The Cuban Dilemma

• In 1959, Fidel Castro took control of Cuba by force
• He declared himself a communist and seized U.S. properties
• Eisenhower cut off diplomatic relations
• 10% of the Cuban population fled; mostly to U.S.
The Cuban Dilemma
Bay of Pigs

1961 - Shortly after his inauguration, Kennedy permitted a band of Cuban exiles, already armed and trained, to invade their homeland.

The goal was to topple Castro.
Bay of Pigs

- Plans went wrong; exile forces were killed or taken prisoner
- President Kennedy (JFK) paid a ransom in food, and medicine
- The mission was a public embarrassment.
Cuban Missile Crisis

• The closest the world has come to nuclear war was the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962.
• The Soviets had installed nuclear missiles in Cuba, just 90 miles off the coast Florida.
• U.S. armed forces were at their highest state of readiness.
• Soviet field commanders in Cuba were authorized to use tactical nuclear weapons if invaded by the U.S.

• The fate of millions literally hinged upon the ability of two men, President John F. Kennedy and Premier Nikita Khrushchev, to reach a compromise.
List 5 items you see in this photo. Why are they there?
• In 1962, the Soviet Union was behind the United States (U. S.) in the arms race.
• Soviet missiles were only powerful enough to be launched against Europe but U.S. missiles were capable of striking the entire Soviet Union.
• In late April 1962, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev conceived the idea of placing intermediate-range missiles in Cuba.
• A deployment in Cuba would double the Soviet strategic arsenal and prevent a potential U.S. attack against the Soviet Union.
• Fidel Castro was looking for a way to defend his island nation from an attack by the U.S.

• Ever since the failed Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961; Castro felt a second attack was expected.
• Consequently, he approved of Khrushchev's plan to place missiles on the island.

• In the summer of 1962 the Soviet Union worked quickly and secretly to build its missile installations in Cuba.
• For the United States, the crisis began on October 15, 1962 when reconnaissance photographs taken by a U-2 spy plane, revealed Soviet missiles under construction in Cuba.
• After **seven** days of guarded and intense debate, Kennedy decided to force a naval **quarantine** around **Cuba**.

• He wished to prevent the arrival of more Soviet **offensive** weapons on the island.
• On October 22, Kennedy announced the discovery of the missile installations to the public and his decision to quarantine the island.

• He also proclaimed that any nuclear missile launched from Cuba would be regarded as an attack on the United States by the Soviet Union and demanded that the Soviets remove all of their offensive weapons from Cuba.
Khrushchev at first refused to remove the missiles, both countries were within 13 days of going to war when Nikita Khrushchev agreed to remove the missiles.
Pair Share

• Who trained the Cuban exiles who attempted the Bay of Pigs invasion?
• What happened at the Bay of Pigs invasion?
• What leaders and what countries were involved in the Cuban Missile Crisis?
• What almost happened because of the Soviet missiles in Cuba?
• How did Pres. Kennedy find out about the missiles in Cuba?
• How did our reaction to the Cuban Missile Crisis support the U.S. policy of containment?