

Cuban Missile Crisis DBQ

Document A: Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy

Moscow, October 27, 1962.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,

I understand your concern for the security of the United States... You wish to ensure the security of your country, and this is understandable. But Cuba, too, wants the same thing; all countries want to maintain their security. But how are we, the Soviet Union, to [understand] the fact that you have surrounded the Soviet Union with military bases; surrounded our allies with military bases; placed military bases literally around our country; and stationed your missile armaments there? This is no secret. . . .Your missiles are located in Britain, are located in Italy, and are aimed against us. Your missiles are located in Turkey. You are disturbed over Cuba. You say that this disturbs you because it is 90 miles by sea from the coast of the United States of America. But you have placed destructive missile weapons, which you call offensive, in Turkey, literally next to us.

I therefore make this proposal: We are willing to remove from Cuba the [missiles] which you regard as offensive. Your representatives will make a declaration to the effect that the United States, for its part, . . . will remove its [missiles] from Turkey.

We, in making this pledge, will promise not to invade Turkey. . . .The United States Government will promise not to invade Cuba . . .

The greatest joy for all peoples would be the announcement of our agreement. These are my proposals, Mr. President.

Respectfully yours,

N. Khrushchev

Source: Letter from Soviet Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy. U.S., Department of State, FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UN 1961-1963, Volume XI, Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath.

Document B: Letter from President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev

Washington, October 27, 1962

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I have read your letter of Oct. 26th with great care and welcomed the statement of your desire to seek a prompt solution to the problem. As I read your letter, the key elements of your proposals...are as follows:

- 1) You would agree to remove these weapons from Cuba under appropriate United Nations observation and supervision; and halt the further introduction of such weapons systems into Cuba.

- 2) We, on our part, would agree...a) to remove promptly the [blockade] now in effect and (b) to give assurances against an invasion of Cuba, I am confident that other nations of the Western Hemisphere would be prepared to do likewise.

There is no reason why we should not be able to complete these arrangements and announce them to the world within a couple of days. The effect of such a settlement on easing world tensions would enable us to work toward a more general arrangement regarding "other armaments", as proposed in your letter. But the first step, let me emphasize, is the **cessation** (end) of work on missile sites in Cuba The continuation of this threat by linking these problems to the broader questions of European and world security, would surely [be] a grave risk to the peace of the world. For this reason I hope we can quickly agree along the lines outlined in this letter and in your letter of October 26.

John F. Kennedy

Source: Letter from President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev. New York Times,

Name _____ Period _____

Document Based Questions

Document A: Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy

1. What deal does Khrushchev propose to Kennedy?
2. What is the tone of this letter? Provide a quote to support your claim.
3. Do you think Khrushchev has the upper hand? Why or why not?

Document B: Letter from President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev

4. In this letter Kennedy restates Khrushchev's proposals. Does Kennedy include everything Khrushchev proposed? If not, why might have he left something out?
5. What is the tone of this letter? Provide a quote to support your claim.
6. Do you think Kennedy has the upper hand? Why or why not?