

OECD-Canada Technology Foresight Forum
Session 3b
Government 2.0: Engaging citizens to deliver
better policy and services and improve efficiency

1 Ottawa, ON
2 --- Upon commencing on Wednesday, October 3, 2007
3 at 2:00 p.m.

4 MR. VICKERY: Hello. I propose we
5 start. There are still some people coming in but
6 we should start so we don't fall too far behind.
7 I'm doing the job of the MC in the big room in
8 this small room. But it's nice to see you all
9 here. It's very, very good.

10 We lost one of our speakers over
11 the weekend, our Mexican colleague. He couldn't
12 come at the last minute. So we decided that
13 because we are trying to encourage as much
14 participation, as much interaction as possible,
15 rather than try and add another speaker, we
16 decided that we would actually remain with the
17 three speakers and Ellen. And Ellen was going --
18 who was the chair and is still going to be the
19 chair, will also be a speaker.

20 So we've got four speakers anyway
21 and Ellen is going to do both task. And that
22 should encourage us to have much more interaction.

23 So, over to Ellen who is chairing

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1 this group.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. MILLER: Thank you very much.

4 This session has a very hopeful title. I'll
5 refresh my memory, Government 2.0. I'm not sure
6 the American government is in 1.0 yet. That's why
7 I think it's hopeful. But it is a direction that
8 we need to be talking about, engaging citizens to
9 deliver better policy in a proved democracy.

10 I was honoured to be asked to be
11 on this panel and even more honoured to chair it.
12 And so I thought I would kick it off and then ask
13 my colleagues, whom I have had the pleasure of
14 meeting just before the panel, to introduce
15 themselves, very Web 2.0.

16 But I have a question. I want to
17 know a little bit more about you. I really am
18 into this participative web world. So, with a
19 show of hands, how many people in this room blog?
20 --- Raise hands

21 MS MILLER: Oh, a very small
22 minority.

23 How many people in this room are

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1 on a social network? You don't have to tell me
2 which one.

3 --- Raise hands

4 MS MILLER: Aha (laughter).

5 How many are on more than one
6 social network?

7 --- Raise hands

8 MS MILLER: I'm very impressed.
9 I'm very impressed. Good. Well then you
10 understand at least the context of the world in
11 which we're operating even if the government
12 doesn't quite understand that context.

13 So, by way of personal
14 introduction -- whoops, I didn't mean to go there
15 yet. I'm Ellen Miller, Co-founder and Executive
16 Director of the Washington D.C. based Sunlight
17 Foundation.

18 I've worked in the public interest
19 field for a number of decades that I have been in
20 Washington and founded two other NGO's that are
21 involved in examining the mix of money and power
22 and politics and influence in Washington.

23 The Sunlight Foundation was

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1 founded just about 18 months ago to use the power
2 of the internet, new technologies and the
3 interactivity of the world of the Web 2.0 to
4 create greater transparency for the operations of
5 the U.S. Congress and to help improve the two-way
6 relationship between citizens and their elected
7 representatives.

8 Thomas Jefferson, one of our
9 founding fathers, said information is the currency
10 of democracy. So, freedom of information or
11 freedom for information is clearly not a new idea.
12 But what is different about information in this
13 day and age is the time in which we operate.

14 The technologies of communication
15 have changed dramatically. In the past few years
16 they changed dramatically at an amazing pace every
17 single day.

18 Two mottos guide the work of the
19 Sunlight Foundation. They marry old style
20 conventional wisdom and new web thinking.

21 The first is to paraphrase a
22 former Supreme Court Justice: Sunlight is said to
23 be the best of disinfectants, electric light the

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1 most efficient policeman.

2 And the second motto that guides
3 our work is that given enough eyeballs all bugs
4 are shallow. Now, this is a technical term. But
5 we like to apply it to mean that when citizens are
6 watching and engaged with politics in the
7 internet, which the internet uniquely allows them
8 to do, elected officials have to pay attention.

9 Some have said, I meant that
10 literally, given enough eyeballs all the bugs are
11 shallow. But in fact we mean it figuratively
12 about engaging citizens.

13 We are talking about the potential
14 of a paradigm shift in how disclosure happens and
15 how information travels, how information is
16 collected and disseminated and what people can do
17 with it, and particularly the ways people can use
18 information to engage themselves in the process of
19 politics, policy, the drafting of legislation, et
20 cetera.

21 If you go back to the early 1800's
22 in America which was a rural agricultural society,
23 the ways of connecting citizens were almost

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1 limited by their geographic distance from
2 Washington. There were no good ways for
3 government information to travel quickly and
4 easily to citizens.

5 But the advances in technology
6 create a very different world for us.

7 The U.S. congress ushered in the
8 age of computer-disseminated government
9 information in 1993 when they mandated the
10 government printing office to make certain
11 legislative and executive branch documents
12 available online.

13 Since then public information has
14 been made available and it has steadily increased.
15 Not all of this is thanks to the government. But
16 with the click of a mouse you can find what
17 congress is discussing and voting on; the full
18 text of bills; the video of floor proceedings and
19 committee hearings; who is lobbying and how much
20 they spend on it; who used to work for what
21 elected official and who they work for now; who
22 gives how much political money and whether they
23 favour or oppose legislation; what interventions

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1 with regulatory agencies are being made and by
2 whom; how much taxpayer money is being spent and
3 granted.

4 But to find all that information
5 you have to go to a myriad of websites and you
6 have to know precisely what you're looking for.
7 The advances made in this arena still lag behind
8 the technological developments by leaps and
9 bounds.

10 This is a slide that shows THOMAS,
11 the government's official online database for
12 Congressional information. It is difficult to
13 navigate, poorly organized and often doesn't
14 contain what the researcher might be looking for.
15 But it's there and it was a start.

16 Even worse than not having access
17 to Congressional information, the text of bills,
18 et cetera, is that other important information
19 like committee hearing transcripts, Congressional
20 research reports and chairman's lists of earmarks,
21 specially appropriated projects, are not available
22 or are available way after the fact in which
23 someone would be interested in.

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1 Even members of Congress and their
2 committees have failed to use their official
3 websites as information centres for their
4 constituents. This is known as the slide of the
5 boring website.

6 Believe it or not we have found
7 that the vast majority of members of Congress
8 failed to list even what bills they sponsor, let
9 alone what votes they take or who they meet with
10 on their websites.

11 While some members are beginning
12 to reach out and to begin to think about how to
13 use their websites as interactive and use them to
14 offer transparency for their activities, most are
15 letting this revolution pass them by.

16 Aside from the shortcomings of
17 already available databases, Congress also fails
18 to disclose important pieces of information.
19 Earmarks, personal financial disclosure, travel
20 reports and other documents are still not put
21 online in a searchable database even after the
22 most recently passed ethics reforms.

23 The U.S. Senate still refuses to

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1 disclose its campaign finance reports
2 electronically. In fact that piece of legislation
3 has been block anonymously for the past six
4 months. The perpetrator of the hold on the
5 legislation just recently came forward.

6 And so the funders of political
7 campaigns remain hidden in many cases until after
8 the election day.

9 While we wait and push for
10 Congress and the rest of the government to catch
11 up with online information and the environment in
12 which information is being made available, public
13 information and public participation will rely on
14 a convergence of government institutions and NGO's
15 in the U.S.

16 Congressional information is now
17 being developed and mashed up and made user
18 friendly on a variety of non-governmental sites,
19 many of which the Sunlight Foundation has funded
20 or operates all in the last 18 months. I
21 calculated a few days ago that in our 18 months we
22 have created as many databases and website to
23 display government information.

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1 There are also projects underway
2 that emphasize public participation in ways that
3 rely on cooperation between members of Congress
4 and outside groups. A terrific example is this
5 one.

6 In late July and early August a
7 top Democratic leader in the U.S. House, Senator
8 Richard Derbin, from Illinois undertook a unique
9 and unprecedented effort to develop legislation
10 with respect to broadband policy on two websites.
11 It might be obvious, open left, a progressive
12 site, red state, a conservative site, two of the
13 leading political sites.

14 He was on the website on a regular
15 basis over the course of a week, he developed
16 videos, joint discussions and then promised to use
17 the ideas that were generated by citizens and
18 lobbyists and interested parties to draft a bill,
19 which he will then post online for further comment
20 before he introduces it in congress. He called
21 this Legislation 2.0.

22 And we are quite intrigued by it
23 because it seemed to work in a very positive and

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1 respectful way and we think that there are other
2 legislators who want to begin to develop their
3 legislation in the same way and, in a sense,
4 garnering citizen support and input at a time at
5 which it had never been solicited before.

6 We have also launched at the
7 Sunlight Foundation a variety of experiments in
8 engaging the public to help shine a light on the
9 darker corners of congress. This is an example of
10 something we launched about 10 days ago, maybe
11 just a week, working with another NGO called
12 Taxpayers for Common Sense.

13 This website, where anyone can
14 investigate the details behind thousands of
15 earmarks that are in two current pending
16 legislative bills, a defence bill and a health and
17 human services bill, and it is a fairly complex
18 effort in which we ask members of the public to
19 dig in and do some research for us. Who are these
20 companies? What is their website? What is the
21 purpose and what can you find out about what they
22 will be making for the federal government?

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1 And more than 500 citizens have
2 engaged in this process, which we find, in a
3 week's time, rather heartening.

4 At present, however, this kind of
5 interactive internet-powered participation is very
6 limited in the U.S. I know that the speakers on
7 this panel have other examples from Canada,
8 Germany, France and just sort of overview comments
9 on how varied the public participation is via the
10 internet. Participative engagement is in mass
11 demand across this new medium and politicians are
12 only beginning to see this. The public needs
13 avenues to fulfil its desire for a more active
14 role in democratic governance and better
15 information.

16 Let me close by just saying that
17 Teddy Roosevelt, our twenty-sixth president,
18 claimed that the best citizen in a democracy is
19 one who is actually in the arena. As more and
20 more citizens seek not to just sit and watch the
21 show, but to enter the game, just to step in and
22 step up, they will need to use the weapon of

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1 choice in the legislative and political process
2 and that is accessible and accurate information.

3 Where legislators have had access
4 to critical information, so should citizens. Only
5 then will an informed citizenry be able to act.

6 Now, I would like to turn this
7 over to our first panellist and I would like to
8 ask each of the panellists to do their own
9 personal introductions, just pretend you are
10 blogging.

11 MR. LENIHEN: Hello, everybody.
12 My name is Don Lenihan. I am the President of
13 something called Crossing Boundaries. In a
14 nutshell, Crossing Boundaries is a national
15 network of politicians and public servants and
16 others across the country who have worked together
17 over 10 years in various forums and ways exploring
18 the impact of information technology on government
19 and governance and how governments should respond.

20 I am actually here today in a
21 related, but slightly different capacity. In the
22 last year I have been asked to serve as the
23 advisor to the Government of New Brunswick -- for

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1 those of you not from Canada, that is one of our
2 provinces -- the Government of New Brunswick as
3 their advisor on public engagement. And in
4 effect, the new premier there said to me, you have
5 talked about all this stuff about using technology
6 to engage the public, I would like to do that, I
7 would like to be the first guy off the block, how
8 do I do it, why don't you come and help me?

9 So I want to talk about that a
10 little bit. And I want to say to you in advance
11 that what I am about to say to you I usually say
12 in three hours, so I will give you a thumbnail
13 sketch of I guess where our thinking is going. I
14 am heading about five pilot projects there that
15 are meant to experiment with different aspects of
16 the public, some are the general public, some are
17 stakeholders, and I will speak a little bit about
18 the process a little bit further on.

19 I guess what I do want to say is
20 that this, in my mind, is far more about
21 engagement than technology. Technology, to me,
22 has always been an enabler, it is a huge and
23 powerful one, I am part of that chorus of people

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1 that says it is that transformative force out here
2 that is bringing us into another era, but it is
3 not clear to me what that future era looks like.
4 And I think unless we do a lot of thinking about
5 how we use the technology and what we use it to do
6 we may go to a place we don't actually want to be
7 in.

8 So let me tell you about the
9 thinking we have been doing about engagement
10 before I tell you a tiny bit about how we see the
11 technology actually taking us forward on that.

12 I have put up here on the screen
13 something we call The Engagement Continuum. And I
14 want to say something about what it means in my
15 mind for governments to engage the public and what
16 I think they need to do to change how they engage
17 the public. If we want to improve democracy and
18 the relationship between government and the
19 public, there are big changes that are necessary.

20 First of all, voice, decision,
21 action, these are fancy words for a very simple,
22 very deeply human process around problem solving.
23 It works something like this. If you are with

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1 some people and you have got a problem, first of
2 all you sit down and everybody gets to put their
3 stuff on the table, let us call that voice. What
4 do you think, what do you think, what do you
5 think, what do you think? And we have been doing
6 this since we were sitting around the campfires in
7 the caves, right? There is nothing new about
8 this, it is deeply human.

9 Once we sit around the table and
10 say what do you think, what do you think, what do
11 you think, then we sort of say about the problem.
12 So who is right? And we start trading ideas and
13 comparing evidence and exchanging things or maybe
14 sometimes we make compromises, it depends what the
15 problem is we are trying to solve. But we move
16 along and we make some decisions. We think
17 through, we exchange ideas, we make some decisions
18 about what we think.

19 And sometimes it stops there but
20 very often we need to go another step. Because
21 once you sort of figure out the problem, well here
22 is what we all said at the beginning and here is
23 what we now sort of thing together is our

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1 diagnosis of the problem. What is the third step?
2 And so what are we going to do about it? Let us
3 move to action.

4 And again, I want to underline
5 this as a deeply deeply human process, we are all
6 affected by it, you go through it with your kids
7 and your families and your colleagues and all
8 sorts of stuff. But let me say this, when we talk
9 about governments engaging in the public this is
10 not what governments do. Governments go the first
11 stage and they rarely get beyond the first stage.
12 So the engagement from most governments is what I
13 would call consultation.

14 And what is consultation? It
15 looks a lot like this, somebody stands up at the
16 front of the room, usually behind a table, and a
17 bunch of the public stands on the other side of
18 the room, usually lining up at microphones or
19 handing briefs or whatever it may be and you come
20 up and you get to say what you think,, right. So
21 we listen dutifully if we are from government or
22 wherever it is. And you come up one at a time and
23 you say I think this and I want you to do this.

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1 And somebody comes up and says, oh no, I think
2 this and I want you to do this. I think C, I
3 think D, I think E. And we go through the whole
4 long list of people and we travel around the
5 country or the province or wherever it may be and
6 we take all our stuff and we go back home or sit
7 in our room as the committee and we review all
8 this stuff, right.

9 And after we have reviewed all
10 this stuff, we make our decisions about what we
11 think and then we make our recommendations to
12 government. We go through decision making and
13 ultimately government probably make some decisions
14 and acts on them and gets a plan and it goes
15 through action.

16 So government's relationship to
17 the public is largely one of voice. We ask what
18 you think. There's nothing wrong with that,
19 consultation has been with us for a very long time
20 and it probably will be. Here is what I want to
21 suggest is why would we think that everything fits
22 into one box? Why do we think that consultation
23 is the only answer to engagement?

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1 And not only that, let me tell you
2 what it is starting to do. As I would argue to
3 you, that engagement is actually -- or that
4 consultation on that model is starting to become
5 hugely destructive to democracy. What we don't
6 seem to realize or we are beginning to realize is
7 it divides the public against itself. If I'm the
8 voice of authority who is going to make the
9 decisions and you are out there and you want me to
10 make your decision, look at the person next to you
11 who is next to get up to the microphone and tell
12 me their story.

13 Remember, there is going to be 40
14 people after you and I am going to listen to them
15 all and I have got to make a decision. So it is
16 in your interest to try to get me to listen to
17 your decision and the person next to you is a
18 competitor, they are not your friend. That means,
19 you start to think how do I actually outwit that
20 person? How do I make my story more compelling?
21 How do I manufacture a crisis, provide exaggerated
22 facts and figures, make this person look not very
23 credible, etc.? And we see more and more of this.

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1 In many cases there are lots of people out
2 there who make a very good living advising people
3 how these squeaky wheels so that ultimately they get
4 the grease when it comes around to influencing
5 government decision_making processes of this type.
6 I think we see this all over the place. I'm not
7 saying it's the only way it happens, but that's the
8 dynamic that we are creating in many places.
9 And not only that, not only does it divide the
10 public against itself, it divides the public against
11 government. Remember, I've got to go __ especially if
12 I'm an elected guy; right? I've got to go away and
13 make a decision. You guys have given me a list of 45
14 options, three of which might actually fit together.
15 The rest of you, when I come back, your ox is
16 going to get gored; right? You are probably not going
17 to be pleased with me, and that's not going to make me
18 very happy. I might be looking for your vote next time
19 around.
20 So ultimately it's an increasingly uncomfortable
21 process that creates not very useful solutions, that
22 divides the public against itself and that ultimately
23 divides the public against government.
24 I guess what I want to say is if we are tired of
25 the process, if the process is not working very well,
26 what is the answer? Change the process; right? Change
27 the process.
28 We need to get beyond simple consultation, at
29 least for many things.
30 So why wouldn't we do something like this. Why
31 wouldn't we allow me as government to sort of say: You
32 know what, I'm tired of being the decision_maker here.
33 Why don't I become the facilitator? Why don't I get
34 you guys to put your chairs in a circle and start
35 talking to each other instead of talking to me?
36 Let's see what you have to say to one another
37 instead of lining up and giving me your grief. Tell
38 each other what you think about the issue. Tell each
39 other what you think your solution is; compare your
40 evidence and start arguing with each other. And I will
41 facilitate that dialogue.
42 Let's see where you get. Let's see if we can
43 break down some of the differences between you. Let's
44 see if we can find some common ground, some common
45 solutions, some common objectives, some compromises and

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1 arrive as close as we can to something that looks like
2 a position we can all live with.
3 I'm not saying it's going to be easy. I'm not
4 saying it's always going to work. I just believe we
5 can do a whole lot better at this.
6 And the way to do it is ultimately to give the
7 public more space to work with itself. Government can
8 actually be a player at that table. It can be a
9 participant.
10 People don't get to make crazy decisions.
11 Ultimately government gets to say, like any other
12 player at the table: You may be asking us for money,
13 but I'm here to tell you we don't have it. We just
14 don't have it. So let's go down another road.
15 So you can have that dialogue with the public.
16 I want to go one step farther and say sometimes
17 you only need to go to decision_making, but sometimes
18 __ and I think we are only beginning to realize this
19 with the public __ you need to go a lot farther. You
20 need to go to action.
21 Let me give you one example.
22 We hear over and over and over again, rightly,
23 that obesity is the new smoking. Obesity is not only a
24 bad thing, it's going to put huge pressure on our
25 health care costs, it slows down people. It's a
26 problem, a social problem. It's the new smoking. It's
27 the social problem of the future.
28 What I want to suggest to you is that governments
29 can't solve that problem on their own. I mean, how
30 could they. Right? Or if they could, it's a world I
31 don't want to live in. Maybe they are going to
32 regulate what you eat to the point where you don't get
33 to choose.
34 Ultimately if we want to solve a problem like
35 obesity, governments may have a very important role to
36 play but in the end individuals are going to have to
37 essentially take responsibility for some very important
38 part of that problem_solving. We have to divide up the
39 responsibilities differently.
40 Government, as I always say, can build you a
41 bicycle path. Government cannot make you get on your
42 bicycle, at least not in any world I want to live in.
43 So what we really ought to be doing is saying in
44 areas where the public requires some kind of change in
45 attitude and behaviour in order to solve the problem we
46 are dealing with, we are going to have to move beyond

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1 simply discussion and deliberation. We are going to
2 have to get them to form and commit to an action plan
3 and transfer some of that responsibility to them.
4 That's not a small task but it's doable. In fact,
5 I would argue if it's not doable, we are in a lot of
6 trouble because it's true on the environment, it's true
7 on literacy, it's true on obesity, it's true on 25
8 issues I could name you very easily.
9 So how do we do that? How do we do that?
10 Let me quickly recap where I am and then just say
11 a tiny bit about what we are trying to do in New
12 Brunswick.
13 In a nutshell, again I think the whole thing is
14 about transferring responsibility or sharing
15 responsibility between governments and citizens __ and
16 not just citizens; it can be stakeholders. Let's just
17 say the public in various forms.
18 And ultimately if you want to engage the public,
19 you need a process by which they will begin to actually
20 work through the issues themselves together, with the
21 facilitation of government or others, and even arrive
22 at a point where they accept responsibility for new
23 action and form a plan of action that they are going to
24 deliver on for obesity or literacy or environmental
25 issues, or whatever it may be.
26 So how do we get there?
27 There is no magic bullet here but I want to show
28 you my second slide.
29 There are not a lot of bells and whistles here. I
30 think the basic idea is meant to be pretty simple.
31 It's how do we take a process and map it onto that
32 thing that I just gave you?
33 This process can be infinitely flexible. There's
34 all kinds of different ways we are using it. Sometimes
35 we are using some to intersect others.
36 I just want to make a couple of points about it.
37 That's all I have time for here.
38 Here is what we would have done.
39 I've been doing processes now for 20 years and
40 here is what we did in many, many cases in the past
41 when we wanted to talk to the public.
42 You see those round circles? Let's call them
43 roundtables. I've done more roundtables than you can
44 shake a stick at. Maybe some of you were at some of
45 them. Maybe some of you wish you weren't. Maybe some
46 of you have held your own.

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1 The bottom line is if you bring a bunch of
2 stakeholders or whoever it may be to a series of three
3 or four roundtables, especially in a country the size
4 of Canada, it gets very expensive. It takes a long
5 time for people to travel there, think about this
6 conference. You bring them there. It costs a lot of
7 money. You get them there one, two, three times to
8 have a discussion on some important issue.

9 The bottom line is in a case like that, you don't
10 really get much of a discussion going. It tends to be
11 a consultation. And that's not a bad thing. But what
12 we do is we hear what others think and some of us
13 dutifully take notes and then go away and try to do the
14 best we can in synthesizing this and maybe we send the
15 report out for comment from them.

16 What we don't get is we don't get them really
17 deeply discussing with each other, working through the
18 issues, and beginning to take responsibility for
19 solving some of those problems and then forming an
20 action plan for the simple reason that it takes too
21 long.

22 And this is where, frankly, I think the Internet
23 ___ and let me make this really simple; the technology
24 we are using in these processes right now is very
25 simple ___ is potentially a bit of a miracle. Maybe a
26 big miracle.

27 It suddenly makes it possible, especially in a
28 country the size of Canada, to not only have
29 essentially a few roundtable processes where you bring
30 people together face_to_face and they can talk to each
31 other, you can connect them together in this period of
32 time (off microphone)

33 And that's what we are doing. It's very simple.
34 We are just using basically a website where I can
35 moderate a discussion and the 30 or 35 stakeholders in
36 the process will come together online whenever they
37 want ___ it's 24/7; it's password protected ___ and
38 essentially they get to start blogging, dialoguing, use
39 the word you like, with each other.

40 But they are not just doing it freely. They are
41 doing it in a structured process and there are
42 questions they have to answer and they have to work
43 with each other to work through a process.

44 Just to give you one example, we have a process
45 right now which is on skills development. We brought
46 together 35 stakeholders from across the province of

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1 New Brunswick. They are from business and labour and
2 post secondary education and a wide variety of things.
3 What we are making them do is we are making them get to
4 the end point __ where I have "action plan" there, we
5 are making them generate their own action plan that
6 they have to work through together.

7 What that means is they have to sit down and at
8 the first roundtable they have to name six issues that
9 they think that group of 35 people is well positioned
10 to solve. And government is one stakeholder at the
11 table.

12 Then what they have to do is take those issues one
13 at a time and work through them together online as a
14 group and decide what's the issue here. Do we have it
15 framed right? What's the solution or the strategy we
16 all think is the right strategy to solve this problem?
17 Who is best positioned to do that? And ultimately is
18 that person or persons ready to do it? Until we get an
19 accumulated list of 10 or 12, whatever it may be,
20 actions at the end.

21 And the real point that I want to make to you is
22 when people go through that process, it is back to that
23 decision_making process, they think through the issues.
24 They become committed to them. They take
25 responsibility for them and they sign off on an action
26 plan that is their own.

27 And that's a very different way for governments to
28 do business. It's not the government's action plan;
29 it's theirs.

30 I guess in the end what we are aiming at in this
31 process really is a much more effective way of
32 collaborating, that transfers responsibility to a group
33 of people and lets them seriously work together and
34 solve problems together.

35 Let me just say in conclusion three simple things
36 about the way I look at this process as evolving. I
37 think this is an enrichment of democracy. We are doing
38 things with the general public as well.

39 The first thing is I think this is a way of
40 genuinely enhancing our ability to collaborate across
41 organizational boundaries, not just governments;
42 governments and stakeholders, governments and the
43 general public.

44 Second, there is no guarantee. I've heard so many
45 times that people say the technology, the technology is
46 inherently democratizing. It's going to democratize us

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1 all. I'm a deep sceptic about that. I think it could
2 do lots of things, good or bad. It's neutral. It's an
3 enabler.

4 I think we have to think as much about how we use
5 those processes, that technology, to transform and
6 strengthen the democratic processes we have as just
7 assuming that the technology will do it of itself.
8 There is no guarantee in my mind that that is true at
9 all.

10 The last thing I want to say in
11 closing is we are using very simple technology here,
12 with small numbers of people. We want to learn a lot
13 about the processes, about the engagement process,
14 about transfer of responsibility. But the expectation
15 is if we get good at this, five or ten years down the
16 road we could use much more powerful technology
17 that would engage hundreds or thousands of people
18 potentially online in dialogues that are much more
19 sophisticated than these and that would really
20 move the yardsticks on democracy.

21 So let me stop there and thank you
22 very much for the time to make those comments.

23 --- Applause

24 MS MILLER: Thank you. A
25 remarkable condensation if that is down from three
26 hours. Thank you, Don. I have lots of questions
27 but let's go through the rest of the

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1 presentations.

2 Quitterie.

3 MME DELMAS : Bonjour à tous.

4 Je suis Quitterie Delmas. Je suis
5 Parisienne, Française. Je suis très heureuse
6 d'être parmi vous, avec vous.

7 Nous sortons, en France, d'une
8 campagne présidentielle, et ça fait du bien de
9 pouvoir voyager et de se ressentir, enfin, une
10 citoyenne du monde et pas que dans ses problèmes
11 franco-français.

12 Je suis ici pour vous apporter un
13 témoignage sur ce qu'on a pu vivre, notamment,
14 dans la partie blogger.

15 Alors, je me présente rapidement.
16 Donc, je suis une bloggeuse politique. Il n'y a
17 pas encore beaucoup de femmes qui sont des
18 bloggeuses politiques, mais pour moi, c'est une
19 bonne manière de s'investir en politique quand on
20 a, notamment, une famille et un travail, de
21 pouvoir partager et porter ses convictions.

22 Je suis également rédactrice sur
23 un nouveau média qui s'appelle AGORAVOX, qui a été

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1 lancé il y a deux ans, qui a un million de
2 visiteurs par mois, et qui, en fait, est né face à
3 la défiance que les Français avaient vis-à-vis des
4 grands médias classiques, les journaux télévisés,
5 et qui, en fait, quotidiennement, il y a des
6 articles de rédacteurs qui soient simples
7 citoyens, donc, un peu de journalisme d'opinion,
8 mais aussi des experts, des avocats, des médecins,
9 des chercheurs, et toute une partie d'enquêtes qui
10 se font à partir de données qui sont offertes par
11 des internautes et qui sont ensuite traduites, et
12 où il y a des comptes rendus faits par des
13 journalistes.

14 Également, je me suis occupée de
15 la campagne d'un candidat à l'élection
16 présidentielle en France qui s'appelait François
17 Bayrou, qui a commencé la campagne à 6 pour cent,
18 qui l'a finie à 18 et demi pour cent, et lui aussi
19 a réussi à émerger grâce à internet.

20 On ne peut pas ne pas parler de la
21 campagne aussi réalisée par Ségolène Royal, qui a
22 aussi perdu, comme François Bayrou, mais qui a été
23 très innovante dans la pratique de la démocratie

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1 participative, notamment, dans la première partie
2 de la campagne, sur justement Désirs d'avenir, qui
3 était son site internet et qui a posé des
4 questions aux citoyens, qui ont pu participer à
5 l'élaboration de son programme.

6 Pour re-situer le contexte, donc,
7 en France, il y a une grande défiance face aux
8 politiques en général, qui ne sont pas aujourd'hui
9 très représentatives de la population puisqu'on a
10 des politiques qui sont vieillissantes, qui sont
11 essentiellement masculins et essentiellement dans
12 la fonction publique, et qui, donc, ne sont pas
13 représentatives.

14 On a aussi un problème avec nos
15 grands médias classiques, comme je l'ai déjà dit,
16 et effectivement, internet est une bouffée d'air
17 frais pour tous ceux qui ont envie d'avoir de
18 l'information juste.

19 On a vu l'influence de l'internet
20 dans deux événements. Le premier, c'était le
21 référendum sur le Traité constitutionnel européen,
22 qui a été rejeté par les Français, alors que tous
23 disaient au début de la campagne qu'il allait

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1 avoir 90 pour cent des Français qui allaient voter
2 oui, 90 pour cent des parlementaires votaient oui,
3 les grands médias disaient qu'ils allaient voter
4 oui, et c'est sur internet via des blogs de
5 particuliers qui ont démonté point par point la
6 constitution, que, finalement, le non a gagné.
7 C'était quelque chose qui n'était pas organisé
8 mais qui s'est, en tout cas, révélé dans les
9 urnes.

10 Le deuxième grand moment
11 d'internet, c'est normal, c'est des grands moments
12 de questions nationales, c'était la campagne
13 présidentielle, et je retiens quelques souvenirs.

14 Le premier, c'est l'impact sur les
15 citoyens. On a vu que les citoyens, ce sont eux
16 qui ont été les grands vainqueurs de cette
17 campagne présidentielle puisqu'ils ont réussi à
18 s'informer et ils sont devenus acteurs de leur
19 information. Ils ont pu comparer leurs sources et
20 vérifier, finalement, qu'il faut avoir plusieurs
21 prises sur une même information pour se forger sa
22 propre opinion.

23 Donc, on a vu un nombre de

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1 personnes incalculable se rendre sur internet, que
2 ce soit des très jeunes ou que ce soit aussi des
3 très vieux retraités, qui ont pris l'habitude,
4 comme ils ont du temps, pour aller se renseigner
5 sur internet. Ils sont, donc, devenus eux-mêmes
6 acteurs de leur propre information. Ils ont aussi
7 pu se former et aussi comparer les différents
8 programmes.

9 Un nombre de sites incalculable
10 sont sortis sur la comparaison des programmes, et
11 finalement, qui ont permis aux citoyens d'au lieu
12 de se référer par rapport à l'étiquette dans
13 laquelle vous êtes né... vous naissez parfois à
14 gauche, parfois à droite. Eh bien, finalement,
15 c'est en regardant les programmes qu'on sait vers
16 quel candidat se tourner, et ça aussi beaucoup
17 joué pour le candidat François Bayrou qui était au
18 centre, donc, ni à gauche, ni à droite, et qui,
19 finalement, a pu faire entendre son projet via
20 internet.

21 Il y a eu aussi une capacité de
22 fédérer les gens sur internet, les citoyens, qui
23 se sont rencontrés sur des thématiques communes,

1 notamment, sur la thématique du développement
2 durable, qui était vraiment au premier plan de
3 cette élection présidentielle, et on voit que
4 cette problématique du développement durable a une
5 capacité à fédérer de façon beaucoup plus large
6 que les appareils politiques dont on a l'habitude.

7 C'est aussi ce qui explique la
8 diminution du parti des Verts et le fait qu'ils
9 aient fait un score très, très petit.

10 On a vu aussi qu'il y avait,
11 évidemment, un contre-pouvoir, internet étant un
12 contre-pouvoir pour les citoyens qui n'arrivent
13 pas à s'exprimer, notamment, dans leur ville. On
14 voit parfois qu'on a quelques petits problèmes
15 démocratiques pour l'opposition dans certaines
16 villes des Hauts-de-Seine, et c'est intéressant de
17 suivre des expériences locales.

18 Alors, si vous avez l'occasion
19 d'aller voir des sites comme MonPuteaux, qui est
20 une ville un peu fermée, ou MaLuempe (ph), où on
21 voit qu'il y a aussi une voix qui peut être
22 entendue grâce à internet et à des internautes.

23 On voit très clairement aussi

1 l'influence de l'internet sur l'exercice
2 législatif, mais pour l'instant, ce n'est pas du
3 tout organisé, et c'est un peu triste. C'est ce
4 qui me fait dire que les candidats à l'élection
5 présidentielle se sont servis de l'internet comme
6 un média classique pour faire du marketing comme
7 si on vendait une lessive. Donc, on a vu leurs
8 programmes déversés du haut vers le bas. Donc,
9 ça, ils ont bien compris l'intérêt, notamment,
10 Nicolas Sarkozy.

11 En revanche, pour faire remonter,
12 on peut dire que François Bayrou a essayé de le
13 faire, Ségolène Royal aussi, mais il n'y a encore
14 pas du tout de concrétisation dans la vie publique
15 et politique quotidienne. Notamment, sur le site
16 de l'Assemblée nationale ou du Sénat, aucun effort
17 n'a été fait.

18 Alors, il me semble qu'au
19 parlement européen, ça commence, et c'est bien.
20 Il y a deux appels d'offre qui sont là pour faire
21 interagir les citoyens et les élus.

22 Je pense qu'on commence à
23 progresser, mais les politiques, et je vous ai

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1 décrit un peu notre classe politique, qui est un
2 peu vieillissante, a un peu peur. Il y a une
3 réaction de peur vis-à-vis des nouveaux médias et
4 aussi un bouleversement de hiérarchie interne dans
5 les partis politiques, puisque le simple militant,
6 le simple blogueur qui a des milliers de visites
7 par jour sur son blog devient beaucoup plus
8 influant que l'élu, le sénateur, le parlementaire,
9 qui passe une fois tous les six mois à la
10 télévision.

11 Et donc, c'est tout un
12 bouleversement, une vraie révolution que nous
13 sommes en train de vivre, et je pense que les
14 politiques auraient tout intérêt à faire confiance
15 et à essayer d'accompagner ce mouvement plutôt que
16 d'avoir une réaction de peur.

17 On a vu, pendant la campagne
18 présidentielle, des textes passés sur la création
19 d'un comité de déontologie sur internet, où le
20 rapport Marc Tessier, qui a envie de contrôler
21 cette espace de liberté et toute la communauté
22 internet reste très vigilante vis-à-vis ça puisque
23 nous sommes tous attachés à notre liberté.

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1 Il y a une petite carte que
2 j'avais envie de vous montrer pour illustrer mon
3 propos, et surtout vous montrer que l'internet est
4 en train de bouleverser durablement le paysage
5 politique.

6 --- Pause

7 MME DELMAS : Ici, vous avez un
8 outil qui a été très utile pendant la campagne,
9 qui permettait de voir les différents logosphères
10 de chaque candidat et de chaque couleur politique.

11 Donc, en rouge, par exemple, vous
12 voyez la gauche, en orange le centre, en bleu la
13 droite, et puis d'autres partis politiques plus
14 petits.

15 Vous voyez que c'est un
16 échantillon de sites internet... si j'arrive à
17 faire marcher ça. On va y arriver.

18 Vous pouvez voir dans les liens
19 rouge et jaune de différents partis politiques
20 qu'il y a énormément d'interaction, de liens
21 entrant et de liens sortant, ce qui montre que,
22 finalement, les citoyens commencent à se rendre
23 compte qu'ils ont été rangés dans des cases, dans

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1 des castes, et qu'il y avait un peu des murs de
2 ballants entre des militants de différents partis
3 ou des citoyens qui se croyaient de gauche ou de
4 droite, et que, finalement, ils se sont rendus
5 compte sur internet qu'ils pouvaient discuter
6 ensemble, et que, plus qu'on ne pouvait le croire
7 avant, ils étaient d'accord, ils avaient envie de
8 porter des mêmes problématiques ensemble.

9 C'est vraiment, pour nous, un
10 bouleversement complet de voir qu'il y a une
11 nouvelle composition de ces partis politiques et
12 qu'on va aujourd'hui vivre un grand bouleversement
13 qui arrive.

14 Dernière chose que je voulais vous
15 dire, c'est, en fait, en plus de cette carte, ce
16 qui serait intéressant de développer comme outil,
17 et ce que nous n'avons pas encore, c'est sur quels
18 mots, sur quelles valeurs se rassemblent ces
19 personnes.

20 Aujourd'hui, je peux voir les
21 liens hypertextes. On est capable de voir qu'à
22 l'UDF, on communique avec tous les partis
23 politiques, mais qu'est-ce qui nous rassemble et

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1 qu'est-ce qui nous divise, et je pense que c'est à
2 partir de là, et si, par miracle, l'un d'entre
3 vous avait un logiciel adapté à ça, on pourrait
4 vraiment comprendre ce bouleversement du paysage
5 politique en France.

6 Voilà! Donc, en gros, c'est un
7 vrai espace de liberté. On attend beaucoup de
8 choses, notamment, pour les nouvelles générations
9 politiques qui réussissent à émerger grâce à
10 internet, des nouveaux visages, des nouvelles
11 pratiques politiques, et il nous manque encore des
12 outils.

13 Voilà!

14 --- Applaudissements / Applause

15 MS MILLER: Thank you.

16 And our last speaker on the panel
17 is Wolfgang Blau.

18 MR. BLAU: Hard act to follow.

19 Hi, my name is Wolfgang Blau. I
20 am a journalist working in Germany and the United
21 States. I moved to California in '99, primarily
22 to cover media industries of all kinds, newspaper,
23 radio, to a lesser extent also film and the music

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1 industry and just observing how well they were
2 doing in their transition onto the internet.

3 In 2004 I was covering the last
4 presidential election with a special emphasis on
5 the use of the internet. Early 2005 I covered the
6 internet based rescue efforts after the tsunami
7 catastrophe in Southeast Asia. You might remember
8 that also several thousand German families for a
9 few days didn't know where their loved ones are
10 and the internet suddenly played a very important
11 role. And I'm about to move back to Washington,
12 D.C. to cover the next election.

13 I want to speak to you today about
14 the media industry and lessons that e-democracy
15 government projects could take from the failures,
16 the multi-billion dollar failures of the media
17 industry in their attempts to transition onto the
18 internet.

19 Because I think there are some
20 very important lessons to learn specifically from
21 the media industry because what's special about
22 that sector is that not only they were very well
23 funded, overall that sector did very well in the

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1 90s', but they also different from any other
2 industry segment, pretty much had free
3 advertisement for their own online projects. You
4 could advertise in their broadcast and print
5 outlets to make these new online ventures known
6 and most of the times that didn't really help them
7 very much.

8 When you cover an industry in the
9 beginning of course you, as a journalist, are
10 obsessed with all the details. But after a while
11 at least I became more interested in the patterns
12 that I saw emerging. Sometimes in some industry
13 segments it looked like lemmings going off the
14 cliff, repeating the same mistake over and over
15 again.

16 And I started wondering, why that
17 is. And I saw several mistakes emerge that were
18 being made repeatedly. First is that across the
19 board, newspaper, radio, television, they overlaid
20 their offline business model onto the internet.
21 And second, they didn't anticipate that innovation
22 is more likely to come from the outside of their
23 industry and not from the inside.

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1 And I think these are two
2 important lessons that governments also should
3 take in looking at their own internet strategies.

4 Let me give you a few quick
5 examples: radio stations. When radio stations
6 started looking at the internet in the mid-90's,
7 they couldn't come up with anything more inventive
8 than offering a 24-7 live stream.

9 Now, the internet really is not a
10 very good live medium at this point and that kind
11 of a thing actually emphasizes the weakness of the
12 internet at a time when we don't have affordable,
13 ubiquitous mobile internet access, which means if
14 you want to listen to a radio station now you're
15 tied to your PC versus being able to listen to a
16 radio in your car.

17 Similar with newspapers.
18 Newspapers and print media have a deep
19 understanding of graphic advertisement. So, the
20 best form of advertisement they could up with for
21 the internet was the banner ad. And then it took
22 again an outsider, Google, to educate print media
23 about the power of text-based contextual

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1 advertisement.

2 And across all these industries,
3 in radio it was podcasters and highly customized
4 stations like Pandora and Last.fm that educated
5 radio stations about the true power of the
6 internet.

7 In television similarly it was
8 podcasters who educated television stations about
9 the power of the web as an on demand medium.

10 In newspapers it was the bloggers
11 who really educated newspapers about RSS as a
12 powerful distribution mechanism and about
13 commentaries as a way to involve your readers.
14 And I already mentioned Google as an outsider who
15 taught and Yahoo also to a lesser degree, who
16 taught newspapers about the power of new forms of
17 web-based advertisement.

18 And I could go on with these
19 examples but that are the two primary mistakes I
20 saw, that they repeated. And then after they had
21 realized these two mistakes they made another
22 mistake. Then they started observing what these
23 new non-commercial start-ups were doing and then

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1 they thought they could just re-engineer it.

2 And they looked at the Web 2.0
3 phenomenon as a technological phenomenon. And
4 there were actually serious projects within the
5 media industry where people said, let's just
6 rebuild Wikipedia and we'll put ads on it.

7 And if you look at Wikipedia of
8 course from a technological standpoint it's not
9 rocket science. It's fairly simple to rebuild the
10 technical aspect of it. But then populating it
11 with the right users and with quality content and
12 a culture is a totally different ballpark.

13 And that is also something I think
14 governments should look at. There are very
15 interesting, let's say, user generated government
16 projects.

17 For instance, one project I really
18 like in Spain is called Canal Accessible(ph) where
19 people in wheelchairs use Google maps to map all
20 the impasses in town where they don't get through
21 with their wheelchairs and upload pictures and use
22 all the available technologies to really create a
23 rich database and also give handicapped people a

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1 sense of involvement and a sense that they can
2 contribute to their communities.

3 Now, the typical response of local
4 governments would be to say, well that's really
5 great, we should build that on a larger scale
6 instead of cooperating with what already exists.
7 Because again that happens if you look at these
8 projects as a technological invention instead of
9 also realizing there's a culture that governments
10 necessarily cannot recreate on their own.

11 A fourth mistake I often saw is
12 that media companies did not anticipate that the
13 web would change their own offline business model
14 and modus operandi. Something you can see in
15 journalism a lot where we journalists are fighting
16 against the changes that we are now seeing in our
17 print and conventional broadcast world.

18 For instance if as a television
19 station you know that a certain program is being
20 seen a lot by podcast subscribers, of course you
21 have to offer shorter elements.

22 Another thing is that the current
23 compression algorithms, the different streaming

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1 technologies don't like panning and zooming, it
2 creates jittery images. And so many television
3 stations now tell their cameramen, don't zoom and
4 don't pan as much anymore because we also want to
5 broadcast this piece of yours on the web.

6 And again, I think you better
7 anticipate as a government that the first step is
8 offering transparency, offering an API so that
9 people can use your data. But in the long run,
10 user citizens will also change their view on what
11 your role as a government actually is.

12 And that will change your own
13 practices as new media technologies have always
14 done. I mean radio changed journalism; television
15 changed journalism and so does the internet.

16 Now, after having mapped out these
17 four typical mistakes over the years, I realized
18 that many people in the media business new about
19 these mistakes just as well and still kept
20 repeating the same errors over and over again.

21 And I don't mean to point fingers
22 at the media business. I consider myself part of
23 the media business and many of these mistakes I

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1 made myself. We are all just trying to understand
2 this web thing and what it's actually doing.

3 What I came to think is that there
4 are some very powerful narratives in the working
5 which is the narrative of how we even understand
6 the internet. What is the internet? It's really
7 worth asking yourself that question.

8 It seems like a philosophical
9 question without consequence, pretty much like
10 asking, what is art. You know you get a thousand
11 answers and still you don't know what is art. But
12 it is worth asking the question, what is the
13 internet? Let's describe what it is.

14 The first powerful narrative that
15 emerged in the 90's of course was that the
16 internet is the super information highway. And
17 that was a very misleading narrative because it's
18 everything but a highway. I think it had a lot to
19 do with Al Gore who was instrumental in the
20 legislation and whose father was instrumental in
21 setting up the American interstate highway system.
22 And so young Al thought, look dad, I also built a
23 highway or something like that.

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1 --- Laughter/Rires

2 MR. BLAU: But it really stuck and
3 it I think caused a lot of damage.

4 The second narrative already was a
5 bit more education because then people started
6 looking at what is the internet actually doing.
7 And then came the narrative of that the internet
8 is cutting out the middleman or the middle-woman.

9 That is a narrative that I think
10 is still very prevalent also in the political
11 scene in Washington right now where of course
12 politicians see the media as their former
13 middleman that they were dependent on to reach
14 their voters. And so they very much enjoy being
15 able to approach their voters directly.

16 But that's not all the internet is
17 doing. And in 2004, two new powerful narratives
18 emerged. One is of course, long tail and again in
19 politics that for instance shows itself in that
20 even highly specialized interest topics now find
21 their support groups.

22 And there's also the long tail of
23 campaign finance. I'm sure you have heard about

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1 Barack Obama's recent donation statistics. And
2 what's remarkable is that the average donation of
3 his supporters now is around \$230 which is really
4 a trend that began in 2004 is that the small
5 donations, the long tail of donations is really
6 showing.

7 Web 2.0 I thought was a more
8 difficult narrative because people try to define
9 it technologically but all the technological
10 elements of Web 2.0, RSS, Style sheets, HX and all
11 the other things, this whole, you know, alphabet
12 soup of acronyms, are all things that have been
13 around, some of them for many, many years. And I
14 think if anything Web 2.0 really marks a time
15 where we, the bigger we, humanity, began realizing
16 what this internet thing really is.

17 And these kinds of delays are very
18 typical. You see it many times in the history of
19 technologies.

20 James Watt didn't anticipate
21 locomotives and that anybody would want to install
22 steam engines on vehicles. Gutenberg didn't see
23 that you could do more than just print more Bibles

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1 within one day but that this printing press would
2 also trigger a revolution of science. And Bill
3 Gates didn't foresee the internet, really,
4 something he never really recovered from.

5 What I like about Web 2.0 is
6 though that it showed us that there is a cultural
7 shift happening. Because that's really the only
8 thing Web 2.0 can describe is a different cultural
9 collective set of behaviours.

10 I, from my own work, not to sell
11 one more theory or to sell one more book, was just
12 not satisfied with these narratives and needed for
13 my own work as a journalist, which is very much
14 making things understandable also for lay people,
15 I needed a different narrative for myself.

16 And the best I could come up with
17 so far is the scheme that you can see here on the
18 screen of a transition from the pyramid to the
19 circle. And it has nothing to do with political
20 orientation left or right or good or bad. The
21 pyramid isn't bad and the circle isn't good. It's
22 just different modes of mapping our own world.

23 And one thing I noticed is that

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1 feudalism is still prevalent even though we have
2 democracies. But a lot of feudalistic thinking is
3 still used when we map our own world. When we see
4 in our school history books how our constitution
5 works, in many countries you still see a pyramid
6 with the government at the top and then the
7 parliament in the middle and the voters at the
8 bottom.

9 In the past it was the king, the
10 nobility, the clergy and serfs.

11 We used it many times to show the
12 organizations of our corporations with the CEO and
13 the shareholders at the top, the employees at the
14 bottom.

15 In some ways that's how we still
16 map our spiritual world with the respective god at
17 the top and the whole midrange of saints and
18 things like that and the humans at the bottom.

19 And even in humanist psychology,
20 in the advertisement industry especially, of
21 course you all have met Maslow's Hierarchy of
22 Needs in, Europe we even say the pyramid of needs,
23 something that seems very natural and

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1 understandable and logical to us. But in many
2 other cultures the idea of giving physical needs a
3 higher ranking order than let's say mental needs
4 would be considered almost crazy.

5 Now, when we look at the more
6 spherical modes of organization, this is what is
7 happening in that our borders are blurring. A key
8 element of the pyramidal organizations, whether
9 it's religions, nations, corporations or media
10 business models is that there was a very clear
11 definition and who is in and who is out. Where
12 does the journalism end and where do the users
13 begin? Where does the government apparatus end?
14 Where does the public sphere begin?

15 And I think one of the most
16 confusing things of our time is this blurring of
17 borders. Media companies were very confused by
18 looking at some of these new start-ups. They
19 couldn't figure out, are they commercial or are
20 they non-commercial? This Craigslist in the U.S.,
21 is that a business or is that a citizen movement?
22 What is that thing? And they didn't know how to
23 fight it also.

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1 The workplace, same thing. In the
2 past we knew exactly who was in the company and
3 who was in the outside. Now we have this whole
4 world of freelance people or people working for
5 several companies at a time. We have people who
6 live in different nations, double citizenship.

7 All these things are fairly new
8 and I think that's also a mindset of the fixed
9 borders that governments and people who work in e-
10 government projects have to face this confusion
11 how to deal with citizens who think that their
12 user-generated or voter-generated government
13 projects know better than you and your government
14 yourself.

15 Many times when you speak with
16 people who are still in this mindset of the
17 pyramid, you hear them speak about the internet as
18 a place instead of something that permeates all of
19 our life like electricity.

20 People say, where did you buy
21 that? And they say, I went onto the internet and
22 I bought it on the internet. Younger people often
23 say, I bought it online, which describes how they

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1 bought it and not where they bought it.

2 I think we are experiencing a
3 shift in values. If I can flip this to the next
4 slide; it's very simple; there's actually not much
5 being added. Yeah, one back. I think the
6 definition of power in the more pyramidal mindset
7 was power is measured by how much control you
8 exert. Controlling the message a very big topic
9 in politics.

10 The lead currency right now is
11 authenticity. We have all learned that you cannot
12 control the message on the internet. So, all you
13 can do is be very authentic.

14 What does this all mean for
15 governments? Ask yourself, who is the middleman
16 because there will be a middleman or middle-woman
17 that will be cut out eventually, the more citizen-
18 generated government projects there will be.

19 Assume that user-generated
20 government projects will also change your internal
21 modus operandi. Don't think you can build and
22 populate platforms on your own. Sometimes you
23 have to go to where the action already is.

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1 Let me tell you, Google tried to
2 just copy the idea of a social network based on
3 other projects that were already out there. And
4 Google, with all it's power, was not able to make
5 Orkut its social network. A competitor in the
6 U.S., Orkut got populated in Brazil as the market
7 leader in Brazil, but that's not what Google had
8 in mind.

9 Don't just think of the internet
10 as a pipeline to the voter and back. I think this
11 is something you already have described in much
12 better terms. I'm personally looking forward to
13 platforms that allow for public deliberation, that
14 don't just treat the internet as a delivery
15 platform from the voter to the voter. But I look
16 forward to platforms that help citizens also
17 understand how complex some topics really are.

18 And lastly expect topics on the
19 voter's agenda that you yourself don't think are
20 really important. You might have heard about
21 former Prime Minister Blair's idea of an online
22 petitioning system where citizens could petition
23 for certain topics. And one of the most popular

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1 topics in the British citizenry was that the
2 British Anthem should be replaced by a pop song of
3 Spandau Ballet.

4 --- Laughter/Rires

5 MR. BLAU: And that's something
6 journalists are also wrestling with at large is
7 that now on line we can see exactly how popular
8 each article is. In the past we only know how
9 many copies a magazine sold. Now, we know which
10 article is the most popular. And often that can
11 be very intriguing and often it can be very
12 frustrating.

13 In closing, I think it is also
14 important to remember that our lifespans are very
15 short. And what's happening right now maybe isn't
16 so brand new at all. It's just happening with new
17 technologies.

18 I think we are actually returning
19 to something. We are returning to a culture and
20 we are also returning, especially on a local
21 level, to modes of government that we had before,
22 before the advent of broadcasting of the age of
23 industrialization. We are going back to a culture

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1 that is what it always was, highly regionalized,
2 highly diverse and mostly non-commercial and
3 driven by amateurs.

4 An amateur is now a somewhat
5 derogatory term. But it comes from the Latin
6 word, amare which means to love something, to be
7 passionate about something. And I think citizens
8 who are passionate, who express their love for
9 their community is the one thing we need the most
10 and that we should really welcome in our
11 democracies.

12 Thank you.

13 --- Applause/Applaudissements

14 MS MILLER: That's a terrific note
15 to end on.

16 Thank you, Wolfgang.

17 We have a few minutes for
18 questions. And I apologize if the panellists have
19 gone on too long. We're all quite passionate
20 obviously about our work and our observations.

21 But we have two microphones here.
22 If you would just come up, introduce yourself
23 briefly and if the question is addressed to the

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1 whole panel, let us know that or if one specific
2 person, that's fine too.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. SKOCK: Hi. My name is
5 Vladimir Skock. I run the Canadian Cultural
6 Observatory in culture.ca at Canadian Heritage.

7 E-consultation and going beyond
8 consultation to engagement is something everybody
9 is talking about. I'd like a really frank
10 assessment whether you think governments in
11 advanced democracies are actually ready for it
12 and are they ready for what, you know, the Web 2.0
13 social technology platforms?

14 And should in fact those platforms
15 for those types of consultations be on government
16 sites or are the rules around government sites not
17 letting it really happen as the technology is
18 making it available?

19 MS MILLER: Terrific. Don, you
20 want to respond, or begin to respond?

21 MR. LENIHEN: Sure, I guess I can
22 give you a short -- I think a short and frank
23 response, at least from where I come from.

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1 The first thing I'd say is this,
2 is the status quo is no longer an option. I'm
3 thinking of the political system that we've got.

4 Our practice is a democracy, such
5 as they exist, and it is changing. And I think on
6 the other hand the political culture and the
7 institutions themselves have not changed or not
8 changed much. It remains very much as it was, it
9 is a command and control system to sort of move to
10 some of the things that Wolfgang said. We do need
11 to move more towards his circle.

12 But here is where I think we are.
13 For most politicians the risk of moving to a much
14 more collaborative and open kind of system is
15 high. They promise to the public, the public
16 still plays the game, the public wants the
17 promises and then if they don't deliver we can
18 live with that. What they are not ready to do is
19 actually take a very different way of engaging
20 people.

21 And I guess I would say this, is
22 that right now there is only one or two directions
23 that we can go. Either, as it gets harder and

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1 harder for politicians to deliver on conventional
2 agendas, they get more and more centralized, they
3 start pulling on the reins, right. First they
4 choke their own sort of the people that work for
5 them, the departments, and then they choke their
6 ministers.

7 And you can only choke so many
8 people and you are pulling so hard on the reins
9 trying to control the world around you that I
10 think you have got to realize that that is not
11 going to work. You have to change the way you
12 play the game and open up, if you like, and become
13 more collaborative, move more towards the circle.
14 There are a few politicians I think. I would like
15 to say right now, one of the reasons I am in New
16 Brunswick is they are trying to do something like
17 that, they are trying to say the right way is not
18 more consolidation and more centralization, it is
19 to loosen up on the reins and bring other people
20 into the tent.

21 And there is only two choices and
22 we are going to find out one way or another I
23 think that the first one just doesn't work.

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1 MME DELMAS : Effectivement, on
2 n'est pas prêt. Les outils sont là, mais la
3 volonté politique n'est pas encore là en France.
4 J'ai un peu critiqué Nicolas Sarkozy, mais il a
5 mis en place, lors du modèle de l'environnement,
6 des blogs. Donc, déjà, on pourrait. C'est déjà
7 pas mal.

8 Mais ce qu'il faut, c'est
9 recréditer la démocratie représentative. On élit
10 des gens, et on se rend compte que, finalement,
11 via internet, on peut être aussi, quasiment aussi
12 qualifié qu'eux, et on a envie, du coup, de
13 pouvoir les aider et on a besoin d'être écouté par
14 eux.

15 Et moi, ce que j'attends, c'est
16 qu'on donne du sens à cette démocratie
17 représentative, qui, pour une fois, prendrait
18 vraiment de la valeur, et ces activités entre les
19 élus, qu'il y ait plus de transparence dans le
20 modèle de ce que Ellen Miller a montré tout à
21 l'heure.

22 MR. BLAU: I think that maybe one
23 of the most powerful things a government can do is

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1 offer APIs, application interfaces where then
2 citizens can use this enormous wealth of
3 government data. And I think governments will be
4 surprised by what users will do, citizens will do
5 with that data and what new creative solutions
6 they will come up with.

7 In regards to the motivation of
8 governments to move online, I sometimes look at
9 governments as monopolies. And this fact that
10 they are monopolies within their countries is
11 balanced by the fact that the whole team ideally
12 gets exchanged frequently. But still, they don't
13 have a competitor in that sense. And media
14 companies also were dragging their feet and what
15 forced them to go on line; was the traffic that
16 user-generated content created and also the fact
17 that there is always one who is more courageous
18 and who is going ahead and then the others have to
19 follow.

20 I think, like you said, Don,
21 politicians have a lot to lose, just like
22 journalists have a lot to lose in what is
23 happening right now. There will always be

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1 journalists, but maybe a different kind of
2 journalist. And I looked around in different
3 industries and in different sectors of society,
4 for instance, in the energy industry we have user-
5 generated energy now and over the internet the
6 role of energy companies is totally changing. You
7 see even the military, the role of professional
8 soldiers and especially generals is changing
9 because there is user-generated battlefield
10 intelligence that is changing the doctrines. There
11 is even journalists, more corporate R&D in many
12 other areas.

13 So the professionals always have
14 their place, there will always be a place for
15 professional politicians. But just like in these
16 other professions, they will have to upgrade and I
17 think their role will go more towards being a
18 moderator. Just like, again, journalists really
19 have to upgrade their skill set right now so that
20 they have an advantage and an added value that
21 legitimizes that they want to sell their content.

22 MS MILLER: We have just time for
23 one more question. I don't see anyone at the

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1 microphone.

2 So I will take the prerogative of
3 the moderator here. I think we all have examples,
4 an example or perhaps two in many countries of
5 where government has become more open or a
6 politician has gone forward and created a policy
7 wiki or the Government of New Brunswick inviting
8 you in, you know, to help them figure out how to
9 actually engage citizens.

10 Wolfgang, you may have the answer
11 to this question, Don and Quitterie as well, do we
12 know of governments other than the Government of
13 Estonia, which is recognized for reinventing or
14 inventing itself on the internet so that it
15 doesn't have this institutional resistance, we
16 have never done this before, it is scary, we don't
17 know what it is going to mean, it could be
18 destabilizing, etc.

19 Who is leading us, whose example
20 in the world, where in the world, where there are
21 governments that have embraced this concept and
22 that we should be looking toward?

23 MR. LENIHEN: Well, if I can

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1 start, I will just say this, is that if there is
2 such a government I don't know of it. At least
3 the kind of changes that I think are necessary,
4 which are really changing the way governments
5 govern, there are interesting examples in lots of
6 different countries and they usually happen via
7 accident or circumstance or some inspired leader
8 who comes along and just has the right disposition
9 and leads people.

10 I guess what I do want to say is
11 that I believe that we can institutionalize some
12 very fundamental changes. And I think a lot of it
13 does go back to what Wolfgang was talking about,
14 the right kind of culture and all those things, we
15 can't overlook that. We can't just use the
16 technology to change government and democracy. It
17 is a high risk. I think we have to figure out how
18 to do it and you can institutionalize those
19 changes, but we have got a long way to go.

20 MR. BLAU: I would be equally hard
21 pressed to mention any government. I see
22 Germany's Angela Merkel being the first European
23 chancellor who has her own pod cast, things like

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1 that, and what Tony Blair did that I mentioned
2 earlier. I also see the candidates now in the
3 American campaign right now asking citizens to
4 tell them what they want. It has a certain
5 fakiness, even though I find it good that they are
6 doing it, that they are experimenting with it.
7 But we need tools to really harvest intelligence
8 from citizens, because otherwise we have a pile of
9 a million proposals and then what.

10 MME DELMAS : Moi non plus,
11 malheureusement, je n'ai pas de modèle à suivre,
12 et j'aimerais bien en avoir. C'est plus facile
13 comme ça quand on a une route toute tracée.

14 La seule chose que je sais, c'est
15 que, aujourd'hui, on va le faire tous en lien,
16 chacun dans nos pays différents, et on va pouvoir
17 s'observer les uns les autres et s'inspirer des
18 modèles qui sont proposés par les uns et par les
19 autres.

20 Je sais qu'au parlement européen,
21 il va y avoir un réel effort, et il est temps
22 puisque les Européens, les citoyens d'Europe, ne
23 croient pas du tout dans cette institution, qui

1 leur paraît très éloignée, très bureaucratique, et
2 action pas incarnée par des visages et des
3 personnes qui eux-mêmes portent des lois.

4 Donc, je pense qu'il faut avoir
5 beaucoup d'espoir, mais encore une fois, si les
6 politiques ne décident pas de le faire, si les
7 professionnels de la politique ne décident pas de
8 le faire, d'autres le feront, et, malheureusement,
9 encontre.

10 Et c'est aussi ça qui m'inquiète,
11 moi. C'est que chez nous en France, il n'y a pas
12 d'espaces qui sont dédiés à ça, et par exemple,
13 sur des amendements de lois, on en a vu un la
14 semaine dernière, un amendement sur l'immigration.
15 Il y a toute une mobilisation citoyenne qui s'est
16 faite un peu partout et qui vraiment vient
17 encontre du pouvoir, et je pense que c'est
18 passant.

19 Il vaut mieux encadrer et faire en
20 sorte que les politiques se mettent à l'écoute.
21 Mais en tout cas, cette expérience était
22 intéressante. Juste pour vous expliquer, il y eu
23 un collectif de chercheurs, donc, d'experts. Il y

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1 a aussi des jeunes de banlieues, dont vous avez
2 tous entendu parler, qui se sont mobilisés
3 ensemble pour défendre la même cause, et je pense
4 que c'est symboliquement très beau.

5 MS MILLER: Well, thank you.
6 Thank you very much. I think I see a new project
7 for the Sunlight Foundation, which is perhaps
8 beginning a wiki so people can add a examples of
9 this and perhaps we will have created the ideal
10 list of examples that way.

11 Thank you all for attending. We
12 appreciate your questions, your interest and we
13 will be here for a few minutes in between sessions
14 if you have additional questions.

15 Thank you.

16 --- Applause

17 --- Whereupon the session concluded at 3:09 p.m.