

Cuban Missile Crisis



Background

- By 1950's American's supported Fulgencio Batista's corrupt regime
- They completely controlled the Cuban economy
- Sugar is major industry
- Wealth unequally distributed

Cuban Revolution 1959

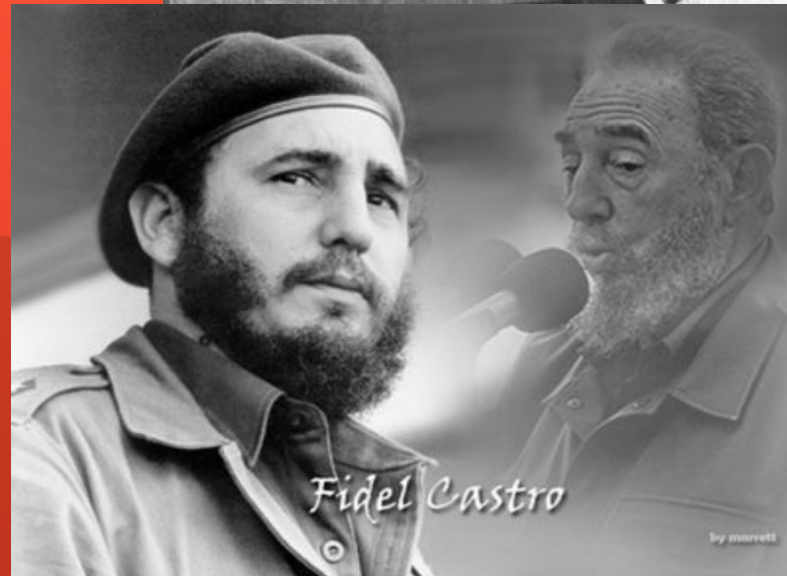
- Peaceful attempts to reform Batista's regime were unsuccessful
- Fidel Castro organized a guerrilla force in the mountainous regions, and then overthrew the Batista regime on January 1st
- At 1st it was only a slightly left wing gov't with a mix of Liberals and Marxists

Batista



FULGENCIO BATISTA

Castro



Cuba and the US after the Revolution

- Castro nationalized American owned factories and plantations
- USA stopped buying Cuban sugar in 1960
- Feb 1960 castro signs a trade agreement with USSR
- Soviets agreed to buy all of Cuba's sugar and provide aid
- USA broke off relations in 1961

Bay of Pigs

- Kennedy and the CIA supported Cuban exiles to reinvade and recapture Cuba
- Americans offered a military base in Guatemala
- They did not offer troops or air support
- The ill-planned invasion took place in April, 1961

Bay of Pigs



Bay of Pigs cont'd

- 1400 Cuban patriots were embarrassed by the Cuban forces
- None made it ashore
- The fiasco was a major embarrassment for the USA
- Shortly after Castro announced that Cuba was a Marxist state
- USA and Cuba now completely estranged

Missile Build Up

- In 1962 USSR deployed missiles in Cuba
- Soviets now behind in the space race
- USA had ICBM's
- Missiles in Cuba would equalize the strategic situation

Missile Build Up

- The Bay of Pigs validated the fear of an American invasion of Cuba
- Documents in 1990s showed there were, indeed, American plans for an invasion of Cuba
- Pentagon had plans for invasions in many places. That's what military planners do :)

Missile Build Up

- Krushchev hoped that missiles in Cuba, next door to the USA, could convince Americans to withdraw missiles in Turkey

Sightings in Cuba

- American U-2 Spy planes photographed missiles in Cuba and Soviet planes capable of carrying Nuclear Bombs
- US intelligence kept this a secret to consider possible responses



U-2 Spy plane sightings



Kennedy's Options

- Negotiate a settlement with USSR
- Conventional attack or invasion
- Naval blockade or 'quarantine'
- Naval blockade would be considered act of war
- Possible nuclear strike

Kennedy

- Kennedy stated on national TV that missiles were offensive and that the lower 48 states were within striking range



Crisis Resolved

After Soviet ships turned back on Oct 24th:

- Letter sent to Krushchev proposing that if missiles were removed from Cuba USA would not invade the island
- Krushchev responded saying no deal unless Americans removed missiles from Turkey
- Kennedy took his bro's advice and responded to tyhe first letter, ignoring the 2nd.
- Kennedy accepted and appeared victorious

Robert and John F Kennedy

