

## **OPEN MARKETS, OPEN MEDIA ?**

*The Roundtable on Open Markets, Open Media was hosted by the International Media and Policy Alternatives Centre (IMPAC). The event was held in Vancouver on March 21, 1997, and drew on journalists and academics from Canada and Indonesia. These included Patrick Brown, CBC TV Asia Correspondent, Andreas Harsono, Jakarta Correspondent for the Bangkok Nation, Iain Simpson, BBC Radio Asia Correspondent, Frank Koller, Canadian Committee for the Protection of Journalists.*

Participants addressed the question of whether trade liberalization is leading to freer, more open and independent media in the Asia Pacific region. They were asked to address this question from a variety of perspectives, including:

- \* factors which may be contributing to the development of free media in the region;
- \* factors which may be limiting this development;
- \* the role of journalists, media ownership, and Canadian foreign policy in supporting free media.

Based on their deliberations, participants identified options and strategies for policy change.

### ***Policy Options***

What are the ways to expand space (stop shrinkage) for free media/expression/dissenting voices?

#### **I) Canadian Government**

- \* Use trade linkages to promote Canadian values through "Constructive Engagement."
- \* Take advantage of entry points provided by APEC. eg. "Free flow of information" should be interpreted as all kinds of information. Business can be brought into the discussion by emphasizing "transparency."
- \* Take advantage of "unused levers." eg. Canada's linkages with the public broadcasting system and regulatory commission of Malaysia.
- \* Offer governments alternatives to "public embarrassment". These could include proposing workable alternatives to the status quo, or flexible approaches to