

The cuban missile crisis

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The Cuban Missile Crisis Since the beginning, the United States has dealt with many adversities since its inception. It started out with the American Revolution in which the United States declared to Britain that it was going to exist as a sovereign nation. Then, the Civil War was fought in order to determine that America was established for the freedom of all regardless of race. The biggest and largest scale engagements that the United States was involved in were World War I and World War II. After the end of these wars, very few superpowers existed to maintain the world order. Europe had taken the hammer the hardest and suffered the most. The two superpowers that were still standing were the democratic United States and the communist run Soviet Union. Because of the advent of nuclear technology and the development of nuclear warheads, each country was hardening itself trying to take hold of superiority. Many of the small fires which flared up were fought based on the policy of containment that the United States upheld to as well as fighting a war based on proxy. The single most defining event in United States history, in my opinion, was the Cuban Missile Crisis. It was an event in which the whole world was watching waiting for Armageddon to occur. Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) seemed inevitable. The historical setting was that Cuba was and still is a communist controlled country. The United States had tried to intervene by supporting a particular communist government in which would be friendly and cooperate with the United States (Batista Dictatorship). Because of the shared philosophy on communism and the struggle of the United States and the USSR backing up countries which shared their views respectively, the USSR put nuclear launchers right off the coast of Florida on Cuba. The Kennedy Administration combated this by telling the president of the USSR, Nikita Khrushchev, that the United States

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would retaliate by launching nuclear warheads at the USSR. Tensions were on the rise as each country continued to fortify its own defenses. The world stood and watch as the nuclear stockpiles and military support continued to increase. The crisis ended on October 28, 1962 when an agreement was reached between the USSR and the US (Byrne 2006, 74-80). The USSR removed its nuclear arms from Cuba and the crisis and conflict escalation was averted. I believe that this was one of the most pivotal points in recent American history. If the conflict escalation had occurred anymore, we had reached the end of Glasl's nine stages of conflict escalation, which is "Together in the Abyss" (Bercovitch 1996, 243). It would have completely changed the world, probably with the destruction of the world due to nuclear bombs and the nuclear fallout which would have occurred afterward. I also believe that this one act alone was the primary start to the end of the Cold War. Besides the collapse of the USSR due to mismanagement of the economy and putting too many resources into the military, this single one act showed that two countries of different and opposing viewpoints could work together in order to avoid conflict. I also believe that this single act of cooperation has helped develop the peace and stability that both of our countries have been able to experience up to modern day.

Reference List
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Resolving international conflicts: the theory and practice of mediation. Jacob Bercovitch. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers , 1996.