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Session A-1: The Cuban Missile Crisis: Understanding the Impact of Personality on Leadership

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The Cuban Missile Crisis
Understanding the Impact of Personality on Leadership.
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Defining terms

Leadership:
The capacity to lead.

Moral:
Sanctioned by or operative on one's conscience or ethical judgment.

Machiavellian:
Marked by cunning, duplicity, or bad faith.
Big Issues

• Reasons for the Crisis
• What’s at stake?
• Personalities/leaders matter.
A war of **Ideology** and **Unthinkable Weapons**: 
**Political** and **Economic**
Birds of a Feather: F Castro and N Khrushchev in ideological embrace.
Secondary Leaders?
Mao and U Thant
Medium Range and Intermediate Ranges for Russian Missiles.
Evidence presented at the United Nations; support for a blockade.
The US Jupiter IRBM: 15 in Turkey
The “Proof”: Clear evidence of a secret build-up of missiles (MRBM and IRBM) in Cuba.
JFK and military advisors – options?
Air Strike and/or Invasion?
Brinkmanship: JFK will stop all Russians ships, period.
US naval vessel and patrol craft intercept and ward off a Russian freighter.
The democrat?

Meaning of...
Leadership?
Style?
Restrictions?
Public Opinion?
“Women Strike for Peace” Group
The Apparatchik?
Meaning of...
Leadership?
Style?
Restrictions?
The Marxist Revolutionary?

Meaning of...

Leadership?

Style?

Restrictions?
Leadership and the Crisis’ Impact.

1. Personalities of the leaders.
2. Domestic Impact of Foreign Policy.
3. Ideological Conflict/Aspirations.
4. Third World Rivalries.
5. Relations with Allies (esp. USSR and Cuba).
Recommended Reading...

• John L. Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*. 1997
• Wm J. Medland, *The Cuban Missile Crisis: Evolving Historical Perspectives*. The History Teacher, Vol. 23, Nu 4, August 1990