



CLUWnews

Sept/Oct 2000, Volume 26, No. 5

Coalition of Labor Union Women

World March for Women

WASHINGTON — In October, the nation's capitol hosted one of many world events to end poverty and violence against women. Many countries chose October 17 as "International Day for the Eradication of Poverty." From Brussels, Belgium to Montreal, Canada; Chiapas, Mexico to Dallas, Texas; and Washington, DC to New York City, women marched and protested against the political and economic conditions that have led to the degradation of women across the globe.

Women's groups from 157 countries and territories have come together this year to address this serious world problem. Since last March, events have been held in over 50 countries and 101 national coordinating bodies have organized large scale actions. On October 15, delegations from North and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia and

continued on page 5



Greater Richmond CLUW Chapter President Katie Sanders (APWU) pictured with Washington, DC CLUW President Marilyn Merry (AFGE) at the Washington World March for Women.

CLUW members left to right: Lula Cannon (APWU), Dee Gorczyca, CLUW VP (IFPTE), Leona Draper (APWU), and Eleanor Bailey, CLUW VP (APWU) at the New York World March for Women.



Don't Forget

CLUW NEB Meeting

The St. Anthony (a Wyndham Historic Hotel), San Antonio, Texas, March 1-4, 2001

CLUW 11th Biennial Convention

The Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, October 4-7, 2001

We Moved!

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CLUW Point

Electing for a Change

History was made in November when the results of Election 2000 were too close to call and ballot problems in Florida led to the long delay in announcing who will serve as America's 43rd President. Today's electorate is deeply divided between the major parties and neither the Republicans or Democrats dominate the political landscape.

But issues like health care and retirement security are on the minds of more and more Americans and we must work together for change. The next President and Congress must make progress on the issues that dominated the campaigns of both parties.

Pundits may say that the voting irregularities that soured the Presidential election will hurt whoever ultimately comes out on top. This is dangerous because women and families cannot afford to waste the next four years by having an ineffective or deadlocked legislative and executive branch of government. Let this election serve as a lesson to our country's leaders that it is time to help working families, women and minorities achieve equal opportunity in a nation that promotes this freedom.

Regardless of who they voted for, the electorate clearly defined health care as an important issue. The affordability of health care used to be a problem that affected only the poor. But today, this has become a middle class problem. The cost of prescription drugs continue to rise at alarming rates. While at the same time, the very same drugs can be purchased in other countries at a fraction of the cost.

High drug costs are a major reason why health insurance premiums have gone up so dramatically. Anyone negotiating a contract knows that rising health care costs are contentious as companies try to shift these costs to their employees. Today's workers have either been forced to pay more for their insurance or are waiting to feel the pinch. Millions more — millions of working moms and millions of children have no health insurance at all.

Many who do have health insurance, have no assurance they can get the quality of care they deserve. Both Republicans and Democrats have promised patients rights in managed care and its time to pass a meaningful patients' bill of rights that keep the patients', not the insurance companies' best interests in mind.

Voters also demonstrated that they want retirement security. Social Security is a pillar of retirement security and it greatly benefits women who live longer lives, and generally have earned less and spent less time in the workplace. Although the federal program is solvent for the next 40 years, simple steps today can preserve this program for future generations.

Health and retirement security are just two of the issues Americans unanimously support. Voters want safe and quality public schools, they want equal pay and advancement opportunities for all races and genders and they want to keep our streets, homes and workplaces safe and free from violence.

United we stand and divided we fall. It's time to get over the political divisions that have scarred the Presidential election and work to make America a land of equal opportunity and justice for all.

Judicial Politics: Determining a Presidency

The Supreme Court's recent ruling in the case of *George Bush versus Albert Gore* stripped away any lingering myth that judges are "above the law," or that politics are left at the courthouse door. The 5 to 4 decision overturning the Florida Supreme Court's order that all Florida votes should be counted found the most conservative Justices taking the most "activist" role, reaching for an Equal Protection argument that most legal scholars had dismissed.

In dissent, Justice John Paul Stevens decried the court's ruling as lending credibility to "the most cynical appraisal of the work of judges throughout the land," and impairing "the nation's confidence in the judge as an impartial guardian of the rule of law."

Ironically, the majority opinion was written by Justices whose judicial philosophy has been characterized as favoring "State's rights," yet they threw out the judgment of the highest court of the State of Florida about what the State's electoral laws meant. These are Justices who generally take a "hands-off" approach to matters of individual rights. They have refused to consider Equal Protection arguments when made by women, minorities, gays, or lesbians who argue that subjecting them to less favorable treatment than others offends the Constitution. These very Justices refused to hear a case brought by voters in the District of Columbia arguing that denying them a voice in Congress denied them equal protection of law. Of all courts, the Supreme Court should be most protective of the franchise and the rights of voters, but it has instead let voters down in the most fundamental way.

The Equal Protection clause is contained in the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. It forbids classifications that treat one group less favorably than another unless they can be justified by compelling governmental interests. The nature of the interest, and the deference which the Court will give to it, varies depending on the classification involved. Up to now, the Court has interpreted these guarantees very narrowly. Classifications based on race can only be justified under a "strict scrutiny" standard; classifications based on gender, however, can be justified based on a standard of "intermediate" review. In other cases, state or federal governmental distinctions are upheld if there is a "rational basis" for them. In finding that differences in standards for counting ballots among Florida counties violated the Equal Protection Clause, the Court appears to be discarding these standards in order to achieve a particular outcome. The test of the Court's actions will be whether subsequent cases (including those which could be brought by predominantly African American voters arguing that they received faulty voting machines or were denied up to date computerized polling equipment) back away from this "new" standard. One strongly suspects the answer is yes.

The truth is that we should not be surprised by the Court's final ruling in the Bush case. This Supreme Court has been, in fact, a very "activist" court whenever an outcome suits the conservative agenda of the Justices who hold the majority. Affirmative action has been gutted under the Rehnquist Court, despite substantial precedent and legislative

and Constitutional support for its use. The Court has rejected decades of support for Congressional power to regulate matters that affect state interests such as violence against women or age discrimination. It has gutted the rights of criminal defendants which long distinguished our democracy from more despotic forms of government.

The tragedy of this election is that the next four years will be critical for the Supreme Court's composition for decades to come. Several Justices are likely to retire. Instead of a 5 to 4 division, with occasional defections to a more pragmatic view of the law, we could be facing a near-unanimous conservative agenda. This will affect every aspect of our lives – educational and employment opportunities, labor law protections, personal reproductive choices, as well as the rights of defendants in criminal cases and our right to privacy, religious and expressional freedom and access to the courts. The same Justices who felt free to interfere with the interpretation of State law issued by the highest court in Florida will likely also feel free to interfere with the judgment of Congress and/or state governments that family and medical leave laws or protections against discrimination based on disability or sexual orientation are important guarantees.

In light of the Supreme Court decision, we can only hope that voters still understand how critical their vote is, and that they make their voices heard loudly, clearly, and overwhelmingly during future elections.

Right: Millie Hall, President, Metro Detroit CLUW, and Jearlean Fleming, Chicago CLUW Chapter, travelled to Detroit to attend the Michigan CLUW conference.

METRO DETROIT

Millie Jeffrey, Medal of Freedom

President Clinton presented Metro Detroit CLUW member Millie Jeffrey, a founding member of CLUW, the nation's highest civilian honor — the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Jeffrey is a leading woman in labor and a Democratic party activist. Working for the UAW from 1945 -1976, she was the first female to direct a department of the UAW and eventually headed four departments. She served as a special assistant to former UAW President Walter Reuther and on Presidential commissions during the Kennedy and Carter Administrations. CLUW is proud that this distinguished honor was presented to a CLUW sister and a dedicated trade union activist.

Browder Appointment

Metro Detroit CLUW member Catherine Browder has been appointed by UAW President Stephen Yokich as Assistant Director of the UAW-CAP Department. Active in CLUW and in her union, Browder has served in many elected union posts. She coordinated campaigns for many office seekers over the years, including UAW's campaign to help elect Bill Clinton in 1992.



Michigan Political Action Conference

Over 100 women participated in the Michigan CLUW Political Action Conference held here in October. Hosted at UAW Local 22, the Conference "Women Voters — Creating the Winning Edge" helped mobilize union voters across the state. The conference focused on what's at stake for women and seniors in the 2000 election. An esteemed line up of speakers talked about challenges facing Americans, the Presidential election, campaign rhetoric versus the candidate's record and how to mobilize women voters on Election Day.

In other Michigan news, Derrick Hale, son of Metro Detroit CLUW President Millie Hall, was reelected to his 3rd term as a Michigan State Representative.

PHILADELPHIA

Philadelphia CLUW President Kathy Black (AFSCME) exemplifies CLUW's commitment to democracy. Black has been appointed to the Pennsylvania Electoral College. In December, Black will cast an engraved Electoral College ballot into a box once owned by William Penn. CLUW salutes sister Black and democracy in America.



TWIN CITIES

"Wake up America. Register and Vote!" This was the message women of Twin Cities CLUW told fair goers at the Minnesota State Fair. CLUW staffed a labor booth at the state fair that drew big crowds who registered to vote and signed World March for Women postcards.

NEW HAVEN, CT

The New Haven Chapter of CLUW worked very hard helping others this holiday season. It donated a Sears gift certificate to a family who lost everything in a fire. It also donated 10 baskets of hygiene products to the Domestic Violence Services of Greater New Haven and 25 baskets to the Columbus House, a homeless shelter for women.

DC/Maryland

The DC/Maryland Statewide CLUW Political Action meeting, held on September 23rd at the George Meany Center included presentations by CLUW, Pride at Work, LCLAA and the League of Women Voters. CWA members reported on the successful conclusion of the Verizon strike, and Mindy Blandon of the DC Nurses Association spoke about the strike that was underway at Washington Hospital Center. DC State VP Susan Holleran (AFSCME) and Maryland State VP Chris Hall (IAM) served as hosts. Marilyn Merry (AFGE) DC CLUW Chapter President also participated.



CLEVELAND

Cleveland CLUW showed up at that city's annual Labor Day parade to talk to people about the issues that matter most in this year's election. Pictured here are Teamster women who paraded for equal pay.

March (continued from page 1)

the Pacific gathered at the Ellipse in Washington, DC.

Gloria Johnson, who addressed Washington's March for Women and who marched with Martin Luther King, Jr. in Washington, DC 37 years ago said, "In 1963, more than 300,000 came to this very city seeking solutions to the same problems we fight today — discrimination on the job as well as discrimination in wages, benefits and job opportunities."

CLUW sisters who participated in World March for Women events witnessed diverse people and cultures coming together to improve conditions for women from all nations who are bound by substandard wages, living conditions and human rights abuses. In addition to Johnson, Dolores Huerta of the United Farmworkers and Gerald McEntee of AFSCME represented labor on the Washington, DC agenda. CLUW Executive Director Carol Rosenblatt met with a forty five person Japanese delegation on October 15th in Washington, DC. Included in the group were Naruyo Nakajima, Head of the Zenroren Women's Committee and Yuri Horie of the Japan Federation of Women's Organizations (FUDANREN). Chris Townsend, UE Political Action Director was instrumental in coordinating the event and participated in the program.

In New York, thousands of women gathered at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza to present their demands to United Nation's Secretary Kofi Annan. (See box, below left). These demands generated nearly 5 million worldwide signatures of support. CLUW collected 2,000 signatures on postcards which were part of the count. Like the Washington march, the New York event attracted women

of diverse nationalities who wore vivid national costumes and chanted "solidarity." A CLUW delegation was led by Vice Presidents Eleanor Bailey (APWU) and Dee Gorczyca (IFPTE). CLUW Corresponding Secretary Josephine LeBeau hosted a delegation of French women trade unionists from CGT at the headquarters of her union, AFSCME DC 1707 in New York.

World March for Women Demanded that the United Nations:

1. Eliminate poverty and ensure equitable distribution of wealth between rich and poor, and men and women;
2. Eliminate violence against women and ensure equality between women and men;
3. Stimulate a vast movement of grassroots women's groups so the march becomes a gesture of affirmation by women of the world;
4. Promote equality between women and men;
5. Highlight the common demands and initiatives issuing from the global women's movement relating to the issues of poverty and violence against women;
6. Force governments, decision-makers and individuals the world over to institute the changes necessary for improving the status of women and women's quality of life;
7. Enter the new millennium by demonstrating women's ongoing determination to change the world.



BELOW: CLUW also showed support for striking nurses at the District of Columbia's Washington Hospital Center who joined the October march.

CLUW Scholarship Program

Back to School Campaign

CLUW donated \$500 as part of CLUW's Scholarship Program for a Back to School Campaign to Stop Gender Apartheid in Afghanistan. This project, run by the Feminist Majority Foundation pays for teachers, books and materials for furthering the education of women and girls in Afghanistan. To learn more about the Back to School Campaign, contact the Feminist Majority Foundation at 1600 Wilson Blvd., Suite 801, Arlington, VA 22209.

Congratulations Scholarship Winners

The following individuals were awarded \$500 CLUW Scholarships to attend labor education programs:

Audrey Terrell, UAW, California Institute of Integral Studies

Theresa Friend, IAM, Indiana University

Connie Belisle, CWA, George Meany Center

Mary Flanagan, APWU, University of Massachusetts Labor Studies Program

Jill McCullars, AFGE, George Meany Center

Anita Toth, UAW, George Meany Center



The Campaign Trail

Philadelphia CLUW Members meet Vice President Al Gore on a campaign stop to Pennsylvania. Pictured left to right are Dawneisha Spratley, Stephanie Formigni, Dawn Moody, Philadelphia Chapter Treasurer (HERE), Rita Russella (HERE), Barbara Russella (HERE).

Thank yous

CLUW wishes to thank the following for their generous support as contributing, supporting and sustaining members:

Contributing (\$50)

- Nancy Biagini (CWA)
- Sheila D. Cochran (UAW)
- Sue Goulding (UAW)
- Susan Hagan (IBEW)
- Connie Johnsey (UNITE!)
- Cynthia McCaughan (OPEIU)
- Joyce Miller (UNITE!)
- Sharon Pinnock (AFGE)
- Sheila Radloff (UAW)
- Gloria Romero (SEIU)
- Glenda Samuel (BAC)
- Isabella B. Surink (IAM)

Supporting (\$75)

- Leenan G. Anderson (PACE)
- Heather Kelley (IAM)
- Gary Ruffner (UWUA)

Sustaining (\$150)

- AFGE Local 32 - \$250.00
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- Stuart Appelbaum (UFCW)
- Bobbie Betonti (IAM)
- Susan A. Palmer (IAM)

Your contributions support CLUW's efforts to empower women through the labor movement.



Union Members Vote

CLUW Executive Director Carol Rosenblatt, CLUW Center Director Nicole Kresch and CLUW National Organizer Dessadra Lomax phone bank to get out the vote in November.

Moving?

Please, Let us know your change of address. Send this coupon to:

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Women Vote — Families Win



Pictured at a APWU child care facility (left to right) are Leona Draper (APWU); Eleanor Bailey (APWU); Nicole Kresch, CLUW Center Director; Vanessa Smith, Child Care Coordinator (APWU); Karen Wing (APWU), Mary Ann Medina (APWU) and Marsha Zakowski (USWA).

NEW ORLEANS — The Crescent City hosted the CLUW National Executive Board Meeting and “A Women’s Vote = A Family’s Win” Conference in September. With November’s elections representing a referendum on the rights of working women and families, the conference helped CLUW members mobilize voters who wanted to elect lawmakers who take work and family issues seriously.

Issues like equal pay, minimum wage and tax breaks for the wealthy were some of the defining issues in Election 2000 and key issues for women voters. Karen Nussbaum, director of the AFL-CIO Working Women’s Department was an opening plenary speaker and explained what a department survey found were the issues that matter the most. Access to affordable health insurance, strengthening Social Security and promoting quality public schools were among the issues that ranked high on women’s political agendas.

Some special guest speakers included Marilyn Park, Senior Health Policy Analyst of the AFL-CIO, Catherine Hill, Study Director of the Institute for Women’s Policy

Research, and Catherine O’Reilly Collette, Director of AFSCME’s Women’s Rights Department. Conference workshops helped CLUW members learn how to mobilize members on a patients’ bill of rights, access to health insurance and a Medicare prescription drug benefit. Members also discussed ways to interest voters about issues like Social Security and fighting school vouchers. Outside of the election, CLUW members also discussed strategies for winning family benefits at the bargaining table.

One of the family benefits put to practice in New Orleans, was an on site day care facility for postal employees. CLUW members had an opportunity to visit the child care center used by APWU members and their children.

CLUW members celebrate sister Janet Nelson’s (AFSCME) birthday. Pictured (left to right) are Lila Smith (ILWU), Jean Ross (ANA), Janet Nelson, Patricia Agostino (OPEIU), Bobbi Betonti (IAM) and Josephine LeBeau (AFSCME).



Equal Pay Day

Mark your calendars for **Tuesday, April 3, 2001**. On that day, CLUW chapters from around the country will speak out for fair pay in America. Tuesday is a significant day of the week because it symbolizes the day that women’s earnings match men’s from the previous work week. In other words, because women earn less, they must work longer to earn the same pay.

CLUW President **Gloria Johnson**, who served as Chair of the Board of the National Committee on Pay Equity (NCPE) said, “Although the issue of equal pay was significant in the Presidential campaign, women actually lost ground over the past year. According to Census Bureau statistics, women made only 72 cents to each dollar earned by men. That fell from 73 cents to the dollar from one year ago.”

Johnson, who resigned as NCPE Chair in September, is being succeeded by AFL-CIO Executive Vice President **Linda Chavez-Thompson** who wants to help minorities who fare even worse. African-American women earn only 65 cents to each dollar earned by white males. Hispanic women make only 52 cents. This problem also effects men, with African-American men earning 80 cents to the white male’s dollar and Hispanic men earning a little less than 62 cents.

Each year CLUW chapters have helped raise awareness about the problem by organizing events to draw attention to unfair pay practices. Whether it’s rallies, press conferences, panel discussions, luncheons or other activities, it is important to keep the pressure on the next President and Congress to eliminate pay bias.

CLUW Health Tip

Brought to you by the CLUW Women's Health Task Force

Perimenopause is a four to five year period leading up to menopause that is a normal part of a woman's life. A common sign of perimenopause is a change in the menstrual cycle that usually begins in a woman's forties. The menstrual cycles become much more irregular with heavier bleeding and a shorter time between periods. Eventually, the menstrual cycle stops completely. Menopause is the last monthly period and is a sign that the ovaries are no longer actively functioning.

During perimenopause, contact your doctor if you experience heavy bleeding, long intervals of spotting, or go more than two months without a period. It is possible to have an abnormality in the uterine lining which can be easily treated.

Women can become pregnant during perimenopause. To avoid an unwanted pregnancy, use contraception. Some doctors recommend using contraception for up to two years after menopause to make sure an unwanted pregnancy does not occur. Women are at equal risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, before, during and after menopause. So it's always wise to have safe sex.

During perimenopause, you may experience occasional hot flashes and night sweats. Breast tenderness or fullness may occur at unpredictable times. See your doctor if you feel any lumps in your breasts or experience fluid coming from your nipple. Even if there are no unusual symptoms, your doctor should do a clinical breast exam once a year as well as a yearly mammogram.

Most women do not experience any difficulties during perimenopause as it is a normal transition in life. This is a good time to plan, or maintain, a healthy lifestyle which includes regular exercise, good nutrition and the cessation of smoking.

Coalition of Labor Union Women Membership Application

I want to help empower women through the labor movement by becoming a member of the Coalition of Labor Union Women.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

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Enclosed are my CLUW dues for one year.

\$25 \$10 (retiree)

I am a member of a bona fide collective bargaining organization.

Signature _____

Date _____

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