
Register of the Emil and Tassia Freed Papers, 1915-1987

Collection number: MSS 007

Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research

Los Angeles, California

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Emil and Tassia Freed Papers,

Date (inclusive): 1915-1987

Collection number: MSS 007

Creator: Freed Emil
Freed, Tassia

Extent: 8 document cases
2 1/2 cubic feet

Repository: Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research.
Los Angeles, California

Language: English

Access

The collection is available for research only at the Library's facility in Los Angeles. The Library is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. Researchers are encouraged to call or email the Library indicating the nature of their research query prior to making a visit.

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Emil and Tassia Freed Papers, MSS 007, Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research, Los Angeles.

Biography

Emil Freed was a long-time political activist and founder of the Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research (SCL). He was born in New York on June 25, 1901 and named Emanuel Rosenberg. His sister Dorothy Eletz was born March 10, 1903; she was given the name Sophie Dorothy Rosenberg. Their mother was Rose Palevsky of Brest-Litovsk, Russia who married their father Abraham Rosenberg on August 20, 1900. She married her second husband, Morris Freed on November 12, 1909; they moved to Los Angeles in September 1910 where the children's names were changed to Dorothy and Emil Freed.

Emil Freed attended Manual Arts High School in Los Angeles and the University of Southern California where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering in 1923.

Freed married Tatiana Tassia Hirsh in December 1926; Tassia was born in Russia on September 7, 1905. Emil was employed by the QRS Electric Sign Company until 1928 when he opened his own shop, the National Electric Sign Company which he serviced and sold neon signs. This venture lasted for about 13 years. He was next employed as a machinist by the Gillette Machine and Tool Company in Hollywood. He was terminated from his job in June 1942 for talking too much. Until his retirement Emil found employment at various places as a tool designer, planner and sometimes as a teacher.

Freed was a political activist and was a member of the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA) for at least 50 years for which he was given a certificate of merit in 1981.

He spent 10 months in jail in 1949 for participating in the Hollywood Studio Strike of 1945-1946, for which he was ultimately expelled from the International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local #311.

When the Civil Rights Congress was founded, Freed served as the organization secretary for the Los Angeles area. While he was an active organizer, his primary legacy is the founding of the Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research, a library of books, pamphlets, films, tapes and individual and organizational papers on progressive, labor and social movements.

The Southern California Library moved into its present location (6120 S. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, California 90044) in 1973. Freed collected and stored materials that otherwise might have been destroyed during the Cold War Era (McCarthyism) of the 1950s.

The Freeds worked at the library until Emil's death in December 1982. In 1983, Tassia Freed moved to Laguna Hills, California. Despite declining health, she maintained an active interest in the library until her death in April, 1987.

Scope and Content

The Emil and Tassia Freed Papers are divided by series: PERSONAL, GENERAL POLITICS, CORRESPONDENCE, HEARING LOCAL 311, IAM and JAIL-1949.

The PERSONAL file in the Freed Collection contains papers both of Emil and Tassia Freed. Her files include union cards, the couple's marriage certificate, a subpoena to appear before HUAC (House Committee on UnAmerican Activities) and correspondence from the Film Technicians of The Motion Picture Industry, friends and government agencies. There are also letters on political and social issues and acknowledgements of support.

The rest of the PERSONAL files are the papers and other material that belonged to Emil Freed. They contain stories, poems, a building fund note, some journal and newspaper articles, his biography and his engineer field book. Freed's grammar, high school and college diplomas are also included in this section.

Freed designed several devices for which he applied for patents; folder no. 11 contains some of the drawings and correspondence referring to these designs and patents.

Within the collection are the dues cards to organizations and unions Freed joined, in addition to his social security card and other identification cards.

In August 1942, Emil Freed corresponded with the Selective Service System requesting to serve in the Volunteer Officer's Corp as a machinist. His first choice was the coast artillery and his second, the field artillery. He was rejected because the Selective Service System as of December 5, 1942 would not accept a volunteer officer candidate over 32 years of age. The series contains a preliminary questionnaire, letter of recommendation, and letters of rejection regarding his request.

There are affidavits and correspondence to government agencies verifying school attendance and date of birth for both Dorothy Eletz and Emil Freed as well as for Tassia Hirsh Freed. There are documents from the California Department of Employment referring to a termination notice, hearing dates and appeals in addition, to a subpoena that was served on Freed to testify in *The People of the State of California vs. Anker, et al.*

A resume dated 1960 and 1965, in addition to letters of recommendations for future work and photographs of Emil and Tassia Freed are also part of the series.

Also included are certificates from various organizations honoring him for his years of political service, greetings on his 75th birthday, condolence letters and eulogies upon his death.

The GENERAL POLITICS series (box 2) covers a wide range of endeavors in which Freed was directly or indirectly involved. He ran for Congress and for the California Assembly on the Communist Party ticket. The series contains the certificates of nomination in addition to an example of the campaign literature that was used as part of his candidacy for Congress, 15th District.

There are some papers on the Middle East, Israel and Soviet Jews and articles and papers that refer to Nazism after World War II written by the National Committee Against Nazi Criminals and Nazism and the Committee Against Anti-Semitism and Renazification of West Germany.

The series also contains Freed's speeches ranging from the 1968 elections, War on Poverty, U.S. economy and foreign policy to Czechoslovakia and labor and Vietnam as well as an article he wrote titled A Study in Political Racism in Work, published by *Jewish Affairs*, July-August, 1980. There are also other speeches, articles and position papers either requested by Freed or given to him to review on Democratic Centralism and the Walter-McCarran Act.

Tassia and Emil Freed had invested in a political film called The Hangman based on poem by Maurice Ogden. The poem and correspondence referring to the film round out the GENERAL POLITICS series.

In the CORRESPONDENCE series are letters Freed wrote in response to social issues and sent to local papers, television and radio stations. Correspondence sent out of state includes a letter to Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York asking him to account for a quote he had used in the *New York Times*. Other letters sent out convey political criticism, offer support, say thank you, or request information. Some of the letters are from both Tassia and Emil Freed.

The Correspondence Received dates from 1937 to 1982 and contain letters from unions, letters in appreciation for Tassia and Emil Freed's support and letters referring to political and social issues. There are letters from Congressman James Roosevelt, Hubert H. Humphrey, Congressman Glenn Anderson and Congressman Thomas M. Rees as well as letters regarding the operations of the Southern California Library.

The HEARING LOCAL 311 series (boxes 3 and 4) deals with charges brought by the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) delegates to the Los Angeles Central Labor Council (CLC) claiming that Freed, Al Sherman, and Bernard Roberts had violated CLC provisions regarding communist activities and membership in dual organizations. Subsequently five others from Local 311, IAM, were charged with having political interests other than the union.

Though Freed and Louis Baron were tried by the IAM Local and found guilty, there were not enough votes to expel them. IAM President Harvey W. Brown then overrode the Local's decision and expelled all eight defendants. Even after appeals to the IAM Executive Council (Grand Lodge) the decision was upheld.

The series contains newspaper clippings, correspondence in reference to the charges, appeals and the eventual expulsion and proceedings from the Freed and Baron trial committee. There are other legal documents as well as leaflets issued by the Square Deal Committee in defense of the eight, and a narrative of events in the case. The series also contains Freed's notes on the hearings and a letter of appeal from Freed and Baron. There are also anti-communist statements issued by the United American Federation of Labor (UAFL) and IATSE.

The JAIL-1949 series (boxes 4-7) refers to the time spent by Freed in the Lincoln Heights Jail due to his activities in the Hollywood Studio Strike of 1945-1946. He was arrested on November 16, 1946 and found guilty on three counts: failure to obey a court order, refusal to disperse and disturbing the peace. He received six months on each count to be served concurrently. Freed was taken to Lincoln Heights Jail on December 13, 1948 and released after 10 months.

The JAIL-1949 series contain newspaper clippings, a calendar marking off the days until his release, prison receipts indicating the possessions that he carried, a mimeographed letter from Tassia Freed establishing the Emil Freed Fund and an application for parole. The rest of the JAIL-1949 series consists of correspondence from Tassia Freed, his mother and step-father, friends and acquaintances and to people who heard of his plight. There is also some correspondence from his lawyers. Most of Freed's letters are to his wife.

The oversize document case contains the proof of *Silence of The Good People*, a certificate commemorating Freed's activities and subsequent jail term as a result of his participation in the Hollywood Studio Strike, certificates of nomination dating from 1936, and photographs of Emil and Tassia Freed, the celebration opening of the library at its South Vermont Avenue location (1973), and construction of the Library's annex (1981?).

PERSONAL

Tassia Freed:

- Box 1, Folder 1 **General File. 1976-1987, Nds.**
Box 1, Folder 2 **Certificates and Summons. 1926, 1943, 1955, 1984.**
Box 1, Folder 3 **Newspaper Clippings. 1941, 1942, 1955.**
Box 1, Folder 4 **Greeting Cards. 1975, Nds.**
Box 1, Folder 5 **Correspondence Sent. 1955, 1959, 1974.**
Box 1, Folder 6 **Correspondence Received. 1944, 1955, 1965, 1967, 1971, 1973, 1983-1984.**

Emil Freed:

- Box 1, Folder 7 **General File. [-1970s], Nd.**
Box 1, Folder 8 **Biography. [1970s?].**
Box 1, Folder 9 **Engineer's Field Books. No. 403. [1915-1917?].**
Box 1, Folder 10 **Diplomas. 1915, 1917, 1922.**
Box 1, Folder 11 **Patents. 1929, 1930, 1945, 1954-1956.**
Box 1, Folder 12 **Membership and Dues Cards. 1936, 1938, 1940, 1942-1955, 1968, 1982.**
Box 1, Folder 13 **Application and Correspondence-Volunteers Officers Corp. 1942-1943.**
Box 1, Folder 14 **Correspondence, Affidavits. 1942.**
Box 1, Folder 14 **Census Bureau. 1966.**
Box 1, Folder 15 **Termination Notice. 1942.**
Box 1, Folder 15 **Department of Unemployment Papers. 1956-1957.**
Box 1, Folder 16 **Subpoena. 1947.**
Box 1, Folder 17 **Resume. 1960, 1965.**
Box 1, Folder 18 **Letters of Recommendation. 1965.**
Box 1, Folder 19 **Verification of School Attendance. 1976.**
Box 1, Folder 20 **75th Birthday. August, 1976.**
Box 1, Folder 21 **Awards and Certificates. 1981, Nds.**
Box 1, Folder 22 **Monetary Appeal, Well-Wishers. 1981.**

Photographs:

- Box 1, Folder 23-25 **General. 1973, [1981?], Nds.**

Memorial:

- Box 2, Folder 1-3 **Condolences. December, 1982.**
Box 2, Folder 2 **Eulogies. 1982-1983.**
Box 2, Folder 3 ***Random Lengths*. Article on Emil Freed. May, 1983.**

GENERAL POLITICS

Box 2, Folder 4 **Campaign Literature. Congress 15th District. [1940s].**
Box 2, Folder 5 **Community Conference for Democratic Action. 1945. Theme Song of the 57th Assembly District Branch of the CP. Nd.**

Box 2, Folder 6 **Position Paper on Democratic Centralism. December 1, 1948.**
Box 2, Folder 7 **Newspaper Clippings. 1949.**
Box 2, Folder 8 **Middle East. [1950s?].**
Box 2, Folder 9 **Civil Rights Congress Tells The Story.... [1950s].**
Box 2, Folder 10 **Israel. Nd.**
Box 2, Folder 11 **Draft and Final Copy. An Open Letter to President Eisenhower. [1950s].**
Box 2, Folder 12 **Articles on Concentration Camps. Cold War Era. 1950s.**
Box 2, Folder 13 **Speech by Senator Thomas C. Hennings. 1955.**
Box 2, Folder 14 **Campaign Literature. [1950s?].**
Box 2, Folder 15 **Paper on Walter-McCarran Act.**
Box 2, Folder 15 **Correspondence to Author of Paper. 1965.**
Box 2, Folder 16 **Speaking Engagements.**
Box 2, Folder 16 **[1960s-1970s?].**
Box 2, Folder 17 **Speeches? 1950s-1960s.**
Box 2, Folder 18 **Speech-Article? on Labor and Opposition to Vietnam. [1960s?].**
Box 2, Folder 19 **Script of Interviews Conducted by Emil Freed? 1964.**
Box 2, Folder 20 **To The Jewish Workers and Folk's People in Metropolitan Los Angeles.**
Box 2, Folder 20 **Translation. [1968-1970?].**
Box 2, Folder 21 **Draft, Soviet Jews Fact and Fiction. 1971.**
Box 2, Folder 22 **Press Release. Committee to Stop Revival of Nazism and Anti-Semitism. 1960.**
Box 2, Folder 23 **Translation of An Article from *Die Welt*. [1961?].**
Box 2, Folder 24 **Drafts. An Open Letter to the Jewish Community. [1963?].**
Box 2, Folder 25 **The Hangman. Film Production. 1963-1964.**
Box 2, Folder 26 **Paper on Nazism and The Walter-McCarran Act. Drafts. [Mid-1960s?].**
Box 2, Folder 27 **A Study in Political Racism in Work. 1980.**

CORRESPONDENCE

Box 3, Folder 1-9 **Correspondence Sent**
Box 3, Folder 1-5 **Letters to the Editor:**
Box 3, Folder 1-5 **1945, 1949-1980, Nd.**
Box 3, Folder 6-9 **General:**
Box 3, Folder 6-9 **1940-1970.**
Box 3, Folder 10-15 **Correspondence Received**
Box 3, Folder 10-15 **1937, 1940-1980.**

HEARING LOCAL 311, IAM

Box 3, Folder 16 **General File. Local 311. 1945.**
Box 3, Folder 17 **Reports. [1940s].**
Box 3, Folder 18 **Resolutions. [1940s].**
Box 3, Folder 19 **Union Anti-Communist Statements. 1945.**
Box 3, Folder 19 **UAFL Constitutional (Proposed) Suggested Changes. [1945].**
Box 3, Folder 20 **Correspondence. 1943, 1945-1946.**
Box 3, Folder 21 **Union Election Sample Ballots and Campaign Literature. 1943, 1945.**
Box 3, Folder 22 **Proceedings Trial Committee of Machinists Lodge No. 311.**
Box 3, Folder 22 **December 5, 1945.**
Box 3, Folder 23 **Preliminary Injunction. December 13, 1945.**
Box 3, Folder 24 **Transcript of Hearings of Machinists, Lodge No. 311 and Louis Baron, December 14, 1945, and Emil Freed, December 15-16, 1945.**

Box 4, Folder 1 **Legal Documents. 1945.**
Box 4, Folder 2 **Exhibits Trial Committee. 1945.**
Box 4, Folder 3 **Square Deal Committee. Statement, Papers, Leaflets. 1945, 1946.**
Box 4, Folder 4 **Background of Lodge #311 Witchhunt. [1946?].**
Box 4, Folder 5 **Notes on Hearing. [1945-1946].**
Box 4, Folder 6 **Draft and Outline of Letter of Appeal. 1946.**
Box 4, Folder 7 **Letter of Appeal. January, 1946.**

JAIL-1949

Box 4, Folder 8 **General File. Jail. [1948-1949].**
Box 4, Folder 9 **Prison Receipts. 1946-1947, 1949.**
Box 4, Folder 10 **Emil Freed Fund. 1948.**
Box 4, Folder 11 **Application for Parole. 1949.**
Box 4-6 **Correspondence Received:**
Box 4, Folder 12-16 **January, 1949-May, 1949.**
Box 5, Folder 1 **Birthday Greetings. June, 1949.**
Box 5, Folder 2-4 **June, 1949-August, 1949.**
Box 6, Folder 1-3 **August, 1949-October, 1949.**
Box 6-7 **Correspondence Sent:**
Box 6, Folder 4-10 **December, 1948-June, 1949.**
Box 7, Folder 1-4 **July, 1949-October, 1949.**
Box 7, Box 8 **Oversized Materials.**