

*Reforming the Chicago Teamsters: The Story of Local 705.* By Robert Bruno. (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2003. Pp. X, 203. Ill., notes, bib., index. Paper, \$24.00).

Because of the union's dynamism and corruption, the Teamsters have long captivated Americans. Generally, however, emphases on corruption have outweighed attempts to understand the Teamsters' potential for change. Robert Bruno's penetrating analysis of one of the largest and most prominent Teamster locals, Chicago's Local 705, effectively conveys how union members were able to transform a corrupt and undemocratic organization into a more democratic and responsive one. Although Bruno's study uncovers significant evidence of a democratic transition from 1993 to 2000, he also soberly indicates tensions and problems remaining in present-day Local 705.

Bruno believes that Local 705's recent history provides a window for investigating the concept of union democracy. He defines union democracy as the "substantive outcome" (13) of labor-management struggles to define rules that govern shop-floor life. Meaningful union democracy, which Bruno says must create a just work environment that contributes to a more equitable society, goes beyond successful collective bargaining achievements. In fact, Bruno emphasizes that the Teamsters' post-World War II economic achievements, wrested primarily from the freight industry until the 1970s, had created a union culture that stifled democratic impulses and fostered corruption.

The fight against corruption in Local 705 began in the 1970s with several grassroots campaigns and by the early 1990s had revealed pervasive criminal activities, including union leaders' embezzlement of \$13.5 million from Local 705's health, welfare, and pension funds. A Justice Department-filed Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organization (RICO) suit, Ron Carey's election to the Teamster's presidency, and, especially, the creation of a local trusteeship in 1993 all contributed to opening a wedge for democratic changes in Local 705. The bulk of Bruno's book is devoted to a detailed description and analysis of the changes manifested in the local during the trusteeship from 1993 to 2000, and then the internal split among the local's reformers that resulted in new officer elections in December 2000.

Many of the reformers, including Gerald Zero, the leading trustee beginning in 1994, were Teamster members but outsiders to Local 705. Bruno describes several democratic results during the trusteeship period, including reductions in union officials' salaries, improved record-keeping, more regular dues collection, more aggressive pursuit of members' grievances, elimination of multiple wage tiers, and increases in the minimum wage scale as well as more organizing efforts, increased political action, and more involvement in social justice movements. The parts of the book devoted to the schism between Gerald Zero and John McCormick, the local's two leading reformers, are harder to follow. Although both leaders' attributes and faults are described in close detail, Bruno might have devoted more attention to their respective followings among Local 705's rank and file. Zero drew supporters from the freight segment of the local while McCormick's support came primarily from UPS employees, a growing segment of Local 705's membership. Yet Bruno also demonstrates that Zero reached out effectively to part-time UPS employees. More attention on the shifting membership basis of the local might have made Bruno's analysis of the leadership schism clearer.

Gerald Zero won the December 2000 election. Yet, as Bruno makes clear, the election's meaning remains ambiguous. Voter turnout was up over previous elections, but only 47 percent of the local's 18,000 members turned

out. Bruno's conclusion suggests that, while reform during the trusteeship period had made improvements, more substantial reform, especially greater rank-and-file involvement, is still necessary.

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