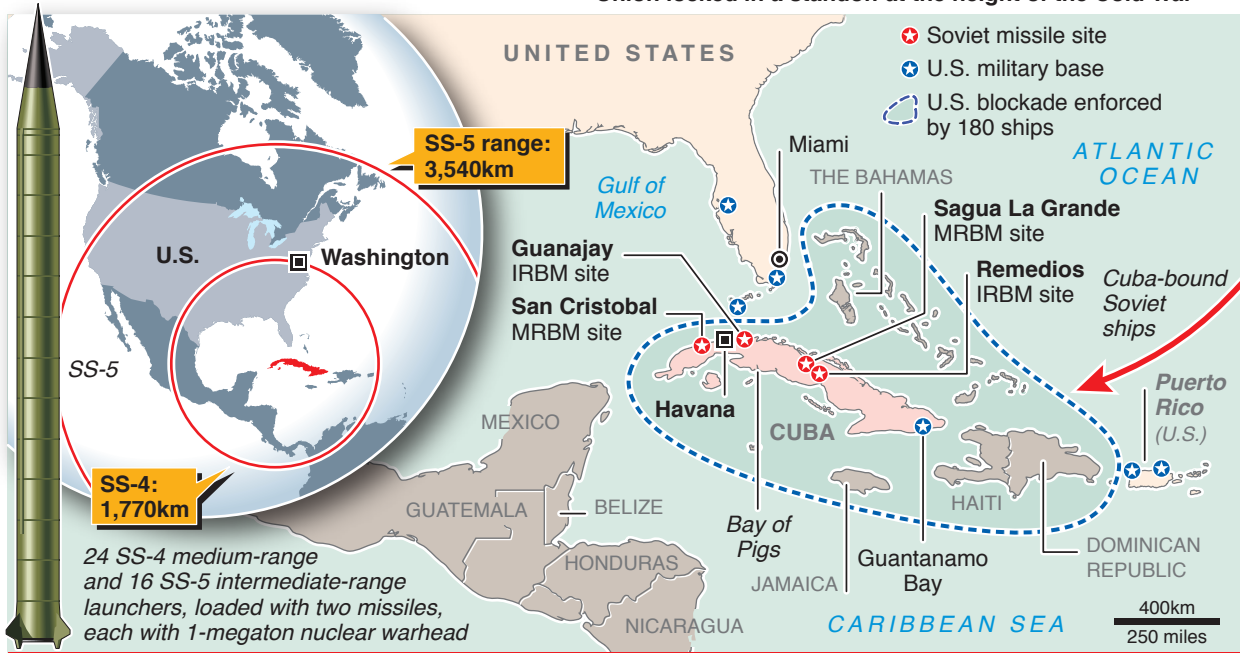


Cuban Missile Crisis

For 13 days in October 1962 the world hovered on the brink of nuclear war, with the United States and the Soviet Union locked in a standoff at the height of the Cold War



Apr 1961: Soviet Union increases support of *Fidel Castro's* regime in Cuba after *Bay of Pigs* invasion

Sep 1962: Soviet leader *Nikita Khrushchev* gives go-ahead to install nuclear missiles on Cuba to defend island from U.S. invasion

Oct 14: American U-2 spy plane obtains photographs of missile sites on Cuba



Oct 16: U.S. President *John F. Kennedy* convenes *ExComm* – group of senior advisors – to tackle crisis

Oct 18: ExComm told installation of SS-4 missiles is nearly complete

Oct 22: Kennedy makes TV address, declaring naval blockade of Cuba and warning U.S. will retaliate if any Soviet missile is launched from Cuba

All U.S. military forces worldwide ordered to go to DEFCON 3 – heightened state of nuclear alert



Oct 24: Soviet ships carrying military equipment to Cuba reverse course as they near quarantine zone



Oct 24: Khrushchev says blockade is “an act of aggression”. U.S. forces go to DEFCON 2 – highest alert status short of war

Oct 25: CIA reports SS-4 missiles are ready to fire – Kennedy considers invasion

Oct 26: Soviets offer to dismantle sites if U.S. pledges not to invade Cuba

Oct 27: Khrushchev now demands removal of U.S. missile sites from Turkey



U2 plane shot down over Cuba, killing U.S. pilot – war looks imminent

Oct 27: Kennedy offers to end blockade and not invade Cuba if Soviets withdraw missiles

Oct 28: Khrushchev announces removal of missiles in exchange for U.S. pledge never to invade Cuba. Deal to remove U.S. missiles from Turkey not made public

Nov 20: Naval blockade lifted after Soviet missiles withdrawn

Apr 1963: U.S. missiles in Turkey dismantled – kept secret until 1989

Aug 30: “Hotline” – direct communication between Moscow and Washington – goes into operation

