

Tinian Student In Land Plea

Results of a bilingual house-to-house survey taken on Tinian by four University of Guam students from there have been presented to a Japanese peace group affiliated with the Socialist Party. The survey showed the majority of Tinian's population opposed to a proposed U.S. military takeover of the island.

UOG student Florence Mendiola was heard in Tokyo at an annual conference of Gensuiken, a large Japanese anti-bomb group subsidized by Japan's Socialist Party, the third largest political party in the country.



FLORENCE

"Gensuiken wanted some Micronesian delegates at the conference," Florence says. "When the ticket came, I just grabbed it and went. I didn't know anything of this organization — who they are or what they are, but I knew that we (Tinian) needed support from other nations if we are going to keep the military from grabbing our homes.

"Most people on Tinian see the problem as too big and too hopeless," Florence said. "How do 600 people fight three million without support?"

"Gensuiken's stationary called the group 'anti A and H bomb,' so I knew they would be against a military takeover of our island. I had to speak out," Florence said.

"The impression outsiders have is that Tinian wants the military. Three other UOG students from Tinian and I conducted a house-to-house bilingual survey which showed that only five families really want the military. We are desperate to let the people of the world know that we need their support."

The Gensuiken conference, Florence says, became an annual event following a first conference in 1960 which resulted from public outcry and demonstrations against atomic bomb testing in the Marshalls in 1954, and in commemoration of the bombing of Hiroshima in 1945.

The 28th Disaster Anniversary World Conference included 12 international delegates, among whom were Francisco Uludong of Palau and Carl Young of Guam, and 50 Japanese participants. Thousands of people marched outside the conference in support, Florence said.

"The U.S. seems bent on making us more dependent on her and less reliant on ourselves," Florence told the conference.

"We don't need a military economy. We need tremendous help in farming and fishing—this is the real economy," she told them.

The older generation on Tinian is opposed to the military takeover for fear of experiencing the bombing and killing of another world war and not having enough land for future generations, Florence says. The younger generations fears cultural and social shock and the restriction of movement "which would surely occur," Florence said.

"We strongly believe that our language, culture and land is our identity. We must not lose this for any cause. We do not want a repetition of 1945. We do not want our island again to be used for dropping bombs on others."

Besides the Tinian problem, the relief of Marshallese victims of the hydrogen bomb tests was discussed at the conference. Also brought up was opposition to separate negotiations with Trust Territory districts by the U.S. to determine their future status.

Also discussed were the French nuclear tests, the prevention of nuclear armament by Japan, the relief of Japanese atomic bomb victims, and the implementation of the Vietnam peace agreement.