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The Navajo Indian Tribe and the Pomona (Calif.) Division of General Dynamics Corp. have joined forces to establish a missile parts plant at Fort Defiance, Ariz., it was announced today by the Tribe, the Company and the Department of the Interior.

Operations will consist mainly of electronic component and circuit assemblies for flight and guidance of the Standard Missile, a tactical weapon for use in U.S. Navy vessels.

The Pomona Division of General Dynamics has developed a series of tactical missiles for the Navy, Army, Marine Corps and armed forces of allied countries. Among these is the new standard missile for which General Dynamics was recently awarded a multi-million dollar Defense Department production contract.

Operations at the Fort Defiance site will consist of production and supporting services necessary to the manufacture of welded modules -- electronic components and circuits necessary to flight and guidance of the missiles. Jobs will include assembly, welding, inspection, repair, and preparation of parts for loading into encapsulation (protective) equipment, as well as supporting activities.

The lease of a five-acre plant site on Navajo property was negotiated between the Tribe and the Company with the unanimous approval of the Tribal Council. The Tribe will also construct the 26,000-square-foot manufacturing facility, under terms of the agreement.

Three-fourths of the construction costs will be repaid during the first five years of the lease, which is to run for 15 years with renewal options annually to the lessee after the first five years.

A yearly payroll of $500,000 to $750,000 is expected, with 200 Navajos comprising the bulk of the work force when production reaches capacity. Operations will commence this Fall in a temporary facility, with 20 to 35 Navajos employed initially.

Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall, in making the announcement today from Washington, said:

"The Navajo Tribe is to be congratulated for its business acumen in inviting General Dynamics to expand in an area where it will help an Indian community. Not only does the event mean increased income to the Tribe and to individual workers, but it heralds the advance of the space age into the Navajo world. General Dynamics also deserves commendation for its readiness to venture into a relatively remote community in order to spread some of the benefits of its new defense contract to the Indian people."

Establishment of the enterprise will mark the second electronic manufacturing facility on the vast Navajo Reservation, where nearly 20 percent of the total American Indian population lives. Fairchild Instrument Corp., of New York, employs 300 Navajos at a transistor assembly plant opened last year at Shiprock, N.M., on the reservation.