

Internal Assessment: History

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Research Question:

To what extent was President John F. Kennedy responsible for the peaceful resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis?

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Section A

The Cuban Missile Crisis has come to epitomise the height of cold war tensions. After the crisis, President Kennedy's actions under these circumstances were widely praised for enabling the peaceful resolution of this nuclear crisis. However, since the opening of Soviet archives and declassification of the Kennedy tapes, Kennedy's role within the missile crisis was once again under scrutiny.

To determine Kennedy's role in averting of a nuclear breakout during the 13-day confrontation, the question: *'To what extent was President Kennedy responsible for the peaceful resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis?'* will be explored. This investigation will examine the Executive Committee meetings, as well as secondary sources that analyse the diplomatic actions undertaken by U.S. and U.S.S.R. The main sources used in this investigation will include a transcript¹ of the ExComm² meetings and Sheldon M. Stern's commentary on the Cuban Missile Crisis³.

Word Count: 143

Section B

John F. Kennedy

- prior to missile crisis, JFK turned down Khrushchev's proposal to a hotline, which meant slow communications⁴
- 1961, U.S. Air Force Jupiter Missiles deployed in Italy and Turkey⁵
- 1962 September 13, JFK vowed to protect security of U.S. and its allies 'if Cuba should...become an offensive military base of significant capacity for the Soviet Union.'⁶
- under international law, 'quarantine' is legally distinguished action from a blockade⁷

¹ "Documentation: White House Tapes and Minutes of the Cuban Missile Crisis." *International Security* 10, no. 1 (1985): 164.

² The 'Executive Committee' will henceforth be abbreviated as 'ExComm'

³ Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

⁴ Walker, Martin. "Missiles and Myths." *The World Today* 68, no. 6 (October 2012): 2. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41963135>.

⁵ "PGM-19 Jupiter." Wikipedia. Accessed February 08, 2016. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PGM-19_Jupiter.

⁶ Hampson, Fen Osler. "The Divided Decision-Maker: American Domestic Politics and the Cuban Crises." *International Security* 9, no. 3 (1984): 130-65. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2538590>.

⁷ "The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962 - 1961-1968 - Milestones - Office of the Historian." *The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962 - 1961-1968 - Milestones - Office of the Historian*. Accessed February 08, 2016. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/cuban-missile-crisis>.

- limited demands to restoration of *status quo ante*, which entailed removal of any Soviet nuclear capability from Cuba⁸
- accepted loss of an American U-2 and pilot, choosing to deliberate instead of retaliate⁹
- ordered Turkish missiles disabled to prevent any accidents, which angered 'hawks' in ExComm¹⁰
- Kennedy brothers were willing to swap Turkish missiles in a secret deal and reluctant to press Khrushchev with an ultimatum¹¹
- risked ignoring Khrushchev's second message¹²
- October 2nd, JFK assured Dobrynin privately that U.S. missiles in Turkey would be removed after resolution of crisis¹³

Nikita Khrushchev

- assured Kennedy that U.S.S.R would not install offensive weapons in Cuba.¹⁴
- October 26th, Khrushchev sent letter to JFK proposing a resolution: Soviet missile withdrawals in exchange for a U.S. pledge not to invade Cuba.¹⁵
- October 27th, sent second letter indicating that any proposed deal must include removal of U.S. Jupiter missiles from Turkey¹⁶

⁸ Allison, Graham T., and Paul Zigman. "Managing US-Soviet Confrontations: JFK, Cuba, and the Macho Myth." *Harvard International Review* 5, no. 2 (November 1982): 24-29. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42759554>.

⁹ Allison, Graham T., and Paul Zigman. "Managing US-Soviet Confrontations: JFK, Cuba, and the Macho Myth." *Harvard International Review* 5, no. 2 (November 1982): 24-29. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42759554>.

¹⁰ Swift, John. "The Cuban Missile Crisis." *History Review*, no. 57 (March 2007). Accessed February 8, 2016. <http://www.historytoday.com/john-swift/cuban-missile-crisis>.

¹¹ Costigliola, Frank. "Kennedy, the European Allies, and the Failure to Consult." *Political Science Quarterly* 110, no. 1 (1995): 105-23. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2152053>.

¹² "The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962 - 1961-1968 - Milestones - Office of the Historian." *The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962 - 1961-1968 - Milestones - Office of the Historian*. Accessed February 08, 2016. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/cuban-missile-crisis>.

¹³ Allison, Graham T., and Paul Zigman. "Managing US-Soviet Confrontations: JFK, Cuba, and the Macho Myth." *Harvard International Review* 5, no. 2 (November 1982): 24-29. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42759554>.

¹⁴ Allison, Graham T., and Paul Zigman. "Managing US-Soviet Confrontations: JFK, Cuba, and the Macho Myth." *Harvard International Review* 5, no. 2 (November 1982): 24-29. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42759554>.

¹⁵ Allison, Graham T., and Paul Zigman. "Managing US-Soviet Confrontations: JFK, Cuba, and the Macho Myth." *Harvard International Review* 5, no. 2 (November 1982): 24-29. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42759554>.

- didn't insist on a public pledge for U.S. to remove missiles from Turkey¹⁷
- October 28th, Khrushchev announces U.S.S.R. withdrawal of Soviet missiles from Cuba¹⁸
- didn't deploy missiles openly as legitimate act of bilateral diplomacy, which U.S. had done in Turkey and Italy¹⁹

ExComm Members

- McNamara denied the effect of deployed missiles on strategic balance, whereas JCS²⁰ felt the effect would be substantial²¹
- George W. Ball supported blockade and condemned surprise air attacks on Cuba. Advocated for declaration of war and initially opposed Cuba-Turkey missiles trade, but changed position after shooting down of U.S. U-2 plane on October 27th.²²
- McGeorge Bundy initially supported blockade, but later endorsed bombing Cuban missile sites. Later resisted trading of Soviet missiles for U.S. missiles in Turkey, because believed this would fracture NATO alliance.²³
- C. Douglas Dillon supported blockade with aim of ousting Castro, but advocated for air strikes on Cuban missile sites in later meetings. He resisted proposal to remove U.S. missiles from Turkey in exchange for Cuban missiles to do the same.²⁴
- Roswell Gilpatric supported JCS's view that Cuban missiles represented military threat, was sympathetic to proposals of resolving the crisis via military means (i.e. eliminating missiles by bombing or invasion).²⁵

¹⁶ "The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962 - 1961-1968 - Milestones - Office of the Historian." The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962 - 1961-1968 - Milestones - Office of the Historian. Accessed February 08, 2016. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/cuban-missile-crisis>.

¹⁷ Bernstein, Barton J. "The Cuban Missile Crisis: Trading the Jupiters in Turkey?" *Political Science Quarterly* 95, no. 1 (1980): 97-125. Accessed January 26, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2149587>.

¹⁸ Allison, Graham T., and Paul Zsigman. "Managing US-Soviet Confrontations: JFK, Cuba, and the Macho Myth." *Harvard International Review* 5, no. 2 (November 1982): 24-29. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42759554>.

¹⁹ Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

²⁰ **'JCS' is an abbreviation of 'Joint Chiefs of Staff'**

²¹ "Documentation: White House Tapes and Minutes of the Cuban Missile Crisis." *International Security* 10, no. 1 (1985): 164.

²² Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

²³ Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

²⁴ Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

- Lyndon B. Johnson was uncertain about the use of force.²⁶
- Robert F. Kennedy was perceived to be the president's closest confidante. RFK was trusted as the president's personal and secret emissary to the Soviet ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin. Contrary to the portrayal in his memoir²⁷, RFK was a hawkish and confrontational member of ExComm.²⁸
- McNamara supported an invasion at several points of the meeting, but ultimately supported the blockade. McNamara also opposed JFK's support for a direct trade between Cuban-Turkish missiles.²⁹
- Paul H. Nitze argued Cuban missiles had altered the balance of power, and opposed Cuba-Turkey missile trade.³⁰
- Dean Rusk generally opposed surprise airstrikes and endorsed the blockade. However, Rusk resisted missile trade-off with Cuba, and suggested armed surveillance over Cuba.³¹
- Theodore C. Sorensen generally supported acts of caution, but opposed Turkish missile swap, as did most ExComm members.³²
- Maxwell D. Taylor mostly represented JCS'S hawkish views, but eventually accepted the quarantine.³³
- Llewellyn E. Thompson was the only regular member of ExComm that knew Khrushchev personally, however his views were largely hawkish. He resisted missile trade to preserve U.S. credibility in Europe, and advised JFK that Khrushchev would never concede.³⁴

²⁵ Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

²⁶ Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

²⁷ **Robert F. Kennedy's posthumous memoir 'Thirteen Days'**

²⁸ Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

²⁹ Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

³⁰ Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

³¹ Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

³² Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

³³ Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

³⁴ Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

Word Count: 600

Section C

Source 1³⁵

As a primary source, this text originates from the Kennedy Tapes and minutes taken during ExComm and NSC meetings of October 1962. A value of this type of source is that its origin can be presumed to be devoid of another person's subjective perspective, thereby providing an accurate portrayal of each member of the ExComm and their deliberations, because the tapes were recorded without their knowledge. However, the origin of this source is limited because the President was aware of these recordings and may have taken precautions against saying things that were incriminating. Another limitation of its origin is that this the source is a transcription of the Kennedy tapes, rather than the original tapes itself, which means that the audio ambiguities of the tapes requires an interpretation from the person who produced this transcription.

The source's purpose is limited because the Kennedy tapes and minutes were previously classified, meaning that there was an awareness of potential subsequent historical analysis, which could have lead to sanitation and alterations to portray a particular version of history. On the other hand, the tapes represent a candid documentation of ExComm's decision-making process as the President would not have expected a public disclosure of the tapes because these recordings were considered private property in legal terms at the time.

Source 2³⁶

A value of this secondary source's origin would be that Stern was a historian at the John F. Kennedy library between 1977 until 1999, from which it can be assumed that he had access to exclusive sources at the library pertaining to the president. On the contrary, this source's origin may be limited because the historian's familiarity with JFK may lead to a Kennedy oriented interpretation, and neglect the perspectives of the other side.

This source aims to provide a 'condensed interpretative narrative' of the Cuban Missile Crisis in its entirety, which would be a value in its purpose because it omits irrelevant sections of ExComm discussions and focuses on the pivotal moments and facts. However, this would also be a limitation to its purpose because the evidence may be simplified to make the historical event more accessible, which in turn may affect its accuracy.

Word Count: 364

³⁵ "Documentation: White House Tapes and Minutes of the Cuban Missile Crisis." International Security 10, no. 1 (1985): 164.

³⁶ Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

Section D

The immediate response to President Kennedy's role in the Cuban Missile Crisis was overwhelmingly positive, as evidenced in the traditionalist views. The Western orthodox view, epitomised by memoirs of Robert Kennedy, Arthur Schlesinger, Theodore Sorenson³⁷, viewed the presence of Soviet missiles as an intolerable provocation to the status quo of the Cold War, which then justifies Kennedy's response. Kennedy and his administration were praised for their bold moves during the missile crisis³⁸, especially for his courage in demanding the removal of Cuban missiles 'without a *quid pro quo*'³⁹. Kennedy's skilled statesmanship is evidenced by the application of a naval quarantine, which is legally distinguishing from a blockade, because a 'blockade' assumes that a state of war existed. This gives the impression that U.S. took careful precautions to 'preserve the peace of the western hemisphere.'⁴⁰ Commentators supporting this viewpoint would argue that this was a show of restraint, as U.S. avoided 'early initiation of American forces'⁴¹, which would have 'forced an instant and possibly ill-considered response.'⁴² It could be argued that these choices gave the Soviet government sufficient time and opportunity to 'respond with equal restraint.'⁴³

Conversely, the revisionist perspective is 'diametrically opposed'⁴⁴ to the orthodox point of view, because it criticises him for unnecessarily increasing the possibility of nuclear war.⁴⁵ As Sorenson admitted, America's nuclear superiority in 1962 meant the nuclear strategic balance was not substantially affected by the introduction of missiles into Cuba⁴⁶, however the 'effect on Latin America and elsewhere would be

³⁷ Fitzgerald, Réachbha. "Historians and the Cuban Missile Crisis: The Evidence–Interpretation Relationship as Seen through Differing Interpretations of the Crisis Settlement." *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 18, no. -1 (2007): 191-203.

³⁸ Allison, Graham T., and Paul Zigman. "Managing US-Soviet Confrontations: JFK, Cuba, and the Macho Myth." *Harvard International Review* 5, no. 2 (November 1982): 24-29. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42759554>.

³⁹ Allison, Graham T., and Paul Zigman. "Managing US-Soviet Confrontations: JFK, Cuba, and the Macho Myth." *Harvard International Review* 5, no. 2 (November 1982): 24-29. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42759554>.

⁴⁰ "Quarantine or Blockade: What Is the Difference?" *The Milwaukee Sentinel*, October 24, 1962. Accessed February 8, 2016.

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1368&dat=19621024&id=cndQAAAAIBAJ&sjid=KBEEAAAAIBAJ&pg=3578,2225099&hl=en>.

⁴¹ "Essay: The Lessons of the Cuban Missile Crisis." *TIME*, September 27, 1982.

⁴² "Essay: The Lessons of the Cuban Missile Crisis." *TIME*, September 27, 1982.

⁴³ "Essay: The Lessons of the Cuban Missile Crisis." *TIME*, September 27, 1982.

⁴⁴ <http://dh.oxfordjournals.org/content/14/4/471.extract#>

⁴⁵ Fitzgerald, Réachbha. "Historians and the Cuban Missile Crisis: The Evidence–Interpretation Relationship as Seen through Differing Interpretations of the Crisis Settlement." *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 18, no. -1 (2007): 191-203.

⁴⁶ Stone, I. F. "The Brink." *The New York Review of Books*. April 14, 1966. Accessed February 08, 2016. <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1966/04/14/the-brink/>.

large.⁴⁷ Revisionist historians, such as I. F. Stone, Ronald Steel, Barton J. Bernstein, James Nathan,⁴⁸ therefore argue JFK chose to risk nuclear war over an act that did not constitute a threat to American security. Nathan explains this behaviour as a result of the Kennedy administration's insecurity in their 'precarious electoral position,'⁴⁹ the imminent November mid-term elections and the public's interest in the Cuba problem. Hence, the administration's political needs had been so great that it 'urged them to take almost any risk'⁵⁰ to remove the missiles from Cuba. The revisionist interpretation often invokes the same evidence as traditionalists use to justify their claim. Instead of seeing JFK's refusal to compromise American interests as a demonstration of courage, revisionists argue JFK's insistence in making 'Khrushchev capitulate and cry uncle'⁵¹ during a nuclear confrontation was reckless and irresponsible. Essentially, Kennedy had given Khrushchev an ultimatum, with the intention of humiliating Khrushchev, rather than suffer that humiliation himself.⁵² Historians, such as Garry Wills and T.G. Patterson, criticise Kennedy for allowing his personal pride and 'desire to recapture previous losses'⁵³ interfere with diplomacy. As a result of the president 'flexing his muscle,'⁵⁴ Patterson argues that JFK 'accentuated the crisis'⁵⁵ and risked an outbreak of nuclear war, rather than admit that a trade of 'useless missiles near each other's countries was eminently fair.'⁵⁶ B.J. Bernstein cited the administration's failure to view the international situation 'from

⁴⁷ Stone, I. F. "The Brink." *The New York Review of Books*. April 14, 1966. Accessed February 08, 2016. <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1966/04/14/the-brink/>.

⁴⁸ Lebow, Richard Ned. "Domestic Politics and the Cuban Missile Crisis: The Traditional and Revisionist Interpretations Reevaluated." *Diplomatic History* 14, no. 4 (1990): 471-92. Accessed February 8, 2016.

⁴⁹ Nathan, James A. "The Missile Crisis: His Finest Hour Now." *World Pol. World Politics* 27, no. 02 (January 1975): 256-81. Accessed February 8, 2016.

⁵⁰ Nathan, James A. "The Missile Crisis: His Finest Hour Now." *World Pol. World Politics* 27, no. 02 (January 1975): 256-81. Accessed February 8, 2016.

⁵¹ Allison, Graham T., and Paul Zigman. "Managing US-Soviet Confrontations: JFK, Cuba, and the Macho Myth." *Harvard International Review* 5, no. 2 (November 1982): 24-29. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42759554>.

⁵² **"If Khrushchev wants to rub my nose in the dirt," Kennedy told Wechsler, "it's all over."** Stone, I. F. "The Brink." *The New York Review of Books*. April 14, 1966. Accessed February 08, 2016. <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1966/04/14/the-brink/>.

⁵³ Paterson, Thomas G. "Bearing the Burden: A Critical Look At JFK's Foreign Policy." *Virginia Quarterly Review* 54, no. 2 (1978). Accessed February 8, 2016. <http://www.vqronline.org/essay/bearing-burden-critical-look-jfk's-foreign-policy>.

⁵⁴ Paterson, Thomas G. "Bearing the Burden: A Critical Look At JFK's Foreign Policy." *Virginia Quarterly Review* 54, no. 2 (1978). Accessed February 8, 2016. <http://www.vqronline.org/essay/bearing-burden-critical-look-jfk's-foreign-policy>.

⁵⁵ Paterson, Thomas G. "Bearing the Burden: A Critical Look At JFK's Foreign Policy." *Virginia Quarterly Review* 54, no. 2 (1978). Accessed February 8, 2016. <http://www.vqronline.org/essay/bearing-burden-critical-look-jfk's-foreign-policy>.

⁵⁶ Allison, Graham T., and Paul Zigman. "Managing US-Soviet Confrontations: JFK, Cuba, and the Macho Myth." *Harvard International Review* 5, no. 2 (November 1982): 24-29. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42759554>.

an adversary's perspective'⁵⁷ as a 'marked failure in intellect'⁵⁸ for ExComm, which factored into heightening the tensions between U.S. and USSR.

The declassification of U.S. and Soviet official documents meant that post-revisionist interpretations were able to construct a more holistic view⁵⁹. Recent evidence highlights the importance of hostile American activities in Cuba, which underscores Khrushchev's restraint in enduring public humiliation as an alternative to initiating nuclear war. Though Kennedy's 'covert war against Cuba clearly contributed to instigating the missile crisis,'⁶⁰ JFK also utilised 'his intellectual and political skill'⁶¹ to prevent the 'outbreak of hostilities'⁶² when faced with a realistic likelihood of nuclear war. At a time when ExComm felt that war was imminent⁶³ and the only solution would be to remove the missiles by force, Kennedy 'insisted on giving the diplomatic channel a little more time,'⁶⁴ even when preparations had been made for a U.S. invasion of Cuba⁶⁵. His restraint was again apparent when Soviet SAMs⁶⁶ shot down a U.S. U-2 plane the next day, but 'JFK refused to retaliate.'⁶⁷ Instead, Kennedy

⁵⁷ Bernstein, Barton J. "Arms Control Today." *Reconsidering the Perilous Cuban Missile Crisis 50 Years Later*. October 2, 2012. Accessed February 08, 2016. https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2012_10/Reconsidering-the-Perilous-Cuban-Missile-Crisis-50-Years-Later.

⁵⁸ Bernstein, Barton J. "Arms Control Today." *Reconsidering the Perilous Cuban Missile Crisis 50 Years Later*. October 2, 2012. Accessed February 08, 2016. https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2012_10/Reconsidering-the-Perilous-Cuban-Missile-Crisis-50-Years-Later.

⁵⁹ **'The post-revisionist literature on the crisis is certainly far more balanced and comprehensive in its scope than that of either the traditionalists or revisionists.'** Fitzgerald, Réachbha. "Historians and the Cuban Missile Crisis: The Evidence–Interpretation Relationship as Seen through Differing Interpretations of the Crisis Settlement." *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 18, no. -1 (2007): 191-203.

⁶⁰ Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

⁶¹ Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

⁶² Stern, Sheldon M., and Sheldon M. Stern. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

⁶³ "The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962 - 1961–1968 - Milestones - Office of the Historian." *The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962 - 1961–1968 - Milestones - Office of the Historian*. Accessed February 08, 2016. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/cuban-missile-crisis>.

⁶⁴ "The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962 - 1961–1968 - Milestones - Office of the Historian." *The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962 - 1961–1968 - Milestones - Office of the Historian*. Accessed February 08, 2016. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/cuban-missile-crisis>.

⁶⁵ **placement of U.S. forces in DEFCON2 on October 26th** "The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962 - 1961–1968 - Milestones - Office of the Historian." *The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962 - 1961–1968 - Milestones - Office of the Historian*. Accessed February 08, 2016. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/cuban-missile-crisis>.

⁶⁶ **'SAMs' is an abbreviation for 'surface-to-air missiles'**

⁶⁷ Allison, Graham T., and Paul Zigman. "Managing US-Soviet Confrontations: JFK, Cuba, and the Macho Myth." *Harvard International Review* 5, no. 2 (November 1982): 24-29. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42759554>.

'overturned the previous decision to respond to the Soviet's first shot,'⁶⁸ even when this was 'received with disbelief in the Pentagon.'⁶⁹ The secret agreement that Robert Kennedy arranged with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin contributed significantly to the crisis' peaceful resolution, because the direct meeting assured that both sides were able to reach a mutual understanding with minimal misinterpretation⁷⁰ and interference.

Word Count: 713

Section E

To conclude, it is evident that solely praising or condemning Kennedy would be an oversimplification of his diplomatic choices during the crisis. Agreeing with the orthodox view of Kennedy's heroism would place total blame on Khrushchev's part, thereby ignore the significant concessions that Khrushchev made, even though U.S.S.R had legitimate reasons for aiding Cuba and subsequently escalating the crisis. Contrary to this, accepting the revisionist standpoint would be to disregard Kennedy's repeated shows of restraint at crucial moments of the crisis. Declassification of new evidence clearly demonstrates that the avoidance of nuclear war was not inevitable, which means that neglecting either Kennedy or Khrushchev's restraint during the crisis would be a form of the *post hoc* fallacy. On the other hand, the recent evidence also shows that a large portion of the crisis was beyond the control of both leaders⁷¹. The lack of control suggests that even with their restraint, a possibility of nuclear war still remained, which means that perhaps the aversion of nuclear war cannot be completely attributed to any party involved in the crisis.

Word Count: 178

⁶⁸ Allison, Graham T., and Paul Zigman. "Managing US-Soviet Confrontations: JFK, Cuba, and the Macho Myth." *Harvard International Review* 5, no. 2 (November 1982): 24-29. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42759554>.

⁶⁹ Allison, Graham T., and Paul Zigman. "Managing US-Soviet Confrontations: JFK, Cuba, and the Macho Myth." *Harvard International Review* 5, no. 2 (November 1982): 24-29. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42759554>.

⁷⁰ Allison, Graham T., and Paul Zigman. "Managing US-Soviet Confrontations: JFK, Cuba, and the Macho Myth." *Harvard International Review* 5, no. 2 (November 1982): 24-29. Accessed January 16, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42759554>.

⁷¹ '**...discovery of intelligence failures on the part of both the U.S. and U.S.S.R. and a widespread lack of executive control over the military of all three countries, have suggested that the crisis could easily have resulted in a disaster due to circumstances outside the control of the American and Soviet leaders.'** Fitzgerald, Réachbha. "Historians and the Cuban Missile Crisis: The Evidence— Interpretation Relationship as Seen through Differing Interpretations of the Crisis Settlement." *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 18, no. -1 (2007): 191-203.

Section F

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