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Public diplomacy can make a significant contribution to international crisis management and resolution when used wisely by governments in conjunction with military power and private negotiations. This case study very ably illustrates the usefulness, as well as some shortcomings, of public diplomacy as an instrument of national policy with the improvement of world communications and the increased importance placed upon public opinion.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND THE MISSILES OF OCTOBER

A research paper prepared

by

G. Scott Sugden

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The recent presence of Soviet naval craft at Cienfuegos, Cuba, has redirected U.S. public attention back to that turmoiled island. The activities of these units have raised questions as to their ultimate purpose, such as the establishment of naval facilities in support of missile-laden submarines, and its possible effect on future U.S. national security and defense posture. Already the national press has speculated on this development in terms of the agreement that resolved the last United States-U.S.S.R. confrontation in Cuba, which included halting the further introduction of offensive weapons to the island.

Nearly a decade has elapsed since the world was engrossed by that epic occasion, the historic Cuban missile crisis of October 1962. Yet, one is still able to recall with clarity the tension and

awesome prospect that suddenly emerged at its outset and the intense relief that was apparent as the super-powers drew apart.

The Soviet vessels at Cienfuegos may be harbingers of a new crisis. Denials of the offensive intent of the vessels or of the naval base with which they are alleged to be concerned sound familiarly like those heard during the prelude to the missile crisis of 1962. Similarly, the national press again raises doubts about the intent and resolve of the U.S. position in the face of this renewed Soviet activity.

But whether or not this episode develops into another Cuban crisis, the United States should seek to benefit from the insights gained from the earlier confrontation. While world conditions have changed substantially during the past decade, this has not altered the

continued importance of neighboring Cuba to U.S. security interests. Another, albeit more subtle, attempt by the Soviet Union to extend its offensive military capability into the Caribbean would carry the same challenge to the United States that it did in 1962. Meeting that challenge would again require measured and effective use of all facets of U.S. statecraft which contributed to resolution of the previous confrontation, including the application of public diplomacy.

Despite the considerable amount of literature which has been produced about the Cuban missile crisis, scant attention has been given to the conduct of public diplomacy during that event. This lack of attention may be explained in part by the general unfamiliarity which most people have of this mode of diplomatic procedure as distinct from the more traditional mode based upon direct, formal government-to-government exchanges. It may also be explained in part by the inherent difficulty of measuring the effect that public actions, materials, or pronouncements have upon governments' foreign policy decisions. Finally, the dearth of attention may be because there is no clear majority consensus even among the practitioners of this "new diplomacy" as to what constitutes its limits, while its techniques remain in flux.

Nonetheless, public diplomacy has come to bear with increasing effectiveness on the affairs of international relations. This has been particularly evident during the period since the First World War, an era when social and political changes have coincided with a rapid proliferation of technological developments in the field of communications.

In a sense, public diplomacy has been spawned by a merger of modern communications and democratized politics. The growth of mass communications has promoted governments whose decisions increasingly reflect an awareness

of and responsiveness to the opinions of their electorates. In turn, these electorates have become the object of a growing variety of efforts through the communications media to enlist their influence for the purpose of achieving political leverage. In recognition of this trend, more governments tend to weigh the strength of foreign public opinion when assessing the current strength or future direction of policies promulgated by other governments. At the same time they seek to maximize the effectiveness of their own foreign policy by influencing the opinions of overseas electorates and governments by direct and indirect means, largely through communications media. It is upon these efforts that the practice of public diplomacy rests.

During the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, public diplomacy played a substantial role, a role which emerged in two distinct phases. The first phase ran from July 1962, when Soviet military assistance to Cuba suddenly burgeoned, until mid-October, on the occasion of the U.S. discovery of the missile base sites. The second, more critical but brief, phase extended from discovery of the sites until 28 October, when the Soviet Union agreed to withdraw all offensive weapons from Cuba. By the latter date the most significant effects of the impact of public diplomacy activities had registered on the crisis.

The initial, precrisis, phase was characterized by rising popular concern in the United States over the rapidly growing Soviet military presence in Cuba. This concern reinforced a residue of general discontent and frustration toward Cuba which had remained after the abortive Bay of Pigs debacle of April 1961. It was further enhanced by impending 1962 congressional elections scheduled for November of that year.

President John F. Kennedy's policy toward Cuba at this juncture had become less active and less aggressive than earlier in his administration.

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During his presidential campaign he had called for a strong, active stand against Communist influence in Cuba. Only 17 days before he assumed office, relations with Cuba ruptured, and as President he soon sanctioned the continuation of U.S. support for an invasion of the island by Cuban exiles. But after the disastrous failure at Bahía de Cochinos and the violent international reaction to the fiasco, President Kennedy publicly accepted full responsibility for the U.S. part in the attack, and U.S. policy toward Cuba became distinctly more passive and indirect.

The futility and ignominy of the Bay of Pigs episode made a deep impression on the President. Further, it had serious politico-psychological implications for future relations with Cuba and the Soviet Union. Although antagonism toward Cuba gained momentum in the Americas, especially after Castro proclaimed that country socialist and later announced himself a Marxist-Leninist, the Kennedy administration concentrated upon persuasive efforts to achieve political and economic isolation of the island rather than seeking to promote direct military action against Castro. With respect to the Soviet Union, President Kennedy discussed the Cuban attack with Premier Khrushchev during their Vienna meeting in June 1961. From accounts, he did so in an apologetic manner,¹ giving rise to the feeling that the United States was not prepared to resist forcefully U.S.S.R. involvement in Cuba.² The apparent lack of will to resist was further reflected in the U.S. agreement to the "neutralization" of Laos and later in the failure to respond strongly to the erection of the Berlin Wall in the summer of 1961.

One year later Cuba was again brought back toward the focus of attention as the Soviet Union moved to test U.S. policy and resolve. Allegedly in order to prevent a U.S. invasion of Cuba,³ the Soviet Union embarked upon a covert operation to establish

nuclear missiles in that country. This operation, which involved a massive airlift utilizing over 100 shiploads of men and material,⁴ was initiated late in June and continued until mid-October when the missile sites were finally identified from U.S. aerial reconnaissance photographs. Meanwhile, though conscious of the sharp increase in the number of Soviet ships arriving at Cuban ports, the U.S. Government was sluggish in reaction, while its policy lacked clarity, cohesion, and decisiveness.

Quite naturally the Government's public diplomacy reflected identical qualities. During the months preceding the Cuban crisis, Government spokesmen concentrated upon the economic ills and the loss of civil and political liberties in Cuba while generating support for the Alliance for Progress as the most logical and effective deterrent against the blight of Castro's brand of communism in the Americas. References to the influx of Soviet supplies and equipment into Cuba were treated with restraint and moderation. Even after opposition leaders in Congress had seized upon the Soviet buildup to protest the Government's policy of restraint, spokesmen for the administration refrained from denouncing the Soviet operation and were put in the position virtually of defending the defensive character of the weapons and personnel being introduced. At the same time, President Kennedy and various members of his administration continued to assure the public at home and abroad that any genuine threat to the United States would be dealt with in an appropriate manner. A closer look at these Government statements, which serve as the grist for the conduct of public diplomacy, reveals more clearly the ramifications of the administration's policy of restraint during the precrisis period.

The U.S. Government made few public references to the Soviet buildup

in Cuba until late August 1962. However, 5 months earlier the Department of State had issued a press release on the subject of Communist military aid to Cuba.⁵ In response to numerous queries being received on the subject, the statement pointed out that Cuba had been receiving large-scale military assistance for 18 months from the Soviet bloc but that there was no evidence of any missiles being supplied or missile bases being constructed on the island. When the United States became aware, in July, that the number of Soviet ships arriving at Cuban ports had increased drastically, surveillance of the ships and the island was stepped up without public fanfare while the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Edwin M. Martin, continued to promote the policy of isolating Cuba from the rest of Latin America.⁶ At this time there was a general consensus among the U.S. foreign policymakers that the Soviet Union might be tempted to revive its waning postsputnik offensive, but similarly these officials agreed that the activity in Cuba did not then constitute a threat to the United States and did not presage introduction of offensive missiles.⁷ Concurrently, the growing press campaign to alert the country to the signs of increased Soviet activity in Cuba was downgraded by such private commentators as *Saturday Review's* editor Norman Cousins who stressed that private information media did not speak for the U.S. Government. He made it clear that the Soviet Union should not be misled into thinking otherwise.⁸

Gradual escalation of Government comment began in August, coincident with indications of rising apprehension in Congress and amid dogged attention of the press. After Senator Homer Capehart called for a U.S. invasion of Cuba to halt the flow of Soviet troops and supplies, President Kennedy in a press conference on 29 August opposed such an invasion "... at this time," stating

that such a move could lead to "... very serious consequences."⁹ One week later he issued a statement denying the existence of any evidence of offensive missiles, while announcing the installation of surface-to-air missiles on the island. But, at the same time, he clearly inferred that surface-to-surface missiles would be considered offensive weapons, the emplacement of which would not be tolerated. As emphasis, he later requested and received congressional authority to call up 150,000 U.S. reservists in case of a critical international situation. The Soviet Union quickly announced on 11 September that in view of its powerful rockets there was no need for missile sites in Cuba or anywhere outside of its own country.

Despite this apparent Soviet disclaimer, the Kennedy administration found itself enmeshed in a cacophony of criticism. In 6 weeks Senator Kenneth Keating made 10 speeches in the Senate warning of the Soviet military buildup. Other opposition leaders in Congress, including Senator Everett Dirksen and Representative Charles Halleck, also sounded the tocsin, declaring a threat to the security of the Nation and a violation of the Monroe Doctrine. A *Life* magazine editorial decried the administration's indecision. *Time* magazine called for armed intervention. And the *U.S. News & World Report* saw a major U.S. defeat in the Soviet incursion. Columnist David Lawrence questioned why the U.S. Government was failing to denounce or protest publicly the Soviet activity, while Marguerite Higgins asked in her newspaper column if President Kennedy was destined to administer over the decline of the United States as a world power. By September a Gallup poll gauged public support for the President at an alltime low.

In the face of this vocal opposition, the Kennedy administration steadfastly maintained its policy of restraint.

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Responding to critics at home and potential adversaries abroad, the administration's position was emphasized by a series of public statements on the Cuba issue by Government spokesmen. On 9 September Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs Paul H. Nitze stated on ABC's "Issues and Answers" program that while the United States had grounds for concern, the installation of offensive missiles in Cuba would be contrary to past Soviet policy and therefore extremely unlikely to take place. Four days later the President, at a press conference, reiterated the contention that the Soviet military shipments, due to the defensive nature of their contents, did not constitute a serious threat to any part of the hemisphere, but that if Cuba gained the capacity to conduct offensive action against the United States, he would act to protect the hemispheric security. Chester Bowles, Presidential special representative and adviser on African, Asian and Latin American Affairs, in a public address on 16 September asserted that a U.S. attack on Cuba would cause irreparable harm to the cause of freedom and provide the means for a series of Soviet victories. On the very next day Secretary of State Dean Rusk assured two Senate subcommittees that the Soviet Union, by denying its need for missile bases outside the U.S.S.R., had already recognized the "signals" which the United States had transmitted in its public statements regarding the danger of installing offensive missiles in Cuba. Encouraged by the apparent effectiveness of this public diplomacy, Secretary Rusk testified in favor of the proposed joint resolution which would signal the depth and unanimity of U.S. congressional opposition to the creation in Cuba of an externally supported military force capable of threatening U.S. security.¹⁰

Later, on the last day of September, Secretary Rusk supported further the administration's policy of restraint.

During an interview on Howard K. Smith's "News and Comment," the Secretary insisted that the "configuration" of the military forces in Cuba was defensive and that the United States should find an answer to the buildup without bloodshed. A similar assertion, that the forces were no threat to the United States, was made on 3 October by Under Secretary of State George Ball before a congressional committee in open hearing on trade with Cuba.¹¹

The administration's public defense of its policy continued until the last day of innocence. On 14 October Presidential adviser McGeorge Bundy, during an interview on "Issues and Answers," confided that he did not believe that the Soviet Union would try to establish a "major offensive capability" in Cuba. The final effort by the administration was made by Assistant Secretary of State Martin who on 15 October for the first time placed the policy of the United States toward Cuba on record in a speech and explained why the Soviet Union would not put offensive missiles in Cuba.¹² During his speech at the National Press Club in Washington, a telephone call was made to inform him that missile base sites in Cuba had just been identified from reconnaissance photographs.

These expressions of U.S. policy toward the Soviet buildup in Cuba by senior administration officials were the basis for the public diplomatic activities conducted during the precrisis period. By providing these statements to the international communications media and by promoting the dissemination of these statements and commentaries on them through the facilities of its own information posts and diplomatic missions abroad, the Kennedy administration sought to assure ally and neutral that the United States was following a rational, restrained, and measured policy, despite Soviet provocation and U.S. internal political pressure. Moreover, since no formal protests were

made to the Soviet Union during this phase, these public statements and the private exchanges which took place between United States and Soviet officials were intended to serve as important indicators of U.S. security interests to the Soviet leaders. The potential adversary in the Kremlin was expected to note and to understand these "signals," such as the one to which Secretary Rusk referred in his congressional testimony about President Kennedy not tolerating the presence of a force in Cuba capable of threatening the security of the United States.

Clearly the Soviet Union misinterpreted or misjudged the signals. But while public diplomacy promotes policy, it is not a substitute for it. The policy of restraint, by appearing to deemphasize the missile threat, not only made the President vulnerable to domestic political pressure, but it also provided the Soviet leaders with grounds for believing that he lacked the will and boldness to oppose such a threat. Further, since the U.S. Government policy failed to include public opposition to the extension of communism into Cuba, the Soviet Union had reason to believe that the United States was becoming acquiescent to the incursion. The administration even appeared to have sanctioned the defensive nature of Soviet arms and personnel while denying to opposition members in Congress the existence of offensive missiles, leaving Soviet policymakers free to speculate as to whether the President was prepared to accept presence of the missiles or to delay announcement until after the congressional elections. Finally, leaders in the Kremlin probably were also wrongly emboldened by some information media comments in the United States and more generally abroad in allied countries that the United States had become obsessed by Cuba, that it had no grounds for threatening warlike action against the Soviet Union for activities in that country, and

that Latin American States could not be depended upon for support in the event of a crisis.¹³

The time for testing began 15 October and continued for 13 days. During that period, initiated by identification of the missile sites, U.S. public diplomacy played a far more effective and successful role than during the precrisis phase. If the steps which led to the Cuban missile confrontation were facilitated by misjudgments based upon public diplomatic relations, the resolution of that crisis flowed in no small measure from the support achieved and the clear and precise intentions conveyed through public diplomacy.

During the first week after detection of the missile sites, there was no visible evidence of unusual activity in Washington. Selected members of the National Security Council and several other senior Government officials conducted an extended series of meetings in secrecy to determine the best way to meet the Soviet missile threat. By Friday, 19 October, there was general agreement among the participants, who were convened as the Executive Committee of the National Security Council (ExCom), that the first step should include the public declaration of a quarantine against the further introduction of offensive weapons into Cuba announced simultaneously with the demand that all similar weapons be removed from that island. Within 48 hours President Kennedy made a final decision in concurrence with that view, and arrangements were planned for its public release and implementation.

The President's address to the nation at 7 p.m., 22 October, was the first public indication that the United States and the world faced an unprecedented crisis. The domestic and foreign reaction was strong, immediate, and unequivocal. After achieving the support of its allies, particularly the Organization of American States, the President's address was followed by formal declaration of the

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quarantine to become effective on 24 October. While the quarantine remained unchallenged, the issue of Soviet intentions stayed in doubt until the denouement on Sunday, 28 October. That morning, Radio Moscow broadcast the text of Chairman Khrushchev's fifth letter to President Kennedy since the advent of the crisis. Through this means Khrushchev agreed with the conditions which had been set forth in President Kennedy's most recent letter calling for the removal of the offensive weapons and a "... halt to further introduction of such weapons systems into Cuba."

In retrospect, it is no more possible to determine which factor contributed most effectively to the Soviet decision to withdraw its offensive weapons than it is to determine which factor was the most responsible for their introduction. However, the preponderant power of the U.S. strategic deterrent coupled with the inability of the Soviet Union to match U.S. military force in the Cuban area were, undoubtedly, principal considerations. After being triggered by the President's speech on 22 October in a preplanned response, the U.S. military effort involved about 300,000 men, 185 naval vessels, a 2,100 mile quarantine line, and the most massive airborne alert in world history.¹⁴ But military force would be effective as a deterrent only to the extent that potential adversaries were aware of its presence, its capabilities, and the intent behind its utilization. Consequently, one of the most important functions of U.S. public diplomacy during the crisis phase was to convey in a direct, lucid, and unambiguous manner to friend and foe the vital interests, intentions, and capabilities of the United States.

President Kennedy immediately recognized this need. As soon as he learned that the missile sites had been identified, he requested Special Assistant Theodore Sorensen to review all his public statements on the possible U.S. reaction to offensive missiles in Cuba.

While these statements precommitted the administration to eliminating the offensive threat, the President was determined that the operation be performed without risking further misconceptions of U.S. intentions. For this purpose he made it clear that the U.S. Government was to speak with a single voice. Planning for the dissemination of public statements was charged directly to ExCom, with the President's press secretary Pierre Salinger responsible for coordination of the decisions.¹⁵ This determination by the President rankled many U.S. pressmen during the course of the crisis, and it eventually led to charges of news management against the administration. Nonetheless, with President Kennedy reviewing all public statements originating in the White House, the decision to coordinate release of information materials was implemented faithfully and with telling effect throughout the crisis phase.

Members of ExCom frequently considered foreign public opinion when assessing plans and their possible effects on the outcome of the crisis.¹⁶ While the minutes of the ExCom meetings are not yet available for public record, it may be inferred from guidelines laid down for the implementation of decisions from this body that there were three principal objectives to be achieved in the field of public diplomacy during this period: first, to establish Soviet responsibility for the threat against the United States, the Western Hemisphere, and world peace; second, to convince all interested parties of the firm intention and capability of the United States to remove the threat; and third, to convince all interested parties that the measures to be used were limited to the threat, responsible in their inception and implementation, and peaceful of intent. Adjuncts to these objectives were to keep world opinion focused on the offensive weapons in Cuba, disassociated from similar U.S. weapons or commitments elsewhere, while

countering critics of U.S. policy and operations.

The President's speech of 22 October provided the tone, direction, and basic source for the projection of U.S. public diplomacy during the crisis. Somber, deliberate, and firm, the speech stressed the unmistakable evidence and magnitude of the threat, the duplicity of Soviet policy in an area with a special relationship to the United States, and the resolve, but reasonableness, of the United States to eliminate the threat by whatever means were to be necessary, with a peaceful solution clearly preferred. By stressing these points, the President sought to emphasize the strongest facets of the U.S. position: the mutual threat to hemispheric security, proven Soviet guilt, and the inevitability of the United States outbidding the U.S.S.R. in a nearby area of traditionally vital interest.

In his speech the President made the U.S. position clear. This country considered that the Soviet Union, rather than Cuba, was primarily responsible for the crisis, the resolution for which the United States was prepared to face the cost of worldwide nuclear war, including a full retaliatory response in the event of a missile launched against any nation in the Western Hemisphere. But concurrently, the peaceful intent of the limited quarantine—as an initial step toward achievement of hemispheric security—and the appeal to the regional and international organizations as well as to Khrushchev himself all indicated a balanced and temperate approach in favor of a peaceful solution. Each of these points was amplified through implementation of public diplomacy.

The importance of conveying these points abroad was reflected in the elaborate and finely timed arrangements made to gain maximum impact with the speech. In addition to the series of briefings scheduled for foreign ambassadors and the information media in Washington before and after the speech,

special Presidential envoys were dispatched to inform key leaders and representatives abroad. At the same time the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) initiated a massive campaign to disseminate the speech as the first step in its drive to ensure that explanation of the U.S. position was widely received and clearly understood overseas.

The senior official available from USIA, Deputy Director Donald Wilson,¹⁷ had been brought into ExCom during the weekend preceding the President's quarantine speech. It was soon clear to him that the President was instinctively interested in foreign public opinion and in the vital need for everyone, especially the people in the Soviet Union and Cuba, to be aware of what was happening.¹⁸ With this insight and the benefit of the ExCom guidelines in mind, he organized his Agency's efforts to promote the objectives of U.S. public diplomacy during the crisis.

USIA gave multimedia promotion to the President's quarantine speech on 22 October. After alerting its overseas audience, the Agency's radio service, Voice of America, carried the speech live from the White House on its worldwide network, with translations in Spanish and Portuguese broadcast immediately afterward and in 35 additional languages later. Maximum Cuban reception was ensured by arranging for the unprecedented utilization of 10 private U.S. radio stations to supplement VOA transmissions to the island. While more than doubling its number of frequencies carrying Spanish-language programs and tripling its broadcast schedule to 24 hours per day, the Voice of America also carried the President's address and twice-daily news stories thereafter in Russian to Cuba for the Soviet personnel stationed there. Videotapes, kinescopes, and standard film prints of the address in English and a wide variety of foreign languages were sent to USIA posts in more than 100 countries for use in USIA information centers,

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commercial theaters, and television stations. Telstar transmission of the speech was arranged by USIA for millions of viewers in Europe. Radio teletype was used to send the text of the address to 107 Agency posts as the President spoke. These texts were translated and reproduced for thousands of government officials, political leaders, and newspapers editors around the world. Finally, illustrated pamphlets with the text of the President's address in several languages were published at the Agency's regional printing centers in Manila, Mexico City, and Beirut, while 100 copies of a photo exhibit based on the speech were sent via air to Latin America, and prints in 40 languages of a 10-minute documentary on the Cuban situation were airshipped throughout the world.

This extensive dissemination of President Kennedy's quarantine speech typified the manner in which USIA operations¹⁹ promoted U.S. public diplomatic objectives during the crisis. Wide coverage was also devoted to other events which served to illustrate or to strengthen the U.S. position, such as the unanimous support of the Organization of American States, the acrid Stevenson-Zorin exchanges at the Security Council sessions of the United Nations, and the unique series of messages among President Kennedy, Chairman Khrushchev, and Secretary General U Thant.

At the same time, USIA, as the Government Agency charged with the public promotion of U.S. foreign policy objectives, faced a variety of audiences: the governments and peoples of friendly, nonaligned, and adversary states. Many audiences merited special, sometimes unique, attention. Three examples illustrate the manner in which this attention was implemented with respect to the people in the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and Cuba.

In order to keep pressure on the leaders in the Kremlin, the United States wanted to be sure that the people

of the Soviet Union knew about the genesis and implications of the crisis in Cuba. Since the controlled Soviet press had not revealed the presence of nuclear missile sites and other vital information germane to the crisis, USIA undertook to rectify the omissions. On 25 October, following a series of radio announcements alerting audiences to the upcoming event, VOA conducted a saturation broadcast to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Designed to penetrate jamming by 2,000 Communist interference transmitters, VOA massed 52 transmitters, strategically sited around the Soviet Union, with a total power of nearly 4.5 million watts—equivalent to more than 86 of the strongest U.S. radio stations broadcasting simultaneously—for an 8½-hour-long radio barrage in 10 languages on 80 frequencies. Favored by good propagation the saturation barrage broke through the jamming efforts and, as confirmed by electronic monitoring and reports from American newsmen in Moscow at the time, proved highly successful.

A second example took place in Great Britain. One objective of U.S. public diplomacy was to establish the credibility of the Soviet threat to world peace. The United States recognized that the promotion of this objective would contribute to a favorable consensus of public opinion and support abroad which, in turn, would exert additional pressure on the Soviet Union to withdraw the source of the threat. While the favorable consensus was achieved rapidly in most countries, this was not the case with respect to the United States major ally, Great Britain, where much of the immediate press reaction to the quarantine address was negative. The *Guardian* doubted the effectiveness and wisdom of the quarantine, while the *Daily Telegraph* saw it as "greatly mistimed." The *Daily Mail* felt that the President was being led by popular emotion rather than statesmanship, and *The Times* sought to

promote the traditional British stance as mediator. Perhaps most revealing was the call by the *Daily Herald* for "irrefutable proof" of the charge against the Soviet Union.

Luckily the proof was at hand in the form of photographs of the missile bases which had been flown to London for briefing of the British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan. Presciently, upon being shown the photographs the night the President delivered his quarantine speech, the Prime Minister had asserted that they should be published in the newspapers immediately since the threat would not be believed until the photographs were shown.²⁰ As a result of the reaction of the press and the Prime Minister, USIA officers in London sought and received permission on 23 October to release prints of the photographs. The prints were used that evening on special programs carried by both nationwide television channels, reaching an estimated audience of 21 million persons. At the same time, prints were provided to the national press, and they dominated the news on the following morning, appearing in newspapers with national circulations of 24 million copies. Citing the photographs, the London daily *Express* ran a one-word headline "Evidence." And the daily *Sketch* called it "Proof." The photographs were credited with playing a principal role in converting British public opinion toward acceptance of the U.S. position.

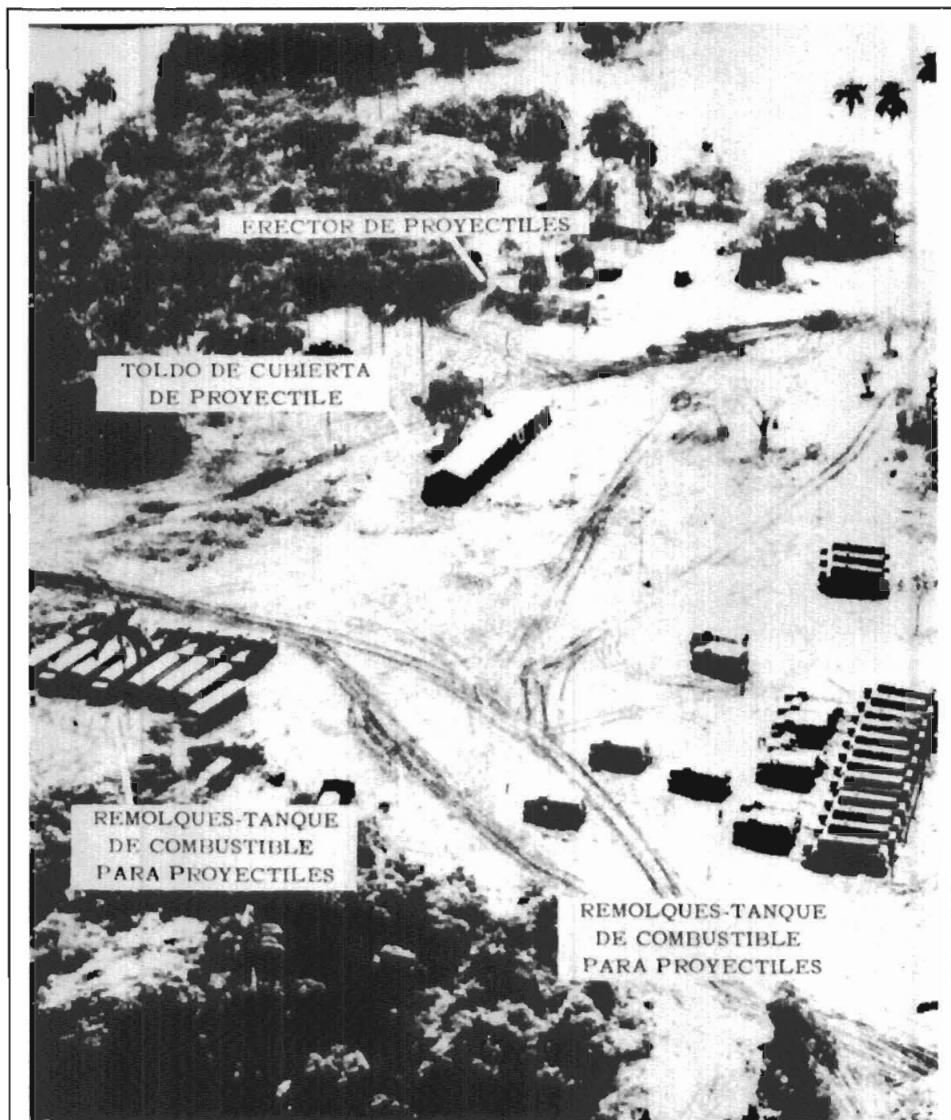
Moreover, because of the release of the photographs in Great Britain, the embargo on their use was lifted everywhere. As a result, they made a substantial contribution toward influencing world public opinion²¹ in favor of principal objectives of U.S. public diplomacy: the establishment of the Soviet guilt and threat.

As a final example, President Kennedy expressed special concern for the Cuban people. This concern surfaced in his quarantine speech and may

have originated from the Bay of Pigs experience. He wanted to be certain that the Cubans knew what the Soviet Union was doing on their island and that the United States sought elimination of the missile threat without the use of force. These points were highlighted in the round-the-clock Spanish programs of the Voice of America, which carried news broadcasts every 30 minutes. But the President also ordered USIA to organize a massive leaflet drop for the island.²² Within 72 hours, 5 million copies of a one-page leaflet were prepared and printed in cooperation with the Psychological Warfare Headquarters at Fort Bragg, N.C. On one side of the leaflet was a photograph identifying a nuclear missile base site in Cuba, while the other side described in Spanish the responsibility and intentions of the Soviet Union in constructing the missile bases on Cuban soil. Though the leaflets were loaded into canisters and mounted on planes at a Florida airbase, they were never dropped.

As the leaflets were prepared for delivery, a U-2 plane had been shot down by a missile over Cuba. At the same time a letter was received from Premier Khrushchev indicating possible stiffening of Soviet resistance. As a consequence, President Kennedy was probably reluctant to aggravate the tense situation with a leaflet drop which might have been interpreted as a prelude to invasion. Since the Soviet Union agreed during the following morning to remove the offensive weapons from Cuba, the rationale for dropping the leaflets was eliminated.

Through these and a myriad of other activities, USIA played the prime role in presenting U.S. policy to foreign audiences during the crisis. In large part because of this effort, it was later claimed that the U.S. position in the crisis and the threat upon which it was based—the Soviet missiles in Cuba—were more thoroughly documented



ESTAS BASES PONEN EN PELIGRO VIDAS CUBANAS

Esta fotografía fué tomada un día de la semana pasada desde un avión que voló sobre Cuba. Ella muestra una base de proyectiles nucleares de carácter ofensivo cerca de San Cristobal. Esta es una de varias bases que apresurada y secretamente fueron construídas por los rusos y para los rusos.

LA VERDAD

Los rusos secretamente han construido bases de proyectiles nucleares de carácter ofensivo en Cuba. Estas bases ponen en peligro vidas cubanas y la paz del mundo, porque Cuba es ahora una base de avanzada para la agresión soviética.

Los rusos, con el consentimiento de Castro, llevaron a cabo su trabajo en secreto. Los cubanos no tienen acceso a esas bases. Pero las bases están allí.

Para proteger al pueblo cubano, y a todos los pueblos del hemisferio occidental, el Presidente Kennedy con la aprobación de todos los países latinoamericanos ha impuesto una cuarentena para evitar que este equipo bélico de carácter ofensivo sea desembarcado en Cuba. Los alimentos no son detenidos, las medicinas no son detenidas, sólo es detenido el material de guerra agresivo de los rusos.

Cuando ese material de guerra sea retirado de Cuba la cuarentena terminará.



Ocho de diez bases de proyectiles nucleares de carácter ofensivo, están localizadas en las cercanías de Guanajay, Remedios, San Cristóbal y Sagua la Grande.

(Leaflet prepared for the Department of Defense by the 1st Psychological Warfare Battalion.)

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throughout the world than any other single international issue in history.²³

But USIA was not the only channel for promoting the objectives of U.S. public diplomacy in this period. These objectives were also advanced by unofficial means, such as through the domestic and international information media, which carried or commented upon reports made by U.S. Government spokesmen at the White House, the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and the United Nations. This news coverage and commentary not only informed the world public about events and their implications, it also engaged in transmitting to all recipients signals of the will, force, and intent of the United States throughout the crisis, thereby providing an additional means of presenting and clarifying the U.S. position abroad. Because of the extreme seriousness of the situation and the rapidity with which these reports were disseminated by the international information media, this facet of public diplomacy had a greater impact than usual on the crisis.

This facet and its impact became particularly apparent during the final phase of the crisis. By Friday, 26 October, 4 days after the quarantine speech, the United States knew that construction work on the missile bases was being accelerated, rather than terminated. In view of this information it was estimated that some of the missile bases could be operational within several days, at which time the United States would have lost its tactical advantage and be faced with a new, more dangerous situation: the probability of missile launches from Cuba against targets in the United States before the bases could be eliminated by force, in case a strike became necessary. Operational readiness of the bases would raise sharply the ante of the confrontation. Implementation of the naval quarantine 2 days earlier and President Kennedy's appeal to stop work on the missile bases

had failed to deter construction at the sites. It was clear that the United States would have to convince the Soviet Union of the need to halt work on the bases very shortly or be prepared to do it by unilateral means through the use of force.

At this juncture, on 26 October, Department of State spokesman Lincoln White noted at the noontime press briefing that construction work was continuing on the missile bases. He then called attention to President Kennedy's earlier statement in his quarantine speech to the effect that further U.S. action would be justified if the military preparations continued. Later that day the White House released a statement indicating that construction of the bases was being speeded up under the attempt of camouflage. Shortly thereafter Congressman Clement Zablocki told reporters that it might soon be necessary to conduct "pinpoint bombing" against the missile sites. Finally, the press was authorized to report on the buildup of a marine strike force in Florida.²⁴ This series of public announcements was sufficient to ignite a barrage of headlines indicating the growing justification for, and the strong imminence of, invasion or airstrikes against Cuba. Within 48 hours Radio Moscow broadcast the text of Khrushchev's letter agreeing to dismantle the missile sites and to remove the offensive weapons from Cuba.

Publicizing knowledge of the accelerating construction work on the missile bases established the basis for "further action" cited by the President. By coupling notice of this acceleration with the buildup of a U.S. invasion force implied what the next act on the part of the United States could be. Moreover, correlating the preparations for invasion with the construction work on the missile bases served to indicate to Premier Khrushchev how the Soviet Union could stop escalation of U.S. military action against Cuba.

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Khrushchev later admitted that the Soviet Union agreed to withdraw the offensive weapons when it became clear that an invasion from the United States was actually imminent.²⁵ And Pierre Salinger, the President's press secretary, concluded that the statements released on the continuing work at the missile base sites were as important in maintaining pressure at this time as the positioning of U.S. troops for the possible invasion of Cuba.²⁶

There was no boasting and no claim of victory by the United States when the Soviet Union agreed to withdraw its offensive weapons from the island. President Kennedy declined to appear on television at this occasion and made it clear to his staff that moderation remained the rule—giving rise to the suggestion that the United States wished to avoid dismantling Khrushchev along with the missile bases. Even during the following weeks that it took to achieve removal of the missiles and the bombers, without the agreed on-site inspection, the United States refrained from any appearance of gloating over the outcome of the crisis. Realization of how close the United States had come to open hostilities with its nuclear-armed adversary must have been sufficiently sobering for the policymakers who had endured the traumatic experience. During this aftermath period they also may well have been assessing the factors which created the crisis, as well as those that facilitated its resolution. The same determinations could be sought with respect to the role played by public diplomacy during this episode.

With hindsight, there is general agreement that misjudgments and misconceptions contributed substantially to the growth of the crisis. Both the United States and the Soviet Union erred in assessing the strength of the other's will, interests, and intentions. The "signals" that the Kennedy administration felt were registering in the Kremlin

apparently did not transmit the messages that were intended. These efforts were conceivably masked by the administration's seeming reluctance to challenge openly the blatant Soviet buildup of military supplies and personnel in Cuba. Certainly the U.S. policy of restraint, as reflected in its public diplomacy, provided ample grounds for the Soviet Union to be misled into suspecting that the United States might not oppose, either publicly or forcefully, the presence of offensive weapons in Cuba, at least until after the congressional elections—by which time the missile bases would have been operational and incalculably more difficult to eliminate.

But after the discovery of the missile sites by the United States, the extent of Soviet misjudgment was revealed by deft and coordinated application of military power, private persuasion, and public diplomacy. Under firm, unilateral leadership, the United States rallied its own forces, its allies, and world opinion to the defense of a vital interest. By clearly defining achievable objectives and by pursuing them with the mini-

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imum amount of force through means which allowed the Soviet Union an honorable means for public accommodation, the United States reached a resolution of the crisis. This process was facilitated by the ability to convince the Soviet Union and other interested countries that the United States had both the resolve and the military power to eliminate the threat of the offensive weapons in Cuba by whatever means were necessary. It was in this capacity that public diplomacy made its most meaningful contribution.

In short, during the Cuban missile crisis U.S. public diplomacy served as a principal means of conveying the will, intent, and capability of the United States. Its use expressed recognition of the influence that modern communications media and world public opinion can have upon government decision-

makers. Moreover, it demonstrated with force the dependence of its effectiveness upon sound policy and the strength of credible evidence.

If the United States is to face another confrontation with the Soviet Union in Cuba, it would do well to profit from the experience of its previous encounter. The Soviet Union must not be misled into harboring misconceptions about the interests of the United States and its capacity and resolve to protect those interests. It should be made clear at the outset what the United States considers inimical to its security and to its interests.

The confrontation of 1962 demonstrated that public diplomacy can make a significant contribution to international crisis management and resolution. The United States must be well prepared to use it wisely and effectively.

FOOTNOTES

1. Robert D. Crane, "The Cuban Crisis: a Strategic Analysis of American and Soviet Policy," *Orbis*, Winter 1963, p. 533. See also James Heston, "Not Only the President Was Killed, but the Promise," *The New York Times Magazine*, 15 November 1964, p. 24; and Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York: Harper, 1965), p. 545-550.

2. Arnold L. Horeliek, *The Cuban Missile Crisis: An Analysis of Soviet Calculations and Behavior* (Santa Monica, Cal.: Rand, 1963), p. 38.

3. Nikita Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Remembers* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1970), p. 492-496.

4. Roger Hillsman, *To Move a Nation* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967), p. 161, 165.

5. U.S. Dept. of State, *Press Release no. 195*, 27 March 1962.

6. "Interview with Edwin M. Martin, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs," *U.S. News & World Report*, 6 August 1962, p. 18.

7. See Oral History Interview (text) for John F. Kennedy Library, Waltham, Mass., with Robert Hurwitch, Special Assistant for Cuban Affairs, Department of State, p. 136; Walt W. Rostow, *View from the Seventh Floor* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 9-10; Sorensen, p. 671.

8. Norman Cousins, "Newspapers and Hair Triggers," *Saturday Review*, 4 August 1962, p. 12.

9. See "The President's News Conference of August 29," *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, John F. Kennedy, 1962* (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1963), p. 652-653; and Harold Chase and Allen Lerman, eds., *Kennedy and the Press* (New York: Crowell, 1965), p. 314-315.

10. U.S. Congress, Senate, Committees for Foreign Relations and Armed Services, *Situation in Cuba*, Hearings (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1962), p. 31.

11. George W. Ball, "Trading Relations between the Free World and Cuba," *The Department of State Bulletin*, 22 October 1962, p. 591-595.

12. See Oral History Interview (text) for John F. Kennedy Library with Edwin Martin, p. 56; and James Daniel and John G. Hubbell, *Strike in the West* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963), p. 34.

13. See Walter Lippmann, "Cuba: Watchful Waiting," *New York Herald Tribune*, 18 September 1962, p. 26; Walter Lippmann, "On War with Cuba," *New York Herald Tribune*, 9 October 1962, p. 26; "Obsessed by Cuba," *The Economist*, 6 October 1962, p. 15; "Shrugging

off Cubanism," *The Economist*, 6 October 1962, p. 16-17; David Richardson, "Count Me Out," *U.S. News & World Report*, 17 September 1962, p. 39; and Sorensen, p. 672.

14. For details of the military operations see the Reports of the Secretaries in the Department of Defense, U.S. Dept. of Defense, *Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1963* (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1964), p. 4-8, 111-114, 190-191, 243-247.

15. See Pierre Salinger, *With Kennedy* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966), p. 287; and Sorensen, p. 319, 674.

16. Thomas C. Sorensen, *The Word War* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p. 205; and Crane, p. 538.

17. USIA Director Edward R. Murrow was in the hospital with pneumonia throughout this period.

18. Interview with Donald Wilson, Vice President, Time Inc., New York; 17 November 1970; and Oral History Interview (text) for John F. Kennedy Library with Donald Wilson, 2 September 1963, p. 16-21.

19. For a summary of these operations, objectives, and reactions see U.S. Information Agency, *19th Review of Operations July 1-December 31, 1962* (Washington: 1963), p. 5-12; and Thomas C. Sorensen, p. 202-210.

20. Oral History Interview (text) for John F. Kennedy Library with Dean Acheson, p. 27.

21. See Oral History Interview with Donald Wilson, p. 21; and Alastair Buchan, *Crisis Management the New Diplomacy* (Paris: Atlantic Institute, 1966), p. 34.

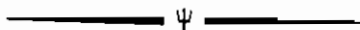
22. *Ibid.*, p. 22-23. See also Theodore Sorensen, p. 711; and Thomas Sorensen, p. 204-205.

23. Donald Wilson, "Persuasion Overseas: an Element of Power," *Vassar Alumnae Magazine*, February 1964, p. 11; see also Alexander Kendrick, *Prime Time: the Life of Edward R. Murrow* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1969), p. 484.

24. See Elic Abel, *The Missile Crisis* (New York: Lippincott, 1966), p. 173-174; Oran R. Young, *The Politics of Force* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 212-213; Henry M. Pachter, *Collision Course* (New York: Praeger, 1963), p. 44-50; and Hilsman, 213-214.

25. Nikita Khrushchev Speech before the Supreme Soviet December 12, 1962, *The New York Times*, 13 December 1962, p. 2:3-8; and his *Khrushchev Remembers*, p. 497-498.

26. Salinger, p. 301; see also Young, p. 213.



The printing press is the greatest weapon in the armory of the modern commander.

T.E. Lawrence, 1888-1935