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Newsletter
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TINIAN BASE WHOLE ISLAND TO AIR FORCE

- PEOPLE TO BE OUSTED
- \$144.6 MILLION BASE

*"I'm not about to give up the island I love
without a fight."*

John Hofschneider, Tinian resident

*Opponents of U.S. military take-over assemble in front
of huge latte stone, site of home of traditional Taga
chiefs.*



FOM

The United States has officially announced it plans to build a huge \$144.6 million military airbase and supply complex on Tinian island in the Marianas. The announcement was made by Franklin Haydn Williams, chief American spokesman on the future of Micronesia.

The United States would be sole landlord of the entire 40 square mile Manhattan-shaped island. Its 800 inhabitants would be displaced from their homes to make way for a new port and munitions facility. According to U.S. reports, access to the island would be regulated by the military.

The people of Tinian, many of whom had previously welcomed the prospects of a limited military presence on their island are "visibly angry" according to Administration spokesman Frank Chong. Immediately fol-

lowing the announcement, signs opposing military plans began to appear. Former Mayor Joe Cruz said, "I have always been quoted as being pro-military but moving San Jose (where the entire population lives) is too much..." Felipe Atalig, a member of the Congress of Micronesia said he doubted the people would allow themselves to become "virtual peons on their own land," as United States proposals would have it.

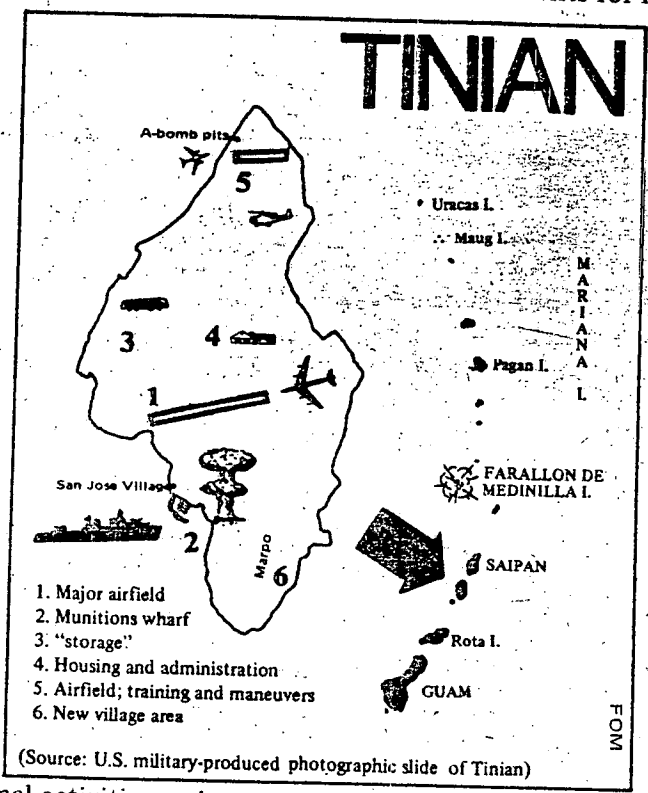
Felipe Mendiola, speaker of the local legislature, was among many who signed a petition asking for United Nations help in stopping American plans to displace them from their homes. He told Williams that the U.S. is "apparently unaware of how attached islanders are to their land. If the U.S. attempts to force us, I would predict another Wounded Knee. It is our land, our

future."

The announcement about the base came during negotiations between the United States and representatives of the Mariana Islands who are seeking permanent ties with the United States through a commonwealth relationship.

DETAILS

Details of American plans were first revealed in the Guam-based *Pacific Daily News* on 16 May 1973 but were denied by a spokesman for Williams. However, in an unannounced radio broadcast on the evening of 30 May, Williams confirmed these reports. He said, "U.S. land needs are extensive... so much so that we feel we should acquire the northern two-thirds of the island for military purposes. We feel we should also ask to acquire the southern third but would make this part of the island available to the current residents for nor-



mal activities and community life." Mike Malone, reporter for the *Pacific Daily News* quotes a United States position paper as saying, the military wants "to have as much of Tinian as possible. Indeed, if it could be done, we would like to see the entire island under military control."

Over one-third of Tinian has been held by the military in reserve status since World War II. The new move would increase military acreage from 8,882 acres to 18,500 acres. The southern part of Tinian -- about 7,700 acres including the exceptionally fertile farming area of Marpo Valley would be reserved for habitation and farming by the residents of Tinian.

Williams mentioned a seven-step plan for construction of facilities on the island to begin in 1975 and to be completed by 1982. Tinian, the base from which Hiroshima and Nagasaki were atom bombed, has four

runways, one of which is still in use for regular passenger service. Continental Airlines is slated to begin 727 jet service there in the near future.

The new base was described by Williams as a "joint service military service facility" that would station 2,600 military and civilian personnel, not including dependents. The following particulars were given for each area of the island:

- North: reserved for air and periodic ground maneuvers

"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 crumbs. Our land is 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."

"We steadfastly oppose the military takeover of any of our Beautiful Island for purposes of destruction and instead offer a life-giving alternative -- the growing on our super-rich soil of food for our Struggling Nation."

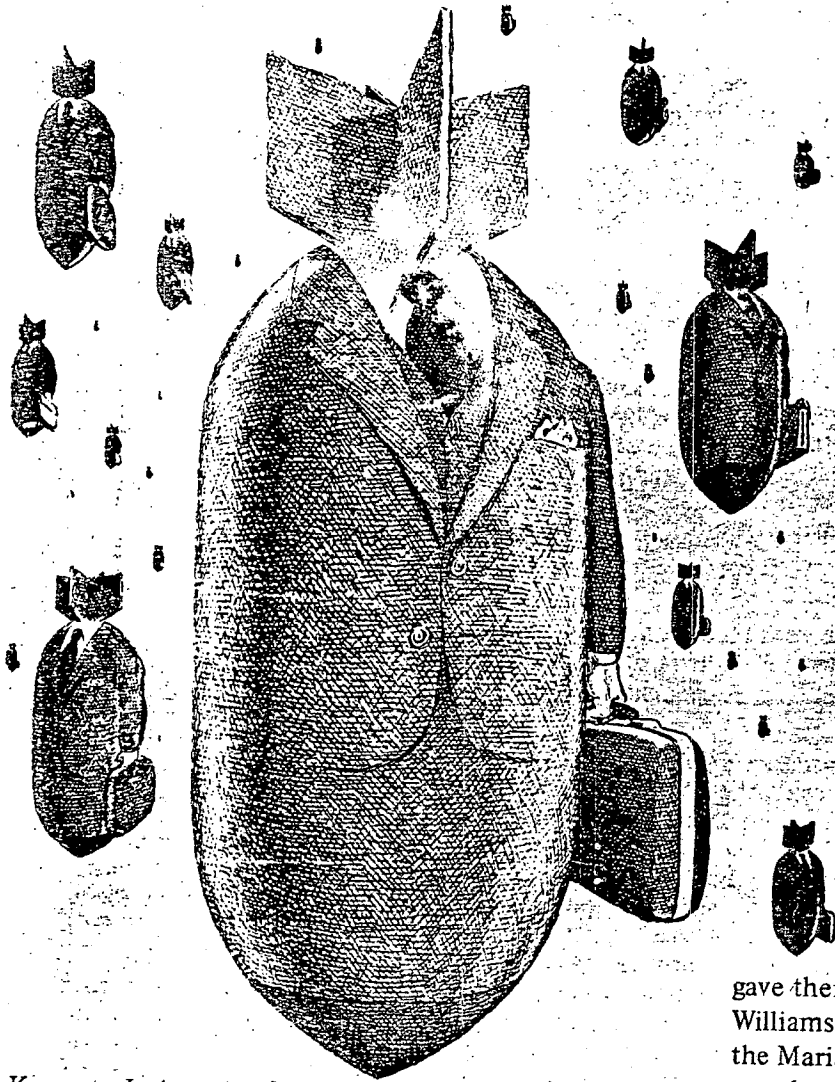
Tinian students at the University of Guam

- East-central: base housing and administrative quarters
- West: supply base
- West Field: enlarged to accomodate any existing U.S. aircraft
- Harbor (including San Jose village): restricted whenever munitions handled or unloaded; open for commercial purposes at other times.

There are reports that Tinian will become a major forward supply base for the giant C-5A cargo planes, the largest aircraft in the world. It is also likely that bombers and reconnaissance aircraft based on Guam and at other bases would be moved to Tinian. Reports from Guam suggest that because of widespread opposition there to the construction of a new \$120 million ammunition wharf, a major munitions storage facility may be built on Tinian. The United States launched a trial balloon proposing this two years ago:

One congressman from Palau points out that some of the proposed military uses for Tinian may be a "smoke-screen" for taking attention away from future military plans for Guam and Palau. The United States made public in August 1972, plans to take over 28% of Palau for a Marine guerrilla training base, submarine base, airfield and "storage facility". There is almost universal opposition to bases on the part of the Palauans.

At the same time that United States plans for Tinian were revealed, it was announced in Tokyo that Japanese-controlled Iwo Jima, about 1000 miles north of Tinian would become a Japanese airbase in 1977. With the completion of bases in Palau and Tinian, a 3000-mile Pacific Rim military arc stretching from



Korea to Indonesia would be complete.

THE PEOPLE

Williams told the Marianas residents that the military's acquisition of Tinian would have significant impact throughout the area in terms of increasing revenues, providing jobs, and building a technological infrastructure. He estimated that \$10-12 million dollars would be pumped into the islands each year when construction begins. "We feel," he said, "that our proposal is in both our interests and those of the people of Tinian."

The island is presently being developed for agricultural purposes largely on a self-help basis. Tinian has long been noted for its fertile soil. There is a growing livestock business controlled by the Guam-based Ken Jones empire and once a week an Air Force plane visits Tinian to buy produce from local farmers for commissaries on Guam. The plans outlined by Williams would virtually end the livestock business and would severely hinder agricultural production, especially when seemingly attractive, but menial jobs become available on and around the base.

Although one member of the Marianas Status Commission from Tinian said he would oppose a settlement with the United States unless the people of Tinian

gave their approval, the joint communiques issued by Williams and Senator Edward Pangelinan, chairman of the Marianas Status Commission, said only that the people of Tinian would be "consulted" about future plans for their island. Many of the people of Rota, another island in the Marianas chain, have already expressed their opposition to being represented by the Saipanese-dominated Marianas Status Commission. It is not clear at this point what the position of the Tinian residents will be.

OTHER "REQUIREMENTS"

Williams also outlined other military land "requirements" on Saipan and on Farallon de Medinilla. On Saipan where almost 5,000 acres is held by the military, he listed:

- 320 of the military's present 640-acre land holding at Tanapag Harbor will be returned to civilian use but an equal amount will be retained for contingency purposes.
- Isley Field, now being rebuilt for joint military-tourist use, will be controlled under some kind of joint use agreement with 500 acres being retained for exclusive use as a military support area.
- 23 acres of land will be retained for Coast Guard and Postal Service use.

Farallon de Medinilla, a small island north of Saipan, now used as a Navy-Air Force target area, will be retained for continuing use.