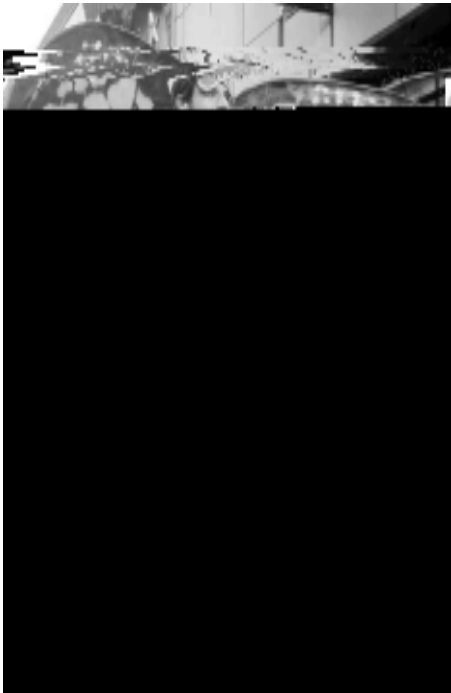


when deemed necessary, all democratic institutions are diminished and at risk. Corporate free market policies subvert culture, democracy, and community, a true



to have been Michael Moore's moment, reviving what had been a mediocre political ascendancy in New Zealand. To say nothing of Monsanto's moment. If the as-yet unapproved draft agenda were ever ratified, the Europeans could no longer block or demand labeling on genetically modified crops without being slapped with punitive lawsuits and tariffs. The draft also contained provisions that would allow all water in the world to be privatized. It would allow corporations patent protection on all forms of life, even genetic material in cultural use for thousands of years. Farmers who have spent thousands of years growing crops in a valley in India could, within a decade, be required to pay for their water. They could also find that they would have to purchase seeds containing genetic traits their ancestors developed, from companies that have engineered the seeds not to reproduce unless the farmer annually buys expensive chemicals to restore seed viability. If this happens, the CEOs of Novartis and Enron, two of the companies creating the seeds and privatizing the water, will have more money. What will Indian farmers have?

But the perfect moment for Barshevsky, Moore and Monsanto didn't arrive. The meeting couldn't start. Demonstrators were everywhere. Private security guards locked

down the hotels. The downtown stores were shut. Hundreds of delegates were on the street trying to get into the Convention Center. No one could help them. For WTO delegates accustomed to an ordered corporate or governmental world, it was a calamity.

UP PIKE TOWARD SEVENTH and to Randy's and my right on Sixth, protesters faced armored cars, horses, and police in full riot gear. In between, demonstrators ringed the Sheraton to prevent an alternative entry to the Convention Center. At one point, police guarding the steps to the lobby pummeled and broke through a crowd of protesters to let eight delegates in. On Sixth Street, Sergeant Richard Goldstein asked demonstrators seated on the street in front of the police line "to cooperate" and move back 40 feet. No one understood why, but that hardly mattered. No one was going to move. He announced that "chemical irritants" would be used if they did not leave.

The police were anonymous. No facial expressions, no face. You could not see their eyes. They were masked Hollywood caricatures burdened with 60 to 70 pounds of weaponry. These were not the men and women of the 6th precinct. They were the Gang Squads and the SWAT teams of the Tactical Operations Divisions, closer in training to soldiers from the School of the Americas than local cops on the beat. Behind them and around were special forces from the FBI, the Secret Service, even the CIA.

The police were almost motionless. They were equipped with US military standard M40A1 double-canister gas masks, uncalibrated, semi-automatic, high velocity Autocockers loaded with solid plastic shot, Monadnock disposable plastic cuffs, Nomex slash-resistant gloves, Commando boots, Centurion tactical leg guards, combat harnesses, DK5-H pivot-and-lock riot face shields, black Monadnock P24 polycarbonate riot batons with Trum Bull stop side handles, No. 2 continuous discharge CS (ortho-chlorobenzylidene-malononitrile) chemical grenades, M651

CN (chloroacetophenone) pyrotechnic grenades, T16 Flameless OC Expulsion Grenades, DTCA rubber bullet grenades (Stingers), M-203 (40mm) grenade launchers, First Defense MK-46 Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) aerosol tanks with hose and wands, .60 caliber rubber ball impact munitions, lightweight tactical Kevlar composite ballistic helmets, combat butt packs, .30 cal. 30-round magazine pouches, and Kevlar body armor. None of the police had visible badges or forms of identification.

The demonstrators seated in front of the black-clad ranks were equipped with hooded jackets for protection against rain and chemicals. They carried toothpaste and baking powder for protection of their skin, and wet cotton cloths impregnated with vinegar to cover their mouths and noses after a tear gas release. In their backpacks were bottled water and food for the day ahead.

Ten Koreans came around the corner carrying a 10-foot banner protesting genetically modified foods. They were impeccable in white robes, sashes, and headbands. One was a priest. They played flutes and drums and marched straight toward the police and behind the seated demonstrators. Everyone cheered at the sight and chanted, "The whole world is watching." The sun broke through the gauzy clouds. It was a beautiful day. Over cell phones, we could hear the cheers coming from the labor rally at the football stadium. The air was still and quiet.

At 10 a.m. the police fired the first seven canisters of tear gas into the crowd. The whitish clouds wafted slowly down the street. The seated protesters were overwhelmed, yet most did not budge. Police poured over them. Then came the truncheons, and the rubber bullets.

I was with a couple of hundred people who had ringed the hotel, arms locked. We watched as long as we could until the tear gas slowly enveloped us. We were several hundred feet from Sgt. Goldstein's 40-foot "cooperation" zone. Police pushed and truncheoned their way through and behind us. We covered our faces with rags and cloth, snatching glimpses of the people

The mayor went on TV that night to say, that as a protester from the '60s, he never could have imagined what he was going to do next: call in the National Guard.

Lawlessness

This is what I remember about the violence. There was almost none until police attacked demonstrators that Tuesday in Seattle. Michael Meacher, environment minister of the United Kingdom, said afterward, "What we hadn't reckoned with was the Seattle Police Department, who single-handedly

managed to turn a peaceful protest into a riot." There was no police restraint, despite what Mayor Paul Schell kept proudly assuring television viewers all day. Instead, there were rubber bullets, which Schell kept denying all day. In the end, more copy and video was given to broken windows than broken teeth.

During that day, the anarchist black blocs were in full view. Numbering about one hundred, they could have been arrested at any time but the police were so weighed

bananas at below cost to muscle its way into the European market. Its stock was at a 13-year low, the shareholders were angry, the company was up for sale, but the prices of bananas in Europe are really cheap. Who lost? Caribbean farmers who could formerly make a living and send their kids to school can no longer do so because of low prices and demand.

Globalization leads to the concentration of wealth inside such large multinational corporations as Time-Warner, Microsoft, GE, Exxon, and Wal-Mart. These giants can obliterate social capital and local equity, and create cultural homogeneity in their wake. Countries as different as Mongolia, Bhutan, and Uganda will have no choice but to allow Blockbuster, Burger King, and Pizza Hut to operate within their borders. Under WTO, even decisions made by local communities to refuse McDonald's entry (as did Martha's Vineyard) could be overruled. The as-yet unapproved draft agenda calls for WTO member governments to open up their procurement process to multinational corporations. No longer could local governments buy preferentially from local vendors. The WTO could force governments to privatize healthcare and allow foreign companies to bid on delivering national health programs. The draft agenda could privatize and commodify education, and could ban cultural restrictions on entertainment, advertising, or commercialism as trade barriers. Globalization kills self-reliance, since smaller local businesses can rarely compete with highly capitalized firms who seek market share instead of profits. Thus, developing regions may become more subservient to distant companies, with more of their income exported rather than re-spent locally.

On the weekend prior to the WTO meeting, the International Forum on Globalization (IFG) held a two-day teach-in at Benaroya Hall in downtown Seattle on just such questions of how countries can maintain autonomy in the face of globalization. Chaired by IFG president Jerry Mander, more than 2,500 people from around the world attended. A similar number were turned away. It was the hottest ticket

in town (but somehow that ticket did not get into the hands of pundits and columnists). It was an extravagant display of research, intelligence, and concern, expressed by scholars, diplomats, writers, academics, fishermen, scientists, farmers, geneticists, businesspeople, and lawyers. Prior to the

