

Inventory of the

All Rockford Party
Rockford, Illinois

Records

In the

Regional History Center

RC 175

INTRODUCTION

Lawrence J. Schmidt donated the records of the All Rockford Party to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on March 11, 1982.

Property rights in the collection are held by the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: .25
Number of containers: 1
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection 175

SCOPE AND CONTENT

Records in this collection partially document many of the activities of the All Rockford Party from 1957 to 1967. Types of materials include organization plans, meeting minutes and agendas, committee reports, financial records, platforms and policy statements, and membership information. Campaign materials and newsclippings indicate candidates and major issues of interest to the party. Other names used by the party were Greater Rockford Party and United Rockford Party. For additional information researchers should consult the Zeke Giorgi Papers (RC 136) and the Robert McGaw Papers (RC 150).

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The All Rockford Party was organized in February 1957 to support the mayoral candidacy of seventh ward alderman Benjamin T. Schleicher. Many of Rockford's independent voters and leading industrialists, disillusioned with the administration of Milton Lundstrom, lent organizational and financial support to the new party. Clifford Carlson served as the party's first chairman. The All Rockford Party ticket, consisting of Schleicher, Robert J. Lindley for city clerk and Emil P. Olson for city treasurer, won the election by a margin of almost two to one. During the early years of the All Rockford Party the emphasis was placed on capital improvements such as bridge repair, schools, off street parking, flood control, and the removal of trees damaged by Dutch elm disease.

Mayor Schleicher was reelected in 1961, 1965, and 1969. In 1969 he ran as a Republican and defeated the popular and powerful Democratic candidate E. J. "Zeke" Giorgi. The anti-Republican backlash of the Watergate era, combined with local political conditions, were among the factors that led to Schleicher's defeat in 1973 by his Democratic challenger Robert McGaw.

Some political observers give credit to Schleicher and the All Rockford Party for leading the city through an era of significant growth and development. Most often cited as major accomplishments include: restoring the city's financial stability, capital improvements, urban

renewal, improvements in the police and fire departments, and establishing a reforestation program for the city.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

All Rockford Party
 Labor Unions
 Politics
 Rockford
 Schleicher, Benjamin

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	1	History, 1957-1967
	2-3	Meetings, committees, reports, platforms, 1957-1965
	4	Treasurer's records and reports, 1957-1969
	5	Campaign materials, 1959-1965
	6	Newsclippings, 1957-1967
	7	Rockford Civil Service Commission, 1960-1962