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XXX. New Authority in the French Antilles

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Mr. Henri Hoppenot, Director of Civil Services of the French Military Mission in Washington, has informed the Department of State of his designation by the French Committee of National Liberation to assume the authority over the French Antilles. Admiral Robert recently expressed a desire to relinquish his authority. The acceptance of Mr. Hoppenot's designation for the express purpose of exercising the French authority in the Antilles is not to be construed as affecting either pro or con the question of this Government's relations with the French Committee of National Liberation.

Mr. Hoppenot has assured the Government of the United States that the facilities and resources of the French Antilles will be devoted to the fullest extent to the prosecution of the war against the Axis, in accord with the action already taken by all French territory not under the domination of the enemy. The military interests of the United States in the Caribbean zone are fully recognized. The use of all presently immobilized French naval and merchant ships will be made available in the prosecution of the war effort.

On the basis of the new situation created by Mr. Hoppenot's designation, the Government of the United States is despatching relief supplies to Martinique and Guadeloupe and will cooperate

with the new authority in the resumption of the economic life of the islands.

Mr. Hoppenot and his assistants are expected to arrive at Martinique in the immediate future, and upon his assumption of authority relations with the French Antilles will be resumed through Consul General Marcel E. Malige, who is returning to his post.