



The Race to the Intelligent State

CHARTING THE GLOBAL INFORMATION
ECONOMY INTO THE **21ST CENTURY**

MICHAEL CONNORS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Is the world really in the midst of an information revolution? If so, what is its likely future course and what will be its consequences?

The Race to the Intelligent State describes the evolution of information infrastructures in the past, considering the role of technology and other factors, and predicts the course of events up to the year 2005. Its principal messages are that technology, the major driver of the process, is essentially predictable in that timeframe, that the information revolution will have marked negative, as well as positive consequences and that, perhaps contrary to popular perception, it will be the developing world, not the developed nations, which will be its major beneficiaries.

I predict the rise of "Info-tigers" in the developing world which will pose significant competitive threats to companies in the developed world which has hitherto been assumed to have an unassailable monopoly in the high-tech information sector. The hundred-fold growth of the software business in India over the last decade is an example of this and the burgeoning information technology sector in Israel is an example of the rise of another kind of "info-tiger."

I use the word "infostructure" to describe the range of diverse components which determine the nature of the broad information environment and *The Race to the Intelligent State* contains an Infostructure Index which demonstrates the extremely uneven accessibility of information around the globe. The Index ranks 147 countries according to a composite of statistics for literacy, newspaper readership and radio, television and telephone diffusion, giving scores as disparate as 309 for the United States and just 7 for Burkina Faso.

Although its findings are generally upbeat, the book is, in part, an antidote to the overly optimistic predictions which some futurologists

have made with regard to the role of the information sector in the broader economy. It highlights flaws in the concept of the “post-industrial information society,” flaws which are manifesting themselves in the problems and imbalances in many of the economies of the developed world.

The biggest threats to developed nations, such as the US, UK, Canada and Australia, where employees in the service and information sectors outnumber those in manufacturing by nearly three-to-one, are of structural upheavals in industries which have hitherto seen stable growth and the emergence of structural white collar/professional unemployment.

The Race to the Intelligent State concludes that the “information revolution” will have run its course by 2005 but that it will have sown the seeds of a radically altered competitive world order and that a new man-machine intelligence complex will have laid the ground for a revolution in intelligence itself.