

of opportunity to participate in the cultural marketplace constrained.

Part of the answer lies in competing globally, producing world class products for the global marketplace. Sweden's ABBA music recording group have succeeded in finding a global niche among the platinum records, but have had to sing in English to do so. Canada's Harlequin books dominate the world market for romance fiction, but most of its writers are British, and few if any even speak of Canada. The Dutch-German co-national, Polygram, has succeeded in winning a leading position among the major record distributors. We may yet see a second stream of world class culture, as the various nations of the world learn to please on a global scale.

But even were each country of the world to win its fair share of cultural trade, produce its quota of global blockbusters, the problem of regional and national cultural development would only become more aggravated, more pressing, and the question of diversity more real. And just as all governments of the world now subsidize the arts, they now find they have to find new ways to promote national and regional media production, in order to maintain diversity, an internal dialogue, and develop audiences, talent, and new ideas and themes. This, of course, is just as much a concern in the United States as elsewhere. To quote from the NTIA paper on *The foundations of U.S. Information Policy* — "United States policy encourages diversity in both the source and the content of information because of the belief that a sufficient diversity of source and content will lead to a diversity of ideas."

World concern

A fifth reality of the information age is the depth of concern it evokes from nations of every size and persuasion, and the necessity of maintaining a reasonable dialogue in the face of attempts to polarize opinion around extreme positions. Nations large and small are now aware that information is the new wealth, that its development and trade is governed by new and unfamiliar rules and that there is some danger they may be trampled in the gold rush.

Many developing countries are trying to consolidate their concerns and aspirations in a neat package increasingly being referred to as "a new world information and communication order". This, they see, as being intimately linked to "the new international economic order". Some western commentators have tended to dismiss this initiative as an attempt by socialist countries and authoritarian developing countries to legitimize government control over media content, and no doubt there is a basis for this view but perhaps it's also more complicated than that. There are obviously some things which governments should not do — they should not, for example, interfere with freedom of the press. But there are certain things governments think they must do if their citizens are going to prosper and feel free.

As all of us are aware, UNESCO, has been trying to carve out for itself a leading role in promoting "a new world information and communication order". The UNESCO General Conference, which ended recently in Belgrade, expressed the view that the report of the MacBride Commission was a "valuable contribution to the study of information and communication problems". The Conference also launched an ambitious new international program for the development of communication. The U.S. and Canada were elected to the 35-member State Intergovernmental Council
