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U.S., Micronesia initial pact

A new political relationship between Micronesia and the United States has come one step closer to realization with the formal initialing of a "Compact of Free Association" by representatives of both sides on Wednesday in Saipan.

The signing was reported to The Advertiser by Navy Cmdr. Dick Wyttenbach, official spokesman for Ambassador Haydon Williams, President Ford's personal representative for Micronesian status negotiations.

Under terms of the tentative compact, Micronesia will become a federated state. It would be self-governing, with the provision that foreign affairs and defense responsibil-

ities and rights would be vested in the United States.

MICRONESIAN citizens would have all the privileges of U.S. nationals, including freedom of entry and exit and the right to employment.

The proposed compact must be approved by the people in a plebiscite before the final agreement becomes official.

The initialing was seen as a significant development since it indicates that, after years of bilateral talks — and no small amount of soul-searching by the Micronesians — both sides now appear near agreement on Micronesian status after the United States administration of the

U.N. trusteeship ends in 1981.

ONE ISSUE REMAINS unresolved, however: Micronesia's ocean resources and its position regarding law of the sea matters. But, Wyttenbach said, "it is a problem that can be solved," adding that discussions will continue in Washington "in the near future."

He said the Micronesian leaders hope to have all details ironed out in time to submit the final compact to the congress of Micronesia in a special session July 19.