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## **Soviet intelligence and the 1957 Syrian Crisis**

*This article assesses a claim by Khrushchev that warnings from the Soviet intelligence services enabled him to deter a Turkish invasion of Syria in 1957. The article shows that the United States and Turkey did aim to overthrow the Syrian government, with the Turks massing an invasion force on Syria's border. Soviet intelligence detected this threat and was able to alert Khrushchev, who took diplomatic and military countermeasures. However, while the Soviet intelligence services did provide advance warning, Khrushchev overestimated the extent to which the United States was committed to a Turkish invasion.*

The Syrian Crisis in the autumn of 1957 was the most serious Cold War confrontation in the Middle East between the Suez Crisis and the Six Day War. It centred on an alleged Western plot to attack Syria and topple a newly installed pro-Soviet government in Damascus. Turkish, Soviet and American military units were mobilised and deployed on the borders of Syria and Turkey and the foreign ministers of the superpowers traded angry accusations at the United Nations. The crisis blew over within a few months but it laid the foundations for a strategic partnership between Russia and Syria that has endured to this day.

In the past 25 years archival research has revealed much about American and British policy in the Syrian Crisis but the Soviet position and the thinking of the Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, remain largely unexplored.<sup>1</sup> In particular, historians have not considered the role played by the Soviet intelligence services even though Khrushchev claimed in his memoirs that intelligence precipitated his actions in the crisis.<sup>2</sup> He wrote that in 1957 'it became known to us, from reliable reports coming through our intelligence services, that the United States was about to organize an invasion of Syria, making use of Turkey, as well as Iraq and Iran, for that purpose.'<sup>3</sup> Khrushchev described how he tried to deter the attack by applying

countervailing military pressure on Turkey; Soviet and Bulgarian troops ostentatiously held manoeuvres on Turkey's northern and western borders and Moscow announced that it was sending its most experienced military commanders to the border areas. Shortly before the Turkish invasion was due the Soviet Union declared that it 'would come to the aid of Syria militarily'.<sup>4</sup> According to Khrushchev, at this point the United States advised Turkey to halt its preparations for war and subsequently the plans for invasion were cancelled altogether. In his memoirs Khrushchev hailed the outcome as a 'bloodless victory' for the Soviet Union, adding that 'we restrained the aggressors...preventing the destruction of the Syrian republic, and we accomplished it without a war.'<sup>5</sup>

Prima facie, this is an example of successful intelligence led deterrence. The Soviet intelligence services warned Khrushchev of an impending attack on a friendly state and enabled him to take action and deter aggression. In this sense, the Syrian Crisis was a victory for Soviet intelligence as well as for the Soviet Union in general. Obviously, it is necessary to treat Khrushchev's claims with a degree of caution, especially since he dictated his memoirs ten years after the crisis without access to government documents and relying solely on memory.<sup>6</sup> Still, Khrushchev's autobiography was not state sanctioned propaganda – in fact the Soviet authorities tried hard to suppress it. Moreover, public statements made by Soviet policymakers during the Syrian Crisis partially corroborate Khrushchev's account for they repeatedly accused the United States and Turkey of plotting an attack on Syria, although they did not disclose that Soviet intelligence had uncovered the plan. The American and Turkish governments vehemently denied that they were intriguing against Syria but subsequent research by Matthew Jones, David Lesch, Douglas Little, Bonnie Saunders and Salim Yaqub has shown that the United States and Turkey did indeed conspire to remove the Syrian government.<sup>7</sup>

This article will therefore investigate whether Khrushchev's version of events is correct and if Soviet intelligence did help forestall a Western attack on Syria. The paper will first closely examine the development of American policy towards Syria between August and October 1957, as this will then make it possible to check the veracity of Soviet claims. It will also identify potential Soviet intelligence sources and see if the intelligence services did accurately inform Khrushchev of American and Turkish activities. Finally, the article will explain how the Soviet Union responded to the perceived threat to Syria. Restricted access to archival sources in Russia and Turkey imposes some limitations on the study; both countries have released hardly any of the documents relating to the crisis and the archives of the Soviet intelligence agencies, the Committee for State Security (KGB) and the Main Intelligence Agency (GRU), remain closed to Western researchers. In addition, many American and British documents connected to covert operations against Syria are still retained. Nevertheless, by using the available American and British sources and some published Russian material, a picture can be built up of the role played by Soviet intelligence.

Syria had been a point of contention between the United States and the Soviet Union since 1955. Left wing governments in Damascus had aligned themselves with President Gamal Nasser of Egypt and were antagonistic to the conservative Arab states, Israel and European imperialism. Syria also established close ties with the Soviet Union and signed trade and arms agreements with the Soviet Bloc, which were regarded with deep suspicion by Washington. The differences between the United States and Syria publicly came to a head in August 1957 because of a series of moves by the Syrian government.<sup>8</sup> Syria signed a new economic agreement with the USSR and the commander in chief of the Syrian army was replaced by a reputed communist. The Syrian authorities then announced on 12 August that they had discovered an American plot to overthrow the government and they expelled three officials from the American embassy in Damascus. The United States firmly rejected these

accusations but fragmentary evidence suggests that American officials had been covertly conspiring with Syrian army officers.<sup>9</sup> The Americans had already been party to an abortive attempt to topple the Syrian regime in 1956, codenamed Operation Straggle.<sup>10</sup>

The Syrian government's actions in August provoked a strong reaction in Washington and in the region. American policymakers believed that pro-Soviet elements had effectively taken control of the Syrian state and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles was not prepared to tolerate a communist outpost in the heart of the Middle East.<sup>11</sup> Four pro-Western countries bordering Syria - Turkey, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon - were equally mistrustful and fearful of the Syrian regime. The Turkish Prime Minister, Adnan Menderes, considered that Syria had been turned into a Soviet satellite.<sup>12</sup> Turkey already shared a border with the USSR and in 1945 it had experienced Soviet military pressures and demands for political concessions. Now it was confronted with a pro-Soviet state on its southern frontier, raising the spectre of an attack from two sides. Syria had been involved in subversion in Jordan and Lebanon and its brand of radical Arab nationalism posed a mortal threat to the Iraqi monarchy. All four countries saw the Syrian government as highly dangerous for the area.<sup>13</sup>

The United States was reluctant to intervene directly to topple the Syrian regime but it was prepared to back Syria's neighbours if they took military action. American President Dwight Eisenhower thought that the United States should urge friendly Arab states to 'band together, and using such excuses as necessary, move to eliminate the Syrian government.'<sup>14</sup> Dulles believed that the Iraqis were ready to act and it was decided to send an envoy, Loy Henderson, to the region for secret consultations with America's allies. Dulles and Eisenhower instructed Henderson to make clear that any military intervention must have a plausible cause.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore the Iraqis should not go in unless it was certain that Turkey was ready to help them. The Turks could transfer military equipment to the Iraqis and mass troops on the border to divert and stretch the Syrian armed forces. Eisenhower stressed that

United States should not be seen as taking the lead although as precautionary measures he deployed the American Sixth Fleet in the eastern Mediterranean and sent aircraft to the Adana airbase in southern Turkey.

Henderson flew out to the Middle East and for over a week he discussed the Syrian issue with the regional leaders. In Istanbul on 25 August he met with Menderes, King Faisal of Iraq, Iraqi Crown Prince Abd al-Ilah, and King Hussein of Jordan.<sup>16</sup> After further talks with Menderes in Ankara, Henderson then travelled on to Beirut to speak to the Lebanese president and the Acting Iraqi Foreign Minister, Ali Mumtaz el-Daftari.<sup>17</sup> Finally, he returned to Istanbul for a last round of discussions with Menderes and Abd al-Ilah on 2 September.<sup>18</sup> Henderson's telegrams back to Washington were guarded in their language but he appears to have faithfully followed the instructions given to him by Dulles and Eisenhower. While he told the Turks and Arabs that the United States was not trying to push them into a particular course of action, he made it clear that Washington would support them if they moved against Syria, with the caveat that any operation would have to be justifiable at the United Nations.<sup>19</sup> Mumtaz later confided to a British diplomat that Henderson had pressed the Iraqis to take action against Syria as soon as a pretext could be found which would stand up in the UN Security Council.<sup>20</sup> Both the Iraqis and Turks asked Henderson for American military advisers to give them strategic and tactical advice.<sup>21</sup>

However, there was an unexpected difficulty. During the talks, it emerged that the Iraqi and Jordanian governments were more divided and hesitant about using force than the Americans had anticipated. While Faisal and Abd al-Ilah were prepared to intervene, Mumtaz and the Iraqi Prime Minister Ali Jawdat al-Ayubi were much more cautious.<sup>22</sup> It was feared that the Iraqi people would oppose an attack on Syria.<sup>23</sup> As result, Henderson was unable to extract a firm commitment from the Iraqis or Jordanians to take military action. By contrast Menderes appeared determined to act, with or without the Arab states, and he asked Henderson whether

the Americans would back Turkey if it tried to eliminate the Syrian regime by itself.<sup>24</sup> From 4 September the Turkish General Staff began to move infantry, tanks and aircraft close to Syria's northern frontier, supposedly as part of military exercises.<sup>25</sup> The Turks had used such deployments in the past as a form of coercive diplomacy against Syria, the most recent occasion being only few months earlier over an internal crisis in Jordan, but Henderson formed the impression that the Turks were likely to take military action on their own if there was no alternative.<sup>26</sup> The Turkish armed forces were large and well equipped and more than a match for the Syrian military but unilateral Turkish intervention could be politically counter-productive because for centuries the Ottoman Turks had been the imperial masters of the Arabs. Dulles was concerned that if Turkey intervened on its own it could rally all Arab populations in support of the Syrian government.<sup>27</sup> The CIA thought that most Syrians would oppose Turkish intervention.<sup>28</sup>

Eisenhower and Dulles responded to this predicament in two ways. Firstly, they sought close consultation and cooperation with Britain which was allied to Iraq and Turkey through the Baghdad Pact. The British were hostile to the Syrian government and Dulles had kept Prime Minister Harold Macmillan informed of the Henderson mission.<sup>29</sup> They agreed to set up a secret Anglo-American Working Group in Washington which would devise policy options for Syria.<sup>30</sup> Secondly, the United States again encouraged the regional powers to move against the Syrian government, in the hope that they could agree on a combined Arab-Turkish operation which would be less toxic to Arab public opinion. On 10 September Washington passed on oral messages to the governments of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey offering American support over Syria.<sup>31</sup> Abd al-Ilah was effectively told that the United States would regard subversion by Syria as grounds for self-defence by Iraq under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.<sup>32</sup> If one or more of Syria's Arab neighbours took military action on this basis the United States would give them military supplies, economic assistance and

diplomatic cover at the United Nations. The US would also commit its own armed forces if the Arab states or Turkey were subsequently attacked by the Soviet Union. In the meantime it would continue to deploy the Sixth Fleet in the eastern Mediterranean. The oral message given to the Turks was similar in language yet it was ambiguous on the crucial question of whether the United States would back unilateral Turkish intervention. It advised the Turks to only act as reinforcement for Arab military action in Syria but at same time it stated that the United States would support Turkey at the United Nations and protect it against Soviet attack if Ankara 'should feel compelled to react to armed provocations [from Syria] which implied a serious threat to its own national integrity and independence'.<sup>33</sup>

Historians of the Syrian Crisis have interpreted this message in different ways. Lesch and Saunders believed that Eisenhower and Dulles were giving a green light to Menderes to use force against Syria but Yaqub has argued that they were actually trying to hold back the Turks while still maintaining confidence in the American security commitment to Turkey.<sup>34</sup> The ambiguity in the message may also have reflected uncertainty on the part of Dulles over what attitude to take towards unilateral Turkish intervention. While Eisenhower wanted to restrain the Turks, at times Dulles appeared tempted by the Turkish option despite the political difficulties it would cause in Arab states.<sup>35</sup> Washington added to the ambivalence around its policy by agreeing to provide senior military advisors to both Iraq and Turkey.<sup>36</sup> General Verdi Barnes was sent out to Baghdad while General Armistead Mead went to Ankara.<sup>37</sup>

American policy towards Syria was formulated in late August and early September under conditions of intense secrecy. The State Department set up a special security category for the handling of sensitive telegrams and memoranda relating to Syria and kept its messages to Menderes and the Arab leaders strictly secret.<sup>38</sup> Although the press did pick up on Henderson's trip to the Middle East, the State Department portrayed it as merely a fact

finding mission to appraise the situation in Syria and take soundings on Turkish and Arab opinion.<sup>39</sup> Yet in spite of this cover of secrecy, by early September the Soviet government appeared to have found out what had transpired on Henderson's tour. The Soviets would naturally have been suspicious of American intentions toward Syria after the coup plots in 1956 and August 1957, especially as the Eisenhower administration had toppled left wing governments before, in Iran in 1953 and Guatemala in 1954. Henderson had even been the American ambassador in Tehran when the Iranian government was overthrown. But the Soviets also seem to have had concrete intelligence about the Henderson mission. Khrushchev would later brief the Egyptian journalist Mohamed Heikal that '[t]he Americans are threatening Syria. They asked Jordan and Iraq to attack Syria – we have documents to prove this.'<sup>40</sup>

This intelligence may have come from several different sources. As the Syrian Crisis unfolded there was speculation in the Western press and diplomatic circles that the Soviets had acquired some of Henderson's papers during his visit to Turkey. The French newspaper *Le Monde* ran a story of an American diplomatic bag going missing when a boat disappeared while crossing the Bosphorus.<sup>41</sup> The bag supposedly contained an account of Henderson's conversations with Menderes. Similarly, the NATO Secretary-General, Paul Henri Spaak, heard from a 'serious' source that a suitcase containing Henderson's papers had been stolen in Ankara.<sup>42</sup> But neither of these reports was true. The American embassy in Ankara assured British diplomats that it had not lost any diplomatic bags.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, Henderson had carried no documents on his tour, made no notes and only communicated orally with the Turkish and Iraqi leaders. Another possibility is that the Soviets discovered the nature of Henderson's talks through an on-going signals intelligence operation against the American embassy in Moscow. Between 1953 and 1964 the KGB was able to intercept and decrypt diplomatic telegrams between the State Department and the Moscow embassy, thanks to bugging

devices in the embassy.<sup>44</sup> However, in the Syrian Crisis the United States government shared relatively little information with the embassy. The State Department did forward to Moscow two of Henderson's telegrams from Beirut but these did not reveal in any detail the American plans for Syria.<sup>45</sup>

It is more likely that the Soviet intelligence came from regional sources. A number of Iraqi officials were told of what Henderson had said in Istanbul, including the ambassador in Ankara who was mistrusted by the former Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Said.<sup>46</sup> Nuri was afraid that the ambassador would pass the information on to the Egyptians. Certainly by early September Iraqi sources had helped the Egyptian government piece together a picture of what Henderson had been trying to do.<sup>47</sup> Privately Syrians officials also claimed that Iraqi Prime Minister Jawdat had told them about plans discussed in Turkey for the overthrow of the Syrian government, either by the Arab states or through Turkish military action.<sup>48</sup> Nonetheless, even if this is true it is not clear how extensively Syria and Egypt shared their intelligence with the Soviet Union.

Americans and British policymakers were more exercised by possible intelligence leaks from Turkey. During the crisis the Turks denied that they had lost any of their own secret papers but the American embassy in Ankara questioned this denial and thought that they might have lost important documents.<sup>49</sup> The British Foreign Secretary, Selwyn Lloyd, was worried about the security of Turkish diplomatic communications. In talks with Dulles and senior American officials in mid-September Lloyd pointed out 'that the Turkish cyphers were not reliable' and recommended directing the Turks to only use couriers when communicating with Iraq.<sup>50</sup> This recommendation seems to have been put into effect, for the British ambassador to Iraq noted in early November that for several weeks there had been a complete ban on the use of Turkish or Iraqi cyphers between Ankara and Baghdad.<sup>51</sup> Lloyd's fears were well founded for the KGB was targeting Turkish diplomatic traffic. Ilya Dzhirkvelov, who served in the KGB

Second Chief Directorate between 1953 and 1955, recounted in his memoirs secretly breaking into the Turkish embassy in Moscow and photographing the diplomatic cypher tables.<sup>52</sup>

Whatever the source of its intelligence, the Soviet government began a concerted effort in early September to protect the Syrian regime. Articles in the Soviet newspapers *Pravda*, *Izvestia* and *Red Star* accused Henderson of preparing aggression with Syria's neighbours.<sup>53</sup> Then at a press conference in Moscow on 10 September the Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko, announced that Henderson's tour was connected with plans to prepare armed provocations on the Syrian border and thereby create the grounds for military intervention in Syria.<sup>54</sup> Gromyko said that the masterminds behind this plan had wanted to set Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon on Syria but they knew that if they did, the Arab governments would face problems with their own populations. So the organisers had turned to Turkey to execute their plan and the Turks were massing troops on the frontier. After denouncing this conspiracy Gromyko made veiled warnings of a Soviet military response; asking how Turkey would feel if troops were concentrated on its borders and implying that it would be difficult to localise a Turco-Syrian war. The next day the Soviet Premier, Nikolai Bulganin, sent Menderes a diplomatic note which made similar accusations and threats. Bulganin asserted that a 'certain role is being assigned to Turkey in the plans to unleash military action against Syria' and cautioned the Turks not to intervene, adding that 'the Soviet Union cannot remain indifferent to these events.'<sup>55</sup>

When speaking privately to Western visitors to the USSR Soviet leaders repeated the same message and hinted that they had intelligence about the Henderson mission. On 9 September the Soviet Deputy Premier, Anastas Mikoyan, told American Senator Allen Ellender that 'We have strong evidence that the United States is trying to instigate trouble' in the Middle East.<sup>56</sup> A week later Khrushchev expounded on this theme with Aneurin Bevan, the shadow foreign

secretary for the British Labour Party.<sup>57</sup> Meeting Bevan in Yalta Khrushchev declared that he had ‘irrefragable evidence’ that Henderson had been sent to the region to organise a political coup d’état in Syria with the aim of setting up a pro-Western government.<sup>58</sup> The new Syrian regime would then engineer a pretext for Arab and Turkish troops to enter the country in support. Khrushchev emphasized that the Soviets would not accept this manoeuvre and said menacingly that if it was attempted, ‘we will show the Turks how they can bleed.’<sup>59</sup> On 27 September it was the turn of Eleanor Roosevelt, the widow of former American President Franklin Roosevelt. When she interviewed Khrushchev in Yalta the Soviet leader remarked that ‘Mr Henderson had a rather dirty mission’ and called upon Dulles to reveal what Henderson had in view when he visited Turkey and Lebanon.<sup>60</sup>

These warnings from the Kremlin did not deter the United States or Turkey. Washington continued to search for ways to remove the Syrian government, although there were no easy alternatives. On 18 September the Anglo-American Working Group had produced its secret report on policy towards Syria and the favoured option was to stimulate unrest in Syria and create border incidents between Syria and Iraq or Jordan which could provide a pretext for Iraqi and Jordanian military intervention under Article 51.<sup>61</sup> The Turks could assist as required but the Working Group saw unilateral military action by Turkey as a last resort because it would probably alienate Arab opinion. Yet despite the American promises of support to Baghdad, it appeared less and less likely that the Iraqi government would take on such a role. Public opinion was being stirred up by Arab nationalist radio propaganda from Syria and Egypt and the Iraqi Interior Minister was concerned about the potential internal security situation and very survival of the government if it ordered an invasion of Syria.<sup>62</sup> Jawdat was still reluctant to use force and he was bolstered by the efforts of King Saud of Saudi Arabia, who was trying to reduce the tensions between Syria and its neighbours through diplomacy. Saud and Jawdat visited Damascus at the end of September and to the

consternation of the Turks, Jawdat said publicly that Iraq would support Syria against aggression.<sup>63</sup>

Menderes, on the other hand, was much more resolute. The Turks were preparing plans for an invasion of Syria and redeploying their military units so they would have the forces available to carry out the operation.<sup>64</sup> For want of a better alternative Dulles toyed with the idea of using the Turkish army to solve the Syrian problem. At a meeting with Lloyd with on 21 September to consider the Working Group's report Dulles pointed out that 'the only people with the resources and the courage to act were the Turks.'<sup>65</sup> The next day he told the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the director of the CIA that further study should be done of how Turkey could intervene without causing damage to the Western position in the Arab world.<sup>66</sup> He believed that it might just be possible to make a Turkish operation acceptable. By early October however, the Secretary of State was considerably more pessimistic, foreseeing a 'period of almost unending turmoil in the Middle East' if Turkey invaded Syria.<sup>67</sup>

While Dulles mulled over unilateral action by the Turks, the Turkish General Staff pressed ahead with its preparations for invasion, helped by General Mead and other American military advisors. The Working Group was given a report from Mead on 26 September which stated that the final Turkish military plans would be submitted by 1 October.<sup>68</sup> American advisors would assist in the planning at all stages. The planned operation envisaged bringing the Turkish army to the brink of an assault on Damascus just three days after the initial invasion. By 28 September Turkish ground units would be in position for starting the operation although air and naval elements would not be ready until 15 October. This did not necessarily mean that a Turkish invasion of Syria was imminent; while Menderes appeared determined the American ambassador detected hesitation and doubts amongst the Turkish military.<sup>69</sup> But the capability was there if Ankara decided to give the order. A British

intelligence review on 3 October declared that Turkish forces as presently deployed could launch a surprise attack on Syria.<sup>70</sup>

Through intelligence sources the Soviet leadership was aware of the military planning and preparation going on in Turkey. Khrushchev told the Syrian Deputy Prime Minister in December 1957 that the Soviets had known about ‘the decision of the Turkish General Staff to prepare an attack on Syria.’<sup>71</sup> In his memoirs Khrushchev claimed that Moscow had even acquired a copy of the Turkish plan for the invasion of Syria. He wrote that:

A detailed plan came into our hands, a plan not only for the invasion itself but for the buildup to it, and we had no doubt about the accuracy of the information we received. We knew what forces Turkey intended to use, where and how they were concentrated, and how many tank and infantry divisions and how much artillery would take place in this action.<sup>72</sup>

Khrushchev described the Turkish invasion plan as designed to reach Damascus as quickly as possible and put an end to the Syria government. As the Soviets knew in advance the stages of Turkey’s preparation for the invasion and the intended launch date, they could monitor Turkish progress and take action. Khrushchev recalled in his memoirs that ‘[w]e were very well informed about what was happening in Turkey. With great accuracy our people kept Moscow updated.’<sup>73</sup>

Khrushchev responded to the Turkish threat by stepping up his defence of Syria. On 7 October he gave a blistering interview in Moscow to the *New York Times* journalist James Reston.<sup>74</sup> In the interview Khrushchev blamed the American government for creating a crisis over Syria, saying that Henderson had tried to organise an attack on the country by the Arab states.<sup>75</sup> Then when the Arab governments proved reluctant to act, the United States had pushed Turkey into preparing a war with Syria. Khrushchev decried the Turkish build up and implicitly threatened Soviet military intervention if the Turks invaded. He pointedly observed that by moving their troops against Syria the Turks were laying bare part of their border with the Soviet Union and said that ‘[t]hey should not do that. They are very weak.

Turkey would not last one day in case of war'.<sup>76</sup> Khrushchev warned Reston that '[i]f war breaks out, we are near Turkey and you are not. When the guns begin to fire, the rockets can begin firing, and then it will be too late to think about it.'<sup>77</sup> That evening at a dinner at the East Germany embassy Khrushchev publicly made very similar threats against Turkey.<sup>78</sup>

It was notable that in the Reston interview Khrushchev again implied that the Soviets had evidence of American plotting against Syria and he called on the United States Senate to investigate the instructions that Dulles had given to Henderson for his tour.<sup>79</sup> Khrushchev suggested that Dulles should be forced to swear under oath and tell the truth about his instructions to Henderson. These comments by Khrushchev, combined with Mikoyan's remarks to Senator Ellender in early September, made the American ambassador in Moscow suspect that the Soviets had some specific information which they considered genuine, perhaps from intercepts of Arab communications.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, the State Department issued a public statement on 10 October which stoutly denied that the United States was pushing Turkey into a war with Syria.<sup>81</sup> It also described Khrushchev's allegations about Henderson's mission as 'completely unfounded'.<sup>82</sup> Leading senators scorned the suggestion that they should investigate Dulles' instructions to Henderson.<sup>83</sup>

More though was to come from the Soviet side. On 10 October Khrushchev and the Presidium of the Central Committee discussed the 'Syrian Question' and agreed that the Soviet Union should take additional measures to support Syria.<sup>84</sup> Moscow would send letters to the British Labour Party and the socialist parties of Belgium, Denmark, France, Holland, Italy, Norway and West Germany urging them to restrain their governments from aggressive action in the Middle East. Presumably Khrushchev had in mind here the Labour Party's vocal opposition to the British military attack on Egypt in the 1956 Suez Crisis. The USSR would also inform the Syrian and Egyptian governments of its estimate of the situation around Syria based upon the latest evidence. Gromyko would raise the Syrian issue at the United Nations

General Assembly and the Defence Ministry would organise military manoeuvres by the Soviet and Bulgarian armed forces to act as a deterrent to Turkey. Finally, the Presidium instructed the KGB to submit proposals for ‘publicising in the United States material relating to plans for an attack on Syria’.<sup>85</sup>

Over the next two weeks most of these measures were put into effect. Moscow sent out letters to the European socialist parties on 11 October warning of a plot against Syria.<sup>86</sup> These did not rouse much open opposition to American and Turkish policy but the letter to the Labour Party did have an impact on Bevan, since it reinforced what Khrushchev had told him at Yalta in September. Bevan urgently sought talks with senior British ministers, calling the Soviet allegations ‘extremely serious’ and on 14 and 15 October he met consecutively with David Ormsby-Gore, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Macmillan.<sup>87</sup> Bevan recounted to the two men his discussion with Khrushchev. He said the Soviet leader had seemed convinced that Henderson was sent to the Middle East to arrange a coup in Syria which would be followed by a call for help from the new regime to Arab countries and then military intervention by Turkey. Bevan asked for assurances that the Soviet allegations were untrue. Macmillan replied that as far he was aware there was no truth in Khrushchev’s story and Ormsby-Gore categorically denied the claims.

But in actual fact, Khrushchev’s description of the Henderson mission was at least partly true, as Macmillan probably knew. Indeed, behind the scenes the Foreign Office was worried by Bevan’s report of his conversation in Yalta because it appeared to confirm that Soviet intelligence was obtaining information via the Turks. On 14 October the Foreign Office telegraphed Lloyd (who was at the United Nations in New York) and informed him that

We are, however, seriously concerned at Turkish security. There seems to be a steady leak to the Russians. This is confirmed by Mr Bevan’s account of his interview with Khrushchev, when the latter gave him a detailed and accurate account of Mr Henderson’s discussions in Istanbul.<sup>88</sup>

The Foreign Office was studying this problem and intended to produce a paper on it for consultation with the United States.<sup>89</sup> American policymakers shared these concerns about poor Turkish security. That same day Under Secretary of State Christian Herter lamented to Dulles that on the Syrian issue 'it is obvious that any move we make in connection with Turkey is relayed pretty accurately to Moscow with great rapidity.'<sup>90</sup>

Khrushchev's statements helped convince the Americans and British to rule out the option of unilateral Turkish intervention in Syria. On 11 October the Working Group had produced a further report which recommend adopting a policy called 'containment plus' for Syria.<sup>91</sup> Under this longer term approach the pro-Western Arab states would try to incite unrest within Syria and create conditions in the future where military intervention would be possible. The Working Group concluded that a Turkish invasion was 'undesirable at this stage', partly because many Arab states had been obliged by public feeling to come out in support of Syria.<sup>92</sup> Indeed on 13 October Egypt sent a token force of soldiers to Syria to help defend the country against Turkey.<sup>93</sup> But the Working Group also thought Turkish action was undesirable because Khrushchev had tied the Soviet Union's prestige to the Syrian government's survival and thereby increased the risk of Soviet military intervention. The same point was made by Herter, who advised Dulles that the USSR had definitely committed its prestige through Khrushchev's interview with Reston and its diplomatic note to Turkey.<sup>94</sup> Herter predicted that if the Turks went into Syria the Soviet Union would feel compelled to attack Turkey, with the all the attendant potential for escalation up to a general war between the superpowers. Dulles was much more sceptical about the risk of Soviet intervention but going through the Working Group's papers with Lloyd on 16 October he accepted the conclusion that unilateral Turkish military intervention was undesirable.<sup>95</sup> Containment plus became the new favoured scheme. Informing the Turks of this decision was a delicate task though as Dulles and Lloyd felt that they had to avoid giving them any impression of being

intimidated by the Soviet threats. It would thus take nearly a week for Dulles and the Working Group to compose a suitable message for Ankara.<sup>96</sup>

Ironically, just as Dulles decided to restrain the Turks the crisis escalated with the Syrians and Soviets taking the dispute to the United Nations. On 15 October the Syrian government appealed to the UN Secretary General claiming that it was threatened by Turkish forces concentrating on its border.<sup>97</sup> The Syrians asked for a United Nation commission to investigate the situation in the border area and report back to the General Assembly. Gromyko strongly supported their appeal. In a letter to the President of the General Assembly he endorsed the Syrian request for a UN investigatory commission and proposed that if Turkey did invade, United Nations' member states should immediately render Syria armed assistance.<sup>98</sup> In that situation, he wrote, the Soviet Union was 'prepared to take part with its forces in suppressing aggression and punishing the violators of peace', a clear warning of possible Soviet military intervention.<sup>99</sup>

In his letter Gromyko alleged there was 'reliable information' that the Turkish General Staff with American advisors had devised detailed plans for an invasion of Syria.<sup>100</sup> TASS issued an authorised statement on 18 October which set out the supposed invasion plan: the Turks would invade Syria on a wide front from the Mediterranean coast to the Euphrates River.<sup>101</sup> One regiment would swing west and capture the port of Latakia, making it possible for the American Sixth Fleet to bring in ships. The main Turkish invasion force would strike south, first taking Homs and then push down to Damascus. Gromyko also detailed the composition of the Turkish military force massed on the border which would carry out the attack.<sup>102</sup> Supposedly known as the 'Hatai Mobile Group', it consisted of an infantry division, four separate infantry regiments, a gendarme division and three armoured brigades. The total strength was 50,000 men with approximately 500 tanks and self-propelled guns plus artillery

and aircraft. Gromyko claimed that the planned launch date for the invasion was immediately after general elections in Turkey on 27 October.

The Soviets did appear to be genuinely concerned about the threat to the Syrian government. Tom Driberg, the Chairman of the British Labour Party, lunched with Khrushchev in Moscow on 19 October and he advised the Foreign Office that the Soviet leader 'believed passionately that there was a Turco-American plot against Syria.'<sup>103</sup> Khrushchev told Driberg that the United States and Turkey were planning a lightning attack on Syria which would be over before the Security Council could make a decision. Khrushchev may also have divulged more about the sources of his information. Driberg asked him if he would show the members of a future Labour government the documents which proved there was a Turco-American plot. According to Driberg, Khrushchev demurred, saying if the Soviets 'showed the documents that they had got from the Turkish G.H.Q [General Headquarters] it would give away the Generals from whom they got them.'<sup>104</sup>

Driberg is a problematic source, however, because he had been compromised by the KGB in 1956 and acted as an agent of influence for them.<sup>105</sup> The account of the meeting he gave to the Foreign Office therefore may have contained Soviet disinformation. Yet there were other signs that the USSR had obtained incriminating documents from the Turkish military. The *Washington Post* reported on 19 October that the Soviets had given Syrian and Egyptian diplomats at the United Nations copies of documents stolen from the Turkish defence and foreign ministries which revealed a plan to invade Syria.<sup>106</sup> The Turkish documents referred to the Hatai Mobile Group and the forces allocated to it. The Soviets had told the Syrians and Egyptians that these were some of the documents which Khrushchev had alluded to in his *New York Times* interview with Reston. It is also possible that they were the Turkish invasion plans which Khrushchev claimed in his memoirs to have received from Soviet intelligence. Of course, the documents could have been KGB forgeries intended to manipulate the Syrian

and Egyptian governments into believing there was an active threat from Turkey which only the USSR could repel. But the plan described by Gromyko in his letter to the United Nations, apparently on the basis of these documents, matches what is known of Turkish and American activities. American advisors had secretly helped the Turkish military prepare plans for an invasion of Syria and the plan was to quickly advance on Damascus. Turkey had assembled an invasion force and Eisenhower later admitted in his memoirs that the Turks increased their strength on the border to 50,000 men, the same figure given by Gromyko.<sup>107</sup> The purported invasion date looks incorrect because there is no evidence that the Turks were set to invade after their general elections. Still, the Turkish force was in a position to attack Syria and the Turks did plan ground and air manoeuvres in the area after 27 October, which the Soviets may have interpreted as cover for an invasion.<sup>108</sup>

Interestingly, the State Department seemed to think that the Soviets did have Turkish documents but it downplayed their significance, arguing that they were long standing military contingency plans rather than specific plans for toppling the current Syrian government. On 23 October the *Times* revealed that for a week rumours had been circulating in the State Department of an espionage leak in Turkey which had enabled the Soviets to procure plans of the Turkish General Staff for operations against Syria.<sup>109</sup> But these were portrayed in the article as ‘theoretical plans’; paper exercises that that any general staff would possess.<sup>110</sup> Dulles privately told the American Ambassador to the United Nations that ‘no doubt the Soviets have gotten hold of war plans which we all have. There is a difference between having them and putting them into operation. The proof of attacking is not in plans – it is in the political decision.’<sup>111</sup> Dulles was right about this distinction but if Khrushchev had found out the aims of the Henderson mission, it is easy to see why he would fear that the Turkish war plans and military build-up presaged an invasion of Syria.

The Syrian complaint led to a debate in the UN General Assembly where Gromyko made a fiery speech reiterating the accusations against the United States and Turkey. Gromyko also warned that if there was an attack on Syria the USSR would 'take all the necessary steps to extend assistance to the victim of aggression.'<sup>112</sup> His words were backed up by a show of force. The Soviet Ministry of Defence announced combined exercises by elements of the Trans-Caucasian Military District, which bordered Turkey, and the Black Sea Fleet.<sup>113</sup> Marshall Konstantin Rokossovsky, the Deputy Defence Minister and one of the most successful Soviet military leaders in World War Two, was appointed commander of the Trans-Caucasian Military District.<sup>114</sup> The Turks had already detected exceptional military activity taking place in southern Bulgaria.<sup>115</sup> But in truth, the danger of war was starting to recede, for on 22 October the Americans finally delivered their message to the Turks calling for restraint. Acting on instructions from Dulles, the American ambassador advised Menderes that in view of the charges made against Turkey in the UN debate, 'no action should be taken which enemies of Turkey could use as attempt to demonstrate that charges have substance.'<sup>116</sup> Menderes believed that the danger from Syria was greater than ever but he was prepared to accept this advice and promised not to make any move without the closest consultation with the United States.<sup>117</sup>

From intelligence sources Khrushchev may have learnt that the Americans had counselled restraint to Menderes. He wrote in his memoirs that after the USSR indicated it would defend Syria the United States advised the Turks to cease their preparations for war.<sup>118</sup> He made similar claims about the Americans restraining Turkey in an interview for an Egyptian newspaper in November 1957 and in talks with the Syrian Deputy Prime Minister the following month.<sup>119</sup> In any case, after the American message was delivered Khrushchev moved to defuse tensions and de-escalate the crisis. On 29 October the Soviet leader surprised everyone by turning up at the Turkish embassy in Moscow for a national day

reception. He exuded goodwill to gathered Western diplomats and called for a toast to ‘no war between the Governments represented here’.<sup>120</sup> When asked by reporters if his presence was a sign of lessening tension in the Middle East Khrushchev said that ‘[i]f you think of peace as the needle in a compass, you may say it has swung a little bit towards peace.’<sup>121</sup> Khrushchev was still convinced that the Americans and Turks had been conspiring against Syria; at the reception the Turkish ambassador tried to assure him that Turkey had no aggressive intentions towards Syria but Khrushchev snapped back that the Soviet government had ‘material and irrefutable proof’ that Henderson had laid plans in Turkey for the overthrow of the Syrian government.<sup>122</sup> But by this point Khrushchev was confident that he had deterred the Turkish invasion of Syria. On 2 November he told the Egyptian Defence Minister, Abdel Hakim Amer, that the attempt to mount an armed attack on Syria had failed and boasted that the Soviets and Arabs had won the battle without having to have a war.<sup>123</sup> Khrushchev correctly predicted to Amer that henceforth the United States and Turkey would rely on internal subversion to topple the Syrian government rather than using external military force.

After Khrushchev’s visit to the Turkish embassy the Syrian Crisis wound down.<sup>124</sup> The debate in the General Assembly concluded on 1 November without a vote and the Syrians indicated to the Secretary General that they no longer wanted a UN commission to investigate the border situation. From 19 November the Turks started to withdraw their forces from the Syrian frontier. For a while the United States and Britain covertly pursued the containment plus policy, fostering the creation of an Arab Committee in Beirut which would look for ways to incite internal unrest in Syria.<sup>125</sup> But the dynamics of situation changed completely in February 1958 when Syria united with Egypt to form the United Arab Republic, eliminating any scope for the West to install a government in Damascus.

In the end then, should the 1957 Syrian Crisis be seen as a victory for the Soviet intelligence services? Broadly, the account given by Khrushchev in his memoirs was correct. There were clear indications at the time that the KGB had uncovered the Western plans against Syria. In private conversations Khrushchev asserted that he possessed 'irrefragable evidence' and 'irrefutable proof' of American and Turkish plotting and he told Heikal he had documents proving the United States had asked Iraq and Jordan to attack Syria. The Soviet allegations against the United States and Turkey also generally match up with what is known of Henderson's discussions in the Middle East and Ankara's invasion preparations. Most tellingly of all, British and American policymakers themselves believed that the Soviets had acquired accurate intelligence about the Henderson mission and Turkish planning. The Foreign Office thought Khrushchev gave Bevan a true account of Henderson's secret talks in Istanbul and Dulles assumed that the Soviets had obtained Turkish military plans, even if they were just contingency plans. The British and Americans strongly suspected that the Soviets had breached Turkish security and Khrushchev's memoirs and contemporaneous press reporting and comments imply that the Soviets had an agent or agents with access to sensitive documents from the Turkish general staff and defence and foreign ministries. Given the vulnerability of Turkish ciphers, some material may also have come from KGB signals intelligence. Soviet intelligence thus seems to have penetrated the Western conspiracy against Syria and it was able to warn Khrushchev of a possible Turkish invasion. He could then take diplomatic and military countermeasures to defend Syria. To this extent, the Syrian Crisis was an example of intelligence led deterrence and intelligence had a greater influence on Soviet policy in the crisis than previously realised.

In some respects, however, the Soviet intelligence picture may have been incorrect. In his memoirs Khrushchev included Iran in the plot to attack Syria but Iran did not feature at all in American plans and it does not border Syria. Soviet statements never mentioned Iranian

involvement so Khrushchev probably misremembered this point when later dictating his memoirs. More significantly, Khrushchev and Gromyko both alleged that Turkey was about to invade Syria. The Turkish military had drawn up invasion plans and positioned its forces so that it could carry out an operation, but the limited evidence presently available does not confirm whether Menderes had taken the political decision to launch an invasion or if it was imminent. It is possible then that Khrushchev and/or the KGB overestimated the danger of invasion. Khrushchev also seems to have misjudged the extent to which the Americans were committed to a Turkish attack. For Dulles and Eisenhower a unilateral Turkish operation was always the least preferred option because they feared it would inflame Arab opinion. Dulles was only briefly tempted by Turkish military action when Iraqi intervention looked impossible in September 1957. Finally, it was not just the Soviet counter-measures which convinced the United States to restrain Turkey - the growing Arab support for the Syrian government was important as well. Intelligence did assist Khrushchev in the Syrian Crisis but the 'bloodless victory' was not down solely to his actions.

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<sup>1</sup> Jones, *The Preferred Plan*; Lesch, *Syria and the United States*; Little, *Cold War and Covert Action*; Rathmell, *Secret War in the Middle East: The Covert Struggle for Syria, 1949-1961*; Saunders, *The United States and Arab Nationalism*; Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism*.

<sup>2</sup> Only Lesch and Yaqub make any reference to possible Soviet intelligence in the crisis: Lesch, 195; Yaqub, 167. Khrushchev, *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev*, 868-869. An unabridged version of the memoirs was first published in English in 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Khrushchev, 868.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 869.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 870.

<sup>6</sup> Khrushchev, *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev, Volume 1*, 723.

<sup>7</sup> Jones, *The Preferred Plan*; Lesch, *Syria and the United States*; Little, *Cold War and Covert Action*; Saunders, *The United States and Arab Nationalism*; Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism*.

<sup>8</sup> Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism*, 154-158.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 155-156.

<sup>10</sup> Little, *Cold War and Covert Action*, 65-68.

<sup>11</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957, Near East: Jordan-Yemen, Vol. XIII (FRUS), No. 360, Memorandum of a Conversation, 19 August 1957.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 362, Telegram Ankara to State Department, 21 August 1957.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 358, Daily Top Secret Summary, 19 August 1957.

<sup>14</sup> Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism*, 159.

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- <sup>15</sup> U.S. Declassified Documents Online, Gale Cengage (DDO), <http://gale.cengage.co.uk/home/usddo.aspx>, Memorandum for the record, 23 August 1957.
- <sup>16</sup> DDO, Telegram 190, Istanbul to State Department, 25 August 1957; Telegram 193, Istanbul to State Department, 25 August 1957.
- <sup>17</sup> 'Henderson in New Parley', *The New York Times*, 28 August 1957; 'Henderson is Returning to U.S.', *The New York Times*, 4 September 1957.
- <sup>18</sup> FRUS, No. 381, Telegram Istanbul to State Department, 2/3 September 1957.
- <sup>19</sup> DDO, Telegram 190, Istanbul to State Department, 25 August 1957; Telegram 193, Istanbul to State Department, 25 August 1957.
- <sup>20</sup> British National Archives (TNA), FO 371/128227, Telegram 2266, Foreign Office to Baghdad, 12 September 1957.
- <sup>21</sup> FRUS, No. 381, Telegram Istanbul to State Department, 2/3 September 1957.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>23</sup> FRUS, No. 388, Memorandum of conversation, 7 September 1957.
- <sup>24</sup> DDO, Telegram 191, Istanbul to State Department, 25 August 1957.
- <sup>25</sup> TNA, CAB 159/28 JIC(57) 81st Meeting, Item 6, 19 September 1957; Brill, United States Intelligence on the Middle East, 1945-2009, <http://www.brill.com/products/online-resources/us-intelligence-middle-east-1945-2009>, CIA Current Intelligence Bulletin, 7 September 1957; U.S. National Archives at College Park, Maryland, (NARA), Record Group 59, State Department, Central Decimal Files, 1955-59, Box 3744, Telegram 2458, Paris to State Department, 11 September 1957.
- <sup>26</sup> Seale, *The Struggle for Syria*, 300; TNA, PREM 11/2521, Telegram 1540, New York to Foreign Office, 22 September 1957.
- <sup>27</sup> NARA, RG 59, Central Decimal Files, 1955-59, Box 3746, Memorandum of Conversation Dulles and Alphan, 5 September 1957.
- <sup>28</sup> NARA, CREST, CIA Special National Intelligence Estimate 36.7-57, 3 September 1957.
- <sup>29</sup> NARA, RG 59, Central Decimal Files, 1955-59, Box 425, Telegram 1509, Dulles to Macmillan, 22 August 1957; FRUS, No. 385, Letter Dulles to Macmillan, 5 September 1957.
- <sup>30</sup> Jones, *The Preferred Plan*, 405.
- <sup>31</sup> FRUS, No. 392, Telegram State Department to Ankara, 10 September 1957; No. 393, Telegram State Department to Ankara, 10 September 1957; No. 394, Telegram State Department to Beirut, 10 September 1957; No. 395, Telegram State Department to Annan, 10 September 1957.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid., No. 393, Telegram State Department to Ankara, 10 September 1957.
- <sup>33</sup> FRUS, No. 392, Telegram State Department to Ankara, 10 September 1957.
- <sup>34</sup> Lesch, *Syria and the United States*, 152-156; Saunders, *United States and Arab Nationalism*, 156; Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism*, 164-165.
- <sup>35</sup> DDO, Memorandum for the Record by Goodpaster, 26 August 1957; Eisenhower, *White House Years*, 201; FRUS, No. 380, Memorandum of conversation, 2 September 1957; No. 388, Memorandum of conversation, 7 September 1957.
- <sup>36</sup> FRUS, No. 388, Memorandum of conversation, 7 September 1957.
- <sup>37</sup> TNA, PREM 11/2521, Telegram 1810 Washington to FO, 12 September 1957.
- <sup>38</sup> FRUS, No. 370, Editorial Note; TNA, PREM 11/2116, Telegram 1503, Commonwealth Relations Office to Ottawa, 13 September 1957.
- <sup>39</sup> Barker, Russell, 'U.S. Expert Sent to Middle East in Syrian Crisis', *The New York Times*, 24 August 1957.
- <sup>40</sup> Heikal, *Sphinx and Commissar*: 82-83.
- <sup>41</sup> 'A Diplomatic Bag Riddle', *The Times*, 23 October 1957.
- <sup>42</sup> NARA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 1955-59, Box 3147, Telegram POLTO 998, Paris to State Department, 19 October 1957.
- <sup>43</sup> TNA, FO 371/130221, Letter Stewart to Addis, 25 October 1957.
- <sup>44</sup> Easter, *Soviet Bloc and Western Bugging*, 34-36, 44-47.
- <sup>45</sup> NARA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 1955-1959, Box 425, Telegram 247, State Department to Moscow, 5 September 1957; Telegram 606, Beirut to State Department, 1 September 1957; Telegram 607, Beirut to State Department, 1 September 1957.
- <sup>46</sup> TNA, FO 371/128227, Telegram 2255, Foreign Office to Baghdad, 11 September 1957.
- <sup>47</sup> Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism*, 164.
- <sup>48</sup> TNA, PREM 11/2119, Telegram 2234, Washington to Foreign Office, 29 October 1957.
- <sup>49</sup> TNA, FO 371/130221, Letter Stewart to Addis, 25 October 1957.

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- <sup>50</sup> DDO, Memorandum of Conversation on the Joint US-UK Working Group Report on Syria, 21 September 1957.
- <sup>51</sup> TNA, PREM 11/2519, Telegram 1333, Baghdad to Foreign Office, 2 November 1957.
- <sup>52</sup> Dzhirkvelov, *Secret Servant*, 181, 211-214.
- <sup>53</sup> NARA, Record Group 263, Foreign Broadcast Information (FBIS) Service Daily Reports, 1941-59, Box 805, Daily Reports Vol. 1511, No. 175 USSR and Eastern Europe, 'Soviet Near Eastern Service in Arabic', 9 September 1957; 'TASS in Russian Hellschrieber to Europe', 10 September.
- <sup>54</sup> NARA, RG 263, FBIS Daily Reports, 1941-59, Box 805, Daily Reports Vol. 1511, No. 176 USSR and Eastern Europe, TASS 'Gromyko's Statement to Press', 10 September 1957.
- <sup>55</sup> 'Text of Premier Bulganin's Letter to Menderes on Syrian Issue', *The New York Times*, 14 September 1957.
- <sup>56</sup> 'Mikoyan says U.S. stirs up Mideast', *The New York Times*, 10 September 1957.
- <sup>57</sup> NARA, RG 263, FBIS Service Daily Reports, 1941-59, Box 806, Daily Reports Vol. 1514, USSR and Eastern Europe, TASS 'Mr and Mrs Bevan meet Khrushchev', 17 September 1957; Bevan, Aneurin, 'Khrushchev has the Trumps', *Tribune*, 18 October 1957.
- <sup>58</sup> TNA, FO 371/128241, Telegram 4135, Foreign Office to Washington, 15 October 1957.
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>60</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project, Eleanor Roosevelt Interview with Nikita Khrushchev, 27 September 1957, <https://erpapers.columbian.gwu.edu/eleanor-roosevelt-interview-nikita-khrushchev> (Accessed 15 November 2016).
- <sup>61</sup> Jones, *The Preferred Plan*, 406-409.
- <sup>62</sup> TNA, FO 371/128229, Telegram 1148, Baghdad to Foreign Office, 24 September 1957; PREM 11/2521, Telegram 1926, Washington to Foreign Office, 26 September 1957.
- <sup>63</sup> Lesch, *Syria and the United States*, 176-178; TNA, FO 371/128230, Telegram 913, Ankara to Foreign Office, 2 October 1957.
- <sup>64</sup> TNA, PREM 11/2521, Telegram 1540, New York to Foreign Office, 22 September 1957.
- <sup>65</sup> DDO, Memorandum of Conversation on 'Joint US-UK Working Group Report on Syria', 21 September 1957.
- <sup>66</sup> DDO, Memorandum of Conversation on 'Syria', 22 September 1957.
- <sup>67</sup> DDO, Memorandum of Conversation Dulles and Mansfield, 6 October 1957.
- <sup>68</sup> TNA, PREM 11/2521, Telegram 1926, Washington to Foreign Office, 26 September 1957.
- <sup>69</sup> DDO, Memorandum of Conversation with the President, 1 October 1957; Memorandum Herter to Dulles, 14 October 1957.
- <sup>70</sup> TNA, CAB 179/3, Weekly Review of Current Intelligence, 3 October 1957.
- <sup>71</sup> Naumkin, *Blizhnevostochnyi konflikt*, 149. Translation by author.
- <sup>72</sup> Khrushchev, *Memoirs*, 868.
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid., 869.
- <sup>74</sup> NARA, CREST, CIA Draft Memorandum for the Director, 'Probable Soviet Action in the Event of Turkish Military Intervention in Syria', 11 October 1957.
- <sup>75</sup> 'Text of Khrushchev Interview on Wide Range of Issues Between East and West', *The New York Times*, 10 October 1957.
- <sup>76</sup> NARA, CREST, CIA Draft Memorandum for the Director, 'Probable Soviet Action in the Event of Turkish Military Intervention in Syria', 11 October 1957.
- <sup>77</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>78</sup> 'Khrushchev Sees a Peril in Turkey', *The New York Times*, 8 October 1957.
- <sup>79</sup> 'Text of Khrushchev Interview on Wide Range of Issues Between East and West', *The New York Times*, 10 October 1957.
- <sup>80</sup> DDO, Telegram 706, Moscow to State Department, 8 October 1957.
- <sup>81</sup> 'U.S. Text on Khrushchev', *The New York Times*, 11 October 1957.
- <sup>82</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>83</sup> Trussel, C., 'Senators Scorn Khrushchev Bid', *The New York Times*, 11 October 1957.
- <sup>84</sup> Fursenko, *Prezidium TSK KPSS 1954-1964, Tom 1*, 284-285; Fursenko, *Prezidium TSK KPSS 1954-1964, Tom 2*, 697-698.
- <sup>85</sup> Fursenko, *Prezidium TSK KPSS 1954-1964, Tom 2*, 698. Translation by author.
- <sup>86</sup> Lesch, *Syria and the United States*, 196.
- <sup>87</sup> TNA, PREM 11/2099, Minute PM/OG/57/106 Ormsby-Gore to Macmillan, 14 October 1957; TNA FO 371/128241, Telegram 4135, Foreign Office to Washington, 15 October 1957.
- <sup>88</sup> TNA, PREM 11/2521, Telegram 2547, Foreign Office to New York, 14 October 1957.

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- <sup>89</sup> No such paper has come to light in American or British archives.
- <sup>90</sup> DDO, Memorandum Herter to Dulles, 14 October 1957.
- <sup>91</sup> TNA, PREM 11/2521, Letter Morris to Hood, 11 October 1957; Jones, *The Preferred Plan*, 409.
- <sup>92</sup> TNA, PREM 11/2521, Letter Morris to Hood, 11 October 1957.
- <sup>93</sup> Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism*, 169.
- <sup>94</sup> DDO, Memorandum Herter to Dulles, 14 October 1957.
- <sup>95</sup> Yaqub, *The Syrian Crisis*, 172; TNA, PREM 11/2521, Telegram 2084, Washington to Foreign Office, 16 October 1957.
- <sup>96</sup> TNA, PREM 11/2521, Telegram 2130, Washington to Foreign Office, 19 October 1957; Telegram 2132, Washington to Foreign Office, 19 October 1957.
- <sup>97</sup> TNA, PREM 11/2119, Telegram 1707, New York to Foreign Office, 16 October 1957.
- <sup>98</sup> TNA, PREM 11/2119, Telegram 1711, New York to Foreign Office, 16 October 1957.
- <sup>99</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>100</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>101</sup> NARA, RG 263, FBIS Daily Reports, 1941-59, Box 812, Daily Reports Vol. 1525, No. 204 USSR and Eastern Europe, 'Authorised TASS Statement on Middle East', 18 October 1957.
- <sup>102</sup> PREM 11/2119, Telegram 1711, New York to Foreign Office, 16 October 1957.
- <sup>103</sup> Wheen, 328; TNA, FO 371/128991, Minute recording a conversation with Tom Driberg, 28 October 1957.
- <sup>104</sup> TNA, FO 371/128991, Minute recording a conversation with Tom Driberg, 28 October 1957.
- <sup>105</sup> Andrew and Mitrokhin, 522-526.
- <sup>106</sup> Freudenheim, Milt, 'Reds Offer 'Proof' of Turk 'Plot'', *The Washington Post*, 19 October 1957.
- <sup>107</sup> Eisenhower, *White House Years*, 203.
- <sup>108</sup> TNA, CAB 159/28, JIC(57) 92nd Meeting, Item 5, 24 October 1957; Brill, CIA Current Intelligence Weekly Summary, Part 1, 17 October 1957.
- <sup>109</sup> 'A Fairytale Account', *The Times*, 23 October 1957.
- <sup>110</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>111</sup> Lesch, *Syria and the United States*, 195.
- <sup>112</sup> 'Excerpts from Addresses in U.N. Debate on Syria's Complaint Against Turkey', *The New York Times*, 23 October 1957.
- <sup>113</sup> Lesch, *Syria and the United States*, 199.
- <sup>114</sup> Ibid. In his memoirs Khrushchev wrote that Andrei Grechko was appointed commander, not Rokossovsky, but this seems to be a mistake.
- <sup>115</sup> NARA, RG 59, Central Decimal Files, 1955-59, Box 2682, Telegram 1105, Ankara to State Department, 16 October 1957.
- <sup>116</sup> FRUS, 1955-1957, Soviet Union, Eastern Mediterranean, Vol. XXIV, No. 367, Telegram State Department to Ankara, 20 October 1957.
- <sup>117</sup> Ibid., No. 368, Telegram Ankara to State Department, 23 October 1957.
- <sup>118</sup> Khrushchev, *Memoirs*, 869.
- <sup>119</sup> NARA, RG 263 FBIS Daily Reports, 1941-59, Box 818, Daily Reports Vol. 1537, No. 228 Western Europe and Near East, 'Khrushchev makes statement to Al-Ahram', 22 November 1957; Naumkin, *Blizhnevostochnyĭ konflikt*, 149.
- <sup>120</sup> 'Khrushchev Speaks of Zhukov's Next Post', *The Times*, 30 October 1957.
- <sup>121</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>122</sup> NARA, RG 59, Central Decimal Files, 1955-59, Box 2684, Telegram 872, Moscow to State Department, 30 October 1957.
- <sup>123</sup> Naumkin, *Blizhnevostochnyĭ konflikt*, 126-128.
- <sup>124</sup> Lesch, *Syria and the United States*, 201-202.
- <sup>125</sup> TNA, PREM 11/2521, Telegram 2313, Washington to Foreign Office, 8 November 1957; NARA, RG 59, Central Decimal Files, 1955-59, Box 2681, Telegram 3930, London to State Department, 3 January 1958.

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