

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 19 , 1975

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 high winds, heavy rains, and flooding associated with Tropical Storm Eloise, beginning about September 13, which caused extensive public, private, and agricultural property damage. 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, disaster unemployment assistance payments to those who lost their jobs as a result of the storms and floods, debris removal, and the repair or restoration of damaged or destroyed streets, roads, bridges, and public facilities and utilities. Low-interest rate disaster loans will be made available by the Small Business Administration 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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