

CWLUNEWWS

Chicago Women's Liberation Union 2875 W. Cermak Rm. 9 Chicago 60623 (927-1790)

WOMENS STRIKE

The day of the Women's Strike, Aug. 26, was the anniversary of women's suffrage. The strike was conceived of by NOW which brought together a great variety of woman's groups around three prime demands: equal pay for equal work, free abortions on demand and no forced sterilization, and free child care. At first there was some disagreement over whether the coalition was fighting for equality or liberation. This indicates the range of political perspectives involved. The coalition included Democratic party officials, the

League of Women Voters, NOW, the CWLU and other groups. NOW held together the coalition, doing most of the work. In fact the media did most of the organizing, using women's liberation in the broadest sense as its theme.

It was very difficult to estimate how many women even knew about the strike. Many of the members of CWLU, perhaps because we were not directly working on it, were not enthusiastic initially.

The papers say that 2,000 people showed up at the noontime rally, but there might have been many more. The rally was

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Calendar

- Sept. 12 Saturday-----Interviewing for CWLU staff position 1pm Union office
- Sept 13 Sunday----1 pm CITYWIDE MEETING! Church of the 3 Crosses 1900 N. Sedgwick followed by possible demonstration at Playboy (919 N. Michigan) in support of sisters protesting Miss Amerika contest
-----3 pm meeting of Total Repeal of Ill. Abortion Laws at Cicle Campus Lecture Hall C-1
- Sept. 14 Monday-----H. Winston on Communist Perspective on Mid. East situation northside center 2150 N. Halsted (2nd floor rear apt)
-----Discussion group for women over 30 8pm call MI 3-4046 for place
- Sept 16 Wednesday-----8pm Union office meeting of organizing committee of new groups
- Sept. 17 Thursday-----7:30 Union office Steering Committee meeting
- Sept. 19 Saturday-----1pm meeting of women on college campuses, northside center 2150 N. Halsted 2nd floor rear apt. (see article)
- Sept. 21 Monday-----8pm orientation program for new women, northside center (and thereafter the third Monday of every month)
- Sept. 23 Wednesday-----Southside Marxist study group 8pm call MI 3-4046 for place
- Sept 26 Saturday-----All day anti-war workshops on plans for Oct 31 Roos U Illinois Room
- Oct. 1 Thursday-----Steering Committee meeting of Union 7:30 pm
- Oct. 4 Sunday-----Next citywide meeting, place to be announced.

WOMEN'S STRIKE CONTINUED.....

designed to be held from 12-1 to be repeated from 1-2. While it was great being in a crowd with other women, to listen to speeches about women, the men seemed to dominate much of the crowd and had an inordinate impact. Once again an event was not fully ours and we were a show for the men.

The speakers in the afternoon rally were generally right on. Three were in CWLU and some others shared our perspective. A judge, nun, and labor union official spoke; representative from TRIAL, an abortion coalition, and a speaker on day care also participated. Unfortunately the Gay Liberation speaker was considered secondary and placed at the end of the group of speakers during the open microphone period. We should have been more active in supporting our sisters in Gay Liberation and demanded that they speak with us.

The representative from CWLU had been chosen by our speakers bureau policy. The U of C chapter chose amongst their group by using lots. The chosen woman did not have much experience speaking and was fairly new to the movement, though very dedicated. The chapter set up a group to work together to prepare the speech. It went very well.

At the end of the rally it was announced that a sister had been fired because she had brought her child to work to force the boss to provide child care. There was an impromptu move to the Morell meat office and, with many women at his door, the boss was forced to reinstate the sister.

We were not adequately prepared for the rally, did not see it politically enough. There were almost no provisions made for us to distribute literature and buttons although the requests were great. The \$100 worth of lit. we did bring was sold out in 20 minutes. We should have prepared a leaflet, set up a table.

A rally was held at Grant Park that evening. Generally we considered that our political perspective would be given in the noon rally, and the evening was for entertainment and a liberation experience. As a result we did things that we enjoyed doing and that had been fun in the past. The band was great and was able to project our excitement in finding sisterhood and building an alternate culture.

The medical skit went well too and the audience enjoyed it.

The topic of the rally was political alternatives for women. Fannie Lou Hamer was sick and couldn't make it. Though Women's Liberation was allocated 1/3 of the program, there was inadequate expression of a women's liberation political strategy. This would have been especially important in contrast to the type of political speech that was given. For example, someone from the League of Women Voters encouraged women to become precinct captains, saying then maybe we will be given child care while we are doing precinct work.

Some of the things it would have been important for us to talk about were: 1) The women's liberation movement is committed to fighting for the liberation of all oppressed people, 2) Women's oppression is not a mistake but a necessary part of an exploitative economic system that uses people for profit, 3) Because of our understanding of power in America part of our strategy is to build a movement for power rather than just voting for "the party of our choice." We are for real power for women, not for the illusory power that both men and women are supposed to have now. We were also not prepared organizationally. We did not adequately identify how people could get in touch with our office, centers, or meetings.

The best aspect about the strike is the wider audience that it reached and the public acceptance of the legitimacy of our grievances. But with all of these are serious political problems. "Women's Lib" is now a catchword but void of most of its substance. If accepted, we are not sure what it means. If our struggle gets channelled into forms controlled by others we may be educating our sisters to an illusion that people can be liberated in this society. If we reach more women, we must have something for them to do, ways for individuals to act collectively. There is a movement. It is now up to the Union and other Women's Liberation groups to give it organizational direction, political education and programmatic content to struggle for power over our lives.

PANTHERS ON WL

A LETTER FROM HUEY NEWTON, MINISTER OF DEFENSE OF THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY, TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PANTHERS ON WOMENS LIBERATION AND GAY LIBERATION.....

During the past few years, strong movements have developed among women and among homosexuals seeking their liberation. There has been some uncertainty about how to relate to these movements.

Whatever your personal opinions and your insecurities about homosexuality and the various liberation movements among homosexuals and women (and I speak of the homosexuals and women as oppressed groups), we should try to unite with them in a revolutionary fashion. I say "whatever your insecurities are" because, as we very well know sometimes our first instinct is to want to hit a homosexual in the mouth and want a woman to be quiet. We want to hit the homosexual in the mouth because we're afraid we might be homosexual; and we want to hit the woman or shut her up because we're afraid that she might castrate us, or take the nuts that we might not have to start with.

We must gain security in ourselves and therefore have respect and feelings for all oppressed people. We must not use the racist type attitude like the White racists use against people because they are Black and poor. Many times the poorest White person is the most racist, because he's afraid that he might lose something, or discover something that he doesn't have; you're some kind of threat to him. This kind of psychology is in operation when we view oppressed people and we're angry with them because of their particular kind of behavior, or their particular kind of deviation from the established norm.

Remember, we haven't established a revolutionary value system; we're only in the process of establishing it. I don't remember us ever constituting any value that said that a revolutionary must say offensive things towards homosexuals, or that a revolutionary should make sure that women do not speak out about their own particular kind of oppression. Matter of fact it's just the opposite: we say that we recognize the women's right to be free. We haven't said much about the homosexual at all, and we must relate to the homosexual movement because it's a real thing. And I know through reading and through my life experience, my observations that homosexuals are not given freedom and liberty by anyone in the society. Maybe they might be the most oppressed people in the society.

And what made them homosexual? Perhaps it's a whole phenomena that I don't understand entirely. Some people say that it's the decadence of capitalism. I don't know whether this is the case; I rather doubt it. But whatever the case is, we know that homosexuality is a fact that exists, and we must understand it in its purest form. That is, a person should have freedom to use his body in whatever way he wants to. That's not endorsing things in homosexuality that we wouldn't view as revolutionary. But there's nothing to say

that a homosexual cannot also be a revolutionary. And maybe I'm now injecting some of my prejudice by saying that "even a homosexual can be a revolutionary." Quite on the contrary, maybe a homosexual could be the most revolutionary.

When we have revolutionary conferences, rallies and demonstrations there should be full participation of the gay liberation movement and the women's liberation movement. Some groups might be more revolutionary than others. We shouldn't use the actions of a few to say that they're all reactionary or counterrevolutionary, because they're not.

We should deal with the factions just as we deal with any other group or party that claims to be revolutionary. We should try to judge somehow, whether they're operating sincerely, in a revolutionary fashion, from a really oppressed situation (And we'll grant that if they're women, they're probably oppressed). If they do things that are un-revolutionary or counter-revolutionary, then criticize that action. If we feel that the group in spirit means to be revolutionary in practice, but they make mistakes in interpretation of the revolutionary philosophy, or they don't understand the dialectics of the social forces in operation, we should criticize that and not criticize them because they're women trying to be free. And the same is

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PEACE WORK

On Saturday, August 8 several women from the Chicago Women's Liberation Union presented an anti-war skit at the Hiroshima Day rally. This skit particularly stressed the suffering the Southeast Asian war causes women and the way sex role stereotypes contribute to war in general.

The music, provided by some members of the Womens' Liberation Rock Band and 2 sisters from the Young Socialist Alliance certainly enlivened the rally.

We must now plan ways to spark up the October 31 anti-war rally. Please phone in your brainstormers to Rachel Jacobs 225-1632.



PANTHER STATEMENT CONTINUED..... true for homosexuals. We should never say a whole movement is dishonest, when in fact they're trying to be honest, they're just making honest mistakes. Friends are allowed to make mistakes. The enemy is not allowed to make mistakes because his whole existence is a mistake, and we suffer from it. But the womens liberation front and gay liberation front are our friends, they are potential allies, and we need as many allies as possible.

We should be willing to discuss the insecurities that many people have about homosexuality. When I say "insecurities," I mean the fear that they're some kind of threat to our manhood. I can understand this fear. Because of the long conditioning process which builds insecurity in the American male, homosexuality might produce certain hangups in us. I have hangups myself about male homosexuality. Where, on the other hand, I have no hangup about female homosexuality. And that's a phenomena in itself. I think it's probably because male homosexuality is a threat to me, maybe and the females are no threat.

We should be careful about using those terms that might turn our friends off. The terms "faggot" and "punk" should be deleted from our vocabulary, and especially we should not attach names normally assigned for homosexuals



Women want to create, produce, contribute-- or whatever name is given to the kind of work which demands enough of the will and the intelligence to make us feel human. Yet that very "work" is denied us, often in spite of proven accomplishment, qualifications, or just a sincere desire to learn.

We have the right to equal work. All interested women can come and meet with the CWLU West Suburban chapter on Wednesday, September 23 to help define and organize a female liberation "employment service." Effectively put together, such a service could offer all sisters an alternative to the role-playing work which the want ads, placement offices, and employment agencies insinuate. However, we would not want merely to offer information about available situations. More importantly, we plan to actively seek out new possibilities for women in all fields, and serve as a lever in "breaking in" potential employers to the idea of hiring women for real work.

Anyone with ideas, energy, criticism, please come to the Third Unitarian Church 301 North Mayfield in Austin at 8:00 p.m. September 23 (near Lake St. and Austin Blvd on the far west side of the city). Or call Donna 366-3732/Joan 287-2702/Joyce 378-5826.

SERVICE

to men who are enemies of the people, such as Nixon or Mitchell. Homosexuals are not enemies of the people.

We should try to form a working coalition with the Gay liberation and Women's liberation groups. We must always handle social forces in the most appropriate manner. And this is really a significant part of the population, both women, and the growing number of homosexuals that we have to deal with.

ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

Huey P. Newton

(reprinted from the Panther newspaper)

FEMINISM

OLD WAVE AND NEW

by Ellen DuBois

Feminism is a political concept with three parts: (1) an analysis -- which explains the totality of women's oppression; (2) a vision -- of a society in which women are liberated and sex role stereotypes are obliterated; (3) a strategy -- to get from analysis to vision.

There have been two major feminist waves in this country, one running from about 1835 to 1920 (it took that long to win it's major demand -- the vote); the other beginning sometime in the middle of the sixties and ending who knows when.

In both cases, a feminist upsurge was initiated by women who had attempted to function politically in the major reform movements of their days, and had found that because they were women, they would be unable to do very much at all. That they would be isolated from positions of decision-making, and instead they would do the shitwork (the typing, petition-gathering, meeting-organizing, etc.) while men made the decisions and got the recognition.

In our generation, women who were working in the civil rights and peace movements inaugurated a new feminism. They had joined and committed themselves to a political movement -- the New Left -- which proudly labelled itself radical, and therefore seemed to be calling for a ruthlessly radical critique of all aspects of American society. These women came to realize that sex-role stereotypes were not being subjected to this searching criticism, and, in fact, were reappearing in particularly virulent forms within the movement. The New Left had dedicated itself to equal justice for all, and yet right in its midst, women felt they were not quite being treated as political equals.

The first wave of feminism grew out of the major reform movement of the mid-nineteenth century--abolitionism. Like contemporary feminists, women working in abolition found that their full and equal participation in political activity was not especially wanted--that as long as they worked within "woman's sphere", everything would be fine. But as soon as they stepped beyond it, they were severely reprimanded by their abolitionist brothers. Like the women of the New Left, these 19th century sisters discovered that the political world in which they moved -- and which they thought was dedicated to equal justice for all -- was perfectly content to abide by the rules for "proper feminine behavior" that the outside, less politically sophisticated world provided.

What this meant for these 19th century feminists -- as it meant for us -- was that the women did the shitwork and the men made the decisions. Thousands of women participated in the abolition movement--collecting signatures on petitions to Congress; their labor and those petitions provided the organizational backbone of the abolitionist movement. The decision-making and public acknowledgement were reserved for the men.

In 1837, however, this peaceful division of labor was a shattered when 2 female

abolitionists and ex-slaveholders-- Sarah and Angelina Grimke--started to speak out publicly against slavery. New England, and especially its clergy, was shocked at women lecturing to "promiscuous audiences." Some male abolitionists, notably William Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglass, defended the Grimkes. But what is striking is how many male abolitionists did not. The Grimkes succeeded in preserving their right to lecture, and even began to write and speak about the "woman question." The controversy they had begun -- whether or not women were going to be allowed to participate equally with men in all aspects of the abolitionist movement -- continued to be hotly debated. In the end, it can be credited with generating 19th century feminism.

The next major event in which the "woman question" figured was three years after the Grimkes, in 1840. In that year, British abolitionists announced that they would sponsor a World Anti-Slavery Convention. Off to London went most of the major American abolitionists, among them Lucretia Mott (who was primarily responsible for organizing anti-slavery work in Philadelphia) and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a young bride on her honeymoon with her abolitionist husband.

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COMMUNE WANTS TO GROW

Sisters (and Brothers):

We are a group of people who have been living (struggling) together in a communal experience for 5 months. We are now 4 adults and 2 kids. We need more people to operate financially and to grow emotionally and psychologically. We rent a house in Rogers Park that can easily accomodate 10 adults and 3 or 4 kids. If you are interested in living and working with alternative life styles perhaps you would like to join with us.

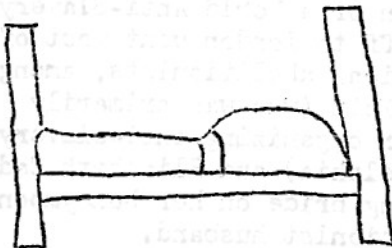
These are some of the things we feel are important to living together successfully at our house:

- 1) Struggling to abolish sex roles
- 2) Working toward and/or living in non-monogamous relationships
- 3) Sensitivity to and willingness to take responsibility for kids as a vital part of the communal family
- 4) Willingness to experiment with what can be done politically through the commune form -- or willingness to live in a house where that kind of activity (e.g. free university, etc.) might go on.

If you would like to talk with us or visit our house please call 338-7149 .

Melene
Shirley
Lenny
Danny
Nonnie
Kevin

Housing is needed for people who are coming to Chicago for the National Peace Action Coalition conference on Sept. 18-19 and October 10-11. Beds are preferred. If you have room call Chicago PAC 922-1068 or Rachel Jacobs 225-1632.



Linda Freeman has a news program on Channel 44, Monday thru Saturday at 11:50 p.m. She will air any press releases or announcements we send her. Write her c/o the station, 430 West Grant Place, or call her weekdays at 929-1200.

IF YOU NEED HOUSEPAINTING DONE, WHY NOT HAVE A SISTER DO IT???

A group of Indiana women are doing house-painting professionally and would someday like to start their own company. If you have work for them contact Jackie Kent 715 Northside Drive Warsaw, Indiana (219) 269-1290.



FEMINISM: OLD WAVE AND NEW CONTINUED

Once in London the women abolitionists had a surprise waiting for them. British abolitionists were offended by the thought of women functioning politically as the equals of men, and therefore the sponsors of the Convention decreed that women--even women like Lucretia Mott--would not be seated as delegates to the Convention. Once again, a few male abolitionists stood up for the women, but the majority did not bother to even protest this discrimination. The women were placed behind a curtain in the convention hall -- so that they might hear the proceedings without offending any male sensibilities. Stanton and Mott left the hall in disgust, to wander around London and discuss the "woman question". They found that they agreed on many things, but especially that the oppression of women deserved attention. Eight years later, in 1848, these same 2 women organized the first woman's rights convention in the U.S., the Seneca Falls Convention.

(This article will be continued in the next issue of CWLU NEWS)

Organizing Committee

The Women's Liberation Movement is growing rapidly with women constantly calling the office and the two centers wanting to get involved in groups. We have a responsibility to respond to these women by helping them get in touch with women in their areas to begin discussion, study and action groups. At the steering committee retreat the decision was made to put together a citywide organizing committee of women who would take responsibility for organizing new groups in various areas and help the groups develop and perhaps eventually become functioning chapters of the Union.

If you are interested in working on such a committee come to its first meeting at 8 pm on Wednesday September 16 at the CWLU office. This group should be able to talk about different approaches to starting groups and problems faced once they are begun. So if you want a place to talk about difficulties within the group you have now, the organizing committee may be helpful for you.

P.S. This newsletter is sent out to over 700 women in the Chicago area. Of this number we are sure there are many women who are not in chapters or work groups at this time and would like to be. If that is the case for you, please send your name and phone number to the Organizing Committee c/o CWLU 2875 West Cermak or call and leave your name for the committee. We will then contact you to help you form a group in your area or find one you can join.

OFFICE STAFF NEEDED!!

Do you have a day or $\frac{1}{2}$ a day a week that you could give to the Union? If so, we are in need of women to volunteer to staff the office. It will give you an idea of what activities are going on around the city. If you have time, call the office and leave your name and number and the day or $\frac{1}{2}$ day you would be available.

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COLLEGE

A number of women within CWLU have begun to think about program ideas for the fall. Some of us felt that women on college campuses might want to meet together.

Such a meeting will provide a chance to compare experiences and problems various groups have had with organizing and program on their campus, to brainstorm about plans for the fall and to talk about the possibility of co-ordinated campus activities.

The meeting will be held on Saturday, September 19 at the La Dolores Northside Women's Liberation Center 2150 North Halsted (2nd floor rear), at 1:00 pm.

WOMEN

The Union needs your dues pledge. Beginning soon we will be paying \$100 a week for the staff of our organization. In order for us to continue to function and grow and meet expenses, women must begin to pledge money on a regular basis. Please fill this out and mail with your donation to CWLU 2875 W. Cermak Chicago 60623.

I, _____ will pledge \$ _____
(name)
a month / every six months / a year (circle one) to keep the Union going.

Enclosed is \$ _____ .

Attention - - - ARTISTS

I am a woman artist interested in forming an artists collective within the CWLU to express and communicate our thoughts and feelings---our whole women's liberation ideology---through visual art.

Painters, sculptors, photographers, ceramists---every woman who is serious about her art whether or not she finds it easy to call herself an artist--- must get together and support each other in this as well as other struggles.

We are unaccustomed to thinking of our work as being valid. Art is an important means of communication and can be used as effectively as leafletting or speech making.

If you are a woman, an artist, and are interested in what we can do together please contact me at 338-7149. The possibilities are limitless---let's share ideas. Melene,

Dear CWLU:

I have been reading Barbara Mehrhof's article On Class Structure Within the Women's Movement which is a perfect answer to a letter you printed in one of your issues a few months ago. The letter had to do with a woman who was resigning from the organization because other women were jealous of her "innate" leadership qualities.

I wish you had included an answer of this sort, or at least the argument, rather than print a testy letter.

Barbara Mehrof's article appears in Notes from the Second Year. I especially like one of her sentences: "To say in the women's movement that some people are better than others, to feel that some just naturally have leadership qualities, is to be thinking and acting on the basis of the male value system. It is to act toward other women--women with whom you supposedly identify your interests--as men do..." Sophie Wessel

Books/-amphlets in CWLU Library

Toward Job Equality for Women

Dialogue on Women

Social Thought of Jane Addams

Marx, Lenin: The woman Question

Women and Work in America

Vietnamese Women

Pioneers of Women's Liberation

Black Movement and Women's Liberation

Chinese Communist Society--Family & Village

Family in various cultures

Husbands and Wives

Leviathan issue on Women

Women in modern China

Five for Freedom

Everyone Was Brave

Harriet Tubman

Feminism and Art

Patriarchal Attitudes

Children of Working others

Women in the USSR--articles

Black Scholar--articles on black women

Pregnancy and Birth

The Pill

American Women: report of President's Commission on women

The Fighting Pankhursts

And many more. You may borrow these for short periods of time.

Speakers Bureau

Recently the steering committee of the Chicago WL Union has been discussing and reevaluating the speakers bureau policy. The following is the list of revisions of the policy which were voted on by the steering committee and which will be discussed at the next citywide meeting. The underlying idea behind the speakers bureau policy is that all women in the Union should speak publicly about the women's movement.

1. Speaking engagements in a woman's organizing sphere can be handled by her, alone if necessary. She should inform the office.
2. When an individual woman is asked to speak, she may do it. She must take another woman from the next chapter on the rotation schedule with her, and she must report the engagement to the office.
3. Any woman asked to speak as the representative of the CWLU must refer the engagement to the Speakers' Bureau through the office.
4. The Speakers Bureau will work with the Media Committee to develop a resource file including materials and names of women knowledgeable in specific areas or kinds of organizing. The chapter will be free to use the resource person and take her to speak or as a second person for aid in speaking.
5. Speaking engagements originating through the office will be filled by rotation through chapters. 2 women (at least) must go on each engagement, and all chapters are encouraged to make use of the resource file of women experienced in different fields. Please take the type of audience into consideration as well as the subject.

6. Large chapters will be divided into groups of 10 (based on stable members only) for purposes of filling speaking engagements.

7. All at-large members who indicate willingness to speak will be organized into geographically-based groups of 10. These groups will be considered like other chapters for rotation of speaking engagements.

8. The office workers will handle the Speakers Bureau assignments and the resource file. They will meet either weekly or bi-weekly and the staff worker(s) will present monthly reports on the functioning of the Speakers Bureau to the Steering Committee.

9. The Political Education Committee will organize speakers' training with emphasis on doing follow-up organizing.

10. Every time we speak we should write a resume of the basic rap that we gave, the response, the questions asked, and the need for follow-up (what kind, who should do it). The office workers will remind speakers who do not send in a resume after a reasonable length of time, but there should be very little need for them to do this extra work.

11. All these revisions and the whole Speakers Bureau policy will be reviewed after 6 months practice by the Steering Committee. It can be reviewed sooner if members experience difficulties with some aspect of it.

(The basic difference between this policy and the old is the existence of the resource file and the fact that individual women can now fill requests in line with her organizing or if asked individually, in which case she must take a sister with her from the chapter rotation.)

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Please tear off and mail to the office if you are interested in speaking but are not part of a Union chapter and therefore have not up to now been asked to fill speaking engagements.

_____ (name) _____ (address)

_____ (phone--days) _____ (phone-evenings) _____ (when you would be unavailable to speak)