

## **Candid Ken and the Cuban Crisis: Senator Kenneth Keating, the Red Menace, and the Missile Crisis of 1962**

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### **Abstract**

Republican Senator Kenneth Keating had an illustrious career in 20<sup>th</sup>-century American government, but he has never been the subject of a full-length biography. This paper constitutes a first step toward restoring Keating to his proper place in historiographic literature. Using extensive primary sources, culled from both online databases and the Kenneth Keating Papers housed at the University of Rochester Libraries, this paper reconstructs Keating's involvement with Cuban-American relations, culminating in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. The paper charts Keating's skepticism regarding the nominally democratic Cuban Revolution, his strongly anti-Communist rhetoric in the late 1950s, and finally his public revelation in August 1962 that the Soviets were installing military equipment in Cuba. In this speech, Keating also accused the Kennedy administration of not being completely honest with the public. The research conducted for this paper proves that Keating was correct. President Kennedy knew of defensive missile installations in Cuba, but lied to the public about the matter, until Keating's address forced the President to go public with the information. In ensuing weeks, Keating's claims grew more ominous, for the Senator argued in October that offensive IRBMs were being placed in Cuba. Once again, Keating accused Kennedy of being deceptive, but this time, Kennedy simply had access to less intelligence than Keating did. Finally, on October 16, IRBMs were photographed in Cuba, Keating was vindicated, and Kennedy's famed "Thirteen Days" began. Overall, this paper has three major themes. First, the relationship between Congress and the White House figured largely in the buildup to the Missile Crisis. Second, Keating's use of rhetoric is a masterful case of Congressional position-taking and self-advertising. Finally, this paper reminds us that many individuals, not only icons like President Kennedy, affected American foreign relations during the Cold War.

**Keywords:** Keating, Kennedy, Soviet

### **1. Introduction:**

Despite his extensive career in public service, Republican Senator Kenneth Barnard Keating has never been the subject of a full-length published biography. A native of upstate New York, Keating fought in both World Wars, rose to the rank of brigadier general, served in the House from 1947 to 1959, and served in the Senate from 1959 to 1965. Later in life, he became Ambassador to India and Israel.<sup>1</sup> Keating also played a crucial role in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, which, perhaps more than any other factor, makes the lack of substantive research on him surprising.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of this paper is primarily narrative – to clarify Keating's contribution to American-Cuban relations, culminating in the Crisis, and thereby restore the senator to his rightful place in the Cold War saga.

## 2. Kenneth Keating and the Cold War:

During the early 1960s, Barry Goldwater (who became the 1964 Republican Party presidential nominee) popularized a brand of conservatism that emphasized traditional values, small government, opposition to civil rights, and a hawkish stance toward the Soviets.<sup>3</sup> Kenneth Keating did believe that a “Communist conspiracy” existed worldwide, and he sought to combat that conspiracy, as when he supported House legislation limiting immunity for witnesses in treason and espionage cases.<sup>4</sup> However, Keating was a moderate Republican who supported civil rights,<sup>5</sup> and he largely avoided the paranoia of the far right – thereby setting him in opposition to Goldwater and the paleoconservatism rising within the Party. For instance, in a 1963 Senate speech, Keating mocked a conservative Los Angeles organization that had deemed American folk music a tool of communist subversion.<sup>6</sup> The senator moved from satire to seriousness, revealing his devotion both to anti-communism and moderate Republicanism:

This resolution is but another demonstration of the absurd lengths to which the amateur ferrets of the radical right will go in their quixotic sallies against the Communist menace.... [V]igilante charges such as these can breed the atmosphere of suspicion and confusion which tends not only to undermine free institutions, but, of equal concern, to divert our energies from tackling the real threats posed by international communism to our liberty and security.<sup>7</sup>

Senator Keating was also a moderate when it came to the *temperature* of the Cold War. In 1956, then-Representative Keating attended the 45<sup>th</sup> Interparliamentary Union Conference in Thailand. During his address to the delegates, Keating asserted that peaceful competition with the Soviet Union was superior to military conflict, and largely endorsed disarmament efforts.<sup>8</sup> Keating revisited this notion of peaceful competition in an op-ed for *World Affairs*, arguing that the United States had the upper hand in winning the support of underdeveloped nations. America could offer both private sector investment and government aid, whereas the communist bloc could only assist “socialistic enterprises in other countries.”<sup>9</sup> To Senator Keating, American free market capitalism would trump communist central planning without the use of arms.

When it came to Cuba, though, Keating became combative, for he was suspicious of the supposedly democratic new regime in Cuba. In an interesting moment of bipartisanship, Keating and Democratic Senator Hubert Humphrey confronted Fidel Castro at a reception in April 1959:

“You promised to hold elections as soon as you came to power,” we said. “Why have no elections been held? What is your timetable for elections now?” There was a trace of a sneer on Castro’s face as he said, “The people are not ready. When the time is ripe, we will have our elections.”<sup>10</sup>

Keating also believed the testimony of Major Pedro Luis Diaz Lanz, Castro’s former Air Force chief, who swore to the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee in July 1959 that Castro was a communist, not a democrat. In the late 1950s, many Congressmen did not yet believe that Castro was a communist leader.<sup>11</sup> At the close of 1959, Keating announced in an address to Manhattan’s Union League Club that “[t]he evidence of Communist penetration in Cuba is very strong indeed, and goes all the way to the top.”<sup>12</sup> In 1959, then, Kenneth Keating was ahead of the curve when it came to knowing what was going on in Cuba.

The senator pushed for the overthrow, or at least disciplining, of Castro throughout 1960. Although Keating preferred economic competition to armed warfare with the Soviets, he was not opposed to the use of *economic warfare* against communism. Weeks after his Union League speech, Keating demanded that President Eisenhower alter quotas for imported Cuban sugar and “drive home to the Castro regime the economic facts of life that bear heavily upon the stability of the Cuban Government.”<sup>13</sup> A few weeks later, in March 1960, Keating used another large civil society gathering – the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick dinner in Yonkers – as a platform for his views. This time, Keating announced that communist subversion was responsible for the downfall of Cuban democracy, and that the global communist conspiracy “would remove the Lord and put Lenin in his place.”<sup>14</sup> In May, Keating heard arguably his first account of a Soviet missile program in Cuba. Colonel Manuel Antonio Ugalde Carrillo, a Cuban intelligence officer-turned-defector, described runways and concrete launch pads “being constructed [in southeastern Cuba] for attack upon the American democracies.”<sup>15</sup> Keating, the acting chair of the Internal Security Subcommittee, is said to have “quizzed the witness closely.”<sup>16</sup> Finally, in September, Keating argued that Americans must not surrender the base at Guantanamo Bay, just as they must not surrender the contested islands of Quemoy and Matsu to communist China.<sup>17</sup>

1961 brought a number of changes to Senator Keating's crusade against Castro. John F. Kennedy became president, having campaigned on the promise to overthrow Castro. When Kennedy's Bay of Pigs invasion plan failed later that year, Keating was disappointed, so he began lobbying the Executive Branch to be more aggressive about ousting Castro.<sup>18</sup> As months passed, though, Cuba became a less salient issue,<sup>19</sup> and Keating acknowledged that his lobbying might amount to nothing.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, early 1962 passed with little Cuban news from Keating, save for an atypical defense of the Cuban economy: Keating felt that the current administration's embargo on Cuba was hypocritical, since there was no embargo placed upon the Soviet Union.<sup>21</sup>

In the final third of 1962, Keating took to the Senate floor and accused the Soviet Union of building missile bases in Cuba. The identities of Keating's sources leading up to the Missile Crisis remain unknown.<sup>22</sup> In a 1964 article for *Look*, Keating wrote, "All my information about the Soviet buildup in Cuba was either furnished or confirmed by Government sources."<sup>23</sup> Historian Mark J. White disputes this claim, arguing that the senator probably received information from Cuban expatriates, in addition to employees of the Pentagon, Defense Department, and CIA.<sup>24</sup> (Scholar Thomas G. Paterson shares this view.<sup>25</sup>) White also mentions Navy Admiral Edward J. O'Donnell, conservative CIA Director John McCone, and West Germany's ambassador to Cuba, Karl von Spreti, as other possible sources.<sup>26</sup> Regardless of where Keating obtained his data, the senator clearly trusted his sources enough to go public with their sensational reports.

On August 31, 1962, Senator Jacob Javits interrupted the presentation of a bill to ask that Keating be allowed to speak on a matter of great importance.<sup>27</sup> Following the assent of Sens. Proxmire and Magnuson, Keating took the floor and announced that, according to five reliable sources, the Soviets were sending large numbers of personnel to Cuba.<sup>28</sup> Keating acknowledged that the Soviets might be constructing missile bases,<sup>29</sup> but he focused on potential radio interference with the Cape Canaveral space program:

Castro has virtually handed the Communists a gigantic monkeywrench that can be turned right through the middle of our entire space effort, that can endanger the lives of our astronauts, and that can critically slowdown [sic] vital defense developments. It is time for the people of this country and of this hemisphere to have the truth, the whole truth, about what Castro and his Soviet cohorts are up to.<sup>30</sup>

Using words reflecting his opposition to communism, Keating described the affair as an "unholy alliance between Castro's Cuba and the Soviet Union," and he christened Cuba the Soviets' "new island fortress."<sup>31</sup> Keating also criticized President Kennedy, who was unable to provide clear updates on Russian activity in Cuba,<sup>32</sup> and accused the administration of "[looking] the other way in the hope that somehow Castro will just disappear."<sup>33</sup>

Having suffered the botched Bay of Pigs operation, as well as public outrage regarding "Soviet influence in the Caribbean,"<sup>34</sup> the President (correctly) viewed Keating's claims as politically problematic.<sup>35</sup> The Kennedy administration applied pressure on Keating; as discussed by Mark J. White in *The Cuban Missile Crisis*, the administration may even have wiretapped the senator's office, although White is unable to confirm if this wiretapping was ultimately carried out.<sup>36</sup> Still, it seems that the President's initial move to censure Keating was not motivated solely by politics. Keating's refusal to name his sources prompted Kennedy to view the senator's claims as "rumors or unsubstantiated or exaggerated reports."<sup>37</sup> Moreover, heading into the final months of 1962, the White House received mixed messages about Soviet military activity in Cuba. Joseph F. Thorning, writing for *World Affairs* in 1969, described this state of conflicting information (albeit with some flowery anti-communist rhetoric):

White House officials, despite the warnings of CIA Chief John A. McCone, were at first unable to believe that Mr. Nikita Khrushchev was ready to engage in a game of thermonuclear blackmail. As early as *August 22, 1962*, Mr. McCone presented President Kennedy with evidence that the some five thousand Soviet technicians in Cuba had laid the ground work [sic] for offensive missiles.... On the other hand, Mr. Roger Hilsman, head of State Department Intelligence, claimed that the numerous Soviet bloc ships streaming into Cuba were carrying electronic gear and construction equipment meant for coastal and air defenses.<sup>38</sup>

In the light of such contradictory intelligence reports and Keating's pervasive media coverage after August 31, it is not surprising that the President combated Keating's rhetoric.

Kennedy's dismissal of Keating's charges remains troubling, though, for we now know that the President had some details of a Soviet buildup in Cuba *before* Keating's speech. On August 29, U-2 spy planes photographed surface-to-air (specifically, SA-2) missile bases in Cuba.<sup>39</sup> This information went against Kennedy's statement in a press conference, also on August 29, that no Soviet military presence existed in Cuba.<sup>40</sup> Although he had now been proven incorrect by the U-2 photographs, which conveyed the most up-to-date information:

President Kennedy was inclined toward the view held by the overwhelming majority of senior officials in his administration: that the Soviet military aid ... was for the purpose of ostentatiously defending Cuba while setting up the island as a model of socialist development and bridgehead for subversive activities in the region. By this reasoning, the SA-2 deployment did not signal a foreign policy crisis as much as a domestic political one.<sup>41</sup>

In other words, the presence of SAM missiles, while problematic and needing to be “managed carefully” from a publicity standpoint,<sup>42</sup> was not deemed a major security threat. At another press conference on August 31, Kennedy therefore announced that there were no missiles of any kind in Cuba – rather, as Hilsman had argued, the Soviets were providing technical aid to Cuba.<sup>43</sup>

When Keating made his August 31 speech and wondered if missiles or radio interference devices were being built in Cuba, the senator was correct that the President had not been fully honest with the public. Keating’s claim that the Soviets had a military plan for Cuba also contradicted Kennedy’s description of a technical mission. Keating reiterated his controversial claim of a military buildup on the September 4 *Today Show*, prompting a White House spokesman to call and report that “the President would refute [Keating’s] account as inaccurate.”<sup>44</sup> Later that day, however, Kennedy went public with what he knew so far,<sup>45</sup> in an attempt to control publicity and answer Keating. While Kennedy did not admit he had lied to the public less than a week earlier, he was open about the current facts: “Information has reached this Government in the last four days from a variety of sources which establishes without doubt that the Soviets have provided the Cuban Government with a number of anti-aircraft defensive missiles...”<sup>46</sup> Despite the presence of SAMs, the President asserted that there was no “presence of offensive ground-to-ground missiles” in Cuba. Kennedy also subtly criticized Keating’s accusations of ignoring Castro:

It continues to be the policy of the United States that the Castro regime will not be allowed to export its aggressive purposes by force or the threat of force. It will be prevented by whatever means may be necessary from taking action against any part of the Western hemisphere.... [W]hile increased Cuban armaments will be a heavy burden to the unhappy people of Cuba themselves, they will be nothing more.

The President’s address on September 4 therefore answered most of Keating’s August 31 criticisms.

### 3. The Cuban Missile Crisis and Beyond:

But Keating was not finished. In the following weeks, Keating used television appearances and Senate speeches to demand the full truth about Soviet activities in Cuba, particularly in regard to any missile bases.<sup>47</sup> His personal radio and television programs, broadcast in New York, offered a platform for his views.<sup>48</sup> Although Keating did not advocate a full invasion of Cuba, he still demanded some sort of disciplinary action: “The longer this nation permits a military buildup in Cuba to continue, the costlier it will be in terms of substance and possibly of blood to wipe out the Soviet menace. We must not continue to sit idly by as the Soviets continue to build a fortress in Cuba.”<sup>49</sup>

Senator Keating’s media coverage has three key implications. First, despite the White House’s acknowledgement that *something* was afoot in Cuba, Keating was not satisfied. He believed that the administration was concealing additional information about Cuba. Given Kennedy’s about-face on September 4 about the SAMs, such a belief on Keating’s part was not unreasonable. Second, Keating was something of a publicity hound – the man loved being in the papers and on television.<sup>50</sup> The press appearances were not mere vanity, though:

The speeches were ... an essential part of Keating’s strategy for political survival in a state in which he did not command a natural majority of the electorate. He was a moderate conservative from Rochester, whereas the voting proclivities of his urban constituents generally compelled him to adopt more liberal positions than he otherwise would. He compensated by being a stern anti-Communist.<sup>51</sup>

Still, Keating did not compensate with anti-Soviet rhetoric to the extent that he wound up in Barry Goldwater’s corner. Finally, according to Mark J. White, “Hurting Kennedy would strengthen [Keating’s] position in his own party by helping the Republicans who were running in November [1962],” as well as expected presidential candidate Nelson Rockefeller.<sup>52</sup> (Keating was closer ideologically to Rockefeller, a liberal Republican, than to Goldwater.<sup>53</sup>)

Keating’s many public comments about Cuba constitute *position-taking*, one of David R. Mayhew’s often-cited strategies for Congressmen who are fervently seeking reelection.<sup>54</sup> Mayhew defines position-taking as “the public enunciation of a judgmental statement on anything likely to be of interest to political actors.”<sup>55</sup> While position-

taking often takes the form of roll call votes in Congress,<sup>56</sup> position-taking can also be achieved through “speeches before home groups, television appearances, letters, newsletters, press releases, ghostwritten books, *Playboy* articles, even interviews with political scientists.”<sup>57</sup> The ultimate goal, of course, is to raise one’s profile. By spreading his anti-communist rhetoric with multiple forms of media, Kenneth Keating utilized most of his available avenues for self-publicity. The only avenue he did not actively pursue was the roll call vote – since Keating did not introduce any resolutions criticizing the Kennedy administration, there was no issue on which to demand a party-line vote.

Keating’s second major Senate address, which “enraged” the President,<sup>58</sup> came on October 10. The senator stated that he now knew for certain that the Soviets were constructing “intermediate range missile bases in Cuba.”<sup>59</sup> The Russians would “have the power to hurl rockets into the American heartland and as far as the Panama Canal Zone.” Keating’s multiple references to “intermediate range tactical missiles” – in other words, intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) – indicate that Keating knew (or, at least, thought he knew) of Cuban offensive missiles, which were far more dangerous than defensive SAMs.<sup>60, 61</sup> As in his August 31 address, Keating combined his alarmist statements about Cuba with a critique of the White House: Keating explicitly accused the administration of knowing more about the missiles in Cuba than it let on.<sup>62</sup> According to Keating, “The Soviets know the fact [about the missiles]. The Cubans know this fact. But in the view of the administration, our people are not entitled to know.” Keating concluded with a call for transparency: “Mr. President, let us have all the facts, and have them now.” In the wake of the speech, the *New York Times* echoed Keating’s pointed criticism of the Kennedy administration: “[E]ither ... the Kennedy administration doesn’t know what is going on in Cuba or, as Senator Keating strongly implies, ... it is deceiving the American people.”<sup>63</sup>

In this speech, Senator Keating overestimated just how much the President knew about Soviet activity in Cuba. Unlike in August, when Kennedy knew of SAMs at the time of Keating’s speech, Kennedy did not receive conclusive proof of IRBMs until October 16, when National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy briefed the President on the matter.<sup>64</sup> (Bundy had appeared on ABC’s October 14 *Issues and Answers* and denied Keating’s claims of “ground-to-ground missiles”: “[A]nyone who said that is saying something which just does not correspond with the situation. That is just wrong.”<sup>65</sup>) The President showed the aerial photographs to his stunned aide, Kenneth O’Donnell, who had argued that Cuba would not matter to American voters. Kennedy was chastened, too, having only days earlier mocked Senator Capeheart’s “demand for a full invasion of Cuba.”<sup>66</sup> “We’ve just elected Capeheart in Indiana, and Ken Keating will probably be the next President of the United States,” the President quipped.<sup>67</sup> The President’s witticism shows what a nuisance Keating had become – although one must wonder if the President felt a grudging respect for the accuracy of Keating’s sources.

During the next thirteen days, Keating and Congress faded into the background, as the Executive Branch and military tackled the Soviet buildup. Still, the New York senator and his prescient accusations still weighed on the minds of the President and his advisors. At a meeting in the White House Cabinet Room on October 16, the President, Robert Kennedy, Dean Rusk, Gen. Marshall Carter, Bundy, and Lyndon Johnson discussed interviewing Keating to “check out his data.”<sup>68</sup> The President eventually opted not to bother.<sup>69</sup> At an Oval Office meeting on October 22, a darkly humorous exchange occurred between Robert Kennedy and Roger Hilsman, who had discounted rumors of Cuban ground-to-ground missiles:

RFK: When could you... why didn’t we detect them a month ago? What is your answer?

Hilsman: My answer to this is that Mr. Keating is wrong! There weren’t descriptions of that kind. The refugee reports were describing SAM missiles before. They were calling them ICBMs, but when you got them to sit down and tell you what they were, they were SAMs.<sup>70</sup>

Mr. Hilsman tried to save face, eventually stating that “there are some lovely photographs” of the missiles taken in the last few days, showing “the enormous change” in the launch pads’ visibility.<sup>71</sup> (Note that Hilsman, the head of an intelligence agency, misnamed in this conversation the type of missile observed in Cuba. Hilsman mentioned ICBMs, whereas Keating was describing IRBMs, which were slightly less powerful than full-fledged ICBMs.<sup>72</sup>)

The quality of intelligence photographs aside, Hilsman’s comments raise some interesting questions about Keating’s public statements. Did Keating’s sources mistake SAMs for IRBMs and other offensive missiles, in which case Keating was lucky that his October 10 accusations proved correct? Alternatively, did Keating’s sources correctly identify IRBMs leading up to the October 10 speech, meaning that Keating’s sources were better than Hilsman’s? In his book, *The Fourteenth Day*, David G. Coleman sides with Hilsman, arguing that Keating’s sources “had seen SA-2 anti-aircraft missiles, weapons that were large and advanced and looked to the untrained eye as if they might be nuclear missiles.”<sup>73</sup> Coleman contends that Keating got lucky: “Keating’s core contention proved to be correct – the Soviets were in fact installing missile bases in Cuba – and it bolstered his public credibility immensely.”<sup>74</sup> Ultimately, we cannot determine whether Keating’s sources did or did not mistake SAM missile sites

for IRBM sites, for we know neither the sources' identities nor their means of gathering data. Still, even if Keating's sources were incorrect about the precise type of missile in Cuba, Keating's sources provided more working information in September 1962 than Hilsman's State Department Intelligence offered to President Kennedy.

The Cuban Missile Crisis came to a peaceful conclusion in late October. Premier Khrushchev agreed to remove the missiles from Cuba, so long as President Kennedy ended his blockade of Cuba, promised not to invade Cuba, and removed U.S. missiles from Turkey.<sup>75</sup> Afterward, Kennedy was accused of intentionally hiding the Soviet buildup from the public for political gain.<sup>76</sup> As columnist Hanson W. Baldwin wrote in the *New York Times*:

Was the nation's factual information about the Communist military build-up in Cuba adequate in quantity and quality, and was there a long delay after the missiles actually arrived? ... [W]ere the estimates tailored to fit top policy beliefs? Or did Administration officials, until action was finally taken, reject the intelligence estimates as erroneous?<sup>77</sup>

Certainly there had been data about the SAMs, which Kennedy initially glossed over for political gain. In the President's defense, though, Kennedy did not know until rather late about the offensive weapons in Cuba, and his top advisors disagreed about the Soviets and Cubans' plans. For these reasons, it is unlikely that Kennedy deliberately hid the intermediate missiles from the American people. Nonetheless, the American intelligence community consistently may have lagged behind Keating's private intelligence network, and the government's inability to discover the offensive launch pads merits further research.

With his reputation strengthened by the Missile Crisis,<sup>78</sup> Keating continued agitating about Cuba into early 1963, mainly due to the continued presence of Soviet troops in Cuba.<sup>79</sup> Eventually, Keating's rhetoric grew less aggressive, but he remained critical of the Kennedy administration, for the senator believed that the government had long lacked a coherent Cuban strategy.<sup>80</sup> In an article for *Look*, published on Election Day, 1964, Keating acknowledged that "the President was not receiving all the relevant intelligence" about the Soviet buildup.<sup>81</sup> This statement represented a change of opinion from Keating's October 10, 1962 address, wherein the senator had accused the President of concealing the truth. Later in the *Look* piece, though, Keating wrote, "I cannot accept the view, suggested by an Assistant Secretary of Defense, that the Government has the right to lie for political reasons." This pointed statement implied that some members of the Kennedy administration, if not the President himself, had suppressed the intelligence coming out of Cuba in mid-1962. Separate from the issue of lying to the public, Keating hypothesized that "early U.S. attempts to play down the buildup, and to insist that the Soviet weapons shipments were merely defensive, very probably encouraged the Russians."<sup>82</sup> On the whole, Kenneth Keating was neither totally critical of the administration, nor inclined to give the administration a free pass.

In the months following the Missile Crisis, Keating proposed a number of strategies for imposing political, economic, and military pressures upon Cuba, relying on the Navy and NATO. Few of these ideas were implemented, though.<sup>83</sup> Additionally, in a 1963 Senate speech (which resembles the *Look* piece published the following year), Keating outlined a compelling philosophical rationale for the Cold War – a firm, but not overly warlike, stance against the Soviet bloc:

[W]e want a peace where freedom can flourish and where men can differ without the need to silence their differences by bringing in thousands of troops and establishing missile bases. The best way to achieve that peace ... is not by appeasement, and not by a policy of retreat that can only encourage the Soviets to attack us elsewhere.... Certainly one of the big lessons of the Cuban crisis of October ... is that a strong and determined stand by the United States can ultimately ease tensions. It can show the Soviets that we mean what we say. It can show them that they have nothing to gain by belligerent activities.<sup>84</sup>

This speech recycles Keating's major oratorical themes – the ultimate triumph of democratic America over the Soviet Union, and the need for diplomatic strength, while avoiding extreme militarism.

For reasons that are not entirely clear, Cuba faded from the Republican political discourse in 1964, so much so that journalist John Chamberlain declared, "The forgotten issue of the 1964 campaign is Cuba." Moreover, Keating was "chary about setting his own record in foreign policy matters against the record of his [Senate] opponent, Bobby Kennedy."<sup>85</sup> Keating lost his seat to Robert Kennedy by a wide margin.<sup>86</sup> The senator's position-taking was not enough to earn him a permanent high profile, overcome sympathy for the Kennedys in the wake of John Kennedy's assassination, or beat the coattail effect of President Johnson's re-election.<sup>87</sup> Keating's moderate politics also hurt him. New York's Conservative Party fielded a ticket-splitting senate candidate, Henry Paolucci, because of Keating's "refusal to endorse Barry Goldwater."<sup>88</sup> (Indeed, Keating was so appalled by Goldwater's paleoconservative values that, at the 1964 Republican Convention, Keating had "[announced] that he would run his

tough reelection fight ... independently of the Republican Party if Goldwater were nominated.”<sup>89</sup>) As indicated by the large amount of angry constituent mail sent to Keating, the senator’s independent streak irked Republicans who wanted a united front against the Democrats.<sup>90</sup> Still, Keating published a book on Congressional reform in 1964,<sup>91</sup> and he later became an ambassador, so perhaps he derived some benefits from his time as the Cuban Cato.<sup>92</sup> If nothing else, Senator Keating has the distinction of being the first major politician to publicize the threat in Cuba.

#### 4. Conclusion:

The saga of Kenneth Keating and Cuba matters for several reasons. First, Keating’s use of rhetoric to draw attention to Cuba is a masterful example of Congressional position-taking (and self-advertising). Although Keating lost his second Senate race, he went to impressive lengths to be seen as a strong anti-communist. Second, this story shows how a politician can pressure the Executive Branch without passing any legislation. (As Robert Kennedy mused during his race against Keating, “Name me a Keating bill.... What legislation has he introduced?”<sup>93</sup>) Third, Keating hewed stubbornly to a moderate political path while many Republicans moved sharply to the right. He attacked Kennedy and Castro to compensate for his liberal social views, but he refused to support the extremely anti-communist Goldwater Republicans. Finally, this story restores a semi-forgotten person, Kenneth Keating, to Cold War historiography, which is typically dominated by the Kennedys, LBJ, and the advisors to the Executive Branch. By focusing on iconic figures, we forget that many more people affected American foreign relations during the Cold War. By studying candid Ken Keating, we can better appreciate the agency of individuals in our history.

For further study, Keating’s position-taking should be compared to Congressional position-taking during other Cold War crises (the 1968 invasion of Hungary, the U-2 spy plane incident, the Russian invasion of Afghanistan, etc.). By comparing Keating’s behavior to that of other Congressmen, historians can study how politicians used rhetoric to affect Cold War-era domestic politics, and also discern to what degree domestic politicians affected the foreign policy decisions made by the presidency and military. Multidisciplinary collaboration between historians and political scientists is also possible. Political scientists could record the number of public statements by Congressmen during Cold War crises, code the statements by topic and date, and then display the results with a spatial model.

#### 5. Acknowledgements:

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#### 6. Notes:

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<sup>1</sup> Biographical data drawn from: “Keating, Kenneth Barnard, (1900-1975),” *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, accessed March 29, 2013, <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=K000036>.

<sup>2</sup> Mark J. White shares this view: “Although New York Senator Kenneth B. Keating has not been altogether ignored by historians of the Cuban Missile Crisis, he has not received much attention from them either. His role in fall 1962 has customarily been described in a footnote, sometimes a sentence, occasionally a paragraph. Such laconic treatment of Keating is not, however, commensurate to the importance of the part he played in the events leading to the Missile Crisis. A fuller evaluation of his arguments, motives, and influence is, therefore, in order.” [Mark J. White, “Approaching the Abyss: The Cuban Missile Crisis and the men who made and resolved it” (unpublished doctoral thesis, Rutgers, 1992), 150, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/304010228?accountid=13567>.]

<sup>3</sup> Lewis L. Gould, *Grand Old Party: A History of the Republicans* (New York: Random House, 2003), 350-365.

<sup>4</sup> “Grant of Immunity to Witnesses,” 83<sup>rd</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> session, *Congressional Record* 100, part 10 (August 4, 1954), 13323. I learned of this speech due to a reference in the footnotes of: O. John Rogge, “Compelling the Testimony of Political Deviants,” *Michigan Law Review* 55, no. 2 (December 1956), 163, accessed February 11, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1285409>.

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- <sup>5</sup> Edward R. Korman and Abbott A. Leban, "Kenneth Barnard Keating," accessed June 26, 2014, <https://www.nycourts.gov/history/legal-history-new-york/luminaries-court-appeals/keating-kenneth.html>.
- <sup>6</sup> "Mine Enemy – The Folk Singer," 88<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> session, *Congressional Record* 109, part 13 (September 26, 1963), 18221. I first learned of this speech, specifically the words that I cite, in: Richard A. Reuss, "American Folksongs and Left-Wing Politics: 1935-56," *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 12, no. 2/3 (Indiana University Press, 1975), 89-90, accessed February 11, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3813920>.
- <sup>7</sup> "Mine Enemy – The Folk Singer," 18223.
- <sup>8</sup> Kenneth B. Keating, "An American View," reprinted in *World Affairs* 120, no. 1 (Spring, 1957): 15-16, accessed February 11, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20669340>.
- <sup>9</sup> Kenneth B. Keating, "Private Enterprise in Foreign Aid," *World Affairs* 124, no. 4 (Winter, 1961), 111, accessed February 11, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20670067>.
- <sup>10</sup> Kenneth B. Keating, "My Advance View of the Cuban Crisis," *Look* (November 3, 1964), 97-98, accessed April 1, 2013, <http://jfk.hood.edu/Collection/Weisberg%20Subject%20Index%20Files/K%20Disk/Keating%20Kenneth%20Senator/Item%2001.pdf>.
- <sup>11</sup> Keating, "My Advance View," 98.
- <sup>12</sup> "Keating Warns On Cuba: Senator Says Red 'Penetration' There Is 'of Ill Omen,'" *The New York Times* (1923-Current File), Dec. 12, 1959, 7, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* (1851-2009), with Index (1851-1993), accessed April 3, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/114836310?accountid=13567>.
- <sup>13</sup> E.W. Kenworthy, "Senators Assail Castro's Actions: Keating Favors New Powers on Sugar Quota to Teach Cuba 'Facts of Life,'" *The New York Times* (1923-Current File), Jan. 23, 1960, 1, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* (1851-2009), with Index (1851-1993), accessed March 28, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/115218176/13D1DC7001150159E82/4?accountid=13567>.
- <sup>14</sup> "Keating Assails Cuba: Says 'Invasion by Stealth' Erodes Values of Free," *The New York Times* (1923-Current File), Mar. 13, 1960, 26, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* (1851-2009), with Index (1851-1993), accessed April 5, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/news/docview/115034652/13D21B1EB8A16293084/6?accountid=13567>.
- <sup>15</sup> Willard Edwards, "Cuba Building Missile Pads, Probers Told: Former Intelligence Chief Testifies," *The Chicago Daily Tribune* (1923-1963), May 05, 1960, 7, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1989), accessed February 11, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/182511280?accountid=13567>.
- <sup>16</sup> Edwards, "Cuba Building Missile Pads."
- <sup>17</sup> "Cuban-Base Stand Hailed By Keating," *The New York Times* (1923-Current File), Sept. 30, 1960, 8, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* (1851-2009), with Index (1851-1993), accessed April 4, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/news/docview/115156924/13D21ABE7CE41A9D72B/17?accountid=13567>.
- <sup>18</sup> Mark J. White, *The Cuban Missile Crisis* (Houndmills: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996), 92-93, 102.
- <sup>19</sup> White, *The Cuban Missile Crisis*, 93.
- <sup>20</sup> Tad Szulc, "U.S. Bids Citizens Leave Cuba Now: But No New Threat Is Seen to 300 remaining – Rebel Group Badly Split," *The New York Times* (1923-Current File), May 1, 1961, 3, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* (1851-2009), with Index (1851-1993), accessed March 28, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/115257824/13D272A232F482B48F5/6?accountid=13567>.
- <sup>21</sup> "Keating Assails Cuban Embargo," *The Washington Post and Times Herald* (1959-1973), Feb. 19, 1962, A1, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Washington Post* (1877-1996), accessed April 5, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/news/docview/141766012/13D21ABE7CE41A9D72B/25?accountid=13567>.
- <sup>22</sup> A representative sample of Keating's enormous research file on Cuba can be found in: Kenneth B. Keating Papers, series 2, box 1027, University of Rochester Libraries, Dept. of Rare Books & Special Collections.
- <sup>23</sup> Keating, "My Advance View," 96.
- <sup>24</sup> White, *The Cuban Missile Crisis*, 94-100.
- <sup>25</sup> Thomas G. Paterson, "Research Note: The Historian as Detective: Senator Kenneth Keating, the Missiles in Cuba, and His Mysterious Sources," *Diplomatic History* 11, no. 1 (1987): 67-70, accessed April 2, 2013, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/j.1467-7709.1987.tb00005.x/asset/j.1467-7709.1987.tb00005.x.pdf?v=1&t=hewzn0v8&s=f46546bda970ac4ff692060cb091aa488cb98bf5>.
- <sup>26</sup> White, *The Cuban Missile Crisis*, 97-99.
- <sup>27</sup> "Soviet Activities in Cuba," 87<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> session, *Congressional Record* 108, part 14 (August 31, 1962), 18359; see also: "Advance for Release – PM's, Friday August 31, 1962 – Cuba-Based Soviets Could Jam



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- Carnaval [sic] Launchings, Keating Warns,” Aug. 31, 1962, Kenneth B. Keating Papers, series 2, box 950, folder 6, University of Rochester Libraries, Dept. of Rare Books & Special Collections.
- <sup>28</sup> “Soviet Activities in Cuba,” 18360.
- <sup>29</sup> “Soviet Activities in Cuba,” 18360.
- <sup>30</sup> “Soviet Activities in Cuba,” 18361.
- <sup>31</sup> “Soviet Activities in Cuba,” 18360.
- <sup>32</sup> “Soviet Activities in Cuba,” 18360.
- <sup>33</sup> “Soviet Activities in Cuba,” 18361.
- <sup>34</sup> Richard Ned Lebow, “The Cuban Missile Crisis: Reading the Lessons Correctly,” *Political Science Quarterly* 98, no. 3 (Autumn, 1983), 443, accessed March 30, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2150497>.
- <sup>35</sup> Sheldon M. Stern, *Averting ‘The Final Failure’: John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 26.
- <sup>36</sup> White, *The Cuban Missile Crisis*, 107.
- <sup>37</sup> Kenneth P. O’Donnell and David F. Powers, with Joe McCarthy, “Johnny, We Hardly Knew Ye”: *Memories of John Fitzgerald Kennedy* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1972), 308.
- <sup>38</sup> Joseph F. Thorning, “Is Cuba a Key to Peace?,” *World Affairs* 131, no. 4 (January, February, March, 1969), 231, accessed March 30, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20671037>. Italics are added for emphasis.
- <sup>39</sup> David M. Barrett and Max Holland, *Blind Over Cuba: The Photo Gap and the Missile Crisis* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2012), 4-6.
- <sup>40</sup> “Cuba Chronology – 1962,” 1, Kenneth B. Keating Papers, series 2, box 950, folder 6, University of Rochester Libraries, Dept. of Rare Books & Special Collections.
- <sup>41</sup> Barrett and Holland, 6.
- <sup>42</sup> Barrett and Holland, 6.
- <sup>43</sup> “Cuba Chronology – 1962,” 1, Kenneth B. Keating Papers, series 2, box 950, folder 6, University of Rochester Libraries, Dept. of Rare Books & Special Collections.
- <sup>44</sup> “Still Disturbed by Denials In Buildup, Keating Says,” *Times-Union Wire Services* [Rochester Times-Union], Oct. 26, 1962, Kenneth B. Keating Papers, series 2, box 950, folder 10, University of Rochester Libraries, Dept. of Rare Books & Special Collections.
- <sup>45</sup> Barrett and Holland, 148-149.
- <sup>46</sup> “Kennedy’s Cuba Statement,” *The New York Times* (1923-Current file), September 5, 1962, 2, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (1851-2009), with Index (1851-1993), accessed April 20, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/116109448?accountid=13567>.
- <sup>47</sup> Keating, “My Advance View,” 101.
- <sup>48</sup> Refer to radio and television program transcripts, stored in: Kenneth B. Keating Papers, series 10, box 5, University of Rochester Libraries, Dept. of Rare Books & Special Collections.
- <sup>49</sup> Senator Kenneth B. Keating, Transcript of “Senate Report” (WKBW-TV, Buffalo, New York), Sept. 24, 1962, Kenneth B. Keating Papers, series 10, box 5, folder 66, University of Rochester Libraries, Dept. of Rare Books & Special Collections.
- <sup>50</sup> White, *The Cuban Missile Crisis*, 100-101, 190.
- <sup>51</sup> Max Holland, “A Luce Connection: Senator Keating, William Pawley, and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 1, no. 3 (1999), accessed April 1, 2013, [http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal\\_of\\_cold\\_war\\_studies/v001/1.3holland.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_cold_war_studies/v001/1.3holland.html).
- <sup>52</sup> White, *The Cuban Missile Crisis*, 101.
- <sup>53</sup> Gould, 357-361; Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 224-225.
- <sup>54</sup> David R. Mayhew, *Congress: The Electoral Connection*, 2nd ed., foreword by R. Douglas Arnold (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 61-77.
- <sup>55</sup> Mayhew, 61.
- <sup>56</sup> Mayhew, 61.
- <sup>57</sup> Mayhew, 63.
- <sup>58</sup> White, *The Cuban Missile Crisis*, 106.
- <sup>59</sup> “Cuba,” 87<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> session, *Congressional Record* 108, part 17 (October 10, 1962), 22957. [The address is less than one page long, so I only used one footnote/page number citation for the entire October 10 paragraph.] Refer also to: Senator Kenneth B. Keating, “For Immediate Release – Keating Demands True Report on

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Intermediate Missiles in Cuba,” Oct. 10, 1962, Kenneth B. Keating Papers, series 9, box 27, folder 31, University of Rochester Libraries, Dept. of Rare Books & Special Collections.

<sup>60</sup> Writing in 1969, Joseph Thorning felt that Keating was incorrect in describing “intermediate range ballistic missiles” at first (Thorning, 231). Rather, the first Soviet missile bases were for “medium-range weapons,” not more advanced missiles (Thorning, 231). “Eventually, however,” Thorning argued, “the Soviets planned for a subsequent installation for intermediate range missiles” (Thorning, 231). While Thorning did raise the issue of what Keating knew and when he knew it, Thorning was wrong to claim that the Soviets only planned to install IRBMs. Rather, the Soviets did install IRBMs in Cuba before the Cuban Missile Crisis, and U-2 spy photographs were taken of these IRBMs. See: “Cuban missile crisis, 1962, value of photo intelligence,” CIA Library, accessed April 18, 2014, [https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/docs/v44i4a09p\\_0006.htm](https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/docs/v44i4a09p_0006.htm).

<sup>61</sup> “Ballistic Missile Basics,” Federation of American Scientists, last modified June 4, 2000, accessed April 18, 2014, <https://www.fas.org/nuke/intro/missile/basics.htm>.

<sup>62</sup> Rather than naming the President directly, Keating focused on the recent testimony of Under Secretary of State George Ball to the House Select Committee on Export Control. Ball stated that several missile sites might be under construction in Cuba. Keating expressed extreme displeasure that Ball couched his testimony in qualifications, rather than saying outright that there were missile bases in Cuba. However, Keating revealed his goal of criticizing the entire Kennedy administration when he ceased to speak only of Ball. Instead, Keating asked, “Are *they* [i.e., Kennedy and his top lieutenants] still trying to perpetuate the myth that the buildup is defensive?”

<sup>63</sup> James Reston, “Washington: On Cuba and Pearl Harbor – the American Nightmare / Keating’s C.I.A.,” *The New York Times* (1923-Current File), Oct. 12, 1962, 30, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* (1851-2009), with Index (1851-1993), accessed April 1, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/116106845?accountid=13567>.

<sup>64</sup> Sheldon M. Stern, *The Week The World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 22.

<sup>65</sup> McGeorge Bundy, interview by Edward P. Morgan and John Scali, *Issues and Answers*, ABC, October 14, 1962, 18, Kenneth B. Keating Papers, series 2, box 950, folder 10, University of Rochester Libraries, Dept. of Rare Books & Special Collections.

<sup>66</sup> O’Donnell, 309.

<sup>67</sup> O’Donnell, 310.

<sup>68</sup> Timothy Naftali and Philip Zelikow, eds., *The Presidential Recordings: John F. Kennedy – The Great Crises, Volume Two*, “Tuesday, October 16, 1962: 11:50 AM – 1:00 PM – Meeting on the Cuban Missile Crisis” (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), 414-415.

<sup>69</sup> Naftali and Zelikow, 421.

<sup>70</sup> Philip Zelikow and Ernest May, eds., *The Presidential Recordings: John F. Kennedy – The Great Crises, Volume Three*, “Monday, October 22, 1962: 11:00 AM – 11:46 AM – Meeting on Diplomatic Plans for the Crisis” (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), 30.

<sup>71</sup> Zelikow, 30.

<sup>72</sup> “Ballistic Missile Basics,” <https://www.fas.org/nuke/intro/missile/basics.htm>.

<sup>73</sup> David G. Goleman, *The Fourteenth Day: JFK and the Aftermath of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2012), 203.

<sup>74</sup> Coleman, 203.

<sup>75</sup> E.W. Kenworthy, “Capital Hopeful: Plans to End Blockade as Soon as Moscow Lives Up to Vow,” *The New York Times*, Oct. 29, 1962, 1, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* (1851-2009), with Index (1851-1993), accessed April 5, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/116234572?accountid=13567>.

<sup>76</sup> Coleman, 194.

<sup>77</sup> Hanson W. Baldwin, “An Intelligence Gap – Experts Ask if Reports on Cuba Were Poor or Adapted to Policy,” *The New York Times*, Oct. 31, 1962, page unknown, Kenneth B. Keating Papers, series 2, box 950, folder 10, University of Rochester Libraries, Dept. of Rare Books & Special Collections.

<sup>78</sup> “Keating Wins National Esteem For Cuba Stand [By Telephone From Washington],” *Brighton Pittsford Post*, Oct. 25, 1962, Kenneth B. Keating Papers, series 2, box 950, folder 10, University of Rochester Libraries, Dept. of Rare Books & Special Collections.

<sup>79</sup> Coleman, 197.

<sup>80</sup> “Keating Urges More Realistic Bipartisan Cuba Policy,” 88<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> session, *Congressional Record* 109, part 3 (February 25, 1963), 2942. Excerpted in: William T. Reed, “They Say: Pertinent and thought-provoking

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comments from the press and from speeches by personalities in the public eye,” *World Affairs* 126, no. 2 (Summer, 1963), 118, accessed February 11, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20670313>.

<sup>81</sup> Keating, “My Advance View,” 101.

<sup>82</sup> Keating, “My Advance View,” 106.

<sup>83</sup> Keating, “My Advance View,” 104-106.

<sup>84</sup> “Keating Urges More Realistic Bipartisan Cuba Policy,” 2945.

<sup>85</sup> John Chamberlain, “These Days... Cuba, the Dormant Issue,” *The Washington Post and Times Herald* (1959-1973), Oct. 9, 1964, 21, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Washington Post* (1877-1996), accessed April 2, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/142125871?accountid=13567>.

<sup>86</sup> White, *The Cuban Missile Crisis*, 89; “The Senate: Junior to Teddy,” *Time* – Election Special, Nov. 4, 1964, 12.

<sup>87</sup> “New York: How Long Are the Coattails?,” *Time*, Oct. 30, 1964, 30, 33.

<sup>88</sup> “New York: How Long Are the Coattails?,” 30.

<sup>89</sup> Perlstein, 374.

<sup>90</sup> Kenneth B. Keating, Letters to constituents (1964), Kenneth B. Keating Papers, series 2, box 227, folder 7, University of Rochester Libraries, Dept. of Rare Books & Special Collections. Keating also received mail praising him for his stand against Goldwater, reflecting the divided nature of the Republican Party before the 1964 elections.

<sup>91</sup> Senator Kenneth B. Keating, *Government of the People* (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1964).

<sup>92</sup> Cato was the Roman politician who ended most speeches with the declaration, “Carthago delenda est!” –

“Carthage must be destroyed!” See: Paul Lunde, “Delenda est Carthago,” and John Lawton, “The Carthage Treaty,” *Saudi Aramco World* 36, no. 3 (May/June 1985), accessed March 30, 2013, <http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/198503/delenda.est.carthago.htm>.

<sup>93</sup> “New York: How Long Are the Coattails?,” 33.