

# Acknowledgments

The original, full-length version of this book, *Averting 'The Final Failure': John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, began, at least in my mind, over twenty years ago when, as JFK Library historian, I first listened to the still-classified ExComm tapes. I was especially intrigued by the October 26 morning meeting in which U.N. ambassador Adlai Stevenson, my hero in the 1950s, attempted unsuccessfully to overcome the hostility of his ExComm critics. I later told my wife that a narrative account of these meetings would make a fascinating book. But the project had to wait until all the tapes from these historic thirteen days were finally declassified in the late 1990s.

This revised and condensed version of *Averting 'The Final Failure'* aims to make this unique historical event completely comprehensible—especially for students and general readers. And, of course, genuinely interested readers can always move on to the full-length version.

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Sheldon M. Stern

*Newton, Mass.*