

# Marianas Talks Begin

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Leaders of the Mariana Islands get together today in Saipan with a personal ambassador of United States President

Richard Nixon for what could be the start of a new future for the islands.

The meeting represents a departure from what was once U.S. policy toward its Pacific Trust Territory—to resolve the problem of Micronesia's future political status as a single entity.

Now, there are winds that the Marianas will go their own way, and the meeting of Ambassador Franklin Haydn Williams and the political leaders

of the Marianas symbolizes that change. Guam will be there today, too.

Gov. Camacho is to be on hand at 10 a.m. for formal opening ceremonies. He is going by invitation of both the Micronesians and the U.S. government.

Thereby hangs a tale, for the role of Guam in these pending talks is a strange one.

On the one hand, Guam has strong ties with (Continued on page 12)

AM, PM

WC/JTWC twenty-four  
forecast for Guam,  
Saipan, and Saipan  
beginning at 6 a.m.  
cloudy with isolated  
morning and  
showers. See  
diseases, and tides on  
p. 2.

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# Gov. Camacho A Guest As Marianas, U.S. Talk Status

(Continued from page 1)

Saipan and Rota and Tinian and all the rest. By reason of geography and sheer isolation from the rest of the world, Guam's leaders are well familiar with the local leaders of the neighboring islands. And it is logical, therefore, that Guam's officials would want to tell the Micronesians, "Here's what you might look for in the status talks."

But on the other hand, Guam is a United States territory. Its officials are privy to confidential American information, and its ties with the U.S. military are obvious.

This leaves Guam straddled in the middle on talks.

"We know, on the one hand," says an observer of this position, "that the Marianas are going to be with Guam in a system some day, and that Guam has a responsibility to help the Marianas know what to look for in these status negotiations. But on the other hand, Guam has a responsibility to itself and to the U.S., for that's what Guam is. It could be one hell of a mess."

Camacho's role, therefore, will be strictly ceremonial—he is not expected to take part in any real debate.

One of the matters at issue—and in which Guam is in the middle—is a military question. The U.S. has said it has an interest in major land requirements on the island of Tinian. What else the U.S. might want has not been clearly spelled out. The Marianas will want to know.

The U.S. Air Force holds 8,881.9 acres as military retention lands on Tinian and the Navy and Air Force hold another 4,943.3 acres of Saipan.

The preliminary talks are expected to last only two days.

While in the past the Marianas District Legislature has by resolution urged annexation with the U.S. and Guam, more recently leaders have begun to discuss the possibility of bypassing Guam in favor of direct ties with Washington.

The Congress of Micronesia has been pursuing separate talks—conducted with Williams—on the future of Micronesia as a whole.

The Northern Marianas represent some 13,000 inhabitants on 14 islands, stretching nearly 400 miles northward from here.