Charles Covington
HIS114: World Civilization II: OA
04/06/2023

Film Response: Cuban Missile Crisis

Upon Fidel Castros' victory in the Cuban revolution, he seeks protection and support from the Russian government. Without provocation, only under pressure did President Kennedy decide to order action to depose Castro's coup. Due to strategic advantage, similar to ours in Europe and Alaska, the USSR would have in Cuba. In response to the failed attempt and his affection for Castro, Premier Nikita Khrushchev secretly sent nuclear missiles to Cuba. Yet discovering the arsenal, Kennedy had the option to attack the unfinished missile base or blockade the island, preventing additional supply ships. Unbeknownst to President Kenedy, had an attack been attempted, short-range nuclear missiles were prepared to be fired on targets in the Western Hemisphere.

Black Saturday was a perilous moment during the crisis because of the incidents that could have led to all-out war. First, Castro's letter to Khrushchev emploring a nuclear first strike under the presumption of an inevitable US invasion. Then, Major Rudolf Anderson's U2 spy plane was shot down over Cuba, as allowing it to pass would have been a significant security risk. With this and surmounting pressure from the military to strike at Russia, prompting Kennedy to turn to his brother Bobby for help drafting a final response to the USSR. Toward the end of the day, Russian sub-B-59 nearly fired its nuclear missiles because the captain felt war must have been declared because they had lost communication with Russia for over 24 hours. Khrushchev accepted Kennedy's terms in resolving this crisis, knowing that if he pushed for further concession would result in war. With that, the Russian troops returned home within two weeks, the Jupiter missiles were destroyed secretly, and the Russian missiles in Cuba were dismantled within five months.