

June 25, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR THE MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS  
COMMISSION FILE

Subject: Meeting with James Wilson

Howard Willens and Michael Helfer met on June 21, 1974 with James Wilson at his office in the Interior Department. Mr. Willens had requested the meeting primarily to discuss how the Joint Drafting Committee should proceed between now and the next round of negotiations.

Land Negotiating Committee: Mr. Wilson said that one of his priorities during the recess would be the Land Negotiating Committee. He stated that he would be in Saipan in early July, and hoped to arrange a meeting of this Committee on July 11 or 12. Two persons from the Defense Department are expected to assist Mr. Wilson, one from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the other from the Air Force. Mr. Wilson also stated that he expected that Emmett Rice would be made available to assist the United States in conjunction with the deliberations of the Land Negotiating Committee. Mr. Rice is expected to leave the Trust Territory Government in the fall and return to the Department of the Interior.

Phase I Funds: Mr. Wilson reported that he had discussed Phase I funding with OMB, and that the response was generally favorable. He is now in the process of pursuing the necessary formalities to gain OMB approval of Phase I funds. Mr. Wilson stated that in view of the progress of the negotiations, the United States would attempt to add Phase I funding as a separate item to the fiscal year 1975 Trust Territory budget. The alternative -- to seek a supplemental appropriation next spring -- might mean that there would be a delay of six months or more between the signing of a status agreement and the beginning of Phase I.

Public Land Legislation: Mr. Wilson stated that he had been spending some time assisting in the Department of Interior review of the public land legislation in the Congress of Micronesia. The Interior Department position is that unless the legislation directly conflicts with the policy statement, the Interior Department