

the past two years. After a dozen years of civil strife, the people of El Salvador were able to reach a political settlement of their differences. This speaks volumes about their commitment and courage. Since the 1992 peace accords, they have worked to build a prosperous and democratic country. This is a people tested well beyond what they should be asked to bear. At each step on the path to recovery they have faced a new challenge, and each time they have responded tenaciously and stepped forward again.

Mr. President, this earthquake is not the first time in recent memory that a natural disaster has brought devastation on such a wide scale to the people of El Salvador. In addition to this terrible earthquake, there has also been a serious outbreak of dengue fever, a serious and debilitating disease. And it was only two years ago that Hurricane Mitch tore through Central America, exacting an unbearable toll on an already fragile region. In the countries of El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua, more than 11,000 lives were swept away in the rain, winds, and massive landslides that Mitch wrought. In some areas, more than 70 percent of crops were demolished. The price tag of that devastating hurricane soared to more than \$4 billion once a full accounting was made.

Mr. President, the people of El Salvador did not simply wring their hands in despair at the devastation of Mitch. They worked to improve their lives—they rebuilt roads, and schools, and homes. They began to address the needs of citizens dealing with painful losses and an uncertain future. They began to pull themselves, with the help of international monetary and humanitarian assistance, out of the darkness created by Mitch when they were struck again by another wanton force of mother nature. This earthquake, which registered a thundering 7.6 on the Richter scale, once again threatens to break the back of an already struggling nation.

Mr. President, the story unfolding right now in India is no less compelling and deserves our equal attention and concern. January 26th is traditionally a day of celebration in India, a day when people gather with their families in their homes to celebrate Republic Day, their constitution, and their country. But this January the clamor of parades and cheers was replaced by the roar of collapsing buildings torn down by an earthquake registering 7.9 on the Richter scale, the worst earthquake in India in a half century. Tremors were felt in Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh as the earth shook early that morning.

Hardest hit was Bhuj, a city of 150,000 in the Gujarat state, only 43 miles from the quake's epicenter. The government of India places the official death toll at more than 16,000, but estimates this figure could climb to a ghastly 100,000 in the days and weeks to come. Six hundred thousand people have been left

homeless, many of whom are sleeping out in the open, with too few blankets among them, for fear of returning to unsteady buildings. Many others simply have no place to go. As many as 35 million people have been affected in some way by the earthquake, a figure so staggering it is almost impossible to comprehend. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) places the cost of rehabilitation and reconstruction at \$1.3 billion.

The daunting task that now lies before us is to bring some measure of relief and care to those who were spared, including an estimated 3,000 orphaned children. Tragically, the state of Gujarat was particularly vulnerable to a natural disaster such as this, as one quarter of its citizens live below the poverty line and almost one half of households rely on public food distribution under normal conditions. In an emergency such as this, the situation becomes exponentially more dire than before. In addition to the desperate need for food, medicine, and shelters, many Indian officials now fear epidemics of cholera and typhoid if access to clean, safe, drinking water is not quickly restored. This task has been made all the more difficult because it comes in the midst of a 3 year drought in India which affected almost 3 million people in the state of Gujarat last year. The majority of water supply wells are caked with mud and temporarily out of service, promoting concerns that some who managed to survive the earthquake may instead succumb to disease while they wait for clean water. Certainly, the survivors of this earthquake should not be exposed to further suffering and injury.

Mr. President, we cannot and should not ask the governments of El Salvador and India, or their people, to walk the path toward recovery alone. At a time when these countries seek peace and development, we must be there as both an ally and a partner. We must not turn away from their suffering, but rather must respond swiftly and effectively.

In fact, international relief efforts are already in full operation in both El Salvador and India, providing basic necessities such as drinking water, food, blankets and temporary shelter to the quakes' victims. The United States government is actively participating in these international efforts through the work of USAID. At the time of the quake, USAID personnel in El Salvador immediately began meeting with Salvadoran relief agencies to evaluate the extent of the damage and the level of aid necessary. To date, USAID assistance to El Salvador totals more than \$5 million, the majority of which was allocated for temporary shelter programs. In addition, the World Food Programme has provided 900 metric tons of rations, the International Federation of the Red Cross has released \$100,000 of disaster relief funds as well as sent a delegation of relief workers to

assist the 1,200 person Salvadoran Red Cross. Medicines for hospitals and temporary clinics are pouring in from the Pan-American Health Organization, and the International Development Bank is considering a \$20 million emergency loan. Monetary and other contributions from additional organizations continue to arrive as well.

In India, USAID has pledged \$9 million in emergency relief, including emergency food distribution, airlifts, and temporary shelter equipment. Indeed, more than 38 countries have responded to India's cries, as well as several hundred non-governmental organizations including UNICEF, The International Federation of the Red Cross, and the World Food Programme.

It is my hope, Mr. President, that the Bush administration will recognize how desperately our help is still needed in El Salvador and India and will respond not only with continued short-term emergency relief aid, but also with a comprehensive plan for long term reconstruction and development. In the case of India that will require that waiver authority be exercised by the Administration to permit broader categories of assistance to be provided despite existing sanctions against that country. I would urge the Administration to do so.

I am confident that our colleagues in the Senate join with me in extending our prayers and our hands to the people of two nations who must persevere at very difficult moments in their histories. I am confident that with our help the lives of the peoples of these two nations will improve day by day.

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#### PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Peter Winokur be granted the privilege of the floor during today's session of the Senate.

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

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Mark Peters be granted floor privileges for the purpose of this debate. He is a fellow from the Commerce Department.

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

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#### LORETTA F. SYMMS

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, let me take a few additional moments to speak to the Senate about a friend of ours who has worked with us in the Senate for a good number of years. This week marks the last week of work for the Senate in the career of Loretta Symms. Loretta, as I mentioned, has become a friend of all of us while she has worked in the Senate.

Loretta, who is originally from Coeur d'Alene, ID, moved to Washington in the midseventies and began her career working for then-Congressman Steve Symms as executive assistant and office manager. In 1981, after Congressman Symms was elected to the Senate,

Loretta became his executive secretary and then office manager.

Most in the Senate got to know Loretta in 1987 when Senator Bob Dole appointed her as the Republican representative to the Sergeant at Arms Office. Between 1987 and 1996, Loretta filled a number of positions within that organization. As its director, she restructured the Capitol Facilities Department, providing career ladders, formal position descriptions, instituting reading programs, basic computer classes for employees, and other training programs—clearly, an effort to build a more professional staff within the Sergeant at Arms Office.

Loretta also participated in the renovation and the opening of Webster Hall, the first and current Senate page dormitory.

Like you, Mr. President, I have had the privilege now of having several Senate pages, and I know they appreciate the facilities that are made available for them and, of course, the educational program that is provided to them while they serve us in the Senate.

Loretta worked closely with the Office of the Secretary of the Senate and has been actively involved in the oversight and the management of the Senate page program.

In 1996, Senator TRENT LOTT named Loretta Deputy Sergeant at Arms, the post in which she still serves. As deputy, Loretta has managed the day-to-day operations of 750 employees of the Sergeant at Arms organization. In addition to assisting Presidents, Vice Presidents, and foreign heads of state on official visits to our Senate, Loretta has led Senate delegations to the funerals of former President Richard Nixon, the late Senator John Heinz, the late Senator John Chafee, the late Senator Paul Coverdell, and a good number of other Senators.

During her tenure as deputy, and working closely with the Assistant Secretary of the Senate, Loretta was instrumental in the formation of the Joint Office of Education and Training which provides a wide variety of professional seminars and training for the staff of the Senate offices and committees.

Loretta is married to former U.S. Senator Steve Symms. They have 7 children and 10 grandchildren. Retirement plans, she tells me, include building a new home that I think is under construction at this moment, traveling—that is if she can get Steve out of town—needlepoint, which she already does very well, and spending a lot of time with her children and grandchildren who live as far away as Atlanta, GA, and in her original home of Coeur d'Alene, ID. Of course, we Idahoans look forward to seeing her back home in our State.

Yes, Mr. President, we will miss Loretta and, of course, the fine work she has always provided us in the Senate. As a fellow Idahoan, I stand before you today to say how proud I am of Loretta Symms for the work she has done for

all of us and to make the Senate a better place to be and to work.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SMITH of Oregon). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, we have had a number of conversations over the past several days with Senator MCCAIN and Senator FEINGOLD, with the Democratic leadership, Senator MCCONNELL, Senator HOLLINGS, Senator NICKLES, a whole number of Senators have been involved in this, Senators DODD and LEVIN, in coming to an agreement on how to proceed on the election campaign reform issue. We have come to agreement here that everybody seems to be satisfied with at this time. I would like to enter this unanimous consent request.

I actually have three. One is dealing with how to handle the campaign finance reform issue. The next one is the Hollings constitutional amendment, and then also a consent regarding the U.N. dues and its consideration on the floor of the Senate beginning tomorrow.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 27

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, after consultation with the Democratic leader, either on March 19, 2001, or March 26, 2001, the Rules Committee be immediately discharged from consideration of S. 27, as introduced, and the Senate shall return to its immediate consideration.

I further ask unanimous consent that following the reporting of the bill by the clerk, the bill become the pending business, to the exclusion of all other business, except for a motion to temporarily postpone consideration of the pending legislation made by the Republican leader, following approval of the Democratic leader, and that no call for the regular order serve to displace this item, except one made by the Republican leader, also after the approval of the Democratic leader.

I ask unanimous consent that when a first-degree amendment is offered, there be up to 3 hours evenly divided in the usual form for debate only, after which a motion to table may be made. If a motion to table fails, the amendment then be fully debatable and amendable. Further, that if the motion to table is not made at the expiration of the 3 hours, a vote occur on the amendment without intervening ac-

tion, motion or debate, provided that no point of order be considered as having been waived by this agreement.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I will have more comment later, but is it the intent of the majority leader to include in this unanimous consent agreement debate and disposal of the Hollings constitutional amendment as well?

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I respond to the Senator from South Dakota that I will, after this agreement is entered into, follow that immediately with an agreement with regard to the Hollings constitutional amendment, which I assume will also be agreed to.

Mr. DASCHLE. I thank the majority leader. I have no objection.

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

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, would the Senator like to be heard at this point? I will be glad to yield to Senator MCCAIN for comment before I go to the next consent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader and the Democratic leader, without whose strenuous efforts we would not have been able to enter into this unanimous consent agreement.

I want to make one thing clear: This campaign finance reform will be before the Senate bumping up against the April recess. I hope we can devote every effort to get that done in the final 2 weeks before the April recess. It would be very good if we could, over a 2-week period, dispose of amendments and move to final passage. It is critical that we do that. Perhaps, if necessary, we could even delay the recess, something that none of us like, but we really don't want to have this issue clouding the legislative agenda for the rest of the year.

I thank Senator LOTT and Senator DASCHLE, but I do want to point out, I do insist that we get a final vote on this issue. We really need to have it disposed of finally. I know Senator DASCHLE and Senator LOTT appreciate that.

If there is a filibuster, in other words, just a loading up of amendments, whether they be extraneous or not, but basically covering the same ground, I will be the first to condemn that, and I know that my friend from Wisconsin feels the same way. There are a number of issues that need to be addressed, but we will know if it is becoming extraneous and just a delaying tactic. Then we will have to make our decisions as to what our options are.

We owe it to the American people, and we owe it to the Members of this body who have been involved in this issue for so long to bring this issue to conclusion.

I ask unanimous consent that a colloquy between myself and Senator LOTT be printed in the RECORD.

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