



## Keio Business School

### **Cuban Missile Crisis (Cont.)**

#### **Wednesday, October 24 (Cont.)**

Two suspicious Soviet cargo ships headed to Cuba turned around, but the submarine that had been accompanying these ships remained in the vicinity of the blockaded area.

**22: 30**

Khrushchev's message to Kennedy with the following content arrived at the State Department:

"The Soviet government considers the violation of the freedom of navigation in international waters and air space to constitute an act of aggression propelling humankind into the abyss of a world nuclear-missile war." After leveling various other accusations against the U.S., Khrushchev continued, "The Soviet Union has no intention of removing the missiles, nor of honoring the U.S. naval blockade. Imagine, Mr. President, what if we were to present to you such an ultimatum as you have presented to us by your actions. How would you react to it? I think you would be outraged at such a move on our part. And this we would understand. To be sure, we will not remain mere observers of pirate actions by American ships in the open sea. We will then be forced on our part to take those measures we deem necessary and sufficient to defend our rights."

#### **Friday, October 26**

The U.S. Navy selectively approached unsuspecting cargo ships, asked about their cargo, and if it was not weapons, allowed them to proceed toward Cuba. Therefore, the U.S. Navy inspectors had not yet boarded even a single Soviet ship. The media began to voice doubt about the effectiveness of the naval blockade.

**18:00**

Khrushchev's message to Kennedy arrived at the State Department via the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. It was a long and emotional message, which seemed to be written by Khrushchev himself. The point of the message was the following:

.....  
This case study was prepared by Professor Atsuomi Obayashi of the Graduate School of Business Administration, Keio University solely for use in class discussions.

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“... we understand perfectly well that if we attack you, you will respond the same way. But you too will receive the same that you hurl against us. And I think that you also understand this.... We must not succumb to intoxication and petty passions, regardless of whether elections are impending in this or that country, or not impending. These are all transient things, but if indeed war should break out, then it would not be in our power to stop it, for such is the logic of war. I have participated in two wars and know that war ends when it has rolled through cities and villages, everywhere sowing death and destruction. .... You would declare that the United States will not invade Cuba with its forces and will not support any sort of forces which might intend to carry out an invasion of Cuba. Then the necessity for the presence of our military specialists in Cuba would disappear.”

10 **19:35**

A correspondent of ABC (American Broadcasting Company) acted as an intermediary and relayed a message from the KGB Station Chief in Washington D.C. to the U.S. Secretary of the State. The KGB was an intelligence agency of the Soviet Union. The KGB Station Chief made a proposal consisting of the following three points as a way out of the crisis:

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- The Soviet Union will remove the missiles from Cuba under United Nations supervision.
- Castro will promise not to accept any sort of offensive weapons in the future.
- The U.S. will officially guarantee that it will not invade Cuba.

20 The KGB Station Chief in Washington D.C. was a Soviet Embassy official in title, yet neither he nor the ABC correspondent had ever before acted as intermediaries for secret negotiations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union side, however, must have known that this correspondent had contact with key people within the U.S. government. Since the message was not directly from Khrushchev, he could claim any time in the future that he had had no knowledge of such conditions. It  
25 appeared that the KGB Station Chief wanted an answer as quickly as possible.

**Saturday, October 27**

**03:35**

30 The Soviet Union carried out a nuclear test at a test site within the country. To collect airborne nuclear substances, a U-2 spy plane left Alaska toward the sky above the open sea in the Arctic Ocean, but strayed from its original route and invaded into the sky above Soviet Siberia. Since the U-2's weight was kept to the minimum in order to be able to fly at ultra-high altitude, it did not carry any communication equipment, and therefore there was no way to contact it.

35 It was confirmed that the base for the medium-range missile R12 in Cuba had completed its battle preparation. It was also reported that smoke had been spewing out of the chimney of the Soviet Embassy since the night before, hinting that important documents were being incinerated in case war broke out soon.

06:00

Another message from Khrushchev to Kennedy arrived, which contained the following proposal:

“The Soviet Union would remove the offensive weapons from Cuba and the U.S. would remove its missiles from Turkey. The Soviet Union would pledge not to invade or interfere with the internal affairs of Turkey, and the U.S. would make the same pledge regarding Cuba.”

10:00

Radio Moscow broadcasted to the world that Khrushchev had sent the above message to Kennedy. However, the conditions described in the broadcast were different from those described in the message received at 18:00 the previous day. The message published by Radio Moscow described equal actions by the U.S. and the Soviet Union, which was not unreasonable. However, if the U.S. accepted the proposal, it would give the impression to the world that the U.S. had “sold” Turkey, an ally, in response to a Soviet threat. Moreover, if the U.S. invaded Cuba, that would give an excuse for the Soviet Union to invade Turkey. If Turkey, which was a NATO ally, was invaded, Western European countries that form the NATO’s collective security framework might also be drawn into the conflict.

11:19

A U-2 spy plane was shot down over the Cuban sky. It was certain that a hard-line opinion would come out in response in the U.S. It was also possible that the Soviet Union and Cuba might think that the possibility of a preemptive or reprisal attack by the U.S. had increased.

### **Exercise in decision making (example): How to respond to various messages**

As an individual or group, make the following decisions from the position of President Kennedy or the White House:

How would you respond to the situations after receiving the various messages from Khrushchev (at 22:30 on the 24th, 18:00 on the 26th, 06:00 on the 27th) and the ABC correspondent’s mediation (19:35 on the 26th)? What specific responses would you issue for the following items and what information would you publicize?

- Would you take some action toward or issue some communication to the Soviet Union? If so, what will it be?
- How would you respond to the offer of mediation received via the ABC correspondent?
- Would you take some action toward or issue some communication to Cuba? If so, what will it be?
- Would you send a message to the citizens of your country? If so, what would that message be?
- Would you send a message to other countries? If so, what would that message be?

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