

THE SILENT GUNS OF TWO OCTOBERS

KENNEDY AND KHRUSHCHEV PLAY THE DOUBLE GAME

The Silent Guns of Two Octobers uses new as well as previously underappreciated documentary evidence to link the Cuban Missile Crisis to the Checkpoint Charlie tank standoff to achieve the impossible—craft a new, thoughtful, original analysis of a political showdown everyone thought they knew everything about. Ultimately the book concludes that much of the Cold War rhetoric the leaders employed was mere posturing; in reality neither had any intention of starting a nuclear war. Theodore Voorhees reexamines Khrushchev's and Kennedy's leadership, decision, and rhetoric in light of the new documentary evidence available. Voorhees examines the impact of John F. Kennedy's domestic political concerns about his upcoming first midterm elections on his handling of the Cuban Missile Crisis through his use of back-channel dealings with Khrushchev during the lead-up to the crisis and in the closing days when the two leaders managed to reach a settlement.

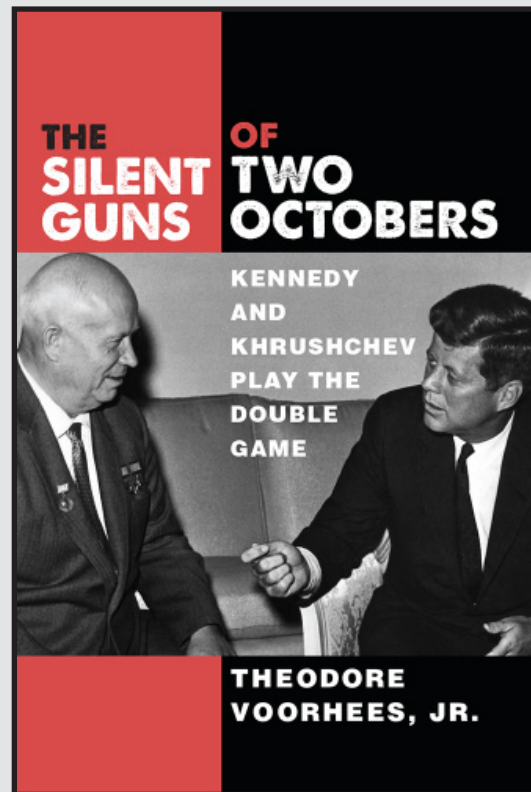
"A thoroughly new and original approach to a subject that most historians (myself included) believed to be very well-trod ground; as such, it offers a fresh look at what was then (and remains) the crisis that brought the world closest to nuclear war."

—Gregg Herken, University of California, Merced

"Is there more to say about the Berlin and Cuban missile crises of 1961-62? Absolutely yes. Based on a mastery of the latest sources, Ted Voorhees's *Silent Guns of Two Octobers* takes a fresh look at this key period in the history of US foreign relations. Scrutinizing several angles—the strategic balance, the secret back-channel diplomacy between the superpowers, and domestic US politics among them—Voorhees argues that John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev defused the 1961 and 1962 crises in similar ways, and concludes, contrary to the scholarly consensus, that the risk of war was actually minimal. This provocative work forces us to rethink much of what we thought we knew about the 'crisis years,' and it deserves the widest possible readership."

—Philip Nash, Associate Professor of History, Penn State Shenango and author of *The Other Missiles of October: Eisenhower, Kennedy, and the Jupiters, 1957-1963*

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