

KEY QUESTION: How successful was US Containment in Cuba? (Part 2) Missiles in Cuba

Was Khrushchev just dingbat crazy or did he have a good reason for putting missiles into Cuba?

- **To close the missile gap:** the Soviet leader, Khrushchev, knew the USA had medium and long-range nuclear missiles aimed at the USSR from bases in Turkey, just on the USSR's 'doorstep'.
- **Domestic politics:** Khrushchev wanted to strengthen his political position in the USSR and show his government that he wasn't soft on America.
- **To protect Cuba:** Khrushchev wanted to support the new communist country in 'Uncle Sam's backyard' and ensure that the Americans would not attempt another incident like the Bay of Pigs and attempt to overthrow Castro.

Which emoji would you use for Khrushchev?



Be Kennedy – What were his options?

- **Ignore the missiles:** JFK / USA would look weak
- **Get the United Nations involved:** US loses control
- **Call on the USSR to remove the missiles:** Khrushchev might demand the US leave Berlin in return.
- **Blockade Cuba:** Buys time, puts ball back into the Soviet's court.
- **Invade with soldiers or launch air attacks:** Too aggressive but could hold in reserve.

The 'solution'

- JFK ordered a naval quarantine (22) - Khrushchev calls it an 'act of piracy' (23) (will the USSR 'observe it?')
- Adlai Steevenson at UN council meeting announces existence of missiles (embarrassing for Khrushchev)
- Soviets ships don't cross the 'line'. Ships slow, some turn around...(24)
- Khrushchev sends Telegram 1 (26): USSR to withdraw missiles for US pledge not to invade Cuba.
- Khrushchev sends Telegram 2 (27): USSR to withdraw missiles for US pledge not to invade Cuba AND withdrawal of US missiles from Turkey
- JFK ignores second Telegram! Clever or a big gamble?
- Back channels lead to a 'deal' (28). USSR remove missiles, US pledge not to invade Cuba + secret clause to remove US missiles from Turkey

Outcomes for JFK:

- Containment has been tested – and the removal of missiles (a significant strategic and psychological threat to the USA have been removed – JFK 'saves the day'
- Removal of US missiles from Turkey remained secret – no embarrassment for JFK.

Outcomes for Khrushchev:

- US pledge not to invade Cuba (Huge victory IF this was his main objective)
- Castro 'angry' with Khrushchev for removing them
- China think Khrushchev is 'too weak' – he didn't stand up to the USA
- Removed from 'office' in 1964

KEY TERMS

Brinkmanship / Doves / Hawks / Monroe Doctrine / Missile Gap / Quarantine

OR – a 'Victory' for Common Sense and 'diplomacy?'

- Both leaders emerged with something from the crisis and both sides had shown restraint. The USA did not react to the loss of a U2 plane and the USSR did not react to a U2 flight over their airspace in Siberia or the US navy forcing a Soviet submarine to surface.
- Both allowed their opponent to retreat without too much loss of face. Kennedy did not boast of victory and paid tribute to Khrushchev's contribution to peace. While Khrushchev did not reveal the secret deal over Turkey, both powers honoured the agreements made.



Containment TEST: How many stars would you award the US for handling this part of the Cuban 'crisis'?



Did you know? After this crisis both the USA and the USSR did try to reduce superpowers tensions. A hotline was established between Washington and Moscow and a Test Ban Treaty was agreed in 1963...some feel this was paving the way towards what became known as detente!

Discussion Point: Who came out 'best' from the missile crisis 'stand off?'