

## Introduction

The nuclear test ban treaty, the landmark agreement that ended the nuclear arms race, was the result of a series of events that unfolded over the course of the Cold War. The world's two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, had spent decades in a bitter struggle for global dominance. The nuclear arms race had become a central part of this struggle, with each side vying to outpace the other in developing more powerful weapons. The treaty, which was signed in August 1963, was the result of a series of negotiations that were led by President John F. Kennedy and Premier Nikita Khrushchev. The treaty was a landmark achievement, as it was the first time that the two superpowers had agreed to limit their nuclear arsenals. The treaty was a result of a series of events that unfolded over the course of the Cold War. The world's two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, had spent decades in a bitter struggle for global dominance. The nuclear arms race had become a central part of this struggle, with each side vying to outpace the other in developing more powerful weapons. The treaty, which was signed in August 1963, was the result of a series of negotiations that were led by President John F. Kennedy and Premier Nikita Khrushchev. The treaty was a landmark achievement, as it was the first time that the two superpowers had agreed to limit their nuclear arsenals.

# **Negotiating with the Enemy: Kennedy and the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty**

A Senior History Honors Thesis

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The nuclear test ban treaty, the landmark agreement that ended the nuclear arms race, was the result of a series of events that unfolded over the course of the Cold War. The world's two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, had spent decades in a bitter struggle for global dominance. The nuclear arms race had become a central part of this struggle, with each side vying to outpace the other in developing more powerful weapons. The treaty, which was signed in August 1963, was the result of a series of negotiations that were led by President John F. Kennedy and Premier Nikita Khrushchev. The treaty was a landmark achievement, as it was the first time that the two superpowers had agreed to limit their nuclear arsenals. The treaty was a result of a series of events that unfolded over the course of the Cold War. The world's two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, had spent decades in a bitter struggle for global dominance. The nuclear arms race had become a central part of this struggle, with each side vying to outpace the other in developing more powerful weapons. The treaty, which was signed in August 1963, was the result of a series of negotiations that were led by President John F. Kennedy and Premier Nikita Khrushchev. The treaty was a landmark achievement, as it was the first time that the two superpowers had agreed to limit their nuclear arsenals.

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The nuclear test ban negotiations spanned two United States presidencies, two different decades, and multiple crises, including one that brought the world closer to nuclear war than at any other time. Though it took over nine years to be finalized, it provided the important lesson that agreement was possible between the superpowers. Such eminent people as Dwight Eisenhower, Harold Macmillan, Edward Teller, Dean Rusk, and Averell Harriman were all connected to the test ban negotiations in one way or another, yet no statesmen dominated the test ban negotiations as did Nikita Khrushchev and John F. Kennedy. For the former, the test ban became an issue as he was fighting for power in the Soviet Union and it remained an important issue throughout his rule. He was an early advocate of negotiations, but many times it was his actions that soured relations between the superpowers that made negotiations fruitless. Khrushchev would speak about peace one day and the next about how many nuclear weapons he could drop on the West. Eisenhower, towards the beginning of the process, said he wasn't dealing with sensible men and Macmillan, at the end of the negotiations, called Khrushchev a "practical, hard, and brutal man."<sup>1</sup> Yet this was the man the West had to deal with, and though those dealings were never smooth, they eventually led to the first major arms control agreement between the two superpowers.

John F. Kennedy was the other dominant personality of the test ban struggle. He came into office wanting to reach an agreement, but it took almost the whole of his truncated presidency to make it happen. At times Kennedy approached the test ban negotiations as an opportunity to find agreement with Khrushchev and use that experience to solve other outstanding issues between the West and the Soviet Union, such



as disagreements over Berlin and Laos. But, when he became discouraged about the test ban negotiations because of Khrushchev's intransigence, Kennedy came to see the negotiations as a forum to persuade the rest of the world that the Soviets were being unreasonable and that it was not his fault that an agreement could not be reached. Though there were numerous ups and downs during the negotiations, the three major turning points were the Vienna Summit, the resumption of testing, and the Cuban Missile Crisis. The first two events greatly discouraged Kennedy, but ironically the most serious of the events, the Cuban Missile Crisis, actually helped spur the negotiations forward. Kennedy's reactions to each of these events, and to other more minor events, reveal how he approached the test ban and how Khrushchev's actions changed how Kennedy viewed the negotiations.

Many scholars have examined the test ban. Several books were written shortly after its adoption, but they lack much of the documentary evidence that is now available. In 1981 Glenn Seaborg published one of the best accounts. Because Kennedy appointed Seaborg the chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission Seaborg is able to provide a first-hand description of the negotiations. Michael Beschloss touches on the test ban throughout *The Crisis Years*, published in 1991, but his book examines the whole period of international relations between Kennedy and Khrushchev without focusing on the test ban issue. Also, though he was able to draw upon many documents not available to previous authors, even more documents have been declassified with the end of the Cold War. The most recent study of the issue, by Kendrick Oliver in 1998, focuses on the role Great Britain and her Prime Minister, Macmillan, played in shaping American policy towards the test ban negotiations.

This thesis offers a new perspective than the previous works done on the test ban negotiations. Instead of trying to give simply an historical account of the process, or an explanation of how the test ban negotiations fit in with all the other issues of the day, this thesis will attempt to look deeper at how actions by Khrushchev could drive Kennedy, in connection to the test ban issue, from optimism to despair and back again. Also, because more and more primary documents continue to be released, there is always something new to be said. Several documents have been declassified in only the last several years and were not available to any previous authors. One example is a document that helps explain why Kennedy tried to hide from the public possible nuclear tests by the Soviet Union early in the summer of 1963. Though these documents do not drastically change the basic narrative, they do help to shine new light on several important events and to fill in previous holes in the narrative.

The negotiations during Kennedy's Administration can be broken up into four distinct periods. The Vienna Summit marks the end of the first period, the resumption of nuclear testing marks the end of the second period, and the Cuban Missile Crisis marks the end of the third period. The fourth period includes the final negotiations and ends with the actual signing of the partial test ban treaty. In each period, Kennedy had certain expectations for the test ban and reasons to continue the negotiations, which changed as the international situation changed. Also, Kennedy and his administration were constantly trying to ascertain why Khrushchev was acting in a given way and how to react to his moves. But before any study of the test ban negotiations during Kennedy's Administration can be undertaken, the question, how the test ban became an issue in the 1950's in the first place, must be answered.

## The Test Ban Before Kennedy

*Suddenly, there was an enormous flash of light, the brightest light I have ever seen or that I think anyone has ever seen. It blasted; it pounced; it bored its way right through you. It was a vision which was seen with more than the eye. It was seen to last forever. You would wish it would stop; altogether it lasted about two seconds. Finally it was over, diminishing, and we looked toward the place where the bomb had been; there was an enormous ball of fire which grew and grew and it rolled as it grew; it went up into the air, in yellow flashes and into scarlet green. It looked menacing. It seemed to come toward one. A new thing had been born; a new control; a new understanding of man, which man had acquired over nature.*

Isidor L. Rabi at the Trinity Test<sup>1</sup>

The nuclear age dawned at 0529:45 of July 16, 1945 with the Trinity test<sup>2</sup> and so any discussion of the nuclear test ban treaty logically starts at this point. During the next nine years there were 53 more tests, with both the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union joining the nuclear club, but during this time there was little or no pressure to stop testing.<sup>3</sup> That changed in the spring of 1954 and for the next nine years the nuclear test ban became a major issue in world affairs. The negotiations for a nuclear test ban began during the Eisenhower Administration and their birth can be traced to a single event: the U.S. thermonuclear test on March 1, 1954 in the Bikini Atoll, codenamed BRAVO.<sup>4</sup> There were immediate problems with high radiation, due to a yield twice the expected, and unexpected wind changes,<sup>5</sup> requiring the evacuation of 236 natives and 28 Americans from nearby islands over the next several days. Many had received near fatal doses of radiation, and though many suffered painful injuries, there seemed to be no fatalities.<sup>6</sup> If these had been the only casualties, few would have thought twice about the BRAVO shot. The uproar occurred when, on March 14, a Japanese tuna fishing vessel, named *Lucky Dragon*, pulled into port with all 23 seamen displaying the classic signs of radiation

poisoning.<sup>7</sup> In Japan, where the cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima were virtually destroyed by atomic weapons a little less than a decade earlier, there was predictable outrage which included boycotting of tuna and students taking to the streets in anti-American protests.<sup>8</sup> The first public call for a test ban came from Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India. While addressing the Indian Parliament on April 2, he called for the Soviet Union and the United States to end immediately all nuclear tests and said, "It is of great concern to us that Asia and her peoples appear to be always nearer these occurrences and experiments and their fearsome consequences, actual or potential."<sup>9</sup> Not only was Nehru the first to call for a test ban agreement, but he also helped keep the public pressure for a test ban at the forefront of international politics throughout the following nine years. Nehru's call was followed by pleas to stop nuclear tests by Albert Schweitzer, Albert Einstein, and Pope Pius XII.<sup>10</sup> Though the Soviet Union and others pressed the nuclear testing issue for the next several years, it was not an important issue in the United States.

Adlai Stevenson, who lost to Eisenhower in the 1952 election, pushed the nuclear test ban issue into public light in the United States during the 1956 Democrat primary race. On April 21, 1956 he called for "prompt and earnest consideration to stopping further tests of the hydrogen<sup>a</sup> bomb."<sup>11</sup> The issue disappeared for the next several months and it seemed that it would not become a major campaign issue. Then, on August 24, the Soviet Union began a new test series and the Eisenhower Administration decided to play up the Soviet tests as a way to show that the Soviet Union was not serious about a test ban.<sup>12</sup> Stevenson then brought up the test ban issue again during a speech on September

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<sup>a</sup> An atomic bomb involves fission and was the first type to be built. A hydrogen bomb is a fusion device which can produce much more powerful explosions.

5. Though Eisenhower himself was beginning to think about the possibility of a test ban, he also thought it was too complex of an issue for a domestic election. But because Stevenson had brought it up in the campaign he and other Republicans were forced to attack Stevenson's proposal.<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, Eisenhower with amazing prescience, at a press conference on October 5, warned that the problem with a suspension of testing was that one side could secretly prepare to test, unilaterally resume testing, and "they could make tremendous advances where we would be standing still."<sup>14</sup> Though Stevenson gained some political traction, two events coupled together destroyed whatever chance he had at defeating Eisenhower. First, the Soviet Prime Minister, Nikolai Bulganin, sent a letter to Eisenhower renewing his call for a test ban treaty and pointing out that some in the United States were proposing the same idea. Eisenhower immediately denounced this as interference in internal U.S. affairs.<sup>15</sup> Though having the support of the Soviet Union seemed bad enough for Stevenson, this was followed with the invasion of Hungary by Soviet tanks on November 4, 1956, allowing Republicans, such as former presidential candidate Thomas Dewey, to declare that "a Russian promise is an invitation to national suicide."<sup>16</sup> Stevenson lost in a landslide, but he did bring the test ban issue, which had been important internationally for years, to the front of American politics.

The Eisenhower Administration had resisted all pressure for a test ban agreement in his first term; towards the end of his second an agreement seemed all but done. The initial optimism came when in the spring of 1957 at disarmament talks in London the American negotiator came away with the impression that the Soviet Union wanted an agreement. Then a few months later the Soviets changed their position that any test ban had to be permanent and that no inspection was needed. Instead, the Soviet negotiator,

Valerian Zorin, announced that the Soviet Union was open to a two to three year moratorium and would accept an international control system.<sup>17</sup> These changes in the Soviet position prodded Eisenhower announce in August that the U.S. would enter into a yearlong testing moratorium that would be renewable for another year if progress were made in negotiating an inspection system and a cutoff to weapons production. Secretary of State Dulles, who thought the Soviets were bluffing, was not surprised when the Soviets rejected the plan.<sup>18</sup> After finishing up a test series the following winter and spring Foreign Minister Gromyko announced on March 31, 1958 that the Soviet Union was unilaterally halting all nuclear testing<sup>19</sup>. Eisenhower, who had just received the results of a study of the possibilities and implications of a test ban, responded with a proposal for a technical conference to explore how to set up an international control system. After initially rejecting this proposal, Khrushchev agreed to technical talks on May 9.<sup>20</sup> This conference, known commonly as the Conference of Experts, was held in Geneva from July 1, 1958 through August 21, 1958. It concluded that it was feasible to set up an international control system and proposed the "Geneva System", which included almost 200 monitoring posts and an international control organization.<sup>21</sup> In many respects the Conference of Experts was the beginning of the serious nuclear test ban negotiations because finally there was a reference point for both sides to point to. There were many disagreements about the specifics of the Geneva System, but it was at least a starting point for negotiations.

Eisenhower proposed on August 23, 1958, that Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States enter into negotiations and refrain from testing for a year so the negotiations could be given a chance. The Soviet Union agreed and the talks began in

Geneva on October 31,<sup>st</sup> but only after a rash of testing by both sides, which included two by the Soviet Union after the negotiations had already started. Almost immediately there was a major problem with the negotiations. On January 5, 1959, the U.S. told the Soviet Union that new data from its latest test series, HARDTACK, showed that the Conference of Experts had overstated the Geneva System's ability to detect underground tests, but the Soviet Union refused to accept these new data.<sup>22</sup> At a meeting a week later, President Eisenhower and his administration were looking for a way to break off the negotiations to their advantage. Eisenhower said he did not think the Soviets really wanted to make the negotiations succeed, and that it would be best to break off negotiations over the control system. Dulles, also with much foresight, thought the Soviets would insist on a veto in the control organization and that the U.S. could use that to break off negotiations. Finally, after hearing about the idea of evolving the techniques to detect tests even after the treaty was signed, Eisenhower "responded that would be possible if we were dealing with sensible people, but not when we were dealing with the Soviet Union."<sup>23</sup> The impasse over the technical data not only continued but also became worse when the U.S. brought up the theory of decoupling, which proposed that a nuclear test could be masked from detection in a large underground cavern. Even after the Soviet Union proposed Technical Working Group II convened, the Soviet scientists refused to accept the new data fully and it broke up on December 18 without the hostile delegations even being able to agree on a final report. With these setbacks the U.S. changed its position and focused on only banning tests that both sides could agree were detectable, mainly those over a certain size for underground tests. Also, a joint Soviet-West research program would work to lower that threshold over time. Though there was still some disagreement, momentum picked



up for a test ban and there was optimism that the final details could be hammered out between Khrushchev and Eisenhower themselves at the summit in Paris planned for May 16, 1960.<sup>24</sup> Then disaster struck. A United States U-2 spy plane piloted by Francis Gary Powers was shot down over the Soviet Union on May 1, 1960. After initially refusing to acknowledge it was a spy plane, the U.S. was forced to change its position after Khrushchev was able to produce both the wreckage and the pilot. Despite attempts by Eisenhower to salvage the summit, Khrushchev immediately began attacking Eisenhower on May 16 and even withdrew a pending invitation for Eisenhower to visit the Soviet Union.<sup>25</sup> The U-2 incident had destroyed any chance of test ban agreement during Eisenhower's Administration. After U.S. elections the following fall, it would be up to Eisenhower's successor to try to reach agreement with the Soviet Union.



## Inauguration to Vienna

*The deliberations which you are about to undertake could lead to the first international arms control agreement of the nuclear age. Such an agreement might not only help to contain the danger of a nuclear arms race, but might also be the prototype of other far-reaching agreements.*<sup>1</sup>

Kennedy to Ambassador Dean before negotiations resumed.

After winning one of the closest Presidential elections in history on November 9, 1960, John F. Kennedy was determined to do things differently than his predecessor had done. But even with his victory, he knew his position was tenuous given the closeness of the election and he needed a way to rally the country around him. As one author has pointed out, "Kennedy knew the surest way to unite the Congress and people behind his leadership was through foreign policy."<sup>2</sup> He entered office thinking it was only Eisenhower and the people around him who had kept major agreements with the Soviet Union, such as the nuclear test ban, out of reach,<sup>3</sup> hence agreement with Nikita Khrushchev and the Soviet Union would be possible under his leadership. And the first signs out of Moscow were encouraging. Radio Moscow described the inauguration of Kennedy as "marking the end of the infamous eight years of the Eisenhower regime."<sup>4</sup> Later that very day Kennedy received a letter from Khrushchev expressing his hope for "achieving a fundamental improvement in relations between our countries and a normalization of the whole international situation."<sup>5</sup> Yet despite these hopeful signs and Kennedy's desire for an agreement, he would be gravely disillusioned and disappointed by the end of March before his hopes were revived with the prospects of a summit with Khrushchev.

Kennedy quickly turned to the test ban negotiations as an arena where he could achieve an historic agreement with the Soviet Union. At first he had thought that he could

find agreement on Berlin, which was a problem that had been festering ever since the Berlin Blockade in 1948 and 1949, which had been a brutal attempt to force the West out of the divided city. The problem had flared up again in 1958 when Khrushchev began demanding a solution to Berlin be found or he would take unilateral actions to solve it.<sup>6</sup> Kennedy asked Dean Acheson, the Secretary of State under President Truman, to look into it, but on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Acheson reported back "There is no 'solution' for the Berlin problem short of the unification of Germany."<sup>7</sup> In the meantime, Kennedy began preparing to make a try for an agreement in the test ban negotiations. He had long been in favor of a test ban and his public calls for a comprehensive test ban during the Eisenhower Administration were noticed even during a State Department meeting as an example of how it had failed to explain fully the administration's position,<sup>8</sup> since Eisenhower was moving away from a comprehensive treaty at that time. The Geneva Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapons Tests, the current venue for the test ban negotiations, recessed on December 5, 1960 with the plan to reconvene on February 7, 1961, but Kennedy asked for the pause in negotiations to continue until March 21 to give him more time to review the U.S. position.<sup>9</sup> John McCloy, who had held various senior government positions and was currently the president's special advisor on disarmament, headed this review and appointed, on January 27, 1961, the Ad Hoc Panel on the Technical Capabilities and Implications of the Geneva System, better known as the Fisk Panel.<sup>10</sup> The Fisk Panel presented its results on March 2, and that same day the Committee of Principals, a group formed in 1958 to coordinate White House arms control policy, met to discuss the U.S. position at the forthcoming negotiations. While talking about the number of inspections each year, Jerome B. Wiesner, the

President's Science Advisor, reported, "He had been told by certain Soviet scientists that...there might be no problem with that number [20] of inspections."<sup>11</sup> Wiesner's assessment of the Soviet position proved wildly optimistic, but underscores the feeling among many in the Kennedy Administration that early agreement on a test ban was not out of the question. In a letter to Arthur Dean, the chief U.S. negotiator at Geneva, Kennedy expressed this optimism by writing, "The United States is prepared to make a vigorous effort to reach an agreement which would be to the advantage of both sides and which would promote disarmament and strengthen world security."<sup>12</sup> Kennedy wanted an agreement and he believed he was sending Dean to Geneva with the concessions that would give him the first arms agreement in the nuclear age.

But why did Kennedy and others in his administration want to reach an agreement with the Soviet Union on the test ban issue? First, as shown above, Kennedy wanted a success in foreign affairs to help solidify his own political situation. He had long been a supporter of a test ban partly because he had been convinced that "if tests were stopped, America would remain comfortably ahead of the Soviets."<sup>13</sup> He also explained that, "Such an agreement might not only help to contain the danger of a nuclear arms race, but might also be the prototype of other far-reaching agreements. At the very least, it would furnish practical experience for cooperative effort in arms control."<sup>14</sup> Clearly the signing of a test ban treaty did not represent an end in itself to Kennedy. He wanted to use it as a springboard to accomplish bigger and better things, such as slowing the growing arms race. Kennedy came into office thinking he could help transform the world, and the test ban negotiations were to be the means to this end. At a meeting with Congressmen to explain the U.S. position before the negotiations began, Kennedy made it clear that a test

ban agreement would improve the U.S. position in world opinion and help the U.S. and Soviet Union move toward agreement on other issues, including Berlin and Laos, while failure "could make agreements on Berlin and Laos more difficult."<sup>15</sup> In Laos the American-backed government was fighting a Soviet-backed insurgency that threatened to draw both the United States and the Soviet Union deeper into the conflict. War was not going to break out over a nuclear test by one side or the other, but the situations in Berlin and Laos could escalate into more serious situations, including nuclear war. McCloy, expressing his opinion in a letter to the President, gave a good summation of the motives driving the United States in 1961. He believed that not only would a test ban improve relations and relax tensions, it would also give experience in arms control and inspection which could be expanded to cover other issues, open up Soviet society through the stationing of foreigners in the Soviet Union, force the Soviet Union to accept the principle of inspection and control, and help control the spread of nuclear weapons. Finally, according to McCloy, a test ban treaty would improve the image of the United States in world opinion, but if instead "the United States were to break off the test ban talks and resume testing, without a new and serious attempt to negotiate an agreement, it would, in my judgment, alienate world opinion, not only in the underdeveloped countries but among our major allies as well."<sup>16</sup> Unlike later periods, there was little talk at this time to use the test ban negotiations as a propaganda platform to show that the Soviet Union was unreasonable. Kennedy had this myriad of motivations to accomplish a test ban treaty in 1961; the problem, which Kennedy would soon face, was that Khrushchev and the Soviet Union did not have the same strong motivations to reach an agreement.

Not only did President Kennedy want an agreement to cease all nuclear testing; he thought he could get one. Despite his bellicose State of the Union speech of January 30 and some inclinations to take a hard line with the Soviets, Kennedy also saw possibilities for agreement with the Soviet Union. On February 11, he brought together his Soviet experts to decide how to approach them. Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson, the U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union, told Kennedy "Khrushchev would very much like some specific diplomatic successes in 1961."<sup>17</sup> Kennedy thought he could reach an agreement because, as the experienced diplomat Charles (Chip) Bohlen said, "He saw Russia as a great and powerful country and we were a great and powerful country, and it seemed to him there must be some basis upon which the two countries could live without blowing each other up."<sup>18</sup> Kennedy's belief that he could achieve a test ban can also be seen in the fact that he picked the test ban as the issue on which to create the momentum to solve the other outstanding issues between the super powers. At a March 7 luncheon for Congressional leaders, Ambassador Dean explained the new U.S. treaty proposals, which included many concessions to the Soviet Union, and "He said it was a well-thought-out and fair program, which had been designed to win agreement."<sup>19</sup> For a final indication of the optimism within the administration, Glenn T. Seaborg, the Atomic Energy Commission Chairman, told the journalist Joseph Alsop, just after Ambassador Dean left for Geneva, that he "had heard that the chances of success at Geneva were about 50-50."<sup>20</sup> Because the U.S. was not going to Geneva to play diplomatic games, many in the administration, including Kennedy, believed they would come away from Geneva with an agreement.

The Geneva Conference reconvened on March 21, 1961, and nothing the Soviets said that day gave any cause for optimism in the West. Semyon K. Tsarapkin, head of the Soviet delegation and the chairman for the day, gave his opening statement and said that the Soviet Union could no longer accept a single administrator for the control organization, which had been agreed to during the Eisenhower Administration. Instead he called for a "troika" of administrators: one Soviet, one Western, and one neutral. Each one would have veto power over any action because, according to Tsarapkin, "it is impossible to find a completely neutral person."<sup>21</sup> Ambassador Dean, realizing that the Soviet proposal was unacceptable, nonetheless went ahead and presented the concessions the Kennedy Administration had decided upon, including increasing the moratorium on underground tests from 2 to 3 years, reducing the number of stations on Soviet territory from 21 to 19, giving each power a veto over the annual budget, and making the Control Commission have a 4-4-3 ratio of Soviet, Western, and neutral members.<sup>22</sup> The Soviet Union agreed to many of these concessions over the next several weeks, but all progress that had been made by the U.S. proposal was wiped out by the Soviet proposal for the Troika.

After all the hopeful signs that the Soviet Union really wanted a test ban treaty, Kennedy and his administration had to step back and ask themselves why there was this seemingly sudden reversal on the part of the Soviets. McCloy met with Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet Foreign Minister, at the Polish Mission in New York on March 30<sup>th</sup>. They had a two-hour conversation about disarmament and Gromyko made it clear that the Soviets would not abandon the troika proposal. Also, four days later, Josef Winiewicz, the Head of the Polish UN Delegation, told an American official that, "he had impression from

Gromyko, Geneva Test Ban negotiations would be "locked" with no real progress until after talks on comprehensive disarmament had started and showed some signs of advance."<sup>23</sup> Of course McCloy had hoped that agreement on test ban would give the world experience in arms control, which could then be expanded to cover more comprehensive arms control. The U.S. wanted the test ban first, but the Soviets were making it clear that this would not happen. On April 6, a National Intelligence Estimate was prepared which looked at motivations for disarmament talks for the Soviet Union. It concluded "the Soviet leaders see, in agitation of the disarmament issue, a prime opportunity to further their political purposes in the non-Communist world" and that by agitating for general and complete disarmament the Soviets could label the West as being against arms control even though they knew they would never have to follow through with actual disarmament, though they might be willing to negotiate on some limited measures."<sup>24</sup> The U.S. government had gone from being very confident that it could reach an agreement to seeing the Soviets using the test ban negotiations only for propaganda reasons. Then on April 18<sup>th</sup>, the Americans and British tabled a complete treaty encompassing everything previously agreed to and the new Western proposals. Though it would take a month for the Soviets to formally reject it, the next day Tsarapkin made it clear that the tabled treaty was unacceptable."<sup>25</sup> The American delegation's frustration began to come through because, as Dean eloquently explained to McCloy, the Soviets "have appeared to go to great pains to cross the T's and dot the I's of their stand-still position in great detail and to make it clear that they are not budging in even the most minute particular from previous positions."<sup>26</sup> Dean believed there were several possible motivations for this refusal to budge: they wanted to combine the test ban talks with the



general disarmament talks, save any minor moves to keep the West from breaking off the negotiations, force the West to break off tests so the blame would fall on them when both sides resumed testing, or Moscow had not yet determined what it wanted to do.<sup>27</sup> The Soviet position was well established, even if their motives were still unclear; now it was up to the U.S. to decide how to react.

Over the next two weeks Kennedy considered several different courses of action. Kennedy had made it clear before he had even won the presidency that he wanted to make another effort for a test ban before the United States resumed testing,<sup>28</sup> and to this effect he had told Dean that "the negotiations should be conducted in such a way as to make it clear within a reasonable period whether it is possible to proceed to the consummation of a treaty."<sup>29</sup> Kennedy did not want the negotiations to be drawn out for months and months and by the end of April it was clear that the Soviets were going to do just that. In a memorandum on April 22, McCloy stated that the Soviet Union had no intention of coming to a test ban agreement any time soon, that the Soviet Union would not be the party to break off the negotiations, and the Soviets were drawing out the negotiations to continue the unpoliced moratorium.<sup>30</sup> Because this memorandum was meant for discussion purposes, it laid out both reasons to resume testing and reasons not to resume testing. One of the key arguments to resume testing, besides the danger that the Soviet Union was testing clandestinely, was:

"A plan to resume testing, moreover, may be the only way to get an agreement since, otherwise, the USSR will be convinced that there is no need to accept controls. Finally, permitting an unenforceable moratorium to continue indefinitely (something we have said we would not permit) cannot fail to have an adverse effect on U.S. credibility."<sup>31</sup>



These ideas were discussed at a National Security Council meeting on the same day and its impact on the President can be seen in the fact that Seaborg believed Kennedy was considering at this time both a resumption of testing and one last try at Geneva to reach an agreement.<sup>32</sup> But unilateral resumption or more negotiations were not the only options in front of the President. A Special National Intelligence Estimate of April 25 examined the evidence of any Soviet testing since the moratorium began on November 3, 1958. After reviewing several suspicious sites, it concluded that the political cost of being caught would have kept the Soviet Union from attempting any clandestine tests, though there was no way to prove if they have or have not tested. Several senior intelligence officials disagreed with this assessment and thought that the Soviet Union had enough to gain through clandestine testing to outweigh the risks of being caught.<sup>33</sup> This intelligence assessment became important the following week when, on May 2, Kennedy suggested the United States announce that it had evidence of clandestine Soviet tests. Allen Dulles, the Director of the CIA, repeated the conclusions of the April 25 report and discouraged the President from this course.<sup>34</sup> Kennedy's frustration was becoming apparent by this May 2 meeting. Soviet backpedaling and stubbornness in Geneva was making him look for some way to break off the negotiations. He had two major options, unilaterally resume testing, or continue the negotiations. The U.S. would be seriously hurt in world opinion by a unilateral resumption of testing, and, if he continued the negotiations, he would face more and more domestic pressure because he had promised to make one more try in Geneva and then return to testing. In the accusation that the Soviets were clandestinely testing, he saw a way to put the blame on the Soviet Union for the resumption of testing. The only problem was that there was no evidence of any testing by

the Soviet Union, but this idea of putting the blame on the Soviet Union for the breaking off of negotiations would be returned to again and again. Kennedy wanted a test ban, but if the Soviets made that impossible, as they had in Geneva, then he wanted to be sure the world knew that the failure was their fault, not his.

Though the prospects for a test ban had dimmed by the beginning of May, an unexpected second chance seemed to emerge: a summit between Kennedy and Khrushchev. From the beginning of his Presidency, Kennedy had been interested in an early summit with Khrushchev. On February 18, Kennedy convened a meeting to discuss the idea of a summit with Khrushchev. Despite opposition from Dean Rusk, the Secretary of State, Kennedy decided, "...we'll go and see Khrushchev."<sup>35</sup> Rusk explained the decision later by saying, "Kennedy had the impression that if he could just sit down with Khrushchev, maybe something worthwhile would come of it—at least some closer meeting of the minds on various questions."<sup>36</sup> Kennedy came into office with a lot of confidence that he could change things. He operated under the impression early in his administration that since both he and Khrushchev were rational human beings, there was no reason why they could not reach agreement on the outstanding issues. In the letter to Khrushchev on February 22, Kennedy wrote "I hope it will be possible, before too long, for us to meet personally for an informal exchange of views...Of course, a meeting of this nature will depend upon the general international situation at the time."<sup>37</sup> Yet by early May the "general international situation" was anything but conducive to a successful summit. The Bay of Pigs disaster, in which U.S. backed Cuban exiles tried to invade Cuba, had played out in mid-April and the Soviets had showed no movement on the test ban. Despite the tense international climate, Gromyko approached Thompson on

May 4 with a formal proposal for a summit.<sup>38</sup> Then twelve days later, Khrushchev finally responded to Kennedy's letter asking for a summit and said he would be glad to meet with Kennedy to discuss the outstanding issues between their two countries.<sup>39</sup> The situation was not favorable for the President to attend a summit, but he decided the following day to agree despite the changed international situation from when he originally proposed the summit. Kennedy saw the summit as one last chance to avoid a resumption of testing. After a May 19<sup>th</sup> meeting that discussed what testing could accomplish, Seaborg "had the impression that the president was not convinced that it was necessary...to resume testing."<sup>40</sup> The summit, which he had wanted for months, was his chance to sit down with Khrushchev and solve the problems between them, including the test ban.

The Vienna Summit was seemingly arranged through official channels, but what happened behind the scenes was just as important and, because it occurred through unofficial channels, there is still disagreement about what exactly happened. What is known for sure is that Robert Kennedy met for the first time with Georgi Bolshakov sometime in early May. Bolshakov was a Soviet intelligence agent who worked at the Soviet embassy in Washington D.C. and knew a journalist named Frank Holeman, who, through his contacts in the Kennedy Administration, was able to set up the meeting between the Soviet intelligence officer and the Attorney General of the United States, the President's brother. Michael Beschloss, in *The Crisis Years*, writes that Bolshakov asked to meet with Robert Kennedy and then asked if the offer for a summit still stood. Understandably, the President was not happy with this because he was in a much weaker position following the Bay of Pigs than he had been back in February when he had

initially proposed the summit. To encourage Kennedy to attend a summit, Bolshakov said Khrushchev would make serious concessions to get a test ban and that Kennedy would get a test ban if he went to Vienna.<sup>41</sup> It was only after this meeting between Bolshakov and the Attorney General that a more formal proposal was presented by Gromyko to Thompson on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Aleksandr Furensko and Timothy Naftali, in *"One Hell of a Gamble"*, give a very different account of the first meetings between Bolshakov and Robert Kennedy. Instead of Bolshakov seeking a meeting, Holeman, the journalist contact to Bolshakov, was the one who suggested the meeting with Robert Kennedy. The first meeting took place on May 9<sup>th</sup>, when it was Robert who pressed for a summit dealing with the test ban and John Kennedy offered major concessions. Despite the currently dim prospects for success, the President wanted to make another try and "The attorney general told Bolshakov that the administration's public position of twenty annual inspections notwithstanding, his brother would accept half that number, if the Soviets dressed it up as their offer."<sup>42</sup> According to these authors, no promises were ever made and Kennedy should have known what he was getting into in Vienna. The response to this meeting was the May 16<sup>th</sup> letter from Khrushchev proposing a summit, called by these authors "the disappointing letter,"<sup>43</sup> because it did not go as far as Kennedy had hoped following his offer he had sent through Bolshakov. The authors then review the written instructions given to Bolshakov and conclude "The Kremlin's response left little room for optimism."<sup>44</sup> But if Bolshakov really gave dim prospects of success at a summit, why did the President agree to it? And these authors fail to explain why Kennedy would once again suggest a summit when he was in a much weaker position than earlier and Khrushchev had not even bothered to answer his first letter suggesting a summit. Also,

because the authors are basing their version on Soviet documents, there is the question of whether Bolshakov's written instructions were different from oral instructions.

Khrushchev had many domestic enemies and even members of Kennedy's administration "speculated whether he continued to use this private channel...to keep it from someone in *his* government, possibly someone in the Presidium or military (original emphasis)."<sup>45</sup>

Also, Bolshakov had a very personal connection with Khrushchev through his friendship with Khrushchev's son-in-law and reportedly told Holeman "I'm the only person in the Embassy who can communicate directly with Khrushchev."<sup>46</sup> There is also the possibility that Bolshakov failed to deliver the message exactly according to his instructions. In fact, according to Furensko and Naftali, Bolshakov had been instructed to not meet with Robert Kennedy at all, yet he did anyways, proving he was willing to do things outside of his orders.<sup>47</sup> But in the end it does not matter what exactly was said between Bolshakov and Robert Kennedy. What matters is what Robert and John Kennedy thought was being said and Robert Kennedy thought Bolshakov "indicated to me here quite clearly that they would reach an agreement on the test ban."<sup>48</sup> There is no record of these meetings on the American side because many times only the Kennedy brothers knew everything that was said at them and Robert never took notes of the meetings.<sup>49</sup> What makes sense is that Khrushchev made the first move through this back-channel, and because of the political dangers of refusing a summit when he offered one just two months earlier, Kennedy found the best way to handle the offer: make agreement on the test ban a central part of the summit. Because of this, and the fact that Bolshakov had indicated Khrushchev was ready to agree to a test ban, he had Robert Kennedy offer a major concession as a way to pave the way for a test ban agreement at a summit in Vienna. And he had reason to

believe that this was exactly the concession the Soviets were looking for. In early March, the TASS bureau chief said, "Perhaps the Americans will be able to come down and the Soviets will be able to come up and they will meet in the middle somewhere."<sup>50</sup>

Combined with the assurances he thought he had from Bolshakov, President Kennedy thought he had his test ban at last.

In just over four months since his inauguration, Kennedy had already faced a whirlwind of ups and downs in connection with the test ban. After Khrushchev and the Soviets in Geneva crushed his initial enthusiasm and expectations for a test ban, he had to face the prospect of a return to testing. Then in early May, the idea of a summit was revived, most likely by Khrushchev, and Kennedy had another chance to accomplish his goal. He knew that the Vienna Summit could be dangerous, especially if Khrushchev insisted on talking about Cuba and Berlin, but Kennedy thought he had assurances that Khrushchev was willing to compromise on the test ban. As Beschloss wrote, "Whatever went badly in Vienna would be overlooked if the summit produced what would be the first major nuclear agreement between the United States and Soviet Union."<sup>51</sup> Kennedy felt much optimism going in to the summit and according to Robert Kennedy both he and his brother were "reasonably hopeful about what would happen."<sup>52</sup>

## A Cold Summer

*I want peace. But if you want war, that is your problem... The calamities of war will be shared equally. War will take place only if the U.S. imposes it on the U.S.S.R. It is up to the U.S. to decide whether there will be war or peace.*

Khrushchev to Kennedy, Vienna Summit<sup>1</sup>

John F. Kennedy went to Vienna at the beginning of June 1961 to bring the test ban negotiations to a successful conclusion. He believed he had assurances that Khrushchev was coming with the same goal in mind. But Khrushchev had no such desire. Instead he came to Vienna to do what he had done to Eisenhower little over a year earlier in Paris. To the man who believed that he and Khrushchev should be able to sit down and solve the world's problems, Vienna was a shock that is hard to over emphasize. It changed the thinking of the President and his administration and colored their approach to the Soviet Union for the rest of his presidency. Instead of Kennedy's earlier optimism that a test ban could lead to bigger and better agreements, the test ban negotiations became a political battleground where the Soviet Union and the United States fought for propaganda points that could be used in their contest for world opinion. Because of Vienna, Kennedy came to the conclusion that the Soviet Union, and more specifically, Khrushchev, was no longer interested in a test ban. All the optimism going into Vienna was gone and for the next phase of the test ban negotiations, Kennedy no longer had any real hope that they would end successfully.

Kennedy went into Vienna confident he could reach an agreement: the result was a disaster. In the days before the meeting Kennedy studied briefing books and transcripts from earlier summits. He knew Khrushchev was tough and Averell Harriman, the



millionaire and former ambassador to Moscow, warned, "Don't let him rattle you, he'll try to rattle you, but don't pay any attention to that...His style will be to attack and then see if he can get away with it. Laugh about it, don't get into a fight...Have some fun."<sup>2</sup> But almost immediately Kennedy was drawn into ideological arguments because of Khrushchev's attacks. During the first day Khrushchev attacked Kennedy on Berlin and Cuba, both weak points for the United States and Kennedy. Laos was barely discussed and the test ban was only briefly brought up, the main justification Kennedy had for a summit in the first place. Warned not to discuss ideology because "[Khrushchev] really believes it,"<sup>3</sup> Kennedy and Khrushchev spent most of the first day in arguments over whether Communism would eventually replace capitalism.<sup>4</sup> As bad as the first day was (after which Kennedy was described by a journalist friend as "dazed"<sup>5</sup>), day two of the summit proved much worse. During the conversation about the nuclear test ban, instead of being ready to negotiate seriously, as Kennedy expected, Khrushchev opened by saying "He would not go into any details because the positions of the two sides were well known. Furthermore, he was not familiar with all the details of this intricate problem."<sup>6</sup> Considering that Kennedy expected this conversation to yield a breakthrough, this beginning was not very auspicious. Khrushchev did not disappoint, following this opening by both reinforcing the need for a "troika" arrangement for the administration of the control system and insisting, "that three inspections a year would be sufficient. A larger number would be tantamount to intelligence, something the Soviet Union cannot accept."<sup>7</sup> There would be no bargaining. No give and take. No Khrushchev coming up to ten annual inspections and Kennedy coming down to ten annual inspections. In fact there was no good news in relation to the test ban negotiations. Not only did Khrushchev refuse



to move off the positions he had taken at Geneva in March, which the United States had made abundantly clear were unacceptable and made agreement impossible, Khrushchev put another wrench into the problem by finally revealing that he wanted to link the test ban negotiations with the general disarmament talks, something the U.S. had long suspected, saying "If agreement could be reached on disarmament, then the USSR could agree to any controls and it would then drop the troika arrangement and the requirement for unanimity."<sup>8</sup> Despite Kennedy's plea to use the test ban as a first step, Khrushchev refused to consider it. Kennedy pointed out that there had been a three year uninspected moratorium during the test ban talks and "The prospect of an indefinite continuance of a moratorium without controls is a matter of great concern to the United States."<sup>9</sup> Because the negotiations for complete and general disarmament would take a long time, resulting in a never-ending moratorium, combining the talks was unacceptable to the United States. Khrushchev, by asking the U.S. to continue the moratorium while the utopian idea of complete and general disarmament was negotiated, was all but telling Kennedy that the Soviet Union was neither serious nor interested in a test ban. And what followed next made it questionable if Khrushchev even wanted peace. Turning the question to Berlin and a German peace treaty, Khrushchev reduced himself to threatening war, and when Kennedy refused to sign a peace treaty with Germany, which would have removed U.S. rights to Berlin, he declared "The Soviet Union will sign it in December if the U.S. refuses an interim agreement" and Kennedy replied with his famous "If that is true, it's going to be a cold winter."<sup>10</sup> Any unilateral peace treaty with East Germany, which would result in another Berlin crisis when East Germany shut down Western access to West Berlin, would mean the U.S. would be forced to either give up its position in the

city or fight to maintain it. Kennedy had gambled when he accepted a summit, but with the assurances he thought he had that an agreement on the test ban was possible, he thought it was a safe gamble. Khrushchev changed the agenda on him and the result was the exchange of some of the harshest words ever exchanged between the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union.

To the pragmatic Kennedy, who truly wanted to make the world a safer place, Vienna was a shock. Secretary of State Rusk noted that, "In diplomacy, you almost never use the word war."<sup>11</sup> On the ride back to the Embassy, Kennedy hit his hand against a shelf and Rusk recalled, "Kennedy was very upset...He wasn't prepared for the brutality of Khrushchev's presentations...Khrushchev was trying to act like a bully to this young President of the United States."<sup>12</sup> Macmillan, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, met with Kennedy a few days later and wrote that Kennedy looked, "rather like someone meeting Napoleon (at the height of his power) for the first time."<sup>13</sup> Harriman described him as "shattered" and Lyndon Johnson joked, "Khrushchev scared the poor little fellow dead."<sup>14</sup> Kennedy himself agreed with these assessments. He realized that he had been completely manhandled by Khrushchev. His dreams of being able to sit down with Khrushchev and come to compromises rationally that benefited both countries had been shattered. In a revealing interview with James Reston right after the end of the summit, Kennedy described the encounter as the

"Roughest thing in my life...I've got two problems. First, to figure out why he did it, and in such a hostile way. And second, to figure out what we can do about it. I think the first part is pretty easy to explain. I think he did it because of the Bay of Pigs. I think he thought that anyone who was so young and inexperienced as to get into that mess could be taken. And anyone who got into it and didn't see it through had no guts. So he just beat the hell out of me...I've got a terrible problem. If he thinks I'm

inexperienced and have no guts, until we remove those ideas we won't get anywhere with him. So we have to act."<sup>15</sup>

Vienna changed Kennedy's thinking. No longer was the test ban the key to solve other world problems. Khrushchev had pushed Berlin to the front and threatened war if he did not get his way within six months. And to judge from what Khrushchev said about the test ban, there could be no test ban within six months. Kennedy tried to interest Khrushchev with a test ban as a first step but Khrushchev literally said, "that any other measure would be acceptable."<sup>16</sup> Glenn Seaborg said Vienna "seemed to be somewhat of a turning point. I do not believe it was ever...a right angle change of direction, but I do have the impression that after this meeting he was more inclined to think that the resumption of testing was inevitable."<sup>17</sup> Kennedy knew that any such resumption of testing would not only be a major roadblock to the test ban negotiations, but it would also reduce any chance of keeping the end of the year from becoming a very "cold winter."

Kennedy had been humiliated at Vienna: now the question turned to how he should react to this attack by Khrushchev. On June 6, the President met with Congressional leaders. He told them that he had concluded, "that either from Chinese pressure or for other reasons the Soviets have lost interest in a test ban agreement."<sup>18</sup> Because of this conclusion, the question of what the United States should do had changed. No longer was the administration going to be asking what concessions they could make to reach agreement: Khrushchev had made it very clear what it would take to reach a test ban agreement but the conditions for it were impossible for the United States. Instead, "The main question was how to disengage from these negotiations...so that the Soviets would seem to be responsible."<sup>19</sup> This was a drastic change for Kennedy. He had flirted with the idea of how to break off the talks back in early May when he suggested

accusing the Soviets of secretly testing. Now Kennedy wanted to end the negotiations because they were going nowhere. This thinking was reflected throughout the administration. On June 8, in a letter from to Secretary Rusk, Ambassador Thompson suggested they renew their offer of a test ban for atmospheric tests and underwater tests, thereby putting "the Soviets in a position of turning down a reasonable proposal to prevent pollution of the atmosphere and if they did resume testing in the atmosphere the onus would fall on them."<sup>20</sup> Six days later the Chairman of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy called for an end of the moratorium and a resumption of tests, and there was some speculation that he had done so with Kennedy's blessings. On June 16, McNamara and Seaborg were asked to begin drawing up plans for what needed to be tested.<sup>21</sup> After Vienna Kennedy had little choice but to begin moving towards a resumption of testing. He had promised that he would not allow the moratorium to be drawn out further and further. Instead of progress on the test ban issue since he had come into office he had only been faced with setback after setback. Within two weeks of the disappointing outcome of Vienna, Kennedy's Administration was planning for a possible resumption of testing.

As the summer progressed, the U.S. continued to consider a resumption of testing as a reply to the deadlock in Geneva and the outcome of the Vienna Summit. In fact, the U.S. admitted it to Khrushchev at the end of July. John McCloy visited Khrushchev at his dacha near Yalta on July 26 and 27. In a series of conversations, McCloy made it clear that because of the deadlock in Geneva, the U.S. government was discussing a resumption of tests. He also brought up Ambassador Thompson's idea of an atmospheric and underwater test ban. Khrushchev admitted that he too was under pressure to resume

testing and that his scientists wanted to test a 100-megaton weapon.<sup>22</sup> According to Seaborg, Khrushchev also promised not to be the first to resume testing.<sup>23</sup> From the summary of the conversation sent to the State Department, Khrushchev only promised not to test clandestinely, though he did say, in connection to the 100-megaton bomb, that "He had told his scientists perhaps U.S. would resume testing and thus help them test their bomb."<sup>24</sup> This meeting between McCloy and Khrushchev is very interesting. Both sides freely admitted that they were under pressure to test, and while McCloy admitted his government was actually considering testing, Khrushchev used the threat of the Soviet Union testing a 100-megaton bomb as a deterrent to U.S. testing. Both also admitted that the negotiations in Geneva were going nowhere because of the Soviet "troika" proposal. This conversation, and whether Khrushchev promised not to resume testing first, would come to play an important role in barely over a month. In the meantime, it marks how far the U.S. had come that it admitted to Khrushchev that it were considering a return to testing.

Back in the United States, Kennedy seemed to be leaning towards sending Ambassador Dean back to Geneva for one last time, and if that failed, to announce the resumption of testing. In a memorandum declassified in 2003, McGeorge Bundy reported the results of a conversation between Dean and Kennedy that occurred on July 27. Its basic conclusions were that if the President did not change his mind after hearing comments on the Panofsky Report,<sup>a</sup> he would announce that Ambassador Dean was returning to Geneva for one last attempt. If no progress was made within a week, he

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<sup>a</sup> The Panofsky Panel reviewed whether the Soviet Union were testing clandestinely, what progress the U.S. could make by a resumption of testing, and if the Soviet Union could catch up with the U.S. if both sides resumed testing.

would be recalled and Kennedy would take the matter to the United Nations, where Thompson's proposal of a limited test ban would be announced. Kennedy would also be ready to order secret preparations for testing that would not start before the beginning of 1962.<sup>25</sup> So by the end of July Kennedy had seemingly already decided upon his course of action. This push towards testing was only reinforced by the Defense Department. In a letter to McCloy on July 28, Secretary of Defense McNamara set out the Department's argument for a resumption of testing. When considering the political reasons, McNamara has some very interesting and important insights, especially points three through five:

“ 3. Continuation of a voluntary and uncontrolled moratorium on tests puts the U.S. in a weak position to press for adequate controls in the disarmament negotiations and in connection with other arms control measures; it sets a bad precedent.

4. If there is any remaining chance of obtaining a satisfactory test ban agreement, resuming tests is more likely to help than hinder the chance. A continuing uncontrolled moratorium removes any incentive for the Soviet Union to conclude a treaty or to negotiate seriously on an acceptable control system.

5. Most important--especially in view of the impending Berlin crisis--is the role played by resumption of tests as a demonstration of U.S. resoluteness. The U.S. has stated that it would not continue indefinitely under an uncontrolled moratorium. This is an appropriate time to demonstrate that the U.S. means what it says.”<sup>26</sup>

From McNamara's analysis there is only one choice: to test. Despite Kennedy's sincere desire for a test ban, there had been no progress since his inauguration. It had reached the point where not testing would not only hurt the U.S. militarily, but it would also hurt its position in the test ban negotiations, general disarmament negotiations (by setting a bad precedent), and in the crisis over Berlin. Despite these arguments, Kennedy was not yet ready to abandon a test ban. In a letter to Macmillan, on August 3, he wrote, “I remain



most reluctant to take a firm decision to resume testing--the stakes are high and the consequences not easily predicted<sup>27</sup>." Instead, he proposed, as he and Dean had decided a week earlier, one last attempt should be made in Geneva, and if that did not work, a resumption of testing would occur not before the new year. No one knows for sure why Kennedy wanted to make this one last attempt. It might have simply been that he was not yet ready to make the decision to resume testing, as he told Macmillan. Kennedy knew that this was his last chance for an agreement before Berlin became a serious problem. In fact, on the same day the letter to Macmillan was sent, the Soviets announced that the West had to either negotiate or face the consequences.<sup>28</sup> Kennedy knew that once he took that fateful step of announcing tests there would be no turning back. By sending Dean back to Geneva, Kennedy was both stalling about having to make that final decision and also providing, for propaganda use, one more demonstration that the U.S. wanted a test ban but the Soviet Union did not.

Worry about the propaganda angle and about what the rest of the world thought about the test ban negotiations was present throughout the summer of 1961, and in some ways was the main reason the United States continued the test ban negotiations. As already shown above, Kennedy was interested in how to disengage from the talks with the blame being placed on the Soviet Union, not the United States, for their failure. As the U.S. was preparing its position for the upcoming general and complete disarmament talks during the summer of 1961 a State Department memorandum admits that propaganda was the main focus: "The primary purpose at this time, in view of the absence of a prospect for serious negotiations on disarmament, is to achieve Allied unity and to win over the Soviets at the UN and around the world on the public opinion

front.”<sup>29</sup> The dim prospects for the general and complete disarmament negotiations came from the failure to successfully negotiate the much simpler ban for nuclear tests. Concern about the position in the U.S. can also be seen through attempts to win over other countries to the U.S. side during the upcoming UN General Assembly. On July 22 the State Department sent a telegram to the American Embassy in Tokyo. This recently declassified document reveals that the U.S. was already trying to solicit international support. The State Department stressed that it saw the Japanese government as a key ally in the test ban negotiations, especially in gaining resolutions in the UN General Assembly that were supportive of the Western position of an early test ban agreement with adequate controls. In an enclosed series of talking points, the U.S. emphasized, “The Soviet Union has not introduced a single positive proposal within the past year and a half.”<sup>30</sup> A month later Kennedy sent a letter to the U.S. Ambassador in India asking him to talk to Prime Minister Nehru about the test ban negotiations. Nehru had helped start international efforts for a test ban and Kennedy wanted his ambassador to convince Nehru to support the U.S. resolution on the test ban in the upcoming UN General Assembly and not to propose a resolution like he had the year before, which had called for the moratorium to continue indefinitely without any control.<sup>31</sup> The worry of the UN General Assembly and what India would do was not a new worry. Earlier in August, at a meeting discussing the Panofsky Panel’s conclusions, McCloy said he “believed that as a practical political matter we ought to wait until 1962 to test because of the UN General Assembly.”<sup>32</sup> Kennedy responded by saying, “We have here a major political problem. We should clearly resume testing fairly soon, but the UN problem is a serious one.”<sup>33</sup> Then at a meeting on August 17, where the new U.S. position for the last try at Geneva was



discussed, India's position towards the test ban negotiations was a major focus of the conversation. In discussing how low the U.S. should make the threshold for underground tests during the three-year moratorium, Ambassador Dean said, "We must do everything we can to lower threshold so as to give credibility to our position with Indians."<sup>34</sup> No longer was the United States really worried about producing an offer that could actually achieve agreement. Instead the worry was how whatever offer they made would look to the rest of the world, especially India. By the end of August the Geneva negotiations were more a propaganda circus act than a serious attempt to reach agreement.

Dean presented the new U.S. proposal on August 28, 1961. It would ban all tests currently detectable and a moratorium on all underground tests that produced a signal greater than 4.75 on the Richter scale. After three years it would be decided whether new technologies would allow for that threshold to be lowered or even eliminated. The Soviets showed little interest in the new proposal. Two days later the reason became clear. In a message broadcasted to the world, the Soviet Union announced, at 7:00 P.M. Washington time, that it would resume testing nuclear weapons.<sup>35</sup> After almost three years of neither side testing, the Soviet Union was breaking the moratorium. Kennedy had gone to Vienna in June with much optimism. That crushing blow had caused the U.S. to start seriously thinking about testing itself and how to disengage from the talks, but Kennedy had wanted to give negotiations one last chance, not in a small part for the propaganda benefits. The line that Kennedy had been trying to avoid crossing had been crossed for him and however cold Kennedy thought the winter was going to be back in June, it became a few degrees colder with Moscow's announcement less than three months later.

## Propaganda

*The flash of light was so bright that it was visible at a distance of a 1000 kilometers, despite cloudy skies. A gigantic swirling mushroom cloud rose as high as 64 kilometers.*

Description of 50 megaton Soviet test on October 30, 1961<sup>1</sup>

The Soviet resumption of testing changed the equation once again. Despite Kennedy publicly acknowledging after Vienna that he had to prove to Khrushchev that he both had experience and had guts, Khrushchev was the one to act, not the United States. Secretary of Defense McNamara wanted to use a resumption of testing by the U.S. to both jumpstart the negotiations and to show U.S. resolve, but Khrushchev's testing first made it impossible for the U.S. to accomplish those goals. Instead, the worry Eisenhower had had back in 1956, that one side could secretly prepare to test and then begin testing unilaterally, had come true and it was a worry that Kennedy and his administration would have for the rest of the negotiations, adding one more complication. Also, with both sides conducting test after test, neither side was willing to negotiate seriously in case the other side had gained an advantage during its latest test. Yet, despite the heightened tensions, which eventually culminated in the Cuban Missile Crisis, there were glimmers of hope. By the summer and fall of 1962 common ground was beginning to be found, common ground which eventually led to the signing of a test ban treaty the following year.

The day after the Soviet Union announced it was resuming nuclear testing, President Kennedy was in meetings all day to decide what to do about it. The United States did not immediately announce it too was resuming testing. Instead, many in the administration wanted to let the Soviet Union feel the wrath of world public opinion first. In a meeting with Congressional leaders, Kennedy informed them that even though he

was directing the Atomic Energy Commission to be prepared to test before the end of September, "He also wanted to explore with them the possibility of deriving the maximum propaganda benefit by the U.S. from the recent Russian announcement to resume testing."<sup>2</sup> Even though the United States had already lost the benefits McNamara had imagined, Kennedy was ready and willing to use the Soviet resumption to his full advantage. But even as they tried to take advantage of the situation for propaganda there was a constant worry of looking weak. Throughout the meetings there were suggestions on how to emphasize U.S. strength without immediately testing in response to the Soviet tests. For example, after one senator said he thought Khrushchev was trying to intimidate the West, Kennedy suggested, "McNamara might hold a press conference in which he would state bluntly that the U.S. has a stockpile of nuclear weapons from three to seven times greater than that of the Soviet Union."<sup>3</sup> In the eventual White House statement this need to look strong was reflected in the line "The President is entirely confident in the size of the U.S. stockpile."<sup>4</sup> Despite all the meetings, no decisions, besides the decision to wait, were made on that first day.

After the Soviets followed their announcement with an actual test the following day, things began moving faster. Rusk, after having spoken to Kennedy, told McCloy over the phone, "[Kennedy], on his own initiative, started raising [the] question of a proposal on the limitation of atmospheric tests."<sup>5</sup> After some quick negotiations within the administration and with the British, both Washington and London issued a proposal for the elimination of atmospheric tests on September 3.<sup>6</sup> In these first few days the U.S. reaction to the Soviet test resumption was already clear. As McGeorge Bundy explained, "of all the Soviet provocations of these two years [1961 and 1962], it was the resumption

of testing that disappointed [Kennedy] most.”<sup>7</sup> Yet Kennedy did not overreact. He measured his options carefully and tried to gain the most in world public opinion from the event by both waiting to announce U.S. resumption and by offering an atmospheric test ban. But his need to look strong was also already becoming clear. He wanted to make sure the world knew the U.S. was still more powerful than the Soviet Union; hence his suggestion that McNamara tell the world the U.S. still had many more weapons than the Soviet Union. These two goals, propaganda and looking strong, would come into conflict shortly, but in his initial reaction Kennedy wanted to accomplish both goals. Kennedy’s need to look strong was something that had been on the agenda since the Vienna Summit; now it grew in importance. In a morning meeting with Glenn Seaborg on September 5, Kennedy expressed concern about the planned size of the first American test: “The disparity between the planned test and the first Soviet test at over 100 KT would invite such adverse comment as to be unacceptable.”<sup>8</sup> Kennedy was very worried about looking weak by conducting a smaller test than the Soviet Union, but because he also wanted it done quickly, Seaborg had to tell him that to conduct such a large test would endanger the ability to conduct future tests at the same underground site. Later that same day, the latest Soviet test, which occurred that morning, “resulted in President Kennedy’s announcing . . . the immediate resumption of underground nuclear testing.”<sup>9</sup> After offering an atmospheric test ban two days earlier for propaganda purposes, Kennedy could not wait idly as the Soviet Union ignored him and continued to test in the atmosphere with impunity. His need to look strong and act decisively was greater than his desire for favorable world opinion. He had worried about looking weak during his campaign for president and he worried about it still. Of course his fear had

been reinforced by Vienna and some signals coming from Moscow made it seem that the Soviets still saw him as weak. Just two days later, in a conversation between a U.S. and a Soviet official at the UN, the Soviet official said, "Kennedy gave the same impression as Eisenhower gave—of weakness."<sup>10</sup> This just confirmed what Kennedy had been worried about since the Vienna Summit. And the Soviets' testing first did nothing to help him fix it. Kennedy must have been angry at himself for not being the first one to act. Now not only did he still look weak to Khrushchev, but also he had lost the easiest way to look stronger: be the first to test. He had given the negotiations one more try for at least partly propaganda reasons and now his propaganda goal had gotten in the way of his goal of looking strong.

Over the next several weeks the Kennedy Administration tried to discover why Khrushchev had decided to resume testing. The day after the announcement McCloy admitted he was confused by Khrushchev's actions because when he met with him in July, "Khrushchev had told him the Soviet Union wouldn't test until after the U.S. had started to test."<sup>11</sup> His first reaction was that Khrushchev thought he could cause fear in the world by talk of the 100-megaton weapon.<sup>12</sup> A National Intelligence Estimate prepared on September 8 examined motives and implications of the Soviet resumption. While it acknowledged there were growing technical motivations to resume testing, it also concluded that it was the West's firm stand on Berlin that convinced Khrushchev of the need to test and that the final decision was probably made in late July with earlier preparations begun months before. The authors believed it was done to show off the Soviet Union's power and its willingness to use it, which "reflects and dramatizes the turn by the Soviets to an openly militant and increasingly risky phase of tactics in

relations with the West.”<sup>13</sup> Replying to a request from Secretary Rusk for his assessment for Soviet motives, Ambassador Thompson replied on September 9. In his opinion the Soviet Union had an accurate view of U.S. strength but blustering over Berlin and resumption of nuclear testing were attempts to convince the rest of the world that the balance of power was in its own favor. Also, he believed Khrushchev saw his military position with the West as worsening, which might lead the Soviets to believe “we [the West] think we have gained sufficient advantage to risk war.”<sup>14</sup> This last assessment was reinforced months later after a conversation between Tsarapkin and Ambassador Dean. Just after the negotiations finally resumed, Tsarapkin told Dean, “The sole and only reason we resumed testing was because we were concerned lest you actually were ahead of us in this field of nuclear weapons.”<sup>15</sup> Kennedy wanted to look strong, but at least in part the reason the Soviet Union tested was out of fear of U.S. strength.

Because of the surprise testing by the Soviet Union, an old worry resurfaced: what to do about secret preparations to test even after a treaty was signed. The danger of the Soviet Union’s secret preparations to test was exactly the argument Eisenhower had used against a test ban when Adlai Stevenson made it a campaign issue in 1956. The first time it seemed to come up after the testing began was at an early October meeting. While discussing whether the U.S. could renew its offer of early September of an atmospheric test ban, McNamara pointed out that, “If the international situation remains tense...he thought we would have to assume the Soviets would prepare another test series despite an agreement. If we were caught again in twelve to eighteen months as we had been this last time he thought we would be in serious trouble.”<sup>16</sup> The ability of the Soviets to secretly prepare behind the shades of their closed society became a serious worry for the United

States. The Soviet resumption of testing convinced the Kennedy Administration that they were not working with people who necessarily planned on keeping any agreement they signed. In late November, at a meeting to discuss the U.S. position when negotiations resumed, Seaborg said, "The fact that a nuclear test ban treaty would not prevent preparations for another series of Soviet tests was the most worrisome thing... After another several years of preparations the Soviet Union might again start to test."<sup>17</sup> At this meeting, because of the dangers of the Soviets cheating, it was also decided that the United States could not repeat the offer of an atmospheric test ban or even sign the comprehensive draft treaty the United States had presented in Geneva.<sup>18</sup> The real fear was not that the treaty would be broken soon after it was signed; the United States could always return to testing in a matter of months. Instead, the worry was that the Soviet Union would surpass the United States while the U.S. was still preparing its tests. Already by late November 1962 the President's Science Advisory Committee concluded that the Soviet Union had caught up with, and maybe even passed, the United States in some fields of nuclear weapon technology.<sup>19</sup> If the United States was caught off guard again, there could be serious problems. In a memorandum to Secretary McNamara describing the pros and cons of an atmospheric test ban, a Defense Department official estimated the U.S. would lose 20 months in the technology race if the Soviet Union broke a test ban after a couple of years.<sup>20</sup> The United States could not risk the Soviet Union getting a head start in the technology race by secretly preparing to test. There was still the worry of clandestine testing, but with the Soviet resumption of testing the bigger worry became that the Soviet Union would secretly prepare to test and then conduct its test series out in the open. Yet the United States had not even been able to convince the



Soviet Union to accept the safeguards needed for clandestine testing. Now the U.S. needed the Soviet Union to accept safeguards against clandestine *preparations* to test.

Ironically, just as the Kennedy Administration came to the conclusion it needed more safeguards, it also began to realize that the Soviets really did have security and espionage fears. First, when Tsarapkin met with Dean in late November, he told him, "We knew also that you planned to attack the Soviet Union with nuclear weapons."<sup>21</sup> Of course this was not true, but the leaders of the Soviet Union seemed to really believe it. Also, Tsarapkin made it clear that there was no point in continuing the negotiations for a test ban because "In view of the present tensions in this world, there is no possibility whatsoever of any further negotiations on the nuclear test ban agreement."<sup>22</sup> On top of that, Tsarapkin said, "I must admit Mr. Dean has been most constructive and reasonable but we just cannot accept his suggestions in view of the present tension of the world."<sup>23</sup> Tsarapkin made it very clear that because of Soviet security concerns and international tensions, which Khrushchev of course made worse at Vienna and through the resumption of testing, it was impossible for the Soviet Union to agree to a test ban. In late December, President Kennedy and Prime Minister Macmillan met in Bermuda to speak about a variety of subjects including the test ban. At those meetings, Dr. Harold Brown, a Defense Department official, said that the Soviets had originally thought they could hide their large missiles, but because of the effectiveness of the U-2, they needed smaller and lighter missiles, which could be built as a result of more testing.<sup>24</sup> This was an important realization by the West. Brown was admitting that the Soviets had legitimate fears, caused mainly by past U.S. espionage. His insight was confirmed the following summer during a five-hour conversation between Ambassador Thompson and Khrushchev.

Afterwards Thompson commented, "Throughout conversation K made many references to U-2."<sup>25</sup> After admitting that part of the problem of the negotiations was Soviet secrecy, Khrushchev asserted that the U.S. "military obsessed with desire [to] acquire ever more information. He said of course every country had spies but sending U-2 across frontier was essentially act of war."<sup>26</sup> The U-2 incident occurred over two years earlier during a different administration, yet it was still clearly bothering Khrushchev. The worry about espionage was not just a ruse to escape having to sign a test ban. As Thompson realized, "[Khrushchev] is obsessed with [the] idea [that] we want to locate his missiles but probably more important he wants to conceal his relative weakness."<sup>27</sup> So just as the United States was realizing that it needed more safeguards, it was also becoming clear that the Soviet Union really would not accept even what the United States had originally said it needed, let alone the greater safeguards required to ensure the Soviet Union was not secretly preparing to test.

Throughout the year 1962 the negotiations did continue, even if little to nothing was accomplished. The negotiations reopened in Geneva on November 28, 1961 with the Soviets tabling a new treaty that basically called for a test ban without a control system. The treaty proposal was unacceptable to the United States and once again the U.S. tried to make sure world opinion agreed with them. In a letter that went to all State Department posts, Rusk gave several talking points for his diplomats to use to discredit the Soviet proposal and to show the reasonableness of the U.S. position.<sup>28</sup> Then in early January, when Kennedy was still considering whether to announce a resumption of atmospheric testing by the United States, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Kennedy's assistant and speech writer, suggested that the President announce that the U.S. would resume atmospheric

testing unless the Soviet Union signed the test ban treaty. This plan, according to Schlesinger, "...puts the USSR in the position of triggering our test series and may therefore do something in the weeks before actual resumption to transfer popular indignation from the USA to the USSR."<sup>29</sup> By this point Kennedy and his administration did not see much hope for a test ban. Kennedy had to resume atmospheric testing, but like most of his actions since Vienna, this would be one more effort to win over public opinion and to transfer the blame to the Soviet Union. When Kennedy, on March 2, did announce his decision to resume testing he emphasized that by testing it might force the Soviet Union to finally sit down and negotiate a test ban agreement.<sup>30</sup> Two weeks later the United States finally put forward a new proposal, a proposal that reflected the new worry of a surprise test series. While presenting the proposal to Tsarapkin, Dean said the United States "Would want to see if in some way we could have the head of state certify there were no preparations for tests and work out agreed rights for preparatory commission to inspect, certain number of times per year, declared test sites."<sup>31</sup> Considering what had happened in late August, the idea of inspection to make sure the other side was not preparing a test series does not sound unreasonable. But when coupled with the Soviet fear of espionage, one can see why Tsarapkin needed to barely glance at the proposal before saying "Under now existing situation, idea [of] international control is completely unacceptable to USSR."<sup>32</sup> The two sides had reached another impasse. While the United States needed more controls than ever, the Soviet Union was unwilling to accept any international control whatsoever.

With the negotiations faltering again, Kennedy turned towards propaganda quickly. When the negotiations had resumed in the middle of March 1962, they did so

under a new form, the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament talks, which were supposed to include five NATO countries (France decided not to attend), five Warsaw Pact countries, and eight nonaligned countries.<sup>33</sup> At a meeting following the opening of the talks, Rusk reported, "On testing, it was utterly clear that the Soviets would accept no inspection in the USSR, in any way, shape or form."<sup>34</sup> A new forum for negotiations, and the same result; deadlock. Rusk then turned the question to the neutral countries at the conference because "The problem was that of getting our position clear to other countries."<sup>35</sup> Once again there was no progress in the negotiations, so the administration's main goal became convincing the world to support the U.S. position. Rusk believed the neutrals understood that inspection would not involve espionage and that there was a difference between detection and inspection. Rusk had also been told that if a secret vote were taken, the neutrals would all support the U.S. position on these issues.<sup>36</sup> At this point Kennedy no longer had much faith in the test ban negotiations. He told Macmillan in a letter a couple of days later that, "It seems clear to me that the Soviets have decided both that they wish to test again and that they are not now prepared to accept any system of international inspection on their territory."<sup>37</sup> Over the next several months little or no progress was made at the new talks in Geneva. Instead both sides stuck to their previous positions and continued to test weapons in the atmosphere.

At the end of July a series of meetings took place at the White House where administration leaders discussed the test ban negotiations. On July 26, Rusk said that everyone was expecting a major change in the U.S. position in Geneva and that "We must not put out proposals for propaganda purposes as this hurts us rather than helps us."<sup>38</sup> Because so much of their past effort had been at securing the support of the

nonaligned countries, these countries expected a genuine offer from the United States. Rusk also recognized that because of the Soviet refusal to accept onsite inspection, a comprehensive treaty had little chance of success. On the other hand, the United States could attempt to propose a partial test ban, which would ban tests in the atmosphere, underwater, and in outer space, and rely upon national means of detection with no inspection. Though the Soviet Union had shown little interest in such a partial test ban in the past, Rusk saw common ground emerging on the issue of proliferation. Gromyko had told him, "Both U.S. and USSR have a common interest against proliferation<sup>39</sup>." Rusk realized that this could change everything. He noted the U.S. had always assumed the Soviets would reject an atmospheric test ban, but "in view of Soviet concern over the proliferation of nuclear weapons, he thought that if we could move forward simultaneously with an atmospheric ban and something on non-proliferation, the Soviet Union might accept it."<sup>40</sup> Despite all the setbacks, a shared fear of proliferation could give the test ban negotiations a new momentum. The negotiations were deadlocked over inspection, but the Kennedy Administration began to see a chance it could at least gain a partial test ban. At the end of August the Americans and British tabled both a comprehensive treaty and a partial test ban treaty at Geneva, but the Soviets immediately rejected both drafts and the negotiations in Geneva recessed on September 7.<sup>41</sup> Despite the initial optimism that the common interest of stopping proliferation would help bring a conclusion to the test ban issue, the negotiations were seemingly deadlocked once again.

Kennedy could have lost hope in the negotiations again, but instead he tried to use the fear of proliferation to keep the discussion moving forward. On August 29, after the Soviets had rejected the new U.S. proposals, the President said during a press conference

that he was willing to sign a test ban treaty on January 1, 1963 no matter what progress the Soviet Union made in its current test series. He was willing to do this because of the increasing danger of other countries gaining nuclear weapons.<sup>42</sup> Also, despite the setback, Khrushchev and Kennedy continued to exchange letters over the next several months. In his letter responding to Khrushchev's rejection of the U.S. proposal, Kennedy emphasized the fact that a test ban, combined with a nondissemination of nuclear weapons treaty, "would have a powerful effect in deterring the spread of nuclear weapons capabilities to other countries. I firmly believe that obtaining this objective is in our mutual interest."<sup>43</sup> Khrushchev replied at the end of September with a letter suggesting the use of automatic seismic stations ("black boxes") in place of manned seismic stations or inspections.<sup>44</sup> Throughout the letter Khrushchev seemed to be trying to find common ground for Kennedy and himself to agree upon. Kennedy obviously saw reasons to be optimistic, including the black boxes idea, because he wrote back to Khrushchev on October 8 and said, "I continue to think that we are within striking distance on a treaty banning nuclear tests in the atmosphere, in outer space, and under water."<sup>45</sup> One of the reasons the President could be so optimistic was that he had been told two days earlier that the United States had over-estimated Soviet advances from the 1961 test series and that the Soviet tests in 1962 "...do not involve any substantial advances over the 1961 series and that a large number of them appear in fact to be repeats of the 1961 tests."<sup>46</sup> This information, coupled with Khrushchev's seemingly sudden willingness to seriously talk about the test ban, made it, for the first time in a long time, reasonable to be optimistic about the test ban negotiations.

After the Soviet Union resumed testing, next to nothing happened in the negotiations for the following year. Kennedy spent most of the year worrying about both looking strong and convincing the rest of the world the U.S. was in the right. He was not really worried about putting forward proposals that had much chance of success, partly because he worked under the assumption that the Soviet Union were not really interested in a test ban at this time. But by the fall there was some movement simply because the two sides finally found common ground in a desire to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Yet even as the two sides finally began to come closer together, Khrushchev was already secretly installing nuclear weapons in Cuba. Instead of riding the growing momentum to a test ban, the negotiations would be interrupted again, this time with a crisis that almost came to the exchange of nuclear weapons. The Cuban Missile Crisis could have ended any hope of an agreement, but in the end, almost miraculously, it helped the negotiations, though there would still be many bumps before an agreement was finally signed.



## A First Step

*We do not want war. We do not expect a war... We shall be prepared if others wish it... But we shall also do our part to build a world where the weak are safe and the strong are just. We are not helpless before the task or hopeless of its success.*

Kennedy's American University Speech<sup>1</sup>

The Cuban Missile Crisis could have been a deathblow to the test ban negotiations. Kennedy had felt betrayed after Vienna and the Soviet resumption of testing a year earlier, and before the Cuban Missile Crisis Khrushchev lied to Kennedy again and again. For example, the Soviet Ambassador to the United States, Anatoly Dobrynin, told Robert Kennedy on September 4 that the Soviet Union would put "no ground-to-ground missiles or offensive weapons in Cuba."<sup>2</sup> Kennedy was also worried about Soviet agitation of world tensions because of the upcoming midterm congressional elections, but Dobrynin assured him Khrushchev would do "nothing to disrupt the relationship of our two countries during this period prior to the election."<sup>3</sup> Yet barely a month later, on October 16, Kennedy and his advisors were studying photographs of MRBM<sup>a</sup> sites in Cuba.<sup>4</sup> It is not within the scope of this project to examine the Cuban Missile Crisis, but what is important was how Kennedy reacted to it afterwards and the amazing outcome of the crisis acting as a catalyst to the renewed test ban negotiations.

The desire to use the Cuban Missile Crisis to spur on the test ban negotiations was reflected in the very letters that helped to end the crisis. Khrushchev, in his letter of October 28, wrote to Kennedy that, "We should like to continue the exchange of views on the prohibition of atomic and thermonuclear weapons, general disarmament, and other problems relating to the relaxation of international tensions."<sup>5</sup> The President also saw a

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<sup>a</sup> Medium Range Ballistic Missiles

chance to use the crisis as a way to further the test ban negotiations. In his reply to Khrushchev, he wrote, "Perhaps now, as we step back from danger, we can together make real progress in this vital field. I think we should give priority to questions relating to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, on earth and in outer space, and to the great effort for a nuclear test ban."<sup>6</sup> This was a revealing letter from the President. Unlike his views after other crises, such as the Vienna Summit and the resumption of testing, Kennedy did not need to worry about looking strong because it had been Khrushchev who had backed down over Cuba. Because of this, Kennedy could focus on making "real progress" on the test ban instead of worrying about the propaganda considerations, which had come to dominate the test ban issue. Also, Kennedy once again brought up the fear of proliferation, a fear he believed Khrushchev shared, and a fear that could help bring the two sides together. Finally, the experience of solving the missile crisis by compromising with Khrushchev revived the old desire in the President that he and Khrushchev could sit down and solve the world's problems. Khrushchev replied with a far-ranging letter that covered many topics. He stressed several times in the letter the fact that both sides had displayed restraint during the crisis and the crisis was ended "on the compromise basis through reciprocal concessions."<sup>7</sup> More importantly, Khrushchev also saw this as a chance to make progress on the test ban negotiations; "Mr. President, we have now the conditions ripe for finalizing the agreement on signing a treaty on the cessation of tests of thermonuclear weapons."<sup>8</sup> He made no concessions and he reiterated that the Soviet Union would not accept any inspections, but nonetheless it was important because it showed a desire by Khrushchev to solve the world's problems through compromise, just as Kennedy wanted to do. Though no breakthroughs were made in these first letters, they

did set the tone that both sides wanted to find a solution to the seemingly never-ending test ban negotiations.

A major breakthrough and a major setback all occurred in a letter Khrushchev sent to Kennedy on December 19, 1962. The breakthrough occurred because Khrushchev finally agreed to onsite inspection. He wrote,

“You, Mr. President, and your representatives point out that without at least a minimum number of on-site inspections you will not manage to persuade the U.S. Senate to ratify an agreement... Well, if this is the only difficulty in the way to agreement, then for the noble and humane goal of ceasing nuclear weapon tests we are ready to meet you halfway in this question.”<sup>9</sup>

Even though Khrushchev refused to recognize the scientific need for inspection, he at least finally agreed to some inspection because he recognized that the U.S. Senate would never agree to a test ban without inspection. Though this was a major breakthrough, the setback came in the very next paragraph, even if it was not completely recognized right away:

“We noted that on this October 30, in conversation with First Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR V.V. Kuznetsov in New York, your representative Ambassador Dean stated that, in the opinion of the U.S. Government, it would be sufficient to carry on 2-4 on-site inspections each year.”<sup>10</sup>

Kennedy replied on December 28<sup>th</sup> and wrote, “Ambassador Dean advises me that the only number which he mentioned... was a number between eight and ten.”<sup>11</sup> Kennedy did not immediately realize the importance of this misunderstanding, and most people thought the misunderstanding was genuine. For example, a member of the American Geneva delegation commented that “Kuznetsov’s report was a correct appraisal of what he thought he had been told”, and Harold Wilson, the head of Britain’s Labour Party, told Khrushchev that Dean was “often vague.”<sup>12</sup> Over the next several months the importance

of this disagreement became clearer. There was little or no movement by the Soviet Union, and by the end of March the situation had deteriorated so much that Kennedy wrote Macmillan that, "Khrushchev probably has too many problems on his hands right now to give the test ban the attention it deserves. In any case, it seems likely that Khrushchev is not yet ready to make the definite move towards the West."<sup>13</sup> Kennedy, after both the hopeful exchange of letters immediately after the Cuban Missile Crisis and Khrushchev finally agreeing to inspections, was once again disappointed about the prospects of a test ban. Then, on April 3, Ambassador Dobrynin handed a letter to Robert Kennedy, that, according to the President's brother, "was so insulting and rude to the President and to the United States that I would neither accept it or transmit its message."<sup>14</sup> He did summarize the letter for the President and one of its main accusations was that the U.S. wanted more than three inspections only because it wanted to commit espionage. Thompson, commenting on the reason for the letter, speculated that the "Soviet military may have reluctantly agreed to three atomic test inspections under pressure from Khrushchev who may really have believed this would achieve agreement."<sup>15</sup> The journalist Norman Cousins confirmed Thompson's thinking only a few days later in an interview with Khrushchev:

"I went before the Council of Ministers and said to them: 'We can have an agreement with the United States to stop nuclear tests if we agree to three inspections'... The Council asked me if I was certain that we could have a treaty if we agreed to three inspections and I told them yes. Finally, I persuaded them."<sup>16</sup>

Khrushchev felt he had been made out to be a fool when Kennedy replied that he needed eight to ten inspections a year. A breakthrough had occurred when Khrushchev agreed to inspections, but that concession occurred only because of a misunderstanding about the

number of inspections. Though the United States did not realize it right away, the disagreement over how many inspections Ambassador Dean had said were needed soured the negotiations for months and almost destroyed the momentum built during the successful negotiated end to the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The lack of progress quickly dimmed Kennedy's hopes for a test ban after his initial optimism following the Cuban Missile Crisis. At a news conference on March 21 he was asked about the test ban and he began his answer with, "Well, my hopes are somewhat dimmed, but nevertheless I hope."<sup>17</sup> Then just a week later he sent the letter to Macmillan saying Khrushchev did not have the time to focus on the test ban. Early in April, John McCone, the Director of CIA, met with the President and brought up some objections to a test ban treaty. Kennedy responded by telling him "that he did not think we were going to get a treaty anyway."<sup>18</sup> His already pessimistic view of the test ban negotiations grew with the realization in April that the misunderstanding about the number of inspections offered by Dean was having lasting consequences. Kennedy and Macmillan then sent a joint letter on April 15 to Khrushchev proposing they send "very senior representatives who would be empowered to speak for us and talk in Moscow directly with you."<sup>19</sup> This attempt to break the deadlock, which had once again developed, did not get off to a promising start. Ambassador Kohler, the new American ambassador in Moscow, presented the letters with his British counterpart on April 24. Kohler reported that Khrushchev had been very negative about the test ban and it took a lot of persuading for Khrushchev to even agree to read the letter. Khrushchev told Kohler "that the nuclear test ban really had no importance" and that he favored going "back to position of no inspections at all."<sup>20</sup> This initial reaction by Khrushchev caused Thompson

to conclude that, "Khrushchev has probably given his agreement to further tests by the Soviet Union."<sup>21</sup> The Soviets had not tested since the end December 1962 and the United States had not tested in the atmosphere since November 1962.<sup>22</sup> Kennedy knew that if the Soviet Union began another major test series, he would face pressure to respond with more U.S. atmospheric tests, which might set the test ban negotiations back months or even years as the first resumption of testing had done. When Khrushchev finally formally replied to the Kennedy/Macmillan letter on May 8, the response was not much better than Khrushchev's original reaction. Most of the letter was spent in accusing the West of wanting inspections in order to conduct espionage on Soviet territory, the newest offer was only a new propaganda tool instead of being a constructive step forward in the negotiations, and that Khrushchev had to maintain the security of the Soviet Union. But at the end Khrushchev wrote, "We shall be happy to receive in Moscow the high-level representatives of the United States and Great Britain."<sup>23</sup> The response, despite the acceptance of the proposal at the end, did nothing to allay Kennedy's fear that Khrushchev had given up on the test ban and wanted to return to testing. In fact, Kennedy's reaction can be seen in a press conference he held later that month where he said, in connection to the test ban negotiations, "I'm not hopeful, I'm not hopeful."<sup>24</sup> When he was asked if he believed there would be another round of testing, Kennedy responded, "I would think that that if we don't get an agreement that is what would happen...Personally I think that would be a great disaster."<sup>25</sup> Other people in the administration were also discouraged and Wiesner admitted that, "The Soviet Union may not want a test ban now."<sup>26</sup> From the opinions in Kennedy's White House that spring, it was inconceivable that a test ban would be finalized within a few short months.

Despite this pessimism in the Kennedy Administration, Ambassador Ormsby-Gore<sup>b</sup> suggested ignoring the first part of Khrushchev's message and simply replying to Khrushchev's invitation to send emissaries. Kennedy had done something similar to help end the missile crisis when he responded to Khrushchev's first positive letter and ignored the much more hostile second letter.<sup>27</sup> Ormsby-Gore's advice was followed, and the letter was delivered to Khrushchev on May 31, proposing that Kennedy and Macmillan send representatives in June or July.<sup>28</sup> Yet if those representatives had gone to Moscow in the current international climate, there was little to no chance that any agreement could be reached. The climate had to be changed, and Kennedy did just that at his commencement address at American University on June 10, 1963. Interestingly, Kennedy worked on the speech with few other people, and "Unlike most foreign policy speeches...official department positions and suggestions were not solicited."<sup>29</sup> Two different events encouraged the President to make this newest plea for peace. First, on May 18 Ambassador Dobrynin had told Rusk that the question he was going to be asked in Moscow was "whether it is possible to reach any agreement with the United States on any subject."<sup>30</sup> Because Moscow was reevaluating its whole position of trying to reach agreement with the West, Dobrynin told Rusk, "He thought it was of great importance that some point be found on which agreement could be reached. He emphasized the psychology of an agreement on something rather than the importance of the subject of agreement itself."<sup>31</sup> Kennedy already knew that time was running short: this just emphasized that point. Also, Dobrynin pointed out that any agreement would do, showing that Khrushchev needed an agreement and needed it soon. The second

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<sup>b</sup> The British ambassador to the United States, who had been the chief negotiator for the British at Geneva.



encouraging sign came two days before the speech when Khrushchev replied to the letter of May 31. Though Khrushchev once again went through his litany of complaints, including that the West wanted inspections for espionage, in the end he invited the American and British representatives to come to Moscow on July 15.<sup>32</sup>

The stage was set perfectly for Kennedy to change the international climate. In his famous American University speech, Kennedy said, "I am talking about genuine peace, the kind of peace that makes life on earth worth living."<sup>33</sup> After reviewing the costs of modern war, he concluded, "In short, both the United States and its allies, and the Soviet Union and its allies, have a mutually deep interest in a just and genuine peace and in halting the arms race."<sup>34</sup> As to how to end the arms race, he pointed to the general and complete disarmament negotiations, and that the test ban negotiations was "the one major area... where the end is in sight, yet where a fresh start is badly needed... The conclusion of such a treaty, so near and yet so far, would check the spiraling arms race in one of its most dangerous areas."<sup>35</sup> He then announced that high-level discussions would begin in Moscow that summer and he promised the United States would not be the first to test in the atmosphere again.<sup>36</sup> Kennedy had made his play to smooth world tensions to help pave the way for a test ban treaty to be signed that summer, and from the immediate Soviet reaction, he had gone a long way in doing just that. A CIA document declassified in 2001 reveals that two different Soviet officials, probably both working at the United Nations, were interviewed following the speech and both gave almost identical answers. They said that, "The atmosphere created by this speech is now such that the possibilities of agreeing to a test ban treaty are very good."<sup>37</sup> They also reported that, "Kennedy's speech has gone a long way toward assuaging Soviet doubts of United States sincerity."<sup>38</sup>

Because two different officials said the same thing, it is obvious they had been told what to say. Also, because we now know that the United States had this initial positive feedback, it explains why the White House did nothing when several possible low-yield atmospheric tests were detected during the next two weeks. In the end they turned out to be false alarms, but at the time they could have ended the high-level talks before they even began. Kennedy wanted to avoid that eventuality and ordered that, "Every effort should be made to prevent leaks with respect to the current evidence."<sup>39</sup> Also, if there were a leak, the Atomic Energy Commission would release a prepared statement that read, "The evidence remains inconclusive, and it is expected that more definite conclusions must await further evidence and analysis."<sup>40</sup> This discreet handling of an event, which in the past the United States would have been quick to use for propaganda purposes, was rewarded when on July 2 Khrushchev, in a speech in Berlin, said, "Since the Western Powers are impeding the conclusion of an agreement on the cessation of all nuclear tests, the Soviet Government expresses its readiness to include an agreement on the cessation of nuclear tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water."<sup>41</sup> Khrushchev had at last agreed that if the Soviet Union and the West could not agree on the number of inspections, then he would be willing to sign a partial test ban that did not require any inspection. After Kennedy had carefully extended the olive branch, Khrushchev responded by providing an opportunity to gain a partial test ban if a comprehensive test ban proved impossible to negotiate. For the first time since Vienna there was a reason to have real optimism that at least part of the original goal was going to be achieved.

Since the missile crisis, one of the dominant reasons for Kennedy to pursue a test ban at all was to deny Communist China from developing nuclear weapons. At a National Security Council meeting on January 22, Kennedy said, "A test ban involving only the Russians and the United States wouldn't be worth very much; but, if it affects China, it will be worth very much indeed. It is, therefore, much more important than it was a year or two ago."<sup>42</sup> Two weeks later Kennedy said, "In his opinion, the whole reason for having a test ban is related to the Chinese situation."<sup>43</sup> Worry about the Chinese developing nuclear weapons was widespread and in a late April memorandum to McNamara, the Joint Chiefs reported, "The acts of persuasion, pressure, or coercion which might be applied in an effort to gain ChiCom [Chinese Communist] acceptance of a nuclear test ban or arms control treaty run a wide gamut within the diplomatic, political, economic, and military spheres."<sup>44</sup> More interestingly the document also states, "Active Soviet support of these proposed actions would of course render them far more effective than unilateral U.S. action or than multilateral action without Soviet overt participation."<sup>45</sup> The thought of gaining Soviet support to stop China from acquiring nuclear weapons did not go away. While reviewing the instructions for Averell Harriman, who was the American representative for the discussions in Moscow, Adrian Fisher, the Deputy Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, wrote:

"We should indicate to the Soviets that we would not expect to make any public announcement of a joint U.S.-U.S.S.R. campaign to prevent the Chinese from acquiring a nuclear capability but would consider that a tacit understanding that we would do so as part of the understanding between us."<sup>46</sup>

One of the reasons U.S. officials made China such a big issue was that it could be an issue the Soviet Union would also be interested in solving<sup>c</sup>. In a CIA memorandum to Harriman on July 8, a high-level CIA official said, "I have long felt that the Soviet leaders must harbor the profoundest apprehension of the Chinese attainment of an early nuclear capability."<sup>47</sup> Throughout the final negotiations of the test ban Harriman continually brought up the Chinese situation. When he brought it up on the first day, July 15, Khrushchev "did not indicate particular concern."<sup>48</sup> Secretary Rusk immediately responded and told Harriman, "I remain convinced that Chinese problem is more serious than Khrushchev comments in first meeting suggest."<sup>49</sup> Because of this, Rusk instructed Harriman that, "You should try to elicit Khrushchev's view of means of limiting or preventing Chinese nuclear development and his willingness either to take Soviet action or to accept U.S. action aimed in this direction."<sup>50</sup> There is no evidence that Harriman was ever as direct as Rusk seemed to want him to be, though he did continue to bring up the issue of China. From his conversations he concluded that Khrushchev was interested in a test ban at that time because it was a way to isolate China and use it to promote his leadership of international Communism.<sup>51</sup> On July 26, the day the draft treaty was signed, Harriman once again tried to figure out Khrushchev's position relative to the Chinese. During the conversation Khrushchev made it clear the Soviet Union had major differences with China, but when Harriman asked if he was concerned that China would direct its nuclear weapons against the Soviet Union, Khrushchev brushed it aside by asking Harriman if the U.S. was concerned the U.K. or France would direct their nuclear weapons against the United States.<sup>52</sup> Though China was not a signer of the test ban, and

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<sup>c</sup> The Soviet Union had promised to provide a sample nuclear bomb to China in 1957 but by 1960 Khrushchev had stopped almost all cooperation and withdrew Soviet advisors.

the test ban did nothing to stop it from developing a nuclear capability, the issue at least made Kennedy continue to push for a test ban even after many of his original goals for a test ban had been disappointed. Moreover, American analysts believed that the issue made Khrushchev pursue a test ban that summer too.

The eight months following the Cuban Missile Crisis found their climax during the final negotiations for the test ban, which occurred in Moscow from July 15 to July 26, 1963. Averill Harriman represented the United States and Lord Hailsham, the British Minister of Science, represented the British. After the first day, when Khrushchev withdrew his offer of two to three inspections and said he would allow no inspection at all, there was little suspense to the negotiations.<sup>53</sup> The negotiations proceeded relatively smoothly as only a withdrawal clause and the fate of peaceful nuclear explosions proved to cause any sort of problem in negotiating a test ban treaty for the atmosphere, outer space, and underwater. On August 5 the treaty was signed in Moscow by Secretary Rusk and the following month, on September 23, 1963 the partial test ban was approved the United States Senate. In many ways the "climax" to the negotiations was anticlimactic, with neither side making any major concessions. The most amazing part about this last eight or so months before the test ban was completed was that it followed a crisis that brought the world the closest it ever came to a nuclear war. But in solving that problem, both Kennedy and Khrushchev found the momentum needed to finally agree to some sort of test ban. It was not a smooth path from October to July: in the spring success looked almost hopeless, but once both Kennedy and Khrushchev decided they really wanted a test ban, it was only a matter of time until they signed one.

## Conclusion

There was nothing easy about the negotiations for the nuclear test ban. Every time agreement seemed to be near, something threw it into doubt, and peace between the superpowers sometimes seemed impossible. Kennedy's initial confidence was shattered within months of his inauguration, and though it returned at times, he never fully recovered that naïve belief that he and Khrushchev could sit down and solve the world's problems. Instead Kennedy had to constantly react to what Khrushchev was doing. He thought he was making a worthwhile proposal in March, 1961, only to be stopped cold by Khrushchev insisting on a veto. Then when he got his hopes up that the test ban issue could be solved at Vienna, Khrushchev reinforced his intransigence and even threw up new roadblocks to an agreement. After Vienna the test ban negotiations became a place to score propaganda points, not a place for serious negotiations. Kennedy realized he had to return to testing, but he wanted to first prove to the world that it was Khrushchev, not himself, who was keeping a test ban from being completed. He had some hopes that a return to testing might stimulate the negotiations, but that hope was dashed as soon as the Soviet Union returned to testing first just as he was making his final push in negotiations for propaganda reasons. It was back to trying to secure favorable opinion throughout the world, and this only changed when common ground was finally found on the issue of proliferation and China. Amazingly, this issue, at least from the American perspective, helped to overcome the bad taste in the mouth that could have been left from the Cuban Missile Crisis and lead to a test ban finally being signed.

If one looks back to the original goals for the test ban negotiations first set out by the Kennedy Administration, only one was still present in 1963 and not one of them was

ultimately met with the signing of a test ban. They had hoped the test ban negotiations would help relax tensions, but, in the course of negotiating it, the world came to the brink of nuclear war partly because of the tensions caused by the failure to reach agreement. Also, the test ban was supposed to give experience in arms control and inspection while also forcing the Soviet Union to accept the principle of international control, but because in the end the treaty contained neither inspection nor international control, this goal was not met. True, down the road further agreements were signed, but the next major arms limitation treaty was not signed for almost another decade. Finally, the negotiations were supposed to help stop proliferation, which was the last of the original goals still around in 1963. But even this last goal failed to be met because during the negotiations France gained a nuclear capability and only a year after the test ban was signed Communist China joined the nuclear club.

There are still important questions that remain to be investigated regarding the test ban treaty. Many will either require, or be enlightened by, a close reading of the Soviet documentary evidence as it finally becomes available and any new documents that come to light in the United States. For example, it would be interesting to investigate further just why Khrushchev decided to finally agree to a partial test ban agreement in 1963 and what role China played in that decision. Also, a study parallel to this one that examined how Khrushchev and his advisors viewed and reacted to the actions of the United States, and how Khrushchev viewed the test ban negotiations throughout this period, would be very useful. Such a topic was beyond the scope or resources of this paper, but it is a question that merits investigation



So what importance did the test ban have? First, the negotiations show how hard it can be for two rival powers to come to agreement, even on something both sides claim they desire. Every action by Khrushchev left lasting impressions on Kennedy and his advisors. For example, Khrushchev's attitude at the Vienna Summit caused Kennedy to worry about looking strong throughout the following year and a half. Simple misunderstandings, such as how many inspections Ambassador Dean said would be needed, could scuttle what seemed to be promising negotiations. Also, the negotiations show how sometimes things just need the right circumstances to happen. The limited test ban treaty, in its final form, could have been signed during Eisenhower's Administration. But it took what happened in the intervening years for the two sides to finally agree to it. The treaty would probably have been impossible to sign without a return to testing in 1961 or the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. The former provided the tests the hardliners wanted in both countries and the latter took both sides to the brink of disaster and showed for both sides the true danger that had been unleashed in 1945 with the Trinity test. Finally, and most importantly, the test ban negotiations showed it was possible for agreement between the super powers. This was an important first step, one that helped lead to future arms control agreements, even if it took years for those efforts to succeed. Though the test ban failed in many of its original goals, it still had enduring lessons and consequences.

## Notes

### Introduction

<sup>1</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 309.

### The Test Ban Before Kennedy

<sup>1</sup> Rhodes, 672.

<sup>2</sup> Rhodes, 670.

<sup>3</sup> Mikhailov, 14-16.

<sup>4</sup> Divine, 3.

<sup>5</sup> Seaborg, 3-4.

<sup>6</sup> Divine, 4.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>10</sup> Seaborg, 4.

<sup>11</sup> Divine, 72.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 86-90.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 98-99.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 143, 146.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 200.

<sup>20</sup> Seaborg, 11-12.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 12-13.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-17.

<sup>23</sup> *Memorandum of Conversation with the President: January 19, 1959*, available Burr and Montford, Document 11.

<sup>24</sup> Seaborg, 18, 20-24.

<sup>25</sup> Divine, 312-313.

### Chapter 1: Inauguration to Vienna

<sup>1</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 6.

<sup>2</sup> Beschloss, 48.

<sup>3</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 107.

<sup>4</sup> Beschloss, 49.

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- <sup>5</sup> *The Kennedy-Khrushchev Letters*, 4.
- <sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Berlin Crises*, available at [http://future.state.gov/when/timeline/1946\\_cold\\_war/berlin\\_crisis.html](http://future.state.gov/when/timeline/1946_cold_war/berlin_crisis.html).
- <sup>7</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 107.
- <sup>8</sup> State Department Memorandum of Conversation, *Meeting of the Secretary's Disarmament Advisors*, 3 November 1959, available Burr and Montford, Document 19.
- <sup>9</sup> Seaborg, 35-36.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, 36.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 42.
- <sup>12</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 6.
- <sup>13</sup> Beschloss, 84.
- <sup>14</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 6.
- <sup>15</sup> Seaborg, 48.
- <sup>16</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 5.
- <sup>17</sup> Beschloss, 68-69.
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 70.
- <sup>19</sup> Seaborg, 46-47.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 52.
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, 54-55.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, 55-56.
- <sup>23</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 12.
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, Document 13.
- <sup>25</sup> Seaborg, 57-59.
- <sup>26</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 15.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, Document 16.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, Document 6.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, Document 16.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>32</sup> Seaborg, 63.
- <sup>33</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 17.
- <sup>34</sup> Seaborg, 64.
- <sup>35</sup> Beschloss, 70,77.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 77,
- <sup>37</sup> *The Kennedy-Khrushchev Letters*, 11.
- <sup>38</sup> Beschloss, 159.
- <sup>39</sup> *The Kennedy-Khrushchev Letters*, 34-38.
- <sup>40</sup> Seaborg, 66.
- <sup>41</sup> Beschloss, 152, 155.
- <sup>42</sup> Fursenko and Naftali, 112-113.
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, 116.
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid*, 117.
- <sup>45</sup> Sorensen, 554.
- <sup>46</sup> Beschloss, 152.
- <sup>47</sup> Furensko and Naftali, 112.

- <sup>48</sup> Beschloss, 155.  
<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 156.  
<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 109.  
<sup>51</sup> Ibid, 180.  
<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 180-181.

## Chapter 2: A Cold Summer

- <sup>1</sup> Beschloss, 225-6  
<sup>2</sup> Taubman, 493-4.  
<sup>3</sup> Beschloss, 206.  
<sup>4</sup> Taubman, 496.  
<sup>5</sup> Beschloss, 205.  
<sup>6</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 31.  
<sup>7</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>8</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>9</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>10</sup> Beschloss, 223-4.  
<sup>11</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>12</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>13</sup> Taubman, 495.  
<sup>14</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>15</sup> Beschloss, 224-225.  
<sup>16</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 31.  
<sup>17</sup> Seaborg, 68.  
<sup>18</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 32.  
<sup>19</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>20</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 33.  
<sup>21</sup> Seaborg, 69.  
<sup>22</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 44.  
<sup>23</sup> Seaborg, 74.  
<sup>24</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 44.  
<sup>25</sup> McGeorge Bundy, *Memorandum of Decision*, 27 July 1961, available Burr and Montford, Document 29. Also available *Foreign Relations*, Document 46.  
<sup>26</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 47.  
<sup>27</sup> Ibid, Document 50.  
<sup>28</sup> Seaborg, 70.  
<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 96.  
<sup>30</sup> State Department Instructions to U.S. Embassy Japan, W-24, *Briefing of the Japanese Government Concerning Developments in Nuclear Test Ban Negotiations*, 22 July 1961, available Burr and Montford, Document 28.  
<sup>31</sup> *State Department cable 6955 to U.S. Embassy India*, 24 August 1961, available Burr and Montford, Document 30.  
<sup>32</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 53.

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid, Document 53.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, Document 56.

<sup>35</sup> Seaborg, 77.

### Chapter 3: Propaganda

<sup>1</sup> Burr and Montford.

<sup>2</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 61.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Seaborg, 85.

<sup>5</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 63.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Seaborg, 84.

<sup>8</sup> Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Glenn Seaborg, *Journal Entry for 5 September 1961*, available Burr and Montford, Document 32.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Department of State Memorandum of Conversations, *The International Situation*, September 8, 1961, available Burr and Montford, Document 33.

<sup>11</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 61.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, Document 69.

<sup>14</sup> State Department Telegram, *Moscow Embassy Cable to State Department*, 9 September 1961, available Burr and Montford, Document 34.

<sup>15</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 106.

<sup>16</sup> Seaborg, 104.

<sup>17</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 101.

<sup>18</sup> Seaborg, 120.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 118.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, Document 106.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, Document 111.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, Document 200.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, Document, 107.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, Document 116.

<sup>30</sup> Seaborg, 139.

<sup>31</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 158.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Seaborg, 142.

<sup>34</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 165.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

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- <sup>37</sup> Ibid, Document 166.  
<sup>38</sup> John McCone, *Memorandum for the Record: Meeting of Principals*, 24 July 1962, available Burr and Montford, Document 42.  
<sup>39</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>40</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 201.  
<sup>41</sup> Seaborg, 168, 170-1.  
<sup>42</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>43</sup> *The Kennedy-Khrushchev Letters*, 275.  
<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 277.  
<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 297.  
<sup>46</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 235.

#### **Chapter 4: A First Step**

- <sup>1</sup> Seaborg, 216.  
<sup>2</sup> Beschloss, 420.  
<sup>3</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 431.  
<sup>5</sup> *The Kennedy-Khrushchev Letters*, 335.  
<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 341.  
<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 348, 356.  
<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 349.  
<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 426.  
<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 426-7.  
<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 432.  
<sup>12</sup> Seaborg, 179.  
<sup>13</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 269.  
<sup>14</sup> Ibid, Document 270.  
<sup>15</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>16</sup> Seaborg, 179-180.  
<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 198.  
<sup>18</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 270.  
<sup>19</sup> Ibid, Document 277.  
<sup>20</sup> Ibid, Document 280.  
<sup>21</sup> Ibid, Document 281.  
<sup>22</sup> Mikhailov, 30-31.  
<sup>23</sup> *The Kennedy-Khrushchev Letters*, 505-517.  
<sup>24</sup> Seaborg, 199.  
<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 199.  
<sup>26</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 286.  
<sup>27</sup> Seaborg, 210.  
<sup>28</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 289.  
<sup>29</sup> Seaborg, 212.  
<sup>30</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 287.  
<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

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- <sup>32</sup> *The Kennedy-Khrushchev Letters*, 529-536.
- <sup>33</sup> Seaborg, 213.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, 215.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 215-6.
- <sup>37</sup> CIA Information Report, *Soviet Reaction to June 10 Speech of President Kennedy*, 11 June 1963, available Burr and Montford, Document 51.
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>39</sup> *Foreign Relations*, Document 298.
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, Document 309.
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, Document 259.
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, Document 262.
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid*, Document 283.
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, Document 296.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, Document 314.
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, Document 325.
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, Document 326.
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, Document 331.
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid*, Document 354.
- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, Document 325.



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