

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
November 11, 1975

To Branch Organizers and CLUW Work Directors

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed is the statement and call for a meeting at the CLUW convention around which we want to organize as many forces as possible.

This statement is being initiated by Lynn McDonald, chairperson of Houston CLUW, and Debby Leonard of Houston CLUW and will be sent to all NCC members and CLUW chapters by them. It is expected that the Thursday, Nov. 13 meeting of Houston CLUW will endorse the statement. McDonald and Leonard plan to mail the statement out on Friday morning, Nov. 14.

However, McDonald and Leonard have sent advance copies to some of the people around the country with whom they have discussed this and know that they agree so that they can begin gathering support for it.

The mailing going out from Houston on Friday morning will also contain the alternate agenda mentioned in this statement.

Comradely,



Linda Jenness
National Office

To members of the Coalition of Labor Union Women

Since our founding convention in March of 1974 the Coalition of Labor Union Women has grown in numbers and prestige. The national convention of Dec. 5-7 in Detroit can further the process of CLUW becoming the kind of organization we set out to be: an organization that can fight in the interests of working women on the job, in society as a whole, and within our unions.

In order to do this we must adopt a constitution and elect officers and a governing body to implement our statement of purpose. This is and should be the first point on the agenda.

But our convention is faced with other important issues that must be discussed. For CLUW to attract thousands of union women to its ranks we must leave this convention with a plan of action around the most pressing needs of union women. We believe these issues are:

1. Affirmative action in a period of layoffs:

At the May 31, 1975 National Coordinating Committee (NCC) meeting of CLUW a resolution was passed (42 to 33) on "Affirmative Action and Seniority." The question of how the union movement should respond to the attacks on affirmative action gains is being widely debated. Different solutions to this crisis have been put forward within the union movement as a whole and within CLUW.

Because of the importance of this debate -- how to defend the affirmative action gains of women and minorities -- there must be a place on the agenda of the CLUW convention to discuss it. The national convention is the highest decision making body of CLUW. A policy decision of such import made by the NCC must be presented to the convention body so that the membership of CLUW has an opportunity to hear all sides before adopting, or reversing, the NCC resolution.

2. The Equal Rights Amendment

On Nov. 4 the state ERAs of New York and New Jersey were defeated in a referendum vote. This setback must be met with a renewed and vigorous drive by the union movement for ratification of the federal ERA in 1976.

CLUW has always made support to the ERA a priority. The CLUW convention must now plan an action campaign around the ERA. There must be room on the convention agenda for discussion of and adoption of an ERA campaign.

3. Jobs for All:

The unemployment lines continue to grow. CLUW's program calls for a shorter work week, with no reduction in pay, and a massive public works program with jobs at union wages as a means of ending unemployment and providing every worker with a job. The CLUW convention must now plan an action campaign around this program. There must be room on the convention agenda for discussion of and adoption of a Jobs for All campaign.

The Houston chapter of the Coalition of Labor Union Women has put forward an agenda that allows for discussion of these priority issues. We urge our sister unionists to support the Houston Agenda.

If you support our proposed agenda (copy enclosed) as an alternative to the agenda contained in the Convention Call (which was drawn up by three national CLUW officers), we urge you to write the CLUW national office and send a copy to us in Houston.

Because of the importance of the upcoming national convention to the future of CLUW and the urgency of the issues outlined above; Houston CLUW is planning a meeting on Friday evening, December 5 at Cobo Hall in Detroit of supporters of the proposed alternate agenda. The meeting is to organize for adoption of the alternate agenda by the convention on Saturday morning.

Let's make this national convention a CLUW building convention. Let's come out of this convention with a constitution, elected officers and a governing body, plus a program and action campaign that we can implement in our chapters all over the country. With full discussion and an action program, CLUW can be the clue to a fight for the needs and demands of working women through effective intervention in our unions.

In solidarity and sisterhood,

Lynn McDonald, CLUW NCC
Houston CLUW chair-
person
ITU

and

Debby Leonard, CLUW NCC
CLUW Steering
Committee
Houston CLUW
OCAW