



MARTINIQUE

Tropical Storm

... "Dorothy" strikes Martinique on August 20, 1970, causing more deaths than any storm in 10 years in the French Antilles—45 killed, 5,000 evacuated. Estimated dollar damage—\$31 million.

Value of U.S. Assistance\$24,196

DETAILS AND BACKGROUND:

The following record of previous storms since 1967 contrast their effects with "Dorothy" in terms of lives lost:

Year	Hurricane	Location	Killed
1970	Dorothy	Martinique	45
1963	Dora	St. Martin and St. Barteley } Martinique	2
1963	Edith	Martinique	10
1964	Cleo	Guadeloupe	14
1966	Inez	Guadeloupe	26
1967	Beulah	Martinique	13

Practically all of the damage from "Dorothy" was caused by water. Winds reached a brief maximum velocity of 90 miles an hour but were scarcely noticed on most of the Island. An extraordinary amount of rain accompanied the storm. Six inches fell in a single hour. The results were torrents and landslides in the mountain valleys and floods in the coastal lowlands and in the city of Fort-de-France. The river Madame, which flows through Fort-de-France and drains the surrounding hills, can handle a flow of 100 cubic meters per second. At the height

of the rainfall the flow was estimated to be 300 cubic meters per second. The rushing water tore up roads, power lines, water conduits and destroyed four bridges. The floodwater and mud reached a depth of over 5 feet in Fort-de-France and seeped into merchandise stores and houses. Merchants sustained heavy stock losses, but the buildings, while dirtied by mud and water, did not suffer much damage.

Although as many as 5,000 people had to be evacuated temporarily from their homes, relatively few dwellings (150 by official estimate) were completely destroyed. These were in the areas where the majority of deaths occurred.

The estimated \$31 million in material damage included roads, bridges, waterworks, power equipment, sugar and banana crop losses, destruction of warehouse stocks, private dwelling and personal property.

ACTION TAKEN BY THE FRENCH AND LOCAL UNITS OF GOVERNMENT AND ORGANIZATIONS:

The Government of France, units of local government, the Army and the Martinique Red Cross cooperated in relief efforts. Details and value of this assistance were not available, but the following comment of the American Consul indicates relief operations were effective.

"French capability to deal with such disasters has greatly improved in the last several years. This is the result of (1) the considerable investment in infrastructure which was made during the 1960's and the resulting increases in stocks of machinery such as bulldozers, scrapers, and various emergency supplies; (2) the more frequent and quicker communications by air and sea with metropolitan France; (3) the greater amount of merchandise stocked by local merchants; and (4) the greatly increased capability of the local Military in the civic action field resulting from the institution in 1960 of the Service Militaire Adapte (SMA), which includes a military public works program used to train local conscripts in various trades. The Army even brought in special engineers to install Bailey bridges sent from France."

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT:

The American Ambassador exercised his disaster relief authority to make a cash donation from the A.I.D. contingency fund to the Prefect of Martinique for the local purchase of disaster supplies in the amount of \$ 5,000
AID/DRC also authorized payment of airlift costs for a shipment of clothing by Catholic Relief Services for the storm victims. These charges amount to \$ 1,366
\$ 6,366

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

Catholic Relief Services donated three tons of light clothing, valued at \$10,330
Seventh Day Adventist Welfare Service also sent 4,000 pounds clothing from the U.S. via Air France and made a cash donation of \$3,500, totalling \$ 7,500
\$17,830

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY OTHER NATIONS:

None reported.

