

Cuban Missile Crisis: Thirteen days the shook the world!

- October 14th, an American U2 spy-plane took pictures of what seemed to be launch pads in Cuba.
- US intelligence told Kennedy that Soviet ships were making their way to Cuba with more nuclear weapons to base in Cuba

Why did Khrushchev do this, despite telling Kennedy he wouldn't?

- NATO had missiles based in Turkey, a short distance from the Soviet Union
- It may have been Khrushchev chose such a provocative act to get them removed
- The Berlin Wall had been seen as a failure for Khrushchev, putting pressure on him as leader, if he could outwit Kennedy in Cuba it would restore his prestige
- Maybe to defend Cuba from another US attack, if the US overthrew Castro, this would be seen as another defeat for communism



What could Kennedy do that would not trigger a full-blown war?

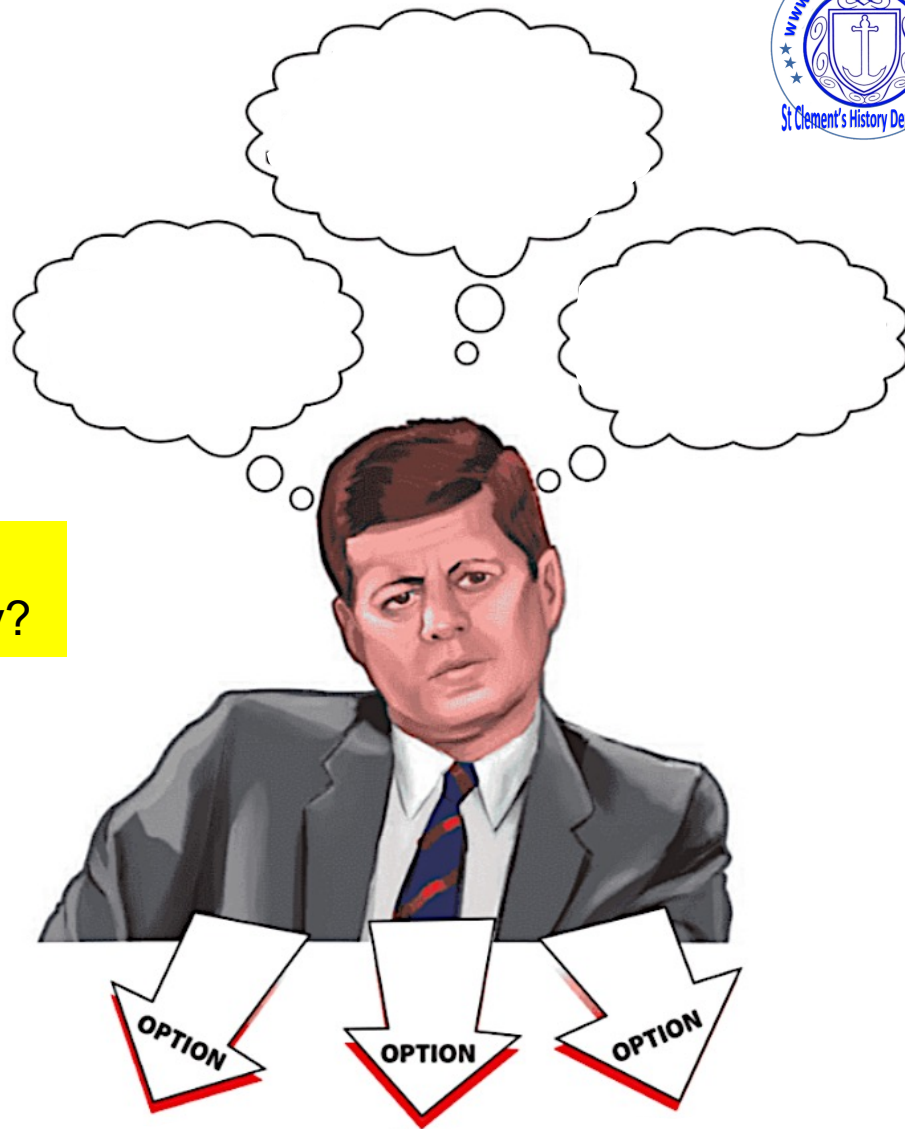
Kennedy had just two weeks before these Soviet missiles were operational.

Which of these options would you chose and why?

For the next 13 days, the world would hold its breath in fear!

Kennedy was ready with 54 bombers with 4 nuclear war heads on each.

Was Khrushchev?





The Offices of John F. Kennedy

President of the United States of America

URGENT
TOP SECRET

To: Ex-Comm (The Executive Committee of the National Security Council)

From: President J. F. Kennedy

Ladies and Gentlemen, President John F. Kennedy requests your services.

He asks that you sit on the newly established Executive Committee of the National Security Council (Ex-Comm) in order to provide advice and guidance on an emerging crisis.

The freedom, liberty and lives of millions of your fellow Americans and the SAFETY OF THE ENTIRE WORLD depend on your abilities.

URGENT
TOP SECRET

To: Ex-Comm (The Executive Committee of the National Security Council)

From: President J. F. Kennedy

Our U2 spy-planes have photographed Soviet missile sites under construction in Fidel Castro's communist Cuba, only 90 miles from the US coast.



URGENT
TOP SECRET

To: Ex-Comm (The Executive Committee of the National Security Council)

From: President J. F. Kennedy

The missiles have a range of 1000km, and can hit targets in most of the USA.

We believe that in a few weeks these sites will be capable of launching nuclear warheads that could destroy the United States **WITH ONLY 5 MINUTES WARNING!**

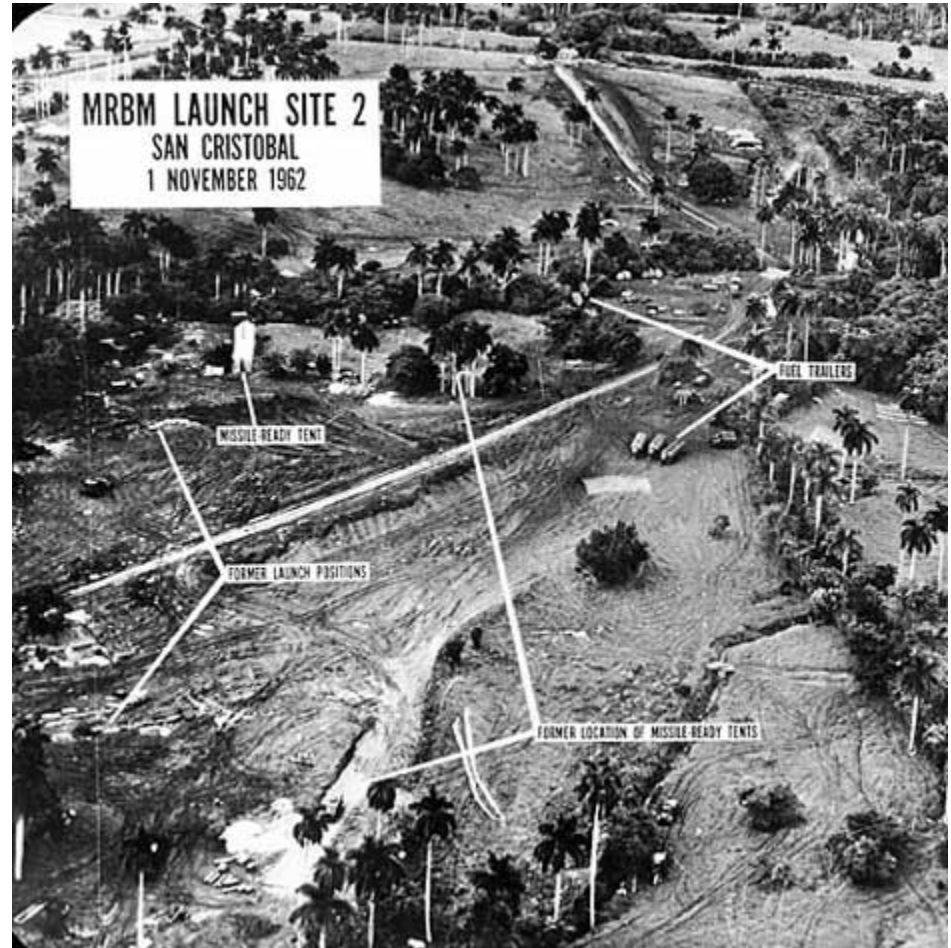


URGENT
TOP SECRET

To: Ex-Comm (The Executive Committee of the National Security Council)

From: President J. F. Kennedy

Although we have photographic evidence showing Medium Range Ballistic Missile sites the soviets are denying that there are any offensive weapons on the island.



URGENT
TOP SECRET



To: Ex-Comm (The Executive Committee of the National Security Council)

From: President J. F. Kennedy

You have now been briefed as to the problem facing us in Cuba.

You have been selected to sit on this special committee because you are the best and brightest in the country.

I trust that you will weigh up ALL of the available options thoroughly and without prejudice in order to ensure that freedom and peace continue to reign in this country of ours.

However, please bare in mind the following...



URGENT
TOP SECRET

To: Ex-Comm (The Executive Committee of the National Security Council)

From: President J. F. Kennedy

We must:

1. Force the Soviets to remove the missiles from Cuba before they become operational.

We must do everything in our power not to...

1. Be seen to back down
2. Start a war with the USSR
3. Let Khrushchev and the Soviets think that they have won a victory in Cuba
4. Kill innocent people whether they be American, Cuban or Russian
5. Be made to look like the aggressors in Cuba



Complete the options form before leaving today's meeting



Advantage		Disadvantage
	1) Do nothing.	
	1) Use the US Navy to blockade Cuba to try and prevent the Soviets from completing the missile site.	
	1) Use an air strike to destroy the missile sites before they are completed.	
	1) Use troops to invade Cuba.	
	1) Launch a pre-emptive nuclear strike on Cuba.	

JUST HOW CLOSE *DID* THE WORLD COME TO NUCLEAR WAR?



- Decide each day how many minutes should be added on or taken off.
- You may add or take off up to 3 minutes each day, depending on how important you feel the events of each day are.
- If you think there is no change that day, leave the clock the same.
- Remember, if the clock reaches **MIDNIGHT**, war breaks out.
- Briefly explain why you have changed the time

The doomsday clock



Tues 16th Oct 1962:



Thu 25th Oct 1962:



Mon 22nd Oct 1962:



Fri 26th Oct 1962:



Tues 23rd Oct 1962:



Sat 27th Oct 1962:



Wed 24th Oct 1962:



Sun 28th Oct 1962:



The day before the
crisis, the clock was set
at **11.53pm**

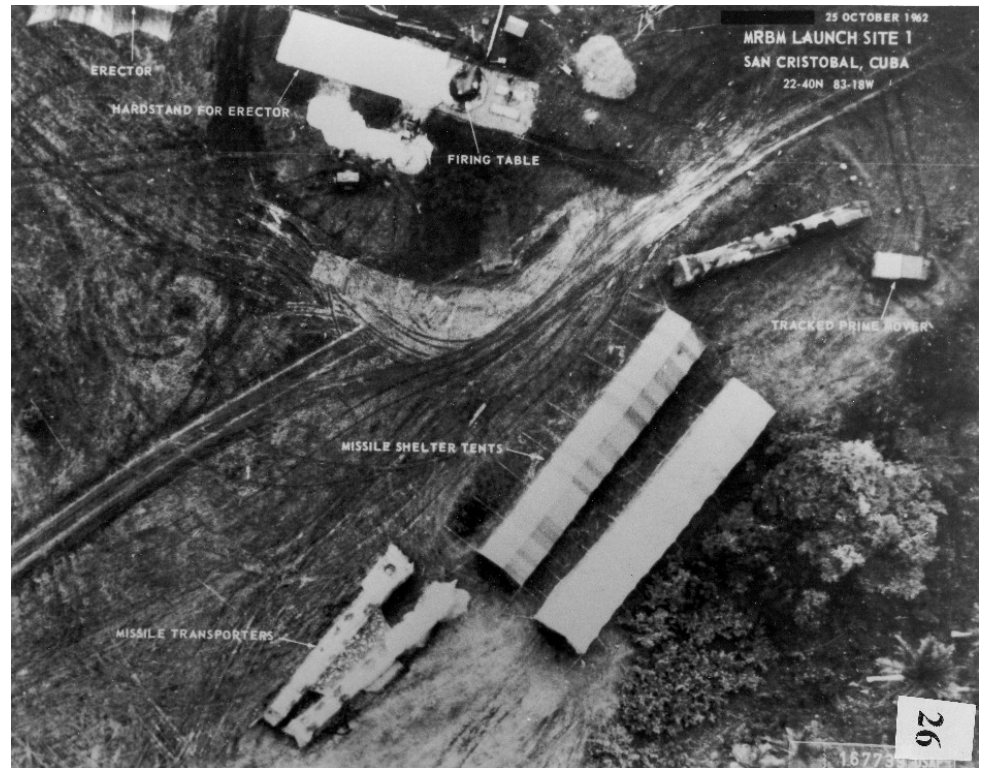
What was the time on the worst day
of the crisis:

URGENT
TOP SECRET

NEWSFLASH

October 16th,
1962

U2 spy-planes
have
discovered
more nuclear
missile sites
on Cuba.



URGENT
TOP SECRET

NEWSFLASH

October 23rd,
1962

The Organisation
of American
States approves
the blockade of
Cuba



American
Secretary of State
Dean Rusk said it
was

*“eyeball to
eyeball, and the
other guy just
blinked.”*

**What did he
mean?**



URGENT
TOP SECRET

NEWSFLASH

October 24th, 1962

Most soviet ships
en route to Cuba
have slowed down or
turned around

One ship is
continuing towards
the blockade line.



URGENT
TOP SECRET

NEWSFLASH

October 25th, 1962

Our Ambassador Adlai Stevenson
has produced photographs of the
missile sites in the U.N.

Despite this the USSR denies
their presence

URGENT
TOP SECRET

NEWSFLASH

October 25th, 1962

Photographs
show that the
missile sites
are still
being
constructed



URGENT
TOP SECRET

NEWSFLASH

October 26th, 1962

The government has received this communication thought to be from Chairman Khrushchev.

“This is my proposal. We will send no more weapons to Cuba and those within Cuba will be withdrawn or destroyed. You reciprocate by withdrawing your blockade and also by agreeing not to invade Cuba”

URGENT
TOP SECRET

NEWSFLASH

An American U2 Spy-plane has been shot down
over Cuba!

How shall we respond?

Was Khrushchev's telegram yesterday a
smoke screen?

URGENT
TOP SECRET

NEWSFLASH

October 27th, 1962

The government has received a second communication from Moscow thought to be from Chairman Khrushchev.

“We agree to move these weapons from Cuba which you regard as offensive weapons. Your representative will make a statement to the effect that the United States, on its part, will withdraw its weapons in Turkey.”

13 Days Movie Clip

Results of the crisis:

- Both sides needed to help each other save face, Robert Kennedy had made a secret deal to withdraw NATO missiles from Turkey.
- Kennedy was more popular than ever!
- USA promised to not invade Cuba and withdrew ICBM's from Turkey.
- USSR removed missiles from Cuba.
- Both sides worked to reduce tension.
- **Khrushchev removed in 1964 despite claiming he had won.**



Consequences of the Cuban Missile Crisis

- The Cuban Missile Crisis made it clear what could happen with a policy of 'brinkmanship'
- Both countries were keen to ensure the world would never get this close again to Nuclear war



June 1963: A direct communication line between Washington and Moscow was set up, this became known as the 'hotline'

August 1963: Test Ban Treaty was signed by USA, Britain and USSR, all 3 countries agreed not to test nuclear weapons in outer space, underwater or in the atmosphere

1967: Outer Space Treaty signed – USA & USSR agreed that as the 'Space Race' developed, Space would not be used for military purposes, specifically putting nuclear weapons into orbit



1968: Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was signed to stop the spread of nuclear weapons. Countries that signed up agreed not to share their nuclear technology with other countries

“Let’s Get A Lock For This Thing”



What is the message of this source?

It has been estimated that had 1963 led to war:

53.6% of US population would have been killed

44.6% of Soviet population

Approximately 200 million people!

Exam-style question

Explain the importance of the 'Bay of Pigs' invasion for relations between the USA and the Soviet Union

8 marks

Exam tip

Note the question asks about importance and also gives you a context for that importance – relations between the USA and the Soviet Union. Don't just say what happened. Explain how the invasion affected relations. Did it make them better or worse?

Summary

- The pro-American government in Cuba was overthrown.
- The USA supported Cuban exiles trying to restore a pro-American government.
- Castro turned to the Soviet Union for support.
- Khrushchev decided to site nuclear missiles in Cuba.
- Kennedy set up a naval blockade resulting in a tense stand-off known as the 'Thirteen Days'.

Checkpoint

Strengthen

- S1** What actions did Castro take which worried the USA?
- S2** Briefly summarise the events of the 'Thirteen Days'.
- S3** What positive things happened as a result of the Cuban Missile Crisis?

Challenge

- C1** If you were Kennedy, how would you counter the argument that supporting the 'Bay of Pigs' invasion was foolish?
- C2** Why didn't the USA attack the Soviet ships, bringing missiles to Cuba?
- C3** Why do you think the Cuban Missile Crisis is remembered as such an important event?
- How confident do you feel about your answers to these questions? Re-read the section and then try answering the questions again. If you're still not sure, discuss with your teacher.