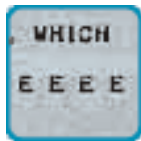




Source 8

Extracts from a letter from Fidel Castro, leader of Cuba, to the Secretary General of the United Nations, broadcast on Havana Radio in November 1962

(Catalogue ref: FO 371/162405)



8a



8b

Questions

1. The tone of this source is very dramatic. What do you think is Castro's purpose or reason for writing in this way?
2. Who are his intended audiences?
3. What words or phrases suggest Castro wants peace?
4. What words or phrases suggest Castro is ready for a fight?
5. Compare this with the viewpoint in source 4. Which viewpoint do you find most persuasive?
6. Is this source biased? Is it of value to historians? Explain your answer.



HEROES & VILLAINS

Kennedy & Cuba > Why didn't this lead to nuclear war?

Source 8a

THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT, COMPLYING WITH THE PROMISE MADE TO MR. KENNEDY, WITHDREW ITS STRATEGIC MISSILES, AN ACT WHICH WAS INSPECTED BY U.S. OFFICIALS ON THE HIGH SEAS. WE REPEAT ONCE MORE THAT THE EMPLACEMENT OF THOSE ARMS WAS NOTHING BUT AN ACT OF LEGITIMATE DEFENCE OF THE CUBAN REPUBLIC AGAINST THE AGGRESSIVE POLICY WHICH THE UNITED STATES HAS PRACTICES AGAINST OUR COUNTRY SINCE THE VERY START OF THE REVOLUTION.

THIS DID NOT GIVE ANY RIGHT TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AGAINST CUBA, SINCE ALL OUR ACTS HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT ACCORDING TO INTERNATIONAL LAW IN THE USE OF THE SOVEREIGN PREROGATIVES OF OUR STATE. BUT IT WAS A PRETEXT UTILIZED TO PERPETRATE ACTS OF FORCE, WHICH (BROUGHT) THE WORLD TO THE BRINK OF WAR. THE PRETEXT HAS E E E E THE PRETEXT HAS NOW DISAPPEARED.

EACH DAY THE INCURSIONS OF WAR PLANES OVER OUR TERRITORY GROW MORE ALARMING. MILITARY PLANES HARASS OUR AIR BASES. THEY FLY LOW, (BUZZ?) OUR MILITARY DEFENCES, AND PHOTOGRAPHY NOT ONLY INSTALLATIONS OF STRATEGIV MISSILES, BUT ALL OUR TERRITORY, PALM BY PALM, AND INCH BY INCH.

FOUR OUR PART, WE HAVE GIVEN REPEATED WARNINGS TO THE AGGRESSORS. ON 27TH OCTOBER, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CRISIS, THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT DECLARED THAT OUR COUNTRY WOULD NOT ACCEPT THE VANDALISTIC AND PIRATICAL RIGHT OF ANY WAR PLANE TO VIOLATE OUR AIR SPACE, BECAUSE ESSENTIALLY IT AFFECTED OUR SAFETY, AND WOULD FACILITATE THE CONDITIONS FOR A SURPRISE ZATTACK. THE RIGHT OF CUBA TO RESIST SUCH VIOLATIONS IS IRREVOCABLE.



HEROES & VILLAINS

Kennedy & Cuba > Why didn't this lead to nuclear war?

Source 8b

THE LONG HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY'S STRUGGLE WHICH ENDED IN FULL SOVEREIGNTY AND NATIONAL DIGNITY, AFTER (ONE WORD) STRUGGLES WITH BLOOD AND HEROISM, HAS NO POSSIBLE RETREAT. A POWERFUL MILITARY FORCE WOULD BE ABLE TO LIQUIDATE US, BUT NEVER SUBJECT US. AND BEFORE THEY COULD THEY WOULD PAY A VERY HIGH PRICE, THOSE PIRATES WHO WOULD DARE TO INVADE THE SOIL OF THE CUBAN HOMELAND. EVEN IN DEATH OUR FLAG WOULD REMAIN VICTORIOUS ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ BECAUSE WE ARE DEFENDING SOMETHING VERY SACRED, THAT IS, OUR RIGHT AS A SOVEREIGN NATION IN THE UNION OF FREE NATIONS OF THE LAND.

WE ARE GIVING THE NECESSARY ALERT TO DEFEND WORLD PEACE. WE ARE DEFENDING THE RIGHT OF SMALL NATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED ON A LEVEL OF EQUALITY. WE ARE TELLING ALL PEOPLES OF THE LAND, THAT, FACING THE IMPERIALIST ENEMY, THERE CAN BE NO HALTING (CLAUDICATION). THE WAY OF THE CALM AND SERIOUS WARNING, PROTECTED BY THE SURENESS OF AN ANSWER IN KEEPING WITH THE MAGNITUDE OF THE AGGRESSION, IS THE SALVATION OF PEACE. OUR RIGHT TO LIVE IS SOMETHING THAT CANNOT BE DISCUSSED BY ANYONE. BUT IF OUR RIGHT TO LIVE IS CONDITIONED BY OUR OBLIGATION TO FALL ON OUR KNEES, WE ANSWER ONCE MORE THAT WE DO NOT ACCEPT.

WE BELIEVE IN THE RIGHT TO DEFEND LIBERTY, SOVEREIGNTY, AND THE DIGNITY OF THIS NATION, AND WE WILL EXERCISE IT INEVITABLY UP TO THE LAST MAN, WOMAN, OR CHILD CAPABLE OF HOLDING A WEAPON IN THIS TERRITORY.