

Resource Sheet #3

Draft of President Kennedy's Letter to Chairman Khrushchev, October 23, 1962

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I have received your letter of October twenty-third. I think you will recognize that the step which started the current chain of events was the action of your Government in secretly furnishing long-range missiles to Cuba. We ~~will be~~ [handwritten "are" inserted] discussing this matter in the Security Council. In the meantime, I am concerned that we both show prudence and do nothing to allow events to make the situation more difficult to control than it already is.

With this in mind I hope you will issue instructions to your ships bound for Cuba not to challenge the quarantine legally established by the Organization of American States this afternoon

Sincerely,

The Final Version of President Kennedy's Letter of October 23 as Transmitted by State Department Telegram

Washington, October 23, 1962, 6:51 p.m.

985. You should deliver following letter addressed by the President to Chairman Khrushchev immediately. This replaces message contained Deptel 982.

"Dear Mr. Chairman:

I have received your letter of October twenty-third. I think you will recognize that the step which started the current chain of events was the action of your Government in secretly furnishing offensive weapons to Cuba. We will be discussing this matter in the Security Council. In the meantime, I am concerned that we both show prudence and do nothing to allow events to make the situation more difficult to control than it already is.

I hope that you will issue immediately the necessary instructions to your ships to observe the terms of the quarantine, the basis of which was established by the vote of the Organization of American States this afternoon, and which will go into effect at 1400 hours Greenwich time October twenty-four.

Sincerely, JFK."

Rusk

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