

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOVEMBER 30, 1974

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

The President today declared a major disaster for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico as a result of damage caused by severe storms, landslides, and flooding beginning about October 23, which caused damage to public, private, and agricultural property. The President's action will permit the use of Federal funds in relief and recovery efforts in designated areas of the Commonwealth.

Federal assistance from the President's Disaster Relief Fund will consist primarily of temporary housing assistance for families who have lost their homes as a result of the flooding; Disaster Unemployment Assistance; and the repair or restoration of damaged streets, roads, bridges, and public facilities and utilities. Low-interest rate disaster loans for homeowners and businesses will be made available by the Small Business Administration under the authorities of Public Law 93-24, and emergency loan assistance will be made available by the Farmers Home Administration.

Federal relief activities in Puerto Rico will be coordinated by the Federal Disaster Assistance Administration, Department of Housing and Urban Development, under the direction of Administrator Thomas P. Dunne. Mr. Dunne will designate the specific areas within the Commonwealth eligible for Federal assistance, based upon Federal and Commonwealth damage assessments.

Mr. Thomas R. Casey, Regional Director of the Federal Disaster Assistance Administration, HUD Region II, will be designated as the Federal Coordinating Officer to work with the Commonwealth in providing Federal disaster assistance under the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, Public Law 93-288.

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