For Immediate Release
Tuesday, April 7, 1936.

Hopkins Orders Workers and Supplies to Tornado-Stricken Towns.

The Works Progress Administration was marshalling its forces today to combat the second disaster to strike the eastern section of the Nation recently. State administrators in Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee and other southern states swept by Monday's tornado were rushing men and supplies into stricken areas to minister to the wounded and homeless, and to protect the health and safety of the inhabitants.

Works Progress Administrator Harry L. Hopkins has been in communication by telephone and telegraph throughout today with representatives in the devastated communities and said at noon that the full resources of his organization had been thrown into the emergency. No estimate of the number of men engaged in the task was possible at that time, he said.

Mr. Hopkins conferred this morning with Rear Admiral Cary T. Grayson, chairman of the American Red Cross, and with Governor Hill McAllister of Tennessee. They were assured that the WPA would do everything in its power to alleviate distress and to aid the stricken communities to clear away the debris and wreckage of the storm.

From Georgia came the report that Miss Gay B. Shepperson, State Works Progress Administrator and Federal Emergency Relief Administrator, had gone in person to Gainesville, scene of the greatest havoc in that State, and had ordered a force of 600 WPA men to work. In addition, three carloads of food have been turned over to the local chapter of the American Red Cross for distribution to the storm survivors.

Miss Shepperson reported that the WPA force in Gainesville and adjacent territory would be augmented today by an additional 200 or 300 men. While
several crews are aiding local authorities in retrieving bodies of the dead from shattered houses, other groups are demolishing structures damaged by the high winds which now constitute a further menace to safety.

She reported another force is at work in Savannah building a levee along the Savannah River which now threatens to overflow its banks and add to the destruction already wrought by cyclonic winds.

Mr. Hopkins informed his aids in the field they might put men to work on either public or private property provided the existence of an emergency was certified to by local health authorities. Demolition of tottering buildings and the clearing away of debris in the streets are the principal work being done at this time, he said.

Wayne Alliston, WPA administrator for Mississippi, wired Mr. Hopkins this morning that he was in Tupelo where the death toll has exceeded 100 persons, but due to the disruption of communication facilities was able to give little information as to the rescue and rehabilitation work being done there. The administrator was authorized to turn over all clothing, bedding and surgical supplies accumulated in WPA sewing rooms to the Red Cross and other local welfare organizations.

L. M. Pinckney, WPA administrator for South Carolina, informed Mr. Hopkins this morning that 100 workmen were engaged in rescue work at Anderson. From Ray Crow, administrator for Alabama, it was learned that rehabilitation work is progressing in several communities in that state visited by the storm.

Activities of the Women's Division are playing a prominent part in the alleviation of immediate distress and in checking the spread of disease.

Two truckloads of bedding, cots, and first-aid supplies were sent yesterday from Jackson, Mississippi, to Tupelo. Seventy nurses from WPA health projects are also on the scene, and the local Women's Division has set up a distribution bureau where food, clothing, and medical supplies are being dispensed. Surplus food commodities from other points in Mississippi are being concentrated in Tupelo and distributed through the WPA.