Dear Justice Jackson,

May I submit to you the following suggestions in connection with the forthcoming trial of Major war criminals:

1. I wonder whether it could not be advisable to strengthen the “Jackson Doctrine” by arguments borrowed from Nazi legal literature. I have in mind specifically your theory that the German State was nothing but an instrumentality of the party, which was again nothing but a gang of criminals. Strangely enough this theory, which is on the very basis of the “Jackson Doctrine” finds the most striking confirmation in the writings of the leading Nazi legal authority, Professor Fritz Sauckel. He makes this point in various writings, especially in his monographs on “State, People, Document” and “The Three Ways of Legal Thinking”. In these two monographs he, like the authoritative leader of the Nazi legal philosophers, makes the unequivocal statement that the State has no existence per se but is nothing but a servant of the people (volk), which again is nothing but an instrumentality of the movement (National Socialist Party). Certainly their moral connotations are different from yours, but the generalisation of values is the same. It seems to me that a paragraph in the indictment referring to this authoritative statement may prove useful for the purpose of the trials.

2. It is obvious that while we are concerned with the final outcome of the trials we are no less concerned with the strength of the arguments and the case as presented by the prosecution. I believe there is probably in the offices of the prosecution a “volk’s advocate” who is thinking in terms of defence.

It would appear that the defendants may nearly be able to contradict the facts. The evidence will probably be overwhelming. It can, therefore, reasonably be expected that it will concentrate its efforts on legal points. Here are these points:

(a) The irresponsibility of State agents for State acts.

This is the traditional doctrine in both international and constitutional law. Hess has recently based his theory on war crimes on these “immunities”. How can this theory be refuted?
I believe that the "Jackson Doctrine" gives an answer to this question while, on the other hand, a more elaborate study on this subject would seem to be most useful.

(b) The problem of illlegality and criminality of Aggression war.

There seems to be a gap in the "Jackson Doctrine" concerning the criminality of an aggressive war. In your article in the New York Times magazine, you speak about "illegal war". The problem arises whether illegal war is also a criminal war or there must be some specific elements in the illegal war to make it criminal. What are the implications of an illegal war and what are the implications of a criminal war? Here again it is very interesting to note that the above-mentioned legal hasi authority, Carl Schmitt, in his study on "The Tatooyny Towards the Discriminating Definition of War", states a very definite stand against different types of war, as for instance, the just war, or the unjust war, war of aggression and war of self-defense, and so on. A more detailed and thorough discussion of all these problems may prove necessary in order to avert future attacks on the part of the defence who could quote some leading authorities in the allied countries as favoring this view.

3. While emphasis on the mutual-benefit Pact is justified, a closer analysis, not only of the Pact itself, but specifically of the German note and the numerous reservations made by the Allies would seem to be imperative.

4. A special difficulty may arise out of the fact that neither the diplomatic correspondence preceding this conflict nor the individual charges and counter-charges made by the belligerent parties had specific reference to all the elements of the "Jackson Doctrine", nor it need be interpreted by the defense as proof that not only the belligerents specifically the United Nations have not been to see the Brando-Kellogg Pact as a factor in the struggle against the Axis? Does it not follow by the defense that this would mean a commitment on the part of the United Nations not to press these points?

5. I do not know whether in the numerous articles dealing with
the problem of war crimes, the basic problem of the implications of illegal war was at all discussed. It would seem to me that an illegal war in no war at all, in the sense that it does not involve perpetration of individual crimes from the punishment inherent in such a crime. What I had in mind was the following: if a private citizen shoots another private citizen he commits murder and will be accordingly punished. But if these two citizens are in uniforms and are taking part in opposite armies as soldiers and commit the same act of murder, it is no murder any more. It becomes a matter of mutual hostility — a perfectly legal act. If a citizen penetrates into the house of his neighbour and takes away his belonging, he commits theft and will be punished accordingly, but if the thief is in uniform in an enemy country and penetrates into his house and takes away whatever he deems useful, he is just neutralizing. If a private citizen meets on the street his friend or enemy and puts him into a box, locks him up and leaves him there, he is kidnaping, but if the same person is in uniform and he takes people back from their homes and puts them in concentration camps or in prison, it is just taking over, a perfectly legal act.

So it would seem that the moment we recognize that there are illegal wars, everyone of these individual situations reverts to the original and elementary criminal act and the whole war, divorced of its glory, becomes nothing but a series of common law crimes for which the instigator, the perpetrators, and their accomplices have to be responsible in accordance with the criminal law of every civilized country.

I believe that this argument will probably play an important part in the controversy, and here again a more thorough study of all these problems may prove quite useful.

There are a few suggestions which I consider useful to submit to you and which I am prepared to discuss with yourself or with your associates at a place and at a time of your convenience.