The San Francisco 1989 Earthquake Essay, Research Paper

The Loma Prieta Earthquake

On Tuesday October 17, 1989 at 5:04 PM the Loma Prieta earthquake struck the San Francisco,

Monterey Bay, and Silicon Valley areas. Those were no the only areas affected. Many areas up to 70 and

100 miles away could feel the tremble of the quake. The epicenter of the quake was in the Santa Cruz

Mountains. The quake measured a magnitude of 7.1. The initial quake lasted 15 seconds. The USGS first

thought the magnitude of the quake would be about 6.9 but it increased to 7.1.

The quake destroyed many buildings and freeways. A section of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay

Bridge collapsed. The power was out in many places and the telephone lines were out also. This was the

first time the power had been out since the 1906 earthquake. The earthquake killed 68 people and injured

3,757 people. The cost of the quake was estimated at $6 to $7 billion dollars. The quake happened during

the 1989 World Series. The San Francisco Giants were playing the Oakland Athletics. The match up was

called the ?Bay Bridge? World Series. The game was postponed for a month. They were playing at

Candlestick Park.

Airports were closed for inspection or repairs. Ceiling Tiles and broken glass were the main reason

for the airports being closed. After a while the airports reopened and some local pilots helped fly

emergency supplies to airports near the seriously damaged and in need areas. Roads were jammed with cars

trying to get home or trying to get out of the earthquake area.

The news media were desperate to get time on a satellite to broadcast their story to the rest of the

world. People say that the media made the damaged areas look worse than they really were because they

only focused on the bad areas and they got cities mixed up.

Most people away from the center of the quake were only inconvenienced by the quake. They only

had broken windows or broken pools. The insides of these people?s houses were a wreck. These people

quickly recovered from the quake. The people closer to the center of the quake were not so fortunate. Some

of these people lost all their belongings including their house. These people wouldn?t get things back

together for months or maybe even years.

Damage and loss of life were reduced because of California?s strict building codes which required

buildings to be strong enough to survive even larger quakes. Having the public educated in earthquake

readiness helped a lot. The people knew how to react in a quake and how to save their own life and the

lives of others.

The fires that broke out after the initial quake were of even worse threat. There were at least 27

fires that broke out across the city. The citizens formed a bucket brigade to help the firefighters who were

without water because of water main brakes. The fires were disastrous they burned down apartment

buildings, shops and even the fire chief?s house in one city.

Some people went looting in the downtown areas. The District Attorney said, ?If there is anyone

arrested tonight for burglary or looting, tomorrow morning we are going to go into court and demand that

there is no bail. Anyone engaged in that kind of conduct can expect maximum sentences.? Some people

were arrested for looting and they were severely penalized.

The earthquake didn?t only cause trouble for the San Francisco Bay area. It caused a four-foot

tsunami wave in Monterey Bay as well as a huge undersea landslide. The sea level in Santa Cruz dropped

three feet. The wave took 20 minuets to reach Monterey.

Vice President Dan Quayle and his wife flew to San Diego to see the damage. The spent four

hours there and didn?t even make contact with the may who had been awake since the quake started. The

mayor called the visit a ?cheap publicity stunt? Our Vice President Al Gore did the same thing when he

came to Cincinnati during our flood. Mr. Gore took his shoes and socks off and put his foot in the Ohio

River. What was the point of that. Mr. Quayle said this after touring the area, ? Just walking through here

and seeing the loss of property, knowing the loss of life, it hits you right here in the heart, and that is the

reason I?m here.?

Many people and companies and the Government helped the damaged city. They helped my

donating food, supplies, the government signed a $3.45 billion earthquake relief package for California,

railroad companies helped transport needed materials for repairing the freeways, people donated their time,

construction companies helped rebuild buildings, companies all over the country donated the needed

materials to rebuild the cities, and other countries donated doctors, geologists, and supplies.

I got all my information from the Internet and the packet that the school got off the Internet. I didn?t write

down the web page addresses, but I do have the names of some of the pages..

KRON Online television ?Quake of ?89? http://www.kron.com/specials/quake89/

WWW Hot Topic: 5 years Ago: Loma Prieta Earthquake

The Great Loma Prieta Earthquake

Earthquakes: Eyewitness accounts

Seismological Society of America

USGS United States Geological Survey

EQE

ABAG

Those are the names and abbreviations of the sites and companies that I received information from.

FACTS PAGE

Facts

about the

Loma Prieta Earthquake

Date of Quake:

October 17, 1989

Time:

5:04pm

Magnitude:

7.1

Deaths:

68

Injuries:

3,757

Homes Damaged:

23,408

Homes Destroyed:

1,018

Businesses Damaged:

3,530

Business Destroyed:

366

Estimated Dollar Loss:

$6 billion to $7 billion

Aftershocks:

More than 7,000