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The Cuban Missile Crisis

Overview: On the 16th of October 1962, JFK was informed of the presence on Cuba of forty-two Soviet built medium and long range SS4 and SS5 missiles capable of destroying major cities on the eastern seaboard of the United States. What followed was thirteen days of confrontation between the USA and the USSR, whereby both JFK and Khrushchev attempted to outmanoeuvre one another to gain the upper hand. Ultimately, the Cuban Missile Crisis ended when both sides agreed on a compromise. The debate still rages as to which side gained the most from this flashpoint in Cold War history.

Patrick's arguments that JFK was the victor	Elliott's arguments that Khrushchev was the victor
JFK avoided nuclear war through his flexible response to the missiles being placed in Cuba. His negotiations (secret and otherwise), his use of the UN, the emplacement of the 'quarantine' around Cuba, and his use of the international media, ensured a diverse range of methods for success.	Khrushchev was seen by many in the world as a compromiser, while JFK was (to some) blamed for his 'brinkmanship'. Thus, it was in fact Khrushchev who prevented a nuclear exchange and <i>not</i> JFK.
JFK's image was restored, both at home and abroad, after the debacle of the Bay of Pigs.	Khrushchev was able to get a non-invasion pledge from the US.
JFK was able to get the missiles removed from Cuba.	Khrushchev was able to get US Jupiter missiles out of Turkey.
Khrushchev was seen by many as the cause of the crisis – after all, it was his placing of the missiles in Cuba which started it.	Khrushchev was able to get US THOR missiles out of Italy.
Khrushchev fell from power two years later – many blame his 'defeat' in the crisis for this.	Cuba remained a communist country.
The concession over the missiles in Turkey and Italy was hardly a concession at all – JFK had ordered their removal months before the crisis and had a range of alternative sites.	Cuba remained an area of Soviet influence in the western hemisphere and an insertion point of that influence into Latin America.
JFK believed that he was dealing with an opposite in the Kremlin that had been internally weakened by the 1956 Secret Speech and a range of unpopular domestic reforms.	According to Khrushchev, he accomplished all of his aims (and more) by placing the missiles on Cuba.

Don't forget to check out Dr Elliott L. Watson's free website: www.thecourseworkclub.com and follow him at @thelibrarian6 on Twitter.

Don't forget to check out Patrick O'Shaughnessy's free website: www.historychappy.com and follow him at @historychappy on Twitter.