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**The American Intervention in The Cuban Missile
Crisis of 1962**

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Abstract

The Cold War is considered as an important aspect of both the history and foreign policy of the United States. It is a term which is used to refer to the intense competition which occurred between the Communist countries or the Eastern Bloc, which was led by the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics and the Western countries or the Western Bloc, which was led by the United States. It began at the end of the Second World War (1945) and lasted until the end of the 1980's. One of the important crises of the Cold War is The Cuban Missile Crisis , The Caribbean or The October Crisis. It is the confrontation which took place in October 1962 between the United States on one hand and the Soviet Union and Cuba on the other hand. It is among the most serious crises which happened during the Cold War, that's why it is of great importance. The Cuban Missile Crisis is directly related to the Containment policy which was very famous and important strategy for which some United States policymakers were known. In this dissertation, I will try to find an answer to this question: Was the U.S. application of the Containment policy in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 defensive or offensive ?

Résumé

La guerre froide est considérée comme un aspect important de l'histoire et la politique étrangère des États-Unis. C'est un terme qui est utilisé pour désigner l'intense compétition qui a eu lieu entre les pays communistes ou le bloc de l'Est, qui a été menée par l'Union des Républiques socialistes soviétiques et les pays occidentaux ou le bloc de l'Ouest, qui était dirigée par les États-Unis. Elle a commencée à la fin de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale (1945) et a duré jusqu'à la fin des années 1980. L'une des crises importantes de la guerre froide est La crise des missiles cubains, La crise Caribenne ou La crise d'Octobre. C'est la confrontation qui a eu lieu en Octobre 1962 entre les États-Unis d'une part et l'Union soviétique et de Cuba sur l'autre. Elle est parmi les crises les plus graves qui s'est passée pendant la guerre froide, c'est pourquoi elle est d'une grande importance. La crise des missiles cubains est directement liée à la politique d'endiguement qui était très célèbre et importante stratégie pour laquelle certains responsables politiques des États-Unis étaient connus. Dans cette thèse, je vais essayer de trouver une réponse à cette question: Est-ce que l'application des États-Unis de la politique d'endiguement dans la crise des missiles cubains de 1962 défensive ou offensive?

ملخص

تعتبر الحرب الباردة جانبا مهما في كلا تاريخ و سياسة الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية الخارجية. فهي عبارة عن مصطلح يشار به إلى التنافس الحاد الذي كان قائما بين الدول الشيوعية أو الكتلة الشرقية بزعامة إتحاد الجمهوريات الإشتراكية السوفيتية و الدول الغربية أو الكتلة الغربية بزعامة الولايات المتحدة. بدأت الحرب الباردة منذ نهاية الحرب العالمية الثانية في 1945 م و امتدت حتى نهاية الثمانينيات من القرن العشرين. تعد أزمة الصواريخ الكوبية أو الأزمة الكاريبية أو أزمة أكتوبر التي حدثت في 1962م بين الولايات المتحدة من ناحية و الإتحاد السوفياتي و كوبا من ناحية أخرى من أهم و أخطر أزماتها لذلك فهي ذو أهمية بالغة. عُرف بعض صناعات القرار الأمريكيون باستراتيجيات هامة و مشهورة و هي سياسة الاحتواء و التي بدورها ارتبطت ارتباطا مباشرا بأزمة الصواريخ الكوبية. في هذه الأطروحة سأحاول الإجابة عن ما إذا كان تطبيق الولايات المتحدة لسياسة الإحتواء في أزمة الصواريخ الكوبية عام 1962م دفاعيا أو هجوميا.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter One : The United States and Cuba before the Cold War	3
I -The United States and Cuba before the Spanish America War of 1898	3
II - The United States and Cuba from the end of the Spanish-American War to the Cold War	14
Endnotes	23
Chapter Two : The Cold War and the Cuban Missile Crisis	24
I -The Cold War and Cuba in the 1950's	24
II -The United States and the Castro Regime	29
III - The Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)	31
Endnotes	45
Conclusion	47
Bibliography	48

Introduction

The United States' intervention in Latin America as a whole and in Cuba in 1962 was not new. The Americans have several times tried to interfere and even control the island since the Nineteenth Century. In the twentieth century and in 1945, the United States became an enemy to the Soviet Union and vice versa. Their conflict which began with the end of the Second World War and lasted until 1989 and which is called the Cold War included many crises. The United States got into trouble with Cuba when Fidel Castro, one of the primary leaders of the Cuban Revolution, became the Prime Minister of the island. The Americans saw that their country was in jeopardy when the Soviets constructed missile bases in Cuba. The United States tried to contain the spread of Communism in Cuba, especially because it is very close to the United States. The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 is very important, that is why I have chosen to work on it.

The question of whether the United States application of the Containment policy in the Cuban Missile Crisis was defensive or offensive is really controversial. The questions which we can ask here are the following. Did the United States have the right to intervene in Cuba in 1962 to protect itself from the Soviet Union? If this is true, the Americans cited the Monroe Doctrine and other documents to justify their intervention in Cuba. Or was the United States application of the Containment policy in this case coercive? This leads us to the idea that the United States as usual claimed rights which

normally it should not have. Or was the United States application of the Containment policy in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 defensive and offensive at the same time?

The work includes two chapters. The first one starts with explaining the nature of the relationship between Cuba and the United States before the Cold War, which means from the Eighteenth Century to the mid half of the Twentieth century. I have mentioned some doctrines and events which are crucial to the understanding of the United States attitude towards Cuba and Latin America as a whole.

In the second chapter, I have started with the Cold War and the Containment policy to introduce the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 and then find an answer to my question.

In this research, I have used text books and e-books. I used also online articles, journals and magazines, some of which are descriptive and the others are argumentative.

CHAPTER ONE

The United States and Cuba before the Cold War

From the independence of the United States onwards, Latin America was and still is one of its spheres of influence. Although the United States policymakers did not colonize all Latin American nations officially, they strove to get control of them by any means. They capitalized on the bad circumstances from which those countries have suffered and turned them to their interests. They wrote important and influential documents which helped to define the relationship between the United States and those countries, among which Cuba is a good example.

D)- The United States and Cuba before The Spanish American War of 1898

The relationship between the United States and Cuba is deeply rooted because each of them dealt with the other even before it got its independence. In the early Eighteenth Century, the North American mainland and Cuba, which was at that time a Spanish colony, began to make illegal commercial contracts in order to avoid paying colonial taxes. Because legal and illegal trade increased, Cuba became approximately a prosperous area in the region and a center of tobacco and sugar production. During this period, the Cuban merchants travelled to North American ports and established trade contracts that lasted for many years. The British occupation of Havana in 1762 opened the trade with the British colonies in North America. Because of the American Revolution in 1776, Spain opened

Cuban ports to North American commerce officially in November of the same year, and the island became gradually dependent on that trade and vice versa. After the independence of the United States in 1783 and the opening of the island to world trade in 1818, Cuban-American trade agreements began to replace the Spanish ones (Smith, 119).

From the beginning of the dissolution of the Spanish power in America, American statesmen began to look at Cuba as a possible new state. There were many reasons which made it desirable like its nearness, fertility, its mineral wealth and its command of the Gulf of Mexico. The annexation of Louisiana in 1803 and Florida in 1819 reinforced these reasons and suggested further extensions of territory at the expense of Spain. On October 24, 1823, Thomas Jefferson in a letter to President James Monroe said "I candidly confess that I have ever looked on Cuba as the most interesting addition which could ever be made to our system of States" (quoted in Schlesinger, 150). He also told the Secretary of War John C. Calhoun that the United States "ought, at the first possible opportunity, to take Cuba" (quoted in Schlesinger, 150). The Secretary of State, John Quincy Adams, described in a letter to the U.S. Minister to Spain Hugh Nelson the probability of U.S. annexation of Cuba in the following fifty years stressing that it would not be easy because of the difficulties which existed. He said,

But there are laws of political as well as of physical gravitation; and if an apple severed by the tempest from its native tree cannot choose but fall to the ground, Cuba, forcibly disjoined from its own unnatural connection with Spain, and incapable of self support, can gravitate only

towards the North American Union, which by the same law of nature cannot cast her off from its bosom (quoted in Perkins, 25).

During the first two decades of the Nineteenth century, many revolutions took place in Spain's South American colonies, which was not the case for Cuba. In 1823, the Spanish control over those countries seemed to be in its final stage of collapse; however, the assistance which Spain received from the Holy Alliance (Russia, Austria, France and Prussia) changed the course of events (Smith, 15). As a result, a great fear spread in the hearts of the Americans. The revolutions continued also during the presidency of James Monroe (1817-1825). Ammon, President Monroe's biographer, wrote, "the all-absorbing problem in foreign affairs during Monroe's presidency was that created by Spain crumbling American empire. Nearly all his major decisions either centered on this issue or had to be closely correlated with the questions it raised." (quoted in Perkins, 155). One aspect of the problem was the series of revolutions in Latin America. They were seen in Jefferson's words as "another example of man rising in his might and bursting the chains of his oppressor." (quoted in Perkins, 155). The United States did not intervene militarily, but it preferred to be "the beacon on the hill", functioning as a guide for those who struggled in Latin America. However, the majority of Americans did not believe that the people in Latin America could follow this beacon. According to them, "the somnolent populations of that region, debilitated by their heritage (under Spain) and enervated by a tropical climate, neglected their rich natural resources, while the Catholic faith lulled them into intellectual passivity." (quoted in Perkins, 156). For them, miscegenation¹ also had

made things worse. As a result, many American commentators felt that the people of Latin America whom they sympathized with were incapable to rule themselves if they won. The American politicians also shared this point of view. The North American Review warned in 1817 that success in an anticolonial revolt was not a proof that the people could develop (Perkins , 156). John Quincy Adams used similar reasons to support his argument for his delay to recognize the new states, at least until the Florida matter was settled. When Spain ceded Florida to the United States, the time came for Latin America. On December 2, 1823 and in his seventh annual state of the Union Address message to Congress, James Monroe declared an end to the New World colonization and warned foreign powers that any intervention in the Western Hemisphere would be considered as a threat to the United States. In addition, the Monroe Doctrine asserted that the United States would not interfere with existing European colonies nor in the internal affairs of European countries and expected that the latter would do the same. It suggested that the New world and the Old one should remain separate spheres of influence because they were composed of completely separate and independent nations (Gambone ,56-7) . Moreover, it created a sphere of influence that would grow stronger with the addition of the Roosevelt Corollary, a document written in 1904 to assert the right of the United States to intervene in the Latin American lands if they suffered from economic or political trouble. Although the Monroe Doctrine was neglected in the international arena because of the U.S. lack of a credible navy and army at that time, its influence would appear later. The Monroe Doctrine was of

great importance because it became a defining moment in the foreign policy of the United States and one of its influential tenets. It set the first ideological justification for any direct or indirect United States intervention in the area; it firmly established an official American tutorship over Latin America.

In addition to the previous reasons which made the United States eager to annex Cuba, there was another one which arose in 1845. It occurred when Southern statesmen wanted to get more slave states. In 1848, the U.S. made an offer of over 100 million dollars to buy Cuba from Spain; however, the Spanish government replied, “sooner than see the island transferred to any power they would prefer seeing it sunk in the ocean” (quoted in Latané, 92). Between 1848-1850, several attempts were made to produce a revolution in Cuba, and expeditions were provided in the U.S. to help this movement. The President, Zachary Taylor (1849-1850) interfered, but European countries did not side with him. This was clear when the English and French ambassadors to the U.S. joined to ask the U.S. government to unite with them in making a tripartite guaranty of Cuba to Spain. On December 1, 1852 Secretary Everett on behalf of President Millard Fillmore (1850-1853) refused to provide the guaranty. The issue now began to develop in congress’ debates (Pollklas, 1+).

In 1853 and under the direction of President Franklin Pierce (1853-1857), the minister to Spain, Pierre Soulé made an offer to the Spanish in order to purchase Cuba from them for 130 million dollars, but he failed. The American vessels were vulnerable to

Spain's arbitrary annoyances and seizures. One example was that of the Black Warrior, a United States ship seized in Havana in March, 1854. Unlike Congress which saw it as a violation, the Spanish officials in Cuba argued that the ship violated custom regulations and fined the owners 6,000 dollars. Although Spain released the ship, the Pierce administration's concern for Cuba remained. The best example is the Ostend Manifesto. After Soulé's failure, Secretary of State, William L. Marcy, directed James Buchanan, minister to Great Britain, and John Y. Mason, minister to France, to discuss the issue with Soulé at Ostend, Belgium, where they assembled on October 8, 1854. However, the document was completed and published in Aix-la-Chapelle, in Prussia on the 18th of October. The three diplomats, who represented the views of many Southern Democrats, claimed that, "Cuba is as necessary to the North American republic as any of its present members, and that it belongs naturally to that great family of States of which the Union is the providential nursery" (quoted in Gambone, 80). They stated also that Spain's control of Cuba was unnatural. The United States offered to buy Cuba from Spain, but if the latter refused, they warned, "by every law, human and divine, we shall be justified in wresting it from Spain" (quoted in Gambone, 81). The Ostend Manifesto had not been authorized by the Franklin Pierce's administration and was immediately rejected. It caused great anger both at home (especially in the north) and abroad after it became public. Although the Ostend Manifesto had less effect than it had been hoped, the Breckenridge and Douglas

Democratic platforms contained plans in favour of the annexation of Cuba in the late 1860's especially after the Civil War (1861- 1865) had been fought .

The first of the three liberation wars that Cuba fought against Spain is known as the Ten Years War, or also the Big or Great War (1868 – 1878). In this war, the Cubans failed to obtain their independence. The war did not stop the trade between the United States and Cuba. For example, in 1877, 83 % of Cuba's total exports was for the United States, which as a monopsonist² was able to control price and production levels closely (Bakewell, 454). It was during this period that the English traveller Anthony Trollope observed that “ The trade of the country is falling into the hands of foreigners , Havana will soon be as American as New Orleans” (quoted in Perez, 3+). There were also many North Americans who resided in the island. Between 1878- 1898 American investors took advantage of the bad economic conditions of the Ten Years War to take over estates which they had tried to buy before the war, and there were others who acquired properties at very low prices (Smith,18). The Little War (1879 – 1880) which was led by Calixto Garcia was as unsuccessful as the first one. Spain gave Cuba representation in the parliament, abolished slavery in 1886 and promised other reforms (Smith,57).

In 1894 Spain cancelled a trade pact between Cuba and the United States. The imposition of more taxes and trade restrictions pushed the Cubans in 1895 to launch the Cuban War of Independence, which in turn led the United States to the imperialist age with the acquisition of the Phillipines, Purto Rico and Guam. The war was inspired by José

Marti, who was a poet, journalist and ideological spokesman of the revolution. He employed sophisticated guerrilla tactics under the leadership of Maximo Gomez, who used “ scorched – earth” policy³, and Antonio Maceo. The revolutionary army took control of the eastern region, declared the Republic of Cuba in September 1895, and sent Maceo’s forces to invade the western provinces (Howard, 4).

In parallel with these events and during the same year, there was a problem between the United Kingdom and Venezuela. The conflict led the President Grover Cleveland (1893-1897), through his Secretary of State, Richard Olney, to cite the Monroe Doctrine and threaten the British that the Americans would interfere if the British failed in solving their problem with Venezuela. Although the cause for writing the Olney Proclamation had nothing to do with Cuba, but the statement included once again the U. S. concern for all Latin American nations, “The United States is practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition”(quoted in Tucker, 446). This means that the Americans reminded the European powers that the United States’ control over the Western Hemisphere is not just a theory or words written in documents, but it is rather practical. Through this proclamation, the Americans also confirmed that the United States’ order should be implemented to the Latin Americans and should limit any interference in the continent.

During the Cuban war of independence and in January 1896, rebel forces controlled most of the island, and the Spanish government replaced Martinez

Campos with General Valeriano Weyler y Nicolau who soon became known as “ The Butcher”. In order to deprive the revolutionaries of the rural support on which they depended, Weyler used a brutal program of “reconcentration” in which he forced many Cubans into camps in the towns and cities, where they died of starvation and disease (Lafaber, 139). Because the brutality of the Spanish authorities was reported in the U.S. Newspapers, especially in Joseph Pulitzer’s New York World“ Weyler the soldier [,] ...Weyler the brute, the devastator of haciendas, the destroyer of families, and the outrager of women...Pitiless, cold, an exterminator of men.” and William Randolph Hearst’s New York Journal “ blood on the roadsides, blood in the fields, blood on the doorsteps, blood, blood, blood! The old, the young, the weak, the crippled _ all are butchered without mercy.”, the U.S. public began to support the independence of Cuba (quoted in Howard, 4-5). In 1897, Spain recalled Weyler and proposed partial autonomy to the Cubans, but the Cuban leaders refused it and continued their call for complete independence. In January of 1898, the U.S. battleship Maine, was sent to Havana to protect the U.S. citizens and property. On the evening of February 15, 1898, the ship was sunk by a big explosion, in which 266 sailors died (Gould,30). Although the cause of the explosion was never determined, the New York Press or as it was called the Yellow Press put the blame on Spain which led to the cries of “ Remember the Maine, to Hell with Spain ! ” (quoted in Lafaber, 140) and demanded that the U.S. Should intervene militarily in Cuba.

On April 11, 1898, President William McKinley (1897-1901) sent a war message to the Congress in which he asked a permission to use military force to stop the war in Cuba. He emphasized that , “ In the name of humanity, in the name of civilization, in behalf of endangered American interests which give us the right and the duty to speak and to act, the war in Cuba must stop.” (quoted in Gambone, 120). He asked the Congress for authority “ to secure a full and final termination of hostilities between the government of Spain and the people of Cuba.” (quoted in Gambone, 120) in order to stop the “ very serious injury to the commerce, trade, and business of our people and by the wanton destruction of property ” (quoted in Gambone, 119). After a hot debate, the Congress approved a joint resolution in which support was given to McKinley’s request. Although there was no evident support to recognize Cuba as a republic, Congress promised that the United States would not annex the island. This seems clearly through the fourth and last part of the joint resolution, which is known as Teller Amendment. The Teller clause proclaimed that,

the United States hereby disclaims any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said Island except for the pacification thereof, and asserts its determination, when that is accomplished, to leave the government and control of the Island to its people.
(quoted in Lafeber, 143-44).

On April 19, 1898 the Congress passed the amendment, 42 to 35, and the House of Representatives agreed 31 to 6. President McKinley signed the joint resolution on April 20,

1898 , and the ultimatum was sent to Spain. On April 24 , Spain declared war against the United States which in turn did the same thing against Spain on April 25 (Gould, 32).

The Spanish - American War or the “splendid little war” as it was called by John Hay was brief because the Spanish forces were inferior compared to the American forces. On May 1, 1898, the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay in the Philippines was destroyed by the United States navy under the command of commodore George Dewey. On July 3, the U.S. troops began a battle for the city of Santiago in Cuba. Theodore Roosevelt, who emerged as one of the war’s great heroes, and his First Volunteer Cavalry, the “ Rough Riders”, fought in San Juan Hill (Gould,31). When the Spanish fleet was sunk on July 3, and Santiago was captured on July 11, the war was effectively over. The armistice , which was signed on August 12, ended the hostilities and directed that a peace conference would be held in Paris by October. The parties signed the Treaty of Paris on December 10, 1898. Cuba got its independence, and Spain agreed to pay the Cuban debt which was estimated at 400 million dollars. According to Articles II and III of the treaty, Spain relinquished Porto Rico and Guam and ceded the Philipines respectively to the United States. Despite of its shortness and inexpensiveness compared to other conflicts, the Spanish -American War is of great importance because it did not only end Spain’s colonial rule in the Western Hemisphere, but it also made the United States for the first time in its history a world power. It is also important because it was considered as a base on which the orthodox or traditional interpretation⁴ of the United States foreign policy was established.

II) – The United States and Cuba from the end of the Spanish- American War to the Cold War:

In 1899 and after the collapse of the Spanish regime in Cuba , the United States adopted a formal policy of occupation because members of the McKinley administration were afraid of new revolutionary governments in Cuba. To overcome this fear, the American Secretary of war Elihu Root formulated in 1901 an amendment to the Army Appropriations Act which was presented to the United States Senate by Connecticut Republican Senator Orville H. Platt. It was passed through the U.S. Senate by a vote of 43 to 20. Although it was rejected at the beginning by the Cuban Assembly, it was accepted later by a vote of 16 to 11 with four absentions and integrated into the Cuban Constitution. According to Article I of the amendment, Cuba was not allowed to negotiate any treaty with whatever country that would either, “ impair or tend to impair the independence of Cuba” or allow “ any foreign power or powers to obtain by colonization or for military or naval purposes or otherwise , lodgement in or control over any portion” (quoted in Gambone, 131). Article II stated that Cuba would not contract any foreign debt without guarantees that the interest could be served from ordinary revenues. The Third Article ensured U.S. intervention in Cuban affairs when the U.S. saw it necessary (quoted in Gambone, 131). On the one hand the Platt amendment gave Cuba a limited right to conduct its own affairs and debt policies, but on the other it gave the U.S. the right to intervene in Cuban affairs. Thus, the Platt Amendment repealed the Teller one. After the acceptance of the amendment, the U.S. ratified a tariff pact that gave preference to the

Cuban sugar in the U.S. market and protection to select U.S. products in the Cuban market. As a result, sugar production dominated the Cuban economy while Cuban domestic consumption became increasingly dependent on U.S. producers (Smith, 53).

The Platt amendment caused a great opposition both inside and outside the United States. The U.S. anti - imperialists used their arguments against foreign involvement and many Cubans complained that the U.S. was simply a substitute for the Spanish oppressor. President Theodore Roosevelt (1901- 1909) characterized the American opponents of the Platt Amendment as, “ unhung traitors [,] ... liars , slanderers and scandal mongers,” (quoted in Howard, 38). Besides, Secretary of War Root tried to establish a difference between “ interventionism” and “ interference” with the island’s domestic affairs. He argued that the U.S. intervention would occur only to protect the government of Cuba and preserve the island’s independence and not to interfere in the country’s internal matters. However, his attempt to convince the anti – imperialists was in vain. In 1902, the U.S. occupation of Cuba was ended. During the same year, the U.S. signed the Peciprocity Treaty with Cuba which tightened the relationship between the mentioned countries by lowering duties on the island’s exports to America. The Platt Amendment functioned as a precursor for similar U.S. actions in other parts of the hemisphere and as a basis for a new policy, the Roosevelt Corollary (Howard,38).

Although the proverb says “Necessity is the mother of invention”, President Theodore Roosevelt through his Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine showed that necessity is the mother of intervention. In his annual message to Congress, Roosevelt declared,

All that this country desires is to see the neighbouring countries stable, orderly, and prosperous [...]. Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power.
(quoted in Gambone, 136).

So, the Roosevelt Corollary asserted the right and obligation of the United States to intervene to stabilize the economic and political affairs of small States in the Caribbean and Central America if they were unable to pay their international debts, like what happened in Venezuela in 1902. The purpose behind the Corollary was to avoid European intervention in the Western Hemisphere. After the Venezuela Affair, President Roosevelt informed Grover Cleveland “We have succeeded in ...getting England and Germany explicitly to recognize the Monroe Doctrine” (quoted in Mitchell, 105). The President cited the Roosevelt Corollary to justify the U.S. intervention in Cuba between 1906- 1909. This happened when the Liberals opposed Estrada Palma, Cuba’s first president, who wanted to keep power in the 1905- 1906 elections knowing that he was to a very great extent submissive to U.S. influence. The rebellion which broke out led to a second U.S.

occupation in September 1906. The United States Secretary of War, William Howard Taft, failed to find a solution to the problem, and Estrada Palma resigned. Because of this, the U.S. government made Charles Magoon temporary governor. A committee, composed of many advisers, revised electoral procedures, and in January 1909, Magoon gave the government to the Liberal President, José Miguel Gomez. Although U.S. officials continuously argued that the Roosevelt Corollary was beneficial to Latin America, it was rather harmful. That is so because Roosevelt Corollary, together with the Monroe Doctrine were flagrant examples of American imperialism in the region, an imperialism that would last until the Twentieth Century.

The critics, Mitchener and Weidenmier, are among the proponents who said that the small countries would benefit economically from the Roosevelt Corollary. According to them, the Roosevelt Corollary made the investors in Latin America comfortable because they believed that there was no danger to work in the area (6+). The critics also thought that financial stability would lead to the political one. Roosevelt himself refused the criticism that his purpose was to gain more territories and explained that the United States “was simply performing in a peaceful manner not only with the cordial acquiescence, but in accordance with the earnest request of the government concerned, part of that international duty which is necessarily involved in the assertion of the Monroe Doctrine” (quoted in Smith, 71).

However, Roosevelt Corollary made the United States' control of Latin American nations easier, and this happens at the expense of the mentioned countries. Christopher Coyne and Stephen Davies said that a foreign policy which is modelled on the Roosevelt Corollary leads to negative consequences both in national security terms and in terms of its effect on domestic politics (15+). There is also Noam Chomsky who argued that the Roosevelt Corollary was simply a more explicit imperialist threat building on the Monroe Doctrine (45). Serge of the University of Paris III shared the same point of view "[It] was an entirely new diplomatic tenet which epitomized his " big stick" approach to foreign policy" (5+). In other words, if the Monroe Doctrine forbade the European empires to enter the Western Hemisphere, the Roosevelt Corollary announced America's intention to replace them.

Many people described Theodore Roosevelt's Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine as Big Stick Diplomacy, which in turn is a form of control or hegemony. The term comes from the West African proverb " Speak softly and carry a big stick, you will go far." The first use of the phrase by Roosevelt was on September 2, 1901 in a speech at the Minnesota State Fair in which he described his approach to foreign policy. In the Big Stick Diplomacy or Ideology, there is the idea of negotiating peacefully while at the same time threatening with the " big stick " or the military forces which is closely related to the idea of realpolitik⁵ which is a theory in which a particular state uses its power in a coercive manner to oppress another one without taking into consideration any moral or ideological notions. In fact, the

“ Big Stick” was a big naval force (the“ white fleet”) which was sent on a world tour to show the great power of the United States (Lafeber, 155) .

After the end of the second presidential term of Theodore Roosevelt in 1909, the Americans tried to further their aims in Latin America, including, of course, Cuba. President, William Howard Taft, Roosevelt’s successor wanted to reach the same goal of his predecessor but with different means. The new president and his Secretary of State Philander C. Knox followed a foreign policy known as “ Dollar Diplomacy”. They saw that they could dominate Latin American business by using economic power instead of military power. President Taft also shared the view held by Knox that the goal of diplomacy should be to create stability abroad which in turn would promote American commercial interests. In addition, Knox felt that diplomacy was meant to use private capital to further U.S. interests outside its boundaries. Diplomacy did not only allow the U.S. to gain financially from Cuba and other countries, but it also prevented other foreign countries from doing the same thing. Like in Honduras, Nicaragua, Colombia and Haiti, Dollar Diplomacy was evident also in extensive U.S. interventions in Cuba. This happened during the Gomez administration (1909- 1913) in which there was graft, corruption, maladministration, financial irresponsibility and social carelessness, especially toward Afro – Cubans. The pattern of corruption continued also in the following administrations of Mario Garcia Menocal (1913-21), Alfredo Zayas (1921 – 25) and Gerardo Machado y Morales (1925- 33) (Smith , 171).

Many American anti- imperialist groups felt that military intervention in Latin American countries caused a culture of resentment and anti – Americanism in the region. They felt also that it was too imperialistic for the U.S. to conduct foreign affairs without taking into consideration Latin American interests. In addition , they opposed the expenses which were used to raise armies that would help Latin American countries. Their opposition grew rapidly, especially during the Great Depression. So, military intervention was very unpopular in the United States. The new president, Franklin Roosevelt, introduced his Good neighbour policy, which aimed at preserving the United States influence in Latin America but in a peaceful manner , in his inaugural address on March 4, 1933, “ In the field of world policy I would dedicate this nation to the policy of the good neighbour – the neighbour who resolutely respects himself and , because he does so , respects the rights of others” (quoted in Gambone, 212). Cordell Hull, Roosevelt’s Secretary of State affirmed this position in December 1933 at a conference of American States in Monterideo when he said, “No country has the right to intervene in the internal or external affairs of another” (quoted in LaFeber, 376). During the same month , Roosevelt stated,“ The definite policy of the United States from now is one opposed to armed intervention” (quoted in Edgar, 559-60). Through the Good Neighbour policy, the Americans wanted to abandon the use of military intervention as a means for solving the internal problems of Latin American countries and instead adopt a new policy. The latter includes the establishment of Pan- Americanism⁶ , support for strong local leaders, training

of national guards, economic and cultural penetration, export– import bank loans, financial supervision and political subversion. Concerning Cuba and the Good Neighbour Policy, Roosevelt was ambivalent. On the one hand, he ordered 29 warships to Cuba when the internal confrontations between the government of Gerardo Machado and the political opposition led to a military overthrow by Cuban rebels in 1933. But on the other, he abrogated the Platt Amendment in 1934 when his counterpart in Cuba Ramon Grau annulled it from the Cuban Constitution .

It is crystal clear that the United States had a strong relationship with Cuba, which is considered as one of the most important and closest countries to the United States in the Western Hemisphere. Throughout time, the Americans did their best to control the island beginning with the Ostend Manifesto (1854) and reaching to the Spanish - American War (1898). They promised that they would not annex Cuba in the Teller Amendment (1898) because they knew that under the Monroe Doctrine (1823) no foreign power could dare to recolonize the island.

When the Spanish – American War was over, the Americans assured in the Platt amendment (1901) their right to intervene in the internal affairs of the country. So, they maintained their control over the island before they gave the Cubans their formal independence in 1902. In 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt introduced his Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, which is considered as a means for applying the President’s Big Stick Diplomacy. In the Corollary, he stated that the United States had the right and the

duty to intervene in Latin American countries whenever the latter misconducted their affairs whether politically or economically like what happened in Cuba between 1906-1909. After Roosevelt, William Howard Taft brought the Dollar Diplomacy which focused on achieving economic prosperity by reinforcing American investments in Latin America, including Cuba. When President Franklin D. Roosevelt came to power, he introduced a new policy known as the Good Neighbour policy. Although he cancelled the Platt amendment in 1934, he sent the American army to Cuba a year earlier. The previous events are crucial to the understanding of the United States' attitude towards the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 because they showed that there was nothing new in the United States intervention in this country.

Endnotes:

¹ Miscegenation is a mixture of races; especially: marriage, cohabitation, or sexual intercourse between a white person and a member of another race.

² Monopsonist is derived from the word monopsony which is in turn a market situation in which the product or service of several sellers is sought by only one buyer.

³ “scorched-earth” policy entailed dynamiting passenger trains and burning the Spanish loyalists’ property and sugar plantations- including many owned by Americans.

⁴ Traditional or Orthodox interpretation (1950’s): Many American diplomatic historians, like Dexter Perkins, who wrote The American Approach to Foreign Policy defended this kind of interpretation, and they said that U.S. foreign policy was characterized by discontinuity. They argued that the United States was more or less isolationist before the Spanish American War of 1898, which changed completely the status of the U.S. and made it a world power. This interpretation helped to make the American public think that the U.S. foreign policy was isolationist until the Second World War.

⁵ Realpolitik is a German term coined by the Otto Eduard Leopold von Bismarck, a German writer and politician in the 19th century. Real means in English “realistic”, “practical” or “actual” and Politik means “politics”. In Germany, Realpolitik is used to describe the modest or realistic politics in opposition to unrealistic one, while in the United States, it is often similar to power politics.

⁶ Pan-Americanism is a movement for greater cooperation among the independent republics of North and South America.

CHAPTER TWO

The Cold War and the Cuban Missile Crisis

The second half of the Twentieth Century saw the emergence of one of the most important wars in world history, which is without doubt the Cold War. It is a conflict which took place immediately after the end of the Second World War between the United States and the Soviet Union. The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 is among the most serious crises which happened during the Cold War.

I)- The Cold War and Cuba in the 1950's

After the end of the Second World War in 1945, the United States along with the Soviet Union emerged as the only two superpowers of the world. Although they were allied in their fighting against the Axis powers during the war, this was no longer the case when the war was over. This was clear especially in the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences (1945) in which they did not agree about the future development of Germany and Eastern Europe. The post – 1945 struggle which occurred between the two countries is called the Cold War. Many Americans felt that the security of their country was vulnerable to the Soviet Union's attempt to spread everywhere, beginning with the creation of the Eastern Bloc.

The Cold War was characterized by the Containment policy. It was meant to stop the expansion of the Soviet Union. In February 1946, the U.S. State Department asked the United States diplomat and historian, George F. Kennan, at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow why the Russians opposed the creation of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. On February 22, 1946, he responded with a wide-ranging analysis of Russian policy which is now called the Long Telegram. He said,

Soviet power, unlike that of Hitlerite Germany is neither schematic nor adventuristic. It does not take unnecessary risks. Impervious to logic of reason, and it is highly sensitive to logic of force. For this reason, it can easily withdraw – and usually does when strong resistance is encountered at any point. (quoted in Gambone , 304).

In January 1947, Kennan submitted a report called “ the sources of Soviet Conduct” to Defence Secretary, James Forrestal. The use of the word “ Containment ” comes from this report, “ In these circumstances it is clear that the main element of any U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of long – term , patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian tendencies” (quoted in Gambone, 306). Forrestal gave permission for the report to be published in the journal of Foreign Affairs under the pseudonym “ X ”. The Cold War policy of Containment was tested 90 miles from the Florida coast on the island of Cuba in 1962.

To contain Communism, the United States began to help the European countries which were considered as the most vulnerable nations to the threat of Communism. To

accomplish this goal, the Truman Doctrine¹ (March 12, 1947) and the Marshall Plan² (June 5, 1947) were created. The American perception of the people of Latin America in the 1950's was not different from that of their ancestors. They saw that the economic difficulties of the region were caused by their incompetence and inefficiency. As an example, we have the State Department official George F. Kennan's conclusion of his first tour in Latin America in 1950, "the shadow of a tremendous helplessness and impotence falls today over most of the Latin American world". Furthermore, he attributed this concept to the influence of Spain, "The handicaps to progress are written in blood and in the tracings of geography; and in neither case are they readily susceptible of obliteration"(481).

From 1952 to 1959, Cuba was ruled by Fulgencio Batista whose rise led to an era of co-operation between the governments of Cuba and the United States. Batista's second term began with a military coup, which was planned in Florida. The United States President, Harry S. Truman, quickly recognized Batista's return to rule and provided him with military and economic aid. During his presidency, the United States dominated nearly all the Cuban economy because there was an increase in the American corporations. This happened in a time when there was widespread corruption especially in Havana which became a popular shelter for American organized crime figures. Arthur Gardner, United States Ambassador to Cuba later described the relationship between the United States and Batista during his second term as president,

Batista had always leaned toward the United States. I don't think we ever had a better friend. It was regrettable like all south Americans, that he was known – although I had no absolute knowledge of it to be getting a cut, I think is the word for it, in almost all the, things that were done. But, on the other hand, he was doing an amazing job. (quoted in Howard,128).

By the end of the 1950's, the Cuban economy became one of the most important ones in Latin America, with an annual income of 353 per capita, which is among the highest incomes in the region. Nevertheless, the majority of the Cubans suffered from poverty (especially in the countryside).The situation was really very catastrophic. There was terrible lack of public services and unemployment. The United States and other foreign investors controlled the economy . They owned about 75 % of the agrarian land, 90 % of the essential services and 40 % of the sugar production. What made things worse was Batista's absolute control of the political system (Howard, 128).

The bad economic conditions were not the only factors which led to Batista's fall. The president's regime was also opposed by Fidel Castro's 26th of July Movement, the Federation of University students and other groups. Fidel Castro was a legislative candidate for the elections of 1952; however, Batista overthrew the government of President Carlos Prio Socarras and cancelled the elections. Castro attempted many times to remove Batista's new dictatorship, but he failed. As a result, he began to organize a rebel force in 1953. On July 26 of the same year, he led about 160 men in a suicidal attack on the

Moncada military barracks in Santiago, Cuba, in an attempt to arouse a popular uprising. The attack resulted in men's murder and Castro's arrest. The government sentenced him to 15 years in prison. Because of the political amnesty of 1955, Castro and his brother Raul were released. Their release pushed them to continue their campaign against the Batista regime in Mexico, in which Castro, organized the Cuban exiles into a revolutionary group called the 26th of July Movement. On December 2, 1956, Castro and an armed expedition of 81 men landed, from the yacht Granma, on the coast of Oriente province in Cuba. All of them were killed or captured except for Castro, Raul, the Argentine revolutionary Ernesto Che Guevara and nine men who went to the Sierra Maestra of southwestern Oriente province to continue their guerrilla warfare against the Batista forces. In the next two years, they attracted hundreds of Cuban volunteers, won several battles against Batista's demoralized armed forces and advanced westward. At the same time, communist groups and radical members of the Federation of University Students organized strikes and attacks in urban areas. The expected Cuban president, Manuel Urrutia Lleo urged the United States to stop its sale of arms to Batista. In March 1958, the United States prevented the sale of weapons to Batista's government. In addition, many Cuban military commanders sympathized with the rebellion or joined it. On January 1, 1959, Batista left the country. There were about 800 of Castro's supporters who marched in Havana and who were very happy to defeat 30,000 Batista's men (Smith, 180).

II) -The United States and the Castro Regime

United States President Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953-1961) officially recognized the new Cuban government after the 1959 Cuban Revolution, but relations between the two countries became worse rapidly. Within days Earl T. Smith, United States Ambassador to Cuba who said, “ Until Castro , the United States was so overwhelmingly influential in Cuba that the American Ambassador was the second most important man, sometimes even more important than the Cuban president” (quoted in Kellner, 66), resigned his post, and he was replaced by Philip Bonsal. The United States government became angry about Cuba’s agrarian reforms and especially about the nationalizations of United States owned industries. Between April 15 and 26th, 1959, Castro and a delegation of representatives visited the United States as guests of the Press Club. During his visit, he met with Vice President Richard Nixon and outlined his reform plans for Cuba. After the meeting, the United States began to impose gradual trade restrictions on the island. On September 4, 1959, Ambassador Bonsal met with Cuban Premier Fidel Castro to express serious concern over the nationalizations of American private industries (Smith , 145).

As it was used to be, Cuba emerged once again as a major issue not only in American foreign policy but also in American political debate. As an example, we have the 1960 presidential election competition between the Republican candidate, Richard Nixon, and the Democratic candidate, John F. Kennedy. Both candidates competed with each other in warning the American public of the danger caused by the new government in

Cuba. Kennedy declared “ In 1952 the Republicans ran on a program of rolling back the Iron Curtain in Eastern Europe” and added“ Today the Iron Curtain is 90 miles off the coast of the United States.” (quoted in Smith, 127). He blamed also the Republicans for allowing a “ communist satellite ” at “ our very doorstep ” and , he declared that the Americans would not be “ pushed around any longer.” (quoted in Howard, 328) . Nixon condemned Kennedy’s “defeatist talk” and insisted that “Cuba is not lost” (quoted in Smith,127). The debate between the two candidates showed that the American public was not certain in its attitude towards Fidel Castro.

Because state intervention and nationalization continued, trade restrictions on Cuba increased. Lack of trust was deepened by Castro’s trade agreement with the Soviet Deputy Premier Anastas Mikoyan in February 1960. After four months, Castro nationalized American oil refineries, which refused to process Soviet petroleum. Eisenhower stopped to buy Cuban sugar and refused to supply its former trading partner with oil which affected the island’s economy negatively. Castro expressed his anger from what Eisenhower did, and he complained against “ the repeated threats, harassments, intrigues, reprisals, and aggressive acts” of the United States (quoted in Sobel,144). In March 1960, tensions increased when the French ship La Coubre exploded in Havana harbor and resulted in the killing of over 75 people. Fidel Castro blamed the United States and compared the incident to that of Maine. In the same month, President Eizenhower authorized the Central Intelligence Agency (C.I.A.) to organize, train and equip Cuban

refugees as a guerrilla force to overthrow Castro. The preparations continued and culminated in the Bay of Pigs Invasion during Kennedy's presidency. Whenever the Cuban government nationalized American properties, the American government reacted. On October 19, 1960, the United States government prohibited all exports to Cuba, and in January, 1961, it broke all diplomatic relations with Cuba.

III)- The Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)

Although the Arkansas Senator J. William Fulbright, who was an influential chair of the Foreign Relations Committee said to Kennedy that the Castro regime was “ a thorn in the flesh ” and “ not a dagger in the heart ” (quoted in Howard, 328) which means that the Castro's regime was not very dangerous as the Americans thought, the new administration continued to deal with the new regime as a direct threat to the security of the United States. When Kennedy became president, he was informed by the C.I.A. about the invasion plans and was also told that the invasion would result in a great victory for the United States as it happened in Guatemala in 1954. President Kennedy also knew that the Bay of Pigs, which is located on the southwest side of the island was the place of the invasion and the April 17, 1961 was its date. At the beginning, Kennedy approved the invasion plan only as a contingency operation, which means that it could be annulled at any time. He asked Arthur Schlesinger, American historian, social critic and former John F. Kennedy associate, to draft a White Paper in which justification for United States intervention in Cuba should be provided. During the same time, the State Department published a pamphlet

entitled "Cuba" in which it was stated that Castro did not make the reforms which he promised to do. The pamphlet also named Castro's regime as "a fateful challenge to the inter-American system" (quoted in Howard, 329). The Kennedy administration did not try to negotiate with Castro and did not consult congress in its achievement of the Bay of Pigs Invasion. The plan for the invasion was tended to be secret, but this did not happen. When Castro heard about the invasion, he maintained effective personal control over the army and he sent all available troops, tanks and airplanes to the invasion area. Besides, his call for strong resistance against the invaders did not include Communist ideology but rather Cuban nationalism and anti-Americanism. He said, "Forward Cubans! answer with steel and with fire the barbarians who despise us and want to make us return to slavery" (quoted in Smith, 129). Che Guevara also stated, "all the Cuban people must become a guerrilla army, each and every Cuban must learn to handle and if necessary use firearms in defense of the nation" (quoted in Kellner, 112). The United States Ambassador to Cuba, Philip Bonsal, attempted to show to the Americans that Castro's regime became communist because of the United States policy towards Cuba. According to him, the purpose of Castro "was radically and exclusively nationalistic; it became oriented toward dependence on the Soviet Union only when the United States, by its actions in the spring of 1960, gave the Russians no choice other than to come to Castro's rescue." (quoted in Howard, 327). However, the United States government was not convinced by what he said. On April 15, 1961, three United States airplanes which were piloted by Cubans bombed

Cuban air bases. After two days, the Cubans who were trained by the United States and who used U.S. equipment landed in many sites, the most important one was that of the Bay of Pigs. The invasion failed because Castro's troops were stronger than the Cuban exiles. The invasion ended on April 19 when its last stronghold and more than 1100 men were captured. Although Kennedy accepted the full responsibility for the failure of the invasion, he considered the C.I.A. and the Joint Chiefs of Staff as responsible for this catastrophe. He said later "How could I have been so stupid, to let them go ahead?" "All my life I've known better than to depend on the experts." (quoted in Howard, 329). Cyrus Sulzberger wrote in the New York Times "We looked like fools to our friends, rascals to our enemies, and incompetents to the rest" (quoted in Howard, 329). Many people denounced the invasion like the Latin Americans and the U.N. Ambassador Adali Stevenson, who did not know about the attack and who denied, two days before, the rumours of the invasion (Howard,332).

If the failure of the invasion humiliated President Kennedy, it pushed Castro forward. The latter considered it as a great victory for the Cuban Revolution over American imperialism. The failure of "Operation Zapata", as it was called, strengthened the relationship between Cuba and the Soviet Union. The Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, promised to support Castro and declared that the Soviet Union, "will not abandon the Cuban people" (quoted in Smith, 130). For the first time, Castro affirmed publicly his personal commitment to the ideology of Marxism – Leninism "I am a Marxist

– Leninist and will be one until the day I die ” (quoted in Howard, 330) , and he aligned Cuba with the Communist nations. As a response, the Kennedy administration wanted to isolate Castro both politically and economically. Kennedy’s Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, informed the Organization of American States (O.A.S.)³ and warned, “ It has supplied communism with a bridgehead in the Americas ” (quoted in Smith, 131). After some hesitation, Latin American nations voted to approve the American proposals to expel Cuba from the O.A.S. in January 1962, but they did not agree to punish it economically.

When the Bay of Pigs invasion failed, a special committee was founded to look for ways to overthrow Castro from power. Through this committee, the Kennedy administration wanted to eliminate communism especially in Cuba, which was the nearest communist country to the United States. The American government saw that Castro’s regime functioned as a model for other communist movements in the Americas (Grow, 42). Furthermore, they believed that the failure of the government’s socialist economic policies and the persecution in Cuba made the Cuban people live in an atmosphere in which a resistance program would be possible. Because of this, the United States developed a secret plan to arouse anti – regime spirit. The United States Department of Defense Joint Chiefs of Staff saw that the project’s greatest objective was to provide adequate justification for a military intervention in Cuba. They asked the Secretary of Defense to give them the responsibility for the project, but the Attorney General Robert Kennedy kept effective control.

The Cuban Project (also known as Operation Mongoose or the Special Group) was a secret program of propaganda, psychological warfare and sabotage against Cuba to remove the communists from power. It was led by Edward Lansdale in the Defense Department and William King Harvey at the C.I.A.. Samuel Halpern, a C.I.A. co-organizer said, CIA and the United States army and military forces and Department Commerce, and Immigration, treasury, God knows who else – everybody was in Mongoose. It was a government – wide operation run out of Bobby Kennedy’s office with Ed Lansdale as the mastermind ” (quoted in Blight and Kornbluh, 125). This means that everyone contributed in the Operation Mongoose. The Cuban Project contained more than 30 plans. Some of them included the use of American Green Berets, destruction of Cuban sugar crops and attempts to assassinate Castro. Examples of the latter include the poisoning of a box of Castro’s favourite cigars with botulinus toxin and the placing of explosive seashells in his favourite diving places. The United States Senate’s church Committee of 1975 stated that it had confirmed at least eight separate C.I.A. plots to assassinate Castro; while, Fabian Escalante, whose job was to protect Castro’s life, argued that there were 638 separate C.I.A. attempts. In order to make the United States public side with the military intervention against the Cuban government, the United States created Operation Northwoods. The latter was a 1962 plan, which was signed by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of staff and presented to Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara who approved it. They used false flag operations to justify intervention in Cuba. The operation involved

artificial attacks on Cuban exiles and United States military targets. Although the Cuban Project was stopped on October 30, 1962, 3 of 10 sabotage teams had already been sent to Cuba. Like the Bay of Pigs Invasion, the Cuban Project is considered as an American policy failure in Cuba. The bad relationship between the United States and Cuba reached its climax in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962.

The confrontation between the United States and Cuba began during the Eisenhower's administration, but it became worse when Kennedy assumed his presidency as Paterson mentioned " Kennedy inherited the Cuban problem – and he made it worse."(129). The Cuban Missile Crisis was a confrontation between the United States on one hand and the Soviet Union and Cuba on the other one. In May 1962, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev thought that the best way to react to the United States superiority in developing and deploying strategic missiles was to place his own intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Cuba. By doing so, he would also react to the United States placement of Jupiter intermediate-range ballistic missiles in April 1962 in Turkey (Correll, 58). The careful denial and deception which the Soviet Union adopted from the beginning was called in Russia as Maskirovka. All of the planning and preparation for transporting and deploying the missiles were done secretly. Only few people were told of the exact information. Even the troops who were prepared for the mission were given false information; they were told that they should wear suitable clothes for the winter season. The Soviet code name for the operation ANADYR was also the name of a river which

flowed into the Bering Sea and the name of the capital of Chukotsky. All this was done to keep the program secret from both internal and external audiences (Hansen,4+). In early 1962, a group of Soviet military specialists in constructing the missiles went with an agricultural delegation to Havana. They met with Fidel Castro because the Cuban leaders had a great expectation that the U.S. would invade Cuba especially after the Bay of Pigs invasion and the Operation Mongoose, they agreed eagerly with the idea of installing nuclear missiles in Cuba. Like Castro, Khrushchev felt that a U.S. invasion of Cuba was very soon. They thought that the loss of Cuba would harm the communist cause, especially in Latin America. He said that he wanted to confront the Americans “with more than words...the logical answer was missiles” (quoted in Weldes, 29). The plans for installing nuclear missiles in Cuba were approved by Cuban President Rodion Malinovsky, on July 4 and Khrushchev on July 7. During the same month, specialists in missile construction arrived to Cuba (Hansen, 5+). Marshal Sergei Biryuzov, Chief of the Soviet Rocket Forces who led a survey team to visit Cuba, told Khrushchev that the missiles would be hidden by the palm trees (Correll, 115). In September, the Cuban leaders became extremely worried when Congress approved the U.S. joint Resolution 230, which authorized the use of military force in Cuba if the American interests were threatened. On the same day, the U.S. announced a major military exercise in the Caribbean, PHIBRIG LEX-62, which was considered by Cuba as a proof that the U.S. planned to invade it. The leaders expected Kennedy’s acceptance of the missiles because they saw him as a weak

and less confident person after his failure in the Bay of Pigs invasion. On September 7, Dobrynin confirmed to the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Adlai Stevenson that the U.S.S.R. was supplying only defensive weapons to Cuba. The first sending of R-12 missiles arrived on the night of September 8 and followed by a second one on September 16. The Soviets were building 9 sites: six for R-12 medium-range missiles with an effective range of 2,000 kilometers and 3 sites for R-14 intermediate-range ballistic missiles, with a maximum range of 4,500 kilometers. On September 11, the U.S. publicly warned that a U.S. attack on Cuba or on Soviet ships which carried supplies to the island would mean war (Franklin, 166). The Soviets continued their Maskirovka program and denied several times that the weapons which brought to Cuba were offensive.

On October 7, Cuban president Osvaldo Dorticos spoke at the U.N. General assembly, “ If we are attacked, we will defend ourselves. I repeat, we have sufficient means with which to defend ourselves, we have indeed our inevitable weapons, the weapons, which we would have preferred not to acquire, and which we do not wish to employ.”(quoted in Howard, 325). Although the Americans heard about the missiles in Cuba, no U-2 flights were made over Cuba from September 5 to October 14. On October 12, the administration decided to transfer the Cuban U-2 reconnaissance missions to the Air force. They thought involving Air force flights would be easier to explain than C.I.A. flights. When the reconnaissance missions were re-authorized on October 8, the bad weather kept the plans from flying. The U.S. first obtained photographic evidence of the

missiles on October 14 when a U-2 flight piloted by Major Richard Heyser took 928 pictures during six minutes.

The Cuban Missile Crisis began on October 16, 1962 when President Kennedy and his advisers were informed about the U-2 reconnaissance photographs, which were taken two days earlier, of missile sites in Cuba. From October 16 to 22, Kennedy formed the Executive Committee (Ex Com) which met every day to decide how to deal with the problem. The committee was in a hurry because it had to make a decision before the missiles became operational. The Ex Com discussed the effect on the strategic balance of power, both political and military. According to Ball, the “one question in dispute was whether the emplacement of the missiles would in any way change the power balance” (289). The Joint Chiefs of Staff believed that the missiles would change the military balance seriously, but Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara disagreed. He was convinced that the missiles would not affect the strategic balance at all. He said that an extra forty would not make a big difference in the strategic balance. The United States had already approximately 5,000 strategic warheads; while, the Soviet Union had only 300. He concluded that if the Soviets had 340; this would not change the strategic balance to a great extent (Ornstein, 261). In 1990, he repeated that “it made no difference...The military balance wasn’t changed. I didn’t believe it then, and I don’t believe it now.”(quoted in Blight,85). However the EXCOMM agreed that the missiles would affect the political balance. First, Kennedy had explicitly promised the American people before the crisis that,

“ if Cuba should possess a capacity to carry out offensive actions against the United states...the United States would act” (Kennedy,674). Second, the United States credibility would be damaged in the eyes of the American people and its allies if they allowed the Soviet Union to compensate the strategic balance by placing missiles in Cuba. After the crisis, Kennedy explained that “ it would have politically changed the balance of power. It would have appeared to, and appearances contribute to reality” (889). The problem divided the Executive Committee into hawks and doves. The former wanted an air strike on the missile installations and a further invasion if necessary, but the latter wanted a naval blockade through which ships would be prevented from coming or going to Cuba. Robert McNamara supported the naval blockade as a strong but limited military action that left the United States in control. According to international law, a blockade is an act of war. Admiral Anderson’s, Chief of Naval Operations wrote position paper that helped Kennedy to differentiate between a quarantine of offensive weapons and a blockade of all materials and showed that a classic blockade was not the original purpose. Since it would take place in international waters, President Kennedy obtained the approval of the O.A.S. for military action under the hemispheric defense provisions of the Rio Treaty⁴. On October 19, the EXCOMM formed separate working groups to examine the air strike and blockade options. By the afternoon , the EXCOMM supported the blockade option.

On October 22 (3:00 p.m.), President Kennedy established the EXCOMM with National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM) 196. At 5:00 p.m., he met with

Congressional leaders who opposed the blockade and asked for a strong action. In Moscow, Ambassador Kohler informed Chairman Khrushchev about the blockade and Kennedy's speech to the nation. Before the speech, the American delegates met with Canadian Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan, West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and French President Charles de Gaulle to tell them about U.S. intelligence and their proposed reaction. All of them supported the U.S. position .At 7.00 p.m., President Kennedy delivered a televised address in which he announced the discovery of the missiles, " It shall be the policy of this nation to regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack on the United States, requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union" (892). He described also the administration's plan, " To halt this offensive buildup, a strict quarantine of all offensive military equipment under shipment to Cuba is being initiated." (893). Kennedy's speech was not well liked in Britain. On October 23, the British press expressed their doubt about the existence of Soviet bases in Cuba and guessed that Kennedy did this to be reelected. On October 23, Khrushchev explained that the missile sites were put only to defend Cuba against the attack of the United States. There were 20 ships which were moving towards Cuba. On October, 24 the first Russian ship, which carried oil, reached the naval quarantine and was allowed to enter Cuba. However, this was not the case to the other ships which carried missiles. During the same day, the Chinese People's Daily announced that 650,000,000 Chinese men and women supported the Cuban

people. In Germany, newspapers supported the United States' response and expressed their fear of a Soviet retaliation in Berlin. In France, an editorial in Le Monde doubted about the authenticity of the C.I.A.'s photographic evidence. On October 25, Adlai Stevenson showed photographs to the United Nations Security Council after an argument with Soviet U.N. Ambassador Zorin of whether the missile sites existed or not . On October 26, Khrushchev sent a telegram to Kennedy in which he proposed to dismantle the missiles if Kennedy agreed to stop the blockade and promise a non – invasion of Cuba. In the same day, Castro sent a letter to Khrushchev through which he wanted to convince him that the United States would invade Cuba and that he should respond with a nuclear strike against the United States. On October 27, and before Kennedy could reply, Khrushchev sent another letter. He said that Kennedy should also dismantle American missile bases in Turkey. In the same day, a U2 plane fell in Cuba. The incident was ignored by Kennedy who replied that he agreed to the terms of the first letter and also to the second letter but secretly. On October 28, Khrushchev agreed. By doing so, the crisis ended. On November 20, 1962, Kennedy lifted the blockade and on April 25, 1963, the Jupiter missiles were removed from Turkey. In 1963, they signed the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. The Cuban Missile Crisis changed the foreign policy between the United States and the Soviet Union from confrontation to coexistence. As Kennedy noted at a speech at American University, “ We can seek a relaxation of tensions without relaxing our guard... we labor on- not toward a strategy of annihilation but toward a strategy of peace.” (quoted in White, 150).

The dramatic dimension of the Cuban Missile crisis was the assassination of Kennedy on November 22, 1963.

The blame should be put on the United States, Cuba and the Soviet Union. The United States tried to contain communism in Cuba as part of its application of the Containment policy. Under the Monroe Doctrine, the United States had the right for doing so to protect itself from the Soviet Union's threat and especially in Cuba which is a Latin American country. However, without taking the Monroe Doctrine into consideration, the United States had not the right to intervene in Cuba, which was an independent country and can make any agreement with any country. The Cubans accepted the Soviet Union's installation of the missiles because they wanted to defend themselves against United States aggression. The United States isolated Cuba diplomatically, ousted it from the Organization of American States, imposed an economic embargo, assisted anti Castro rebels in the Bay of Pigs Invasion, tried to assassinate Castro in what is known as the Operation Mongoose. The Soviet Union also had the right to install its missiles in Cuba as a reaction to the United States' installation of missiles in Turkey.

The Cuban Missile Crisis did not appear in a political vacuum, but it rather occurred in a time when the United States became an enemy to Cuba and the Soviet Union. After 1945, the Cold War emerged and brought with it the Containment policy which the Americans used to protect themselves against the Soviet Union. The Americans of the

1950's saw Latin American nations , including Cuba, as primitive people and inferior to them , a perception which is not new for a country whose people throughout history believed in their superiority. During the 1950's, Cuba witnessed many internal problems and at the end of the decade, Fidel Castro's rule began. Once this happened, the relations between the United States and Cuba began to deteriorate . The Americans tried to get rid of Castro by any means like the Bay of Pigs Invasion(1961), the Cuban Project (1962) and more importantly the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962). Despite the fact that the United States application of the Containment policy in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 was understood to be either defensive or offensive , it was defensive on one hand and offensive on the other one.

Endnotes:

¹ Truman Doctrine is a pronouncement by [U.S. Pres. Harry S. Truman](#) on March 12, 1947, declaring immediate economic and military aid to the governments of Greece, threatened by Communist insurrection, and [Turkey](#), under pressure from Soviet expansion in the Mediterranean area. As the United States and the [Soviet Union](#) struggled to reach a balance of power during the Cold War that followed World War II, Great [Britain](#) announced that it could no longer afford to aid those Mediterranean countries, which the West feared were in danger of falling under Soviet influence. The U.S. Congress responded to a message from Truman by promptly appropriating \$400,000,000 for this purpose.

² Marshal Plan is a program of loans and other economic assistance provided by the U.S. government between 1947 and 1952 to help western European nations rebuild after the Second world war.

³The Organization of American States (O.A.S.) is an [international organization](#), headquartered in [Washington, D.C., United States](#). Its members are the thirty-five independent states of the [Americas](#). The current government of Cuba was excluded from participation in the Organization under a decision adopted by the Eighth Meeting of Consultation in [Punta del Este, Uruguay](#), on 31 January 1962. The vote was passed by 14 in favor, with one against (Cuba) and six abstentions (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, and Mexico). The operative part of the resolution read as follows:

1. That adherence by any member of the Organization of American States to Marxism-Leninism is incompatible with the inter-American system and the alignment of such a government with the communist bloc breaks the unity and solidarity of the hemisphere.

2. That the present Government of Cuba, which has officially identified itself as a Marxist-Leninist government, was incompatible with the principles and objectives of the inter-American system.

3. That this incompatibility excluded the present Government of Cuba from participation in the inter-American system.

⁴The Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (commonly known as the Rio Treaty, the Rio Pact) was an agreement signed in 1947 in Rio de Janeiro among many American countries. The central principle contained in its articles is that an attack against one is to be considered an attack against all of them; this was known as the “ hemispheric defense” doctrine.

Conclusion

The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 is very important in both the history of the United States and Cuba. In this crisis, the United States interfered to stop the spread of communism and also to remove the missiles which the Soviet Union had installed in Cuba. It is important because it made a turning point in the Cold War. It helped to make the United States and the Soviet Union realize that a nuclear war was impossible.

This dissertation shows that the United States' interference in Cuba in 1962 was not new. Throughout history, the United States interfered in a way or another in Cuba. It shows also that the crisis did not happen by accident, but it was well calculated. This is clear if we look to what happened before the crisis took place. Although some people think that the United States application of the Containment policy in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 was either defensive or offensive, it was a combination of the two.

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