The Cuban Missile Crisis
John F. Kennedy

- John F. Kennedy (JFK) became President in 1961. He was 43 – making him the youngest person ever elected to the office.
- He was very popular with young people.
- At his inauguration, he inspired Americans to work for their country.
John F. Kennedy

“Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.”
The Cuban Missile Crisis

- **The Players:**
  - President John F. Kennedy – United States
  - Premier Nikita Khrushchev – Russian Leader
  - Fidel Castro – Cuban Leader
The Cuban Missile Crisis

- The Cuban Missile Crisis was the closest the world ever came to nuclear war.
- The United States armed forces were at their highest state of readiness ever and Soviet field commanders in Cuba were prepared to use battlefield nuclear weapons to defend the island if it was invaded.
In October 1962, Kennedy learned that the Soviet Union had build several launch sites for missiles in Cuba.

Fidel Castro, leader of Cuba (1959), cooperated with the Soviet Union, formed a communist government, and allowed the Soviets to build missile launch sites.
The Cuban Missile Crisis

- Worried that the Soviets would attack the U.S., Kennedy set up a blockade of the island nation.
- He ordered the U.S. Navy to stop Soviet ships carrying missiles to Cuba.
- What would happen if the ships refused to stop?
- Would there be a war?
The Cuban Missile Crisis

- Americans were tense fearing the results of an attack.
- American built fallout shelters (bomb shelters) for protection.
- They stocked their shelters with flashlights, radios, first-aid kits, canned foods, and water.
- Schools taught school children to get under their desks in case of a missile attack.
You can't hear it

You can't taste it

How will I know it?

You can't smell it

Often you can't even see it
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AIR RAID instructions

“SNEAK ATTACK” — NO WARNING SIREN

DO THIS FAST

SIREN

AT HOME

Get under bed or table close to the wall and R.A.M. from windows. Cover exposed parts of body and close eyes tightly.

AT WORK

Get under desk, table or bench. Stay close to wall away from doors or glass doors. Cover exposed parts of body and close eyes tightly.

OUT WALKING

Take any shelter if within a few steps. If no shelter near — fall to ground. Cover exposed parts of body and close eyes tightly.

IN VEHICLE

Put into car, stay, turn off to active. Cover face and eyes and stay in place.

CHILDREN AT SCHOOL

If your children are at school — 1946 stay at home. Don’t phone — teachers are trained to care for the students.

RAID SIGNAL

SIREN

FOR 3 MINUTES

ALL-CLEAR

3 ONE-MINUTE SIGNALS
The Results

• After long negotiations, the Soviet Union agreed to stop sending missiles to Cuba and to remove all the missiles that were already there.
• The United States agreed to end the naval blockade.
The Arms Race

- Both the U.S. and the Soviet Union believed that having the most and strongest weapons would keep them safe.
- This started an arms race between the two superpowers.
- The U.S. built the hydrogen bomb which was a thousand times more powerful than the atomic bomb.
- Both countries had missiles that could carry bombs to targets half-way around the world.