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new round of status talks

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Talks between the U.S. Government and the people of Micronesia, which could determine the political future of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, will begin in Hawaii Oct. 4.

The discussions between a 12-member joint committee of the Congress of Micronesia and an American delegation headed by Ambassador Franklin Hayden Williams will be at Hana, Maui. They are expected to last 10 days.

It will be the first such talks in nearly a year and a half. The last discussions, largely unsuccessful, were held in May 1970 on Saipan. Most of the Micronesian

delegation is expected to arrive tomorrow night. Sen. Lazarus Salii of Palau, chairman of the committee, is in California and will arrive Monday afternoon.

WILLIAMS and the U.S. delegation are expected in Hawaii next Friday.

The Micronesian group will devote most of next week to pre-conference talks at the Ala Moana Hotel; the aim is a unified position.

Williams, head of the Asia Foundation, is President Nixon's special representative at the talks. Other American delegates will represent the Departments of State, Interior and Defense.

The Micronesian delegation represents all six districts in the Trust Territory.

Micronesia has been a "strategic trust territory" under the United States since the end of World War II. The talks at Hana—third in a series which began in 1969—are aimed at changing the political status of Micronesia.

THE OFFICIAL position of the Congress of Micronesia is for a "free association" that would give Micronesia full control of its government and lands. The U.S. would take charge of foreign policy and defense.

It is understood, however, that some minority elements of the Micronesian group favor complete independence, and others would like to see quite close ties to the U.S.

The United States has offered Micronesia a status

akin to that of Puerto Rico. Micronesians would have internal self government and an opportunity to become American citizens.

However, the U.S. would extend its Federal Court system to include the Trust Territory, would control postal, defense and banking matters, foreign policy, and would have a right to land in the islands when necessary for "public purposes."

IT IS THIS matter of land control that has caused deadlocks in the past. Some observers think the presence of Williams—who was not at the previous talks—may indicate a change in the U.S. position.