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COMMITTEE ON INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS  
House of Representatives  
Office of the Chairman  
Washington 25, D.C.

July 23, 1953

Hon. Charles E. Wilson  
Secretary of Defense  
U. S. Department of Defense  
Washington 25, D. C.

My dear Secretary:

The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, of which I have the honor to be Chairman, has under its jurisdiction the Trust Territory in the Pacific Islands. It is my plan to appoint a small subcommittee to visit the more important points in the Trust Territory in order to have a better understanding of some of their problems.

The Committee will want a better understanding of the military and strategic significance of this Territory. I understand the Defense Department, particularly the Navy, is interested and has withdrawn several of the islands because of their military importance. These islands, as you know, are under the administration of the United States and the international trusteeship system of the United Nations. The Caroline, Marshall, and Marianna Islands have a strategic importance and under the trusteeship agreement, the United States has assumed certain obligations for the administration of the Territory. As I understand it, these obligations are primarily to promote the political, economic, social and education advancement of the inhabitants of the Territory.

Recently a mission from the United States, and in concurrence with a similar one from the United Nations, visited the Territory and made a report on the progress of the trusteeship of these islands.

The Subcommittee on Territories and Insular Possessions has certain legislation before the Committee relative to providing a government for this Trust Territory. The Committee recently passed a resolution continuing for six months the present government and operations of the Trust Territory. This agreement runs to June 30, 1954.

It will be necessary for the Congress to enact legislation to properly satisfy and handle many of the problems connected with this area. It will be necessary if a fully developed system of law, particularly in respect to property and personal rights, is established for the Trust Territory. Therefore I will expect to authorize a small

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committee to investigate this Territory sometime this Fall or early Winter.

The purpose of this letter is to ask the cooperation of the Defense Department, and particularly the Navy, in helping the Committee to make the proper examination of the Trust Territory. It is my hope that the military will assist the Committee in the transportation between the several points which will need the attention of the Committee.

I trust that you will send this letter through proper channels at your earliest convenience and that I may know, as Chairman of the full Committee, what assistance we may have from the Navy in our transportation problems and other details relative to the hearings which will be necessary. An early reply would be appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

A. L. Miller, Chairman

CC: Col. Wade M. Fleischer  
Rear Admiral Ira H. Numm