

# PRESS RELEASE



## TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Office of the High Commissioner

Saipan, Mariana Islands

96950

RELEASE: 54-67

Marianas

### TYPHOON BULLETIN

Saipan, Mariana Islands, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Mar. 7 . . . Sally, the freak typhoon with the characteristics of a multiple tornado, clawed Palau like a giant hand. Between fingers of broken villages are strips virtually untouched by the violence that collided with the enchanted islands on March 2. Three persons perished in collapsing houses, 50 were injured and hundreds left homeless. Five days later the echo of hammers ring across Palau as workmen labor by lantern-light salvaging what they can of wrecked homes, repairing, re-building, erecting temporary shelters. Electrical power has been restored at the hospital, radio station, hotel and heavy equipment repair yard, while 75 percent of the district is in darkness. District Administrator Boyd Mackenzie's staff and local leaders are welded into a hard core task force dedicated to rehabilitate scarred Palau.

Truk

Ponape

Marshalls

Yap

Most Micronesian Government employees are on leave from their jobs repairing private dwellings and caring for their families. U.S. high school teacher Victor Hobson organized 150 school boys into road clearing crews. Singing Palauan folksongs for strength, victory, and humor the youth chopped, sawed, and lifted until all main roads in Koror are passable.

Palau

Medical reports indicate that only three typhoon casualties remain hospitalized, none critical. The possibility of epidemic outbreaks

MORE

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

resulting from contaminated water supplies and disturbed sanitation facilities is a major concern. District wide immunization for cholera and typhoid is underway. Seven mobile medical teams began work Tuesday. Each team consists of a doctor, two or three nurses, and a recording clerk. The team will move to Babelthuap on Wednesday.

The roof was torn from the district administration building. Emergency Headquarters have been set up at the Royal Palauan Hotel while District Administrator Mackenzie, Assistant District Administrators Tom Remengesau and Takeo Yano, Administrative Officer Phil Abalos and Trust Territory Headquarters emergency staffers from Public Works and Engineering and Construction, E. E. Blankenfeld and Adrian Knyff, continue to operate on an 18-hour day. Red Cross Field Director Milton J. Whitten has set up twelve feeding stations in the municipalities of Koror, Ollei, Ngaremlengui, Ngatpang, Aimeliik, Ngarard, Ngiwal, Melekeiok and Ngchesar. Food is being distributed to 9,400 persons daily, each receiving one pound of rice and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pounds of fresh fish, and canned milk for infants in Koror. Including rice sent to the villages of outer islands, the Red Cross is distributing five tons of rice and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  tons of fish daily. Local rootcrops disturbed by winds and salt water will spoil within the week. Surplus tapioca, taro and coconuts are being purchased by the Red Cross to use in the feeding program. A serious food crisis will hit in about two weeks when local products are exhausted. Until rains leach the salt from the soil, tapioca and taro, staple foods of Palau, cannot be replanted. After replanting there will be a six-month wait for harvest.

MORE

The Reverend Alex Froelich resumed classes at the Interdenominational Protestant Mission Schools on Tuesday. Emmaus High School, Koror, and Bethania Seminary, Ngarard, Babelthuap, boarding schools for 46 boys and 96 girls respectively, have students from all districts of the Territory. Their schools lost three buildings and one teacher's house. Catholic mission schools in Koror reopened on Tuesday. The heavily damaged public elementary school buildings will be repaired sufficiently to receive students later this week. The Palau High School will reopen Monday on a half time basis until further notice. Damage is great and thousands of lives have been violently disrupted, yet no one complains only expressing gratitude at being alive to rebuild.

# # #

WINHAM/PIO/2148