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No Retreat, No Surrender: Concessions, Resistance, and the End of the Postwar Settlement

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No Retreat, No Surrender: Concessions, Resistance, and the End of the Postwar Settlement

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Julius Getman, *The Betrayal of Local 14: Paperworkers, Politics, and Permanent Replacements* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998)
Tom Juravich and Kate Bronfenbrenner, *Ravenswood: The Steelworkers' Victory and the Revival of American Labor* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999)
Timothy J. Minchin, *Forging a Common Bond: Labor and Environmental Activism During the BASF Lockout* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003)
Jonathon D. Rosenblum, *Copper Crucible: How the Arizona Miners' Strike of 1983 Recast Labor-Management Relations in America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995)

STRIKES IN THE UNITED STATES may be in the process of withering away, having declined precipitously over the last three decades,[1] but you would never know it from the number of recently published books about them.[2] In the past few years a number

[1]For example, the number of work stoppages idling 1,000 workers or more from 1970-79 was 2,888. It declined by more than two-thirds over the course of the 1980s to 831, and then fell again by more than 50 per cent through the 1990s to just 347.
[2]This is a review of just some of the literature that has accumulated. Relevant monographs on the Hormel strike alone include Hardy Green, *On Strike at Hormel: The Struggle for a Democratic Labor Movement* (Philadelphia 1990); Peter J. Rachleff, *Hard-Pressed in the Heartland: The Hormel Strike and the Future of the Labor Movement* (Boston 1993); and Michael T. Fahey, *Packing It In! The Hormel Strike, 1985-86: A Personal Memoir* (St Paul 1988). Other books in the genre include Barbara Kingsolver, *Holding the Line: Women in the Great Arizona Mine Strike of 1983* (Ithaca 1996); and Stephen Franklin, *Three Strikes: Labor's Heartland Losses and What They Mean for Working Americans* (New York 2001).

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of monographs describing recent labour conflicts have appeared even as their incidence declines. The strikes described in these books capture a particular moment in American labour history. They examine the unraveling of the postwar settlement between labour and capital, when management no longer acknowledged unions as a fact of life with which they had to bargain. Management began to take back the slack that had existed in labour relations, demanding lower wages, cuts in benefits, longer contracts, fewer work rules, and less job protection. Concessions were needed, employers argued, in order to restore profits or, where profits were strong, to maintain competitiveness in a more global, ruthless marketplace. In many cases, demands for concessions from unions in collective bargaining were a pretext for trying to eliminate unions entirely. A new employer offensive had begun. These books describe how labour fought back.

A script that would become familiar in the 1980s was first written in the 1983 copper miners' strike in Arizona. Twenty-four hundred copper workers from 30 different union locals struck the Phelps Dodge Corporation (PD) when it demanded concessions, refusing to accept the pattern settlement that covered the industry. As Jonathon D. Rosenblum recounts in *The Copper Crucible*, the strike was significant because it pioneered the use of permanent replacements. President Reagan had permanently replaced striking air traffic controllers two years earlier in 1981. But PD was more precedent-setting because, unlike the air traffic controllers, it was not illegal for copper workers to strike and PD involved the private rather than the public sector. Looking back on the 1983 strike, former President Richard Moolick boasted in an interview with Rosenblum: "We created a new approach to labor." (48) Its results would reverberate in other industries with other protagonists over the course of the next twenty years

The copper miners' strike established how successful management could be in defeating unions once it took the gloves off. From the start, PD was determined to win at any cost. Pleasantries that had characterized previous strikes were now gone. PD stores would not extend credit to striking miners, and the company refused to continue health insurance benefits or tolerate delays in the payment of rent. In previous strikes the mines had shut down. Now production would continue. In previous strikes the company had not asked workers to cross the picket line. Now it invited workers to show up for work and then hired permanent replacements to take the place of those who did not. It pressured the governor into calling out the National Guard and collaborated with state security agencies to gather intelligence on union activities. When the union acknowledged defeat and offered more concessions than PD had requested originally, the company turned them down. Sensing total victory, the company was determined to turn a strike over concessions into a means to rid itself of unions altogether. After a year-and-a-half, replacement workers and union members who had crossed the picket line voted to decertify all 30 union locals at all PD properties. The price of victory, however, was not cheap. PD lost

100 million dollars on its copper operations in 1983, much more than the savings it anticipated from the concessions it demanded of the unions

The cost of the strike was not measured only in dollars. The prolonged work stoppage also extracted an emotional price as it divided families and communities. For example, Rosenblum describes how the strike ran down the length of Holy Cross Church. On one side, parishioners took communion from a deacon who supported the strike, while on the other side the communion line formed with a deacon who opposed it. The strike also created organizational stress for the unions involved. Different levels of the unions, with different interests serving different constituencies, came into conflict with one another. Rosenblum suggests that local union democracy was compromised by the bargaining arm for all the copper unions, the Non-ferrous Industry Conference (NIC). The local unions at PD could see defeat looming but could not convince NIC to cut its losses. Local conditions were not paramount to NIC because it served a broader constituency than the PD locals. It was more concerned with preserving pattern bargaining for all copper workers, which a more concessionary contract with PD threatened to unravel.

The workers at PD began the strike with a great deal of confidence. Miners had previous strike experience, striking PD in 1967 and in 1980, both times with success. In addition, the largest union at the mines was the Steelworkers, which originally had been a militant Mine, Mill local prior to that union merging in 1967. Yet, the copper unions suffered more defections than any of the unions covered in the other books under review, some of which had never struck before. Several dozen copper workers crossed the picket line the first day of the strike, and more than 500 out of 2,500 had already crossed one month into the strike by the time PD announced it would permanently replace workers.

The greater number of defections at PD can be traced to the ethnic and religious divide among the workers there. White, predominantly Mormon workers crossed the picket line, while Catholic workers of Mexican descent largely respected it. The salience of ethnic and religious differences among the workers at PD is traceable to a second anomaly distinguishing the PD strike from the others we will review. Local unions in the other disputes developed an alternative culture over the course of their strikes. This culture muted and contained whatever incipient conflicts based on identity existed within the locals. In contrast, the copper locals at PD failed to create an alternative culture that could build solidarity across ethnic and religious lines. The locals were bypassed physically and culturally. A medical clinic led by a radical doctor became the community meeting place for strike supporters, not the local union hall, and the Morenci Miners Women's Auxiliary provided a moral and historical reading to the strike, not the local union leadership.

But this places too much of the burden on the copper unions for their own defeat. PD always had a compliant state to do its bidding, from the governor's office that ordered the largest military mobilization in state history to keep the mines open to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) that virtually sponsored the union de-

certification petitions. Finally, the copper unions suffered from the fact that they were the first target of new corporate weapons. They did not have the advantages of hindsight: a learning curve that informed union leaders in later strikes that new strategies and tactics were necessary when management is intent on producing with replacement workers. The unions at PD were fighting the last war while the enemy was busy deploying more powerful weapons that made previous strategies obsolete. The copper unions still thought they could beat PD one-on-one, at the point of production. They did not pursue a strategy of escalation that would have moved the conflict beyond the picket line. They engaged in regulatory harassment reluctantly and adopted a corporate strategy too late, when it was apparent the strike was already lost. Other unions in later struggles would not make the same mistake.

The Betrayal of Local 14 by Julius Getman, a law professor, describes how International Paper Company (IPC), the richest and largest paper company in the world, demanded concessions from workers at its Androscoggin mill in Jay, Maine in 1987. When the workers, members of Local 14 of the United Paperworkers International Union (UPIU), struck, the company hired permanent replacements, and after sixteen months the strike was lost. With permanent replacements inside the plant, the local agreed to many of IP's concessions in order to stave off union decertification, which occurred anyway.

But Getman's reporting allows us to probe beyond the pathos and tragedy. First, prior to the strike, Local 14 was not a particularly militant or radical union outpost. The workers prospered within the cocoon of IPC's paternalism. The workers identified with the company and offered their loyalty in return for good wages, good benefits, and apparent job security. Many workers and local union leaders, including Bill Meserve, the president of Local 14, had once aspired to join IPC's management team. They hoped to follow the path of their former president, C.K. Lavoi, who now served as director of human resources at the Androscoggin mill. In that capacity, Lavoi helped implement the strategy of defeating the union he once led.

Second, the workers had an exaggerated sense of their indispensability. They believed the plant could not operate without their experience and knowledge of the production process. In doing so, they underestimated the willingness of the company to accept financial losses and the ability of newly hired replacement workers to perform their jobs. Nor could picket lines, rendered ineffectual by court injunctions, prevent supplies from entering or finished products from leaving the mill.

But if the secrets of production that workers had were less potent than they suspected, there were other secrets they possessed that might have been equally effective. Prior to the strike workers contrived with management to ignore environmental and health and safety violations. Workers were willing to wink at regulatory infractions in return for money and jobs. But now with the local fighting for its life, it began to engage in a strategy of regulatory harassment. It called attention to health and safety violations as well as air and water pollution control infractions, which workers and the local had previously been willing to disregard. The local

hoped that the prospect of frequent government inspections, bad publicity, and costly fines would pressure IPC and prove a functional substitute for their inability to stop production.

Third, *Betrayal* also provides a revealing look at relations within the UPIU. Local 14 argued that they were the line in the sand for a fight with IPC that the international union leadership was unwilling to recognize or acknowledge. For example, the international would not support a campaign of civil disobedience because of the legal liability that it would incur. Nor would the international union organize a pool so that as other local union contracts with IPC expired, they would all stop production together and pressure the company to settle. The international union feared that this would antagonize IPC and dangerously magnify the stakes involved. It would escalate the conflict to the entire IPC chain, making the local conflict in Maine that much more difficult to settle.

But the UPIU leadership's unwillingness to deliver on the pool reflected more than their failure of nerve. Local unions where strikes were not occurring were reluctant to join a pool: Getman writes, "The failure of other locals of the UPIU to make common cause with the strikers was probably the biggest factor in the strike's defeat." (70) Organizing a pool from the top would have required the UPIU leadership to nullify local union democracy from below. The same issue of how far to respect local union democracy that was raised in the copper miners' strike was raised in the paper workers' strike as well. Just as local union solidarity came into conflict with solidarity across workers in the copper industry, so did local union solidarity come into conflict with solidarity across workers in the IPC chain. When local unions were reluctant to join an IPC pool and the UPIU leadership bowed to their wishes, it condemned Local 14 to certain defeat in the process.

To some degree Local 14 was hoisted on its own petard. In the past, Local 14 had voted not to bargain with other IPC locals in a pool organized by the international union, believing it could do better on its own. But now, not only was the union unwilling to organize other locals so as to strike several IPC mills at once, but it also prevented Local 14 from coordinating strategy with other locals in its place. Local 14's efforts at outreach to other local unions threatened the unique and indispensable organizational position that the international union claimed for itself.

Finally, *Betrayal* is about building and maintaining militancy in a local that previously had displayed little of it. A culture of solidarity among striking workers did not occur spontaneously but only through creative planning. The Maine State AFL-CIO parachuted a professional organizer, Peter Kellman, into Jay to assist and advise local union leaders. The local began to take on new roles, serving as a social center where families of striking workers bonded and as a resource center where families could obtain economic help. With Kellman's assistance, weekly meetings were organized to boost morale, keep workers informed, and educate them as to the

importance of their strike. An alternative culture was created, imbuing the strike with a higher morality and historical significance.[3] A narrative was authored in which the strike was not about this or that specific change to the collective bargaining agreement, but about defending basic principles of fairness and dignity for all workers. Striking workers came to believe that their picket line in isolated and obscure Jay had become the front line in the struggle against concessions everywhere. They were sustained and inspired to sacrifice by the idea that the stakes involved were larger than their particular struggle.

Ravenswood by Tom Juravich and Kate Bronfenbrenner follows the narrative footsteps of *Betrayal* in many respects. Workers employed at the aluminum facility in Ravenswood, West Virginia had spent their work lives under the protection of a paternalistic employer. Like IPC, Kaiser Aluminum provided good jobs at good wages to its workers and was a model corporate citizen in the community. Local 5668 of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), which represented the workers at the plant, was not particularly militant. Like Paperworkers Local 14, Local 5668 had never engaged in a work stoppage or had its mettle tested prior to the lockout detailed in the book. And, here again, corporate demands for concessions precipitated a dispute. Kaiser had sold the facility to a privately held company, the Ravenswood Aluminum Corporation (RAC). To pay down the debt of its acquisition, RAC demanded wholesale changes to the labour contract, insisting upon lower labour costs, fewer seniority rights, and more labour flexibility. Negotiations on a new contract failed, union members were locked out, and permanent replacements were hired to take their place. The plant continued to produce despite workers' expectations that their experience and knowledge were essential to the production process. While a former local union president worked for the company tormenting the workers in Jay, a former local union president defected and tried to lead a back-to-work movement in Ravenswood. For a year-and-a-half, the locked out workers displayed remarkable solidarity to get their jobs back. All this is familiar from *Betrayal*, with one crucial difference: in *Ravenswood*, the workers won.

It is hard to ascribe these divergent outcomes to different degrees of local militance. Paper and aluminum workers both displayed grit and tenacity; both were strategically audacious and inventive. Nor can we attribute the different results to the militance and determination of the adversary. Both IPC and RAC were willing to sustain substantial financial losses in order to win. The IPC paper mill lost 30 million dollars over the course of the strike, while the aluminum plant saw revenue plummet by 29 million dollars, putting RAC in default to its principal creditors. Both companies were willing to suffer financial losses in order to subdue or dispose of the unions and gain power over production and the workforce. Of course, one advantage the workers at Ravenswood had over those at Jay was that they were more perceived as victims, since the employer had locked them out. Workers who decide

[3]On alternative cultures see Lawrence Goodwyn, *The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America* (New York 1978), vii-xxiv.

to strike do not receive such sympathy. Locked out workers are also in a more advantageous legal position when resisting being permanently replaced than workers who go on strike. But the most telling factor explaining the divergent outcomes in the two disputes lies in the decisions of the international union leadership.

In the case of the Paperworkers, the union financially supported the strike. It paid out so much in benefits to striking workers that these costs threatened to deplete the union treasury. In addition, the leadership faced political pressure inside the union from those who thought it had been too militant, as opposed to not militant enough. At the 1988 UPIU convention President Wayne Glenn ran for reelection as a supporter of the strike against an opponent who argued that the union should cut its losses.

But if the UPIU leadership was not guilty of outright betrayal, it never took the risks necessary to bring the strike to a successful conclusion either. It failed to provide leadership and use its staff effectively to explain why other local unions engaged with IPC needed to rally behind the embattled local. It never embraced and therefore never conveyed to other IPC workers the alternative culture that had developed among the workers on strike at Jay. UPIU leaders did not want to antagonize local unions who were anxious to make peace with IPC in order to avoid the fate of Local 14. Similarly, they feared antagonizing IPC. They constantly tried to appease the company, hoping it would relent and let the local retreat with some dignity, thereby avoiding the possibility of full-scale war across the entire IPC chain. Support from other locals was the only recourse for winning the strike in Maine. But union leaders were not confident they could get broad support within the union for this fight, which threatened the financial and organizational security of the union itself. They hoped to wage a militant, yet contained, risk-averse struggle in Jay, which was insufficient, given IPC's determination.

The UPIU and USWA leadership made different choices because they faced different institutional environments. RAC, unlike IPC, did not have multiple plants under contract to other USWA local unions. The struggle did not have ramifications across a chain of plants. This reduced the stakes involved for the USWA leadership, permitting it to engage in riskier behavior because less hung in the balance. In addition, USWA leaders did not face the dilemma of having to coordinate recalcitrant locals and challenge local union democracy in order to win, as the UPIU leadership did. The struggle at Ravenswood was more bipolar. This posed different but no less difficult obstacles for USWA leaders. Victory would depend not so much on coordinating and maximizing their own strength, which was the challenge facing the UPIU leadership, but rather on finding weaknesses in their opponent.

Much of *Ravenswood* is taken up with union efforts to pierce the corporate veil of ownership at RAC and use this information to embarrass the company. Research by USWA international staff revealed that RAC was actually owned by a company controlled by the corporate rogue, Marc Rich. Rich was America's most wanted white-collar criminal, who had fled to Switzerland after being indicted for tax eva-

sion in 1983. In the interim he had added to his venal reputation by violating the Iranian oil embargo and South African trade sanctions and by conducting business with such dictators as Chile's Augusto Pinochet and Romania's Nicolae Ceausescu. But Rich wanted desperately to return to the US. Publicity tying him to the strike at Ravenswood would ruin his effort to repair his tarnished reputation and prevent his eventual return. The Steelworkers sent delegations to London to do informational picketing at industry conventions and to Switzerland outside Rich's corporate headquarters in order to highlight Rich's connection to the Ravenswood lockout. The union made clear that Rich would know no peace so long as workers were locked out at Ravenswood. USWA staff developed a strategy of escalation.[4] They continually upped the ante, in contrast to the deferential approach taken by the UPIU leadership in the Local 14 dispute. More than a question of nerve, escalation was also an attempt to shift the arena of conflict. So long as the dispute remained one between RAC management and the permanently replaced workers, the union would be the loser. Escalation was necessary to broaden the conflict beyond the picket lines at Ravenswood and involve others who could pressure RAC to negotiate with the union. Ironically, the notorious Marc Rich, who had a controlling interest in RAC, became the union's reluctant ally. The union's publicity campaign made clear to him that he would be unable to clear his name unless he used his control over the company to change RAC's antiunion strategy.

Betrayal and *Ravenswood* are both written from behind union lines, with each author looking over a union's shoulder to report on the combat below. Management's motivations and strategies are slighted and presented only through the union's eyes. *The Copper Crucible* departs a bit from this partial view by including retrospective interviews of PD managers. But only *Forging A Common Bond* by Timothy Minchin succeeds in "bringing the employers back in." Minchin, a British historian of American labour, had rare access to management's records and interviewed them extensively. His use of these sources is refreshing and not found often in books of this genre. The reader is not on one side peering out at a caricatured and inexplicable foe, but overlooking the entire battlefield, watching each side plot their next move.

Forging A Common Bond details how one local union pursued an unusual strategy of allying with environmentalists to produce an even more unusual result — victory over a multinational corporation. In June 1984, 370 chemical workers, members of Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) Local 4620, were locked out by BASF Corporation from the Geismar, Louisiana chemical plant in which they worked. The lockout continued for five-and-a-half years until December 1989, when an agreement finally was reached that allowed all the strikers to return to work. The conflict was noteworthy not only for its length but for the strategy the un-

[4]For a more thorough treatment of the strategy of escalation see Michael Schwartz, *Radical Protest and Social Structure: The Southern Farmers' Alliance and Cotton Tenancy, 1880-1890* (Chicago 1976), 201-15.

ion pursued to bring it to a conclusion. Contrary to the familiar portrait of workers and environmentalists at each other's throats, Minchin's book details how mutual suspicions were overcome and an unlikely alliance was forged.

The Wyandotte Chemical Company originally opened the Geismar plant in 1958. Although the plant was located in a predominantly Black parish, it was staffed predominantly by Whites who commuted from Baton Rouge. Wyandotte readily accepted the unionization of its Geismar facility, as all of its plants in the North were already organized. Workers at Geismar, like those who worked for IPC in Jay or for Kaiser in Ravenswood, identified with the company. They were paid well, accepted poor environmental practices in exchange for their jobs, viewed environmentalists with suspicion, and defended the company against environmentalists' objections. But in 1970, Wyandotte was acquired by the German chemical manufacturer, BASF. The Geismar plant became BASF's crown jewel, the company's largest and most profitable facility in the US.

In 1984, BASF demanded concessions from the union in negotiations over a new contract. It wanted to roll back wages, weaken seniority, and increase workers' health contributions. But, as the company's documents indicate, these demands were a pretext for its plans eventually to decertify the union at Geismar, as had happened at other former Wyandotte plants acquired by BASF. With over half the plant on salary and unemployment rife throughout the area, BASF was confident it could operate the plant without a unionized workforce. When Local 4620 refused to provide the concessions BASF wanted, the company proceeded to lock out its workers.

It was apparent after the first year of the lockout that the local was unable to exert any leverage on BASF. Contract workers replaced strikers, craft unions crossed the picket lines, relations with the German chemical union that sat on BASF's board were chilly, and a letter-writing campaign to the governor received a weak reply. Desperate to find a weakness, OCAW headquarters back in Denver thought that BASF was vulnerable to issues of chemical plant safety. It sent Richard Miller, who worked for the Labor Institute in New York, to Geismar to advise the local union. With Miller's help, the local began a public relations campaign, warning about a potential "Bhopal on the Bayou." Research indicated the Geismar plant manufactured chemicals similar to those produced at the infamous Union Carbide plant in Bhopal, India, in which a toxic gas leak killed 3,500 people. The union allied with local environmental groups, providing them with information about what went on inside the plant and resources to investigate pollution outside it. It helped organize local Blacks who feared chemicals were contaminating their well water; it marched with Greenpeace to protest the pollution of the Mississippi River; it cooperated with the Sierra Club in documenting water and air pollution; and it crowded state regulatory hearings with community and environmental activists. These efforts created political pressure that succeeded in slowing company requests for permits, increasing financial penalties for code violations, toughening regulatory standards and enforcement, and disrupting the company's plans to expand the plant. More-

over, it isolated BASF within its own industry. Other chemical companies wanted BASF to settle in order to put an end to the unwelcome publicity and regulatory harassment that the lockout was creating.

The union prevailed after five-and-a-half years if judged by the humble, but not insignificant criterion of avoiding elimination. Its strategy of shifting the nature of the conflict from a labour-management struggle to a health and safety issue was critical. It put the company on the defensive and permitted the local to recruit allies who otherwise would have been indifferent observers. The local's environmentalism, which might have been purely instrumental at the beginning, became part of its enduring purpose by the end. The local, for example, remained active on environmental issues even after the strike ended. Members voted to increase dues in order to create a labour-community coalition that would oversee BASF emissions, and advocate stricter regulatory standards and tougher enforcement. Members' growing acceptance of environmentalism and their awareness that community coalitions were their best defense against a union-busting corporation reinforced each other.

Also critical was the unflagging support of the OCAW international union. From the beginning, the union leadership regarded the struggle at BASF as a test of its credibility. The strike at Geismar was the line in the sand for the OCAW that the UPIU was reluctant to draw in Jay and like the USWA leadership at Ravenswood, it played hardball until the very end. Even though BASF invited the operators back to work after three years, OCAW kept up the environmental pressure until the remaining 100 maintenance workers could also return to work.

Collectively, the four books reviewed here provide us with important lessons about contemporary labour relations. First, management has successfully neutralized the strike weapon. The increasing ratio of managers to workers, automation, the use of replacement workers, and the ineffectiveness of picket lines all permit firms to continue production during strikes. The scales have tipped even more than before in favour of employers at the point of production. The secrets of production that workers possess and that once made them indispensable are no longer as vital to the production process as they once were. But workers possess a new, different kind of secret, one they do not keep from management but share with it. They both know where the regulatory skeletons are hidden. Once workers feel betrayed by management, they are willing to inform the authorities of violations they previously were willing to conceal. For example, Minchin reports that OCAW officials obtained a map of the Geismar plant and instructed workers to draw circles in areas where they knew environmental contamination had occurred. Paper workers in Jay and aluminum workers in Ravenswood likewise shared their knowledge with union officials regarding environmental and safety infractions the company was committing.

Second, unable to defeat management at the point of production, unions conduct corporate campaigns beyond it. Corporate campaigns tend to increase local union dependence on the international union, which has the expertise, staff, and re-

sources to wage such battles. Consequently, the commitment of the international union may be more decisive for the outcome of local disputes than in the past. This was certainly apparent in the chemical and aluminum workers compared to the tentative support the union leadership provided the paper workers. The key to corporate campaigns coordinated by the international union is escalation in which the union tries to shift the arena of conflict away from labour relations in order to draw new participants into it. Unions try to lift the conflict out of a local, bipolar context in order to circumvent an unfavorable balance of power there. Such strategies reflect the insight of the political scientist E.E. Schattschneider, who noted that the scope of conflict often determines its result. The union's use of such strategies also confirms Schattschneider's corollary: "It is the *loser* who calls in outside help."[5]

Third, unions on strike raise issues that appeal to local communities, environmentalists, consumers, and even other firms in order to draw them into the conflict. But in many instances, such allies are recruited in order to place more pressure upon the union's main target, the state. They want the state to take back the regulatory slack that previously existed. Standard setting and enforcement respond to political pressure. This creates a form of regulatory stretch in which standards and enforcement are reviewed and tightened. Moreover, federalism and the fragmentation of the American state lends itself to forum shopping by unions engaged in corporate campaigns. There are multiple agencies to which unions can appeal and the response is different within and between different agencies and levels of government. The NLRB may be deaf to union pleas, but the Occupational Safety and Health Administration may not be. The Environmental Protection Agency may be receptive where a state department of environmental quality is not.

Finally, the books are one and at their best in exposing how consciousness is generated and changed by social action. They portray the process of political struggle as a reciprocal one: as people participate in struggles to change their circumstances, they also change themselves. Workers who identify with the company, who vote Republican, who want a career in management, and who oppose environmentalism, are transformed by their own experience of being on strike. Local unions that had never struck, enjoyed excellent relations with management, and had never displayed much union solidarity, find themselves becoming radical and more militant over the course of their dispute. What these books demonstrate so insistently and evocatively is how class-consciousness develops through collective action, in which cultures of solidarity emerge only in the process of struggle.[6] Juravich and Bronfenbrenner write:

[5]E.E. Schattshneider, *The Semisovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America* (New York 1960), 16 (emphasis in original).

[6]See for a similar point Rick Fantasia, *Cultures of Solidarity: Consciousness, Action, and Contemporary American Workers* (Berkeley 1988).

> The involvement of the workers and their families changed the campaign and changed the workers themselves. Leafletting outside the Metals Exchange in London, telling their story to the officials at the NMB Postbank, rallying with their union allies in Prague, listening to Joe Lang testifying before the West Virginia state legislature, and sharing food with the caravans of union supporters who traveled to Fort Unity not only were essential to their victory, but forever altered their understanding of their company, their industry, their union, and their world. (203-04)

A similar process occurred in Local 14. The workers' vision of the conflict changed, Getman writes, from "regaining jobs and defeating IP's contract proposals" to protesting corporate greed and indifference in general. (132) Their radicalism and militancy reinforced each other. What happened in Louisiana among the members of OCAW Local 4620 was no different. Their efforts to pressure BASF through allying with environmentalists permanently transformed the way workers viewed environmental issues. Previously, Minchin reports, workers regarded environmentalism with suspicion, as a threat to their standard of living. But the strike changed their outlook. They no longer believed they had to accept environmental pollution in order to keep their jobs. Over the course of the strike they became educated to ways the plant could be made safer, the need for strict regulatory enforcement, the risks they shared with people who lived near the plant, and the need to conserve resources.

A new logic took hold. At Ravenswood, strike money left over after insurance and food expenses were covered was pooled and distributed not on the basis of paid-up membership, but on the basis of need. But there is nothing automatic about the process by which class-consciousness emerges from social action. Whether strikes and lockouts radicalize their participants depends upon the message that unions send. In the case of Ravenswood, the Paperworkers strike, and OCAW Local 4620, organizers parachuted in for the occasion or union staff assigned to the strike were critical in giving meaning to the dispute, interpreting it in a way that educated the membership as to its larger significance. In each case, agents of the union were the driving force behind the narrative about the strike that the workers adopted. As Kellman explained to Getman, "the more you educate people on a broader scope, the more they can see themselves as being part of a historical force, the bigger the movement grows." (132) This is precisely what did not happen during the PD strike. Perhaps because it came first, before the use of permanent replacements became so prevalent, the miners' unions never placed the strike within a larger story that could draw connections between their strike and other struggles. As a result, the striking miners never developed an alternative culture that could give broader meaning to their activity. Their militancy deepened, their antipathy toward PD grew, but with-

out the unions supplying a larger narrative these workers never went beyond the immediacy of their particular struggle.[7]

Finally, there is something a bit nostalgic about the books under review. A smaller and smaller percentage of the work force labour in the mills, mines, and factories that are the backdrop of these books.[8] The industrial workers who are at centre stage in these books are no longer the vanguard of the labour movement they once were. The future of American unions may depend less on whether these types of workers succeed than on whether post-industrial workers follow their example.

[7]On the other hand, the Morenci Miners Women's Auxiliary and its members were transformed. As the Women's Auxiliary shifted from holding bake sales to a more aggressive activism, so did its members change. They confided to Rosenblum that they found themselves doing and saying things that they never knew they had in them. (148) They confronted the police, cursed scabs, spoke at public rallies, and brought their new ideas and confidence home with them to challenge the previously unquestioned authority of their husbands.

[8]Coincidentally, the Paperworkers and the OCAW have fallen on such hard times, their membership contracting to such a degree, that they merged in 1999 to form PACE: the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers International Union.