The Cuban Missile Crisis: The Diplomatic Dilemma

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Junior Division Group Exhibit Exhibit: 500 student-composed words Process Paper: 474 words

# The Cuban Missile Crisis: The Diplomatic Dilemma Process Paper

We chose to investigate the Cuban Missile Crisis, a pivotal event in the Cold War that necessitated utmost diplomacy if they were to maintain relative peace. One of our members introduced the topic to the group and after some deliberation, we decided to research the topic, seeing it most fit for this year's theme. The stakes that were involved in the Crisis made for an interesting subject that involved both diplomacy and debate.

All research was done online as it was easy to access, and our current situation could not facilitate physical sources. We first started our research by doing a simple Google search about our topic. From there, we expanded to more sources such as images, maps, and videos. As the Crisis was well-documented during its time, primary sources were influential in our research as most of it was without bias. Transcripts and letters made up a good chunk of primary information, most of which was derived from the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum.

As we had more experience creating posters and other similar graphics, we went with, what we believe to be the most comfortable option, an exhibit. We believe that an exhibit was the most effective way to convey information without making it purely textual as the Cuban Missile Crisis had many interesting visuals that would benefit our project if included. Images that showed the missile range helped us convey how dangerous the situation would be if the missiles were to be launched, helping others to empathize with the leaders' worries.

Our historical argument is as follows: "During the Cold War, there was a diplomatic struggle to de-escalate the tension between the US and the Soviet Union. Waging proper war against each other would've led to nuclear retaliation. In October 1962, the Soviet Union stationed missiles in allied Cuba to warn the US against invading Cuba, and to protest the placement of US missiles in Turkey, which threatened their capital, Moscow. Shortly after, the US began taking measures to hamper the missiles without using extreme force, instead utilizing diplomacy. These measures slowly increased the tension between the two countries with compound pressure from Cuba, making this event the closest the two superpowers ever got to nuclear war. This changed history by cementing the Kennedy administration's resolve and reputation, and alienated Cuba from its communist allies due to Castro's volatility and eagerness to retaliate despite the risks of nuclear annihilation."

We believe that this topic is important and should be examined, it was a prime example of a stand-off that if not handled correctly, would have led to the deaths of millions. Looking back, events like these can better educate future leaders on how to handle situations that require cooperation and communication, so that when the time comes, they will be better prepared to engage in meaningful debate and diplomacy.

#### **Annotated Bibliography**

#### **Primary Sources**

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This newspaper helped us understand the different challenges the USSR and the U.S. needed to overcome during the crisis. The newspaper also included a map which helped us understand how the USSR is threatening the U.S. position in the Cold War.

Brugioni, Dino A., and The National Security Archive. "The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962: The Photographs." *The National Security Archive*, http://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/nsa/cuba mis cri/photos.htm.

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Choices Program. "Khrushchev on the Cuban Missile Crisis." *YouTube*, 9 September 2008, http://youtu.be/phpe0DsisbY.

This is an interview of Sergei Khrushchev, the son of Nikita Khrushchev. This source helped us understand why his father decided to bring missiles to Cuba and gives some points of the Soviet's point of view.

Darrell L., Airman. "NH 103710 USS Beale." Naval History and Heritage Command, 21 July 1964,

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A photograph of a naval ship used by the U.S. Taken around the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, it gave us a picture of what naval ships looked like during the crisis.

Department of Defense. "Photograph of MRBM Field Launch Site No. 1 in San Cristobal, Cuba, 14 October 1962." *The National Archives Catalog*, National Archives Catalog, 14 October 1962, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/193926.

These photographs show a MRBM launch site in San Cristobal, Cuba on October 14 and 23, 1962 and the development of the missile launch site. The photographs helped us understand the development of missile launch sites over Cuba.

Department of Defense, and John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. "Soviet Military Build Up In Cuba, late October 1962." Wikimedia Commons, October 1962, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:CubaSites1962.jpg.

This is a map showing the Soviet Military buildup in Cuba that is used in our exhibit.

Dobrynin, Anatoly. "Anatoly Dobrynin's Conversation with Robert Kennedy, October 27, 1962 | National Security Archive." *National Security Archive*, National Security Archive, 14 April 2010,

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This source gives insight into the United States' point of view to the Cuban Missile Crisis and the 'debate' between what they should do to resolve the Cuban Missile Crisis. This helped us understand the diplomacy involved between the USSR and the U.S.

Globe and Mail Update. "Fidel Castro meets with world's leaders through the years." The Globe and Mail, 26 November 2016,

https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/cuban-revolutionary-icon-fidel-castro-me etings-with-leaders-throughout-the-years/article33057568/.

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John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum. "Minutes of the 505th Meeting of the National Security Council - Cuban Missile Crisis - John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum." *JFK Library*, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum, https://microsites.jfklibrary.org/cmc/oct20/doc1.html.

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John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum. "Kennedy and Khrushchev meet in Vienna." JFK Library, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum, 6 June 1961, https://www.jfklibrary.org/asset-viewer/kennedy-and-khrushchev-meet-in-vienna.

An image that is used in our exhibit. The image shows President John F. Kennedy and Chairman Nikita Khrushchev meeting at the US Embassy in Vienna, Austria to discuss world problems.

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A commencement speech at the American University given by President Kennedy which includes his views about the Cuban Missile Crisis.

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A formal proclamation that announced the American quarantine placed on Cuba's borders. This source helped us understand the intentions, methods, and limitations behind Cuba's quarantine.

Kennedy, John F. "Radio and Television Report to the American People on the Soviet Arms Buildup in Cuba, October 22, 1962." *JFK Library*, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum,

https://www.jfklibrary.org/archives/other-resources/john-f-kennedy-speeches/cuba-radio-and-television-report-19621022.

This is a radio and television report to the American people that talks about the buildup of Soviet arms. This source helped us understand how politically attuned the U.S was of Cuba's and USSR's movements and how aware they were of their actions.

Kennedy, John F. "Reading copy of the radio and television report to the American people on the Soviet arms build-up in Cuba, 22 October 1962." *The National Archives Catalog*, 22 October 1962, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/193899.

This is a reading copy of President John F. Kennedy's radio and television address to the nation regarding the Soviet Union's military presence in Cuba.

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This source includes photographs added to our exhibit. This source helped us understand the range of the missiles placed in Cuba and the blockade placed around Cuba.

Kenworthy, E. W. "Blockade Begins at 10 A.M. Today." The New York Times, 24 October 1962.

A newspaper article written during the missile crisis explaining the quarantine around Cuba. This source helped us understand what the quarantine was about and Kennedy's

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A series of images of an EXCOMM meeting regarding the Cuban Missile Crisis. This source gave insight about how the internal EXCOMM meetings worked.

Widmer, Ted, et al. Listening In: The Secret White House Recordings of John F. Kennedy.

Hyperion Books, 2012.

A series of transcripts from taped recordings involving Kennedy. This source helped us understand the workings of the NSC and EXCOMM and the confusing politics within it.

Wigglesworth, Donald C. "The Cuban Missile Crisis: A SIGINT Perspective." The National Security Archive, The National Security Archive, 1994, https://www.nsa.gov/portals/75/documents/news-features/declassified-documents/cryptol ogic-quarterly/Cuban\_Missile\_Crisis.pdf.

This source gave a timeline of the Cuban Missile Crisis, which was used in our exhibit.

#### **Secondary Sources**

"Aftermath." *Cuban Missile Crisis: Considering It's Place in Cold War History*, by The Choices Program - Brown University Staff, Choices Program, Watson Institute, Brown University, 1998, pp. 29-33,

https://choices.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/choices-twtn-cuba-aftermath.pdf.

The source describes the aftermath of the Cuban Missile Crisis and the possibilities of the crisis. This source helped us understand what both sides of the crisis did after.

The Armchair Historian. "Cuban Missile Crisis from the Cuban Perspective | Animated History." *YouTube*, 21 May 2021, https://youtu.be/jMozubL3Ozg.

The source explains the Cuban Missile Crisis from the Cuban perspective. This source helped us understand Cuba's perspective of the crisis.

Extra Credits. "Cuban Missile Crisis - Black Saturday - Extra History - #3." *YouTube*, 1 March 2018, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Ox9wIZeZYg.

This source explains the last days of the Missile Crisis, especially Black Saturday and talks about some of the effects of the Crisis on the leaders and countries involved. This source helped us understand the aftermath and the effects of the Crisis on all the people involved.

Extra Credits. "Cuban Missile Crisis - Eyeball to Eyeball - Extra History - #2." *YouTube*, 22 February 2018, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQT4Dt82Kz0.

The source summarizes the events happening between Oct. 22 to Oct. 27. This source helped us understand some main points of the crisis that includes the start of the quarantine, Khrushchev sending a letter proposing a solution to the Crisis, Castro's response to the spy planes, and the shootdown of a U2 plane over Cuba.

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This source contains information and images about the standoff in Checkpoint Charlie, Berlin, a similar crisis that involved de-escalation. This source helped us understand the significance of Berlin with the Cuban Missile Crisis.

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These maps, created and published after the Cuban Missile Crisis. This source helped us understand the capabilities of the missiles placed in Cuba and how they may damage major U.S. cities.

Mikoyan, Sergo, and Svetlana Savranskaya. "The Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis: Castro, Mikoyan, Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Missiles of November." *The National Security Archive*, 10 October 2012, https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB393/.

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WEAVER, MICHAEL E. "The Relationship between Diplomacy and Military Force: An Example from the Cuban Missile Crisis." *Diplomatic History*, vol. 38, no. 1, 2014, pp. 137-181. *JSTOR*, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26376538.

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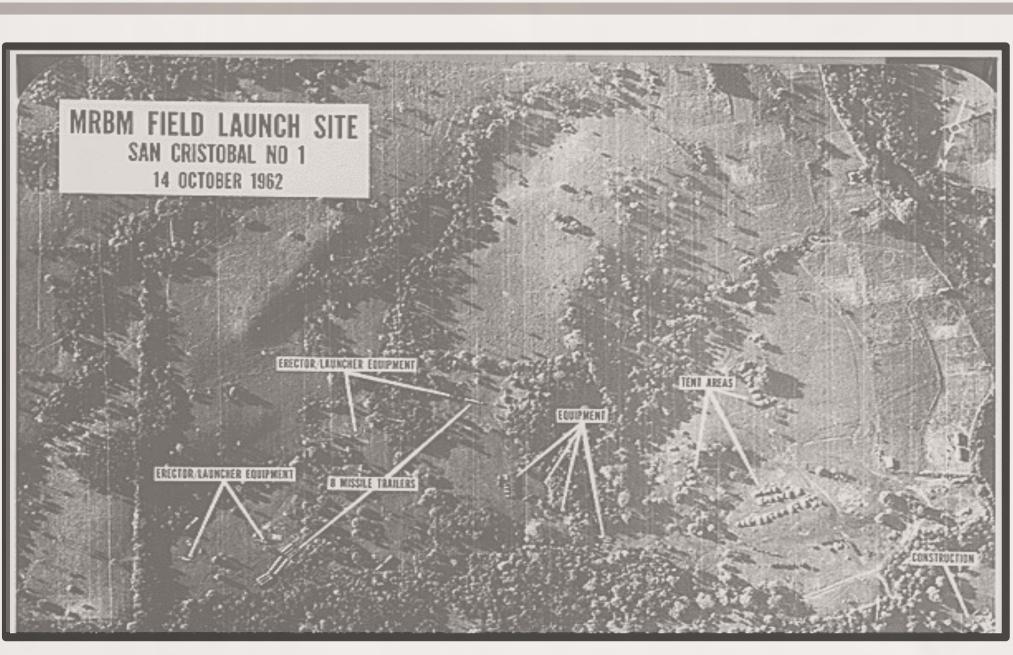


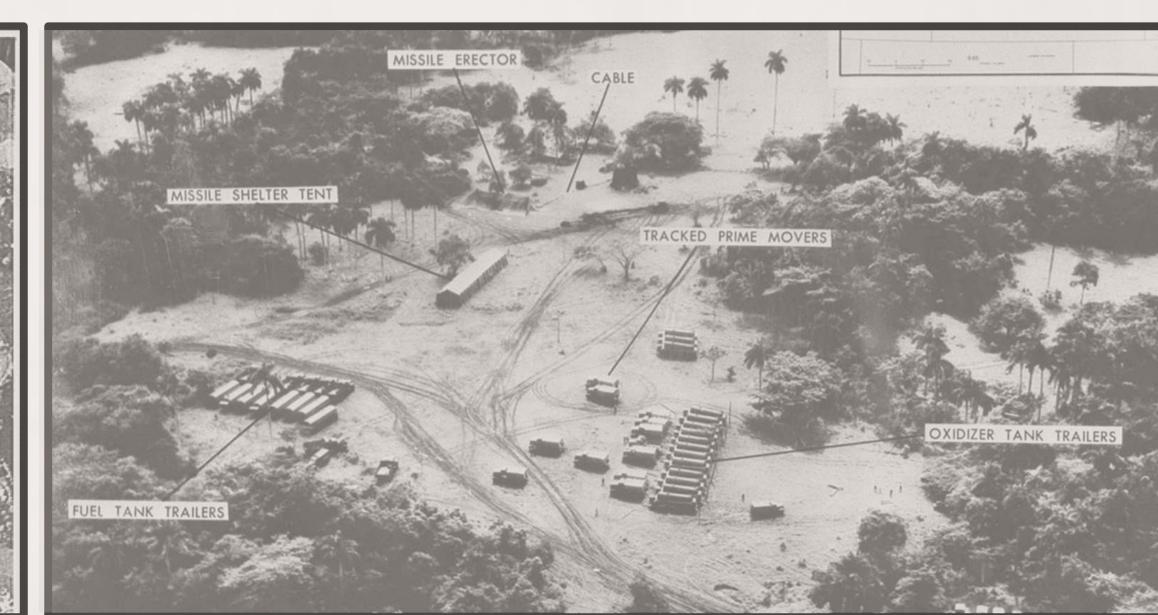
# INTERNAL AFFAIRS

On October 16, 1962, the Executive Committee met in the White House and found out about the missiles via photographs from a spy plane.

"Because of the plane that was shot down, there is now strong pressure on the president to give an order to respond with fire if fired upon when American reconnaissance planes are flying over Cuba. ... But if we start to fire in response—a chain reaction will quickly start that will be very hard to stop ... A real war will begin, in which millions of Americans and Russians will die. We want to avoid that any way we can, I'm sure that the government of the USSR has the same wish... However, taking time to find a way out [of the situation] is very risky there are many unreasonable heads among the generals, and not only among the generals, who are 'itching for a fight.' The situation might get out of control, with irreversible consequences."

- Robert Kennedy, Former U.S. Attorney General Dobrynin, 1962, "Anatoly Dobrynin Conversation with Robert Kennedy, October 27, 1962."

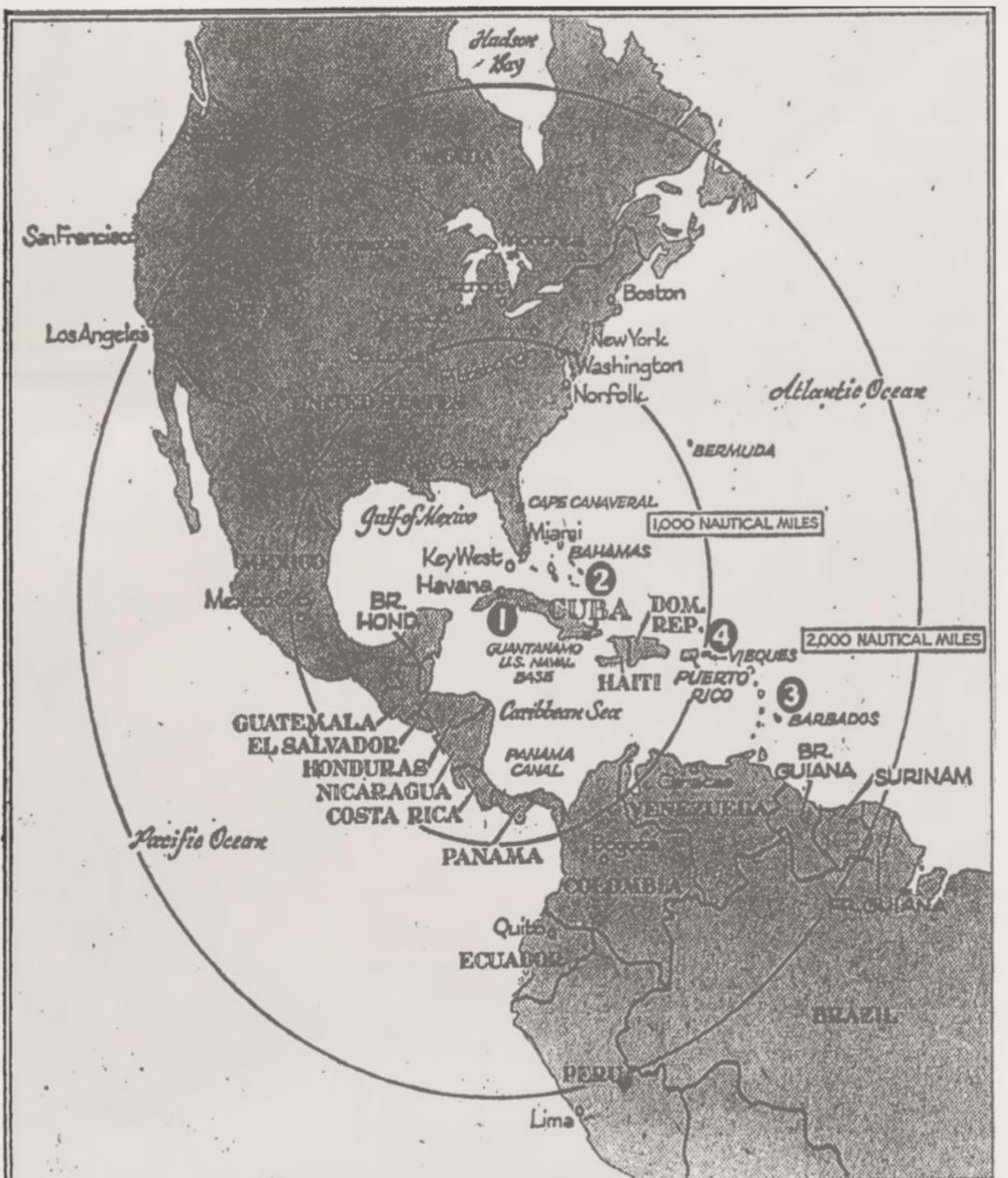




"This item is a high altitude aerial reconnaissance photograph of medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) launch site number 1 in San Cristobal, Cuba." Department of Defense, 1962, "Photograph of MRBM Field Launch Site No. 1 in San Cristobal, Cuba, 14 October 1962"

"If we go into Cuba we have to realize that we are taking a chance that these missiles, which are ready to fire, won't be fired... The fact is that that is one hell of a gamble."

- President John F. Kennedy Kennedy, 1962, "Reading copy of the radio and television report to the American people on the Soviet arms build-up in Cuba, 22 October 1962."



CUBAN EMERGENCY: Major points in the blockade of Cuba will be the harbor at Havana (1), the sea lanes that run through the Bahamas (2) and an arc extending from the Bahamas to Barbados (3). A landing at Vieques (4), which was to have been the nited States training exercise, has been canceled. The inner circle, centered adicates the range of medium-range ballistic missiles and the outer circle shows the range for intermediate range ballistic missiles. President Kennedy declared in his speech to the nation that sites for both types of missiles were being built in Cuba.

Kennedy, 1962, "Text of Kennedy's Address on Moves to Meet

the Soviets Build-Up in Cuba."

SOVIET MILITARY BUILD UP IN CUBA GUANAJAY IRBM SITES SAN CRISTOBAL MRBM SITES SAGUA LA GRANDE MRBM SITES SSM CRUISE SITES (5) MRBM SITES [6] ■ GM PATROL CRAFT BASES (2) Department of Defense, 1962, "Soviet Military Build Up In

Cuba, late October 1962."

Originally, the USSR could not credibly threaten the US with their intercontinental missiles due to their inaccuracy and slow launch times. Knowing this, they turned to their more dependable intermediate range missiles which could reliably threaten many of the US' major cities when stationed in Cuba.

# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

The Kennedy administration used de-escalation and diplomacy to resolve the Crisis peacefully while still holding their ground to maintain their reputation.

A notable example includes the use of the term "quarantine" when politically referring to the blockade placed upon Cuba.

Issuing a blockade in enemy waters would be an act of war according to the 1856 Paris Declaration and Articles 1-22 of the 1909 London Declaration. This subtle wording change is an interesting example of diplomatic wordsmanship to protect a country's interests while avoiding war.

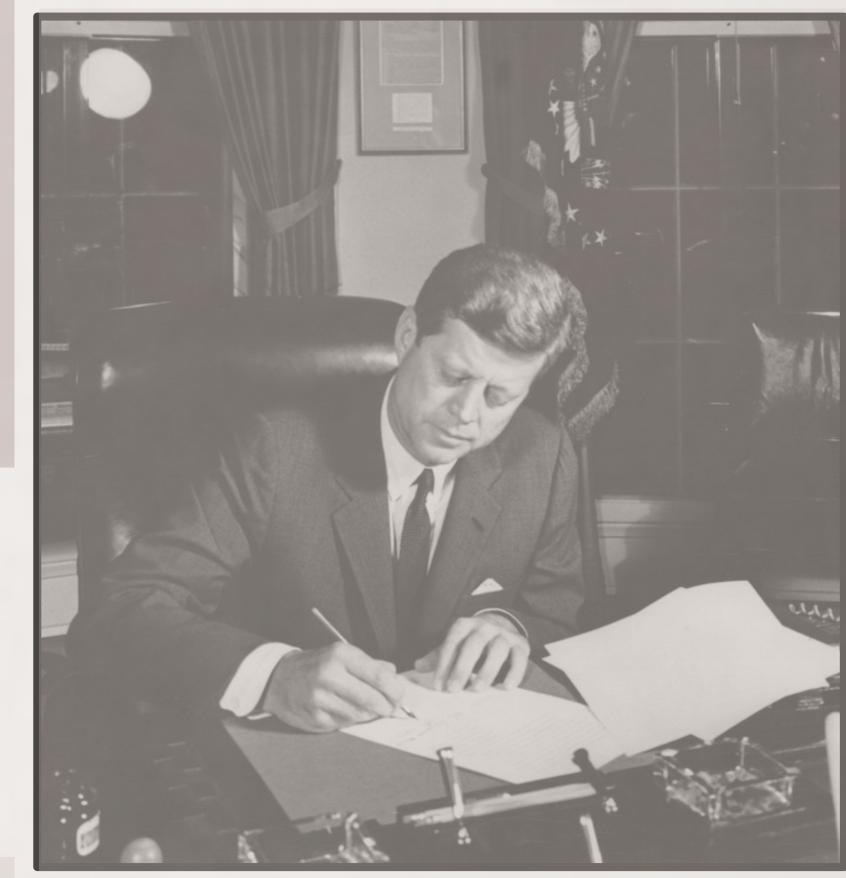
"President Kennedy signed a proclamation of the blockade ... that he intended to order a naval and air quarantine of Cuba because the Soviet Union had established offensive-missile sites there."

Kenworthy, 1962, "Blockade Begins at 10 A.M. Today."

"You, Mr. President, are not declaring a quarantine, but rather are setting forth an ultimatum and threatening that if we do not give in to your demands you will use force. Consider what you are saying!"

- Chairman Nikita Khrushchev Khrushchev, 1962. "Letter from Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy."

# BLOCKADE BEGINS AT 10 A. M. TODAY



"President John F. Kennedy signs the Interdiction of the Delivery of Offensive Weapons to Cuba" White House Photographs. 1962, "Proclamation signing, Interdiction of the Delivery of Offensive Weapons to Cuba,

# THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS The Diplomatic Dilemma

# THESIS

During the Cuban Missile Crisis, the US, USSR, and their allies struggled to diplomatically de-escalate tension among themselves. The interdependence of force and diplomacy was demonstrated in the pursuit of national security.

# "War is a failure of diplomacy."

WEAVER, 2014, "The Relationship between Diplomacy and Military Force: An Example from the Cuban Missile Crisis."

# THE THIRTEEN DAYS OF CRISIS

Aug. 29, 1962	U-2 fly-over of western Cubs produced the first photographic evidence of SAMs installed in position. Eight SAM sites identified.
Sep. 4, 1962	JFK aware of arrival in Cuba of SAMs
Sep. 8-15, 1962	MRBMs moved into Cuban ports
Oct. 14, 1962	U-2 flight photographed Cuban missile installations
Oct. 15, 1962	Discussion of readiness measures
Oct. 16, 1962	Irrefutable evidence of missiles in Cuba - U-2 photos
Oct. 22, 1962	JFK's speech to the nation that he was imposing a "quarantine"
Oct. 23, 1962	"Interdiction Proclamation"
Oct. 26, 1962	First message from Khrushchev
Oct. 27, 1962	U-2 shot down over Cuba - "Peak of Crisis"
Oct. 28, 1962	Khrushchev's compliance with U.S. demands
Nov. 10, 1962	Completion of withdrawal of 42 missiles
Nov. 19, 1962	Castro agreed to removal of bombers (IL-28s)

Wigglesworth, 1994, "The Cuban Missile Crisis: A SIGINT Perspective."



Darrell L., 1964, "NH 103710 USS Beale."

The Crisis demonstrated how military force and diplomacy complemented each other when protecting a nation.

"War, military actions short of war, and diplomacy mutually support each other when thought of as instruments of power that inhabit the same continuum. ... Furthermore, the Crisis underscored the mutual support of many variables within those two: conventional and nuclear air power, naval power, diplomatic groundwork, and the use of international organizations."

WEAVER, 2014, "The Relationship between Diplomacy and Military Force: An Example from the Cuban Missile Crisis."

The failed Bay of Pigs invasion was a culmination of America's efforts to unseat Cuba's Prime Minister, Fidel Castro. It pushed Cuba to ally with the USSR and strained Castro's relationship with the US.

"And when Castro, after Bay of Pigs, declare officially that he joined the Soviet Bloc (Alliance), he put this obligation on my father's shoulders. And for this, the Cuba became to the Soviet Union, the same as the West Berlin to the United States: useless small piece of land, very deep inside hostile territory. But if you will not protect this small piece of land, you will lose your face. Your allies will not trust you. So we have to do it. So Khrushchev decided to send missiles there as a diplomatic signal. 'Don't invade Cuba; we are serious."

- Sergei Khrushchev, son of Nikita Khrushchev Brown University, 2008, "Khrushchev on the Cuban Missile Crisis"

With their new allies, Cuba entangled itself in the diplomatic affairs of the Cold War.

"The fiery Castro passionately urged Khrushchev to issue a declaration statement that any attack on Cuban soil would be seen as an attack on the USSR itself and to have his forces deployed through Europe to enter a state of maximum readiness. Khrushchev had no intention of doing any of those things. Kennedy too, had played his hand carefully. Castro soon realized that he had been neatly taken out of the diplomatic equation, leaving him with next to no say in any talks between America and the USSR."

The Armchair Historian, 2021, "Cuban Missile Crisis from the Cuban Perspective | Animated History."

Castro thought his actions would drive Khrushchev to act, however, they ironically assisted in de-escalating the Crisis.

# 

# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Khrushchev's decision to station missiles in Cuba allowed them to threaten the US mainland and support the archipelago with negligible risk.

"Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev is walking near his villa on the Black Sea. He looks across the water. On the far shore is Turkey, where, months before, President Kennedy had stationed nuclear missiles. Their warheads threaten Moscow. And he wonders: 'Why then can't we do the same in Cuba?""

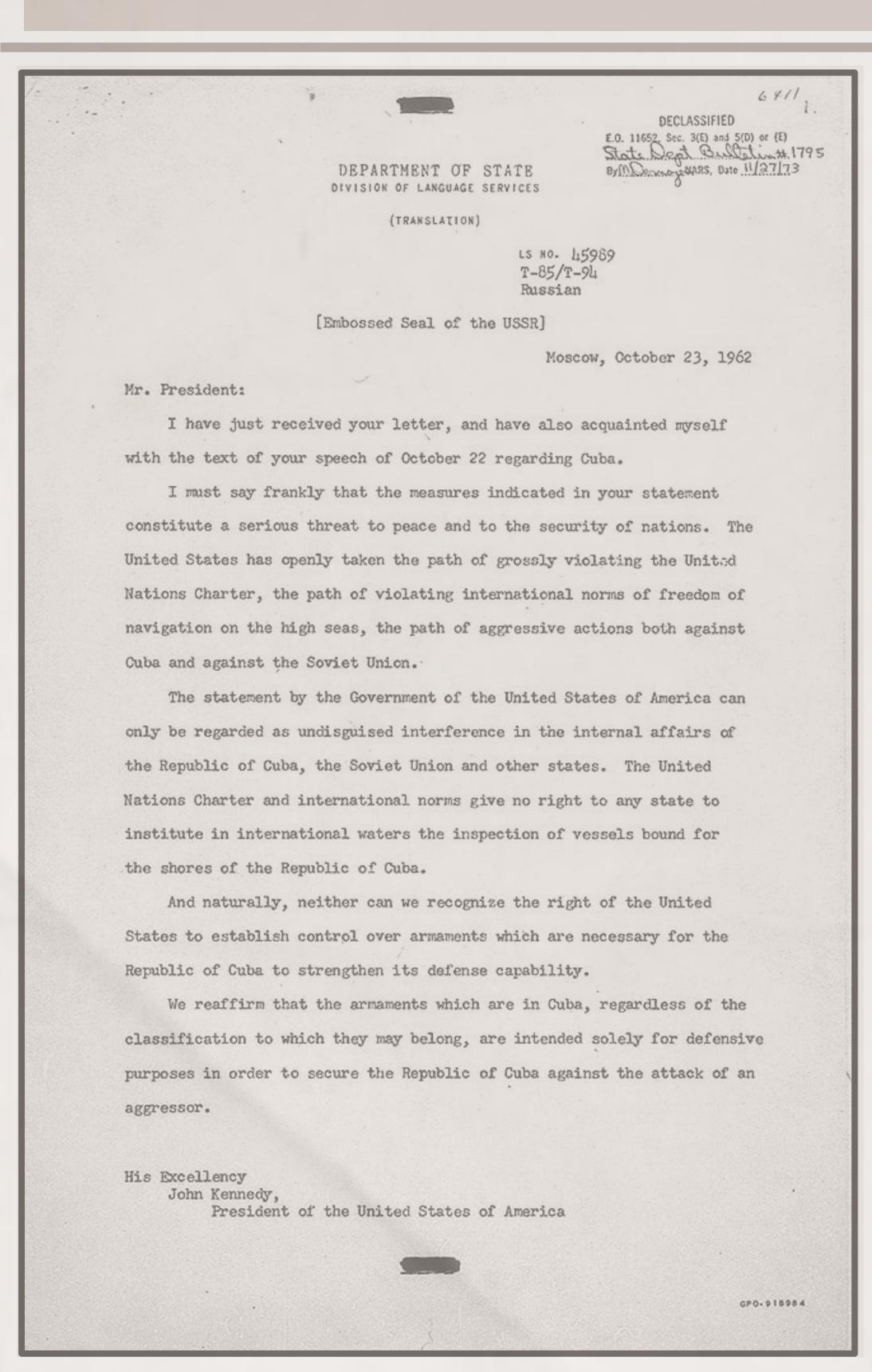
Extra Credits, 2018, "Cuban Missile Crisis - The Failed Checkmate - Extra History - #1."

Due to Cold War tensions, Khrushchev needed to settle this without endangering his country or disturbing the relative peace.

"We will then be forced on our part to take the measures we consider necessary and adequate in order to protect our rights. We have everything necessary to do so."

- Chairman Nikita Khrushchev Khrushchev, 1962, "Letter from Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, October 24, 1962"

Additionally, Khrushchev had to respond to Castro's demands for a first strike. Fearing nuclear retaliation, he chose to ignore his requests.



Khrushchev, 1962, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, October 24, 1962."

"Time is of the essence and we shouldn't miss the chance"

- Anatoly Dobrynin, Soviet diplomat Dobrynin, 1962, "Anatoly Dobrynin's Conversation with Robert Kennedy, October 27, 1962."



National Security Archives, 1962, "October 18, 1962: White House photograph of President Kennedy meeting with Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko and Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin - in which JFK does not reveal he knows about the missiles, and Gromyko asserts that Soviet military assistance is purely defensive."

"You wish to ensure the security of your country, and this is understandable. But Cuba, too, wants the same thing; all countries want to maintain their security."

- Chairman Nikita Khrushchev Khrushchev, 1962, "Letter from Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, October 27, 1962"

# AFTERMATH

The USSR, US, and Cuba came together to review the events of the Crisis. The possibility of a nuclear war emerging from the Crisis horrified all sides of the conflict.

"If we cannot now end our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity. For, in the final analysis, our most basic common link is the fact that we all inhabit this planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal.... Confident and unafraid, we labor on-not toward a strategy of annihilation, but toward a strategy of peace."

- President John F. Kennedy Kennedy, 1963, "Commencement Address at American University, Washington, DC, June 10, 1963."



John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum, 1961, "Kennedy and Khrushchev meet in Vienna."

"If we, together with you, and with the assistance of other people of good will, succeed in eliminating this tense atmosphere, we should also make certain that no other dangerous conflicts which could lead to a world nuclear catastrophe would - Chairman Nikita

Khrushchev Khrushchev, 1962, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, October 28,

The Crisis, though brief in the grand scheme of things, left a significant impact on the world. The US' non-invasion pact with the USSR concerning Cuba was a factor in Castro's long rule, though he would never prominently feature on the world stage again.

The lack of immediate communication methods was highlighted during the Crisis, soon remedied by a direct hotline from the Kremlin to the White House. The hotline was reportedly used dozens of times to reduce the risk of misunderstandings that would've led to deadly conflicts.

# **Left Top Panel Photo**

#### Source Credit Text:

Dobrynin, 1962, "Anatoly Dobrynin Conversation with Robert Kennedy, October 27, 1962."

Department of Defense, 1962, "Photograph of MRBM Field Launch Site No. 1 in San Cristobal, Cuba, 14 October 1962"

Kennedy, 1962, "Reading copy of the radio and television report to the American people on the Soviet arms build-up in Cuba, 22 October 1962."



# **USA**

#### INTERNAL AFFAIRS

On October 16, 1962, the Executive Committee met in the White House and found out about the missiles via photographs from a spy plane.

"Because of the plane that was shot down, there is now strong pressure on the president to give an order to respond with fire if fired upon when American reconnaissance planes are flying over Cuba. ... But if we start to fire in response—a chain reaction will quickly start that will be very hard to stop ... A real war will begin, in which millions of Americans and Russians will die. We want to avoid that any way we can, Pm sure that the government of the USSR has the same wish... However, taking time to find a way out [of the situation] is very risky there are many unreasonable heads among the generals, and not only among the generals, who are 'itching for a fight.' The situation might get out of control, with irreversible consequences."

- Robert Kennedy, Former U.S. Attorney General Dobrynin, 1962, "Anatoly Dobrynin Conversation with Robert Kennedy, October 27), 1962."





"This item is a high altitude aerial reconnaissance photograph of medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) launch site number 1 in San Cristobal, Cuba."

Department of Defense, 1963, "Photograph of MRBM Field Launch Site No. 1 in San Cristobal, Cuba, 14 October 1962"

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Kennedy, 1962, "Reading copy of the radio and television report to the American people on the Soviet arms build-up in Cuba, 22 October 1962."

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"This item is a high altitude aerial reconnaissance photograph of medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) launch site number 1 in San Cristobal, Cuba."

"If we go into Cuba we have to realize that we are taking a chance that these missiles, which are ready to fire, won't be fired...

The fact is that that is one hell of a gamble." - President John F. Kennedy

#### Left Center Panel Photo

#### Source Credit Text:

Department of Defense, 1962, "Soviet Military Build Up In Cuba, late October 1962."

Kennedy, 1962, "Text of Kennedy's Address on Moves to Meet the Soviets Build-Up in Cuba."



The New York Times Oct. 23. 1841
CUBAN EMERGENCY: Major points in the blockade of Cuba will be the harbor at
Havana (1), the sea lanes that run through the Bahamas (2) and an arc extending from
the Bahamas to Barbados (3). A landing at Vieques (4), which was to have been the
climax of a United States training exercise, has been canceled. The inner circle, centered
on Havana, indicates the range of medium-range ballistic missiles and the outer circle
shows the range for intermediate range ballistic missiles. President Kennedy declared in
his speech to the nation that sites for both types of missiles were being built in Cuba.

Kennedy, 1962, "Text of Kennedy's Address on Moves to Meet the Soviets Build-Up in Cuba."



Department of Defense, 1962, "Soviet Military Build Up In Cuba, late October 1962."

Originally, the USSR could not credibly threaten the US with their intercontinental missiles due to their inaccuracy and slow launch times. Knowing this, they turned to their more dependable intermediate range missiles which could reliably threaten many of the US' major cities when stationed in Cuba.

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Kenworthy, 1962, "Blockade Begins at 10 A.M. Today."

Khrushchev, 1962. "Letter from Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy."

White House Photographs. 1962, "Proclamation signing, Interdiction of the Delivery of Offensive Weapons to Cuba, 7:05PM."

# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

The Kennedy administration used de-escalation and diplomacy to resolve the Crisis peacefully while still holding their ground to maintain their reputation.

A notable example includes the use of the term "quarantine" when politically referring to the blockade placed upon Cuba.

Issuing a blockade in enemy waters would be an act of war according to the 1856 Paris Declaration and Articles 1-22 of the 1909 London Declaration. This subtle wording change is an interesting example of diplomatic wordsmanship to protect a country's interests while avoiding war.

"President Kennedy signed a proclamation of the blockade ... that he intended to order a naval and air quarantine of Cuba because the Soviet Union had established offensive-missile sites there."

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"You, Mr. President, are not declaring a quarantine, but rather are setting forth an ultimatum and threatening that if we do not give in to your demands you will use force. Consider what you are saying!"

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## **Center Top Panel Photo**

Source Credit Text:

WEAVER, 2014, "The Relationship between Diplomacy and Military Force: An Example from the Cuban Missile Crisis."

# THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS The Diplomatic Dilemma

# THESIS

During the Cuban Missile Crisis, the US, USSR, and their allies struggled to diplomatically de-escalate tension among themselves. The interdependence of force and diplomacy was demonstrated in the pursuit of national security.

### "War is a failure of diplomacy."

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The Cuban Missile Crisis
The Diplomatic Dilemma

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Darrell L., 1964, "NH 103710 USS Beale."

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#### THE THIRTEEN DAYS OF CRISIS

Aug. 29, 1962	U-2 fly-over of western Cubs produced the first photographic evidence of SAMs installed in position. Eight SAM sites identified.
Sep. 4, 1962	JFK aware of arrival in Cuba of SAMs
Sep. 8-15, 1962	MRBMs moved into Cuban ports
Oct. 14, 1962	U-2 flight photographed Cuban missile installations
Oct. 15, 1962	Discussion of readiness measures
Oct. 16, 1962	Irrefutable evidence of missiles in Cuba - U-2 photos
Oct. 22, 1962	JFK's speech to the nation that he was imposing a "quarantine"
Oct. 23, 1962	"Interdiction Proclamation"
Oct. 26, 1962	First message from Khrushchev
Oct. 27, 1962	U-2 shot down over Cuba - "Peak of Crisis"
Oct. 28, 1962	Khrushchev's compliance with U.S. demands
Nov. 10, 1962	Completion of withdrawal of 42 missiles
Nov. 19, 1962	Castro agreed to removal of bombers (IL-28s)

Wigglesworth, 1994, "The Cuban Missile Crisis: A SIGINT Perspective."



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The Crisis demonstrated how military force and diplomacy complemented each other when protecting a nation.

"War, military actions short of war, and diplomacy mutually support each other when thought of as instruments of power that inhabit the same continuum.... Furthermore, the Crisis underscored the mutual support of many variables within those two: conventional and nuclear air power, naval power, diplomatic groundwork, and the use of international organizations."

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Brown University, 2008, "Khrushchev on the Cuban Missile Crisis"

The Armchair Historian, 2021, "Cuban Missile Crisis from the Cuban Perspective | Animated History."

# **CUBA**

The failed Bay of Pigs invasion was a culmination of America's efforts to unseat Cuba's Prime Minister, Fidel Castro. It pushed Cuba to ally with the USSR and strained Castro's relationship with the US.

"And when Castro, after Bay of Pigs, declare officially that he joined the Soviet Bloc (Alliance), he put this obligation on my father's shoulders. And for this, the Cuba became to the Soviet Union, the same as the West Berlin to the United States: useless small piece of land, very deep inside hostile territory. But if you will not protect this small piece of land, you will lose your face. Your allies will not trust you. So we have to do it. So Khrushchev decided to send missiles there as a diplomatic signal. 'Don't invade Cuba; we are serious.'"

- Sergei Khrushchev, son of Nikita Khrushchev

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#### With their new allies, Cuba entangled itself in the diplomatic affairs of the Cold War.

"The fiery Castro passionately urged Khrushchev to issue a declaration statement that any attack on Cuban soil would be seen as an attack on the USSR itself and to have his forces deployed through Europe to enter a state of maximum readiness. Khrushchev had no intention of doing any of those things. Kennedy too, had played his hand carefully. Castro soon realized that he had been neatly taken out of the diplomatic equation, leaving him with next to no say in any talks between America and the USSR."

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Castro thought his actions would drive Khrushchev to act, however, they ironically assisted in de-escalating the Crisis.

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Extra Credits, 2018, "Cuban Missile Crisis - The Failed Checkmate - Extra History - #1."

Khrushchev, 1962, "Letter from Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, October 24, 1962"



# <u>USSR</u>

## EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Khrushchev's decision to station missiles in Cuba allowed them to threaten the US mainland and support the archipelago with negligible risk.

"Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev is walking near his villa on the Black Sea. He looks across the water. On the far shore is Turkey, where, months before, President Kennedy had stationed nuclear missiles. Their warheads threaten Moscow. And he wonders: 'Why then can't we do the same in Cuba'"

Extra Credits, 2018, "Cuban Missile Crisis - The Failed Checkmate - Extra History - #1."

Due to Cold War tensions, Khrushchev needed to settle this without endangering his country or disturbing the relative peace.

"We will then be forced on our part to take the measures we consider necessary and adequate in order to protect our rights. We have everything necessary to do so."

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Additionally, Khrushchev had to respond to Castro's demands for a first strike. Fearing nuclear retaliation, he chose to ignore his requests.

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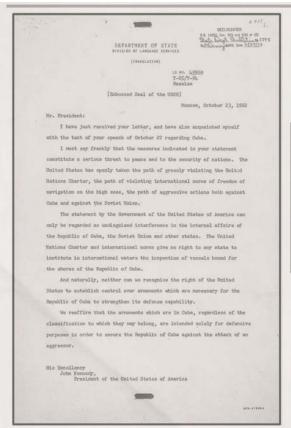
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#### Source Credit Text:

Dobrynin, 1962, "Anatoly Dobrynin's Conversation with Robert Kennedy, October 27, 1962."

National Security Archives, 1962, "October 18, 1962: White House photograph of President Kennedy meeting with Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko and Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin – in which JFK does not reveal he knows about the missiles, and Gromyko asserts that Soviet military assistance is purely defensive."

Khrushchev, 1962, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, October 24, 1962."



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Kennedy, 1963, "Commencement Address at American University, Washington, DC, June 10, 1963."

John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum, 1961, "Kennedy and Khrushchev meet in Vienna."

Khrushchev, 1962, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, October 28, 1962."

#### **AFTERMATH**

The USSR, US, and Cuba came together to review the events of the Crisis. The possibility of a nuclear war emerging from the Crisis horrified all sides of the conflict.

"If we cannot now end our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity. For, in the final analysis, our most basic common link is the fact that we all inhabit this planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal.... Confident and unafraid, we labor on—not toward a strategy of annihilation, but toward a strategy of peace."

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"If we, together with you, and with the assistance of other people of good will, succeed in eliminating this tense atmosphere, we should also make certain that no other dangerous conflicts which could lead to a world nuclear catastrophe would arise."

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Khrushchev, 1962, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, October 28, 1962."

The Crisis, though brief in the grand scheme of things, left a significant impact on the world. The US's non-invasion pact with the USSR concerning Cuba was a factor in Castro's long rule, though he would never prominently feature on the world stage again.

The lack of immediate communication methods was highlighted during the Crisis, soon remedied by a direct hotline from the Kremlin to the White House. The hotline was reportedly used dozens of times to reduce the risk of misunderstandings that would've led to deadly conflicts.

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