

Artist-pranksters *The Yes Men* expose the ideology of the WTO by actively promoting the most absurd and inhumane ideas, and rationalizing them by the (il)logic of 'free' market fundamentalism.

With their website www.gatt.org, a clever spoof of that of the WTO's, they tried to provoke outraged anger, yet such reactions almost never materialized. Even mild reactions turned out to be rare, and the bulk of their mail consisted of humdrum requests for this or that bit of data. They began to feel that their work was a failure. Then on 17 May 2000, an entirely new sort of email arrived at gatt.org.

It was addressed directly to WTO Director-General Michael Moore; the e-mail's sender, under the impression he was emailing the real WTO, requested Moore's presence in Salzburg, Austria to speak before a panel of international trade lawyers. After three months of deliberating the risks (prison, ending up much poorer) vs. the benefits (discovering the limits of people's willingness to follow 'free' market theory) *The Yes Men* accepted.

The mission was a complete success in that the impostors were not detected, and a total failure in that no one batted an eyelid at their enthusiasm for invented 'free' trade initiatives such as the privatization of national elections where US citizens could go to VoteAuction.com and sell their vote to the highest corporate bidder.

They began to fear that consumers of neoliberal economic ideology might indeed believe anything, however insane or inhuman, provided it were presented as a logical part of the workings of the immutable law of the 'free' market. So for a subsequent appearance, they decided to pull out all the stops and deliver something extreme, aided by a PowerPoint presentation and stunningly clear visual effects, something any child could understand ...

The Pranksters and the Golden Phallus

by **The Yes Men**

This lecture by 'Dr Hank Hardy Unruh of the WTO' (aka Andy, from the Yes Men) was the keynote address for the Textiles of the Future conference held at the University of Technology on 18-21 August 2001 in Tampere, Finland. In the audience were 150 international research engineers, businesspeople, officials and academics working in industries ranging from medicine to defence.

Towards the Globalization of Textile Trade Textilically speaking...

It's an honour to be here in Tampere addressing the most outstanding textilians in the world today. Looking around at this diverse sea of faces, I see outstanding elements of corporations like Dow, Denckendorf, Lenzing, all at the forefront of consumer satisfaction in textiles. I see members of the European Commission, Euratex, and other important political bodies that aim at easing rules for corporate citizens. I also see professors from great universities walking into a prosperous future hand in hand with industrial partners, using citizen funds to develop great textile solutions to be sold to consumers for profit and progress.

How do we at the WTO fit in? Well, that's easy: we want to help you achieve dollar results. We want to make sure that protectionism, worry, even violence against physical property doesn't stand in the way of your dollar results.

What do we want? A free and open global economy that will best serve corporate owners and stockholders alike. When do we want it? Now.

How will we do it? We're using a variety of techniques. Lobbying, for example. 'Guerrilla marketing' to cleverly show teenagers the value of liberalization; and so on.

Finally, we have in mind some far more sophisticated solutions for the future. In just 20 minutes, I'm going to unveil the WTO's solution to two of the biggest problems for management: maintaining rapport with a distant workforce, and maintaining healthful amounts of leisure. This solution, appropriately enough, is based in textiles.

I myself am an abolitionist

But how did workers ever get to be a problem? Before unveiling the solution, I'd like to talk a bit about the history of the worker/management problem. The first leg of our journey is back to 1860s America, and the US Civil War. We all know about this war – the bloodiest, least profitable war in the history of the US, a war in which unbelievably huge amounts of money went right down the drain – and all for textiles!

Now believe it or not, even many Americans don't know what caused the Civil War. Why did people fight and die and lose money? The answer is really really simple, but it is surprising. It comes down to one word: freedom.

By the 1860s, the South was utterly flush with cash. It had recently benefited from the cotton gin, an invention that took the seeds out of cotton and the South out of its pre-industrial past. Hundreds of thousands of workers, previously unemployed in their countries of origin, were given useful jobs in textiles.

Into this rosy picture of freedom and boon stepped... you guessed it: the North. The South, of course, wanted to buy industrial equipment where it was cheapest, and to sell raw cotton where it fetched the highest price – in Britain. The North, however, decided the South should not have the freedom to do this, but instead should have to do business with the North, and only with the North.

The North used its majority stake in the country's governance to exploit the Southern landowners and deny them their freedom to choose the cheapest prices; this of course made them very angry. And so the North's abusive

>> **August 31** >> Twenty million people from Colombia's labour unions, students, and indigenous groups begin the first day of an indefinite national strike in protest at the government's IMF-backed privatization plans and social spending cuts. The demands also include a moratorium on all debt repayment. Small businesses use the strike to begin a campaign of civil disobedience marked by non-payment

of taxes, and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) carry out an occupation of the hydro-electric plant, demanding a cut in electricity tariffs and securing an agreement that a regional forum on the issue will be held. An IMF delegation cancels a trip to Bogotá and after three days the government releases all arrested during the strike, and agrees to set up a working group to discuss demands.

>> **September 11** >> Several thousand people from diverse groups march to the stock exchange to protest against the dictatorship of the marketplace in Stockholm, Sweden.

>> **September 14** >> Despite heavy-handed police tactics, protests and counter-summits shadow the APEC meetings in Auckland, Aotearoa/New Zealand. Meanwhile Chinese Premier Jiang Zemin demands that

tariff practices basically caused what otherwise was a perfectly good market to spiral into a hideously unprofitable war.

Now some Civil-War apologists have stated that the Civil War, for all its faults, at least had the effect of outlawing an Involuntarily Imported Workforce. Now such a labour model is of course a terrible thing; I myself am an abolitionist. But in fact there is no doubt that left to their own devices, markets would have eventually replaced slavery with 'clean' sources of labour. To prove my point, come join me on what Albert Einstein used to call a "thought experiment". Suppose Involuntarily Imported Labour had never been outlawed, that slaves still existed, and that it was easy to own one. What do you think it would cost today to profitably maintain a slave – say, here in Tampere?

Let's see ... A Finnish clothing set costs \$50 at the very least. Two meals from McDonald's cost \$10 or so. The cheapest small room probably runs for \$250/month. To function well, you have to pay for your slave's health care – if its country of origin was polluted, this could get very expensive. And of course what with child labour laws, much of the youth market is simply not available. Now leave the same slave back at home – let's say, Gabon. In Gabon, \$10 pays for two weeks of food, not just one day. \$250 pays for two years' housing, not a month's. \$50 pays for a lifetime of budget clothing! Healthcare is likewise much cheaper. On top of it all, youth can be gainfully employed without restriction.

The biggest benefit of the remote labour system, though, is to the slave. In Gabon, there is no need for the slave not to be free! This is primarily because there are no one-time

slave transport costs to recoup, and so the potential losses from fleeing are limited to the slave's rudimentary training. So since the slave can be free, he or she suddenly becomes a worker rather than a slave!

I think it is clear from this little thought experiment that if the North and South had simply let the market sort it out, they would have quickly given up slavery for something more efficient anyway. By forcing the issue, the North not only committed a terrible injustice against the freedom of the South, but also deprived slavery of its natural development into remote labour. Had the leaders of the 1860s understood what our leaders understand today, the Civil War would never have happened.

Now the 'modern' remote labour model, while much better than the imported workforce model – being decentralized – is also much more complicated from a management perspective.

British Empire: its lessons for managers

In a world where the headquarters of a company are in New York, Hong Kong, or Espoo, and the workers are in Gabon, Rangoon, or Estonia, how does a manager maintain proper rapport with the workers, and how does he or she ensure from a distance that workers perform their work in an ethical fashion?

Let's look at a counter example, where managers remained out of touch with remote workers, leading to extreme worker dissatisfaction and the eventual total loss of the worker base. Perhaps we can learn from this case and

avoid such catastrophes in the future.

In nineteenth century Britain, just like in the South, things had never looked better. The country was flush with cash, potential, and freedom, thanks to new technology – the spinning jenny. Like the cotton gin in the South, Britain's spinning jenny turned useable cotton into finished textiles, so the British could suddenly mass-produce clothing.

Like in the South, all that was needed was a work force to produce the raw materials that these new tools required. The British took a modern approach: instead of expensively importing workers, they located their employment opportunities where workers already lived – India.

There were problems right from the start. For thousands of years India had made the finest cotton garments in the world, so Indian workers felt humiliated providing raw materials to British industry.

The main rabble-rouser was Mohandas Gandhi, a likeable, well-meaning fellow who wanted to help his fellow workers along, but did not understand the benefits of open markets and free trade. Gandhi thought that through 'self-reliance' – protectionism, really – India could become

strong and relearn its own ancient ways of textiles. These rather naive ideas became extremely popular, and a big proportion of the citizenry rose up against the British management system. The British eventually had to leave!

What are the lessons for management here? The big problem in India was clearly a grave lack of management rapport with workers. By making only small adjustments, British management could have kept India on the path to modernity.

For example, one of the things Gandhi and his antiglobalization followers did was make their own clothing at home, to symbolize their independence from the cotton trade. Now as any student can tell you, if management in England had been properly in touch with worker concerns, they could have responded in a timely way – perhaps by making available clothes in the homespun style that the Indians craved. Today you can see clothes like that in many clothing catalogues, like the Whole Earth Catalogue. But of course they didn't have that sort of perspective in Britain and so they couldn't do it.

Now while the British may be excused for losing India because of a want of technology, we have no such excuse. In

police disperse the crowd before he will consider attending the banquet, and arrives an hour and half late after they have complied. Protesters are moved out of the Premier's sight; buses are used as visual barricades, and police sirens blare out in an attempt to drown out the sound of opposition.

>> **September 24** >> Canadian university students smash up the Montreal stock market and build a bonfire

while demanding that budget surpluses be spent on education. "The stock exchange is a symbol of capitalism and the business class who ask the government to make cuts," says one student. Eighteen people are arrested.

>> **September 26** >> Fifty people protest outside the annual meeting of the IMF/WB in Washington, US. The IMF's official documents begin to make conciliatory but empty gestures to the growing demands for change by

stressing the need to promote both growth and poverty reduction. Little do they know that this will be their last chance to meet with so little opposition!

>> **October 6-12** >> Seventy thousand steelworkers stop production of auto parts and 4,333 cars in 15 plants located in the greater São Paulo area, Campinas, and Vale do Paraíba, Brazil, with the objective of receiving a salary raise. Local strikes, referred to as the

these sensitive times when a large percentage of the world's population is nearing the boiling point over problems they imagine with globalization, we need to use all resources at our disposal to help the market help corporations, to assure that things go well, in society just as in nature.

Again, we need to use all the political tools at our disposal, like lobbying. And again, marketing to certain population sectors can change future perceptions. The market, in the form of privatized education, is likely to be our ally in this process of shifting children's awareness from less productive issues and thinkers to more productive ones, but we can help it along as well.

The prototype Employee Visualization Appendage

But even more important than any of this is management's on-the-ground efficiency. To avoid another India, we must ensure that management is constantly in touch with workers. That the manager has direct, visceral access to his or her workers, and can experience their needs in a visceral way.

I'm about to show you an actual prototype of the WTO's solution to two major management problems of today. This solution is intended to get you thinking outside the box on solutions to management problems.

Now we all know that not even the best workplace design can help even the most astute manager keep track of his workers. You need a solution that enables a lot more rapport with workers especially when they're remote.

[Dr Unruh steps out from behind podium.]

Mike, would you please?

“The protesters are simply too focused on reality, and on facts and figures. There's an enormous number of experts at all the greatest universities in the world, who have read all these books, who have read Adam Smith and everything since, to Milton Friedman, and these people have solid theoretical basis for knowing that things will lead to betterment...

We have to find a way to convince perhaps not the protesters, but the protesters' children, to follow thinkers like Milton Friedman and Darwin and so on rather than what the protesters have been reared on - Trotsky, and Robespierre, and Abbie Hoffman.”

– interview with Yes Man 'Granwyth Hulatberi, WTO spokesperson', broadcast live on CNBC's European Marketwrap program, on 19 July 2001, the day before the G8 protests in Genoa

[Mike grabs the front of Dr Unruh's suit at the chest and the crotch, gives a mighty yank, and rips his suit right off. Dr Unruh's gold lamé body suit is revealed. After regaining his equilibrium, Dr Unruh raises his arms to the crowd in a gesture of triumph. Applause.]

Ah! That's better! This is the Management Leisure Suit. This is the WTO's answer to the two central management problems of today: how to maintain rapport with distant workers, and how to maintain one's own mental health as a manager with the proper amount of leisure.

How does the MLS work, besides being very comfortable indeed, as I can assure you it is? Allow me to describe the suit's core features.

[Dr Unruh bends down, grabs a ripcord in his perineal region, and pulls hard. Nothing happens. He tries again. Still nothing. He pulls a second ripcord. This time, there is a hissing sound, and a three-foot long golden phallus inflates forcefully, snapping up and banging Dr Unruh in the face. Dr Unruh, now sporting a meter-long golden phallus, turns to the audience and again raises his arms in triumph. Applause.]

This is the Employee Visualization Appendage – an

instantly deployable hip-mounted device with hands-free operation, which allows the manager to see his employees directly, as well as receive all relevant data about them. Signals communicating exact amounts and quality of physical labour are transmitted to the manager not only visually, but directly, through electric channels implanted directly into the manager, in front and behind. The workers, for their part, are fitted with unobtrusive small chips, implanted humanely into the shoulder, that transmit all relevant data directly into the manager.

The MLS truly allows the corporation to be a corpus, by permitting total communication within the corporate body, on a scale never before possible. This is important but the other, equally important, achievement of the MLS has to do with leisure.

In the US, leisure – another word for freedom, really – has been decreasing steadily since the 1970s. Compared with 1973, Americans must now work six weeks more per year to achieve the same standard of living. The MLS permits the manager to reverse this trend by letting him do his work anywhere – all locations are equal.

Strike Festival, take place once a week in different Brazilian states.

>> **October 7** >> Over 1,000 men and women from grassroots organizations converge on the capital city of Brasilia, Brazil, having walked 995 miles from 23 states. The Popular March for Brazil meets with more than 200,000 on the way, in schools, churches and associations of all kinds, discussing ways of developing a

new politics, holding forums on the economic crisis, and developing proposals for alternative economies.

>> **October 21** >> Eighty thousand Filipino farmers protest against feudal exploitation and globalization in nationally coordinated actions. Thousands of farmers caravan for three days to Manila, holding rallies along the way. They denounce the Estrada government's plan to grant 100 per cent foreign ownership of land,

demanding genuine land reform instead. Simultaneously, 10,000 farmers and fisherfolk refuse to allow a real estate project that would turn fertile agricultural lands into a tourist paradise for the rich; more than 300 peasant families defend their claims on a portion of the former Clark US Air base in Pampanga which they have tilled for years, and 1,000 peasant families in Bukidnon, Mindanao resist eviction from the government-owned

Now the MLS is good for both managers and workers, but the number of non-corporate solutions, also, is as endless as our imagination. For example, with the MLS I'll be able to not only see protests right here on my screen, but I'll be able to feel them as well. What will the danger level be when the first protester is beheaded? I'm against beheading, but they do that in Qatar, where we're holding our next meeting. The MLS can, in a general sort of way, show us things – it can help us discover new metrics.

This suit – is it a science-fiction scenario? No – everything we've been talking about is possible with technologies we have available today. And even more interesting solutions are being developed. Right here, today and tomorrow, we will be learning about some of the most interesting new solutions from the prime movers themselves.

I am very excited to be here.

Thank you.

Human Resources: behind the scenes

by **The Yes Men**

'Dr Hank Hardy Unruh', aka Yes Man Andy and his accomplice Mike, explain how they pulled it off ...

Our Finnish adventure began, unfortunately, with the belated realization that the clocks in Finland are set one hour ahead of those in most of the rest of Europe, so when we arrived at the conference centre at what we thought was eight am, there was only one of the conference

organizers left in the lobby. When Andy introduced himself as Hank Hardy Unruh of the WTO, she was relieved. "It is wonderful to see you. They are waiting for you." Waiting for us? An hour before? We looked at the clock on the wall behind her. Then we looked at each other, speechless with horror. "Time zone," Andy finally managed to gasp. "Please follow me," she said. She whooshed towards the door of the conference hall.

Andy followed impulsively, in a panic. Fortunately Mike had managed to conserve some of his wits. "Ah, Dr Unruh," said Mike, "we have that, ah, urgent phone call..." Andy froze. The Management Leisure Suit!! Andy wasn't wearing it, for it made moving very clumsy, and it had been hard to imagine waddling the half-mile from the hotel to the conference centre. Instead he wore a suit identical to the breakaway suit covering the MLS; we'd planned to change into the real McCoy on arrival. "Ah, ma'am," he called out to the lady just as she opened the door to the conference hall, "we have a very urgent phone call we'll be just a tiny, tiny bit late? I mean later. Two minutes?" Her eyes widened speechlessly for a moment, then she shook her head, pointed to the telephones down the hall, and hurried into the conference hall.

We hoped nobody saw us darting together into the restroom next to the telephones. What would they think? That the WTO representative and the WTO representative's assistant both have urgent bladder problems, simultaneously? And that they lie about it? More frantic than either of us had ever been, Mike pulled the thing out

of his bag while Andy stripped down to his underwear. The suit was designed for simplicity, but there's only so simple you can make a three-foot long inflatable phallus. "A fucking hour late," said Andy as he tried to jam his foot into the leg. "Wait, wait, shit, go slow," said Mike, as he bent down to untwist the golden fabric. "Fucking time zone... Okay, push." "One fucking hour," said Andy as he pushed it in and frantically searched for an armhole to fill. After what seemed like an interminable amount of untwisting and zipping and fitting – straps, penis, baboon butt, CO2 cartridge, second CO2 cartridge (backup), breakaway pants, breakaway shirt, breakaway jacket – the Management Leisure Suit and its breakaway suit were on.

Fully reassembled, Dr Hank Hardy Unruh emerged from the restroom and waddled into the conference hall as fast as he could without breaking his seams. Three hundred people were waiting. Dr Pertti Nousiainen, the president of the university and primary organizer of the conference, was still explaining to the audience that the keynote speaker encountered a slight adversity of some sort, compounded by a last-minute urgent telephone call, and would arrive soon.

When he saw us his eyes lit up – apparently he had gotten to the end of plausible explanations.

Now for our second tightrope act. We had planned to hook up the computer to the projector ahead of time; now we had to do it in front of everyone. Dr Nousiainen used the opportunity to announce the keynote speaker, and to explain again who he was. Andy waved to the audience. The audience did not react. Nor did the computer. For ten minutes, Andy fidgeted with his laptop, under the increasingly icy stares of the audience. Nothing. Fortunately, this had happened before, and we had a CD backup just in case – but it would take at least 15 minutes to copy to another computer, because of the enormous video files.

Mike explained the unfortunate situation to Dr Nousiainen, apologized on behalf of our crappy laptop, and asked to change spots. Our host did everything in his power to accommodate the frantic, absurd, and incompetent team from the WTO. Dr Nousiainen would speak first instead of second; another lecturer would speak second instead of third. We set the files to copying over to Dr Nousiainen's own computer, which he graciously volunteered, and sat

lands of the Central Mindanao University.

>> **November 21** >> The Landless Movement (MST) in Brazil occupies land at Igarassu, Pernambuco State, and 620 families set up new homes.

>> **November 23** >> More than 300 indigenous people from the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh blockade the World Bank building in Delhi. Covering the building with cow dung, mud, posters, and graffiti, they sing

traditional songs, protesting the impact of World Bank forestry projects which threaten their rights to land, forest, and fishing. "We fought against the British and we will fight against the new form of colonialism that you represent with all our might," they declare.

>> **November 24** >> Demonstrators in Manila, Philippines break through security lines at the meetings of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

A few days earlier, many homeless families who were living near the summit building were brutally evicted so as not to spoil the view of foreign dignitaries on their way from the airport to their hotels. More than 7,000 police and soldiers control the streets, while firefighters turn high-pressure hoses on the crowds.

>> **November 25** >> Five thousand French farmers gather with their sheep, goats, and ducks for a picnic

down in the audience. The copying finished with less than one megabyte to spare. (A week later, informed by a reporter that Dr Unruh had been a fake, Dr Nousiainen refused to believe it. “But he was so polite!” he said. “And he had such a very large presentation!”) Finally, the incompetent duo was ready. The second lecturer finished, and Dr Nousiainen took the stage to introduce what had been billed as the keynote speaker, and was now the *pièce de résistance*.

Now when a performance is plagued with technical difficulties before it even begins, there are two ways the audience can react. They can sympathize with the performer, proffering increased attentiveness, applause, and big smiles to make her feel better. Alternately, they can manifest petulance – remaining passive, stone-faced, as if to show that their money would have been better spent elsewhere. Our audience was the latter sort; we were relieved when it was time for the climax.

Mike grabbed the front of Andy’s suit and ripped it off in two hard yanks. Andy was now wearing only the golden leotard. The audience was suddenly bolt upright at attention. A gold-lamé suit on the WTO representative? Everything changed. Our audience was all smiles, applause, and kindness. As the Employee Visualization Appendage inflated to its three-foot length, the audience was clearly beside itself with excitement. As Dr Unruh enumerated the uses of the EVA – to monitor distant factory workers and administer electric shocks when necessary, to assure leisure time for a grossly encumbered managerial class, to keep tabs on the severity of protests –

the audience’s attention was riveted. The WTO stood there with its enormous golden phallus, controlling the Third World and parts of the First, and the audience felt nothing but love.

In the heat of a performance, certain things happen. Juices flow, awareness falls away, the entire being is concentrated on a single point of entry or exit. Andy, fully Dr Unruh, was as happy as Dr Unruh would have been to be receiving the adulation of such a respectable audience. But when he saw Mike’s face – clearly very depressed – Andy snapped out of his bliss. Something was wrong. And what was wrong was exactly what had seemed right: the triumph of Unruh was the failure of Andy and Mike. As we waddled to lunch, the air slowly leaking out of Andy’s EVA, our spirits sagged along with it. We had pulled out all the stops, and we had gotten nothing by way of reaction. We had spent the last three weeks anticipating an extremely dramatic, even dangerous situation, and nothing but applause had resulted. By the time we got to the cafeteria, our cheer picked up slightly. We became certain that someone in the audience must have been violently appalled by the WTO’s metre-long member and what it signified. We resolved to find that person.

On the way we spoke to a fellow from Dow (“Interesting lecture!”); a German chemist (“I enjoyed your lecture, but only wondered what was its point”); a fellow from British defence (“Your point was obviously that the market would have replaced slavery, given enough time”); the head of the textiles department at

Ghent University, who insisted we read his position paper on the future of textiles; several assorted others who had enjoyed the lecture in various ways.

Then, right after dinner, we met her, the object of our quest. She had not enjoyed the lecture: so much not, in fact, that it took a great deal of coaxing to get her to speak to us. At last! We managed to convince her that we really wished to hear what she thought. "Well," she finally said, "I think your performance was clear. I think you showed how close the factory owner wants to be to the workers, to control the workers very well. But the way you presented it was not fair." "Fair?" Andy said. "To the factory owners. You present it as, the males are the owners and the females are the workers. But females can be the factory owners too."

Andy and Mike were stunned. Their hearts sank. "It's just the... metaphor?" Andy managed. "Yes," the woman said. "If we varied the... metaphor..." Andy made big circular motions around his chest, as if to show where big golden breasts might be placed. "Yes," she said. "But don't get me wrong," she said, "your performance was brilliant. And you got your point across, that's the main thing." "So

the point was clear," Andy said sadly. "Just the shape was unfortunate." "A penis is a nice shape," the woman said. "I'm only speaking of what it meant." "What did it mean?" Mike pushed. "Male perspective," she said. "Too much." Enough was enough. "I'm sorry for interrupting," Mike said, "but it's time to call Mr Bensonhurst-Philidango." "Ah yes! Of course!" Andy exclaimed. "Bensonhurst-Philidango! I am so sorry," he said to his new scientist friend. "Thank you for everything!" he called out to Dr Nouisiainen from across the room, gesturing at Mike as if blaming him for his abduction. Our Waterloo was finally over.

The Yes Men are a genderless, loose-knit association of 300 impostors worldwide. By any means necessary, they enter fortified compounds of commerce, ask questions, and smuggle out stories from the behind-the-scenes world of business. In other words, the Yes Men are team players... but they play for the opposing team.

Resources:

- » For the complete works see: www.theyesmen.org
- » Quintessential subversion and pranks: www.rtmark.com

under the Eiffel Tower. Feasting on regional products, they denounce the impact of 'free' trade and the WTO.

>> **November 30** >>> Global Day of Action, WTO actions, Seattle.

>> **December** >> Over the course of this year, anti-biotech activists have destroyed all the field trials of genetically modified trees in England.

>> **December 7** >>> Twenty thousand people take to the

streets of Seoul, South Korea, demanding a shorter work week and an end to privatization. Organized by the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, the workers defend themselves with bamboo sticks and metal rods against an attack by riot police, which injures 160 people.

>> **December 11** >>> In Mexico City, 10,000 striking UNAM students protest outside the American embassy in solidarity with people arrested in the Seattle WTO

actions, and also with US political prisoner Mumia Abu Jamal. Police attack and arrest 98 people, charging dozens of them with mutiny.



>> **January-February** >>> Activists break through police lines and invade several immigrant detention centres across Italy, allowing journalists and human rights observers to document inhumane conditions. The