

GEORGE MEANY MEMORIAL ARCHIVES
AUDIOTAPE COLLECTION
OVERVIEW

Dates: The bulk of the material is between 1953 and 1983. The collection contains some miscellaneous material, mostly speeches of CIO and AFL leaders, before that date. The collection contains few tapes after 1983.

Provenance: Most of the tapes were accessioned from the "tape closet" of the Information Department in 1985. During the 1950s, 60s and 70s, the AFL-CIO did their own sound recordings within the old Public Relations and Information Department. Sid Breckner was the recording engineer for the AFL-CIO throughout much of this period. He retired in ?. In 1982 the Labor Institute for Public Affairs [LIPA] was formed and built a quality video studio in the AFL-CIO building. Since that time much more of the AFL-CIO's media outreach had been done through video. The lack of audio tapes after that point in this collection may signify little radio work was being done, or, that the material has yet to be moved to the archives

Collection Size: 121 boxes of inventoried tapes and 22 boxes uninventoried. The total number of tapes in the processed boxes is 4569, and in the unprocessed collection approximately 1200.

Format: The majority of the tapes are reel to reel. By the early 1970s some of the tapes are the standard cassette format. Only a few of the tapes are labeled "copies" or "master" and no such distinction was included in the data base at this time. There are, infrequently, multiple copies of some individual tapes.

Note on the data entry procedures employed: This survey was a quick preliminary one to evaluate the broad nature of the holdings, and identify potential storage and damage issues. For single tapes of press conferences or speeches the main speaker and topic were entered in the computer. However, A complete listing of the content of each tape in large multi-tape series was not done at this time. Thus conventions and conferences that may themselves be an entire box of over 30 tapes have only a single entry under the title of the event. For example, the computer listing for the 1979 AFL-CIO Convention would be "1979 AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention" with 20 tapes noted in the relevant data field. The complete list of speakers and issues are on the tape box itself. Also, supplementing the computer printout, some boxes had all their individual tape boxes identifications xeroxed. These copies can be used as a additional finding aid.

Printout: One printout is by box, with the tapes sorted and arranged by date within the box. The contents of a individual box is generally within the same time frame, with some exceptions. The second printout is with the individual tapes sorted by date irrespective of box. For searching for items using the computer please consult archives staff.

SERIES DESCRIPTION

No attempt was made to move the tapes into physical series. Thus, the existing--and sometimes contradictory--order currently within the collection was maintained. For example, if portions of the 1963 Constitutional Convention were scattered in three boxes when originally accessioned, they remain in that position. The printed finding aid, as well as computer searches by date or name, will enable researchers to locate any information currently entered in the database.

The collection does break down into a number of subject areas as noted below.

A. Constitutional Conventions of the National AFL, CIO and AFL-CIO. These tapes are of all working sessions of the conventions. The printed transcript was likely made from these tapes. With one exception however--the 1955 AFL, AFL-CIO, and AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department Convention--the reels are not indexed to the printed proceedings.

B. Conventions and Conferences of AFL-CIO Staff Departments, and special one time conferences of the AFL-CIO. These would include the regularly scheduled conventions of such groups as Community Services, the Industrial Union Department, and the Building and Construction Trades Department. These departments, as well as the national AFL-CIO, also held periodic special conference on such topics as Legislation, OSHA, Education, Unemployment and International Affairs.

C. Press Conferences of the AFL-CIO. Because of the time period this collection covers, the vast majority of these feature George Meany and Lane Kirkland. Many of the press conferences listed the topic discussed and that information was noted in the computerized data base. Often the label on the tape box only listed the date and the name of the speaker.

D. Speeches. These are mostly by either George Meany or Lane Kirkland. Though many of these speeches were to union gatherings of individual affiliate or AFL-CIO staff department conventions, a wide range of groups were addressed. These would include Congressional committees, radio and television shows, and dinners of numerous progressive groups.

E. "As We See It." A labor radio show produced by the AFL-CIO from the early 1950s throughout the mid 1960s. It was broadcast weekly over the Mutual Broadcasting Network and hosted by Harry Flannery. Each show had a topic, a labor guest [often George Meany] and typically two reporters besides Flannery. Where the topic and guest were listed on the tape box, that information was entered into the data base.

F. The World of Labor. Gordon Cole of the International Association of Machinists donated 13 boxes to the Meany Archives of the IAM radio show "The World of Labor." These show were broadcast weekly and the collection contains the shows from 1964 through 1969. Each show had a guest and a special topic to discuss. No outside reporters were used and Cole, along with periodic co-hosts Dean Ruth or Jane Stokes, were the other people involved. Some tapes are labeled with a date, guests and topic, while others merely have a program number. The latter are likely duplicates copies of the labeled tapes. This collection also contains some Public Service Announcements and Election Spots produced by the IAM. THIS COLLECTION HAS NOT BEEN ENTERED IN THE DATA BASE.

G. "Labor News Conference". This AFL-CIO radio show which was broadcast weekly over the Mutual Broadcasting Network. The collection runs from Series 13 [1974] through Series 21 [1982]. Series 1 through Series 12 are missing, though a list of these programs is in the supplementary finding aid. THIS COLLECTION HAS NOT BEEN ENTERED IN THE DATA BASE.

RAS
7/91