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## Nuclear Pioneers Event 2000 National Atomic Museum Albuquerque, NM

### Minutes to Midnight; The Cuban Missile Crisis October 11-12, 2000

The Third annual "Nuclear Pioneers" event focusing on the Cuban Missile Crisis. This year, the Museum's annual historical program series will examine this incredibly troubling time in world history. In the Fall of 1962, it is said that the world was never closer to nuclear war. During this Museum event specially selected individuals will share anecdotal accounts of their experiences during the days of the Missile Crisis. This annual event draws interest from national media, historians and film producers.

The National Atomic Museum's large collection of nuclear weapons and weapon delivery systems includes those that were part of America's nuclear arsenal during the October 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis.

#### The United States of America

The Crisis and its very real threat of an all-out nuclear war brought America's Civil Defense preparedness to a new level. Items typical of those found in Civil Defense and private shelters across the country are on exhibit in the Museum. The Museum collection includes Civil Defense communication equipment, metering and testing materials, booklets for advising the public in construction of shelter. In addition there are "Survival Packs", hand-operated and bicycle operated blower and air circulation equipment, foodstuffs and medical supplies. A unique feature is a Soviet pamphlet advising Russian citizens on preparing for attack and building an underground shelter.

Two unique exhibitions, " Missiles of October" covering military aspects of American preparedness and "Secret no More" an exhibition about Soviet nuclear weapons will be displayed during this event.

#### The Soviet Union

After its first nuclear test on August 29, 1949, the Soviet Union's nuclear arsenal grew rapidly from only a few fission weapons remarkably similar to the US's World War II Fat Man, to over 33,000 fission and fusion (hydrogen) warheads by 1988.

The world should recall the cause of the Cuban Missile Crisis was the attempted installation in Cuba of 48 Soviet nuclear capable SS-4 "Sandal" medium range ballistic missiles (MRBMs), 32 SS-5 "Skean" intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs), and 42 outdated IL-28 "Beagle" light bombers. Post-Crisis the U.S. found out that Soviet forces in Cuba were also equipped with six "Frog" tactical ground-to-ground nuclear tipped rockets.

The following individuals are the Nuclear Pioneers for the event held Oct. 11-12, 2000.

- Lud Gritzko, Deputy shelter manger for Shelter # TA-16-370, Los Alamos, NM recalls the emotion and activities preparing for the possibility of Soviet attack of the US. Dr. Gritzko worked locally during 1962 to prepare for the expected attack.
- James G. Blight, Professor, Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University. Author of many historical books and papers regarding the crisis. Dr. Blight will trace the evolution of policy thought in Washington, Moscow and Havana during the crisis. Dr. Blight remains a consultant in national military policy issues.
- Manny Olona, as a young airman with bilingual skills assigned to a Secret Isle Listening Post monitoring Cuban ICBM operational readiness. Mr. Olona spoke directly to President Kennedy regarding Cuban intentions. Mr. Olona will recall anecdotally the stressful time that may have changed world history.
- Maj. Gen. Edward B. Giller, USAF Ret. Major General Giller was assigned to CIA and provided insight and analysis in determining intentions of Soviet blockade running ships at the time of the crisis. Gen. Giller will address remarks regarding some policy viewpoints of the time.
- Clark E. Aamodt, Navigator Bombardier, B-47 Strategic Air Command. Mr. Aamodt was on full alert during all stages of the Cuban Crisis. Mr. Aamodt will address perceptions of the SAC forces at this critical time.
- Dago Ruiz, Cuban American who was living in South Florida and worried about his family in Cuba during crisis. Mr. Ruiz will speak about the Cuban community perceptions during the crisis.
- Mike Moore or Linda Rothstein former editors of "Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists" will speak about the Dooms Day Clock which tracks the potential for nuclear war. They will discuss an overview of history and the "clock

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