

The Cuban Missile Crises

The one major military thing that happened the year I was at Leavenworth, was the Cuban Missile Crises that pitted the Soviet Union leadership which had placed some Nuclear Weapons on Missiles pointed at the United States in Cuba, against an American President John F Kennedy, who had already been burned by the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion of Communist Cuba by Cuban exiles, backed - to a point - by the US through the CIA. He refused to permit US Air Force planes to fire on Cubans who were resisting the attempted invasion which was aimed at getting a popular uprising against Fidel Castro, who was still barely in control of the government of Cuba after his Communist overthrow of the western government. Castro turned for support to Soviet Russia. Young Kennedy's fortitude was unknown when up against Old Soviet Nikita Krushchev.

The story is well known. The US discovered by intelligence overflights that Soviet nuclear missiles were being quietly installed in Cuba, their installations were nearly ready to threaten at least the Southern United States. And a convoy of Soviet Vessels were steaming toward Cuba with another load of missiles.

During the showdown, television monitors were put in the Leavenworth C&GSC student classrooms so we could at least hear the President's address to the nation.

Of course as we now know, the crises was averted when the men in the White House figured out a way to finesse the Soviet hard liners by backchannelling messages to Nikita that promised to deactivate the US Missiles which had been put in Turkey and Europe threatening the Soviets, in return for Russia removing their weapons in Cuba. And buying time by 'quarantening' the Soviet fleet by US Navy forces, which stopped the Soviets in the water, without a shot being fired.

Of course there were vigorous discussions in the Leavenworth Classes between students about the whole Cold War standoff, as well as the Crises itself.

After I got involved in some of the discussions among officers, some of whom would eventually be staff or commanders at the highest US Military levels operating out of the Pentagon, my own creative juices began to flow.

What I was thinking ahead to, was how both the US and Soviet leadership would react IF the negotiations broke down, a nuclear war started, and both America and Russia received nuclear strikes.

In fact I sat down and started to write a Play, that would probe these issues.

In the next Chapter I will summarize how my mind dealt with the grave possibility that we would, in fact, be in a

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Category: Fort Leavenworth Year - 1963

Published: Tuesday, 06 September 2011 14:14

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Hits: 3816

Nuclear War sooner or later.

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