Title: “The Cuban Missile Crisis: Kennedy’s Quest for Peace”

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Christine Erickson

Paper written for: History H217: The Nature of History (Fall 2015)

I am Seth Carpenter-Nichols. I became a History major two years ago after I switched from being a Theatre major for two years. In each history class, I look forward to expanding my expertise and sharing my knowledge on a given subject. Since I was in elementary school, I had a deep passion about history. When I was 9 years old, I could remember and name all the presidents. As I grew older, my knowledge grew on world leaders, dictators, political parties, presidential facts, and what each president had to go through during their time in office. My specialty is World War II and the Cold War that followed.

I decided to write about the Cuban Missile Crisis because it was one of the most exciting, stressful, and even the most dangerous episodes of the Cold War. Our country was on the brink of nuclear war, but President Kennedy prevented that from happening. He stood up to the Soviet Union and his war-mongering military staff to keep our country and the world safe. The aftermath of the Cuban Missile Crisis also changed the tide of the Cold War due to President Kennedy compromising and communicating peacefully with Nikita Khrushchev. In his excellent leadership, Kennedy changed the policy of aggression to peacekeeping.

Abstract

President John F. Kennedy is argued by some to be the most influential president of the United States in the twentieth century. From his charisma, energy, and his progressive politics, Kennedy launched the nation into being the model of the world. However, October 1962 proved to be the ultimate test of Kennedy’s presidency when the Cuban Missile Crisis created worldwide panic. Despite Kennedy facing pressure from the military industrial complex to invade both the Soviet Union and Cuba and the aggressive policies of the USSR sending nuclear missiles to Cuba, Kennedy would compromise with the rival super-power to disband their nuclear missile sites to avoid a nuclear war. Despite rather mixed reactions by his colleagues and the American people. Kennedy displayed amazing leadership in this major foreign policy decision because he kept the American people and the world safe. He changed the Cold War mentality from being hostile to peaceful, and proved that the United States can succeed by communication and not by warfare.

The leadership and tactics of President John F. Kennedy during the Cuban Missile Crisis were revolutionary because they kept the world safe and changed the direction of the Cold War.
The sources I have used for my presentation were from newspaper articles, memoirs, and biographies written during and after the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Primary Sources:

Secondary Sources: