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criterion by which to decide which matters should be addressed by international labor standards (though see Richard Freeman's essay "A Hard-Headed Look at Labor Standards"). As a possible basis for setting international labor standards, I would offer this: basic human rights in the workplace. Though there are many "labor standards" (defined as those workplace processes and conditions that we would rather have than not have), there are manageably few "labor rights" (defined as workplace processes and conditions so fundamental that it would be better to have no production at all than to have production in their absence, which would amount to production using "illegitimate means"). Adoption of the "illegitimate means" criterion would mandate the setting of labor rights at a level appropriate to all working people in rich and poor countries alike, and the promulgation of international agreements to guarantee those rights. Here is my own list of core labor rights that would fit this definition:

(i) No person has the right to enslave another or to cause another to enter into indentured servitude, and every person has the right to freedom from such conditions.

(ii) No person has the right to expose another to unsafe or unhealthy working conditions without providing the fullest possible information.

(iii) Children have the right not to work long hours whenever their families' financial circumstances allow.

(iv) Every person has the right to freedom of association in the workplace and the right to organize and bargain collectively with employers.

Why not be more ambitious? Very simply, if the rules are not kept modest in scope, it will be hard to point the finger at alleged violators and get them to change what they do. What country could say with a straight face that it is honoring the ILO's convention regarding equal remuneration for work of equal value but another country is not? When codes are generally honored, violations are more clear-cut and the rate of compliance on core matters is likely to be higher as a result. Call it what you will: internationally agreed labor rights, core labor standards, an international labor code, a social clause, or even a minimal package. I predict that we will see broad international agreement on such a list before the end of the millennium—if, that is, the list is kept short and focused on essentials, as some of the authors in

this book have done. For the world's working people, that would be genuine progress.

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Historical Studies

The Labor Wars in Córdoba, 1955–1976: Ideology, Work, and Labor Politics in an Argentine Industrial City. By James P. Brennan. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994. xi, 440 pp. ISBN 0 674-50851-3, \$59.95.

This impressively researched book, which draws on union records, the archives of Fiat and Renault, and a wide array of other sources, is a gripping study of the political and trade union events, actors, and movements of a tragic era in Córdoba's history. It is an intricately detailed account of Córdoba labor from the days of incipient industrialization in the mid-1950s to the military coup of 1976. Brennan's magisterial narrative greatly enriches a literature that one might have thought was already air-tight, since this era in Córdoba has been the subject of study by a number of first-rate scholars, among them Monica Gordillo and Iris Marta Roldán.

The November 1972 return of Juan Perón, Argentina's legendary populist leader and former president (1946–55), occurred at a moment of acute political polarization marked by explosive popular protest, heightened labor mobilization, and an increasing resort to violence from all sides. Throughout the years from 1968 to the military coup of 1976, two years after Perón's death in office, the provincial industrial city of Córdoba stood at the center of national political and trade union life.

Córdoba was catapulted to national prominence in 1969 when a tumultuous labor protest was transformed into two days of fighting between residents, the police, and the military. With deaths estimated at between 12 and 60, this episode, which became known as the *Cordobazo*, decisively weakened the military government of Onganía, helped open the way for Perón's return, and served to cement ties between the city's radical students and a remarkably combative local labor movement. In his

detailed chapter on the *Cordobazo*, James Brennan highlights new dimensions of this often-discussed urban uprising and offers a fresh historical interpretation.

Even prior to the fiery events of 1969, the independent-minded trade unions of Córdoba had emerged as the key national opponents of the accommodationist policies and centralizing "verticalism" of the powerful Peronist union bosses of Buenos Aires. And in the *Cordobazo's* aftermath, Argentina's second largest industrial city (with a population of 800,000) became the birthplace of a new form of labor radicalism that came to be known as *clasismo*. *Clasismo* began as a shop floor rebellion at the Fiat and Kaiser-Renault auto plants, but rapidly evolved into a dissident political/union movement of national prominence in the early 1970s. For the most part, *clasismo* has been dismissed as an ephemeral episode of Maoist-inspired hyper-radicalism alien to the Peronist traditions and day-to-day lives of Córdoba's workers. This characterization seems self-evident in light of several indications, such as the slogan adopted by one of the *clasista* unions—"Ni golpe, ni elección, revolución!" ("Neither coup nor election, revolution!"), which was coined, Brennan tells us, by a local intellectual. Yet Brennan quite rightly criticizes this dismissal for foreclosing serious examination of the workplace discontent that paved the way for this New Left labor insurgency.

Brennan does not, however, deny the radicalism of this form of "revolutionary trade unionism," which came to assert openly that labor's ultimate goal was a socialist one. Unlike some observers, he deals frankly with the party affiliations and revolutionary projects that came to be embraced by many *clasista* leaders. Yet despite his sympathies for *clasismo*, Brennan never confuses rank-and-file support for *clasista* shop floor activism with an embrace of the increasingly anti-Peronist political agenda of the *clasista* union leadership prior to their defeat and decimation. His perspective, which is partly defined by an acute awareness of *clasismo's* youthful miscalculations, is close to that of the legendary Agustín Tosco, the independent leftist leader of Córdoba's light and power union who consistently sought, in a non-sectarian way, to unite trade unionists in a common front. Admirably profiled here, Tosco was a key strategist who both unified Córdoba's pluralistic labor movement and helped to guide it, with no small success, through an extremely complex period marked by intense conflict with employers, the state, and power-

ful Peronist union leaders in the nation's capital.

In many ways, Brennan's greatest achievement is to make credible the events of this surrealistic period in Córdoba—the general strikes; the factory occupations; the kidnapping and assassination of union leaders and factory managers (the personnel directors of Fiat and IKA-Renault were both murdered by guerrillas acting independently of but "in solidarity" with the *clasista* unions); and the case of the U.S. consul Patrick Egan, who offered "some of the best analyses of labor politics in Córdoba in this period" (1973) before being kidnapped and executed by guerrillas in 1975 (p. 406). This so-called "war," however, was decidedly unequal in nature, with innumerable leftist and independent labor leaders, attorneys, and intellectuals "disappeared," tortured, and murdered.

Another feature of Brennan's account that makes it a solid contribution to the fairly extensive literature on this era in Córdoba is the deftness and clarity with which he handles the immensely confusing domain of factional labor and leftist politics at the city level. In his treatment of the complex dynamics of Córdoba's labor movement, Brennan eschews abstract labels and timeless categorizations. His discussion of the day-to-day politics of labor demonstrates a splendid grasp of the calculations, both strategic and tactical, that underlay the maneuvers of each and every segment or faction of the city's labor leadership. Brennan is sensitive to the individual and group peculiarities that guarantee, in the real world, diverse responses among the adherents to a given political position. His evaluation of union decision-making takes stock of the influence of the company, the state, internal union rivals, and external union power brokers, but also recognizes the important role played by the personalities of individual union leaders, by purely regionalist antipathies (which, he suggests, helped shore up local labor radicalism in Córdoba), and by chance.

Another contribution of this book is Brennan's rich exploration of labor relations in the automobile industry. Citing the enormous differences in production techniques and management cultures between the anti-union Fiat and the more union-tolerant Renault, he rightly insists on taking a company-specific approach to understanding labor/management conflict. At the same time, he provides a comparative perspective by incorporating observations on the auto industry in other countries. His penetrating account suffers only one weakness: the link between the production process and union

politics is less well developed than one might expect, given the book's declared objective of proving the centrality of the factory (as opposed to the public square) in the creation of working-class actors.

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A History of British Trade Unions Since 1889. Volume 3, 1934–51. By Hugh Armstrong Clegg. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994. ix, 458 pp. ISBN 0-1982-0406-X, \$85.00.

This book completes a three-volume history of the British trade unions that Clegg commenced in the 1950s. The first volume, co-authored with A. F. Thompson and A. Fox, was published in 1964. This volume examines the recovery of the trade unions from the Great Depression, the impact of the Second World War, and the period of at least partial advance under the Labour Government of 1945–51. The central agenda of the earlier volumes is continued. Clegg chronicles, often in exhaustive detail, the rise of collective bargaining as the dominant form of dispute resolution. His approach is careful and encyclopedic, moving through the whole range of industrial sectors, including much neglected ones such as agricultural labor, public utilities, civil servants, and white-collar workers.

For Clegg, the period 1934–51 is characterized by the success of the pragmatic and moderate policies epitomized by leaders such as Ernest Bevin and Walter Citrine. In the two decades before the General Strike many union leaders had explicitly been willing to use industrial power to achieve their objectives. The post-Strike redirection, however, changed this and resulted in "one of the most successful periods in the history of British industrial relations."

Throughout the book, Clegg takes a view from the top of the union movement. The book is above all a history of the leadership and its "high politics." In many respects this is revealing. Clegg sheds much light on the growing links between unions and government in the 1930s that successfully paved the way for Bevin's elevation to the wartime cabinet. He highlights the centrality of the unions' continuing political role, which they were unwilling to devolve fully to the Labour Party, and the impact of this

role on the Labour Party. And he stresses the importance of continuous organizational restructuring and centralization, contextualizing the organizational as well as political roots of the TUC and central union leaders' powerful antipathy to Communist and rank-and-file movements.

These themes come together most interestingly in Clegg's analysis of postwar planning. In particular, he stresses the relatively limited role of the unions in the Labour Party's debates on postwar industrial planning. Poor preparation and lack of engagement with the critical issues in the immediate postwar years were among the critical weaknesses of Clement Attlee's supply-side policies. Meanwhile, the union leaders' influence on the Labour Party in office waned as leading figures were appointed to administer nationalized industries and Bevin, though still powerful as Foreign Secretary, was sidelined on trade union issues. The union-government relationship in the late 1940s remains obscure in many respects, but Clegg's analysis of key institutional factors has opened up some important angles.

Clegg's three-volume history will undoubtedly be a standard work for many years to come. It is a massive institutional analysis, stressing continuities, organization, and the centrality of politics. In a sense, this last volume is a fulfillment of the agenda originally set out by the author in the 1950s. Yet one wonders whether the agenda should not have moved on. The book often fails to engage with newer scholarship and newer directions in the subject. There is little sense of the social history of trade unions, the dynamics of the shop floor, the role of gender and ethnicity, or the contributions of "lost causes" and oppositional movements. Nonetheless, in choosing to plow his own furrow in great depth, Clegg has certainly left us all in his debt.

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Cold War in the Working Class: The Rise and Decline of the United Electrical Workers. By Ronald L. Filippelli and Mark McColloch. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1995. 296 pp. ISBN 0-7914-2181-3, \$19.95.

In 1949, the CIO expelled eleven unions, charging them with communist domination.