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GENS-3 15 Oct 58
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NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY
Washington 25, D.C.

(b) (1)
(b) (3)-50 USC 403
(b) (3)-18 USC 798
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COMINT REPORT

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SHOOT-DOWN OF A USAF C-130 BY SOVIET AIRCRAFT
ON 2 SEPTEMBER 1958

I. SUMMARY

1. Soviet air defense communications reflected the "shoot down" of a USAF C-130 aircraft near Erevan in the Tbilisi Air Defense District on 2 September 1958.

2. The USAF C-130 was reported ((1)) flying over northeastern Turkey on a course approximately parallel to the USSR border until it reached a point (40-36N 43-42E) near Leninakan (see Chart 1), where it penetrated Soviet territory at approximately 1205Z. Subsequent Soviet air warning and fighter air-to-ground communications revealed that at least four fighter aircraft of the Soviet 11th Air Army participated in the "shoot down" of the C-130. The target was reported destroyed at 1213-14Z at approximately 40-23N 43-55E, about 30 nautical miles northwest of Erevan.

II. DETAILED REFLECTIONS OF USAF C-130 FLIGHT

3. The C-130 aircraft (Track No. 7845) was initially reported at 40-30N 41-05E at 1141Z by the [] broadcast station []. At this time the aircraft was 75 nautical miles southwest of Batumi, []. The aircraft was tracked on a due north heading to 40-43N 41-05E at 1143Z when it apparently faded from radar observation and tracking reports terminated.

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4. The aircraft was next reported at 41-23N 41-46E at 1147Z and subsequent reports revealed that the C-130 was on a northeasterly course to within approximately one nautical mile of the USSR border at 41-30N 41-55E at 1148Z (see Chart 1), at which time it was identified by the Soviets as one [] aircraft. The C-130 aircraft then turned and proceeded on a southeasterly heading until it reached 40-56N 42-25E at 1153Z, at which time it changed course and flew due east toward the USSR border.

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5. Tracking reports revealed that two Soviet fighter aircraft of [] were airborne at Erevan at 1152Z in response to the C-130 flight (see paragraph 7 for details). An altitude of 9,500 meters (31,160 feet) was reported for the C-130 at 1157Z. When at 40-56N 43-05E at 1158Z the C-130 aircraft took a southeasterly heading and proceeded to 40-36N 43-35E at 1203Z. The C-130 again altered its course at 1203Z and proceeded due east, crossing the USSR-Turkish border at 40-36N 43-42E at approximately 1205Z. The C-130 was identified as an [] aircraft when at 40-36N 43-45E at 1206Z. The C-130 was then tracked to 40-23N 43-55E and was reported at this same position from 1209Z through 1213Z. At 1210Z the C-130 was identified as one [] with two "MIG 15/17" aircraft, and again at 1213Z as one "aircraft in combat" with four "MIG 15/17" aircraft.

6. At 1213Z, while at the above position, the Soviets reported the C-130 at an altitude of 10,000 meters (32,800 feet). Although the aircraft was reported at 40-23N 43-55E at 1213Z, there were also two reports that the aircraft was at 40-16N 43-55E at this same time. The C-130 was

I. RZCB 00203, RZAB 22801, RZFY 00101

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AND 1 CHART

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again reflected at 40-23N 43-55E at 1214Z. Soviet air warning facilities broadcast a message at 1213Z and 1214Z indicating "target destroyed". No further position reports were passed on the C-130 and at 1220Z an "end of track" report was passed. Soviet air warning (see Chart 1) and 11th Air Army fighter air-to-ground communications ((1)) reflected a minimum of four "MIG 15/17" aircraft engaged in combat against the C-130, and one "MIG 15/17" aircraft which was possibly serving a back up function []

III. DETAILED REFLECTIONS OF SOVIET FIGHTER REACTIONS

First Flight

7. At 1152Z, sixteen minutes before the C-130 penetrated the USSR-Turkish border, the first fighter reaction (Track No. 0582; pilot suffixes 582, 583; two "MIG 15/17" aircraft [] at Erevan) was initially reflected in air warning communications; the fighters were approximately one nautical mile west of Erevan and flying on a due west course (see Chart 1). At this time the C-130 was approximately 43 nautical miles from the closest point on the USSR border and approximately 110 nautical miles from Erevan. The fighter flight (0582) proceeded to 40-10N 43-55E at 1154Z at an altitude of 4,000 meters (13,120 feet). At this time the fighter flight (0582) assumed a northerly heading and flew parallel to the border until it reached 41-10N 43-55E at 1204Z; the flight then altered its course to a southerly heading and flew -- at an altitude of 8,500 meters (27,880 feet) -- to 40-36N 43-55E at 1208Z. When at the latter position the fighters (0582) were approximately six nautical miles from the C-130 which was reported at altitudes between 9,000 meters (29,520 feet) and 10,000 meters (32,800 feet). At the same time, 1208Z, the fighter flight (0582) was also reported at 40-30N 43-45E where tracking temporarily ceased.

8. Tracking resumed at 1215Z when the fighters were reported circling at 10,000 meters (32,800 feet) at 40-23N 43-55E, the position at which the C-130 was reported "destroyed" at 1213-1214Z. The fighter flight was then tracked to 40-30N 43-55E at 1217Z, when it was identified as four "MIG 15/17" aircraft.

9. Fighter flight 0582 then proceeded to 40-36N 43-55E where it was reported circling at an altitude of 7,000 meters (22,960 feet) at 1224-25Z. An "end of track" message was sent on flight 0582 at 1235Z.

Second Flight

10. Soviet tracking of the second flight of fighter aircraft (Track No. 0201, two "MIG 15/17" aircraft [] at Leninakan; pilot suffix 201, 218) was sporadic; however, this flight was reported as [] against the C-130. The initial position report of this fighter flight (0201) indicated it had merged with the C-130 at 40-23N 43-55E at 1212Z (see Chart 1) at an altitude of 10,000 meters (32,800 feet). Fighter flight 0201 was not observed again until it and fighter flight 0582 separated at 40-23N 43-55E at 1218Z. Fighter flight 0201 was tracked to 40-36N 43-55E at 1221Z-1225Z where it circled at an altitude of 7,000 meters (22,960 feet). At 1231Z an "end of track" message for this flight was sent.

Third Flight

11. The third fighter flight (Track No. 0577; one "MIG 15/17" of [] at Erevan; pilot suffix 577) did not take part in the destruction of the C-130. It was initially reported at 40-10N 44-35E at 1219Z and was tracked at an altitude of 5,000 meters (16,400 feet) to

1. For translation of voice communications associated with the present activity see 3/0 [] R01-58, []

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40-16N 44-05E at 1220-1222Z. Track No. 0577 was identified as one "MIG-15/17" aircraft and was reported to be "circling" at this position. Fighter flight 0577 then proceeded south to 40-10N 44-05E at 1226Z where it circled. No further tracking was observed on fighter flight 0577 until 1242Z when the flight was at 40-23N 44-45E. The flight proceeded to Erevan and tracking ceased near Erevan at 1244Z when a "track fading" message was sent.

Air Search

12. There were no indications from tracking reports that the Soviets conducted air-search or reconnaissance over the area where the C-130 was reported destroyed.

Related Fighter Activity

13. Available fighter air/ground communications related to the "shoot-down" indicated that:

- a. The weather in the area was good; cloud cover was reported from two to three tenths;
- b. No attempt was made to warn the C-130 or force it down intact prior to the initial attack;
- c. Four fighters [] (suffixes 201, 218, 582, 583) participated in the activity. Suffixes 201, 218, and 582 were observed attacking the target and one suffix, possibly 201, reported that the target started burning after his third burst (see below, paragraph 19).
- d. Near the end of the attack the tail assembly of the C-130 fell off []

IV. COMMENTS

14. Considering the fact that there were no references in the related air-ground voice communications to evacuees or survivors, together with the reported results of the attack, it is doubtful that there were any survivors from the U.S. aircraft. The Soviet fighter pilots effected the "shoot down" with deliberation and precision. The confusion which is often evident in Soviet air warning communications during GCI activity was not apparent in the "shoot down" of 2 September 1958 []

15. [] displayed extreme sensitivity to flights in adjacent areas of Turkey and Iran for several days subsequent to the USAF C-130 "shoot down" on 2 September 1958.

16. On the evening of 2 September 1958 two "MIG 15/17" and one "YAK-25/MIG 19" aircraft were scrambled possibly in reaction to an unidentified flight proceeding from the Lake Van area towards Trabzon. At the time of "scramble" the unidentified aircraft was at least 40 nautical miles from the Soviet border.

17. On 3 September 1958 very little flight activity was noted in air defense communications; however, eleven unidentified flights were reported in eastern Turkey on 4 September 1958; at least 9 of these were identified as [] At least six 11th Air Army Soviet fighter flights of "MIG 15/17" aircraft were reflected in Soviet tracking reports, possibly in reaction to the unidentified flights in Turkey.

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18. The number of the flights identified by the Soviets as [] decreased on 5 and 6 September 1958 and by 7 September 1958 they were given the normally assigned designations indicating that the period of increased activity along the USSR/Turkish border had terminated.

19. Two articles that appeared in the Soviet newspaper Sovetskaya Aviatsiya on 19 and 20 September 1958 described the interception of an "enemy" target by two pairs of Soviet fighters. Although there was no mention that the target was a U. S. aircraft or that the target was destroyed, it was obvious that the articles contained a description of the Soviet attack on the U. S. C-130. The newspapers revealed the following information:

a. Captain ROMANYUTA [] (Leninakan) controlled the intercept operation. Upon initial detection of the target, the controller ordered the scramble of a pair of fighters (led by pilot 201) from his airfield (Leninakan). Although the take-off of these fighters was delayed seven minutes because of a dust storm at the airfield, a pair of fighters (led by pilot 582) was immediately scrambled from another airfield (Erevan). Pilot 582 was Senior Lieutenant LOPATKOV and his wingman (probably suffix 583) was GAVRILOV. Pilot 201 was Senior Lieutenant KUCHERYAEV and his wingman (probably suffix 218) was Senior Lieutenant IVANOV.

b. Senior Lieutenant LOPATKOV made the first attack on the target during which he turned on his gun camera. His wingman, GAVRILOV, followed and fired three bursts during his attack. The target was then attacked by the second pair, Senior Lieutenants KUCHERYAEV and IVANOV, after which the first pair made a second attack on the target.

c. All fighters returned to the home base of pilot 201 (Leninakan) where the senior chief, a General (probably commanding officer []), congratulated them on the successful completion of their mission. Films of the attack taken by the gun cameras were later examined by the General who expressed his satisfaction with the quality of the combat operation and congratulated the pilots for their proficiency.

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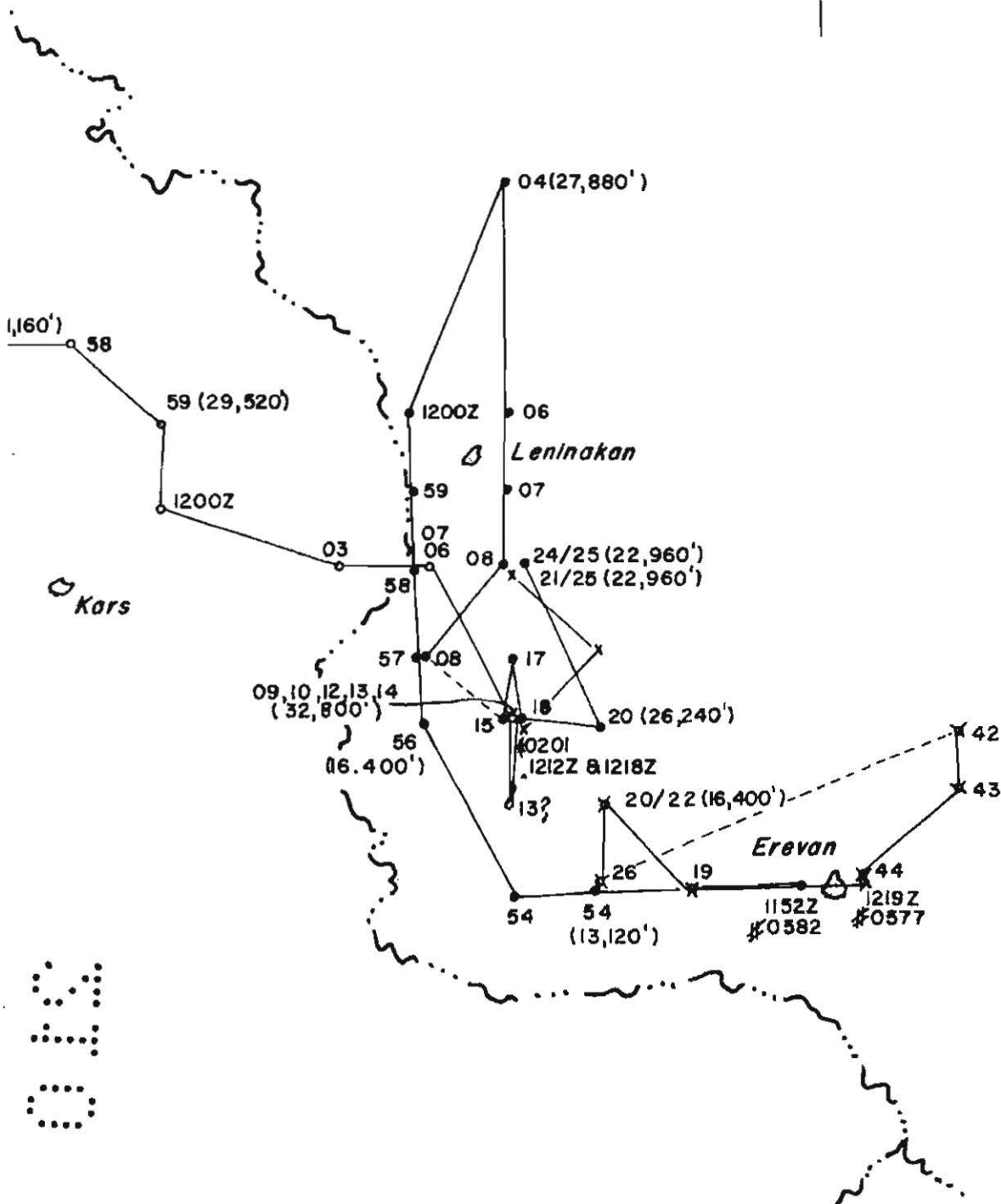
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CHART 1

U. S. S. R.

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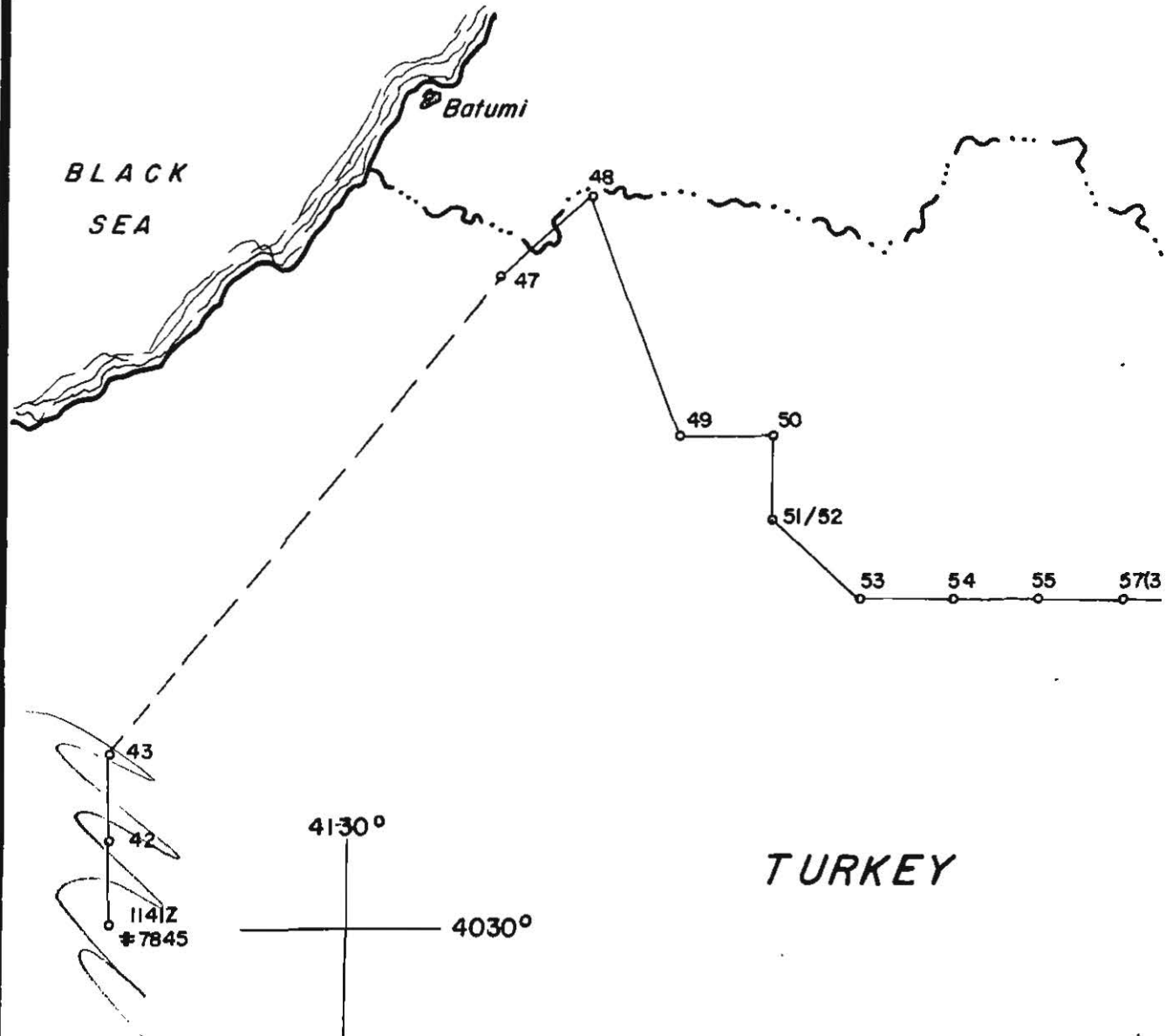
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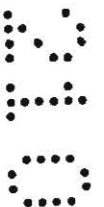
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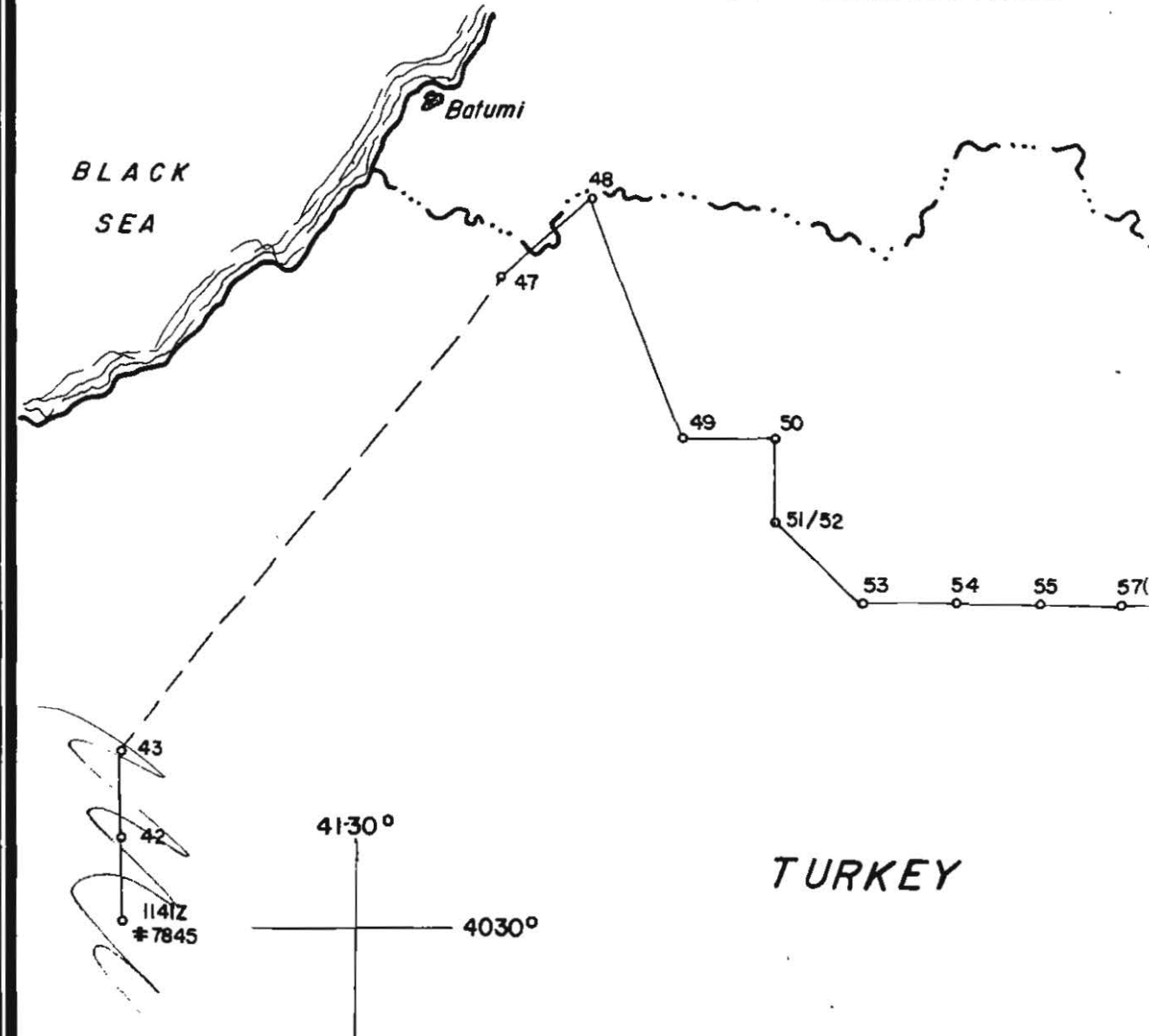


- RADAR TRACK OF USAF C-130
- RADAR TRACK OF 2 MIG 15/17's #0582
- x—x RADAR TRACK OF 2 MIG 15/17's #0201
- ✕—✕ RADAR TRACK OF 1 MIG 15/17' #0577

SCALE = 1:1,000,000



SHOOT-DOWN OF USAF C-130 BY SOVIET AIRCRAFT ON 2 SEPTEMBER 1958



RADAR TRACK OF USAF C-130

