

# U.S. Plans Giant Base on

Gannett News Service

AGANA, Guam — The United States proposes to take over the tiny island of Tinian and build a massive air force and naval base as a bastion in the Western Pacific, the Pacific Daily News said today.

The newspaper said it had learned from "unimpeachable sources" that the United States has suggested to officials of the Marianas Islands, a Trust Territory of the United Nations, that if the Marianas join with the United States in some kind

of commonwealth status, Tinian would be a perfect place for a base.

The newspaper said the United States suggests that the 800 residents of Tinian could sell or lease all their land to the government. They would work on the base or be transplanted to a nearby island.

TINIAN, located 100 miles north of this westernmost American territory, is the island from which the airplane Enola Gay took off for its atomic bombing attack on Hiroshima in August 1945. After the war, the United States turned it and other neighboring islands over to a United Nations trust, which is now seeking a more permanent status for them.

A spokesman for the U.S. delegation to the political status talks of the Mariana Islands, currently under way on Saipan, just a few miles from Tinian, refused to comment on the newspaper's report. President Nixon's personal ambassador to the Marianas talks, Franklin Haydn Williams, was not available for comment. The commander of the naval forces for the Marianas, Adm. George S. Morrison, who is stationed on Guam, refused to comment.

The newspaper said Morrison had flown over the island recently on a photographic mission labelled "top secret." It also said a number of Navy officials had visited the island in the past few months, talked to residents, and come away with the impression that they might favor such a vast development.

It was not known how

many men might be involved in such a base or what the estimated cost of the land and construction and operation might be.

THE NEWSPAPER said the deteriorating harbor at Tinian would be repaired. It

also said two air fields on the island would be beefed up — one to accommodate long-range jets and one for shorter shuttle service among nearby islands.

It said the U.S. plan suggests that if Tinian residents don't want to surrender their

## Tinian, Newspaper Says

entire island to become an off-limits enclave of government territory, then a second plan might be instituted in which the government would take over substantial portions of the island and move residents of its current major harbor village inland

to a new location, away from the military facilities. If the latter plan were adopted, the newspaper said, then the civilian government would be placed under strict security requirements which would ban immigration and off-island pri-

vate investment. Tinian contains only 39 square miles — being about 12 miles long and 6½ miles wide at the widest point. It is a largely level land, with some cattle grazing. Its residents have no telephone or wire contact to the out-

side world. Its ever-warm, tropical climate has raised some hopes for future expansion in tourism. The tree shaded pit where the atomic bomb was first loaded on a B-29 is still spotted by an official marker on an abandoned runway here