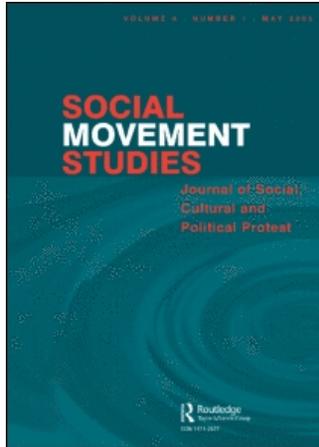


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A New Alliance between Religion and Labor? The 2002 Graphic Communications International Union–*San Diego Union-Tribune* Newspaper Contract Negotiation

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ABSTRACT *Despite a largely successful, fifteen-year effort to get rid of its labor unions, in July 2002 the San Diego (California) Union-Tribune newspaper signed a contract with its pressroom workers that maintained the integrity of the Graphic Communications International Union as the legal bargaining agent. What was unusual was not simply that the company signed a contract after years of negotiations essentially designed to break the union, but that the contract was negotiated by a team of outsiders: three leaders of the San Diego religious community drawn from the executive board of the Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, the Secretary-Treasurer of the San Diego–Imperial Counties Labor Council, and a prominent local businessman. The pressroom workers had dropped out of the negotiating and authorized these others to bargain on their behalf. With labor's decline in the USA, religion has become one of the few institutions with the legitimacy to raise social justice issues and employ a morality-based discourse. The modest resurgence of the religion–labor alliance and revival of a discourse of social justice on behalf of labor may be a significant development in contemporary labor relations and in the orientation of faith-based social action groups. This paper explores these issues through a compelling case study.*

KEY WORDS: Religion, labor, contract negotiation, *San Diego Union-Tribune* Newspaper, graphic communication, international union, social justice, moral discourse

Despite a largely successful, fifteen-year effort to get rid of its labor unions, in July 2002 the *San Diego* (California) *Union-Tribune* newspaper signed a contract with its pressroom workers that maintained the integrity of the Graphic Communications International Union (GCIU) as the legal bargaining agent. What was unusual was not simply that the company signed a contract after years of negotiations essentially designed to break the union, but that the contract was negotiated by a team of outsiders: three leaders of the San Diego religious community drawn from the executive board of the Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, the Secretary-Treasurer of the San Diego–Imperial Counties Labor

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Council, and a prominent local businessman. The pressroom workers had dropped out of the negotiating and authorized these others to bargain on their behalf. Perhaps the most intriguing element of the episode was the role of the religious leaders. Adopting the pressroom workers' cause, they brought about the reopening of contract negotiations with the company and helped to alter the character of discussion within the negotiations. The intervention of the religious leaders also facilitated the participation of local businessman Stephen Cushman, probably the key figure in the renewed contract negotiations. The case suggests that faith-based participation in labor conflicts can change the dynamics of the conflict because: (1) the introduction of a religiously inflected discourse of social justice has the potential to insert ethical questions concerning fairness into negotiations, and (2) faith-based participation opens a space for the involvement of important non-labor actors on labor's side.

Although substituting union officials with religious leaders in a contract negotiation may be a phenomenon with few precedents, alliance between labor and religion in the USA has a long history. At the end of the nineteenth century, Social Gospel Protestants urged that the rights of labor be respected, and warned of dire social consequences if some steps were not taken to alleviate the ills of concentration of wealth on the one hand, and poverty, overwork, and low wages on the other. Some Jewish religious figures played a prominent role in the labor struggles in the garment trades, and the Jewish Labor Committee, founded in 1934 to challenge the rise of Nazism in Europe, by the 1950s changed focus to serve as a labor advocacy organization and develop multi-ethnic and inter-religious solidarity among workers. The Catholic Labor School movement was encouraged by the precursor to the United States Catholic Conference as a way to train union rank-and-file leaders in the labor-oriented encyclicals of the Church and provide practical skills for building and maintaining effective unions. More recently, the Church played an important role in the farmworker struggles in the 1960s. When Martin Luther King Jr brought the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to Memphis in 1968, it was in support of striking sanitation workers (see, among others, Gutman, 1966; Piehl, 1982; Christiano, 1988; Fraser, 1991; Russo & Corbin, 1999; National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, n.d.).

But the historical connection between religion and labor peaked in the 1930s, and with some exceptions has been rather dormant in recent decades. Mainline Protestant churches remain a mainstay with regard to social justice-oriented public activism, but their efforts in the economic realm no longer include programs on behalf of labor (Wuthnow & Evans, 2002). Of the more than 150 Catholic Labor Schools that were established from 1936 through 1956, only one remains in operation (National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, n.d.). There are several reasons for the decline of the relationship between religion and labor. Paradoxically, the success of unionism and its setback with the Taft-Hartley amendments to the Wagner Act, in conjunction with the firm-centered system of bargaining, precipitated a long inward turn toward a servicing bureaucracy model beginning in the 1950s. Organized labor turned away from community coalitions (Brody, 1980; Lichtenstein, 2002). At the same time, religious activists gravitated toward new arenas of social action, notably civil rights. Organized labor's conflicted relationship with the Civil Rights movement and its steadfast Cold War support for the Vietnam War and US policy in Central America were factors that underlay the fading connection between church activists and labor from the 1960s through the 1980s (Draper, 1994; Bole, 1998; Rorty, 1998). The church-based social action programs that in recent years have addressed

hunger or homelessness have been embraced as non-partisan ways to tackle politically safe social issues. Labor simply is no longer a part of the conceptual map of most religious institutions.

How it is that religious values and the question of economic justice have parted company is part of a larger transformation of the rise of politically conservative fundamentalism and evangelicalism and relative decline of mainline religious denominations in the USA over the last few decades (Wuthnow, 1988; Smith, 2000). Recently, however, the historic relationship between religion and labor has shown signs of revival, along with labor–community coalitions generally. A growing literature documents and for the most part heralds these coalitions (for an overview see Nissen, 2004; see also Rose, 2000; Voss & Sherman, 2000). Religious-based community organizations and organized labor have rediscovered common ground, in the words of the Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, ‘challenging both an economic system that allows working families to live in poverty and a society that does not invest in its workers’ (Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, n.d.; Warren, 2001). A number of faith-based groups have arisen that have adopted labor issues as matters of social justice. Largely unaffiliated with mainstream religious organizations, these groups have begun to employ religious and moral language to frame nitty-gritty practical class issues and politics, championing new social justice-based labor struggles such as Justice for Janitors and ‘living wage’ campaigns. This development is a part of a modest trend toward social movement unionism, a trend characterized by unions mobilizing the energies of their own rank and file and making alliances with social movements and community forces in the struggle against corporate power (Hart, 1992; Bronfenbrenner *et al.*, 1998; Turner *et al.*, 2001).

Scholars and activists have described some of the conditions for the success of the new labor–community coalitions, including, prominently, whether the unions and their community partners build ‘common-cause’ alliances based on converging interests (as opposed to labor-support groups that unconditionally back decisions made by a particular union), whether there are bridge builders who share both labor and community viewpoints, and whether the labor–community coalitions are able to demonstrate concrete results for achieving union goals (see Nissen, 2004). The faith-based organizations add a special dimension to the labor–community coalitions, that is, the legitimacy to raise morality-based claims. Historically it was the labor movement that personified and mobilized the discourse of social justice in a secular idiom in twentieth-century America. Some liberal mainline religious institutions did so in a religious idiom, particularly in their support of the Civil Rights movement, a movement that itself was heavily steeped in prophetic Christianity (Chappell, 2004). The decline of the labor movement in absolute numbers and union density – along with the predominance of a post-World War II business unionism that allowed labor’s opponents, with some validity, to pigeonhole it as a ‘special interest’ – has been accompanied by a marked degeneration of labor’s ability to call upon the discourse of social justice. With labor’s decline, religion has become one of the few institutions with the legitimacy to raise social justice issues and employ a morality-based discourse. Religion is also one of the only institutions that, in principle, resists, or at least disapproves of, the seemingly limitless commodification of everyday life in contemporary America. The modest resurgence of the religion–labor alliance and revival of a discourse of social justice on behalf of labor may be a significant development in contemporary labor relations and in the orientation of faith-based social action groups. This paper explores these issues through a compelling case study: the contract negotiation between the

San Diego Union-Tribune newspaper and its pressroom workers and the role of the San Diego Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice in that negotiation.

The flow of the essay is roughly as follows: it begins with an examination of the newspaper industry in the USA, how trends played out at the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, and the nature of the labor conflict between the newspaper and the pressroom workers. It then discusses the origins of the San Diego chapter of the Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice (ICWJ) and how the ICWJ took on the cause of the pressroom workers. Finally, the essay traces the course of the contract negotiation, the reasons for the workers' modest victory, and what this case may tell us about labor–faith coalitions.

The Context: The *Union-Tribune* and its Decertification Campaign

The flagship paper of the Copley Press, Inc., the *San Diego Union-Tribune* became the effective monopoly daily newspaper in San Diego following the merger of the morning *Union* and the afternoon *Tribune* in February 1992, and the termination of the *Los Angeles Times*' San Diego edition that same year. The total average paid circulation of the *Union-Tribune* throughout the mid- to late 1990s was about 375,000 daily and 450,000 Sunday, figures that placed the *Union-Tribune* as the twenty-third to twenty-sixth largest circulation daily in the USA.¹

A privately held corporation, the Copley Press, Inc. does not release financial information about itself, hence specific data on revenues and profits at the *Union-Tribune* are difficult to come by.² Hoover's Online, the business information website, reports 2001 revenues for Copley Press at \$534 million, with a one-year sales growth of 5.5 percent. Data for 2003 show revenues of \$573 million, with a one-year sales growth of 8.1 percent.³ In 2002 the Copley Press published nine daily, eight weekly, and one bi-weekly newspaper, and operates the Copley News Service. One can reasonably surmise that the financial performance of the *San Diego Union-Tribune* does not depart too far from that of comparable publicly owned newspapers in the USA. Although there is much pessimism about newspapers in the long term due to declining circulation and competition from other media sources, in the short term daily newspapers are a highly profitable industry. Operating margins for big city dailies, historically in the 10–15 percent range, can now range between 20 and 30 percent, a level of profit more than two to three times that of the average industrial corporation (Overholser, 2001). Newspapers have become highly profitable for a number of reasons, but two stand out. First, a long-term trend of declining competition and emergence of single-newspaper towns has effectively resulted in local monopolies (Cranberg *et al.*, 2001). Second, a technological revolution that eventually computerized composition and platemaking in the 1970s and 1980s resulted in fewer workers needed to put out a newspaper and also changed the balance of power between labor and management – largely because newspaper workers effectively lost the power to strike (McKercher, 2001). Together, these trends have allowed newspaper companies, increasingly consolidating through merger and acquisition under a publicly traded stock ownership model and focused on serving 'shareholder value', to cut costs while charging advertisers more. Computerization not only eliminated entire classes of work at newspapers and reduced staffing in general but it also permitted newspaper companies to attack newspaper unions and effectively roll back wages. The average real hourly wage at US newspapers, according to US Department of Labor data, dropped 25.7 percent between 1976 and 2000, from \$18.58 to \$13.81, a far steeper drop than the average decline of

the average manufacturing real hourly wage (6.8 percent) during the same time period (cited in Stanger, 2002).

Many of these trends played out at the *San Diego Union-Tribune*. Not long after the 1992 merger of the *Union* and the *Tribune*, the company embarked upon a substantial overhaul of many of its operations. It refurbished its press capacity with a \$34 million upgrade of its existing production facility, adding Goss Metro Tower units to existing equipment to double the color capacity and increase printing capacity. New formers, the machines that shape the paper on the press and assemble it into sections, were also introduced to each press line, increasing the number of sections that the press could handle at one time. The company brought in R. Gene Bell as President and CEO in 1993. Bell, a longtime newspaper executive, had been corporate vice-president for newspaper operations at the Tribune Company in the 1980s and helped transform the *Chicago Tribune* and *Orlando Sentinel's* production plants into state-of-the-art printing facilities. Those achievements also included the wholesale restructuring of labor relations at those newspapers and resulted in high profits. Bell had been a player in the disastrous *New York Daily News* strike in 1990, a conflict prompted by the Tribune Company's heavy-handed efforts to wrest control over pressroom and delivery staffing from the unions (Jennings, 1993; Vigilante, 1994). Bell's move to San Diego signaled the increased standing of the law firm King & Ballow in the labor policies of the *San Diego Union-Tribune*. King & Ballow, which arrived on the scene at the *Union-Tribune* in the mid-1980s, was known within the industry for its hardball negotiating agenda. In labor's eyes, King & Ballow was notorious for its no-holds-barred union-busting tactics.

Six bargaining units represented workers at the *Union-Tribune* in 1993 when Bell arrived: the composing room and packaging (mail) room were separate units, each represented by the Communication Workers of America; drivers were represented by the Teamsters; the platemaking and pressroom units were represented by the GCIU; and the Newspaper Guild, the largest unit, represented reporters, editors, advertising and circulation workers, even janitors. Under the direction of King & Ballow, *Union-Tribune* management moved to transform the company's relationship to its workforce and by 1998, a mere five years after Bell's arrival, only two labor unions remained at the newspaper: the Teamsters and the GCIU. Management first went after the Newspaper Guild, in the late 1980s. King & Ballow knew from past experience that decertifying a Guild bargaining unit would be a long process, and approached the task in a staged offensive. The company attacked the 'agency-shop' provisions of the contract, refusing to administer the collection of union dues through automatic deduction from the paycheck. As Craig Rose, president of the Guild local for two years in 1990s and chair of the bargaining committee in 1998, relates, once automatic dues deduction was eliminated, only about 50 percent of dues payers consistently paid their monthly union contributions. The consequences played out according to the King & Ballow plan: tensions between union stalwarts and non- or erratic dues payers about free-riding, and much less money available to the union. The loss of monetary resources made it difficult for the union to pay lost wages when its members took off from work to engage in union business. Thus, much more union activity took place after hours, at night and on weekends, causing resentment within families and burn-out among union activists. The Guild nearly struck over the agency-shop issue but pulled back from the brink. The company's triumph regarding the agency-shop and the corresponding reduction in union dues collections weakened the Guild bargaining unit considerably. The company then refused to negotiate across-the-board wage increases, insisting instead on a comprehensive merit pay system.⁴

Breaking the Newspaper Guild was a work in progress. *Union-Tribune* management had more definitive early success with the composing room bargaining unit, and won the second of two decertification votes in 1991. The decertification of the packaging room unit came next. Also on the company's hit list were the pressroom and platemaking workers, both represented by the GCIU. The company's contract with the pressroom workers expired October 1992. The pressroom workers' last pay raise was October 1991, and, following the expiration of the contract, management reduced the wage by \$40 per week. The company refused to increase its share of health insurance premiums in the face of a rapid rise, even though it paid virtually the full cost of the premium for the company's non-union workers for equivalent insurance coverage. This was another part of the King & Ballow strategy: let unionized workers see that their non-union counterparts received yearly wage increases and better benefits.⁵ As contract negotiations between the company and the pressroom workers proceeded, management put forward an offer that hit at the union's core: (1) a merit-based raise system that diluted the principle of seniority; (2) a two-tier wage scheme that would pay new employees 25 percent lower wages; (3) no pay raises for journeymen press operators; (4) the elimination of the long-standing apprenticeship program; and (5) the elimination of company contributions to the union-run pension plan. Staffing – the crux of conflict in the *New York Daily News* struggle – was not directly at issue in the *Union-Tribune* labor negotiations. *Union-Tribune* management already had effective control over staffing levels in the pressroom, and since 1991 staffing had been reduced on each press. Nor was the impact of new printing technology on pressroom workers at issue, according to GCIU local president Jack Finneran.⁶ Although the new press units served to digitalize most pressroom functions, pressroom workers in fact needed to be *more* skilled, because they were required to know both the old technologies and the new, and make possible their integration. But, whereas staffing was not at the center of the bargaining struggles, reduced staffing clearly was of concern to pressroom workers. They had to do more work, felt more exposed to a greater risk of discipline for equipment breakdowns or for production of low-quality papers, and felt at greater risk of injury caused by being required to perform too many tasks at the same time. This was one source of tension on the shop floor.

The company was victorious in its long effort to decertify the Newspaper Guild. After the Guild's fall in June 1998, a decertification petition was filed in the platemaking department. However, that petition was automatically blocked by a series of pending unfair labor practice charges relating to shop floor harassment in the pressroom. Richard Prochazka, who served as the attorney for several of the *Union-Tribune* bargaining units, pursued a legal approach of filing unfair labor practice charges against the company with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) – not so much on account of their own merits as part of a strategy against the newspaper's broader depredations against the union.⁷ Under current NLRB practice, the actual remedies for most management violations of the National Labor Relations Act are, in Prochazka's judgment, trivial, an appraisal almost universally shared in the labor movement. Since the 1980s, accounts of management harassment of union leaders and advocates have been legion, largely because the potential penalties companies face from the NLRB are so insubstantial and the immediate payoff of getting rid of union leaders so decisive. If companies are found at fault in firing union workers, they must merely rehire them with back pay – ordinarily after a period of months or years due to the length of NLRB proceedings, and hence, consequentially, well after the company has rid itself of union leaders during the crucial period of heated labor activity (see Hurd, 1994;

Gross, 1995). Judicial decisions have limited the remedy for bad faith bargaining to no more than an order to bargain in good faith, rather than imposing monetary sanctions, requiring arbitration, or imposing terms.⁸ On the other hand, if the NLRB investigates unfair labor practice charges and issues a complaint against management, any action to decertify a union is suspended until the complaint is settled, or adjudicated and remedied.

Thus began a cat and mouse game between the GCIU and the *Union-Tribune* management. The union filed many charges against the company for unfair labor practices, a good number of which were deemed worthy enough by the NLRB regional office to issue complaints. In the meantime, contract negotiations between the pressroom workers and the newspaper continued to be fruitless. The *Union-Tribune* declared 'impasse' in negotiations in March 1999, withdrew recognition from GCIU Local 432-M as a bargaining unit, and imposed new work conditions in the pressroom.⁹ In GCIU local president Jack Finneran's view, the company's strategy was to be both so intransigent and implacable in negotiations, and so provocative on the shop floor, that workers would either get fed up and strike – and thus be put in the position of being replaced – or lose faith in their union and thus become amenable to a decertification vote. Whether or not top management furnished shop floor managers with an authorized wink to engage in harassment isn't known, but it is safe to assume that reduced staffing, stalled contract negotiations, and the strained relations between union supporters and the company made for difficult relations in the pressroom. A series of squabbles, altercations, reprimands, suspensions, and terminations transpired during the years of contract negotiations, many of which involved union leaders and/or the union's most vocal supporters. The GCIU's charges were consolidated in two sets of formal complaints filed by the NLRB against the *Union-Tribune*, and were taken to hearings before administrative law judges. In general the rulings were mixed, with the judges finding for the company in some instances, for the union in others.¹⁰ The company was required to post notice of its violations in the pressroom. And, the complaints had achieved a key purpose: delay of decertification.¹¹

In addition to the NLRB route, the GCIU engaged in other tactics. In 1996, then local president David Rubi sent letters to the advertising managers of businesses that customarily bought large ads in the newspaper, notifying them of labor troubles in the pressroom and how the absence of a contract and reduced staffing levels were undermining professionalism and the quality of work.¹² A year later, the GCIU augmented its public relations activities with a skunk mascot and a 'Something Stinks at the *Union-Tribune*' campaign, urging *Union-Tribune* subscribers to boycott the newspaper and cancel their subscriptions because of the company's bad behavior in contract negotiations with the pressroom workers. Because paid subscriptions form the basis for the determination of advertising rates, the 'Something Stinks' campaign aimed directly at the company's revenues. Depictions of 'Stinky the Skunk' alongside the 'Something Stinks' slogan could be seen on automobile bumpers, T-shirts, and newsstands during the five years of the boycott campaign. The union bought radio ads, gave media interviews, appeared on cable access television, made a 'Something Stinks' video, and held 'Something Stinks' rallies in front of the *Union-Tribune* building attended by several hundred unionists and their supporters. Union stalwart Jeff Alger wore a 'Stinky the Skunk' outfit and marched in the annual Hillcrest neighborhood Gay Pride parade. The GCIU continued to try to get the *Union-Tribune*'s advertisers involved, hoping to have major advertisers put pressure on the newspaper to settle a contract or even to withdraw advertising until a contract was signed. GCIU members handed out flyers just outside the business premises of major

Union-Tribune advertisers. In a sour piece of irony, the *Union-Tribune*, an entity that should be devoted to free speech, went to the NLRB head office in Washington trying (unsuccessfully) to convince the Board to ban the workers from publicizing their dispute and engaging in its handbilling of advertisers (see Kelleher, 1999). Although the campaign attracted some media attention, according to union president Finneran the strategy had only limited practical success. Advertisers did not respond or, when they expressed sympathy for the pressroom workers, the effective monopoly position of *Union-Tribune* in San Diego precluded any action. As Joe Drew, owner of Drew Ford, told Finneran: 'I'm in business. I need to sell cars. And when there's only one newspaper in town ...' Still, Finneran maintained that the campaign hurt the image of the company in the community, a claim that had some plausibility in view of subsequent events.¹³

The GCIU'S Turn to the Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice

The endurance and doggedness of the pressroom workers and their leadership were remarkable, but the years of sparring with the company took their toll. Attrition among journeymen pressroom workers at the *Union-Tribune* was significant. GCIU local president Jack Finneran, terminated by the company in August 2000, continued searching for allies to sustain the struggle. He began attending meetings of the San Diego Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice. The San Diego ICWJ is the local chapter of a loose confederation of national interfaith committees. A self-described 'social action project of the San Diego faith communities' (Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, n.d.), including over seventy-five religious leaders representing more than a dozen different religious traditions, the San Diego chapter of the ICWJ was established in August 1998 by Regina Botterill of the National ICWJ, and Donald Cohen, then political director of the San Diego–Imperial Counties Central Labor Council.¹⁴ The National ICWJ, founded in 1996, evolved from a local Chicago version organized by Kim Bobo in 1991 in an effort to re-forge the historical link between the churches and the labor movement. In this regard, Bobo, a veteran trainer of organizers at the Midwest Academy, and a critic of what she saw as the social justice quietude of the mainline Protestant churches, anticipated the 'New Labor' agenda inaugurated by John Sweeney upon his election to the presidency of the AFL-CIO in 1995.¹⁵ The San Diego ICWJ sees its mission as one of educating and mobilizing the San Diego religious communities to support issues and campaigns that will 'sustain lives with dignity for workers and their families by improving wages, benefits, and working conditions' (Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, n.d.). As San Diego ICWJ Executive Committee member and Director Rabbi Laurie Coskey said in an interview, 'We are Caesar Chavez's legacy. He did faith in the fields. His strategy of engaging communities is exactly what ICWJ is doing.'¹⁶

The San Diego ICWJ operates, in effect, as an independent, morality-based arm of an emerging labor support movement. It is the ICWJ that brings bodies, preferably bodies garbed in various external signs of religious affiliation and performing symbolically potent religious rituals, to City Council meetings, to Justice for Janitors rallies, to protests against the Westfield Corporation (owner of mega shopping malls in southern California). There is a symbiotic relationship between the ICWJ and the Center on Policy Initiatives (CPI), a research organization oriented around issues of poverty and economic development founded by Labor Council political director Donald Cohen and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) local president Mary Grillo in 1997. The ICWJ and CPI share

offices and, for legal purposes, the Interfaith Committee is a department of the CPI, operating under its 501(c)(3) non-profit status.¹⁷ The young CPI staffers provide the concrete research, statistical data, and arguments that back up the ICWJ's public stances and actions. CPI also brings suggestions of campaigns to the ICWJ. The CPI, in turn, is in many respects a policy arm of the Labor Council. But, importantly, the ICWJ has come to be independent of the CPI and the unions, and, as it has moved out from their shadow, its public notice and effectiveness have grown.

It took a little while for the ICWJ to get to this point. In the beginning, the religious activists thought that their mere presence and their reasoning would sway employers. Donald Cohen said it took about a year for them to realize that their moral arguments, absent the threat of coercion, would simply be dismissed or ignored by employers.¹⁸ The ICWJ now has its own lively executive board and organizes its own actions, at which unions and workers may be present. ICWJ members tend to be middle aged or older, yet very mixed in terms of race and ethnicity, and very balanced in terms of gender. Monthly meetings attract about forty people, roughly balanced between men and women, and, although majority white, with many Latinos and African-Americans. Some are active laypeople; many are ordained clergy. The monthly meetings of the ICWJ feature presentations from workers that are as much testimonials as they are reports from the field. Local labor leaders also present progress reports, and CPI staffers report on research projects. ICWJ meetings feel less like union or political gatherings; they are more like a *mélange* of social action religious and support-group gatherings similar to the church-based Central America solidarity groups of the 1980s. Indeed, the model of worker testimonials to the ICWJ seems patterned after the narratives of Salvadoran or Guatemalan refugees to USA solidarity groups.

Like the effort to enlist *Union-Tribune* advertisers to pressure the newspaper to settle with the pressroom workers, GCIU president Jack Finneran turned to the ICWJ and religious leaders for similar kinds of assistance. He began reporting to the ICWJ at its monthly meetings on what was happening – or *not* happening – in negotiations with the *Union-Tribune*. In one telling meeting in the spring of 2002, a weepy Finneran told the ICWJ that the workers were at the end of their rope and about to give up and sign a bad contract. Eric Miller, a minister relatively new to the monthly ICWJ meeting, became distressed upon hearing Finneran's anguished testimonial. 'We can't just let this happen', he declared, and called for prayer. The prayer, in Rabbi Coskey's recollection, produced a 'spiritual zap' that energized the group and prompted it to adopt the pressroom workers' cause.

The ICWJ's involvement with the pressroom workers took two paths. The first, the public path, was to hold a prayer vigil at the *Union-Tribune* on behalf of the union. Forty to fifty people of various religious affiliations in prayer shawls or habits attended the vigil at the front entry of the *Union-Tribune* Mission Valley headquarters in June 2002. Participants offered prayers for both management and workers, and sang spiritual songs. Drawing loosely from the Jewish tradition of Passover, the Reverend Robert C. Ard, pastor of Christ Church San Diego, tried to offer a tray of bitter herbs to the *Union-Tribune* management. The bitter herbs were intended to symbolize both the pressroom workers' resentment and how difficult and bitter the contract negotiations had become for both sides. These ritually freighted actions were part of the ICWJ's protest playbook. Collected in a booklet called 'Stand Up for Justice: An Interfaith Prayer Service', the booklet instructs activists how to invoke religious themes, language, and utilize widely recognizable rituals and attire in public actions (Interfaith Committee for Worker

Justice, n.d.). Because no one would come out of the *Union-Tribune* building to accept the offering, Reverend Ard placed the tray of bitter herbs at the base of the company's flagpole. As the faith participants engaged in prayer, someone from the *Union-Tribune* called the police. With some discomfort, the police declared the rally unlawful but permitted the vigil to conclude. In the meantime, *Union-Tribune* management also called a towing company to remove illegally parked cars from its company parking lot. Many of these cars were those of vigil-attending nuns in habit, and the police intervened to give the nuns time to collect their vehicles.¹⁹

The behind-the-scenes path was to draft Jerry Butkiewicz, the Secretary-Treasurer of the San Diego–Imperial Counties Labor Council (CLC), to join the campaign. This was not a surprising move. Butkiewicz has a reputation in town as an effective spokesman for labor, someone who can get things done, and who is able to interact both with his union constituency and with local businessmen, politicians, and community groups (Brydolf, 1997; Hicks, 2002). San Diego labor politics had long been characterized by a combination of a largely invisible business unionism and punctuated labor militancy. Many San Diego labor unions, like many mature unions in the post-World War II period, became essentially servicing bureaucracies for their members, isolated from communities and other natural allies in common cause against corporate power, quiescent and politically weak (in general, see Moody, 1988). The San Diego–Imperial Counties CLC, particularly under the plodding leadership of Secretary-Treasurer Joe Francis in the 1990s, was ineffective. At the same time there had been considerable militancy among the industrial unions in San Diego in the late 1980s. Workers at General Dynamics, Solar Turbines, and National Steel and Shipbuilding all went out on strike – and all got beat (Davis *et al.*, 2003). The perception of Joe Francis as ineffective led to his ousting in 1996. Jerry Butkiewicz brought a social movement unionism perspective and political smarts to the San Diego labor scene, gradually transforming the largely dormant CLC into a vibrant organization, forging alliances with other communities, and involving itself in the nitty-gritty of local politics. Butkiewicz, originally from the Postal Workers Union, had served as the AFL-CIO's Labor Liaison to the United Way charity for over a decade, and was robustly networked in the business community. The new orientation of the San Diego–Imperial Counties CLC was consistent with a general transformation in the 1990s toward more activist CLCs (Gapasin & Wial, 1998; Tillman & Cummings, 1999). Indeed, by the early 2000s, traditional San Diego power blocs and conservative political groups not only noted labor's new political clout in town but were also complaining about it.²⁰

ICWJ Director Rabbi Laurie Coskey, who did most of the organizing in the aftermath of the faith organization's commitment to the *Union-Tribune* pressroom workers, met with Butkiewicz about the *Union-Tribune*–GCIU contract negotiations. In the meantime, she placed a call to Patrick Marrinan, Manager of Labor Relations at the *Union-Tribune* and chief labor negotiator for the company. Coskey was hoping to arrange a meeting between Marrinan and some members of the ICWJ. In Coskey's retelling, Marrinan himself, rather than a secretary, unexpectedly answered the phone. In the course of their conversation, Marrinan told Coskey that he did not want to meet with the ICWJ and did not want the clergy to hold the prayer vigil on *Union-Tribune* property. He did, however, pass along a surprising piece of information: the GCIU could put whomever they wanted on their negotiating team. Butkiewicz agreed to become involved on the condition that the GCIU membership voted to give him full authority to act on the union's behalf. With the cajoling efforts of Jack Finneran, the GCIU rank and file did so. Butkiewicz put together a new

negotiating team, consisting of himself and three members of the ICWJ Executive Committee: Rabbi Coskey, Kent Peters from the Catholic Diocese, and the Reverend Robert C. Ard, pastor of Christ Church. The final member of the reformulated GCIU negotiating team was the most surprising: Stephen P. Cushman, owner of various auto dealerships and among the largest advertisers in the *Union-Tribune*.

A longtime San Diego businessman with political, or, perhaps more accurately, public/community service inclinations, Cushman had served on scores of boards of community and business organizations. As Chairman of the Greater San Diego Chamber of Commerce, he instigated the Chamber's invitation of Jerry Butkiewicz to join its Executive Committee in 1997, a first for a labor leader in San Diego. A moderate Republican with a self-described 'strange relationship with labor', Cushman came to know Butkiewicz through their mutual participation in community organizations. In Cushman's telling, the two men worked together, most often quietly, behind the scenes, bringing management and labor together on many issues. 'Labor and I work very well together', he declared.²¹

Cushman also came to the bargaining table with an intimate knowledge of the newspaper business. His family had owned Independent Newspapers, a group of community papers that had operated as a union shop until the family sold the business some thirty-five years ago. The family's ownership of Independent Newspapers meant that Cushman dealt with the unions from the management side. He knew the trades, the unions, and, importantly, he was also familiar with the work; he claimed to be able to run a traditional printing press. Because of the newspaper connection, Cushman's family had a fifty-year friendship with the Copley family, owners of the *San Diego Union-Tribune*. Cushman had been approached by the GCIU a few years earlier in its campaign to get large advertisers to pressure the *Union-Tribune* to settle with the pressroom workers. He had not been pleased with the picketing of his auto dealerships, and he was somewhat offended by the 'Something Stinks at the *Union-Tribune*' campaign, especially the union's occasional public nastiness toward the Copleys. In this regard, Cushman revealed his proclivity toward understanding politics as an elite affair, best conducted by pragmatic men of substance such as *Union-Tribune* CEO Gene Bell, Jerry Butkiewicz, and himself. When disputes range out of their proper ken, Cushman reflected, things not only get messy and ugly, but people lose the ability to 'do business', compromise, and settle.

This is how Steve Cushman understood the strife at the *Union-Tribune*. Each side had come to hate the other, thus each side had painted itself into a corner. At the same time, Cushman showed compassion toward the plight of the pressroom workers. 'They [the pressroom workers] were outcasts', he said, and 'it wasn't fair that they weren't getting the same benefits as other workers' at the paper. Yet when asked why he thought the *Union-Tribune* management had engaged in more than a decade of what could only be described as ruthless union-busting activity, Cushman avoided passing judgment, replying that this was 'their affair'. In addition to his business connections to the *Union-Tribune*, his family friendship with the Copleys, and professional relationship with Jerry Butkiewicz, Cushman had other connections to the players involved in the *Union-Tribune*-GCIU controversy. He had a close professional relationship with and great respect for *Union-Tribune* CEO Gene Bell. He had recruited Bell to sit on a board associated with Sharp Hospital. Cushman also had a historic, if indirect, family connection to Rabbi Laurie Coskey. For many years he had been a congregant of Beth Israel, the premier Reform Jewish synagogue in San Diego. In his characterization, a high dues-paying, but only two-day-a-year (Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur) somewhat reluctant congregant, Cushman's

forbears literally built the first Beth Israel building, a one-room simple but elegant wood structure, now a historical landmark situated at Heritage Park in San Diego's Old Town neighborhood. Laurie Coskey had served as an associate rabbi at Beth Israel in the 1980s and had officiated at Cushman family funeral functions.

The new, curious GCIU negotiating team met the *Union-Tribune* team just twice, in sessions that each lasted three to four hours. Participating for the *Union-Tribune* were: Howard Kastrinsky, the King & Ballow attorney; Jane Matthews from Human Relations; and Carlos Stovall, Manager of Pressroom Operations. Patrick Marrinan, the *Union-Tribune's* Manager of Labor Relations, was supposed to participate, but a minor stroke kept him away from the first session. That session, in the judgment of the faith participants, was lighter than the second, in part because the company's negotiators initially thought the GCIU was kidding. In the Reverend Ard's view, the *Union-Tribune* negotiators were amazed at the composition of the GCIU's team. Having the faith representatives as contract negotiators, while somewhat disorienting, was also seen as a bit of a joke. Indeed, Ard indicated that there was an ironic mismatch of perceptions. The new GCIU team actually had the authority to bargain and settle for the pressroom workers whereas the *Union-Tribune* team did not have full authority to settle for the newspaper, yet the *Union-Tribune* team questioned the mandate of their opponents.

In the judgment of the faith representatives, Cushman was the linchpin of the process. His newspaper background meant that he was knowledgeable not only about the business of running a newspaper but also was surprisingly well informed with regard to the concrete tasks in a pressroom and what it took to turn out a daily paper. This, according to Coskey and Peters, was an enormous advantage inasmuch as the *Union-Tribune* negotiators could not challenge the GCIU team's business or technical expertise when discussing specific contract points. Furthermore, Cushman's social status was such that he could not be browbeaten or fobbed off by the *Union-Tribune* negotiators. Progress halted upon the return of Patrick Marrinan for the second negotiating session. In Cushman's recollection, each team's hackles were raised and there was a strong possibility that negotiations would cease. When the discussions got sticky or the *Union-Tribune* negotiators indicated that they did not have authorization to decide on a particular negotiating point, on more than one occasion Cushman became irritated, admonishing them not to waste his time. In Coskey's recollection, Cushman whipped out his cell phone during the sessions and called *Union-Tribune* CEO Gene Bell directly. On one occasion, Cushman then turned to the *Union-Tribune* negotiators and related: 'I'm told you can come to an agreement about this.'²² Cushman recalled phoning Gene Bell just once, during a break, when the second session was collapsing. He told Bell that the *Union-Tribune* negotiating team's position had hardened. Bell then called his team and advised them to be more pliant. After a half-hour recess, the teams were back to business and eventually reached a settlement.²³ In sum, Butkiewicz brought into the negotiations an intimate knowledge of union contracts; Cushman brought in connectedness, business acumen, and implied economic pressure. The fact that Cushman was among the *Union-Tribune's* largest advertisers was a looming presence in the sessions, never mentioned aloud, but with an implication that he might not want to give his business to a company that treated workers this way.²⁴ Cushman's knowledge of the newspaper business allowed the GCIU team to sign off on certain provisions, particularly issues around part-time work. Cushman assured the team that it wasn't a matter of having to trust the *Union-Tribune*; it was a matter of strict business sense that the newspaper would act in specific ways.

And what was the role of the faith participants? Coskey, Peters, and Ard downplayed their roles in the negotiating sessions. Peters reflected that without Butkiewicz and Cushman, there was no way the ICWJ participants could have negotiated a contract; they simply did not have the expertise.²⁵ But the faith participants were in many respects much too self-effacing in their assessment. It was their intervention that got the new negotiations going in the first place. And their intervention and participation brought a morality-based purpose to the negotiations that was difficult for the company to snub or ignore. Ard, Coskey, and Peters, in their diffident manner, did suggest that they affected the overall atmosphere in crucial ways. For one thing, the union's new negotiators noted the intense animosity and ill will that existed between Jack Finneran and his GCIU negotiating team and the *Union-Tribune* negotiators. After nearly ten years and over 100 futile sessions, the contract negotiators hated one another. All the original negotiators were 'bruised, wounded, and bitter', in Coskey's words. Everyone concurred in this assessment. Jerry Butkiewicz remarked that the GCIU and *Union-Tribune* negotiators hated each other so much that they could not sit at a table and agree that the sky was blue. In the bargaining sessions, Coskey, Peters, and Ard toned things down by, in Coskey's words, 'making nice', and by bringing a general sense of compassion to the process. In effect, they acknowledged the *Union-Tribune* participants' pain, stating outright: 'this process has been awful for all of you'. At the same time, they imparted a moral seriousness to the discussion, continually merging in their comments mundane contract issues with the language of justice, fairness, and equity. The ICWJ representatives came into the negotiating sessions talking about what was right, what was just for each party; Cushman could then follow with business sense, suggesting where the money could come from if the company agreed to particular contract provisions. Their presence had the effect of bearing witness and, in their account, of bringing a sense of humanity to the negotiating process. By continually posing the moral question of 'what is the right thing to do?' Coskey, Peters, and Ard compelled the *Union-Tribune* negotiators to justify their proposals before the faith community. They thus succeeded in transforming a contract negotiation into a forum where the discourse of social justice held some sway.

This moral tone, especially embodied by the Reverend Ard, had a particularly strong effect on pressroom manager Carlos Stovall. Stovall, a tough-minded African-American supervisor, had been brought in to bust the union, in Coskey's estimation. 'But you could see that he was a good guy, and he seemed to care that the new GCIU negotiating team saw him as fair.' According to Kent Peters, Stovall had stopped the harassment of pressroom workers on the shop floor. A man of faith, he prized the workers under him, and they had respect for him. Stovall was affected by the Reverend Ard's presence. A large, deep-voiced African-American pastor, the Reverend Ard projects, in Coskey's words, the sense that 'God is watching you through his person.' Ard acknowledged that Stovall and he struck up a relationship during the negotiating sessions. At the first session, Stovall was defensive, parroting the company's positions. He loosened up in the second session and supported a settlement because, in Ard's view, he saw that the faith participants were talking about the right things, and that they were not asking any more for the pressroom workers than was given to other *Union-Tribune* workers. The essential humanity of the issues was recognized.

Conclusion

In the end, the *Union-Tribune*–GCIU contract was similar to the company's last, best, and final offer, and thus can hardly be seen as an unequivocal victory on the part of the union.

The union accepted the right of the company to hire part-time workers and it accepted merit pay over a strict seniority system. In return, the company made several (albeit modest) concessions. But the key outcome was that the contract preserved the GCIU as the pressroom workers' legal bargaining agent – reversing ten years of the company's efforts to break the union.

Why did the *Union-Tribune* settle? In Jerry Butkiewicz's view, first, the company, like the union, was tired. Ten years of negotiations is a long time, and the GCIU had proved to be a formidable irritant, mobilizing the local labor movement and reaching out to the community in ways that the *Union-Tribune* found damaging to its reputation. While the subscription boycott and the 'Something Stinks' campaign did not have known, unambiguous effects on the *Union-Tribune*'s circulation, they clearly had a negative effect on the company's public standing.²⁶ Second, the years of labor turmoil in the pressroom and the departure of significant numbers of skilled journeymen meant that paper wastage was up considerably. Finally, and perhaps most important, the reconstitution of the GCIU negotiating committee pulled three crucial groups to the table on labor's side, groups that need to be in place if labor is to succeed in this day and age: the community, in the form of the representatives from the Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice; advertisers, in the personage of Steve Cushman; and the united power of labor, in the form of active support from the Labor Council. Whether Cushman was in any way 'representative' of advertisers need not be addressed; the fact that a major advertiser sat at labor's side of the table in negotiations had to have a major psychological impact vis-à-vis *Union-Tribune* management.²⁷

Two factors not elaborated by Butkiewicz but inherent to this analysis merit additional attention: the morality-based discourse brought to the negotiations by the ICWJ and the personal relationship and trust between Cushman and *Union-Tribune* CEO Gene Bell. The ICWJ's participation and its transformation of the negotiating dynamics could not *alone* have compelled the company to sign a contract. It is reasonable to conclude that the involvement of Stephen Cushman, given his peculiar position as a large advertiser and an associate of *Union-Tribune* CEO Gene Bell, was the single most important factor in getting the company to settle. But neither should the ICWJ's participation and its morality-based arguments be downplayed. The ICWJ not only transformed the nature of the talks but also altered their tone. The ICWJ's arguments established an ethical framework within which the give and take of interest-based demands and exercise of negotiating power took place. This is not to argue, naively, that the company responded sincerely to the ethical bid proffered by the ICWJ negotiators. The company, with the exception of pressroom manager Carlos Stovall, surely responded to the power politics of the moment. Given the peculiar array of groups and personalities negotiating for the pressroom workers, *Union-Tribune* management most likely saw its position as a probable public relations nightmare. The faith participants thus effectively parlayed their collective religious identity and their 'interest-free' talk of social justice into a negotiating position of consequence: morality backed by coercion.²⁸ But the 'conversion' of Carlos Stovall is a testament to the possibility that the faith participants' articulation of social justice *can* induce authentic reconsideration of position. Labor has lost the ability to speak credibly about social justice; faith-based organizations can do so.²⁹

While the efficacy of religious community support in labor struggles should not be exaggerated, the resurrection of the social justice dimension of such struggles by groups such as the ICWJ can play an important part in those conflicts. Perhaps the key conclusion that can be drawn is that with the involvement of the faith-based community in a labor conflict it

becomes possible to attract business and political figures – like Stephen Cushman – who would never get involved in such a conflict if it were only a union matter. Is the *Union-Tribune*–GCIU story replicable? To what degree can a case study support a generalized conclusion? I think it is reasonable to propose that, while the specifics of participation will vary from situation to situation, the presence of religious leaders can be expected to open up space for the involvement of important non-labor actors on labor's side.

And nothing succeeds like success. One consequence for the ICWJ following its role in the *Union-Tribune*–GCIU contract negotiation was a new gravity in its participation in other labor disputes. The organization played an active role in the successful 2002–03 county Justice for Janitors struggle, and its efforts on behalf of janitors working at the seven Westfield America shopping malls in San Diego County concluded in the workers signing a favorable contract in March 2004 (Kinsman, 2004, p. C3). Indeed, according to Donald Cohen, it was the ICWJ that ended the two-and-a-half-year fight to win union agreements at the Westfield malls. SEIU local 1877 had pulled back on the campaign; the ICWJ, after adopting the janitors, did not. It held more than thirty prayer vigils and sent delegations to management at the various Westfield properties. Rabbi Coskey addressed the Jewish-Australian Lowy family, owner of Westfield, and applied a religious-inflected public pressure and helped leverage an international morality-based campaign against the company. The Westfield campaign featured another organization, in part faith based, the Los Angeles Progressive Jewish Alliance, which mobilized over eighty rabbis to sign a letter to Lowy arguing in favor of the unionization of janitors based on Talmudic interpretation of labor and justice. And unlike the GCIU–*Union-Tribune* intervention, the Westfield campaign featured no 'enlightened capitalist' or 'class traitor' such as Stephen Cushman; the faith-based organizations succeeded on their own. More recently, the San Diego ICWJ was a behind-the-scenes player in the lawsuit filed in March 2004 against Neighborhood House Association for cheating hundreds of its workers out of overtime pay. And the ICWJ, along with the CPI and the Labor Council, was one of the key players in the successful effort that galvanized the San Diego City Council to adopt a living wage ordinance in April 2005 (Vigil, 2005, p. B1). Local union leaders now try to leverage the ICWJ's support and its morality-based arguments in negotiations with employers. The ICWJ's involvement changes the nature of negotiations, according to Bridget Browning, lead organizer for the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees San Diego local. Management is more respectful of the workers and the workers feel more secure, more convinced in the righteousness of their cause and thus more apt to persevere.³⁰ In sum, if the San Diego experience is representative of an emerging alliance between labor and faith-based organizations such as the ICWJ, the labor movement has much to gain from these new coalitions. Religious organizations have much to gain as well, but that is the subject for another paper.

Notes

1. Audit Bureau of Circulations, 2002, available at http://www.accessabc.com/reader/102700_0702_RPRD.pdf (accessed 8 August 2003).
2. Also difficult to come by was the company's perspective on its labor relations. *Union-Tribune* executives declined to speak with the author about the negotiations between the company and the GCIU. In response to a letter asking for an interview, President and CEO R. Gene Bell wrote: 'Once we reached a contract last year, we all resolved to put the past behind us and not to rehash the events of the previous ten years. Given the fact

- that we have an ongoing bargaining relationship with the union and anticipate negotiating with the union again in 2005, I feel it would be inappropriate to discuss with a third party the 2002 negotiations.' R. Gene Bell, letter to author, 4 November 2003. The company clearly discouraged its employees from discussing labor relations with outside parties. Patrick J. Marrinan, Manager of Labor Relations for the *Union-Tribune*, declined the author's invitation for an interview in much the same language. Patrick J. Marrinan, letter to author, 24 February 2004.
3. Hoover's Online, available at [http://www.hoovers.com/free/co/factsheet.xhtml?COID = 42556](http://www.hoovers.com/free/co/factsheet.xhtml?COID=42556) (accessed 6 March 2004); http://www.hoovers.com/copley-press/-ID_42556-/free-co-factsheet.xhtml (accessed 12 February 2005).
 4. Craig Rose, interview with author, 6 August 2003.
 5. King & Ballou typically engage in a form of negotiating known in labor circles as 'Boulwarism'. Named after Lemuel Boulware, chief negotiator for the General Electric Company in the 1940s, this form of bargaining is commonly, if somewhat incorrectly, understood as 'take it or leave it' bargaining. Boulwarism describes an employer who comes to the bargaining table and refuses to grant concessions on what the National Labor Relations Act deems mandatory subjects (that is, wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment), while making promises if the workers go non-union (General Electric Co, 150 NLRB 192 [1964], *enfd*, 418 F.2d 736 [2d Cir. 1969], cert denied, 397 U.S. 965 [1970]). As union attorney Richard Prochazka explains, this is a strategy of negotiating designed for the sole purpose of causing the employees in the bargaining unit to give up their support of the union. And as Richard Vigilante writes in his account of the *New York Daily News* struggle, King & Ballou characteristically operates just at the edge of the legal duty to bargain in good faith. The Supreme Court has held that an employer's unilateral implementation of terms violates the NLRA's required duty to bargain in good faith (NLRB v. Katz, 369 U.S. 736 [1962]). But in practice it is relatively easy for an employer to avoid a bad faith charge without ceding much ground in bargaining. King & Ballou lawyers negotiate in a way that threatens unions with effective destruction if they do not agree to their clients' substantive demands, and are willing to talk tough for years toward that end. Richard D. Prochazka, interview with author, 16 July 2003; Vigilante (1994); see also Levitt with Conrow (1993).
 6. Jack Finneran, interviews with author, 24 February; 9 July; 26 September 2003.
 7. Richard D. Prochazka, interview with author, 16 July 2003.
 8. H. K. Porter v. NLRB, 397 U.S. 821 (1970); Dannin (2004, pp. 241–294).
 9. *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 'Wages, hours and terms and conditions of employment for employees of the *Union-Tribune* Publishing Co employed in its pressroom and represented by Graphic Communications International Union', Local 432M, 8 March 1999. In US labor law the aim of the bargaining process is to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement that will define the terms and conditions of employment of the represented workers during the term of the agreement. There is no duty to agree, however, and if the parties deadlock, or reach impasse, the employer is free to implement the last offer and modify the terms and conditions of the workers' employment (see *Litton Financial Printing Div. v. NLRB*, 501 U.S. 190 [1991]). Impasse implementation rights create incentives for an employer to bargain intransigently, declare impasse and implement its offer, hoping to provoke workers into a strike and making possible a lockout and the hiring of permanent replacement workers. See Dannin (2004).
 10. United States, Before the NLRB Division of Judges, San Francisco Branch Office, *Union-Tribune Publishing Co. v. Graphic Communications Union, Local 432-M, Graphic Communications International Union, AFL-CIO*. Decision. Cases 21-CA-31124, 31812, 31893, 32033, 32261, 32488, 32716, 33042, 33114, 33162, 33199, 33223, 33253, 33254, 33331, 33447, 33469, 33545, 33579, July 27, 2001; United States, Before the NLRB Division of Judges, San Francisco Branch Office, *Union-Tribune Publishing Co. v. Graphic Communications Union, Local 432-M, Graphic Communications International Union, AFL-CIO*. Decision. Cases 21-CA-33611, 33641, 33684, 33708, 33774, 33798, 33799, July 26, 2001.
 11. The *Union-Tribune* entered into a similar pattern of negotiations with its forty-five-member Teamsters bargaining unit. Like the pressroom workers, the drivers had not had a contract since the early 1990s (1993), and a parallel set of exasperating negotiations took place between the Teamsters and the company for several years. After many years of no wage increases and uncertainty over health, welfare, and pension matters, the drivers were fairly desperate for a contract. Teamsters' local president Phil Saal entered the negotiating sessions in 1999 and steered the talks toward settlement. But when it became clear to *Union-Tribune* Manager of Labor Relations and chief negotiator Patrick Marrinan that the Teamsters actually were set to accept the company's offer, Marrinan withdrew to caucus with his team and abruptly broke off bargaining, charging the union with 'retrogressive bargaining' (an undefined term that appears only twice in the NLRB database). In Phil Saal's strong impression, Marrinan had called King & Ballou, who advised him to back out

- of negotiations. The fact that the company withdrew its contract offer after it was clear the Teamsters were poised to accept it is a strong indication that the company never intended to settle and its goal was in fact to break the union. Saal's account was replicated by San Diego–Imperial Counties Labor Council Secretary-Treasurer Jerry Butkiewicz. Phil Saal, telephone interview with author, 9 September 2003; Jerry Butkiewicz, interview with author, 27 August 2003.
12. David Rubi, letter on GCIU letterhead to advertising managers, 27 June 1996.
 13. Jack Finneran, interview with author, 24 February 2003.
 14. Cohen's social movement background (he was coordinator of the San Diego chapter of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador and founder of the Central America Information Center in the 1980s and was the coordinator of San Diego Neighbor to Neighbor in the early 1990s) is very much in keeping with what researchers describe as a new generation of labor activists who were strongly influenced by the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, and who are described both as transformers of sclerotic union bureaucracies and as bridge-builders between unions and community groups (Voss & Sherman, 2000; Turner & Hurd, 2001, pp. 9–26; Nissen, 2004).
 15. In Bobo's words, labor was a 'hole' in the social justice religious agenda, reinforced by vehement opposition to unionization on the part of church-affiliated hospitals. When she went to the churches in the late 1980s for help in support of the Pittston coalminers' strike, she was shocked to find that there was no one to talk to. Kim Bobo, telephone interview with author, 3 March 2004.
 16. Rabbi Laurie Coskey, interview with author, 15 July 2003.
 17. Donald Cohen, interview with author, 16 March 2004.
 18. *Idem*. For the point in general on the relationship between morality and coercion, see Niebuhr (1932).
 19. The Reverend Robert C. Ard, interview with author, 8 August 2003; Kent Peters, interview with author, 22 July 2003.
 20. The San Diego–Imperial Counties Labor Council includes 100,000 union members and approximately 110 affiliated labor groups; available at <http://www.unionyes.org/about.htm> (accessed 13 March 2005); Philip J. LaVelle, 'New clout in town: political pull in San Diego used to reside with a few: today, unions and tribes lead a diverse array of groups sharing in the power', *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 4 August 2002, p. A-1; *idem*, 'A labor leader who really leads: scrappy figure adds unions to San Diego political mix', *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 5 May 2003, p. A1; Ray Huard, 'New council expected to be more open: skepticism, demand for information also likely, observers say', *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 2 December 2002, p. B-1.
 21. Stephen Cushman, interview with author, 5 August 2003.
 22. Rabbi Laurie Coskey, interview with author, 15 March 2004.
 23. Stephen Cushman, interview with author, 5 August 2003.
 24. The Reverend Robert C. Ard, interview with author, 8 August 2003.
 25. Kent Peters, interview with author, 22 July 2003.
 26. The *Union-Tribune's* daily circulation slipped some 20,000–25,000 papers by the turn of the century, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulations. This drop is not necessarily attributable to the boycott inasmuch as newspaper circulation in general has been declining as a long-term trend. Still, *Union-Tribune* circulation dropped even as the population of the San Diego metropolitan area had grown strongly. Whatever its precise impact on circulation, former Newspaper Guild local President Craig Rose asserted that the 'Something Stinks' campaign did worry *Union-Tribune* management to the extent that the circulation department telemarketers were given a scripted response to read to subscribers who either called to cancel their subscriptions or who, when solicited to subscribe, asked about the ongoing labor strife. In contrast, the company's campaigns to boost circulation were notable failures.
 27. Jerry Butkiewicz, interview with author, 27 August 2003.
 28. Because *Union-Tribune* employees declined to speak, the author concedes that the direct evidence for this conclusion is insubstantial. The point is that all the other evidence points to the conclusion as reasonable and, indeed, likely.
 29. Reinhold Niebuhr's analysis in *Moral Man and Immoral Society* seems apt here:
Furthermore there must always be a religious element in the hope of a just society. Without the ultrarational hopes and passions of religion no society will ever have the courage to conquer despair and attempt the impossible; for the vision of a just society is an impossible one, which can be approximated only by those who do not regard it as impossible. The truest visions of religion are illusions, which may be partially realized by being resolutely believed. For what religion believes to be true is not wholly true but ought to be true; and may become true if its truth is not doubted. (Niebuhr, 1932, p. 81)
 30. Bridget Browning, telephone interview with author, 31 March 2004.

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