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# HISTORY OF THE STRATEGIC ARMS COMPETITION 1945 - 1972

## Part I

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numbering at least 5,000 men, with T-54 tanks and antitank weapons. Some estimates are as high as 10,000 combat troops out of a total of 22,000 Soviet troops in Cuba.<sup>20</sup> It is not clear whether the primary mission of these troops was to defend the missile sites against a possible U.S. attack or to insure that they remained under Soviet rather than Cuban control.

#### Soviet Motives

Why the Soviets undertook an unprecedented deployment of strategic weapons to Cuba is a complicated question that has never been wholly clarified. Among the motives attributed to Khrushchev and his associates are the following:

1. To use the threat of missiles emplaced in Cuba for limited political ends, primarily to extract a pledge from the United States not to take military action against the Castro regime, whose fears of invasion--whether justified or not--had led to pressure upon the Soviet Union for some form of protection.
2. To use the missiles and IL-28s as bargaining counters to induce the United States to withdraw its forward-based missiles [REDACTED] in exchange for withdrawal of Soviet offensive weapons from Cuba. A tradeoff of the Soviet missiles in Cuba for U.S. JUPITER IRBMs [REDACTED] was proposed in Khrushchev's 27 October letter, though this may have been an afterthought for crisis bargaining purposes.<sup>21</sup>

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