

"You have to constantly fight for the freedom of the press. It is our duty."

— Kavi Chongkittavorn,  
Editor, *The Nation*

"thin skin" and therefore bows quickly to public pressure, usually generated by the press. He concluded with a challenge to participants: "You have to constantly fight for the freedom of the press. It is our duty."

Canadian author, political strategist and educator Gerald Caplan rounded out the day's speakers. "We have accelerated the spread of free expression simply by being here today." He expanded on that notion by telling delegates that there were no other fora that brought together a group such as the one assembled at the People's Summit. "Business is indifferent at best, hostile at worst to the ideals that Northern countries take for granted." He then asked the question "Can businesses be pushed to undertake our ideals, even if for their own selfish purposes?" Caplan answered his own question by pointing out the full page ad Nike had taken out in Tuesday's *Globe and Mail*. In it, Nike felt the need to explain the benefit package afforded to its workers. "We need to begin discussions that will bring these people into our tent." He ended his speech, which was peppered with humour, on a more serious note; "We're cynical about business and government because we have the right to be."

#### ROUNDTABLE PROPOSALS

The following proposals were made by some of the participants to the symposium and were presented to the media at Tuesday's press conference:

- That APEC leaders recognize that freedom of expression and association are conditions for the expansion of trade
- That the expansion of these freedoms must appear on every APEC meeting agenda
- That APEC members report on the current condition of freedom of expression and association
- That APEC, as a body, commission an independent study by eminent persons on the relationship between the free flow of information and trade liberalization
- That civil society organizations (i.e. unions, religious organizations and other citizens groups) be involved in the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of free media conditions within APEC

- That the APEC Human Resources Working Group adopt a program of training journalists so as to improve professional media skills within APEC
- That APEC make all its documents, including negotiated texts, accessible to the media
- That APEC members formally address the issue of freedom of expression and the free flow of information on the Internet. According to a joint letter signed by a dozen members of the International Freedom of Expression Exchange, many APEC nations have censored or are attempting to restrict Internet usage and contents.
- That a dialogue be started with the APEC Business Advisory Council about the relationship between free markets and free media and especially the role of the media in exposing corruption. (A Canadian currently chairs ABAC.)

#### Public Education and Research Forum

Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs makes the nature of APEC clear in a description on its website: "APEC's mandate can be summed up in a single phrase: APEC means business."

Larry Kuehn, director of research for the BC Teachers' Federation and a forum organizer, described the opening day of the Public Education and Research Forum as an important session to address the negative impact that strategy will have on public education.

The APEC agenda on education is focused around the Human Resources Working Group and the Education Forum, explained Kuehn, "which are explicitly working to have education mean training for business."

The forum included a full agenda for its 200 registrants. Beginning with a welcome by Canadian Teachers' Federation president Jan Eastman, the participants then moved into a plenary session. Sharan Burrow, vice-president of Education International, spoke

Colleges and universities are becoming increasingly influenced by corporate interests, with a primary focus on education at all levels to train people to be docile workers.

