

**The New York Public Library
Humanities and Social Sciences Library
Manuscripts and Archives Division**

Liberal Party of New York State
Records,

John D. Stinson
May 1989

Summary

Main entry: Liberal Party of New York State

Title: Records, 1936-1975

Size: 157.8 lin. ft. (145 cartons; 2 boxes; 28 vols.; 1 folder.

Access: Restricted until 2006. Written consent of the executive director of the Liberal Party required for access. Financial records are under permanent seal (written consent of the executive director of the Liberal Party required for access).

Source: The Liberal party of New York State, 1981.

Description: An independent third party formed in New York in 1944 by former officials of the American Labor Party. About one-half of the records consist of correspondence (mainly) of the executive director, Ben Davidson. Included also are records of the publicity director; the Trade Union Council of the Party; minutes of the New York County Liberal Party and of the State Committee of the American Labor Party; press releases; printed ephemera and scrapbooks of clippings and memorabilia.

Historical Note

The Liberal Party of New York State, the most successful third party in America in this century was organized in New York City in 1944 by two prominent trade union leaders, David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, and Alex Rose, president of the United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers Union. Both were instrumental in founding in 1936 the American Labor Party, which as an offshoot of Labor's Nonpartisan League, was intended to strengthen electoral support for the Democratic Party in New York by offering to the liberal and independent voter an alternative to the traditional party ticket. The ALP by 1940 had amassed a following of 400,000 voters and wielded on occasion the balance of power in municipal and state elections. Within the party, however, an increasingly bitter struggle developed between the moderates led by Rose and Dubinsky and a radical or Communist wing led by Sidney Hillman (president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union) for control of the party's all-powerful state committee. The struggle came to a head during the 1944 primary elections when the Hillman faction which had already taken control of the party in its New York City stronghold, won a decisive victory over the moderates and seized control of the state committee. Dubinsky, Rose and their followers promptly resigned from the ALP and formed the Liberal Party of New York State. The ALP destroyed itself in 1948 when forsaking Truman it threw its support to the candidate of the Progressive Party (Henry A. Wallace) and ultimately merged with that party.

Since its founding the Liberal Party has sought to offer to the liberal, progressive and independent voter in New York an alternative to the two major political parties, and to provide through the practice of coalition politics encouragement and support to reform- and liberal-minded politicians in the other parties. Since its first year when it gave Roosevelt his margin of victory in New York the Liberal Party has continued to exert a strong influence on national, state and local elections. In 1948 it was the main supporter of Truman in New York and in 1960 it produced the margin of victory for Kennedy. In gubernatorial elections it was responsible for the election of Averell Harriman in 1954 and it gave Hugh Carey strong support in 1974. During the 1966 gubernatorial campaign by siphoning off enough votes for its own candidate (Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr.) it defeated the Democratic Party candidate (Frank O'Connor) of whom it disapproved and insured the election of a liberal Republican (Nelson A. Rockefeller). In 1961 the Liberal Party defeated the Democratic Party machine in New York in all five boroughs which had opposed the reelection of Mayor Wagner, and in 1965 and 1969 it gave decisive support to the mayoral campaigns of John V. Lindsay. By the nomination of independent candidates and by the participation in fusion campaigns the Liberal Party has influenced the outcome of numerous elections at the local level in boroughs, counties, assembly and judicial districts. It is presently one of three parties to be represented on the ballot in New York in all general elections.

On national issues the Liberal Party has advocated measures providing for full employment, affordable housing, consumer and environmental protection and women's rights. It was the first political party to call for the ending of the bombing and of the war in Vietnam and it was also the first to call for the impeachment of President Nixon.

Structurally the Liberal Party is composed of a state committee which is the supreme governing power of the party, county and assembly district committees (for each county and assembly district in the State, a state convention, and judicial district conventions. The state committee which is composed of five

members elected biennially from each assembly district selects the state chairman and other officers, establishes standing committees and the state executive committee which administers the affairs of the party when the state committee is not in session. The county and assembly district committees are responsible for the management of the party at the local level. State conventions and judicial district conventions composed of delegates elected from the assembly districts are held for the purpose of nominating candidates for political offices and for the office of justice of the supreme court.

Through the years the Liberal Party's officers have included in addition to Messrs. Rose and Dubinsky numerous other distinguished New Yorkers including John L. Childs, George S. Counts, Adolf A. Berle, Jr., Dr. Timothy W. Costello, Dr. Donald Szanthe Harrington, and Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr. Ben Davidson and James S. Notaro have served as its executive directors.

The records (1942-1978) are arranged into fifteen series. More than one-half of the collection consists of records of the executive director. The remaining series are entitled: publicity director; Liberal News/Liberal Digest; Trade Union Council; electoral documents; legislative bills; minutes; photographs; press releases; printed ephemera; financial records; sound recordings; unsorted, damaged and oversized records; enrollments; and scrapbooks. Each series is described in sequence below.

A. Executive Director (Containers I-77)

The records (1942-75) consisting of correspondence and collateral papers are arranged alphabetically by year in name/subject files. Unsorted records for each year are filed at the end of each alphabetical sequence as are campaign papers (when they form a relatively large group). Beginning in 1959 and following the unsorted papers there is a separate file of correspondence and papers arranged by county (other than New York City counties which are filed in the main alphabetical sequence). The bulk of the correspondence is that of Ben Davidson as executive director with regional organizers, and other party officials, labor union officials, politicians, members of Congress and of the state legislature, community and civic leaders and others. The correspondence concerns matters relating to party organization in New York City and in the upstate counties, electoral campaigns, party platforms and legislative programs, state conventions and judicial district conventions, legislation pending in Congress and in the state legislature, fund-raising events, dinners, luncheons, and conferences. Many of the files contain a relatively large proportion of printed and near-printed ephemera. At the beginning of the series are miscellaneous records (1942-43) of Alex Rose as executive secretary of the American Labor Party; and his records (1944-45) as chairman of the administrative committee of the Liberal Party. There is also some correspondence (1945) of John L. Childs as state chairman of the Liberal Party. Extensive correspondence is present with party organizers and regional directors (both in the name/subject files and in the counties files including Jules Aisoff, Angelo Cordaro, Eli Diamond, Clifford Dickinson, Raymond Greiner, and E. Joseph Peperone relative to campaign strategies, organizational matters and the efforts of the part to increase its enrollments and voting strength in upstate counties. The counties files contain some enrollment lists. The records of the years 1969-75 are fragmentary. Some of the records (2 lin. ft.) mainly for the year 1947 and a few records for the years 1957-58 have been damaged by mold and will require extensive physical treatment before they can be used. (the damaged records are located in Containers I33-I34). The following is a list of names and subjects frequently repeated in this series: annual dinners; A.A. Berle, Jr.; Bronx Co.; Clubs (of LP); Committee at Large (of LP); Angelo Cordaro; Congressional correspondence; County committees; County

directors; Ben Davidson-personal; Eli Diamond; Clifford Dickinson; David Dubinsky (mainly correspondence to him); Election campaigns; Raymond Greiner; Inquiries; Kings Co.; Law committee; Letters to legislators; Liberal News; Municipal Affairs Committee; National Legislative Committee; National Legislative Program; New York County; Officers joint correspondence; Platform committee; Policy committee; Joseph M. Pomarlen; Queens County; Radio speeches; Richmond County; Alex Rose (mainly correspondence to him); Spanish Speaking Division; Speaker's bureau; State convention; State executive committee; State law committee; State legislative committee; State legislative program; State organizers; State policy committee; Telegrams; Trade Union Council; Young Committee at Large; and Young Liberals. The files for 1955 and 1958 contain correspondence with the novelist James T. Farrell.

B. Publicity Director (Containers 78-79).

The records (1952-64) consist of a topical file of correspondence and papers of the publicity directors, Michael Fooner, Warren Montross, Albert Margolies, and Gerald R. Coleman. Fooner's file contains mainly memoranda, reports, drafts of statements and press releases, near-printed and printed ephemera. Margolies corresponded also as director of research and legislation. Coleman also corresponded as chairman of the municipal affairs committee and as executive secretary of the United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers International Union.

Included is some correspondence of Ben Davidson.

C. Liberal News/Liberal Digest (Containers 80-92)

The Liberal News was a monthly or bi-monthly periodical issued by the party to subscribers. The Liberal Digest, a yearbook, was published on the occasion of annual dinners of the party. The yearbooks include a complete listing of the state and county officers of the party. The records (1958-61) consist of correspondence of Albert Margolies as editor of the publications, drafts of articles and press releases and copies (1959-66) of the Liberal News and copies (1952, 1957, 1963-69) of the Liberal Digest. Included is some correspondence of Margolies as publicity director and as director of research and legislation.

D. Trade Union Council (containers 83-87)

The Trade Union Council, an integral part of the party was formed to strengthen the ties between the party and the trade union movement, and to serve as an agency for political education and publicity. The records (1945-64) consist of a topical file of correspondence of Joseph M. Pomarlen, executive secretary and Charles S. Zimmerman, chairman, with labor union officials, state assemblymen, congressmen and others relative to legislation affecting the labor movement including the Taft-Hartley law, Communist infiltration of unions, councilmanic, congressional and union elections, the presidential campaigns of 1960 and 1964, meetings, luncheons and other matters. Included are minutes of meetings and some correspondence of Alex Rose.

E. Electoral Documents (Containers 88-91)

These records (1952-74) which are arranged chronologically consist of documents submitted by the party to boards of elections in compliance with the state election laws. Included are statements of positions to be filled, designating petitions, acceptances of nominations, declinations, and minutes of judicial district conventions of the party.

E. Legislative Bills (Containers 92-93)

The legislative bills consist of printed bills of the New York State Assembly and Senate. They are arranged in serial order by bill number through 1957; the remainder by subject by year.

G. Minutes (Container 94)

This series contains minutes (1936-43) of the American Labor Party; and minutes (1944-65 & undated) of the Liberal Party. The ALP minutes consist mainly of meetings of the state committee, but include also minutes of the first meeting of the women's division; minutes of the credentials committee, the administrative committee; the proceedings (1938) of the Trade Union Conference; and minutes (July 1936) of the first meeting of the Labor's Non-Partisan League which was called to form a section of the league in New York State and which resulted instead in the formation of the Liberal Party. The Liberal Party minutes consist of meetings of the executive committee of the New York County Liberal Party including its first meeting (July 12, 1944); its campaign policy committee, administrative committee and committee convention.

H. Photographs (Container 95)

The photographs consist of unsorted 8x10 prints, contact prints, and prints of varying sizes. Included are photographs of party officials, politicians, luncheon meetings, campaigns and other political events.

I. Printed Ephemera (Containers 104-111)

The printed ephemera consists of a chronological file (1942-78) followed by a subject file. Included are materials generated by the Liberal Party.

K. Financial Records (Containers 112-126)

These records (ca.1948-70) consist of financial reports and statements; bills paid; miscellaneous records; account books; accounts (loose sheets); cancelled checks and check stubs. The financial reports (1948-69) include weekly statements of receipts and disbursements, reports of county committees, receipts and expenses for dinners, and political campaigns including the Stevenson-Kefauver presidential campaign (1956) and citizens' committees. There are also financial statements (1949-70) of the treasurer of the political

committee consisting of copies of reports filed with the secretary of state and/or board of elections of New York City listing campaign receipts and expenditures. The bills paid (1954-67) which are arranged alphabetically by year consist of copies of bills and vouchers authorizing their payment. Included are expense statements of party organizers. The 'Western Union' folders in this sub-series contain copies of texts of out-going telegrams. The miscellaneous records (1947-62) include social security, withholding and payroll tax records; campaign budgets; correspondence between Ben Davidson and Alex Rose and between Davidson and county committees and labor union officials regarding contributions; and records of receipts from Liberal Digest advertisements. The account books (1953-63) include a ledger, payroll books, receipt books for dinners, luncheons and cocktail parties (including the Carnegie Hall rally of 1950), subscriptions to the Liberal News and Liberal Digest, and campaign receipts including the campaign for Stevenson-Kefauver (1956) and for John F. Kennedy (1960). Included also are loose sheets (some fragmentary) of various accounts including cash receipts, petty cash, disbursements, accounts payable, ledger and journal fragments. Lastly are check stubs (ca.1958-68) and cancelled checks (ca.1958-77).

L. Sound Recordings (Containers 127, 127A, 128)

The recordings which consist of 31 phonodiscs and 21 phonotapes are listed on a separate checklist attached to this accession record.

M. Unsorted, Damaged & Oversized Records (Containers 129-134)

The unsorted records consist mainly of papers other than correspondence including fragments of reports and memoranda, printed and near-printed ephemera. The papers damaged by mold and which cannot be used until treated consist of correspondence of the executive director for the year 1947 and a few 1957-58 files. The oversized materials consist of two campaign posters filed in the charter case; a scrapbook (1966) of campaign schedules; and engravers plates for party cartoons filed in Container 127 (with the phonodisc).

N. Enrollments (Containers 135-146)

The enrollments (ca.1960-1971) consist of typescript and/or mimeographed copies of the names and addresses of enrolled Liberal Party voters arranged within the year by county, city, election district and ward. The lists were transcribed from official enrollment lists published by county boards of election. Many of the published lists are included in the records.

O. Scrapbooks (Volumes 1-28)

The scrapbooks (1936-63) which are arranged in chronological order contain extensive press documentation relative to the American Labor Party and to the Liberal Party. The ALP scrapbooks contain in addition to clippings leaflets, flyers, press releases and memorabilia of the party.

THE LIBERAL PARTY OF NEW YORK STATE

Container list

Container No.

A. Executive Director

1	1942-43; 1944-45 (to "G")
2	1945, H-Y; 1945 unsorted
3	1945, A-M
4	1945, M-S
5	1945, S-W; 1945 unsorted
6	1946
7	1947-48
8	1949, A-Q
9	1949, R-Y; 1949 unsorted; 1950, A-B
10	1950, C-P
11	1950, P-S
12	1950, T-Y; 1950 unsorted
13	1951, A-Q
14	1951, R-Z; 1951 unsorted; 1951 campaign
15-16	1951 campaign
17	1952, A-N
18	1952, O-S
19	1952, S-U

20	1952, W-Z; 1953 unsorted; 1952 campaign
21-22	1953
23	1954, A-N
24	1954, O-Y; 1954 unsorted
25	1955, A-O
26	1955, P-Z; 1955 unsorted
27	1956, A-N
28	1956, O-S
29	1956, S-Y; 1956 unsorted; 1956 campaign
30	1956 campaign
31	1957, A-N
32	1957, N-Z
33	1957 unsorted; 1957 campaign
34	1958, A-K
35	1958, L-S
36	1958, S-Y
37	1958 unsorted; 1958 campaign
38	1958 campaign
39	1959, A-C
40	1959, D-P
41	1959, Q-Z; 1959 unsorted
42	1959 unsorted; Counties, Albany-Yates
43	1960, A-M

44	1960, N-Z
45	1960 unsorted; Counties, Albany-Yates
46	1961, A-L
47	1961, M-S
48	1961, S-Z; 1961 unsorted; Counties, Allegheny-Westchester
49	1962, A-G
50	1962, H-N
51	1962, N-S
52	1962, S-Z
53	1962 unsorted; Counties, Albany-Yates
54	1963, A-F
55	1963 G-Q
56	1963, R-Z; 1963 unsorted
57	1963 unsorted; Counties, Albany-Nassau
58	1963, Counties, Niagara-Yates
59	1964, A-K
60	1964, L-U
61	1964, W-Z; 1964 unsorted; Counties, Albany-Westchester
62	1965, A-E
63	1965, F-P
64	1965, Q-Z; 1965 unsorted
65	1965 unsorted; Counties, Albany-Yates

66	1966, A-L
67	1966, M-Z; 1966 unsorted
68	1966 unsorted; Counties, Albany-Westchester
69	1967, A-Y; Counties, Albany-Erie
70	1967 Counties, Essex-Yates
71	1968, A-P
72	1968, Q-Z; 1968 unsorted
73	1969; Counties, Albany-Yates; 1970 unsorted
74	1971; Counties, Albany-Yates
75	1972
76	1973
77	1974-75
78-79	B. Publicity Director
80-82	C. Liberal News/Liberal Digest
	D. Trade Union Council
83	1945-54, A-K
84	1945-54, K-M
85	1945-54, M-T
86	1945-54, T-Y; unsorted
87	1959-64
	E. Electoral Documents
88	1952-55
89	1956-57

90 1958-59

91 1959-74

F. Legislative Bills

92 1956-57

93 1957-66

94 **G. Minutes**

95 **H. Photographs**

I. Press Releases

96 1948-51

97 1951-52

98 1952

99 1956-57

100 1958-60

101 1961-64

102 1965-74

103 1965 (Lindsay campaign; unsorted; other than LP)

J. Printed Ephemera

104 1942-62

105 1963-68

106 1969-73

107 1974-78 & n.d.

108 B-G

- 109 G-M
- 110 M-W; unsorted
- 111 N-Y

K. Financial Records

- 112 Reports and statements
- 113 Bills paid
1954-47; 1958, A-P
- 114 1958, R-Z; 1959-60
- 115 1961-62; 1963, A-F
- 116 1963, G-Z; 1964
- 117 1965; 1966, A-D
- 118 1966, E-Z; 1967, A-J
- 119 1967, L-Z; unsorted
- 120 Miscellaneous
1947-62
- 121 1962-67
- 122 Account books
- 123 Receipt books
- 124 Accounts (loose sheets)
- 125 Cancelled checks
- 126 Check stubs

L. Sound Recordings

- 127-127A Phonodiscs
- 128 Phonotapes

M. Unsorted, Damaged & Oversized Records

129-132	Unsorted records
133-134	Damaged records

N. Enrollments

135	1960's-1970's
136	1961
137	1962;1969
138	1962; 1969-70
139	1964
140	1965
141	1966
142	1968
143	1969-70
144	1970
145	1971
146	unsorted
Charter case	Oversized materials

Volume No.

O. Scrapbooks

American Labor Party

- 1 1936 (flyers, memorabilia)
- 2 1936, July-Oct (clippings)
- 3 1936, Oct-Nov (clippings)
- 4 1936, Sept-Dec; 1937, Mar-Nov (press releases)
- 5 1937 (leaflets, flyers, memorabilia)
- 6 1937, Jan 2 - Aug. 7 (clippings)
- 7 1937, Aug-Oct (clippings)
- 8 1937, Nov - 1938, Jan (clippings)
- 9 1940, Aug-Sept (clippings)
- 10 1942, May 23 - Sept (clippings)
- 11 1942, Sept 28 - Oct 22 (clippings)
- 12 1943, Jan 9 - Sept 13 (clippings)
- 13 1943-44 (clippings)
- 14 1944, Mar 29 - 1945, June (clippings)

Liberal Party of New York State

- 15 1944, Mar 28 - 1945, Sept 3 (clippings)
- 16 1945 (clippings)
- 17 1945 (clippings)
- 18 1945-46 (advertisements, editorials)
- 19 1945-47 (clippings)

20	1946 (clippings)
21	1946-49 (editorials, advertisements)
22	1947, Aug-Nov (clippings)
23	1949, Mar.-Nov (clippings)
24	1949, Oct-Dec
25	1951, Jan-Dec (clippings)
26	1952, Jan - 1953, Aug (clippings)
27	1956 (clippings)
28	1960-63 (clippings)

Checklist of Sound Recordings

Phonodiscs (Box 127-127A)

1. F.H. LaGuardia. Excerpt "Wall Street Strike". Spot. 4/20/47. American Broadcasting Co. 78 rpm; 12" disc (one side)
2. Excerpt from "Perspectives and Program for a New National Labor-Liberal Party", by Dr. John L. Childs. Reading by W.J. Harlow. International Recording Co. On other side: "Liberal Party Spot for Registration", by W.J. Harlow. 78 rpm; 12" disc.
3. "Campaign Audition". WOR recording. 12" disc. (two sides)
4. "Bartley C. Crum Speaking at Liberal Party Convention, Sept. 1, 1948. Audio Devices, Inc. 12" disc (one side)
5. "Liberal Party Bells Signature". WOR Electrical Transcription. 12" disc. Damaged.
6. Three unidentified 12" discs.
7. "Dewey and Hanley". Metropolitan Recording Studios. 10" disc (one side).
8. "You've Got to Register, You've Got to Vote". Liberal Party Registration (1950 campaign). Gotham Recording Corp. 12 disc (three discs (both sides)
9. "Address by Dr. Israel Goldstein". 12" disc (one side)
10. "The New York Story / Harry Gross Trial", 9/21/51, WCBS, 10:00-10:30. Part 1 and Part 2. (Rockhill Recording Co.). 2 - 16" discs (33&1/3 rpm).
11. "Halley Speaks to the Women", Sept. 24, 1951, WJZ-TV, 7:00-7:15 p.m. (Associated Recording Studios). 16" disc. (33&1/3 rpm).
12. "Halley", 9/25/51, CBS-TV. On verso: "Halley & A.A. Berle", 9/27/51, WJZ-Radio, 10:45-11:00 p.m. (Associated Recording Studios). 16" disc (33 & 1/3 rpm).
13. "Halley / Crime Syndicate", 10/2/51, CBS-TV, 9:00-9:30 p.m. (Associated Recording Studios). Sides 1 and 2. 16" disc. (33&1/3 rpm).
14. "Halley", 10/3/51, WJZ-TV, 6:45 p.m. (Associated Recording Studios). 16" disc (33&1/3 rpm).
15. "Dr. Roma Ganz-Halley", 10/5/51, 10:15 p.m. (Associated Recording Studios). 16" disc [no rpm given].

16. "Rudolph Halley (Liberal Party)", 10/10/51, WJZ, 10:45-11:00 p.m. (Rockhill Recording Studios). 16" disc [no rpm given].
17. "This Is New York / Bill Leonard", 10/12/51 (Associated Recording Studios). Sides 1 and 2. 16" disc (33&1/3 rpm).
18. "Five Candidates", 10/15/51, CH 9 TV, 7:00 p.m. (Associated Recording Studios). 16" disc (33&1/3 rpm).
19. "Robert E. Sheerwood, 10/21/51 (Gotham Recording Corp.).12" disc (33&1/3 rpm).
20. "WOR TV Press Conference, 10/23/51, Part 1 and Part 2 (WOR Reference Recording). 2 - 16" discs (33&1/3 rpm).
21. "Senator Halley", 10/24/51, WJZ-TV, CH 7, 6:45 p.m. (Associated Recording Studios). 16" disc (33&1/3 rpm).
22. "Russell Davenport", 10/25/46, 6:15 - 6:30 p.m. (Muzak Transcription). 16" disc (33&1/3 rpm).
23. "Halley", 10/26/51, WOR, 10:15 p.m. (Associated Recording Studios). 16" disc (33&1/3 rpm).
24. "Emil K. Ellis", 10/29/51, WPIX, 8:30 p.m. (Associated Recording Studios), 16" disc (33&1/3 rpm).
25. "Rudolph Halley", 10/29/51, WJZ, 10:45 p.m. (Associated Recording Studios). 16" disc (33&1/3 rpm).
26. "Halley-Cherne-Sheftel", 11/1/51, WOR, 10:45 p.m. On verso: Halley-Newbold Morris", 10/31/51, WOR, 10:45 p.m.(Associated Recording Studios). 16" disc (33&1/3 rpm).
27. "Pol. Ann (Sharkey)", 11/4/51, WPIX Television, Channel 11, 1 cut, 1 min. 12" disc (78 rpm).

Phonotapes (Box 128)

1. Robinson Reception at Waldorf, 9/16/53. 10" reel
2. Tim Costello radio tape. 5" reel
3. Costello. Liberal Party Dinner. Cue Recordings, Inc. 5" reel.
4. Liberal Party. Costello, Oct. 8-9, 1940. WMCA,WNBC, WOR.
5. Liberal Party. Tim Costello. 7" reel. Cue Recording, Inc.
6. "Berle I". 7" reel

7. "Berle 2". 7" reel
8. Liberal Party Convention, 1965. Reel 3. 7" reel.
9. Liberal Party Convention, 1965. Reel 4. 7" reel
10. Liberal Party Convention, 1965. Reel 5. 7" reel
11. Liberal. Costello. 5 min. 4" reel
12. Unidentified: 5 (five) 7" reels
13. Unidentified: 3 (three) 7": reels
14. Liberal Party - Tim Costello. 10" reel
15. Liberal Party - Harrington. 10" reel