

Phil Ochs, Talking Cuban Crisis

It was just a little while ago I glued my ears to the radio
The announcer was sayin' we'd better beware
A crisis was hanging - a wave from the air
crawlin' on the ground
swimmin' in the sea
headin' for me
Well, I didn't know if I was for or agin' it
He was yellin' and screamin' a mile a minute
Well, he said "Here comes the President
but first this word from Pepsodent
Have whiter teeth
Have cleaner breath
When you're facin' nuclear death"
And then President John began to speak
And I knew right away he wouldn't be weak
Well, he said he'd seen some missile bases
And terrible smiles on Cuban faces
Close Pictures
carryin' land reform too far
Giving land to the USSR
Well, he said we mustn't be afraid
We're settin' up a little blockade
Put our ships along the Cuban shores
And if the Russian bear yells and roars,
We'll let him have it
From Turkey and Greece, Formosa and Spain
The peaceful West European Plain
From Alaska and Greenland we'll use our means
And twenty thousand submarines
We're gonna teach the Russians a lesson
For trying to upset the balance of power
Now most Americans stood behind
The President and his military minds
But me, I stood behind a bar
Dreamin' of a spaceship getaway car
Head for mars
Any other planet that has bars
Like Gerde's Folk City
Yes, it seemed the President's stand was strong and plain
But some Republicans was a-goin' insane
And they still are
They said our plan was just too mild
Spare the rod and spoil the child
Let's sink Cuba into the sea
And give 'em back democracy
Under the water
Well, the deadline was set for ten o'clock
For a cold war it was a-gettin' hot
Well, the Russians tried, the Russians failed
Homeward bound those missiles sailed
Mr. Khrushchev said, "Better Red than dead."