



## Northampton Labor Council (AFL-CIO) Minutes

1933-1985

2 boxes (0.75 linear ft.)

Call no.: MS55

### Collection overview

Coordinating body for the political and social activities of fourteen labor unions in Northampton, Massachusetts and the surrounding area, generating union support for strikes, boycotts, and celebrations, and hosting annual Labor Day parades. Includes photocopies of four minutebooks, spanning the years 1933-1985.

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### Background on Northampton Labor Council (Northampton, Mass.)

The Northampton Labor Council, the coordinating body for the political and social activities of fourteen labor unions in Northampton, Massachusetts and the surrounding area, traces its roots to 1899 with the formation of the Northampton Central Labor Union (CLU). At its inception, the CLU had 395 members in 9 affiliated local unions; by 1903 it had grown to 1400 in 29 constituent unions. The CLU coordinated labor's political activities in Northampton, and generated union cooperation in strikes, boycotts, and celebrations. It supported a strike of street railway employees in 1914, and hosted annual Labor Day parades in addition to many other activities.

Throughout the 1930s the CLU included both AFL and CIO unions, making it somewhat unusual during that period of fratricidal warfare. Not until 1945 did AFL President William Green force the CLU to ban CIO unions from participating. The industrial unions then established the Northampton Industrial Union Council which lasted only three years before the local merger of AFL and CIO affiliates.

The CLU changed its name to the Northampton Labor Council in the 1960s, and in 1973 absorbed the Unions formerly affiliated with the Greenfield Labor Council. As of June 1985, the NLC President was long-time leader George O'Brien; Louis Leopold continued to serve as its Secretary Treasurer. The NLC had 14 affiliated Locals, including Carpenters #402, Electricians #36, Firefighters #108, Food and Commercial Workers #1459, Garment Workers #226, Hotel and Restaurant Employees #116, Machinists #2175, Motion Picture Operators #232, Painters #257, Plumbers #104, SEIU #'s 211 and 263, and AFSCME #'s 165 and 1776.

### Scope of collection

The records of the Northampton Labor Council (NLC) comprise photocopies of four minutebooks, spanning the years 1933-1985.

## Inventory

Minutes	1933-1963	Box 1: 1-10
Minutes	1964-1985	Box 2: 11-14

## Administrative information

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### Access

The collection is open for research.

### Provenance

Photocopied with permission from Secretary Louis Leopold.

### Processing Information

Processed by Ken Fones-Wolf, August 1985.

### Language:

English

### Acknowledgments

Encoding funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

### Copyright and Use([More information](#) )

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## Search terms

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### Subjects

- Central Labor Union (Northampton, Mass.)--History--Sources.
- Labor unions--Massachusetts--Northampton--History--Sources.
- Northampton (Mass.)--Economic conditions--20th century--Sources.
- Northampton (Mass.)--Social conditions--20th century--Sources.
- Northampton Labor Council (Northampton, Mass.)--History--Sources.

### Contributors

- Northampton Labor Council (Northampton, Mass.)**[main entry]**
- Central Labor Union (Northampton, Mass.)

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