

Everyone's all, "What are you up to?" "Oh, work work work". That's why the New Conservatism is sitting beside you.

The thing is, a lot of people now my age have no allegiance to communism, Maoism, Stalinism, Trotskyism, and so on. There's just a lot of disaffection: "I don't give a shit about political consciousness". Dissidence died with Communism. "Labor and production" no longer have a thing to offer us. I think people now are more interested in making a new democracy, or remaking it, anyway.

You have to understand the problem the way we see it. The way it is now, the main duty of government is to establish laws, like, say, contract law, possibly property law. Outside of that, democracy is a burden and a price to pay, not a positive thing. It's all brokers, accountants, pro-business newspapers, TV pundits, bought-off politicians, regulators... And this is exactly the kind of stuff the IMF wants to stamp out in Thailand and South Korea! Not that—I mean, the IMF, The World Bank, and the WTO are no good either. NGOs like that are just part of the whole problem, which is liberals remaking the world, off on some fantasy cloud. There's no such thing as reform. Squatting is more democratic than voting, and squatting is delusional.

I would say that immigration controls should go, first of all. People should just wander. The whole thing with countries is absurd. The State Department classifies some countries as "TFC", like Haiti, Bosnia, Somalia; it means "Totally Fucked Up Countries". So they're the authorities, you'd think, but then Malaysia has the tallest skyscrapers, and New York City has some of the worst poverty. So there goes that distinction. You're just left with idiotic questions: is it true that land-locked countries are the worst off? Do religions always start in the desert? Would it be possible to make a film about evil and the horrible things people do, without ever once discussing The Third Reich?

In any case, the last fifteen years have been critical. It all got started in '89, when the Berlin wall came down. Then there was the '92 Earth Summit, in Rio. Next, the Zapatistas were important, in part because Marcos is so shrewd. He's not simply reactive, the way a lot of Left leaders can be. He doesn't give you any of that "fat cats upstairs" pablum. He gets things done, he just does it. He knows how to use the Internet too, which is crucial; manipulation is the intellectual counterpart of violence. Struggles depend on media. It's stupid to smash a store window, but you have to admit it gets on TV. The real battle is with images.

So anyway, then, in 1996 when Kathie Lee Gifford was busted for using sweatshops in Honduras, that was huge. A lot of people got turned on when that happened.

And then you have Seattle: sixty thousand people manage to shut down a WTO meeting. Everyone knew it was never going to be the same after that. And then it's like dominoes: you have the Sweden EU summit, and Davos, and now there's Porto Allegre in Brazil.... It's fun to watch, it's like a snowball, getting bigger. I'm personally kind of interested in the Pink Fairies, in Prague. They attack police with water pistols, sometimes they tickle them with feathers. Or also The Revolutionary Anarchist Clown Bloc; they're the ones who go "Dah-mah-crah-cee? Hah-Hah-Hah!" But overall, the anti-globalization movement is pretty naïve. Globalization is about more than simply money. The earliest known writing of all time was an accounting tablet. Do you really still want to move at the speed of money?

Another problem is that all the 'Battle of Seattle' people are total Puritans. Not that they have to be all "free love"... I mean, the hippies were free and all, but those kids were rich. I'm not outside that, I recognize that I am an artist, and I'm from a privileged bourgeois background. But hippies and punks, I'm not into them at all, it's the same thing in a different package. Who gives a shit about the swoosh? Or a mochaccino, for that matter. Same with Hemp Coalitions, student Socialists, safety pins, mohawks, etc.: it's all Bohemianism. Bohemianism only really takes off under a capitalism with a belief in its own future. That's why you got the California variety, originally, and possibly the British variants, as well. Where is all that now?

Another problem, all the coalitions and leftist groups are similar to quasi-armies. It's just like the military, and you know the real soldiers aren't the ones talking about strategy, it's the people in the middle who get things done, not the guys at the top or the bottom. I know the working class is disaffected, but so what? They're not going to do anything, same as the high rollers.

Most of all, people are way too concerned with the question of what to rebel against. The ones who understand best, in the end, are artists: painters and video makers and writers and musicians. They understand what it means to make something real, and just for yourself. I'm not saying that they are the most oppressed, they just understand what it means to imagine something and then go and make it happen by themselves. To create something, not just to consume something.

But in the end, I'm not anti-globalization. You know, I'm really an optimist. I've been thinking a lot recently about the idea of a state of existing where every person you saw—man, woman, rich, poor, ugly, hot—you perceived first of all in terms of being a potential sexual partner. Or at least a sexual victim, sexual collaborator, sexual apprentice; at any rate, initially and overwhelmingly you see a person as a knot best cut through by an appeal to the flesh. After all, that's the way countries see each other. But this would probably have a lot to do with the abolition of "right" and "wrong".