cial Workers alone recruited 70,000 members last year, all without formal NLRB elections.

While unions went about signing up new members, largely away from the public eye, one event in 1997 certainly grabbed headlines: the Teamsters' strike against United Parcel Service. The strike had widespread public support, a possible indicator of a rise in public sympathies toward labor. The Teamsters also had massive AFL-CIO support; Sweeney shrewdly identified the UPS strike as a probable victory, for which he might share credit and tout labor's newfound clout. Indeed, the unions' victory over UPS is seen as a watershed achievement, a reversal of declining fortunes which union bosses trace back to the demise of the air-traffic controllers' PATCO union in the early 1980s.

No discussion of the UPS strike would be complete without at least a brief note on the scandal which led to the ouster of Teamster President Ron Carey. What investigators allege occurred (i.e., the transfer of funds between unions, and between unions and political parties and candidates) is in fact prohibited by current law. But these are the very same non-objective laws that throttle political activities by other individuals. All such regulations are wrong—and if this is the sole basis for Carey's ouster, that action too is wrong.

But even with Carey out of office, the overall impact on unions will be negligible. A Reuters report concludes that

> Labor experts agree that the scandal is unlikely to hinder the high-priority push to recruit more union members that was launched two years ago by AFL-CIO President John Sweeney. Lower income workers in particular, such as the janitors and health care, hotel, restaurant, and strawberry workers that unions are targeting for recruitment, will not be dissuaded from signing union cards. [6]

Labor thus has made measurable gains in the political process, in its organizing efforts, and in strikes against employers. But the real victory—the fundamental accomplishment that has led to these gains—is the underlying triumph of the explicit philosophy held by Sweeney and many of the "new leftists" who now dominate the labor movement's leadership.

Sweeney has made great strides in reestablishing ties between labor and leftist activists and intellectuals. These new allies include religious groups such as the Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice; environmentalists such as Friends of the Earth and the Sierra Club; the NAACP; and the National Organization for Women. According to *Business Week*, "Sweeney's larger goal is to revive the New Deal coalition of labor, liberals and minorities that served unions so effectively in its heyday. . . . The AFL-CIO's link to social groups has been key to the UFW effort [to organize California strawberry workers]." [7]

More than a year ago several thousand students and intellectuals convened at Columbia University for one of nine "teach-ins" nationwide. Organized around the theme "The intellectual community joins the new labor movement in 'The Fight for America's Future,'" these conferences, according to *The Nation*, were "a giant pep rally for social change . . . intended to educate and encourage a new generation of students and to heal the division between intellectuals and unions created by [the Vietnam] war." [8]

Sweeney's membership in the Democratic Socialists of America is well-known. But what is less well-known, and even less well understood, is his commitment to the altruistic ethics of Christianity. It is this ethical system which motivates Sweeney's call for the sacrifice of the "haves" to the "have-nots." It is this ethical system which also drives the "class warfare" strategy Sweeney has used to revitalize the labor movement.

In his 1996 book *America Needs a Raise*, Sweeney describes the relationship between his religious views and his vision for organized labor:

> Since men and women are created in God's image, their dignity must be respected. Working people have the right to a living wage. . . . Human dignity demands that workers have a voice on the job. . . . [A] union must be a movement and a mission . . . organizing new members is not only an institutional necessity but an ethical imperative. It is a practical example of the fortunate helping their less fortunate sisters and brothers. [9]

In a speech delivered before the Meeting of Trade Unions Leaders, Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Sweeney elaborates on these themes—and outlines his plan of action. First, he almost admirably identifies the crux of the philosophic battle:

> [W]hat is at issue in the world today is how we will answer that ancient question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" At its best the labor movement offers a way to affirm and honor our obligations to our sisters and brothers. . . . [10]

Next, Sweeney called for "more visible signs of the Church's support for the dignity of workers and their rights. . . . Priests and religious should be encouraged by their bishops to know and support the labor movement. . ." [11]

And finally, the AFL-CIO chief agitates for Church pressure on businessmen:

> [T]he Church must challenge those, who by their business dealings and corporate decision making, push people to the margins of society. Many of the corporate leaders making the decisions we lament around this table today join in prayer every Sunday. They are respected members of our congregations. Some good Catholics, indeed some professed religious, actively engage in practices that deny the rights to organize and bargain collectively to the workers. [12]

The evidence suggests that Sweeney's goal is the revival of a "New Deal Trinity" among labor, religion, and social activists—an alliance intent on waging a philosophic holy war against businessmen.

As Ayn Rand observed in her essay "The Anatomy of Compromise": "In any conflict between two men (or two groups) who hold the same basic principles, it is the more consistent one who wins." [13]

Tragically, those who should be standing up to big labor have been neither principled nor consistent. The Republicans abandoned their legislative agenda after November 1996, for fear of union-funded bad press; employers are increasingly willing to accept organizing efforts and other labor demands under pressure from unions, churches, and activists. The businessmen and their putative allies in the GOP persist in their practice of pragmatic compromise, which, coupled with the implicit acceptance of religion and altruism, will continue to thwart any attempts to mount a principled defense of individual rights.

A *Business Week* editorial, for example, suggested that "[o]ver the long run, it might be better for management to seek palliatives through negotiation with workers, even if it means dealing with unions, rather than have government impose correctives." [14]

What the author of this prescription fails to realize, of course (aside from the futility of a pragmatic, compromising stance), is that modern U.S. labor unions themselves are a creation of the government—born of the 1934 Wagner Act and nurtured by an endless stream of pro-union measures in the six decades since.

If one of the nation's leading business publications calls for cooperation with big labor, it shouldn't be surprising that many individual businessmen have also failed to recognize the significance of labor's resurgence. Employers' willingness to accept "card check" organizing campaigns is one example. Corporate campaigns, and the pressure brought to bear by labor's newfound leftist allies, play a key role. For example, the 80 social activist groups allied with the UFW in the strawberry-worker campaign in California have secured the cooperation (through proneutrality pledges) of 16 of the state's largest grocery chains. Says one grocery spokesman, "We agreed to sign after the union and the Latino community in California asked us to." [15]

Thus the prognosis, as of this writing, is not hopeful. The failure to even grasp, much less challenge

(Continued on page 18)

ad baculum
internet consulting and design
designer of web sites for ARI, and Philosophy: Who Needs It
http://www.adbaculum.com
At Ad Baculum, we specialize in helping businesses achieve results on the Internet. By integrating business fundamentals with technological expertise, Ad Baculum can help you identify and focus your business goals, and then deliver a superlative implementation. To find out how Ad Baculum can help make the Internet an integral part of your business, contact us at: 303/980-9282 • inquiry@adbaculum.com