

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

# BULLETIN

---

No. 50.75

Early August - Mid-August

---

BRINGING YOU ANOTHER  
SPECIAL CONVENTION EDITION

## CONTENTS

Amendments to Working Women, CLUW, & I.S. Work--  
Joan M., NY

Amendments to Working Women, CLUW, & I.S. Work--  
Mary F., L.A.

Amendment to Labor Document -- Richard E,  
Detroit

## AMENDMENTS TO WORKING WOMEN, CLUW, AND IS WORK

By Joan McKiernan

### 1. Involvement in CLUW

CLUW has opened up an important arena for all women, but particularly for our industrialized comrades. It is these women who can go to CLUW as rank and filers who are actively engaged in fighting for our perspective of building a rank and file movement in a national arena. It will be their work in leading the struggles of women workers on the job that will make real our strategy to militant workers and radicals we try to reach in CLUW.

It is these industrialized women who because of the base they have developed in their jobs, will have the greatest legitimacy in leading the fights against the bureaucrats in CLUW. They will be able to play the most important role in exposing those bureaucrats to their own rank and file as the bureaucrats refuse to lead real struggles for women's needs. Also, because of the industrial emphasis in CLUW, the burden of this work will fall particularly on women in auto, telephone, and teamsters, as well as any who go into hospital in New York.

Because of the opportunity that CLUW opens up for developing a working women's movement, it is more crucial than ever for women to become active in these industrial arenas.

As CLUW becomes more active, other areas of importance may open up for women who for some reason do not get jobs in our national priorities. The needs of our work in CLUW should be an important consideration when discussing additional local priorities for jobs for women comrades.

However, CLUW work should not be limited to our industrialized comrades. All other women, where possible, should be involved in CLUW work. For some this may mean getting a union card to attend meetings; for others it means doing research or back up work. This involvement is particularly important for women comrades who have joined in the last few years. This is the only important women's arena today and it gives us a chance to develop our organizational skills and gain political experience. Our opportunities for such development have been limited in the past few years because of the decline of the women's movement and the few available arenas in which non-industrialized women can function.

### 2. CLUW Committees

CLUW has opened up opportunities for industrialized comrades to begin to organize around women's demands in their unions, to

Amendments to Working Women, Cluw, and IS Work, Page 2.

meet and work with militant women workers around support for CLUW and women's needs in the unions. The formation of CLUW has made legitimate the raising of women's demands. Many women in CLUW are actively comparing contract coverage of maternity benefits, etc. and realizing that something better can be obtained.

In order to further our positions as rank and file leaders in the fight for women's rights and to limit bureaucratic control of CLUW in our unions, we should attempt to initiate CLUW committees in each union where we are active. We have already begun to do this in the AFT and women in other unions, AFSCME 1707 and 1199, have established CLUW committees. The committees should be established to support CLUW, but also to begin to discuss women's needs within the union.

To support CLUW the committees could work for endorsement of CLUW by the union at the national level; union funding for its members to participate in national and regional CLUW meetings; for CLUW announcements to be made at local union meetings; and for union newspapers to regularly report CLUW activities.

These committees can, however, move beyond support for CLUW. This has been done in the AFSCME local 1707 CLUW committee which already plans to do research on the AFSCME contract with the intention of raising organized demands that women's interests be covered in future contracts and to establish a resource center to study day care problems. Other unions, such as District 65, have established committees which include only bureaucrats and organizers. These seem to be only interested at this time in getting more women hired as organizers and promoted into higher positions. None of these committees have attempted to mobilize large numbers of women in their unions.

The CLUW committees can use the endorsement or demands of CLUW to make demands in its own union. For instance, New York CLUW is supporting the demands of the child care groups and is planning to seek endorsements from individual unions. This may open up opportunities for women in unions like the CWA, which probably has not shown support for child care.

We should also use these committees formed to support CLUW as a stepping off point to organize the struggle for women's needs in each union - preferably in conjunction with a national issue - e.g. around better contract demands for women's needs. We can use these committees to begin to raise demands and mobilize support for equal pay, maternity benefits, upgrades, childcare, and more women shop stewards.

Amendments to Working Women, CLUW, and IS Work, Page 3.

We will, of course, have to fight to prevent these committees from falling into the hands of the bureaucrats. We should therefore fight for committees open to all union women, with steering committees elected by the membership of the committee and actively work to encourage women to become active in the committee. However, the most important element of our work in such committees will be our readiness to raise demands that will really meet the needs of women workers. Fighting for such a program will differentiate us from the bureaucrats who will not lead militant struggles of women workers or raise any issues that will bring them into serious conflict with male bureaucrats.

3. Contract Campaign

We should begin now to organize for a campaign around contract demands. Each labor fraction should review its own contract for clauses effecting women workers - maternity benefits, equal pay, child care, apprenticeships, upgrading, etc. The Women's Commission should coordinate this research and also arrange for research into other major unions we come across in CLUW. In preparation for national intervention in the future, we should begin to formulate "model clauses" that we can fight for in our unions, and begin organizing support for this action in CLUW committees in the unions and in CLUW itself.

4. Page 5, paragraph 2, Sentence that reads: "However, we have found that due primarily to the stalling tactics of the bureaucracy, that the campaign for organizing the unorganized was ahead of time since there are still no official local CLUW chapters and probably will not be until the middle or late fall."

Replace with: Our attempts to raise the idea of a campaign to organize the unorganized has brought us into confrontation with the bureaucrats' attempt to stall any action and to avoid taking the issue of organizing in a serious way. The bureaucrats do not want to fight to commit union resources to possibly expensive organizing campaigns. The question of organizing the unorganized raises problems for them such as - radicals are attracted to organizing committees, membership in CLUW of non-unionized women; jurisdictional disputes; independent unions. We intend to continue to fight for a campaign to organize the unorganized at CLUW conferences and meetings. We see such a campaign as a major need for women workers and an important means of building CLUW. Organizing the unorganized committee may prove useful in developing a campaign and bringing non-union members into CLUW work.

Amendments to Working Women, CLUW and IS Work  
Mary F., Los Angeles

(These amendments are offered as an attempt to flesh out even more, our perspective on CLUW. The document presented by the Women's Commission did not, in my opinion, sufficiently deal with the questions at hand. Hopefully the convention discussion will help rectify this. In addition, there are a few formulations in the document which are somewhat unfortunate, if not wrong.)

Paragraph one, p. 1; beginning with, "It is not a resolution...."  
SUBSTITUTE: "While it is not a resolution aimed at concretely telling our fractions what to do tactically on a day-to-day basis, it will attempt to put forward some concrete suggestions on how to implement our perspectives and strategy within CLUW.

Strike last sentence, paragraph one, p. 1.

Paragraph six, p. 1; Delete entire paragraph after first sentence.  
SUBSTITUTE: As inflation soared and real wages failed to keep pace with rising prices, more and more women were forced out of the home and into industry in order to prevent their families standard of living from falling. The increasing number of women in the work force also reflected the continuing break-down of the family with more and more women workers classified as heads-of-household- meaning they did not have a man in their households or their husbands or friends, for whatever reasons, were not able to work and contribute to the families income. Once in the workforce, these same pressures, inflation and the decline in real wages, began to force women into militant activity and self-organization. Because of the influence of women's liberation, as well as the economic pressures, this activity and organization often took the form of demands for equal pay, equal jobs and child-care and maternity benefits.

With predictions of a major recession finding more and more roots in reality, women will be faced with yet another pressure that could move them to more increased militancy and organization-the pressure to keep jobs they now have. In the past few years, women have made gains reflected in the opening up of job opportunities in industry previously closed to them, i.e. auto, trucking, telephone installers, etc. While these gains have been minimal and have affected only a small percentage of women, they were important gains and it is quite likely that the coming recession and the high unemployment which is bound to accompany it will wipe out these gains. Even those women in traditional women's jobs will begin losing their jobs or find it harder and harder to get work. The demand for equal pay will meet with more and more resistance from the bosses. The demand for equal work will be met with hues and cries accusing women of wanting to take work away from "family" men-who according to sexist standards are more entitled to what ever work there is to go around. In effect, we may soon be faced with the same "back to the kitchen" syndrome which followed World War II.

Our analysis, that the developing crisis of the capitalist system will deepen, is the basis for our general perspective of helping build a rank and file movement and a revolutionary party, and also to building a working women's movement. Today, the fact that larger numbers of women than ever before are in the workforce, that they are there because of necessity and that they are influenced by the ideas of the women's liberation movement and moved to activity by the developing pressures of the crisis, means that in this period, unlike the period following World War II, there is a basis for women organizing inside the trade unions and the working class in general to fight for the rights and needs of working women and to be moved, through that struggle, to the fight for socialism. Any back-to-the-kitchen

movement by the ruling class will have a much harder time getting acceptance among working women.

Page 5, full paragraph 2, after; "We will probably have to continue to do this.." add: However, the nature of this fight will change somewhat as the chapters become official and can finally begin doing things in the name of CLUW. What is important in this fight is to use it to pose as alternative perspective for CLUW as a fighting, militant action organization. Also closely linked to this ~~gtrix~~ fight is the undemocratic practice of the bureaucrats. They do things undemocratically because they want to prevent activity. Not vice-versa. It is activity which in the long run is threatening to them. In arguing with them, we must make these political points clear. We fight for democracy because it is necessary in order to carry out the stated goals and to create a particular type of organization, not because it is "good" or "just" or "right" in any abstract sense. Their inability and/or refusal to make these political points clear is partial reason for both the success and the failures of the October League. Their objections to bureaucratic schemes which they happen to be opposed to (since they have several of their own) are seen by many rank and filers and independent radicals and sometimes by the less sophisticated bureacrats as "differences of opinion" rather than differences of perspective.

Page 5. para 3; Delete entire paragraph

SUBSTITUTE: Thus, our general strategy towards CLUW is to fight for it to become an effective organization for the struggle of all working women, not just present trade union members, and to generate stable organizations of union and non-union women within the individual unions and among women trying to organize which can eventually be integrated into the larger rank and file movement against the trade union bureaucracy. To do this, we must begin to bring together the rank and file women and industrialized, independent radicals within CLUW for the purpose of building a national opposition based upon a program which emphasises militant struggles around women's equality in the workforce, opposition to the whole of the trade union bureaucracy, organizing the unorganized and fighting the attack on working women which is sure to come as the recession picks up steam. This opposition will be clearly counterposed to the strategy of the present leadership-bureaucratic lobbying and rank and file inactivity.

p. 5 para 4 sentence beginning "The issues are those...." add "lay-offs" so the sentence reads "The issues are those of equal pay for equal work, up grades, child-care, maternity, lay-offs and organizing the unorganized."

ADD to end of document the following section:

#### IMPLEMENTING THIS PERSPECTIVE

In order to implement this perspective, we will raise the following demands within our local chapters and through the journal and Workers Power and attempt to organize a national opposition to the current leadership around these demands as they represent an alternative perspective to that of the bureaucrats. What is outlined here covers those issues which seem most crucial to the continuation of CLUW as a viable organization and the building of a working women's movement to deal with the most critical problems facing working women today. While no specific demands regarding equal pay, child-care, etc are raised in these demands, it is understood that we fight for these demands when they arise in struggles we are involved in, we propagandize around these issues, etc. However, these demands often interlock with the broader and more crucial demands ~~fm~~ of organizing the unorganized and fighting lay-offs, and for the coming period, will many times

be dependent on winning those.

We should aim for this opposition to have some organizational form prior to the 1975 CLUW convention. At the convention, the opposition caucus would raise these demands as resolutions. It would also proposed specific constitutional provisions to embody this perspective. As much as possible, local groups would run candidates for steering committees, conference delegates, etc on the ~~basis~~ basis of these demands. If possible, the national opposition would also run a slate of candidates for the national positions. The journal would be the vehicle through which we call for building this opposition.

I. Open CLUW to all Working Women ( the fight for this demand will take the form of fights to allow women from independent unions in CLUW, for clarification on the status of organizing committees, the status of women on withdrawal and of course the fight to change the membership requirements. Also involved would be a fight to allow non-union women to participate in CLUW with voice but no vote until such time as the membership requirements can be changed.)

II. For an internally democratic structure. ( all leadership positions to be elected with the right of immediate recall; state convenors, ncc members, vps not to be automatically ~~included~~ included in steering committees, for printed minutes that record all votes, for full discussion of the issues at meetings, for the right to raise resolutions at all meetings, for abolition of the requirement for three meetings before charter, that all publications be opened to all views within CLUW.)

III For Support of the UFW- this requires no explanation.

IV. For a national campaign to Organize the Unorganized-(this is detailed in previous documents and Workers Power. This is a demand which can be raised at the local level for local campaigns and in that way to start raising it as an issue for the '75 conference )

V For a national campaign to fight lay-offs of women- (this demand is based on the motion put forward at the '74 conference. Initially, it may be aimed at one particular industry where women are being hardest hit, ie auto, and will expand as the problem and CLUW grows. We also need some discussion on the questions of preferential hiring and superseniority for women as it relates to this demand)

VI For the active building of women's caucuses within the unions (whether official or unofficial, these caucuses would push for the rights and demands of working women in the context of their specific union; they would be a link to CLUW and a place from which to involve rank and file women in CLUW)

AMMENDMENT TO LABOR CODUMENT by Richard Estes--Detroit

p.8 Insert between 2nd and 3rd pargrapp

It is unlikely that the Maoist groups will be able to build or lead a real rank and file movement. But they can and will have the ability to hold back and even break up groups that we are building. This is especially true in periods when the levels of activity and political discussion are low. Most maoists are recognized as militants. They quite often have more blacks and workers than the IS. The main advantage they have is the sort of "softness" toward China prevalent among radical workers. These things, combined with their opportunism give them a certain credibility and following that is important in a time when activity and conscious are low. It is much easier for them to attack and isolate the ISers at a time when you don't have to prove your politics in action.

p 8 add after 3rd paragraph

At the same time we must realize that the maoists have little or no desire to be in a United Front with us. They have instead tried to isolate us(OL) or have come out and directly attacked us(CL). In general they would rather fight us than fight the bureaucrats. We must recognize this and be prepared to deal with them as an unfriendly tendency in the labor movement, just as we must with the bureaucracy. However, we must also attempt to win them over and expose them with the United Front. We must expose them as the "splitters and wreckers" and tie the Trotsky vs. Stalin question to rank and file action vs. sectarianism and defeat.

We do not raise the Trotsky vs. Stalin question as the primary question that must be answered before a rank and file movement can begin. But this question will arise. It will not always be raised in public debate, but it will certainly be raised privately. The maoists will use it as an attempt to denigrate us and explain to workers why they want no part of us. We must use the question to explain to workers why we want to collaborate with maoist workers who are hostile to us.

The basis of this question is the United Front. We conceive of the United Front as a tactic for building a mass workers movement. It is a class alliance. It is based only upon points of agreement and is aimed toward joint action. Each group participating has the right to maintain their own independent political voice. We act upon what we agree upon to build a workers movement.

The Stalinist conception of the Popular Front is different. It is not a class alliance based upon actional agreement. Rather it is based upon accepting their political line, usually the anti-imperialist coalition. Anyone who agrees with this line, regardless of their class, is in. It is not a strategy for class action but rather class collaboration. It leads either to opportunism or sectarianism, in both cases defeat. That is why they will not work with us.

We must be able to deal with this question and the best way is to tie it to concrete activity as much as possible. If we accept the United Front as our tactic, then we should begin to pursue it by proposing alliances with Maoist caucuses in industrial arenas. The main focus of such United Fronts would be in opposition to the various vureacracies, Woodcock, Fitzsimmons, Meany, Shanker, etc. This does not mean that we should ignore opposition groups that are not led by radicals, far from it. But we should also begin to bring the Maoist caucuses into our opposition movement in order to win the workers from them and build ourselves as a strong political pole of attraction.