CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS: U.N. MEDIATED CONFLICT RESOLUTION

University of Toronto, 24 January 2013
Conceptions and Misconceptions

- Most dangerous point
- Not just “13 Days” but over a month
- Not just “eyeball to eyeball” but ...
- Negotiated (teams in NY)
- Mediated by UN Secretary-General
  - Proposals, shuttle diplomacy, forum for agreement

Note: image sources are given in the Notes page under the PPT slides
THIRTEEN DAYS
You'll never believe how close we came.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M19tgYuVWc
**Background**

- Cold War
- Space race
- Berlin Blockade / Berlin Wall
- Arms race, Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD)
- US Jupiter IRBMs in Italy & Turkey in striking range of Moscow
- Electioneering: “missile gap”
- Bay of Pigs (April 1961)
- Operation Mongoose (spring to 30 October 1962)
Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev

charms and threatens West

gains new friend in Cuba
Kennedy informed of nuclear missile base construction in Cuba – October 16
Committee of the National Security Council

ExComm
National Security Adviser
McGeorge Bundy

Secretary of State
Dean Rusk

Secretary of Defense
Robert McNamara
Military Chiefs
Kennedy informs Thant – October 20
Address to the Nation
October 22

CMC_Newsreel-Kennedy_3-08min_22Oct1962.mp4
Soviet submarines forced to surface (US not aware of nuclear-tipped torpedoes)  
(October 27)

US destroyer *Joseph P. Kennedy* stops & boards and inspects *Marucla*  
(dry-cargo ship of Lebanese registry under Soviet charter)  
(October 26)

Soviet troop encampment (40,000+)
U Thant, Amb. Zorin (Soviet rep. chairing Security Council)
Chinese Step Up Offensive, Drive On Indian Town

LATIN AMERICANS BACK U.S.; NEUTRALS ASK UN INTERVENE

Delegation Prepares Plea to U Thant

Remove Cuban Missiles, Stevenson Asks UN

2,000 Storm U.S. London Embassy

Be Ready to Fight, Castro's Dare to U.S.

Stock Prices Tumble As Tension Mounts

Khrushchev At Opera

Russia Tries to Tip Scales...

Khrushchev Misjudged Spirit of America, Character of Kennedy

10 a.m. Start Ordered On Search of Ships

Kennedy Risking War, Russian Reply Says

Guilty of Deception, Britain Says of Russia
Thant’s First Appeal (October 24)

- Khrushchev: Soviet vessels to stay away from the interception area
- Kennedy: withdraw quarantine
- Begin talks
SOME SOVIET SHIPS SAID TO VEER FROM CUBA; KHRUSHCHEV SUGGESTS A SUMMIT MEETING; THANT BIDS U.S. AND RUSSIA DESIST 2 WEEKS

INDIA SAID TO BAR KHRUSHCHEV PLEA FOR A CEASE-FIRE

Students to March in Blockade Protest

U.N. SENDS NOTES PREMIER WRITES

Talks Proposed While Both Shipments and Blockade Cease

Letter to Russell Calls for Parley to Avert a Nuclear Clash

Soviet Ships Bound for Cuba Shown in U.S. Photos

BLOCKADE STARTS

Moscow Is Believed to Be Undecided on Next Step

U.N. Cabinet Ordered to Quit Campaign

White House Bars Political Propaganda Over Soviet Vessels
“We're eyeball to eyeball, and I think the other fellow just blinked.”
– Secretary of State Dean Rusk
Castro calls on the Soviets to launch a pre-emptive nuclear strike on the United States

“...The Soviet Union must never allow ... Imperialists [to] launch the first nuclear strike ...”
Kennedy Requests Second Appeal

I. An expression of concern that Soviet ships might be under instructions to challenge the quarantine and consequently create a confrontation at sea between Soviet ships and Western Hemisphere ships which could lead to an escalation of violence.

II. An expression of concern that such a confrontation would destroy the possibility of the talks such as you have suggested as a prelude to a political settlement.

III. An expression of hope that Soviet ships will be held out of the interception area for a limited time in order to permit discussions of the modalities of an agreement.

IV. An expression of your confidence, on the basis of Soviet ships not proceeding to Cuba, that the United States will avoid a direct confrontation with them during the same period in order to minimize chances of an untoward incident.
Thant’s Second Appeal (October 25)

- Khrushchev: Soviet vessels to stay away from the interception area
- Kennedy: US vessels to do everything possible to avoid direct confrontation
Khrushchev replies to first appeal:

“I agree with your proposal which meets the interests of peace.”

– October 25
Stephenson & Zorin,
Security Council debate
– October 25

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MSV9_J8Csts
(goto 4:00 minutes)
Khrushchev response to second appeal:

“We therefore accept your proposal and have ordered the masters of Soviet vessels … to stay out of the interception area, as you recommend.”

– October 26
KENNEDY AGREES TO TALKS ON THANT PLAN, KHRUSHCHEV ACCEPTS IT; BLOCKADE GOES ON; RUSSIAN TANKER INTERCEPTED AND CLEARED

WASHINGTON FIRM

Insists on Continuing Quarantine Until the Menace is Ended

By MAX FRANKEL

WASHINGTON, Oct. 26—The United States lifted its quarantine on Cuba today to signal that the Soviet threat in Cuba is dis- solved. Before there was no prospect for East-West negotiations.

A White House official said it was "all right," that as long as Soviet ships continued to sail toward Cuba with unknown cargoes, the blockade by United States naval forces would continue. Other sources said that the East-West challenge was still in motion, by the blockade could not end and that all offensive weapons in Cuba were under international supervision.

White House and intelligence sources agreed today that work on the Soviet bases in Cuba was continuing. For that reason, it was said, the idea of ending the quarantine on Cuba at this time was unfeasible.

Further Contacts Expected

STEVENS SHOWS PHOTOS OF CUBAN BASES: Adal E. Stevenson, at right at Security Council table, describes aerial photos of Cuban missile bases as Col. David Parker indicates items in one of photos. At table, from left: Valerian A. Zelov of Soviet Union; Yevgeny Klevek, U.N. Under Secretary; Makkiel Elnajid of the United Arab Republic, and Mr. Patrick Dean of Britland. Mr. Stevenson, chief U.S. delegate, and Mr. Zelov, President of the Council this month, clashed over U.S. charges against the Soviet Union.

Navy Does Not Board Ship: PENTAGON ISSUES: POPE BIDS RULERS

U.S. GETS REBELLIONS

SECRETARY GENERAL TO START 3 SEPARATE PARLIES TODAY

U.S. and Soviet statements; debate accepts, Page 14

By THOMAS P. HAMILTON

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. Oct. 25—President Kennedy today called for talks between the United States and the Soviet Union on whether agreements can be made for negotiations in the Cuban crisis. The blockade of Cuba will continue.

President Khrushchev accepted the President's proposal. Under which the United States would suspend the blockade for two or three weeks, while the Soviet Union stopped shipping weapons to Cuba.

A spokesman for Mr. Thant said preliminary talks would not start tomorrow morning. Mr. Thant, for the time being, will meet separately with representatives of the United States, the Soviet Union and Cuba.

Answered Mr. Khrushchev. The President's answer to Mr. Thant did not go beyond the President's proposal.
Conferences Will Open Today

SOVIET, U.S. AGREE TO HOLD PRELIMINARY TALKS ON CUBA

Monastery Town Falls to Chinese In Bitter Battle

PM Reports All Forces Put on Alert

Won't Agree To Inquiry, Leftist Goes

Businessman Likens Banks To Gangsters

Cabinet Shuffle Stresses Youth; Cass Appointed Attorney-General

High Drama in UN
As Stevenson, Zorin Clash at Meeting

U.S. Stops Tanker, Lets It Carry On

Canada's Stand on Cuba Criticized by Truman

Ottawa Wishy-Washy, Young PCs Charge

Kennedy-Khrushchev Conference Now Thought Unlikely
Thant with Zorin (and translator)
High level negotiators sent to New York

Vasily Kuznetsov
Soviet First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

John J. McCloy
Assistant Secretary of War (1941-45)
Thant quotes Cuban President Osvaldo Dorticos:

“‘If the United States could give us assurances, by word and deed, that it would not commit acts of aggression against our country, we solemnly declare that there would be no need for our weapons and our armies ….””

“Here again I feel that on the basis of discussion some common ground may be found through which way may be traced our of the present impasse.”

– Thant, in UN Security Council, October 24

Thant converted communist propaganda into practical solution to crisis (basis of final settlement)
Thant suggests:

standstill on missile site construction in exchange for US pledge to not invade Cuba

interim solution to give parties time to negotiate final settlement
Kennedy & Rusk refer frequently to Thant’s initiatives as reason not to take more offensive measures.
October 27 (Black Saturday)

SAC Alert to Defcon 2 (next to war)
US forces Soviet submarine to surface

Soviet submarine armed with nuclear torpedo
Second-in-command Vasili Arkhipov refused to launch torpedo

(October 27)
Soviet SAM downs U-2
killing pilot, Maj. Rudolf Anderson
(Oct 27)

U-2 from Alaska strays into Soviet airspace; MiGs scrambled but do not catch it
(Oct 27)

Kennedy learns of unauthorized US military nuclear test
(Oct 26)
Robert Kennedy

Secret talks with Soviet ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin

Offers removal of US Jupiter missiles from Turkey (secret deal)
“[We are] face to face with the danger of war and of nuclear catastrophe, with the possible result of destroying the human race... to save the world, we must retreat.”

– Khrushchev, October 28

Washington receives the news of Khrushchev’s acceptance of the US proposal

Thant announces trip to Havana to seek Castro’s consent for UN mission to verify the dismantling of missile sites

– October 28
U.S. AND SOVIET REACH ACCORD ON CUBA; KENNEDY ACCEPTS KRUSHCHEV PLEDGE TO REMOVE MISSILES UNDER U.N. WATCH

DE GAULLE WINS 61% OF BALLOTS; ABSTENSIONS HIGH

By ROBERT C. DOTY

PARIS, Monday, Oct. 29—President de Gaulle won a second term in office in a landslide victory yesterday, but he faced substantial obstacles in his efforts to stabilize the country.

On the basis of complete returns, he won by a majority of voters who support presidential candidates, 61.76 percent of the total ballots cast. The election is expected to be a significant victory for de Gaulle, who has been in power for 10 years.

THANT SETS VISIT TO CUBA TOMORROW TO SEEK CASTRO CONSENT

The United Nations will hold discussions with the governments of Cuba and the United States in an effort to settle the Cuban crisis. The United States will be represented by President Kennedy, who will meet with Cuban officials and discuss the situation.

RUSSIAN ACCEDES TO REQUEST TO REMOVE MISSILES UNDER U.N. WATCH

The Soviet Union has agreed to the United Nations' request to place missiles under their control. This decision is seen as a significant step towards resolving the Cuban crisis.

CUBAN missile deployment poses a threat to the United States and other nations in the region. The United Nations has taken steps to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and to maintain peace.

CASTRO ASKS GUANTANAMO, STRIVES TO REPAIR PRESTIGE

Fidel Castro has asked for the return of Guantanamo to Cuba and is working to repair the country's image. This move is seen as an attempt to gain international support and to improve relations with other nations.

PLANE VEERS OVER SOVIET, KENNEDY VOICES REGRETS

The Kennedy administration has expressed regret for the incident involving a Soviet plane. The plane was peut to the United States, but not before causing tensions in the region.

CAPITAL HOPEFUL

Plans to end blockade as soon as Moscow shows signs of cooperation.
Shuttle diplomacy
(US and Soviet teams in separate rooms on 38th floor of Secretariat maintaining contact with their capitals)

Thant moves between delegations

(Rikhye on left, Thant centre and Soviets on right)
Crisis Eases – Wary U.S. Awaits Missile Removal

VOICE: ED HERLIHY

Universal Studios, 29 October 1962
THANT'S CUBA TALKS 'FRUITFUL';
HE WILL FLY TO HAVANA TODAY;
BLOCKADE HALTED DURING TRIP

U. S. ARMS SPED AT NEHRU PLEA AS CHINA GAINS
2,000 MEN LOST
Casualties Are Listed by New Delhi—Two
Ladakh Posts Fall

By A. M. ROSENTHAL
Special to The New York Times
NEW DELHI, Oct. 29—Prime
Minister Jawaharlal Nehru
made an urgent request to the
United States today for military
aid to India against the
Chinese Communists. He re-
ceived an immediate pledge that
the promised arms would be rushed to India.

United States air transports
loaded with aircraft and ammuni-
tion are expected to arrive by
the end of the week. They will
form a vital supply line to India in
time of crisis and begin a
historic new chapter in rela-
tions between the countries.

This was the first time in
India's 15 troubled years of
independence that she had made
a direct appeal for military
help. New Delhi had always
feared that such an appeal
might compromise her policy of
non-alignment.

Appeal Has Ramifications
Mr. Nehru is not expected to
abandon his policy of refusing
alliance with blocs of the East
or West. But the fact that in
a hour of danger from Com-

U.N. CHIEF CONFESSION
Sees Soviet and U.S.
Envoys—30 Aides to Accompany Him

By THOMAS J. HAMILTON
Special to The New York Times
WASHINGTON, Oct. 29—U Thant, the Acting
Secretary General, confirmed to-
day that the United Nations General
Assembly would meet on October 30 to
consider proposals for a cease-fire in
Cuba, France's special representative for the
Cuban negotiations; Valerian A. Zorin, Soviet
delegate to the United Nations, and Brig. Indar Jit
Bikhye, military advisor to Mr. Thant. Mr. Kuzevostov arrived on Sunday for talks about Cuba.

EUROPEANS HAIL KENNEDY AS HERO
Air Attack on Cuban Bases Was Seriously Considered

By DAVID SANGER
Special to The New York Times
WASHINGTON, Oct. 29—President Kennedy
told the United Nations General
Assembly on Thursday that the United States
would not use military force in Cuba.

In his speech, Mr. Kennedy said that the
United States would support the United
Nations' efforts to end the conflict in Cuba
through peaceful means.

Mr. Kennedy also spoke about the
international situation, including the
Cuban missile crisis and the
Soviet threat to Western Europe.

He called for a stronger
international response to
the threat from the Soviet
Union.

'Air attack on Cuban Bases
Was Seriously Considered'

By JAMES RESTON
Special to The New York Times
WASHINGTON, Oct. 29—The United States
considered launching a military attack
against Cuba in response to the
Soviet missile threat.

According to sources, the
administration had discussed
the possibility of a limited
air strike to blows up the
missile silos and destroy the
Soviet installations.

However, the decision was
never made, and the United
States opted for a diplomatic
approach to deal with the
Cuban crisis.

'All the News That's Fit to Print'

The New York Times
VOL. CXII . No. 32,685
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NEW YORK, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1962
FIVE CENTS

Air Check Goes On
Missile Sites Watched Despite Suspension of Quarantine

By TAD SZULC
Special to The New York Times
WASHINGTON, Oct. 29—The United States will
lift its blockade of Cuba for two days,
beginning tomorrow morning, the
White House announced.

The announcement said that the
United States will continue to
suspend the tactical nuclear
weapons in Cuba until
October 30.

This gesture toward Mr.
Thant emphasized the easing
of tensions in the eight-day Cuban
Embargo.

The United States lifted
up its air and naval surveillance
of the island and maintained a
cautious diplomatic posture.

Blockade Lifts At 6 A.M.
A Defense Department spokes-
man said that the quarantine,
imposed last Wednesday to
prevent the buildup of Soviet mis-
sile bases in Cuba, would be
lifted at daylight tomorrow, or
about 6 A.M., Eastern standard
time.

'Gilbert Returns To Face Charges'

By EDMUND BLUHM
Special to The New York Times
WASHINGTON, Oct. 29—A military court
in Hawaii sentenced a former
appeal to six years in prison
for desertion and other
charges.

The sentence was for
Gilbert, a former sergeant
in the Marine Corps,
who deserted from a
ship bound for Vietnam.

After a jury trial, the
judge found him guilty
of desertion, unauthorized
absence from a military
post, and
civilian who was
summoned to appear in
military court.

The military court
ordered Gilbert to
report to the
military
dismissal
and
sentence
imposed
in
in
him.

Air Force
Airman
itself

Air Force
Airman
itself

Gilbert
itself

Gilbert
itself

Gilbert
itself
Thant travels to Cuba

US lifts quarantine during trip
Soviet general explains dismantling

Thant asks when missiles completely dismantled? In three days (Nov. 2)
CONFIDENTIAL.

Second


Present:

President Dorticós, Premier Fidel Castro and Foreign Minister Roa. On my side I attended the meeting alone without an aide.

Castro was in a bitter mood. He was angry both with Premier Khrushchev and President Kennedy. He started the meeting with a long statement denouncing Premier Khrushchev for having given a pledge to President Kennedy to demolish the missile sights in Cuba and their withdrawal from Cuban soil without getting prior agreement from the Government of Cuba. He stressed the fact that Cuba is an independent sovereign state and anything involving Cuban territory belonged legitimately to the Cuban Government. Since Khrushchev had already made a commitment to Kennedy to demolish and withdraw the missiles already installed on Cuban soil without the knowledge and consent of the Cuban Government, there was no alternative for him than to denounce the Soviet Government publicly.
October 31
Returning to NY
Kingston, Strathroy: Battle Mobs of Teen-Agers;

CUBA QUARANTINE REIMPOSED;
MISSILES DOWN BY FRIDAY: UN

All Found Faulty
Seat Belts Fail to Pass Tests

Surveillance By Aircraft Begins Again

Gallery Director Alerted To Paintings, House Told

Queen's Park Action
Forestalls Price Rise in Metro Area Milk

British Lend-Lease Arms

Pressure Menon: Nehru in Defense Post

Fail to Get Supervision Agreement

Tongan and on Chinese streets, hundreds of thousands of people gathered in support of the Chinese people. The Chinese government was under attack from the USA. The US and its allies were bombing China. The Chinese were fighting back. But they declined to say whether they wanted to be involved in the Sino-American conflict.

British Lend-Lease Arms

The Globe and Mail

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The Globe and Mail
Kennedy Calls 3 Chief Negotiators To Give Reports on Cuba Situation

By THOMAS J. HAMILTON
© New York Times Service

United Nations, Nov. 11—The three principal U.S. negotiators in the Cuban crisis will report to President John F. Kennedy at the White House tomorrow.

had any contacts with Soviet Meanwhile, in Washington, representatives today. Negotia- tions were suspended yesterday deputy secretary of defense, because Mr. Stevenson and Mr. said today that U.S. authorities McClay were attending the funeral of Mrs. Franklin D. rudge missiles on their way out of Cuba during the past few Speaking on a television program, Mr. Gilpatric left in the future.

Nehru Hopes MIG Plant To Be Built

New Delhi, Nov. 11—Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru today admitted that Russia had planned to build a factory in India for the production of MIG planes before the outbreak of the border war with China, and said he hoped the Soviet promise would be kept.

As the border war still continued, it was also learned today that the Prime Minister had offered the defense ministry to Y. B. Chavan, chief minister of Maharashtra.

Mr. Nehru, addressing a rally estimated at 100,000 persons.


repudiated elements he said were taking advantage of the border war to attack India's policies of socialism and non-alignment.

"Today, there is a need for India's sticking to those policies more steadfastly than ever before," he said. "Giving up non-alignment today would only weaken us and injure our prestige."

MIG plant is the rumors to be
Verification measures agreed

US ships & planes to observe close up;
Missiles to be exposed
“Bombers of November”

Ilyushin 28 jet bombers (nuclear capable)

Kennedy “instructed the US negotiating team in New York not to let the deal get hung up on the issue”

(D. Coleman, *The Fourteenth Day*)
After extensive negotiations, on November 19, Castro finally told Thant that he would agree to removal of IL-28 bombers

Kennedy withdraws quarantine on November 20

(Crisis not “13 days” but two months)
Soviet ship *Kasimov* with IL-28 bomber fuselages in crates
Draft Protocols

- US does not intend to invade Cuba
- provided no nuclear weapons or other offensive weapons are reintroduced into Cuba
- and provided Cuba does not take action to threaten the peace of Western Hemisphere

– November 26
Unofficial translation

Permanent Mission of Cuba to the
United Nations

DRAFT DECLARATION BY THE REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT OF CUBA
IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL

In making this declaration the Revolutionary Government of Cuba
takes into account the exchange of messages between Mr. N.S. Khrushchev,
Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and Mr. J.F. Kennedy,
President of the United States, on 27 and 28 October 1962 and, more
particularly, the statements made by the Cuban Government regarding the
so-called Caribbean crisis, namely, the declaration of Prime Minister
Fidel Castro of 28 October 1962 containing the five measures or points
essential for a stable solution of this crisis and the joint declaration
of the National Directorate of the UNAL and the Council of Ministers,
of 25 November 1962. The Revolutionary Government of Cuba also takes
into account the negotiations carried out through the mediation of
U Thant, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and the fact that
as a result of all this an agreement has been reached whereby the parties
assume the following obligations:

The United States of America:

a) The United States has lifted the "quarantine" which it imposed
with effect from 23 October 1962 on ships proceeding towards the
Republic of Cuba.

b) The United States Armed Forces which were concentrated in the
South-eastern area of the United States in connection with the so-called
Conclusions

- Thant’s initiative gave Khrushchev way out
- Kennedy’s saw importance of honorable alternative and using skilled intermediary
- Thant formula saw the missile sites dismantled in mere days
- Thant received first-hand reports of dismantling
- Negotiated and MEDIATED conflict resolution
- UN served as critical instrument between superpowers
Stevenson:
“the Secretary General’s intervention led to the diversion of the Soviet ships headed for Cuba and interception by our Navy. This was the indispensable first step in the peaceful resolution of the Cuban crisis.”

U Thant unanimously elected to extended term November 30

Joint US-Soviet letter from negotiating teams:
“appreciation for your efforts in assisting our Governments to avert the serious threat to peace which recently arose in the Caribbean area.” (January 7, 1963)
—Engelhardt, in St. Louis Post-Dispatch

FIREWALL
Kennedy: “U Thant has put the world deeply in his debt”
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Additional materials

- Primary Sources used
  
  See [http://walterdorn.org](http://walterdorn.org)

- Publications
  
  How a UN Secretary-General averted doomsday
  (*Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 2012, full piece; pdf);

  50 years ago: The Cuban Missile Crisis and its underappreciated hero
  (*Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 2012, online op-ed)

  Unsung Mediator: U Thant and the Cuban Missile Crisis (html) (pdf)
  (*J. Diplomatic History*, 2009)