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World Civilization

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Film & Response

The Cuban Missile Crisis was a political and military standoff between the United States and the Soviet Union over the installation of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba. It was a pivotal moment in the Cold War and the closest the world ever came to nuclear war. According to the video, there were a handful of events that led up to the crisis. This includes, Fidel Castro coming into power in Cuba with his communist leanings, which in response, the US backs an attempted invasion of Cuba by anti-Castro Cuban exiles. That resulted in the Soviet Union providing military aid to Cuba. So in an attempt to stop the aid, the US places a trade embargo on Cuba. This is when the U.S. discovers that the Soviet Union had placed nuclear missiles in Cuba, which posed a direct threat to the U.S. The U.S. then placed a naval blockade around Cuba to prevent Soviet ships from delivering more missiles, and tensions escalated until both sides reached a compromise and the crisis ended. "Black Saturday" refers to the day when a series of dangerous events occur, in which any one of them held the potential to start a nuclear war. For instance, a Soviet submarine carrying nuclear torpedoes was pursued and attacked by American ships with depth charges during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The Soviet submarine was authorized to use the nuclear torpedoes in self-defense, and the situation came very close to nuclear war. In addition to this incident, the United States also began to launch U-2 spy planes to monitor Soviet missile sites in Cuba, and one of these planes was shot down by a Soviet missile. Leaders on both sides were preparing for possible nuclear war. Black Saturday was considered a point of extreme danger because of how possibly the events that occurred on that day could have caused the nuclear war. The Resolution involved the US removing its missiles from Turkey and pledging not to invade Cuba, while the Soviets removed their missiles from Cuba. This ended the crisis and reduced tensions between the US and the Soviet Union. However, it also led to further

distrust between the two superpowers and heightened the arms race. Additionally, the crisis had a profound impact on Kennedy's presidency and leadership style, as most respected his handling of the situation.