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INTRODUCTION

THE PUBLIC DIMENSION OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE: IMPACT ON THE MEDIA, THE CITIZENRY, AND GOVERNMENTS

*Marcella M. Szel**

As you know, the subject of this evening's session has to do with government, media, and the impact on the citizenry, that is the impact of IT on the population. I might want to add that I am particularly interested in the subject because in addition to the role that I have, I have a volunteer role, which is Chairman of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. I get to deal with the impact of many things upon the Canadian government all the time. So I am very interested to hear what we have got to say today.

During the course of today we have been talking about technology, which has been a significant threat. Obviously, it has been running through our discussions, but even more important has been the role of the impact of the nature of government in relation to these issues. I can just pick through anybody's talks that we have heard or questions from you this morning about these issues.

I made notes on some of them. There is a greater knowledge workforce in Canada versus the United States. What is the role of government in helping that change? The governments in Canada are lagging. Andrei Sulzenko used the term "lagging" many times in reference to Canada's performance, and in relation to the government's role. There were discussions with respect to government regulations dealing with the consumers and direct dealing between Ford and its customers. There was discussion of innovation, the role of government in innovation and training programs. "Geopolitical boundaries are ceasing to exist" was a comment that somebody made. It goes on and on. All this has to do with government.

So we are looking forward to hearing from our two speakers to understand or to get some insights into the aspect of government, citizenry, and the media at a time when every department of our governments are affected by technology and by a very aggressive media. The question I think that we

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would like to hear about is how relevant are either, and how do you make them relevant or more relevant today?

We have a Canadian journalist, David Crane, who is a superb journalist with the *Toronto Star*. He is well-known in Canada. He has written books as well as his regular articles and is well-known on many economic issues in Canada.

On the other side, Chris Hill is a scientist, and from what I have discovered very quickly, he is a scientist who can speak. So we will first hear from Chris and then from David, and then we will take questions when they are finished.