

workers on ships.

RO: The way it is now, a large corporation can leave a country and go use slave-labour wages areas in the poorer countries, and these people really don't have anyone looking out for them.

PS: I must say

"The most dangerous religion in the world is the religion of scientists who think that an infinite increase in information is a good thing."

that my general philosophy now is that, well, I appreciate that sometimes you need a big organization to do something, like a post office department or federal express. By and large I distrust large organizations, whether it's a large church, or a large corporation, or a large government, or even the large United Nations, because big organizations attract power hungry people, and pretty soon they're not doing what you hoped they would do. And little organizations come and go, but a good one will stick around longer, and be imitated,

and I really do believe that if there is a human race here in a hundred years, it's going to be saved by millions upon millions of small organizations, whether they are labour organizations, or scientific organizations, or ecology organizations, or cultural artistic organizations.

RO: So you're thinking in terms of the small groups, as opposed to the United Nations trying to save the world?

PS: Well you can try with big organizations, but you have to keep amending things. I think every big organization needs probably several small organizations to keep tabs on it. Certainly, in spite of the fact that there is a National Labour Relations Board in the federal government, you need to have a whole batch of labour organizations keeping tabs on it. The big problem now is big corporations

are so strong that they control the government. Who is going to keep tabs on these big corporations? And when you try and get government to help you, the government is actually working with the corporations. As we know, in the United States at least, fewer and fewer people bother to vote anymore. Both big parties are controlled by the big business, what's the use? I have a little bet on with friends as to whether the average voter for president will go down as low as twenty percent, or ten percent, or even five percent before we wake up and make real changes.

RO: And that has to start at the very bottom with the voters.

PS: The average person doesn't stop to think of it, but the presidents for the last fifty years all have been elected by a very small minority of the American people. [sarcastically] Reagan was swept in by a landslide! Well he got a landslide of the people voting, but the people who voted were like fifty percent of the country! So a minority of the country was voting for him, and a still smaller minority voting for Bush, and a still smaller minority voted for Clinton. I think Clinton was elected by twenty percent of the American people. And finally when we get a president voted for by two percent of the people, maybe we'll think "Maybe we should have some

changes made."

RO: Looking at your songs, you quite often raise questions, such as "Waist Deep In The Big Muddy," or "We'll All Be A-Doubling." You'll have a question, but you don't necessarily have the answer. Do you believe the important thing is to ask the questions about the status quo?

PS: Absolutely. Einstein said this, "The most important thing is to find the right questions to ask. At least then you're pointed in the right direction to seek the solutions." And we may never find final solutions, all we can do is find half-way solutions. [laughs] For example, what do you do about the male aggressions that have been developed over hundreds of thousands of years of living? It probably produced some good things, but also produced an awful lot of rapes, and wars. The good and the bad are so tangled up in the world, all you can do is laugh.

RO: So the question is the important thing, because it will lead to attempts to find an answer.

PS: Yep.

RO: Also dealing with "Waist Deep In The Big Muddy," how deep are we as the human race?

PS: I believe we're much deeper than the average person realizes. Technology makes us live longer and more

comfortably, but specialization has more disadvantages than most of us think. The average person is not in as good health because we spend most of our lives sitting at desks. Our main exercise is to transfer our rear ends from one seat to another, from a desk to a car, to a table where we eat, to another car, to another desk, to a couch where we look at something. And admittedly, I don't think I, nor anybody, would want to do a little of everything as our ancestors once had to, when we dug for roots, picked berries and tried to catch animals to eat, and when we got sick we died unless we could find a place to rest safely without being hurt or caught. [chuckles] So I don't think I, nor anybody, would really want to go back to times 50,000 years ago when our ancestors' big technology was to learn to use fire, and learn how to latch a rock to a piece of wood to make a club out of it. That was big technology then.

RO: Who is the greatest person you've ever shared a stage with?

PS: Oh, the word great is such a...I use the term but I can't say "greatest." I can say there's a lot of great people I shared the stage with. Young and old, black and white, Latino, dozens, and I would be hard pressed to say who was greater than who.

RO: Do you have any message you'd like to share with the students here at UPEI?

PS: Oh, I've got so many messages it's hard to pick one. Have you ever heard of Robert Fulghum?

RO: No.

PS: He wrote a book called All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten: Uncommon Thoughts on Common Things, and it was so successful he put out several more books, one of them called Maybe (Maybe Not). Another one Uh-oh. [laughs] And he may have put out other books. He's an ex-Unitarian Minister who writes very well. I recommend his books. I think if I was asked to boil down my philosophy, I would tell the story about the see-saw with a basket of rocks on one end, and a basket half full of sand on the other end. Some of us have teaspoons, trying to fill up the basket of sand. Most people are laughing at us. "Say, don't you see it's leaking out as fast as you're putting it in?" We say "Well, it is leaking out, but it's not leaking out quite as fast, and we're getting more people with teaspoons all the time. And sooner or later we're going to get this basket full, and you're going to see that whole see-saw going ZOOP! in the opposite direction." And people will say "Gee, how did it happen so suddenly?" "Us and our goddamn teaspoons!" Each of us is but a grain of sand in this world, and we might be the grain of sand that tips that see-saw. END