

73
PDN 7/26

June

AF Planners Set To Look Tinian Over

SAIPAN (MNS) — A team of military and civilian planners is scheduled to visit Tinian today and tomorrow.

According to status liaison officer Ms. Mary Vance Trent, the U.S. Air Force, as the designated executive agent for Tinian base development, has been requested to proceed with early planning for a military presence on the island "to demonstrate U.S. willingness to honor preliminary agreements with the Marianas Political Status Commission.

Those preliminary agreements, Ms. Trent said, were outlined in the June 4 joint communique, issued at the conclusion of the second round of Marianas talks.

The communique said:

"The United States will send a small group of engineers to the Marianas to make necessary preliminary on-the-spot surveys. These actions are necessary to facilitate the planning process. In this regard, the United States offered assurances that it has no intention of taking further action to implement its military land proposals so long as this matter is still under negotiation with the Marianas Political Status Commission."

The visit to Tinian this week, then, is the first of a series of periodic visits which will take place over the next several months to provide a continuing liaison with Marianas leaders and the people of the district.

The specific purpose of this first trip is "to provide Marianas representatives with information on Tinian on-site surveys which are planned for August and September of this year." Arrangements for the support of the survey team are also to be worked out during the visit.

Proposals before the Marianas status group include overt military control of two-thirds of Tinian, including the port, with the civilian population being relocated in the Marpo area.

However, the military has said it wants all of Tinian—a fact first revealed by the Pacific Daily News. U.S. status negotiator Franklin Haydn Williams at first denied the military positions, then relented and admitted it was true.

Military plans for Tinian include a giant multi-service base that will include a revitalized airfield for the Air Force, harbor facilities for Navy supply operations for other services and either Marine-or Army areas that could be used for maneuvers and quartering troops.