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JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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16 January 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: [REDACTED]

Defense of the Turkish Straits (S)

1. Since December 1955, SACROW has been seeking to obtain forces for use in the defense of the Turkish Straits. The requirement for such forces was approved in principle by the Joint Chiefs of Staff on 31 July 1956. During a trip to Washington on 31 January 1957, General Norstad reaffirmed this requirement and stressed the importance that these forces be allocated to NATO. On 25 March 1957, SACROW recommended that the United States consider the earliest practicable deployment to Turkey of a minimum of one HONEST JOHN battalion.

He stated that the initial element could be one HONEST JOHN battalion, with essential technical and service supporting elements from the United States, augmented by certain small Turkish units for security and other special purposes.

2. The United States Army now proposes to meet this requirement within the force structure programmed under the Fiscal Year 58 budget.

3. The Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, proposes to organize a force in consultation with SACROW [REDACTED]

to the Turkish Army during Fiscal Year 58. Initially the force will consist largely of Turkish personnel, but will be supplemented from the outset by some U.S. personnel. As presently conceived, the plan includes the following features which, however, may be altered in the course of subsequent discussions with SACROW:

a. The HONEST JOHN battalion will be a Turkish Army unit. It is visualized that a fully trained Turkish artillery battalion (155mm howitzer) will be converted to an HONEST JOHN battalion.

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f. The U.S. Army will furnish a training detachment, a field artillery missile support detachment, and two ordnance support units. The U.S. personnel will be assigned to the Military Mission to Turkey and will serve an overseas tour of one year without dependents. The total U.S. personnel involved is 154 troops initially. The U.S. personnel will be progressively replaced by indigenous personnel as rapidly as indigenous training permits. It is estimated that the U.S. personnel can be reduced to 110 troops after 20 weeks, and to 82 troops after one year.

g. The delivery system will be furnished to Turkey under the provisions of the Military Assistance Program. All equipment other than that which is peculiar to the HONEST JOHN delivery system will be furnished by the Turkish Army.

h. [REDACTED]

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4. The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend that:

a. An HONEST JOHN delivery system be shipped to Turkey under the Military Assistance Program at the earliest practicable date.

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b. A U.S. Army training detachment, a U.S. Army field artillery missile support detachment, and two U.S. Army ordnance support detachments be deployed to Turkey at the earliest practicable date.

c. All costs involved in the implementation of this proposal be charged to the Military Assistance Program, Project #14-Mission Training Expenses Funds.

d. The reduced MAAG personnel strength of USEUCOM be augmented as necessary to implement the concept in subparagraph 3b above.

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87561 Because of the political and other considerations, it is requested that the Department of Defense coordinate with the Department of State on the arrangements with Turkey, and on notification to SACMNA, to the Standing Group, and to the North Atlantic Council.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

M. P. TRAINOR,  
Chairman,  
Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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