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Ian Angell

London School of Economics and Political Science

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"I have seen the future and it WORK?" (for some)

Ian O. Angell

London School of Economics and Political Science
UK

Abstract

The author will give his predictions for the effect of global communication networks on both political and commercial governance. He will then relate this to the central position of information systems within the whole spectrum of management, to consider 'the nature of work' in 'the office of the future' and the 'enterprise of the future.' The author will finish by initiating a debate on the likely impact of these emergent technologies on governmental policies, and in particular what it will mean for the information technology industry.

The author's views will be controversial. Central to his thesis is a recognition of the growing global competition for highly mobile 'knowledge workers', made mobile by their use of new technology. The author will consider the central importance of such economic mercenaries' to the success of both company and country, together with broader implications. He is convinced that commonly held dogmas, such as 'the common good', 'social justice', 'full employment' and 'fair taxation', will have to be reassessed, possibly to be superseded by more elitist notions. "In the future the notion of 'Human Rights' will seem just as peculiar as 'The Divine Right of King'."

The increased importance of knowledge workers in companies is also intensifying a power struggle with the owners of equity in those companies, and this is likely to fundamentally change the very nature of capitalism itself. This battle is likely to be at least as significant as that between landowners and industrialists in the early part of the nineteenth century that was formative of today's capitalism.

He is convinced that these economic forces are driving western liberal democracy into decline. Like Karl Marx he believes that representative politicians are becoming impotent in their power broking. Unlike Marx he does not see the reason as the rise of the international proletariat, but a growing international elite who owe no allegiance to the nation state. Indeed he will show that the nation state in its present form has no future, and that if it is to survive at all it will have to be radically different from today's embodiment.