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The mess we are in - or are we?, 1962.

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THE MESS WE ARE IN -- OR ARE WE?

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

Sunday Morning, November 4, 1962

WE HAVE LIVED THROUGH A CRITICAL, A FRIGHTENING EXPERIENCE IN THE LAST FORTNIGHT, AS OUR WORLD TEETERED ON THE BRINK OF WAR AND DISASTER. SUDDENLY WE WERE CONFRONTED WITH DREAD AND DANGEROUS EVENTUALITIES. THE THREAT OF IMMINENT THERMO-NUCLEAR WAR WAS UPON US. A FATEFUL DECISION HAD BEEN MADE BY OUR GOVERNMENT. IT CALLED UPON THE SOVIET UNION FORTHWITH TO HALT THE SENDING OF MISSILES TO CUBA, AND REMOVE, UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF A UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER, THE MISSILES ALREADY THERE, AND TO DISMANTLE THEIR INSTALLATIONS. A STRICT QUARANTINE ON ALL OFFENSIVE MILITARY EQUIPMENT UNDER SHIPMENT TO CUBA AND ITS MILITARY BUILD-UP WAS ORDERED. OUR GOVERNMENT ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT SHOULD THESE OFFENSIVE MILITARY PREPARATIONS NEVERTHELESS CONTINUE, FURTHER ACTION WOULD BE JUSTIFIED. THE ARMED FORCES OF OUR COUNTRY WERE DIRECTED TO PREPARE FOR ANY EVENTUALITY. OUR BASE AT GUANTÁNAMO WAS REINFORCED AND THE DEPENDENTS OF OUR PERSONNEL THERE WERE EVACUATED. OUR ALLIES WERE ALERTED. AN IMMEDIATE MEETING OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES TO COUNTER THE THREAT TO HEMISPHERIC SECURITY WAS CALLED, AND AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS WAS ASKED FOR TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST THE SOVIET THREAT TO WORLD PEACE.

NO ONE WAS LEFT IN ANY DOUBT AS TO THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE STEPS WHICH WERE TAKEN. "MY FELLOW CITIZENS", THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES DECLARED, "LET NO ONE DOUBT THAT THIS IS A DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS EFFORT ON WHICH WE HAVE SET OUT. NO ONE CAN FORESEE PRECISELY WHAT COURSE IT WILL TAKE, OR WHAT COURSE OR CASUALTIES WILL BE INCURRED... THE PATH WE HAVE CHOSEN FOR THE PRESENT IS FULL OF HAZARDS. THE COST OF FREEDOM IS ALWAYS HIGH... ONE PATH WE SHALL NEVER CHOOSE, AND THAT IS THE PATH OF SURRENDER OR SUBMISSION."

AND SO OUR PEOPLE EXPERIENCED A WEEK OF MOUNTING TENSIONS AND DREAD UNCERTAINTIES AS THE STAGE WAS BEING GRIMLY SET FOR A SHOWDOWN IN WHICH THE GIANTS OF THE EARTH ^{would be} ~~WERE~~ PITTED AGAINST EACH OTHER.

FORTUNATELY, WE AND MANKIND WERE PULLED BACK FROM THE BRINK OF WAR. FIRMNESS ON THE PART OF OUR GOVERNMENT, SANITY IN THE COUNCILS OF THE KREMLIN, AND THE QUICK INTERVENTURE ^{ion} ~~URE~~ OF THE UNITED NATIONS, ~~HAVE~~ SUCCEEDED IN AVERTING A WORLD COLLISION WHOSE APPALLING CONSEQUENCES WE DARED NOT EVEN IMAGINE. OUR PEOPLE, AND I AM SURE, THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE AS WELL, AND MANKIND GENERALLY, HEAVED A SIGH OF RELIEF, GRATEFUL THAT THE IGNITED FUSE HAD BEEN STAMPED OUT.

PRESIDENT KENNEDY ACTED WITH WISDOM, WITH COURAGE AND WITH RESPONSIBILITY. HE COULD DO NO~~W~~ LESS. HE REFRAINED FROM

DOING MUCH MORE. HE DID NOT ORDER AN IMMEDIATE INVASION OF CUBA. HE DID NOT SEND OUR PLANES TO DEMOLISH THE MISSILE BASES. HE LEFT THE DOOR OPEN FOR THE SOVIET UNION TO RE-CONSIDER ITS ACTION WHICH WE CONSIDERED AN IMMINENT THREAT TO OUR SECURITY, AND A THREAT TO "THE STABLE RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO NATIONS". HE REMINDED THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT OF ITS OWN PUBLIC DECLARATION THAT "IT HAD NO NEED TO STATION MISSILES OUTSIDE ITS OWN TERRITORY". HE ASSURED THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT THAT THE UNITED STATES IS PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN A SEARCH FOR PEACEFUL AND PERMANENT SOLUTIONS, INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITIES OF A GENUINELY INDEPENDENT CUBA, FREE TO DETERMINE ITS OWN DESTINY, BUT THAT "IT IS DIFFICULT TO SETTLE OR EVEN DISCUSS THESE PROBLEMS IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF INTIMIDATION".

HE TOOK THE ISSUE TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL. HE WAS PREPARED TO PRESENT THE AMERICAN CASE BEFORE ANY WORLD TRIBUNAL.

THERE WERE THOSE WHO BELIEVED THAT PRESIDENT KENNEDY ACTED AT THE TIME THAT HE DID BECAUSE OF OUR APPROACHING ELECTIONS. FORMER PRESIDENT EISENHOWER, GOADED BY EARLIER CRITICISM WHICH HAD BEEN MADE OF THE CONDUCT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS DURING HIS ^{administration} ~~TERM OF OFFICE~~, RESPONDED IN A SPEECH IN BOSTON, ON OCTOBER 15th, IN WHICH HE SHARPLY CRITICIZED MR. KENNEDY AS "CONDUCTING A DREARY FOREIGN POLICY -- TOO SAD TO TALK ABOUT".

IN THIS SPEECH HE SPECIFICALLY ALLUDED TO CUBA. HE DEFENDED HIS ADMINISTRATION BY DECLARING: "IN THESE EIGHT YEARS, WE LOST NO INCH OF GROUND TO TYRANNY...NO WALLS WERE BUILT. NO THREATENING FOREIGN BASES WERE ESTABLISHED." THE REPUBLICAN PARTY HAD PROCLAIMED CUBA AS THE TOP ISSUE OF THE FORTHCOMING CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS. IN FACT, IT HAS SINCE TAKEN CREDIT FOR PRODDING THE PRESIDENT INTO HIS SUCCESSFUL ACTION.

THOSE CLOSE TO THE PRESIDENT, HOWEVER, MAINTAIN THAT HE MOVED WITH EXTREME CAUTION, AND THAT HE COULD NOT TAKE THE PERILOUS STEP WHICH HE ^{finally took} DID UNTIL FULL AND INDISPUTABLE EVIDENCE OF THE MISSILE BUILD-UP WAS AVAILABLE TO HIM. THEN HE ACTED PROMPTLY AND DECISIVELY.

BE THAT AS IT MAY -- AND HERE IS ANOTHER PROOF WHY OUR FOREIGN POLICY SHOULD NOT BECOME A PARTISAN CAMPAIGN FOOTBALL -- WHAT PRESIDENT KENNEDY DID, HAD TO BE DONE, AND WITHOUT MUCH LOSS OF TIME. OUR COUNTRY SIMPLY COULD NOT TOLERATE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SOVIET MISSILE BASES IN OUR BACK-YARD -- BASES WITHIN NINETY MILES OF OUR SHORES, AND WITHIN EASY STRIKING DISTANCE OF ALL THE NERVE CENTERS OF THE UNITED STATES AND OF LATIN-AMERICA. THIS ^{would have} MEANT THE INSTALLATION OF A FOREIGN MILITARY POWER IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE, -- A CONCEPT TRADITIONALLY REPUGNANT TO OUR NATION EVER SINCE ITS VERY INCEPTION. TO HAVE SUCCEEDED IN ESTABLISHING A BRIDGE-HEAD AND A STAGING AREA IN

IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE WOULD HAVE RESULTED IN A MOST
SINISTER SHIFT IN THE ^{international} BALANCE OF POWER, AND WOULD HAVE GIVEN
THE SOVIET UNION AN INCALCULABLE ADVANTAGE IN THE RACE ^{which was going on} FOR
MILITARY SUPREMACY. THE DEFENCE OF THE FREE WORLD WOULD
HAVE BEEN SERIOUSLY IMPAIRED. IT WOULD CERTAINLY ^{have} ~~also~~ TENDED
TO FOMENT COMMUNIST REVOLUTIONS IN OTHER LATIN-AMERICAN
COUNTRIES AND ^{would have} PUT ALL OF THE AMERICAS "UNDER THE NUCLEAR
"GUN" OF CASTRO AND HIS RUSSIAN MASTERS.

MR. ^{Adlai} STEVENSON QUITE CORRECTLY STATED AT THE SECURITY
COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS: "WE WATCHED MR. CASTRO BETRAY
HIS REVOLUTION INTO TOTALITARIANISM. HE WAS FREE TO JOIN THE
SOVIET BLOC, TO ACCEPT DEFENSIVE WEAPONS WITH IMPUNITY, AND
WELCOME SOVIET TECHNICIANS AND MILITARY EXPERTS. BUT, WHEN
HE TURNED HIS COUNTRY OVER TO THE SOVIET UNION FOR A LONG-
RANGE MISSILE BASE -- THEN THE DAY OF FORBEARANCE ENDED."

THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT ^{evidently} ATTEMPTED TO DO IN THE CARIBBEAN
WHAT IT HAD DONE QUITE SUCCESSFULLY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN --
ONLY THIS TIME ON A MORE DARING SCALE. SEVEN YEARS AGO ~~IT~~ ^{Russia}
RESOLVED TO UNDERTAKE A POLITICAL OFFENSIVE IN THE MIDDLE
EAST AND TO ESTABLISH A SPHERE OF INFLUENCE AMONG THE ARAB
COUNTRIES FROM WHICH IT HAD LONG BEEN EXCLUDED, ABRUPTLY,
AND TO THE CONSTERNATION OF THE FREE WORLD,

SHIPLOADS OF CZECHOSLOVAKIAN ARMS ARRIVED IN EGYPT FAR BEYOND EGYPT'S REQUIREMENTS FOR DEFENSIVE PURPOSES. THE INITIATION TO SEND ARMS TO EGYPT ACTUALLY HAD COME NOT FROM EGYPT, BUT FROM THE SOVIET UNION. EGYPT HAD NOT TURNED TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA TO ASK FOR ARMS, NOR HAD CZECHOSLOVAKIA OFFERED THEM. THE SOVIET PRESS QUICKLY SET OUT TO ALLAY WESTERN ANXIETY. IT WAS PURELY COMMERCIAL TRANSACTION, IT MAINTAINED. THE WEAPONS WERE FOR DEFENSIVE PURPOSES ONLY AND, OF COURSE, EACH STATE HAD THE SOVEREIGN RIGHT TO PROVIDE ^{for own} ITS DEFENSE. (^{Paraphrastically} ~~RECENTLY~~) RUSSIA ALSO SENT ^{recently} ROCKETS TO EGYPT, AND NASSER PROMPTLY ANNOUNCED THAT THESE ~~MISSILES~~ WOULD BE AIMED AT NO STATE BUT ISRAEL.)

AS A RESULT OF THIS ^{huge} SHIPMENT OF RUSSIAN ARMS, TECHNICIANS AND MILITARY ADVISERS IN 1955, AND ^{as a result of} THE CLOSER ALIGNMENT WITH EGYPT WHICH FOLLOWED, THE POLITICAL BALANCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST WAS ^{sharply} UPSET. THE POSITION OF THE FREE WORLD THERE WAS ^{drastically} WEAKENED. SOVIET DIPLOMACY WAS ABLE TO MAKE GREAT INROADS IN THE NEAR EAST. SOON THERE WAS SERIOUS TROUBLE FOR THE UNITED STATES AND THE FREE WORLD IN SYRIA, JORDAN AND LEBANON, FOMENTED BY COMMUNIST AGENTS. IN 1957, PRESIDENT EISENHOWER APPEARED ^{before} A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS, AND ASKED FOR AUTHORIZATION TO USE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES AGAINST COMMUNIST PENETRATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST. A DECLARATION, SINCE CALLED THE EISENHOWER

DOCTRINE, WAS MADE, IN WHICH OUR GOVERNMENT UNDERTOOK TO GIVE, IF REQUESTED, MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO ANY NATION UNDER ATTACK BY INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM. WE ACTUALLY HAD TO SEND OUR MARINES INTO LEBANON, AND GREAT BRITAIN DESPATCHED TROOPS TO JORDAN. SINCE THAT FORMIDABLE ARMS SHIPMENT IN '55, EGYPT AND THE OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES HAVE BECOME UNDEPENDABLE AS FAR AS THE FREE WORLD WAS CONCERNED. IN THE UNITED NATIONS, THEY HAVE VOTED ALMOST CONSISTENTLY WITH THE SOVIET BLOC.

AND NOW, SEVEN YEARS LATER, RUSSIA HAS TRIED TO DO THE SAME THING IN OUR WESTERN HEMISPHERE. IN REVOLUTIONARY CUBA, IT FOUND A BASE OF OPERATIONS -- JUST AS IT HAD FOUND SUCH A BASE EARLIER IN REVOLUTIONARY EGYPT. CASTRO PROVED TO BE AN EVEN MORE EAGER COLLABORATOR THAN WAS NASSER, FOR CASTRO IS NOT NEARLY AS SHREWD AS NASSER. MIKOYAN WAS SENT TO CUBA TO LAY THE GROUND-WORK THERE, AS SHEPILOV HAD BEEN SENT TO EGYPT SEVEN YEARS ^{before.} ~~AGO.~~ (I SEE WHERE MIKOYAN HAS NOW COME BACK TO CUBA, EVIDENTLY TO DO MUCH NECESSARY REPAIR AND SALVAGE WORK).

STEADILY THE RUSSIANS TOOK OVER -- ALWAYS, OF COURSE, AT THE INVITATION OF THE SOVEREIGN STATE OF CUBA, AND STEADILY CUBA MOVED COMPLETELY INTO THE SOVIET ORBIT. CUBA JOINED THE POWER BLOC WHICH WAS HOSTILE TO THE UNITED STATES. CASTRO FELT HIMSELF VERY TALL, RIDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF KHRUSHCHEV, AND FROM THAT PERCH VERY SECURE IN HIS INSOLENT DEFIANCE OF THE UNITED

STATES. HE VISIONED HIMSELF THE REVOLUTIONARY LEADER OF ALL LATIN-AMERICA, AS NASSER HAD VISIONED HIMSELF THE LEADER OF THE ARAB WORLD.

IF THE PLAN OF ERECTING A BASTION OF SOVIET MILITARY POWER IN THE CARIBBEAN HAD SUCCEEDED, WHAT A POWERFUL ARGUMENT THAT WOULD ~~PROVE~~ ^{have been} IN PERSUADING THE UNITED STATES TO COME TO ~~an~~ ^{agreement} TERMS WITH THE SOVIET ON BERLIN OR ON ANY OTHER ISSUE, ~~but on Soviet~~ ^{terms, of course.}

THEN SOMETHING WENT WRONG! THE SOVIET UNION CLEARLY OVER-REACHED ITSELF THIS TIME, AND THE UNITED STATES FINALLY CALLED A SUDDEN HALT. IN 1956, YOU WILL RECALL, THE WEST WAS ALSO COMPELLED TO CALL A ^{sudden} HALT ON NASSER, WHEN HE SEIZED THE SUEZ CANAL. ENGLAND, FRANCE AND ISRAEL AT THAT TIME ATTACKED, AND WERE IT NOT FOR THE UNACCOUNTABLE INTERVENTION OF MR. DULLES, MR. NASSER WOULD LONG AGO HAVE DISAPPEARED FROM THE ^{political} WORLD SCENE, AND THE POSITION OF THE FREE WORLD IN THE NEAR EAST AND IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD WOULD ~~TODAY~~ BE ALTOGETHER DIFFERENT, ^{to-day.}

MR. KHRUSHCHEV'S ACTION IN CUBA WAS BASED ON A GROSS MIS-CALCULATION, AND ON A FALSE READING OF THE CHARACTER, PURPOSE AND TRADITION OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. HE HAD BEEN FOREWARNED, BUT HE HAD COME TO BELIEVE THAT HE KNEW BETTER. THIS IS USUALLY THE CASE WITH DICTATORS. IN CONSEQUENCE, HE HAS NOW SUFFERED A SHARP DIPLOMATIC DEFEAT. AS THE FOREMOST ADVOCATE OF PEACE AND CO-EXISTENCE IN THE COMMUNIST WORLD, AND AT A TIME WHEN THE ~~WHOLE~~ WORLD WAS STRAINING TO ACHIEVE DISARMAMENT, AND TO OUT-LAW ~~ALL~~ NUCLEAR WEAPONS, HE SHOULD NOT HAVE EMBARKED UPON

SUCH A PROVOCATIVE MILITARY ADVENTURE WHICH WAS CERTAIN TO AROUSE ^a~~THE~~ MOST DETERMINED RESISTANCE ON THE PART OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. NO AMOUNT OF PROPOGANDA CAN RECONCILE THE TWO CONTRADICTORY COURSES WHICH HE ADOPTED, ANY MORE THAN SOVIET PROPOGANDA ~~NEVER~~ SUCCEEDED IN EXPLAINING AWAY RUSSIA'S RESUMPTION OF NUCLEAR TESTING AFTER A MORATORIUM HAD BEEN AGREED UPON AND WAS IN ACTUAL FORCE.

TO HIS CREDIT, BE IT SAID THAT WHEN HE WAS FINALLY CONFRONTED WITH THE REACTION OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT, WHICH WAS ENDORSED BY THE UNANIMOUS SUPPORT OF THE NATIONS OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE, AND ^{when he} HAD BECOME CONVINCED THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD ACT FORCIBLY AND RESOLUTELY IN THE FACE OF MANIFEST AGGRESSION, HE QUICKLY YIELDED. THAT HE YIELDED IS PROOF THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS NOT PREPARED FOR WAR WITH THE FREE WORLD, AND THAT THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE DID NOT WANT WAR. IT WAS NOT AN EASY DECISION FOR HIM TO MAKE. IT COST HIM CONSIDERABLY IN PRESTIGE. IT MAY HAVE EVEN MORE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES FOR HIM ^{in the future} BUT HE AGREED TO WITHDRAW THE MISSILES AND TO DISMANTLE THEIR INSTALLATIONS. / PRESIDENT KENNEDY WELCOMED WHAT HE CALLED MR. KHRUSHCHEV'S STATESMAN-LIKE DECISION. HE CALLED IT "AN IMPORTANT AND CONSTRUCTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE".

WHAT NOW? MANY ISSUES WILL UNDOUBTEDLY FLOW FROM THIS SUDDEN POLITICAL TORNADO WHICH SWEPT OVER THE EARTH. THE

REPERCUSSIONS WILL BE MANY, FOR AN EVENT OF SUCH MAGNITUDE, ONCE DETONATED, TRAVELS IN EVERY DIRECTION FOR A LONG TIME.

PRIME MINISTER HAROLD MACMILLAN ⁱⁿ PRAISE^{ing} IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS THE FIRMNESS OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE CUBAN CRISIS AND ⁱⁿ STATED^{ing} THAT "WAVERING IN WASHINGTON MIGHT EASILY HAVE LED TO THE COLLAPSE OF THE DEFENSE OF THE FREE WORLD", ~~BUT~~ ~~WISELY, HE~~ UTTERED THIS WORD OF CAUTION. HE SAID: " THESE VARIOUS TRIALS OF STRENGTH OF WHICH THE CUBAN CRISIS IS THE MOST RECENT, OUGHT ~~NOT~~ TO BE FOLLOWED, ON ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER, BY RESENTMENT DUE TO FAILURE, OR INTEMPERANCE DUE TO SUCCESS. "

CASTRO FAILED AND HAS BEEN DEFLATED. HE HAS BEEN PROTESTING LOUDLY THAT THE SOVEREIGNTY OF HIS COUNTRY HAS BEEN VIOLATED AND THAT HIS PEOPLE HAVE BEEN HUMILIATED. ACTUALLY HE FAILED TO SAFE-GUARD THE SOVEREIGNTY OF HIS COUNTRY BY KEEPING^{ing} FREE FROM MILITARY ALLIANCES, WHICH PUT IT SQUARELY IN THE PATH OF INTERNATIONAL HURRICANES. HE JOINED UP WITH A POWER BLOC WHICH WAS CLEARLY HOSTILE TO CUBA'S BIG-NEIGHBOR, THE UNITED STATES, AND HE ENDED UP BY TURNING HIS COUNTRY OVER TO THIS POWER BLOC AND PERMITTED^{ing} IT TO INSTALL DEADLY MISSILE BASES ^{which were} AIMED AT THE UNITED STATES. SMALL STATES ARE NOT PERMITTED TO EXPLOIT THEIR FORMAL SOVEREIGNTY IN ^{such} THIS RECKLESS MANNER. UNLIKE A SMALL COUNTRY LIKE FINLAND, ALSO ^{separated} NEXT DOOR TO A BIG NEIGHBOR,

RUSSIA, CUBA, UNDER CASTRO, DID NOT KEEP ITS NOSE OUT OF WORLD-POWER POLITICS. UNDOUBTEDLY CASTRO IS NOW BITTER AND FULL OF RESENTMENT. HE MAY RESORT TO RASH AND VINDICTIVE ACTS AND FOMENT TROUBLE. ^{TP} KHRUSHCHEV MAY ALSO WISH TO RECOUP HIS CONSIDERABLE LOSS OF PRESTIGE BY UNDERTAKING SOME DRAMATIC ACTION ON ANOTHER FRONT. THIS WOULD BE A GRIEVOUS MISTAKE. OUR SUCCESS MAY LEAD TO INTEMPERANCE IN FUTURE DEALINGS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. WE MAY COME TO BELIEVE THAT THE TOUGH LINE IS THE ONLY LINE, AND IT WILL ALWAYS YIELD THE DESIRED RESULTS. MANY VOICES, JUSTIFYING SUCH A LINE GLOBALLY, ON THE STRENGTH OF THE OUTCOME OF THE CUBAN CRISIS, ARE ALREADY HEARD IN OUR LAND. THIS, TOO, WOULD BE A GRIEVOUS ERROR AND MISCALCULATION. IT WILL NOT LEAD TO THE MAJOR SETTLEMENTS WHICH MUST BE MADE, IF WE ARE EVER TO HAVE A PEACEFUL WORLD, IF THE CRUSHING BURDEN OF ARMAMENT — ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY BILLIONS A YEAR — IS EVER TO BE LIFTED FROM THE SHOULDERS OF NATIONS, AND THE FEAR OF NUCLEAR DEATH FROM THE HEARTS OF MEN. THESE MAJOR WORLD PROBLEMS STILL REMAIN. THE ROAD WILL BE LONG AND THERE WILL BE MANY TURNINGS. SOME THINGS WILL SIMPLY HAVE TO BE LEFT TO THE SOLVENT OF TIME. BUT WE MUST BE GIVEN THE TIME.

PRESIDENT KENNEDY, IN HIS LETTER TO KHRUSHCHEV, EXPRESSED NOT ALONE HIS OWN EARNEST HOPE, BUT THE HOPE OF HUMANITY WHEN HE SAID: "THAT THE GOVERNMENTS OF THIS WORLD CAN, WITH A SOLUTION

OF THE CUBAN CRISIS, TURN THEIR EARNEST ATTENTION TO THE COMPELLING NECESSITY FOR ENDING THE ARMS RACE AND REDUCING WORLD TENSIONS". [WORLD POLITICS, LIKE DOMESTIC POLITICS, IS THE ART OF COMPROMISE, COMPROMISE ON EVERYTHING BUT PRINCIPLE AND NATIONAL SECURITY.

✓ OUR SUCCESS IN THE CUBAN CRISIS HAS GIVEN OUR COUNTRY IMMENSURABLE PRESTIGE, NOT ALONE IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE, BUT THROUGHOUT THE FREE AND UNALIGNED WORLD. IT WILL HELP US GREATLY IN OUR FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS, PROVIDED THAT OUR POSITION ON EVERY GIVEN ISSUE, IS CONSIDERED BY MEN OF GOOD-WILL EVERYWHERE ^{to be} ~~AS~~ FAIR AND JUST.

✓ PERHAPS WHAT HAS TRANSPIRED IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS ~~WILL~~ ^{may} POINT THE WAY TOWARDS A LESS BELLIGERENT APPROACH TO THE SOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS, ^{in the future} AND THAT HENCEFORTH NEITHER EAST NOR WEST WILL HAVE TO RESORT TO THREATS OF WAR AND ACTS BORDERING ON WAR, BEFORE AGREEING ~~XXX~~ --AS THEY ULTIMATELY MUST -- TO QUIET NEGOTIATIONS AND MUTUAL ACCOMMODATIONS.

[CASTRO' CUBA REMAINS A PROBLEM. I WONDER WHETHER AMERICAN DIPLOMACY HAS FULLY EXPLORED ^{every avenue} AND EXHAUSTED EVERY PEACEFUL MEANS TO COME TO SOME UNDERSTANDING WITH ^{the people of} THAT UNHAPPY ISLAND. WE ARE NOT ALTOGETHER BLAMELESS, YOU KNOW, FOR WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN CUBA. WE MIGHT HAVE EVIDENCED, AT THE TIME OF THE

CUBAN REVOLUTION, A FRIENDLIER AND MORE COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE
TOWARDS IT. THE ^{Bay of} PIGS ~~BAY~~ INVASION OF CUBA BY CUBAN REFUGEES,
WHICH WE AIDED AND ABETTED, BUT WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE SUCH A
COLLOSAL FIASCO, STILL RANKLES AND INCITES FEARS OF RENEWED
ATTEMPTS IN THE FUTURE. WE STILL MAINTAIN A TRADE EMBARGO ON
CUBA. PERHAPS THIS IS THE TIME, WITH CASTRO'S BITTER DISILLUSION-
MENT WITH THE SOVIET UNION, HIS TOTAL POLITICAL ISOLATION IN THE
WESTERN HEMISPHERE, AND THE CHAOTIC ECONOMIC CONDITIONS WHICH
PREVAIL, PERHAPS THIS IS THE TIME FOR A BOLD NEW ATTEMPT ^{on our part} AT
RECONCILIATION. HERE IS A CHALLENGE TO OUR STATESMANSHIP AND TO
OUR GENEROSITY.

✓ MR. KHRUSHCHEV HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT RETREAT FROM A
POSITION ONCE TAKEN IS POSSIBLE. UNFORTUNATELY, IT WAS TAKEN
UNDER DURESS, AND CAME TO INVOLVE THE UNPLEASANT MATTER OF
EXIST
PRESTIGE. OTHER ISSUES BETWEEN US AND THE SOVIET UNION, ~~++~~ WILL
WE BE PREPARED TO RETREAT FROM POSITIONS WHICH WE HAVE TAKEN,
VOLUNTARILY AND NOT UNDER DURESS, BUT FOR THE SAKE OF WORLD
PEACE? WILL WE BE PREPARED TO TAKE ONE STEP BACKWARD IN
ORDER TO MOVE TWO STEPS FORWARD ON THE ROAD TO A PEACEFUL
WORLD ORDER?

THERE IS BERLIN, THERE ARE OUR MILITARY INSTALLATIONS ABROAD,
INCLUDING OUR MISSILE BASE IN TURKEY. THERE IS THE STOPPING OF
NUCLEAR TESTS. THERE IS THE PROBLEM OF STEP-BY-STEP DISARMAMENT.

ARE THERE NO COMPROMISE SOLUTIONS WHICH WE CAN OFFER, NO
MODIFICATIONS OF THE POSITION, WHICH WE HAVE ^{already} TAKEN, WHICH WILL
BEGIN ^{a welcome} ~~THE~~ THAW OF THE LONG FROZEN CONFERENCES, AND SET FREE
THE FLOW OF THE RIVER OF A NEW LIFE FOR MEN AND NATIONS? IS
OUR DIPLOMACY SUPPLE ENOUGH, FIRM BUT FLEXIBLE?

HERE AGAIN IS A CHALLENGE TO THE GENIUS OF OUR STATESMANSHIP,
~~TO~~ OUR COURAGE AND INITIATION ^{VE} AND TO THE GENEROSITY OF OUR SPIRIT.

✓✓ DARE WE HOPE THAT THE CUBAN CRISIS MAY MARK THE MOMENT
OF A MAJOR BREAK-THROUGH IN THE ATTITUDES OF EAST AND WEST
TOWARDS FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS?



Reel # 88
No. 581

THE MESS WE ARE IN -- OR ARE WE?

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

Sunday Morning, November 4, 1962

We have lived through a critical, a frightening experience in the last fortnight, as our world teetered on the brink of war and disaster. Suddenly we were confronted with dread and dangerous eventualities. The threat of imminent thermonuclear war was upon us. A fateful decision had been made by our government. It called upon the Soviet Union forthwith to halt the sending of missiles to Cuba, and remove, under the supervision of United Nations observers, the missiles already there, and to dismantle their installations. A strict quarantine on all offensive military equipment under shipment to Cuba and its military build-up was ordered. Our government also announced that should these offensive military preparations nevertheless continue, further action would be justified. The Armed Forces of our country were directed to prepare for any eventuality. Our base at Guantanamo was reinforced and the dependents of our personnel there were evacuated. Our allies were alerted. An immediate meeting of the organization of ^{the} American states to counter the threat to hemispheric security was called, and an emergency meeting of the security council of the United Nations was asked for to take action against the Soviet Threat to world peace.

No one was left in any doubt as to the seriousness of the steps which were taken. "My fellow citizens", the President of the United States declared, "Let no one doubt that this is a difficult and dangerous effort on which we have set out. No one can foresee precisely what course it will take, or what course or casualties will be incurred...the path we have chosen for the present is full of hazards. The cost of freedom is always high...one path we shall never choose, and that is the path of surrender or submission."

And so our people experienced a week of mounting tensions and dread uncertainties as the stage was being grimly set for a showdown in which the giants of the earth would be pitted against each other.

Fortunately, we and mankind were pulled back from the brink of war. Firmness on the part of our government, sanity in the councils of the Kremlin, and the quick intervention of the United Nations, succeeded in averting a world collision whose appalling consequences we dared not even imagine. Our people, and I am sure, the Russian people as well, and mankind generally, heaved a sigh of relief, grateful that the ignited fuse had been stamped out.

President Kennedy acted with wisdom, with courage and with responsibility. He could do no less. He refrained from doing much more. He did not order an immediate invasion of Cuba. He did not send our planes to demolish the missile bases. He left the door open for the Soviet Union to reconsider its action which we considered an imminent threat to our security, and a threat to "the stable relations between our two nations". He reminded the Soviet Government of its own public declaration that "it had no need to station missiles outside its own territory". He assured the Soviet Government that the United States is prepared to participate in a search for peaceful and permanent solutions, including the possibilities of a genuinely independent Cuba, free to determine its own destiny, but that "it is difficult to settle or even discuss these problems in an atmosphere of intimidation".

He took the issue to the Security Council. He was prepared to present the American case before any world tribunal.

There were those who believed that President Kennedy acted at the time that he did because of our approaching elections. Former President Eisenhower,

goaded by earlier criticism which had been made of the conduct of foreign affairs during his administration, responded in a speech in Boston, on October 15th, in which he sharply criticized Mr. Kennedy as "conducting a dreary foreign policy -- too sad to talk about". In this speech he specifically alluded to Cuba. He defended his administration by declaring: "In these eight years, we lost no inch of ground to tyranny...no walls were built. No threatening foreign bases were established." The Republican Party had proclaimed Cuba as the top issue of the forthcoming congressional elections. In fact, it has since taken credit for prodding the President into his successful action. ~~XXXX~~

Those close to the President, however, maintain that he moved with extreme caution, and that he could not take the perilous step which he finally did take until full and indisputable evidence of the missile build-up was available to him. Then he acted promptly and decisively.

Be that as it may -- and here is another proof why our foreign policy should not become a partisan campaign football -- what President Kennedy did, had to be done, and without much loss of time. Our country simply could not tolerate the establishment of Soviet missile bases in our back yard -- bases within ninety miles of our shores, and within easy striking distance of all the nerve centers of the United States and of Latin-America. This would have meant the installation of a foreign military power in the Western Hemisphere -- a concept traditionally repugnant to our nation ever since its very inception. To have succeeded in establishing a bridge-head and a staging area in the Western Hemisphere would have resulted in a most sinister shift in the international balance of power, and would have given the Soviet Union an incalculable advantage in the race which was

going on for military supremacy. The defence of the free world would have been seriously impaired. It would certainly have tended to foment communist revolutions in other Latin-American countries and would have put all of the Americas "under the nuclear gun of Castro and his Russian masters.

Mr. Adlai Stevenson quite correctly stated at the Security Council of the United Nations: "We watched Mr. Castro betray his revolution into totalitarianism. He was free to join the Soviet bloc, to accept defensive weapons with impunity, and welcome Soviet technicians and military experts. But, when he turned his country over to the Soviet Union for a long-range missile base -- then the day of forbearance ended."

The Soviet Government evidently attempted to do in the Caribbean what it had done quite successfully in the Mediterranean -- only this time on a more daring scale. Seven years ago, Russia resolved to undertake a political offensive in the Middle East and to establish a sphere of influence among the Arab countries from which it had long been excluded. Abruptly, and to the consternation of the free world, shiploads of Czechoslovakian arms arrived in Egypt far beyond Egypt's requirements for defensive purposes. The initiation to send arms to Egypt actually had come not from Egypt, but from the Soviet Union. Egypt had not turned to Czechoslovakia to ask for arms, nor had Czechoslovakia offered them. The Soviet press quickly set out to allay Western anxiety. It was ~~time to stop~~ purely commercial transaction, ~~and~~ it maintained. The weapons were for defensive purposes only and, of course, each state has the sovereign right to provide for its own defense. Parenthetically, Russia also sent rockets recently to Egypt, and Nasser promptly announced that these would be aimed at no state but Israel.