

THE CENTER FOR NATIONAL POLICY

“CONNECTING AMERICA: BUILDING RESILIENCE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA”

FEATURED SPEAKER:

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STEPHEN FLYNN: Good afternoon. We have a few folks rolling in and they'll hopefully grab their sandwiches and find their way. We have plenty of seats up here so I hope folks will run in. We're delighted to have all of you here today.

I'm Stephen Flynn, the president of the Center for National Policy as we advertise up front, but that's not for that much longer. I've actually received an appointment up at Northeastern University where I'll be co-director for a brand new institute up there, the George Kostas Research Institute for Homeland Security where some of the work we've been doing here at the center, particularly folks around this issue of resilience, will do something that we'll be doing up there with the benefit of being also at a major research university evenly committed to doing all this. So that – I actually start up there on the 1st of November but I'm going to be continuing to support the center and to – my successor's name, which we hope will happen quite soon. But thank you all for being here today.

I'm so thrilled to – as one of the things that happened during the time I was here was wanting to focus around three elements of resilience – please come on in – three elements of resilience, one which we will focus on here today is how do we advance this within some of the broader societal context as something of a value and capture some of the tools to do this.

Another area we focused on is the area of infrastructure resilience, the system resilience, how do we design essentially critical infrastructure systems, networks that we rely on, be able to manage the disruptive risk that comes our way from time to time.

And, finally, the area of community resilience giving that we organize ourselves and have institutions and when it comes to times of things going badly, we're often (that bad at a ?) local level, how do we ensure that we have that capacity of communities to be able to deal with the kinds of disruptive risk that confronts us?

The broader overarching theme that's animated so much of this is the extent to which we thought in the 20th century, probably – particularly out of the outcome of the Second World War, that we could eliminate risk if we worked hard enough at it and that should be our focus.

I think there's a growing recognition – and I don't think this is an act of resignation. I think this is just an act of perhaps being pragmatic and probably gives us some hubris. The fact is in the 21st century, risk is going to continue to be a fact of life, and our skill set and managing is really what's going to be key to our success as communities, as companies, as societies and countries at the end of the day.

As much as we'd like to, you know, bad stuff are going to happen. We'll have events that Mother Nature will toss our way. We have complex, interdependent networks that just despite our best efforts to design them to be able to work well almost all the time

go haywire from time to time. And we know in our own individual lives that we're not probably going to have cures for the kinds of things that can disrupt us, how we cope with distresses, how we cope with illness, all these things are a part of the skill set that we really need to embrace. So that's a broad construct.

What we were able with the benefit of a grant that we received from the Open Society Institute over the last year was to set off and explore two questions which is the focus for conversation here today.

The first is how do we advance this idea of resilience as a cultural value, as something that people will embrace because it's a good thing, much like generally you don't have much debate about whether people want to be prosperous. There's sort of a general idea here that that's a good thing. Can resilience essentially capture folks at that level to say, yes, this is a value that we should have as individuals, as a community, as a country and we want to embrace it.

The second piece of this, so how can we use to get that message out and take advantage of the revolution in the social media world to help with that? That was one focus or inquiry. The second is – and this I think is a more important one – is how can we actually use those tools to empower and engage civil society and the actions that go with becoming resilient to be better at weighing upfront some of the risks we face, being able to mobilize in response, being able to speed up recovery when things do go wrong. How do we basically use these tools, harness them in a way that will ultimately improve our capacity as individuals, as a broader society to cope.

And so that's what we set out to do. In the process of doing so, we wanted to reach beyond Washington. So we spent – we had the opportunity to go out to Hollywood, literally. We were hosted there by Participant Media, the folks who did “An Inconvenient Truth,” and “Waiting for Superman,” and a number of other folks that we drew in and we spent some time talking with those folks a bit on the messaging and how you message resilience and how you engage. But we had executives there from Google and Twitter and so forth here who are all able to help with the latest stuff that's going on.

We also went up to New York. And HBO actually hosted us there. And there we drew heavily on folks who came out of the PR firms and agencies and all of that who are very much into selling things and marketing things and also sort of talking through that.

And then we had a very good conversation here in D.C. with people who are, of course, harnessing these tools around the things that D.C. is very interesting in – getting people election and figure out how to push issues and so forth. And with the collective insights of all those pulled together this report which we're going to discuss here today.

So I'd like now to introduce the panel we have here. And then each of us will say a few things about not just the report but what the report may mean for the broader effort that we're talking about, and then open it up to all of you in the participatory fashion we like to do things here at the Center for National Policy.

So immediately to my right is Governor Scott McCallum who is with Aidmatrix now. Scott was governor of Wisconsin before he went off into the nonprofit world and has really been a global leader on how we're harnessing tools in a way to really better connect capacity within civil society to support responses in a very high-tech way. So I'm delighted that Governor McCallum will be here with us.

Scott, my colleague here at the Center for National Policy and coauthor of this report. And I'm going to ask Scott in just a minute here to give us kind of the overview of the report itself.

And, finally, Harold Brooks who is the longest traveler of the day. Harold comes to us from the San Francisco Bay area where he has been almost forever running the Red Cross out there in a place that disasters never stop. It's a beautiful part of the world, I think one of the prettiest parts certainly of our nation, but things do seem to go haywire from there from time to time. The ground moves, wild fires come in, floods happen. It's like there never seems to be a slow period in the Bay Area when it comes to there. And Harold has been the person out on point. And also not very far away from our little known part of the country called Silicon Valley, where some of the tools that we talk about in here are there and there is a relationship between those providers and the Red Cross. And they've been put to use in very innovative ways.

With that, some bit of the introduction, I'd like to now ask Scott, if you wouldn't mind give us a little bit of the thumbnail sketch of what we've said here and then we'll turn to Harold and to Scott.

SCOTT BATES: It's a pleasure to be here and to release this report. And for all of you who are old fashioned, you can pick up one of these paper copies out at the back of the room. We encourage that. And I want to thank in particular Andrew Lavigne, a research associate on this, and Willis Bretz over here, our new media specialist who contributed to this report and its development.

I'm very excited to see people younger than me here because this is your new world. And we are a bit – I won't speak for you two but Steve and I are a big high bound because of our age and when we grew up. I just heard him call something Twitter. (Laughter.)

MR. FLYNN: Twitter, tweets. There we are.

MR. BATES: So please, we are looking forward to the conversation and hearing from all of you who know actually much more than we do.

What was most interesting to me about this project was an interaction between emergency management professionals, and people in the social media, and also marketers – how can we best reach out to populations that emergency management issues or

preparedness it's not at the top of your agenda. So there were really some great meetings and I encourage you to read the report to find that out.

Really we began this report by saying, okay, the past decade, the 9/11 decade has been really some of the most challenging time to be around, to be an American, but also one of the most exciting. And our national narrative has been in the last 10 years about mass disruption.

On the security front we had 9/11 that shook our world and our concept of secure America. Then we had Katrina which shook us in terms of government response and ability to respond and our level of preparedness. I think it was exposed that we're not as prepared as we should be. And then, in 2008, maybe some of you heard, we had a financial crisis. So the institutions that had powered our prosperity were exposed to be profoundly faulty. And then the economic malaise that we've gone through the last years, again, government, business, unable to get it in gear. And now I would suggest our political process, also stymied.

So for this whole decade we've had mass disruption that's been affecting our lives and creating quite a bit of turbulence.

On the other hand, one of the most exciting developments is the emergence of social media. And, as a corollary, not just the tools of social media but what it means, which is the ability of citizens to connect, to identify problems, and find solutions. And it's really – you can take all of this for granted if you don't look at when social media evolved, but it's all during 9/11 – so Friendster. Anybody remember that? That was 2002 that was launched. Then 2004 – Facebook came, and that's not too long ago; 2005, YouTube; 2006, Twitter and most recently Google+ so all of these tools coming online, creating untold levels of community connection at home, abroad. It's transformed our lives and our opportunities and the way we look at things.

Over 52 percent of Americans are using social media in some form on a regular basis. And 46 million Americans are using social media several times a day checking in at work and – (inaudible). So maybe some of you are here doing that as well.

So that's the exciting part of being an American. And really we don't have a lot of answers I think that's fair to say. We've identified a few recommendations that we can talk about later. But we really wanted to bring this issue into relief and begin conversations not just here, but across the country about how we can best use social media in building more resilient communities.

One of the issues we identified early on is that you have to understand the values of a networked world. They are a little bit different, especially in terms of national security preparedness, the kind of professional protector class that has guarded America for the last 50 or 60 years. We had the Cold War, so, you know, I could tell you but I'll have to kill you kind of approach to national security. That doesn't apply anymore. We need to build more resilient communities and that requires citizen engagement. That's

the way we're going to best prepared to handle asymmetric warfare, which is terrorism, and the best way we can be prepared to handle any kind of community disasters, natural disasters, these kind of things.

So what are the values of the networked world? Well, transparency – and that is not something that the national security infrastructure is accustomed to doing. Responsiveness – I think all of us now, because of the revolution in social media expect an answer, and we're not happy to just roll with whatever recording we get on the telephone. And participation – your participation has to be real and valued for you to want to remain part of a community. You're not just going to go to a website, you don't hear from it and that's it.

One of the things that's very exciting – we've seen many examples of it, and my colleagues here are going to share those with you, is that citizens now are identifying their own needs in terms of preparedness and response. And often they're organizing their own responses. So how do we find that sweet spot where we can integrate the professional protectors, if you will – the first responders, the state officials, integrate them, the NGOs with everyday citizens.

So I'll be happy to pitch in a little bit later, but I think it would be really interesting to hear from some of my colleagues here about their experiences using social media to meet these challenges.

And I'll throw out a couple of examples we identified in the report, but it's amazing – as we were writing the report Irene was happening and at a certain point you have to cut off the report and publish it. This is now evolving so quickly that the examples abound.

So the Haitian earthquake was one of the first large-scale events where we saw the use of social media to literally saves lives and coordinate response – the Japan earthquake and tsunami, the Joplin tornado, even Deepwater Horizon. There was something called the Louisiana Bucket Brigade that formed. It was just regular citizens tracking what the heck was going on and how they could respond. And San Bruno in California with the pipeline. So you can see from this that social media has been used to respond to natural and manmade kinds of disasters and it's a very flexible tool to prepare and respond.

And, with that, I think, Mr. Moderator, that I'm done for the moment.

MR. FLYNN: Thank you very much, Scott. I guess if I could kind of summarize that key tension that we have found by having the conversation between folks in the emergency management community, from the national security community is – as Scott pointed out here, you kind of see that that had evolved overtime to be very hierarchical and very authoritative and directive.

And now, this revolution has happened literally over this decade. And I fall back on – just going to 9/11 itself, as somebody who was in New York that day, and its immediate aftermath. When people lost somebody or somebody was missing, we used the same technology people had been using for centuries. They put up newsletters at public meeting places, pictures in the Grand Central Station and other places. If you've seen such and such, please call. They had a little tear with the phone numbers I guess sometimes. I mean, that was the technology we were just using 10 years ago and – (inaudible) – to account for people lost. And now we're in a time where obviously Facebook pages are made up overnight and Google has set up a nice mapping system here where people can check in, people can check on each other. So there's just that piece.

But the challenge here really is to what extent can a series of professionals who has been brought up – and interestingly I've always found from somebody like myself who came out of the Coast Guard environment and others who were in the emergency management world who would have to deal with risk they're sometimes the most risk adverse group when it comes to embracing new things because, hey, what's worked, that's what we stick with. If you try something experimental and when you're dealing with something high stakes like savings lives and protecting property and it doesn't go well, there's a huge accountability there appropriately but, of course, there is loss of life because it didn't go well.

And so, as a community is incredibly conservative and yet, there's this thing knocking at its door saying, we have new capacity, but I think more importantly new capability that this provides to harness everyday citizens getting involved.

And so, if I could maybe turn now to you, Harold, as somebody who came through – the Red Cross has always tried to be this – play this key role between getting access to civil society, deep relationships you have there, but working typically with that hierarchical often emergency management kind of capability that communities put together and state governments and national government puts together. You're in the Bay Area where a lot of this stuff is all bubbling up and about, highlighting perhaps how that tension from your perspective has been playing out and your sense of the direction of where this is all – how it's going to play itself out.

HAROLD BROOKS: And I'll add that the American Red Cross is 130-years-old and much of this social media stuff is for young folks. So how is it that Red Cross – and we do love this phenomenon – we are on Facebook. We're on Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, LinkedIn, and we're doing blogs. And we're pretty good at all of those things.

I think we got humbled during the Virginia Tech incident where the kids on Facebook knew much more about who was well and who was not than we did. And we thought we were experts in this whole region of disaster welfare increase. So we learned from that and got on board. And I think do a nice job of using all of those now.

On October 20th, every year the state of California does what we call the Great Shakeout where millions of people first register online if they're going to participate, that is act as if there's an earthquake so you get up under something, and we say it has dropped, hold on and wait until the earthquake is over.

So I talked about that in a San Francisco Chamber of Commerce board meeting and went to my office and we did this. And some of them did it. Well, later on that day we had an earthquake about 4.0 on the scale. And I got all these calls from all these guys who were at the meeting, what did you do, man? That was just real. (Laughter.) And before the day ended, we had two – just yesterday we had another one at 5:30 a.m. something in the morning.

And it was interesting. I always will check the iPad and all these things to see what people are saying. And invariably, you turn on the TV, right, and they said it was a 3.9. My brain said, they're going to downgrade that because it didn't shake me out of bed to a 3.6. Sure enough, I looked at the Twitter feed and the alerts that I was getting and they all said, USGS has just sent word that it's a 3.6., you see?

But also and looking at it you see all of these people starting to post saying, did you feel it; where were you, and different things like that. So the information is out there. It's being shared. What people are beginning to ask for is verification and trusted sources. Red Cross, thankfully, is a trusted source. So they're always going to look to us. We end up with millions of followers, as does FEMA and CDC, depending on the nature of the emergency. And so we want to make sure we're providing fresh, good information. And to a large extent we're getting it from those folks who are involved in it now.

So it's an exciting time. It's kind of fun to be in the middle of Silicon Valley. I mentioned these guys earlier that there was a conference back in 2004. Facebook was just getting started. They brought in all these people from all of the different tech firms. They brought in folks from FEMA, from the military. And we were talking about this new wave of stuff that was going on online, what Facebook was doing, what MySpace was still doing at the time. And the folks from the government were kind of saying, how would I control this and make sure it's good and valid, and this guy, wild hair and kind of crazy looking said, man, the minute you figure out how to control, we're going to move someplace else. So don't even try. Just figure out a way to take advantage of it and use it in ways that will be helpful to people. And I'll leave it at that for the moment.

MR. FLYNN: Yes. And applied you've had most recently – I know you were involved with the West Coast you came out here. Some of these people are Red Cross. They moved with the disaster – (inaudible) – need. Maybe some just current lessons about how emergency management Red Cross used this technology in the most recent – the hurricane that we had here on the East Coast.

MR. BROOKS: I was deployed for a while in Norfolk and Hampton Roads, Virginia, coastal Virginia. And I've got to tell you, the military was amazing. They had

a Navy fleet that they would then – almost that quickly moved all these big ships out that weren't in dock at the time that the hurricane hit. That was a pretty impressive stunt. So the military plays a very important role. They have a lot of logistical power and stuff like that.

What Red Cross was doing though was, in addition to responding and taking care of folks in shelters and make sure they were out of harm's in and fed and things like that, we provided on Twitter kind of a verification system so that people – I mentioned earlier about trusted information. We had a system of badges that, you know, would indicate or would verify that you were a Red Cross person and so, therefore, that information that you received some something you could believe in. So if we said the shelter was at X or this one was full and go to the next one, you would know you could trust that information. So that was one of the many things that we were doing, just getting trusted, good information out as quickly as we could.

MR. FLYNN: In the I guess continuum we have of this greater transparency that we get automatically and expectation we have appropriately for understanding what's happening and the tools that give us that, and then that we can respond more nimbly potentially with some of these tools in terms of the aftermath. The whole participation, though, participation in response, participation in recovery, this is really the key element I think of the power that we would really want to harness.

And, Scott, that's something you've really made, of course, with both your organization and the process of building out that organization. Maybe you could speak a little bit about how you've taken a core function that's always been there, disasters, people need aid, they need assistance, they need food and so forth, and how you basically harness these tools to turn this into a global operation for carrying out that critical function.

SCOTT MCCALLUM: Sure. As background, Aidmatrix is a nonprofit organization that is backed by a number of technology companies as well as other companies, does supply chain information systems, works with almost 50,000 organizations globally.

As an example, almost all of the charitable food in the U.S. goes through Aidmatrix technologies. We're linked into the food companies, to the food banks and then the end users, food kitchens and that supply chain. Most charitable food in the UK, food in Africa, Asia, which became very interesting – Japan, the Japanese Army, when supply chains were broken, it was our supply chain used with the Japanese Second Harvest that was used for a number of other items.

So that's a quick background of Aidmatrix. Food is an important resiliency. We also do the disaster system for FEMA, 52 states and territories, mainly Honduras and India have similar but a little bit different systems; NATO. So we're following both flooding that it's taking place right now and the earthquake in Turkey, which as of

yesterday was not accepting support from outside but a number of NGOs are continuing to go in anyway. You can see that on the system.

So you brought a focus – but first I want to compliment Dr. Flynn for – he has gone to Hollywood. So while we see the number of people here, I'm sure this is being broadcast over the Internet to thousands of others throughout the world. And so those that are watching, feel free to tweet in your questions as we go along. Is that the correct – okay. But it does show how things have changed.

In fact, I think homeland security had a white paper done in collaboration with the UK on social networking, on how communities have changed. And I've argued in some of our meetings, I know Dr. Dunaway has been part of that, what makes us think we're going to have such a thing as countries in 100 years. Maybe we will, but communities are changing so rapidly. You used to sit on the porch and watch your neighbors walk by. How many really know their neighbors now or know the people on your block? In some cases you've got block parties, but communities have changed where through social networking it's the soccer parents or the soccer (prom ?) or it's depending on where you're from, California, they don't have church I don't think but the south, Texas. (Laughter.) Churches are very big. They have their surf clubs or whatever you've got.

But the point is that there are different ways – you can have different ways of defining community of people being close to each other.

Scott went through a number of events that were disruptive. But technology in itself is a disruptor. It changes things. We've kind of touched on a little bit of what resiliency is. I've long argued governments and big organizations want things controlled vertically. You want to be able to see what's going on, but you want to dictate and the argument is we need to be able to make decisions at the top.

I would argue true community resiliency, true resiliency is horizontal. It's what happens – in fact, even to take a step further is something I learned in our hearings, one of the reasons I think the U.S. has been so good not only as a democracy with individuals being able to make decisions but we're able to respond to disasters fairly well because people don't follow the rules in the U.S. It distinctly comes to mind the rules of first identifying where the oil came from on things that may be down the road before it can be removed. Well, you know, that's not really going to happen. They can come up with the rules they want to.

So as a disruptor as well, you never really know which way it's going to go. Things can cut both ways. Ask the Chinese or the North Koreans and others of how you control social media, how do you set the systems up so you know who's doing what, you can identify the phones. That's an important aspect.

The flipside of it is how do they maintain a resiliency? Was it five years ago they had the big earthquake in China? And they realized at that time, okay, we need to have the types of local organizations that can respond that makes us much more resilient. The

downside when you start having local organizations do that there's a tendency to want to elect your own leaders. So how do you control things vertically, once again, versus horizontal in true resiliency?

So I don't want to go on too long. I'll just take a couple of other points if you don't mind.

There's several different steps in resiliency but we've discussed disasters, which – disasters out of control lead to catastrophes. We consider Katrina a catastrophe. Japan was a catastrophe but they didn't expect an earthquake that big. They didn't expect a tsunami with it. And Harold just heard me say this a few weeks ago we don't understand in the U.S. six weeks ago how close we came to a major catastrophe far beyond Katrina. Had the earthquake been more severe, a bit more severe on the East Coast, one day later, closer to a bit more severe hurricane, we had the double disaster, very severe, right next to each other. Potentially the way we now do warehousing, which I would argue is outdated because we're not using technology to make it virtual – you've got the infrastructure disrupted.

So there are a number of things upside technology can do that are tremendously powerful. There's also downside things. Harold and others have touched on how you control the information. People can blog. So how do you trust it who is in charge of these things? Again, government is going not want to control that and true resiliency may be horizontal. So how do we meet in these things?

The other thing I would just mention is you never really know which way technology is going to go. If we're looking at resiliency beyond just disaster, there are a number of things getting an economy going again, things we haven't discussed in this report or elsewhere, but a big thing that's occurring worldwide now, the banking on mobiles. That's the future of banking. U.S. is way behind what's happening elsewhere. Most people now are beginning to do their banking on mobiles.

But what does that do as you discuss the report on transparency, the U.S. had a pilot project with the police in Afghanistan which, I mean, there's kind of this corruption there so how do you do this. So they decided we're going to pay the police directly. They took one community and people were shocked how much they were getting. It was \$1.50 a day or whatever it was. But it came through in their phones. Why aren't we doing that anymore? We aren't because the system is so corrupt there that all the leaders could no longer – they couldn't stand it. In fact, they started taking cell phones or they'd take the cut. So you can see all the types of things that are going on that you don't – you can't really control.

There are probably four major groups in the U.S., and it wasn't a corporate – probably Google, Amazon, Apple and Facebook, and I know I've left out some of our major sponsors, Microsoft and UPS and others. But those four are really driving and fighting in three areas where there's a lot of funding: there's hardware, the software, apps and the types of things that people are evolving into, and increasingly data. It's the data

in many cases that has the value. So it's how organizations, how individuals are able to – I always think of it in two terms: it's the pitch and the catch.

So the first part of the report is the pitch, how we inform people to do things, or mobile alerts like you had in Japan with tsunamis, and how do you catch – where are the hotspots, can you accumulate them? Yes, you can accumulate the social data to provide dashboards for administrators or to see individually where there are hotspots and people need help as you saw in Haiti, Japan, while we use it as an example.

You know, social – it's almost what I used to say about – I used to warn my previous jobs I had to – it turns out Wisconsin grows most of the American ginseng. So I had to go to China each year to promote our ginseng. And I'd get back and people would say, what's China like? And I'd say, I don't know. I haven't been there for six months because it's changing that rapidly.

So anything we do really in the social network that we discuss, it is really changing that rapidly that things are evolving.

You mentioned Facebook. I have a board member who's on Facebook. That's changed, going to something else. These things do evolve. There are probably four major companies fighting in those areas with very rapidly evolving systems.

MR. FLYNN: That's great. I want to now open it up to the audience. I just – (inaudible) – that I think clearly some of the last points that you made, Scott, is – one disconnect is we know that the resources available to many institutions at the government level, particularly state and local, are simply not there to keep pace with the evolution of the technology, and how we sort of work our way through that, that the folks who often have the frailest of systems, which tends increasingly to be government, then yet they have the responsibility of playing this role. So we have to figure out how we close that technology resource gap. I think if we had any expectation of how that gets effectively harnessed so we don't have a clash –

MR. MCCALLUM: They used to have the money but they no longer have the money. And they still have DARPA doing some of the things cutting edge in defense, but even defense took kind of fall. I think the private sector in many cases, and that was here in California we have the private sector, you look at the things that have been done in mapping is basically private nonprofit sector, in many cases open source, not always, but there are examples now and that's why some of these countries are having difficulties. So the government may say, you know, there are only a couple of hundred demonstrators that are extreme. But people can actually catch their cell phone and send up in a bunch of party balloons and take the photos and put it on YouTube and map it. So a lot of this is occurring. It truly is grassroots.

So it's – when we ask how government can drive it, I think government is going to be behind the curve always. And it's how government is able to at least catch up a little bit to be able to utilize the data, the information to make better decisions.

MR. FLYNN: Yes. Very good. Okay. Opening up here now. Anybody – questions here? Yes, sir. If you can identify yourself as well please.

Q: Yes. My name is Mike Kraft. I'm a counterterrorism consultant, but I've worked on the State Department operations – (inaudible) – terrorism. And I'd like to pick up on something Mr. Brooks said.

One of the main problems as emerging from some of these exercises, you get so much information, how you verify – you say people are looking for verification from a trusted source. And it's very difficult for government officials who are looked upon to filter out the information quickly in order to verify. And there's also the issue that comes up at least in terrorism attacks, the bad guys deliberately feeding in false information so the fire engines go the wrong place or reports are really bad.

How do you deal with that and especially – I'm directing this to you probably because you have multiple jurisdictions. We have in Washington too, but you've got San Francisco, Oakland, and other communities. And you, Scott, in your report try to address this operational problem.

MR. FLYNN: Mike, maybe if I can just go back to you here on this. Let's go back 20 years. How successful was government when it didn't have the social media out there at getting things factually correct within the first 24 hours?

Q: Not always. And I can remember some incidents when attacks overseas and information was coming in from embassy was turned up and sorted through the local police sergeant. And I remember of having as a former reporter and journalist, gee, I wish we had a couple of good police reporters on the scene rather than Foreign Service officers without proper training. Now, it was difficult then, but I think the problem is it's becoming more complicated because of all –

MR. FLYNN: Sure. I tossed that out as you set it up as it's not something like that we used to have mail and now this is complicating it. It's always been a challenge of in the immediate aftermath your unknown, how do you get good information. But, Harold, maybe it's a thought that –

MR. BROOKS: That's a great question. And the answer is it's still pretty iffy. You know, during the inauguration, the gentleman who was in charge of security and moving people through the metro system had all of his professional staffer, of course badged (sp) and certified and able to verify, were saying, you know, that X, Y, Z station is open and on and on, and they kept saying that to him. And so he was feeding that information. His daughter happened to be stuck in that very spot, took a picture of it and posted it and said, dad, it ain't open. And so, at that point, he had to accept that no, it wasn't.

So a part of it is trusting and crowd sourcing, but also knowing the people who are giving you the information know what they're talking about. But that one is not yet something that is a science. It's still got a lot of art in it and I think we just have to learn how to trust each other.

MR. BATES: It's kind of the democratization of decision making, which, for professional protectors who've made that as a career, you're very much into command and control and verification so it's a balancing of those values. I mean, it's great to have that but it takes longer.

And, as you're saying, as the information is pumped out there, at a certain point there's a tipping point where people begin to trust because they're getting the same information verified by more than one source over and over. And if an organization is waiting to verify for a long time, people are just going to go anyway. They're going to make their own decisions. So that's kind of happening.

One of the recommendations we have is for state emergency management organizations to have a social media op center. And really the potential to monitor 24/7 it's a pitch and catch, push forward, however you want to call it, to be aware of what's out there. And I think – we think that a great opportunity might come into play and it would require funds for training and such, but for the hundreds of thousands of veterans coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan, or the tens of thousands who have been wounded, that might be sidelined right now by this economy, those folks are perfectly suited to continue their service in this very realm by virtue of their age and their skills. And we can tap into that talent.

MR. FLYNN: Michael.

Q: Michael Dunaway. I'm with the American Red Cross. Just to follow along with this train of thought. I've been with the Red Cross now for about two and a half months. Before that I was the science and technology director at DHS. And one of the projects that I was in charge of there was risk communications during an improvised explosive device attack on the United States, but not just a one-off attack – a campaign.

So how would the United States manage communications from government to the public in the event that we had the kind of an IED campaign and we see in Israel or saw in the UK during the IRA years, those kind of thing.

One of the things that emerged out of that study was that this was a question that we posed through FEMA. And this was the office that was building the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System, which is the next generation early warning system that actually broadcast over both landline telephones, cell phones, a reversed 911, and all that kind of thing.

So I asked the program manager of FEMA who was in charge of this project, are you prepared to receive information back from the public over all this information

causing the next IED attack, all those live feeds are going to come right from the scene of the victims and they're going to go somewhere. Where are they going to go? Right now they're going to go to CNN's iReport because the government has made no provision to take this information in either as intelligence or as ground truth of the incident or as an ability to manage the process from the local level.

And this gets to the point, Mr. Brooks, that you were making, and that is that not only do we need to accommodate communications flowing both ways in a new generation. We need to accommodate trust flowing both directions. The public needs to trust the leadership in the way they view the problem set and manage the problem set, but government itself has to trust the information coming up from the public because it's going to be coming. But we have not accounted for that level of relationship, not just in the technology but in the way we're going to manage and live with the technology once that begins to become a reality, which in the next incident it will.

MR. FLYNN: Great comment. And I just offer one illustration to show sign of progress actually with the San Bruno disaster. The current administrator for FEMA, Craig Fugate, right after that happened, because it was so close to the airport when the explosion went off, the initial thing, it may be a terrorist attack on a plane, plane crashed. So everybody in the – not surprising, the national security world was spinning itself up thinking that it might be a contingency and they need to mobilize from.

And they were all going after Mr. Fugate, you know, we've got to get here White House and convening a meeting and so forth. Well, on his iPhone he went on, called in, got the webcast of the helicopter flying overhead of the actual disaster unfolding saw the plume was all in a vertical direction, which would identify it, and therefore, having to have to be something on the ground with ongoing fuel source and called back the White House and says, I don't need a plane. It's obviously something in the ground, in construction, and so forth here, not a terrorist attack. We'll get back to you.

And it was the head of the agency going to the social media source in this case, getting a picture, making a snap decision. And the whole bureaucracy was spinning itself up in an information void.

So having the antenna to get the feedback becomes quite helpful probably in managing disasters. I think a lesson learned. Harold.

MR. BROOKS: You mentioned San Bruno. And another kind of interesting thing that occurred during it was – and, by the way, Google's YouTube operation is headquartered in San Bruno.

A couple of students, recent graduates from Stanford, got a call from a buddy of mine who now lives here you talked to. And were asked to go to the scene in San Bruno, that the fire department would allow them across the line. And it was at that point still considered a crime scene but they were going to let them in so they could mark all of the areas that were impacted, including even the rocks that had been thrown during the

explosion so that then they could take – do a fly over and show how different things were and some of the damage that it occurred. And they did this.

And, ordinarily, our old way of doing what we call disaster assessment was to go house by house and mark it damaged and all of that. But they were able by 6:00 a.m. in the morning to lay out using the old Google map and this new Google map with these markings, these fluorescent markings to show in a very dramatic way what had happened and what the differences were. So when our disaster assessment volunteers came ready to do the job, the fire department said, we already have it. And it was kind of a cool moment. But the world is changing in so many ways.

MR. FLYNN: And clearly, the next iteration of that would be, you have a link homeowners can go online, look on the Google Earth of their actual home and know whether or not they have a serious issue or not. Another question. Yes, Mary.

Q: Mary Fetchet. And I was one of the family members that pushed for the 9/11 Commission to be established. And in their assessment this year, one thing came up that one of my – (inaudible) – issues that I saw is the interoperability.

And I wonder if you, any of you on the panel could provide some insight into where things stand and how we might be able to continue the advocacy work to push to get that result, because my son was on the 89th floor of tower two and they were told to remain in the building that day. And, of course, people that were trying to be evacuated were sent back up to their offices and, of course, the fire department was rushing to try to rescue people. And I think about if we had another type of attack where our first responders have to go in potentially unprepared to protect themselves and some of the types of attacks and just – (inaudible) – so critical, and here we are 10 years after 9/11.

I think when we were testifying before Congress I saw a GAO report that was conducted in 1995 and all of the recommendations that were made then were never implemented. So here we are in 2011.

MR. FLYNN: Well, as a basic update, sadly, it's primarily been an issue about spectrum available for supporting these technologies to make it possible for everybody to have that common operating picture or visuals here and that's been ensnared in this not very far from here as, on one hand, a revenue generating opportunity to sell some bandwidth to folks who really want it and the need we identify dramatically and not just on 9/11, but every disaster since for needing to get this fixed. And we are still in the – have an impasse on this.

It's incredibly frustrating because the need is real. It's the most basic function of government is providing the safety and wellbeing of its people. Communication is key to carrying that out. And the fact that we can't take what the public owns, which is the spectrum of communication and devote it to something as important as this is a source of great frustration.

But it's going to keep apparently – we hope that the 10th anniversary was a chance to kind of embarrass the government into doing something. Well, they managed to get by that deadline too and I'm not quite sure what the next one will be. I hate to think it has to be another mass casualty event where we demonstrate yet again these same problems are still with us. Scott, did you have –

MR. MCCALLUM: I was just thinking there are different types of communication, of course. You're thinking of the verbal – generally, the first thing to go, one of the things that occurs in disaster is communication, wherever it is. If you look at the broader scope of people being able to communicate following a disaster, you know, what is it – Paycom is looking for a band system. They're looking at ways of common communication. The difficulty you've got is people are proprietary in their information and don't necessarily want things shared.

So how do you create a community of being able to share communication? And I argue is you need a common system that people can get on and could be proprietary with it. And, again, it's beyond just the voice systems but it's the information flow that will occur in a wider occasion.

The other thing is if you have – it's again to the horizontal resiliency. If you have one system, it's easier to take out one system. If you have redundancy in the system, different types of systems, at least they have the ability to communicate, you've got that resiliency of not being able to take out one. And it actually makes me think of the terrorism earlier we said it's the bad guys. But, you know, misinformation is nothing new. We've done it ourselves all the time. It's what you do. Just when it's done to us we don't like it as much and it happens a lot faster now and it's a lot easier for the individuals to misinform. But there are just new things that are occurring faster and more widespread than have in the past.

MR. FLYNN: We need to wrap things up here. Maybe a final word from each of the panel members here in terms of prescription. What are you recommending with regard to social media? What maybe is the one thing that you see is most important to make sure that we can effectively harness this that this town should pay attention to? Harold, I put you on the spot with that?

MR. BROOKS: Yes, but I'm not going to respond with what you're asking.
(Laughter.)

MR. FLYNN: It's a democracy.

MR. BATES (?): Typical of this town.

MR. BROOKS: Yes. What I want to do is – (inaudible) – at the very beginning of this report he talks about the government, really the emergency management community and the nation at large missed an opportunity to do what Mary is doing, and

that is to at a very grassroots level begin to turn to our neighbors and say, we're going to be there for each other going forward.

Back in the days of the civil defense stuff and the threat of the nuclear bombs and all that, there was a lot of more of this notion of neighbor helping neighbor. People were leaning in towards one another. And we've gotten away from that expecting the lone ranger to ride in, save the day and ride out. And that's just not a good approach for a nation like ours.

We've got to learn and encourage each other to be willing to help each other. It's not going to be somebody riding in. It's going to be a neighbor who's going to help you. That's more powerful than interoperability. It's way better than Facebook or any of that other stuff.

So as we put those tools in place in place know that really it's being willing to say, as soon as I've taken care of myself and my family, my loved ones, I'm going to be there for the rest of the community.

MR. FLYNN: Right. Back to the future essentially. It reminds us of some very basic things. Scott.

MR. BATES: A couple of prescriptions. One would be that there should be a social media summit. We call for that in this report, talking about Facebook and Twitter playing nice and inviting LinkedIn and everybody else to talk about within the context of better prepared communities I think would be a great public giveback by those companies. And, frankly, they're the ones that can tap into the expertise that's needed, not Capitol Hill, not, with all due respect, even DHS. It's going to come from that community and from regular people.

And another is the idea of a new emergency broadcast system that used to be for those of us old enough were trained to hear that annoying beep for a minute on your TV and, again, better cooperation, coordination between all those social media services in a bit more coherent fashion can be a very powerful way to alert and activate a community. When it comes to building resilience through social media, we do have the tools and we can do the job.

MR. FLYNN: Scott.

MR. MCCALLUM: You added after a paragraph one final thing that really changes the whole answer for all of us. And you said, what we can do in Washington. And I'm not so sure. I mean, that really did change it because I think whether Washington can do it or not is a big question because, of course, they want to control. If you've got the money, you've also got the responsibility with it and you're risk adverse.

As a convener is important. As an innovator, the best thing government could do is probably reduce the risk for decision makers is work with pilot projects, and

particularly the private sector and other groups and organizations that work on community levels. So it's not trying to control things on their own or set up big response units, but it's playing the role of convening, sharing best practices and providing funding for innovations as pilot projects.

MR. FLYNN: I'll finish with a – I think we've got to stop doing something. And there is I think clearly a legacy of the Cold War but it's a secrecy impulse. And when it comes to risk literacy, we need to do a better job of pushing that out. When it comes to understanding threat – (inaudible) – and vulnerability and mobilize in response, it is the need to share, the need to engage. And those are the exact opposite of the values that were really reinforced within the federal bureaucracy and now calcified through a security clearance process and endless series of new categories of information.

At the end of the day, our society will best be served, it seems to me, by coming clean on risk and coming clean on the need that there is – that civil society needs to be engaged and there are inherent limits to what government can do to protect us from all the kinds of risks out there. That's a big leap. It's going to take a political leadership to make that happen. I think tearing down some of the edifices that were put in place the last 40 years that are going to have this social media revolution but as a sweep by an entity that arguably its core responsibility to make us and provide support for making us a safer nation.

I want to thank all of you for coming here today and participating in the discussion. We have some very low-tech, high paper quality – (inaudible) – for the report. But, of course, it's online and will be there to circulate to friends and neighbors. Thanks so much for coming today. Applause.

(END)