



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

**A Finding Aid to the
Samuel Dickstein Papers**

Manuscript Collection No. 8



Collection Summary

Title	Samuel Dickstein Papers
Dates	1923-1944
Collection Number	MS-8
Repository	The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives
Creator	Dickstein, Samuel, 1885-1954
Extent	9.2 linear feet (18 Hollinger boxes and 2 oversize boxes)
Language of the Material	English

Administrative Information

Biographical Sketch

Samuel Dickstein was born February 6, 1885 in Vilna, Lithuania, the eldest child of Rabbi Israel (d. 1918) and Sata B. Gordon (d. 1931) Dickstein. He was brought to the United States by his parents in 1887. The family settled in New York City, where Dickstein attended public schools, graduating in 1903. He studied at the New York Law School and in 1908 he was admitted to the New York bar; shortly thereafter he joined the New York law firm of Hyman and Gross.

Dickstein's interest in politics began while he was still in high school and he eventually became closely associated with Tammany Hall District Leader John Ahearn (d. 1921). Ahearn was instrumental in Dickstein's appointment as a special deputy attorney general of the State of New York (1911-1914) and his membership on New York's Board of Aldermen (1917), where Dickstein ran unsuccessfully for the New York State Assembly. He was victorious in gaining a seat during the 1918 election.

In Albany, Assemblyman Dickstein distinguished himself by authoring New York's kosher food law, which set the standard for similar legislation in other states. He initiated New York's Sabbath law, which permitted Jewish merchants to remain open on Sunday, and throughout his tenure he fought for improved housing and rental regulations to benefit New York's East Side tenants.

In 1922, Dickstein, running on the Democratic ticket, was elected to the House of Representatives from New York's 12th District. He was assigned to the House Committee on Naturalization and Immigration, where his work with New York's East Side immigrants proved invaluable. He soon was recognized for his expertise on the immigrant question, and in 1931 became the Chairman of the Committee on Naturalization and Immigration.

As chairman of this Committee, Dickstein first became aware of the great number of foreigners illegally residing in the United States and the vast amount of anti-Semitic and anti-American literature being distributed in the country. His personal interest in this matter led him to investigate independently the activities of neo-Nazi and other Fascist groups in the U.S. This investigation proved to be of such significance that in November 1933, Dickstein's committee began official hearings on Nazi activities in the United States.

On January 3, 1934, the opening day of the 73d Congress, Dickstein introduced a resolution calling for the formation of a special committee to probe into un-American activities in the United States. The "Dickstein Resolution" (H.R. #198) was passed in March 1934, with John McCormack named Chairman and Samuel Dickstein Vice-Chairman. (Dickstein had refused the chairmanship of the Committee, feeling that his Jewish ancestry might have an adverse effect on the proceedings.)

Throughout the rest of 1934, the Special Committee on Un-American Activities conducted hearings, bringing before it most of the major figures in the U.S. Fascist movement. Dickstein, who proclaimed as his aim the eradication of all traces of Nazism in the U.S., personally questioned each witness. His flair for dramatics and sensationalism, along with his sometimes exaggerated claims, continually captured headlines across the nation and won him much public recognition.

By the time the official Committee report was issued in February 1935, its conclusions were known to most Americans: the Committee found that while Nazi Germany was indeed giving both financial and ideological support to the Friends of the New Germany (the American Bund), the American Bundists were not in violation of any existing federal law. The report did, however, result in Germany's official denial of any affiliation with the American Bund and its order forbidding all German nationals to become members of the Bund.

Upon the conclusion of the official House investigation, Dickstein continued his personal

investigation into Nazi activities and propaganda in the United States. In 1937, he called for a renewed House investigation which resulted in the formation of a new Committee on Un-American Activities under the chairmanship of Representative Martin Dies.

Due to the tremendous amount of European immigration to the United States, Dickstein, during the war, was involved in the implementation and classification of U.S. immigration and naturalization laws. In 1946, after twenty-three years in Congress, Dickstein resigned to become a justice of the New York Supreme Court. He retained this position until his death in New York City on April 22, 1954.

Scope and Content

The Samuel Dickstein Papers (1923-1944) consist of the personal papers of Representative Dickstein as Vice-Chairman of the House of Representative Special Committee on Un-American Activities. The collection contains correspondence, iconographic material, nearprint, legislative records and miscellaneous items relating to Dickstein's investigation of Fascist activities in the United States during the pre-World II period. Thirty-six metal disks of Committee recordings were also donated with the Papers. These have been transferred onto magnetic tape (Tape Nos. 697-699) and are no longer part of the collection.

In 1954, when the collection was originally arranged, it was done by subject with a "Master Index," but due to the vast amount of missing material, the errors within the Index, the misleading titles and lack of consistency, the arrangement has been changed. The collection is now arranged by type of material. The original index, with notes as to the location of the material in the present arrangement, may be found in the first box of the collection.

Arrangement

Organized into three (3) series: A. Correspondence, 1923-1944; B. Photographs, 1928-1937; C. Printed Matter and Nearprint, 1927-1943.

Terms of Access

The collection is open for use; no restrictions apply.

Terms of Reproduction and Use

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Preferred Citation

Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Samuel Dickstein Papers and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:

[Description], [Date], Samuel Dickstein Papers, MS-8, Box [#], Folder [#]. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Provenance

The Samuel Dickstein papers were originally presented to the Hebrew Union College Library by Samuel Dickstein in April 1945. The library donated the collection to the American Jewish Archives in 1954.

Processing Information

Processed by M. Carolyn Dellenbach and Larry C. Baron, January 1977.

Index Terms

Subjects Anti-fascist movements / Anti-Nazi movement / Jews -- United States / Legislators / United States -- Politics and government

Personal Names Dickstein, Samuel, 1885-1954

Media Photographs

Series A. Correspondence, 1923-1944

Extent 2.4 linear feet (6 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Series A consists of correspondence, memoranda, and miscellaneous material such as outlines and summaries of committee hearings, investigative reports, translations of foreign articles, and newspaper clippings. The majority of the Series is composed of Dickstein's correspondence with committee members, investigators, and others interested in the committee proceedings. A great deal of the correspondence consists of letters to

Representative Dickstein from organizations and from American citizens expressing their opinions on the success or failure of the Special Committee and suggesting the direction of further investigations.

Arrangement

The series is alphabetically arranged.

Box and Folder Listing

- Box 1. Folder 1. Index.
- Box 1. Folder 2. A, General.
- Box 1. Folder 3. American Jewish Congress.
- Box 1. Folder 4. B, General.
- Box 1. Folder 5. C, General.
- Box 2. Folder 1. D, General.
- Box 2. Folder 2. E, General.
- Box 2. Folder 3. F, General.
- Box 2. Folder 4. G, General.
- Box 2. Folder 5. H, General.
- Box 3. Folder 1. I, General.
- Box 3. Folder 2. Immigration and Naturalization Service.
- Box 3. Folder 3. J, General.
- Box 3. Folder 4. K, General.
- Box 3. Folder 5. L, General.
- Box 3. Folder 6. M, General.
- Box 3. Folder 7. McCormick, John W.
- Box 4. Folder 1. N, General.
- Box 4. Folder 2. Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League.
- Box 4. Folder 3. O, General.
- Box 4. Folder 4. P, General.
- Box 4. Folder 5. R, General.
- Box 4. Folder 6. Randolph, Frank.
- Box 4. Folder 7. Rollins, Richard.
- Box 5. Folder 1. Sa-So, General.
- Box 5. Folder 2. Sp-Sw, General.
- Box 5. Folder 3. State Department.
- Box 5. Folder 4. T, General.
- Box 5. Folder 5. U, General.
- Box 5. Folder 6. Untermyer, Samuel.
- Box 5. Folder 7. V, General.
- Box 5. Folder 8. W, General.
- Box 5. Folder 9. Y-Z, General.

Box 6. Folder 1. Press releases and speeches.

Box 6. Folder 2. Miscellaneous correspondence.

Box 6. Folder 3. Miscellaneous correspondence.

Box 6. Folder 4. Miscellaneous correspondence.

Box 7. Folder 1. Miscellaneous correspondence.

Box 7. Folder 2. Miscellaneous correspondence.

Series B. Photographs, 1928-1937

Extent 0.2 linear feet (0.5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Series B contains photographs (as well as photocopy and photostat copies of photographs) of some of the people and activities which Dickstein investigated. The Series consists of two folders containing photographs and one folder containing copies of photographs.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 7. Folder 3. Photographs, 1928-1938, undated

Box 7. Folder 4. Copies, 1934-2937, undated

Series C. Printed Material and Nearprint, 1927-1943

Extent 6.6 linear feet (11.5 Hollinger boxes and 2 oversize boxes)

Scope and Content Note This series is of special interest because it contains many examples of pre-World War II literature and propaganda.

Arrangement Series C is divided into four (4) subseries: 1. Magazines and Bulletins; 2. Pamphlets, Articles and Broadsides; 3. Newsclippings; and 4. Newspapers.

Subseries 1. Magazines and Bulletins, 1927-1941

Extent 1.6 linear feet (4 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Contains complete issues of magazines and bulletins which were collected because they either dealt with the Committee investigations or other topics of interest to Dickstein. Many of the printed and typescript copies of the Committee's hearings and reports along with some of the Congressional Records and other legislative material from this period are contained in this subseries.

Arrangement The subseries is arranged alphabetically.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 7. Folder 5. A-I, General, 1933-1938

Box 7. Folder 6. American Hebrew, 1934, 1937-1938

Box 7. Folder 7. The Anti-Nazi Bulletin, 1937-1938, 1940

Box 7. Folder 8. Boycott, 1937, 1939

Box 7. Folder 9. Buch and Volk, 1934

Box 7. Folder 10. The Christian Zionist, 1937-1938

Box 7. Folder 11. Debrest's Weekly News Service, 1938-1939

Box 7. Folder 12. The Hour, 1940-1941

Box 7. Folder 13. J-N, General, 1933-1941

Box 8. Folder 1. Japan in Pictures, 1937

Box 8. Folder 2. Jewish Daily Bulletin, 1927-1928, 1933

Box 8. Folder 3. Liberation, 1938-1939

Box 8. Folder 4. Liberty, 1938-1939

Box 8. Folder 5. The Nation, 1933-1934, 1937-1938

Box 8. Folder 6. National Republic, 1937-1939

Box 8. Folder 7. New Masses, 1933-1935

Box 8. Folder 8. News Research Service, Inc. News Letter, 1941

Box 8. Folder 9. O-W, General, 1933-1940

Box 9. Folder 1. On Guard, 1938

Box 9. Folder 2. Opinion, 1938-1939

Box 9. Folder 3. Propaganda Analysis, 1937-1938

Box 9. Folder 4. Social Justice, 1939

Box 9. Folder 5. U.S. Congress. Congressional Records, 1932-1935

Box 9. Folder 6. U.S. Congress. Congressional Records, 1937

Box 9. Folder 7. U.S. Congress. Congressional Records, 1938-1939

Box 9. Folder 8. U.S. Congress. Congressional Records, 1940, undated

Box 10. Folder 1. U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. Bills; Resolutions; Reports, 1932-1941

Box 10. Folder 2. U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. Special Committee on Un-American Activities. Hearings, 1932, 1934 May-June

Box 10. Folder 3. U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. Special Committee on Un-American Activities. Hearings, 1934 July-August

Box 10. Folder 4. U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. Special Committee on Un-American Activities. Hearings, 1934 September-October

Box 10. Folder 5. U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. Special Committee on Un-American Activities. Hearings, 1934 November-December

Box 10. Folder 6. U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. Special Committee on Un-American Activities. Hearings, 1934 December

Box 10. Folder 7. U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. Special Committee on Un-American Activities. Index to Hearings (1934 Oct.); Preliminary draft of Committee report (1935 Jan.), 1934 October, 1935 January

Box 10. Folder 8. U.S. Congress. Senate. Bills; Resolutions, 1932-1937

Box 11. Folder 1. The Voice of Labor, 1939

Box 11. Folder 2. Voelkerbund, 1937-1939

Subseries 2. Pamphlets, Articles and Broadsides, 1930-1933

Extent 0.6 linear feet (1.5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Consists of pamphlets, broadsides and loose and reprinted articles. The material in

this subseries depicts many of the activities during this period (rallies, demonstrations, meetings) and contains priceless examples of pre-World War II propaganda.

Arrangement

This subseries is arranged chronologically.

Box and Folder Listing

- Box 11. Folder 3. Pamphlets, articles, and broadsides, 1930-1933
- Box 11. Folder 4. Pamphlets, articles, and broadsides, 1934
- Box 11. Folder 5. Pamphlets, articles, and broadsides, 1935
- Box 11. Folder 6. Pamphlets, articles, and broadsides, 1936
- Box 11. Folder 7. Pamphlets, articles, and broadsides, 1937
- Box 11. Folder 8. Pamphlets, articles, and broadsides, 1937
- Box 12. Folder 1. Pamphlets, articles, and broadsides, 1938
- Box 12. Folder 2. Pamphlets, articles, and broadsides, 1938
- Box 12. Folder 3. Pamphlets, articles, and broadsides, 1939
- Box 12. Folder 4. Pamphlets, articles, and broadsides, undated
- Box 12. Folder 5. Pamphlets, articles, and broadsides, undated
- Box 12. Folder 6. Pamphlets, articles, and broadsides, undated
- Box 13. Folder 1. Pamphlets, articles, and broadsides, undated

Subseries 3. Newsclippings, 1928-1943

Extent 2.2 linear feet (5.5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Contains mounted and loose newsclippings.

Arrangement

Newsclippings of general interest are chronologically arranged and are followed by newsclippings of a topical nature which are alphabetically arranged.

Box and Folder Listing

- Box 13. Folder 2. Newsclippings, 1928-1933
- Box 13. Folder 3. Newsclippings, 1934
- Box 13. Folder 4. Newsclippings, 1935
- Box 13. Folder 5. Newsclippings, 1936
- Box 13. Folder 6. Newsclippings, 1937
- Box 13. Folder 7. Newsclippings, 1937
- Box 14. Folder 1. Newsclippings, 1937
- Box 14. Folder 2. Newsclippings, 1938
- Box 14. Folder 3. Newsclippings, 1938
- Box 14. Folder 4. Newsclippings, 1938
- Box 14. Folder 5. Newsclippings, 1938

Box 15. Folder 1. Newsclippings, 1938
Box 15. Folder 2. Newsclippings, 1938
Box 15. Folder 3. Newsclippings, 1938
Box 15. Folder 4. Newsclippings, 1939
Box 15. Folder 5. Newsclippings, 1939
Box 15. Folder 6. Newsclippings, 1939
Box 15. Folder 7. Newsclippings, 1940-1943
Box 16. Folder 1. Newsclippings, undated
Box 16. Folder 2. Newsclippings, undated
Box 16. Folder 3. Newsclippings, undated
Box 16. Folder 4. Brandeis, Louis Dembitz, 1938-1939
Box 16. Folder 5. Camps [Nazi], 1937-1938, undated
Box 16. Folder 6. Cartoons [Political], 1933-1939, undated
Box 16. Folder 7. Chamberlain, Neville, 1938-1939, undated
Box 16. Folder 8. Coughlin, Charles E, 1938-1939, undated
Box 16. Folder 9. Czechoslovakia, 1938-1939
Box 17. Folder 1. Editorials, General, 1934, 1938-1939, undated
Box 17. Folder 2. Editorials-Bromley, Dorothy Dunbar, 1938-1939, undated
Box 17. Folder 3. Editorials-Lore, Ludwig, 1938-1939, undated
Box 17. Folder 4. Editorials-Meyer, Ernest L., 1937-1939, undated
Box 17. Folder 5. Editorials-Pegler, Westbrook, 1938-1939, undated
Box 17. Folder 6. Ford, Henry, 1936-1938
Box 17. Folder 7. France, 1938, undated
Box 17. Folder 8. Frankfurter, Felix, undated
Box 17. Folder 9. Goering, Hermann, 1938-1939, undated
Box 17. Folder 10. Great Britain, 1938-1939, undated
Box 17. Folder 11. Grynszpan, Herschel Fripel, 1938
Box 17. Folder 12. Hitler, Adolf, 1933-1939, undated
Box 17. Folder 13. Hull, Cordell, 1938, undated
Box 17. Folder 14. Italy, 1938-1939, undated
Box 17. Folder 15. Italy-France, 1938-1939, undated
Box 18. Folder 1. Kuhn, Fritz, 1937-1939, undated
Box 18. Folder 2. Ku Klux Klan, 1937-1939, undated
Box 18. Folder 3. McGrady, Pat, 1934
Box 18. Folder 4. Mann, Thomas, 1938-1939
Box 18. Folder 5. Morrow Castle, 1934,1936, undated
Box 18. Folder 6. Nazis-1938 riot, 1938
Box 18. Folder 7. Nazis-Spy trial, 1938
Box 18. Folder 8. Poland, 1938-1939, undated

Box 18. Folder 9. Refugees, 1937-1939, undated

Box 18. Folder 10. Roosevelt, Eleanor and Franklin D., 1933-1939, undated

Box 18. Folder 11. Soviet Russia, 1928-1939

Box 18. Folder 12. Spies, 1937-1939, undated

Box 18. Folder 13. Vonsiatsky, Anastase A., 1937-1939

Subseries 4. Newspapers, 1933-1940

Extent 2 linear feet (2 oversize boxes)

Scope and Content Note Contains complete issues of newspapers such as Voelkischer Beobachter, Deutscher Weckruf, Christian Free Press and Jewish Daily Bulletin.

Arrangement The subseries is chronologically arranged.

Box and Folder Listing

Box X-16. Folder 1. Newspapers, 1933

Box X-16. Folder 2. Newspapers, 1934

Box X-16. Folder 3. Newspapers, 1935

Box X-16. Folder 4. Newspapers, 1936

Box X-16. Folder 5. Newspapers, 1937

Box X-17. Folder 1. Newspapers, 1938

Box X-17. Folder 2. Newspapers, 1938

Box X-17. Folder 3. Newspapers, 1939-1940