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Dear Mr. Strauss:

I wish to call your attention to the fact that certain questions concerning the effects of the recent thermonuclear weapons tests conducted at the Pacific Proving Grounds in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands may be raised in the United Nations Trusteeship Council in July when it examines the administration of the Trust Territory. Normally the proceedings of the Council do not attract much publicity. It is probable, however, that the U.S.S.R., and possibly one or two other Members of the Council, such as India and Syria, will criticize the United States for testing such destructive weapons in a trust territory, in which event the press might give the matter considerable attention.

The Trusteeship Council, which is composed of twelve members (Australia, Belgium, China, El Salvador, France, Haiti, India, New Zealand, Syria, United Kingdom, United States, and the USSR) conducts a detailed study annually of developments in each trust territory. This annual examination is a feature of the International Trusteeship System established by Chapters XII and XIII of the United Nations Charter. It was under the provisions of these Chapters and more specifically the terms of the Trusteeship Agreement approved by the Security Council on April 2, 1947 and by the President on July 18, 1947, that the United States undertook the administration of the Trust Territory.

The Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands differs from other trust territories in that it has been designated a strategic area. According to Article 83(1) of the Charter, the Security Council is to exercise all functions of the United Nations relating to such areas. However, the Security Council has, pursuant to section 3 of that Article, availed itself of the assistance of the Trusteeship Council in performing those functions of the United Nations under the Trusteeship System relating to political, economic, social, and educational matters in strategic areas. Thus, the Trusteeship Council has a legitimate interest in the effects of the recent tests on the manner in which the United States is carrying out its international obligations with respect to the welfare of the

inhabitants

The Honorable  
Lewis L. Strauss,  
Chairman, United States  
Atomic Energy Commission.

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inhabitants of the Territory.

Under these circumstances it is desirable to anticipate as far as possible questions that may arise at the Fourteenth Session of the Trusteeship Council, which convenes on June 2, and to collect and prepare material for use in answering and forestalling such questions. In this way the United States Representative will be better prepared to allay the possible concern of any members of the Trusteeship Council and to minimize the propaganda advantages which the U.S.S.R. may seek to derive from this situation.

There is attached a list of questions suggestive of the type that may be asked by Trusteeship Council members. The answers to some of these questions can be found in your statement of March 31. I will be grateful for any additional information or suggestions which might assist the Department of State in its preparations for the Fourteenth Session of the Trusteeship Council. Mr. Benjamin Gerig, Director of the Office of Dependent Area Affairs in the Department is in charge of these preparations, and will be glad to discuss the matter further with your office.

Sincerely yours,

David McK. Key  
Assistant Secretary

Enclosure:

List of possible questions.

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List of Possible Questions

Those questions marked by asterisks are wholly or partially answered by materials available in the files of the Department and in the statements made by Admiral Strauss and Ambassador Allison.

1. Why were areas within the Trust Territory chosen for testing purposes?\*
2. Does the Administering Authority feel satisfied that there will be no long-run effects on the inhabitants, either physical or psychological, from these enormously destructive devices?
3. Movement of people\*
  - (a) Were any inhabited areas in the estimated danger zones? If so, what provision was made for the evacuation of the inhabitants? Will any such evacuation be temporary or permanent? In either case, what arrangements have been made for the welfare of the evacuees?
  - (b) Did the actual danger zone of any of the tests extend to any inhabited area not within the estimated danger area? If so, was it necessary to evacuate any of them, temporarily or permanently? What arrangements were made for the welfare of any such evacuees?
4. Damage\*
  - (a) How much land was destroyed?
  - (b) How much land was in any way damaged? What was the extent and kind of damage?
  - (c) What was the extent of sea area, including lagoons and surrounding open sea, contaminated or otherwise affected? What were the effects? How lasting are they? Will any areas require decontamination? Is there any way of doing this?
  - (d) How many persons were injured? How many were indigenous inhabitants? What steps were taken to treat and otherwise assist them? What is their present condition?
5. Compensation
  - (a) Was the land area which was destroyed or rendered useless of any agricultural or economic value and, if so, does the Administering Authority plan to compensate the owners or users?\*

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- (b) If there was damage to any property outside the test area, are there any plans to compensate the owners or users? How?
  - (c) To the extent that marine life (an important source of food) was contaminated, has any compensation or assistance to the inhabitants affected been undertaken or planned?
  - (d) Was any compensation made for injuries sustained by indigenous inhabitants?
6. What kind of advance notification was given? Was it adequate to warn all shipping and aircraft which might enter the area?
7. Is the Administering Authority contemplating further H-bomb experimentation in this area, and, if so, what steps are contemplated to provide adequate safeguards for inhabitants or other persons who might be affected by "fall out" radioactive material at an even greater distance than before?

It is possible that questions concerning the international obligations of the United States may also be asked. The Department of State is preparing answers to questions of this type, of which the following are examples.

1. Is not the testing of such destructive devices incompatible with the obligations of the United States under the Trusteeship Agreement and the Charter?
2. In view of the fact that the Administering Authority is not sovereign in the Trust Territory, by what legal right may the Administering Authority destroy portions of such territory?
3. Does the Administering Authority feel that it is justified in experimenting in the Trust Territory with weapons which it cannot control with any certainty?
4. What authority does the United States have for closing large areas of the ocean for these tests?
5. Did any notification include the UN? Was any kind of UN approval deemed necessary, sought, or obtained? Presuming there is a right to close large danger areas of this kind, does this right include the right to contaminate international waters and marine life?\*

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