

fail.⁶⁰ If the initiator decides against the proscribed behaviour because of the resolve the defender demonstrates in the course of their confrontation, the case must be judged a deterrence success.

The Cuban missile crisis illustrates these important distinctions. George and Smoke argue — and we agree — that the missile crisis was an immediate deterrence failure because the Soviet Union deployed missiles in Cuba capable of attacking the United States with nuclear warheads.⁶¹ President Kennedy had previously defined the deployment of such offensive weapons in Cuba as unacceptable. Had Khrushchev opted for a limited probe instead of his attempted fait accompli, he might have threatened to send medium and intermediate range missiles in addition to the substantial Soviet conventional forces already on the island. If he had then decided against the missile deployment because of Kennedy's strong opposition, the encounter could have been judged an immediate deterrence success. Khrushchev's dispatch of soldiers, advisors, and conventional weapons to Cuba does not make the incident a partial deterrence failure. Kennedy was not pleased by the Soviet conventional buildup but he did not attempt to deter it; he had advised Khrushchev that he was prepared to tolerate the presence of conventional forces and aircraft provided no offensive weapons were introduced that would directly threaten American security.⁶²

This counterfactual interpretation has an historical analog in the 1961 Berlin crisis. The actions of Khrushchev and those of his allies, including the construction of the Berlin Wall, were not those Kennedy was trying to deter. As Khrushchev refrained from attacking the city or trying to force its submission through a crippling blockade, and did not attempt to deny or to interfere seriously with access by the

⁶⁰ As George and Smoke note, occasionally a defender does not proscribe a specific action, but deliberately makes generalized deterrent threats. They cite John Foster Dulles as a case in point. *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy*, pp.562-565.

⁶¹ George and Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy*, pp.447-491, for their treatment of this case.

⁶² Lebow and Stein, *Who Is the Enemy?*, ch.3 reviews Kennedy's warnings and clarifications to Khrushchev on the eve of the missile crisis.