

## Students Say: 'We Want To Grow Life'

Statement From Tinian Students  
Studying on Guam May 16, 1973

We, Tinian students studying at Guam, deeply oppose the military takeover of our island. We feel that the opinions of the Tinian people and their leaders have been misrepresented. Because of recent events we have come to realize that "if you starve a person, he'll eat anything he is given." We have been getting only the crumbs. Government aids for farming have not been given to our farmers.

We feel that the biggest problem is secrecy. There has been lack of communication of intent and of plans between people and government. Our Municipal Council's Resolution of December 1971 asking for education on the military's impact has been disregarded. The Trust Territory school system does not tell us about the United Nations' decisions which require the T.T. government provide alternatives to American ideas and values and alternatives on future status.

We want our land for farming. The administering authority's agricultural expert tells us that "the land is so rich that it'll melt in your mouth." Yet we have problems with marketing and transportation and there's even a long waiting list for the small tractor. If they are closing military bases in the States why do they want our island? We want to help grow life instead of destroy life.

Before the Spanish came 400 years ago there were 30,000 of us Chamorros living on our small island. The Spanish took everybody away that survived the fighting and raised cattle to feed their soldiers. Next the Germans bought our land and people without even asking us and also raised cattle. Then the Japanese came. During their rule our phosphate deposits were dug up and sugar cane was planted. Both of these products were sent to Japan. Finally, the Americans want our land for the military. When are we going to benefit? For several hundred years our "parents" have come from the outside and we have been kept babies. The baby should grow up and speak.

We students have remained silent because culturally it is difficult to criticize our elders. But times are changing. As students we learn at school about pollution and other problems. We should have a voice, too. We were born here. We have our roots in the land.

Our land is so precious and scarce, we cannot condone the use of it by a foreign government. We are Chamorros and proud of it and want to stay that way....

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