



PacificMUN 2018

Dare to Speak | February 23-25

Historical US Cabinet
Backgrounder Guide

US Cabinet

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Dare to Speak.

Dear delegates,

My name is Linda Wu and I have the honour of serving as your Director for the crisis committee of Historical US Cabinet. I, alongside of my Chair Thrisha Mohan, would like to give you the warmest welcome to PacificMUN 2018.

As some of you might know, the Cuban Missile Crisis is the tense standoff between the two international superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, over the installation of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba. Throughout the tense thirteen-days standoff, leaders of both governments engaged in intense strategizing, negotiations, and debates that will eventually decide the course of history. Your job, delegates, is to take over the roles of the US Cabinet of 1962.

In typical crisis committee fashion, the pace of the committee will be fast and many obstacles will stand in your way. The dynamic of the committee will be ever changing given the erratic nature of crisis assemblies. In order to keep up, you will all be expected to have a comprehensive understanding of the history on which this committee is built upon. I would recommend that everyone read the backgrounder and do some additional research, especially on the bloc positions, yourselves.

It is an exciting and thrilling topic, and I look forward to witnessing the creative debate that will no doubt take place. Once again, welcome to PacificMUN 2018.

Sincerely,

Linda Wu

Director of HUSC

Committee Description

The world as whole holds its breath as the President of the United States walks down the red carpeted hallway to the East Room of the White House, slow, patient and deliberate. The President adjusts the microphone at the podium, clears his throat perhaps, then and only then, begins the speech. Every administration has that moment, some even have several. Every administration is faced with a diplomatic crisis or an escalating conflict abroad. Every President must walk up to that podium and look the American people in the eye. That is what the public sees, but what they don't see is the U.S Cabinet. If politics is a theatrical spectacle, then the Cabinet are the backstage crew. It is the gentle hand that guides the leader of the free world. Go ahead, step into the world of Machiavellian backstabbing, realpolitik and decisions of the highest stakes. Stakes that will determine the course of the Republic and possibly the world. Every day brings with it crisis of grave urgency and the burden of painstaking decisions, in other words, just a regular day for the Cabinet. Welcome to the Situation Room.

Welcome to the 1962. Welcome to the Presidency of John F. Kennedy. Welcome to the days where the world held its collective breath, as two nuclear powers stared down at an obsidian abyss and the abyss well and true blinked back. At the height of the age of atomic paranoia, in the shadow of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the United States battled the Soviet Union for ideological supremacy and political hegemony, plunging whole continents into chaos in the process. The doomsday clock drew ever nearer to midnight. Tension crackled through the airwaves on every radio station, fear emanated from the fresh ink of the daily newspaper as the world waited for the world to end. Amongst this backdrop the United States stood at a great many crossroads. The status quo that had shaped the nation since the end of the Civil War and the Reconstruction Era was giving way to a new struggle, a struggle for racial equality and justice. All over the world the Red Menace reared its devilish head, demanding to be contained without the resources or the manpower to contain it. As the ugly silhouette of segregation and Jim Crow reared its head at home, the Cold War reared its head abroad in far flung lands like Vietnam and Cambodia just as it showed up on America's doorstep.

With the benefit of hindsight, we can evaluate the actions that the President and his administration took to deal with these complex geopolitical challenges. It is the duty of a free thinking individual to do so, to glean from the past whatever lessons they can to prevent the same mistake from arising in the future. As the stable global status quo begins to deteriorate the lessons of the past can serve as important tools to prepare for the challenges of the moment and the uncertainty of the future. There is no way to change what happened in 1962, but in the spirit of hope there is still plenty of history to be made in the present. The Cabinet of the 35th President of the United States shaped history in their present, confronted with the reality that the wrong decision could destroy the future of all mankind.

Contextualization: President Kennedy

Three days before he took the oath of office, the American people sat silent by their radios or by their television screens to listen to President Eisenhower's solemn warning about the emerging permanent armaments industry. World War II had destroyed European, Japanese and Soviet manufacturing capacity and placed the United States as a formidable emerging superpower in this new reality. On January 20th, as per tradition, John F. Kennedy was sworn into office as the 35th President of the United States of America. He was young, charismatic and certainly eloquent. He was Catholic, a fact that still meant bearing the slings and arrows of prejudice from time to time. Rumors swirled around the legitimacy of his electoral victory. Kennedy was shadowed by allegations of electoral fraud, a connection with the Giancana mob in Chicago. President Kennedy was elected at an important junction in American socio-cultural history as well. The McCarthyist moral panic of the Eisenhower administration as well as the near nuclear decisions made in the

Korean War left their marks on the foreign policy apparatus of the United States. The fall of China to Mao Tse-Tsung, near constant Soviet subversion efforts in India and the Middle East, and growing Soviet influence in Latin America all peaked in the age of nuclear paranoia. Nuclear paranoia, moral panic and sweeping cultural changes: from rock n' roll music to psychedelics to the hippie counterculture arrived to greet the youngest elected President of the United States. His road there was not easy.

A Hard Fought Primary

The Democratic Party faced a challenging campaign no matter who won the primary contest in 1960. The Presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower was a popular one, the former general was revered for his service to his country during the Second World War and for the economic boon of the post-war decade. The primary field was littered with candidates many of whom were running as "favorite sons" in their home states, determined to secure a political base from which to entice concessions out of the eventual nominee but resigned to the reality that they had no chance to secure the nomination themselves. Aside from Kennedy, the other major candidates were Governor Pat Brown of California, Senator Stuart Symington of Missouri, Senator Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas, former Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson, Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon and Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota.

Symington, Stevenson, and Johnson all declined to campaign in the presidential primaries; hoping that a muddled campaign by the rest of the field would allow them to get chosen by the Democratic National Committee as a political compromise between at times fractious support bases of the rest of the field. In the initial stages of the campaign, there was pressure from senior party leaders such as Harry S. Truman that Kennedy was too young and too inexperienced to be a presidential nominee and urged him to become a running mate for another candidate. It was a clever political strategy- designed to portray him as a silly and feckless choice for the nomination.

"I'm not running for vice-president, I'm running for president." - John F. Kennedy

Still in the race after attempts to undermine him the next obstacle JFK faced were the primaries themselves. Divisions between Catholics and Protestants were still open in the 1960s, a candidate's support could often be determined by the religious make up of a particular county. Kennedy's Roman Catholic faith became a point of attack from his political opponents. After defeating Humphrey in a tight Wisconsin primary- largely due to a successful "get out the vote" effort in Catholic counties, Kennedy went on to trounce Humphrey in the first televised debate and successfully knocked Humphrey out of contention by beating him in West Virginia. Kennedy's lead grew larger after each primary was held, but he was still short of an outright majority needed to secure himself the nomination. Adlai Stevenson and Lyndon Johnson entered the campaign, Stevenson- popular amongst Liberal voters and Johnson popular amongst Dixiecrats in the South. Both entered the campaign as the Convention drew near, hoping to pitch themselves as compromise candidates between the various political factions that had emerged within the Democrats. Stevenson, the twice failed nominee against Eisenhower was pushed out of contention by party elites who believed that a "fresh face" was needed to defeat the Republicans in 1960.

The Convention and Vice-Presidential Nomination

Kennedy won more primaries than the rest of the field combined, but delegate rich California and Florida prevented him from securing an outright majority of delegates for the party nomination. Stevenson being pushed out by party elites meant that his liberal base of support within the Convention was critical to electoral victory. After a televised debate, Johnson failed to expand his base of support outside of the Southern States and a vote wrangling by Robert Kennedy on the convention secured enough pledged delegate votes to secure the nomination. After accepting the nomination, Kennedy needed to secure himself a running mate. JFK was partial to Stuart Symington (who was a favorite of Truman and other elite party figures) but first approached Lyndon Johnson, his runner up. Much to his surprise, and surprise of his HUSC

campaign Johnson accepted.

The General Election (Kennedy vs Nixon)

The uncontested Republican nominee for President was Vice President Richard M. Nixon, who built his campaign on continuing the policies of the Eisenhower administration. He pledged to maintain American military strength, prestige, and economic might and in his internationalist aims selected Henry Cabot Lodge, the American Ambassador to the United Nations to be his vice presidential nominee. Nixon was older and was perceived by the electorate to be more experienced and thus more suited to be the next President. He held a sizeable, but not insurmountable lead over Kennedy right after the party conventions. Nixon's age meant he was less savvy about the dominant new technology of the day: television. Gone were the days of Roosevelt's fireside chats and long eloquent speeches of the radio, the 60s was the decade where political theater and performance really began to resemble the modern day campaigning we know today.

Timeline

January/February, 1959 - After a six-year long revolution, dictatorial President Fulgencio Batista flees Cuba and Fidel Castro assumes control of the nation after proclaiming victory in the nation's capital of Santiago.

October 28, 1959 - The States reach an agreement with its NATO ally Turkey to deploy fifteen Jupiter nuclear-tipped missiles agree to deploy fifteen nuclear-tipped Jupiter missiles in Turkey June 1, 1961.

May 7, 1960 - The Soviet Union and Cuba establish diplomatic relations.

July 8, 1960 - The United States stops the import of Cuban sugar, effectively cutting off 80 percent of Cuban exports to the United States.

July 9, 1960 - The Soviet Union agrees to buy purchase Cuban sugar at a subsidised price.

July 12, 1960 - Nikita Khrushchev supports Cuba in dispute with U.S. over American presence at Guantanamo Bay.

August 16, 1960 - The CIA drafts a plan to assassinate Fidel Castro by poisoning a box of his favorite cigarillos.

August 28, 1960 - The United States imposes a trade embargo against Cuba.

September 1960 - The first substantial shipment of Soviet armaments arrives in Havana. Czech and Soviet technicians are rumored to be assisting the Cuban military in assembling equipment and installing anti-aircraft batteries. The first contingent of Soviet troops arrive in an advisory capacity.

October 6, 1960 - Cuba nationalizes U.S. private investments on the island worth approximately one billion dollars.

December 19, 1960 - Cuba and the Soviet Union issue a joint communiqué in which Cuba openly aligns itself with the domestic and foreign policies of the Soviet Union and indicates its solidarity with the Sino-Soviet Bloc.

January 3, 1961 - The United States and Cuba sever diplomatic and consular relations.

January 20, 1961 - John F. Kennedy takes the oath of office.

January 28, 1961 - President Kennedy was briefed and his Cabinet, on the latest plan (code-named Operation Pluto), which would become the invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs.

April 17-18, 1961 - With U.S. direction, training, and support, 1400 Cuban emigrés attempt an invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. Cuban government aircraft left operational after previous CIA airstrikes pin the invaders on the beachhead, and the Bay of Pigs invasion is crushed. Survivors of the earlier airstrikes are able to pin the invasion force on the beachhead, and without additional supplies of ammunition, the invaders are quickly crushed by Cuban ground forces. Of the anti-Castro emigrés, 114 are killed and 1,189 are captured. Castro begins cracking down on dissidents within Cuba.

April 27-28, 1961 - While at a Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) meeting in Ankara, Turkey, Secretary of State Dean Rusk raises the possibility of withdrawing missiles from Turkey with Turkish Foreign Minister Salim Sarper. Sarper declines and notes that appropriations for the missiles were just granted and that it would be a source of embarrassment for the Turkish government to have the missiles withdrawn. Upon returning to Washington, D.C., Rusk briefs President Kennedy on his discussion with Sarper, and Kennedy decides to delay withdrawing missiles.

June 3-4, 1961 - President Kennedy meets Khrushchev in Austria for the Vienna Summit where Khrushchev delivers an ultimatum on the status of Berlin, a continuing source of tension between the two superpowers. Khrushchev threatens to annex Western Berlin if the city's status is not resolved within six months. Kennedy tells reporters after the meeting that Khrushchev's demands made the prospects for war "very real."

August 12-13, 1961 - Soviet forces help construct the Berlin Wall- preventing movement between the Soviet and Western quarters of the city. The situation climaxes with a sixteen-hour standoff between U.S and Soviet tanks on the border between East and West Berlin on October the 28th, 1961 at checkpoint Charlie.

November 30, 1961 - President Kennedy authorizes a major new covert action program aimed at overthrowing the Cuban government, codenamed OPERATION MONGOOSE is directed by counterinsurgency specialist Edward G. Lansdale under the guidance of Attorney General Robert Kennedy. A high-level inter-agency group, the Special Group Augmented (SGA) , is created with the sole purpose of overseeing OPERATION MONGOOSE.

Late 1961 or Early 1962 - William K. Harvey is put in charge of Task Force W, the CIA unit for OPERATION MONGOOSE. Task Force W operates under guidance from the SGA and is undertaken by the CIA's Miami station, in addition to about two thousand Cubans, a private navy of speedboats, and an annual budget of some \$50 million. Task Force W begins conducting sabotage operations against Cuban seafaring trade and sugar shipments.

January 18, 1962 - Edward Lansdale outlines "The Cuba Project," a program under OPERATION MONGOOSE aimed at overthrowing Fidel Castro. Thirty-two planning tasks, ranging from sabotage actions to intelligence activities, are assigned to the agencies involved in MONGOOSE. The program is designed to develop a "strongly motivated political action movement" within Cuba capable of generating a revolt to topple the Castro regime.

January 22-30, 1962 - At the OAS Conference Punta del Este, Uruguay, Cuba is excluded "from participation in the inter-American system." Another resolution is also adopted prohibiting OAS members from selling arms to Cuba and setting measures for collective defense against Cuban activities in the hemisphere.

February 1962 - The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) establish a "first priority basis" for the completion of plans for military intervention in Cuba.

April 1962 - U.S. Jupiter missiles in Turkey become fully operational.

August 1962 - U.S. intelligence receive several reports of Soviet missiles in Cuba during the month, all of which are either linked to SAM or cruise missiles or are debunked. The frequency of reports increases in late August.

August 10, 1962 - After examining intelligence on the movement of cargo ships from the Black and Baltic seas to Cuba, CIA Director John McCone sends a memorandum to the President expressing his belief that Soviet MRBMs are destined for Cuba in spite of a lack of evidence and concerns from his subordinates at the Agency..

August 29, 1962 - A high-altitude U-2 surveillance flight provides conclusive evidence of the existence of SA-2 SAM missile sites at eight different locations in Cuba. Additional reconnaissance shortly thereafter also positively identifies coastal defense cruise missile installations for the first time. However, U-2 photography of the area around San Cristóbal, Cuba, where the first nuclear missile sites are later detected, reveals no evidence of construction at this time.

August 31, 1962 - President Kennedy is informed that the U-2 mission has confirmed the presence of SAM batteries in Cuba.

And it begins.

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