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Deceptive Intentions :  
Packaging the Cuban Missile Crisis for Foreign and Domestic Consumption

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**Deceptive Intentions:  
Packaging the Cuban Missile Crisis for Foreign and  
Domestic Consumption**

**Derek Anthony Stark**

Thesis submitted to the  
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies  
In partial fulfillment of the requirements  
For the MA degree in History

Department of History  
Faculty of Arts  
University of Ottawa

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## **Abstract for:**

Deceptive Intentions: Packaging the Cuban Missile Crisis  
for Foreign and Domestic Consumption  
MA Thesis by Derek Anthony Stark

Derek's Stark's thesis examines the diplomatic history behind the Cuban Missile Crisis. It focuses on how the crisis was packaged and delivered to its various constituents. The crisis was framed differently to the varying members of the administration of the governments involved, the allies of these nations, the members of the United Nations, and the populations of the countries through their media. Information pertaining to the crisis was being manipulated, not only through inaccurate testimonials that came from Washington after the fact, but during the crisis as well, as a conscious effort was being made to influence how the history would be interpreted. The thesis provides a clear-cut case of information-manipulation from the highest levels of the US government. Were President Kennedy's deceptions required to protect his own political position or were they needed for more valid reasons of international strategy? Stark's thesis includes the complex answer to this question.

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# **Introduction**

***“I would say, after having read various statements of the past ten days, that any historian—and I think this matter should be left to historians—who walks through this mine field of charges and counter-charges should proceed with some care.”*** President John F. Kennedy, News Conference Number 46, State Department Auditorium, December 12, 1962, 4pm.

***“To our mutual satisfaction we maybe even sacrificed self-esteem. Apparently, there will be such scribblers who will engage in hair-splitting over our agreement, will be digging as to who made greater concessions to whom. As for me, I would say that we both made a concession to reason and found a reasonable solution which enabled us to ensure peace for all including those who will be trying to dig up something.”*** Chairman Nikita S. Khrushchev, Letter to President Kennedy, Moscow, October 30, 1962.

Reportedly, the closest that Humanity has ever come to ending its own existence happened late in October of 1962 during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Prior to this event, most of the planet’s population had literally been divided into two hostile camps; the ‘Free World’—defined by capitalism, democracy and military intervention to protect the state’s national (or capital) interests—was engaged in direct competition with their ideological counterparts, the ‘Communist World’—whose defining characteristics included socialism, dictatorship, and military support for fledgling revolutionary societies. Both ‘Worlds’ were locked into a fierce competition for control of the developing nations, mostly former colonies from the period of history that preceded the two World Wars. The ‘Third World’, as it was known, would become the battleground where the two diametrically opposed superpowers did most of their fighting throughout the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. While neither side ever directly engaged the other in a military conflict, there were several times where their actions, internationally, could have sparked a much greater conflagration.

Both the United States of America (the self-proclaimed leaders of the ‘Free World’) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (the self-proclaimed leaders of the ‘Communist World’) possessed weapons of mass destruction, such as the Atomic Bomb and the Hydrogen Bomb, as well as huge stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons, offering the mutual destruction of both homelands.<sup>1</sup> This period in history is known as the Cold War, and it defined nearly every international incident from 1945 until 1989.

As President John F. Kennedy came to power in the United States, he faced varying factions within his country whose concerns spilled into his administration. Liberals, closet Republicans and Presidential Loyalists all vied for Kennedy’s attention.<sup>2</sup> While President Kennedy was popular, he was not very influential with Congress.<sup>3</sup> His equivalent in the Soviet Union was Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union, and most important, the head of the Presidium (or Politburo) of the party’s Central Committee.<sup>4</sup> Although their systems differed in many ways, the two men would face similar challenges and would be affected by the same concerns and warnings from within their own administrations.

In 1962, both of the aforementioned nations found their basis of power to be deteriorating close to their borders. While conflicts were brewing in South-East Asia, the two more pressing concerns for the superpowers were Berlin<sup>5</sup> and Cuba, simply because of their proximity to the centres of power. There had been

an American military presence in Berlin, a city well within the East German borders, since the end of World War II; and likewise, the Soviets were reinforcing the newly proclaimed “socialist” state in Cuba with military capabilities, augmenting their forces with Soviet equipment, only 145 kilometres off of the coast of Florida. Neither nation was willing to allow the situations to remain as they were. They both developed and enacted elaborate schemes to win a victory in their own sphere of power, while demonstrating superiority in their adversary’s backyard. At the time, the Americans enjoyed a seventeen-to-one advantage in nuclear warheads, and a ten-to-one advantage in nuclear bombers.<sup>6</sup>

Eventually it would prove that many factors influenced the decision, but nonetheless, the Soviets had attempted to secretly install ballistic missiles in Cuba.<sup>7</sup> As a missile base, Cuba would present the Soviet Union with a fifty-percent increase in their destructive power against the United States by providing access for a nuclear strike conducted with MRBMs and IRBMs.<sup>8</sup> When the Americans discovered the operation in action, President Kennedy created a committee of his top executives<sup>9</sup> to develop a strategy to preserve the prior status quo. Their decisions involved the enforcement of a blockade of Cuba, accompanied with threats of military escalation in order to halt the shipment of weapons, and to exert enough pressure to have the existing weapons removed. In secret, the US and USSR agreed to mutual concessions by dismantling their missile bases in Turkey<sup>10</sup> and Cuba, respectively, and by orally providing non-invasion pledges to the aforementioned nations. After what appeared to be an intense showdown, the Soviets publicly announced their decision to withdraw the missiles from Cuba, and the conflict was ended with minimal loss of life.

There are no shortcuts to understanding the Cuban Missile Crisis, and there undoubtedly are no replacements for the primary sources that exist, including declassified documents from the National Security Archives, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and the Kremlin, correspondence between Kennedy and Khrushchev; speeches, press conferences, and finally, the actual audio-recordings made by JFK. This is not saying that the work of historians is not essential to help interpret these events; it is saying that their interpretations of the data can be, and sometimes are, flawed, or inaccurate, and in some cases, even purposely deceptive.

A major theme that surfaces throughout the historiography that has yet to be addressed is an examination of how the crisis was packaged and delivered to its various constituents. It is no wonder that so many different interpretations of the crisis exist, despite the best current sources available, since almost no one received the same information even within the two administrations involved. Some participants were more informed than others, and some willingly altered the historical record. The public was grossly misinformed, allies were lied to, and there were even concurrent movements within the crisis to distort the future record. A complete analysis of the crisis cannot be achieved until these final barriers have been removed.

The historiography of the Cuban Missile Crisis suffers from several shortcomings. Many statements from prior studies have been disproved, revisionist theories have speculated too often, and recent studies have not always reflected the declassified sources, thus, many incorrect lessons persist. These problems are best highlighted by a brief examination of how several textbooks teach the Cuban Missile Crisis. *The Unfinished*

*Nation*,<sup>11</sup> *History of a Free Nation*,<sup>12</sup> and *The Enduring Vision*<sup>13</sup> are three textbooks currently in use in Canadian and American schools and universities.<sup>14</sup> One reoccurring problem in the three textbooks is the propagation of the longest running myth of the Cuban Missile Crisis. The 'Trollope Ploy' was originally suggested to explain how the crisis was resolved. During the tense negotiations between Kennedy and Khrushchev, a series of letters had been exchanged. The 'Trollope Ploy' proposed the Soviets accepted an American ploy that ignored their second letter, and delivered a reply to the earlier letter, which included more favourable terms for the United States. In this version of the history, the Soviets buckled to American pressures. All three sources rely on this myth and create the impression that the crisis was solved by the use of deterrence. In addition, the authors often confuse Kennedy's immediate responses, portraying him as unwavering and decisive. They have also underestimated the dangers that existed in the post-crisis phase of the conflict. With the exception of the latter criticism, evidence existed to disprove these errors before the publication of each of the textbooks, and ultimately, these false lessons are being passed-on to students today.

As the collective understanding of the crisis advances, some problems remain even in the most credible and influential analyses. Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow's *The Essence of Decision: Exploring the Cuban Missile Crisis* is one of the most useful analyses of the crisis. Despite this, some of their assertions have since been proven incorrect,<sup>15</sup> they have made arguments that contradict what was said on the audiotapes by President Kennedy,<sup>16</sup> and have made some statements that are not substantiated by the existing evidence.<sup>17</sup> The transcripts of President Kennedy's audiotapes,<sup>18</sup> created at the Miller Center and edited by Ernest May, Philip Zelikow and Timothy Naftali, despite their convenience, are often incorrect.<sup>19</sup> This was originally identified by Sheldon Stern in his book *Averting the 'Final Failure': John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*. Stern has provided one of the best-summarized chronologies of the crisis to date, however, he can often be selective in his presentation of facts, occasionally over-dramatizes the meetings, and has omitted some controversial information from the conversations. As a result, his narrative occasionally alters the historical record.<sup>20</sup> Despite any deficiencies that might exist within his study, Stern was still working to disprove many of the remaining myths associated with the Cuban Missile Crisis, the most notable being the 'Trollope Ploy'.<sup>21</sup> Stern's work has highlighted many of the divisions within the historiography of the crisis.

The historiography in question divides easily into four categories. The first covers the period from 1963 to 1970.<sup>22</sup> During this time, what might be called the *Traditional Phase*, a dominant view emerged—the idea that the crisis was a result of Soviet actions and expansionist practices in the Caribbean that had to be addressed by US action. JFK emerged as a heroic figure who battled the Soviets during a short period of time in October of 1962. While the issue of internal US politics was discussed, it was linked to regular, presumably inconsequential, Republican-Democrat infighting. The 'Trollope Ploy' was suggested as the deciding factor for resolving the conflict. As the first suggested format for interpreting the events, the opinions and analyses from these versions have often persisted to present times. The *Traditional Phase* will be discussed thoroughly at a later point in this paper.

The second era, the *Revisionist Phase*, occurred in the 1970's, as more critical views and interpretations from different perspectives entered the mainstream discussion. The idea that JFK was using brinkmanship policies in the White House, or the view that he was not just answering the Republicans, but was instead making a bid for the midterm elections surfaced in this era. Despite interjecting new points of view, the conclusions were often based upon incomplete information, or were far too limited in scope, thus oversimplifying the crisis. While easily classified as a typical example of the era, Bruce Miroff's *The Presidential Politics of John F. Kennedy* had the explicit goal of examining JFK's political actions critically, to avoid providing another heroic perspective. Miroff even asserted that JFK "brought the world to the brink of nuclear war for the sake of American prestige and influence," while adding, "Kennedy's conduct in the missile crisis was neither responsible nor justifiable."<sup>23</sup>

Phase three of the historiography, the *Updated Traditionalist Phase*, spanned the 1980's. The historiography stagnated during this period. The most notable contributions of the period are listed below. During this era, Lester H. Brune wrote the first historiographical analysis of the literature in *The Missile Crisis of October 1962: A Review of Issues and References*. Examining and classifying approximately 500 different sources pertaining to the crisis, Brune created eight different categories of interpretation. Although an excellent resource, Brune's study was stunted by the limitations of his sources.<sup>24</sup> When McGeorge Bundy published *Danger and Survival: Choices About the Bomb in the First Fifty Years* in 1988, his book confirmed what many had hinted or speculated. Bundy explained how he, Rusk, McNamara, RFK, Ball, Gilpatric, Thompson, Sorensen, and JFK discussed plans for a secret deal between RFK and Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin on October 27. They decided to issue a non-invasion pledge; "The president in particular was clear and insistent on this part of the message." It was Rusk who prompted the oral agreement on Turkey; "The proposal was quickly supported by the rest of us and approved by the president." They agreed to keep the contents of their twenty-minute meeting secret from everyone.<sup>25</sup> In his final analysis, Bundy had determined that the nuclear danger present during the Cuban Missile Crisis was unacceptably high.

In 1989 there was held in Moscow the first of many international conferences to discuss the Cuban Missile Crisis. Three years later, Bruce J. Allyn, James G. Blight, and David A. Welch published edited transcripts of the conference. Aside from expressing divergent interpretations of the events from the different perspectives of the participating governments, the conference was valuable for Sorensen's admission that he in fact altered the historical record when he edited out the portion that dealt with the secret missile trade in RFK's *Thirteen Days*.<sup>26</sup> An exclusively American conference had been held in Hawk's Cay, Florida prior to the Moscow conference in 1989. Subsequent conferences have been held in Havana in 1992, and 2002, and seem to have produced as many problems inherent to oral histories as they have provided solutions.<sup>27</sup> The most recent of the conferences was held on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the crisis in Havana.<sup>28</sup>

The most recent *Post-Cold War Phase* since 1991 has been characterized by a more encompassing view of the event. Many documents have been declassified, the Kennedy tapes released, and the Cold War tensions have been removed. The scholarly work that will be discussed from this era is less systemic, looking

first at those who have significantly demonstrated their aptitude for analysis, or for interjecting new perspectives and interpretations into the historiography. It is only recently that the actual events of the Cuban Missile Crisis are becoming known to the historian, and the motives behind these actions are now being explained differently. One of the first such views came from Dino A. Brugioni, a participant of the conferences who had worked on photographic interpretation in Kennedy's administration. Clarifying many of the errors from previous periods, he believed that throughout the crisis, JFK was "acutely aware of the off-year congressional elections just two months away."<sup>29</sup> Pointing the finger, and opening the door for new interpretations on the events, he added that "It wasn't the weather but rather the dereliction, bumbling, and intransigence of Rusk and Bundy that kept the U-2's from flying..."<sup>30</sup> in early September, preventing an earlier discovery of the weapons. Not soon after this, James G. Blight, a psychologist, published and edited several books pertaining to the crisis. In 1992, he dramatically altered the historiography by examining the role that *fear* played in the crisis, in his book *The Shattered Crystal Ball: Fear and Learning in the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Blight borrowed from Kierkegaard's insights to help explain some of the heroic tales of the crisis that originally surfaced, stating, "fear of an unknown and highly uncertain outcome is characteristically omitted from the after-the-fact accounts."<sup>31</sup> It is his main assertion that fear produced a form of adaptive learning in the Cuban Missile Crisis. His work has allowed the crisis to be analyzed from a psychological perspective, rather than traditional political or military approaches.

As Blight had done before, Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein have also provided a stunningly refreshing perspective on the crisis, their co-authored book considering many factors that had been ignored by the majority of the historiography. Although not the first book written since the thaw of the Cold War, Lebow and Stein provided the first post-Cold War *perspective* that the Cuban Missile Crisis was the "result of the heavy-handed practice of deterrence by both superpowers."<sup>32</sup> Dismissing much of the early Revisionist work as being far too one-sided and neglectful of the role played by international politics, Lebow and Stein also tore into the Traditionalists, saying the claims that JFK had ordered the removal of the Jupiter missiles from Turkey *before* the crisis was deliberate 'disinformation' to help justify the actual outcome of the crisis.<sup>33</sup> The authors demonstrated how both sides generated strong sentiments for war, but once the crisis was underway, Khrushchev and Kennedy both attempted to issue some form of damage control to prevent the crisis from an unnecessary escalation.

Soviet General Anatoli I. Gribkov and American General William Y. Smith collaborated in the book *Operation ANADYR: U.S. and Soviet Generals Recount the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Prior to 1994, there had been very few examinations of the crisis from any other perspective other than the American point of view, and the only two books including the Soviet perspective, those by Gromyko and Dobrynin, were quite limited in scope.<sup>34</sup> In 1997, scholars were treated to another Soviet perspective. Soviet Aleksandr Fursenko and American Timothy Naftali co-operated to produce a groundbreaking examination of formerly classified Soviet documents in "*One Hell of a Gamble*": *Khrushchev, Castro, And Kennedy, 1958-1964*. Their book truly marked a distinctive point in the historiography as prior presuppositions of the Soviet intentions were shown to be quite mistaken. Instead, entirely new debates were opened on how to interpret the Soviet intentions. They

established the time line of Soviet decision-making, allowing historians to gain a much clearer conception for the actual reasoning behind the Soviet manoeuvres. Fursenko and Naftali supported the notion that the back channels were highly important to the resolution to the crisis. In addition to the opening of new perspectives, and new evidence, revisions were also in the works for earlier interpretations of the crisis.

Revealing the vast complexities that face any historian examining governmental policies and actions, Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow have offered an intelligent and sophisticated analysis of the Cuban Missile Crisis. In an obvious offshoot of the ideas proposed by Theodore Sorensen, they have examined the process of decision-making during the Cuban Missile Crisis.<sup>35</sup> Allison proposed three models for examining the crisis: the Rational Actor Model, the Organizational Behavior Model, and the Governmental Politics Model. The other strength of their work is how it underlined the complexity of the crisis, their analytical frames offering further challenges for the reader, student, or historian to explore. With all it has contributed, the study is not without its faults.

Following the lead of Lebow and Stein by examining the crisis in a post-Cold War perspective, Jutta Weldes has noted that if the crisis is viewed as a Cold War crisis, the perspective helps to justify and legitimize the US actions. Weldes made the claim that the US identity as a global leader is unstable; “the missiles quickly came to symbolize the pervasive threats faced by that always precarious identity, ‘the United States.’”<sup>36</sup> Another perspective not readily explored by most scholars is the work of Tomas Diaz Acosta, a former member of Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces during the crisis. Published in 2002, his book *October 1962; The ‘Missile’ Crisis As Seen From Cuba* was diligently researched. Acosta was able to place a human face on the results of the covert war being fought from Washington against Cuba, noting that throughout “1962 there was a significant intensification of sabotage, terrorism, burning of cane fields, attempts to assassinate leaders of the revolution, acts of piracy, and infiltration of commando groups.”<sup>37</sup> In an attempt to explain the scope of the US contingency plans and preparations, Acosta noted that the invasion force preparing to invade Cuba, 100,000 men, was larger than the force used in Normandy.<sup>38</sup>

Even with the newly evolving perspectives with which to study the crisis, the most valuable source for understanding the crisis from an American perspective comes from the edited transcripts of JFK’s presidential recordings (released in 2001) by Ernest May, Philip Zelikow and Timothy Naftali. Separated into three volumes, the transcripts cover all of JFK’s secret recordings from July 30 to October 28, 1962.<sup>39</sup> The recordings let us know exactly what the president heard during several key meetings held in the White House, and help the historian listen to the process of decision-making, which is often hard to recall after-the-fact by participants.<sup>40</sup> Although many errors litter their work, several of which alter the historical record,<sup>41</sup> compared to the sheer volume of transcribed materials, they have made a very significant contribution. Working with the same sources, Sheldon M. Stern, a former historian at the JFK Presidential Library from 1977-1999 published on the same topic most recently.<sup>42</sup> While Stern provided an encompassing view of the crisis, demonstrating a vast understanding of the available sources of information, his most noteworthy contribution to the historiography is how he identified the inaccuracies that existed in the transcripts of the JFK recordings.<sup>43</sup>

It is a goal of this paper to explain how and why the Cuban Missile Crisis has come to be understood as it has.<sup>44</sup> It will explain what forces were at work as the crisis was packaged and framed differently to the varying members of the administration of the governments involved, the allies of these nations, the members of the United Nations, and the populations of the countries through their media. As well, it will be demonstrated that the information pertaining to the crisis was being manipulated, not only through inaccurate testimonials that came from Washington after the fact, but during the crisis as well, as a conscious effort was being made to influence how the history would be interpreted. Separated into four chapters, the first three will begin by defining if not the irrefutable facts at least the generally accepted story of the Cuban Missile Crisis, explaining how it was instigated, how it evolved, and how it was resolved. The fourth chapter will specifically set out to demonstrate how the record has been distorted.

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<sup>1</sup> The new technology of warfare set these international conflicts apart from those that had come before.

<sup>2</sup> The first faction of Kennedy's government consisted of Adlai Stevenson, Kenneth Galbraith, Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and George Ball. Liberals, they all believed that opportunities for better relations existed with the Soviet Union. The second faction was made up of C. Douglas Dillon, McGeorge Bundy, Robert McNamara, John McCloy, Dean Acheson, Robert Lovett and Clark Clifford, some of whom were perceived to be closet Republicans. They supported a hard line towards the USSR. Finally, the third faction is often described as the Kennedy Loyalists, including Kenneth O'Donnell, David Powers, Lawrence O'Brien, Theodore Sorensen, Richard Goodwin and Robert F. Kennedy, who were in their position primarily in order to protect the interests of the President. Timothy Naftali in Philip Zelikow and Ernest May, General Ed., *The Presidential Recordings John F. Kennedy: The Great Crises, Volume 1; July 30-August 1962* Ed. Timothy Naftali (New York, WW Norton & Company, 2001), 1-1ii.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, liii.

<sup>4</sup> Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *"One Hell of a Gamble" Khrushchev, Castro, And Kennedy, 1958-1964* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), 11.

<sup>5</sup> After World War II, Berlin had been divided into four separate zones of occupation (French, British, American and Soviet). Sheldon Stern noted that when the British, French and Americans merged their zones of occupation in 1948, it effectually made Berlin "the focal point of Cold War tensions." Sheldon M. Stern, *Averting 'The Final Failure': John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2003), 5.

<sup>6</sup> Tomas Diaz Acosta, *October 1962; The Cuban 'Missile' Crisis As Seen From Cuba* (New York: Pathfinder, 2002), 98.

<sup>7</sup> The missiles that were in Cuba during the crisis include the following: FKR cruise missiles (145-kilometre-range, with tactical nuclear warheads of 5.6-12 kilotons), Luna tactical nuclear weapons (32-40-kilometre-range, mobile, with warheads of 2 kilotons), R-12 MRBMs (2,253-kilometre-range, with the ability to strike as far north as the state of New York, and as far west as Texas), R-13 SLBM (550-kilometre-range, launched from a submarine with a 1.5 megaton warhead), R-15 tactical nuclear weapons (40-kilometre-range, launched from the Komar patrol-boats), SA-75 (Surface-to-Air Missiles), and SOPKA tactical nuclear weapons (Surface-to-Sea, 48-80-kilometre-range). The R-12 (IRBM, 4,500-kilometre-range) did not arrive in Cuba. Ibid, 114-118.

<sup>8</sup> Roger Hilsman, *The Cuban Missile Crisis: The Struggle Over Policy* (London: Praeger Publishers, 1996), 78.

<sup>9</sup> The Executive Committee of the National Security Council was made up of the following individuals: George W. Ball = Undersecretary of State. McGeorge Bundy = Special Assistant to the President for National Security. C. Douglas Dillon = Secretary of the Treasury. Roswell Gilpatric = Deputy Secretary of Defense. Lyndon B. Johnson = Vice President. U. Alexis Johnson = Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. Edwin Martin = Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. John McCone = Director CIA. Robert S. McNamara = Secretary of Defense. Paul H. Nitze = Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. Dean Rusk = Secretary of State. Theodore C. Sorensen = Special Assistant to the President. Maxwell D. Taylor = Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Llewellyn E. Thompson = US Ambassador. John F. Kennedy = President. Robert F. Kennedy = Attorney-General. Dean Acheson (temporarily).

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<sup>10</sup> In 1958, the United States decided to offer their Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles (IRBM) to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in order to make up for the suspected Soviet deployment of similar missiles in Eastern Europe. Stern says that it was “largely for political and symbolic reasons” that Eisenhower’s administration deployed Jupiter missiles to Turkey and Italy, and Thor missiles to England. Eisenhower also acknowledged the dangers of such a move, especially of the missiles sent to Turkey. He declared that any similar Soviet deployment paralleling the Jupiter deployment would require the US to take offensive military action. Stern, 8-9. Eisenhower had been correct. Khrushchev was very angry by the American deployment. In his memoirs, Khrushchev noted, “The Americans had surrounded our country with military bases and threatened us with nuclear weapons, and now they would learn just what it feels like to have enemy missiles pointing at you...” Nikita Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Remembers*, translated and edited by Strobe Talbott, with notes by Edward Crankshaw (Boston: Little, Brown, 1970), 493. The Jupiter missiles could hit the USSR in ten minutes from Turkey, as opposed to the twenty-five minutes that it took for a Soviet ICBM to hit the USA. Jupiters and Thors were IRBMs, and therefore had a range of 3,862-8,849 kilometres, covering all of the western portion of the Soviet Union, including Moscow. Acosta, 94.

<sup>11</sup> Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People* (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1993), 820-821.

<sup>12</sup> Henry W. Bragdon, Samuel P. McCutchen, and Donald A. Ritchie, *History of a Free Nation* (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1998), 924-925.

<sup>13</sup> Paul S. Boyer, Clifford E. Clark, Jr., Sandra McNair Hawley, Joseph F. Kett, Neal Salisbury, Harvard Sitkoff, and Nancy Woloch, *The Enduring Vision: A History of the American People* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002), 608-609.

<sup>14</sup> *The Unfinished Nation* was required reading in American History courses at Nipissing University and Columbia University, *History of a Free Nation* is currently an approved textbook at the secondary level in Ontario, and *The Enduring Vision* is currently being used at the University of Ottawa.

<sup>15</sup> Alison and Zelikow argued that the Soviet Union had not placed nuclear missiles outside of their border before the Cuban Missile Crisis. Matthias Uhl and Vladimir Ivken’s *Operation Atom* have since disproved this assertion.

<sup>16</sup> Asserting that conventional weapons or a public defence treaty would have provided enough of a deterrence for the US not to have taken action, the authors claimed that the CIA’s hypothesis that the Soviets were placing missiles in Cuba for the defence of Cuba, did not work. In actuality, it was the nuclear weapons that deterred the US actions; JFK even said this himself at one point during the crisis; “The only real deterrent against a country our size is two things. First, the fact the Soviet[s] can act against us.” Then he adds “[Unclear] in Iran, Turkey or anyplace else. And secondly, if that they can get a ground-to-ground—...with a nuclear weapon. That’s the real deterrent.” “Otherwise we can always move against Cuba. It just takes two more divisions than it took...” John F. Kennedy, “Meeting on Soviet Arms Shipments to Cuba.” September 4, 1962 12:35-1:00 pm. (Tape 18) in Philip Zelikow and Ernest May, General Ed., *The Presidential Recordings John F. Kennedy: The Great Crises, Volume 2; September-October 21, 1962* Ed. Timothy Naftali and Philip Zelikow (New York, WW Norton & Company, 2001), 28. (JFK, Bundy, Carter, RFK, McNamara, Rusk and Sorensen present.) Allison and Zelikow instead believe that through the application of pressure upon the US, Khrushchev hoped his display in Cuba would demonstrate his missile power and allow for an easing of tensions, permitting him to work on his domestic problems. They have denied the possibility that Khrushchev’s moves might also have been defensive in nature.

<sup>17</sup> The authors claimed that Kennedy was angry about the Navy’s plans to use depth charges in their anti-submarine activities. The audiotapes do not substantiate this claim as Kennedy even sounds docile and complacent while being informed of the situation on varying occasions.

<sup>18</sup> President Kennedy had made a major attempt to keep an accurate record of his daily routine when he had Secret Service Agent Robert Bouck install a secret taping system employing a double deck Tandberg reel-to-reel tape recorder (hidden in a locked room in the basement), and various microphones hidden throughout Kennedy’s office (in the leg hole of his desk and the coffee table), the Cabinet Room (behind the curtains), the second floor Meeting Room and Study of the Mansion. Kennedy, and his personal secretary, Evelyn Lincoln, had full control over the taping system, which also included the Dictaphone connected to his phone lines. May and Zelikow, xvii-xviii. William Doyle, *Inside the Oval Office: The White House Tapes From FDR To Clinton* (New York: Kodansha International Ltd., 1999), 103. This meant that the President could choose which meetings and conversations to record. Several historians have debated the merits of a source that was so easily controlled and manipulated, but most often their argument is as follows: “As the president was aware that his

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words were being recorded for posterity, the performative aspect of his participation in ExComm should be considered.” Mark J. White, *The Cuban Missile Crisis* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996), 80. In perhaps the most unique analysis of the crisis, a mathematically based article for *Applied Mathematics and Computation*, the authors stated, a “key difficulty in studying any conflict situation is determining the preferences of the decision makers (DM) involved in the dispute. A DM, for example, may try to hide his true preferences in order to attempt to obtain a better outcome for himself or a DM may attempt to portray a false impression of his preferences when behaving strategically.” Considering this, it would generally be impossible to be one-hundred-percent certain about the intentions of anyone. Worrying about Kennedy’s performance aspect is futile. Even if he had played up his words or motives for the recorder, it would not change the fact that he said *those* words to other people who were unaware of the recording devices. While not the first to make the suggestion, as William Doyle had done so in 1999, and many other historians had speculated in kind, Stern points out the question of the validity of the audiotapes as a source, saying that JFK and RFK tailored what they said at the recorded meetings, since they were both aware of the recording devices. While I originally sat on the question myself and pondered the implications of the tapes being honest records of what happened, or carefully orchestrated theatre, I came to the conclusion that it did not matter in the end for the specific reason that this *is* what was said. If JFK was truly speaking his intentions during the meetings or not, these words were the ones selected to be used in many interactions that formed perceived realities for individual participants. Stern mentions that there is no reason to believe that JFK ever expected anyone to ever hear the tapes, since the Freedom of Information Act did not exist at the time, and no precedence had been set for any presidential information to be released. Besides, during any conversation we always behave as though we are being observed, because we are in fact being observed by at least the other participant(s) of the conversation. Charles Goodwin, *Conversational Organization: Interaction Between Speakers And Hearers* (New York: Academic Press, 1981), 44. Doyle has noted “eyewitness testimony of Kennedy in action in untaped situations varies little from how he presents himself on the tapes.” Doyle, 120-121.

<sup>19</sup> When the transcripts are compared to transcripts created in other fields, they are terribly inadequate since they do not use symbols to interpret tones, attitudes and nuances in the speech. As a result, to read the transcripts without the tapes generally leaves an improper impression of the meetings.

<sup>20</sup> Stern has made false statements about the consensus of attitudes at the meetings, has omitted Kennedy’s occasional desires to have certain information kept off of the record, and has also ignored much of Kennedy’s inappropriate joking and laughter during the crisis.

<sup>21</sup> The ‘Trollope Ploy’ still persists in some recent publications despite the fact that it was demonstrated to be false in 1988 and 1989.

<sup>22</sup> This era includes such authors as Sorensen, Abel, Hilsman, Rostow, Schlessinger, Allison, O’Donnell and Powers, and RFK, all of whom (with the exception of Abel) will be discussed later in the paper.

<sup>23</sup> Bruce Miroff, *Pragmatic Illusions: The Presidential Politics of John F. Kennedy* (New York: David McKay Company Inc., 1976), 99.

<sup>24</sup> Lester H. Brune, *The Missile Crisis of October 1962: A Review of Issues and References* (Claremont: Regina Books, 1985), 1-3.

<sup>25</sup> McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival: Choices About the Bomb in the First Fifty Years* (New York: Random House, 1988), 432.

<sup>26</sup> Bruce J. Allyn, James G. Blight, and David A. Welch, Ed., *Back to the Brink; Proceedings of the Moscow Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis, January 27-28, 1989* (Lanham: University Press of America, Inc., 1992).

<sup>27</sup> During the conference, Theodore Sorensen, Robert McNamara, and Aleksandr Alekseev debated the purpose of and motives behind the missiles, Jorge Risquet pointed out the contradiction of US policy as the Americans had allowed the British to act with impunity in the Falkland Islands, contravening the Monroe Doctrine, and Dobrynin spoke of meetings with RFK to which no records exist. Ibid, 11-25, 143.

<sup>28</sup> Norman Boucher has published on the Havana conference of 2002. During his article, Boucher expained how McNamara asked Nikolai Leonov if the USSR would ever have fired their tactical nuclear weapons against a US invasion. The article includes the statement, “missiles that no one in the United States at the time knew were in Cuba.” It is not clear if this statement has been attributed to McNamara, or comes from the author’s views. If the statement came from McNamara, then McNamara was distorting the record, as there is evidence that these weapons were known to be present in Cuba by Taylor, Carter and Kennedy, at least. If the notion is Boucher’s mistake, then perhaps a more thorough review of the available sources is necessary. Norman

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Boucher, "Our Men in Havana" *Brown Alumni Magazine* January/February 2003. Available Online at: <http://www.brownalumnimagazine.com/printerfriendly.cfm?ID=1936> [Visited on May 11, 2004.]

<sup>29</sup> Dino A. Brugioni, *The Inside Story of the Cuban Missile Crisis: Eyeball To Eyeball*. Ed. Robert F. McCort (New York: Random House, 1991), 109.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 109.

<sup>31</sup> James G. Blight, *The Shattered Crystal Ball: Fear and Learning in the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Lanham: Littlefield Adams Quality Paperbacks, 1992), 57.

<sup>32</sup> Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 4.

<sup>33</sup> Lebow and Stein were reflecting the admissions of Bundy and Sorensen, and used this information to help further explain how the events unfolded.

<sup>34</sup> General Anatoli I. Gribkov and General William Y. Smith, *Operation ANADYR: U.S. and Soviet Generals Recount the Cuban Missile Crisis* ed. Alfred Friendly, Jr. (Chicago: edition q, Inc., 1994), 3-75.

<sup>35</sup> Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc., 1999), 3.

<sup>36</sup> Jutta Weldes, *Constructing National Interests: The United States and the Cuban Missile Crisis*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 229.

<sup>37</sup> Acosta, 85.

<sup>38</sup> Although many of his facts are verifiable through an examination of the declassified NSA and CIA documents, his work is often so ideologically contrasting to the American historiography that it will most likely not be taken seriously by many historians.

<sup>39</sup> The collection comes with a CD-ROM that includes the actual recordings, as well as PDF files containing various scanned documents.

<sup>40</sup> Zelikow and May, *VI*, xii.

<sup>41</sup> Sheldon Stern has identified and corrected dozens of transcription errors. One such example comes from page 252 of Volume 3 of the transcripts, where an unidentified speaker asked, "Have you ever seen missile fuel?" McNamara reportedly answered, "No. [Unclear mentions of "nitric acid"].]" In this context, McNamara appears to be uninformed about the technicalities and comes across as being incompetent. Stern has cleared this up, first of all by identifying the unidentified speaker as George Ball, and transcribing the conversation as follows. Referring specifically to the type of fuel container that they would see on a ship's deckload, Ball asked, "Kerosene missile fuel?" In Stern's version, McNamara's response was much more detailed, saying, "No, fuming nitric acid." In this context, McNamara appears to be competent and knowledgeable. Stern, 244.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, xv.

<sup>43</sup> The aforementioned categories cover most of the historiography, perhaps only excluding the collections of declassified documents to surface during the last phase.

<sup>44</sup> It should also be noted that there is no goal of evaluating Kennedy's performance. While the evidence provided in this paper may lead some to their own conclusions, it is still too early to properly assess Kennedy's performance in the crisis.

## **Before the Crisis; The Events Preceding the Cuban Missile Crisis**

By 1950, the Cold War had firmly been established. In the US, planning was based on the belief that there was a design orchestrated by the Kremlin for global domination. This belief had been the central assumption of the National Security Council's NSC-68. This line of thinking, reflecting of the 'Domino Theory', predominated in the upper echelons of power in America, and expressed a fear that the Soviets would be able to topple various nations in procession. In 1957, the Soviet satellite Sputnik advertised their ICBM capabilities. Children learned how to duck bombs in school, and parents soon demanded tough action. In 1959, Albert Wohlstetter of the RAND Corporation stated that Soviet power was likely to increase and the US might not be able to deter a deteriorating American influence.<sup>1</sup>

The Cuban-American relationship began long before Fidel Castro came to the United States in 1959 as a guest of McGeorge Bundy, then the Dean of Harvard; it easily traces back for more than a century before the occurrence of the Cuban Missile Crisis. In this time, Cuba and the United States had forged a relationship largely based upon Cuban subservience to American desires, characterized by an established pattern of US military intervention. Since Castro's visit, the relationship was evolving. Castro had recently won a revolutionary war, ousting the corrupt—and American backed—Fulgencio Batista from power in Cuba. The Soviets attempted to take advantage of the volatile situation, and on April 12 the Presidium accepted Raul Castro's request for defence aid. By March 15, 1960, the United States' tolerance for the Cuban Revolution was waning. Eisenhower's administration began discussing and considering plans created by the CIA to overthrow Castro and drastically reduced the quantity of sugar that the US purchased from Cuba. Cubans were growing tired of the US resistance to process Soviet crude oil in American-owned refineries in Cuba. Castro also accused the Americans of being behind the explosion of *La Coubre* (a Belgian-owned ship that exploded while transporting weapons and artillery to Havana). He thus made the rash decision to nationalize the US oil refineries in question.<sup>2</sup> What had initially looked like the potential for a positive relationship, disintegrated as the Americans and Cubans showed increasing hostility towards one another. The Soviets continued to assert an influence in Cuba, and on July 11 Khrushchev even voiced threats that Cuba would be defended with a nuclear attack if the US tried to intervene.<sup>3</sup> Amid a burgeoning relationship with their new Soviet benefactors, Cuba began to pursue a more bellicose path. As well, they began to pursue an active stance internationally, issuing a letter to the United Nations' Security Council in July of 1960 that protested against the actions of the United States, accusing Washington of protecting Cuban war criminals, violating Cuban airspace, and allowing attacks against Cuba to be launched from US soil.<sup>4</sup> With the mounting tensions, each administration took increased action.

On August 18, 1960, the Americans had an intelligence breakthrough when the "U.S. Discoverer XIV space satellite was launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California," recovering "more than 1 million square miles<sup>5</sup> of coverage of the Soviet Union..." In addition, by October the US had initiated U-2 spy plane reconnaissance missions over Cuban territory.<sup>6</sup> The Americans were now capable of examining large quantities of photographs showing missile installations, radar stations and military encampments in 'enemy' regions.

While the Americans increased their precautions and surveillance, the Cubans were busy interpreting the signals sent from Washington. In its last day of operation in 1960, the UN Security Council listened to a protest from Cuba that a US attack on their nation was imminent. The Cuban representative stated: "In justification of these hostile preparations, the United States had invoked the 'fraudulent pretext' of 'the construction on the island of Cuba of seventeen sites for the launching of Soviet rockets.'" <sup>7</sup> These remarks, in hindsight, foreshadowed the crisis that occurred nearly two years later.

Having narrowly defeated Vice President Richard M. Nixon, John Fitzgerald Kennedy was sworn in as the President of the United States on January 20, 1961. A sense of heady idealism swept over Washington as the new president captivated the public. As he appointed his officials and restructured the White House, the media could not help but notice the paucity of career politicians working with Kennedy, while at the same time they noted the influx of prominent academics and corporation heads that did fill the positions. Kennedy's administration was unique, and even within his officials, an inner circle of confidence existed. Robert Kennedy was afforded many privileges known to none other, and advisors O'Donnell, Sorensen and Bundy were allocated the most time alone with President Kennedy (in that order). <sup>8</sup> May and Zelikow have noted that JFK was an atypical president, as he was also a historian, and often worried about how his administration would be remembered. This outlook tended to remain a fixation of the President.

By campaigning on what he knew to be a fictitious missile gap, <sup>9</sup> Kennedy had increased the tensions between the US and USSR. A problem that existed within Kennedy's chain of information <sup>10</sup> was that Cold War attitudes dominated many of the recommendations he received. The American perspective constrained the scope of a possible US response to various Soviet actions because of their limited outlook. Soviet moves were viewed as *provocations*, and their recent cooperation with Cuba was seen as Soviet *expansionism*. Hardly in office for a week, JFK received word from Bundy that "Cuba is now for practical purposes a Communist-controlled state." All of Kennedy's advisors were in agreement with this. <sup>11</sup> JFK had encouraged aggressive action throughout his campaign and had received support from his administration.

On Cuba, Kennedy, like Eisenhower, supposed the Castro regime could be removed from power in Cuba by an invasion of Cuban exiles. Operation PLUTO, as the mission was known, would have US air support and US-instigated revolts within Cuba. By completing such a course of action, the President imagined that a client regime could be re-installed, mending the broken Cuban-American relations. <sup>12</sup> Kennedy agreed to the action reluctantly, but in a fateful decision he removed the stipulation allowing for the use of American forces. Despite the top-secret nature of Operation PLUTO, its preparations did not go unnoticed. On April 12, 1961, the KGB uncovered evidence of Cuban exiles being trained in Guatemala for an invasion of Cuba. <sup>13</sup> The actual invasion attempt took place on April 17, and proved to be a glaring disaster.

Poor coordination, errors, and the simple fact that the exiles were vastly outnumbered, brought the invasion attempt to a closure with surrender. The failed invasion attempt has come to be known as the Bay of Pigs (after the bay where the landing took place). Days after the failed operation, US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk received a memo from Walt W. Rostow, Counselor of the Department of State and Chairman of the

Policy Planning Council, outlining his belief that Cuba “might join with the USSR in setting up an offensive air or missile base.” He suggested a “move towards a selective OAS blockade of Cuba” to prevent arms shipments from arriving.<sup>14</sup> While this was the first time in writing that an advisor had warned of the potential of a missile base in Cuba, this was the second time that a blockade was suggested to Rusk as a potential tactic.<sup>15</sup> This does not imply that either advisor predicted the outcome of the Soviet stratagem, just the potential for it. It is also important to note that the Americans were involved globally, facing potential conflicts in Indonesia, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Berlin, not to mention their various domestic concerns, and while this paper focuses solely on the Cuban conflict, the administration had their hands full. There even existed other areas of concern within the Caribbean region as well.<sup>16</sup>

The US administration was becoming confident in their military capabilities, largely because their new intelligence capabilities had provided evidence of America’s military superiority. In October of 1961, JFK had his Deputy Secretary of Defense, Roswell Gilpatric, announce the falsehood of the missile gap. This move alone constituted somewhat of a provocation by revealing the US nuclear superiority and forcing the Soviets to either accept the difference in military power or remedy the problem.<sup>17</sup> Accompanying the announcement was the fact that the US had continued with the deployment of fifteen nuclear-armed Jupiter missiles<sup>18</sup> to Turkey, a move initiated by Eisenhower. Some viewed the deployment as a move to strengthen the defence of Europe, yet others interpreted the IRBMs in Turkey (a nation that bordered the Soviet Union) as establishing a new precedent for defence, to which the superpowers now could each install nuclear bases within close range of their adversary’s borders in order to protect their interests. Between January 22 and 31, 1962, a conference for the Organization of American States (OAS) was held at Punta del Este in Uruguay where Cuba was essentially voted out of the OAS and cut off from trading with the member states.<sup>19</sup> The embargo was formally adopted on February 6 by Presidential Decree No. 3447. Only two days later, the USSR approved a military assistance package for Cuba, building on their previous arrangements.<sup>20</sup>

Despite the failure of their previous attempts to topple Castro, the Americans introduced and formalized Operation MONGOOSE between December 1, 1961, and March 14, 1962. The operation was initiated through the CIA and was designed to serve as the backbone of the US policy towards Cuba.<sup>21</sup> The stated purpose of Operation MONGOOSE was to overthrow the Cuban government and institute one that would follow the lead of the US. Brigadier General Edward Lansdale, formally in charge of the operation, summarized the goals, noting, “The political actions will be assisted by economic warfare to induce failure of the Communist regime.”<sup>22</sup> In early February, Lansdale received a memo suggesting proposed activities for MONGOOSE, listed as “Possible Actions To Provoke, Harass, or Disrupt”.<sup>23</sup> Later that month, Lansdale distributed the formal plans for Operation MONGOOSE. His report stated that the operation “aims for a revolt which can take place in Cuba by October 1962.” The operation was to include six phases from the gathering of intelligence and sabotage activities, to an open revolt in Cuba. Understanding the illegal and provocative nature of their activities, the report stated: “Any inference that this plan exists could place the President of the United States in a most damaging position.”<sup>24</sup> By mid March, their plans were approved and the CIA was given \$55,000,000 and 400 agents (to be based out of Miami) to work on the Cuban problem.<sup>25</sup> Shortly thereafter, the

Special Group (5412 augmented) released the report: "Guidelines for OPERATION MONGOOSE." The group recognized "that final success will require decisive U.S. military intervention," and recommended that the Joint Chiefs of Staff needed to prepare for action. The Special Group (5412 augmented), under the leadership of Maxwell D. Taylor, would be responsible "for approving important operations."<sup>26</sup> With Operation MONGOOSE fully agreed upon, the US had initiated a provocative and dangerous course of action, especially when considering the Soviet pledge to protect Cuba with nuclear weapons. If US plans were to prove successful—and with such a price tag, it is not likely that JFK would have settled for less than a successful outcome—the United States would soon be involved in a military conflagration with Cuba.

Based on their Cold War beliefs that the Communists operated under a monolithic system, the "National Intelligence Estimate on the situation and prospects in Cuba, NIE 85-62" was released on August 1, 1962, and was readily accepted in Washington. The report established that Cuba was under Soviet control, effectively "surrounded by an iron curtain." The report outlined a defensive military build-up occurring in Cuba, and stated, "Fidel Castro has actually accomplished a radical social revolution in Cuba, and has done so in defiance of the Yankees with the support of an apparently more powerful patron."<sup>27</sup> They believed "there remains a danger that the Cuban example will set the pattern of the impending social revolution in Latin America."<sup>28</sup> The Americans were afraid that other countries in the region might follow the defiant example set by Cuba, challenging the hegemony of the US.<sup>29</sup>

In late March of 1962, in an article by Stewart Alsop, JFK explained how he had provided for a more credible US nuclear strategy; nuclear missiles were to be aimed at Soviet missiles instead of cities. He indicated that a first strike was now possible, and helped solidify the Soviet fears, confirming their belief of a US intelligence breakthrough.<sup>30</sup> Whether intended or not, these statements can be interpreted as a direct challenge to the prestige of the Soviet Union. Over the course of the next two months, the United States was engaged in various military exercises in the Caribbean. 'Lantphibex 1-62' was a military exercise conducted by the Marines at the island of Vieques, and 'Quick Kick' followed shortly thereafter. Raymond L. Garthoff, a staff-level advisor during the crisis who has subsequently become an expert on the topic, suggests that the exercises looked as though the US was testing its plans for an amphibious invasion. Coupled with the fact that the US was already conducting "economic warfare against Cuba," the actions served to taunt the Soviets into a response.<sup>31</sup> This was not the only pressure being exerted on the Kremlin. The Soviets faced their own challenges as they had many IRBMs and MRBMs, but only twenty ICBMs in their arsenal, providing for a limited nuclear strike against the US.<sup>32</sup> At the same time, Soviet officials and the Chinese government were criticizing Khrushchev's 'soft' military stance.<sup>33</sup> Khrushchev had a limited choice of options, either they would accept the US global dominance, or they would have to challenge it.

While Khrushchev wished to eliminate much of his nation's defence spending in order to tend to his domestic concerns, the option was not one that he could consider. His country faced a challenge from the US in Berlin, and there was a possibility that Cuba would align itself with China, or worse, would be invaded by the Americans. Then, instead of simply reducing the military budget, Khrushchev would be forced to move in a

direction that would be considered the polar opposite of his desires if he wished to retain his position, and the status of his country. On May 20, 1962, he met with his advisors to inquire about the option of deploying ballistic missiles to Cuba.<sup>34</sup> Allison and Zelikow believe that through the application of pressure upon the US with the installation of ballistic missiles in Cuba, Khrushchev hoped that his display of power would demonstrate his military strength, and allow for an easing of tensions, enabling him to work on his domestic problems.<sup>35</sup> If that happened, the action would also leave the Soviets in a better position to solve the Berlin question. The logic behind Khrushchev's assertion, that the secret placement of nuclear missiles in Cuba could ease the tensions between the USSR and the USA, seems quite difficult to fathom.

The actual nuclear option was presented to the Defence Council and Presidium on May 21 and 24, 1962. The group that met with Khrushchev contained members of the Presidium, the Central Committee, and the Ministry of Defence.<sup>36</sup> Khrushchev reportedly stated his belief that the missiles would redress the balance of power. While some members did not concur, the Presidium ultimately did endorse the action as their memo from May 24 demonstrates. The memo outlined a major deployment of Soviet forces to Cuba.<sup>37</sup> The operation was to be called ANADYR. Since the Cubans had been courting assistance from both the Soviets and the Chinese, Soviet missiles in Cuba can be viewed as a challenge to the Chinese, who were in direct competition with the Soviets to 'lead' the Communist world.<sup>38</sup> When propositioned with the missiles, Castro consulted with his advisors and decided to accept them.<sup>39</sup> When Raul Castro spoke with Khrushchev, Khrushchev had explained that in the event that the US discovered the missiles during the operation, he would "grab Kennedy by the balls and make him negotiate." Khrushchev even suggested sending the Baltic fleet to 'visit' Cuba if necessary.<sup>40</sup> By July, a draft treaty was written up between the Soviets and Cubans, stipulating a five-year military deal. Guevara and Malinovsky signed this deal, yet it did not bear the signatures of Castro or Khrushchev, and therefore, was not an official agreement.<sup>41</sup> Despite the lack of a formal commitment, the Soviets were now fully engaged in a secret operation to provide for the defence of Cuba, while confirming their own global status. Cuba was now at the centre of two massive military policies initiated by the world's superpowers.

Accompanying the covert actions of both sides was a fervent assault of Cold War rhetoric. While both nations were publicly conducting their own policies, the reality of their secret intentions made such statements and sentiments a dangerous policy to pursue. In the early summer, the attitudes and announcements of the Soviets piqued US concerns, and at a meeting on June 17, 1962, JFK told Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin that the language in Khrushchev's recent speeches had been quite threatening, and was creating anger and issues within the American military.<sup>42</sup> Despite the warning, there were no changes of policy by either side. Lansdale reported that intelligence was being collected, and that a shipment of supplies and weapons had successfully arrived at Pinar del Rio for covert activities. Their Phase 2 projection for the operation provided four options for continuation: i) cancel Operation MONGOOSE and allow Cuba to become a Soviet nation, ii) use all possible methods to overthrow Castro except for US military intervention, iii) continue the current covert actions and use the military to overthrow the Cuban government, or iv) initiate a provocation at Guantanamo and invade Cuba.<sup>43</sup> It was the second option that was agreed upon.

While meeting US Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson, Khrushchev inquired if JFK wanted to bring the Berlin crisis to a head before or after the US elections.<sup>44</sup> Khrushchev would benefit greatly from a delay, allowing his missiles to be in place in Cuba, strengthening his arsenal. He hoped that Kennedy would prefer to wait until after the mid-term elections in early November. The use of back channel diplomacy was evident on July 30, 1962, as the Kennedy brothers responded positively to Bolshakov's request, saying that the US would stop the practice of photographing Soviet ships<sup>45</sup> in international waters if the Soviets would postpone the Berlin issue until after the elections.<sup>46</sup> Despite their agreement, JFK learned on August 8 that Khrushchev was unhappy with the continuing US surveillance, and specifically, the U-2.<sup>47</sup> An interesting aspect about this apparent deal to turn a blind eye between Kennedy and Khrushchev is that Kennedy made this decision prior to his administration learning the nature of the Soviet build-up. It was not until the cooperative memo from the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Defense Department, on August 8 that they determined, "The military capabilities of Cuba are oriented primarily toward defensive activities."<sup>48</sup>

John A. McCone, the Director of the CIA, was the first US official to raise concerns over the Soviet build-up in Cuba. On August 10, he stated the possibility that the Soviets were shipping ballistic missiles while at a meeting with the Special Group (5412 augmented). General Taylor's recounting of the meeting was that no one was really surprised by McCone's warning or did anything about it.<sup>49</sup> Ten days later, Kennedy conducted a meeting on intelligence matters where he learned from Taylor that the US military was rather unprepared for any immediate action against Cuba. Taylor recommended they continue with their economic sabotage.<sup>50</sup> By August 21, CIA Deputy Director for Intelligence Ray Cline, was supportive of McCone's missile hypothesis,<sup>51</sup> but McCone would have to work to persuade other important officials of the importance of his warnings.<sup>52</sup> At a meeting in Rusk's office, Taylor discussed the possibility of a blockade of Cuba, the possibility of stepping up the sabotage program, and Robert Kennedy questioned "the feasibility of provoking an action against Guantanamo which would permit" the US to attack Cuba.<sup>53</sup> McCone also voiced the opinion that both a stepped-up and modified Plan B could not overthrow Castro. Castro's regime would only be strengthened by this attempt, and Cuba might even be fortified as "a possible location for MRBMs". He recommended that they go forward with Plan B, and supported a staged pretext to invade Cuba.<sup>54</sup>

On August 22, a CIA Intelligence memo stated: "The speed and magnitude of this influx of bloc personnel and equipment into a non-bloc country is unprecedented in Soviet military aid activities; clearly something new and different is taking place."<sup>55</sup> That evening, when McCone met with JFK and General Taylor to discuss intelligence matters, the Director mentioned that Cuba had become 'alarming' since August 10, due to increased military shipments with cases that "might contain missile parts."<sup>56</sup> He described how the Soviets were taking extreme measures to disguise their actions. The Soviet economists, he explained, believed Cuba had the potential to create a feasible economy; "if they can establish this as a viable place, they...have a communist society which can be an example for all dissident groups on the continent." He also grimly predicted, with "the evidences of the types of assistance that they are putting in there, we can expect a more formidable situation to confront us in Cuba...."<sup>57</sup> While McCone had helped to raise the awareness of the

Soviet shipments, his ultimate prediction that ballistic missiles would arrive in Cuba was not consistent with contemporary views.

President Kennedy was not alarmed by the warnings he had received from McCone, but his level of caution did increase. On the morning of August 23, JFK met with the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and McNamara.<sup>58</sup> Later, there was another meeting discussing the possibility of missiles in Cuba. McCone asked about the Jupiter missiles in Turkey, implying the potential for a trade. McNamara responded saying the missiles were useless, but would not be easy politically to remove. That afternoon, Bundy released the "National Security Action Memorandum No. 181." As a Presidential directive, this document outlined various items that JFK wanted to accomplish. He wanted to know what action they could take to remove the Jupiter missiles from Turkey.<sup>59</sup> Implying that the US would use any force necessary short of military intervention, JFK recommended that they develop Plan B for Operation MONGOOSE. He also stated the need for a study "of the advantages and disadvantages of making a statement that the U.S. would not tolerate the establishment of military forces...which might launch a nuclear attack from Cuba against the U.S."<sup>60</sup> Kennedy was reluctant to cancel any intentions he had on Cuba. Instead, he was investigating the importance of recent Soviet actions, while exploring his own possible moves.

Cuba began to receive a lot of attention, both privately through the administration, and publicly in the media. While JFK explored his options, the US covert action was well under way. On August 24, Alpha 66, a Cuban exile group working out of Florida in collaboration with the CIA, conducted a speedboat attack, strafing a Cuban hotel, killing twenty Cubans and Russians.<sup>61</sup> Alpha 66 struck again on September 10, attacking two cargo ships (one Cuban, the other British) near Puerto Rico,<sup>62</sup> and again on October 8 attacking the Cuban shoreline, resulting in more deaths.<sup>63</sup> Diplomacy continued in late August. Theodore Sorensen met with Dobrynin and asked that the Soviet Union remain neutral during the mid-term election, backing neither the Democrats nor the Republicans. Sorensen explained that JFK would have to respond to anything that occurred in Cuba.<sup>64</sup> This was the second time during the summer that the Kennedy used unofficial channels of communication to make requests of the Soviets in regards to the upcoming elections.

Meanwhile, McCone "urged General Carter, Acting DCI, to propose low level R 101 flights over certain Soviet-Cuban installations...."<sup>65</sup> U-2 overflights conducted on August 29 (the first flights since August 5) showed eight SA-2 sites in the final stages of completion. Two days later, Carter informed Bundy and Lemnitzer of the status of the SAM sites. In regards to this, "the President called General Carter at 1300, asked how many people had this information, and told General Carter that he wished it put back in the box and nailed tight."<sup>66</sup> By controlling the intelligence,<sup>67</sup> Kennedy was essentially covering up the existence of the weapons systems. Cuba was already receiving more publicity than he desired, and Kennedy's attempt to conceal the Soviet actions was most likely to keep any ambitious Republicans from exploiting the situation, either provoking an incident between the Soviets and the US, or GOP gains electorally. Kennedy already had plans in action to deal with Cuba, and a secret deal with Khrushchev for a brief détente between the two nations before the mid-term elections.<sup>68</sup> The initial reports of the August 29 overflight results were enhanced over the next

few days. In his memo, "Recent Soviet Military Activities in Cuba", Cline noted that in addition to the eight SAM sites, there were eight Komar-class missile boats, thirty-seven MiGs, tanks, and other conventional weapons in Cuba.<sup>69</sup> While intelligence analysts informed Kennedy of the unusual build-up, his advisors still downplayed the importance of the weapons.<sup>70</sup>

Just after noon on September 4, Kennedy met with Bundy, Carter, RFK, McNamara, Rusk and Sorensen to discuss the Soviet arms shipments. Rusk believed that the placement of nuclear weapons in a country that claimed to be hostile, such as Cuba, was a threat to American security. JFK queried, "The missiles really are what are significant?" To which Bundy confirmed, "Surface-to-surface missiles are the turning point."<sup>71</sup> McNamara stated his belief that the Soviets would soon install ballistic missiles in Cuba. Rusk suggested that action would have to be taken to remove the missiles, and added: "I would suppose that if you're going to take on a bloodbath in Cuba, you'd precede it by a systematic blockade to weaken Cuba before you actually go to put anybody ashore."<sup>72</sup> McNamara then asked why the US did not simply invade Cuba right then. Rusk responded to this question by stating that the equipment in Cuba was defensive, adding, "...There is very little evidence, hard evidence, that the Cubans are really directly engaged in subversive activities in other countries around the Caribbean and Latin America." Rusk was essentially saying that there was no hard-evidence to suggest that the Cubans had done anything to justify the US taking action against them. Bundy then advised JFK not to release the information about the SAM sites to the public, but Kennedy stated he would rather have the information come out through official channels than as a leak to the press.<sup>73</sup> Kennedy's logic was most likely based on the fact that political opponents such as Senator Kenneth Keating (R-NY) were already accusing the administration of covering up the Soviet construction of nuclear bases in Cuba.<sup>74</sup> After a brief disagreement between Bundy and RFK,<sup>75</sup> President Kennedy stated his opinion that "if that [the Soviets] can get a ground-to-ground—...with a nuclear weapon. That's the real deterrent." He then added, "Otherwise we can always move against Cuba. It just takes two more divisions than it took..." in the Bay of Pigs. The President stated the problem of using the Monroe Doctrine as a justification for action in this case, was that it was intended for invaders, not those that had been invited in by a nation.<sup>76</sup> This conflicted with what he had said at his press conference on August 29 when he told the media that the Monroe Doctrine was the reason that the US was so concerned with Cuba. Kennedy was aware of the potential for nuclear missile bases in Cuba. In addition, some had suggested that the US impose a blockade on Cuba before making any attempt at launching an invasion.

Later that afternoon, Kennedy had a drafting meeting to create a press statement<sup>77</sup> on Cuba.<sup>78</sup> President Kennedy outlined their strategy as follows: "First we're going to give the details of what assistance they've sent to Cuba...And what they have not. Then secondly we are going to give a unilateral guarantee against the use of any of these forces against anyone in the hemisphere." Bundy described how the operation was different from other Soviet moves: "This is a quick, smart, secret operation." JFK then interrogated General Curtis E. LeMay, US Air Force Chief of Staff, to find what affect the SAM sites would have on an attacking force. LeMay explained that the US Air Force would knock the SAM sites out first with an aerial attack, providing the Air Force with access to hit the other targets in Cuba.<sup>79</sup> Carter informed Kennedy that a

“bird” (U-2) would be ready to fly on the next day. Both Bundy and McNamara approved the action as the meeting drew to a close. Marshall Carter (filling in for McCone who was on his honeymoon) kept the director informed on the developments. In a cable sent on September 4, Carter mentioned a “weekend communiqué” from Moscow professing the right to provide defence to Cuba from an invasion. He then emphasized that: “ALL THIS CREATES NEW ATMOSPHERE.”<sup>80</sup>

Kennedy met with the Congressional leadership to discuss the impending problem presented by Cuba. Congress was briefed on the build-up, including information on all identified military materials.<sup>81</sup> The stress in his voice was apparent when JFK<sup>82</sup> answered a question from Senator Wiley by saying, “Blockades are very difficult. It’s a big island and [uh] you have to stop [uh] ships of the Soviet Union and [uh] other ships. And it [uh] would be regarded as a belligerent act; and [uh] it would be regarded as a warlike act.”<sup>83</sup> JFK then added, “We did as I say put missiles in Turkey with nuclear warheads and they didn’t [uh] take action.” Rusk reminded everyone that they must look at Cuba within a global context, but to this Russell responded that Americans cared about Cuba, not Berlin, adding that the Soviet build-up was “an offense to the national pride...”. In the meeting that followed, Rusk suggested if the resolution to call up troops were passed quietly, it would carry a strong message to Moscow.<sup>84</sup> While the Congressional leadership was not necessarily supportive of JFK’s interpretations of the Cuban situation, when Republican Senator Everett Dirksen and Representative Charles Halleck introduced the Joint Congressional Resolution authorizing 150,000 reservists to face the potential crises in Cuba and Berlin, they supported it enthusiastically.

On September 5, Kennedy wanted preparatory actions taken to facilitate a blockade of Cuba.<sup>85</sup> The next day, analysts at the National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC) made an important discovery when examining their most recent U-2 photographs. They had detected coastal defence cruise missiles.<sup>86</sup> From this day forward, the weather was checked daily for possible U-2 overflights, as it was hurricane season.<sup>87</sup> In McCone’s cable to Carter, he stated that they “might face [the] prospect of Soviet short-range surface-to-surface missiles of [the] portable type in Cuba which could command important targets of [the] southeast United States and possibly Latin American Caribbean areas.”<sup>88</sup> That day, Carter informed President Kennedy, Rusk and McNamara that NPIC had discovered “a surface-to-surface missile site” near Banes that “analysts felt...was a defensive missile system that could be employed to repel an amphibious landing.”<sup>89</sup> The surface-to-surface missiles identified by NPIC were most likely the Sopka cruise missiles. As he had done before, JFK froze this information. The United States Intelligence Board (USIB)<sup>90</sup> was informed on September 7, and was told of the freeze.<sup>91</sup> On September 10 in a meeting in Bundy’s office, Carter requested overflights to find the number of SAM sites in Cuba. Rusk did not like the idea, but four overflights were approved to go between September 26 and October 7.<sup>92</sup> Kennedy continued to quarantine the knowledge of the true build-up of Soviet forces in Cuba. On September 10, he learned the disturbing news that Khrushchev had told Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall that the Soviets would wait until after the US elections to take action, and then the status of Berlin would be resolved with a treaty or war.<sup>93</sup>

The cloak of deception remained as the Soviets maintained their secretive plans for Operation ANADYR. In the meantime, their public policy seemed designed to provoke the Americans. On September 6, Malinovsky sent a memo to Khrushchev asking him to authorize nuclear bombs for the IL-28 bombers.<sup>94</sup> The very next day, Khrushchev authorized six nuclear bombs, as well as Luna tactical nuclear weapons to help defend Cuba.<sup>95</sup> To the Soviets, the mission appeared to be quite successful. The first ballistic missiles arrived in Cuba without a hitch on September 8.<sup>96</sup> Malinovsky and Zakharov sent instructions to the Soviet Commander in Cuba, informing him that the missiles should be operational by November 1, 1962.<sup>97</sup> On September 11, the Soviets released a public statement in response to Kennedy's remarks from September 4.<sup>98</sup> The statement left no doubts that the Soviets intended to protect Cuba with ICBMs, but it did not go as far as saying that they would not furnish Cuba with their own ballistic missile capabilities, as the historians of the 1960s often accuse the communication of doing.

On September 13, Kennedy issued a statement in response to the TASS release. Addressing the American public, Kennedy said, "...These new shipments do not constitute a serious threat to any other part of this hemisphere", while adding, "...unilateral military intervention on the part of the United States cannot currently be either required or justified, and it is regrettable that loose talk about such action in this country might serve to give a thin color of legitimacy to the Communist pretense that such a threat exists." The latter comment was clearly intended to silence his Republican opposition. President Kennedy then warned, "If at any time the Communist build-up in Cuba were to endanger or interfere with our security in any way, including our base at Guantanamo, our passage to the Panama Canal, our missiles and space activities at Cape Canaveral, or the lives of American citizens in this country, or if Cuba should ever attempt to export its aggressive purposes by force or the threat of force against any nation in this hemisphere, or become an offensive military base of significant capacity for the Soviet Union, then this country will do whatever must be done to protect its own security and that of its allies." Demonstrating that his administration was taking the problems seriously, JFK explained, "I have full authority now to take such action, and I have asked the Congress to authorize me to call up reserve forces should this or any other crisis make it necessary." To reassure his population, President Kennedy equivocated, "We shall continue to keep the American people and the Congress fully informed."<sup>99</sup> Neither the Soviets nor Americans were operating in as straightforward a fashion as their press statements indicated. Both countries attempted to control perceptions through false statements, or the omission of essential information, when publicly addressing the conflict.

Despite the incessant warnings from his administration and the approaching elections, Kennedy took some time off in September (roughly between Sept 13-25) to watch the America's Cup Challenge off of the coast of Newport.<sup>100</sup> He invited friends to watch the sailing event from the *Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr.*, and took no known steps to ameliorate the approaching conflict. During this time, the Soviets, continuing with ANADYR,<sup>101</sup> as additional ballistic missiles<sup>102</sup> arrived in Cuba on the *Poltava*, accompanied by several IL-28 nuclear bombers, on September 15.<sup>103</sup> McCone, still suspicious of Soviet intentions, cabled Carter with his impressions of JFK's recent press statements. He believed that the Soviets were sending MRBMs to Cuba, and he instructed Carter to warn Kennedy of the looming dangers. McCone was specifically concerned that they

could not be sure of the defensive nature of the weapons, as Kennedy claimed.<sup>104</sup> Carter replied two days later, citing an official estimate report that supported the stance taken by the administration. Carter explained how “SNIE 85-3 stresses that there is a middle ground in which defensive or offensive character of build-up is a matter of interpretation.”<sup>105</sup> The report also stated that while the Soviets would gain strategically from ballistic missiles in Cuba, it was uncharacteristic of their current policy to risk creating hostilities in US-Soviet relations.<sup>106</sup> Such was the adopted position of Kennedy’s administration.

In late September, both the Americans and Soviets were intent on following through with their initial policies, despite the transformation of the international situation. The US Congress continued to push the hard-line agenda, passing Joint Resolution 230, proposed by the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees, on September 26. This authorized President Kennedy to oppose the Soviets with force.<sup>107</sup> The Soviets reacted in a different manner, responding to the Americans diplomatically in a letter from Khrushchev to Kennedy. Khrushchev expressed his displeasure that American reconnaissance planes continued to ‘buzz’ the Soviet ships headed for Cuba, despite their earlier agreement to the contrary. Khrushchev stated: “The U.S. has taken a dangerous course. This makes us apprehensive and we are now compelled to take appropriate measures.” Believing that the US actions may be in connection with the upcoming election, Khrushchev then asserted, “I would ask you to correctly understand our anxiety and not to do anything that could further aggravate the atmosphere and even expose the world. We on our part again say to you that we will do nothing with regard to West Berlin until the elections in the U.S. After the elections, apparently in the second half of November, it would be necessary in our opinion to continue the dialogue.”<sup>108</sup> To learn more about the Soviet intentions, Kennedy met with two of his top Soviet experts, Thompson and Bohlen.<sup>109</sup> Kennedy was concerned with how the Soviets might be interpreting his moves, but not to the extent that he would shift his plans.

In early October, the Soviets and Americans continued their preparation for a conflict in Cuba. Taylor, having been sworn in as Lemnitzer’s replacement as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on October 1,<sup>110</sup> alerted the Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic Fleet, Admiral Dennison, to prepare for a blockade of Cuba.<sup>111</sup> Two days later, Dennison began to reconfigure his fleet to meet the objective.<sup>112</sup> In his memo to Taylor, McNamara provided a summary of their meeting from this day.<sup>113</sup> He stated that their political objective was either “the removal of the threat to US security of Soviet weapon systems in Cuba” or the removal of Castro from power.<sup>114</sup> President Kennedy signed the Congressional resolution authorizing him to use force against Cuba.<sup>115</sup> Meanwhile, the Soviets were proving McCone prescient as they continued to furnish their bases in Cuba with new supplies. On October 4, the *Indigirka* arrived at the Port of Mariel<sup>116</sup> with forty-five R-12 warheads (one megaton each), twelve Luna<sup>117</sup> warheads, six IL-28 bombs (twelve kilotons each) and thirty-six Sopka coastal defense cruise missile warheads (twelve kilotons each).<sup>118</sup> By the end of the first week of October, the Soviets had enough equipment in Cuba to deliver a nuclear attack upon the US from Cuban soil,<sup>119</sup> and the Americans were preparing to impose a blockade of Cuba, accompanied with a JCS contingency plan to keep these exact weapons from ever entering the country.

The next few days were quite tense in Washington,<sup>120</sup> as Kennedy continued his attempts to cover up the nature of the Soviet build-up in Cuba.<sup>121</sup> Kennedy wanted to make sure that there would not be many additional voices from Washington commenting on his decisions and manoeuvres in the upcoming weeks before the elections.<sup>122</sup> On October 11, McCone showed President Kennedy evidence of IL-28 nuclear bombers in Cuba. In his memo, McCone noted how “The President requested that such information be withheld at least until after elections....” McCone then informed Kennedy that the information had been dispersed to the Commander in Chief of US forces in the Atlantic (CINCLANT), Strategic Air Command (SAC) and North American Air Defence (NORAD), and was already in a CIA bulletin. In his memo, McCone added: “The President further requested that all future information be suppressed. DCI stated that this was extremely dangerous.” In response, Kennedy decided to restrict the information to those advising the President. McCone quoted JFK as saying: “we’ll have to do something drastic about Cuba....”<sup>123</sup> While Kennedy tried to keep anyone from knowing what was happening in Cuba, he also anxiously anticipated the military proposals for a course of action. Up until this time, aside from the implication that the Jupiter missiles in Turkey could be traded away, there is little evidence that suggests any diplomatic plans were made or considered as Kennedy watched the Soviets arm themselves to the teeth.

Eventually, Kennedy’s worst fears were confirmed, completely altering both the intended course of the Americans and the Soviets alike. US Air Force Major Richard S. Heyser left in his U-2 reconnaissance plane at 11:30 pm on October 13 and early the next morning, his U-2 took pictures of the San Cristobal area.<sup>124</sup> On Monday afternoon, Gene Lydon and Jim Holmes, two analysts at NPIC, first discovered the six canvas-covered ‘missiles’, an estimated eighteen to twenty-one metres long. They reported this to their superior officer, Lundahl, who phoned DDI Cline with the information at 5:30pm. By late that evening, most of Kennedy’s administration was aware of the newest Soviet action.<sup>125</sup> Kennedy, however, would not learn about the developments until the following morning, when he was informed by Bundy at breakfast.<sup>126</sup>

Leading up to the discovery of the ballistic missiles in Cuba, there exist certain irrefutable facts that help create an accurate understanding of how the crisis evolved. When Kennedy came to power he pushed an adversarial approach with the Soviet Union. Having a solid foothold in Latin America, the US hoped to avoid letting Cuba become an example of a successful communist nation, and worked to prevent the success of the Castro regime. Castro provoked the Americans in kind, and the Soviets sought to preserve Cuba, providing military assistance after a failed invasion attempt by an army of exiles organized, trained, and funded by the US. The Americans continued preparing to invade Cuba, and were aware of their military superiority. The most likely place for a US/USSR showdown was in Berlin, and both Kennedy and Khrushchev wanted to postpone the possibility of this happening until November for varying reasons. They made a deal not to do anything to antagonize people until this time, although Kennedy maintained his plans with stated goals to invade Cuba, and Khrushchev continued shipping missiles to Cuba. When news of the military build-up surfaced in US intelligence channels, Kennedy quickly suppressed the information, since he had assumed the secret agreement meant Khrushchev would not ship missiles to Cuba during this time.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Weisbrot, *Maximum Danger: Kennedy, the Missiles and the Crisis of American Confidence* ed. Ivan R. Dee (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2001), 23. Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, "Man Of The People? JFK And The Cuban Missile Crisis," *Reviews in American History* 30 (2002): 488.

<sup>2</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 10-57.

<sup>3</sup> Brune, 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, Supplement 1959-1963* (New York: United Nations, 1965), 184.

<sup>5</sup> Or 1,609,300 square kilometres.

<sup>6</sup> Brugioni, 53-55. Roger Hilsman has noted that the U-2 would fly twenty-two-and-a-half kilometres, in the air. Bissell was the project director for the flights.

<sup>7</sup> *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*, 188.

<sup>8</sup> Michael R. Beschloss, *The Crisis Years: Kennedy And Khrushchev 1960-1963* (New York: Edward Burlingame Books, 1991), 249.

<sup>9</sup> Stern, 11.

<sup>10</sup> JFK relied on 'facts'; he would often go down to the middle levels to find his information instead of having it presented to him, to the extent that he would read raw intelligence reports. Miroff, 3-29.

<sup>11</sup> McGeorge Bundy, "Memorandum of discussion on Cuba." January 28, 1961 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 15.

<sup>12</sup> Brune, 10. The operation was planned by Allen Dulles, Richard Bissell, General Lyman Lemnitzer (Chairman of the JCS), and Admiral Arleigh Burke (Chief of Naval Operations).

<sup>13</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 90.

<sup>14</sup> The OAS is the Organization of American States. W. W. Rostow, "Memorandum To: The Secretary of State, The Secretary of Defense, Director of Central Intelligence. From W. W. Rostow; Subject: Notes on Cuba Policy." April 24, 1961 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 16-19.

<sup>15</sup> On March 31, 1961 Chester Bowles had written a memo to Rusk expressing his concern with the proposed invasion plans, arguing that during an American invasion of Cuba the US would be acting against various treaties that they had agreed to. Bowles wrote, "We cannot expect the benefits of this regime of treaties if we are unwilling to accept the limitations it imposes upon our freedom to act." He noted how the invasion had only one-third of a chance to succeed unless backed with US force, and suggested using a blockade as an option to slow down the Cuban economy if the USSR began to ship weapons into Cuba. Chester Bowles, "Memorandum from the Under Secretary of State to Secretary of State Rusk." March 31, 1961 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 17-21.

<sup>16</sup> For example, in May of 1961, Rafael Trujillo was assassinated. Robert Kennedy wanted the US to intervene in the Dominican Republic, and "suggested blowing up the U.S. Consulate to create a pretext for sending in American troops." Robert F. Kennedy, from FRUS American Republics '61-63 XII. In Stern, 87. While the action was not followed through, it does provide some insight into how the Americans viewed the countries that surrounded them, and to how readily the military option would be available for their use.

<sup>17</sup> Weldes, 62.

<sup>18</sup> Jupiters, according to Allison and Zelikow, are liquid-fuelled, and were to be used in the Emergency Defense Plan (EDP) and Quick Reaction Alert (QRA).

<sup>19</sup> Acosta, 54.

<sup>20</sup> As well, the US used their influence with Israel, Jordan, Iran, Greece and Japan to cut off trade to Cuba. Fursenko and Naftali, 160.

<sup>21</sup> "Minutes of first OPERATION MONGOOSE meeting with Attorney-General Robert Kennedy, December 1, 1961." in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 20-22.

<sup>22</sup> Edward Lansdale, "Program review of the Cuba Project by the Chief of Operations, Operation Mongoose." January 18, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 32-33.

<sup>23</sup> Among the stated options was Operation BINGO, an attempt to fake an attack on the US base in Guantanamo, "thus providing the excuse for use of U.S. military might to overthrow the current government of

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Cuba.” Optimistically worded, the memo suggested if “[p]roperly executed, the above could overthrow the Cuban Government in a matter of hours, providing the plan is implemented within the next six months.” William H. Craig, “Ideas in Support of Project.” February 2, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 53-61.

<sup>24</sup> Brigadier General Lansdale, “The Cuban Project; program review and basic action plan for OPERATION MONGOOSE.” February 20, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 23-37. This memo was presented to JFK, RFK, Taylor, Johnson, Gilpatric, McCone, Wilson, Goodwin, Craig, Harvey and Lansdale.  
<sup>25</sup> White, 55.

<sup>26</sup> Special Group Augmented, “Guidelines for OPERATION MONGOOSE.” in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 38-39.

<sup>27</sup> While the language quoted here does not seem like typical US governmental wording, this is because they were implying that this is what the Soviets would be justified in saying.

<sup>28</sup> “National Intelligence Estimate on the situation and prospects in Cuba, NIE 85-62.” March 21, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 44-50.

<sup>29</sup> Before Cuba’s communist revolution, the Americans had previously enjoyed a dominant role in Latin America. Many powerful people had invested in the region, and the US government had intervened militarily to protect these investments. As the Americans attempted to subvert and dissuade Soviet allies, the Soviets practiced a similar policy, encouraging any nations that were willing to thumb their nose at the Americans to do so. Anyone familiar with the Cold War is aware of the ‘Domino Theory’, but the extent to which this theory was actually involved in US politics is startling. Through various statements and policies, the Americans indicated a severe concern that their dominance of the Western Hemisphere would deteriorate under Soviet pressure. The JFK administration had expressed their fear that Cuba would become an economically viable nation, thus providing an example for other countries in the region that were dissatisfied in their relationship with the Americans. They therefore determined that a communist Cuba could not exist. The Soviets were of the exact opposite opinion, as they needed Cuba to survive in order to advance the communist revolution.

<sup>30</sup> Brugioni, 81.

<sup>31</sup> Allison and Zelikow, 87, and Raymond L. Garthoff, *Reflections on the Cuban Missile Crisis* Revised Edition (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1989), 6.

<sup>32</sup> This is provided that the ICBMs actually worked as they were supposed to—and there were no guarantees of that given the results of their tests. Ibid, 93.

<sup>33</sup> Stern, 21.

<sup>34</sup> Khrushchev’s advisors included: Andrei Gromyko (Soviet foreign minister), Anastas Mikoyan (senior member of the Presidium), Radion Malinovsky (Defence Minister), Frol R. Kozlov (Presidium member), Marshal Sergei S. Biryuzov (Commander of the Strategic Rocket Forces), Sharaf R. Rashidov (an alternate Presidium member) and Aleksandr Alekseev (Soviet Ambassador to Cuba). Fursenko and Naftali, 179.

<sup>35</sup> Allison and Zelikow, 107.

<sup>36</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 179-180. Leonid Brezhnev (Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee), Aleksei Kosygin (Presidium Member), Frol Kozlov (Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee), Anastas Mikoyan (Presidium Member), Voronov, Polyanski and Kuusinen all spoke in favour of the missile placement. Also present at the meetings was Marshal Malinovsky (Ministry of Defence), Marshal Andrei Grechko (Ministry of Defence), General Aleksei Yepishev (Ministry of Defence), and Colonel General Semyon Pavlovich Ivanov (Ministry of Defence).

<sup>37</sup> The memo specifically stated that they were sending the 43<sup>rd</sup> Missile Division (five missile regiments) to Cuba under Major General Statsenko. The 79<sup>th</sup>, 181<sup>st</sup> and 664<sup>th</sup> regiments would be in charge of the R-12 missiles (SS-4), a total of twenty-four launchers, and the 665<sup>th</sup> and 668<sup>th</sup> regiments would be in charge of the R-14 missiles (SS-5), a total of sixteen launchers. There were to be 1.5 missiles and 1.5 warheads per launch site. Anti-aircraft divisions would also be sent—one in July, and one in August—as well as seven nuclear submarines, each armed with three R-13 missiles (SS-N-4). To accompany the shipment, 44,000 military personnel, and 1,300 civilians/workers would be sent. Radion Malinovsky and Marshal Matvei Zakharov Soviet General Staff, “Memorandum from the General Staff to Comrade N.S. Khrushchev.” May 24, 1962 in

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*The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 53-60.

<sup>38</sup> White, 78.

<sup>39</sup> Castro's advisors included: his brother Raul Castro, Che Guevara, Osvaldo Dorticos and Ramiro Valdes. Fursenko and Naftali, 187.

<sup>40</sup> Acosta, 103-104.

<sup>41</sup> Gribkov and Smith, 21-23.

<sup>42</sup> Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence Moscow's Ambassador To America's Six Cold War Presidents (1962-1986)* (New York: Times Books, 1995), 67.

<sup>43</sup> Brigadier General Edward Lansdale, "Review of OPERATION MONGOOSE; Phase One." July 25, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 40-47.

<sup>44</sup> Zelikow and May, *VI*, xlvii.

<sup>45</sup> Since the initial reports came in from British and German (Federal Republic of Germany) intelligence agencies of unusual Soviet shipping activity, the United States had maintained surveillance of the incoming shipments. Acosta, 126. To interpret the photographic intelligence, Arthur C. Lundahl at the Office of Naval Intelligence invented the science of Cratology; the ability to predict the deck-cargo of various ships, based on measurements of the crates that they carried.

<sup>46</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 193-194.

<sup>47</sup> "Meeting with Llewellyn Thompson on Khrushchev." 10:36-11:12 am. (Tape 8) in ed. Zelikow and May, *VI*, 261.

<sup>48</sup> Defense Department/Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Consequences of U.S. Military Intervention in Cuba." August 8, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 48-52. This document remains heavily censored. The "requirements" for military action section is entirely censored. The projected date that they will have control of Cuba is censored.

<sup>49</sup> Brugioni, 96.

<sup>50</sup> "Meeting on Intelligence Matters." 11:48 am-12:06 pm. (Tape 13) Zelikow and May, *VI*, 484. (JFK, Bundy, Taylor and Salinger present.)

<sup>51</sup> Brugioni, 97.

<sup>52</sup> McCone discussed the potential for MRBMs with Senator Russell's Subcommittees, Chairman Vinson's Subcommittees, and Chairman Cannon. John A. McCone, "Soviet MRBMs in Cuba." October 31, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 13-17.

<sup>53</sup> At the meeting, Taylor discussed the Surface-to-Air missiles (SAM's) in Cuba. In his opinion, if Plan B of Operation MONGOOSE were to continue, the Soviets would be an increased obstacle. He recounts, "There was general agreement that the situation was critical and that the most dynamic action was indicated." John A. McCone, Memorandum for the File, "Discussion in Secretary Rusk's Office at 12 o'clock, 21 August 1962." In *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 21-23. Rusk, McNamara, UA Johnson, RFK, Taylor, Lemnitzer, Bundy and McCone were all present.

<sup>54</sup> John A. McCone, "Proposed Plan of Action for Cuba." In *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 31-32.

<sup>55</sup> CIA Intelligence Memo, "Recent Soviet Military Aid to Cuba." Wednesday August 22, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 67-69.

<sup>56</sup> "Meeting on Intelligence Matters." 6:10-6:37 pm. (Tape 15-A) Zelikow and May, *VI*, 599-600. (JFK, Taylor and McCone present.) McCone is essentially covering the material contained in his memo from two days prior, as found in: John A. McCone, "Memorandum on Cuba." August 20, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 19-20.

<sup>57</sup> Zelikow and May, *VI*, 601-602.

<sup>58</sup> It is likely that the Soviet nuclear inferiority was brought up at this meeting. Ibid, 607.

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<sup>59</sup> This indicates either the intention of making a trade, or the intention of removing the Jupiter missiles to make the Soviet missiles unjustifiable, there being no comparable US base installation.

<sup>60</sup> McGeorge Bundy, "National Security Action Memorandum No. 181." Presidential Directive, August 23, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 74-75.

<sup>61</sup> Garthoff, 31. Stern, 26.

<sup>62</sup> Marshall Carter, "Cable From Carter to McCone." September 11, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 63.

<sup>63</sup> Robert Smith Thompson, *The Missiles of October: The Declassified Story of John F. Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 173.

<sup>64</sup> Dobrynin, 68.

<sup>65</sup> John A. McCone, "Soviet MRBMs in Cuba." October 31, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 13-17.

<sup>66</sup> Lyman B. Kirkpatrick, "Action Generated by DCI Cables Concerning Cuban Low-Level Photography and Offensive Weapons." in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 39-43. Zelikow and May, V2, 20.

<sup>67</sup> This order was confirmed in a memo from William A. Tidwell. It stressed that all information was to be distributed on a need to know basis. William A. Tidwell, Memo for the Record, "Instructions Concerning the Handling of Certain Information Concerning Cuba." In *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 33.

<sup>68</sup> The President most likely still believed that the Soviets would not take the nuclear step into Cuba, and wanted to leave a conventional military build-up out of the public's attention.

<sup>69</sup> Ray S. Cline, "Recent Soviet Military Activities in Cuba", September 3, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 35-38.

<sup>70</sup> Rostow's memo to President Kennedy said that the Soviet build-up and movements "do not constitute a substantial threat to U.S. security." He suggested that they should use the legality of the Treaty of Rio of 1947 (Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance) as the basis for any action in Cuba. Rostow also warned Kennedy that the Soviets may demand to have US nuclear weapons in Eurasia disbanded, but there should be no 'symmetry' between the US hemisphere and theirs. His final suggestion was some advice on how to frame the situation so that world problems appeared to stem from Soviet expansion. W. W. Rostow, "Memorandum to the President." September 3, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 76-84.

<sup>71</sup> "Meeting on Soviet Arms Shipments to Cuba." September 4, 1962 12:35-1:00 pm. (Tape 18) in Zelikow and May, V2, 21. (JFK, Bundy, Carter, RFK, McNamara, Rusk and Sorensen present.)

<sup>72</sup> Advisors had been suggesting the use of a blockade against Cuba to Rusk for over a year, and these remarks reflected that.

<sup>73</sup> Zelikow and May, V2, 22-24.

<sup>74</sup> Stern, 26.

<sup>75</sup> Bundy disagreed with RFK's assertion that the Soviets would put surface-to-surface missiles in Cuba, and was of the opinion that the build-up was defensive. RFK refuted this, saying "I think we can all assume that they are going to take those steps eventually."

<sup>76</sup> Zelikow and May, V2, 25-30. Interestingly enough, the Monroe Doctrine is actually quite open to different interpretations, as I will demonstrate. The one phrase, "any attempt...to extend their system to any portion of the hemisphere" is "dangerous to our peace and safety..." can be used to justify a US military response since the Soviets were extending their system to the hemisphere, *and* can be used to explain how the doctrine did not apply to the situation since the Soviets were not expanding their system, but had been invited to help a nation in need and were simply connecting likeminded nations. Depending on your point of view, the phrase will mean different things to different people.

<sup>77</sup> Bundy said that JFK's September 4 statement "was more an assurance to his countrymen than a direct warning to Khrushchev..." Bundy, 393.

<sup>78</sup> Dillon, concerned that they might lock themselves into action, cautioned the group about "making a threat to do something if they get some particular weapon in Cuba." "Drafting Meeting on the Cuba Press Statement." September 4, 1962 4:00-4:50 pm (Tape 19) in Zelikow and May, V2, 40-47. (JFK, Bundy, Carter, Cline, Dillon, Kaysen, RFK, Le May, Martin, McNamara, Nitze, Sorensen, Taylor, Bohlen and Hillenbrand present.)

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>80</sup> Marshall Carter, "Cable From Carter to McCone." September 4, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 45.
- <sup>81</sup> "Meeting with Congressional Leadership on Cuba." Sept. 4, 1962 5:00-5:55 pm. (Tape 19) in Zelikow and May, *V2*, 55-56. (JFK, Carter, Le May, McNamara, Rusk, Senators Dirksen, Fulbright, Hickenlooper, Mansfield, Russell and Wiley; and Congressmen Halleck, McCormack, and Vinson present. Others were present, but not vocal.)
- <sup>82</sup> Senator Russell had just dissented from the view that the build-up was defensive, saying, "if they would decide to kick us out of Guantanamo, every bit of this stuff could be offensive." Ibid, 57.
- <sup>83</sup> Ibid, 62. The additional [uh]'s were present on the audio recording, but were not transcribed by the editors.
- <sup>84</sup> Senator Everett Dirksen (Republican Senate Minority Leader) proclaimed that the administration could "pour some sugar on that department and achieve that tactic," but they must mention Cuba to do so. Ibid, 64-76.
- <sup>85</sup> Ibid, 111.
- <sup>86</sup> Allison and Zelikow, 335.
- <sup>87</sup> In 1962, there were eight hurricanes in the Caribbean including Hurricane Ella, as well as tropical storm Daisy. Brugioni, 162.
- <sup>88</sup> John A. McCone, "Cable From McCone to Carter." September 6, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 51-52.
- <sup>89</sup> Brugioni, 122.
- <sup>90</sup> Roger Hilsman explains that the USIB was made up of representatives from the following organizations within the US government: the FBI and National Security Agency, as well as the Department of State Intelligence Bureau Director, the Director of the CIA, as well as the Army, Air Force and Navy intelligence heads. Hilsman, 23.
- <sup>91</sup> Kirkpatrick in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency*, 40.
- <sup>92</sup> John A. McCone, "Soviet MRBMs in Cuba." October 31, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 13-17. Brugioni says that while RFK pushed for U-2 overflights on September 10, Rusk thought the move was too provocative. He wanted to legitimize the overflights through the OAS. In Brugioni's opinion, Bundy and Rusk were responsible for stalling the U-2 overflights for a few weeks. Brugioni, 138-144.
- <sup>93</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 111.
- <sup>94</sup> R. Malinovsky, "Memorandum from R. Malinovsky to the Chairman of the Defense Council of the USSR, Comrade N.S. Khrushchev." September 6, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 64-65.
- <sup>95</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 211.
- <sup>96</sup> They arrived onboard the *Omsk*. Allison and Zelikow, 203. Beschloss, 423.
- <sup>97</sup> Radion Malinovsky and Marshal Matvei Zakharov, "Memorandum, personally, to the Commander of the Group of Soviet Forces in Cuba", September 8, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 66-71.
- <sup>98</sup> In less than congenial terms they asked, 'if the US is not going to attack Cuba, then why are they worried about Soviet actions?' It continued, "We have said and we do repeat that if war is unleashed, if the aggressor makes an attack on one state or another and this state asks for assistance, the Soviet Union has the possibility from its own territory to render assistance.... And let no one doubt that the Soviet Union will render such assistance...". TASS Statement, September 11, 1962, reproduced in *The New York Times*, September 12, 1962, as appears in *The Cuban Missile Crisis*, ed. Robert A. Divine (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), 9-11.
- <sup>99</sup> News Conference Number 43, President John F. Kennedy, State Department Auditorium, September 13, 1962, 6pm. Transcript available Online at: [http://www.jfklibrary.net/jfk\\_press\\_conference\\_620913.html](http://www.jfklibrary.net/jfk_press_conference_620913.html) [Visited May 4, 2004].
- <sup>100</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 154.
- <sup>101</sup> In hindsight, several of the actions taken by the Cubans were particularly forthright, yet at the time they received little attention within the US intelligence circles. On September 20, a "CIA Information Report" stated that Castro's pilot, Claudio Morinas, bragged about Cuban conventional capabilities, and even quoted him as saying that there "are also many mobile ramps for Intermediate Range Rockets." "CIA Information Report." September 20, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 105. The following day, Blas Roca appeared on Radio

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Havana and discussed the recent shipments of missiles. Thompson, 170. Meanwhile, the DIA received intelligence of first hand sightings of the transportation of missiles in Cuba. Stern, 29. While the last example could easily be explained away by the fact that the US received many false reports like this each year around the globe, the first two occurrences were not as easily dismissed. In Kennedy's absence, and in line with the US policy designed to cover-up any and all information pertaining to Cuban military capabilities, none of the reports were properly examined, and no activities were initiated to scrutinize the claims.

<sup>102</sup> Some specifics of the weapons in Cuba during the crisis: MRBMs were R-12 (US categorization of SS-4) IRBMs were R-14 (US classification of SS-5). Cruise Missiles were FKR's (5-12 kiloton warheads, 145 kilometre away). Ilyushin-28 could deliver a six-kiloton payload 322 kilometres away. (Differs from the stated US view of 1207 kilometres). Gribkov, 4.

<sup>103</sup> Allison and Zelikow, 203. Beschloss, 424.

<sup>104</sup> John A. McCone, "Cable From McCone to Carter." September 16, 1962, in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 77-79.

<sup>105</sup> Marshall Carter, "Cable From Carter to McCone." September 18, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 83.

<sup>106</sup> Allison and Zelikow, 80-81.

<sup>107</sup> Acosta, 130. Brugioni, 152-157. In the Senate, this was passed by an 86-1 vote, and in the House of Representatives, by a vote of 384-7.

<sup>108</sup> Nikita S. Khrushchev, "Message from Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy." September 28, 1962. Moscow. Available Online at: [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/volume\\_vi/exchanges.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/volume_vi/exchanges.html) [Visited May 4, 2004].

<sup>109</sup> Kennedy asked his advisors why Cuba was not part of the Warsaw Pact. Bohlen believed it was because the Russians did not know how the US would respond to its inclusion, and they did not want to commit to a war over Cuba. In global context, Bohlen explained that while the US was aware that the missile gap was in their favour, the Chinese still believed the Soviet rhetoric of 1957-1958, and thus were not convinced by American claims. "Meeting on the Soviet Union." Saturday September 29 11:00 am-12:27 pm (Tape 25) in Zelikow and May, V2, 182-198. (JFK, Bohlen, Thompson, and Wiesner present.)

<sup>110</sup> Zelikow and May, V2, 319.

<sup>111</sup> Weisbrot, 115.

<sup>112</sup> Garthoff pointed out that on October 6, 1962, the US Navy established readiness for Oplan 314/316. Garthoff, 51. Fursenko and Naftali noted that CINCLANT estimated that the cost of OPLAN 314 to be 6.5 million dollars to make the plan operational, with an additional cost of 153,000 dollars for each day that the task force remained operational. Fursenko and Naftali, 150. Brugioni described PHIBRIGLEX-62, an Amphibious Brigade Landing Exercise scheduled for October 15-20. This exercise was cancelled, and the ships were given new co-ordinates on October 15, 1962. Brugioni, 221.

<sup>113</sup> McNamara mentioned that they had discussed the contingencies for military action in Cuba, and noted that the plans would be initiated if: a) there was Soviet action against the US in West Berlin, b) they found evidence of offensive missiles being shipped to Cuba, c) there was an attack against Guantanamo, d) a popular uprising occurred in Cuba, e) the Cubans initiated armed activity in Latin America, or f) if the President decided that Cuba was a threat.

<sup>114</sup> Robert S. McNamara, "Memorandum from Secretary of Defense McNamara to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff." October 2, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 78-80.

<sup>115</sup> Around this same time, McCone and Bundy were in disagreement over the Soviet build-up. McCone believed that the installation of MRBMs in Cuba was probable, not just possible. Bundy disagreed, yet McCone insisted that Cuba was bound to become either a Soviet missile base or a true Soviet satellite country. John A. McCone, "Memorandum of Discussion with Mr. McGeorge Bundy, Friday, October 5, 1962, 5:15 p.m." October 5, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 115-118.

<sup>116</sup> Colonel General S.P. Ivanov, "Handwritten note for the record by Colonel General S.P. Ivanov 17:20 hours, October 5, 1962." in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 88.

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<sup>117</sup> David Coleman described these weapons in 2004 as “FROGs (Free-Range Over Ground)...[known]...to the Soviets and Cubans as *Luna*, these surface-to-surface rockets mounted on a modified tank chassis, government experts concluded, were capable of delivering a thermonuclear warhead between 5 and 100 kilotons to a range of 11 to 26 nautical miles.” (The distance in nautical miles is equal to twenty to forty-eight kilometres.) David Coleman, “After the Cuban Missile Crisis: Why Short-Range Nuclear Weapons Delivery Systems Stayed in Cuba.” Part of the Presidential Recordings Project. Fall, 2002. Available Online at:

[www.WhiteHouseTapes.org](http://www.WhiteHouseTapes.org) [Visited August 15, 2004].

<sup>118</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 217. Gribkov and Smith, 45. The *Alexandrovsk* carried warheads for the R-14 (IRBM), but never arrived in Cuba.

<sup>119</sup> Weisbrot noted that General Pliyev had the authority to launch a nuclear attack in the event of a US invasion if he lost radio contact with the Soviet Union. Weisbrot, 206.

<sup>120</sup> Norbert Schlei, Assistant Attorney-General, Office of Legal Counsel conducted studies to explore if the US had a legal precedence to issue a warning to the USSR. The results were shared with RFK at length. As well, they “were thoroughly reviewed with the Department heads in the weeks immediately preceding the discovery of the missiles in Cuba.” Intra-office discussions during the crisis indicated the belief that ‘self-defence’ was not a valid reason for the action, negating the possible use of Article 51 of the UN Charter. Abram Chayes, *The Cuban Missile Crisis: International Crises and the Role of Law* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 17-19 and 65-66.

<sup>121</sup> On October 9, the Special Group (5412 augmented) approved an overflight, and noted that “a number of similar sorties might be mounted if this flight did not activate ground-air fire.” John A. McCone, “Soviet MRBMs in Cuba.” October 31, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey’s, 1994), 13-17.

<sup>122</sup> On October 10 in a recorded conversation with his close friend, George Smathers, Kennedy announced that he wanted Congress to go home, especially if there were to be any action taken in Cuba. He remarked, “...Everybody goes home, and, shit, nobody knows what the hell’s going on.” “Conversation with George Smathers.” October 10, 1962 (Dictabelt 50.3) in Zelikow and May, *V2*, 382-384.

<sup>123</sup> Kennedy also mentioned to McCone that he was looking forward to receiving the JCS operational plans. John A. McCone, “Memorandum on Donovan Project.” October 11, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey’s, 1994), 123-124.

<sup>124</sup> Allison and Zelikow, 219. Fursenko and Naftali, 221.

<sup>125</sup> Cline informed Lieutenant General Carter, and then told Bundy. He also phoned Hilsman to inform him of the discovery. Carter passed the information on to Lieutenant General Joseph F. Carroll (the Director of the DIA) who phoned Gilpatric, and then met with Taylor, Gilpatric and U.A. Johnson. Hilsman also spread the word, calling Rusk, Ball, and Martin. Brugioni, 197-208.

<sup>126</sup> Even with the availability of source materials, assembling an entirely complete recount of the Cuban Missile Crisis is still out of reach for the historian. Often, the information necessary to fully complete the picture remains classified, and at other times there simply appears to be no leads to help explain why certain events occurred as they did. Such circumstances have left historians playing guessing games. Did Kennedy plan the Cuban Missile Crisis or was he the unsuspecting victim of Soviet deceit? Did the US purposefully seek a conflict with the Soviets, or were the Americans truly unaware of how dangerous their policies were? Had the Soviets realized the potential outcome if the Americans discovered the missiles, especially considering that they did not have any stated plans to use the weapons? Why did the Americans react to the missiles as they did? Of these questions, no definite answer can be written. Speculating on the intentions of an individual is too risky an activity for one to undertake, let alone making an attempt to estimate the intentions of various individuals interacting with different, yet intertwined, organizations and bureaucratic systems (Action and intention are not necessarily linked. Results come from ‘players’ with different perceptions, mixed motives drive agreements, and actions have come from various games. Therefore, you cannot signal or suppose intent. Allison and Zelikow, 306.). Instead, the historian has to make use of the available records with a scrutinizing eye, or ear in the case of the Kennedy tapes, to piece together a comprehensive recount of the events.

# **The Cuban Missile Crisis**

If the Republican opposition learned of the true nature of the Soviet build-up in Cuba, they would push Kennedy to take action, or would encourage the Soviets to believe the Americans had intentions to invade Cuba once again. The point where Kennedy had to alter his approach to Cuba was the morning of October 16, 1962, when Bundy informed him of the new intelligence findings. That morning, the 'Top Secret' CIA Memo, "Probable Soviet MRBM Sites in Cuba" was released with the designation *Psalm* (the most restrictive security code in the White House), stating the discovery of two MRBM sites, located fifty nautical miles<sup>1</sup> southwest of Havana.<sup>2</sup> Between 11:50 am and 1:00 pm, Kennedy met with members of his administration to discuss the Cuban crisis. Carter began with an intelligence report describing the two ballistic missile sites. Sidney Graybeal, a missile expert, informed the group that the canvas covered missiles were most likely SS-3's with a 1,014-1,126 kilometre range. If the missiles did not have their nose cones on already, they could have a range of 1,770 kilometres. JFK calmly inquired, "Is this ready to be fired?"<sup>3</sup> Graybeal answered, saying that they were not, and despite their efforts, they had not been able to locate any warheads for the missiles. McNamara believed that locating the warheads would be the biggest problem for determining the readiness of the missiles. Rusk, hoping to set the agenda for US action, requested that they use a forceful blockade, but wanted the US administration to realize that they would be facing the potential for a general war with the Soviet Union.<sup>4</sup> While the Secretary of State preferred taking firm but cautious steps, the Secretary of Defense believed other action might be required.

When listening to the actual meetings, McNamara clearly emerges as a forceful individual. Precise and well spoken, he dominated the room when he spoke. He now suggested using airstrikes, but pointedly stated, "...If we are to conduct an air strike against these installations, or against any part of Cuba, we must agree now that we will schedule that prior to the time these missile sites become operational."<sup>5</sup> Further warnings came from McNamara that the US air defence along the Florida coast was inadequate,<sup>6</sup> and they would have to strike against the Cuban air force, as a preventative measure. Bundy worried that they might receive a lot of 'noise' from their allies over this course of action since most of Europe lived within the range of MRBM's located in the Soviet Union. President Kennedy listened intently while his administration discussed the problem, and eventually began to summarize the main options they had for action; 1) strike only the missile bases, 2) employ wider strikes to incorporate other military targets, 3) use wider strikes in conjunction with a blockade, or 4) conduct airstrikes with a blockade, with consultation with their allies. Robert Kennedy added the fifth option of an invasion to the list, although he did not do so enthusiastically, claiming, "You're going to kill an awful lot of people, and we're going to take an awful lot of heat on it." President Kennedy once again asked his advisors how few people he needed to inform. As the meeting came to a close, Kennedy implied that he would conduct airstrikes against the missiles.<sup>7</sup> Just over an hour later at a meeting for Operation MONGOOSE, the team learned that the President was unhappy with their progress. The Attorney-General would now maintain a closer watch on their activities, and would meet with them every day.<sup>8</sup> President Kennedy was aware of his options, and was disappointed that his original plans were not going to succeed.

To plan their course of action, the US administration decided to split into groups.<sup>9</sup> In his account of the crisis, Robert Kennedy expressed how their conversations were conducted openly without consideration of

rank.<sup>10</sup> Following an afternoon of such meetings, Kennedy's top advisors were back in the Cabinet Room. At this meeting Kennedy learned that the Soviets had back-up missiles located at the sites, indicating a reload capability. Carter informed the room that they were able to identify the type of missile using data from their IRONBARK source (US spy Red Army Colonel Oleg Penkovsky). Kennedy also heard from Taylor that the JCS were in agreement that narrowly targeted strikes would be a mistake. To help manage their alternatives, McNamara listed their options as follows: 1) take political action, although it would not give satisfactory results and "it almost *stops* subsequent military action,"<sup>11</sup> 2) conduct open surveillance with a blockade of offensive weapons, with the ability to step up their reaction, or 3) utilize a military strike. "It seems to me" he began with a pause, "almost certain, that any one of these forms of direct military action will lead to a Soviet military response of some type, some place in the world. It may well be worth the price. Perhaps we should pay that."<sup>12</sup> McNamara was acknowledging that their actions would not be without repercussions. He wanted to prepare Kennedy for these possibilities, but suggested that the benefits might outweigh the negative aspects.

With three options available, there was bound to be some disagreement. One such disagreement was highlighted when Bundy wanted to know how the missiles impacted the strategic balance. McNamara replied, "I asked the Chiefs that this afternoon, in effect. They said: 'Substantially.' My own personal view is: Not at all." Taylor then stated that the missiles *did* help the Soviets strategically. There was an unmistakable anger in Kennedy's voice as he exclaimed, "That's why it shows the Bay of Pigs was really right. If we had done it right." Moments later he added, "Last month I said we weren't going to [allow it]. Last month I should have said that we don't care." President Kennedy then decided that they should prepare for the airstrikes.<sup>13</sup> The mood in the room began to shift as Taylor mentioned an associated problem with the airstrikes, saying, "my inclination is all against the invasion," and then adding somewhat melodramatically, "We don't want to get committed to the degree that shackles us with [Khrushchev] in Berlin." Adding on to this concept, Undersecretary of State George W. Ball suggested that this was part of Khrushchev's ploy, since the Chairman planned a visit to the UN in November. He believed that Khrushchev would try to use the missiles to gain leverage on Berlin, adding, "it's a trading ploy."<sup>14</sup> From the first day of the discovery of the missiles, the US already had many options to choose from. They were also beginning to speculate what the Soviet motives were.

The audio recordings made by Kennedy have provided historians with a wealth of material to study and examine, and they have revealed much that would have escaped the historiography otherwise. While they make it clear that President Kennedy was an intelligent and capable administrator, they also reveal various errors made by the President and his advisors throughout the crisis. At times, these errors were beneficial for advancing their comprehension of the current events. At one point, Kennedy mistakenly said, "It's just as if we suddenly began to put a major number of MRBMs in Turkey. Now that'd be goddamn dangerous, I would think." Bundy, sounding as though he was almost shocked but politely concealing it, quickly explained to Kennedy, "Well, we did, Mr. President." U.A. Johnson, a little less reserved in his opinions brashly stated, "We did it. We did it in England." To this JFK, timidly but defensively tried to justify his statements saying that they had done so five years ago, but Johnson added in a pleading tone, "That's when we were short. We

put them in England too when we were short of ICBMs.” From this reasoning, he began to wonder, “But doesn’t he realize he has a deficiency of ICBMs vis-à-vis our capacity perhaps? In view of that he’s got lots of MRBMs and this is a way to balance it out a bit.”<sup>15</sup> From Kennedy’s simple error, the meeting’s participants were able to glean a better understanding of Khrushchev’s possible motives by comparing his move to their own experiences.

Yet President Kennedy’s entrenched plans for Cuba remained and his advisors eagerly talked about their opportunities to advance the covert agenda. Bobby Kennedy at one point wondered “whether we should also think of whether there is some other way we can get involved in this, through Guantanamo Bay or something. Or whether there’s some ship that...you know, sink the *Maine* again or something.”<sup>16</sup> Bundy next presented a list of stepped-up sabotage activities, suggesting that the ‘noise levels’ did not matter anymore, implying that they could conduct raids without worrying about the consequences. Bundy had also verified that Kennedy would not attempt to resolve the matter diplomatically. McNamara, consciously wanting his department to play a role in the crisis correctly explained, “...Once you start this political approach, I don’t think you’re going to *have* any opportunity for a military operation.” From his phrasing, it would appear that McNamara was under the impression that the goal of the administration was to have a military operation in Cuba. Ball had many reservations about the military plans, telling everyone: “This coming in there, on a Pearl Harbor, just frightens the hell out of me as to what goes beyond.” Speaking with conviction he added, “This isn’t the end. This is the *beginning*, I think.”<sup>17</sup> This was the first recorded reference to Pearl Harbor. A conscious effort was set forth by Kennedy’s administration to alter the perception of the events to avoid any comparisons between their own action and that of the Japanese in WWII.

While Cuba had caught the attention of the President, he continued to follow his schedule as though everything were normal. Much of Tuesday was occupied with the developments in Cuba, but on Wednesday October 17,<sup>18</sup> Kennedy appeared to spend little time involved in the discussions carried out by his executives.<sup>19</sup> Adlai Stevenson, a prominent Democrat and the US Ambassador to the UN, wrote Kennedy suggesting that he begin a dialogue with Khrushchev to discover his motives for the action. Stevenson’s ideas were in sharp contrast to those provided by Kennedy’s other advisers. He warned, “To start or risk starting a nuclear war is bound to be divisive at best and the judgements of history seldom coincide with the tempers of the moment.” In the letter, Stevenson paralleled the bases in Turkey with those in Cuba, and offered appeasement when he stated that all US bases should be negotiable.<sup>20</sup> Each position could be justified by its supporters, and all underscored valid points, yet they all neglected other essential information. Before the resolution of the crisis, Kennedy would be preparing to accommodate all three factions within his administration.

On Thursday, October 18, Operation ANADYR pressed ahead, as Anatoli I. Gribkov, the Soviet General in charge of the mission, returned to Cuba from the USSR. He relayed Malinovsky’s orders that prohibited General Issa Pliyev, the Soviet commander in charge of the rocket arsenal, from firing the R-12 and R-14 rockets, and advised him against using tactical nuclear weapons in battle.<sup>21</sup> Although Pliyev had

suspected U-2 overflights had occurred on October 14, this information was not reported to Gribkov until this day. The news did not reach the top rungs of the Soviet government, yet Gribkov decided to increase the use of camouflage at the sites, as the original plans stipulated.<sup>22</sup> While the Americans debated their potential responses, the Soviets were moving with extreme caution.

At his morning crisis meeting, Kennedy learned more about the situation that faced him. Arthur C. Lundahl informed them that permanent structures were being constructed in Cuba, which NPIC determined were most likely for IRBMs. Upon hearing this, Rusk remarked that Lundahl's briefing had changed his opinion. He then noted that the US was making a major effort "in every continent", and inaction would create a global loss of support for their country. Stating a belief that it was essential to get a two-thirds majority in the OAS to help convince the American people that their actions were justified, Rusk thought a blockade was their only option. The conversation then turned to a discussion of limited strikes, but McNamara emphatically argued that limited strikes were inconclusive, and in his opinion, an invasion would be required to fully remove the weapons. Explaining that strike options 1 and 2 would leave US civilians open for a counterattack, McNamara stressed that there was no justification to initiate either option. In defence of the limited strike, Kennedy stated his belief that a Soviet nuclear attack was not probable. McNamara, for the moment was preoccupied with concerns of accidental escalation, and attempted to influence Kennedy's view by mentioning the potential for an accidental launching, or of someone's taking unauthorized action to launch the missiles. In the opinion of the Secretary of Defense, the real problem they faced was "the problem of holding the alliance together, the problem of conditioning Khrushchev for our future moves, the problem of dealing with our domestic public...." Taylor, expressing disagreement with Rusk's suggestion, said, "only diplomatic action, or occupation as far as I can see, can prevent this kind of threat from building up."<sup>23</sup> No significant developments had occurred as of yet in regards to the three options for action available to the Americans, but they were attempting to advance each of their potential strategies.

In an attempt to gain the approval of the President, each faction within the executives tried to persuade Kennedy that their option was the most fitting.<sup>24</sup> Supporting the military route, McCone pointed out that the Soviets had not publicly claimed the missile bases in Cuba, and the relationship between the two countries had not been formalized through a treaty. If the US were to attack these bases, the Soviets would not be forced to respond. If the US were to issue a warning (take diplomatic action), it would provide the Soviets with the opportunity to claim the bases. The US would need to strike without warning to maximize their effect. Considering the diplomatic option, Kennedy twice openly suggested trading the Jupiter missile bases in Turkey.<sup>25</sup> At times during their discussions, George Ball would grow so frustrated with the developments in the room that he would burst out in fits of rage in order to get his point across. He often had a high level of moral consciousness as he argued once again, "A course of action where we strike without warning is like Pearl Harbor. It's the kind of conduct that one might expect of the Soviet Union. It is not conduct that one expects of the United States."<sup>26</sup> Perhaps Ball had placed too much confidence in the rhetoric of his nation, yet his frequent acknowledgement of the moral stakes helped remind Kennedy that there would be retribution for their actions.

Kennedy was not going to rush into any decisions. He was aware of the danger present, but he remained optimistic about US capabilities.<sup>27</sup> The administration had determined that they had to take action. If they did not respond to the Soviets' aggression, it would damage the American image, and the US would suffer a deterioration of their alliance. JFK expressed caution saying, "...The question really is to what action we take which lessens the chances of a nuclear exchange, which obviously is the final failure." Not everyone believed that a blockade was this option, as it would provide for potential Naval exchanges at sea. The group also discussed the legality of their actions, and President Kennedy said, "I think we shouldn't assume we have to declare war." He also mentioned that they might as well invade Cuba if they declared war, since they would receive a negative response to any action following that decision. Kennedy thought that the best option would be to use a blockade and deliver a message to Khrushchev, but without declaring war. Far from conforming to their commander-in-chief's whims, several members of the administration grudgingly disputed the issue with Kennedy.<sup>28</sup> While having supported a line of action that would create a military situation, Thompson still considered other options as he suggested, "I don't know about a deal for the bases for Turkey. And we substitute Polaris<sup>29</sup> for the missiles we've got there. It seems to me in negotiations this isn't entirely to be rejected." He suggested asking Khrushchev for a summit now, instead of waiting until November. "Because these other paths, it seems to me," he began calmly, before his voice suddenly turned to a plea, "you're playing Russian roulette." Thompson was emphasizing the dangers that existed since the Americans could not predict exactly how the Soviets would respond to military attack. Although spoken in a more moderate tone, he was dead serious as he said, "You're flipping a coin as to whether you end up with world war or not."<sup>30</sup>

McNamara suggested splitting up the administration into two groups to each work through a separate option, either a rapid military action, like airstrikes, or a slower type of action, like a blockade. He did not know which one they should take, but advised, "I think the price of any one of these actions is going to be very, very high. I can visualize a whole series of actions that the Russians are going to take." After President Kennedy ended the meeting and left, the remaining participants continued informally. McNamara's views were ambivalent. He told them, "The best possible conclusion of a blockade, it seems to me, is that the alliance is not divided. You have agreed to take your missiles out of Turkey and Italy, and the Soviets have agreed...to take them out of Cuba...". Bundy and McNamara were in agreement that an airstrike would lead to "Russian roulette and a broken alliance."<sup>31</sup> The administration wanted to make certain that they were following the best possible course of action. In preparation for a potential invasion of Cuba, railways were requisitioned as US troops were positioned for deployment.<sup>32</sup>

Many who were working on the Cuban problem did not have complete access to all of the gathered intelligence and were making their decisions without full knowledge of the situation. A steady flow of information was available to Kennedy's top advisors only. For their benefit, the Guided Missile and Astronautics Intelligence Committee, Joint Atomic Energy Intelligence Committee, and the National Photographic Interpretation Center produced several joint evaluations from their analysis of the surveillance. One such report was created on October 18.<sup>33</sup> With a better grasp of the Soviet build-up, Kennedy persisted with his regularly scheduled meetings that day. One such meeting was greatly anticipated and planned for, as

Kennedy would speak with one of the highest Soviet officials. During their meeting, Gromyko complained of the US actions towards Cuba, stating that the US had driven the Soviets to their current position through the use of economic warfare. Gromyko restated the official position that the only purpose of the weapons in Cuba was to provide a defence capability for the Cubans. Withholding his own knowledge, President Kennedy said that there was no intention to invade Cuba, and noted that they planned no blockade of Cuba.<sup>34</sup> Neither side revealed their true intentions or knowledge of the other's actions.

Throughout the day, very few people maintained a constant outlook, and many opinions shifted. Despite this, many formalized their views in memoranda for President Kennedy.<sup>35</sup> It was midnight before Kennedy had an opportunity to contemplate the events from his day. He recorded a memo stating his opinions of a meeting held earlier at 9:15pm, noting how many opinions evolved. Only two people had specific views; Lovett was opposed to striking the missiles, while Bundy preferred to ignore the missiles, rather than to take action. No one else could decide upon a definite course of action to take. The President also mentioned that everyone had agreed to the necessity of a blockade, since it would be possible to escalate this action.<sup>36</sup> Kennedy aspired to initiate a plan that would maximize the US rewards while taking the least dangerous course of action.

On Friday, October 19, the Americans focused their attention on Cuba. President Kennedy met with the JCS that morning to seek their expertise, and to inform them of his own personal interpretations and desires.<sup>37</sup> The President reasserted that Berlin remained his top priority in the conflict, as he believed the Soviets would respond to any US action there. He was concerned because the US policy stated that they would have to fire nuclear weapons to defend Berlin, "which is a hell of an alternative—and begin a nuclear exchange...." Kennedy was indicating a lack of desire for military action. The hawkish LeMay took advantage of the opportunity to speak stating: "I'd emphasize, a little strongly perhaps, that we don't have any choice except direct military action." LeMay felt that a blockade would lead them to war, and in an attempt to intimidate Kennedy he avowed, "This is almost as bad as the appeasement at Munich." General George W. Anderson, Chief of Naval Operations, then expressed his belief that a complete blockade was a direct affront to the Soviets. Anderson was not satisfied that the missiles would remain in Cuba, placing the US at a disadvantage if there was an escalation.<sup>38</sup> Kennedy reminded them of the global context of Berlin. To this, Taylor responded: "We haven't ignored it. For me, it's been a deterrent to my enthusiasm for any invasion of Cuba, as I think you know."<sup>39</sup> McNamara, who had remained silent throughout much of the meeting, then advised Kennedy not to authorize the low-level flights until the US was certain of its course of action.<sup>40</sup> When Kennedy departed, General David M. Shoup (the Commandant of the Marine Corps), General Earle G. Wheeler (the Army Chief of Staff), and LeMay remained behind to discuss the President in somewhat unfavourable terms.<sup>41</sup> After his meeting with his aggrieved military officials, Kennedy was free to follow up his other courses of action.

While there were three predominant options available for action, there were essentially two factions that existed in Kennedy's administration. At meetings held in the State Department,<sup>42</sup> Bundy, Acheson, Dillon,

McCone, and Taylor all preferred airstrikes,<sup>43</sup> but McNamara, RFK and Ball did not agree with this course of action.<sup>44</sup> Intelligence reports, specifically the CIA's Special National Intelligence Estimate 11-18-62, tended to fuel the militaristic view of the crisis. SNIE 11-18 estimated that the Soviet objective was to demonstrate that the USSR was more powerful than the US, and "[t]hey would probably expect their missile forces in Cuba to make some contribution to their total strategic capability vis-à-vis the US." It listed the following equipment present in Cuba: twenty-two IL-28 jets (one assembled), thirty-nine MiG-21 jet fighters (thirty-five assembled), twenty-four SA-2 sites (sixteen operational), three cruise missile sites (two operational), and twelve operational patrol boats. While it acknowledged that US military action would challenge the Soviet prestige, the report concluded that the Soviets would not want to run the risk of a general war.<sup>45</sup>

Kennedy had set off on a previously planned campaign trip. He was not satisfied with the progress that they had made, and was aware that he might have to return on a short notice to face the impending crisis.<sup>46</sup> Robert Kennedy requested JFK's presence in Washington on October 20.<sup>47</sup> After faking a cold, President Kennedy boarded Air Force One.<sup>48</sup> During their flight home, Kennedy confided in Salinger, telling him, "Something *is* going on," adding, "You'll be briefed when you get back to Washington, and when you find out—grab your balls."<sup>49</sup> A supplement had been released for the Joint Evaluation on overhead reconnaissance. This emphasized "the READINESS status of the offensive missiles in Cuba." It also predicted that the three sites would be fully operational by October 25, November 1, and December 1-15.<sup>50</sup>

That afternoon at the National Security Council (NSC) meeting, as arranged, McNamara made a presentation in support of the blockade option, while Bundy and Taylor conversely presented the airstrike option.<sup>51</sup> During the meeting,<sup>52</sup> four approaches surfaced; Taylor and Bundy preferred using a strike against the missiles, RFK, Dillon, Thompson and McCone wanted to use a blockade, ultimatum and then a strike, Rusk wanted a blockade and a freezing of the situation, while McNamara, Stevenson and Sorensen preferred using a blockade and negotiations.<sup>53</sup> McNamara's plan for a blockade said, "the United States would negotiate for the removal of the strategic missiles from Turkey and Italy and possibly agreement to limit our use of Guantanamo to a specified limited time."<sup>54</sup> He then weighed the disadvantages, including, the long time period for success, the potential for political problems in the US, and the potential that the US would look weak, to the advantages, that it was the path of least resistance with their allies, it eliminated the need for a surprise attack, there existed the potential to limit escalation, and it was the only "course of action compatible with our positions as a leader of the free world."<sup>55</sup> As he had already suggested, Kennedy reinforced the idea that the US was not to *initiate* a trade for the Jupiter missiles in Turkey and Italy, mentioning that they would instead *accept* a trade at the request of the Soviets. He insisted that they would not be removing the missiles, only exchanging them for Polaris submarines.<sup>56</sup> No definite action would be decided upon until the following day, when the President would weigh the benefits of striking Cuba with the costs he would have to pay in Berlin.

Kennedy was convinced the crisis was at its heart about Berlin, in spite of the fact that the main theatre of action was being played out in the Caribbean. If JFK were to blockade Cuba and then negotiate, the US would appear weak, but he also could not use the surprise attack for fear of the comparisons to Pearl Harbor.

He therefore combined the two plans, a path with the approval of RFK, Dillon, McCone and Thompson.<sup>57</sup> Sunday October 21 was the last full day that the Americans had before they went public with their discovery. Kennedy spent much of the day hammering out a plan with his executives. He met with RFK, McNamara, Taylor and McCone in the morning to discuss the potential for a military course of action. At this time, Taylor was instructed to plan accordingly. The men acknowledged that any military plan had to include an invasion/occupation of Cuba in order to succeed.<sup>58</sup> The briefing notes for the heads of Government speculated that they were seeing the end result of decisions made in the Soviet Union during the spring, mainly initiated because the Cuban economy was deteriorating. The notes predicted that the Soviets were planning to keep their actions secret until the build-up was complete, in order to keep international tensions low.<sup>59</sup> Kennedy met with more advisers in the Oval Room. There they decided that he would make a public announcement of the crisis, to be coordinated with the movement of troops in preparation for action. President Kennedy ordered the military to be ready for airstrikes on Monday.<sup>60</sup> A Defense Department memo confirmed that a loss of the Jupiter missiles in Turkey would not hurt national security, nor would it damage the potential for a US nuclear strike against the Soviet Union.<sup>61</sup>

Kennedy had now chosen to announce the Soviet shipments of nuclear missiles, along with the US decision to conduct a blockade of shipments of offensive weapons.<sup>62</sup> Having made his initial decision, the administration would now have to increase their efforts to make sure that their plans would work without a hitch. While Monday, October 22, was to be the formal announcement of the crisis, the news would not be announced until the evening. Kennedy would spend the majority of his day seeking feedback, informing the uninformed members of Congress and the Senate, and initiating policies with the help of his staff.<sup>63</sup>

Kennedy's morning meetings, usually beginning at 10am, had become somewhat of a ritual during the crisis. At the Monday morning meeting, Kennedy suggested that they should remove the missiles in Italy and Turkey, saying that he had tried already to remove the missiles in Turkey.<sup>64</sup> The President also believed that their proposal for the UN did not have to commit to the removal of the quarantine; they could therefore keep the pressure on the Soviets for the removal of additional weaponry.<sup>65</sup> The meeting spilled over into another, now that the Berlin Group was present to discuss their plan of action. Once again, President Kennedy was issuing orders to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, Paul H. Nitze, to ensure that the weapons in Turkey and Italy would not be fired, even if the JCS disapproved of the message. Bundy spoke up, suggesting that the build-up in Cuba would require a lot of American attention and would endanger the US' ability to defend their allies. They would have to keep the credibility of their nation in mind. President Kennedy thought that was a valid point.<sup>66</sup> Despite his movement towards a public showdown between the US and the USSR, Kennedy maintained a certain degree of caution to prevent any US errors that would start a war.<sup>67</sup>

By October 22, there had been few new developments for the Soviets. On that day, however, the most significant shipment arrived in Cuba onboard the *Aleksandrovsk*. The Soviets now had warheads for their IRBMs, and enough warheads for all of their cruise missiles.<sup>68</sup> National Security Action Memorandum 196

was distributed within Kennedy's administration, establishing the Executive Committee (ExComm) of the National Security Council (NSC), as the body designated to handle the crisis.<sup>69</sup> Kennedy met with the NSC that afternoon and stated, "as I've said from the beginning, the idea of a quick strike", he paused for a second, "was very [uh] tempting and I really didn't give up on that until yesterday morning."<sup>70</sup> The meeting was a chance for Kennedy to make sure that his administration would all be aware of their actions and the implications. Taylor noted that the US military forces were making some overt moves,<sup>71</sup> and people would begin to ask whether or not they were preparing to invade Cuba. As a response to the early reaction of the media, Rusk advised the President to tell the press that reporting all of the US moves would not be in the national interest, since this was "a very critical situation."<sup>72</sup> With his administration in line, Kennedy prepared to meet the Congressional leadership to discuss his intended actions.

This meeting took place over the course of an hour, just prior to Kennedy's televised announcement. With his administration having set the stage,<sup>73</sup> Kennedy informed the group that they would begin a blockade of offensive weapons shipments to Cuba, under the authority of the Rio Treaty. The President responded calmly when Senator Richard B. Russell voiced his concerns about Khrushchev 'rattling his missiles', pleading, "...Senator, we can't invade Cuba."<sup>74</sup> However, he elaborated, "I think it may very well come to that before the end of the week."<sup>75</sup> Kennedy then shifted his voice to a very serious tone, stating, "If we go into Cuba, we have to all realize that we are taking a chance that these missiles, which are ready to fire, won't be fired. So that's...is that really a gamble we should take?"<sup>76</sup> His tone then softened, as he added, "In any case we are preparing to take it. I think that is one hell of a gamble." As their conversations shifted to the legality of their intended actions, Kennedy mentioned that they would need to receive a two-thirds majority in the OAS, otherwise, "we are going to have to have what's legally an illegal blockade or a declaration of war." Senator J. William Fulbright made no qualms about voicing his negative opinion of their proposed action, calling the option the 'worst' on three occasions, saying he did not like the option twice, and adding once that it was 'not right', all in the matter of one minute.<sup>77</sup> President Kennedy was forced to take a firm stance: airstrikes would be worse than sinking a ship. He added, "If we're talking about nuclear war, the escalation ought to be at least with some degree of control." JFK informed them that if the US had to invade, it would be done publicly; the blockade would provide "the beginning of an escalation."<sup>78</sup> President Kennedy left the impression that his blockade was a precursor to an invasion. Typically, the majority of the opposition expressed to Kennedy came from his own Democratic party.

That evening, Kennedy was broadcast live across the nation. Viewers and listeners crowded around all available televisions and radios to hear their commander-in-chief speak. Kennedy's speech was delivered in a way to maximize the warnings of danger. At times, his speech made it seem as though the weapons were installed with the sole purpose of being used in a Soviet take-over of Latin America. Kennedy outlined the US intentions and it was clear that the goals of his actions were sevenfold; 1) to impose a blockade on Cuba, but not on the essential survival items as the Soviets had in Berlin, 2) to continue both the surveillance of the island, and their consultation with the OAS, 3) to state that any nuclear attack launched from Cuba was to be constituted as an attack on the US from the USSR, and would be met with a retaliatory strike, 4) to inform the

US public that the base at Guantanamo was being reinforced, 5) to explain how the OAS would invoke Articles 6 and 8 of the Rio Treaty, 6) to extend a request that the UN Security Council could supervise the dismantling and removal of the weapons, and 7) to encourage Khrushchev to stop his actions.<sup>79</sup> Kennedy sent a copy of his speech, accompanied by a letter,<sup>80</sup> to Chairman Khrushchev. This was the first time that the Soviets learned of the US knowledge of their missiles.<sup>81</sup> The secret that Kennedy's administration had been harbouring for a week was out. For the rest of the world, the Cuban Missile Crisis had just begun.

With their announcement of the crisis, the situation changed entirely for the Americans; they no longer had the advantage of preparing their response in secrecy. The earliest repercussions were seen at the first meeting of the ExComm (this nickname was given to the group after the crisis by the media), on Tuesday October 23.<sup>82</sup> McNamara wanted Kennedy to determine when he would issue the quarantine proclamation, the time it would go into effect, and the time that they would intercept their first ship.<sup>83</sup> The Secretary of Defense believed success would be achieved if the Soviets turned around, *and* if the US boarded and searched a ship. McNamara stressed that they wanted to avoid stopping a ship that did not have offensive weapons on board.<sup>84</sup> There was an urgent attempt to formalize the US plans that had previously been stated, to facilitate any potential action that they might take.<sup>85</sup>

At times, Kennedy's taping system caught conversations that were never intended for history. One such moment occurred when President Kennedy first expressed his desire to make an off the record comment, following it through by saying that RFK had been making some very good points. The President added, "there's no action we ever could have taken, unless we'd have invaded Cuba a year ago, to prevent [the nuclear weapons from] being there...." While obviously ignoring the potential of the military and the CIA, Kennedy did not allow anyone to interject as he firmly stated "the fact of the matter is there wasn't anybody suggesting an invasion of Cuba *at a time when they necessarily could have stopped these things coming onto the island.*" JFK was practically yelling by this point of his diatribe, exclaiming, "So that what *we* are doing is throwing down a card on the table in a game which we don't know the ending of."

Later at the same meeting, McNamara wanted Kennedy to issue a notice to extend the tours of duty for American servicemen under an executive order. The President agreed, and stressed the importance of ensuring that all necessary steps towards an invasion were being taken. They also agreed upon the procedure to retaliate against any SAM site that shot down a U-2.<sup>86</sup> Bearing news of their other diplomatic manoeuvres, a triumphant Secretary of State arrived to greet the stragglers with his positive results from the OAS meeting. U.A. Johnson was very excited about the announcement and expressed his confidence in their diplomacy. Suggesting that they were outmanoeuvring the Soviets, he added, "We really caught them with their contingencies down."<sup>87</sup> That morning, the Americans were feeling quite optimistic.

Kennedy had been candid when he mentioned how his government did not know the end result of their actions. As a result of their uncertainty, they continued to examine different policy options, searching for one that would resolve the crisis in the most advantageous manner for their nation, and the Democrats. Others continued to argue in favour of one action or another.<sup>88</sup> Kennedy had received a letter from Khrushchev that

stated: "We reaffirm that the armaments which are in Cuba, regardless of the classification to which they may belong, are intended solely for defensive purposes in order to secure the Republic of Cuba against the attack of an aggressor." Keeping in line with ANADYR, the statement did not indicate any intention to resolve the crisis; it simply protested against the US action. At the day's second ExComm meeting, McNamara suggested that they issue the proclamation before they dealt with the technicalities of a blockade.<sup>89</sup> JFK decided that he was ready to sign the proclamation, and the atmosphere of the meeting lightened up shortly thereafter. Kennedy can be heard remarking, in a joking manner, "I'll tell you, for those who considered the blockade course to be the easy way, I told them not to do it!" Following this, the room broke into roaring laughter.<sup>90</sup> The light mood continued as Gilpatric informed them that Soviet submarines had been spotted refuelling and moving west.<sup>91</sup> This news made JFK inquire about the security of their aircraft carriers, the *USS Enterprise* and *USS Independence*. He then joked, "we don't want to lose a carrier right away. [Chuckles.]" In response, Taylor informed him that they could "keep tabs on the submarines."<sup>92</sup> The joking continued moments later as Bundy remarked, "We had guys brought consensus today, everybody fell for it!"<sup>93</sup> The morning's optimism had lasted well into the evening as Kennedy and his men joked about the potential for danger as they continued with their plans.

The next order of action for Kennedy was the formal proclamation of the blockade, referred to as a 'quarantine' for legal reasons. To justify his actions, Kennedy invoked the Congressional resolution of October 3, which granted him the authority to prevent Soviet expansion with force. He prohibited the shipment of surface-to-surface missiles, bomber aircraft, bombs, air-to-surface rockets and warheads to Cuba. The US forces would stop any ships attempting to transport offensive cargo.<sup>94</sup> Only moments before publicly issuing his proclamation, Kennedy had approved a letter to Khrushchev that asked him to obey the quarantine that would begin at 1400, on October 24. Kennedy called for restraint, saying, "I am concerned that we both show prudence and do nothing to allow events to make the situation more difficult to control than it already is."<sup>95</sup> Because of the public nature of the crisis Kennedy found himself in a difficult situation; yet it was a situation that his administration believed was manageable. He encouraged the potential for military action, and had issued a threat to Khrushchev, but at the same time, he was willing to take suggestions for a peaceful resolution,<sup>96</sup> and incorporated them where he could.

The brother of the President, Robert Kennedy was a man with extraordinary access within the White House. Although the Attorney-General was often the first to suggest illegal or immoral actions in their international affairs, he also explored various opportunities to resolve the crisis peacefully. RFK had enacted a plan to use back channel diplomacy on October 22: Frank Holeman of the *Daily News* was commissioned to meet with Bolshakov to pass a message along to Khrushchev for a potential missile trade. Charles Bartlett had also delivered the same message to Bolshakov on behalf of RFK. Bolshakov reported the messages to the GRU (Soviet Military Intelligence Agency) station, but the information was not acted upon immediately.<sup>97</sup> On Tuesday evening, the Kennedy brothers had a discussion after their final meeting for the day.<sup>98</sup> In his book, RFK had admitted to using Holeman to relay the message, but never took responsibility for Bartlett's action. Even so, May and Zelikow think that RFK used both Bartlett and Holeman to talk to Bolshakov. They also

speculate that the President had not authorized this back channel move, because of the way that the two of them were discussing it on the tapes.<sup>99</sup> They think, “in an excess of zeal, Robert Kennedy had gone too far, and did not want to tell his brother.”<sup>100</sup>

President Kennedy had not been an expert on each individual aspect of the crisis before its initiation, but he always made sure that he was informed of current developments, and pressed his administration for information in an attempt to learn as much as he could about their endeavours. Before the quarantine came into effect, Kennedy met with ExComm to discuss the day’s activities. McCone mentioned that twenty-two Soviet ships were en route to Cuba, predicting that nine would arrive by the end of October, three of which had hatches big enough for missile transportation.<sup>101</sup> McNamara noted that the *Gagarin* and *Kimovsk* were approaching the interception zone, and would arrive by noon. He believed that both would make for a good first ship, and mentioned that Admiral Anderson would be attempting an interception. Accompanying the ships was a Soviet submarine, adding danger to the situation.<sup>102</sup> But this would not deter the US.

Throughout the day, the US would face continuous obstacles from the Soviet Union. To counter the problem of Soviet submarines, McNamara suggested the Navy use the *Essex*, armed with anti-submarine helicopters. He then explained the procedure for hailing a submarine, saying, “We have depth charges that have such a small charge that they can be dropped and they can actually hit the submarine, without damaging the submarine.” Taylor elaborated, noting, “They’re practice depth charges.” A sonar signal would be sent first, but they acknowledged the possibility that the Soviets would not understand the signal, and therefore, the depth charge would be required. President Kennedy wanted to know how they would determine when to attack the submarine, as he preferred to attack a merchant ship before a submarine. McNamara explained to him that it would be dangerous to defer, since it could put the US at risk. Rusk needed clarification on the procedures, and McNamara explained to him how they would send “antisubmarine helicopters out to harass the submarine. And they have weapons and devices that can damage the submarine. And the plan, therefore, is to put pressure on the submarine...the pressure of potential destruction.”

The danger appeared to be somewhat alleviated when McCone returned to the meeting. Earlier, the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) had reported to him that six of the Soviet ships were turning around, and he left the meeting to verify the information.<sup>103</sup> The *Poltava*,<sup>104</sup> *Gagarin*, *Kimovsk*, *Dalmatovo*, *Moscow Festival*, and *Metallurg Kursk* had all turned around or stopped according to the ONI.<sup>105</sup> The news that some Soviet ships were actually turning around somewhat jolted JFK, as he announced that they would not touch any of the ships near Cuba if the report was accurate.<sup>106</sup> After the meeting, Kennedy received a letter from Khrushchev that voiced concern about the Americans’ actions, saying that the US was “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!” He further chided them, “You are no longer appealing to reason, but wish to intimidate us.”<sup>107</sup> While some of their ships had turned around, the Soviets were most likely trying to prevent the US from seizing their nuclear technology. Diplomatically, the Soviets tried to convey the impression that they would not make any concessions whatsoever in regards to the missiles in Cuba.

Having watched the crisis evolve throughout the day, Kennedy was ready to meet the Congressional Leadership at 5:00pm.<sup>108</sup> It is evident that McNamara was well aware of the US Naval plans.<sup>109</sup> He explained that Task Force 136, under Admiral Alfred Ward, had been deployed to their quarantine stations, although they had not made any interceptions by that point.<sup>110</sup> After listening to remarks from the Congressional Leadership,<sup>111</sup> McCone<sup>112</sup> voiced concern with the possibility that the Soviets would observe the quarantine, but would also finish building their missiles. McNamara provided some advice, saying, "I think if we can remain cool and calm here, we've really got the screws on. They're being restricted from what the [world] thinks is their right—"<sup>113</sup> Despite embarking upon some risky behaviour, Kennedy and his men decided they should issue a response to the Secretary General of the UN that evening, in an attempt to find a diplomatic solution.<sup>114</sup>

Much like President Kennedy, Chairman Khrushchev wished to look tough, but strongly yearned for a peaceful resolution to the crisis.<sup>115</sup> After his initial criticism of the US, he had decided that the USSR could not both keep their missiles in Cuba *and* prevent a war, which in most likelihood, would be nuclear. Brezhnev, Kosygin, Kozlov, Mikoyan, Boris Ponomarev and Mikhail Suslov supported the idea of a Soviet retreat. That night, to demonstrate a sense of calm, they attended the Bolshoi Theatre.<sup>116</sup> In a lesser diplomatic action, Ball phoned Stevenson in New York and suggested he wake the Secretary General, U Thant, to have him ask Khrushchev if he would keep his ships back from the quarantine zone, because of the potential for escalation.<sup>117</sup> No one was certain as to how the conflict would unfold, but much of the progress would soon be erased as the tension escalated.

At Thursday morning's ExComm meeting, the enforcement of the quarantine was their primary concern. At 7:00 am, a US Destroyer had intercepted the *Bucharest*. The ship identified itself, and its cargo as Petroleum, Oil, and Lubricants (POL), with Havana as its destination. The Americans were not boarding the ship, just observing it. After much discussion of searching vessels,<sup>118</sup> Bundy reminded them that in the next 48 hours they might receive a positive, yet ultimately meaningless, assurance from U Thant. Kennedy, considering the implications of a peaceful resolution, decided to hold off on searching any ships. JFK then wanted to know what the advantages were of low-level surveillance. McNamara said they were useful for gathering detailed intelligence, and the pattern they establish "cannot be differentiated from an attack, and therefore reduces the warning of an attack". By flying surveillance patterns, they could easily switch the reconnaissance aircraft for bombers, providing them with more security. Kennedy authorized the flights, but he was still apprehensive about the *Bucharest*.

Laying it out realistically for everyone, McNamara announced, "What the quarantine does is not to stop offensive weapons. That we always felt would happen. The quarantine to us is a form of pressure to assure the removal of those weapons." He passionately continued, "I don't see any way to get those weapons out of Cuba. I never have thought we'd get them out of Cuba without...the application of substantial force."<sup>119</sup> President Kennedy, in a rather telling phrase, pointed out, "the object is not to stop offensive weapons, because the offensive weapons are already there, as much as it is to have a showdown with the Russians of one kind or another." The discussion returned to the possibility of coordinating a search of a friendly vessel, and allowing

certain ships to proceed without being searched because of their sensitive cargo.<sup>120</sup> While the previous day's meetings had been characterized with laughter and jokes, tension and conflict now began to define the American attempts to manage the crisis.

While every single occurrence helped to shape the Cuban Missile Crisis, some measures carried more weight than others and impacted the ensuing events. That Thursday, two particular events altered the course of the crisis. Walter Lippmann had an article published in the *Washington Post* that among other things<sup>121</sup> suggested it would be a fair deal to trade the Jupiter missiles in Turkey for the missiles in Cuba.<sup>122</sup> Now, it was not as though he had suggested an idea that nobody had thought of, but instead it was how his article was interpreted that influenced the outcome of the crisis.<sup>123</sup> Word of the article reached Khrushchev and inspired him. He would demand that the US would issue a non-invasion pledge of Cuba, and would dismantle their missile base in Turkey. If it was intended or not, Lippmann had become one of the policy engineers, working to resolve the crisis.<sup>124</sup> The second defining event of the day occurred in the Security Council of the UN. That afternoon, the Security Council had spent much of their time bogged down with the current crisis. It was then that Stevenson began an assault on the Soviets that would reach its pinnacle when he declared to Soviet Ambassador Zorin, "...We do have evidence. We have it, and it is clear and it is incontrovertible." Stevenson then proceeded to present pictures from the U-2 reconnaissance flights, delivering a damaging blow to the Soviets who had been denying the existence of the missiles up until this time.<sup>125</sup> Much of the world was now convinced that there was much more to the story than either side was letting on.

President Kennedy had implied on several occasions that their blockade could escalate into a larger action, but since learning of the readiness status of the missiles, accompanied by the disapprovals of both the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the JCS, Kennedy realized that he could not escalate the conflict as easily as he had planned. Recommendations for airstrikes continued to flood the President's desk, proposing 'tough' action, saying strikes were no riskier than a blockade, and explaining how it would lead to an invasion and occupation.<sup>126</sup> In the intelligence wing, Carter informed McCone that there were some tribulations associated with Operation MONGOOSE.<sup>127</sup> Carter was warning the administration that there was a potential for danger if Lansdale was successful in his intentions to continue with Operation MONGOOSE activities.

ExComm met once again that evening. Another Soviet ship, the *Volkerfreundschaft*, had approached the quarantine line carrying 1,500 workers, 550 technicians, and some students. The boat was under surveillance conducted by the *USS Pierce* and McNamara recommended that they leave it alone, instead of potentially having to fire upon a passenger ship. He also recommended stepping up their reconnaissance to include night surveillance using flares, describing the action as, "quite startling," and reminding them, "We have a lot of harassing actions we could carry out—incidents we can provoke, if we wish to." Ball inquired if the night flares for reconnaissance were the same as the 'pathfinder' flares used in night bombing missions. After learning that they were, he wondered if the Cubans and Soviets might interpret their use as a signal that they were under attack. McNamara did not think it was likely.<sup>128</sup> Even if it was not likely, it was still a very risky strategy because of the ballistic missiles.<sup>129</sup> One advisor that was curiously left out of the ExComm

deliberations,<sup>130</sup> Arthur Schlesinger Jr., exigently sent his advice and interpretations to Washington in the form of telegrams. Schlesinger passed along information from Averell W. Harriman, the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern and Pacific Affairs, that suggested Khrushchev was looking for a way out of the conflict.<sup>131</sup> This memo was sent to the State Department, and was distributed to Stevenson. It is evident that there was a delicate balancing act happening in the US administration. At one moment they would exercise extreme caution and allow a dangerous situation to bypass them entirely, yet at the same time, they continued to augment various provocative actions that might escalate the conflict. With several overt comments that went beyond implying a desire for military action, it appears that a military showdown was being sought by several key figures in the Kennedy administration, (namely McNamara, Taylor and McCone), but only one of a very specific nature. They would not allow a war to spark in any way that was not initiated by their actions, or so they hoped!<sup>132</sup>

On Friday, ExComm gathered once again together to discuss further developments. McNamara presented the Naval position, stating that they were currently on board the *Marcula*. Originally thought to be a non-Bloc ship, they had since discovered that it was under Soviet charter.<sup>133</sup> The *Joseph P. Kennedy Jr.*, a Destroyer, searched the Lebanese dry cargo ship.<sup>134</sup> While the *Marcula* received most of the attention the *Vinnitsa*, a ship that ran the blockade with US permission, was not mentioned.<sup>135</sup> A Swedish dry cargo ship under Soviet charter, the *Coalangatta*, passed through the quarantine on that day as well.<sup>136</sup> Their discussion soon returned to the idea of night surveillance. McNamara described how the operation would work, dropping “roughly ten flares per target. It’s thrown out of the airplanes at about 5,000 feet,<sup>137</sup> opening and...operating at about 2,000 feet,<sup>138</sup> illuminating the target area and the surrounding territory and serving as the basis for photographs.” Rusk immediately encouraged the group to wait until they had their results from U Thant.<sup>139</sup> Rusk was concerned that the people in Cuba would interpret the flares differently, and McNamara explained that this was why they would announce the unarmed missions in advance. McCone, adding yet another telling point of view, remarked, “by announcing [the surveillance], it destroys one part of this thing, and that is to stimulate an attack.”<sup>140</sup> Kennedy agreed to hold off on the night missions.

JFK was coming to terms with the fact that he would most likely need to use diplomacy in order to achieve his final objective. The tempers flared in the Cabinet Room as they began to discuss how severely they should prepare for any negotiations for peace. Rusk emphasized that they had to insist that the Soviets would arrest their shipments to Cuba, stop their construction and assembly, and render the offensive weapons inoperable, since the US objective was to remove the threat.<sup>141</sup> President Kennedy admitted that he would have to make concessions, commenting, “The quarantine appeals to everybody and if that’s one of the prices that has to be paid to get these out of there, then we commit ourselves not to invade Cuba.” Amid protest, Rusk reassured McCone that they would not “give assurances against any kind of rascality.”<sup>142</sup> If any diplomatic action were to be taken, Kennedy would prefer that the UN would play a pivotal role.

ExComm then examined what approach they ought to take with the Secretary General. In a moment reminiscent of Nitze’s attempts in a previous meeting, Stevenson<sup>143</sup> was having a difficult time convincing the

administration that an agreed standstill implied a *standstill*, not continual action. Stevenson noted how they would have to grant the 'territorial integrity' of Cuba, and they may have to trade their bases in Turkey and Italy as previously discussed. McCone disagreed with Stevenson's views, but the President remarked, "the quarantine itself won't remove the weapons. So we've only got two ways of removing the weapons. One is to negotiate them out—in other words, trade them out. Or the other is to go in and take them out. I don't see any other way you're going to get the weapons out." Only moments later, JFK restated this point. Bundy noted that the Soviets still had not admitted that the missiles even existed, and that "negotiating for the status quo, or for a calm down, [was] *not* in [their] interest". With Stevenson absent using the telephone,<sup>144</sup> President Kennedy acknowledged that no one was interested in the Ambassador's proposal, but bemoaned that a blockade alone would not resolve their problems. They were going to need alternatives; alternatives like Stevenson's plan. Kennedy was concerned that the blockade was only "going to bring the conflagration closer...." After a moment's reflection, he lent support to Stevenson's idea, and in a facetious tone asked what other realistic options existed.<sup>145</sup>

Kennedy's affirmations were confirmed during a private meeting with the Director of the CIA, joined for a few moments by the top expert from NPIC. Kennedy learned that the missiles were so well camouflaged that the experts were only able to spot them because they already knew their location. McCone told Kennedy that he no longer believed the weapons could be hidden easily in the surrounding forests. After Lundahl was dismissed, McCone and Kennedy continued the meeting. The Director plainly told the President, "I'm getting more concerned all the time," adding, "I think that they've got a substantial number of these, that they could start at dark and have missiles pointing at us the following morning." He was also concerned with using the political route for the disadvantages it created for their military. Kennedy addressed the real issue, saying, "We still are going to face the fact that, if we invade, by the time we get to these sites after a very bloody fight, we will have...they will be pointing at us. So it still comes down to a question of whether they're going to fire the missiles." McCone noted how the Cubans were well armed and would "give an invading force a pretty bad time." The Director also mentioned that the tactical nuclear weapons, or field pieces, would be very difficult to hit in an attack.<sup>146</sup> Several ships were still headed towards Cuba,<sup>147</sup> despite the numbers that had turned around, and the Americans were unaware of what cargo they carried. US intelligence was providing less optimistic terms than were being suggested by his military officials, and Kennedy was forced to adapt his strategy.

Much of the American attention went towards preventing any accidental escalations, but not every event would be within their control. Kennedy was not aware that they were scheduled to conduct an ICBM test that afternoon, and a missile was launched into the South Pacific from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. Vandenberg was an operational missile base with armed ICBMs aimed at the USSR.<sup>148</sup> The US had almost 1,600 US Air Force bombers, 177 ICBMs, and 100 Polaris submarines ready for use against the USSR during the crisis, while the Soviets had MRBMs and a force of 45,000 Soviet troops in Cuba.<sup>149</sup> An escalation at that time meant a full-scale war. Furthermore, Castro was encouraging the Soviets to take a tougher stance, as demonstrated in his letter to Chairman Khrushchev. If the US were to invade Cuba, Castro believed it would have enormous implications for the world since it would mean that the US could invade any

country unilaterally, and potentially with a nuclear attack. Castro believed that the Soviets and Cubans needed to attack the Americans with nuclear missiles in the event of an American invasion of Cuba to prevent this from happening globally.<sup>150</sup> Meanwhile, Kennedy was preparing to make concessions to guarantee Cuba's territory. In a phone call with the Secretary of State, Kennedy had backed down, explaining, "I think we'd have to do that, because we weren't going to invade them anyway."<sup>151</sup> This conversation was quite curious, as it contravened what Kennedy had been openly saying for weeks. In addition, that evening Kennedy spoke with Prime Minister Harold Macmillan—with whom he had been in touch daily since Monday—explaining that unless the Soviets responded favourably in the next forty-eight hours, the US would take action.<sup>152</sup> President Kennedy maintained his dual policy of preparing for both an invasion and diplomatic solution.

While Robert Kennedy had initiated an attempt to resolve the crisis through back channel diplomacy, he was not the only person to act on his own initiative. The KGB chief in Washington, Aleksandr Feklisov, was known to his American contacts under the name Fomin, and they only suspected that he had ties to the KGB. Feklisov, fearing that the events of the crisis could spiral out of control, met with John Scali, a reporter with several contacts in the US administration. Although Scali's notes differ from Feklisov's account,<sup>153</sup> it is apparent that Feklisov gave a Soviet offer to dismantle the bases in Cuba, and to stop shipments of offensive weapons into Cuba if the US would pledge not to invade that country. The two discussed how Stevenson could pursue this line of diplomacy with Zorin at the UN.<sup>154</sup> Word of the meeting did reach Khrushchev, and helped inspire his letter to the President.

That night, a long transmission came in to Washington from Moscow.<sup>155</sup> In the letter, Khrushchev commented, "We must not succumb to light-headedness and petty passions, regardless of whether elections are forthcoming in one country or another." He noted how both sides had interpreted the situation differently, saying, "the same types of armaments may in actuality have different interpretations." This was not a point Khrushchev cared to debate. While assuring the President, Khrushchev warned him at the same time, proclaiming, "You may regard us with distrust, but you can at any rate rest assured that we are of sound mind and understand perfectly well that if we launch an offensive against you, you will respond in kind. But you too will get in response whatever you throw at us." Khrushchev declared that the missiles were intended to protect the Cuban Revolution,<sup>156</sup> citing American antagonism through supported exile attacks, and the threat of an armed attack on Cuba as his reasons. He also announced the first real concession: there were no more armaments headed for Cuba. Making an offer, he stated that the US would have to make a non-invasion pledge for Cuba, removing the need for the Soviet missiles. Dramatically, he added, "you and I should not now pull on the ends of the rope in which you have tied a knot of war, because the harder you and I pull, the tighter the knot will become. And a time may come when this knot is tied so tight that the person who tied it is no longer capable of untying it, and then the knot will have to be cut."<sup>157</sup> There was a clear offer being suggested to the Americans, accompanied by a firm warning stating the consequences of the suspension of diplomacy. Although the conflict was far from resolved, both nations now were more inclined to look for a diplomatic solution to the problem of Cuba. Neither side halted their operations; American forces mobilized for an

invasion, and the Soviets continued their construction at the missile sites. Khrushchev had made an initial offer and Kennedy had acknowledged the necessity of diplomacy; the groundwork for a resolution had been laid.

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<sup>1</sup> Equal to ninety-two-and-a-half kilometres.

<sup>2</sup> The report estimated that the missiles could be ready in a short period of time, and also concluded that the Soviets were willing to use the missiles to deter what they perceived to be an imminent invasion. CIA Memo, "Probable Soviet MRBM Sites in Cuba" October 16, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 139-144.

<sup>3</sup> "Meeting on the Cuban Missile Crisis." October 16, 1962 11:50 am-1:00 pm. (Tape 28) in Zelikow and May, *V2*, 397-399. (JFK, Ball, Bundy, Carter, Dillon, Gilpatric, Graybeal, LBJ, UA Johnson, RFK, Lundahl, McNamara, Rusk and Taylor present.)

<sup>4</sup> Rusk suggested the US "do it in a way that gives everybody a chance to pull away from it before it gets too hard." Zelikow and May, *V2*, 399-407.

<sup>5</sup> McNamara explained that it would be an extensive strike, with an estimated 2,000-3,000 Cuban casualties, and stressed that the US should mobilize their forces to be ready to invade Cuba after the airstrikes took place. Taylor agreed, saying they could decide after the strikes if they wanted to follow through with an invasion.

<sup>6</sup> This point was brought up and discussed again at the 6:30pm meeting.

<sup>7</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 407-416.

<sup>8</sup> Richard Helms, "Mongoose Meeting with the Attorney General." October 16, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 62-63.

<sup>9</sup> The groups would then meet, criticize each other, and divide their plans to improve them.

<sup>10</sup> This decision annoyed some of the participants, namely Dean Acheson who remained critical of the meetings even late in his life.

<sup>11</sup> Emphasis is not in the transcripts, but is from my own interpretation of the recordings.

<sup>12</sup> "Meeting on the Cuban Missile Crisis." October 16, 1962, 6:30-8:00 pm. (Tapes 28 + 28-A) in Zelikow and May, *V2*, 427-437. (JFK, Ball, Bundy, Carter, Dillon, Gilpatric, UA Johnson, LBJ, RFK, Martin, McNamara, Rusk, Sorensen and Taylor present.)

<sup>13</sup> This option was not going to be as easy as simply approving, or recommending the action though. McNamara believed that they would have to minimize the potential consequences of this action, because "I don't know what kind of world we live in after we have struck Cuba, and we've started it." Ibid, 440-451.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 440-451.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 451.

<sup>16</sup> RFK's statement did not elicit much of a response from anyone at the meeting. The Attorney-General's previous actions tended to foreshadow how he would handle this crisis, recommending once again that the US should blow up their own property and put American lives at risk in order to start a 'justifiable' war with Cuba.

<sup>17</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 452-466.

<sup>18</sup> By October 17, the strike options were as follows: 1) missiles/nuclear storage facilities = fifty-two sorties, 2) option-1/IL-28's/MiG's = 104 sorties, 3) option-1/2/SAMs/aircraft/Cruise missiles/missile boats = 194 sorties, 4) all military targets except tanks = 474, and 5) all military targets as a prelude to an invasion = 2,002 sorties. The JCS saw a blockade as part of each of the plans. From Zelikow and May, *V2*, 513.

<sup>19</sup> During those meetings, Rusk, Taylor, Acheson and McCone were all vocally supportive of using the airstrikes without prior negotiations. Thompson, Gilpatric and Edwin Martin wanted to use a blockade accompanied by a declaration of war to ensure its legality. Ibid, 514.

<sup>20</sup> Adlai Stevenson, "Letter from Adlai Stevenson to JFK." October 17, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 129-130.

<sup>21</sup> Gribkov and Smith, 51-53.

<sup>22</sup> Allison and Zelikow, 215.

<sup>23</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 512-529.

<sup>24</sup> Not everyone present simply focused on their own preferences. For example, U.A. Johnson, a supporter of the airstrikes, suggested telling Turkey that they would receive Polaris submarines to replace the Jupiter missiles.

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<sup>25</sup> At this time, Thompson supported the blockade. Yet, his comments implied that he was in favour of using a military solution, just not one that began with an attack. He suggested that a blockade that would provoke Castro to attack the US forces at Guantanamo would provide better grounds for the US to attack and invade Cuba.

<sup>26</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 531-539.

<sup>27</sup> The President encouraged many ideas to be presented during his meetings, and he benefited from each new perspective. This tactic also gave the administration some time to ponder the implications of their decisions.

<sup>28</sup> Ball suggested that this would mean, "it is an illegal blockade", and Bundy averred, "It is an act of aggression against everybody else." McCone then said that the move would put Khrushchev's prestige at stake, and he would most likely run the blockade. Zelikow and May, *V2*, 541-549.

<sup>29</sup> Polaris submarines were equipped with SLBMs (their range was limited to 965 kilometres). Allison and Zelikow, 92.

<sup>30</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 541-549.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 563-568.

<sup>32</sup> George W. Ball, *The Past Has Another Pattern; Memoirs of George W. Ball* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1982), 291.

<sup>33</sup> The report stated that they had discovered a total of eight potential IRBM sites that would be ready by December 1962. Two SS-4 MRBM sites were operational and the Soviets could achieve a launch within eighteen hours of their decision to do so. The presence of three coastal defence cruise missile sites was confirmed and the report verified a total of twenty-two SAM sites in Cuba. The analysts suggested the Soviets intended "to develop Cuba into a prime strategic base, rather than as a token show of strength." Guided Missile and Astronautics Intelligence Committee, Joint Atomic Energy Intelligence Committee, and the National Photographic Interpretation Center "Joint Evaluation of Soviet Missile Threat in Cuba; U-2 missions 14 Oct. Mission 3101, 15 Oct. Mission 3102 + 3103, 17 Oct. 6 Missions-rough readouts." October 18, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 187-191.

<sup>34</sup> "Memorandum of conversation with Gromyko." in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 150-156. JFK, Rusk, Thompson, Hillenbrand, Akalovsky, Gromyko, Semenov, Dobrynin and Sukhodrev were all present.

<sup>35</sup> Ball provided one such memo, stating that the blockade would provide the US with a "moral and propaganda advantage." He continued to state that an unannounced invasion was uncharacteristic of the US, citing that it would alienate the US from their allies.

<sup>36</sup> "JFK Memorandum of 9:15 pm Meeting." Midnight (Tape 31.1) in Zelikow and May, *V2*, 572-577.

<sup>37</sup> Taylor recommended taking out the missiles, conducting surveillance, and using a blockade in unison, but Kennedy thought that this could result in a loss of allies.

<sup>38</sup> LeMay cautioned Kennedy that a blockade was weak, saying, "In other words, you're in a pretty bad fix at present time." JFK, having not fully heard LeMay's remarks, asked him, "What did you say?" LeMay repeated himself, and the President provoked some laughter amongst the group by replying, "You're in there with me."

<sup>39</sup> "Meeting with the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the Cuban Missile Crisis." October 19 1962, 9:45-10:30 am. (Tape 31.2) in Zelikow and May, *V2*, 578-589. (JFK, Anderson, Le May, McNamara, Shoup, Taylor and Wheeler present.)

<sup>40</sup> McNamara also told Taylor to split the Chiefs up into two groups to work out each option, so that when the time came, Kennedy would know exactly what authority he needed to give, and to whom.

<sup>41</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 597-598.

<sup>42</sup> John A. McCone, "Memorandum of Meeting Wednesday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, at 8:30 a.m., and again at 4:00 p.m." in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 169-172. Rusk, Ball, Martin, UA Johnson, McNamara, Gilpatric, Taylor, Bohlen, Thompson, Bundy, Sorensen and Acheson all present.

<sup>43</sup> Theodore Sorensen created the document, "Air Strike Scenario for October 19, 1962."

<sup>44</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 599.

<sup>45</sup> The report argued against inaction, saying that the tolerance of the missiles would encourage all Communists, and would diminish the US influence internationally. It also said that asking Khrushchev about the missiles would not stop their deployment; it would only encourage the Soviets to link Cuba with Berlin. Suggesting that

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warnings would reduce the surprise element of any attack, SNIE 11-18 discredited the diplomatic approach. The blockade was also scrutinized, as they believed it would be answered by Soviet pressure elsewhere around the globe. Special National Intelligence Estimate 11-18-62, "Soviet Reactions to Certain US Courses of Action on Cuba." October 19, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 197-202.

<sup>46</sup> While away from Washington, Kennedy made several important stops on the campaign trail. In between these stops he enjoyed some free time at a carnival.

<sup>47</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 600-601.

<sup>48</sup> Vice President Johnson also faked a cold and returned to Washington from Hawaii on this day.

<sup>49</sup> Pierre Salinger, *P.S. A Memoir* Advanced Uncorrected Proofs (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 115.

<sup>50</sup> Guided Missile and Astronautics Intelligence Committee, Joint Atomic Energy Intelligence, Committee, National Photographic Interpretation Center, "Supplement 1 to Joint Evaluation of Soviet Missile Threat in Cuba; U-2 missions 14 Oct. Mission 3101, 15 Oct. Mission 3102 + 3103, 17 Oct. 3104, 3105, 3106, 3107, 3108, 3109, + preliminary analysis of 18 Oct. 3111." October 20, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 227-232.

<sup>51</sup> Bundy, 401.

<sup>52</sup> May and Zelikow have pieced together this meeting through various documents, and note that Kennedy suggested the potential for using an air strike limited to the missile sites. Rusk argued that even limited strikes would lead to war, contravening both law and morality. Stevenson also opposed them, stating that bases in both Turkey and Guantanamo should be negotiable. Along with the others, President Kennedy sharply rejected the proposition to trade their base in Guantanamo, as it would give the impression that the US was frightened. He also urged that the Turks and Italians had to be informed not to fire their ballistic missiles (even if they were attacked), and requested that they disarm their nuclear weapons.

<sup>53</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 601-602.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 604.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, 605.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, 609-613.

<sup>57</sup> To satiate Rusk's request that the US only take steps that would allow for the Soviets to back-down graciously, Kennedy said there was to be no time limit on the removal of the missiles. Philip Zelikow and Ernest May, General Ed. *The Presidential Recordings John F. Kennedy: The Great Crises, Volume 3; October 22-28, 1962* (New York, WW Norton & Company, 2001), 3.

<sup>58</sup> McNamara and Taylor also reminded Kennedy that airstrikes would only have a ninety-percent accuracy rate. If they issued a warning first, the Cubans and Soviets would have time to man their Anti-Aircraft batteries and the SA-2 sites, and the accuracy rate would inevitably decline. John A. McCone, "Memorandum of Meeting with the President, Attorney General, Secretary McNamara, General Taylor, and Mr. McCone, 10:00 a.m.—10/21/62." October 21, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 241.

<sup>59</sup> Briefing Notes for Heads of Government, "Soviet Military Buildup in Cuba." October 21, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 247-259.

<sup>60</sup> McCone, RFK and McNamara were now all opposed to using the strikes, but wanted to be ready for them if they were needed. Robert S. McNamara, "Notes on October 21, 1962 Meeting with the President." October 21, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 154-157.

<sup>61</sup> Weisbrot, 168.

<sup>62</sup> This was to be his first step, allowing him to either back down from the confrontation should it prove beneficial to the US, or escalate their actions through airstrikes if necessary.

<sup>63</sup> The President also spoke with Dwight Eisenhower on the phone that morning. Eisenhower lent his support to the President, but asked him why he thought the blockade would escalate the action. Kennedy explained the potential that their U-2 surveillance flights would be shot down. Eisenhower was satisfied with this reasoning. "Conversation with Dwight Eisenhower." October 22, 1962, 10:40-10:47 am. (Dictabelt 30.2 [Cassette JJ]) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 11.

<sup>64</sup> This claim did not prove to be accurate, as Kennedy had only *inquired* how they could remove the missiles, as opposed to ordering their removal. Bundy asserted this in both his book in 1988, and at a conference in Moscow in 1989.

<sup>65</sup> Throughout the day, Kennedy was somewhat less focused than usual. He made several elementary errors, questioning if the UK had nuclear weapons (despite his awareness of their status as a nuclear 'producer'), forgetting that Blas Roca (a top Cuban official) was part of Castro's administration, and later forgetting what the EDP (European Defence Plan) was. "Meeting on Diplomatic Plans for the Crisis." 11:00-11:46 am. (Tape 32.1) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 16-18. (JFK, Ball, Bundy, Forrestal, Hilsman, UA Johnson, RFK, Rusk, and Schlesinger, Jr. present.)

<sup>66</sup> "Meeting on Berlin Group on Crisis Planning." Monday, October 22 11:47 am-12:30 pm. (Tape 32.2) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 33-35. (JFK, Ball, Bundy, Gilpatric, UA Johnson, RFK, Nitze, O'Donnell, Rusk, Sorensen and Thompson present.)

<sup>67</sup> The purpose of the Jupiter missiles in Turkey was explained in a more realistic way at an unrecorded meeting, as JFK stated a belief that the Jupiters had been deployed as a response to the Soviet MRBMs pointed at Europe. Dillon then told him they were deployed because the previous US administration, of which he had been a part of, had no other place to station them. *Ibid*, 6.

<sup>68</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 247.

<sup>69</sup> "National Security Action Memorandum 196." October 22, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 215-216.

<sup>70</sup> The [uh] was not included in the transcripts.

<sup>71</sup> A Jack Raymond article, "Navy and Marine Forces Heads for Exercise," appeared in the *New York Times* and described how US forces were carrying out a mock invasion on the island of Vieques near Puerto Rico to overthrow the fictional dictator 'Ortsac'. *Stern*, 140. Such information would be readily available in Moscow where the Kremlin would then have to judge the intent of the American actions.

<sup>72</sup> "National Security Council Meeting on the Cuban Missile Crisis." Monday, October 22, 1962 3:00-4:00 pm. (Tapes 33.1 + 33.1-A) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 40-51. (JFK, Anderson, Ball, Bundy, Fowler, Hilsman, RFK, LeMay, McCone, McNamara, O'Donnell, Rusk, Shoup, Sorensen, Taylor, Thompson, and Wheeler present.)

<sup>73</sup> McCone began by explaining, quite accurately, the exact build-up taking place in Cuba. Rusk described the Soviet move as "reckless and hazardous", saying that they would have to watch them around the globe.

<sup>74</sup> When Kennedy opened the floor for discussion, Senator Russell had calmly dissented, saying, "Mr. President, I could not stay silent under these circumstances and live with myself." He advised taking "strong steps".

<sup>75</sup> "Meeting with the Congressional Leadership on the Cuban Missile Crisis." Monday, October 22, 1962, 5:30-6:30 pm. (Tapes 33.2 + 33.1-A) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 58-74. (JFK, Cline, Lundahl, McCone, McNamara, Rusk, LBJ, Thompson, Senators: Dirksen (R-Illinois), Fulbright (D-Arkansas), Hickenlooper (R-Iowa), Humphrey (D-Minnesota), Kuchel (R-California), Mansfield (D-Montana), Russell (D-Georgia), Saltonstall (R-Massachusetts) and Smathers (D-Florida), and Members of the House: Boggs (D-Louisiana), Halleck (R-Indiana), Taber (R-New York), Vinson (D-Georgia), and McCormack (D-Massachusetts) were present.)

<sup>76</sup> *Stern*, 167.

<sup>77</sup> Senator Michael J. Mansfield spoke out against Fulbright's comments, lending support to the President.

<sup>78</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 78-89.

<sup>79</sup> John F. Kennedy, "Radio-TV Address of the President to the Nation from the White House." October 22, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 160-164.

<sup>80</sup> In his letter, Kennedy stated that no sane person would take the world to the point of nuclear war, calling on the Soviets not to take any actions that could make the 'crisis' worse. John F. Kennedy, "Letter From President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev." October 22, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 158-159.

<sup>81</sup> Soviet diplomat, Vassily Kuznetsov reported that when NSK learned of American knowledge, he "shit his pants." Of course, Kuznetsov was not speaking literally. Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 266.

<sup>82</sup> At this meeting, Lundahl informed the ExComm that two of the Soviet MRBMs had gone missing; they might be hidden somewhere in the trees. Despite this setback, McCone and Lundahl boasted that their reconnaissance had achieved ninety-seven-percent coverage of the island, and three low-level flights were scheduled for the day.

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<sup>83</sup> He recommended the administration have it ready for Wednesday by dawn, because they were interested in intercepting the *Kimovsk*.

<sup>84</sup> "Executive Committee Meeting of the National Security Council on the Cuban Missile Crisis." Tuesday, October 23, 1962, 10:00-11:03 am. (Tapes 34 + 35.1) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 103-111. (JFK, LBJ, Rusk, McNamara, Dillon, RFK, McCone, Ball, Gilpatric, Taylor, Thompson, Sorensen, Bundy, Edwards, UA Johnson, Lundahl, and Wiesner present.)

<sup>85</sup> May and Zelikow provided some interesting information about where Kennedy went after his meeting that morning. Along the lines of what was learned from JFK's secretary, Evelyn Lincoln, who reminisced about how the President kept an appointment with his tailor during the crisis, the editors mentioned how between meetings that day, JFK met with Priscilla Wear for roughly half an hour either at the Mansion, or in the West Wing Office. Sally Bedell Smith identified Miss Wear in 2004 as being half of the famed "Fiddle" and "Faddle" duo—naked swimming partners of JFK. Kennedy was apparently off for a quickie with his young mistress. Zelikow and May, *V3*, 140.

<sup>86</sup> At the end of the meeting, Ball instructed Lundahl that two of the best intelligence people available were needed in New York to assist at the UN deliberations.

<sup>87</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 113-131.

<sup>88</sup> Raymond Garthoff wrote one such memo suggesting if the US neutralized Cuba militarily it might compromise peace in the Caribbean and in Berlin, but it would also hurt the Soviet image worldwide. Raymond Garthoff to Walt Rostow, "Reflections of the Confrontation over Cuba." Tuesday, October 23, 1962 in Garthoff, 195.

<sup>89</sup> McNamara characterized the 'primary objective' of the blockade as grabbing a ship with offensive weapons. He also suggested that they should follow any Soviet ships that changed direction, because it probably had weapons on board. Rusk did not support this idea, expressing his concern that the Soviets would believe that the US was trying to seize their weapons in order to examine them. McNamara later suggested that they maintain the interception line outside of the IL-28 bombers' range.

<sup>90</sup> "Executive Committee of the National Security Council on the Cuban Missile Crisis." Tuesday, October 23, 6:00-7:10 pm. (Tapes 35.2, 36.1, 36.1-A, + 36.2) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 150-165. (JFK, LBJ, Rusk, McNamara, Dillon, RFK, McCone, Ball, Gilpatric, Taylor, Thompson, Sorensen, Bundy, McDonald, Nitze, and Pittman present.)

<sup>91</sup> Peter T. Haydon, *The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis: Canadian Involvement Reconsidered* (Toronto: The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 1993), 79-80. Haydon notes that Soviet submarines were routinely in North American waters during the crisis, including: Golf (Class SSB, armed with 3 MRBM/SS-N-4), Foxtrot (Class SS, armed with nuclear torpedoes), Whiskey (Class SS, for surveillance, mining and anti-shipping), and Zulu (Class SS armed with torpedoes and mines).

<sup>92</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 167-168.

<sup>93</sup> Stern, 198.

<sup>94</sup> John F. Kennedy, "By the President of the United States of America A Proclamation." October 23, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 244-246.

<sup>95</sup> John F. Kennedy, "Letter From President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev." Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Soviet Union, Washington, October 23, 1962, 6:51pm in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 166.

<sup>96</sup> Because of a conversation that night with David Ormsby-Gore, both the British Ambassador to the US and a friend of JFK, Kennedy decided to order the blockade moved from 1,287 kilometres out to 805 kilometres from the coast of Cuba. This postponed the interception of the lead ship, the *Kimovsk* (carrying ballistic missiles). Allison and Zelikow, 233

<sup>97</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 237-252.

<sup>98</sup> "Discussion between President Kennedy and Robert Kennedy." October 23, 1962, 7:10-7:20 pm. (Tapes 36.1 + 36.2) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 173.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid, 179.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, 180.

<sup>101</sup> Lundahl then presented Kennedy with pictures of the newly camouflaged missiles. They were hidden under canvas tarps.

<sup>102</sup> "Executive Committee of the National Security Council on the Cuban Missile Crisis." October 24, 1962, 10:00-11:15 am. (Tape 36.3) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 183-186. (JFK, LBJ, Rusk, McNamara, Dillon, RFK, McCone, Ball, Gilpatric, Taylor, Thompson, Sorensen, Bundy, Kreer, Lundahl, General McDavid, Nitze, O'Donnell, and Wiesner present.)

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 190-194.

<sup>104</sup> The Navy picked up radiation readings from the *Poltava*. Gribkov and Smith, 140.

<sup>105</sup> Their problems had subsided for the moment, but the report did not mention the *Indigirka*, the *Alexandovsk* or the *Archangel*, all of which carried nuclear warheads.

<sup>106</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 196-197.

<sup>107</sup> Nikita S. Khrushchev, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy (State Department Translation)." October 24, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 173-174.

<sup>108</sup> Rusk thought it was worth mentioning that the Russians seemed to be playing up the US-Cuban aspect of the conflict, while downplaying the US-USSR aspect. To their knowledge, the Soviets had not yet told their own people of the missiles in Cuba. "Meeting with Staff and Congressional Leadership on the Cuban Missile Crisis." October 24, 1962, 5:05-6:10 pm. (Tapes 37.1, 37.2, + 37.3) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 206-209. (JFK, Bundy, Dirksen, Fulbright, McCone, McNamara, Nitze, O'Donnell, Russell, Rusk, Smathers, Vinson, Hickenlooper, Humphrey, Kuchel, Lovett, and Mansfield present.)

<sup>109</sup> May and Zelikow, 207. McNamara had spent most of the day at the Navy Flag Plot room, and he and Anderson were having "some confrontational exchanges". Stern also notes a confrontation in the Navy Flag Plot room that occurred when McNamara wanted to know what language the Soviet ships would be hailed in, and culminated in a shouting match. Stern, 215. Stern mentions Alexander Mozgovoi's book, *Cuban Samba of the Foxtrot Quartet*, citing his account of Soviet submarines under attack from US ships. The barrage of depth charges lasted for hours, making the temperature inside of the submarines rise to 122 degrees. In one case, the commander ordered that the torpedoes be armed, but reconsidered and surfaced at night under US floodlights.

<sup>110</sup> Task Force 136, led by Vice Admiral Alfred G. Ward, was in charge of conducting the blockade between Puerto Rico and the Bahamas. They had 60 days worth of supplies. Other Task Forces were deployed shortly thereafter, including: Task Force 135, led by Read Admiral John T. Hayward, the "strike and protection force for the Guantanamo naval base," and Task Force 83, led by Vice Admiral Edmund Baltelle Taylor, conducting anti-submarine activity. Acosta, 150.

<sup>111</sup> They discussed the Rowland Evans article in the *New York Herald Tribune* that dealt with the Congressional meeting conducted by the President. Russell, heavily referenced in the article, denied any association with the author, deeming it as inappropriate behaviour. Another concern voiced at the meeting included a mention that many of them were anxious to leave to continue campaigning for the elections. Fulbright verified that they were preparing for an invasion, but Robert A. Lovett, a Special Counselor to Kennedy, urged a warning that they should use caution.

<sup>112</sup> John A. McCone, Memo for the File, "Leadership Meeting on October 22<sup>nd</sup> at 5:00 p.m." in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 275-279. McCone, who must have been suppressing desires to shout "I told you so!", was annoyed with something said by the Secretary of Defense. In his memo he noted, "McNamara then made a most unusual statement. He said 'One might question whether the missiles are or are not offensive. However there is no question about the IL 28s.' NOTE: This was the first time anyone has raised doubt as to whether the MRBMs and the IRBMs are offensive missiles."

<sup>113</sup> This is from my own transcription. In the official transcripts, the word 'world' is transcribed as [*Unclear*]. There was almost a sense of pride, as though his country had won bragging rights for hampering a legitimate relationship between two sovereign nations. Additionally, Sorensen had said that low-level flights, conducted by the F8U Crusader, would be "a means of harassing the Soviets and humiliating Castro...". Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 711.

<sup>114</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 218-225.

<sup>115</sup> While Kennedy expressed a desire for diplomatic action, it was shadowed by his military preparations, particularly the open announcement from SAC of a move to DEFCON 2. Khrushchev, on the other hand, apparently had a deeper commitment to peace.

<sup>116</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 259-260.

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<sup>117</sup> George W. Ball, "George Ball to Adlai Stevenson on phone, 11:45 PM." October 24, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 266-267.

<sup>118</sup> McNamara wanted to authorize Admiral Dennison to search ships, allowing them to establish a pattern of searching vessels, starting with friendly ships. Kennedy approved the action. He was concerned with how the Soviets would interpret the move. Rusk suggested that they had already passed the ship, but McNamara explained the difference between observing and passing a ship through the quarantine line. Sorensen thought that the ship would be a good starting point for a search, since the Soviets would probably not allow the Americans to search a ship with serious cargo. "Executive Committee Meeting of the National Security Council on the Cuban Missile Crisis." October 25, 1962 10:00-11:10 am. (Tapes 37.2 + 38.1) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 232-247. (JFK, LBJ, Rusk, McNamara, Dillon, RFK, McCone, Ball, Gilpatric, Taylor, Thompson, Sorensen, Bundy, Nitze, and Donald Wilson present.)

<sup>119</sup> Prior to this, McNamara had asked that they add missile fuel to the list of prohibited items, saying it was not likely that the *Grozny*, the next ship to approach the line, was carrying missile fuel. The merits of adding POL to the quarantine were discussed, but not decided upon.

<sup>120</sup> Nitze, perhaps the only one in the room actually paying attention to what implications the US action and proclamation already suggested, recommended that they simply stop *all* ships, since they had already called a quarantine. Clearly worked up, Nitze added, "you've declared a quarantine which has certain implied rules, which means you just go ahead and carry out those rules indiscriminately, against everybody, not selecting ships or types of ships." Zelikow and May, *V3*, 249-268.

<sup>121</sup> Although the historiography has mostly ignored it, Lippmann had pointed out the mistake that was made in WWII by suspending diplomacy. Paralleling this to the current events, he wrote, "I see danger of this mistake in the fact that when the President saw Mr. Gromyko on Thursday, and had the evidence of the missile build-up in Cuba, he refrained from confronting Mr. Gromyko with this evidence. This was to suspend diplomacy." Lippmann believed they could have easily told the Soviets of the US resolve to have the ships turn around. If Khrushchev had not turned his ships around after this request, it would have strengthened JFK's position.

<sup>122</sup> Walter Lippmann in *The Cuban Missile Crisis* ed. Robert A. Divine (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), 43-44.

<sup>123</sup> Lippmann was not a typical journalist. His friendships and connections within the inner circles of Kennedy's administration were widely known in Washington at the time. Therefore, many interpreted Lippmann's articles as having a higher authority, including the Soviet analysts who were used to dealing with a controlled system of media.

<sup>124</sup> I am not certain if he approached Ball with the idea, or if he was influenced by Ball, but the two met prior to the article being released. Ball had been aware of its contents.

<sup>125</sup> Adlai E. Stevenson, *Looking Outward: Years of Crisis at the United Nations* ed. Robert L. Selma Schiffer (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1963), 107.

<sup>126</sup> Dillon Group Paper, "Scenario for Airstrike Against Offensive Missile Bases and Bombers in Cuba." October 25, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 178-180.

<sup>127</sup> Carter's memo stated that there were problems of jurisdiction and bureaucracy, noting, "Lansdale feels badly cut out of the picture and appears to be seeking to reconstitute the MONGOOSE Special Group operations during this period of impending crisis." Marshall Carter, Memo for Director, "MONGOOSE Operations and General Lansdale's Problems." October 25, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 311-312.

<sup>128</sup> "Executive Committee Meeting of the National Security Council on the Cuban Missile Crisis." October 25, 1962, 5:25-5:45 pm. (Tape 38.2) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 269-279. (JFK, LBJ, Rusk, McNamara, Dillon, RFK, McCone, Ball, Gilpatric, Taylor, Thompson, Sorensen, Bundy, and Rostow present.)

<sup>129</sup> When listening to the tapes, it is evident that Ball was concerned with any potential misinterpretations that might accidentally escalate the crisis. McNamara later claimed to have constantly considered this throughout the crisis, but more often than not, it was Ball suggesting such ideas for McNamara's consideration.

<sup>130</sup> Mark J. White speculated that Schlesinger Jr. was too Liberal to be included in Kennedy's ExComm.

<sup>131</sup> Harriman supported his claim by citing the sudden change of direction of the Soviet ships, and a message sent from Khrushchev to Bertrand Russell accepting advice to seek peaceful terms. Harriman further advised that a tough approach would be a mistake.

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<sup>132</sup> This is the reason why McNamara appears to be so strongly opposed to the actions taken during the crisis today. At the time, there were many things that did go wrong, and many more that easily could have.

<sup>133</sup> "Executive Committee Meeting of the National Security Council on the Cuban Missile Crisis." October 26, 1962, 10:10-11:20 am. (Tapes 39.1 + 39.1-A) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 284-291. (JFK, LBJ, Rusk, McNamara, Dillon, RFK, McCone, Ball, Gilpatric, Taylor, Thompson, Sorensen, Bundy, McCloy, Nitze, Stevenson, and Wilson present.)

<sup>134</sup> Brugioni, 434. "Admiral Beakley suggested to Admiral Ward that it would be nice if the destroyer *Kennedy* was one of the first ships to board a ship suspected of carrying forbidden cargo." Kennedy had not ordered the move, but it was not wholly a coincidental occurrence.

<sup>135</sup> Thompson, 312.

<sup>136</sup> The closest Destroyer asked for instructions, and Washington was contacted. Kennedy ordered them not to do anything, and the ship was simply observed. Zelikow and May, *V3*, 330.

<sup>137</sup> Equal to 1,524 metres.

<sup>138</sup> Equal to 609 metres.

<sup>139</sup> His remarks incited Dillon to ask if the surveillance was provocative, to which Rusk responded, "these flares are pathfinder flares, typically. They are frequently used with bombs right behind them."

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid*, 296-297.

<sup>141</sup> Rusk wanted to let U Thant know that they were not just against further shipments of missiles, but were opposed to the existing missiles as well.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid* 300-309.

<sup>143</sup> It should be noted that Stevenson did have enormous prestige, thanks to his presidential bids in 1952 and 1956 against Eisenhower.

<sup>144</sup> This phone call was intrudingly recorded without Stevenson's knowledge.

<sup>145</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 311-317.

<sup>146</sup> May and Zelikow also claim that the two men discussed Soviet tactical nuclear weapons, or Free Range Over Ground Missiles (FROG), during one of the excised portions of the records of the meeting. Meeting with Intelligence Officials." October 26, 1962, 12:00-12:12 pm. (Tape 40) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 323-327. (JFK, McCone, and Lundahl present.)

<sup>147</sup> CIA Memo for Executive Committee, "The Crisis USSR/Cuba." October 26, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 315-316. There were 2 freighters, and 5 tankers still en route to Cuba.

<sup>148</sup> Allison and Zelikow, 239.

<sup>149</sup> Stern, 371.

<sup>150</sup> Fidel Castro, "Letter From Fidel Castro to Chairman Khrushchev (Reproduced from the International Edition of Granma)." October 26, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 199.

<sup>151</sup> "Conversation with Dean Rusk." October 26, 1962, 4:30-4:32 pm. (Dictabelt 38.2 [Cassette K]) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 331-332.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid*, 344.

<sup>153</sup> This has subsequently been addressed at one of the many conferences. It is simply a matter of interpretation, as both sides tended to paint their own picture of their conversation.

<sup>154</sup> John Scali, "Notes from meeting with Fomin." October 26, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 194.

<sup>155</sup> Historians have echoed the initial beliefs that the message was emotional, and distraught, but in comparison with his other private correspondence with Kennedy, it appears to be quite uniform with the Chairman's style.

<sup>156</sup> Khrushchev also mentioned how Russia too had a revolution and then was invaded by the US. He cited an account written by General Graves.

<sup>157</sup> Nikita S. Khrushchev, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy (State Department Translation)." October 26, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 195-198.

## **The Resolution of Tensions; The Events of the Post-Crisis**

By Saturday, October 27, exhaustion was a common feature in the White House.<sup>1</sup> Early that morning, a second correspondence from Khrushchev<sup>2</sup> arrived in Washington.<sup>3</sup> Although it had been preceded by a message written and sent the day before, this was the formal offer being issued. The main difference between the two letters, aside from the fact that the second letter was broadcast publicly, was that the formal offer included a reference to the missile bases in Turkey. Khrushchev stated that they were surrounded by American bases and asked rhetorically ‘do we not have the same right to demand that these bases be removed?’ The message also specifically noted that the Soviets would not invade Turkey, if the US did not invade Cuba. While offering to remove the missiles in Cuba, the Soviets had explained that the Americans would need to issue a non-invasion pledge. The new twist was that the Soviets were now implicitly threatening Turkey with an invasion, if the Americans did not withdraw their missiles from that nation. If they complied, each nation would be dismantling a missile base, and issuing a non-invasion pledge to Cuba and Turkey, respectively.<sup>4</sup>

ExComm met at their usual time with Khrushchev’s two proposals at hand. Before they could mention the messages, they discussed the advancing Soviet vessels and surveillance.<sup>5</sup> President Kennedy was informed that they were using different pilots on the surveillance missions to build experience, and initially approved a request for overnight reconnaissance. Once again, Rusk recommended that they take a diplomatic approach and wait to hear back from U Thant. Kennedy took his remarks into account as he heeded both the escalated demands of Bundy and McNamara, and Rusk’s advice. Thomas Finletter, the permanent representative from America at the North Atlantic Council (NAC) of NATO, had provided a memo stating that Italy would be compliant, but Turkey would remain a problem, most likely requiring an agreement to substitute their Jupiter missiles for Polaris submarines, to be suggested through NATO.<sup>6</sup> While RFK and Gilpatric both believed that Turkey had to stay separate from the issue of missiles in Cuba, JFK did not see it that way. He wanted them linked because he viewed Turkey as an obsolete base, whereas Cuba would be a giant leap for the Soviets’ capabilities.<sup>7</sup> With some of the technicalities out of the way, the men were prepared to debate how to respond to Khrushchev’s offers.

They would not make any definite decisions that morning, but various strategies were suggested for President Kennedy to follow.<sup>8</sup> In Kennedy’s absence, Bundy suggested that they could publicly reject the offer, and privately tell the Soviets that the statement was dangerous because of an “inconsistency in [their] position”. The others agreed with this course of action just before Kennedy returned to the room. Ball thought it would be difficult to get Turkey to agree to trade their missiles, but Kennedy disagreed because he incorrectly thought the Jupiters were American missiles, not Turkish missiles, under American control. McNamara pointed out the President’s error, saying that the Jupiters were deployed under NATO, and that they now belonged to Turkey, with Turkish men in control. The United States was only in custody of the warheads, and they were controlled through NATO.<sup>9</sup> The President, having to shift his understanding of their options now, was beginning to realize that this implied a much more serious problem than he had anticipated. Bundy brought Kennedy up to speed, informing him that the group had agreed that the first message they had received was from Khrushchev, and the second message was from “hard-nosed people overruling him...”<sup>10</sup> Not only was Kennedy’s perception of their options altered during this meeting, but a ploy was suggested to ignore the formal offer,

providing a response to the earlier proposal.<sup>11</sup> Kennedy knew that this would not be acceptable because of the public nature of the second proposal. It is also likely that he was sceptical because of the information from the reports he had received.<sup>12</sup> The Soviets and Cubans had both the capability to strike the United States with a nuclear attack, and the ability to repel an invasion with tactical nuclear weapons. While the Americans had good intelligence pertaining to the build-up, they remained unaware of the true number of Soviet soldiers mobilized in Cuba, awaiting their arrival.

This day would prove to be the most exhausting for Kennedy's administration. They were constantly meeting and drafting responses in sessions that would last for hours. Their longest and most productive meeting spanned from 4:00-7:45pm. One of the first orders was the postponement of the planned radio broadcasts to announce the unarmed surveillance flights. Kennedy also wanted to convey to Khrushchev that his proposal for Turkey involved other countries and organizations, like NATO and the Warsaw Pact, and thus, the situation could not be resolved so easily.<sup>13</sup> After a brief absence, the President returned. RFK suggested a diplomatic strategy for the deliberations at the UN.<sup>14</sup> The Attorney General proposed they tell the UN that the US had received several messages from Khrushchev, and required some assurances from the Soviets that they would stop their construction, rendering the missiles inoperative, while the negotiations proceeded.<sup>15</sup> This would become the basis for their approach to the UN.

While he was often quite hawkish during the crisis, McNamara too soon began to realize that their plans were infeasible. He no longer recommended using the airstrikes until they could replace the Jupiter missiles for Polaris submarines. The stress in McNamara's voice is painfully obvious to anyone either participating in the conversation, or listening to the tapes. He advised that no steps should be taken in Cuba, and once again criticized the limited strikes, recommending taking out the SAM sites, the MiG airfields and many other targets, with a minimum of 500 sorties, followed up seven days later with an invasion. McNamara warned that if they have not dealt with the missiles in Turkey, then the Soviets would surely strike there in retaliation. Nitze questioned how the US would respond to Soviet submarines off of their coast.<sup>16</sup> McNamara informed him that three had arrived in the last forty-eight hours. President Kennedy was concerned with the wording of their proposed message to Chairman Khrushchev, suggesting it rejected the Soviet proposal of the morning. Bundy, Rusk and Dillon all clarified the intent of their message, explaining that it did not reject the proposal, but instead rejected the tie-in of Turkey to Cuba. Kennedy was obviously weighing each option heavily as his advisors recommended a push towards a more rewarding outcome for the US.

At the time, Kennedy's men were deciding upon three separate diplomatic routes; they had to respond to Khrushchev, they had to open a dialogue with the UN, and they needed to discuss their actions with NATO. Kennedy was somewhat cynical when discussing NATO, stating, "They'll say: 'Well God! We don't want to trade them off.' They don't realize that in two or three days we may have a military strike which would bring perhaps the seizure of Berlin or a strike on Turkey. And then they'll say: 'My God! We should have taken [the deal].'" Kennedy's remarks also drew attention to the fact that NATO had been kept in the dark thus far. Before any agreements could be made McNamara switched their focus over to Khrushchev, building on what

Bundy and Ball had already suggested. The Secretary of Defense believed they could remove the missiles in Turkey, and tell Khrushchev that they would honour his message from October 26. This approach would become the basis for their correspondence with Khrushchev, although his preferred chronology of events would not develop.<sup>17</sup>

If they were forced to escalate their action, Kennedy stated that he was in favour of using a total blockade instead of military action. Sorensen was hoping to avoid having the crisis develop that far, and backed the idea to “try the private letter route in answer to [Khrushchev’s] private letter of last night.” President Kennedy was not so optimistic, and argued: “To be reasonable, we’re not going to get these weapons out of Cuba, probably, anyway—but I mean, by negotiation. We’re going to have to take our weapons out of Turkey.”<sup>18</sup> There is some contention over who said the following phrase;<sup>19</sup> however, it was not the person, but the words that were important. It was suggested that “The important thing for Khrushchev... is to be able to say: ‘I saved Cuba. I stopped an invasion.’”<sup>20</sup> The speaker suggested that they could allow Khrushchev to do this. After hearing this, President Kennedy decided that he would lend support to Stevenson’s letter, asking that they send it now. Although they had decided how to respond to the UN, Kennedy’s administration still had to decide exactly how to respond to Khrushchev, what to do about the NATO meeting scheduled for the next day, and specifically what to do with Turkey.

Despite the tensions that surrounded most of their current considerations, there were still occasional moments of laughter, even as they discussed grave issues. Having just exchanged a few laughs inspired by some brotherly jesting between the Kennedys, RFK asked the meeting’s constituents if they should consider consulting with Eisenhower to probe him for his opinions. JFK, answering in a voice so quiet that the recorder just barely caught his statement, joked, “Well, he would just nuke them all!” The room broke out once again in roaring laughter.<sup>21</sup> Robert Kennedy soon joined the opinions stated by McNamara and supported the idea of accepting the terms from the October 26 letter. The laughter continued as he then suggested that the President allow them to work on the drafts without him there to “pick it apart.” Taylor had mentioned that the Chiefs recommended using Oplan 312 (airstrikes) on Monday October 29, accompanied with Oplan 316 (invasion), seven days later. RFK, wryly added, “Well, I’m surprised.” Again, the room erupted with a loud burst of laughter. President Kennedy brushed off their jokes and agreed with Taylor, saying they would probably have to use that approach, but wanted to get a letter out first, to try a diplomatic route. Taylor pressed further and declared, “My personal view is that we should be ready to go in Monday and also ready to invade, but make no advance decisions.”<sup>22</sup> Kennedy was once again planning for negotiations and escalations concurrently.

McNamara had learned that a U-2 was thirty to forty minutes late on its return, before he had entered the meeting.<sup>23</sup> During the meeting, he received an update on the plane’s status and in a chillingly calm, unemotional voice, he informed the group: “The U-2 was shot down.”<sup>24</sup> JFK asked for clarification and McNamara confirmed, saying that a DIA official (Wright), had just found this to be the case.<sup>25</sup> After showing some concern for the well-being of the pilot, they acknowledged that this could happen again. Kennedy did not want to lose any more American lives, and was given the option to retaliate on the SA-2 site responsible.<sup>26</sup>

There would be no more joking around for the moment. Instead, Kennedy left the meeting once again while his administration began drafting various proposals for action.

ExComm meetings were often quite disjointed in nature, and within moments they had returned to the topic of Turkey.<sup>27</sup> McNamara forcefully asserted, "I would say that it is *damn dangerous* to have had a Soviet attack on Turkey and a NATO response on the Soviet Union. This is *extremely dangerous*."<sup>28</sup> He added, "I'm not sure we can avoid anything like that if we attack Cuba." McCone thought the trade would be wise. With the developments occurring as they were, Rostow was quite amazed by their attitudes and proposals. He mentioned how a week earlier at the State Department they had all said they would "be *delighted* to trade those missiles in Turkey for the thing in Cuba." Getting worked up, he noted that they had originally feared that they would be forced to trade Berlin.<sup>29</sup> Ball joined in Rostow's anger, and also supported the trade. He began yelling, "And we don't *want* it. And we're talking about a *course of action* which involves military action with enormous casualties and a great, *grave risk* of escalation."<sup>30</sup> After Ball shouted some more, Bundy demanded to know what a trade would mean for NATO. Ball did not think it would damage the organization, and suggested that the organization would have been meaningless to them anyhow if it did.<sup>31</sup> There were still arguments being presented for both a military action, and a negotiation, even though both options left them with less than perfect results.

Representing their bilateral approach to the conflict, McNamara asked that they write two separate messages for NATO. One would be based around the premises that they were going to trade the missiles, and the other would stipulate that they were going to remove the missiles in Turkey before taking any action.<sup>32</sup> At 7:20pm, President Kennedy returned to the meeting.<sup>33</sup> He had approved a letter to Khrushchev with the assistance of RFK and Sorensen.<sup>34</sup> The Attorney General had also arranged to meet with Dobrynin. Reflecting upon their options, President Kennedy told his advisors, "We can't very well invade Cuba, with all this toil and blood it's going to be, when we could have gotten them out by making a deal on the same missiles in Turkey. If that's part of the record, then I don't see how we'll have a very good war."<sup>35</sup> After the meeting, Kennedy met with Bundy, Rusk, McNamara, Robert Kennedy, Ball, Gilpatric, Thompson, and Sorensen to discuss Robert Kennedy's upcoming meeting with Dobrynin. The President insisted that their message to Khrushchev must include a non-invasion pledge. Rusk suggested they could accept the Soviet circumstances of a trade in an oral agreement and ask that the conditions remain a secret. This would mean that both the bases in Cuba and Turkey would be dissolved, and that both nations would remain free from an invasion. The idea was quickly supported and approved, and everyone present agreed to keep the contents of their meeting and their decision a secret from everyone.<sup>36</sup>

Robert Kennedy left the White House and headed to the Justice Department where he had arranged to meet Dobrynin. There he handed the Soviet Ambassador a letter from the President to Chairman Khrushchev.<sup>37</sup> The US was seeking a compromise along the lines of the October 26 letter. The Americans proposed: 1) the USSR remove the offensive weapons under UN supervision and promise not to introduce more, and 2) the US would remove the quarantine and give assurances against invading Cuba. The letter further stated, "The effect

of such a settlement on easing world tensions would enable us to work toward a more general arrangement regarding “other armaments”, as proposed in your second letter which you made public.” The Americans were telling Khrushchev that Cuba would be in danger if they tried to bargain for other locations around the world.<sup>38</sup> Dobrynin had not received appropriate instructions for diplomacy from Moscow, but when he noticed that Kennedy’s letter did not contain any reference to the Turkish missile bases, he inquired about the Jupiter missiles. RFK responded positively with the oral agreement that had been agreed upon by the President and his top advisors.<sup>39</sup> In response to the developing events, and reports of the Scali-Feklisov exchanges, but before he learned of the secret deal from Washington, Khrushchev addressed the Presidium and declared: “Now we found ourselves face to face with the danger of war and of nuclear catastrophe, with the possible result of destroying the human race. In order to save the world, we must retreat.”<sup>40</sup> Both nations had opted for peace, but were unaware of each other’s desires.

Kennedy’s staff met that Saturday between 9:00-9:45 pm. Of everyone present, only McCone, LBJ and Dillon were unaware of the secret arrangements made by Robert Kennedy. Despite the acceptance of Khrushchev’s terms, Kennedy would not allow their planning to stop. They discussed the amount of 20mm flack received by their reconnaissance planes, and McNamara requested fighter escorts. Kennedy thought it would be wise to sit tight until they heard back from U Thant, suggesting they should not retaliate on the source of the 20mm fire. If the Soviets did not respond positively, and continued to fire at planes on Sunday, Kennedy said, “We are therefore considering the island of Cuba as an open territory, and then take out all these SAM sites.” McNamara requested that they “should issue an order tonight calling up the 24 air reserve squadrons, roughly 300 troop carrier transports, which are required for an invasion.”<sup>41</sup> He explained that this was both to prepare for any necessary action, and to signal their resolve to the USSR. Kennedy approved of this. He also wanted them to inform Stevenson to get in touch with the Secretary General, letting him know that if the Soviet ships were not called back, there might be a confrontation. At the same time, Kennedy was involved in the following endeavours: he had initiated a secret deal with Khrushchev to trade the missiles out of Turkey in exchange for the missiles in Cuba, he had only provided documentation suggesting a non-invasion pledge, he had initiated a response to the UN, he was preparing to inform their NATO allies of their intentions, and finally, he was making the final preparations for an invasion of Cuba. It appears as though his preparation for both war and peace—and for the record—in unison is one defining characteristic of Kennedy’s Cuban policy and method of crisis management.

The day had been long and trying.<sup>42</sup> They began discussing the option of adding POL to the quarantine as their next escalation. Kennedy then made a statement that implied that he intended to allow the *Grozny* to run the blockade instead of risking a potential conflict over it. The President also wanted to know what Finletter should say about Turkey to the NAC. Robert Kennedy thought it would be a good idea to only inform them of the events, and explain the gravity of the situation. JFK also said that they would meet again with NATO on Monday, and then strike Cuba on Tuesday. The mood lightened up again as RFK joked that the Army was going “from Mississippi [to enforce integration] to Cuba? [Laughter.]” After the meeting had broken up, a few of the remaining men began to joke around, saying that they would like Cuba back. One

unidentified speaker remarked, "Yeah, how are you going to partition it?" Another unidentified speaker responded, "Suppose we make Bobby mayor of Havana?" After some brief laughter, the room was vacated.<sup>43</sup>

Fortunately, the Soviets took a conciliatory approach to the suggestion issued by the United States.<sup>44</sup> Khrushchev thought it would be best to broadcast his response at the same time that his government released the letter to the American Embassy.<sup>45</sup> Khrushchev's message contained an acceptance to the US offer, saying that he had "issued instructions on the cessation of further work at building sites for the weapons" and had "issued a new order on the dismantling of the weapons...." Khrushchev protested the shelling of Havana conducted by Alpha-66<sup>46</sup> and expressed concern with the well-being of Cuba. Khrushchev stated that the US' non-invasion pledge made their missiles unnecessary. He also voiced a desire for NATO and the Warsaw Pact to begin communicating, specifically on the prohibition of nuclear weapons.<sup>47</sup> As per the American request, there was no mention of Turkey or the Jupiter missiles. The mood at Sunday's ExComm meeting was one of joy.<sup>48</sup> Congratulatory speeches were made, but Kennedy cautioned them against gloating, for he knew the full details of his arrangements with Khrushchev, and understood how damaging such information could be if it were leaked. Some of Kennedy's advisors were concerned that the Soviets might be laying a trap, and the JCS were still planning airstrikes to begin as scheduled. As planned, at the NATO meeting held in Europe, the Americans informed their allies of the potential for a strike.<sup>49</sup> Around the same time, the 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Brigade was boarding ships in preparation for an invasion of Cuba, if needed.<sup>50</sup> While most of the tension had receded, many dangers loomed. Despite this, from a public relations point of view, or in the context of the traditional historiography, the conflict had been resolved.

That day, there would be many diplomatic letters exchanged between the heads of all three nations, although the Americans and Cubans had not opened a dialogue during the crisis, and did not do so in the aftermath. Kennedy's response to Chairman Khrushchev was short and to the point. He welcomed Khrushchev's solution and agreed to the necessity of using the UN to resolve the crisis. The President apologized for the U-2 flight that had strayed over the USSR on October 27,<sup>51</sup> and provided an explanation for the "accident."<sup>52</sup> Khrushchev's letter to Castro outlined that the US had given assurances of a non-invasion pledge. It did not, however, mention the deal to trade Jupiter missiles for the bases in Cuba. Khrushchev encouraged Castro to remain calm, saying that the Pentagon militarists were trying to provoke the Cubans with the overflights.<sup>53</sup> The response from Castro was appreciative of the peaceful resolution, but was far from cooperative.<sup>54</sup> Castro also wrote a letter proposing terms for a Cuban resolution to U Thant that day. He requested a cessation of five points: the economic blockade, subversive activities initiated by the US, the piracy towards international shipping vessels by the US, all Cuban airspace violations and water violations, and the US presence at Guantanamo.<sup>55</sup> The American-Soviet relationship seemed to be headed in a positive direction, while it was apparent that the Soviets had lost much of the confidence Cuba once had invested in them, and the Soviet-Cuban relations would need resuscitation.

On Monday, there was no way to be certain that the Cuban Missile Crisis would be resolved without a military conflict.<sup>56</sup> Discussions in the morning ExComm meeting were directed towards the continued Soviet

construction at the missiles sites.<sup>57</sup> In a conversation that took place shortly after the meeting, the President expressed disagreement with the idea that nuclear weapons would be used in a conflict with the USSR. He believed that the use of such weapons would create tremendous problems politically, even with tactical nuclear weapons, and did not think it was likely to occur. As he had throughout the crisis, Kennedy was intently focused on Berlin and tried to imagine what the Soviet move there would be.<sup>58</sup> The President would also make the decision on this day to suspend the sabotage missions against Cuba, although the order was not to be one-hundred-percent effective and would only last until the following spring.<sup>59</sup> McNamara would also initiate a process to exchange the Jupiter missiles for Polaris submarines.<sup>60</sup> Kennedy maintained his military readiness, while assuming any conflict would simply be fought with conventional weapons. Consistent with his dual policy, it was evident that he also proceeded to make the necessary steps to continue the diplomacy.<sup>61</sup>

While Khrushchev had been very cooperative with keeping their deal a secret, he felt the need to formalize the agreement that had been offered by Robert Kennedy. He decided to write the terms in a private letter for the President and had Dobrynin deliver the letter to Robert Kennedy on October 29. The letter noted, "Robert Kennedy said that it is somewhat difficult for you at the present time to publicly discuss the question of eliminating the US missile bases in Turkey because of the fact that the stationing of those bases in Turkey was formalized through a NATO Council decision." It also proposed a timeline saying that the Attorney-General had assured Ambassador Dobrynin that "removal of those bases from Turkey would take 4 to 5 months." Khrushchev was sympathetic to the American concerns, saying, "I feel I must state to you that I do understand the delicacy involved for you in an open consideration of the issue of eliminating the US missile bases in Turkey. I take into account the complexity of this issue and I believe you are right about not wishing to publicly discuss it."<sup>62</sup> After having the letter for an evening, the Attorney-General returned it to Dobrynin and said that he could not accept anything in writing that would indicate the deal that they had made. He further explained how the US was not prepared to formalize their agreement on Turkey, "even by means of strictly confidential letters, and that the American side preferred not to engage in any correspondence on so sensitive an issue."<sup>63</sup>

On October 30, the Chairman wrote a letter that the US *could* accept. In an attempt to speed up the resolution, Khrushchev had written, "I would like to express a wish that you already now remove the quarantine without waiting for the procedure for the inspection of ships on which an agreement has been reached to be put into effect." He thought that all actions that could be taken to quicken the process should be utilized, including allowing the Soviet ships en route to continue through the blockade zone. To get around mentioning Turkey, Khrushchev wrote, "...We found a reasonable compromise having made mutual concessions to each other and on this basis eliminated the crisis which could explode in the catastrophe of a thermonuclear war."<sup>64</sup> Khrushchev had stated the Soviet commitment to removing the ballistic missiles<sup>65</sup> and aspired to resolve the conflict in a timely fashion. His representatives in New York found that the US was not being as compliant. The Soviets had received a list of offensive weapons from the UN, which included many weapons that they deemed defensive, and bore no official US seal.<sup>66</sup> They interpreted the American actions as a ploy to disarm Cuba.

On November 2, American and Soviet diplomats met to begin their negotiations.<sup>67</sup> Stevenson had previously provided Mikoyan with the official list of offensive weapons: surface-to-surface missiles, bomber aircraft, bombs, air-to-surface rockets and guided missiles, warheads and equipment for launching.<sup>68</sup> At the meeting, Mikoyan was a dominating figure, calling for the suspension of the quarantine and pushing for four of Castro's five points—all except for the Guantanamo request. He suggested that the IL-28's could be out in roughly two weeks, but the Americans rebutted that the lack of UN inspections might hamper their negotiations.<sup>69</sup> In Washington, Kennedy met with ExComm to express his dismay with the leaks of information from his administration. He was specifically annoyed by Rowland Evans' newspaper article saying that Khrushchev's October 26 letter had been dictated "by an agitated or an overwrought man."<sup>70</sup> That evening, Kennedy addressed the nation saying, "the Soviet missile bases in Cuba are being dismantled, their missiles and related equipment are being crated, and the fixed installations at these sites are being destroyed."<sup>71</sup> While the United States stalled the UN proceedings, President Kennedy concerned himself with damage control.

After receiving the agreement from Khrushchev, Kennedy had publicly announced an end to the crisis in terms that helped to bolster the American gains, while the Soviets worked with Cuba to facilitate the negotiations.<sup>72</sup> On November 3,<sup>73</sup> Kennedy addressed the nation, encouraging them all to vote in three days time.<sup>74</sup> Kennedy and Khrushchev continued their correspondence. Through this process, Kennedy informed the Chairman that he would allow Soviet vessels to pass through the quarantine.<sup>75</sup> Khrushchev wrote back on November 4, but his letter did not arrive in Washington until the following day. Khrushchev showed gratitude for the US position on Soviet shipping, but stated his confusion over the list of weapons raised during their negotiations, saying that they had agreed only to remove the missiles and were doing so.<sup>76</sup> Khrushchev also tried to negotiate terms that would be beneficial for Cuba.<sup>77</sup> Mikoyan remained in Cuba to negotiate the removal of the weapons from Cuban soil, even after learning of the death of his wife shortly after his arrival. He was that dedicated to mending the Cuban-Soviet relations.

Neither side was willing to give in as easily as their initial correspondence had suggested. As they exchanged letters, there was an obvious attempt being made by both sides to obtain more concessions, while limiting their own. On Election Day,<sup>78</sup> the President wrote to Khrushchev saying that they were not trying to complicate the situation in Cuba, but reminded him that "light bombers" were mentioned on October 22 in his broadcast address. He argued, "These facts were all known at the time of our exchange of letters on Cuba...." Expressing his dissatisfaction with the 'false' Soviet messages that preceded the crisis, Kennedy mentioned, "Your Government repeatedly gave us assurances of what it was not doing; these assurances were announced as coming from the highest levels, and they proved inaccurate." Kennedy added, "Through these channels we were specifically informed that no missiles would be placed in Cuba which would have a range capable of reaching the United States."<sup>79</sup> The President stood by the demands set forth at the UN. When Kennedy learned that they had evidence of the Soviet withdrawal on November 7, he authorized Salinger's proposition to have the information made public. Kennedy was also still pondering the non-invasion pledge, suggesting that he could formalize the pledge after the IL-28's were withdrawn. He was also looking for some opinions on whether to announce that the Soviets had fulfilled their end of the bargain, versus waiting on the fate of the

bombers.<sup>80</sup> Kennedy did not know it right away, but the Presidium had authorized Khrushchev to give an oral promise to remove the IL-28's.<sup>81</sup> Khrushchev had a desire to end the crisis quickly. He perceived the American messages to mean they would not make any further concessions and decided that he would be the one to take a greater loss in order to resolve the conflict.

The Chairman did not come right out with the decision made by the Presidium. Instead, he wanted to see if he could avoid making such a concession. In a letter received by President Kennedy on November 12, Khrushchev acknowledged that the Soviets had removed their missiles, fulfilling their end of the bargain, and called on the Americans to do the same. He encouraged the US to end their violations of the Cuban coastal waters and airspace. Khrushchev explained how the IL-28's were added as a response to the increased budget for the US military and because they had called up their reserves. He mentioned that the bombers would come out of Cuba, but that it would only happen in time.<sup>82</sup> The Soviets next accepted an offer proposed that evening at the Soviet Embassy's reception for the Bolshoi Ballet. Robert Kennedy and Dobrynin once again had struck a deal. RFK proposed the following to Dobrynin, "the IL-28 aircraft shall be withdrawn within a certain period of time. Following this agreement the US will immediately, even tomorrow, lift all[sic] quarantine, without waiting for the completion of the aircraft pullout."<sup>83</sup> Dobrynin was receptive to the idea, and Kennedy formalized the oral agreement in a letter to Khrushchev, stressing a desired 30-day removal period for the IL-28's.<sup>84</sup> As he had done many times before during the crisis, Kennedy continued the military preparations<sup>85</sup> in case an escalation proved to provide a more desirable outcome for the US.

With the continued military preparation came increased calls for action, as the crisis remained a volatile situation as late as two weeks into November. A State Department Contingency paper from November 14 offered the idea to use increased surveillance flights as a means of provoking an attack on an American aircraft to justify bombing the Cuban airfields.<sup>86</sup> Taylor and Dillon strongly supported this notion. Their stance is not too surprising when considering that the two officials, despite their status in ExComm, were entirely uninformed about the secret arrangements made by Kennedy. Khrushchev responded favourably to the President's last letter and issued a response declaring that the Soviets would need two-to-three months to remove the IL-28's from Cuba. Pushing a peaceful initiative, he noted, "It is significant that as a result of the elections precisely those candidates were defeated who, if I may use such an expression, were making the most frenzied bellicose speeches."<sup>87</sup> Khrushchev and Kennedy had agreed upon terms for the removal of the IL-28's, but it would take a few more days to formalize their agreements. During this time, the US military preparation would reach its peak of mobilization.<sup>88</sup>

While the US forces sat ready to invade Cuba, Kennedy decided to hold off on an acceptance of Khrushchev's proposal.<sup>89</sup> In his response, Kennedy expressed his happiness that the IL-28's would be removed, but called for the Soviets to publicly announce the move. The President outlined their agreement, minus any reference to Turkey, but noted that there was a condition that included UN inspections of Cuba. Since these were not being conducted, Kennedy reasoned that the US was giving up more than it had promised.<sup>90</sup> Taylor was recommending an escalation of the blockade to include POL, suggesting that trading

the quarantine for the IL-28's was a mistake since they could have pressed for the removal of Soviet troops. The JCS backed his position.<sup>91</sup> Kennedy conversely believed tightening the quarantine to remove the IL-28's would yield unsatisfactory results.<sup>92</sup> Kennedy decided to explain to ExComm "the conditions under which we'd invade. We'd invade Cuba only if a civil war broke out, *really*. We'd invade Cuba only if a military threat came to us, or if they were carrying out their threat against their neighbor. Now, that's *quite* obvious. Then we'd invade Cuba probably only if there was a real outbreak of civil war where our presence might be a *decisive* factor. I don't think *otherwise* we're planning...we're gonna find the conditions in the next two or three years where we're gonna be able to justifiably, [*sic*] *in our interests*, taken around the world, of *invading* Cuba."<sup>93</sup> Kennedy had decided that he would end the crisis and rejected the proposals from his immediate advisors.

The final decision not to issue a non-invasion pledge originally seemed easily explained by the fact that the Cubans had denied the proposed UN inspections. But perhaps there was more to the situation than was originally explained. On November 17, Roger Hilsman, distributed his memo, "Negotiations on Cuba: The Advantage of Stalemate." As the title suggested, Hilsman endorsed the idea that Castro would feel let down by the Soviets unless they received a formal pledge of non-invasion from the US. He then suggested leaving the Cuban Missile Crisis unresolved, since Cuba would not allow the inspections, and such a pledge would be a difficult document to write. His final analysis was that leaving the crisis unresolved would hurt Cuban-Soviet relations.<sup>94</sup> There was more to Kennedy's final decision than the simple fact that Cuba had not allowed the inspections. Kennedy was attempting to manipulate the situation to provide the Americans with some degree of advantage. While preparing to dissolve the quarantine, Kennedy followed Hilsman's strategy in an attempt to damage the Soviet-Cuban relationship.

Communication was an important asset during the negotiation period, but most communications came in the form of letters, and thus it could be a slow process. President Kennedy received a response to his letter from November 15 on November 20. The Soviets were protesting once again the mention of the IL-28's in conjunction with the crisis, arguing, "you will agree, Mr. President, that messages that fix the subject of agreement and unilateral statements of the U.S. Government are two different things indeed." He also added that they had agreed to remove the IL-28's regardless of this, and asked for the termination of the quarantine upon receipt of the letter. Khrushchev noted the Soviet compliance in allowing the US to photograph their ships over international waters in a cooperative manner, and therefore asked for a balanced statement from the Americans, and the cessation of overflights of Cuban territory.<sup>95</sup> The UN was reporting news from Castro that he would not allow inspections, but would begrudgingly give up the IL-28 bombers if Moscow so desired.<sup>96</sup> Meanwhile, ExComm had made a decision to lift the quarantine, limit low-level and U-2 overflights, place their military on a reduced alert, and even discussed issuing a non-invasion pledge.<sup>97</sup> At 6pm that evening, President Kennedy publicly announced that he was lifting the quarantine since the crisis had been resolved.<sup>98</sup> The following day he sent this information to Khrushchev in a letter.<sup>99</sup> When the Soviets replied, it effectually signified the resolution of the crisis, since these were the last agreements to be made between the two nations. The crisis would remain unresolved, as the Soviets never obtained a non-invasion pledge from the US.<sup>100</sup>

A week had passed since the last US-Soviet agreement. Having taken care of the Il-28's, Kennedy's administration was left to decide what approach to take towards the remaining Soviet troops and the tactical nuclear weapons. President Kennedy was still regularly meeting with ExComm to discuss the crisis on November 29. He was making some tough decisions and remarked, "we have to decide whether we'd rather have those units in and not have the guarantee, or the assurance, or...But I don't think we can have it both ways. If you don't give them the assurance, they're not going to take out those units. There's really no incentive for them to do it." He added, "as a practical matter—that's really what we're trying to do now is, having the IL-28s out and the [MRBM and IRBM] missiles, we're trying now to prevent ourselves from having to give an assurance which would psychologically be a source of strength to Castro and a source of difficulty for us, here." There were many that would obviously create problems for Kennedy if he took this course of action, and it would strengthen the ties between Cuba and the Soviet Union. Kennedy then stated his decision: "So I would think that we have to really make a choice. My feeling would be that we would be better off to have those units in and not have the guarantee than we would [*unclear*]—" Bundy interjected saying, "They're not that important." President Kennedy agreed, "I think we're all in agreement that we would much rather have all this stuff there, SAM sites, FROGs, and all the rest, than to be really locked in any kind of guarantee that would be difficult to get out of. What we'd like to do is give sort of a half-guarantee...."<sup>101</sup> This was exactly the approach that he decided upon. The United States would receive their last concession from the Soviets between December 1 and 6, when they removed their Il-28's from Cuba.<sup>102</sup>

Khrushchev was starting to realize that the Americans were not going to follow through on their end of the bargain any further than they already had. By December 11, this was becoming more evident in his writing as he reflected on the turmoil that could have been. His analysis bore a touch that could only fully be respected by the two statesmen, yet was critical of the Americans at the same time. Khrushchev remarked, "being convinced that mankind would never forgive the statesmen who would not exhaust all possibilities to prevent catastrophe, [we] agreed to a compromise although we understood—and we state it now—that your claims had no grounds whatsoever, had no legal basis and represented a manifestation of sheer arbitrariness in international affairs." With their differences aside, Khrushchev expressed his desire that Kennedy would be elected for a second term in office. Weeks later, Kennedy was back to his belligerent stance towards Cuba: On December 29 Kennedy addressed the group of Cuban exiles that had been captured in the Bay of Pigs invasion, and hinted towards future adventures in Cuba. He told them, "I can assure you that it is the strongest wish of the people of this country, as well as the people of this hemisphere, that Cuba shall one day be free again, and when it is, this brigade will deserve to march at the head of the free column."<sup>103</sup> It was precisely the kind of statement that had goaded the Soviets into action the first time around.

On January 7, a joint letter was issued from the Soviets and Americans in New York. Stevenson<sup>104</sup> and Kuznetsov had determined that their negotiations were no longer proving worthwhile, and while the problems in Cuba were not fully resolved, they were able to now live in peace.<sup>105</sup> With the new assurances of peace, the Americans returned to their original tactics. Only one day had passed when "National Security Action Memorandum No. 213" was released. Kennedy was creating an Interdepartmental Committee on Cuba,

along with a new position of Coordinator of Cuban Affairs in the Department of State. Kennedy maintained that he had the final policy responsibility.<sup>106</sup> Desmond Fitzgerald soon replaced William Harvey<sup>107</sup> as the manager of covert activities against Cuba.<sup>108</sup> In February, analysts were still drawing conclusions from the events. James R. Killian, Jr. believed that more intelligence was required on Soviet motives. He also noted that in a draft version of SNIE (September 19) there had been a cautionary paragraph on ballistic missiles, but they did not want to initiate any policies without certain proof. Killian also respected the intelligence freeze, but thought that its boundaries needed to have been communicated more clearly so not to hamper with anyone's job, and to avoid more mistakes, like the USIB thinking that the freeze meant they could not publish their findings.<sup>109</sup>

The actual termination of the Cuban Missile Crisis did not occur until well into 1963. McNamara appeared on a television broadcast in February and delivered a detailed briefing, complete with photographic evidence of the Soviet missiles, FROGs and coastal defence missiles in Cuba.<sup>110</sup> He said that they could move past the crisis, to avert anyone from discovering the true nature of their deal.<sup>111</sup> The closest date that can be pinpointed for the end of the crisis would have to be March 31, 1963. It was on this day that NATO began to dismantle the Jupiter missiles, as Polaris submarines had become operational in the Mediterranean the day before. Although the crisis was over, hostilities remained. Kennedy had ignored all of Castro's requests during negotiations, and used Castro's non-compliance with UN inspections as the reason for reneging on a non-invasion pledge for Cuba. The President was strengthening contingency plans for an invasion of Cuba in April,<sup>112</sup> and furthermore, reinstated the sabotage program against Cuba in June.<sup>113</sup> The Cuban Missile Crisis may have been over, but the conflicts that created this course of events had not been resolved.

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<sup>1</sup> Many of Kennedy's executives were spending the nights in their offices, sleeping on their couches in case of any escalations that might occur overnight. This was not an American phenomenon. A quick examination of the Kremlin would have revealed Khrushchev sleeping in his office, fully dressed in a suit, prepared for the exact same situation.

<sup>2</sup> Georgy Kornienko, the Deputy Soviet Ambassador to the US, verified that the October 27 letter was actually written first. The first letter that the Americans received was drafted and sent after Khrushchev believed a US attack was imminent. He followed through with the original message, because he realized they had not issued the suggestion about Turkey. The 'second' letter was drafted on October 25. James G. Blight and Philip Brenner, *Sad And Luminous Days: Cuba's Struggle with the Superpowers after the Missile Crisis* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002), 10.

<sup>3</sup> Nikita S. Khrushchev, "Communiqué to JFK" October 27, 1962 (State Department Translation) in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 207-209.

<sup>4</sup> This was a real concession, given the USSR-Turkish boundary dispute.

<sup>5</sup> McNamara speculated that the *Grozny* most likely did not contain prohibited cargo. His recommendation was that they should stop it, and use force if necessary.

<sup>6</sup> "Executive Committee Meeting of the National Security Council on the Cuban Missile Crisis." October 27, 1962, 10:05-11:55 am. (Tape 40) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 356-362. (JFK, LBJ, Rusk, McNamara, Dillon, RFK, McCone, Ball, Gilpatric, Taylor, Thompson, Sorensen, Bundy, and Nitze present.)

<sup>7</sup> Kennedy believed that it would reflect poorly on the US to invade Cuba in order to keep missiles in Turkey. *Ibid*, 386.

<sup>8</sup> Bundy explained how he would respond: "I would answer back saying I would prefer to deal with your, you know, with your interesting proposal of last night." Kennedy thought that was an unrealistic approach,

suggesting they would have to respond to the public message. Sorensen supported Bundy's notion before he and the President briefly left the room.

<sup>9</sup> The Ambassador to Turkey, Raymond Hare, sent a cable to the State Department early in the afternoon. It stated that the removal of the Jupiter missiles would be a problem, suggesting that such a move would also hurt the Turkish view of the US. Hare also believed, "Turkish Jupiters might be a more potent factor in Soviet eyes than they are in fact for simple reason that propinquity tends to magnify as we have repeatedly seen in Soviet reaction to military installations on their periphery irrespective of their defensive purpose." He suggested making an offer to the Soviets to remove the missiles, if such a deal could be done in secret. Raymond Hare, "Cable from Turkey Ambassador Raymond Hare to State Department; 1:18pm." October 27, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 231-232. Zelikow and May described how the cable had influenced the actions of Bundy and Rusk. Zelikow and May, *V3*, 486.

<sup>10</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 363-381.

<sup>11</sup> This is the genesis of the 'Trollope Ploy' myth.

<sup>12</sup> An examination of the US intelligence reports shows how the Americans were painfully aware that all three nations were mobilizing their forces in preparation for war. A fact sheet prepared for the President described how the Commander-in-Chief of SAC would have 172 missiles, and 1,200 nuclear-armed aircraft under his command. The report noted that 5,868 Marines were stationed at Guantanamo, and that it had been reinforced with additional troops. "Cuba Fact Sheet." October 27, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 200-201. Meanwhile, a CIA daily report examined the Soviet and Cuban aspect of the crisis. It noted that there were three MRBM sites at San Cristobal, and two IRBM sites at Sagua La Grande that were fully operational. The Cuban military was mobilizing while Soviet ships continued toward the island. The Soviets, however, were not mobilizing their troops, but it was noted that "there are continuing indications of increased readiness...." The portion of the document pertaining to this information has subsequently been excised from the records. In the seventh supplement to the Joint Evaluation of the Soviet missile threat, it was noted that Mission 5012, flown on October 25, confirmed a FROG missile launcher (40,000-50,000 yard range) in Cuba. Guided Missile and Astronautics Intelligence Committee, Joint Atomic Energy Intelligence, Committee, National Photographic Interpretation Center, "Supplement 7 to Joint Evaluation of Soviet Missile Threat in Cuba; U-2 missions 14 Oct. Mission 3101, 15 Oct. Mission 3102 + 3103, 17 Oct. 3104, 3105, 3106, 3107, 3108, 3109, 18 Oct. 3111, 19 Oct. 3113, 3114, 20 Oct. 3115, 3116, 3117, 22 Oct. 3118, 3119, 3120, 3121, 3122, 3123, 23 Oct. 5002, 5003, 5004, 5005, 5006, 25 Oct. 3125, 5007, 5008, 5009, 5011, 5012, 5013, 5014, 5015, 5016, + 26 Oct. 2622, 2623, 2625, 2626." October 27, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 323-325.

<sup>13</sup> While pondering the offer in JFK's absence, McNamara noted that President Kennedy "wanted to turn it down. He wanted to defer consideration of it, but do it with a good excuse." Vice President Johnson supported the idea of trading the missiles in Turkey, but Bundy was critical of how he suggested it, opposing the plan to send a vague message to Khrushchev. He believed their correspondence should be a little more 'forthcoming'.

<sup>14</sup> The proposal was instantly supported by Bundy, Nitze and Rusk

<sup>15</sup> "Executive Committee Meeting of the National Security Council on the Cuban Missile Crisis." October 27, 1962, 4:00-7:45 pm. (Tapes 41, 41-A + 42) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 389-408. (JFK, LBJ, Rusk, McNamara, Dillon, RFK, McCone, Ball, Gilpatric, Taylor, Thompson, Sorensen, Bundy, Lemnitzer, Nitze, Rostow and Wilson present.)

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 415.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 417-423.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 423-427.

<sup>19</sup> Zelikow and May suggest that it was McCone speaking, but Stern, Bundy, and McNamara have all identified the speaker as Thompson, or attributed the phrase to him. It is very difficult to tell which man is speaking on the tape, as the men have similar voices, use similar prosodic features, and are both identifiably speaking around the same point on the tapes. Contextually, it is consistent with Thompson's purpose, but it is also consistent with, and almost exactly duplicates, a phrase from a memo that McCone had sent to Carter while he was on his honeymoon. It is possible that Bundy, who had listened to the tapes before writing *Danger and Survival*, confused the speaker and incorrectly attributed the phrase to the wrong person. McNamara, who has kept up on the crisis, appears to have been influenced by Bundy's assertion. After approximately 20 plays of the passage, my attempts to identify the speaker proved inconclusive.

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<sup>20</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 428.

<sup>21</sup> These remarks are from my own transcriptions. The original transcripts have “nuke them all” transcribed as [Unclear]. Ibid, 430. Stern makes no reference to the joke in his narrative account of the meeting either, and perhaps this just demonstrates another example of the endless possibilities for new historical discoveries provided by the audiotapes.

<sup>22</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 434-441.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 388.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 445.

<sup>25</sup> Major Rudolf Anderson Jr. was shot down in his U-2 over Cuba by an SA-2. This was done by the local command of Igor D. Statsenko, a one-star general. This immediately fuelled the suspicion that the Kremlin had been taken over by hardliners. Hilsman, 124. Lieutenant General Stepan Grechko was an Air Defence Commander in Cuba who gave the orders to fire on the U-2. Gribkov, 66. Khrushchev was unimpressed by the downing of the U-2. At the Moscow Conference, S.N. Khrushchev said that his father was disappointed about the U-2 being shot down, because it showed him that he obviously did not have full control. Allyn, 38. A memo was sent through R. Malinovsky that reported that it was the 507<sup>th</sup> Antiaircraft Missile Regiment near Antilla that shot Anderson’s U-2 down. S.P. Ivanov, “Memorandum from S.P. Ivanov to Comrade N.S. Khrushchev.” in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 307-308.

<sup>26</sup> Gilpatric thought that it was significant to note that the SAM sites were manned by Soviets, provoking U.A. Johnson to agree, saying that it was “not any accident.” Zelikow and May, *V3*, 446-451.

<sup>27</sup> McNamara said that the missiles in Turkey would draw a Soviet attack in the event that the US took military action in Cuba. If this were to occur, it would mean that the Soviets had attacked NATO, who would then have to respond with conventional weapons in a general war.

<sup>28</sup> The emphases are from my own transcription.

<sup>29</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 458-459.

<sup>30</sup> The emphases are from my own transcription. Ibid, 459.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 460.

<sup>32</sup> Bundy expressed an interest in reviewing the final drafts of both documents.

<sup>33</sup> While he was away, Dillon mentioned that he wanted them to employ night surveillance. LBJ began laughing and responded, saying, “I’ve been afraid of these damned flares ever since they mentioned them.” He paused for another quick laugh before adding, “Imagine some crazy Russian captain doing it. The damn thing goes “blooey” and lights up the skies. He might just pull a trigger. Looks like we’re playing Fourth of July over there or something.” Ibid, 460-467. LBJ was pointing out a concern that had been voiced by some, and implied by many others.

<sup>34</sup> Mark J. White pointed out that the final letter sent was an amalgamation of draft letters written by U.A. Johnson, Ball and Stevenson. Robert Kennedy helped with synthesis of these letters.

<sup>35</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 479-481. Interestingly, at the same meeting the President informed the group that they were “going to call up some Air Force Reserves tonight.”

<sup>36</sup> Bundy, 432.

<sup>37</sup> In the letter, Kennedy told the Soviets that they must stop their construction of the missile sites and render their missiles inoperable.

<sup>38</sup> John F. Kennedy, “Letter From President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev.” October 27, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 233-235.

<sup>39</sup> When RFK returned to the White House, President Kennedy had previously had a swim and was dining with Dave Powers. Zelikow and May, *V3*, 488.

<sup>40</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 284.

<sup>41</sup> “Executive Committee Meeting of the National Security Council on the Cuban Missile Crisis.” October 27, 1962, 9:00-9:45 pm. (Tape 42) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 488-493. (JFK, LBJ, Rusk, McNamara, Dillon, RFK, McCone, Ball, Gilpatric, Taylor, Thompson, Sorensen, and Bundy present.)

<sup>42</sup> Rusk managed to outline seven major developments from the day, including: 1) the issuance of a statement from the White House on the Moscow broadcast, 2) the clarification of the interception zone boundaries with U Thant, 3) the announcement of enforced surveillance by the Pentagon, 4) the issuance of a statement to U Thant in regards to Khrushchev’s public statement, 5) the preparation of an answer to Khrushchev’s message of

October 26, and 7) the delivery of a message to U Thant about the approaching Soviet ships. Rusk left out any mention of their secret agreement because there were three men present without the same privileges as Kennedy's true inner circle.

<sup>43</sup> While many of his administration were sleeping in their offices, Kennedy was watching the movie *Roman Holiday* with his friend David Powers. Zelikow and May, *V3*, 497-511.

<sup>44</sup> Chairman Khrushchev had received a letter from Castro on October 27 that called for the Soviets to defend Cuba with nuclear weapons if the United States invaded. This was more than a request for tactical nuclear defence, it was a call for the launch of the ballistic missiles against the United States. Khrushchev had interpreted the letter as a desperate plea and wanted to avoid any accidental escalations.

<sup>45</sup> The broadcast was intercepted before the official word arrived in Washington.

<sup>46</sup> Alpha-66 was not the only active group of Cuban émigrés working in cohesion with the CIA. During the negotiations to resolve the crisis on November 8, another group of Cuban émigrés bombed a factory in Cuba. The mission was Operation MONGOOSE related and contravened an order given by the President to halt all sabotage missions. Beschloss, 559. Garthoff, 122. Cubans would protest to the UN on December 5 that "members of counter-revolutionary organizations, operating from a base in the United States, had fired on 4 December from a vessel against a town on the Cuban coast." *Yearbook of the United Nations 1962* (New York: Office of Public Information United Nations, 1962), 110.

<sup>47</sup> Nikita S. Khrushchev, "Communiqué From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy." October 28, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 236-238.

<sup>48</sup> Despite these jovial times, NORAD and SAC were alerted when early defense stations interpreted what they thought was a missile attack launched from Cuba against the US. This observation was the result of a test tape running through the program, misinterpreted at the radar station. While no action resulted from this error, it helps demonstrate the resilience of the tension of the situation. Allison and Zelikow, 239.

<sup>49</sup> White, 230.

<sup>50</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 511.

<sup>51</sup> This event was not mentioned in the chronology of my paper, but was referenced several times on October 27 during the ExComm meetings. Stern has speculated that there was more to the breach of airspace than was mentioned by the President. He has suggested an elaborate theory that Rusk had even read a prepared memo to help Kennedy explain away the event. The evidence suggests that the flight was over the Soviet airspace as an attempt to test the air for evidence of atmospheric nuclear testing, but it accidentally ended up off course.

<sup>52</sup> John F. Kennedy, "Letter From President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev." October 28, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 240-241.

<sup>53</sup> Nikita S. Khrushchev, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to Fidel Castro (Reprint from International Edition of Granma)." October 28, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 249.

<sup>54</sup> He stated that he would seek to avoid any incidents that could harm the negotiations. So long as the negotiations remained productive, the Cuban air defence batteries would remain moot. Yet Castro was strongly opposed to UN inspections and forbade them.

<sup>55</sup> Fidel Castro, "Five Points Letter to U Thant." October 28, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 251-252.

<sup>56</sup> "Executive Meeting in the Cabinet Room and Oval Office." October 29, 1962, 10:10 am in Ernest R. May and Philip D. Zelikow ed., *The Kennedy Tapes Inside the White House During The Cuban Missile Crisis* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press/Harvard University Press, 1997), 637.

<sup>57</sup> Afterwards, in the Oval Office, Kennedy and a few advisors were discussing their contingency plans for invading Cuba. The President was particularly concerned with the conventional build-up, but his concern disappeared as they were soon discussing football scores before the meeting broke up. May and Zelikow, 654-656.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 657.

<sup>59</sup> Thompson, 345.

<sup>60</sup> Lebow and Stein, 125.

<sup>61</sup> In Washington, there were many who provided instant analysis of the crisis. The problem with such analyses was that there were few who actually had full knowledge of how the crisis was resolved. For the rest, it

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appeared as though the Americans had taken a tough stance and the Soviets had backed down. This confusion littered most of the opinions that flooded Kennedy's offices. In his memo, "Significance of the Soviet Backdown for Future U.S. Policy," Raymond Garthoff's analysis stated that NATO would appear stronger as a result of the crisis since the Alliance had not backed down. This, he believed, would strengthen their position on Berlin and would create uncertainty among the neutral nations with communist leanings. The US would also maintain their "nuclear strategic advantage". A long-term projection was offered suggesting that it might be more probable that they could find peaceful resolutions to future problems. Although some of the premises for the memo were incorrect, much of the analysis was quite accurate, and Garthoff's final position was that the US should initiate peaceful solutions with the Soviets in any future conflicts. Raymond Garthoff, "Significance of the Soviet Backdown for Future U.S. Policy." October 29, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 313-316.

<sup>62</sup> Nikita S. Khrushchev, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy." October 28, 1962. Available Online at: [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/volume\\_vi/exchanges.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/volume_vi/exchanges.html) [Visited May 4, 2004.]

<sup>63</sup> Dobrynin, 90.

<sup>64</sup> Khrushchev also stated, "I believe that you as a military man, and your military people understand that we were not preparing for war when we delivered means of defense to Cuba. Those means were not meant against the U.S., but were the means to ensure the security of Cuba." Nikita S. Khrushchev, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, Moscow." October 30, 1962. Available Online at: [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/volume\\_vi/exchanges.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/volume_vi/exchanges.html) [Visited May 4, 2004.]

<sup>65</sup> He also claimed that their missiles had been dismantled.

<sup>66</sup> From the Moscow Conference, in Allyn, 35-36.

<sup>67</sup> The American team included Stevenson, McCloy and Akalovsky, and the Soviets were Mikoyan, Kuznetsov, Zorin, Dobrynin, Menshikov and Zhukov.

<sup>68</sup> Adlai Stevenson, "Memo October 31" *The Papers of Adlai E. Stevenson Vol. VIII, Ambassador to the United Nations 1961-1965* ed. Walter Johnson, Carol Evans and C. Eric Sears (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979), 304.

<sup>69</sup> Adlai Stevenson, "Report on Anastas Mikoyan Meeting." November 2, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 262-265.

<sup>70</sup> Bromley Smith, "Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee Meeting." November 2, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 266-269.

<sup>71</sup> John F. Kennedy, "Radio and Television Remarks on the Dismantling of Soviet Missile Bases in Cuba, 5:30 pm, Fish Room in White House." November 2, 1962. Available Online at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/site/docs/pppus.php?admin=030&year=1962&id=501> [Visited May 4, 2004.]

<sup>72</sup> Khrushchev worked hard to preserve the relationship with Castro, and they maintained a regular correspondence; there was an exchange of letters between the two leaders between October 30 and 31. Khrushchev claimed that the Soviets had listened to Cuban reports and that consultation had taken place between the two nations. He stated his disapproval of Castro's call for a nuclear attack on the US, and while he noted that they were forced to make concessions, he explained that the Americans had done the same. Despite the growing relationship between their two countries, Khrushchev did not explain the full extent of the American deal. Nikita S. Khrushchev, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to Fidel Castro (Reprinted from the International Edition of Granma)." October 30, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 253. When Castro replied, there was an evident rift developing. He said that he had only called for nuclear strikes if the US had been the aggressor, declaring, "I spoke not as a troublemaker but as a combatant from the most endangered trenches." Castro also disagreed with Khrushchev's assertion that the Cubans were consulted, questioning how the Soviet leader could make such a claim. While Cuba did have an assurance of territorial integrity, Castro increasingly felt ignored as the weeks proceeded. Fidel Castro, "Letter From Fidel Castro to Chairman Khrushchev (Reprinted from International Edition of Granma)." October 31, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 254.

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<sup>73</sup> On this day, an article appeared on the front page of the *New York Times*. It provided a summary of the crisis, and helped to establish the starting date of the crisis as October 14. Available Online at: <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/nytimes/90584910.html> [Visited April 3, 2004.]

<sup>74</sup> John F. Kennedy, "Statement by the President Urging Citizens To Vote on Election Day." Available Online at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/site/docs/pppus.php?admin=035&year=1962&id=502> [Visited May 4, 2004.]

<sup>75</sup> John F. Kennedy, "Letter From President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev." November 3, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 270.

<sup>76</sup> Nikita S. Khrushchev, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy (State Department Translation)." November 4, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 274.

<sup>77</sup> Mikoyan would do much of the work in that department, as a diplomatic foot soldier in Cuba. When he addressed the Cuban leadership, he recounted the Soviet perspective of the crisis that had occurred, accusing Kennedy of originally covering up the Soviet build-up so not to tamper with the electoral campaign. Anastas Mikoyan, "Cuban record of conversation, Mikoyan and Cuban Leadership." November 4, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 318-322.

<sup>78</sup> The final results of this election revealed that Kennedy did not lose any ground in Congress. This was an encouraging victory for the incumbent Commander-in-Chief.

<sup>79</sup> John F. Kennedy, "Letter From President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev (Transcribed for legibility)." November 6, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 275-276.

<sup>80</sup> Bromley Smith, "Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee Meeting." November 7, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 277-278.

<sup>81</sup> Mikoyan, however, was not informed of this development during his negotiations with Castro. Fursenko and Naftali, 309.

<sup>82</sup> Nikita S. Khrushchev, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy (State Department Translation)." November 11, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 279-282.

<sup>83</sup> "8:30 pm, November 12, 1962, Oral Message RFK to Dobrynin." Available Online at: [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/volume\\_vi/exchanges.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/volume_vi/exchanges.html) [Visited May 4, 2004.]

<sup>84</sup> John F. Kennedy, "Message From President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev." November 12, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 283.

<sup>85</sup> Task Force 137, led by Rear Admiral John A. Tyree, was created on November 12, 1962. It was the "Combined Inter-American Blockade Force". This Task Force was used to aid Task Force 136, and included participants from Argentina, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic. Acosta, 149.

<sup>86</sup> Garthoff, 112-113.

<sup>87</sup> Nikita S. Khrushchev, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy (State Department Translation)." November 14, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 284-285.

<sup>88</sup> Garthoff, 74.

<sup>89</sup> Rostow, meanwhile, helped Ball prepare for a diplomatic trip to Europe. His conclusion stated that the US could take a tough stance with the Soviets because they would back down. Rostow outlined that the situation in Cuba was unique; "one should generalize with caution." The next crisis, he noted, would not be like this. It stated that nuclear weapons deterred a Soviet nuclear attack, but did not deter them from entering Cuba. Rostow voiced concern over a couple of accidental signals that were sent during the crisis; the U-2 over Russian airspace, and a Soviet ship captain thought flash photography from an American ship was an attack on his vessel. His analysis stated that the Soviet intelligence showed that the US was taking all serious military steps and created an awareness that they were going to lose. W.W. Rostow, Defense Department Review, "Some Lessons From Cuba." November 15, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 317-328.

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<sup>90</sup> John F. Kennedy, "Letter From President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev." November 15, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 286-287.

<sup>91</sup> General Maxwell Taylor, "Chairman's Talking Paper for Meeting with the President." November 16, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 290-292.

<sup>92</sup> Bundy joked, "There are two people to whom it's *wholly* unsatisfactory, Mr. President, you and the Chairman." "Executive Committee Meeting of the NSC." (Tape 58) in Stern, 408.

<sup>93</sup> (Tape 59) in Stern, 409.

<sup>94</sup> Roger Hilsman, "Negotiations on Cuba: The Advantage of Stalemate." State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research Memo, November 17, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 293-296.

<sup>95</sup> Nikita S. Khrushchev, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy (State Department Translation)." November 20, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 300-303.

<sup>96</sup> Fidel Castro, "Letter From Fidel Castro to U Thant (Reproduced in a UN Press Release dated Nov. 20/62 'SG/1379')." November 19, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 298.

<sup>97</sup> McGeorge Bundy, "Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee Meeting November 20, 1962." November 20, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 304-305. Thus far, the information pertaining to their discussion of the non-invasion pledge has remained classified.

<sup>98</sup> "News Conference Number 45, President John F. Kennedy, State Department Auditorium, 6pm." November 20, 1962. Transcript available Online at: [http://www.jfklibrary.net/jfk\\_press\\_conference\\_620913.html](http://www.jfklibrary.net/jfk_press_conference_620913.html) [Visited May 4, 2004].

<sup>99</sup> John F. Kennedy, "Letter From President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev." November 21, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 306.

<sup>100</sup> Nikita S. Khrushchev, "Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, Moscow." November 22, 1962 Available Online at: [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/volume\\_vi/exchanges.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/volume_vi/exchanges.html) [Visited May 4, 2004].

<sup>101</sup> McNamara told them that they were unable to locate the tactical nuclear weapons and assumed they were hidden in caves. When Bundy heard this, he remarked, "You know, that story itself would be worth getting out." Coleman, 38-39.

<sup>102</sup> The warheads left in late December, 1962. Coleman, 39.

<sup>103</sup> John F. Kennedy, "Remarks in Miami at the Presentation of the Flag of the Cuban Invasion Brigade." December 29, 1962 Available Online at:

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/site/docs/pppus.php?admin=035&year=1962&id=556> [Visited May 4, 2004.]

<sup>104</sup> In the aftermath, an article was published attacking Adlai Stevenson for the stance he took during the crisis. The article came from Joseph Alsop and Charles Bartlett; the latter of the two journalists was a friend of the President. The article, "In Time of Crisis" ran in the *Saturday Evening Post* on December 8. The authors accused that Stevenson was 'soft', and "wanted a Munich". Despite this, Stevenson honourably upheld his duties, and Bundy criticized President Kennedy for not clearing up the article. Joseph Alsop and Charles Bartlett, "In Time of Crisis" *Saturday Evening Post*, December 8, 1962 in Divine ed., 59-67. White, 164-166. Bundy, 459.

<sup>105</sup> Garthoff, 128.

<sup>106</sup> "National Security Action Memorandum No. 213." January 8, 1963. Available Online at: <http://www.jfklibrary.net/images/nsam213.jpg> [Visited June 20, 2004.]

<sup>107</sup> Dino Brugioni pointed out how Harvey was often at odds with the Kennedys and even referred to them around the office as "fags".

<sup>108</sup> Beschloss, 639.

<sup>109</sup> James R. Killian, Jr., "Memorandum for JFK from Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board." February 4, 1963 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 361-371.

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<sup>110</sup> Coleman, 39.

<sup>111</sup> Earlier, in December, McNamara had recommended to NATO that the Jupiter missiles in Turkey should be replaced with Polaris submarines, armed with Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles. Acosta, 196.

<sup>112</sup> Blight, 155.

<sup>113</sup> Beschloss, 639.

# **Maskirovka: The Role of Deception in the Cuban Missile Crisis**

Quite often in life, appearance and reality have very little in common. This maxim unmistakably applies to both the Cuban Missile Crisis and President John F. Kennedy. President Kennedy was infallible; the media portrayed him as American royalty; he fought the Soviets and won; his life was taken too soon. The Cuban Missile Crisis was America's response to secretive Soviet aggression; the evil dictator Castro threatened all of Latin America with subversive activities; nuclear weapons were poised to strike the continental US; the crisis was solved brilliantly with the 'Trollope Ploy'. Neither the Cuban Missile Crisis, nor JFK have proven to be what they initially appeared to be, but why is that? It would be too simple to dismiss them both by saying that popular culture takes bits and pieces of reality and forms these generalized myths of grandeur. Myths are not crystals; they do not just randomly form. They are created, and they are created for a purpose. In the case of the public mythologies of both JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis, this is exactly what has occurred.

It is undeniable that there were several sides to JFK's character, which evidently came out in his administrative policies during the crisis. Many of these facts were not known at the time he was in office, but none of these historical tidbits change the fact that he *was* the man that sat at the helm of the most powerful nation in the world in his era. And nothing will change the outcome created by the style of leadership and the decisions that he relied upon to navigate his nation through a potentially fatal tempest. With more recent analyses of John F. Kennedy, a better understanding of the man has emerged.<sup>1</sup> It should be understood that Kennedy, above all else, was a man that was constantly seeking the spotlight. Whether he was making grand speeches in 1954 as a senator on the topic of the St. Lawrence Seaway,<sup>2</sup> or was challenging the Soviets in 1962 over Cuban missile bases, President Kennedy was always looking for opportunities to enhance his popularity.

The Cuban Missile Crisis bears some similarity to the man that was just described. To North Americans, the crisis was presented to them in a perspective that was not necessarily representative of the reality in which it existed. While the Soviets had enforced a pure form of deception against their population by never acknowledging their bold actions, in the United States, citizens were tricked into believing that they were being informed of their government's actions. Not only were American citizens relentlessly bombarded with these deceptive tactics, but foreign allies, the media, and several international organizations were also subjected to varying versions of the crisis. Both Kennedy and Khrushchev purposely deceived one another, and attempted to package or "spin" the crisis in different ways for different constituents. This chapter is divided into five categories: a) Operation MONGOOSE and Operation ANADYR, b) American-Soviet Relations, c) America and International Organizations, d) President Kennedy and the American Government, and e) the Kennedy Administration and the Media.<sup>3</sup>

### **Operation MONGOOSE and Operation ANADYR**

This chapter will begin with an examination of the two policies that triggered the Cuban Missile Crisis. The American policy was designed to overthrow the communist government in Cuba. The Soviet policy was a secret operation to install ballistic missiles in Cuba to deter an American invasion, strengthen the Soviets' ballistic missile capabilities and to appease the Chinese. Both strategies were given an extremely high priority within these nations, and were the backbones of each nation's policy towards Cuba. These policies

have already been outlined in the chronology of this paper, but certain aspects will now be presented in a new, more theoretical context. The covert activities conducted by the United States against Cuba were more than enough to justify a Cuban declaration of war. The Cubans instead looked for international assistance. They managed to do so in a way that purposely menaced the Americans, choosing their main adversaries, the Soviet Union. The Soviets were aware of US foreign policy, and should have known that the Americans would retaliate against a move as bold as the secret deployment of ballistic missiles, covered with a cloak of disinformation.

Kennedy's covert agenda against Castro was part his own concoction, and part a hangover from the Eisenhower administration. Both chose a clandestine approach towards Cuba. After the failed invasion at the Bay of Pigs, Paul Nitze was shuffled out of his position at the helm of the Task Force on Cuba. He was replaced by Richard Goodwin, who was to be assisted by Edward Lansdale, a "covert specialist".<sup>4</sup> One of Goodwin's first initiatives in his new position was the implementation of Operation PATTY, approved by JFK in June of 1961. It called for the assassination of Raul Castro, the bombing of the "Hermanos Diaz" oil refinery and included plans to attack Guantanamo with six mortars, while conducting a simultaneous attack directed at a Cuban military camp, to create the impression that both sides were under an attack, ensuring a military response. The skirmish was to be blamed on Cuban Generals, upset with the assassination of Raul Castro.<sup>5</sup> Instead of backing exile invasions, Kennedy's would try to stage a pretext to justify an American invasion of Cuba.

Linked to Operation PATTY, Project 'Liborio,' was to include plans for armed attacks in Havana, sabotage of electricity plants and department stores, and assassinations. The goal was to provoke enough anger that Castro would call a meeting to discuss the events, where he would then be assassinated. A Cuban, Antonio Veciana Blanch, was recruited by the CIA for the mission, and rented an apartment near a location where public speeches were made with the intention of assassination attempts. Another CIA operative working under Project 'Liborio', Dalia Jorge Diaz, was arrested when she was caught planting a firebomb in a Sears' department store. Her arrest encouraged Blanch to flee and cancel his planned assassination attempt, scheduled for October 4, 1961.<sup>6</sup>

Several months after PATTY spluttered, a new program, Operation MONGOOSE, became the American policy on Cuba.<sup>7</sup> Lansdale was formally in charge of MONGOOSE, but he has subsequently insisted that the CIA was not enthusiastic about President Kennedy's agenda.<sup>8</sup> Lansdale put Theodore Shackley in charge in Miami as the chief of JM WAVE (Operation Headquarters).<sup>9</sup> From Miami, the largest CIA operation in American history (up to that time) was being orchestrated, employing 3,000 Cubans in addition to regular CIA agents. With their resources, "commando raids were launched almost weekly."<sup>10</sup> The Americans also bribed European manufacturers to ship sabotaged products to Cuba to disrupt their economy,<sup>11</sup> "contaminated Cuban sugar fields, detonated bombs in department stores, [and] set factories aflame."<sup>12</sup> In 1962 there were ninety-seven CIA operations by sea to transport agents and supplies to Cuba. The Cuban government responded with Operation Juala (Cage), an armed operation in the Cuban province of Escambray to remove

American-supported armed resistance.<sup>13</sup> At this time, no dual policy existed to balance these warlike actions with a peaceful resolve of the Cuban-American differences. It was known that MONGOOSE would not succeed without a US invasion, but Allison and Zelikow say that the White House opposed an invasion.<sup>14</sup> Since the operation was continued, Kennedy's men were engaged in a contradictory policy, one that was either destined to become a \$55,000,000<sup>15</sup> failure, or one that would force them to employ a course of action that they did not support.

If the plans had leaked for Operation MONGOOSE, it would have been difficult for President Kennedy to justify such a policy, especially one that had stated the illegal nature of the operation in one of its founding documents. However, as his name was not located on any of the papers pertaining to the operation, the President maintained plausible deniability. While his hand is not visible in the records, the role of Robert Kennedy is. There is wide documentation to demonstrate how the Attorney-General had suggested using military action with a staged pretext to either provoke a Cuban attack, or to provoke an attack from the Americans, and even suggested the mining of the harbour at Havana during the onset of the crisis.<sup>16</sup> When President Kennedy moved the operation into Phase B, it activated ZR/RIFLE, the CIA codename for the "assassination capability" headed by William K. Harvey.<sup>17</sup> In late August, there were several attempts made on Castro's life.<sup>18</sup>

During the Cuban Missile Crisis, President Kennedy followed the operation intently, although he did so through his brother. Several days after the formal announcement of the crisis to the public, the US government encouraged Alpha-66 to take action and dispersed guides to Cuban exiles demonstrating how to escape from Cuba, preparing them for the event that an invasion would not go successfully, but implying that they would be used in an invasion in any event.<sup>19</sup> During the second week of the crisis, there was a plan to land ten sabotage teams in Cuba, using submarines, but it was not developed. Problems existed for MONGOOSE, as there was much disagreement between the CIA and the Pentagon over how the operation should be used. McCone decided to suspend the plan since he could not control it. He told JFK that the military and the administration would have to claim responsibility if Kennedy wanted these plans implemented.<sup>20</sup> With the cancellation of their covert program, the President examined other options. On October 26, he eventually approved a strategy suggested by Rusk to send a message to the Brazilians instructing them to lie to Cuba about Soviets preparations to bargain away the Cuban bases, so that Castro would have to decide to serve his people, or Moscow.<sup>21</sup> Although it was not as volatile an operation as an assassination attempt, the move would still be a form of psychological warfare.

From the very start, Kennedy was packaging American foreign policy in less than honest terms. He very consciously worked to manage the image of his country. While he maintained that his country was the 'leader' of the 'Free World,' his actual policies pertaining to Cuba were more in line with that of an imperialist. The American public was not informed of the actions being taken by Kennedy's administration, and were misled about the nature of their policies. Only the victims in Cuba, and Kennedy's inner circle really understood that a covert war was already being fought. Although MONGOOSE was suspended during the

crisis, and Kennedy had called off all sabotage programs, the order did not persist long after the peace was achieved. Many of the operatives trained by the CIA were still involved in various dubious affairs in the months after the announced end of the crisis. Several months into 1963, seventy-three Cubans died after four men trained by the CIA for the Bay of Pigs invasion and Operation MONGOOSE bombed *Cubana* Flight 455. Despite this fact, the Cubans were unable to prove any CIA involvement.<sup>22</sup> Accompanying the economic sanctions imposed through the OAS, these were the real characteristics that defined the Cuban-American relationship while President Kennedy was in office.

An ocean away, the Soviets were not operating in a much different fashion from their American counterparts. There are many examples of attempts made by the Soviets to bolster their image internationally.<sup>23</sup> ‘Maskirovka’ was a Soviet doctrine for concealment, designed “to deceive the adversary about the nature, scope, and timing of a Soviet operation. Each lie [had] to be elusive and its confirmation should be difficult, if not impossible.”<sup>24</sup> Such a policy is evident in the Soviet paper trail that has emerged. As early as August 1, 1961, the KGB Chief, Shelepin, had his plans to spread disinformation about Soviet capabilities approved. This included various boasts of new technology.<sup>25</sup> Such a course of action was chosen to present a challenge to the Americans, while demonstrating the strength of the USSR to the Communist and ‘Third World’ nations. It was also a conscious effort to manipulate the information that came from their country, to deceive their intended audience. Given the international track record of the United States, it was a provocative move indeed.

Khrushchev found himself in a very difficult position after the Bay of Pigs invasion. His boasts to protect Cuba with a nuclear blanket may have impressed the Chinese and the Cubans, but it did little to make the pledge a possible reality. He was facing a shortfall of ICBMs, and the ones he had were not proving reliable. Few of Khrushchev’s advisors had any actual foreign policy experience.<sup>26</sup> There were also continuous threats, and mounting evidence that the Americans were planning to support an invasion of Cuba once more. Khrushchev made his decision to install ballistic missiles in Cuba for three reasons. They would protect Cuba, strengthen the Soviet status internationally—providing Khrushchev with a better footing for negotiations in Berlin, and doing so in a cost-effective way that would allow him to revive the failing Soviet economy—and to appease the Chinese. After meeting with his closest advisors, Khrushchev began to examine the possibility of such an action. Sharaf Rashidov, a member of the Presidium, had written the Defence Council<sup>27</sup> saying he believed that the forests in Cuba would provide camouflage for the missiles.<sup>28</sup> After he had made his decision, some members of the Politburo did not sign the initial acceptance of the missile placement. They had to be coerced, as Khrushchev sent people to their homes to collect their signatures.<sup>29</sup> There may have been some Soviets who did not support the move, but Khrushchev had pushed the plan through, stressing that it would redress the balance of power. There is no evidence that any contingency planning was done to prepare for any obstacles that might arise. This lack of planning demonstrates a serious flaw in the Soviet action, one that was eventually exploited by the United States.

By the time of Khrushchev’s decision, Cuba and the Soviet Union had already established a relationship that was both militarily and economically centred. There were initial plans to sign a secret treaty

with Cuba to be released after the completion of the missile bases. Malinovsky even met with Ché Guevara (Castro's Senior Aide) to sign such a deal, but Guevara did not want the treaty to be secret. Instead, he pressed for a public deal, but to no avail.<sup>30</sup> Khrushchev did not want to risk the possibility that Cuba would release such a document and jeopardize their operation.<sup>31</sup> After they had made their decision, Ivanov approached General Anatoli Gribkov instructing him to plan the secret deployment with the use of his aides Major-General G.I. Yelisseyev, and Colonel V.N. Kotov. Operation ANADYR, as it was titled, was designed to look like a troop movement exercise to the North, explaining why the soldiers were provided with winter gear. Artillery Marshal Konstantin P. Kazalov was in charge of the Soviet end of the shipping operation. Soldiers were uninformed of their destination, and were unhappy to hear of long distance exercises. They were given fake titles, linked to agriculture, and wore civilian clothing.<sup>32</sup> All of this was to fulfil the image of 'Maskirovka.' While the shipping operation was a success, the Strategic Rocket Forces simply went by the books for the construction of the bases. There was no established routine for camouflage during construction. Camouflage would slow down the construction, and there was a deadline to be met.<sup>33</sup> Concurrent with the operation, the Soviets also conducted a massive propaganda campaign. Vladimir Semichastny submitted a six-point propaganda plan on October 16, to coincide with the revelation of the missiles.<sup>34</sup> Khrushchev's secret policies were delicately teetering on the edge of stability. On one hand, he took extreme precautions to protect his decisions, yet his planning was not thorough, and inevitable errors would jeopardize their execution.

Although created and enacted in secret, Operation ANADYR was an attempt by Khrushchev to project a strong image of his nation. With the exposure of the missiles, it would demonstrate that the Soviets had taken strong steps, even though they admittedly never intended on using the weapons to actually strike the US, as their final decision demonstrated.<sup>35</sup> This was merely image management. It turned out that intelligence reports from Cuba had been incorrect about many scheduled locations for the bases, causing delays, and it was also learned that the forests would not conceal their construction efforts from US reconnaissance. The Soviet decision had been made on several false assumptions. Throughout the crisis, the Soviet diplomats in America remained uninformed about their Cuban arsenal because the Kremlin did not want to risk having the US intercept their cables.<sup>36</sup> At the Moscow Conference, Kondrashov mentioned how the Soviet press never even used the word missile throughout the crisis. This left the Soviet population with a sort of "socialist surrealism".<sup>37</sup> The Kremlin was able to portray the United States as the aggressor, while understating the nature of the Soviet relationship with Cuba.

### **American-Soviet Relations**

It should come as no surprise that ANADYR and MONGOOSE fitted each nation's established pattern. Although neither program had been adopted in such a full scale before, the Americans had already invaded Cuba several times and had a recent history of intervention in Latin America to protect US interests; and the Soviets had already placed ballistic missiles outside of their borders,<sup>38</sup> and had publicly pledged to defend Cuba with nuclear weapons. The two policies were destined to come to a head, but the Cuban Missile

Crisis cannot be examined without a reminder that there was a Cold War raging between the two nations, and it would not subside until much later, in 1989.

Despite their political warfare, both nations sought a system of back-channel diplomacy. One such channel was realized on May 9, 1961 when RFK met Georgi Nikitovich Bolshakov, known to be a TASS correspondent. Bolshakov was really a member of the GRU (Soviet Army Intelligence Service) and friend of Aleksei Adzhubei, Khrushchev's son-in-law.<sup>39</sup> Bolshakov would be used several times to establish a deniable channel for the two heads of state. Just prior to the crisis, Bolshakov was used to barter an agreement to put the Berlin issue on ice until November in exchange for the cessation of the American practice of photographing Soviet ships in international waters. This deal matched perfectly with the policies of both nations. For Khrushchev, it would allow him to continue shipping his weapons into Cuba, buying him enough time to complete his operation. For Kennedy, it would ensure that he would not have to respond to a Soviet provocation during an election campaign, and the postponement coincided well with his own plans and scheduled operations in Cuba.<sup>40</sup>

In addition to these beneficial exchanges for the leaders, Bolshakov was also used for disinformation purposes. On October 5, 1962 he informed Robert Kennedy that the weapons being shipped to Cuba were of a defensive nature only.<sup>41</sup> While it is true that the Soviets had defensive goals for the weapons, the statement was misleading at best. Bolshakov delivered the same message to Robert Kennedy on October 23. This message was passed along to the President, who learned that the Soviet ships would run the quarantine, and that the Soviets considered their bases defensive. President Kennedy was audibly angry as he asked, "Why are they lying about [the nature of their weapons]?"<sup>42</sup> With disgust in his voice, he continued, "Khrushchev's horseshit about the election! Anyway, it's a sickening thing that we were told, is that he's very mad about being revealed about this *horror* that would embarrass me in the election."<sup>43</sup> Kennedy was clearly angry that Khrushchev had accused his administration of taking action in Cuba to enhance their results in the election. However, Kennedy *was* angry that the Soviet operation would be politically damaging. It has been noted that this deception caused Kennedy to respond with "startled anger". JFK had staked his reputation on Khrushchev's assurances, and these actions presented too many challenges to the President's image, and to the success of his political party, for him not to react.<sup>44</sup> Sorensen has recorded that President Kennedy was 'heated up' after being lied to,<sup>45</sup> and instead of diplomacy, he preferred to show his ability to retaliate.<sup>46</sup> This betrayal remained a sore issue for the President, as he later stated in his private correspondence with Chairman Khrushchev. Both nations tried to convince each other that they were being cooperative and honest with one another, yet most of their agreements were not followed through, and amounted to little more than empty talk.

The Soviet Union was not the monolithic system that the Americans believed they were facing off against. Instead, the system had various power centres as struggles existed between the KGB, military and Party Bosses. It does appear, however, that the American administration did not think that the Soviets operated under as much of a monolithic system as has been suggested. It has been noted, "the State Department Sovietologists argued that several of the top leaders from the party, the KGB, and the military were involved in

the Soviet decision. Each of these leaders shared an interest in the strategic goals of the Soviet state. But each of them interpreted those goals somewhat differently, and each of them also had goals of his own.”<sup>47</sup> Unless the author has taken present theories (proposed by Allison and Zelikow) and worked them into his own recount of the crisis, this indicates that the Americans were well aware that different factions existed within the USSR. Further proof comes from the American response to the second letter, received on October 27, when they feared Khrushchev had been overrun by hardliners. Reports from his top Soviet experts, documented through audio recordings, demonstrate that Kennedy *was* well aware of this.

In their relations with one another, the Americans and Soviets rarely ever communicated in a straightforward way. After the Americans had discovered the ballistic missiles, but before they announced the knowledge to the world, a previously scheduled meeting was to occur between President Kennedy and Gromyko. Kennedy was already planning his strategy days before the meeting. He wanted to know if he should bring up the US discovery of the Soviet missiles, believing Dobrynin was either lying, or did not know the truth about the weapons.<sup>48</sup> Gilpatric suggested to Kennedy that “your hand is strengthened somewhat if the Soviets have lied to you, either privately or in public.”<sup>49</sup> The day of the meeting, General Taylor also proposed there would be an advantage if Gromyko lied. In order to increase the likelihood of such an occurrence, Rusk suggested JFK read his statement from September 4 to get a response from him, adding, “See if he will lie about it....”<sup>50</sup> President Kennedy employed this strategy, and the meeting with Gromyko was steeped in deception; neither side mentioned the missiles. The President remarked later to RFK and Lovett that Gromyko had told “barefaced lies.”<sup>51</sup> Gromyko left assuming that ANADYR had been a success.<sup>52</sup> President Kennedy had bypassed diplomacy in order to build a strategy that would exploit the favourable conditions to the US, and he misled the Soviets in the process.

After the Soviets understood this particular American strategy, they challenged them in reverse, questioning the veracity of the US. Dobrynin accurately thought that Kennedy had been deceptive when he met with Gromyko by not mentioning the US knowledge of missiles. On October 22, Dobrynin commented to Rusk, “now the administration was creating a serious crisis....”<sup>53</sup> Dobrynin investigated the US resolve and met with Robert Kennedy the next day. RFK commented, “I understood you as saying that what was involved—at that point and in the future—was purely the sending of missiles of a comparatively short range for the defense of Cuban territory and the approaches to the island and not the sending of missiles that could strike all of the continental United States.” The Attorney-General was referring to a meeting between himself and the Soviet Ambassador held earlier in September where they apparently discussed the tactical nuclear weapons in Cuba.<sup>54</sup> In his cable to the USSR, Dobrynin had drawn conclusions perhaps summed up best in his phrase, “the Kennedys’ anger was personal as well as official.”<sup>55</sup>

Throughout the crisis there was an abundance of evidence to suggest that the American administration was concerned with managing their image, and hiding their arrangements with the Soviets. They were also aware of the possibility for deception in their relationship with the Soviets. On October 18, Thompson wondered out loud why Khrushchev would say he would take no action until after the elections, and then

follow a course like this.<sup>56</sup> They reasoned that it was most likely a Soviet ploy, or a diversionary tactic. A week later, Robert Kennedy was questioning whether an airstrike was not a better 'first step' than a confrontation at sea, commenting, "...We're still being tough, which is really the point we have to make."<sup>57</sup> The Americans had to appear to be tough to appease their internal critics and keep the Soviets at bay. When preparing their options to respond to Khrushchev's letters on October 27, President Kennedy was quite critical of wording that suggested the US had welcomed Khrushchev's second letter.<sup>58</sup> The language was edited, and it was also decided not to mention Turkey. Instead, they would mention NATO and the Warsaw Pact to make the issue more of a global conflict or settlement.<sup>59</sup> It should also be recalled that Robert Kennedy would not accept official documents that suggested that they had made any deal for Turkish missiles. Both nations had a desire to look tough, and for the Americans, this concern over their image forced them to conceal many of the true facts about the crisis.

### **America and International Organizations (Alliances)**

As with any international event, the Cuban Missile Crisis was a concern for numerous nations. They each had their own systems of alliances, and could not always act without considering the better interests of their invested partners. This is not to say that either the Americans or Soviets felt so bound to their systems of treaties that they could not act in their own interest. For the Americans, dealing with their allies proved to be less of a cooperative effort with consultation, and more of an exercise in *impression-management*. At other times, their allies were used for what they could provide, and ignored when they proved to be a nuisance. Early in the crisis, President Kennedy had even declared that both NATO and the OAS were useless, but he was forced to consider diplomacy after receiving recommendations from Bundy and Rusk.

In the case of Canada, relations between President Kennedy and Prime Minister Diefenbaker were strained. Historically, Canada had been extremely cooperative in the endeavours of the United States, and the two nations enjoyed a joint agreement for air defence, NORAD. Along with many other things, the treaty stipulated a cooperative military effort to repel any encroachments into their territories. Only two hours before the televised speech on October 22, Diefenbaker and his Defence Minister, Douglas Harkness, were briefed by US Ambassador Livingstone Merchant and informed of the American response. Canada's Prime Minister thought that Canada deserved more than two hours notice, especially since NORAD had secret arrangements since 1957-1958 for dealing with threats like this. Canada was obviously not to be consulted on the crisis, only informed.<sup>60</sup> As a result, Diefenbaker refused to put Canadian forces on alert, although he eventually did lend support, mostly in anti-submarine warfare. The Americans failed to see the nature of their special relationship<sup>61</sup> and treated Canada like any other ally.

The British also enjoyed a special relationship with the United States. Before the crisis even began the British had authorized the Americans to use their base in the Bahamas. It was not to be used 'actively' unless the British were advised in advance.<sup>62</sup> Despite this cooperation, the British received an American portrayal of events, which often included omissions or distortions of fact. When Kennedy phoned Macmillan on October 22 to discuss the situation, the President told him, "We have had no plan to invade Cuba." He also declared,

“getting the missiles out is the object of our policy.”<sup>63</sup> The first statement was false. A plan to invade Cuba did exist at the time, OPLAN 316, and it was being considered for use. The second statement was false because it omitted one of the stated American objectives in their policy towards Cuba—the removal of Fidel Castro from power. Macmillan initially supported Kennedy’s ideas. When British politicians began questioning Macmillan, he could not back Kennedy any longer without expressing some concern. President Kennedy then assisted Macmillan by coaching him on what to say to Parliament, highlighting his statements from September, and underlining Khrushchev’s deception.<sup>64</sup> Kennedy was not only involved with keeping his allies misinformed, but in this case he was also instructing one of them on how to misinform its population.

As soon as the option was raised to consider a trade for the Jupiter missiles in Turkey, the Americans were forced to consider their relationship with their alliances. In a memo to Rostow, Garthoff proposed that the US did not want to look like they would endanger their allies to keep themselves safe.<sup>65</sup> This is what his country was actually considering, but they would have to find a way to make it seem otherwise. Bundy also brought up this topic on October 27 at the morning ExComm meeting. When Kennedy began to question why they had not taken any action towards discussions with Turkey, Bundy said that they did not talk to them earlier since they did not want to appear ready to sell out their allies; “Now it’s irrational and it’s crazy, but it’s a *terribly* powerful fact.”<sup>66</sup> Bundy apparently thought this was laughable, but no matter how they would spin the idea, it would be a difficult fact to overcome. President Kennedy wanted to avoid having Turkey reject the Soviet offer flatly, and noted that they had to tell the Turks about the dangers, or ‘peril’ that loomed. Instead of informing their allies of the immediate danger that existed to their country, the Americans debated exactly what to tell them and when, allowing them to remain uninformed.<sup>67</sup> The Americans definitely had an agenda to inform their allies with incomplete information in order to frame the crisis in terms more acceptable to the US, Turkey, and NATO.

Both the USA and USSR were members of the United Nations and used the organization to further their political decisions. Because of this international organization, the Americans and Soviets would be forced to find ways to frame the role of their nation in a different light. Neither country would find the organization to be truly adequate for their needs, but it would eventually play a key role in finding a resolution for the crisis. For the Americans, an initial examination of their policies demonstrated that their actions were not in line with the UN Charter, and that their protests against the Soviets were not necessarily grounded in international law. Abram Chayes (a Legal Advisor in the US) suggested bypassing the UN under the guise of hemispheric defence and using the OAS to justify their blockade, and Leonard Meeker (the Deputy Legal Advisor) recommended they maintain using the term ‘quarantine’ to describe the blockade.<sup>68</sup> Chayes’ suggestion came when they realized that the UN would not serve their ultimate purpose. They instead chose an organization where they would be unopposed (remember that the OAS had already demonstrated that it would support the US when it voted in favour of economic warfare practices against Cuba, and the Soviets would have no say within this organization). The approval of the OAS would provide the UN with the appearance that the region was united against this act of aggression, and would strengthen the American resolve. Meeker’s suggestion is even easier to explain. Blockades are illegal unless preceded by a declaration of war. Therefore, the US would

be following an aggressive course of action if they employed a blockade, but using the term 'quarantine' in place of the word blockade, would give the impression that their actions were defensive.

In the days following President Kennedy's address on October 22, 1962, the US, USSR and Cuba all independently contacted the UN for aid in resolving the issue. On behalf of the US, Stevenson claimed that the Soviet clandestine action was a threat to international stability, and they demanded the removal of the weapons before they would lift the quarantine. Part of the stated American strategy was to submit this resolution first, in order to prevent another nation from submitting a similar, but less favourable proposal. They also incorporated the results from the OAS decision to help persuade the UN, and denied any reference that would link the Cuban bases with those under American control. The Cubans complained that the naval blockade was an act of war, and wanted the UN to investigate where in the US the attacks were coming from. The Soviets, through Ambassador Zorin, complained of US piracy in international waters, stating that their assistance to Cuba was to defend it against American aggression. The Soviets were obviously manipulating the facts as well. Regardless, they wanted an end to the quarantine, with negotiations.<sup>69</sup> For any nation participating in the UN, the event would have easily taken on two distinctive faces. There was the idea that the Soviets were destabilizing the international environment through their move, or the idea that the US was trying to invade Cuba, the Soviets were trying to enhance Cuba's defence, and the US were now trying to cover their own actions. All of the claims were based on the truth, but each omitted enough information to force many to choose between which side appeared to be the most consistent with known facts.

The Americans were forced to keep the UN in mind to ensure a resolution of the crisis. On October 26 in a meeting with ExComm, Stevenson recommended that they follow the proposal sent by U Thant for a standstill while negotiations were conducted. He also suggested that the US word their resolution to say "the weapons be *kept* inoperable." This would alter the perception that the US wanted the weapons dismantled or *rendered* inoperable.<sup>70</sup> This language would be much easier to swallow, as it would indicate a request for less action than if they were to use the other words. Another consideration taken by the Americans was how they could utilize the UN to achieve optimum results. During their long ExComm meeting on October 27, Ball was advising them all to respond to Khrushchev's letter from October 26, but added the idea that the American response and the letter from Khrushchev should be sent to U Thant, allowing the Secretary General to release both messages without bringing Turkey into the picture.<sup>71</sup> This would allow the Americans to continue to present the problem in a limited context.

The Americans viewed themselves as the cornerstone of NATO, but did not place as much emphasis on the organization as their membership implied. A stipulation of the treaty called for a mutual defence of each member state, indicating that the countries would work in cohesion to absolve any potential threats to member states. While the Americans clearly expected the other NATO nations to live up to the agreement, they did not always conform to the limits that this would impose on their nation. NATO was only a minor concern to President Kennedy during most of the crisis. However, on October 27, NATO would have to be considered. Following the memo received from Ambassador Hare, President Kennedy recommended that they should send

a notice to Turkey to determine their opinion on a missile trade, and to avoid having them reject the Soviet proposal flatly. Bundy reminded the President that any message sent would have two audiences, the Soviets, and NATO. He reinforced that they could not sound like they were willing to trade the missiles and sell out an ally for their own self-preservation.<sup>72</sup> Later in the meeting, while examining a draft proposal for NATO that suggested a trade, Bundy, remarked, "The justification for this message is that we expect it to be turned down."<sup>73</sup> JFK suggested that if they were rejecting the proposal, then they ought to do so through NATO, adding, "What we want to insist on now is a cessation of work et cetera while we *discuss* it. Then we may reject it, but NATO ought to reject it because I think the reprisal is going to be on all NATO." The President also highlighted how uninformed NATO had been all week, suggesting, "I don't think the alternative has been explained to them. You see, they just think it's sort of a continuation of the quarantine. They don't have the notion that we're about to do something."<sup>74</sup> The Americans were clearly withholding information that was needed in order for NATO to operate properly.

In some very heated discussions, Kennedy's administration began to focus on how they could have NATO comply with US demands. Bundy was supportive of McNamara's notion that they would get a more favourable response if they offered to stand down the Jupiters as a favour to Turkey, to insure their own security, than to offer the option as a trade with the Soviets.<sup>75</sup> Planning ahead for the next day's NATO meeting, President Kennedy stated that Finletter was to mention that the work was continuing at the missile bases. If NATO was not interested in the deal, the US was going to have to act by escalating the crisis in one way or another, to which the Soviets would reply in kind. As an aside, the President voiced a concern that "because we wouldn't take the missiles out of Turkey, we are either going to have to invade or have a massive strike on Cuba which may lose *Berlin*."<sup>76</sup> Speculating further, Kennedy noted that the Turks were bound to assume that the US was only proposing this action because of Soviet pressures. McNamara then suggested telling Turkey, "...We're going to have to invade Cuba. You are in mortal danger. We want to reduce your danger while at the same time maintaining your defense."<sup>77</sup> To further drive the issue home, McNamara suggested they could say that the Jupiter missiles were more obsolete than the Thors. Since Britain was removing their missiles because of their obsolete status, the US recommended that Turkey do the same with their weapons.<sup>78</sup> In actuality, the Jupiters were not going to be compatible with the newer solid-state fuel systems that the US military had recently developed, but they could still be used in a nuclear strike and were not entirely obsolete. Kennedy stressed that they did not want Turkey to state their opinions of the Soviet offer, but expressed the belief that they were 'tough', and would probably want the missiles regardless. McNamara continued to push the idea that their main goal at NATO should be getting the Turkish missiles removed, and replacing them, "in the interest of the alliance...."<sup>79</sup> McNamara was quite insistent that they needed to tell NATO that the US was in a position to attack Cuba, and a reprisal was likely in Turkey. By removing the Jupiter missiles in exchange for Polaris submarines, the US would be able to minimize the danger to NATO. By simply rewording their problems and proposals, the Americans were giving the impression that they were acting in the best interests of their allies. Meanwhile, their policy demonstrated a lack of consideration for the well-being of other NATO nations, and instead showed a willingness to prepare a deal with their 'enemy.'

Another concern, expressed later that night was how to influence NATO without appearing as though the Americans were setting the agenda. As summarized by Rusk, there were two options being considered for their meeting with NATO—McNamara's point of swapping the missiles for submarines and Ball's opinion that they should accept the trade in a straightforward fashion.<sup>80</sup> Not wanting to rush into either decision, President Kennedy was careful to add that the Americans did not want to state a position in the NATO meeting. He believed that NATO would "feel compelled then to agree with that," and added that it would only be a good move if they knew which way they wanted to steer NATO. He was afraid that people would accept the view of the US and then say, "Well, we followed you, and you bitched it up." Instead, Kennedy wanted simply to inform NATO that the situation was getting worse, and that the US was going to have to take action against Cuba.<sup>81</sup> Instead of allowing any of the organizations to operate properly, the Americans were willing to push international treaties aside in order to maximize the US gains, all the while undermining the value of these organizations.

### **President Kennedy and the American Government**

Every government is inherently complex. President Kennedy found himself as the head of a nation divided between Democratic and Republican ideals. He was never able to fully explore domestic and foreign policy concerns in independent spheres. Roger Hilsman believed that "behind [Kennedy's] policy choices loomed domestic politics and an appalling array of rival interests and competing factions...."<sup>82</sup> President Kennedy kept that fact in mind when assembling ExComm, as he wanted to maintain a degree of control over the group. To do so, he hand picked the members, supplied them with their goal of removing the missiles, and used his brother as a stand-in whenever he was absent. ExComm would never be left to initiate policies without the President's approval, and while being provided with the ability to meet without the President, and to influence the final policies, they would never function independently of JFK.<sup>83</sup> As the crisis progressed, it became increasingly apparent that not all of the ExComm members were considered to be in the President's inner circle, and according to Len Scott and Steve Smith, "some of [Kennedy's] statements during the ExComm meetings can be read as political manoeuvres rather than as statements about his intentions."<sup>84</sup> Because the levels of trust fluctuated with each member of the administration, President Kennedy would often have to frame his policies in different ways to obtain his objectives. An example of this occurred at a meeting on September 29, 1962. Kennedy was presently meeting with his two top Sovietologists, Bohlen and Thompson, when Jerry Wiesner, Special Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, entered the room. President Kennedy sought the latter's opinion of the letter they had been examining,<sup>85</sup> telling him that it came from British scientists, as opposed to its true origin of Moscow.<sup>86</sup> Kennedy wanted to see if the proposal held water, and did not want to bias Wiesner's opinion by stating that it came from the Soviets. The President did this without any hesitation or voiced pauses, and appeared quite comfortable in this setting. Even after his opinions were shared, Wiesner was not informed of the true status of the letter.

For a much more glaring example of how controlled the channels of information were in the US government even prior to the Cuban Missile Crisis, one does not have to look any further than the President's

initial responses to the intelligence reports on the Soviet build-up. Carter, reporting on the August 29 overflights, told some members of the administration that the SA-2 sites in Cuba were almost completed. Kennedy ordered Carter to freeze all of the intelligence information from the U-2 reconnaissance flights. He feared that the information would be leaked.<sup>87</sup> Just over a week later, the CIA detected cruise missiles for coastal defence. Once again, when Carter and Cline presented the findings to President Kennedy, JFK was more concerned with the potential for a leak of information than with the actual missiles, and the information was frozen. The President was reportedly very angry that his intelligence officials were sharing this information within the US administration, and had threatened both Carter and Cline's jobs if any word of their discovery was leaked to the media.<sup>88</sup> To handle this influx of information, the President ordered additional "security arrangements, which included a special code word, *Psalm*, that ensured that all those who would need to know would get intelligence on offensive weapons, but that no one else would get it."<sup>89</sup> Kennedy's decision has since been described as "a rigid security system."<sup>90</sup> With this system in place, many members of the administration would be forced to make decisions without having full extent of the Soviet build-up. President Kennedy attempted to use the same subterfuge with McCone, when the Director of the CIA had reported the findings of crated IL-28 bomber aircraft in Cuba. This time, however, when the President told McCone about his desires to suppress the information, McCone argued back that it would be too dangerous of a policy to pursue. McCone prevailed; even so, the information still did not become readily available. It is obvious that Kennedy did not want to focus on Cuba prior to an election for fears that he would be forced into taking action. By suppressing the intelligence, the President was able to maintain a suitable atmosphere to continue in his agreement with Khrushchev.

President Kennedy even had designs to continue this policy after the discovery of the ballistic missiles, despite the fact that he had already been informed at a previous meeting that ballistic missiles would create a problem that they could not ignore. On October 16, Kennedy had a desire to know how long they could keep the information pertaining to the weapons a secret. Bundy explained how Kennedy's information freeze had given them an advantage, potentially extending this window.<sup>91</sup> McNamara estimated that they would have a week, but cautioned that they had already taken action that might raise some suspicions; normally, the U-2 film was duplicated and given to other agencies.<sup>92</sup> Bundy understood Kennedy's concerns and suggested a strategy: "let's play it still harder and simply say that there is no evidence. I mean, we have to [...we've gotta] be liars."<sup>93</sup> This logic sat well with the President, who then asked everyone present to remain tight-lipped.<sup>94</sup> To keep 'noise' levels down, both with the media and uninformed members of the staff, Bundy recommended they all use the East gate when they returned for their meetings, to avoid being seen coming and going at unusual hours. Both as a protective measure against the media's running the story, and Kennedy critics' exploiting the situation, the President decided to only keep his top advisors informed of the developments.<sup>95</sup>

When President Kennedy decided to offer a secret deal to the Soviets, he also made the decision to keep this knowledge available to his closest advisors only. In hindsight, Bundy noted how, "With all its costs, secrecy prevented a serious political division both within the United States and in the Atlantic alliance."<sup>96</sup> This statement holds much truth, but it also contains the preconceived notion that this was the *only* way that the US

could have acted. There were further results of the action beyond Bundy's claim. One reason that the war hawks still called for strikes after the 'resolution' of the crisis was that they were not privy to the information that was shared between RFK and Dobrynin.<sup>97</sup> Specifically, Taylor, McCone, Dillon, LBJ, U.A. Johnson, Nitze and the JCS were all uninformed about what took place. The JCS pushed the hardest, insisting that the US should continue with the airstrikes on Monday. They suspected the Soviets were "preparing the ground for diplomatic blackmail."<sup>98</sup> This limitation of information carried even further implications with how the crisis was to be remembered.

Throughout the historiography it has been noted how different members of Kennedy's administration believed the President would have responded in different ways if the Soviets had not sent a favourable reply, but the logic behind their comments has not fully been explained. Dillon, Nitze, and Taylor all thought that JFK would have used the military if the Soviets had not responded favourably, but McNamara and Bundy thought he would have tightened the blockade.<sup>99</sup> Sorensen, Schlesinger and Rusk suggest that Kennedy would have made further concessions, and Rusk even made claims that he was instructed to prepare a deal through the UN, although this point remains in contention.<sup>100</sup> The reason that so many opinions exist is that Kennedy was clearly telling different people different things. The claims by the former group can be disregarded, as they were uninformed and misled. The real debate exists between the camp that suggested the blockade would have been tightened, and those that believed he would have made further concessions, although there is no real way to prove either group correct.

Just outside of Kennedy's immediate administration lay the US Senate and the House of Representatives. During the summer before the crisis, Republican Senators Kenneth Keating and Barry Goldwater worked to make Cuba an issue in the upcoming Congressional elections through their persistent accusations that Kennedy was covering up a large-scale Soviet build-up.<sup>101</sup> Although some of their information was *not* correct,<sup>102</sup> their final assertions *were*. Others criticized Kennedy's interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine, some challenged Kennedy's position on Cuba, and even Senator George Smathers (a personal friend of the President) sided with the Cuban-Americans because it was an election year.<sup>103</sup> There was an abundance of politicians readily willing to speak out on Cuba, but many of them would be appeased by claims of tough action, or the potential for escalation. At other times, they were pacified through presentations of carefully tailored information.

Through an examination of President Kennedy's recorded meetings with Congressional leadership, it is apparent that they were not always being fully informed about the available intelligence or the actions the US government was taking, or the intentions of Kennedy's administration. When the President met with the leaders on September 4, 1962 he requested their permission to send a resolution through Congress to call-up reserve forces to face Soviet challenges around the globe. As part of his justification, Kennedy told them that Cuba was a threat because of their subversive activities in Latin America.<sup>104</sup> This contravened what he had learned earlier that day from his Secretary of State, who said there was no evidence that Cuba was engaged in the kinds of programs the US administration was accusing them of. The following day at the Senate Armed

Services Committee, neither Rusk nor McNamara mentioned the desire of the US government to call up their reserves. The Congressional Resolution was kept secret until it was introduced on September 7.<sup>105</sup>

Before he could announce his decisions to the public, President Kennedy first had to meet with Congress. The content of their presentation was carefully selected, omitting many necessary facts, yet still providing a decent summary of their concerns. There were several present that reiterated many of the administration's earlier anxieties. When questioned if the US would proceed without NATO approval, Kennedy responded evasively.<sup>106</sup> He could have mentioned how they were continuously discussing that they might have to act in such a manner, but decided to omit this.<sup>107</sup> It is also notable that McCone remained diligently loyal to the President while briefing the Congressional leaders about the Soviet build-up. Not once did he mention how hard he had worked to augment their surveillance of Cuba, or how he continuously insisted that the Soviets were preparing to install ballistic missiles.<sup>108</sup> Thompson, as well, held back certain information when describing Khrushchev's concerns with Berlin. He mentioned, "It also seems subsequently that his timing—his indications that he didn't want to talk until the end of November—was related to this buildup."<sup>109</sup> While conceding the knowledge of the Soviets' intentional timeframe, he did not describe how Khrushchev had promised there would be no action until after the *elections*. Although only a slight difference of semantics on paper, the addition of that word would have caused some serious problems for the President. When Kennedy met with the Congressional Leadership again on October 24, McNamara had said that no interceptions had yet occurred, but he did not make mention of the *Kimovsk*, which had turned around when approached by US vessels.<sup>110</sup> It is clear that a pattern of misinformation, omission, and evasion routinely dictated how Kennedy and his administration interacted, not only with Congress, but with each other as well.

### **The Kennedy Administration and The Media**

Historians do not have to search thoroughly to locate numerous incidents that indicate that the crisis was not presented to the public accurately. There were many different concerns that came into play when Kennedy's administration decided how much the public needed to know. While JFK may have professed to the public that he was not planning an invasion of Cuba, evidence, such as the correspondence between Carter and McCone (September 4, 1962) describing how a Soviet announcement to protect Cuba with ICBMs had changed the atmosphere of the US plans suggests otherwise. Initially, Kennedy's biggest concern had to do with leaks. On October 18, McNamara stated his belief that they could withhold the information from the public until October 22, and could cover any leaks by saying the CIA and FBI were investigating "a number of rumors."<sup>111</sup> As well, many people were clearly feeling that their voices were not being heard. Roger Hilsman believes "that some of the memoranda being written were not so much to present this or that case to the President—since he had already heard them all—but to build a record. If something went wrong, many of these papers would obviously begin to leak."<sup>112</sup> With such a high likelihood of press leaks, there were invariable dangers that existed for the administration, and they worked to prevent the possibility.<sup>113</sup>

One tactic that Kennedy often employed to manage the public, was to prepare extensively for the press in different ways. Before making his speech on October 22, President Kennedy held several meetings to

discuss his diplomatic plans. When examining the draft of his address, he suggested removing language that insinuated that Castro was supported by the previous administration. Kennedy was simply being careful, saying they did not want to criticize Eisenhower. He also did not want to make it look as though the Soviets had been working on the sites for two months before the US noticed. This point was restated, in its entirety, a few moments later. Hilsman was able to reassure the President that it was only in the past week that anyone could have known definitively. Rusk then suggested that Kennedy should meet with former *Time* correspondent Jim Greenfield to help prepare for the press and his briefing with Congress before announcing the presence of the missiles to the world. Rusk thought it would be wise to “sit down and think of all the dirty questions.”<sup>114</sup> President Kennedy rarely made a speech or answered a question at a press conference with a statement that had not had its implications examined first.

That afternoon, Kennedy’s attention was focused on his scheduled encounter with the press. Once again, it was suggested that he go over some of his potential answers to delicate questions. On the audio recording, Kennedy almost appeared to be a natural at the process, reciting answer after answer fit for public consumption; we are taking the proper action; we could not have responded earlier without proof; this is such a departure from Soviet policy.<sup>115</sup> McCone suggested they state that they could not have identified the nature of the build-up until seven-to-ten days ago. He also believed that they should not mention that the build-up dated as far back as August.<sup>116</sup> When their conversation turned to the accuracy rate for taking out the missiles, Bundy suggested, “I think it may be quite important *not* to get into too much public discussion as to the difficulty of hitting these targets.” President Kennedy responded defensively, saying that they could not get all of the sites with the strikes. Bundy concurred, “I don’t think the next few days is the time to talk about it.”<sup>117</sup> Kennedy then questioned the role of media censorship during the Korean War, and was informed that some newspapers had been severely censored.<sup>118</sup> O’Donnell notified Kennedy that the censorship codes had since been toughened.<sup>119</sup> With all of this considered, JFK’s final decision was to liken a surprise attack to Pearl Harbor, and to provide no other details about the strike.<sup>120</sup> Despite all of their attempts, the sheer volume of information passing through the White House would be nearly impossible to contain entirely. There had been a slight mix-up and photographs were released to the British media, and not to the American press. In a private conversation with his brother, the President commented, “I don’t want to make it look like we’re all fucked up here....”<sup>121</sup> To combat the problem, RFK suggested to his brother that they release the pictures to the US press, and say that they had planned to all along. Complex problems, especially when dealing with the public, could easily be bypassed with a few deceptive words.

As they began to experience some success with the quarantine, the Americans had to ponder what to say next to their public. At issue was whether they should reveal that some ships had turned around. Before an order could go out, Rusk warned them to be careful not to make it seem as though *all* of the ships had turned around, or the US might look bad if another Soviet ship appeared to be heading towards Cuba at a later date.<sup>122</sup> Moments later, Kennedy was still concerned with their image, saying, “The quarantine can be lifted only if the U.N. can substitute effective guarantees against the introduction of this material during this period. Well, they can’t do that, but at least it doesn’t make us look quite as negative.”<sup>123</sup> His image management continued the

next day, after he learned that the Soviet construction was unrelenting. He wanted to announce this, but through the State Department, so it would not look like the Defense Department was in charge.<sup>124</sup> Following the downing of an American U-2 on October 27, Rusk wanted the event to remain a Cuban response, not a Soviet response.<sup>125</sup> This was despite the fact that they had discussed it, and were nearly certain that it had been a Soviet action. At times it seems as though Kennedy's administration was not going to let the facts stand in the way of a good story.

When confronted with actually having to consider stopping a Soviet vessel on October 25, RFK suggested a plan of avoidance. Instead of searching the *Bucharest*, he suggested letting it pass through, and *then* they could announce the tightening of the quarantine to include POL.<sup>126</sup> This would give the appearance that they were getting tough, while in actuality they would be allowing a tanker to pass. The next day, as they discussed the fact that their troops were currently on board the *Marcula*, JFK wanted to know what to say if people asked why they had stopped this ship, but allowed the *Volkerfreundschaft* to pass. When McNamara informed him that the *Marcula* was a cargo ship under charter to the USSR, Kennedy placed an order to have the information announced through the Defense Department, immediately. Bundy also advised him to say that the US did not want to begin their quarantine with a passenger ship, since this was the truth.<sup>127</sup> McNamara was not concerned with their excuses, since the boarding had been successful, and in this case he argued that they should simply release the facts. It was not long before the subject of POL was brought up again. Since the assembly of the IL-28's had continued, McNamara asked for JFK's authority to add to the quarantine, "bomber fuel, and the materials from which it is manufactured."<sup>128</sup> Kennedy was supportive but wanted an upgrade to POL to be linked to the ballistic missiles since they were the "more dramatic offensive weapons. Because everybody has bombers every place."<sup>129</sup> The day before the end of the immediate crisis, Kennedy reminded his staff that there was a NATO meeting to take place the next day. While such a meeting would easily be justified under the situation, Dillon still recommended creating a false pretence for the meeting, suggesting that the downed surveillance plane could function as their 'reason' for the emergency meeting.<sup>130</sup> As often as accurate information was dispersed, it appears that excuses were just as likely to be found in statements from the Americans.

As a result of the suppression of information, many Americans had very few resources to help them understand their country's foreign policy. The US public were unaware of Operation MONGOOSE while it existed, and believed that the Soviets were acting irrationally. Hardly anyone in the United States considered that perhaps the actions of their government could be interpreted as aggressive.<sup>131</sup> William Blum, an expert on the CIA, has concluded that the American people "have been subjected to a relentless anti-communist indoctrination." Often, the US public is wholly unaware of the activities of their government.<sup>132</sup> Instead of allowing their actions to be viewed as illegitimate, or as meddling in Cuban affairs, the US framed its role as consistent with a leader of freedom, and as representing the true views of Cubans.<sup>133</sup> The American public rarely received accurate information, and this was not through any errors, but instead was by design.

Many efforts were undertaken during the crisis to omit information or to suppress full knowledge of events. Sometimes this was done for security reasons, for example when McCone informed Congress that no one was to use the term U-2, only 'reconnaissance photographs,' and JFK added, "We're not using the precise numbers."<sup>134</sup> This kind of omission seems rather logical for protecting the national interest. At other times, there was no apparent logic to the decision to withhold information. While they discussed the nature of various potential ships that they could intercept, it was made clear that they would not stop any tankers without deck cargo, unless POL was added to the quarantine. As JFK then spoke, he made a reference to the dissemination of information to the public, and the room suddenly became united against the option. McNamara then urged him not to make any of the information public. Kennedy argued that it would become public information eventually, but his advisors still disapproved without providing him with a reason.<sup>135</sup> It is most probable that they did not want to set terms for the quarantine that would bind them to take a certain action, yet announcing information such as the aforementioned, would only have helped to define the quarantine more clearly for the Soviets, and would reassure the American people of the legitimacy of their government's actions.

After all of their planning was said and done, the most effective way to inform the public was to hold a press conference. For President Kennedy, the event would be less stressful due to his intensive preparation, although, given the accuracy of the information being dispersed, he might have experienced some anxiety. By late August, Kennedy was already receiving questions about Cuba. One referred to information received from the State Department that the technicians in Cuba might be there to "operate missiles similar to the Nike missiles." Instead of answering the question, Kennedy simply said he did not know who told them that, and moved on. Another question asked, "Are there no anti-aircraft missiles shipped into Cuba?" To this Kennedy responded saying, "We have no information as yet. That does not mean that there have not been, but all I am saying is that we have no such information as yet."<sup>136</sup> This contradicted what he had learned from McCone on August 20 and 22. It is difficult to interpret these remarks as anything but deception, since Kennedy had been informed about the SAM's on two separate occasions in just over a week.<sup>137</sup> In this case, Kennedy's disinformation was done in the national interest. He did not want to reveal the extent of US surveillance capabilities. At one point Kennedy remarked, "I am not for invading Cuba at this time. No, the words do not have a secondary meaning. I think it would be a mistake to invade Cuba."<sup>138</sup> Salinger has written that all of his own answers during the press conference on October 22 were worded so they would be framing the Russians as the aggressors. George Ball said it best when he described his tactic for coping with the sensitive nature of the content of his statements to the press during the crisis, saying, "I therefore couched my answers in circumlocutions, using diversionary and elaborate obfuscation." That *has* to be the fanciest way to say, "I lied" ever.

As the crisis subsided, Kennedy met with the press on November 20, 1962 to announce: "I have today been informed by Chairman Khrushchev that all of the IL-28 bombers now in Cuba will be withdrawn in 30 days." Although, Kennedy had requested a thirty-day timeframe from the Soviets, the closest offer from Khrushchev came on November 14, when he said it was possible to remove the IL-28 bombers in two to three months. Someone then asked, "Apparently you have established quite a free-flowing channel of

communications with Chairman Khrushchev. I wonder if you can comment any on this, perhaps telling us how many messages you have exchanged, some of the tenor of those, and if this will be a pattern for the future?" Kennedy replied, "We have exchanged several messages in an attempt to try to work out the details of the withdrawal of the IL-28's and also a system of verification, in an attempt to fill in in detail the assurances given in the letters of late October, so that is what the correspondence has been about."<sup>139</sup> Worded like this, Kennedy had implied that they had only been exchanging letters since the conclusion of the crisis, as opposed to admitting that their correspondence dated back to September 1961.<sup>140</sup> Kennedy was still not telling the American people all that they were entitled to know.

In addition to the use of deception, Kennedy also maintained a tight leash around the neck of several of the most influential editors in the country. On October 20, he phoned Orvil Dryfoos, the publisher at *The New York Times*, to have him hold James Reston's story on Cuba. The following day, Kennedy was back on the phone to *The New York Times*, this time speaking with the editor, Max Frankel, again requesting that he hold an article. Philip Graham, the editor of *The Washington Post*, had reporters working for him that had managed to piece together much of the story through phone calls and fact gathering. Graham, at JFK's request, convinced Murray Marder to take Cuba out of a lead story. Reporters Robert S. Allen and Paul Scott had stories on the impending crisis as well, and Kennedy had to call John H. Whitney, the editor at *The New York Herald Tribune* to ensure that no one would print any details about American military preparations.<sup>141</sup> Kennedy also wanted to make sure that no cameras went onboard the US ships, "shooting a lot of pictures, which, in the press might be embarrassing to us—"<sup>142</sup> He mentioned it first to Gilpatric on the phone, and then again to ExComm. McNamara confirmed that the order had been sent out that day.<sup>143</sup> Kennedy was able to silence the journalistic efforts, and attempted to render them blind as well.<sup>144</sup>

In order to create a lasting impression, Kennedy framed the resolution of the crisis in favourable terms. Right from the start, he announced Khrushchev's acceptance of the proposed deal, but dared not announce his non-invasion pledge or the missile trade.<sup>145</sup> He therefore, framed the situation to emphasize Russian/Cuban losses, and not those of the US.<sup>146</sup> May and Zelikow have noted that reporters were led to believe the crisis was over when in fact it was not.<sup>147</sup> Kennedy decided on November 2 that Bundy and Sorensen were to be the only officials permitted to discuss the Cuban Missile Crisis. Not coincidentally, they both had a background in History. The President also cancelled his press conference scheduled for the day, and informed United States Information Agency Director Wilson not to play-up the angle of Castro as "a Soviet stooge" to the press. Castro alone was blocking the UN mission.<sup>148</sup>

Kennedy and his administration consciously made an effort to distort the historical record and on several occasions made overt comments that proved this. The day Kennedy was informed of the missiles, at one of their meetings Dillon was questioning what the advantage was of using early political action by issuing a warning immediately before the airstrike. Ball answered him, saying, "...The only advantage is it's a kind of ultimatum in which there is an opportunity of a response which would preclude it. I mean it's more, [more] for the appearance than for the reality."<sup>149</sup> Ball was indicating that it would look better for the United States in an

historical context, as opposed to a 'Pearl Harbour type' of attack. As though it took forty-eight hours for the knowledge to embed itself in his head, Dillon, on October 18 again wondered aloud what the purpose of warning Khrushchev would be, asking, 'what could he do to convince the US of his actions?' In a voice that sounded as though he was having an epiphany he added, "We may achieve something in sort of...for history in showing we've done something."<sup>150</sup> Dillon suggested that they give notice, and attack, no matter what the Soviet response was. "What you're doing is to set the stage. That makes some sense."<sup>151</sup>

Sorenson needed this point clarified. The President then spoke up, saying that an announcement would disassociate the strike from Pearl Harbor.<sup>152</sup> Ball, the originator of the idea, then reinforced his brainchild, saying, "I think the history too would give us a better position." Dillon, happy that someone saw things his way, chimed in with an enthusiastic: "That's it. For history, or to the world, we've done it." Bundy, in his usual cynical and sarcastic tone immediately created doubts, asking, "How much better are you off before history if you ask him 24 hours ahead of time, if he says: 'I want a summit,' and you say, 'Nuts.'"<sup>153</sup> The next time the historical context was mentioned was October 22, before Kennedy's address. In a meeting beforehand, President Kennedy told his executives that they should not discuss that they were thinking of conducting airstrikes against Cuba. He proclaimed, "I think we ought to just scratch that from all our statements and conversations, and not ever indicate that that was a course of action open to us. I can't say that strongly enough." Only a moment later, the President restated this in a manner that could leave no doubt in the minds of ExComm of the importance of the utterance to JFK.<sup>154</sup> Rusk preferred that they not say it was not considered, but instead express that the option was not chosen. Had Kennedy survived, it is possible that his notion could have become part of the record.<sup>155</sup>

Following the crisis, there were additional historical considerations. After directing that Stevenson was to be in charge of the UN delegation, Kennedy wanted McCloy to be informed that Stevenson was their voice.<sup>156</sup> This was to not only achieve a tighter control over the negotiations, but to ensure that things would be done quietly. Kennedy also mentioned that he did not want any press coverage since the election was only seven days away.<sup>157</sup> Any negative coverage could have jeopardized the images that were projected from the White House. Immediately after the crisis, Robert Kennedy remarked that no one warned the President of the possibility of nuclear weapons in Cuba.<sup>158</sup> It should be reminded that the Attorney-General had *been* one of a few advisors to warn President Kennedy about the potential for the weapons. McCone, General Carroll, McNamara and Taylor all testified that the weather had been a constraining force for overflights, but Congressman William Minshall immediately contested this, pointing to an eight-day period of relative clarity.<sup>159</sup> After his tenure in the office, Rusk destroyed all of his records before he left Washington,<sup>160</sup> including as well, the memos of conversations with the President.<sup>161</sup> In his memoirs, Rusk also noted that he would not discuss all of the events of his career because he did not want to damage his coworkers' reputations. JFK left behind an interesting collection of audiotapes, whose existence did not surface until after the Watergate scandal. It is possible that Dalton and Powers excised some of the recorded materials between 1973-1975, or even Frank Harrington, another person who had access to the recordings.<sup>162</sup> Some of the tapes had been spliced (including the tapes from August 22), and others turned up 'missing', although initial transcripts

existed for these tapes from Dalton.<sup>163</sup> It is even possible that the August 23 meeting with the JCS was recorded but erased. Tape 16 is described as 'blank' by the JFK Library, and could be the result of either a recording error, or a victim of erasure in the 'purge'.<sup>164</sup> Many authors have debated each of the aforementioned topics.

The eventual historiography of the Cuban Missile Crisis would be marked by several phases. The first, the *Traditional Phase*, engulfed the literature from 1963-1970. Within this era, a dominant view emerged; the idea that the crisis had been a result of Soviet expansionism in the Caribbean that *had* to be confronted by US action. JFK emerged as a heroic figure who had victoriously battled the Soviets during a short period of time in October of 1962. The suggested theory included the 'Trollope Ploy'. While the issue of internal US politics was discussed, it was linked to Republican-Democrat partisanship. This does not claim that other people were not interpreting the events from different vantage points at this time, because many were. It does imply that some authors were interpreted as being more 'credible' sources than others because of their inside knowledge, and thus, their views were adopted as the most reliable by the mainstream. Sorensen, Schlesinger, Alsop and Bartlett, Abel and RFK all presented the view that the USSR was challenging the US and that JFK prevailed as a hero.<sup>165</sup>

In his book, *Decision-Making In The White House: The Olive Branch Or The Arrows*, Theodore C. Sorensen helped to set the tone that many other books would echo over the following decades. It was this book that first established what became the dominant view in the era. In comparison to other early accounts by Hilsman, Schlesinger or Rostow, Sorensen conveyed an apologetic attitude towards the handling of the crisis.<sup>166</sup> He also made it very clear that many different policies were suggested, and many different criteria had to be considered.<sup>167</sup> Furthermore, he set the agenda for many future analyses by declaring the crisis posed limits of decision-making through: 1) permissibility for US action, 2) availability of resources, 3) time constraints due to the approaching readiness of Soviet missiles, 4) prior commitments and statements made by the administration, and 5) constraints of information.<sup>168</sup> While this list is mostly accurate, and quite possibly was how Sorensen actually perceived the events, it only provides the basis for a limited interpretation of the crisis, at best. Sorensen provided a warning to future administrations not to unravel the "guarantee of some little nation's military security..."<sup>169</sup> His comments are better interpreted now that we are aware of the secret dealings that were involved in such a guarantee, and help demonstrate how he was attempting to protect a secret that threatened to ruin the relations between the US and USSR, and would threaten the internal politics in the US.

The same point of view was adopted in Roger Hilsman's *To Move A Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy*. What separates Hilsman from the previous author was that he often voiced criticism of the CIA, saying they warped the intelligence, and should have given more attention to claims of 60-foot trailers, considering how sensitive the country was towards offensive weapons. It has to be considered that Hilsman was attempting to pass some of the blame, as he was a member of the USIB, the same agency that had horribly misinterpreted the signals being sent from Moscow prior to the outbreak of the crisis. The Soviet motive was declared to be an attempt to redress the balance of power in nuclear weapons, in a cost-

effective manner,<sup>170</sup> ignoring the fact that the US government also knew that this was also a Soviet response to American provocation. The Republicans were blamed for Kennedy's tough stance in early September,<sup>171</sup> and Hilsman discussed the internal differences within the US in apparent disgust.

Sorensen returned in 1965 with his book *Kennedy*. This time around, he provided a blatantly biased account of Kennedy's time in office. Often, Sorensen's recounts of the events have proven accurate in comparison with the available resources, but the context in which he framed the crisis was still invalid. Readers were finally enlightened about the actual steps and considerations taken by ExComm during those tense moments. Much like Hilsman, Sorensen explained how ExComm examined various hypotheses to explain the Soviet actions.<sup>172</sup> Although the defence of Cuba was listed, the possibility that the actions of the US government were provocative, or could have been interpreted that way, was not mentioned. Sorensen claimed that he was unable to write the airstrike speech for the President, asking rhetorically how anyone could write such a horrific speech.<sup>173</sup> Michael R. Beschloss has since proven that Sorensen *did* write an airstrike speech including the phrase, "we will not have our security compromised," and he drafted a letter for delivery to Khrushchev as well.<sup>174</sup> In Sorensen's book, the disregard for their allies was finally revealed, but Sorensen continued to push the 'heroic' image of Kennedy, backing the 'toughness' of their blockade, and like Rostow did before him, he called the Cuban Missile Crisis the Gettysburg of the Cold War.<sup>175</sup>

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. reinforced much of what had already been established in *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House*. Walking the reader through a version of the crisis that involved the Soviets poising to increase their military power by moving into Cuba, Schlesinger eventually concluded that the crisis was solved for three reasons in combination: 1) the US had a local military superiority, 2) the Soviets were able to back out of the plan because their national security was not threatened, and 3) the Soviets had no case to present to the world.<sup>176</sup> While he helped to alleviate one myth from the historiography, the idea that JFK hated Adlai Stevenson, he unintentionally propagated another with his support of the idea that JFK made a decision to ignore the October 27 message, while replying to the message of October 26. From what is known, this error was unintentional, since Schlesinger had not been present when the deal to trade the Jupiters was discussed.

A different method of distorting the facts came in Robert F. Kennedy's *Thirteen Days: A memoir of the Cuban missile crisis*. RFK, under the editorship of Sorensen, potentially did more to alter the understanding of the events of the crisis than anyone else. *Thirteen Days* was written with the intent of bolstering RFK's presidential ambition, but the book was not published until after his death. He often altered events, took credit for the work done by others, and generally limited the scope of the crisis as he recounted a classic tale of 'good' versus 'evil' over a 13-day period. President Kennedy was portrayed as a hero, and Robert Kennedy made himself out to be the brains behind the solution to the problem through his 'Trollope Ploy.' In reality, it was Bundy who had originally suggested the idea, and it was McNamara's strategy, in reverse, that they actually used. When he read the manuscript, O'Donnell 'chided' the Attorney-General for taking credit for President Kennedy's work. RFK responded by saying his brother was not the one running for election, he was.<sup>177</sup>

In 1970, two of JFK's closest friends and advisors, Kenneth P. O'Donnell and David F. Powers teamed up to write *"Johnny, We Hardly Knew Ye": Memories Of John Fitzgerald Kennedy*. The authors defended any criticism of Rusk made in *Thirteen Days*, and made it clear that it was JFK who appreciated the courage displayed by Stevenson, not RFK.<sup>178</sup> Despite this apparent desire to uphold the truth, O'Donnell and Powers made several fantastic claims. They said that Kennedy had been "[e]xasperated because the Jupiter missiles were still in Turkey..." adding that JFK had ordered their removal in August. Now, it is possible that Kennedy had simply been in error on this occasion, but if this news enraged him, it never came out on the tapes of his meetings. They also claimed that the President had told RFK and O'Donnell that he did not intend to make a trade for the missiles, and said that Robert Kennedy told Dobrynin that they could not trade the Jupiters.<sup>179</sup> The authors were clearly protecting the secret trade,<sup>180</sup> the first of their inaccuracies accompanied the second in order to make the actual outcome of the crisis appear more acceptable.

There were invariably many people who opposed the ideas set forth during this era, and a few of these pioneers would encourage a Revisionist movement to occur throughout the 1970's. The only problem with these attempts to analyze the crisis was that the actual source material was so limited that the authors were often reporting rumours, repeating various inaccuracies or were making implausible claims. One of the first attempts to dethrone the predominantly American historiography came from Anatolii Andreievich Gromyko, son of the Soviet Foreign Minister during the crisis, Andrei Gromyko. Obviously the omission of crucial evidence about the Soviet involvement limited his study, but like its predecessors, it did contain some truth and at least helped to demonstrate how others might be interpreting the events. Gromyko's version of the crisis attempted to package the crisis in an opposite manner to the Americans. It was said, "Moscow offered Washington peace instead of thermonuclear war."<sup>181</sup> Gromyko openly accused the US of being an imperialist power, and stated JFK's "main goal in Latin America" was "the preservation of its economic, social and political dependence upon the United States."<sup>182</sup> The Soviets were depicted as trying to halt a new American aggression against the Cuban people,<sup>183</sup> and not as a nation in desperate need to bolster their international image, or one with deficient ICBMs. His analysis was that the "roots of the crisis lay in the aspirations of the United States to secure for itself a 'monopolistic right' to 'security' while denying the right of self-defense to other peoples."<sup>184</sup>

During a stagnant time in the historiography, George W. Ball provided a very insightful account of the crisis, often interjecting some of his own criticisms on the American system and administration in *The Past Has Another Pattern*. Finding the crisis difficult to write about, he provided more of a background to McCone's pre-crisis hunches, mentioning how he stated, "[the Soviets] had refrained from installing offensive missiles in their Eastern European satellites from fear that the Poles and Hungarians might fire them at Moscow, but missiles in Cuba with a one-thousand-mile<sup>185</sup> range could not reach the Soviet Union."<sup>186</sup> As Robert Kennedy had done, but to a much lesser degree, Ball at times attempted to boost his own role in the crisis. Instead of outlining how many different policies he influenced during the crisis, he would make subtle comments about things like the 'telling phrase' of the crisis being when RFK said, "My brother is not going to be the Tojo of the 1960s." He most likely mentioned this since the remarks echoed his own stated opinions during the crisis. Demonstrating where Alsop and Bartlett had confused their facts, Ball said that the 'attack' on Stevenson by

Dillon, Lovett and McCone on October 20, was not personal. Stevenson had not proposed anything that had not been discussed already, according to Ball, and “was not a man to tailor his opinions to his audience, and I doubt that the personal attack greatly bothered him.”<sup>187</sup> It is evident, and even stated by Ball, that he would like to help dispel the mythology and “nimbus of romance” that has surrounded Kennedy. His work effectively does this; yet, he also continued to propagate the belief that RFK and the ‘Trollope Ploy’ had resolved the crisis, maintaining his oath to secrecy.

Ray S. Cline came out swinging like a true Cold Warrior in 1989 in an article published in *Foreign Affairs*. Fresh off of the Moscow Symposium, he disagreed with the contemporary view of the crisis, and said that Bundy and McNamara “seemed rather to like the romantic idea that the two superpowers were at the very brink of war....”<sup>188</sup> Disregarding the potential for accidents or misinterpretations, he believed that the reality of the situation was that the US had a four-to-one nuclear advantage, and no US officials at the time thought war was likely. “Had it been otherwise, the direct threat of nuclear retaliation, which I helped others to draft for the president’s October 22 warning, would have been argued at length and probably would have been hedged.”<sup>189</sup> Cline did not believe accounts suggesting that warheads had made it to Cuba, saying, “It is obviously very much part of the Soviet agenda to persuade American participants that the two nations were on the brink of a nuclear war and that Khrushchev’s reasonable flexibility narrowly averted the destruction of civilization.”<sup>190</sup> Mikoyan had said that the Soviet goal was to gain a shift in power, and Cline believed that only by moving in Europe would they achieve this. Cline’s point of view ignored how a Soviet foothold in Latin America would have seriously altered the power, even if only through perception. Cline essentially stated that there had not been plans to invade Cuba, thus defending the traditional view of the crisis.

The last actual attempt to control the final perspective of history came from Dean Rusk’s memoirs, published through his son, Richard Rusk in 1990. Rusk stated in the Preface that if he were to tell the entire story, it would be damaging to his colleagues. He described the ExComm meetings as ‘very serious’; RFK was emotional, while JFK was “cool as a cucumber.” There was no mention of the levity or grim jokes. Rusk chose to ignore the numerous times where Kennedy had lost his composure during the crisis. Perhaps to highlight his own role, he claimed the unanimous support of the OAS encouraged the USSR to withdraw from Cuba.<sup>191</sup> By supporting this notion, he continued to emphasize how the Soviets had backed down, as opposed to how the Soviets had negotiated a settlement. He also noted that Thompson proposed the idea of ignoring the second letter from Khrushchev, but notes how RFK was the one that brought it up at ExComm. In any event, it should have been a dead issue by this time, since the story of the trade had been revealed in Bundy’s book a year earlier.

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<sup>1</sup> The heroics of John F. Kennedy were legendary even before he became the President, but few people knew the real story behind the man. John Kennedy came from a wealthy family and was a best-selling author. His father had been into stock-pooling before it was made illegal, and was suspected of being a bootlegger during prohibition. JFK’s first book, *Why England Slept*, was an edited collection of his father’s papers. It became a best-seller after Joseph P. Kennedy, the future President’s father, bought enough copies of the book to make it that way. Kennedy’s father also made certain that his friend, Undersecretary of the Navy, James V. Forrestal, awarded JFK for saving the chief engineer of the PT-109, despite being responsible for its sinking. John

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Hersey who worked for Joe Kennedy's friend, publisher Henry Luce, was then commissioned to immortalize the event in a book. Another influential friend of the family, Arthur Krock, persuaded *Readers Digest* to condense Hersey's story, spreading John Kennedy's renown. The story was then made into a movie. After publishing another book under his name, although it was mostly written by other authors (most prominently, Sorensen), his father once again purchased enough copies of *Profiles in Courage* to ensure it became a best seller. By the time JFK would run for President, he was already an award-winning hero with two best selling books. Thompson, 32-33. Very few people at the time were aware of President Kennedy's health conditions, and many remain oblivious. Suffering from Addison's disease, and a debilitating back injury he sustained in the PT-109 incident, Kennedy had become a pincushion of sorts. Dr. Max Jacobson, AKA "Dr. Feelgood", injected Kennedy 2-3 times per day with procaine. During the first few days of the missile crisis, JFK was injected several times. Janet Travell, another one of Kennedy's doctors said that he was also taking "as many as eight medications a day" including: painkillers (codeine, Demerol, methadone, cortisone), anti-anxiety agents (Librium), stimulants (Ritalin), sleeping pills, and hormones. One White House doctor, General Howard Snyder, mentioned how "people dependent on cortisone moved from a high to a low when the medicine's effect wore off..." The young, healthy looking President would spend many days lying in bed, soaking in the tub, or walking around with the use of a cane or walking device. White, 118. Beschloss, 187-191. Kenneth C. Davis, *Don't Know Much About History* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2003), 449. President Kennedy also appeared to have the perfect wife and family. Jackie Kennedy was stylish, attractive and very worldly—a perfect spouse for a President. Only, Kennedy spent much of his free time with his mistresses. While in Congress, he had an affair with Inga Arvad, allegedly a Nazi sympathizer. The FBI, who tailed JFK, discovered this fact. Kennedy also had an affair with Judith Campbell while campaigning for re-election to the Senate; the press remained mute the entire time. Campbell was also seeing Sam Giancana, a Chicago mobster. A few of Kennedy's younger mistresses were aides in the White House. Thompson, 40, 92-93, 141.

<sup>2</sup> Kennedy was not obligated to speak on the Canadian issue, as a silent vote in opposition to the project would not have drawn any attention. Instead of remaining silent, he chose to make a bold speech in the Senate, grandstanding in a bid to gain the respect of his fellow senators. Lawrence Martin, *The Presidents and the Prime Ministers; Washington and Ottawa Face to Face: The Myth of Bilateral Bliss 1867-1982* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1982), 181-182.

<sup>3</sup> In a sub-category of Conversation Analysis called Deception Theory, Steven A. McCornack developed and tested an Information Manipulation Theory. McCornack states "Given that conversational interactants possess assumptions regarding the quantity, quality, manner, and relevance of information that should be presented, it is possible for speakers to exploit any or all of these assumptions by manipulating the information that they possess so as to mislead listeners." The process of deceit was further broken down by Burgoon et al into sub-categories: Information Management—control of the information of the message (limited or vague), and Image Management—aimed to maximize credibility (appearance of being pleasant and in control). Furthermore, Mark A. de Turck and Gerald R. Miller continued to work along these lines and have identified 'high self-monitors' (people that are decidedly conscious of their words/image), and the fact that they are more likely to deceive, and are better at it. As well, their study indicated that rehearsal of the intended deceptive behaviour increases one's success in lying. In preparation to study the Presidential Recordings, I began by studying a body of literature that sits somewhere between linguistics, sociology and communications studies, Conversation Analysis. When the focus of my paper shifted, there were several theories that I could not part with. They have helped to shape my interpretation of the crisis. Steven A. McCornack, "Information Manipulation Theory," *Communication Monographs* 59, no. 1 (March 1992): 1. Judee K. Burgoon, David B. Buller, Kory Floyd and Joseph Grandpre, "Deceptive Realities: Sender, Receiver, and Observer Perspective in Deceptive Conversations," *Communication Research* 23, no. 6 (December 1996): 728. Mark A. de Turck and Gerald R. Miller, "Training Observers to Detect Deception: Effects of Self-Monitoring and Rehearsal," *Human Communication Research* 16, no. 4 (1990): 604.

<sup>4</sup> White, 49.

<sup>5</sup> Acosta, 40-41.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 45-47.

<sup>7</sup> The CIA uses what is known as a 'digraph', a two-letter code for countries (i.e. Thailand's code is MO). These letters are provided as the first two letters in an operation title to show which country the policy relates to. Operation MONGOOSE used MO to help create additional confusion in the emergency case that a document was leaked or stolen. Fursenko and Naftali, 146-147.

<sup>8</sup> Hilsman, 12. Lansdale's claims are tentative though, considering his own role, and his own liabilities.

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- <sup>9</sup> Brugioni, 68.
- <sup>10</sup> Lloyd S. Etheredge, *Can Governments Learn? American Foreign Policy and Central American Revolutions* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1985), 79.
- <sup>11</sup> Thomas G. Paterson, *Kennedy's Quest For Victory American Foreign Policy, 1961-1963* ed Thomas G. Paterson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 137-138.
- <sup>12</sup> Beschloss, 6.
- <sup>13</sup> Acosta, 70.
- <sup>14</sup> Allison and Zelikow, 84.
- <sup>15</sup> White, 55.
- <sup>16</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 202.
- <sup>17</sup> Gus Russo, *Live By The Sword: The Secret War Against Castro And The Death Of JFK* (Baltimore: Bancroft Press, 1998), 61.
- <sup>18</sup> Thompson, 164.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid, 290.
- <sup>20</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 288.
- <sup>21</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 306-307.
- <sup>22</sup> Blight, 161-162.
- <sup>23</sup> An easy example would be Khrushchev's infamous boasts that they were churning out missiles like sausages in the Soviet Union.
- <sup>24</sup> Brugioni, 89.
- <sup>25</sup> Zubok and Pleshakov, 255.
- <sup>26</sup> Allison and Zelikow, 327-328.
- <sup>27</sup> The Defence Council included all Politburo and Secretariat members.
- <sup>28</sup> Allison and Zelikow, 212. Marshal Biryuzov reportedly had said the same, and Khrushchev believed it. Mikoyan in Allyn, 54-55.
- <sup>29</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 181. Gribkov and Smith, 14.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid, 87.
- <sup>31</sup> Operation ANADYR cost one billion dollars US, using the 1962 value of money. Zubok and Pleshakov, 259. With such a price tag, it is no wonder that Khrushchev was taking additional precautions to protect his investment, especially considering the fact that he had no back-up plans.
- <sup>32</sup> Gribkov, 9-39.
- <sup>33</sup> Allison and Zelikow, 211-214.
- <sup>34</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 228.
- <sup>35</sup> Even though they were not to be used for a strike, once in place the missiles would have been featured in every showdown with the USA.
- <sup>36</sup> Dobrynin, 74.
- <sup>37</sup> Kondrashov in Allyn, 170.
- <sup>38</sup> Stern mentioned how not only the administration, but also much of the historiography accepted a false belief, as he demonstrated how the Soviets had placed nuclear weapons in East Germany in 1959, on a temporary basis. This information came from Matthias Uhl and Vladimir I. Ivkin's *Operation Atom* from 2001. Stern, 153.
- <sup>39</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 110-112. Beschloss, 152-155.
- <sup>40</sup> Later in the crisis when Feklisov met with Scali, the back channel diplomacy was different, because Feklisov acted on his own initiative. While he had not cleared his message with Khrushchev, he did make sure to inform Dobrynin that he was going to pursue this route. White, 211. Weisbrot, 188.
- <sup>41</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 219.
- <sup>42</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 178. (Tape 36.2)
- <sup>43</sup> From my own transcription. It differs from Naftali and May, and Stern's interpretations. (Tape 36.2—John F. Kennedy Presidential Library)
- <sup>44</sup> Allison and Zelikow, 339-340.
- <sup>45</sup> This is also confirmed through transcripts of discussions between President Kennedy and Prime Minister Macmillan. When speaking with Macmillan, JFK explained the reason that he was only communicating with Khrushchev through letters was that Khrushchev had been playing a double game, and was deceptive, and therefore did not deserve more correspondence. Zelikow and May, *V3*, 100.
- <sup>46</sup> Sorensen in Allyn, 47.

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- <sup>47</sup> Hilsman, 86-89.
- <sup>48</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 455.
- <sup>49</sup> U.A. Johnson agreed with this notion. *Ibid*, 457.
- <sup>50</sup> Taylor supported this notion. *Ibid*, 554.
- <sup>51</sup> Weisbrot, 104-106.
- <sup>52</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 232.
- <sup>53</sup> Dobrynin, 79.
- <sup>54</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 252.
- <sup>55</sup> Stern, 206.
- <sup>56</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 535.
- <sup>57</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 274.
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, 432.
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, 433.
- <sup>60</sup> Paul W. Bennett, Cornelius J. Jaenen, Nick Brune, and Cecilia Morgan, *Canada A North American Nation 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1995), 514-517. Martin, 195-210. The meeting was set up through another Defence Minister, Pierre Sevigny. Kennedy did not call Diefenbaker directly since the two men were not speaking.
- <sup>61</sup> Although Canada had been named, by Rusk, to be approached for exactly that reason.
- <sup>62</sup> Thompson, 173.
- <sup>63</sup> John F. Kennedy, "Memorandum of telephone conversation between President Kennedy and Prime Minister Macmillan." October 22, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; Selected Foreign Policy Documents from the Administration of John F. Kennedy January 1961-November 1962* ed. Tim Coates and Michele Staple (London: The Stationary Office, 2001), 231-232.
- <sup>64</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 228.
- <sup>65</sup> Garthoff, 198.
- <sup>66</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 366.
- <sup>67</sup> Dillon preferred that they keep Turkey in the European context when discussing the conflict, instead of allowing it to be lumped in with the Caribbean crisis. *Ibid*, 384.
- <sup>68</sup> Thompson, 259.
- <sup>69</sup> Office of Public Information United Nations, 104-106.
- <sup>70</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 310.
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid*, 418.
- <sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, 399.
- <sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, 407.
- <sup>74</sup> *Ibid*, 414.
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid*, 416.
- <sup>76</sup> *Ibid*, 419.
- <sup>77</sup> *Ibid*, 419.
- <sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, 443.
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid*, 454.
- <sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, 500.
- <sup>81</sup> *Ibid*, 500.
- <sup>82</sup> Hilsman, 196.
- <sup>83</sup> Paterson, 149.
- <sup>84</sup> Len Scott and Steve Smith, "Lessons of October: historians, political scientists, policy-makers and the Cuban missile crisis," *International Affairs* 70 (1994): 665.
- <sup>85</sup> The letter regarded the minimum number of monitoring stations that would be required to detect seismic activity generated from nuclear weapons testing.
- <sup>86</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 209.
- <sup>87</sup> *Ibid*, 20. Fursenko and Naftali, 204.
- <sup>88</sup> Allison and Zelikow, 335. Brugioni, 122-125.
- <sup>89</sup> Hilsman, 187.
- <sup>90</sup> Brugioni, 127.
- <sup>91</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 413.
- <sup>92</sup> *Ibid*, 414.

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- <sup>93</sup> The original transcripts have [...we've gotta] transcribed as [*Unclear*]. Ibid, 422.
- <sup>94</sup> Ibid, 422.
- <sup>95</sup> Perhaps mirroring his President's behaviour, Ball apparently did not share everything with the President. Lippmann had met with Ball before his influential article was published. Ball did not attempt to stop the story. Weisbrot, 171.
- <sup>96</sup> Bundy, 435.
- <sup>97</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 287.
- <sup>98</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 517.
- <sup>99</sup> James G. Blight, Joseph S. Nye, Jr. and David A. Welch, "The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited," *Foreign Affairs* 66, no. 1 (1987): 178.
- <sup>100</sup> Len V. Scott, *Macmillan, Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis: Political, Military and Intelligence Aspects* (London: Macmillan Press Inc, 1999), 173-174.
- <sup>101</sup> Keating had even stated that it would be worth risking an A-bomb to win Cuba. Weisbrot, 87.
- <sup>102</sup> They had also drawn attention to the cause for the wrong reasons, to help the Republicans in the next election, while weakening the Democrats.
- <sup>103</sup> Weisbrot, 81-88.
- <sup>104</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 62.
- <sup>105</sup> Ibid, 81 and 110.
- <sup>106</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 84.
- <sup>107</sup> This decision demonstrates a lack of trust on Kennedy's behalf. He most likely feared that this information would be leaked, causing tumult within NATO.
- <sup>108</sup> A fact that would have eaten me up from the inside if I had been in his shoes!
- <sup>109</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 68.
- <sup>110</sup> John A. McCone, "Notes on Leadership Meeting on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1962, at 5:00 p.m." October 25, 1962 in *The Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Documents Central Intelligence Agency* ed. Dr. Mary S. McAuliffe (McLean: Brassey's, 1994), 297.
- <sup>111</sup> The next day at his meeting with the JCS, Kennedy mentioned that he wanted to hold off on any decision to conduct airstrikes because of potential press leaks. Taylor responded saying, "Mr. President, I've never been impressed with the argument of some of your advisors on that point." Like McNamara, he also suggested that they could deny everything, and dismiss it as a rumour. Zelikow and May, *V2*, 560 and 592.
- <sup>112</sup> Hilsman, 205.
- <sup>113</sup> After the crisis, Khrushchev commented on the leaky nature of Washington in a letter to Kennedy: "We read now various articles by your columnists and correspondents and we are concerned that in those articles they are widely commenting on the confidential exchange of opinion and it is being done by the people who as it would seem have no relation to confidential channels set up between us. Judging by the contents of these articles it is clear that their authors are well informed and we get an impression that this is not a result of an accidental leak of the confidential information but a result of benevolence for those people into whose hands gets the information they make public. This evidently is done for the purpose of informing the public in a one-sided way." Nikita S. Khrushchev, "Message From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, Moscow." December 11, 1962. Available Online at: [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/volume\\_vi/exchanges.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/volume_vi/exchanges.html) [Visited May 4, 2004.]
- <sup>114</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 21-31.
- <sup>115</sup> Ibid, 44.
- <sup>116</sup> Ibid, 45.
- <sup>117</sup> Ibid, 46.
- <sup>118</sup> Ibid, 52.
- <sup>119</sup> Ibid, 53.
- <sup>120</sup> Ibid, 56-57.
- <sup>121</sup> Ibid, 175.
- <sup>122</sup> Ibid, 253-254.
- <sup>123</sup> Ibid, 258.
- <sup>124</sup> Ibid, 319.
- <sup>125</sup> Ibid, 488.
- <sup>126</sup> Ibid, 274.
- <sup>127</sup> Ibid, 292.

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- <sup>128</sup> Ibid, 293.
- <sup>129</sup> Ibid, 294.
- <sup>130</sup> Ibid, 453.
- <sup>131</sup> Etheredge, 85.
- <sup>132</sup> William Blum, *The CIA: A Forgotten History US Global Interventions Since World War 2* (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1986), 4-11.
- <sup>133</sup> Weldes, 209.
- <sup>134</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 67.
- <sup>135</sup> Ibid, 248.
- <sup>136</sup> John F. Kennedy, Press Conference, August 29, 1962. Transcript available Online at [http://www.jfklibrary.net/jfk\\_press\\_conference\\_620829.html](http://www.jfklibrary.net/jfk_press_conference_620829.html) [Visited May 4, 2004].
- <sup>137</sup> It would not be valid to call it a lie, since Kennedy did forget what the EDP was, and that Britain had nuclear weapons, despite their status as a nuclear developer.
- <sup>138</sup> JFK Press Conference, August 29, 1962. Transcript available Online at [http://www.jfklibrary.net/jfk\\_press\\_conference\\_620829.html](http://www.jfklibrary.net/jfk_press_conference_620829.html) [Visited May 4, 2004].
- <sup>139</sup> "News Conference Number 45, President John F. Kennedy, State Department Auditorium, 6pm." November 20, 1962. Transcript available Online at: [http://www.jfklibrary.net/jfk\\_press\\_conference\\_620913.html](http://www.jfklibrary.net/jfk_press_conference_620913.html) [Visited May 4, 2004].
- <sup>140</sup> Salinger in Allyn, 127.
- <sup>141</sup> White, 100. Ball, 296. Hilsman, 108. Salinger, 251. Bundy, 402.
- <sup>142</sup> "Conversation with Roswell Gilpatric." October 23, 1962, 3:52-3:57 pm. (Dictabelt 32.3 [Cassette JJ]) in Zelikow and May, *V3*, 149.
- <sup>143</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 166.
- <sup>144</sup> Although, Rostow mentioned in a memo after the crisis that there was some flash photography from American ships during the crisis.
- <sup>145</sup> Garthoff, 93.
- <sup>146</sup> White, 146.
- <sup>147</sup> May and Zelikow, 1997, 663.
- <sup>148</sup> Bromley Smith, "Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee Meeting." November 2, 1962 in *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 A National Security Archive Documents Reader* ed. Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), 266-269.
- <sup>149</sup> The second 'more' was not transcribed originally. Zelikow and May, *V2*, 444.
- <sup>150</sup> Ibid, 536.
- <sup>151</sup> Ibid, 540. Dillon was definitely an interesting character to listen to. When I began listening to the tapes, he reminded me of a "Southern" cartoon character because of his typically slow, Southern drawl when he spoke, but soon, I learned to appreciate him, because he tended to do much of his thinking out loud.
- <sup>152</sup> Zelikow and May, *V2*, 546.
- <sup>153</sup> Ibid, 554.
- <sup>154</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 50.
- <sup>155</sup> Then again, it is also possible that the tapes would never have been made public to begin with. No assassination, no LBJ, no Nixon, no Watergate. The 'ifs' of History can be entertaining sometimes.
- <sup>156</sup> Stevenson remained in good standing within the administration after the crisis, and despite the defamatory article that Kennedy belligerently never cleared-up, he worked loyally under the man that refused to clear his name.
- <sup>157</sup> 10:10 am, Cabinet Room and Oval Office. In May and Zelikow, 637-659.
- <sup>158</sup> Brugioni, 148.
- <sup>159</sup> Ibid, 163.
- <sup>160</sup> Beschloss, 71.
- <sup>161</sup> Rusk, 197.
- <sup>162</sup> Zelikow and May, *V1*, Pg xix.
- <sup>163</sup> Ibid, Pg xx.
- <sup>164</sup> Ibid, Pg 607.
- <sup>165</sup> Weisbrot, 197.
- <sup>166</sup> Theodore C. Sorensen, *Decision-Making In The White House: The Olive Branch Or The Arrows* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 25.

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- <sup>167</sup> Sorensen, *Decision*, 19.
- <sup>168</sup> Ibid, 23.
- <sup>169</sup> Ibid, 33.
- <sup>170</sup> Hilsman, 163-164.
- <sup>171</sup> Ibid, 196-197.
- <sup>172</sup> These included: Cold War politics, a diversionary trap, the defence of Cuba, for use as a bargaining ploy, and to increase their missile power. Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 676-677.
- <sup>173</sup> Ibid, 686.
- <sup>174</sup> Beschloss, 454.
- <sup>175</sup> Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 724.
- <sup>176</sup> Schlesinger, 831.
- <sup>177</sup> Beschloss, (footnotes) 419.
- <sup>178</sup> Kenneth P. O'Donnell and David F. Powers with Joe McCarthy, "*Johnny, We Hardly Knew Ye*": *Memories Of John Fitzgerald Kennedy* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970), 323.
- <sup>179</sup> O'Donnell and Powers, 337.
- <sup>180</sup> It is difficult to imagine that Kennedy withheld news of the missile trade from O'Donnell and Powers.
- <sup>181</sup> Anatolii Andreievich Gromyko, *Through Russian Eyes: President Kennedy's 1036 Days* (Washington: International Library, Inc., 1973), 231.
- <sup>182</sup> Ibid, 115.
- <sup>183</sup> Ibid, 170.
- <sup>184</sup> Ibid, 171.
- <sup>185</sup> Equal to 1,609 kilometres.
- <sup>186</sup> Ball, 287.
- <sup>187</sup> Ibid, 296.
- <sup>188</sup> Ray S. Cline, "Commentary: The Cuban Missile Crisis," *Foreign Affairs* 68, no.4 (1989), 191.
- <sup>189</sup> Ibid, 191.
- <sup>190</sup> Ibid, 192.
- <sup>191</sup> On this topic, Rusk happily stated, "I didn't have to twist arms or bludgeon anyone." Richard Rusk, *As I Saw It: Dean Rusk as told to Richard Rusk*. Ed. Daniel S. Papp (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990), 236-237.

## **Conclusion**

Since its resolution, our understanding of the Cuban Missile Crisis has grown exponentially. The actual extent of the potential for danger has only been known for a relatively short time, when declassified documents confirmed that the Soviets already had nuclear warheads in Cuba. Placing the dangers of the technology aside, it appears that the real danger lay not in the destructive capabilities of the weapons, but instead, in the parallel policies of the United States of America and the Soviet Union. Members of the American administration have since admitted that they “did not give adequate attention to the impact of [their] actions on the Soviet Union.”<sup>1</sup> The Soviets voiced a concern that the option to sign a public treaty with Cuba was out of the question. Their fear was that the US would have reacted with a blockade or invasion, and the Soviets having announced their intentions and nullified their strategy.<sup>2</sup> If the Soviets had succeeded with their objective in Cuba, the history of the Cold War could have evolved much differently.

JFK and his advisors were pushed to the point where they did not want to let the Soviets think their lies would go unquestioned or unpunished.<sup>3</sup> Kennedy ensured that he would take whatever steps were necessary to resolve the crisis in the most advantageous terms for his nation, self, and party. Considering that the Soviet Captains were instructed not to allow the Americans to search their vessels, and were to blow their ship up as a last resort,<sup>4</sup> or that there were 180,000 American troops mobilized in the south-eastern United States with plans for 1,080 sorties for the air attack if necessary,<sup>5</sup> or that the combined Cuban/Soviet forces in Cuba amounted to 300,000 troops with both conventional and nuclear weapons,<sup>6</sup> it is amazing that the crisis was resolved peacefully, even if not in amicably cooperative terms. Alison and Zelikow have suggested, “To end the crisis, Kennedy was prepared to pay more, and Khrushchev to accept less, than the other required or understood.”<sup>7</sup> In the end, it appears as though Khrushchev actually did make more concessions than his American adversaries. The United States never did invade Cuba, but they did not, as promised, make a formal declaration of these intentions. They also removed the Jupiter missiles in Turkey, but replaced them with Polaris submarines, and therefore, the same dangers existed for the Soviets in the end, while the bases in Cuba had been neutralized. The Soviets had invested an obscene amount of money in Operation ANADYR, and its failure effectually ensured that Khrushchev would not remain in power for long. Ultimately, the Soviets had lost the potential to use the missiles for leverage in future showdowns with the USA.

It is difficult to imagine what would have been implied for the bigger picture had the Soviets not accepted the negotiation terms of the US, but speculating on such things will not help forward the understanding of the crisis. By covering up the actual facts of the crisis, Kennedy, while preserving his own image, negligently allowed many false lessons to be gleaned from the Cuban Missile Crisis. In the official record it would appear as though tough action and nuclear deterrence had solved the confrontation, whereas, it was really conciliatory actions, and negotiations with mutual concessions. While the reality of the conflict is just beginning to emerge now, it is interesting to note that many false lessons were knowingly allowed to persist for such a long period. These lessons have influenced many policy decisions in the United States since the resolution of the crisis. The idea that nuclear deterrence had worked was passed down to subsequent generations of American politicians, who then applied these misconceptions to their current policies on nuclear proliferation and deterrence as a strategy. Even as late as 1985 analysts were declaring “Nuclear deterrence

worked, it sobered decision makers, engaged their individual and collective capacities to think, and produced a measured reaction.”<sup>8</sup> It was not until the mid 1990’s that analysts began to properly understand some of what happened, determining that fear mattered more than superiority, as “mutual vulnerability” was much more important than nuclear deterrence.<sup>9</sup>

As the events preceding the crisis came to fruition, the “U.S. administration was faced with the delicate task of defining the appropriate scope within which the crisis could most advantageously be set.”<sup>10</sup> James Fearon noted “states rationally misrepresent facts about their own resolve or even power...in seeking to achieve a more advantageous bargain.”<sup>11</sup> This is true in the case of both the USA and USSR. In his quest for advantage, Kennedy was willing to tell people what they wanted to hear. He “customarily solicited his advisors’ opinions without expressing his own,” and would often use RFK to introduce his own views during meetings.<sup>12</sup> May and Zelikow believe that JFK had recorded his meetings to help him write his memoirs, as opposed to having the recordings for daily purposes. They remind the reader that JFK was an “atypical politician in that he was also an historian at heart.”<sup>13</sup> O’Donnell reminded his listeners, in an Oral History, that he was a close friend to the President, and noted how JFK had “a little bit of History on his mind.” O’Donnell was asked to remember and record the attitudes at the ExComm meetings for future recollection.<sup>14</sup> Sorensen agrees with this, saying that JFK had a sense of history and was concerned with how history would view his actions. Sorensen also wrote: “During his years as President, he remarked more than once that history depends on who writes it.”<sup>15</sup>

If the lessons that were learned from this crisis were incorrect, what does that imply about every decision that stemmed from these inaccuracies? In the aftermath, Cuba and the United States have never managed to mend their differences, and the US still enforces strict embargoes on shipping to Cuba, even recently trying to make foreign nations bow down to American shipping laws by threatening extreme penalties for those that did not cooperate.

There are a few points that must be restated at this time. Prior to, and during the Cuban Missile Crisis, the United States’ policy towards Cuba consisted primarily of economic and covert warfare. Their eventual goal was to undermine the communists in Cuba, removing them from power, and installing a friendly government. This was the largest CIA operation at the time, and it received a lot of attention from the President. Given the secrecy, the American public could not know how their country was behaving internationally. This is not to suggest that they would or would not have supported such action.<sup>16</sup> In similar fashion, the Soviet Union was also employing a massive secret operation, centred on Cuba. The intentions there were to install ballistic missiles within striking distance of the US in secret, to be announced at a later time in accordance with a planned summit. This mission was so secretive that most of the chain of command involved in the operation were not even fully aware of their mission, and the Soviet population was told nothing about the operation. With two secretive policies that obviously ran in contention to one another, there is no doubting that a conflict between the two nations could have been sparked much earlier in the year, had certain

intelligence documents leaked. It is not as though a conflict was inevitable, because both nations always had diplomacy in their pockets, but their willingness to use such an option was not readily pondered.

The US and the Soviets were at war, but not the same kind of war that is always played out with weaponry. Instead, theirs was a war based upon ideology and psychology, featuring an adversarial approach towards international relations. Such a confined example that only examines how the two nations dealt with one another ignores additional factors that should be taken into account. For example, the United States deceived their allies as often as their adversaries. Not only did the Americans mislead their allies, but also they kept their major defence organization wholly unaware of almost every aspect of the crisis until October 28.<sup>17</sup> Yet again, to draw a conclusion based around this is ignoring even more factors. Something to be considered is that within the American government, people were also regularly being deceived. Omissions, exaggeration, framing stories in different perspectives and outright lying were quite common practice in American politics at the time. Kennedy did not appear to keep anyone in his government fully informed, not even his brother, whom he even had bugged by the FBI and Secret Services. For John F. Kennedy, a high self-monitorer, there were some secrets to be kept even from his closest circles.

In light of the aforementioned evidence of deception, it should come as no surprise that the Americans deceived their media and public throughout the crisis. Many of the incidents of deception that occurred were for good reasons. For example, some of the information would have proved harmful to the American position. Such information was justifiably suppressed. Other information that related to the true actions and intentions of the government that would have provided the people with at least a glimpse of their nation's policies internationally was hidden from the public. What is perhaps the most disturbing finding of this analysis is the conscious efforts that were being taken at the time to distort the future understanding of the events, to alter the course of written history. To have allowed such false lessons to become part of the accepted knowledge was an insult to everyone.<sup>18</sup> It should not have taken over forty years to only begin to understand how the US government behaved during the Cuban Missile Crisis considering the delicate nature of their activities, the illegal nature of their operations, and finally, and most importantly, their available arsenal of nuclear weaponry that could have easily wiped Humanity from the planet several times over again. And for what? An image; a depiction that bears little resemblance to reality. However, this becomes our 'reality'. These accepted myths become our lessons. American history textbooks are still flawed.

Theodore Sorensen stated that the Cuban Missile Crisis was "unwise, unwarranted and unnecessary,"<sup>19</sup> and in light of the current understanding of the crisis, he could not have been more accurate. The fourth era of the historiography, the *Post-Cold War Phase*, has been marked by the declassification of many documents in the USA, the USSR and in Cuba, not to mention various other nations that played any role in the events. This characteristic often has allowed for the historians to guess less frequently, and verify the evidence more readily. While no one author has captured every detail, or has necessarily explained all of the pertinent events, this group of historians has made tremendous advancements on the historiography.<sup>20</sup>

Where is the historiography headed? What remains to be understood? These are the questions that inspire the new historians of the Cuban Missile Crisis. New issues have surfaced recently that demand immediate attention. The official Kennedy transcripts have numerous transcription errors. Although Stern has made many important changes to the transcription, he has also made his own errors. In addition, it is difficult to gain a full understanding of the US intelligence capabilities within the Soviet Union during the crisis. The USSR was the prime target of the CIA, yet it is difficult to find any reference to information coming in to Kennedy from the Soviet Union, outside of the references to Oleg Penkovsky.<sup>21</sup> Intelligence sources remain as one of the last frontiers for historians, as much of this information remains classified to date. Even recently, many unmentioned authors still cling to arcane beliefs, and attempt to resurrect the traditional views of the crisis. Perhaps this is best exemplified with the movie *Thirteen Days*, which appropriately borrowed its title from RFK's best-selling work of near-historical fiction. Much of the actual historiography was ignored in the film, despite the fact that historians, and the actual audiotapes, were consulted in its creation.<sup>22</sup> There is a constant attempt being made in the United States to continually romanticize the American image.

Perhaps Kennedy's true motives in Cuba will one day be revealed. If the assertions by Dobrynin are correct, that the Soviet Ambassador to the US had met with RFK in September to discuss the existence of tactical nuclear weapons in Cuba, then it means that Kennedy would most likely not have been interested in invading Cuba that fall because of the presence of nuclear defence capabilities that would have taken a deadly toll on American troops. This is not to say that Kennedy had ruled out the idea of invading Cuba, as it should be restated that Kennedy often ran two separate and conflicting policies at the same time. Whether or not Kennedy intended to invade Cuba that fall, we are still left asking ourselves 'why did the conflict play out as it did?' Was it all for show? If it was simply a demonstration of force, it is less likely that the blockade was an elections bid, and more likely that it had to do with Berlin and the US role as an international leader, and to appeal to his countrymen, while quieting his critics.

This paper has not professed to be a complete record or a definitive history of the Cuban Missile Crisis, as it is clear that such a study cannot be written. However, it has achieved the stated goal of explaining how and why the Cuban Missile Crisis has come to be understood as it has. In the satisfaction of this criterion, I have provided a clear-cut case of information-manipulation from the highest levels of the US government. One cannot be so naïve as to assume that all deceptions within government are without just cause, or that deception in international affairs is universally bad and damaging. Were President Kennedy's deceptions required to protect his own political position or were they needed for more valid reasons of international strategy? The answer to this question is complex. Initially, when Kennedy had made his arrangements with Khrushchev in the summer of 1962, he was deceiving the Soviet leader with the purpose of strengthening Operation MONGOOSE. When the Soviet tactical nuclear weapons were discovered in Cuba in September, Kennedy could no longer legitimately consider invading Cuba, ruining his \$55,000,000 investment. Kennedy could not allow the Republicans to learn about this if he realistically planned to maintain his presidency. What began as deception as part of the US international strategy transformed into something entirely different. Kennedy was now deceiving the Republicans within his administration, the Congressional Leadership, and the

American public in order to protect his own political position. The reality is that Kennedy quite possibly could have been impeached for what he had done. His deal with Khrushchev to turn a blind eye to the Soviet shipping before the US intelligence officials knew if the nature of the Soviet build-up was offensive or defensive was a tremendous error on JFK's behalf. In addition to the aforementioned negligence, Kennedy had been outmanoeuvred to an even greater extent as Khrushchev had bluffed his way into supposed impunity while he installed nuclear missiles in Cuba. President Kennedy must have known that he was not in a defensible position without demonstrating both his intentions to invade Cuba through Operation MONGOOSE and his weakness in handling the Soviet Union.<sup>23</sup> When Kennedy deceived the UN, NATO and their additional allies, his deception was once again in the national interest. He planned to manipulate these international organizations and alliances to serve the needs of his government, and to strengthen the resolve of the United States.

Kennedy had been lied to and was angry since he had staked his own reputation, and the reputation of his country on his statements made in September 1962 that the Soviet build-up was purely defensive. Kennedy had told his brother that he did not want to look "all fucked up" over the error of releasing photographs to the British media, but not the US public. If Kennedy was that concerned with a small error in handling the British press, then there is no doubt that he would have been much more concerned about the potential of being exposed for fumbling his strategy against the Soviets. Kennedy was devoted to defending American prestige. When the President said that he was afraid of being impeached<sup>24</sup> for his conduct prior to the Cuban Missile Crisis, it was probably because he was afraid that people would discover that he had made a secret deal with the Soviets. To his critics, a full view of the evidence would have probably proved to them that Kennedy was too weak for office, and that he had taken actions which they would have regarded as close to treason, if not treasonous.

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<sup>1</sup> McNamara in Allyn, 44.

<sup>2</sup> Gromyko and Shakhnazarov in Allyn, 20-22.

<sup>3</sup> Weldes, 23.

<sup>4</sup> Acosta, 112.

<sup>5</sup> Robert McNamara in *The Cuban Missile Crisis* Hacienda Productions (1998) VHS.

<sup>6</sup> White, 221.

<sup>7</sup> Alison and Zelikow, 363.

<sup>8</sup> Etheredge, 86.

<sup>9</sup> Scott and Smith, 681-682.

<sup>10</sup> Weldes, 146.

<sup>11</sup> James Fearon in Allison and Zelikow, 48.

<sup>12</sup> White, 1-2.

<sup>13</sup> Naftali in Zelikow and May, *VI*, xlv.

<sup>14</sup> \*Please note, this is not a reference to the feature film. It is a reference to a bonus "Historical Figures Infinifilm Feature" audio track. Kenneth P. O'Donnell, Oral History. Available On: *Thirteen Days* New Line Cinema, 2000, DVD.

<sup>15</sup> Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 4.

<sup>16</sup> A Gallup Poll indicates eighty-four-percent of Americans supported the blockade and four-percent openly opposed the action. Twenty-percent of the total survey group believed the actions would escalate the conflict. Stern, 180. Polls can always be misleading though.

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<sup>17</sup> From the declassified documentation, it appears as though the GDR and the Warsaw Pact were largely in the dark as well.

<sup>18</sup> As well, Beschloss has noted that it allowed prominently placed, or influential men in Washington, such as Nitze, Dillon, Acheson and McCone to believe that a tough stance would lead the Soviets to back down; a view that would echo in the White House for decades.

<sup>19</sup> Weisbrot, 206.

<sup>20</sup> Like many historical topics, authors discussing the Cuban Missile Crisis often have used analogies to help explain the events. While this may help a few of the readers connect the importance of the material discussed, it can also be a terribly harmful way to explain complex situations through simplicity. One of the most interesting authors to have written on the crisis, James G. Blight, created one such analogy. Blight, whose primary focus was the role of *fear* in the crisis, said the following: "The Cuban missile crisis was therefore a stimulus not very different from a roller coaster in an amusement park. You could fear it and avoid it; you could ride it and panic and scream and hope that you lived through it; or you could ride, throw your fists into the air, and thoroughly enjoy the risky thrill of the experience." Blight, *Shattered*, 28. The problem with simplifying the crisis in this format is as follows. A roller coaster most commonly has a visible and determinable end, unlike the crisis, which had many probable outcomes. For his analogy to work, Blight should have added the potential factor of an unpredictable mechanical failure into the equation. For example, a mechanical failure may result in the death, or injury, of the 'riders'. The mechanical failure could result in the cart separating from the track, killing those waiting in line. The mechanical failure may be the result of wear and tear, economic decisions made by the supplier of the materials, or simple negligence. The crisis is far more complex than what has been suggested in even the best of the poker game, bullfight, or joy ride analogies that plague the historiography.

<sup>21</sup> Johnson has noted that the USSR was the prime target of the CIA. While an abundance of documents pertaining to Cuba are available, virtually nothing is accessible on the Soviet Union within the CIA documents. Loch K. Johnson, *America's Secret Power: The CIA in a Democratic Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 80.

<sup>22</sup> This is not the first time that this has happened. On October 16, 1992, Peter Jennings broadcasted on ABC news that the Soviets had been ready to fire the nuclear weapons. Blight and Allyn were the consultants for ABC at the time. Mark Kramer, "Tactical Nuclear Weapons, Soviet Command Authority, and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *The International History Review* 15 (1993): 744.

<sup>23</sup> Especially knowing how Keating and Goldwater had reacted to the previous developments in Cuba

<sup>24</sup> Zelikow and May, *V3*, 177.

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