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The National History Day Project Judges

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12 April 2021

Process Paper:

The process of creating our website was an engaging, intriguing, and tumultuous one – it was marked by three principal points: overachieving, stagnation, and perfectionism.

Firstly, our website exploring Miscommunication in the Cuban Missile Crisis was guided by both the annual theme, ‘Communication in History,’ and our deep desire to understand more of the recent past – for it shapes our future. Moreover, our website’s topic was directly relational and yet converse to this year’s theme because, in the Cuban Missile Crisis, it was not communication that shaped the transpired events, but rather the inverse - miscommunication.

Now, onto the first principal point, we mark our first milestone with the word ‘overachieving’ because, in the project’s beginning, we progressed hastily – completing the tasks almost immediately, achieving 100% on all assignments, and feeling over-comfortable in our position. We gathered much data on our topic of the Cuban Missile Crisis – pictures, articles, databases, and watched a television show on the subject. Our sources used were varied, detailed, and reliable – they were excellent tools to help us further understand the Cuban Missile Crisis’s intricacies.

However, we soon began to plateau – going many days or even weeks without achieving much – and, in our stagnant state, we ended up misreading the Rule Book. This mistake was colossal as we proceeded to create a wixsite via Wix.com instead of a National History Day website – meaning that the work which was put in was, essentially, null-and-

void. All the data that we had collated into website-friendly paragraphs, the pictures cited in the website, and the created pages were all-for-naught.

Moving onto the aspect of perfectionism, once we had realized, we reevaluated immediately and began the expedited process of website creation – while keeping work of the highest quality as our top priority, of course. Then, we had soon finished the website, and while it was not as aesthetically pleasing as our previous wixsite, it was efficient, informative, and functional. We even maintained the same word-count, informative paragraphs, summaries, and insights.

Regarding our project's creation, our historical argument relates to unearthing the results of miscommunication during the Cuban Missile Crisis and covers the specific points of pressure, pandemonium, and prevention. Through our thorough analysis of the Cuban Missile Crisis and these three guiding points – specifically, we learned that the ability to communicate effectively, no matter the context, is quintessential. Thus, as one can see, we delve deep into the details of the Cuban Missile Crisis – with the lens of how miscommunication impacted it.

Therefore, this statement brings us to our topic's historical significance. The Cuban Missile Crisis was an important event in history, and specifically in recent history, because of its far-reaching implications – which almost resulted in Armageddon and did result in many nuclear nonproliferation treaties, as well as new pathways to global communication and cooperation. Furthermore, it provided a significant *shock to the system* of both sides due to its nuclear annihilation-nature – the perspective of *one button away from the end of the world* was promptly introduced.