine industries.

The San Francisco Labor Council is one of the major bodies in the California State Federation of Labor and continues to play an active role in the international AFL-CIO.

The SFLC is governed by its Executive Council, members of which are elected by the general membership. The Council is represented by the elected Secretary/Treasurer, who conducts the daily business of the SFLC. Papers of the two of the Secretary/Treasurers are included in this collection. George W. Johns succeeded John F. Shelley in this office in 1950 when Shelley was elected to the U.S. Congress. Johns served until his retirement in 1972. He was replaced by his assistant secretary John F. Crowley who served until his untimely death in 1985. He is succeeded by Walter Johnson, current Secretary/Treasurer of the SFLC.

Scope and Content

The Records in this collection primarily reflect the activities of the SFLC during the 1960s and early 1970s. A number of individual items and files, two of the record series, and most of the long newspaper runs document earlier history of the SFLC and its affiliates.

The bulk of the collection is comprised of the office files of the SFLC and the personal activities files of two of its chief officers, George W. Johns and John F. Crowley, from the early 1960s to 1974. This was a period of great social change in America and in San Francisco, and this is reflected in the record of the Labor Council and its spokesmen. Both Johns and Crowley served on a wide variety of civic and social action boards and commissions, representing not only their personal views but, at least symbolically, that of organized labor. Their papers, and the official files of the SFLC, are filled with material relating to these activities, taken as a whole, these papers document significant facts of the complex social history of San Francisco during this period. Materials are held which relate to civil rights, housing and urban development, poverty, education, the criminal justice system, and changes in the economic base and government of the city.

In addition to this wide range of outside activities, these files also reflect the daily business of the SFLC itself and its relationship to the many affiliate locals as well as current labor actions, sanctions and boycotts. In addition, records of the Law and Legislative Committee and the Committee on Political Education (COPE) document labor's efforts to represent its constituency and influence change in local and state legislation and elections.

Among the documents in the collection created before 1960, there are a number of particular interest. The bound volumes of *The Labor Clarion*, *San Francisco Labor* and *Northern California Labor* chronicle the local labor movement nearly continuously from 1902 on.

Also housed in the collection are bound minutes and reports of the Allied Printing Trades Council, and associate body composed of the numerous unions involved in the printing trades. These volumes span most of the years from 1910 to 1963 and document the tremendous changes which occurred in the industry and its workforce during this period.

A small but significant volume is the bound minutes of the Asiatic Exclusion League, of which the SFLC was a charter member, from 1906 to 1910. This group attempted to document the inferiority of the various Asian races and agitate against their immigration to the United States.

Among the committee records are files which predate the bulk of the collection. The Labor Day Parade files contain letters, reports and papers relating to the demise of the traditional Labor Day Parade in San Francisco in the early 1950s and its eventual replacement with locally written & produced television specials which were aired on Labor Day for several years. Scripts for these programs from 1955, 1956 and 1957 are included.

The files of the Constitution and Bylaws Revision Committee contain some materials relating to the 1955-56 changes in the SFLC Constitution as well as a larger number from 1956-61 reflecting the merger of the local AFL and CIO affiliates and the later loss of the Teamsters locals. Lists of member locals with their current enrollments, number of delegates and yearly financial contribution to the SFLC are included in some of these files.

Of particular note to historians of racial issues and civil rights are two documents relating to blacks in San Francisco in 1962-63. Attached to the minutes of the Executive Committee for 7/18/63 is a photocopy report on "Negro Unemployment" in San Francisco. In the 1962/63 file of the Law & Legislative Committee is a 25 page report from the Superintendent of Schools outlining the racial makeup of the city and it's schools in 1962.

As of June 1987 this collection has only been roughly processed. It should be understood that assessment of the contents and significance of the collection are tentative and will be revised as time and staffing allow further processing to occur.

Labor Clarion

Vol. 1-46

Date: (Feb. 1902 - Mar. 1948)

San Francisco Labor

Vol. 1-21

Date: (Apr. 1951 - Apr. 1973)

Northern California Labor

Vol. 22-31

Date: (May 1973 - Apr. 1981)

Series 1: Official Bulletin & Minutes

Box 1

Bulletin & Minutes - Bound Volumes 1948-1973

Series 2: Secretary/Treasurer's Papers & Activity Files

George Johns

- Box 2 **SCOPE (State Committee On Political Education) 1966-?**
- Box 3 **SCOPE**
- Box 4 **Miscellaneous Job Training**
- Box 5 **SFSU Strike(s) 1969-1970**
- Box 6 **Bay Area Crusade**

John Crowley

- Box 7 **SF School Commission, Medical Health Plan**
- Box 8 **SF School Commission**
- Box 9 **Manpower Development & Training Act (MDTA)**
Manufacturing Employment, Building Trades Juvenile Justice Committee, Hospital Planning, City
Employees Strike 3/70
- Box 10 **St. Mary's Hospital, City College Board, Board of Permit Appeals, Welfare Commission, Bay Area Regional**
Planning
SF Charter Revision
- Box 11 **SF Charter Revision**
- Box 12 **SF Charter Revision**
- Box 13 **Economic Opportunity Council (EOC)**
- Box 14 **EOC**
- Box 15 **CAP Grant, Home Health Aide Grant**

Series 3: Office Files

Subject/Correspondence Files (1965-1972)

Box 16	1965 A-C
Box 17	1965 C-M
Box 18	1965 M-Z
Box 19	1966 A-H
Box 20	1966 H-Z
Box 21	1967 A-H
Box 22	1967 H-M
Box 23	1967 M-Z, 1968 A-C
Box 24	1968 H-Cal
Box 25	1968 D-W
Box 26	1969 A-P
Box 27	1969 P-Z
Box 28	1970 A-SF
Box 29	1970 SF-Z, 1971 A-SF
Box 30	1971 SF-Z
Box 31	1972 A-SF
Box 32	1972 SF-Z

Labor Organizations Files (1965-1972)

Box 33	1965/66 A-N
Box 34	1965/66 O-Z
Box 35	1967/68 A-O
Box 36	1967/68 O-Z
Box 37	1969/70 A-O
Box 38	1969/70 O-Z
Box 39	1970 A-SF
Box 40	1970 SF-Z, 1971 A-M
Box 41	1971/72 M-Z

Day (Chronological) Files (1960-1969)

Box 42	1960-1970
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Series 4: Financial Records

Box 43-44

General

Series 5: Committee Records

Box 45	Executive Committee (1962-1969) Elections Committee (1960-1977) Credentials Committee (1963-1969) Law & Legislative Committee (1962-1972) Delano Caravan Committee (12/66-6/68) Special Committee on Health (1966) Labor Day Parade (1952-1957)
Box 46	Community Service Committee (1962-1967) Constitution and Bylaws Revision Committee (1954-1971) Committee on Political Education (COPE)
Box 47	COPE
Box 48	COPE
Box 49	COPE
Box 50	COPE

Series 6: *San Francisco Labor Newspaper Files*

Box 51

General

Series 7: Union Hall Association

Box 52

Files

Box 53

Legal Papers, Financial Ledgers

Series 8: Allied Printing Trades Council

Box 54	Minutes, Bound 8/10-4/11 Minutes, Bound 10/12-3/14 Minutes, Bound 3/14-6/17
Box 55	Minutes, Bound 7/17-7/23 Minutes, Bound 8/23-7/30 Joint Council on Closer Affiliation Minutes, Bound 10/19-6/22
Box 56	Minutes, Bound 8/30-3/37 Minutes, Bound 5/37-12/49 Minutes, Bound 1/50-12/63