

# George F. Kennan's Strategic Thought: The Making of an American Political Realist

Richard Russell



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George F. Kennan's strategic thought was instrumental in the formulation of the American grand strategy of containment of the Soviet Union. As Dr. Russell points out, Kennan's strategic thought was forged in the diplomatic practice and scholarship of the time. Russell looks beyond containment, however, to sift through Kennan's work to illuminate the worldview that informed his analysis of international relations and American foreign policy.

Kennan's realist worldview contained principles for governing American diplomacy and the use of force to achieve national interests within the bounds set by the international competition for power between nationstates. Kennan's worldview illuminates the continuities of international politics that are often overlooked because of the massive changes in the post-Cold War world. Ironically, Kennan's worldview continues to provide a theoretical footing for guiding American foreign policy after containment. This is an important study for scholars, policymakers, and concerned citizens interested in international relations, American foreign policy, diplomatic history, and strategic studies.

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