

SAIPAN - Less than two weeks after the U. S. Senate oked a separate and permanent status agreement for the Mariana Islands District, Palau District leaders left for Washington D. C., to explore the possibility for separate negotiations.

Senator Roman Tmetuchl, chairman of the Palau Political Status Commission, headed the delegation, including the Speaker of the Palau Legislature, Sandang Silmai, and others.

During the recent session of the Congress of Micronesia on Saipan, Palau delegates announced plans to begin formal steps to separate from the remaining five districts of the Trust Territory.

Palau's first request for separate negotiations last year received neither a "yes" or "no" answer from Franklin Haydn Williams, of the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations in Washington D. C.

Williams headed a joint military-civilian delegation of U. S. negotiators in talks with the Congress of Micronesia's Joint Committee on Future Status. Until 1972, the U. S. position was to deal

## PALAU ASKS SEPARATE TALKS (AGAIN)

with all six districts of the United Nations "trust" as a single entity. Separate talks with the Marianas began in Dec. 1972, ending in a permanent territorial status for the Marianas as a "commonwealth."

Palau leaders have indicated they desire a separate status from Micronesia "similar in nature to the Mariana Islands."

Palau Senator Lazarus Salii is chairman of Micronesia's Joint Committee on Future Status.

