

Government of the Northern Mariana Islands

Office of the Resident Commissioner

San Juan, P.O. Box 1000



Chief Executive
Resident Commissioner

July 23, 1976

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Through: Mr. Robert C. Stevens
Director, Region Five
Federal Disaster Assistance Administration
120 Montgomery Street
San Francisco, California 94104

Dear Mr. President:

I respectfully request that you declare that a major disaster exists in the Northern Mariana Islands of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, comprised of the inhabited islands of Saipan, Rota, Tinian, Agaña, Pagan, Agrihan and Almagor, under the provisions of the DISASTER RELIEF ACT OF 1974, Public Law 93258.

Beginning Tuesday, July 13 and through Wednesday, July 14, the eye of TYPHOON TRINITY passed within 18 miles of the islands of Saipan and Tinian and within 90 miles of the island of Rota. This resulted in sustained winds of 110 MPH, with gusts of up to 135 MPH at Saipan and Tinian (which are only 3 miles apart), and very heavy surf actions and rains. Rota sustained winds of 70-75 MPH, gusting to 85 MPH, with heavy surf and rains also, although not as close to the storm center.

This caused severe docks, wharfs and harbor damages at Saipan, and some public buildings damages, road damages, as well as additional damages to private homes, commercial building and facilities and extensive agricultural crops damages at Saipan, Rota and Tinian, which were already in weakened and vulnerable condition from the devastations of TYPHOON PAMELA, of May 20-22, 1976.



Photocopy from Central Record Library

Disaster Declaration
 July 23, 1976
 Page 2

As a result of TYPHOON THERESE, 250 private buildings received new or additional damages to those sustained during TYPHOON PAMELA, many of which had not yet been permanently repaired, and the new plantings of agricultural crops at all islands after TYPHOON PAMELA (May 22, 1976) were all 50-100% destroyed.

The estimated damage to public facilities, rendering essential public service, as a result of TYPHOON THERESE, are as follows:

Dock, Seawalls and Breakwater \$200,000

TOTAL DAMAGE ESTIMATED AT THIS TIME ARE:

Public Damages \$200,000
 Private Damages \$100,000
 Agriculture Damages \$200,000

Agriculture within the Northern Marianas Islands consist of both commercial and subsistence farming. Principal crops are vegetable and fruits. TYPHOON THERESE's high winds, heavy rains and high surf actions resulted in destruction of many of the new plants and seedlings that had been replanted after the previous destructions to matured crops of Typhoon Pamela, between May 20-22, 1976. Salt-water intrusion of farm areas of Tinian, Rota and Saipan also occurred, because of sea spray.

The Marianas Agriculturist estimates that it will take 3 - 6 months to re-establish crops to pre-typhoon levels. This will require replanting after the salt has been leached by rains. The cost estimate for agriculture listed above represents costs involved in providing plants, seeds, pesticides and fertilizers and for the rental of farm equipment and implements.

On July 14, 1976, I directed the execution of the Northern Marianas Emergency Plan. Certain emergency actions, particularly repair and reactivation of essential utility services, were begun on Thursday, July 15. I immediately directed the Marianas Director of Public Works to make public facilities damage assessments, particularly of the Saipan, Tinian and Rota docks and harbors, due to the high surfs observed during the typhoon. The Northern Marianas (State) Coordinating Officer, who was at the time of Typhoon Therese (July 13-14, 1976) involved in Typhoon Assistance and Damage Surveys of Typhoon Pamela (May 20-22, 1976) was immediately directed to make an assessment of additional damages to private dwellings and commercial facilities brought about by Typhoon Therese.

Disaster Declaration
July 23, 1976
Page 3

Neither the establishment of mass care shelters nor the implementation of an emergency or temporary housing program within the islands were considered necessary. Families and individuals displaced because of destruction of or major damages to their homes are being housed temporarily by relatives and friends. Since most of the residents who have sustained damages to their homes do not have insurance coverage, a program which will provide for the repair or restoration of their homes will be necessary. In addition, emergency home and personal property loans, to include loans to commercial farmers, should be made available to those who can qualify. It is not believed at this time that unemployment assistance will be required.

I hereby request that assistance authorized under Section 408, Individual and Family Grant Programs, of the Act be made available. I have determined that assistance under the Act and from other means will not be sufficient to meet the necessary expense and serious needs of approximately 250 families, based on IFG assistance applications received after Typhoon Pamela (May) and the Northern Marianas ("State") Coordinating Officer's actual assessments after Typhoon Therese (July). The Government of the Northern Marianas will implement an approved Administrative Plan, and the grant program will be made available throughout the designated major disaster areas.

This Government has the personnel and administrative capability to administer this program. I have already designated a Coordinating Officer, after the Declaration of Typhoon Pamela (July 17, 1975), and I will extend his jurisdiction to the Declaration for Typhoon Therese, should such a Declaration of Major Disaster be made. He will maintain close coordination with the Federal Coordinating Officer, and will provide him with such reports as he may require.

Total funding for this program is estimated to be \$100,000, of which \$75,000 will be the Federal share and \$25,000 will be the Government of the Northern Marianas share. In order to repay this advance, I will either reprogram Government of the Northern Marianas funds and/or request the Legislature of the Northern Marianas for an appropriation of funds, during their next regular session, and will repay this advance as soon as funds become available. I anticipate that this advance will be repaid by December 1977. I agree to return immediately, upon discovery, all Federal funds advanced to meet the Government of Northern Marianas 25% share which exceeds actual requirements.



I have determined that the situation is beyond the capabilities of the Government of the Northern Marianas. Between May 20-22, 1976, Typhoon Pamela struck the Northern Marianas Islands and created considerable devastations. On June 10, 1976, I submitted a Request for Major Disaster Area Declaration.

The President declared the Northern Marianas to be a Major Disaster Area on June 17, 1976 and the FDAA began public and private assistance programs immediately, including Damage Surveys of the public sector and implementations of the Individual and Family Grants Program (Section 408). A Federal/State Agreement for recovery programs from Typhoon Pamela was signed by FDAA Director (Ninth Region) Stevens and myself. A Northern Marianas ("State") Coordinating Officer was appointed. The State Administrative Plan for the IFGP (individual assistance) was compiled and approved by the FDAA Regional Director. Disaster Assistance Centers were opened at Saipan, Rota and Tinian and applicants processing was and still is in progress at the time Typhoon Therese struck, between July 13-14, 1976.

Many of the public facilities, private dwellings and commercial buildings and agricultural planting, still in a weakened and vulnerable state after Typhoon Pamela (May, 1976) sustained further serious damage. Because of the recent drain upon Government of the Northern Marianas resources and capabilities to cope with Typhoon Pamela, we cannot cope with the further damages of Typhoon Therese. Also, because of the recent formation of this Government on April 1, 1976, contingency funds for emergencies do not exist within our budget. Therefore, supplementary funds will be required to repair and restore disaster damaged public facilities and to provide financial assistance to individuals and facilities affected by the disaster. Pursuant to Section 501 of U.S. Public Law 93-283, and Federal Disaster Assistance Administration regulations, I certify that the total expenditure for this disaster, for which no federal reimbursements will be requested are expected to exceed \$50,000, as listed in the following table:

Individual Assistance:

1. Individual and Family Grants (GAMI share) . . . \$25,000

Public Assistance:

1. Protective Work \$ 5,000
2. Restoration of Public Facilities \$10,000
3. Public Safety \$ 5,000
4. Salaries & Overtime (Other than in
Public Works & Public Safety) \$ 5,000

GRAND TOTAL \$50,000

