

Cuban Missile Crisis -- The Trollope Ploy Revealed

by Sherry and Jenny Thompson

Over the years, many people have speculated as to who came up with the idea of ignoring Khrushchev's more demanding letter of October 27, 1962 and answering his other letter, in which he agreed to remove the Soviet missiles in Cuba for a non-invasion pledge by the United States.

A number of people were credited with originating the idea, which became known as the Trollope Ploy, including Robert Kennedy, in his book *Thirteen Days*; National Security Advisor, McGeorge Bundy, and Under Secretary of State, George Ball. Dean Rusk in his autobiography credits Llewellyn Thompson as did McNamara on several occasions including in the film *Fog of War*. Presidential Advisor, Theodore Sorensen, introduces the idea, on the ExComm tapes, and so he has been given credit for it by some historians.

We now have an interview with Ted Sorensen that was given to the authors of *The Kremlinologist* a few months before he died. In the interview he corroborates Rusk's and McNamara's assertion by clearly crediting Thompson with the idea. Hopefully, this new evidence will set the record straight. Perhaps more importantly, this serves to illustrate how ill-advised it is to rely solely on the ExComm tapes to determine the truth behind the Cuban Missile Crisis. It is obvious that there were many important meetings and communications during the Crisis that were not tape-recorded.