

Americans are unfamiliar with, but it is one of the most important in the West Wing. The staff secretary is responsible for keeping the lines of communication between the President and his senior staff open and organized. Nearly every memo destined for the President's desk must first pass through the hands of the staff secretary, who filters the most pressing items and ensures that the President's decisions are conveyed to the appropriate staff member. Think about how complex that is.

Lisa is a native of Connecticut, and she graduated magna cum laude from Princeton with a degree in political economy. She also holds a law degree with honors from the University of Chicago.

After clerking for the late Judge John Godbold, on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit in Alabama, Lisa was a partner at the Washington law firm Shea & Gardner. While working in the private sector, she also engaged in pro bono work in the area of civil rights and disabilities law. During that time, Lisa gained valuable expertise in these fields, which she would later put to use in her government service.

In 1996, Lisa began working as an attorney adviser in the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel. After a year in that role, she was appointed deputy counsel to Vice President Gore, and in 1999 she was appointed as his counsel. At the same time, Lisa served on the executive board of the President's Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities. She also worked on legislative issues with the Vice President's Domestic Policy Office.

After the Clinton administration ended, Lisa moved to the nonprofit sector, where she became executive director of the American Constitution Society for Law and Policy. When President Obama was elected, he asked her to return to government service as a key part of his White House team.

Despite her busy schedule in one of America's most stressful work environments, Lisa still finds time to raise a 6-year-old son with her husband Kevin. Juggling family responsibilities and a demanding workload is a challenge she shares with many other West Wing staffers.

Lisa and other political appointees are a living reminder of the elective nature of our government. When the people decide to give control of the executive branch to the party in opposition, that party is always ready to call on a cadre of talented and dedicated citizens ready to shape policy.

Many of them bring to their jobs the unique perspective of having worked for a previous administration, and they frequently leave higher paying jobs to return to government service. When they do so, they are not only signing on to serve the President. They also commit to long and stressful hours working on behalf of the American peo-

ple to whom the President and his West Wing staff are answerable.

Mr. President, I hope my colleagues will join me in honoring the service of Lisa Brown and all those working and who have worked in the West Wing under Presidents Obama, Bush, Clinton, and their predecessors.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I see the distinguished assistant Republican leader on the floor. I ask unanimous consent that all time remaining on either side be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, have the yeas and nays been requested on the nominee?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. They have not.

Mr. LEAHY. I ask for the yeas and nays on the nominee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Beverly Baldwin Martin, of Georgia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit?

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) is necessarily absent.

Mr. KYL. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 1 Ex.]

YEAS—97

Akaka	Collins	Inouye
Alexander	Conrad	Isakson
Barrasso	Corker	Johanns
Baucus	Cornyn	Johnson
Bayh	Crapo	Kaufman
Begich	DeMint	Kerry
Bennet	Dodd	Kirk
Bennett	Dorgan	Klobuchar
Bingaman	Durbin	Kohl
Boxer	Ensign	Kyl
Brown	Enzi	Landrieu
Brownback	Feingold	Lautenberg
Bunning	Feinstein	Leahy
Burr	Franken	LeMieux
Burr	Gillibrand	Levin
Byrd	Graham	Lieberman
Cantwell	Grassley	Lincoln
Cardin	Gregg	Lugar
Carper	Hagan	McCain
Casey	Harkin	McCaskill
Chambliss	Hatch	McConnell
Coburn	Hutchison	Menendez
Cochran	Inhofe	Merkley

Mikulski	Sanders	Udall (NM)
Murkowski	Schumer	Vitter
Murray	Sessions	Voinovich
Nelson (NE)	Shaheen	Warner
Nelson (FL)	Shelby	Webb
Pryor	Snowe	Whitehouse
Reed	Specter	Wicker
Reid	Stabenow	Wyden
Risch	Tester	
Rockefeller	Thune	

NOT VOTING—3

Bond	Roberts	Udall (CO)
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now return to legislative session.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will stand in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:29 p.m., recessed until 2:16 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Acting President pro tempore.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business until 3 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I further ask that I may be permitted to speak for as much time as I consume.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S FIRST YEAR IN OFFICE

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, it was exactly 1 year ago that Barack Obama was sworn in as President of the United States. He began by promising to launch a new era of responsibility, bipartisanship, and transparency at home and to improve America's standing abroad. That message appealed to

the American people. The President came into office with high approval ratings, widespread support, and plenty of bipartisan good will in this Chamber. Taking stock now a year later, it is apparent the President has not delivered the change he promised. The President's approach to spending, debt, and big government has surprised and frustrated the American people. It is not what they bargained for. Much of the legislation introduced by the majority has passed on party-line votes and without the transparency he promised.

On this 1-year anniversary, I want to talk specifically about the conflict between President Obama's campaign promises and the policies he has promoted during his first year in office.

Despite his pledge to embrace fiscal responsibility, President Obama's domestic agenda has reflected a belief that big government and massive spending are the keys to promoting economic growth. From car company bailouts, to cash for clunkers, to a wasteful \$1.2 trillion stimulus bill that failed to keep unemployment from topping 8 percent, as the administration claimed it would, Federal spending has soared. So has the national debt. President Obama said earlier this year that we cannot keep on borrowing from China, and that is true. So why does the President continue to advocate spending money that we do not have and will have to borrow? What ever happened to his campaign promise of a net spending reduction? Government spending grew by \$705 billion in fiscal year 2009, an increase of 24 percent from 2008, and appropriations legislation enacted this year will increase spending by 8 percent more in 2010.

America's 2009 Federal deficit, which is the gap between total outlays and total revenue, made history—and not in a good way. It exceeded \$1.4 trillion, which is the highest amount in history and more than three times as large as the biggest annual deficit during the previous administration.

The recordbreaking budget President Obama submitted to Congress doubles the deficit in 5 years and triples it in 10. It also creates more debt than the combined debt of every President from George Washington all the way through George Bush. There is no way to blame President Bush for this situation.

The total debt has reached an almost unimaginable sum—almost \$12 trillion. This week, the Senate will take up an increase in the debt ceiling, which is the total amount of legal U.S. debt. That increase will come on the heels of a \$290 billion increase in the debt ceiling that was passed late last year and another increase that was passed early in 2009 to accommodate the stimulus bill. Interest payments on this debt are expected to reach \$800 billion—just interest alone—\$800 billion per year by 2019. Clearly, we have not entered a new era of fiscal responsibility but, rather, quite the opposite.

Of course, the most expensive piece of legislation passed last year was the health care bill. The \$2 trillion-plus bill, the most consequential domestic legislation in a generation, was hardly a work of fiscal responsibility or bipartisanship. It passed both bodies of Congress on a partisan vote. The legislation will create a massive new entitlement at a time when America cannot afford its existing entitlement programs.

The bill is filled with deals for special interests that President Obama said would be banned from doing business with his administration. Last week, for example, the White House reached a deal with labor union leaders to exempt, until 2018, union health care plans from a tax that will hit many other Americans.

The bill also violates several key pledges President Obama made about health care reform—first, the pledge that it would be deficit neutral. Richard Foster, who is the Chief Actuary for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, estimates that under the reform legislation, national health spending will rise by \$222 billion over the next 10 years, and the Congressional Budget Office tells us that the Senate bill double-counts the savings from certain Medicare reforms. It uses certain funds to extend the solvency of Medicare by 9 years while simultaneously using those exact same funds to offset the cost of the bill. According to the Congressional Budget Office:

To describe the full amount . . . as both improving the Government's ability to pay future Medicare benefits and financing new spending outside of Medicare would essentially double-count a large share of those savings and thus overstate the improvement of the government's fiscal position.

In short, this bill is not deficit neutral.

The President also pledged that middle-income families would not see their taxes raised. This is the second broken pledge. As Republicans have explained repeatedly, this bill is packed with taxes that will hit many middle-income Americans, including seniors and the chronically ill. In fact, the Senate version contains a total of 12 new taxes.

The third broken pledge relates to costs. President Obama said his health care bill would reduce costs. It does not. Costs for many families will actually increase thanks to a litany of new Federal requirements and mandates.

This whole process has also shown that the President's professed commitment to transparency was nothing more than a campaign slogan. He promised at least seven times that the health care negotiations would be aired on C-SPAN, as he put it, "so the American people can see what the choices are." But that didn't happen. As Speaker PELOSI reminded us, the President promised a lot of things on the campaign trail. Those who were not invited to the Democrats' secret negotiations did not know the details of the

respective health care bills until just before each of them came out for a vote, and we are talking about bills that are more than 2,000 pages long and contain hundreds of hidden provisions.

Even before the health care legislation is concluded, the President is proposing yet another spending bill, a second stimulus package. The stimulus bill—they call it a jobs bill now—that recently passed the House of Representatives would cost taxpayers \$260 billion more in deficit spending. I do not believe the way to create jobs is to expand the size and expenditures of the Federal Government. I believe we must encourage growth in the private sector, not by taking money out but by putting money back in. It is understandable and unfortunate that job creators may be nervous about economic conditions. The economy is still shaky and new taxes loom on the horizon.

After seeing the dismal employment report in December, a month in which the economy lost another 85,000 jobs, Diana Furchtgott-Roth, a former chief economist of the U.S. Labor Department, advised the administration to "press the reset button on economic policy." More specifically, she urged the President not to raise taxes, scale back Federal spending, focus on deficit reduction, and reject the new environmental regulations that will drive U.S. jobs overseas.

I hope in the coming year President Obama will consider more sensible domestic policies so that we can rein in the out-of-control spending that has characterized his first year. This would truly be change we can believe in.

I would also like to discuss the tension between rhetoric and reality in the President's foreign and national security policies.

Throughout the campaign, President Obama pledged he would improve America's reputation abroad and repair supposedly damaged alliances. In September 2007, Candidate Obama said:

America's standing has suffered. Our diplomacy has been compromised by a refusal to talk to people we don't like. Our alliances have been compromised by bluster. Our credibility has been compromised.

So what has been the President's strategy for boosting America's standing? He has gone on an apology tour of sorts, a fundamental consequence of which, in the words of Charles Krauthammer, has been "to effectively undermine any claim America might have to world leadership."

The President has devoted much energy to improving relations with our adversaries. Not only have these efforts failed to yield positive results, but they have also led the administration to mistreat several key U.S. partners.

The administration's approach to Iran has been regrettable, to say the least. President Obama came into office hoping to negotiate a "grand bargain" over the Iranian nuclear program. He embraced a policy of engagement with the radical Iranian theocracy.

So far, this policy has done nothing to stop Iran from developing nuclear weapons and brutalizing its own people. But it did prevent the Obama administration from offering robust support to the pro-democracy demonstrators who flooded the streets last summer to protest a stolen election. Rather than embrace the protestors, who were standing up for liberty and human rights, President Obama initially said that he did not want "to be seen as meddling in Iranian elections. Those protestors, by the way, are still out in the streets, waging a courageous struggle for democracy."

Despite all these U.S. efforts to engage the Iranian government, the negotiations over Iran's nuclear program have gone nowhere, and the Iranian president recently declared that Iran "will continue resisting" international demands until the United States abolishes its own nuclear arsenal.

We must remember that Iran is the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, a government that murders peaceful student democracy activists. The events of the past year have shown that the Iranian regime is not a good-faith negotiator. Now is the time to maximize leverage over Iran through targeted sanctions. Meanwhile, we must not take any options off the table if we hope to prevent an Iranian nuclear weapon.

The President's Iran strategy was based on the idea that U.S. engagement would produce real concessions. That did not work with Tehran, and it has not worked with Moscow either. Despite U.S. diplomatic efforts, the Russian government continues to withhold support for strong U.N. sanctions against Iran, it continues to bully its democratic neighbors, such as Georgia and Poland, and it continues to practice authoritarian domestic policies. America's allies in Eastern Europe and Near Asia are getting nervous. President Obama's cancellation of a planned missile-defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic, and the manner in which it was executed, gave the impression that the U.S. had caved to Russian pressure.

There are few regions in the world as volatile as the Middle East. Unfortunately, the Obama administration has alienated our closest Middle Eastern ally, Israel, by stubbornly pushing it to adopt a comprehensive "settlement freeze."

As Elliott Abrams, a former deputy national-security adviser, has written in *National Review*, the administration has managed to damage the U.S.-Israel alliance, weaken Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, and produce "a massive policy failure." We all want a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. But demanding unilateral concessions from the Israeli government is no way to achieve it.

As for Latin America, it was highly regrettable that the U.S. imposed sanctions on Honduras, since the removal

of former Honduran president Manuel Zelaya was a constitutionally justified act of democracy. Despite initially siding with Zelaya, a close ally of Venezuelan leader Hugo Chavez, the Obama administration appears ready to recognize the validity of the recent Honduran elections. The administration should now lift suspension of aid, cease any further contact with Mr. Zelaya, and denounce his extra-constitutional behavior.

With regard to Venezuela, the President's policy of engaging Hugo Chavez proved a failure. Writing in *The Weekly Standard*, Jaime Doremblum, Costa Rica's former ambassador to the United States, says, "If Obama believed his personal charm and assurances of goodwill would be sufficient to sway Chavez and the Castro brothers, he was mistaken."

Indeed, Chavez has responded to friendly U.S. overtures by continuing to suffocate Venezuelan democracy, continuing to cooperate with Iran and Russia, and continuing to harass neighboring democracies, such as Colombia, where Chavez has funded vicious narco-terrorists. In an editorial last spring, the *Washington Post* noted, "This may be the first time the United States has watched the systematic destruction of a Latin American democracy in silence."

Meanwhile, pending free-trade agreements with U.S. allies in Colombia, Panama, and South Korea still have not been approved by this Congress. That represents yet another foreign-policy failure for this administration. I sincerely hope the President urges Democratic leaders to take action on these agreements sometime this year, preferably soon. Implementing these three trade deals would provide a boost to the U.S. economy and would also strengthen the U.S. position in two important regions.

I also hope the President resists the temptation to support protectionist measures that will hurt our economy and damage our foreign relations. In his first year, the President signed a stimulus package containing a protectionist "Buy American" provision, agreed to discontinue a U.S.-Mexican trucking program, and imposed a tariff on Chinese tires. These policies were economically foolish, and they damaged America's credibility as a promoter of trade liberalization.

Finally, a word about the administration's antiterror policies, and its decision to increase the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan. I am pleased that President Obama has maintained many of the policies that were formulated by President Bush, including the use of military commissions to try suspected terrorists. However, I am disappointed that the President has decided not to use a military commission to try Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks, and several of his co-conspirators.

Giving these terrorists a civilian trial in New York City will pose sig-

nificant national security risks; among other things, it will compromise U.S. intelligence-gathering methods. The administration has chosen to prosecute several other terrorists before a military commission. So why not Khalid Sheikh Mohammed? Why should the highest-ranking al-Qaida leader captured since 9/11 be given a civilian trial while other al-Qaida members are given military commission trials?

The war against al-Qaida is just that, a war. It is not a law enforcement matter. By announcing that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and other senior al-Qaida members will receive a civilian trial, the Obama administration has signaled that terrorists belong in the U.S. criminal-justice system. They do not. These men are enemy combatants waging war on the United States.

The terrorists who are scheduled to receive civilian trials in New York City have been held at the Guantanamo Bay detention facility. When the President took office, he promised that Guantanamo would be closed within a year. It is now a year later, and Gitmo is still open, as it should be.

There is a good reason that President Obama has not yet been able to fulfill his pledge: Closing Gitmo is a bad idea. The process of removing those detainees who are still being held at Gitmo will create a series of logistical problems and security threats.

Last month, six Gitmo detainees were sent back to their home country of Yemen. Just a few days later, a Nigerian man with links to a Yemen-based terrorist organization attempted to blow up Northwest Airlines flight 253. The flight 253 bombing attempt highlights the deadly threat posed by al-Qaida's Yemen affiliate, known as "al-in the Arabian Peninsula." The administration has wisely halted the transfer of Gitmo detainees to Yemen. But it seems intent to try the flight 253 bomber as a criminal defendant, rather than an enemy combatant. That is deeply misguided, for the reasons I have just listed, as well as the unnecessary difficulties it raises for our intelligence gathering.

The most important front in the war on terrorism remains the battle for Afghanistan. Several weeks ago, the President announced that he would be deploying an additional 30,000 U.S. troops to finish the mission. I strongly support that decision, yet I also worry that the President has set an artificial timeline for withdrawing American forces. The President declared that a withdrawal would begin no later than July of next year. I hope that he is willing to embrace a flexible timeline. Military decisions in Afghanistan should be determined by conditions on the ground, not by the political climate in Washington.

The U.S. commitment to Afghanistan has been costly, and it will continue to be costly. That brings me to the connection between U.S. policies at home and U.S. strategy abroad. While domestic policy is not written to influence

foreign policy, it affects what we can spend on defense and security.

President Obama recently acknowledged the relationship between U.S. economic strength and U.S. global leadership, when he said, "Our prosperity provides a foundation for our power. It pays for our military. It underwrites our diplomacy."

Well, that is absolutely true. Our leadership is contingent on our prosperity—and our ability to pay for a robust national defense.

But massive amounts of new spending, new taxes, and European-style government programs will weaken the U.S. economy and make it more difficult for us to exercise global military leadership.

Just look at what happened last year: While \$1.2 trillion was pumped into the stimulus bill and the majority in this chamber passed a \$2.5 trillion government takeover of health care, the defense budget was practically frozen. Missile defense has been cut, and there's been a reduction in the number of interceptors in Alaska that protect us from a North Korean attack.

So, there has to be balance in spending scarce resources. There is a tipping point at which excessive social spending chokes economic growth and weakens military power.

European nations can get by with relatively low levels of defense spending and high social spending because, for decades, they have enjoyed the protection of America's security umbrella. As Mark Steyn writes in *National Review* "Sweden can be Sweden because America is America."

But if we become more like Europe, if entitlement programs begin to swallow our budget whole, will we still be able to afford the burdens of global military leadership?

I submit that military decline is not an option for the United States. As former Secretary of State Madeline Albright put it, we are "the indispensable nation."

That is what American exceptionalism means. It means that, because of our unique history, our unique power, and the unique appeal of our founding principles, America plays a special role in global affairs.

I fear that many of the policies adopted over the past year will make it harder for America to continue playing this special role. I hope that during the year ahead, the administration will pursue a more sensible and responsible course.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

Mr. BURRIS. Mr. President, are we in morning business?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct. We are in morning business.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Mr. BURRIS. Thank you, Mr. President.

Every so often in the winding history of our country there is an entire generation that rises to confront the challenges of a moment. Every so often there is a movement so powerful that it changes the course of history. And every so often there is a visionary leader, a person with singular ideas, who comes along exactly at the right time to harness the energy of a movement and capture the imagination of a generation.

These are rare figures whose names are etched into our national consciousness, whose memorials dot the landscape of our Capital, and whose words and actions help to redefine the very fabric of our Nation. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was just such a leader. He rose to prominence as a key figure of the civil rights movement, but he came to transcend both the movement and the generation that brought him to national prominence.

Earlier this week we came together as a nation to celebrate and commemorate the life and work of Dr. King. His message of equality and fairness for all inspired the transformative civil rights era and continues to resound throughout the United States even today.

The legacy of Dr. King is one that lives on through the service and goodwill of Americans in communities across the country.

And Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day serves as an annual opportunity for people across the Nation to give back and volunteer to help those who are suffering.

It was this generosity of spirit that defined Dr. King's life and work.

And by living out his selfless dedication to our fellow man, we can honor his vision and continue the work he left behind.

The fact that I stand before you today on the floor of the U.S. Senate is proof of the enduring legacy of Martin Luther King.

Out of the chaos, violence, and injustice of segregation, Dr. King found the strength to speak of peace, hope, and righteousness.

Where many saw hate and resentment, Reverend King saw an opportunity to build bridges, to seek out the humanity of those on both sides, and to appeal to the compassion that lives in each of us.

There were some who lashed out with clenched fists. But although he knew he would be met with hostility, Dr. King came to the table, time and again, with arms outstretched.

Half a century ago, most people could barely conceive of a world in which someone like me could address the highest lawmaking body in our land.

Fewer still could have dreamed of the day when a man with a mother from Kansas and a father from Kenya would be sworn in as President of the United States of America.

I never thought I would live to see the day, Mr. President.

But even 50 years ago, when much of America could barely dream of such a

future, Dr. King knew this day would come.

His vision never faltered, in spite of the dark days he witnessed and the tragic violence that eventually took his life.

The march towards equality has been long.

It began long before Martin Luther King walked this Earth, and it will continue long after all of us are gone.

But so long as this great Nation endures, Dr. King's spirit will live on in our highest aspirations.

His voice rings through our history.

And although he did not live to see the promised land, his steadfast gaze still guides our every step, his booming voice sets the cadence of our march, and we know he will be waiting for us when we get there.

In the near future, a monument to Dr. King will rise on the National Mall, just a short distance from this Senate Chamber.

He will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with other giants in our history: Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and King.

It is fitting that this great leader should be memorialized alongside other Americans who have helped to build a more perfect union.

And as we observed Martin Luther King, Jr. Day earlier this week and as we continue to build this monument, it is my hope that we can keep his spirit alive in our hearts.

As Dr. King might say, let us keep our feet on the march and our hands on the arc of history.

Let us look to the future with the same fierce urgency that he showed us more than 40 years ago.

Let us complete this journey together, arm in arm, and make Martin Luther King's dream a reality.

HAITI

Mr. BURRIS. Mr. President, I also wish to address a matter that is impacting our hemisphere; that is, the country of Haiti.

In recent days, we have all heard the tragic news and seen the shocking images of the earthquake that devastated the nation of Haiti just last week.

Even today, more than a week after the earthquake, the full measure of this catastrophe is difficult to ascertain.

Relief workers have only just begun to go out into the cities and towns that surround the Haitian capital, and we are starting to get initial reports from the outlying areas.

Essential infrastructure has been destroyed by the earthquake. Shelter, food, and water are in short supply, and it is nearly impossible to get aid to the people who need it most.

But it is the human toll of this natural disaster that is truly the most horrifying.

Estimates have soared to include over 200,000 people who may have died, and as many as 3 million who may be injured or homeless.