

Earthquake Sufferers of Italy

Message from the President of the
United States, recommending an
appropriation for the relief of
the sufferers by earthquake
in Italy and its islands

JANUARY 4, 1909.—Read, referred to the Committee on Appropriations, and ordered to be printed

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

The appalling calamity which has befallen the people of Italy is followed by distress and suffering throughout a wide region among many thousands who have escaped with life, but whose shelter and food and means of living are destroyed. The ordinary machinery for supplying the wants of civilized communities is paralyzed, and an exceptional emergency exists which demands that the obligations of humanity shall regard no limit of national lines.

The immense debt of civilization to Italy; the warm and steadfast friendship between that country and our own; the affection for their native land felt by great numbers of good American citizens who are immigrants from Italy; the abundance with which God has blessed us in our safety; all these should prompt us to immediate and effective relief.

Private generosity is responding nobly to the demand by contributions through the safe and efficient channel of the American Red Cross Society.

Confident of your approval, I have ordered the government supply ships *Celtic* and *Culgoa* to the scene of disaster, where, upon receiving the authority which I now ask from you, they will be able to dispense food, clothing, and other supplies with which they are laden to the value of about \$300,000. The *Celtic* has already sailed and the *Culgoa* is at Port Said. Eight vessels of the returning battle-ship fleet are already under orders for Italian waters, and that Government has been asked if their services can be made useful.

I recommend that the Congress approve the application of supplies above indicated and further appropriate the sum of \$500,000,

to be applied to the work of relief at the discretion of the Executive and with the consent of the Italian Government.

I suggest that the law follow the form of that passed after the Mont Pelee disaster in 1902.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

The WHITE HOUSE, *January 4, 1909.*

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