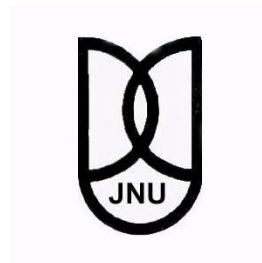


**REASSURANCE STRATEGIES IN THE ERA OF
NUCLEAR WEAPONS:
THE CASE OF THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

MUHAMMED SHAMSEER A P



International Politics

Centre for International Politics, Organization and Disarmament

School of International Studies

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY

New Delhi 110067

2015



Date: 24/07/2015

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled "Reassurance Strategies in the Era of Nuclear Weapons: The Case of the Cuban Missile Crisis" submitted by me in partial fulfilment for the award of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been previously submitted for any degree of this university or any other university.

SMR

Dedicated to My Mother and Father

MUHAMMED SHAMSEER A P

CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

[Signature] 27.7.15
Prof. Swaran Singh
Chairperson, CIPOD

[Signature]
Prof. Rajesh Rajagopalan
Supervisor



Chairperson
Centre for International
Politics, Organization and
Disarmament
School of International
Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru
University
New Delhi 110067



Supervisor
Centre for International
Politics, Organization and
Disarmament
School of International
Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru
University
New Delhi 110067

Dedicated to My Mother and Father

Acknowledgement

This dissertation wouldn't be complete without extending my sincerest gratitude towards the people who helped in giving shape to its content and motivating me towards its completion. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Rajesh Rajagopalan, for his impeccable guidance, deep engagement and patience. He encouraged me to explore uncharted fields of study, gave me the freedom to experiment with new ideas and patiently guided me through tough times.

I am grateful to all teachers who shared their valuable knowledge and expertise over the last four years- Prof. Varun Sahni, Dr. Happymon Jacob, Dr. Sidharth Mallavarappu, Dr. J. Madhan Mohan, Dr. Shivaji Kumar and Prof. Nivedita Menon

I am forever in debt to my parents, who have loved, supported and guided me throughout my life and to my sisters who never get tired with my insouciance.

The Jawaharlal Nehru University Library has been my favorite haunt for the last many years. I am fortunate to have access to such a resourceful place which helped in shaping my thoughts and writings.

I would like to thank all of my friends who shaped my ideas through many endless evenings of debates and discussion.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Background

The scope for international cooperation is limited according to the Realist school of international studies. The endless struggle for power leads to conflicts and tensions. The rise of great powers leads to the balance of power. Compared to Offensive Realists, Defensive Realists are hopeful about limiting this continuous struggle for power. The primary aim of the states in anarchy is survival (Waltz, 1979). Once security is achieved, it can stop the accumulation of power. Defensive realists talk about security dilemma and cooperation under the security dilemma. Defensive realists have different strategies to limit the indefinite struggle for power in the international system. Reassurance is one of the methods that can potentially mitigate the effects of the security dilemma. The present study examines what determines the success and failure of reassurance strategies in the era of nuclear deterrence and why states go for reassurance with the case study of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis (October 14-28).

What is the scope of reassurance strategies within the Realist paradigm? Classical realism focuses on human nature for the increase of conflicts over cooperation (Morgenthau, 1974). Since human nature cannot be altered, the system of international politics cannot be changed. Neo-realism on the other hand, focuses on the system level attributes. Anarchy and its effects boost conflicts than cooperation. Waltz identifies three factors preventing cooperation in the international system (Waltz, 1979).

The Relative gains problem is a major impediment to cooperation in the neo-realist Waltzian paradigm. Who gains more is a more important question than how much we gain (Waltz, 1979). The increased number of actors in the system will decrease the possibilities of cooperation (Waltz, 1979). Fear of dependency is another major obstacle to cooperation as the cooperation for instance in the economy will enhance one state's dependability on others (Waltz, 1979). While all corrective theories within and outside realism talked about addressing and coping up with the uncertainty of current and future intentions, none of them talked about the main problem realists

raise against reassurance attempts. States are concerned about relative gains, and that's the major obstacle against reassurance (Grieco, 1988). Realism considers states as *positional* whereas others consider it as *atomistic* (Grieco, 1988:4). Tang (2002) says that though Waltz (1979) mentions relative gains problem as an impediment to cooperation, he himself contradicts this argument when he says that relative gains cannot be converted to security always (Tang, 2002:23). Glaser (1994-95) also answers to the relative gains problem and cooperation. He says though defensive realists are concerned about relative gains, it's only in security terms not on other issues (Glaser, 1994-95). It leads to the major difference between offensive and defensive realists, whether states are security seekers or power seekers. Robert Powell (1991) also tries to address the issue of relative gains. He says the possibility of cooperation is sensitive to the cost of fighting and if the use of force is no longer at issue, wherein relative gains cannot be converted to use of force, the problem of relative gains also diminishes (Powell, 1991). Powell's theory is built upon elements of both realism and neoliberal institutionalism.

Mearsheimer attributes the pessimist view of Realism towards cooperation to five assumptions; the anarchy as an ordering principle of system where there is no 'government over governments' (Claude, 1971), the inherent offensive military capability of all states even if they don't have the weapons as they will use their 'feet and hands' to attack other, uncertainty about other's intentions which means not that all states are aggressive and greedy but no one state can be sure about other state's intentions as today's intention may not be same tomorrow, and survival as a goal (Mearsheimer, 1994). He maintains that none of the above 5 assumptions will necessarily lead to competition over cooperation if they are taken alone, but it will lead to competition and conflict when they are taken together (Mearsheimer, 1994). These five assumptions will change the state's behaviour in three ways; a) they fear each other and there is little room for trust among each other, but the level of fear may vary, b) each state's will guarantee its own survival mechanism, which doesn't mean that they will not enter into alliances because alliances are just 'marriage of convenience' and today's enemy may be tomorrow's friend c) states will try to maximize their relative power over other states because the greater one's military advantage over other state, the more secure it is (Mearsheimer, 1994). Thus, states can guarantee its security only by being the hegemon (Mearsheimer, 1994). As long as the

security as the primary goal of states, the scope for cooperation is less than the scope for competition and conflict (Mearsheimer, 1995). The emergence of a system, where security is not the primary goal of states, like world government or something like that is far from the possibility for realist scholars (Mearsheimer, 1995). Mearsheimer says there are three features in the international system that blocks cooperation and creates fear; anarchy, the military capability of states, uncertainty about other's intentions (Mearsheimer, 2004). Offensive realism holds uncertainty as the immutable and central cause of conflict (Montgomery, 2006). According to Mearsheimer, every state will possess some offensive military capability at all time, and it is impossible to write off the possibility of using those capability based on the internal characteristics of another state. As the primary goal of state is to secure itself, nothing like balance of power, arms control, institutions and cooperation will secure itself other than its power and being the hegemon is the only way to ensure its own security (Mearsheimer, 2004). The offensive nature of states, which inherently comes from its search for a security, makes the states pessimists about others and their intentions. For offensive realists, states are uncertain about others' current and future intentions and so they are conditioned to remain sceptical about others; so they will try to maximize their relative power whenever possible (Montgomery, 2006). Offensive realism believes that though the wars can be reduced by increasing the costs of war, cooperation cannot be increased by changing the belief and information about other and the world (Jervis, 1999). Mearsheimer is not rejecting the possibility or frequency of cooperation and that is why he used 'sometimes'. However, he is rather sceptical about the sustainment of cooperation while talking about the difficulty of sustainment in cooperation efforts. Why is cooperation not sustained? Mearsheimer attributes it two factors; 'the relative gain considerations' and fear of cheating (Mearsheimer, 1994).

Schweller, another offensive realist, believes in intentions more than capabilities. The intention of the actors is what matters to him for peace and cooperation and it is possible for states to reassure others. Relative gain is not simply preventing the relative gain of others but also trying to gain relative to others (Schweller, 1994). Schweller, though an offensive realist, is in between the offensive realist argument of all states are power maximizers, and defensive realist argument of all states are security maximizers. Thus the stability of the system is not dependent upon the

distribution of capabilities itself, but on the interests of actors; system is stable if the powerful states are status-quoist, and conflict prone if they are revisionists (Schweller, 1994).

The Cuban Missile Crisis was a confrontation between US and USSR over Soviet deployed ballistic missiles in Cuba in the month of October 1962. There have been a several interpretation of the story citing several reasons for deploying missiles in Cuba. The US attempts to dethrone Castro from Cuba including the Bay of Pigs invasion and the US deployment of Jupiter missiles in Turkey and Italy within the range of USSR prompted the later to deploy missiles in Cuba. There was a meeting between Khrushchev and Castro in July 1962 and the deployment was at the request of Cuba. The construction of missiles in Cuba was going on while the US was busy with election campaigns. It was the US spy planes that produced photographs of the missile construction in Cuba. The immediate response was the blockade so as not to let any more missiles into Cuba. It prevented any shipping of offensive missiles to Cuba. Finally, both parties reached an agreement where USSR would dismantle its missiles in Cuba and return to USSR and US will not invade Cuba. There was another secret deal where The US agreed to dismantle its missiles in Italy and Turkey. A Soviet-US hotline was established to de-escalate the tensions between the two. The dismantling and blockade formally ended on 20th November 1962.

Review of Literature of Reassurance

The literature on reassurance strategies is limited in security studies. Realists tend to focus on military aspects to know about a state. Reassurance strategies are usually employed either by rising hegemons to prevent the balance of power struggles against them or to build confidence in crisis. So benign hegemons are not balanced against it as Barry Posen tells us how states perceive others preferences and motives “in watching one another, states tend to focus on military doctrines and military capabilities” (Posen, 1987:17). The literature on reassurance strategies differs on the factors that determine the success of these strategies.

Reassurance strategies are discussed by defensive realists to limit the endless struggle for power. Glaser (1994), Jervis (1978), Tang (2010), Montgomery (2006) Stephen Van Evera (1998) and others are proposing that states can signal their benign intentions to others by decreasing their offensive systems and proving that they are

only concerned about security rather than power. Montgomery uses the term 'reassurance military strategy' to denote this tactic (Montgomery, 2006: 151). These scholars are also of the opinion that most of the states are security maximizers rather than power maximizers. Defensive realists are aware of the limitations to the strategy they have proposed. Jervis acknowledges the fact that reassurance strategy is practical only in the offence defence distinguishable world (Jervis, 1978). The state will be in trouble if it is relying on the defensive system in an offence dominant world, the defensive states cannot be distinguished in a defence dominant world (Montgomery, 2006). Obviously, since states cannot be sure of others intentions, for offensive realists these strategies are not useful to stop the aggressive intention of other states because today's enemy may be tomorrow's friend (Mearsheimer, 2004).

Montgomery looks on opportunities and restrictions embedded within the reassurance strategy or 'military reassurance' (Montgomery, 2006). The state may become more vulnerable with reassurance strategy, and that is why reassurance is less common in practice. Montgomery is not rejecting the possible solution of reassurance. When offence and defence are distinguishable, and 'balance between them are neutral' (Montgomery, 2006) states can go for reassurance without becoming more vulnerable (Montgomery, 2006). Thus Montgomery's theory is a 'middle ground' (Montgomery, 2006) between offensive and defensive realism because offensive and defensive realisms underestimates and overestimates the possible solution from security dilemma and uncertainty (Montgomery, 2006). Montgomery tried to go in-between defensive and offensive Neo-realism about the scope of cooperation. According to him, states can go for cooperation by revealing their benign intentions, not all time but under certain conditions (Montgomery, 2006). Like other defensive realists, Glaser is also integrating offence defence variables to his theory and like Jervis and others he is also taking motives of other states into consideration (Glaser, 1995; Jervis 1999). However, ultimately his theory is when countries 'should' cooperate and when countries should compete (Glaser, 1995).

Though reassurance strategy is an option, statesmen used it only rarely and succeeded even more rarely. There are obstacles to reassurance strategies that have made such cases very few in history. The responses to reassurance strategies also vary. Sometimes making the initiator more vulnerable and inviting more negative results.

There are factors that determine the success and failure of these reassurance strategies. Defensive realists tell us about when states will and can initiate reassurance. Offense-defence differentiation and offense-defence balance (Montgomery, 2006: 154) are the necessary conditions for the success of reassurance strategies according to defensive realists.

Montgomery differs from other defensive realists up to what extent the reassurance has to go. The more the risk in reassurance, the more it is credible. For Montgomery, it is the vulnerability involved in reassurance that makes it credible and the extent of vulnerability determines the degree of credibility (Montgomery, 2006:159). He also differs from Glaser and Jervis by going on to argue that no matter offensive or defensive military posture, credibility cannot be achieved if it can defeat the adversary with that military posture (Montgomery, 2006: 164). He also opposes the defensive realist argument of initiating reassurance when the defence has the advantage. According to him neither defensive advantage nor offensive advantage allows states to initiate reassurance (Montgomery, 2006: 166).

The neutrality in offense defence balance (where there is neither defensive advantage nor offensive advantage) is an essential element in reassurance strategy for Montgomery, 2006:167). So if it is not neutral the attempt will make the initiator more vulnerable as small gestures are not enough in defensive advantage, and even small gestures are making one state vulnerable in offensive advantage. If it is neutral, then there is no vulnerability at all. Any country having the nuclear capability will have a strong defensive advantage, and huge gestures will need for reassurance otherwise less (Montgomery, 2006:166).

Other theorists tend to broaden the scope of reassurance strategies by including non-military strategies. Tang (2010) argues that ignoring non-military reassurance leads to ignoring the processes of the particular reassurance strategy. Andrew Kydd (2000) explore the possibility of integrating some psychological dimensions in reassurance strategies to understand it better. Downs, Rocke, & Siverson also analyses the reassurance strategies and argue that countries very rarely opted for defensive weapons in an arms race and the motive for defensive weapons was not reassurance but the cost (Downs, Rocke, & Siverson: 124).

Kydd (2000) examines the advantage of signalling “costly signals” which are unlikely to be signalled from an untrustworthy state in a rational actor theme. He also maintains that more the cost of a reassurance, the more credible it is to the adversary. Montgomery’s work (2006) is examining only military reassurance and can be located within realist paradigm more than any other reassurance literature in the field. Kydd proposes “motivational realism” as an alternative to structural realism (Kydd, 2014). Kydd argues that the structures alone can’t answer if the conflict will emerge or not. J G Stein examines the appropriateness of reassurance attempts against deterrence in conflict situations (Stein, 1991). Schultz argues that though “dove” is more interested in peace “hawk” plays an important role as the reassurance initiated by “hawk” or offensive state is more credible and the chances are more to be successful than the reassurance attempts initiated by “dove” or peace loving state (Schultz, 2005:1). The characters of leader play an important role in Schultz’ model of reassurance. A moderate thinking leader’s moves for peace will be treated hostile within domestic politics, and the people will think that he is surrendering the national interests as opposed to hardliners. People would not be sceptical of Nixon’s move to make peace with China because of his well-known anti-communist commitments (Schultz, 2005). At the same time, he underlines the lack of importance of the “hawkishness” and “dovishness” of a leader in the way the adversary state responds (Schultz, 2005: 5).

Rathbun (2007) analyses the signalling of reassurance or “screening” within the paradigm of realism and tries to find out the non-realistic elements in “reassurance” literature of Glaser. According to him to signal benign intentions by investing in defensive weapons in an offensive world is unrealistic (Rathbun, 2007: 540). Rathbun finds institutions very helpful in coping up with the problem of uncertainty (Rathbun, 2007). Rathbun (2007) examines the notion of “uncertainty” in four traditions: realism, rationalism (neo-liberal institutionalism or strategic choice), cognitivism and constructivism. The work also examines how the four paradigms are addressing the “uncertainty” of others intentions and how positives are they to screening and signalling. Urpelainen discusses the effectiveness of reassurance with costly signals in the international market system in his essay “Costly Adjustments, Market and International Reassurance” (Urpelainen, 2012). He says these costly adjustments within a domestic market can signal the benign intentions and will attract investors from around the globe. The correspondence between Tang and Montgomery gives a

comprehensive insight into the strategy of reassurance. Tang acknowledges the contribution of Montgomery for his critical contribution to the literature of reassurance, and he points to the flaws in his literature. Montgomery replies to his criticism and corrects the misinterpretation of his works.

Though Edelstein (2002) says that he builds up his theory on realist paradigm he's also debited to non-realistic elements in his theory when he says states read others' intentions by looking adversary's political and social characteristics (Edelstein, 2002).

Cuban Missile Crisis Literature

The Cuban missile crisis is one of the most discussed crisis among foreign policy scholars. The crisis involved the deployment of missiles by USSR in Cuba in late May 1962 and the US's reaction to it till Khrushchev signalled the end of the crisis by agreeing to withdraw the missiles from Cuba. The deployment of medium-range missiles was on request of Castro in a secret meeting between Castro, and it was part of alliance commitments. Though there were rumours of Soviet missile constructions in Cuba, it was the spy flights' photographs on 16th October which cleared the doubts. The literature on Cuban Missile Crisis addressed several questions; why Soviet deployed missiles in Cuba, why The US responded in a particular way that led to the crisis and why at the end Soviet agreed to withdraw from Cuba.

Most of the literature on the Cuban Missile Crisis tends to see the Soviets as the culprit in creating such a crisis that was the biggest manifestation of superpower rivalry. There was more than one reason to acknowledge that USSR was mainly concerned about defence, and the purpose was not offence. The distinction between offence and defence weapons had a major say in the Cuban Missile Crisis. Was the deploying of the missiles in Cuba for defensive purposes or offensive purposes? Since the missiles were for the defence of Cuba, Soviet believed it is for defensive purposes. Missiles of sufficient range so as to reach The US was considered by The US as offensive (Downs, Rocke, & Siverson, 1985). This is the traditional security dilemma and defensive realists like Glaser and Jervis believe it can be mitigated by strategies of re-assurance. The deployment of missiles in Cuba is considered by some scholars as a defensive attempt by USSR to avoid nuclear war by narrowing the missile gap (Scherer, Fall 1981). The gap between the number of ICBMs and SLBMs for US and USSR was alarmingly big. For the former it was 450-500 and for the later it was only

75 (Scherer, 1981). Any compromise on offensive weapons or defensive weapons or by USSR at this stage will make it extremely vulnerable to the US. White (1996) believes the purpose of particular usage of weapons for offence or defence make it offensive and defensive weapons than the mere distinction between offensive weapons and defensive weapons. Decreasing the huge gap needed huge budget but the situation in Cuba made the task easier for USSR. (White, 1996). At the same time, White considers both President Kennedy and Khrushchev as responsible for the crisis (White, 1996). The attempted Bay of Pigs invasion and the increase in military spending in Cuba by the US caused insecurity feeling in Cuba.

The response to USSR deployment of missiles was also defensive. Kennedy did not go for an offensive air strike. There were two factions within US policy makers, one faction under Dean Acheson supported offensive military air strike whereas the other faction under Attorney General Robert Kennedy supported defensive blockade (White, 1996). “It is hard to imagine that any president (in a list of those who could imaginably have been elected) would have adopted a more peaceful course than the one Kennedy chose” (May & Zelkiew, 1997: 696). At the end of the day, there was no use of force in the crisis and what made the crisis solved? It was the compromises on both sides. Whatever the narrative, whether Khrushchev was offensive or not, at least all they wanted was a settlement.

Laffey & Welds (Sep, 2008) points to another major issue of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Both explores the “Myth of Super Power affair” (Laffey & Welds, 2008: 555) and brings a post-colonial view of the crisis. Subaltern view of the crisis will ask why Cuba deployed missiles instead of why USSR planted it. The subaltern view brings another dimension to our study. Was the deployment of missiles in Cuba offensive or defensive? If it was for fortification, then it is an investment in defensive weapons against US aggressions against Cuban Revolution. The subaltern point of view maintains the crisis as the devastation of the sovereignty of small states during the superpower struggles.

The literature on reassurance strategies, all are done with the historical analysis. Cuban missile crisis is one of the most discussed crisis in security literature from different theoretical perspectives in the security literature. Even defensive realists have discussed the crisis from a defensive realist perspective. This dissertation

explores the reassurance strategies employed by both the US and USSR during the short period with a background analysis of what made them reassure each other and what determined the success and failure of these strategies. Though there were discussions for an air strike, Kennedy as well as Khrushchev wanted peace at the end of the day (Sherwin, 2012). Why did they want peace? Is that because of nuclear deterrence or was it because of their personalities (Rajagopalan, 2000)? Whatever the reasons are since both parties wanted peace, they attempted for compromise. For Montgomery (2006), every state having a nuclear weapon is having a strong defensive advantage. In a strong defensive advantage, the state will have to compromise more to make their reassurance attempts more credible. In this case, the Cuban Missile Crisis, nothing less than dismantling the missiles in Cuba was sufficient to make a credible reassurance attempt. However, that also meant huge vulnerability for USSR and Cuba. USSR did not go for that unilaterally. Obviously both parties were neither that benign nor apostles of peace. Still they wanted peace in the crisis even at the price of honour and made reassurance attempts to achieve it. Khrushchev made it clear in his letters to Kennedy on 23rd, 24th and 26th October 1962 that he was interested in peace (Cuban History Archives, 2000). In response, Kennedy made a vocal reassurance, a public pledge that he will not invade Cuba. He also sent a secret commitment to dismantling Jupiter missiles in Turkey to Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin (Sherwin, 2012).

There are three waves of literature on Cuban missile crisis. First, American version (1962 onwards) which dominated till 1987. Most of the works in this periods were based on Kennedy's aides' books and ExComm tapes. The literature in this period viewed the outcome of the crisis as purely Kennedy's victory over offensive Khrushchev's 'badly planned' deployment of missiles. The works were largely by his admirers and it featured Kennedy's heroics during the crisis. The second wave of literature was a more balanced version (1987 onwards), after oral history conferences which accommodated USSR's delegates and after temporal opening of Soviet archives during glasnost. The literature in this period examined Khrushchev's victory as well in the crisis and questioned the 'humiliated retreat'. The third wave (1989 onwards) attempted to decentralize and decolonize the literature on the Cuban missile crisis from US and USSR. The wave started in the 1990s which examined Cuban and global versions of the crisis. The literature in this period benefited largely from

archival sources from Cuba, East and West Germany, Bulgaria, China, France and many other states.

There are traditionalists and revisionists as well. Traditionalists admired Kennedy's heroics. Revisionists criticized Kennedy's brinkmanship and using of public diplomacy which pushed the world to the brink of war.

Bernstein (1980) discusses the Cuban Missile Crisis and trade over missiles in Turkey. Though there wasn't public agreement to dismantle the Jupiter missiles in Turkey, there was secret negotiation and commitment over the missiles. He discusses the issue of this 'trade over' within the context of Cuban missile crisis. The feature of his work is that he brings the reactions from the NATO members (Bernstein, 1980: 114-116) over the 'potential trade over' whether it is publicly made or not. Bernstein is obviously justifying John F Kennedy for everything he did during the crisis. He has several reasons why the trade of Soviet missiles in Cuba over Jupiter missiles in Turkey was not made public.

Cohen (1985) rejects the importance of studying Cuban Missile Crisis. For him, it should not be a model of national security crisis. He argues instead of focusing on one building site, we should examine a variety of cases.

Allison (1971) analyses the case of Cuban Missile Crisis from 3 different paradigms, a- rational actor model, b- bureaucratic model and c- organizational model. Looking through different paradigms give us different explanations for the same crisis that will be overlooked if we were looking from a specific paradigm. His work on the crisis brings in greater insights to the Cuban Missile Crisis. However, his work is silent over the trade of Cuban Missiles over the missiles in Turkey. His bias is obvious when he ignores the defensive purpose of the missiles in Turkey. He claims that the US did not have any offensive intentions in Cuba when the history itself was contrary to that claim.

Haas (2001) discusses the issue of Cuban missile crisis within the paradigm of Prospect theory and discuss the flows within utility or value maximization theory which holds that the decisions are made according to the benefits and costs calculation. His essay tries to answer the question, despite knowing that the costs are higher why Khrushchev went for the gamble in Cuba given the strategic superiority of

US. The work also tries to answer why Kennedy did not go into a potentially beneficial attack on Cuba which would have cleaned up the western hemisphere of communism and threat of Castro.

Scott and Smith (1994) discusses the problems with historiography of Cuban Missile Crisis and discusses the attempts of international historiography of Cuban missile crisis which rejects the American version, Soviet version and Cuban version of Cuban missile crisis. One has to explore for example British, Turkish and Italian stories of the crisis as well. Still, once can find out the bias in Scott and Smith's (1994) literature where they attempt to reject the claims of trade over missiles in Turkey by Soviet Ambassador Anatolii Dobrynin. They also point to the fact that the Soviet leaders who were involved in Crisis are already no more. The issue of memory loss and one's attempt to prove himself right and wrong as well affects the oral histories. Still both admits the fact that these oral histories were able to question the conventional narrations of Cuban missile crisis. They suggest that to improve the less American version of the history of the Cuban missile crisis, oral histories has to come from other countries as well. Scott and Smith also problematize the documents and archives like ExComm documents. Documents will not reveal the intentions of actors but merely provide the details. Documents also carry the national bias, and it does not provide the full story. "In short, documents can be just as problematic a source as oral histories" (Scott and Smith, 1994). They emphasize the point that new versions overrate the accepted versions and conventional versions that are later overwritten by new versions that question the accepted versions of history. Scott and Smith analyses in detail the conventional story and new interpretations of events and decisions during Cuban missile crisis. However, they assert the difficulty in determining the truths and facts of these two different kinds of historiography. Scott and Smith thus conclude that there is no single truth and fact in history, but truths and facts are contextual. Scott and Smith also discuss the three paradigms in the context of Cuban missile crisis and conclude that the organizational model and bureaucratic model was more appealing than the rational actor model.

Ghent (1979) discusses the Cuban Missile Crisis from a Canadian Perspective, How Canada and Canadian viewed communist Cuba, Pay of Pigs and Cuban Missile crisis.

He also discusses the implications of the crisis for Canada and how there was a huge call for nuclear armaments.

Trachtenberg (1985) discuss the role of nuclear weapons and how it influenced the Cuban missile crisis.

Lebow (1988 and 2001) analyses the role of deterrence, resolve and reassurance in the Cuban missile crisis. Lebow's conception of reassurance is different from Glaser's and other defensive realists' conception of reassurance. While Glaser emphasize the role of defensive weapons mixed with other strategies, Lebow looks how these defensive actions are provocative.

Laffey and Weldes (2008) discuss the subaltern perspective of Cuban missile crisis. They discuss how Cuba was ignored both in critical oral history and seminal works on Cuban missile crisis. Lebow and Stein (1994) challenges the prevalent notion that deterrence and compellence were the factors behind the successful resolution of Cuban missile crisis and the end of cold war. They argue that deterrence and compellence prolonged the cold war. They differentiate between a nuclear threat and nuclear weapons and try to answer why nuclear weapons had a positive impact on the successful end of Cuban missile crisis.

Copeland (2001) discuss the crisis from the perspective of dynamic differentials theory which predicts that persons faced with impending decline and with not diplomatic actions available will go for violence and confrontation even though it risks a major war. The work attempts to answer the question that is why placing missiles in Turkey did not create a crisis and why missile deployment in Cuba created a major crisis.

Weldes (1999) gives a constructivist understanding of "Cuban Missile Crisis", Carribean crisis or October crisis. She begins with questioning the term 'crisis' itself and describes how the "crisis" was constructed. She narrates the story of the crisis by three states that were officially and actively involved in though she admits the relevance of internationalization of the history (Weldes, 1999).

Sergei Khrushchev's (2007) work on memoirs of his brother gives a USSR version of the crisis or Caribbean Crisis. The work emphasizes the motive of deploying missiles

in Cuba, and Khrushchev's defensive motives and interests again contrary to the traditional American version of the crisis.

Sheldon Stern (2005) was the first non-ExComm member to have access to the ExComm tapes of Kennedy tapes of ExCom. He edited the recordings to make it easy for the read. Each days ExComm meeting is written in detail. He also brings insights about the hawkish and dovish nature of the ExComm members. He also argues that the world misunderstood Kennedy as hawkish and aggressive, and his aggression led to the USSR's withdrawal. Stern says Kennedy was opposed to militarism and avoided confrontation when the crisis was escalated through secret backchannel diplomacy and concessions.

George, Hall and Simons (1971) describes how Kennedy utilized the coercive diplomacy to end the crisis. He also looks at the limitations of coercive diplomacy that prefers ultimatum over try and see approach in certain conditions, and he opines that the context will determine which one is better for the successful end of the crisis. His model of coercive diplomacy which consists of bargaining, concessions, signalling is more similar to reassurance strategies advanced by defensive realists like Glaser. However, his work is a US version of the crisis. It is just about Kennedy's coercive diplomacy and the benefits of that diplomacy for the post-crisis relations which altered, in his opinion, the offensive foreign policy Khrushchev had with West. He maintains the traditionalist views of the USSR in the crisis like offensive intentions, testing will and determination and retreat without much gain at the end.

Paterson (1978 and 1986) gives a critical analysis of Kennedy's foreign policy towards Cuba, USSR and during the Cuban missile crisis. He is critical of the brinkmanship and public diplomacy done by Kennedy during the crisis that could have been settled without pushing the world to the brink of a new world war. The showdown was for the revenge of Bay of Pigs and to display his determination and will. All of these options were discussed in detail in ExComm meeting. He also fails to understand changes happened with Kennedy when he assumed the office and blindly criticizes Kennedy for his aggressive campaigns. He is also highly critical of admirers of Kennedy's heroics like Arthur M Schlesinger and Theodore Sorensen. He falls into the trap of traditionalists who viewed Soviet withdrawal from Cuba as humiliation and which no chance of face-saving. However, his work has to be

credited for bringing insights on why domestic politics was a factor for Kennedy's brinkmanship and how Republicans exploited the crisis to do well in the post-crisis elections.

Daun and Pauk (2009) examines UN Secretary General U Thant's role as a mediator between US and USSR during the crisis and how he played a part in de-escalating the crisis, resolving the crisis and implementing the settlements. However, both holds the view that US military power and resolve was certainly a factor in Khrushchev's retreat. Daun and Pauk fail to understand the ideal role of a UN Secretary General in an international crisis and how Cuba was not treated well and how it was neglected despite being a party to the conflict. Both has to be credited for a first attempt to examine UN General's role in the course and outcome of the crisis.

Weaver's (2014) attempt is unique as he examines the role of the combination of military and diplomacy in dissolving the Cuban missile crisis where other's strength supports one's weakness. The model differs from reassurance strategy because this model does not differentiate between offensive and defensive weapons. Weaver's work can be regarded as an answer to the revisionists who criticized Kennedy for his brinkmanship. Weaver though was blind about the same strategy adopted by Khrushchev. He also falls to the American version of history who regards the crisis as Kennedy's diplomatic success.

While most of the literature kept silence on the events after 28th October or paid less attention to those days, Coleman (2007) examined the post-crisis implementation and the risks involved in it. The weapons to be removed from Cuba was highly debated between the two and Kennedy were reluctant to flex the muscles over the weapons which has to be removed because it'll reinvent the crisis.

The Cuban missile crisis is one of the most studied phenomena in international security literature. The abundance of literature does not mean that there's nothing new to explore. The reassurance perspective, which is one of the less explored, gives us a new understanding of the course and outcome of the Cuban missile crisis.

Definition, Rationale and Scope of the Study

Defensive realism is an umbrella term for the balance of power theory, the balance of threat theory, offence defence theory and security dilemma theory. It believes that the

main purpose of the state is security and not the power. One's attempt to secure one's state may lead to security dilemma, and this is because of uncertainty about others' intentions. They propose several ways to signal one's intentions. The security dilemma can be defined as a situation where one state's attempt to secure it leads to the insecurity of other state, thereby making both sides feeling insecure. Reassurance can be defined as "is to make other states worry less about one's intentions (and hence one's capabilities too) because one's intention is genuinely benign. Reassurance is thus a specific form of signalling: it is to signal one's benign intentions toward another state" (Tang, 2010: 132).

The proposed study attempts at understanding the effects of reassurance on security dilemma and cooperation. The study will look at various works on reassurance strategies from offensive and defensive realists and realist and non-realist literature. Reassurance strategies cannot be employed everywhere, and the problem of vulnerability prevents states from attempting reassurance. The study will look at the factors that are favourable for reassurance and which are not. It will also look at the broader criticism of reassurance strategies and mainly the problem of offense defence distinction. The study also looks at the historical example of reassurance strategies employed between the US and USSR.

The rationale for selecting the Cuban missile crisis as the case is that, though there has been a lot of literature on reassurance strategies, they all come to the conclusion that the historical attempts of reassurances are uncommon, and most of the attempted reassurance strategies were unsuccessful. The Cuban Missile Crisis would be an apt example of reassurance attempts done in the era of nuclear weapons and the context of nuclear threat. Still the literature on reassurance strategies neglected the crisis. Both USSR and the US were possessing nuclear weapons that make the scenario neutral in offence defence balance.

The scope of the study is the literature on theoretical aspects of reassurance strategies. The scope of the case study that is the Cuban Missile crisis will be the literature on the attempts for reassuring by US, USSR and Cuban leaders.

Research Problem/Question

The questions the study proposes to deal with are mainly related to general aspects of the reassurance strategies and particularities of reassurance strategies during the

Cuban Missile Crisis. The major research questions are as follows. Can reassurance strategy solve the problem of security dilemma that considered as the major impediment to cooperation according to realist perspective of international politics? Historically, the cases of successful reassurance strategies are very rare. What are the factors determinant of successful reassurance strategies? The world was on the brink of a major war as the nuclear super powers posed against each other with each doing brinkmanship. Still, Why the Cuban missile crisis ended the way it ended after escalation? Was the deterrence and nuclear deterrence a factor in the settlement of the crisis as the traditional narrative of the crisis holds? What was the role played by reassurance strategies during the Cuban missile crisis?

Hypothesis

Though no one can deny the effects of security dilemma on the states in the international system, Reassurance strategies can at least mitigate the effects of the security dilemma. When the use of threats and determinism brought the world to the brink of catastrophe, the reassurance attempts played a role in easing the tension that was escalating to an alarming degree during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Method of the study

The study, to address the question of whether reassurance strategy has an impact on security dilemma, uses secondary data including journal articles and books. Regarding the history of Cuban Missile Crisis, the study utilized the available primary and secondary materials of history including newspaper reports.

Case studies may serve several purposes including testing theories, creating theories and inferring antecedents. The purpose of this study is to test the theory of Reassurance within the case, the Cuban Missile Crisis. Within this type of case study, this case study falls within the category of Congruence Procedure Case study though it is a single case study. The reassurance attempt is the Independent Variable, and ease of the tensions is the Dependent Variable. The study variable is the Independent Variable.

The Chapterization Scheme

The first chapter provides the background of the study, important theoretical concepts, methodology, field, review of literature in themes and perspectives relevant to the proposed study.

The second chapter, Reassurance Strategies, looks at the concept of reassurance strategy, the scope of reassurance within the realist paradigm, the problem of defence offense distinction and the question whether there were any attempts of reassurance strategies.

The third chapter, the Cuban Missile Crisis, looks at the 13 days crisis between the two super powers and Cuba. It will address the questions of why USSR deployed missiles in Cuba, why Kennedy went for peace and how the crisis was sorted out.

The fourth chapter, Reassurance and the Cuban Missile Crisis, looks at the context of arms race between two, the reassurance attempts and will explore all three versions of the crisis; The US, The Soviet and the Cuban. The chapter will look at the background scenario of these reassurance strategies and what determined the success and failure of these reassurance attempts.

The concluding chapter would summarize the findings of the study, drawbacks and limitations of the study.

Chapter II: Reassurance

The chapter provides an overview of the reassurance strategies discussed by realist and non-realist literature. The first section discusses the definitions of reassurance that points to the different comprehensions of the strategy. The subsequent sections discuss the scope of reassurance strategy within realism, the different types of reassurance strategies, the relation between credible reassurance and the costs and risks, the conditions for successful reassurance, the problem of offensive and defensive weapons, reassurance strategies' relation with other theories and finally some concluding remarks on Reassurance.

Definitions

Reassurance means to “signal one’s own benign intentions and a means to read others’ present intentions by reading others’ reactions to one’s invitations to cooperate, with ‘costly signalling’ under risk at its core” (Tang, 2008:130). Intentions can be defined as “state’s ambitions, how it is likely to act to achieve those ambitions and the costs it will bear to realize those goals (Edelstein, 2002:4). Reassurance is “to say or do things to make others stop worrying about something” (Tang, 2008:132). Reassurance in International Relations is “to make other states worry less about one’s intentions (and hence one’s capabilities too) because one’s intention is genuinely benign” (Tang, 2008:132). “An actor’s intentions are his preferences over actions” and motives are “immediate pay-offs or goals that drive an actor’s behaviour, and thus one’s more immediate interests (Tang, 2008:131). Trust can be defined as “a function of one’s estimation that the other individual or state is benign” (Tang, 2008:131). Trust and mistrust have an inverse relationship wherein “trust reduces mistrust and vice versa” (Tang, 2008:131).

Pure reassurance is risky, and states almost invariably uses reassurance strategy along with deterrence/defence (Tang, 2008). Reassurance is part of a broader strategy called the strategy of engagement “Which takes place between two states that are unsure of each other’s intentions. Engagement has both Reassurance and Defense/deterrence element” (Tang, 2008:133).

There is also a distinction between cooperation and cooperative strategy or behaviour where the latter is an attempt. Reassurance is not cooperation, but it is a “form of cooperative behaviour or part of cooperative strategy” (Tang, 2008:134). “Operationally Reassurance is a means for gauging others’ intentions by signalling one’s benign intentions and then reading others’ intentions from their reactions toward one’s signal of benign intentions, and it critically depends on incurring some cost and taking some risk in the possibility that the other side may not reciprocate or even take advantage of one’s benign gesture” (Tang, 2008:159). Stein defines reassurance as “A set of strategies that adversaries can use to reduce the likelihood of a threat or use of force” (Stein, 1991: 431). Kydd defines reassurance strategy as “costly signal serves to identify a state as security seeker” (Kydd, 2007:141). Edelstein uses the term engagement instead of reassurance, and he defines it as “a strategy of using positive sanctions in the hopes of achieving peaceful relations or other objectives” (Edelstein, 2006:5).

Hugh Ward also point out that players may “gather information about others’ preferences from their game moves and that it may pay them to take risks of short-term losses in order to do so” (Ward, 1989: 274).

Realism and the scope of Reassurance

The main point of divergence between offensive and defensive realism is how to cope up with the uncertainty produced by security dilemma (Tang, 2008). The variants of realism itself will answer the question in different ways.

Realism, in general, is known for its bias towards conflicts, and there are clearly some factors which make cooperation less likely. Classical realism identifies the cause of conflict as human nature (Morgenthau, 1974). Human nature cannot altered, so also the nature of the international system. It is a unit-level analysis of the international system.

Neorealism presents a system level understanding of the international system. Waltz (1979) identifies three major impediments to international cooperation. The relative gains problem is a major impediment to international cooperation. Who gains more is more important than how much we gain (Waltz, 1979). Another major factor identified by Waltz as an impediment to international cooperation is the number of actors (Waltz, 1979). Cooperation is more possible when the number of actors is less.

Fear of dependency and loss independent economy is another major impediment according to Waltz (Waltz, 1979). All three factors decreases the incentives for cooperation. The aggression and conflict will rule the international system according to this Waltzian perspective.

Waltz uses two terms; integration for interdependence within units of the nation, interdependence for among nations (Waltz, 1979). He talks about the interdependence between nations. Although states are functionally similar, the differences in capabilities pave a way for something of a division of labour. The division of labour among nations make them loosely connected (and interdependence within units of the nation make it closely connected). To him, the integration of nation seldom takes place (Waltz, 1979). The uncertainty of each about others intentions (not only immediate but also future) impedes the cooperation. Though the division of labour and specialization works for everyone's advantage, the fear of inequality in the distribution of benefits impedes the cooperation because states are not sure about other's use of this increased capabilities.

According to Waltz, the structure of international politics impedes cooperation in two ways: a) a state worries about a division of possible gains that may favour others more than itself, b) it also fears being dependent on others by increased specialization and the larger it imports and exports, the larger it is dependent on others (Waltz, 1979). Since it seems to negate all these two problems, it seems there is less scope for cooperation in Waltzian literature. States try to secure what they depend on (like oil) or try to lessen the extent of their dependency (Waltz, 1979). States have more imperial ambitions than intentions for cooperation. To Waltz to act on the idea of division of labour and specialization is a domestic imperative, and the international imperative is to protect yourself (Waltz, 1979). The classical form of cooperation (international interdependence) is not appreciable to Waltz. Waltz also says this is not only division of labour of economy but also politics.

In short, Waltz would argue that states are not interested in cooperation and they will strive hard for avoiding the cooperation to lessen the dependency. The small states will fear the loss of autonomy because of the cooperation (Waltz, 1979). However, is international cooperation only limited to big powers? Do small powers willingly enter international cooperation? Why do they cooperate? This gloomy picture of

international life cannot be changed by increasing awareness and it will remain so; it is not because of the diplomats are stupid but because the structure is same and that can be changed only by structural change (Waltz, 1979). Waltz also says that the inequality of states in terms of resources makes peace and stability possible (Waltz, 1979: 132). Waltz is of the opinion that there is less interdependence if one looks from a system level approach, not the unit level. Because there is a huge disparity between the amount of investment by earlier Great Power Britain and invest by today's great power U.S (Waltz, 1979: 158). So he is in parallel with traditional concepts of interdependence. Waltz says the 'shadow of future' causes war instead of cooperation as thought by the liberal school (Waltz, 1954). Regarding the economic cooperation, states cannot think in pure economic terms according to realist framework.

The defensive realism gives more scope for cooperation than any other variant of Realism. By employing strategies of Reassurance, states can go for cooperation. The security dilemma coming out of anarchy is a major impediment to cooperation according to defensive realist literature one state's attempt to ensure its security makes the other feel insecure and leads to conflict and fear (Jervis, 1999). Even the status quo powers are creating impediments to cooperation as they will try to capture other countries' resources to protect their own possessions (Jervis, 1978). The scope for cooperation may vary depending on whether the status-quo power is confronted with status-quo powers or aggressive powers, where there is no room for cooperation in the former, and there are potential opportunities for cooperation in the later (Jervis, 1999). They also argue that security dilemma is what blocks the cooperation and creates unnecessary fear and conflict. So states can go for cooperation by reducing the effects of security dilemma (Jervis, 1999). There is vast literature by defensive realists on reducing the dilemma in security competition. Robert Jervis says there are 3 ways to increase the scope of cooperation under security dilemma; by increasing the gains of mutual cooperation, by increasing the costs of mutual defection and defection by one side and by increasing the expectation of one state about other state's cooperation (Jervis, 1978). Jervis presents an optimist realist theory of cooperation. While not rejecting the security dilemma, he is much hopeful of cooperation by decreasing constraints of the security dilemma. Jervis also talks about the offence defence balance and says when both states are defensively strong it is hard to conquer them

and it increases the scope for cooperation since they will not invest more for their security (Jervis, 1978). Jervis talks about four international systems; one where offensive posture is not distinguishable from defensive but offence has the advantage (most dangerous), second as defence has the advantage in the same system, third; offence has the advantage where the offence and defence is distinguishable, and lastly where the defence has the advantage where it is distinguishable and he maintains the last as more peaceful and likely for cooperation (Jervis, 1978).

Stephen Walt, another major defensive realist, also gives importance for intentions. His “Balance of threat” rejects the mere focus on power or capability of the states (Walt, 1987). Moreover, he among other defensive realists agree that cooperation is possible though it is difficult to achieve (Walt, 1987).

However, Montgomery, a major defensive realist is strongly critical of this offence defence variable. Apart from the problem of how to differentiate between offence and defence weapons so that states can signal their intentions Montgomery points out another problem in the literature. It is difficult to distinguish which states are greedy and which states are security states (so that there is a scope for cooperation) in offence dominant world and defence dominant world, because when defence is dominant, everyone will strengthen its defence and in an offence dominant world even security states or status quo states will go for offence (Montgomery, 2006). Montgomery looks on the limitations and vulnerabilities while initiating and executing the reassurance. Sometimes, the adversary state may exploit the vulnerability of the initiator. His ideal scenario for initiating reassurance is while the offence and defence are distinguishable, and the balance between offence and defence is neutral (Montgomery, 2006). The defensive realist argument was that Reassurance is effective as well as safe when the defence is distinguishable from the offence and stronger than offence (Tang and Montgomery, 2007). While offensive realism maintained that states cannot signal their benign intentions, defensive realism hoped it can signal the intentions always. Montgomery’s perspective a middle ground between pessimism and optimism.

Though Tang (2007) congratulates Montgomery for his contribution towards how states should cop up with uncertainty, he points to three flaws in Montgomery’s work. First, Montgomery “incorrectly frames the relationship between reassurance and

knowing other's intentions" (Tang and Montgomery, 2007:193). Second: Montgomery takes reassurance as an end itself rather than a means toward an end. Third: Montgomery fails to distinguish between the conditions for signalling the reassurance and for the success of reassurance (Tang and Montgomery, 2007:193).

A critical point has to be noted here. Glaser's 'cooperation as self-help' (Glaser, 1995) is considered as the most optimistic theory of cooperation as it tries to reject the preference of conflict over cooperation. However, Glaser's theory is not that genuinely optimistic because he clearly says that the cooperation to him is only about coordinated policies to avoid arms control and conflict as unilateral military build-ups. So his theory does not give much to the theory of cooperation and why states cooperate. Also there are problems with Glaser's argument because he is arguing that states 'should' (Glaser, 1995) follow cooperation over competition, which is a normative theory and a theory lacking explanatory and predictive power (Mearsheimer, 2011). The world will be same as it was, and his theory will not have any importance outside the academia unless the policy makers around the world contemplate his theory (Mearsheimer, 2011). Glaser's 'contingent realism' (Glaser, 1995) says that cooperation (arms control) 'can be' the best option over competition (unilateral military build-ups), it also identifies the conditions in which cooperation is the best 'self-help' policy (Glaser, 1995). Like other defensive realists, he is also integrating offence defence variables to his theory and like Jervis and others he is also taking motives of other states to consideration (Glaser, 1995; Jervis 1999). However, ultimately his theory is when countries 'should' cooperate and when countries should compete (Glaser, 1995).

The offensive realism gives less scope for cooperation compared to other variants. His assumptions about the international system limit the scope of cooperation if taken as a whole (Mearsheimer, 1994). Anarchy as an ordering principle of international system where there is no government over the governments (Claude, 1971), the inherent offensive capability of the weapons possessed by the states even if they are defensive weapons, the uncertainty about others intentions since today's intentions cannot be tomorrow and the assumption that the primary goal of all state is survival (Mearsheimer, 1994). All other goals are secondary to security.

These features affect the behaviours of one state against the other. They fear each other and trust will be uncommon between them. Since there is no global government to observe them, the scope for cooperation is less. Even if they enter into alliances, it will not survive for long (Mearsheimer, 1995). The relative gains problem affects the state's behaviour since one state may fear that the relative advantage one may get may be used against it. Keeping the relative superiority is the best way to secure itself against the adversary (Mearsheimer, 1994). The scope of world government is far from reality according to realist perspective (Mearsheimer, 1995).

Uncertainty is immutable for offensive realists (Montgomery, 2006). Mearsheimer is sceptical of the offensive military capability of every state, which makes them potentially dangerous (Mearsheimer, 2006). The famous quote of Napoleon 'Conquest has made me what I am, and only conquest can enable me to hold my position' (Quoted in Schweller, 1994) explains the offensive realist argument about conflict and cooperation. Arms control, the balance of power, cooperation or any other means are not helpful for states to secure itself. For Mearsheimer, being hegemon is the only way to secure itself (Mearsheimer, 2004).

Offensive realists argue that states will always try to maximize their relative power because of the uncertainty about others state's current and future intentions (Montgomery, 2006). The uncertainty means uncertainty of others' power and capability, their intentions, interests (Mearsheimer, 1994). The uncertainty is of two types: uncertainty of the current intentions and uncertainty of future intentions (Kydd, 2007). Realism and Rationalism agree on uncertainty but differ on how to cope up with it whereas constructivism challenges the perception of uncertainty itself (Rathbun, 2007). Offensive realists will not address the fear or intentions, but will address the capability. Edelstein also stresses the importance of this uncertainty when he says states may not always behave like offensive realists would predict, but they will do better if they do so (Edelstein, 2002). Offensive realism accepts that indicators of intentions exist, but it is not enough to be sure about adversaries' intentions.

Offensive realism is not rejecting the idea that the increasing the costs of war may decrease the number of wars and its possibility. On the other hand, increasing the information about the other and the world will not increase the cooperation in the

international system (Jervis, 1999). However, Mearsheimer also maintains that though the system is competitive, cooperation does occur but ‘sometimes difficult to achieve, however, and always difficult to sustain’ (Mearsheimer, 1994). Mearsheimer understanding of cooperation does not reject the possibility and frequency of the cooperation. However, he is maintaining that though cooperation is easy to initiate it is really difficult to sustain because of fear of cheating and the uncertainty about other states’ current and future intentions (Mearsheimer, 1994). So even the cooperation takes place, the scope of sustainability is much limited in a ‘world that is competitive at its core’ and history of Europe in the 40 years before WWI serves as the best example because through that period there was much cooperation among European states, but it didn’t hinder them from going to war (Mearsheimer, 1994).

Offensive realists, as well as defensive realists, are not rejecting the potentials of institutions. As Mearsheimer maintains institutions matters, for, everything matters but the question is can institutions have an independent effect on state behaviour and transform it into cooperation? Realists would say institutions are mere reflect of great power interests and balance of power (Mearsheimer, 1995). Any measure to prevent war is ineffective and cooperation even if it emerges will be less durable because balance of power will emerge and institutions can do nothing to prevent this (Mearsheimer, 1995). Defensive realist, Robert Jervis says realists believe that states will establish institutions if and only if the institutions will help it to reach its own goals and if even there is a correlation between cooperation and institutions, it doesn’t follow necessarily that institutions will facilitate cooperation where there is no cooperation (Jervis, 1999). The problem with the institutional argument is that it thinks the lack of cooperation is due to the lack of institutions (Jervis, 1999). Mearsheimer also argues that institutions have minimal influence on state behaviour, and he is supporting his arguments by examining the historical records (Mearsheimer, 1994).

There is yet another category of realists called “motivational” realists (Kydd, 2007:4). They, including Randall Schweller argue that the anarchy itself will not make the international system dangerous. But everyone is motivated by different goals; someone will be greedy, and some others will be only security seekers (Kydd, 2007:5). Schweller also maintains that whether defence or offence is strong, states can

signal their benign intentions by investing in defence though the latter is costly (Schweller, 1996).

Reassurance Strategies

Though the security dilemma leads to conflict, the same fact inspires the cooperation. The weaker side is tempted to overreact, and the powerful is free to reassure. Still the powerful state will not go for reassurance since the cost of conflict is relatively small for the stronger (Kydd, 2005).

Tang refers to options available to the Defensive Realist States posed a threat: 1- Active containment: provoking and roll back, 2- Passive Containment: defense and deterrence without reassurance, 3- Engagement: Defense and deterrence with both a reassurance and a hedging element, 4- Security Cooperation: arms control, arms reduction and beyond (CBMs) (Tang, 2010: 104).

Stein mentions four strategies of reassurance; “the exercise of restraint, the creation of norms of competition, the making of irrevocable commitments, and regime building” (Stein, 1991: 435). During the Cuban missile crisis, U.S and USSR were more or less successful in creating norms of competition. J.F Kennedy promised the US will not invade Cuba in the return for assurance from USSR that it will not deploy further missiles there (Stein, 1991:438).

There are also three types of military reassurance attempts vocal, military and non-military while the reassurance programmes combine all (Tang, 2008).

Cost, Risk and Credibility

The cost of reassurance can be direct or indirect. Indirect costs include losing the support within domestic politics when opposition terms the attempts as appeasement (Tang, 2008) (Schultz, 2005). The reassurance attempt will carry no credibility if it is not taking any real risk (Kydd, 2005). The initiator is not only concerned about how the adversary will react but also how the voters will vote in domestic politics (Schultz, 2005).

The distinction between cost and risk lies in the fact that whereas the cost is incurred at the time of signalling and the risk will not be clear until the receiver rejects or

exploits it (Tang, 2008). So the risk is an additional loss when there is no reciprocity to a reassurance attempt. The real reassurance signal is private information of the sender whereas the real credibility is the private information of the receiver (Tang, 2005). The more risk in reassurance signal as perceived by the receiver, the more credible it is (Tang, 2008). However, it cannot be inferred from the success of a reassurance attempt, that the reassurance was costly and from the failure of a reassurance attempt, that the reassurance was not costly (Tang, 2008).

Determining the success and failure of a reassurance attempt is highly subjective as every human cognition is subjective. Tang (2008) has devoted a section on the issue. He says it is very difficult to determine the success and failure of a reassurance attempt if the reassurance attempt needs not a reciprocity from the receiver (Tang, 2008). However, if it needs reciprocity, we can determine the success and failure on the availability and absence of reciprocity (Tang, 2008). If the reassurance leads to gradual ease of tension and then to cooperation then the reassurance is successful (Tang, 2008).

Even a small amount of trust is not necessary for initiating reassurance (Tang, 2008). The reassurance attempts initiated by hawks are more likely to be successful than those initiated by doves (Schultz, 2005).

Conditions for Reassurance.

There are two types of conditions for reassurance: the conditions for signalling reassurance and the conditions for the success of reassurance. Reassurance will be safe and effective when the defence is distinguishable and stronger than offence according to defensive realists (Glaser, 1995). For Montgomery, reassurance will be safe when the defence is distinguishable and stronger, but it'll be effective and successful when there is risk associated with the initiating reassurance that makes it credible to the receiver. That is when the difference between offence and defence is distinguishable, and balance between them is neutral (Montgomery, 2006).

Offensive states assumes the other state is inherently aggressive, and the state does not need to know other's intentions but mere capabilities. So the primary condition for initiating and reciprocating reassurance is to be genuine and non-offensive state (Tang, 2008:156). The signalling state must not be an extremely fearful and insecure state (Tang, 2008:156). The leader who executes the reassurance attempts needs much

thinking and he needs a will to challenge the traditional military thinking and to counter bureaucratic parochial interests (Lebow, 1983).

If the costs of continued conflict are low then the offensive state or “hawk” won’t be interested in peace and if the cost is high then the chances are more for a reassurance attempt from the “hawk” if their leaders are moderate in thinking (Schultz, 2005: 4). At the same time, if the reassurance attempt comes in this situation from hard-line leader, then it’ll attract the voters in domestic politics as they think that he’ll not surrender the national interest (Schultz, 2005:4). When the costs of mutual defection are low, the doves will initiate the reassurance, and if the costs are high, the Hawks will initiate the reassurance (Schultz, 2005).

The historical cases of successful reassurance strategies are minimal and it’s because the strategy has been rarely implemented, or it’s because of the difficulty of determining the success and failure of a reassurance attempt (Lebow, 1983). The failure of a reassurance attempt can be easily found out, but the success that improves the relations between adversaries is a gradual process and it’ll be difficult to find to what extent the reassurance strategy played a role in improving the relationship (Lebow, 1983). The strategy has been rarely implemented because it requires many conditions to signal a reassurance attempt as opposed to offensive tactics. The persecution of reassurance strategy needs much thinking which is a demanding intellectual task that runs counter to the tendency among politicians to simplify the things rather than complicating it (Lebow, 1983). The problem is more complex because the challenge “in signalling is not the distribution of information but the interpretation” (Rathbun, 547). Statesmen think their intentions are clear and signal it, but the problem comes from the interpretation by the adversary (Jervis 1976:187).

Ward mentions some of the historical cases of reassurance attempts; the Cuban missile crisis, The Berlin Crisis, Gorbachev’s Arms Control Talks (Ward, 1989:278).

The problem of offence and defence

The distinction between offence and defence is the integral part of reassurance literature. There is a huge debate over the problem of distinguishability between offensive and defensive weapons. There is also huge criticisms about the difficulty in identifying the offence defence balance, which is critical to the understanding of reassurance strategy. Balance should be favouring defence according to Glaser (1998)

and Jervis (1978), and neutral according to Montgomery (2006). The offence defence balance can be defined as “the ratio of the cost of the forces that the attacker requires to take territory to the cost of defender’s forces” (Glaser and Kaufmann, 1998). Non-military aspects of a nation are also brought in the offence defence analysis (Glaser and Kaufmann, 1998).

Just before the Cuban missile crisis, the issue of offensive and defensive weapons came to the fore as Kennedy publicly argued he’ll not tolerate any offensive build-up in Cuba after the reconnaissance flights discovered early proofs of military build-ups. Kennedy did not take them as offensive weapons (Lebow and Stein, 1994). National Intelligence Estimate of US dated 19th September 1962 categorized light bombers, submarines, short range surface to surface missiles as defensive (Coleman, 2007). SAMs (surface to air missiles) were also discounted as defensive by Kennedy though Joint Chiefs did not believe so. However, the common sense is that if it carried nuclear warheads, those missiles would fall under offensive missiles. The range also determined whether it is offensive and defensive. When MRBMs were discovered on 16th October 1962, US called it offensive, and USSR called it defensive (Coleman, 2007). The Soviet definition of offensive and defensive weapons were based on the role of weapons, whereas Western definition was based on technical capabilities like range and explosive yield (Coleman, 2007).

Deterrence, Nuclear Deterrence and Reassurance

Deterrence discourages the use of force by convincing the adversary that it’ll be costly. Reassurance reduces the incentives for the use of force (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Reassurance strategies attempts to reduce the fear, uncertainty about others intentions, misunderstanding and feeling insecurity which are the root causes of all major crisis and wars (Lebow and Stein, 1994) and (Montgomery, 2006).

In practice, the distinction between reassurance and deterrence is manifest. Deterrence attempts try to convince the adversary that the cost will exceed the gain by investing largely in offensive weapons like Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM). Deterrence “seeks to prevent undesired action by convincing the party who may be contemplating such action that its cost will exceed any possible gain” (Stein, 1991: 432). Reassurance is against the arms build-up and at the maximum goes for defensive weapons (Glaser, 1995). But there is one thing common between both

attempts, an attempt to defend itself more than conquering the other. Deterrence provokes the adversary rather than preventing the challenge because the pressure will amount on the adversary to react to the challenge (Stein, 1991).

Reassurance strategy is one of the pre-negotiations, which makes the negotiation an attractive option (Stein, 1991). Reassurance strategies change the conditions under which they contemplate the use of force and propel them to think for alternative and persuade them to go for negotiations (Stein, 1991). Stein maintains that reassurance strategies can be used as an alternative to deterrence or with deterrence (Stein, 1991). Lebow also discusses the utility of reassurance along with deterrence though he admits the difficulty of persecuting the combined form of reassurance and deterrence (Lebow, 1983).

The determining factor in deterrence is to make credible threats. The credible threat is not always possible especially when nuclear war is the possible outcome (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Reassurance is also difficult in the nuclear era. An ideal situation for reassurance is when the system is offence defence distinctive and the balance between them is neutral (Montgomery, 2006). However, when both parties have nuclear weapons it is highly debated whether the defence is strong. If nuclear weapons have the deterrence capability, to which most of the realists adhere, the defence is strong. Even huge reduction in defensive weapons will not enjoy any credibility as long as the state has the nuclear weapons. Robert Jervis (1988) believed nuclear weapons though they have some problems, can create a general stability.

Nuclear weapons cannot be classified as offensive weapons in a vacuum, but more factors like motives, range, direction and other's understanding of the weapons determine whether it is offensive or defensive. Simply, one has to reassure other that these weapons are not directed against them. However, nuclear weapons alone can't avoid the confrontations, and that is where reassurance strategies have a role to play.

Other Theories and Reassurance

Apart from the defensive realists, other theorists have also paid attention to reassurance. Ward presents a game theoretical model of reassurance (Ward, 1989). His work is exclusively about the reassurances in sequential games, and he is aware of the limits of reassurances in non-sequential games. Ward criticize the standard game theoretical works for neglecting the ways to learn others preferences.

George (1984) talks about the crisis management school. His model is almost the same model proposed by theorists of reassurance strategies like coordination of diplomacy with military with aim being the settlement of the crisis without using violence, patience in military moves which will suggest to the adversary that the state has no aggressive intentions, diplomatic and military signals of interest in peace than war and conveying terms that are not compromising adversary's fundamental interests (George, 1984). They also share the view of the defensive realists that misperceptions, not interests, are the cause of conflicts and wars.

Coercive diplomacy uses sticks and carrots to pursue foreign policy objectives. George (1971) says coercive diplomacy consists of coercive threats, negotiations, bargaining and concessions. It is opposed to military actions to settle the disputes. Still, it prefers giving ultimatum rather than wait and see approach. But reassurance strategy does not use "threats" as it is provocative more than deterring (Lebow and Stein, 1994).

Cognitive theorists and constructivist theories maintain that the statesmen never look the world as it is (Rathbun, 2007: 545). However, cognitivism admits that there is an objective reality free of social action, interpretation, social norms and identities to which constructivism is opposed to (Rathbun, 2007). The ambiguity is due to lack of precise information and complex partial information (Rathbun, 2007). Jervis' seminal work *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (1976) is based on this cognitive approach, and some psychological elements illuminate his work.

Unlike realism and rationalism, Constructivism treats fear as inevitable. Instead states become socialized to competition and conflict through the interactions (Wendt, 1992). This interaction and learning give an intersubjective understanding of how the state will behave (Wendt, 1992). For constructivists, the way to address the fear is to change these socially constructed norms and identities (Wendt, 1992). NGOs and IOs play an important role in changing these norms and identities to change the way the world behaves. Constructivists do not have a gloomy picture of the world. At the same time, constructivism maintains that these NGOs and IOs are both "producers and reflection of particular understanding of an uncertain world" (Rathbun, 2007:552).

Conclusion

Defensive realists started the literature on reassurance. By bringing in intentions and motivations, they have brought non-realistic elements to the realism. Reassurance strategy is indebted to psychology as well. The mere fact that reassurance was less practiced throughout the history underlines the difficulties in the execution of reassurance strategies. The distinction between offensive and defensive weapons is also problematic. The range, intentions, directions determines the offensive and defensive nature of the weapons. Defensive weapons deployed by someone can be misunderstood as offensive weapons because weapons do not speak themselves, as it happened during Cuban missile crisis. The literature on reassurance strategies did not get much attention from the scholars, especially realists.

Chapter III: The Cuban Missile Crisis

This chapter provides a historical overview of the Cuban missile crisis. The first section presents the chronology of events from the discovery of Soviet MRBMs (Medium Range Ballistic Missiles) in Cuba to the retreat of Soviet weapons from Cuba. The proceeding section analyses the historical perspectives on the narrative of Cuban missile crisis. The following sections presents a background of the crisis and the links between missiles in Turkey and Cuba. Other sections of the chapter analyse the Soviet motives of deploying the missiles in Cuba, Kennedy's response, and the de-escalation of the crisis. The succeeding chapter analyses the role of reassurance during the Cuban missile crisis.

The world was on the brink of a hazardous nuclear war during the thirteen days between 16th October-18th October 1962. USSR deployed missiles in Cuba and the US responded aggressively with a naval blockade and raising the SAC (Strategic Air Command) to DEFCON-2 (Defense Readiness Condition-2), the highest form of alert just short of the war. The USSR continued the missile base construction in Cuba at maximum pace, and neither side retreated. Many unwarranted incidents happened in between, and the crisis escalated to the brink of war. The 27th of October was the blackest day of the crisis, as there were three provocations. USSR added one more condition to resolve the crisis; a trade off the missiles in Cuba with the missiles in Turkey. A reconnaissance U-2 flight was shot down over Cuba by an order from a local Soviet commander. One USSR ship was approaching the blockade line. However, on Sunday Morning, 28th of October, there was a settlement.

The importance of the Cuban Missile Crisis in security studies is largely for its threat of a nuclear war between two nuclear forces (Rajagopalan, 2000), lack of war in spite of American superiority and the way the crisis was molten from its peak. The importance of the crisis also lies in the fact that both action, inaction and over the action was dangerous (Blight *et al.* 1987).

On 16th October 1962, President Kennedy was informed of the presence of Soviet medium-range missiles in Cuba (Rajagopalan, 2000). Allison says it was discovered on 14th (Allison, 1971). But he thought that Cuba and Soviet in combination will not

go for offensive missiles installation in Cuba (Allison, 1971). Kennedy preserved the secrecy for a week to consider the options available (Blight *et al.* 1987).

Chronology of Events

- On 16th October 1962 President Kennedy was informed that MRBM and IRBM missiles were under construction by USSR in Cuba. Kennedy convened a meeting of his experts known as ExComm that day at 11 AM (Haas, 2001).
- On 22nd October 1962 at 7 PM announced to the nation the discovery of missiles in Cuba, and he offered a strict response by quarantine from Wednesday morning (24th October) (Haas, 2001). The US prepared for war as thousands of troops streamed to South Florida, and the US military presence in Guantanamo was strengthened (George, 2003). The SAC was raised from DEFCON 2 to DEFCON 3. USSR also prepared for the war.
- On 24th October, Soviet ships either stopped or reversed the course en route to Cuba (Haas, 2001). The alert level was raised to DEFCON 2, the highest level of alert short of War in Strategic Air Command (SAC) (Haas, 2001) and (George, 2003).
- On 26th October, Kennedy received a letter from Khrushchev with an indication of removing missiles in Cuba upon a public pledge from Kennedy not to invade Cuba (Haas, 2001).
- On 27th October, Kennedy received a letter from Khrushchev in which he added the condition of removal of Jupiter missiles in Turkey to the previous condition to resolve the crisis (Haas, 2001). An American U2 was shot down over Cuba afternoon that day and the pilot were killed. (Haas, 2001). Robert Kennedy met Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin to discuss the issue, and he offered a public pledge not to invade Cuba and a secret trade-off Jupiter missiles in Turkey. That day itself Khrushchev received a series of letters from Fidel Castro and USSR intelligence that the war was imminent (Haas, 2001).
- On 28th October (9 AM Washington time) Radio Moscow aired that they have accepted America's pledge that they will not invade Cuba, and USSR has ordered to remove the missiles in Cuba (Haas, 2001).

Perspectives on the Cuban Missile Crisis

The three major questions became the interest of scholars of international security. Why had Khrushchev deployed the missiles in Cuba? Why had Kennedy responded in the way he responded? Why the crisis ended the way it ended? Different perspectives give different answers.

Allison's *Essense of Decision* (1971) analysis the blockade during Cuban missile crisis and seeks how governmental decisions are made through three different models: rational actor, organizational process and Bureaucratic politics model. The rational actor model neglects the "motives, preferences and intellectual and moral qualities of successive statesmen" (Allison, 1971:692). According to this rational actor model, USSR placed the missiles to tilt the balance in favour of USSR. Six categories of responses were proposed in the US. 1. Do nothing. 2. Diplomatic Pressures through UN or secret approaches to USSR. 3. A secret approach to Castro. 4. Invasion of Cuba. 5. A conventional surgical air strike on the missile sites. 6. Blockade. All of these six responses were discussed in detail and their advantages and disadvantages in ExComm (Allison, 1971). The blockade was more rational considering other alternatives' disadvantages.

Organization model stresses the fact that a state or government is not a single rational actor but it is "conglomerate of semi-feudal, loosely allied organizations, each with substantial life of its own" (Allison, 1971:698). These organizations include, for example, treasury, State Department and Navy. The decisions are outputs of the functioning of these organizations "according to standard patterns of behavior" (Allison, 1971: 698). According to Allison the discovery took place on 14th October, it was neither a week later nor three weeks earlier "as a consequence of the established routines and procedures of the organizations which constitutes the US Intelligence (Allison, 1971: 704). The intelligence was not a failure before nor after (Allison, 1971). The navy had their own planning for the blockade, while Kennedy had his planning and finally Kennedy was able to impose his will despite Navy's protest by drawing the blockade much closer to Cuba (Allison, 1971). Allison describes the events where there were conflicts between these organizations and the how the outcome came which was not a single group's decision.

Bureaucratic Model holds that “the decisions and actions of governments are essentially intra-national political outcomes” (Allison, 1971:708). So their concerns will not be security but the parochial needs (Copeland, 2001). These decisions are outcomes of bargaining between individual and groups (Allison, 1971). Allison (1971) discuss the politics of discovery of missiles in Cuba. The elections were round the corner, and government’s inaction against Cuba was one the main issue of the campaign (Allison, 1971). Allison (1971). Kennedy was opposing a war against Cuba, and he campaigned on 13th October against those admirals who were interested in sending someone else to the war (Allison, 1971:712). He also brought the distinction between offensive and defensive weapons and said if Soviet attempts to install the later US will be harsh on it (Allison, 1971). The decision to send flights to the western end of Cuba on 4th October was McCone’s victory over President and others’ decision. Allison also discusses the politics of *Issues*. Kenney was informed on 16th October’s morning that there were hard evidence of offensive Soviet missiles in Cuba. Kennedy’s response was mixed with anger “He cannot do that to me” (Allison, 1971:173). Kennedy was earlier assured privately by Khrushchev that he is aware of the domestic political pressures, and he will not place offensive missiles in Cuba (Allison, 1971). He was of the opinion that we should act to remove the missiles from Cuba, largely because of a feeling of betrayed (Allison, 1971). Secretary of Defense McNamara was of the opinion that US should not initiate the crisis with USSR which will lead to Nuclear War. For him, the missiles did not alter any strategic gap (Allison, 1971). The response was same from Robert Kennedy as well, not to endanger ourselves to nuclear trap (Allison, 1971). The joint chiefs were obviously mad to initiate the attack. Time was ripe for revenge and retaliation (Allison, 1971). The politics of *Choice* as well is discussed. The way the choice was made from clear surgical airstrike to blockade unravels the politics of choice. McNamara suggested blockade and Robert Kennedy, Sorensen and others supported it. Kennedy was of the opinion of surgical airstrike, but Robert Kennedy convinced him that the surgical airstrike was not a live option. Allison (1971) says different models of the analysis gives a different explanation for the problem. Allison’s work is a product of a seminar held at Harvard University and the close relationship between officials and academicians that featured Kennedy administration (Cohen, 1985).

Dynamic differentials theory predicts that “faced with impending decline, and with no internal or diplomatic options to reverse it” states will go for violent confrontation in spite the high risks of a major war (Copeland, 2001:17).

Weldes (1999) Presents a constructivist model of Cuban missile crisis. The very idea of crisis in Cuban missile crisis is problematized since it was not an obvious threat that caused the crisis. For Kennedy and others, the missile in Cuba posed a threat to their national interests. All nuclear weapons especially the nuclear weapons installed by US inside and outside the US did not pose a threat (Weldes, 1999). The Cuban missile crisis literature talks about the heroics of Kennedy and the victory of Kennedy’s diplomacy which allowed USSR to withdraw without humiliation (Weldes, 1999). The model also traces the crisis back to the placing of missiles by USSR in Cuba. The Caribbean crisis model, on the other hand, traces the crisis back to the outset of the 20th century where the US aggression against Cuba started (Weldes, 1999). The October crisis was for the sovereignty and independence of Cuba (Weldes, 1999). The nuclear missiles gave Cuba a protection umbrella from an impending US attack (Weldes, 1999). Castro emphasized that only Cuba can determine what kind of weapons it could have, offensive or defensive (Weldes, 1999). The crisis did not end happily from this point of view as the sovereignty of Cuba was not protected (Weldes, 1999). Determining success and failure depends upon the setting the central problem of the crisis according to the constructivism. Weldes questions why missiles in Cuba was set as the central problem and not the Cuban independence and sovereignty (Weldes, 1999). The escalation of the crisis was not necessary if US thought differently and looked those missiles as defensive (Weldes, 1999). Setting the problem also determines the start point and end point of the crisis. The October Crisis and Caribbean crisis started well before 16th October, and the October crisis did not end by 28th October (Weldes, 1999). Khrushchev was also not impressed with Cuba’s response to withdraw the missiles when Castro wanted a first strike against US (Khrushchev, 2007). The benefits for USSR at Cuba was low at the end of the crisis as USSR’s credibility was questioned and the attempts to make Castro calm proved ineffective (Khrushchev, 2007).

Domestic politics played a major role especially since the elections were round the corner and the Republicans were alleging government is doing nothing against

increasing USSR military aid to Cuba (Weldes, 1999) and (Paterson and Brophy, 1986). Kennedy was defending himself and was saying that it's a small state with an unstable government and that his government have tried to isolate it never to allow the communist government in Cuba to establish themselves (Weldes, 1999). The domestic politics also influenced the decision of USSR to deploy the missiles in Cuba (increasing public outrage against declining Soviet domestic economy and less costly way to fill the missile gap). Kennedy aides Theodore C Sorensen and Arthur M Schlesinger Jr have denied the domestic political considerations during the crisis (Paterson and Brophy, 1986). There were several factors, but domestic politics was also in the mind of Kennedy when he went for public diplomacy during the crisis. The crisis was exploited during the election campaign, and Republican did well in the elections in November (Paterson and Brophy, 1986).

The coercive diplomacy says that it was that diplomacy that influenced the course and outcome of the crisis. The theory holds that sometimes adding "carrot" to "stick" may produce positive results that may not be possible with only stick George, Hall and Simons (1971). The proponents of this argument differ from proponents of deterrence who argued that it was Kennedy's brinkmanship which made Khrushchev retreat. However, both deterrence theory and coercive diplomacy theorists does not prefer military action to the crisis. Coercive diplomacy consist of bargaining, negotiations, concessions and coercive threats George, Hall and Simons (1971). Weaver (2014) says it was blending diplomacy with the military that determined the course and outcome of the crisis. The military actions taken by the United States during the crisis made the diplomatic negotiations and settlement attractive for USSR (Weaver, 2014). Another perspective on the Cuban missile crisis comes from the theorists of origins of war. Fear of declining power and fear of future caused the tensions to escalate the crisis during Cuban missile crisis (Copeland, 2000).

The background of the crisis

In September 1961, USSR rejected a request from Cuba to send SA-2 missiles and 10,000 troops to defend Cuba against US (Naftali, 2012). In April, USSR reconsidered the issue, and the Presidium approved sending of non-nuclear SAMs and Sopka missiles and a symbolic 3000 troops (Naftali, 2012:300). Khrushchev proposed sending of the nuclear weapons in May, and it took two meetings of Presidium and

four days to get approval for Khrushchev's plan to deploy the missiles (Naftali, 2012). However, in May, it sent 50,000 troops with nuclear weapons (Naftali, 2012). Operation Anadyr, which was a secret code for the USSR's military build-ups in Cuba to defend it against a possible US invasion, was authorized on 24th May (Coleman, 2007). The letter was given to Castro requesting deployment of missiles in May 1962 through the hands of a Presidium member, Rashidov (Garthoff, 1988).

Since mid-July, Russia had started shipping the weapons to Cuba (Daniel and Hubbell, 1963). Copeland (2001) contends that Russia started shipping the weapons to Cuba only in early August (Copeland, 2001). Weaver (2014) says the equipment was sent in July and MRBMs arrived on 9th September 1962. Ninety-nine nuclear warheads also arrived in Cuba secretly on 4th October (Stern, 2005).

Forty thousand Soviet soldiers under General Issa Pliyev were deployed in Cuba under a secret treaty between Cuba and USSR (Kokoshin, 2012). Forty nuclear-armed variants of medium and intermediate range missiles were given to a division of Strategic Missile Forces (Kokoshin, 2012). There were three important types of weapons in Cuba; Frogs, Short Range Missiles and surface to surface missiles (Coleman, 2007:7). In October, Luna or Frogs, which can carry nuclear weapons in battlegrounds up to 40 kilometres were most controversial weapons deployed there (Coleman, 2007). USSR sent at least 36 Lunas and 12 of them was equipped with nuclear warheads (Coleman, 2007). The US did not identify Lunas within the first ten days of the crisis because they were highly mobile and easy to hide in bunkers and caves (Coleman, 2007). Reconnaissance flight discovered first Luna at Remedios (Central Cuba), and it was informed to President on 26th October (Coleman, 2007). However, still Kennedy and Robert McNamara believed there were no tactical nuclear weapons and rejected the proposal from Joint Chiefs to include tactical nuclear weapons for the possible Cuban invasion (Coleman, 2007). There were almost 500 SA 2 missiles and 144 launchers in 24 operational SAM (surface to air missiles) sites in Cuba (Coleman, 2007). The MRBMs had the range of 1200 miles and IRBMs had the range of 2000 miles. They were capable of devastating half of the United States (Weldes, 1999). US intelligence also failed to discover nuclear weapons in Cuba which included twelve nuclear warheads for Lunas, six of them for Il-28 bombers, 80 for FKR cruise missiles and four nuclear mines (Coleman, 2007). But despite lack of

hard evidence, the ExComm assumed there could be nuclear warheads in Cuba (Coleman, 2007). Castro said later that, if he were also taken into confidence of deploying the missiles, he could have done it better under the disguise of the construction works (Garthoff, 1988).

Kennedy had stated that he'll not allow any offensive military build-ups in Cuba in his statements on 4th September and 13th September. But Cuba was already an offensive base by then (Daniel and Hubbell, 1963). He meant nuclear and ballistic missiles (Weaver, 2014). A Senator Kenneth Keating questioned the difference between offensive and defensive weapons and said the direction of weapons it is posed will determine whether the weapons are offensive or defensive (Coleman, 2007).

Communist Cuba was always a "threat" to US and US had tried to overthrow Castro Cuba. The tensions rose when US thought Cuba was a Soviet military base. On 21st August, Kennedy's staff met to discuss the increasing USSR aid to Cuba and CIA director John McCone anticipated that USSR will place medium-range ballistic missiles that will increase their first strike capability especially since US has placed missiles in Turkey and Italy (Copeland, 2001). On 23rd August, Kennedy ordered the group to study the options to prevent installation of nuclear missiles in Cuba and to study the military options of preventive war (Copeland, 2001). On 1st October, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and Joint Chiefs met to discuss the options, and they arrived at the decision of blockade to prepare for military options. Reconnaissance flights discovered SS-4 and SS-5 missiles in Cuba on 15th October 1962 (Welch & Blight, 1987-1988).

Khrushchev said the idea of deploying missiles in Cuba to deter the United States came to his mind in his 1962 May visit to Bulgaria and he presented his views to Central Committee of Presidium on his return to USSR (Khrushchev, 2007). The presidium discussed the issue three times and a decision was made to send the missiles (Khrushchev, 2007). The troops were in civilian clothes on their way to Cuba, and they did not opt for the escorts to maintain high secrecy (Khrushchev, 2007). US flights were spying over Cuba well before the deployment, and the abnormal amount of ships coming to Cuba made US have doubts about the cargos (Khrushchev, 2007). However, they were not sure what was there in the cargo.

Keeping the whole thing private was extremely difficult when it is under the nose of world power with all advanced technology and superior intelligence agency. There were also thousands of USSR troops in civilian clothes, but the Cuban people were aware of their identities (Khrushchev, 2007). Moreover, when the missiles were deployed, they were easily identifiable by spy flights (Khrushchev, 2007). USSR denied the placing of missiles, and it was projected as deception which made Kennedy very aggressive. But Khrushchev justified his deception. He says nothing new was invented and that's how US did with them when they placed missiles in Turkey without prior warning and when they run spy flights over their territories while constantly denying it (Khrushchev, 2007). For Khrushchev, the legacy of deception goes to US.

The decision was unknown even to Anatolii Dobrynin, who was the Soviet ambassador to US (Garthoff, 1988). Dobrynin was critical of Khrushchev that he made several decisions independently without consultation with his foreign policy diplomats (Garthoff, 1988). Schlesinger and George Ball have argued that US knew nothing about the nuclear warheads in Cuba (Coleman, 2007). However, ExComm members and Kennedy assumed that there were nuclear weapons as a worst case scenario and it influenced their decisions during the crisis (Coleman, 2007).

Kennedy's position was that short range missiles didn't pose a threat to US, when reconnaissance flights discovered SAM sites in Cuba on 29th August (Coleman, 2007). But CIA director John McCone feared SAMs as cover for MRBMs (Coleman, 2007). The flights discovered the missiles sites, but they failed in interpretation even during the crisis as they failed to identify 80 nuclear warheads deployed in Cuba (Coleman, 2007). George Ball's estimate on 3rd October said there were defensive missiles in Cuba, and none of them had more than 50kms range (Coleman, 2007).

Jupiter Missiles in Turkey and Missiles in Cuba

In 1957, Eisenhower administration got approval from NATO members to place missiles on the continent. However, most members feared USSR enmity and only Italy and Turkey accepted to deploy the missiles on their land. The agreement over the use of Jupiter missiles in Turkey, between Turkish and US governments that was made in 1959 was based on veto system (Bernstein, 1980). The missiles can be fired only after consensus from all. The agreement includes: deployment of 15 Jupiter

missiles, the ownership of missiles for Turkey, the ownership of nuclear warheads to US, and the attack can be only launched by Supreme Allied Commander-Europe with the approval from both US and Turkish governments (Bernstein, 1980). The actual practice of the attack was more complicated than it sounds.

Jupiter Missiles were extremely vulnerable, and the firing system was based on liquid fuel that needs up to 4 hours to load and fire. It also lacked the power to deter, since even a small attack by an adversary will make it inoperative. It'll be useful only for a first strike (Bernstein, 1980). Then why the Turkish government approved for deployment of missiles? Largely, because it'll frighten USSR from pressurising Turkey (Bernstein, 1980). Turkey also believed that it will add a big step to its military power (Bernstein, 1980). Unlike Eisenhower and Turkish officials, Kennedy was worried about these deployed missiles in Turkey, and he ordered before October 1962 to remove these missiles. There are reports that Kennedy was really worried to find that the missiles were not removed during the Cuban Missile Crisis (Bernstein, 1980). He was shocked to learn the missiles were still there in Turkey (Cohen, 1985). But these reports are misleading because it was Kennedy, not Eisenhower who deployed the missiles in Turkey to fulfil the agreements with Turkey (Bernstein, 1980). Kennedy finally agreed to deployment of missiles for several reasons, largely not to be seen weak in public after Vienna "where he felt Khrushchev bullied him" and to keep the trust of Turkey in America (Bernstein, 1980:102). Bernstein (1980) believes that Kennedy wanted to remove the missiles, but he was not at all optimist about it because of the impediments. He simply ordered "what actions can be taken" (Bernstein, 1980:103).

Many in ExComm deliberated on trading missiles in Cuba with Missiles in Turkey when they got to know about the USSR missiles in Cuba, and Kennedy flirted with the notion (Bernstein, 1980). Secretary of Defense McNamara also said on 19th October that US will have to compromise the missiles in Turkey and Italy to pull Soviet missiles back from Cuba (Bernstein, 1980). However, Kennedy and most of the ExComm members who viewed themselves as "tough" opposed any compromise that will appear as a victory for Khrushchev (Bernstein, 1980). Kennedy was of the opinion that compromise should come at the end of negotiation and not at the beginning where we'll have to stand firm (Bernstein, 1980).

Why Kennedy did refuse the compromise initially? He did so to keep the options open and not to be embarrassed internationally by admitting that there are no differences between the missiles in Turkey and Cuba (Bernstein, 1980). That was an apparent Soviet motivation for deploying missiles (Bernstein, 1980). Trading the missiles in Turkey was not an easy task as well. It would have weakened Turkish Government obviously by “antagonizing its powerful generals” (Bernstein, 1980). Dismantling missiles in Turkey will antagonize Turkey who will believe that it will compromise their interests in the return of appeasing an enemy (Bernstein, 1980). The other members of NATO will also fear such a U-turn from US and this will weaken NATO (Bernstein, 1980). Harriman proposed a way to escape from the fear of NATO Members: instead of trading missiles over Cuba, it should be a step towards disarmament (Bernstein, 1980). He proposed a solution to the crisis while accommodating the problem of missiles in Turkey. Instead of publicly admitting the removal of missiles in Turkey, he wanted Kennedy to propose that only nuclear powers can possess nuclear weapons and missiles. It was an indirect way to remove the missiles in Turkey and Cuba. The proposal would allow neither Turkey nor Cuba to have nuclear missiles on their land (Bernstein, 1980).

Kennedy was not at all optimistic of removing missiles by mere quarantine. But he believed invasion or trade over missiles in Turkey will do the task (Bernstein, 1980).

On 26th October (Friday) Soviet revealed their terms for negotiation and there was not a single hint on dismantling Jupiter missiles in Turkey. Their condition was a commitment from US not to invade Cuba and termination of quarantine (Bernstein, 1980). Most of the ExComm members were happy with the terms since the pledge of not invading the Cuba was a small price compared to the dismantlement of Jupiter missiles in Cuba, though there were some unhappy faces like CIA Director McCone (Bernstein, 1980). But on Saturday morning, the happiness ended with receiving a message from USSR adding dismantle the Jupiter missiles in Turkey to the settlement conditions (Bernstein, 1980). One more incident happened: a U-2 spy aircraft was shot down that day. Roger Hilsman recalled it as the “blackest hours of the crisis” (Bernstein, 1980: 113).

On 27th October 1962, ExComm met again to discuss the issue. The agenda was obviously about the options available: to attack or to compromise. A settlement will

mean antagonizing Turkey and thus NATO. Some discussed the possibility of a secret trade over a public one (Bernstein, 1980). Agreeing to dismantle the missiles in Turkey publicly will be seen as a victory for USSR and a huge blow for US and its allies. It'll endanger Kennedy as well (Bernstein, 1980). On military terms, the proposed deal was favourable to the US. Compromising 15 Jupiter missiles for 42 USSR MRBMs which account for one-third of USSR's strategic arsenal was a nominal compromise (Bernstein, 1980). But the costs of such a simple action meant more than what it meant in military terms because of its political effects. At the same time, US will not find it easy if they go for war for such simple reason and it'll find itself difficult to justify a nuclear war if they do so.

Kennedy was not in a mood to agree to the Soviet terms and conditions. But understanding the importance of the crisis, he had to compromise. Even then, he wanted to come to this compromise proposal from Turkey as they will know the danger of the crisis (Bernstein, 1980). On 27th October 1962, after the ExComm meeting, White House issued a statement that rejected linking Jupiter missiles with Cuban Missiles and rejected any negotiation without dismantlement of missiles in Cuba (Bernstein, 1980). Though it considered the issue of arms control in Europe after the settlement, the statement did not accept the trade of Cuban Missiles over Jupiter Missiles in Turkey. There was another meeting that day itself where Kennedy revised the draft saying he'll be ready for a détente between Warsaw Pact states and NATO states after the settlement, he'll be ready for arms reduction and warmer relationships. But all of these were obviously to stay away from stating the compromise over missiles in Turkey publicly (Bernstein, 1980).

Kennedy said on 27th October that he'll fire at SAM sites if any more surveillance planes were fired over Cuba (Bernstein, 1980). Attorney General Robert Kennedy met with Soviet Ambassador Anatolii Dobrynin that night (27th October) upon the instructions of the President. The attorney general conveyed two messages: If USSR does not remove the missiles from Cuba, US will remove it and the decision of removal of Jupiter missiles from Turkey was up to NATO (Bernstein, 1980). He also conveyed to the Ambassador that removing that missiles at this tense situation is virtually impossible to NATO (Bernstein, 1980). It was a firm ultimatum and loose

pledge from US (Bernstein, 1980). In April 1963, US withdrew Jupiters from Turkey and send a Polaris submarine to the area (Bernstein, 1980).

Blight and Welch (1989) reveals that there was a negotiation between Kennedy and Khrushchev in a quid pro quid manner for the trade of Jupiter missiles in Turkey over the missiles in Cuba. Marfleet also rejects this difference between Kennedy's public and private rhetorics and questions this "impression management" (Marfleet, 2000:547). Lebow and Stein (1994) examines the new interpretations and say that there was the secret deal, and Kennedy wanted it to be secret because of the NATO concerns. Trachtenberg assumes that there was no such deal, but it was "a concession of sorts was being made, but it was a disguised concession" (Trachtenberg, 1985:146). He also describes the settlement as "an imposed negotiated solution" (Trachtenberg, 1985:146). There was also the problem of ownership. The issue was discussed in ExCom's 26th October's meeting, and it was said that Turkey owned the missiles according to the Treaty and only warheads belonged to US. Kennedy then asked whether it is possible then to remove the warheads. McNamara replied that it is not possible as US is only custodians of warheads, and the ownership is for Turkey (Copeland, 2001). There is debate also over who initiated the trade-off. Was Khrushchev's letter upon secret request from Kennedy, so that Kennedy can convince his ExComm members to resolve the crisis or was it from USSR itself? Garthoff (1988) rejects the idea that it came from US. He says that Fomin's letter to Khrushchev arrived only after he himself proposed the deal (Garthoff, 1988).

The missiles in Turkey were publicly deployed, and it was for defensive purposes. But the missiles in Cuba were secretly deployed, and it was for offensive proposes (Bernstein, 1980). The CIA Director, John McCone also believed Soviet missiles as offensive and US missiles in Turkey as defensive. He said that the missiles in Cuba were "pointed at our heart and put us under great handicap to carry out our commitments to the free world" (Bernstein, 1980:111). The repercussions of both missiles were different. The ExComm members thought Khrushchev had assured that the offensive missiles will not be sent to Cuba, but he deceived Kennedy and sent it (Lebow and Stein, 1994).

Why Soviet deployed missiles in Cuba?

There are contrasting arguments over the Soviet motive of deploying the missiles in Turkey. Defending Cuba against a potential imminent threat from the United States was the main motive for deploying missiles in Cuba. The first wave of literature on Cuba, which was based on ExComm recordings and Kennedy's aides' literature, assumes the motives as offensive and badly planned. The second wave of literature which started from 1987 tries to understand the defensive purposes of USSR to deploy the missiles in Cuba. The following section tries to analyse the motives of USSR for deploying the missiles in Cuba from the literature.

- 1- It was an overreaction by USSR. Kennedy Administration tried to convince USSR that the US know USSR's vulnerability. It was to tempt USSR to moderate its challenge on Berlin issue. However, USSR thought differently and considered it as an offensive move. (Lebow, 1983).
- 2- It was to test Kennedy administration's will (Sorensen, 1966 and Stern, 2005). He demonstrated failure or lack of resolve in Bay of Pigs invasion, the Vienna Summit and the construction of the Berlin Wall (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Khrushchev also believed that the inexperience and youth of Kennedy had severe impediments on his will (Lebow and Stein, 1994). George *et al* (1971) also say Khrushchev was suspicious of Kennedy's determination.
- 3- It was to strengthen Soviet's bargaining position on the issue of Berlin (Copeland, 2000). USSR got considerable evidence saying US was practicing a replica of knocking down of the wall in Berlin (Copeland, 2000).
- 4- It was to protect Cuba from further US attacks (Sorensen, 1966). Khrushchev himself said it was the main motivation though there were other reasons as well (Khrushchev, 1971) and it took two meetings of Presidium and four days to get approval for Khrushchev's plan to deploy the missiles (Naftali, 2012).
- 5- It was to tilt the balance of power in favour of Soviet on the background of declining Soviet capabilities (Garthoff, 1988) and (Sorensen, 1996) and increasing US bases around the world (Bernstein, 1980). Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, W Averell Harriman counselled Kennedy and said Khrushchev is said by his officials to takes a strong action because of fear of the increasing US

bases and US missiles in Turkey (Bernstein, 1980). (Haas, 2001). It was the inexpensive way to tilt the balance that will enable him to spend the money to raise the living standard in USSR which was declining dangerously (Haas, 2001). The US nuclear capability was fifteen times higher than USSR's. In the first ExComm meeting, the USSR motive of placing missiles in Cuba was discussed. Secretary of State Dean Rusk opined that Khrushchev knows the nuclear inferiority of USSR and he wanted US to live under the fear of USSR when USSR has to live under the fear of US because of the missiles in Turkey (Copeland, 2001). The US and the "free world" had almost 1500 ballistic missiles whereas USSR had only about 75 ICBMs and about 50 short range Golem missiles (Danial and Hubbell, 1963). So placing short-range missiles and intermediate-range missiles in Cuba was a short way to fill the missile gap (Danial and Hubbell, 1963). In 1962 US had 200 operational ICBMS and 9 Polaris submarines and 144 SLBMs whereas USSR had only twenty to thirty-five ICBMs and hadn't any long-range SLBMs (Lebow and Stein, 1994).

- 6- It was to establish itself as the leader of Communism at the international level especially after China was also in public confrontation with the United States (Schlesinger, 1966) (Weldes, 1999)
- 7- It was an attempt to escape from the problems the Soviet government was facing at the domestic level (Schlesinger, 1996).
- 8- To create differences and weaken NATO by compelling US to dismantle the Jupiter Missiles in Turkey thereby projecting it as selling out of allies for its interests (Bernstein, 1980).
- 9- The credibility of USSR government's strategic power was at question when a study by Kennedy administration in 1962 exposed USSR vulnerability and US's superior nuclear capability (Weldes, 1999). The credibility was a major issue for deploying missiles to protect Cuba. Khrushchev himself says that what the point is being a super power to make empty statements in United Nations and doing nothing to protect Cuba (Khrushchev, 2007). USSR was aware of the benefits and costs of sending missiles to Cuba. The costs and benefits were too high, and they knew that the chances are higher that US will know it (Haas, 2001).

Why did Kennedy opt for the blockade?

The options available for Kennedy was doing nothing, diplomacy, limited war, general war and blockade. Why did he go for blockade instead of all other options? Perspectives differ, and so is the explanation. The ExComm discussed the options available for US. There were six options. Option A was to do nothing. Option B was to protest privately to Khrushchev. Option C was to raise the issue in UN Security Council. Option D was to enforce an embargo on military shipments to Cuba initially and then all shipments. Option E was a surprise attack on Cuba to remove the missiles. Option F was a surprise attack to remove all three, missiles, Russian troops and Castro (Daniel and Hubbell, 1963). Initially, Kennedy did not want an airstrike and wanted to have first military action from Soviet because of various reasons (Sorensen, 1996). According to international law, an invasion was not possible, and US wanted UN to respond to a Soviet attack (Sorensen, 1996). Vice President Lyndon B Johnson was interested in peace (Bernstein, 1980). He said, last week we discussed the trade of Soviet Missiles in Cuba with Missile in Turkey, then why not now? Replace the Jupiter missiles in Turkey with Polaris sub and accept the settlements (Bernstein, 1980).

Still many, including Kennedy and McNamara felt the missiles did not tilt the balance, and it did not reduce the strategic superiority of US over USSR (Haas, 2001). However, there was more to it. It meant a lot if US did nothing especially after their warning earlier (Haas, 2001). The upcoming elections also was a major factor to influence Kennedy's decision especially after the infamous Bay of Pigs invasion. It was an absolute shock for Kennedy as he had publicly warned Khrushchev of placing offensive missiles in Cuba. According to some reports, there was even a private assurance by Khrushchev that he is aware of the domestic political pressure Kennedy faces, and he will not do anything to maximize it (Allison, 1971). So mere the missiles were not the issue, but the credibility and reputation (Haas, 2001).

The potential costs and benefits of responses available to US was discussed in ExComm meetings. Kennedy also believed that if US didn't respond aggressively, Khrushchev would believe in weakness of him and he'll be bold enough on the issue of Berlin which will lead to a crisis in Europe and eventually to the use of nuclear weapons (Haas, 2001). Any attack on Cuba will also tempt Khrushchev to initiate a

war in Berlin (Haas, 2001). Kennedy opined in the ExComm meeting of 18th October, attacking Cuba also was risking the alliance since the allies will think that US is dragging them to war for a crisis that doesn't pose a severe threat to the US and which could have solved on-militarily (Copeland, 2001).

Doing nothing was questioning US's resolve and attacking Cuba was inviting potential wars in Berlin and subsequently in Europe. The only option available was to threaten USSR by blockade and give USSR more time to revise its actions (Haas, 2001). When Joint Chiefs met Kennedy on 19th October and proposed general war as the preferred option he was convinced with it and he thought blockade will also create similar response from USSR in Berlin and it will leave the Cuban issue unresolved (Copeland, 2001). Bundy opined on 19th October's ExComm that though the blockade was not too risky it will work only over time compared to general war that is too quick and effective (Copeland, 2001).

On 20th October National Security Meeting was held, and President preferred air strike. Robert Kennedy preferred blockade and give some time for USSR to respond and initiate air strike after three-four days. Kennedy agreed to that point, and he authorized the Navy to initiate the blockade and prepare for air strike on Monday or Tuesday (Copeland, 2001). On 21st October, Sunday, Kennedy met with Taylor, McNamara, Robert Kennedy and General Walter Sweeney to discuss the missiles in Cuba (Copeland, 2001). He was informed that there were about forty launchers in Cuba, and it increased almost fifty percentage of USSR's strategic missile capability (Copeland, 2001).

Dean Rusk reminded ExComm members that any decision has to be consulted with allies since USSR will retaliate against them in case of military action (Weaver, 2014). Dean Rusk also recommended using the term quarantine instead of blockade that may draw comparisons between blockade in Berlin and which denote an act of aggression or war (Weaver, 2014). UN Charter allowed blockade if it was multilateral and for that purpose it discussed the blockade with OAS to get legitimacy (Weaver, 2014). But Kennedy was determined to go for blockade even if he does not get approval in OAS (Weaver, 2014).

De-escalation of the crisis after the brinkmanship

On 22nd October, Monday President Kennedy addressed the nation at 07:00 PM and promised not to compromise the nation's interest (Haas, 2001) and (Welch & Blight, 1987-1988). He told National Security Council hours before the public address that he's not optimistic about the blockade because it'll also drag USSR to response either in Berlin or against the US itself which will end up in general war (Copeland, 2001).

Presidium was convened in USSR after the public response by Kennedy over the missiles in Cuba on 22nd October. The presidium allowed to use the tactical nuclear weapons in case of a US invasion because the USSR's military power was nothing in comparison to United States' security forces (Copeland, 2001). But he could not use the MRBMs and IRBMs without a direct order from Kremlin (Copeland, 2001). But Lebow contends that there was no such authorization for the use of tactical nuclear weapons (Lebow *et al*, 1994). The blockade was initially planned for 800 miles, and Kennedy reduced it to 500 miles to avoid a clash George, Hall and Simons (1971). Khrushchev initially was angry on the decision of blockade and thought of ordering the Soviet ships to go through the blockade so that he can blame US for initiating the force (Garthoff, 1988). U Thant was also a mediator between Kennedy and Khrushchev. He suggested Khrushchev during blockade either to withdraw the missiles on the way to Cuba or to halt them and he requested Kennedy to avoid any confrontation that he accepted without any hesitation (Daun and Pauk, 2009). Khrushchev also accepted the proposal that time and ordered the ships reaching the blockade line to halt or return to USSR (Daun and Pauk, 2009).

The construction continued in Cuba despite these measures from US. On 26th October, Kennedy received a letter from Khrushchev indicating his readiness to remove the missiles from Cuba upon a public pledge from US not to invade Cuba (Copeland, 2001). The discovery of ballistic missiles was a success, but US intelligence failed to discover the short-range tactical nuclear weapons that carried more value in defence (Weaver, 2014). If US had opted for a military option at that point of time, the outcome could have been catastrophic (Weaver, 2014). On 27th October Khrushchev demanded one more condition of removing missiles from Turkey to remove the missiles on a message aired on Radio Moscow (Copeland, 2001). The "Black Saturday" was further worsened with an American U-2 spy flight

being shot down over Cuba (Copeland, 2001). A Soviet tanker *Grozny* proceeded to the direction of blockade (Garthoff, 1988). Robert Kennedy met with Anatolii Dobrynin that night and made back channel agreements for the resolution of the crisis (Copeland, 2001). Khrushchev said Castro was the one who ordered to shoot the U-2 spy flight (reconnaissance) over Cuba because it was in their territory, and he was worried about those constant spy flights (Khrushchev, 2007). But as it worsened and escalated the crisis, Khrushchev ordered the commander to act on orders only from USSR (Khrushchev, 2007).

The blockade did not create a similar response in Berlin from USSR by creating another blockade there. The lack of response showed the success of American resolve and the deterrence worked. One USSR submarine had to go back to USSR as the blockade worked. Bundy puts it “crucial issue was resolved on the afternoon that the other fellow blinked” (Bundy, 1988: 420). American resolve and credibility were once again reaffirmed.

After the blockade, there was an invitation for crisis resolution from Khrushchev if US issues public commitments not to invade Cuba. The potential benefits if Kennedy accepted were higher, but he did not opt it initially. There were several reasons for the delay. The delay paid the price and on 27th October, Saturday one additional term was added to resolve the crisis by Khrushchev. The trade of Cuban missiles over the missiles in Turkey which was anticipated by many in the initial stage of the crisis. A trade over was costly for Kennedy as it is a matter of trust for Turkey, and it will weaken America’s credibility with its allies and it will eventually weaken the NATO (Bernstein, 1980) (Haas, 2001).

US forces kept vigilance until 11th November when the last of R-12 missiles left Cuba and reconnaissance flights verified it (Weaver, 2014). Air Force lowered the alert to DEFCON 5 on November 29 (Weaver, 2014).

ExComm meetings and the crisis

Executive Committee of National Security Council was the expert committee to whom Kennedy discussed the options during the crisis. The first wave of literature (1962-1987) on the Cuban missile crisis was largely based on the ExComm recordings. The documents of trade over disappeared from these recordings. Kennedy made sure that the deal will not go public because of the repercussions it had.

The regular participants apart from J F Kennedy included Robert Kennedy, Lyndon B Johnson (Vice President), Rusk (Secretary of State), McNamara (Secretary of Defense), C Douglas Dillon (Secretary of the Treasury), George W Ball (Undersecretary of state), Martin (Assistant Secretary of state), Roswell Gilpatric (Deputy Defense secretary), the Chairman Of The Joint Chiefs Of Staff, General Maxwell Taylor (Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff) , Mc George Bundy (Special Assistant to President for National Security), Theodore Sorensen (Special Council to the President), U Alexis Johnson (Deputy Undersecretary of State for political affairs), Edwin Martin (Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs) , Paul H Nitze (Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Affairs) Llewellyn E Thompson (United States Ambassador-at-Large), Charles E Bohlen (Former Ambassador to Soviet Union) and the CIA director John A. McCone (Daniel and Hubbell, 1963 and Stern, 2005).

ExComm was JF Kennedy's confidential and expert committee that was formed to discuss the options available once the missiles were discovered on 16th October. The meetings were held every day. The minutes of ExComm meetings were later released, and it gives a good understanding of the crisis.

Alexis Johnson supported blockade (Stern, 2005). Edwin Martin was in charge of covert and overt actions against Cuba before the crisis, and unsurprisingly he was well committed to removing the missiles from Cuba by any means (Stern, 2005). Known as a hawk, McCone, who was also committed to any action against Cuba, supported the trade of Jupiter missiles on 27th October (Stern, 2005). McNamara was with Kennedy on his assumption that the missiles posed no military threats, but political threats. But he opposed the trade-off (Stern, 2005). Thompson was a USSR specialist and expert on Soviet behaviour. He argued Khrushchev will never back down without declaring war (Stern, 2005).

There were hawks and doves in the ExCom. CIA Director McCone, Secretary of State Rusk, Paul H Nitze, L E Thompson, and Maxwell D Taylor among Joint Chiefs featured the Hawks. Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara and Attorney General Robert Kennedy (before the crisis he was well-known hawk), Special Counsel Sorensen featured doves (Schultz, 2005). George Ball initially supported the blockade and later switched to surprise air strike until the U-2 spy flight was shot down (Stern,

2005). Bundy also supported blockade but opposed the trade of Jupiter missiles as he thought it would divide the NATO (Stern, 2005). Dillon was in support of airstrike after the blockade, and he opposed strongly the trade-off missiles (Stern, 2005). Gilpatric was also interested in the military solution of air strike (Stern, 2005). However, most of the doves did not support the trade off to resolve the crisis (Stern, 2005).

The first ExComm meeting was held on 16th October, Tuesday itself almost all except Robert McNamara preferred military strike. The discussion was on which form of the air strike was most suitable; surgical air strike, general air strike or invasion (Copeland, 2001). Even Kennedy was in favour of the air strike and aggression because he thought USSR tried to test his resolve after his 'failure' in Berlin and Bay of Pigs invasion (Allison, 1971). The options were discussed on Wednesday as well, and the meeting adjourned without a consensus on the preferred option (Copeland, 2001). The ExComm meeting of Thursday also discussed the military options but wasn't able to come to a final decision. However, two options were out by then; a diplomatic way to solve the crisis and a limited strike. The general war and blockade were the preferred options now for ExCom. However, general war was too risky (Copeland, 2001) and (Haas, 2001). There was almost a consensus for blockade (Copeland, 2001).

ExComm meeting on 19th October, Friday witnessed a dramatic shift. Bundy undermined the almost consensus of the previous day's meeting and described the slow nature and ineffectiveness of blockade (Copeland, 2001). Now ExComm was split between group supporting blockade (Robert Kennedy and R McNamara) and the group supporting the general strike (Copeland, 2001). President Kennedy did not attend it.

Friday's meeting (26th October) witnessed new revelation. 16th October's meeting was saying that it will take two weeks for MRBMs and IRBMs in Cuba to be operational. Now CIA revealed that at least two of them has been operational (Copeland, 2001). Now, the supporters of air strike increased in ExCom.

The ExComm meeting on 27th October (Saturday) was the longest from 10 am to noon, 4 pm to 8 PM and 9 PM to 10 PM. The meeting discussed the letter from Khrushchev over the trade of the missiles in Cuba over missiles in Turkey. The

political consequences of trade over and the issue of selling out an ally for the cause of America were well discussed in the meeting (Copeland, 2001).

There are criticisms over Kennedy recordings of ExComm. The criticism includes that President Kennedy was aware of the recordings, so he might have a modified version of talks in ExComm meetings and he might have controlled the way recorder was working to create his version of history. Stern (2005) dismisses such criticisms for the point that, at the time of recording Kennedy believed in its secrecy and was free to talk. He also says he could not control the recorder when ExComm member are there watching him (Stern, 2005).

The Joint Chiefs in ExComm viewed the missiles solely as weapons and others as political. This differences of perception influenced their responses in ExComm (Weaver, 2014).

Like ExCom, the options were discussed well in Presidium. The decision of Presidium and important discussions were written by Vladimir Malin, the chief of the General Department of the Central Committee (Blanton, 2012). It had become available since 2003 when Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (RGANI) published archive notes as *Archivi Kremlya* (Blanton, 2012).

The post-crisis relations

Sorensen argues that, Kennedy's leadership skills lead to ease of tension of cold war, the establishment of a hotline between Moscow and Washington and signing off Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (Sorensen, 1996). Bernstein on the other had opined that the world became more conflict prone and competitive as it opened the nuclear arms race, and everyone tried their best to develop the nuclear arms (Bernstein, 1974). Thompson also points out that USSR invested massively in arms build-up and the victory emboldened US to confront in Vietnam (Thompson, 1978).

Castro did not allow inspectors to verify that the MRBMs were being removed, or new missiles were not being introduced (Coleman, 2007). Coleman (2007) argues that some of the weapons, even short-range nuclear weapons remained in Cuba even after November 20 when US lifted the Naval blockade of Cuba.

The implementation of the dismantling of missiles was not an easy task. The debate continued between USSR and US over the surface to surface and surface to air

missiles with a range below 50kms, but can be used against US base in Guantanamo. However, Kennedy did not stress too much, and MRBMs and Il-28 bombers were removed (Coleman, 2007). The joint chiefs applied pressure for removing all potential nuclear carriers like Lunas, but those were not removed (Coleman, 2007). The tactical nuclear warheads left Cuba only by the end of December 1962 though Khrushchev assured Kennedy on 20th November that all nuclear warheads have been removed (Coleman, 2007). The presence of Soviet forces also was a hot topic in domestic politics of United States.

How did the crisis de-escalate ?

The crisis ended peacefully. Why the crisis ended the way it ended? Perspectives differ. Nuclear deterrence, general deterrence and coercive diplomacy had every reasons to assume nuclear weapons, the use of threat and will and determination did the job. Both superpowers were vulnerable to nuclear war (Rajagopalan, 2000). The Soviet restraint is understandable obviously because of the strategic inferiority, but the US restraint was only because of nuclear weapons (Rajagopalan, 2000). But it was based on the assumption that USSR have deployed nuclear warheads in Cuba. General Anatoly Gribkov was the first man who revealed in 1992 Soviet had sent Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNW) to Cuba (Rajagopalan, 2000).

Lebow and Stein (1994) argues that the deterrence and compellence by Kennedy administration provoked USSR more than preventing him. The deployment of missiles in Turkey and continued warning by Kennedy against deploying missiles in Cuba didn't deter Khrushchev and the former provoked him more and he wanted to give the same medicine to US (Lebow and Stein, 1994). It also convinced him that there is more to do for the security of USSR (Lebow and Stein, 1994). The defensive action of Khrushchev also didn't deter Kennedy from initiating a threat of war. Rather it provoked him and compelled to go for brinkmanship (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Deterrence may work when the leaders are not committed to action, but when they are committed, the political costs increase that reduces the likelihood of deterrence (Lebow and Stein, 1994). It is also difficult to make credible threats when the nuclear war is possible (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Lebow and Stein (1994) maintains that if nuclear weapons were what deterred the Soviet Union, that was also the cause for deployment of missiles in Cuba and the major factor for conflict between them during

the cold war. The nuclear weapons were provocative than preventive during the cold war (Lebow and Stein, 1994).

Trachtenberg (1985) classifies the literature on the role nuclear weapons and international security. One group of literature rejects the role of the nuclear weapons and hold the view that it was the conventional strategic weapons what mattered most. The second group of literature asserts that the risk of nuclear war influences the political behaviours. The third school says, “it was the balance of nuclear weapons, not the balance of resolve or balance of conventional weapons that proved decisive” (Trachtenberg, 1985:139). They also believe the nuclear superiority of US was decisive in the course and outcome of the crisis. The strategic superiority of US did not prevent itself from fearing USSR as Kennedy believed that with the nuclear weapons USSR could blow them (Trachtenberg, 1985).

Copeland (2001) believes that there was not a nuclear crisis, but it was an artificial crisis created by Kennedy to compel USSR to remove the missiles from Cuba. He believes that if placing nuclear missiles in Cuba was risking nuclear war, then why Jupiter missiles in Turkey did not create a nuclear crisis in March 1962 (Copeland, 2001). USSR did not do anything that time and US practiced the brinkmanship during the crisis to achieve the goals (Copeland, 2001).

Proponents of nuclear deterrence also hold that, the nuclear weapons of USSR in Cuba deterred US from a military strike, and that is why they opted for the blockade. This is problematic, as US knew nothing about the existence of nuclear warheads in Cuba as later revealed by Schlesinger and George Ball though they assumed it as worst case scenario. However, the assumption and knowing about it is different. That is why George Ball said the decisions could have been different, had they knew about the nuclear warheads in Cuba (Coleman, 2007).

But, crisis management with nuclear weapons and calling states for arming with nuclear weapons is highly problematic. Any unwarranted incidents without the order and consent from the leader may cause a catastrophe. There is a problem of escalation in the crisis in the era of nuclear weapons though neither side is interested in the nuclear war (Jervis, 1988). This is what exactly happened during Cuban missile crisis. Assuming the presence of nuclear weapons, US took measured which led both to the brink of war. Leaders fear dreaded war because of nuclear weapons even if one

does not intend it, and it increases international tension. But it also restraint leaders like in Cuban missile crisis (Jervis, 2001).

Determining Success and Failure

There are three narratives of the crisis. The Cuban missile crisis (American Version), Caribbean Crisis (Soviet Version) and October Crisis (Cuban Version). The success and failure depend upon the motives of USSR. Khrushchev's main motivation for deploying missiles was a response to the history of aggression by US against Cuba and the imminent threat of an attack (Weldes, 1999). At the end of the crisis, the existence of a socialist Cuba was guaranteed (Weldes, 1999). Placing missiles in Cuba didn't escalate the war, but it prevented escalation of Caribbean Crisis and prevented a war in the Caribbean Sea which could have grown from local war to a major world war (Weldes, 1999).

The October Crisis was about the sovereignty and independence of Cuba. US had pursued an aggressive policy towards Cuba by closing its market for Cuban sugar, by banning petroleum to Cuba and by a series of covert and overt attack on Cuban government including infamous Bay of Pigs invasion (Weldes, 1999). The agreement was taken on without Cuba's participation. Castro himself told that they could have told him. He came to know about the agreement by Khrushchev's message on Radio Moscow (Weldes, 1999). There were many issues to be resolved in October crisis including stopping of US aggressive policies against Cuba and returning Guantanamo to Cuba. None of them was settled at the unilateral agreement at the end of the crisis (Weldes, 1999). Castro believed removing missiles for a public pledge that US will not invade Cuba was nonsense as the United States doesn't have any right to invade Cuba and there cannot be a compromise on the crime (Weldes, 1999).

Decolonizing and decentralising the narrative of Cuban Missile Crisis

Laffey and Weldes (2008) examines the power hierarchy within the narrative of Cuban missile crisis. Though Cuba was involved in the crisis, all existing literature treated Cuba as irrelevant and just a puppet. The US even considered Cuba as subordinate to USSR, who gave the sovereignty of the nation to them and US has the right to do surveillance on them (Laffey and Weldes, 2008). Laffey and Weldes (2008) also question the logic of an explicit warning by Kennedy that Cuba cannot possess offensive weapons which are an explicit intervention on Cuba's sovereignty.

The crisis negotiation and the resolve ignored Cuba, and it was only between USSR and US (Laffey and Weldes, 2008). In the seminars held between 1987 and 1992 to produce a critical oral history of the Cuban missile crisis, Cuba was not invited to the first two seminars. It was invited for the first time by USSR in 1989 for the seminar in Moscow and US was surprised to see them in the conference as they still thought Cuba was irrelevant to the crisis (Laffey and Weldes, 2008).

Cuba has their answers for why USSR deployed missiles in their soil. It was because of US aggression on Cuba (Laffey and Weldes, 2008). The lessons from the crisis were different for small state Cuba and superpowers US and USSR (Laffey and Weldes, 2008). The Cuban version also finds imperialism as the cause of the crisis, and it believes that the crisis cannot be understood independently of its history (Laffey and Weldes, 2008).

The first generation of works till 1987 on the Cuban missiles crisis was an American version of the crisis (Hershberg, 2012). The next wave of literature was a balanced version which accommodated USSR version of the crisis. This literature benefited largely from critical oral history conferences and Soviet archives which were opened temporarily (Hershberg, 2012). The Cuban missile crisis was discussed in several major seminars. But five of them needs to be mentioned as there were practitioners and academicians from three states, Cuba, United States and Russia (Scott and Smith, 1994). The first, in March 1987 at Hawk's Cay, attended by academicians and ExComm members, and the second in October 1987 at Cambridge, this time Soviet delegates, the sons of Khrushchev, Anastas Mikoyan (closest associate to him) and his speechwriter joined them (Hershberg, 2012). The transcripts of this seminar were published in a volume of Blight and Welch, 1989. The first two seminars did not bother to invite Cuba as common sense was that Cuba was irrelevant to the crisis (Laffey and Weldes, 2008). The third in January 1989 in Moscow attended by participants and academicians from three states that were also published in a volume of Allyn *et al* 1992. It was attended by then USSR Foreign Minister Gromyko and USSR ambassador to US Anatolii Dobrynin (Blanton, 2012). The fourth in Antigua in 1991, and the fifth in Havana in 1992 where Castro himself was participant (Scott and Smith, 1994). The seminar was also published in Blight *et al* 1993. All five seminars were published and contributed to the critical oral history and alternative

versions of the Cuban missile crisis. Oral history has its limits, but it was a major source in the background of 'edited' primary sources. The ExComm meeting types were edited, in the way that some of the meetings were not recorded (Blanton, 2012).

Chapter IV: Reassurance and the Cuban Missile Crisis

There has been enormous literature on Cuban missile crisis. The lessons they learnt from the crisis were different. The motivations for USSR deployment of missiles in Cuba gained much attention and resulted in the vast literature on Soviet behaviour during the crisis. The way Kennedy responded also gained attention, and the way Khrushchev retreated without any provocation in Berlin gained more attention. The result was a fair amount of literature on the role of using force, threat and determination in international security in general and in crisis management in particular. The crisis became a laboratory test for proponents of deterrence theory, coercive diplomacy, realists of power and capability and many more. The trend continued for almost 25 years, where Kennedy got a good appraisal for the handling of the crisis and offensive USSR's intentions. But the idea of the humiliating retreat of Khrushchev was challenged from 1987 onwards when there were a series of oral history conferences that challenged the American notion of the crisis. The Soviet archives and documents became available in subsequent years, and this reconstructed the narrative of the Cuban missile crisis. More documents were available from 1992, now with Cuban documents on the crisis. All these challenged the idea of the humiliating retreat of Khrushchev and heroics of Kennedy. As a result, the role of force and threat in resolving the crisis was also questioned. The role of concessions and signalling intentions and motives are getting the attention of the scholars in recent years.

The traditional literature on Cuban missile crisis has flaws of lack of adequate information about Soviet behaviour and way of thinking during the crisis. There was USSR version of the crisis before 1990s, but those books were largely part of the propaganda. Reliable information were made public in the 1990s about the Soviet behaviour during the missile crisis, and the traditional interpretation of the crisis was challenged. Still, there are limits on the available records. The intentions and motivations cannot be understood from the public statements of leaders nor the formal policy-making meetings. The reassurance perspective of the crisis holds that the crisis grew out of mutual misunderstanding about the adversary's intentions, motives and

interests and once the misunderstanding was clarified by reassuring each other the crisis was over (Lebow and Stein, 1994).

Reassurance being a method of crisis management, there can't be any other larger crisis than Cuban Missile Crisis to study how reassurance worked. It was only one nuclear crisis where super powers came face to face. The subsequent sections revisit the history of Cuban missile crisis from a reassurance perspective.

The Deployment of Missiles: Defensive Motives

Reassurance strategists like Glaser and Montgomery have talked about the military defensive tactics of reassurance strategy. To signal one's benign intentions, one has to invest in defensive weapons and the military posture has to be defensive. The offensive weapons and offensive posture provokes the enemy and the cycle of security dilemma emerges. The problem of offensive and defensive weapons also has some say in Cuban missile crisis. Khrushchev's motives weapons were defensive to him, but he failed in signalling his defensive intentions to Kennedy.

The crisis was because the intentions and motives were misinterpreted by each other. USSR thought US was going to attack Cuba soon. There were so many circumstantial evidence for thinking so. But the conventional historiography of Cuban missiles asserted that US had no intention of attacking Cuba. Robert McNamara also said that there was no plan in White House and Pentagon to attack Cuba or to remove Castro (Lebow *et al.*, 1994) and (Lebow, 2001). However, the new version of history refutes this story and points to the fact that McNamara himself was involved in active preparation to invade Cuba in October (Desch, 1991). It is not clear Kennedy intended it or not, but there was American preparation for the invasion (Lebow *et al.*, 1994). Until 1989's Moscow critical oral history conference, the conventional wisdom was that US did not plan to invade Cuba (Blanton, 2012).

The fear of invasion of Cuba was the reason for deploying missiles in Cuba. He was not interested in another war especially when his country's domestic economy was not doing well. "But if you live your whole life being held down by fear, you become paralyzed" (Khrushchev, 2007: 328). He wanted to overcome the fear by deterrence, and he was proved wrong when Kennedy administration responded aggressively. He thought that America has waged war only in foreign territories, and the possibility of direct war with thermonuclear bombs on their territory and people will deter them

from taking actions against Cuba (Khrushchev, 2007). Soviet anticipated a US attack on Cuba after the failed Bay of Pigs invasion, and it'll not be as badly planned and executed as the first (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Cuba also sent repeated warnings to Moscow about an imminent threat. Khrushchev thought only nuclear missiles could save Cuba from a second US attack, and he discussed it with his foreign minister Andrei Gromyko in May 1962 (Lebow and Stein, 1994).

Was Kennedy planning to invade Cuba? Allison (1971) says that it was not at all in his mind. Robert McNamara also says that Kennedy thought another war on Cuba would be prohibitively costly (Lebow and Stein, 1994). McNamara admits that there were plans to dethrone Castro covertly but not by force (Lebow and Stein, 1994).

Why nuclear missiles were preferred? For a couple of reasons. Cuba was far away to help with conventional weapons (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Khrushchev also thought that Nuclear weapons were the easiest way to deter.

Another motive for the deployment was the Jupiter missiles in Turkey. The missiles made them highly insecure. Conventional history considered the Jupiter missiles in Turkey as defensive that needed hours to operate because those were liquid fire based. The American version of Cuban missile crisis also holds that the missiles were vulnerable to small attacks because of its outer layer. But the new interpretations reveal that it needed fifteen minutes to operate, and it was provocative and offensive missiles (Lebow *et al*, 1994).

Defending declining German Democratic Republic was the motive for deploying missiles (Copeland, 2000). Even if Berlin was the motive, it was defensive. The West Germany was getting stronger with military assistance from US, and East Germany was declining rapidly. People were leaving East Germany massively to West Germany as refugees. There was something to be done to protect Berlin (Copeland, 2000). There is another evidence for the defensive motive of Khrushchev to place the missiles in Cuba. Khrushchev planned to notify US about the missiles in Cuba in a proposed trip to Cuba and US in 1962 (Kokoshin, 2012). Khrushchev was interested in solving the problem of Cuba without getting to the war. He opined "it does not take much intelligence to start a war. It takes a lot more to put an end to a war" (Khrushchev, 2007:325).

Did US administration think the missiles as offensive? Robert McNamara opined in ExComm meeting on 16th October that the missiles in Cuba was not a threat to US (Copeland, 2001). Kennedy opined in the second ExComm meeting that even if the missiles did not pose a threat to US capability, it poses a threat to US resolve (Copeland, 2001). Khrushchev in his series of letters to President Kennedy emphasized that the purpose of using weapons makes it offensive or defensive and USSR will not give any weapons to Cuba to attack US (Daniel and Hubbell, 1963).

Khrushchev thought that Kennedy would accept the missiles in Cuba linking US's missiles in Turkey (Lebow and Stein, 1994). But the two missiles had two implications. The missile in Cuba had strong repercussions in US domestic politics, Latin America and Europe (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Khrushchev also thought that the missiles in Cuba after becoming operational will deter an American threat (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Khrushchev was somewhat authoritarian and didn't consult the foreign policy experts thoroughly. Even Anatolii Dobrynin, who was an expert on US and ambassador to it, was not informed of the decision to deploy the missiles. US officials informed him just two days before Kennedy's public statement (Lebow and Stein, 1994).

Kennedy's Response: Intentions and Motives Misread

The motives of Khrushchev was defensive largely because of insecurity, uncertainty and fear of US intentions. Khrushchev thought his defensive attempt would deter US. He thought that is the only way to deterring. Kennedy thought the missiles were also capable of constraining the power of US. Kennedy believed that Cuba can use the threat of missiles for any problem in Latin America, and America will not be able to intervene in the "problems" of Latin America (Weldes, 1999:44). The missiles also undermined the nuclear deterrence of US. It decreased the warning time in case of a USSR nuclear attack and the missiles in US now became vulnerable to first strike (Weldes, 1999:44). The US thought the missiles were shifting the balance of power, and it was capable of undermining US policy of extended deterrence and US commitments to the free world. Everyone will believe that US is no more capable of using its strategic superiority to intervene in the problems around the world (Weldes, 1999). Some members of ExComm also thought that USSR deployed the missiles to bargain on Berlin as it was at the centre stage at that point in time during Cold War

(Weldes, 1999). Even with the USSR missiles in the neighbourhood the strategic superiority still favoured the United States. The balance was in favour of US even in terms of outside the continent missile bases. The ExComm members assumed the worst case scenarios (Weldes, 1999). The weapons can be used for defense and offence and since there was no clear evidence of what was the real motive, US assumed from the nature of weapons that the USSR motives are offensive (Weldes, 1999). Kennedy administration misread USSR's motives and thought USSR was trying to force the withdrawal of American allies out of Berlin in exchange of missiles withdrawal (Steel, 1971). But the real motive of USSR was to defend communist Cuba, to "redress the strategic balance" and to strengthen USSR position in Latin American and Caribbean Islands (Medland, 1990:436). Berlin was not at issue according to this interpretation. Paterson criticizes Kennedy for opting public diplomacy instead of a direct approach to Khrushchev when the missiles were discovered which in turn increased the chances of war (Paterson, 1978). He was determined to show his resolve (Paterson, 1978).

Kennedy also thought that Khrushchev is testing his resolve. He said it publicly that reconciliation does not mean humiliation (Lebow and Stein, 1994). But Khrushchev thought Kennedy was a charming man and strong (Lebow and Stein, 1994). He did not really want to test Kennedy's resolve. The ExComm members conceived it as a deception, and the secret nature of deployment stressed their belief of deception (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Khrushchev had no option of making it public before the deployment because Kennedy will not accept it and if went ahead with the plan, which will be a catalyst for another Cuban invasion. He was planning to inform Kennedy after the missile were deployed (Lebow and Stein, 1994). MRBMs were perceived as offensive weapons by US (based on his statement on 13th September), and it was defensive weapons to USSR (Coleman, 2007).

Though there are so many documents, these are not enough to reveal the intentions. For example, Kennedy's intentions cannot be traced by going through the ExComm transcripts (Scott and Smith, 1994). It is very clear that he did not reveal to ExComm members about the secret trade over the missiles in Cuba (Scott and Smith, 1994). Although a hawk in public, Kennedy distrusted the military and believed in peaceful coexistence and made every attempt to avoid the nuclear war during the missile crisis

(Stern, 2005). Kennedy's private view of international relations is more cooperative than his public one (Marfleet, 2000). Kennedy could have opted for trading the missiles in Turkey initially to avoid the crisis. He did not opt it because it was an issue of credibility. The allies will think that United States will sell out them for US's interests (Weldes, 1999). The credibility will have severe impacts in Berlin as well (Weldes, 1999).

The blockade was an attractive option because it would have revealed USSR's intentions, since US was unsure about their motives (Weaver, 2014). When ExComm came to know that the missiles were operational the number of members supporting an air strike increased. However, Kennedy was interested in communication George, Hall and Simons (1971).

The ExComm members did not commit themselves to understand well the motivations of USSR for deploying missiles in Cuba. They were more interested in how to remove the missiles in Cuba rather than why they have placed it there (Weldes, 1999).

The Failed Defence and Continued Misperceptions

The missile were purely defensive and were to deter United States (Khrushchev, 2007). However, it did not deter the United States from initiating a threat and going all the way to a brink of war. However, neither Khrushchev nor Kennedy wanted war. The conventional history of Cuban missiles was holding the view that the commander in Cuba, General Pliyev, was given pre-delegated authority to use the tactical nuclear weapons installed in Cuba in the event of an invasion (Copeland, 2001). But the new interpretation asserts that the use of nuclear weapons was forbidden without Moscow's authorization, and these messages were sent to General Pliyev by Marshal Malinowski in secret codes (Lebow *et al*, 1994). Khrushchev did not authorize the local Soviet commanders to use tactical nuclear weapons (Coleman, 2007). When U-2 reconnaissance flight was shot down on 'Black Saturday', and one USSR tanker *Grozny* proceeded towards the blockade line, Kennedy thought Khrushchev was influenced by hardliners in Kremlin and Khrushchev is no longer in control (Garthoff, 1988). However, these incidents were not under direction from Moscow (Lebow and Stein, 1994 and Garthoff, 1988). It was shot down by a local

Soviet commander Statsenko (Garthoff, 1988). The attack on U-2 spy flight was a direct violation of Khrushchev's orders (Lebow, 2001).

Khrushchev's defensive weapons were perceived as offensive weapons by US, and his defensive intentions were perceived as offensive by US. USSR failed to signal their intentions correctly. While we cannot say for sure whether the weapons were offensive or defensive, whatever the case, the attempt to deter, US failed. If those were defensive weapons (the goal being to prevent another US invasion of Cuba), it was a failed deterrence! If it was offensive weapons, the deterrence failed as it failed to deter US from reciprocating the threat. The crisis was essentially about interests and intentions, and both had a misplaced comprehension of the adversary's interests and intentions. Later, both parties were convinced of the adversary's intentions through signalling and other ways, and it played a role in dismantling the crisis.

Retreat with Concession from both Sides

The conventional story of the outcome of the crisis was that Kennedy gave an ultimatum for USSR on 27th October for removing the missiles from Cuba and USSR retreated. The retreat was qualitatively described as humiliated. Robert Kennedy was successful in hiding the secret backchannel communication between his brother and Anatolii Dobrynin in which he gave the assurance of dismantling the missiles in Turkey in the return of the dismantling the missiles in Cuba. Because of the larger effect of a public deal on NATO and US allies, US wanted from Dobrynin to make it private deal. The traditional narrative praised the determinism of Kennedy when he gave the ultimatum to Dobrynin. But this ultimatum too is challenged by new documents and archives. At the end, the Soviet retreat was not in humiliation. If USSR had sold out Cuba according to the traditionalists, Turkey was sold out for the interests of US. Lebow *et al* (1994) reproduces Anatolii Dobrynin's telegrams and confirms that the USSR retreat was upon the secret deal and though the time was important, Attorney General stressed that the "request for a reply the next day 'is just that – a request and not an ultimatum'" (Lebow *et al*, 1994:670). This new interpretation rejects the idea that resolve refutes aggression and accommodation invite the aggression (Lebow *et al.*, 1994). These new evidence suggest that the concession made the differences within hours. 27th October was the blackest day of the crisis, and 28th October was the day of settlement. Kennedy's and Khrushchev's

concessions were not small though both loved to appear so. The channels of communication between US and USSR and especially the Soviet ambassador Anatolii Dobrynin played an important role in the course and outcome of the crisis (Kokoshin, 2012).

The new information available from the 1990s indicate that reassurance played an important role in the outcome of the Cuban missile crisis (Lebow, 2001). Kennedy and Khrushchev clarified their respective defensive intentions and by doing so they reduced the costs of mutual concessions that lead to the resolve of the crisis (Lebow, 2001). Kennedy did not use his force to use the crisis to throw Castro out of Cuba, which cleared the fear of Khrushchev (Lebow, 2001). Both clarified their intentions, initiated reassurances that paved a way for trust between them and which lead to a détente after the crisis (Lebow, 2001).

The trade over from USSR was a reassurance since it was too risky for USSR as they will lose fifty percentage of their missile capability. The concession also will affect the USSR and Cuban relations negatively. It was a matter of Credibility for USSR, and its already decreasing allies will lose the confidence. The reassurance paid off when Kennedy himself altered his previous position that the missile should be removed to there should be a cessation of missile works (Copeland, 2001).

Why the Crisis was Resolved: Deterrence or Reassurance?

The October Crisis version (Cuban narrative of the crisis) doesn't believe that the crisis has ended. For them, the deployment of missiles was an issue of sovereignty. Sovereignty and independence to deploy whatever missiles they want; offensive or defensive. They got a public pledge that United States wouldn't invade them. But it was a mere pledge. Also, it was not a privilege to be given to them. It was their right not to be invaded. But their self-right, to possess whatever weapons they want, was not settled.

The Cuban crisis generated enormous literature on international security which were emphasizing the role of threat and coercive tactics to resolve the crisis. There are several theories examining how the Cuban missile crisis was resolved. Prominent among them is the theory of nuclear deterrence, which tells the states for nuclear armament. They thought the nuclear weapons were what deterred both from entering the catastrophic war. The crisis also was a classic example of theorists of deterrence.

They assume that the resolve and determination paid off. Thomas Schelling argues that Kennedy's projection of his military power and resolve instead of mere nuclear superiority and dominance in Caribbean Sea showed Khrushchev the risks of the game and this calculation of the risks is what made him remove the missiles from Cuba (Schelling, 1966). The proponents of coercive diplomacy argue that it was the coercive diplomacy what made Khrushchev withdraw his missiles from Cuba George, Hall and Simons (1971). Kennedy intended to show his determination and thought that is the only way for peaceful settlement of the crisis George, Hall and Simons (1971). They hold that Khrushchev's response to the blockade was to test the credibility of the threat and once he was convinced of Kennedy administration's will he retreated George, Hall and Simons (1971).

There are competing information and revelations and treating some of them as propaganda and treating the other with impunity serves some agendas. ExComm meeting records are edited just as the Malin records of the Soviet Presidium meetings. The Khrushchev memoirs are subjective and biased, just as Kennedy's memoirs. The archives and documents are selectively opened from both sides, with little more flexibility from US. The limitation is not only for the USSR's oral history but also for US's oral history of the crisis. Still, one cannot deny the changes of perception of the crisis made by the second and third wave of the literature on Cuban missile crisis.

While resolve and determination were projected as fruitful in the first wave of literature, the second wave of literature objects it. Kennedy's resolve and projection of the strategic power did not prevent Khrushchev from demanding one more condition for the resolve of the crisis (Lebow and Stein, 1994). When USSR raised the level of SAC alert to DEFCON 2 short of war in an attempt to restrain USSR, USSR also raised their military alert and USSR continued their missile construction works at rapid pace (Weaver, 2014). Both parties tried to get maximum advantage out of the crisis, but also tried not to let it go out of hand to the war (Garthoff, 1988).

Lebow and Stein (1994) hold reassurance as the main reason for the resolution of the crisis. Kennedy made the concession with a private pledge for removing the Jupiter missiles from Turkey in exchange for dismantling or removing the missiles from Cuba when he got convinced of the costs it had on Khrushchev (Lebow and Stein, 1994). It was not resolved by a threat of risking a war (Lebow, 1988). Both leaders

were gradually convinced of the counterpart's defensive intentions there were signalling of those intentions (Lebow and Stein, 1994).

Lebow (1983b) opines the deterrence strategies by Kennedy did not prevent Khrushchev from deploying the missiles in Cuba. Kennedy warned on September 1983 that any offensive build up on Cuba would not be tolerated (Lebow 1983b). In September 1962, Kennedy had got congressional approve to deploy further 150, 000 troops to deter Cuba (Lebow 1983b). On 13th September, he again issued warning to USSR in a press conference (Lebow, 1983b). To make the threats credible to USSR, US sent messages to USSR privately that these threats were not political campaign rhetoric (Lebow, 1983b). All these use of threats aligned with superior nuclear capabilities, strategic superiority and huge control over the Caribbean Sea did not deter Khrushchev from deploying nor halting the missile constructions works in Cuba (Lebow, 1983b).

Kennedy initiated CBM model of operational constraints by forbidding "all routine U.S flights in the direction of Soviet Union" (Borawski, 1986:115). The purpose of operational constraint is to keep away from "deployment of military forces in potentially threatening modes, and where possible, to increase warning time by complicating preparations for aggression" (Borawski, 1986:115). By blockade, Kennedy wanted USSR to have time to "see, think and blink" (Allison, 1971:706).

Reassurance changed each leader's assumption of other's intentions that made them convinced that concessions than confrontations will serve their interests and intentions (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Khrushchev's intention was not to invade Cuba and Kennedy conveyed his readiness to accept the pledge not to invade Cuba in his reply letter to Khrushchev on 27th October, Saturday (Lebow and Stein, 1994). The form of reassurance attempt Kennedy initiated to Khrushchev was his restraint of attacking Cuba and Khrushchev was impressed with Kennedy and his flexibility (Lebow and Stein, 1994). This impression influenced his calculation of risks in withdrawing missiles from Cuba and he foresaw a good relationship between USSR and US during Kennedy's tenure (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Khrushchev's restraint alongside blockade line and subsequent letters made an impression on Kennedy that Khrushchev did not want the crisis to escalate, and he was desperately seeking a way out (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Kennedy also thought that giving the concessions would

not make Khrushchev more aggressive (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Khrushchev was impressed with Kennedy when their ships were not seized by US (Khrushchev, 2007). He was also impressed with the frankness and openness of Americans during the negotiations especially on Robert Kennedy (Khrushchev, 2007).

If Khrushchev were compelled to withdraw the missiles by deterrence and resolve, then the post-crisis relations would have been different (Lebow and Stein, 1994). However, the post-crisis relations were marked by détente than confrontation (Lebow and Stein, 1994) and (Etzioni, 1967) and George, Hall and Simons (1971). The immediate post-crisis era witnessed a new form of coexistence and mutual understanding George, Hall and Simons (1971).

Kennedy opted for blockade because he thought Khrushchev may be unaware of the domestic and foreign policy constraints on the US at the time he deployed the missiles, and he can signal his interests without appearing to be begging for help (Lebow and Stein, 1994). The blockade was a positive move that gave time for Kennedy to understand Khrushchev's intentions and interests, and for Khrushchev to understand Kennedy's interests and intentions (Lebow and Stein, 1994).

Khrushchev did not signal aggressive intentions during the crisis and never tried to escalate the crisis. He signalled his benign defensive and restraint intentions through his letters on Friday and Saturday (26th and 27th October). The shooting down of the U-2 flight was not by Khrushchev's order, but by Cuban forces under an order from Castro (Lebow and Stein, 1994). The settlement was ready by Saturday evening and Kennedy's "warning" only influenced the timing of settlement (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Khrushchev never feared Kennedy's intentions but his inability to constrain the Hawks in ExComm as Kennedy feared not Khrushchev but Kremlin militants (Lebow and Stein, 1994).

Backchannel communications and letters between Kennedy and Khrushchev served well to signal the interests and intentions of both actors. Because there were hawks in ExCom, only half of them were told of Robert Kennedy's secret mission to Anatolii Dobrynin (Stern, 2005). The first meeting between Anatolii Dobrynin and Robert Kennedy was on 23rd October. The meeting may have convinced Kennedy about the defensive intentions of USSR in deploying missiles in Cuba who initially may have thought USSR's move as aggressive (Lebow and Stein, 1994). The letters between

President Kennedy and Khrushchev was part of the reassurance. Khrushchev explained in detail about the defensive purpose of missiles in Cuba, and the insecurity feeling of USSR under the missiles pointed at them from Turkey (Lebow and Stein, 1994).

The missiles were not deployed because of the lack of resolve or test the resolve. However, it was because of vulnerabilities and fear, and Khrushchev withdrew the missiles when the reassurance reduced the fears and uncertainty (Lebow and Stein, 1994). When both parties clarified the interests, they were convinced and reassured each other that mutual concession and cooperation will serve their intentions and interests (Lebow and Stein, 1994). Khrushchev was impressed with Kennedy for “he was seeking ways of establishing communications, sitting up technical devices that would help us avoid conflict” (Khrushchev, 2007: 355). Khrushchev says even though he and Kennedy represented different ideologies, Kennedy was realistic and believed in avoiding confrontations. He was more optimistic of a peaceful relation between USSR and US as long as Kennedy is there in his office (Khrushchev, 2007).

Khrushchev withdrew the missiles as he thought otherwise it was Cuba to be attacked first, when the main motivation for deploying missiles was to defend it. The missiles were deployed for the purpose of avoiding a Cuban invasion, and when concessions would make the US invasion of Cuba unlikely, he opted for concessions (Khrushchev, 2007).

Robert Kennedy thought that a blockade was enough to demonstrate US restraint, and it will let them think again over their rash miscalculation (Stern, 2005). Under Secretary of State, George Ball had proposed restraint over the air strike since USSR did not understand American concerns about Cuba (Stern, 2005). Robert Kennedy says President Kennedy believed from the beginning of the crisis that Khrushchev is rational who can rethink over the deployment of missiles if a time was given (Kennedy and Schlesinger, 2000).

U Thant (UN Secretary General) also played a significant mediator role (Daun and Pauk, 2009). His role was there in de-escalating the crisis, resolving the crisis and implementing the settlements (Daun and Pauk, 2009). Both Kennedy and Khrushchev used U Thant as an intermediary to convey the messages and proposals. Proposal of the non-invasion pledge was conveyed from Khrushchev to Kennedy though U Thant.

When Khrushchev made the second condition of pulling missiles out of Turkey, Kennedy demanded a pledge from USSR to dismantle the missiles in Cuba, and it was conveyed through U Thant (Daun and Pauk, 2009).

On Black Saturday itself, Kennedy allowed Dean Rusk, if needed, to write a letter to UN General U Thant calling for dismantling the missiles from both Turkey and USSR. The idea was to present the issue in UN as his idea so that the crisis can be solved (Weaver, 2014). Khrushchev ordered the ships en route to Cuba to turn around and ordered Pliyev not to use nuclear weapons without a direct order from Moscow on 22nd October (Blanton, 2012).

Malin notes of the USSR Presidium indicate that USSR thought of using force only twice, on 22nd October and 28th October, that too when the impression was that Cuba is to be attacked (Naftali, 2012). Khrushchev assured Kennedy via Knox that the missiles in Cuba were under strict control and would not be misused (Welch & Blight, 1987-1988). Welch & Blight (1987-1988) argues that crisis was resolved largely because of the communication between Kennedy and Khrushchev.

Lebow (1983b) shows how the defensive weapons as well can escalate the crisis in the nuclear era. Sometimes defensive actions many not perceived by the other as defensive, but as offensive. The USSR attempts to convince US that these are defensive also didn't pay off. Without the missiles in Cuba, the settlements of missiles in Turkey may not be attractive for US. The USSR motives were defensive from the start, and it was less than war. The motives might be offensive and higher if US did not enjoy strategic superiority to USSR. That is the role of weapons one cannot deny. But it has to be combined with reassurance strategies to alleviate the negative and provocative effects of these weapons. Intentions cannot be assessed merely from capabilities. Weapons do not speak, though sometimes their postures and directions reveal the intentions. So to signal one's benign intentions and convince the other of one's benign intentions, reassurance strategies can be employed.

Conclusion

Once the fiction of missile gap was proven as false by Kennedy administration, Moscow felt highly insecure. United States repeated attempts to deter USSR by convincing them of the strategic inferiority provoked them. The repeated covert and overt US actions against Cuba, which was the only one Soviet bloc in Latin America

also provoked USSR. United States' strategic superiority, nuclear superiority, repeated warnings did not prevent USSR from deploying the missiles in Cuba. While USSR's motive for deploying the missiles were defensive, the other party, US was not convinced of it. The attempts to reassure US that these were purely defensive also didn't pay off. The problem of differentiation between offensive and defensive weapons became a major issue during the crisis. While US interpreted the weapons deployed in Cuba as offensive, Khrushchev maintained that those weapons were purely defensive. (The distinction was again a problem during the implementation of crisis settlement and dismantling or removing the missiles from Cuba). The defensive deployment to deter US did not pay off and US replied aggressively but short of war. The blockade provoked Khrushchev, and the missile base construction works in Cuba continued at a rapid pace and the crisis escalated. Both Kennedy and Khrushchev felt that things were going out of the hand, and any military incidents without their orders could cause a major war that was not intended by both of them. As McNamara says that the overwhelming lesson he learnt from Cuban Missile Crisis is that no one can measure correctly the effect of military action "because of the risks of accident, miscalculation, misperception and in advertence" (Blight *et al.* 1987: 186).

Then, they tried to signal their intentions through reassurance strategies with concessions, bargaining, back channel communications, issue linkages and direct communication through letters. When both parties were convinced of other's intentions, and the fear or insecurity was molten, the crisis settled peacefully. The success was for both with gains from cooperation. The security of Cuba was assured. The missiles would not last in Cuba to create insecurity for the US. The missiles in Turkey, which caused a feeling of high insecurity to USSR, was removed. They were "eyeball to eye-ball" (Kennedy, 2000) and both U.S and USSR blinked for a bright future.

Chapter V: Conclusion

The study looked the reassurance strategies, the Cuban missile crisis and how reassurance strategies helped in settling the crisis. There were several factors that determined the course and outcome of the crisis, and reassurance played a greater role in dismantling the crisis. It is not to deny that other factors were irrelevant, but to emphasize the role played by reassurance strategy, which is neglected in the literature of Cuban missile crisis and literature of reassurance.

The missiles from USSR carried deterrent value, but the combination of that with the reassurance strategies determined the outcome of the crisis. There is the problem of provocation, which reassurance strategists have addressed by opting for defensive weapons. Sometimes defensive weapons may also provoke, and there can't be an objective way to determine what defensive and offensive weapons are. The reassurance strategy if employed with defensive or deterrent tactics sometimes may escalate the crisis especially in the nuclear era as happened during the Cuban missile crisis. But one cannot deny the role of missiles in Cuba in making the settlement attractive for US, and more or less the role of strategic superiority enjoyed by the US in limiting Soviet motives.

Nuclear weapons may deter the leaders of the states from going to war against nuclear powers. However, one cannot deny the possibility of another mass killer who do not care about the depth of the catastrophe. Nuclear weapons will not deter them. The new non-state actors like terrorist organizations may also not be deterred by nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons alone couldn't make peace during the Cuban missile crisis. This was done along with reassurance strategies. The question whether nuclear weapons are offensive or defensive is based on our understanding of its deterrence value.

The study also understands the need for more decentralization of the narrative of Cuban missile crisis. The role of force, threat, determination and projection of power was emphasized in the first wave of literature that was based on American sources. The second and third wave of literature has contributed a lot to challenge this traditional conception of violent and coercive diplomacy.

States cannot signal the benign intentions by simply investing in defensive weapons. It has to be combined with the reassurance strategies to do it effectively.

Learning from the crisis, many realists have called for nuclear armament. If nuclear deterrence was the factor in Khrushchev's retreat and Kennedy's restraint, then the crisis itself was because of the nuclear weapons. Once the crisis is created, any small incidents could have caused a major nuclear war. During the crisis, the world was on the brink of nuclear war many times. Even if the leader decides to abstain from going to war, any incidents like what happened with the Soviet commander in Cuba when a reconnaissance U-2 spy flight was shot down, can cause the war. The nuclear warheads are with military, and they can act without an order from the President or Premier. The strategy of brinkmanship sometimes may be hazardous. Once the crisis is there, as Robert McNamara later opined, no one can manage the crisis. Crisis prevention is better than crisis management.

There are some drawbacks to the study. Firstly, the literature on reassurance itself is having the major drawback of not having adequate literature. The "theory" is still underdeveloped and has not made much progress and hasn't got attention within the scholars of international security literature. The study was an attempt to study how reassurance and signalling of intentions worked during Cuban missiles crisis and whether it had any impact on the successful end of the crisis. Rather, I think the study could have been done better in a comparative study model, comparing, for instance, the role of deterrence versus reassurance during the missile crisis. As Mearsheimer (1994) noted, for everything matters, but what matters most? Deterrence or reassurance? Resolve or restraint? The constructivist understanding of the crisis gives more insights on the research puzzle. The title of the study itself presupposes some understanding, and it disregards the Caribbean Crisis perspective and October crisis perspective. The study talks nothing about Cuba, the third participant in the crisis, in the fourth chapter and walks to the same flaw of traditionalists in Cuban crisis literature.

Every narrative of the Cuban missile crisis is debited to the oral history of the participants involved in the crisis. However, oral history has its limitations of memory, misleading statements and more. These oral history can be enriched with supportive documents. (Kramer *et al.*, 1990). But the Soviet oral history is still in its

primitive age as some of the documents are not available even for the top officials (Kramer *et al.* 1990).

The intentions of both leaders were misread by the adversary that ended up in escalating the crisis. Kennedy's deterrence failed to prevent USSR from deploying the missiles in Cuba. US's strategic superiority and repeated warning did not pay off. All these were to deter USSR. But USSR was provoked, and it felt highly insecure. USSR, on the other hand, made a defensive deployment, which they thought could deter US from using threat and force. The response was an aggressive blockade. But both leaders were not interested in the war, and that was not their objective. But the unwarranted incidents without their consent and order pulled the world to the brink of war. Once they were convinced of the things going out of the hand, they made concessions that signalled their benign intentions to each other. The concessions made by both were not small at all. Concessions from both sides carried many repercussions. When both leaders were convinced of the fact that they can achieve their goals through concessions, the crisis de-escalated and resettled. The deterrence and threats provoked the adversary and resulted in an escalation of the crisis. The reassurance, on the other hand, didn't invite aggression from the adversary. Robert McNamara's observation needs attention. Crisis prevention is better than crisis management because when the crisis is created it cannot always be managed. Things may escape the control.

Still, without the missiles and tactical nuclear weapons (though the US didn't find it during the crisis, they assumed the presence of TNW on the circumstantial evidence like nuclear capable aircrafts), the settlements, especially the trade of Jupiter missiles, may not be attractive for United States.

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