

BUSSIE (VICTOR) PAPERS

Mss. 5237

Inventory

Compiled by

Dre Tarleton

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Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University

2021

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SUMMARY

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Size | 0.3 linear foot, 1 volume |
| Geographic Locations | Louisiana, Washington, D.C., New York, New York |
| Inclusive Dates | 1953-2012 |
| Bulk Dates | 1976-2011 |
| Languages | English |
| Summary | Victor Bussie was born on January 27, 1919, in Montrose, Louisiana, and served as the president of the Louisiana AFL-CIO from 1956 to 1997. He and his wife, Fran, became dominant forces in the Louisiana labor movement during the twentieth century. The collection consists of correspondence, photographs, federal government memorabilia, and articles documenting his personal and political life. |
| Access Restrictions | None |
| Reproduction Note | May be reproduced. |
| Copyright | Physical rights and copyright are retained by the LSU Libraries. |
| Related Collections | Fran Bussie Papers, Mss. 5235 |
| Citation | Victor Bussie Papers, Mss. 5237, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries Special Collections, Baton Rouge, La. |
| Stack Location(s) | X:78, OS:B |

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

Born on January 27, 1919, in Montrose, Louisiana, Victor Bussie spent his childhood attending public schools in Shreveport. By 1940, he had joined the Shreveport Fire Department, where he worked his way up the ranks until reaching the level of Chief of the Fire Prevention Bureau in 1952. His tenure as a firefighter was interrupted in 1943 when he enlisted in the Naval Air Force to fight in World War II. He returned to his position as a firefighter in 1946 after being honorably discharged from the military.

Victor worked as a firefighter until 1956 when he resigned his position after being elected president of the Louisiana AFL-CIO. At this time his home was targeted with a bomb due to his affiliation with civil rights activists.

Victor was re-elected as president of the AFL-CIO every year until 1997 when he officially retired. At the point of his retirement, he was elected President Emeritus for life due to his contributions to the rights of workers in Louisiana and across the nation.

During his career as president of the AFL-CIO, Victor became a fixture in both the Louisiana Legislature and the US Congress, meeting personally with such political figures as Presidents John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Jimmy Carter, and Bill Clinton. He also consulted U.S. Congressman Hale Boggs and Louisiana Governors Edwin Edwards and Kathleen Blanco frequently. In 1972 he met and married Francis "Fran" Martinez who was an activist for women's, disability, and aging rights both nationwide and in Louisiana. Victor died in 2011.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection consists primarily of articles, correspondence, and photographs documenting the political and personal life of Victor Bussie. Particularly, materials relate to his work as president of the Louisiana chapter of the AFL-CIO and his labor reform work between 1960 and 2011. Most materials document his interactions with major political leaders on the state and national levels. Also included is a signed copy of the Warren Commission Report and two pens used by Lyndon B. Johnson to sign Medicare and air pollution legislation.

LIST OF SERIES AND SUBSERIES

Series I. Correspondence, 1979-1998, undated

Subseries 1. Personal Correspondence, 1984-1997, undated

Subseries 2. Professional Correspondence, 1979-1998, undated

Series II. Professional and Political Work, 1961-2003, undated

Subseries 1. AFL-CIO, 1961-1997, undated

Subseries 2. Legal Actions, 1966-1980

Subseries 3. Newspaper/Magazine Clippings, 1972-1992, undated

Subseries 4. Awards, 1971-2003

Subseries 5. Memorabilia, 1963-1965, undated

Subseries 6. Retirement, 1997

Series III. Personal Papers, 2011-2012

Subseries 1. Obituaries, 2011-2012

Subseries 2. Funeral, 2011

Series IV. Photographs, 1953, 1964-1992, undated

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series I. Correspondence, 1979-1998, undated

Subseries 1. Personal Correspondence, 1984-1997, undated

This subseries contains correspondence from several people with a relationship to Victor, including a get well letter from President Bill Clinton and a Christmas letter from Lindy Boggs.

Subseries 2. Professional Correspondence, 1979-1998, undated

This subseries contains correspondence of a professional nature written to Victor, including an invitation to the White House, letters of thanks from George Meany and Senator John Breaux, a letter from Edward Kennedy, and an invitation from Russell Long to speak at a symposium on the Long family.

Series II. Professional and Political Work, 1961-2003, undated

Subseries 1. AFL-CIO, 1961-1997, undated

This subseries contains newspaper articles, convention programs, and resumes related to Victor's 41-year career as the president of the AFL-CIO. Topics of interest include right-to-work legislation and controversies surrounding the length of his tenure as president.

Subseries 2. Legal Actions, 1966-1980

This subseries contains copies of newspaper articles related to Victor's legal actions taken when his home was bombed. Other topics include a tax equalization lawsuit, a lawsuit against right-to-work legislation backers, and a libel lawsuit against Olen J. LeBlanc.

Subseries 3. Newspaper/Magazine Clippings, 1972-1992, undated

This subseries contains newspaper and magazine articles highlighting Victor's work as AFL-CIO president and other positions he held throughout his lifetime. Also included is an announcement of his marriage to Frances Martinez Bussie.

Subseries 4. Awards, 1971-2003

This subseries contains copies of newspaper articles and programs documenting the awards and ceremonies given to Victor due to his political work. It also contains his honorary doctorate from LSU and an honorary membership to the Golden Key National Honor Society.

Subseries 5. Memorabilia, 1963-1965, undated

This subseries contains three pens used by Lyndon B. Johnson. One pen was used in the signing of the 1965 Medicare Act. Another was used in the signing of the 1963 Air Pollution Act. The subseries also includes a signed copy of the volume, *Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy* (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1964) which was given to Victor by commission member Hale Boggs.

Subseries 6. Retirement, 1997

This subseries contains newspaper articles about Victor's retirement from the AFL-CIO, programs from his joint retirement party with his wife, Frances, and an edited typescript of his retirement speech.

Series III. Personal Papers, 2011-2012

Subseries 1. Obituaries, 2011-2012

This subseries contains newspaper clippings of the obituaries and tributes written in the wake of Victor's death in 2011. It also contains print-outs of articles written for online publications about his passing and legacy.

Subseries 2. Funeral, 2011

This subseries contains materials related to Victor's funeral, including the program for the event and a poem written in his honor by Terry "Tiny" Laurent.

Series IV. Photographs, 1953, 1964-1992, undated

This series contains photographs of Victor and various people of importance in the labor movement of the 20th century, as well as prominent members of the Democratic Party of the same time period. Included are photographs of President John F. Kennedy, President Lyndon B. Johnson, Senator Hale Boggs, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, Senator Russell Long, Governor Edwin Edwards, and President Hubert Humphrey, among others.

INDEX TERMS

Materials relating to these people, places, and things can be found in the series indicated, as represented by their numbers.

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CONTAINER LIST

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