

of information distribution made possible by IT, there are very few shared experiences. Mr. Alboim pointed out that when people shape their views of the world from so many sources, their "sense of threat" is fragmented. In short, what is happening is that there is a **localization of political sentiment; but de-nationalization of sentiment.**

This in turn has led to some normative questions to be asked concerning the distribution of gains. Information technology is leading to the creation of a world of information "haves" and "have nots". There is also the question of whether the creation of the information society has engendered the arrival of factional democracies based on the fragmentation of information. This in turn leads us, says Alboim, to question how relevant is the nation state in a world of global information. This in turn raises the question of whether it is the role of government to act as a "leveller" and provider of information? Alboim also pointed out that once the border disappears, those countries not on the information highway are very vulnerable. Thus the fundamental question is how Western governments' traditional antipathy towards interfering in private transactions can be balanced with the threats posed by international criminal activity facilitated by IT.

The discussion following Mr. Alboim's presentation centred on the concern that IT will give rise to single interest power and that this will undermine governance. The question this raises is whether political parties in the Westminster system will be able to encompass the electorate's views in light of this fragmentation. Some other participants disagreed and suggested that this was perhaps an overstatement of the impact of fragmentation on governance. Again, they noted that the communications revolution may aid and abet, but it is not the cause of fragmentation. Indeed, this highlighted what was perhaps the overarching issue and central dilemma arising out of the day's discussion: whether ITs were causing nations to change or not. In essence, it is the chicken and egg question: some argued that technology (wind power, steam, electronic) has always changed our economic and social systems, so is the rise of IT any different from rise of the sailing ship? Others argued that IT is not necessarily causing nations to change, but rather is facilitating that change (which begs the question of *what is* causing the change. This in turn led to a discussion about government's role: should it be a "fair witness" or gatekeeper to IT?

Some participants then asked that before the question of governability could be answered, we would have to make some choices first, namely, to determine what we want - technology or the state. For example, if we want to stop money laundering what is the appropriate institution? Consensus was reached that the nation-state cannot do many of the things (i.e., monitor much less enforce trans-border criminal activity) that the current environment is causing. This in turn led to the questioning of whether the nation-state was obsolete? To this assertion, the response was that the state's role is not to merely control; furthermore, much regulation is itself driven by the demands of civic society and the private sector. Indeed, there are some public policy interests the private sector will not regulate, e.g., privacy legislation.

The discussion then moved on to the question of whether IT changed the source of