

of Canada, with our reasonable but substantial requirements, lie somewhere in the middle. It will be essential for the conferences to come up with co-ordinating procedures that provide enough stability for countries to plan properly, enough flexibility so the technology will not be frozen at an artificial point in time, and enough equity for developing countries to share the benefits of the new technologies.

In 1983 another ITU world conference will try to bring some order out of the current anarchy of High Frequency (HF) shortwave broadcasting. It is obvious that some technical parameters should be introduced so that it will no longer be necessary for countries to have to shout one another using higher and higher powered transmitters, many exceeding one million watts. But it will be crucial to ensure that any needed technical constraints do not allow receiving countries to impose a veto over what is being transmitted to their citizens. As long as there are governments which control the content of their national media, the activity of international shortwave broadcasters will remain essential.

UNESCO is attempting to fashion for itself a role as the focal point in the UN system for the demands by developing countries for closing the North-South communications gap by establishing a "new world information and communication order". These countries are concerned not only about how information is flowing but what is flowing.

Communications gap

Is there a serious communications gap that requires the international community to work towards the establishment of a "new world order"? I would have to answer yes since those countries with the technology can, and in some cases do, control the information, and those without it will be left behind in some vital sectors of human activity. But care will have to be taken to keep the political rhetoric to a minimum — something UNESCO has not been particularly successful in doing up to now — so that those effective mechanisms in the present system are not destroyed in the rush to establish a new equilibrium. The emphasis should be on practical steps involving the transfer of technology and resources to developing countries — not as an act of charity but to give substance to a fundamental human right. If UNESCO's new Intergovernmental Program for the Development of Communication is going to be a success — and Canada, as a member of the Council, will be working to make it one — there will have to be a close working partnership between UNESCO and the ITU and the governmental and non-governmental organizations with complementary roles to play.

The UN General Assembly itself is also involved in current communications issues given the UN's own information distribution program and its residual responsibility for co-ordinating issues throughout the UN family. Its Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has tried unsuccessfully for many years to produce a consensus on principles to govern television broadcasting *via* Direct Broadcast Satellites. Given the fact that the ITU has been able to approve international regulations on Direct Broadcast Satellites, one is tempted to question the continuing effectiveness of the UN Outer Space Committee as a credible negotiating forum on the issue.

The OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) in Paris is