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SAIPAN - MAY 19

The Marianas Political Status Commission and the United States Delegation continued their discussions of the future political status of the Marianas over the weekend in Rota. On the way back to Saipan on Sunday the plane stopped in Tinian to enable the U.S. Delegation to place a wreath at the memorial for the eight people who recently lost their lives in a boating tragedy between Tinian and Saipan. Both delegations also used the occasion to pay their respect and to meet informally and briefly with the Tinian Municipal leaders.

In Rota, the two delegations had an opportunity to explain directly to the people the current status of the talks between the Mariana Political Status Commission and the United States Government. On arrival on Friday after an enthusiastic airport reception and display of marching by the Boy and Girl Scouts of Rota the Marianas Commission and the U.S. Delegation held a joint session with the Municipal Council. The next day the two delegations held a public meeting where many questions concerning the present negotiations were answered.

During the question period Ambassador Haydn Williams, head of the U.S. Delegation, said that he joined Chairman Pangelinan of the Marianas Commission in the hope that the talks would result in an agreement before the end of the year. There was considerable interest in the benefits of citizenship of the people of the Marianas after the Trusteeship ends. Ambassador Williams additionally indicated that initial funding has been appropriated for an accelerated public land survey and adjudication

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program which will take approximately three years and that the United States is committed to completion of the program.

The Municipal leadership of Rota hosted a reception for the two parties to the status talks on Friday evening and the U.S. Delegation reciprocated with a dinner on Saturday night.

On Tinian the wreath was laid by Ambassador Williams, whose brief remarks were followed by a prayer by Father Meno, Tinian parish priest. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman and the two Tinian representatives on the Marianas Political Status Commission and Ambassador Williams and Mr. Wilson then paid their respects on the Mayor, and the speaker and other members of the Tinian Municipal Council. They discussed the desire of both delegations to return to Tinian soon for another public meeting in order to hear the views of the people. Chairman Pangelinan and Ambassador Williams both also gave the Council members a status report on the talks to date. Particular interest focussed on the new U.S. proposal for land use on Tinian which would reduce the total acreage required and eliminate the need to relocate the village of San Jose.

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