Finding Aid to the Asiatic Exclusion League Records larc.ms.0145

Finding aid prepared by Labor Archives and Research Center staff.
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1987, revised 2013
Title: Asiatic Exclusion League records
Creator: Asiatic Exclusion League.
Date (inclusive): 1906-1910
Collection number: larc.ms.0145
Accession number: 1985/003
Repository: Labor Archives and Research Center
J. Paul Leonard Library, Room 460
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Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English.
Physical Description: 1.25 cubic ft. (3 boxes)
Abstract: The bulk of the Asiatic Exclusion League records consist of the minutes and proceedings of monthly meetings and the first convention of the League, spanning the years 1906-1910; the collection also contains the proceedings of the first two conventions of the Anti-Japanese Laundry League founded in 1908; the transcript of a debate at St. Ignatius College; a pamphlet by Samuel Gompers on Asian workers entitled "Meat vs. Rice"; and a detailed index to its contents. In addition to these items, photocopies of selected articles on Asian exclusion from the Labor Clarion between 1904-1915 were added to the collection in 2006.
Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Asiatic Exclusion League Records, larc.ms.0145, Labor Archives and Research Center, San Francisco State University.
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Availability
Collection is open for research.
Related Materials
History of the Asiatic Exclusion League
The Asiatic Exclusion League was founded in 1905 in San Francisco, California, as the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League. In 1908 the organization changed its name to the Asiatic Exclusion League. Participants in the founding convention were mostly delegates from trade unions and included Andrew Furuseth and Walter Macarthur for the San Francisco Labor Council, and P.H. McCarthy and Olaf A. Tveitmoe for the San Francisco Building Trades Council. The Cooks' and Waiters' union was also especially active due to the significant number of Japanese employed in restaurants.
The building trades unions were a dominant force in the League, and Tveitmoe assumed the presidency. Tveitmoe, a Norwegian immigrant, began as a leader of the Cement Workers' Union in San Francisco and rose to prominence as secretary of the San Francisco Building Trades Council and editor of its newspaper, Organized Labor, eventually becoming financial secretary of the California Building Trades Department. The purpose of the League set forth in its constitution was the exclusion of Asian immigrants through legislation. The League hoped to "educate" people so as to "create a sentiment which will prove to the Congress of our country the necessity of the enactment of a law for the preservation of our race."
The Preamble to the League's Constitution claimed that "The Caucasian and Asiatic races are unassimilable. Contact between these races must result, under the conditions of industrial life obtaining in North America, in injury to the former, proportioned to the extent to which such contact prevails." The anti-Japanese activists campaigned to abolish Japanese-language schools and segregate the public schools, prohibit Japanese from commercial fishing, and forbid Japanese land ownership and long-term leasing. The League was financed by the voluntary contributions of affiliating
organizations, which numbered about 200. Over half of these organizations were labor unions, although the League also received money from fraternal and community organizations, businesses, and individuals.

**Scope and Contents**

The bulk of the Asiatic Exclusion League records consist of the minutes and proceedings of monthly meetings and the first convention of the League, spanning the years 1906-1910; the first twenty-six pages of minutes from four meetings May to August 1906, are missing. The collection also contains the proceedings of the first two conventions of the Anti-Japanese Laundry League founded in 1908; the transcript of a debate at St. Ignatius College; a pamphlet by Samuel Gompers on Asian workers entitled "Meat vs. Rice"; and a detailed index to its contents. Throughout the minutes and convention proceedings and in several League and government reports are statistics on many aspects of the Asian work force in the United States and especially the West Coast. In addition to these items, photocopies of selected articles on Asian exclusion from the *Labor Clarion* between 1904-1915 were added to the collection in 2006.

**Acquisition**

The records of the Asiatic Exclusion League (originally known as the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League) were donated to the Labor Archives and Research Center by the San Francisco Labor Council, October 1985, accession number 1985/003.

**Processing Information**

The material is printed and was clipped together as a hardcover volume. The cover has been removed and the contents placed in folders. The collection was processed by Suzanne Forsyth, November 1987.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

- Anti-Japanese Laundry League.
- Asian Americans--Employment--History.
- California--Race relations--History--20th century.
- Chinese--California--San Francisco--History.
- Foreign workers, Asian--United States--History.
- Foreign workers, Chinese--United States--History.
- Foreign workers, Japanese--United States--History.
- Foreign workers, Korean--United States--History.
- Japanese Americans--Employment--History.
- Japanese--California--San Francisco--History.

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<tr>
<th>Box, Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>1, Folder 1</td>
<td>Minutes and Proceedings, Japanese and Korean Exclusion League (incomplete) 1906-1908</td>
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<td>1, Folder 2</td>
<td>Proceedings, Asiatic Exclusion League 1909-1910</td>
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<td>1, Folder 3</td>
<td>Proceedings, First International Convention, AEL 1908</td>
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<td>Debate transcript, Junior Philhistorian Debating Society, St. Ignatius College 1908</td>
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<td>1, Folder 6</td>
<td>&quot;Meat v. Rice&quot; by Samuel Gompers 1908</td>
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<td>1, Folder 7</td>
<td>&quot;Comparative Tables&quot; of Japanese population growth published by the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League 1907</td>
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<td>Convention Proceedings, Anti-Japanese Laundry League circa 1908</td>
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<td>Convention Proceedings, Second Convention, Anti-Japanese Laundry League 1909</td>
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<td>&quot;Oriental Immigration on the Pacific Coast&quot; undated</td>
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<td>1, Folder 11</td>
<td>&quot;Chinese and Japanese, Their Number and Condition&quot; 1906</td>
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<td><em>Labor Clarion</em> (photocopies)</td>
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<td>1904 February 26-1905 February 17</td>
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1914 February 13-1915 February 5