

The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962
Selected Glossary

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Principal Actors

Acheson, Dean G.

Secretary of State, United States, Jan. 21, 1949-Jan. 20, 1953. Although not formally part of the administration, Acheson served President Kennedy as an unofficial foreign policy adviser, attending Executive Committee meetings and advocating a hard-line position against the Soviet Union.

Alekseyev, Aleksandr

Soviet Ambassador to Cuba, May 31, 1962-1968. A personal friend of Fidel and Raul Castro, Alekseyev was chosen to broach the idea of deploying nuclear missiles to the Cuban government; during the missile crisis, he stayed in close contact with the Cuban leadership.

Ball, George W.

Under Secretary of State, Dec. 4, 1961-Sept. 30, 1966. Ball was active at the State Department in implementing the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba; as a member of the Executive Committee, he argued for a naval blockade during the missile crisis.

Bundy, McGeorge

Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Oct. 20, 1961-Feb. 1966. A member of the Executive Committee, Bundy took minutes for the meetings. After expressing concern that a decision might be made without adequate discussion and consideration of possible Soviet countermeasures against Berlin, Bundy unsuccessfully argued for a massive airstrike on Cuba.

Castro Ruz, Fidel

Prime Minister, President and Commander-in-Chief of Armed Forces, Cuba, Jan. 1, 1959-Present. Following the 1961 invasion by U.S.-backed Cuban exiles at the Bay of Pigs, Castro and other Cuban officials believed a new U.S. invasion was imminent, and a Soviet offer of missiles was quickly accepted. Toward the end of the crisis, Castro was infuriated by Khrushchev's unilateral decision to remove the missiles from Cuba, as well as by U.S. demands (and Soviet pressure) for Cuban agreement to on-site inspection and the removal of IL-28 bombers; relations between Cuba and the Soviet Union were strained for the next several years.

Dillon, C. Douglas

Secretary of the Treasury, United States, Jan. 21, 1961-March 1965. A staunch anticommunist leader of the Republican party, and a member of the Executive Committee, Dillon argued for an airstrike in early Executive Committee sessions; he was persuaded to support the blockade option, but he continued to recommend military action if needed to resolve the crisis.

Dobrynin, Anatoly F.

Soviet Ambassador to the United States, March 30, 1962- 1986.

Uninformed of the missile deployment by his superiors, Dobrynin offered his assurances in September and early October of 1962 that only "defensive" Soviet military equipment was being provided to Cuba. He was aware of negotiations between Aleksandr Fomin and John Scali, and began his own secret talks with Robert Kennedy, during which Kennedy suggested that the removal of the U.S. Jupiter missiles in Turkey might be part of a settlement of the crisis.

Finletter, Thomas K.

United States Ambassador to NATO, March 2, 1961- Sept. 2, 1965. Responsible for informing NATO allies of crisis developments, Finletter warned the Executive Committee that the unilateral removal of Jupiter missiles from Turkey would damage relations with Turkey and divide the NATO alliance.

Fomin, Aleksandr S.

KGB Station Chief, Soviet embassy, Washington. Apparently acting without the knowledge of the Kremlin, Fomin opened a negotiating channel with ABC News correspondent John Scali, passing on a proposal to end the crisis by withdrawing the missiles in return for a pledge that the U.S. would not invade Cuba.

Garthoff, Raymond L.

Analyst, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, State Department. During his tenure as a State Department analyst, Garthoff authored several memoranda for the Executive Committee on the missiles and on recommendations for defining "offensive weapons" in negotiations with Soviet representatives in November 1962. He is the author of *Reflections on the Cuban Missile Crisis* and other influential histories on the crisis and U.S.-Soviet relations.

Gromyko, Andrei A.

Foreign Minister, Soviet Union 1957-1986. Gromyko was among the first to discuss with Khrushchev and object to the idea of deploying medium and long-range missiles in Cuba with Khrushchev in early May 1962. Particularly concerned over the probable U.S. reaction when the deployment was discovered or became public, Gromyko met with President Kennedy at the White House on October 18, 1962; unaware that Kennedy already knew of the Soviet medium-range ballistic missiles, Gromyko carefully offered assurances that the Soviet arms shipped to Cuba were "defensive."

Hare, Raymond A.

United States Ambassador to Turkey, April 4, 1961- Aug. 27, 1965. Responsible for discussing with Turkish officials the possible dismantling of Jupiter bases, Hare reported on October 26 that the Turkish government objected to a trade but not to the gradual removal of the missiles, even through a secret agreement.

Harvey, William K.

Chief, Task Force W, Operation Mongoose, CIA. A veteran clandestine operator, Harvey sent several CIA teams into Cuba during the missile crisis without the knowledge of the Executive Committee or CIA Director John McCone, an action that brought strong criticism from Robert Kennedy and Harvey's subsequent reassignment to Rome.

Hilsman, Roger, Jr.

Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research, State Department 02/19/1961 - 04/25/1963. Hilsman was responsible for the production of numerous intelligence analyses before and during the missile crisis, and also served as liaison with ABC News correspondent John Scali during his meetings with Aleksandr Fomin.

Johnson, U. Alexis

Deputy Under Secretary for Political Affairs, State Department of State, May 2, 1961-July 12, 1964. Present at most of the Executive Committee sessions and armed with his extensive experience in intelligence work, Johnson initially favored a surgical air strike on the missile bases but later supported the blockade. His important staff work for the group included drafting, with Paul Nitze, a scenario that formed the basis for the timing and execution of military and political actions prior to President Kennedy's October 22 speech.

Kennedy, John F.

President, United States, Jan. 20, 1961-Nov. 22, 1963. Preoccupied by tensions with the Soviet Union and dissatisfaction with the Cuban government, President Kennedy quickly established a select committee of advisers known as the Executive Committee (ExComm) to decide on U.S. actions in response to the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba. By enacting a blockade and taking various steps to avoid further escalation of the conflict, Kennedy was able to avoid general war and to reach a peaceful settlement that included with the removal of the missiles.

Kennedy, Robert F.

Attorney General, United States; Member of the Executive Committee, National Security Council, Jan. 21, 1961-Sept. 1964. Robert Kennedy was possibly President Kennedy's most intimate and influential adviser. He met secretly with Soviet Ambassador Dobryn in an attempt to end the crisis.

Khrushchev, Nikita S.

First Secretary, Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Sept. 1953-Oct. 14, 1964; Premier, Soviet Union, March 1958-Oct. 14, 1964. As U.S.-Soviet relations rapidly deteriorated, Khrushchev, according to Soviet sources, developed the idea of secretly stationing medium-range nuclear missiles in Cuba. After the U.S. blockade was established, Khrushchev asked Kennedy to negotiate a settlement to the crisis; on October 28 he promptly agreed to Kennedy's proposal and withdrew the missiles, thus ending the crisis.

Kuznetsov, Vasily V.

First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Soviet Union, 1955-1977. Kuznetsov briefed Soviet Bloc ambassadors in Moscow on the Soviet Union's reaction to the U.S. blockade, and was assigned by Premier Khrushchev on October 28 to negotiate an end to the crisis at the U.N. with Adlai Stevenson and John McCloy.

Lansdale, Edward G.

Operations Chief, Operation Mongoose, CIA. A renowned counterinsurgency specialist, Lansdale designed an ambitious six-phase covert program under Operation Mongoose to foment an uprising against the Cuban

government by October 1962.

Lundahl, Arthur C.

Chief, National Photographic Interpretation Center, CIA. On October 15, Lundahl notified Ray Cline, the CIA deputy director of intelligence of the discovery of missile equipment in Cuba; the following day, he personally briefed President Kennedy and the Executive Committee on the photographic evidence that the Soviet Union was constructing missile sites there.

Martin, Edwin M.

Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs, State Department, May 18, 1962-Jan. 2, 1964. Martin attended several Executive Committee meetings and was responsible for a key briefing of Organization of American States (OAS) ambassadors prior to OAS introduction of the resolutions supporting U.S. action against the missiles.

McCloy, John J.

Coordinator for United States Disarmament Activities, Jan. 1961-Oct. 1961. The first adviser to be contacted by President Kennedy for advice, McCloy recommended firm action, including, if necessary, an airstrike and invasion to remove the missiles; his tough stance encouraged Kennedy to send him to meet with Soviet and U.N. officials in New York to resolve outstanding missile crisis issues.

McCone, John A.

Director, Central Intelligence Agency, United States, Nov. 29, 1961-April 28, 1965. Although McCone was convinced by early August 1962 that the large number of Soviet ships in transit to Cuba were carrying nuclear missiles, he lacked hard evidence to persuade President Kennedy until the U-2 photographs revealed construction of missile sites in October. During the crisis, McCone began each Executive Committee meeting with an update on the status of the missile bases and any other significant intelligence items, and he advocated a hard-line stance toward the Soviet Union throughout the crisis.

McNamara, Robert S.

Secretary of Defense, Jan. 21, 1961-Feb. 29, 1968. As a member of the Executive Committee, McNamara was initially a forceful opponent of an air attack on Cuba, but he pressed for a blockade as a way to keep options open and to control the pace of events. He supported the idea of assuring the Soviets of the later removal of Jupiter missiles from Turkey in order to negotiate a settlement.

Mikoyan, Anastas I.

First Deputy Prime Minister, Soviet Union, 1955-1964. A close friend and primary adviser to Nikita Khrushchev, Mikoyan was sent to Cuba for the delicate task of persuading Castro to allow the missiles and IL-28 bombers to be removed as well as to smooth over strained Cuban-Soviet relations.

Nitze, Paul H.

Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs, Department of Defense, Jan. 29, 1961-Jan. 23, 1963. As chairman of the Executive Committee's Berlin Subcommittee, Nitze urged immediate military action against the missile sites in Cuba, arguing that the missiles in Cuba

significantly altered the strategic nuclear balance (a view rejected by many in the committee), and that U.S nuclear and conventional superiority in the region would prevent the Soviet Union from responding to a U.S. attack on Cuba.

Rostow, Walt W.

Director, Policy Planning Staff Department of State, United States, Nov. 1961-March. 1966; Chairman, Planning Subcommittee, Executive Committee, National Security Council, United States, Oct. 23, 1962-Jan. 1963. As chairman of the Executive Committee's Planning Subcommittee, Rostow was asked by President Kennedy to assess the Cuban military build-up, and recommended a strong hard-line position against the Soviet Union.

Rusk, Dean

Secretary of State, Jan. 21, 1961-Jan. 20, 1969. As a member of the Executive Committee, Rusk advocated early in the missile crisis a surgical strike on Cuba with prior political warning to Castro or Khrushchev, while later in the crisis he suggested that Robert Kennedy offer Ambassador Dobrynin oral assurances on the U.S. intention to withdraw Jupiter missiles from Turkey.

Scali, John A.

Correspondent, ABC News. Scali was contacted by Soviet embassy official (and KGB Station Chief) Aleksandr Fomin about a proposed settlement to the crisis, and subsequently he acted as a contact between Fomin and the Executive Committee; however, it was without government direction that Scali responded to new Soviet conditions with a warning that a U.S. invasion was only hours away, prompting the Soviets to settle the crisis quickly.

Schlesinger, Arthur M., Jr.

Special Assistant to the President, Jan. 30, 1961-Jan. 1964. As a White House aide and personal confidant of President Kennedy, Schlesinger did not play a large role during the missile crisis beyond helping to draft Adlai Stevenson's statements for the United Nations. A historian by training, Schlesinger later authored two comprehensive accounts of the Kennedy administration, *A Thousand Days* and *Robert Kennedy and His Times*, which included detailed descriptions of events inside the White House during the missile crisis .

Smith, Bromley

Executive Secretary, National Security Council. Responsible for the coordination and distribution of internal papers in the National Security Council, Smith took official notes on most of the Executive Committee meetings after October 24.

Sorensen, Theodore C.

Special Counsel to the President, Jan. 1960-Feb. 1964. After receiving assurances in September from Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin on the defensive nature of the military buildup in Cuba, Sorensen advocated the blockade as an initial step in the crisis and wrote Kennedy's speech announcing the presence of the missiles. Sorensen also wrote Kennedy, one of the standard accounts of the Kennedy presidency, and edited Robert Kennedy's account of the crisis, *Thirteen Days*.

Stevenson, Adlai E.

United States Ambassador to the United Nations, Jan 23, 1961-July 14, 1965. Stevenson, John Kennedy's political rival, consistently argued for a diplomatic settlement, with the Jupiter missiles in Turkey and the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo as items for negotiation, proposals that were rejected by the Executive Committee. As Ambassador to the U.N., Stevenson also played a role in negotiations in New York during and after the crisis.

Sweeney, Walter C., Jr.

Commander, Tactical Air Command (TAC), United States Air Force. As chief of TAC, the command that would have carried out airstrikes against Cuba, in the fall of 1962 General Sweeney oversaw the development of military plans for such attacks. He personally briefed President Kennedy on TAC's proposal and planning for strikes on Cuba.

Taylor, Maxwell D.

Military Advisor to the President, United States, July 1961-Sept. 30, 1962; Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, United States, Oct. 1, 1962-July 1, 1964. A member of the Executive Committee and a self-described "two-fold hawk from start to finish," General Taylor personally argued for military action against Cuba and also pressed for a full invasion of Cuba, believing that the maintenance of U.S. military superiority in both nuclear and conventional forces around Cuba required the U.S. to take an uncompromising position.

Thant, U

Acting Secretary General of the United Nations. Although apparently informed about the existence of a crisis involving Cuba on October 21, 1962, U Thant made no direct attempt to mediate until October 24; however, most of his offers to negotiate during and after the crisis were essentially rejected and had little effect on the final outcome.

Thompson, Llewellyn E.

United States Ambassador to the Soviet Union, July 16, 1957-July 27, 1962; United States Ambassador-at-Large, Oct. 3, 1962-Dec. 26, 1966. As the only Soviet expert on the Executive Committee, Thompson presented assessments of Soviet thinking and, based on his assessments, took positions supporting the blockade and against negotiating with the Turkish Jupiter missiles. Thompson's analysis was essential in President Kennedy's decision to accept Khrushchev's October 26 proposal and to ignore his October 27 proposal involving the Jupiter missiles.

Organizations

Atlantic Command. Commander-in-Chief (CINCLANT)

The commander-in-chief of the Atlantic Command headed the unified military command responsible for coordinating U.S. military activities and plans relating to Cuba. Admiral Robert L. Dennison served as CINCLANT in 1962.

Executive Committee (ExComm)

A group of advisers known as the Executive Committee of the U.S.

National Security Council was created by President Kennedy on October 16, the first day of the crisis (although it was not officially constituted until October 22). The Committee was the key decisionmaking body governing U.S. responses and actions during the crisis period. Statutory members included Vice President Lyndon Johnson; Secretary of State Dean Rusk; Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara; Chairman of the JCS General Maxwell Taylor; Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs McGeorge Bundy; Secretary of the Treasury Douglas Dillon; CIA Director John McCone; Attorney General Robert Kennedy; Undersecretary of State George Ball; Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric; and Ambassador-at-Large Llewellyn Thompson. In addition, the ExComm unofficially included Deputy Under Secretary of State U. Alexis Johnson; Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Nitze; former secretary of State Dean Acheson; private advisers John McCloy and Robert Lovett; U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Adlai Stevenson; Deputy Director of the USIA Donald Wilson; Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Edwin Martin; and, on the first day of the crisis, former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union Charles Bohlen. President Kennedy chaired the Executive Committee.

Executive Committee. Berlin Subcommittee

Chaired by Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Nitze, the Berlin Subcommittee of the Executive Committee conducted contingency planning on Berlin in the event that the Cuban Missile Crisis escalated into a Soviet move against West Berlin. In addition, the inter-agency group sent recommendations to the Executive Committee on other issues, including the Turkey-for-Cuba missile trade.

Special Group Augmented (SGA)

President Kennedy created the Special Group Augmented in late November 1961 to oversee Operation Mongoose, the covert action operation designed to overthrow Fidel Castro. SGA included the members of the Special Group task force which oversaw most unconventional warfare operations but was "augmented" by the presence of Attorney General Robert Kennedy and the Chairman of the JCS, General Maxwell Taylor. Taylor chaired the SGA although Kennedy, because of his relation to his brother, was the dominant member.

Task Force W (of Operation Mongoose)

Task Force W was the entity within the CIA responsible for activities conducted against Cuba under Operation Mongoose and was responsible for sabotage and paramilitary operations by anti-Castro guerrilla units infiltrated into Cuba. During the missile crisis, several CIA teams were sent into Cuba without the knowledge or authorization of the Executive Committee; one was caught by Cuban authorities on October 25. Despite Robert Kennedy's efforts to terminate Task Force W operations on October 30, 1962, another sabotage team destroyed a Cuban industrial facility on November 8, adding tension to the final days of the crisis.

Military and Technical Terms

DEFCON

Defense Condition levels, or DEFCONs, establish the readiness status of U.S. military forces from DEFCON 1, a state of war, to DEFCON 5, the

most relaxed military posture. During the missile crisis, the U.S. Strategic Air Command was placed on DEFCON 2, for the first time in history, while the rest of U.S. military commands (with the exception of the U.S. Air Forces in Europe) went on DEFCON 3.

FROG Missiles

Free Rocket Over Ground (FROG) missiles were Soviet ground-to-ground rockets, capable of carrying a nuclear warhead, with a range of about 25 miles. Former Soviet military officials have said that six such missiles were deployed in Cuba along with larger ballistic missiles.

IL-28 Aircraft

An aging Soviet light bomber aircraft capable of carrying nuclear weapons, forty-two Il-28 planes were delivered to Cuba before and during the missile crisis although only seven planes were actually assembled. Although the planes were militarily obsolete in 1962, the U.S. demanded that they be withdrawn as part of a settlement of the missile crisis. Khrushchev acceded to Washington's demand, but Castro's refusal to release the planes extended the crisis into late November 1962.

IRBMs

Intermediate-range ballistic missiles are surface-to-surface weapons with a range of between 1,500 and 3,000 nautical miles.

Jupiter Missiles

A class of intermediate-range ballistic missiles known as the Jupiter were developed by the U.S. Army in the mid 1950s. Under agreements signed in 1959, 30 Jupiters were deployed in Italy and 15 in Turkey near the Soviet border. The Kennedy administration's quiet agreement to withdraw the Jupiters from Turkey in return for the Soviet withdrawal of missiles from Cuba helped end the Cuban missile crisis.

MRBMs

Medium-range ballistic missiles are surface-to-surface missiles with a range of approximately 600 to 1,500 miles.

POL

POL stands for Petroleum, Oil and Lubricants. At several points during the missile crisis, U.S. decisionmakers considered increasing pressure on the Soviet Union and Cuba by extending the naval blockade on offensive weapons to include POL.

SAMs

Twenty four Soviet SA-2 surface-to-air missile (SAM) sites were constructed in Cuba in the fall of 1962. At that time, the SA-2 or "Guideline" missile system was the most advanced air defense system available to the USSR.

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