

It would be a great help to us in NEA if we could have your comments and those of the other Ambassadors concerned at an early date.

Please treat this letter as strictly informal and personal. It has not been cleared by anyone outside of our Bureau and is intended merely as a preliminary sounding and not a basis for action.

With all best regards and congratulations on the splendid job you are doing.

Sincerely,

JOHN D. JERNEGAN

No. 158

780.5/8-1753

*The Under Secretary of State (Smith) to the Secretary of Defense (Wilson)*¹

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] November 12, 1953.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I understand in submitting to the Bureau of the Budget its estimates of the funds required for military assistance programs in Fiscal 1955, the Department of Defense made no provision for programs for countries of the Middle East other than Greece, Turkey, and Iran, and that this omission was explained on the ground that since FY 1954 programs for these countries had not yet been approved, it was impossible to forecast FY 1955 requirements.

I am disturbed by the implication that there will be no request for military assistance funds for the Middle East in the FY 1955 budget until the FY 1954 programs are firmed. In view of the delays which have already occurred in the development of the FY 1954 programs, and the number of additional steps which will be necessary before these programs can be firmed, the effect of this position, given the planned schedule for completing the FY 1955 budget, would be entirely to eliminate military aid for the Middle East.

I am confident that the Department of Defense does not desire this result. In your letter of August 17, 1953,² you restated the concept of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which you informed us had been approved and adopted as the Department of Defense position,

¹ This letter was drafted by Daspit and cleared by NEA, S/S, and S/MSA. A handwritten note at the end reads: "cc FOA Mr. Stassen thru S/MSA Nolting, S/MSA Mr. Nolting, NEA Mr. Daspit. Orig memo ret'd to NEA, Byroade."

² Document 147.