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David Niles papers11.MWalB02055

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Brandeis University

415 South St.

Waltham, MA

URL: <https://findingaids.brandeis.edu/>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Brandeis University
Creator:	Niles, David K. , 1888-1952
Title:	David Niles papers
ID:	11.MWalB02055
Date [inclusive]:	1909-1977
Date [bulk]:	bulk 1937-1952
Physical Description:	14.00 Linear Feet 28 manuscript boxes
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	Arranged in ten series: 1. Personal Correspondence, 1909-1952, undated; 2. Politics, 1925-1952, undated; 3. Immigration and Refugees, 1937-1951; 4. Israel Affairs, 1940-1952, undated; 5. Foundations and Funds, 1926-1950; 6. Jewish Affairs, 1929-1952; 7. Brandeis University, 1948-1968; 8. Post-World War II Europe, 1936-1951, undated; 9. Photographs, Books and Personal Memorabilia, 1933-1951; 10. Miscellaneous Newspaper Clippings, 1917-1977. For more information about each series, please consult the series descriptions in the box and folder listing, available in print form in the Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections Department, Brandeis University.

Preferred Citation

David Niles papers, Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections Department, Brandeis University.

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Scope and Contents

David K. Niles was active in politics and commerce-related endeavors both locally and nationally throughout the first half of the twentieth century. His papers relate to his leadership of Boston's Ford Hall Forum, his work on national Progressive and Democratic election campaigns, his positions in the U.S. Labor and Commerce Departments, his time advising the Works Progress Administration, and his

nearly decade-long position as Special Assistant to the President under Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman. The collection reflects Niles's participatory role in a range of subjects, including domestic civil rights, campaign politics, immigrant quotas, post-World War II foreign redevelopment projects, and the creation of the State of Israel.

Niles was an active member of the local, national, and international Jewish community. As such, the collection reflects the growth of the American Jewish community. There are letters to David Niles from Jews requesting assistance in finding relatives in war-torn Europe, letters from Jewish community leaders reflecting the growing support for the recognition of the State of Israel, and material dealing with anti-Semitism in American society and media. The collection also includes correspondence about a new Jewish-sponsored university in Waltham, Massachusetts—Brandeis University—which Niles helped establish and of which he eventually became a trustee.

After Niles's death in 1952, his papers were donated to Dr. Abram L. Sachar, the president of Brandeis University. Sachar and his staff organized and processed the papers and, in 1985, gave the majority of them to the Truman Library. While the collection at Brandeis contains some original material—correspondence, photographs, and memorabilia—most of the materials are photocopies of originals housed in the David K. Niles Papers of the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Brandeis University

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Waltham, MA

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Conditions Governing Access

Access to the collection is in accordance with the policies of the Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections Department, Brandeis University. Please contact the department for more information.

Conditions Governing Use

Requests to reproduce or publish material from the collection should be directed to the Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections Department, Brandeis University.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

The Harry S. Truman Presidential Library (P:816-268-8200 or P:800-833-1225) also holds the David K Niles papers relating to Niles's career of government service in the White House as Administrative Assistant to Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman from 1942 to 1951. Please see link below.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Presidents -- United States
- United States -- Politics and government -- 1929-1933
- United States -- Politics and government -- 1933-1953
- United States -- History -- 20th century
- United States -- Commerce
- Niles, David K. , 1888-1952
- Truman, Harry S. , 1884-1972
- Roosevelt , Franklin D. (Franklin Delano), 1882-1945
- Ford Hall (Boston, Mass.)
- Brandeis University

Collection Inventory

Personal Correspondence, 1909-1952, undated

Date: 1909-1952, undated

Scope and Contents

Series includes correspondence to and from David Niles. Correspondents include Felix Frankfurter, J. Edgar Hoover, and Abram Sachar. On August 27, 1947, President Truman awarded David Niles the Medal for Merit.

The collection of congratulatory letters reads like a "who's who" of the American political, labor and Jewish communities, giving a sense of David Niles' influence.

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Politics, 1925-1952, undated

Date: 1925-1952, undated

Scope and Contents

Series contains materials about the Democratic Party and Democratic National Committee; WPA; presidential and congressional campaigns; general politics; political favors; and civil rights. Included are position papers on housing and natural resources, and correspondence on the third term issue (1938-1944). Also available are copies of the program and guest list of the 1951 DNC dinner. Among the WPA material are pages from the WPA personnel file on David Niles. Also included is an analysis of cases investigated by the special committee to investigate senatorial campaign expenditures which affected the WPA.

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Immigration and Refugees, 1937-1951

Date: 1937-1951

Scope and Contents

Series contains memoranda about immigrant quotas and correspondence of immigrant aid committees, including many requests for help in bringing family members to the United States from Europe during World War II. Material on aid for displaced persons in Europe is also included. Folders are arranged chronologically, 1937-1951.

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Israel Affairs, 1940-1952, undated

Date: 1940-1952, undated

Scope and Contents

Series consists of material pertaining to the establishment and recognition of the State of Israel, and also material that reflects the status of Jews in the United States. There are articles condemning the rise of Zionism, as well as articles on Jewish domination of the worlds of politics and banking. Certain names are prominent in this series: Felix Frankfurter, Bernard Baruch, Abba Hillel Silver, and Stephen Wise. There are reports of rallies for the America First Party and Gerald L. K. Smith. Also present is material on the political, economic, and military conditions in Palestine; the feasibility of Jewish immigration from Europe to Palestine; and Arab reactions to the events of the time. There are reports on the physical condition of Jewish refugees in displaced persons camps. There are also documents on partition.

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Foundations and Funds, 1926-1950

Date: 1926-1950

Scope and Contents

Series materials relate to the many foundations David Niles was involved in, including the Ford Hall Forum, Institute for Propaganda Analysis, Consumer Distribution Corporation, and Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial Fund. Series also contains Good Will Fund documents, including reports to the board of directors, and information on the philanthropy of Edward A. Filene.

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Jewish Affairs, 1929-1952

Date: 1929-1952

Scope and Contents

Series includes material on the rise of anti-Semitism in America. Also included are records of efforts to raise funds to help Jewish refugees in postwar Europe, and material related to the growing support for a Jewish state in Palestine.

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Brandeis University, 1948-1968

Date: 1948-1968

Scope and Contents

Series contains correspondence between David Niles and Abram Sachar over the years. Niles became involved in the early plans for Brandeis University before he left government service. He was named a university trustee in 1949. The series also contains financial statements of the university, by-laws, and material on university curriculum.

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Post-World War II Europe, 1936-1951, undated

Date: 1936-1951, undated

Scope and Contents

Series contains materials relating to issues of sovereignty, economic relief and social policy in post-World War II Europe. Discussions of postwar Europe took place even as the world war destroyed Europe. Folders are arranged chronologically.

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Photographs, Books and Personal Memorabilia, 1933-1951

Date: 1933-1951

Scope and Contents

Series includes assorted books and photographs, along with personal memorabilia, such as passports and government identification documents (e.g. White House ID), David Niles' Medal for Merit, and special Inauguration Day automobile license plates for 1949. There is a photograph of David Ben Gurion as well as a photograph album of pictures of Israel [i]circa [i]1947.

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Miscellaneous Newspaper Clippings, 1917-1977

Date: 1917-1977

Scope and Contents

Series includes newspaper clippings on a broad range of topics, including the Works Progress Administration. Also included are copies of anti-Semitic newsletters and pamphlets.

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