



St. Louis Labor Council, AFL-CIO Minute Books (S0061)

Collection Number: S0061

Collection Title: St. Louis Labor Council, AFL-CIO Minute Books

Dates: 1913-1963

Creator: St. Louis Labor Council, AFL-CIO

Abstract: The St. Louis Labor Council, AFL-CIO Meeting Books contains meeting minutes, committee reports, and attendance lists documenting the Council's efforts to strengthen organized labor, and advocacy for social justice in the St. Louis area from 1913 to 1963.

Collection Size: 14 microfilm rolls
(29 volumes on microfilm)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at stlouis@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

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Related Materials: Additional materials related to the St. Louis Labor Council, AFL-CIO Minute Books can be found in the following collections:

[Ernest Calloway Papers \(S0011\)](#)

[AFL-CIO Community Services Records \(S0845\)](#)

[James Adam Davis Papers \(C3666\)](#)

[Carpenters' District Council of Greater St. Louis, AFL-CIO Records \(C3696\)](#)

[Missouri State Labor Council, AFL-CIO Records \(C0216\)](#)

[St. Louis/Southern Illinois Labor Tribune Records \(S0521\)](#)

[Thomas B. Curtis Papers \(C3300\)](#)

[Carpenters' Local 1596 Records \(S0163\)](#)

[Robert A. Young Papers \(S0517\)](#)

[International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in St. Louis Collection \(S0779\)](#)

Processed by: Processed by Rachael Heriford, Reilly McDonald, and AJ Medlock, August 2023

Historical Note:

In 1885, the American Federation of Labor presented a resolution at its annual convention, calling for an eight-hour workday. The "Eight Hour" movement quickly gathered momentum, and trade union groups formed across the United States. St. Louis was an active part of the labor. During this time, four national labor organizations were established, including the Central Labor Union, the St. Louis Trades Assembly, the Arbeiter Verband (German workers), and the District Assembly No. 4 of the Order of the Knights of Labor. In 1886, there was a national split of the Knights of Labor, creating the American Federation of Labor. The St. Louis central labor bodies were also divided over the issue of union labels and trade union membership.

In 1887, the Central Labor Union, the St. Louis Trades Assembly, and the Arbeiter-Verband merged to form the St. Louis Trades and Labor Assembly. In 1897, the group changed its name to the Central Trades and Labor Union of St. Louis and Vicinity, but its original goal of emancipating workers remained the same. By 1893, under the leadership of David Kreyling (1859-1938), the organization's membership reached 35,000 workers, including those from the Women's Trade Union, the Ladies Garment Workers Union, and the Colored Waiters Union. They offered their full support to famous St. Louis labor strikes, including the Streetcar Men's Union Railway Strike of 1900, the late 1880s brewery strikes, Kelley's Army in 1894, the "Eight Hour" strike of the Typographical Union, and the 1920 hotel and restaurant employee's strike. The organization also contributed to political and civic improvements such as workman's compensation, women's suffrage, free textbooks, municipal bridges, the establishment of public high schools, and New Deal social legislation.

As their influence began to wane during World War II due to government action against striking workers, the Central Trades and Labor Union of St. Louis set about actively supporting the war effort by rallying together laborers and keeping morale high. In 1955, the American Federation of Labor merged with the Congress of Industrial Organizations to strengthen relationships between unions and workers, creating a more unified labor movement. The Central Trades and Labor Union of St. Louis and Vicinity followed suit and changed its name to the St. Louis Labor Council, AFL-CIO, in 1957.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged chronologically.

Scope and Content Note:

The collection contains microfilmed meeting books of the St. Louis Labor Council AFL-CIO from 1913 to 1963. Topics of interest include the Ladies Garment Workers' Union, unionized labor during World War II, and references to John I. Rollings, later president of the Missouri State Federation of Labor and the Missouri State Labor Council. The microfilm is arranged chronologically.

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