

TAKEOVER DENIED

Late Thursday afternoon, nearly two working days after a story appeared in the Pacific Daily News reporting an alleged military takeover of Tinian, the U.S. and Marianas delegations to the current status talks issued a joint clarifying statement.

The statement, which follows in full, bore the names of Senator Edward DLG. Pangelinan, Chairman of the Marianas Political Status Commission, and Ambassador Franklin Haydn Williams, head of the U.S. delegation:

"A series of informal discussions between our two delegations in Saipan last week initiated the phase in our continuing joint endeavor, begun here last December, to create lasting ties between the Mariana Islands and the United States. Those informal exchanges provided an opportunity for preliminary consideration of most of the major topics bearing on the Marianas' future status, including such matters as the nature of the political relationship, finance, self government, public land, land alienation, and U.S. military land requirements. Both sides found the sessions useful as they prepared for the resumption of the formal talks this week.

"The formal discussions were renewed in a plenary session May 15. Each side pledged to work earnestly to design a Marianas - U.S. relationship which will reflect the desire of the people of the Marianas for close association and will be beneficial to both the Marianas and the

United States. In lengthy working sessions yesterday morning and afternoon and again today the delegations have taken up that task. In a constructive atmosphere characterized by free, frank, and searching exchanges, we have discussed the nature of our future political ties. We have already identified substantial areas of agreement and are now examining some of the more complex legal and constitutional aspects of the political relationship.

"Both delegations plan to give equally intensive consideration to such other major topics as finance, arrangements for the protection of local interests in land, U.S. requirements, and enactment and implementation of the new status agreement.

"The delegations have preliminarily discussed land and U.S. military requirements in the Marianas but have not yet exchanged position papers or any kind of documentation on the subject for negotiation which we expect to

review in great detail.

"Ambassador Williams made it clear as early as October of 1971, at Hana, Maui, Hawaii, that to the extent feasible the U.S. wishes to concentrate on Tinian Island any military facilities it might establish in the Marianas. Ambassador Williams restated that position here in Saipan last December. These requirements are extensive. But the U.S. is not asking for exclusive use of all of Tinian. Furthermore, Ambassador Williams wishes to state categorically that the U.S. Government has no plans whatever to give the U.S. military responsibility for the civil administration of Tinian, as alleged in recent news reports.

"Chairman Pangelinan emphasized that the Marianas Political Status Commission includes two representatives of Tinian. He stated that all fifteen members of the Commission are determined to represent and protect the interest of all the people of Tinian, in their status negotiations.

"Both the Marianas Political Status Commission and the U.S. Delegation are committed to undertake full consultation with the people of Tinian before any final decisions or agreements are made regarding the use of land on Tinian for military purposes. After this matter has been fully discussed in these negotiations, representatives of the Commission and the U.S. Delegation will schedule appropriate meetings with the people of Tinian to disclose these plans in detail and solicit their views."