

E. Mexico – Researcher: Greg Raikes

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The IMPACS' researcher stationed in Mexico, Greg Raikes, selected the following media to monitor: El Universal, a daily newspaper; Radio1260AM, The "Panorama" Morning Show; and Televisa Channel 2, the 10:30pm nightly news broadcast.

The media analyzed in Mexico handled APEC in a very perfunctory manner. In general, the media during the monitoring period did not stray from the official line, which tends to view the APEC Summit as a purely economic exercise, paying little attention to the broader social and environmental repercussions of freer trade.

The general trend in the coverage was to focus on the events taking place at the official summit and the agreements it spawned, and to exclude analysis, critical or otherwise. Moreover, the range of sources given access to these media was severely constrained: government sources dominated during this time. Given this trend, it is not surprising that the issues that tend to be marginalized in economic discourses, issues pertaining to the environment or culture or the rights of indigenous people for example, were almost absent altogether.

El Universal, the newspaper selected for analysis, focused its attention primarily on specific issues relevant to Mexico. The People's Summit, or any other dissenting voice for that

matter, was not mentioned. Instead, government sources, domestic and foreign, consistently framed the terms of

discussion. Surprisingly, El Universal, long considered a pro-government paper, did publish three editorial pieces critical of APEC. The pieces were, however, critical only in that they downplayed the significance of APEC, in particular its inability to formulate binding agreements.

The "Panorama" morning show on Radio Acir, a two-hour format show in which issues are discussed in depth, contained only one APEC-related news item. This three-minute item was meant as a primer, giving listeners an introduction to several topics surrounding APEC. Special attention was given to issues such as international trade and small and medium sized business concerns. A list of potential benefits was given with no mention of the concerns of importance to the participants in the People's Summit or other voices similarly critical of APEC and trade liberalization. Natural disasters and the governing party (PRI) captured the bulk of the headlines.

The 10:30pm nightly news broadcast on Televisa also gave minimal coverage to APEC. It should be noted that Televisa has a long history of unwavering support for the PRI. Over the years it has consistently trumpeted government policies and criticized or ignored any voice of opposition. Indeed, it is a widely held view, as yet unproven, that Televisa receives large amounts of financial support from the government in return for favourable coverage. Given its track record, it is not surprising that when Televisa did turn its attention to the APEC Summit, its coverage was entirely devoid of any opposing views