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(Tinian)

(Corrected 5/23/74)

May 22, 1974

Editor  
Pacific Daily News  
Agana, Guam

PDN 777-87

Dear Sir:

I should like to express appreciation for the treatment which the Pacific Daily News is giving to the current talks concerning the future political status of the Northern Marianas. Nevertheless, the editorial entitled "Moving Very Fast" which appeared in your edition of May 20, 1974 calls for some comment and the correction of a factual error.

We cannot agree with some of the conclusions of the editorial with regard to comparison between the prospective status of the Northern Marianas and that of Guam. Additionally, on another aspect, the editorial contains a significant inaccuracy in its fourth paragraph.

To correct that inaccuracy let me state that the U.S. Government now controls in military retention lands more than one-third of the Island of Tinian. The amended United States plan for acquisition of land on Tinian continues to envisage the need for approximately an additional one-third of the island for federal public use including joint-use military base, although the acreage to be acquired under the amended plan has been reduced by some 1200 acres. Of the approximately 17,500 acres to be acquired, about one-half (8,453 acres) is already military retention land, lying mostly in the central part of the island. An additional 8,469 acres of the required area is adjoining unallocated public land. Agricultural land comprises the remaining 578 acres. Under the revised plan the Federal Government requirements can therefore be met with the minimum dislocation of private individuals, while at the same time assuring joint military/civilian use of the present harbor and the airfield.

As stated to the press on May 16, this revision in requirement results from an intensive restudy based on technical surveys carried out over the past few months, which have made possible a greater degree of precision in drawing up the plan, and reflects in part views expressed earlier by the Marianas Political Status Commission. As your editorial points out, the amended plan eliminates the need to relocate the village of San Jose. Therefore that part of Tinian lying south of the airfield to be built on the site of West Field, and east of the harbor area will remain open for local community purposes and for other public and private development as the people of Tinian may wish.

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The United States is confident that the people of the Northern Marianas, especially those most concerned on Tinian, will conclude that the negotiations between the Marianas Political Status Commission and the United States will result in an agreement representing the best interests of our common defense needs.

Sincerely yours,

(Miss) Mary Vance Trent  
Liaison Officer for Micronesian  
Status Negotiations

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