

Scope and Content

The Negro Labor Committee Record Group consists of the complete noncurrent office files of the Committee and the personal papers of Frank R. Crosswaith, founder and longtime chairman of the Committee. These documents, containing approximately 18,500 items, were transferred to the Schomburg Center for processing and preservation by the Committee in 1971. The records are divided into two major series, each with a number of subseries, as outlined below.

Series I: Office Files of the Negro Labor Committee

This series is subdivided into three subseries reflecting the general practice of the Committee's office staff under the supervision of its secretary, Winifred Gittens. The first subseries is primarily historical and administrative and includes records of the organizations that preceded the Negro Labor Committee—the Trade Union Committee for Organizing Negro Workers (1925) and the Harlem Labor Committee (1934)—as well as items summarizing the Committee's general interests and activities from its founding in 1935 to 1969, the record group cutoff date. This first subseries also contains the general correspondence (Communications Received and Answered) of the Committee (arranged chronologically), and also administrative records such as minutes of meetings, committee reports, financial records, form letters, and letterhead stationary.

The second subseries contains the general subject and activities files of the Committee. Arranged alphabetically, it includes material on conferences and conventions in which the Committee participated, documents relating to activities and special projects of the Committee (for example, Harlem Labor Center, Scholarship Benefit Fund, Negro Labor Committee-U.S.A., anniversary journals, and the proposed 1943 march on Washington, in addition to the monthly minutes of the Negro Labor Assembly, of which the Negro Labor Committee was an integral part. Furthermore, this subseries contains the regular press releases of the Negro Labor News Service from 1935 to 1951.

Finally, the third subseries consists of the files of the individual unions and locals that were affiliated with the Negro Labor Committee and that joined it in many of its projects, programs, and activities. The files present a cross-section of the progressive labor movement in New York City during the 1930s and 1940s.

Series II: Personal Files of Frank R. Crosswaith

In this section, the first subseries (d) contains Crosswaith's personal correspondence (primarily "Letters of Appreciation"), biographical data, and materials relating to political campaigns and testimonial dinners. These documents are followed by subseries (e), which consists of Crosswaith's writings and speeches. Included in this section are the typescripts of his column "Looking around and Beyond," which appeared regularly in various black newspapers from 1939 to 1943, as well as other articles and editorials printed in various publications. This subseries also contains Crosswaith's copies of "Letters to the Editor" (1940–1960), in which he set forth his views and the official positions of the Negro Labor Committee on many of the

major questions of the day. The last section of this subseries includes speeches and correspondence relating to his numerous speaking engagements.

Subseries (f) is an organizational subject file that consists of materials regarding the many organizations in which Crosswaith held membership, served on committees, or simply maintained an interest. These files demonstrate the wide span of his activities and interests. Subseries (g) is similar to subseries (f) in that it again shows a broad field of interest. However, the emphasis here is on people and personalities, friends and labor leaders with whom Crosswaith worked and whose respect he had gained over the years.

Crosswaith's years on the New York City Housing Authority (1942–1956) are represented in a separate section of his papers devoted exclusively to the NYCHA. Subseries (h) includes his correspondence, along with reports, project descriptions, and copies of official publications: *New York City Housing Authority News*, *Housing Outlook*, and *NYCHA Bulletin*.

The final two subseries—Scrapbook Material (i) and Oversized and Nontextual Material (j)—were established to accommodate records that remained outside of the office staff's organizational scheme. The scrapbook materials generally contain clippings, photographs, copies of programs and publications, and other documents that were apparently set aside for future reference. These records have been arranged into general subject categories and placed alphabetically within the record group. The oversized and nontextual materials include certificates, medals and awards, engraved printing plates, and large photographs.