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Job Blackmail [Review of the book *Fear at Work: Job Blackmail, Labor, and the Environment*]

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Abstract
[Excerpt] Ever since the establishment of environmental and workplace protections in the early 1970s, private employers have resisted further curbs on corporate conduct by threatening job destruction. The refrain has been that occupational health and safety standards wipe out existing jobs and make new ones impossible. In *Fear at Work*, Richard Kazis and Richard L. Grossman detail the use of this job blackmail to split trade unionists from environmentalists, making unnatural enemies of those who should be allies.

Keywords
labor movement, union, worker rights, unionization, environmentalism, workplace safety

Disciplines
Environmental Studies | Unions

Comments
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JOB BLACKMAIL, LABOR, AND THE ENVIRONMENT
by Richard Kazis and Richard L. Grossman
The Pilgrim Press. 302 pp. $10.95.

Over the years, environmentalists have been
perplexed by the consistency with which the
numbers employed by employers to game
the research, technologies, equipment, and
service to bring about compliance with state
and Federal law, while corporate claims of
job losses have been absurdly exaggerated.

The book takes a few technical turns—
the Wiedenbaum Multiplier versus the
Tabb Multiplier in estimating regulatory
costs, for example—but Fear at Work
moves smoothly through the arguments to
ward the underlying problem of corporate
hégemony in our economic life.

Kazis and Grossman detail the use of this
job blackmail to split trade unionists from
environmentalists, increasing the devaluing
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thanks to environmental and workplace
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Over the long term, democratic trade unions, with their millions of members, must provide the overall leadership for a progressive coalition to succeed. At the end of Fear at Work, Kazis and Grossman suggest that we can go beyond coalition, that the distinction between workers and environmentalists can disappear. I think workers still have the responsibility for leadership as workers, as the creators of our wealth and the movers of our goods, information and services, in building a political force that can break the power of the corporations. But environmentalists are an indispensable element in a labor-led coalition. Put in the hands of both environmental organizations and union shop stewards, Fear at Work can help pull it together.

—LANCE COMPA

(LANCE COMPA works for an international union in Washington, D.C.)

Books Briefly

Self-ruin
THE SPORTY GAME
by John Newhouse

In 1965, after Boeing lost the contract for the C-5A, the Pentagon's new leviathan, it decided to recoup by building a commercial version in consultation with Pan Am. So was born the 747, an airplane that almost enough to be considered a competitor.

The analysis unintentionally poses some tough questions for contemporary capitalism as an industry acts in direct contradiction to market needs and brings hard times on itself and the traveling public, not by mistake but by design.

Harbinger
RIPENING: SELECTED WORK, 1927-1980
by Mirielle Le Sueur
Feminist Press. 291 pp. $14.95 trade. $7.95 paperback.

In a life that began with the century, Meri­
de Le Sueur has caught the voices of Amer­icans who are tired and hurt and hungry— from soldiers bound for Korea, fearing death, to women who have lost their men to the mines. In the 1930s, she filed reports from breadlines and strike kitchens. In a voice almost too Whitmanesque for our unim­​

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rected profitably on most flights, leaving it to the European Consortium Airbus Industrie to build the airplane best suited to current air traffic needs. John Newhouse follows this story through the labyrinth of relations among airframe manufacturers, engine makers, airlines, banks, and even governments, unraveling the mysteries of one of the few industries where the values of undi­hibited macho capitalism still prevail, where a company will often literally bet itself and risk its profits just to appear "sporty" enough to be considered a competitor. Reading Newhouse's fascinating account of the wheeling and dealing of this world, it is easy to be caught up in its ethos. Yet the analysis unintentionally poses some tough questions for contemporary capitalism as an industry acts in direct contradiction to market needs and brings hard times on itself and the traveling public, not by mistake but by design.

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