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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LARSEN of Washington).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 26, 2010.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RICK LARSEN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

U.S. AND WORLD RESPONDS TO HAITI'S EARTHQUAKE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, it has now been 2 weeks since a 7.0 earthquake struck Haiti on the afternoon of January 12. Over these past 14 days, we have seen pictures of the devastation of Port-au-Prince and the surrounding communities. Estimates of the number of dead continue to rise. And the injured in the capital alone is already in the tens of thousands, many needing sophisticated medical care. People live

in the streets and open spaces, fearful of the daily aftershocks. The very basics of life, water, food, and shelter are absent or in short supply.

We watch in anguish as we learn about the potential number of newly orphaned children in a country that already had around 400,000 orphans. The Washington Post ran a story on Saturday about how 75 percent of the schools have been destroyed and the deaths of so many teachers and students. Nearly every Haitian family in the affected areas suffered the loss of at least one loved one, and nearly every UN, international agency, and NGO operating in the area suffered devastating losses among their Haitian and international staff.

And while our own U.S. Embassy staff and aid agencies worked around the clock to respond to the crisis, each and every one of them are also dealing with their own shock and grief over lost family members and Haitian and U.S. colleagues.

In my congressional district, Mr. Speaker, Britney Gengel, the daughter of Len and Cherylann Gengel from Rutland, Massachusetts, remains missing. She is among the approximately 200 Haitian and foreign nationals who were in the Hotel Montana when the earthquake struck. She was part of a student team from Florida's Lynn University in Haiti working with Food for the Poor. In the few days that she was in Haiti, she had already emailed her parents to tell them that she felt that she had found her life's calling.

Hundreds of search and rescue workers have been active day and night at the Hotel Montana, including U.S. teams from Fairfax, Virginia; Miami-Dade; and Los Angeles counties. One rescue worker, talking with Britney's father, spoke movingly about how this was one of the worst sites he had ever worked on, and if his daughter were trapped here, he wouldn't give up on finding her either. The compassion and

empathy of the rescue workers and every member of our U.S. Embassy team are palpable, and their commitment to all victims' families is total.

We see on our television and read in the papers and online of the generosity and resilience of the human spirit: people helping people, comforting one another, sacrificing for the well-being of one another. We often forget how much the Haitian people are helping one another as we struggle to provide and get aid to them.

Governments, international agencies, NGOs, corporations, and individuals have responded and mobilized as never before. On Friday evening, I was in my hometown of Worcester, Massachusetts, at an event entitled Worcester Cares for Haiti, to mobilize donations from our local community. And I am sure that many Members of this House have been at similar events in their own districts.

Aid is pouring into Haiti to reach the more than 3 million people directly affected by the earthquake. It is flying in to Santo Domingo and Barahona airports in the Dominican Republic and being trucked overland in vast convoys. It is landing at the Port-au-Prince airport, which now receives over 100 flights day and night. And thanks to our Navy and Coast Guard, the destroyed Port-au-Prince docks are now 30 percent operational.

I want to thank all the nations of the world that have responded so generously. I especially want to thank our hemispheric neighbors, many of whom annually suffer from natural disasters and still struggle to overcome centuries of poverty. They have been particularly generous, from Argentina, Brazil, and Chile to Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, and so many others. And a very special thank you to the Government and people of the Dominican Republic.

To my own government, Secretary Clinton, Secretary Gates, Administrator Raj Shah, Secretary Napolitano,

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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and all of the agencies, officers, and staff here in Washington and on the ground in Haiti, who, when faced with a Herculean task, have more than risen to the occasion. And I want to say how grateful I am for all that you have done, are doing, and will be doing in the days, weeks, and months to come. I have seen firsthand your commitment, compassion, expertise, and professionalism. I am sure that mistakes have been made, but no one wants the aid to arrive more quickly and get to those who need it more than the U.S. personnel on the ground in Haiti.

For myself, I have never been more proud of my government or more grateful for the people who serve in it.

Mr. Speaker, I will insert into the RECORD a story that appeared in *The Washington Post* entitled, "Death toll growing at Port-au-Prince's Hotel Montana, once a symbol of stability."

[From the *Washington Post*, Jan. 24, 2010]

DEATH TOLL GROWING AT PORT-AU-PRINCE'S HOTEL MONTANA, ONCE A SYMBOL OF STABILITY

(By William Booth)

Before the earthquake, the Hotel Montana was the place to be in Haiti. During coups and crises, it provided air-conditioned shelter from the political storms for the diplomats, spies and aid workers—and a few heavy-duty criminals—who gathered nightly at the News Bar under a towering mahogany tree to sip rum sours concocted by Monsieur Lauren, known as the best barman in the country.

To many foreigners, as well as the Haitian elite, the Montana stood for security and stability in a country that often lacked both. Now the Port-au-Prince landmark lies in ruins, as families of missing American, Canadian and French citizens press their embassies for any news of life at the scene of the most concentrated international search-and-rescue effort mounted since the Jan. 12 quake.

It does not look good. As body identification teams proceed with their grim assignment, the list of the dead is growing—posted on a tree in the hotel's circular drive because the reception desk is buried under rubble. Most reporters are being kept away as workers in white biohazard suits pull bodies out and then stumble off to vomit in the bushes.

"Except for miracles, hope is unfortunately fading," Elisabeth Byrs, a spokeswoman for the United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, said Saturday.

Some rescue workers have said privately that too many resources have been deployed at the Montana, at the expense of searches elsewhere, and that the U.S. and other governments have focused more attention on those missing at the hotel than on Haitian survivors.

A Facebook page, Haiti Earthquake Hotel Montana, had more than 13,000 members as of Saturday evening and is filled with news, prayers, frustration—and photos of those probably lost in the quake. The posts are poignant: "Diane Cave, Room 220, may have been on way to gym" or "David Apperson last seen in lobby."

Some people post messages of support not only for the families but also for the missing. It is not as strange as it might seem. Cellphone service, disrupted at first, has improved. Someone in the rubble could have received e-mail.

The affiliations of the missing tell part of the story. Many guests at the Montana were

working for organizations such as Food for the Poor, Compassion International and the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

A dozen students from Lynn University in Boca Raton, Fla., were here volunteering with Food for the Poor. Four of them, all women, are missing, along with two faculty members who accompanied them.

Angel Aloma, executive director of Food for the Poor, stood in the driveway in the gathering darkness, hugging Gerthe Cardoso, one of the hotel's owners. The two were going through names of staff members, with Aloma asking whether they were alive and Cardoso answering—yes, no, yes.

"These were not employees, they were family," Cardoso said. "Our accountant. Our waiters. Some had been with us for 15 or 20 years. They came to weddings, birthdays, funerals."

Aloma asked after the famous bartender. "He is gone," Cardoso said, her eyes filling with tears. "Oh, Lauren!"

"Our staff member LeAnn Chong, they saved her after 17 hours of digging," Aloma said. "They had to cut off her hair to get her out."

Many survivors lost far more. Rescue teams describe the work at the Montana as "highly technical" and "medically extreme." Some rescues took 24 hours. Buried survivors subsisted on a trickle of their own urine until rescuers could get an intravenous needle into dehydrated veins. One survivor spent four days in a painful crouch. Some heard other people's last words, their last breaths.

The Rev. Clinton Rabb, in Haiti for a meeting with Methodist aid workers, was freed Jan. 15 after a French surgeon sawed through one leg at the knee and the other at the ankle. Still conscious, Rabb emerged from a tunnel dug into the rubble, like a miner being pulled from a collapsed shaft, and was whisked away in a Navy helicopter. He died last Sunday in a Florida hospital.

HELP FROM AN IPHONE APP

For nine days, an intense rescue effort took place at the Montana, with teams from Fairfax County, France, Chile, Brazil, Colombia and elsewhere working sections. Throughout Haiti, more than 50 teams had rescued 132 people by Saturday. U.S. teams took part in 47 rescues. Some of the most dramatic were at the Montana.

Dan Woolley was in Haiti with Compassion International making a video about poor children. He had just returned to the hotel that Tuesday afternoon when the 7.0-magnitude quake brought the 145-room hotel crashing down. Woolley was trapped in a space by an elevator shaft. It was pitch black, but he used his iPhone first-aid app to treat his leg fracture. He lost his glasses but used his digital single-lens reflex camera to focus and both devices to create a weak glow.

"He used the little light he had to write letters to his wife and his kids," said Raul Perla of the Fairfax team that helped French rescuers pull him out 60 hours later. "Can you imagine?"

Other people, just a few feet away, have not been rescued. A colleague of Woolley's, David Hames, was last seen 20 feet from the elevator shaft where Woolley was found. "David is an amazing family man, the host and creator of the kids' show 'Cranium's Ark,' much loved by hundreds, maybe thousands," a friend, Melanie Dobson, said by e-mail.

The family-owned Montana, built in 1946 in the hills of Port-au-Prince with just 12 rooms, had grown into a sprawling compound with shops, a swimming pool and conference facilities.

Now rescue workers store oxygen tanks in the half-empty pool. On the lawn is a make-

shift shower. Piles of rotting meal rations sit by the fabled News Bar. Beside the conference room stairs, a man in a light-blue shirt, pressed flat by the roof, lies like a flower between the pages of a book.

The place reeks.

'IT'S A LITTLE MIRACLE'

The president of Lynn University, Kevin M. Ross, pressed this week for the return of remains, including those of the four Lynn students missing in the Montana. "This is needed for every grieving father, son, mother, daughter, friend and neighbor who is aching at this very moment for a phone call," Ross said. "A missing family member, whether alive or dead, must be returned to his or her loved ones."

Last week, rumors spread in Port-au-Prince that a popular Montana co-owner, Nadine Cardoso-Riedl, had been killed in her office. Then, just as suddenly, word spread that she was alive.

"We had a little dog, a beagle, that was up on the roof by the terrace, and he alerted, he picked up a scent, but when we brought other dogs to confirm, they couldn't smell her," said Camilo Monroy of the Colombian Civil Defense rescue squad. "We went back the next day, and the same beagle smelled her, and we called, and someone answered. We brought over her son, and he said, 'I think that is my mother down there.'"

The Colombians and other teams dug one tunnel, then a second. Cardoso-Riedl responded, saying two other people were near her. One was perhaps a boy. Sometimes she was lucid, sometimes she appeared to lose consciousness and could not assist the rescuers when they asked: "Are we close? Can you hear us?"

More than 100 hours after her hotel fell down on her, she was pulled out. "It's a little miracle," her husband, Reinhard Riedl, told reporters. "She's one tough cookie. She is indestructible."

Her sister, Gerthe, said Nadine had been kidnapped in Haiti a few years ago and held captive for 15 days. "You have no idea what it takes to survive here," she said.

AN APPEAL TO THE COMMON SENSE OF THE SENATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. I rise today in the hopes of appealing to the common sense of my colleagues in the United States Senate. In a few days, they will vote on whether or not Ben Bernanke will serve a second term as Federal Reserve Chairman. For the good of American taxpayers and the greater economy, his nomination should be rejected.

As Chairman of the Federal Reserve, Mr. Bernanke has intervened in the financial marketplace in an unprecedented way. He has instituted un-American policies that have distorted our free market economy, such as picking winners and losers, and the creation of "too big to fail." Both Republicans and Democrats alike have argued that the Fed itself was a significant factor in creating the worst economic and financial crisis our Nation has faced in a generation.

Where is the justification in reconfirming Ben Bernanke? Under him, interest rates were kept too low for too