

Tinian Distad Vetoes Takeover Vote

News Saipan Bureau

SAIPAN — A proposed referendum to determine what the people of Tinian think about having the U.S. military occupy their island was vetoed yesterday by Marianas District Administrator Francisco C. Ada.

The call for the referendum was contained in an ordinance passed by the Tinian Municipal Council Feb. 14. Tinian Mayor Antonio S. Borja signed the measure, but the District Administrator's approval also would have been necessary for the bill to take effect.

Ada said he would give the reasons for his veto action next week. Some observers here feel that the Tinian referendum might have set an undesired precedent for other polls throughout Micronesia on the future status question.

The Tinian referendum was slated for Sunday, April 7, to obtain residents

views on the possible relocation of their only village and the extent of the land area to be allowed for military use.

The proposed ballot contained two questions: "Do you agree to the relocation (moving) of the Village of San Jose from its present site to another area on the Island of Tinian?"

"In your opinion, how much of the Island of Tinian in terms of land area should the U.S. military be permitted to occupy? None? One-third? Two-thirds? Other (Specify)." The vetoed bill appropriated \$250 from the Tinian municipality's unobligated surplus funds to conduct the referendum.

A similar referendum measure was considered by the Tinian council last summer but was not passed. Congressman Felipe O. Atalis, who represents Tinian in the Congress of Micronesia, said earlier this year that a referendum, "is the only way to officially determine what the people want" on the status issue.

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