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Finding Aid

➤ The United Food And Commercial Workers Local 954 Collection,
1930 -1993 ◀

MSS-093

Size: 3 linear feet

Provenance: received from Dave Sadowski, senior staff organizer of The United Food and Commercial Workers Local 954, in 1993.

Access: open

Related Collections: International Chemical Workers Local 901 Records, MSS-085; Central Labor Union of Toledo and Vicinity, MSS-090.

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Completed by: Thomas J. Brady, June 1993.

**United Food and Commercial Workers Union
Records, 1913-1993**

Historical Sketch

United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 954 began as District Council No. 6 of the Retail Clerks International Association and was comprised of the Department Stores Local 128, Big Ticket Local 633, Shoes Local 116. and Grocery Stores Local 954.

At a December 29, 1959 meeting, District Council No. 6 was officially dissolved and became Local 954. The Local 954 charter listed seven members from Department Stores, seven member: from the grocery stores and six members from the big ticket sales unit. The Local's name was changed to Retail Store Employees Union Local No. 954, a chartered body of the Retail Clerks International Association.

The Local built and moved into its own building at 730 Summit Street, Toledo, Ohio in 1972. In June, 1979 the Retail Clerks International Union and the Amalgamated Meatcutters and Butcher Workmen Union merged forming the United Food and Commercial Workers Union. The merger united nearly 1.3 million members and became the AFL-CIO's largest affiliate. The RCIU contributed over 700,000 members to the new union and the Amalgamated Meat Cutters added over 500,000 members. William H. Wynn, former President of the RCIU, became the acting President of the UFCW.

The Local was moved to 7441 International Drive, Holland, Ohio in 1981 and that same year, Local No. S of the Barbers and Cosmetologist Division joined U.F.C.W. Local No. 954.

United Food and Commercial Workers Union Records, 1913-1993

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists mainly of correspondence of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (U.F.C.W.) correspondence from other related organizations; several union publications; and newspaper clippings. The collection includes three films and several audio tapes regarding the Retail Clerks International Union (R.C.I.U.) and numerous R.C.I.U. legal agreements from the 1930's to the 1970's. The collection is divided into four series.

Series I: U.F.C.W. Correspondence and General Information.

Series I contains U.F.C.W. general information and U.F.C.W. correspondence from 1979 to 1989. Information from the U.F.C.W. June 1979 founding convention, such as the new U.F.C.W. logo, convention photographs and transcripts of convention speeches by President Jimmy Carter and U.F.C.W. International President William Wynn, are included. The series also contains the proposed constitution of the U.F.C.W.

The majority of series I is composed of U.F.C.W. Local 954 correspondence from 1982 to 1989. The correspondence is mainly between Local 954 President Eugene H. Kolkman and other local, state, and international U.F.C.W. representatives. U.F.C.W. - employee conflicts, financial statements, meeting announcements, reports, policy clarifications, and other U.F.C.W. concerns are addressed. U.F.C.W. District Council No. 22 correspondence and meeting minutes are also included. The series also includes Local 954 correspondence and grievances regarding conflicts and negotiations with Stein's (Village Stores of Ohio) from 1978 to 1985. The series contains information regarding U.F.C.W. support of charitable organizations; the Local 954 retirees club; a U.F.C.W. job hazards fact sheet; and U.F.C.W. newspaper clippings concerning contracts and union - employer disputes from 1982 to 1985.

Series II: Union Publications.

Series II is comprised of eleven union publications. Issues of The Label Letter (1986-1988). Meijer News (1985-1987) The Rub Sheer (1981-1989), and Straight Talk (1980) are available. The Northwestern Ohio Labor Union (1978-1988), the Local 954 Reporter (1980-1990), and The Toledo Union Journal (1981) are included. The series also contains issues of the U.F.C.W. Imprint (1985-1986), the U.F.C.W. Link (1986-1991), and (U.F.C.W) Women's Highlights (1983). Four issues of The Toledo Record (Nov. 9, 1966; Nov. 16, 1966; Jan. 1, 1967; and March 26, 1967) are also included. The Toledo Record was published by a union coalition in response to a union strike at The Toledo Blade. Patrons should consult the box-folder listing to determine which issues from the above dates are included.

Series III: General Correspondence and Miscellaneous.

Series III consists of general correspondence from several organizations such as the Toledo Active Ballot Club, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees.

the Hotel and Restaurant Employees, and the Bay Area Labor Council. A voluminous correspondence of the Toledo Port Council from 1977 to 1989, containing meeting announcements, updates of union policies and regulations. and related materials, is included. Patrons should refer to the box-folder listing to determine other organizations in the series, correspondence quantity and inclusive dates. The collection is also comprised of press releases from Senator Howard Metzenbaum (1981-1982). The miscellaneous file contains campaign material for Chief Justice Frank Celebrezze. a letter from State Senator Donald Lukens to Eugene H. Kolkman. and other materials.

Series IV: Retail Clerks International Union General Information and Legal Agreements.

Series IV consists of information regarding the Retail Clerks International Union (R.C.I.U.). A history of the R.C.I.U., from 1865 to 1972. is provided. Anniversary pamphlets from the 1950's. photographs of R.C.I.U. officers, and other miscellaneous items are included (refer to the box-folder listing for a complete inventory).

Numerous legal agreements from the 1930's to the 1970's between the R.C.I.U. and a variety of employers are included. The agreements outline in detail such concerns as working hours. benefits, wages. and promotional policies. Agreements with such companies as Western Auto Supply Co., Kobacker Stores Inc., Tiedtke Division, Topps Family Fair Inc., Lane Drugs and several shoe stores are included. The legal agreements are arranged alphabetically according to the employee name. The series is also comprised of several court cases between the R.C.I.U. and Lion Dry Goods and LaSalle's.

Three films *The Battle of Wall Street*, *A Watch for Joe*, and a silent un-named production, are included in the series.

The Battle of Wall Street. approx. 15-20 minutes.

The Battle of Wall Street is a presentation of the Seafarer's International Union (S.I.U.) Atlantic and Gulf District, A.F.L. The production is a promotional film narrating the late 1940's strike of the United Financial Employees (U.F.E.) against the New York Stock Exchange and Curb Exchange. The film describes the strike as the first challenge to the anti-labor Taft-Hartley Act of 1947. The narrator explains that the S .I.U. was called in by the U.F.E. to provide moral support and advice to the strikers. The S.I.U. gladly volunteered manpower to support the picketers. The film describes "gallant" strikers and refers to police suppression of the strikers as "vicious terrorism". The film describes the efforts of the strikers and claims wide spread support of the U.F.E. from other unions. After more than a month, the Stock and Curb exchanges give in to most of the strikers' demands. The narrator describes the settlement as a great victory for organized labor.

A Watch for Joe. approx. 50 minutes.

A Watch for Joe is a Hal R. Makelim production, starring Robert Jordan and Beverly Campbell. and directed by Jack Hively. A Watch for Joe is a fictional movie promoting the R.C.I.U. The two main characters, Tom Johnson and Joe Adams, are friends in high school, have similar backgrounds, and both become retail clerks. However, Tom' s company is organized by the R.C.I.U. while Joe's remains non-unionized. Due to the efforts

of the R.C.I.U., Tom receives excellent salary, overtime pay, and good benefits. Tom can afford to own a car, get married, and go on a long honeymoon. Tom's life goes well because of the R.C.I.U.

Joe's life spirals downward because he is not in the R.C.I.U. he cannot afford to get married or own a car. He also has no benefits and low job security. Finally, Joe's friends convince him to unionize his company. Despite company resistance, Joe and the R.C.I.U. successfully unionize Joe's company and his life makes a dramatic turn for the better. His salary increases and he receives benefits. Joe can finally afford to get married. In addition, despite initially resisting unionization, Joe's company comes to welcome unionization because of greater worker productivity. According to the movie, the R.C.I.U. benefits all parties involved.

Silent Unnamed Footage

The silent footage shows picketers at Tiedtke's being watched by police and bystanders. Footage also shows picketers at LaSalle's and union members eating during the strike. Short clips are also of local union signs, union meetings and union officials working at desks. The footage appears to be unedited for promotional use.

Series IV also contains six audio tapes from the R.C.I.A.

Tape #1 is a series of short promotional narrations urging Lamson's employees to vote for unionization in the Retail Clerks Union. The narrator lists benefits of unionization and states that United States Secretary of Labor James P. Mitchell and Senator John McClellan both support the union.

Tape #2 is union meeting discussing R.C.I.A. conflicts with Kroger and A. & P. The main component of the tape is a speech given by union member Ben Slegman. Slegman discusses the progress of the R.C.I.A. and his philosophy concerning unions. He urges education of union members and expansion of union membership.

Tape #3 is a union meeting of the late 1950's discussing a R.C.I.A. Locals 128 and 633 with Lasalle and Coke Company. Union officials are presenting the agreement to union members for ratification. Union representatives assure all strikers that they will be put back to work. Officials also describe a new arbitration committee for disputes. Union officials urge members to accept the agreement and attorney Walter Lippman describes legal aspects of the agreement. Union members proceed to ask representatives numerous questions regarding the agreement.

Tape #4 is a seminar meeting of the Retail Clerks Union. Chuch Lipson answers questions concerning the Active Ballot Club. Richard Lewis then speaks about contract interpretation and application. The main speaker, union Vice President Housewright discusses the boycott of Kroger's and the role of union stewards. Housewright stresses the education of union members and the expansion of the union.

Tape #5 is a union meeting outlining an agreement with R.H. Macy and Lasalle's. The tape is damaged and begins on item #38 of the agreement. Hours, wages, and insurance

benefits for different employee categories are discussed. Employees then ask union officials numerous questions regarding the agreement. Union attorney Walter Lippman and other union officials urge member acceptance of the agreement.

Tape #6 records a 1966 union Christmas party. Members jovially sing, joke, and laugh throughout the tape.

Tape #7 records a 1967 union Christmas party. Similar to tape #6, members laugh, joke, and sing throughout the tape.

United Food and Commercial Workers Union
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	3	U.F.C.W. Correspondence, Jan.-Feb. 1982
	4	U.F.C.W. Corr., March 1982
	5	U.F.C.W. Corr., April 1982
	6	U.F.C.W. Corr., May- June 1981
	7	U.F.C.W. Corr., July-Aug. 1982
	8	U.F.C.W. Corr., Sept.-Oct. 1982
	9	U.F.C.W. Corr., Nov.-Dec. 1982
	10	U.F.C.W. Corr., Jan.-Feb. 1983
	11	U.F.C.W. Corr., March-April 1983
	12	U.F.C.W. Corr., May-June 198?
	13	U.F.C.W. Corr., July-Aug. 1983
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	35	U.F.C.W. Corr.. March-April 1987
	36	U.F.C.W. Corr.. May-June 1987

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	39	U.F.C.W. Corr, Nov.-Dec. 1987
	40	U.F.C.W. Corr., Jan.-Feb. 1988
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	43	U.F.C.W. Corr., July-Aug. 1988
	44	U.F.C.W. Corr., Sept.-Oct. 1988
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	46	U.F.C.W. Corr.. Jan.-Feb. 1989
	47	U.F.C.W. Corr.. March-April 1989
	48	U.F.C.W. Corr., May-June 1989
	49	U.F.C.W. Corr., July-Aug. 1989
	50	U.F.C.W. Corr., Sept. - Oct. 1989
	51	U.F.C.W. Corr., Nov.-Dec. 1989
	52	U.F.C.W. District Council No. 22 Corr., Meeting Minutes, Financial Statements. Related Materials, 1978-82, 1988
	53	Retail Store Employees Union (Local 954), Grievances and Corr. regarding Stein's (Village Stores of Ohio. Inc., 1978-85), Part 1.
	54	Retail Store Employees Union (Local 954) Grievances and Corr. regarding Stein's Village Stores of Ohio, Inc., 1978-85), Part II.
	55	U.F.C.W. Executive Board U.F.C.W. support of Charitable Organizations, 1979-82
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	57	U.F.C.W. State Council Corr. and Meeting Minutes, 1985-88.
	58	U.F.C.W. Local 954 Retiree's Club, Bylaws and Formation Corr. 1977
	59	U.F.C.W. Job Hazards Fact Sheet
	60	U.F.C.W. News Clippings concerning Contracts and Related Materials, I 1982-1985
	61	U.F.C.W. News Clippings concerning Contracts and Related Materials, 1985
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2	1	<i>Label Letter</i> , 1986 (except March/April and Nov./Dec.)
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	3	<i>Label Letter</i> , July/Aug and Sept./Oct. 1988
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	7	<i>The Northwestern Ohio Labor Union</i> , March-Dec. 1978 (partially complete)
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	32	<i>The Rub Sheet</i> , May 1985, Feb./March 1986, May 1986, June 1987, Feb. 1988
	33	<i>The Rub Sheet</i> , Aug., Sept./Oct.. and Nov./Dec. 1989
	34	<i>Straight Talk</i> , (U.F.C.W. vs. Churchill's Supermarkets) April, 1980.
	35	<i>The Toledo Record</i> , Nov. 9, 1966
	36	<i>The Toledo Record</i> , Nov. 16, 1966
	37	<i>The Toledo Record</i> , Jan. 1, 1967
	38	<i>The Toledo Record</i> , March 26, 1967
	39	<i>Toledo Union Journal</i> , Dec. 1980-Jan. 1981 (partially complete)
	40	<i>Toledo Union Journal</i> , Feb.-April 1981 (partially complete)
	41	<i>Toledo Union Journal</i> , May-June 1981 (partially complete)
	42	<i>Toledo Union Journal</i> , July-Aug. 1981 (partially complete)
	43	<i>U.F.C.W. Imprint</i> . Oct. 1985, Feb. 1986, April 1986, Oct. 1986
	44	<i>The U.F.C.W. Link</i> , Aug. 1986-Dec. 1988 (partially complete)
	45	<i>The U.F.C.W. Link</i> , Jan. 1989-June 1991 (partially complete)
	46	<i>U.F.C.W. Women's Highlights</i> , Nov. 1983 and two undated issues
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	48	Active Ballot Club Corr. And Meeting Minutes, Feb 1980-Oct. 1982, Oct. 1986
	49	American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, State and Local Corr., June 1979 and undated
	50	Bay Area Labor Council, Corr. of Feb. 6, 1984 and Newsletters, Feb.-May 1986
	51	Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Corr., Aug. 17. 1988. Dec. 5, 1988
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	2	Dues Receipts received from R.C.I.A. Local 128,633, and 954, 1951-1952
	3	Retail Clerks District Council No. 6 Anniversary Pamphlet, 6 pages, 1955
	4	Retail Clerks District Council No. 6 Twenty-second Anniversary Pamphlet, 8 pages, 1959
	5	Photographs of R.C.I.A. District Council No. 6 President, Hugh A. Nichols and other officers
	6	R.C.I.A. <i>Sales Talk</i> (newsletter of March 1954)
	7	Retail Clerks Union District Council No. 6, Retail Reporter, Nov. 1956-Sept. 1957 (partially complete)
	8	R.C.I.A. and Amalgamated Meat Cutters (Local 626) - Joint Letter requesting Union Membership from Prospective Workers (undated)
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	^	Film Number 2 <i>A Watch for Joe</i>

Key: ^ = Oversize Area