



New York State Archives

**New York State Defense Council Correspondence with
National Council of Defense A4237**

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Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	This series consists of correspondence between the New York State Defense Council and the Council of National Defense, its parent organization at the federal level relating to methods of conserving food and fuel supplies and administering the labor force during war emergency conditions. Also included are files reflecting the organizational subdivisions of the National Council and telegrams and bulletins from the national offices.
Creator:	New York State Defense Council
Title:	Correspondence with National Council of Defense
Quantity:	0.8 cubic feet
Inclusive Date:	1917-1918
Series:	A4237

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Arrangement

Arranged by hierarchical council title, then alphabetical by name of member, subject, or committee.

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Scope and Content Note

The series consists of correspondence between the New York State Defense Council and the Council of National Defense, its parent organization at the federal level. The state correspondence is largely authored by Frederic E. Foster, who was Assistant Secretary of the State Council of Defense. The correspondence chiefly relates to methods of conserving food and fuel supplies and administering the labor force during war emergency conditions. There are files in the series for many of the organizational subdivisions of the National Council; included are files of leading officials and chairmen, subject files, and committee files.

The series also includes extensive numbers of telegrams to the State Council from various chairmen of the national divisions, and others from the state officials to the national office; questionnaires from the national offices on State Council personnel and committees; and occasional bulletins published as a result of national committee work.

Members of the Council of National Defense included the secretaries of the federal departments of War, Navy, Interior, Agriculture, and Labor. W.S. Gifford was Director of the National Council and also of the Advisory Commission of the Council of National Defense. Grosvenor B. Clarkson was Secretary to both the National Council and the Commission. Correspondence of both men in their official capacities is found in the series.

The Council of National Defense was comprised of several boards and sections, including those on production, standards, munitions, commercial economy, medical work, food supply and prices, war inventions, and women's defense work. The section on Co-Operation with State Organizations was headed by George F. Foster, and later by his successor, Arthur H. Fleming. Correspondence between each of these individuals and the State Council is found in the series, as are files from many of the specific program areas.

The separate Advisory Commission of the Council of National Defense was chaired by Daniel Willard. It was organized into several committees and subcommittees, including those for transportation and communication, munitions, science and research, raw materials, labor, and medicine and surgery (including general sanitation). There are files in the series relating to the policies and programs of many of these subdivisions.

The correspondence includes such topics as: resolutions of the Council of National Defense concerning maintenance of standards and suspension of labor laws during wartime; organizing sales of Liberty Bonds; and copies of general statements (often with copies of telegrams) circulated, upon release for publication, to all state councils and/or state divisions of the Women's Committee (e.g., announcements of conservation drives; regulations affecting manufacturers and retailers; issues of home defense; and apprehension of deserters during demobilization).

Work of the Commercial Economy Board is well documented. Correspondence relates to the following issues: the board's recommendations in regard to the policy of non-return of unsold bread, and a campaign to induce bakers to discontinue the practice of accepting returns (the State Supply Commission was involved in this issue); plans for conservation and restricting the use of cloth, metal, and other materials in retail manufacture (e.g., of baby carriages, strollers, and sulkies), and the reduction of waste material in farms and factories; and a program to curtail service plans to promote economy in retail deliveries.

The work of the Women's Committee of the National Council is similarly documented. The file focuses on cooperation on plans for food conservation, economy in the home, and a child welfare campaign to "secure the Public Protection of Maternity and Infancy." The latter program was in support of public hygiene, prenatal care, and civilian relief to reduce infant death and disease during the stressful wartime period.

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of the material.

Alternate Formats AvailableAlternate Formats Available

Microform is available at the New York State Archives through interlibrary loan.

Scanned images of a sample of records from this series are available at the New York State Archives.

[Correspondence with National Council of Defense, 1917-1918](#)

Access Terms

- New York (State)
- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Maternal and infant welfare
- War and emergency powers
- War--Economic aspects
- Women in war
- Civil defense
- World War, 1914-1918
- Telegrams
- War and society
- Liberty bonds
- Administering government policy
- Loyalty
- World War, 1914-1918--Civilian relief
- Coordinating citizen participation
- Bulletins
- Questionnaires
- Patriotism
- Industrial mobilization
- Planning emergency services
- Clarkson, Grosvenor B.
- United States. Council of National Defense

- Fleming, Arthur H.
- Foster, George F.
- Gifford, W.S.
- Foster, Frederic E.