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**Bibliothèque et archives Jean-Léon-Allie Library and Archives**  
**Service d'archives – Archival Services**

**Fonds A USP-217 –**                      **ROMEO MAIONE, 1925-2015**  
**1967-2015**  
**0.08m of textual records. – 2 CDs**

**Biographical notes:**

Romeo Maione (5 May 1925 – 12 May 2015)

Romeo Maione, one of Canada's foremost left-leaning Catholic laymen, social activist and critic, indefatigable lecturer and writer, street philosopher and teacher, died in Ottawa May 12 at the age of 90.

Maione was born April 5, 1925, in Montreal to a poor Italian immigrant couple. His career embraced a staggering variety of diverse challenges that all started from the humble beginnings of working in a Montreal factory in 1940.

Among the conversion experiences of his early life was his discovery in 1948 at 23 years of age, of a lay Catholic movement in Montreal, the Young Christian Workers (YCW). The focus of the YCW was to train young working people by means of the "observe, judge and act" method of reflecting on their everyday life experiences in the light of Christian Scripture and to change for good the realities of the world of work, school, and family through daily actions. In 1950 at 25 years of age he took a six-week training course with the young Christian Workers in London, England, and spent four years organizing the movement in Canada, particularly in Toronto and Montreal. In 1954 he became the Canadian president of the YCW.

The Canadian Catholic bishops in 1956 asked Maione to go to Rome to help organize an International Congress of the Catholic laity. While in Rome in 1957, he was one of the chief organizers of a YCW rally that brought 32,000 young workers to that city. His continued activity in the YCW resulted in his election in 1958 as the first international president of the YCW, stationed at the world headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.

Returning to Canada Maione was appointed in 1962 to become assistant director of the Social Action Department of the Catholic Bishops Conference in Ottawa. Two years later he joined the Canadian Labour Congress as assistant director of international affairs which resulted in extensive worldwide travel. During his time at the CLC he was elected president of the World Assembly of Youth (WAY), an international youth association linked to several United Nations agencies.

The next challenge in his life in 1965 was an appointment by Prime Minister Lester Pearson to become a union representative and working member of the Royal Commission to investigate working conditions in the Post Office of Canada. This study, The Montpetit Report, was part of the agreement that ended Canada's first postal strike.

In 1967 Maione became an executive of the United Steelworkers of Canada in Toronto and in 1968 was named by the Catholic bishops of Canada to become the first president of the new Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) aimed at giving economic assistance to Third World countries. He decided to locate the headquarters in Montreal, assuring the bilingual and bicultural nature of this new Catholic lay organization.

And in 1971 he was given an honorary Doctor of Social Sciences degree by the University of Ottawa, under the patronage of the wife of the Governor General, Pauline Vanier, a close friend of the Maiones. That same year he was asked to be a Canadian representative to the synod of international Catholic bishops' meeting in Rome studying the topic, Justice in the World.

Throughout his career, he delivered hundreds of talks around the world about social justice in all its forms, as well as writing innumerable articles. He was a columnist with the Prairie Messenger, and his talks and writings are archived at the Saint-Paul University.

In 1987 he received an invitation to participate as a Canadian delegate to a synod On the Laity called by Pope John Paul II in Rome. With his dominant personality and strong convictions regarding the role of the Catholic laity in the world, Maione played a key role in this synod of bishops gathered from around the world.

In the last years of his life Maione took to his computer to continue his lifetime fight to seek justice for the weak, the poor, the marginalized, and to plead for continual renewal and reform in Catholicism.

*[Excerpt taken from: Longtime columnist and influential Catholic dies / by Paul Harris – Prairie Messenger Catholic Journal, 05/27/2015]*

### **Scope and content :**

The collection is mostly comprised of the writings of Romeo Maoine, as well as some of his correspondence, journal articles and biographical notes. The collection also contains 2 CDs of his complete writings.

The documents are classified in five series:

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|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Series 1 | Biography and obituary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Series 2 | Correspondence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Series 3 | Interview                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Series 4 | Journal articles about R. Maoine                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Series 5 | Writings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Writings for the "Prairie Messenger"</li><li>- Writings posted on "The Cardijn Internet Site"</li><li>- Joseph Cardijn – biography</li><li>- Writings 1960's &amp; 1970's</li><li>- Writings 1980's</li><li>- Writings 1990's</li><li>- Writings 2000's</li></ul> |

### **Immediate source of acquisition:**

Private donation to SPU by Paul T. Harris.

**Restrictions on access:**

The documents are open for consultation.

Documents containing personal and confidential information are restricted to consultation and reproduction.

The records are subject to the Copyright Act.

The SPU archival services reserved the right to limit access to fragile or damaged documents.

**Finding aids :**

A research guide is available at the Saint Paul University Archival Services.

**Accruals:**

No further accruals are expected.

**Related documents :**

See the Jean-Léon-Allie Library Collection.