

**S0441 Business Executives Move For Vietnam Peace,
St. Louis Area Committee
Records, 1966-1974
139 Folders**

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T. Walter Hardy Jr. donated the records of the St. Louis Area Committee of the Business Executives Move for Vietnam Peace to the Western Historical Manuscript Collection on July 15, 1986.

In September 1967 a group of nearly one thousand businessmen, including ten St. Louisans, formed Business Executives Move for Vietnam Peace, a national committee opposing United States participation in the Vietnam War. Henry E. Niles, board chairman of Baltimore Life Insurance Company, founded the national group.

In January 1968 about thirty St. Louis businessmen formed a local chapter of B.E.M. It named T. Walter Hardy Jr., president of Hardy Salt Company, as chairman; Lewis T. Apple, board member of General Fiber Company, as vice chairman; and Larry R. Gavel, vice president of Gaywood Manufacturing Company, as secretary.

B.E.M. sought to end American participation in Vietnam. It recommended an end to the bombing of North Vietnam, deescalating the ground war, and beginning negotiations between all parties engaged in fighting. Activities of the St. Louis B.E.M. included conferences, congressional polls, fundraising dinners and luncheons, films, letter writing campaigns, lobbying, newspaper and radio ads. The committee also supported moratoriums, circulated anti-Vietnam petitions, and sponsored a speakers bureau. Speakers included Daniel Ellsberg, author of The Pentagon Papers, news commentator David Schoenbrun, Brigadier General William Wallace Ford, and a group of P.O.W. wives.

Membership in B.E.M. was open to both active and retired owners, officers, directors, administrators, and managers of American businesses who paid annual dues. Associate members were open to those who supported and contributed to B.E.M.'s objectives. Membership increased to one hundred businessmen in 1970.

T. Walter Hardy Jr. resigned as chairman of the St. Louis Committee in 1970 and Robert Hermanson, president of Hermanson-Manahan, Inc., an investment brokerage firm, replaced him. In 1971 Hardy became president of the American Business Committee on National Priorities, the educational division of the National B.E.M. Also in 1971, the St. Louis Committee of B.E.M., the St. Louis chapter of the American Friends Service Committee, and other peace groups brought the Congressional Caravan to St. Louis. The Caravan included a delegation of anti-war congressmen who met with St. Louis business and professional men, city officials, union members, religious and civic organizations to informally discuss the

Vietnam War. The congressmen hoped to develop grassroots pressure that might persuade additional members of Congress to support anti-war legislation and eventually set a deadline for complete withdrawal of United States troops from Vietnam.

Although a non-partisan group, B.E.M. voted to endorse all candidates supporting an end to the Vietnam War. In 1972 the St. Louis chapter voted to endorse Senator McGovern's candidacy for United States president.

In 1973 the St. Louis chapter re-elected Hardy as chairman. With the gradual withdrawal of United States troops from Vietnam, the St. Louis B.E.M. began its "Operation Watchdog" program to monitor signs of new war involvement.

The St. Louis chapter of B.E.M. became inactive in 1974.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The St. Louis B.E.M. Records (1967-1974) document the group's efforts to end United States involvement in the Vietnam War. The collection primarily contains correspondence to arrange various speakers to come to St. Louis, including Daniel Ellsberg, author of The Pentagon Papers, members of the American Friends Service Committee, the International Voluntary Service Program in Vietnam and St. Louis Doctors for Peace. The records contain local membership lists, meeting minutes, correspondence with local and national congressmen, religious and civic organizations, newsclippings, newsletters, petitions, speeches and photographs of speakers.

The collection is divided into ten series: (1) Administration, 1967-1973; (2) Finances and Fundraising, 1968-1973; (3) Activities, 1967-1973; (4) Correspondence, 1966-1974; (5) Speakers, 1967-1973; (6) American Business Committee, 1971-1974; (7) National Council, 1966-1973; (8) Publicity, 1967-1973; (9) Support Groups, 1967-1972; (10) Photographs, 1967-1972.

SERIES DESCRIPTION

SERIES 1 - ADMINISTRATION, 1967-1973, FOLDERS 1-8

Contains correspondence, Executive Committee meeting minutes, membership lists, and memoranda. Arranged alphabetically.

SERIES 2 - FINANCES AND FUNDRAISING, 1968-1973, FOLDERS 9-22

Contains correspondence, loan agreements, memoranda, newspaper ads, and treasurer's reports. Arranged alphabetically.

SERIES 3 - ACTIVITIES, 1967-1973, FOLDERS 23-41

Contains correspondence, meeting minutes, memoranda, questionnaires, speeches, surveys, newsclippings, brochures, petitions. Arranged alphabetically.

SERIES 4 - CORRESPONDENCE, 1966-1974, FOLDERS 42-69

Contains, correspondence, memoranda, newsclippings. Arranged alphabetically.

SERIES 5 - SPEAKERS, 1967-1973, FOLDERS 70-91

Contains articles, correspondence, biographical sketches, speeches. Arranged alphabetically by name of speaker.

SERIES 6 - AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMITTEE, 1971-1974, FOLDERS 92-100

Contains articles, correspondence, meeting minutes, memoranda, and treasurer's reports. Arranged alphabetically.

SERIES 7 - NATIONAL COUNCIL, 1966-1973, FOLDERS 101-111

Contains articles, T. Walter Hardy's correspondence with the national council, brochures, papers, status report on meeting minutes, and treasurer's reports. Arranged alphabetically.

SERIES 8 - PUBLICITY, 1967-1973, FOLDERS 112-118

Contains articles, brochures, correspondence, literature, newsletters, newsclippings, press releases, memoranda. Arranged alphabetically.

SERIES 9 - SUPPORT GROUPS, 1967-1972, FOLDERS 119-138

Contains articles, bumper stickers, correspondence, posters, petitions, memoranda, calendars, newsclippings, and newsletters. Arranged alphabetically.

SERIES 10 - PHOTOGRAPHS, #8136-8143, 1967-1972, FOLDER 139

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