
ABSTRACT

George Frost Kennan (1904-2005) is a famous American diplomat and historian, the author of the “Long telegram” and the doctrine of “containment”. He is an active participant in the formulation of the Truman Doctrine and the development of the Marshall Plan. He was one of the originators of political “realism”, a dominant school of thought in international relations theory. George Kennan is one of the key figures in the history of the Cold War and Soviet-American geopolitical rivalry. The conceptual, theoretically justified “containment” offered by Kennan has become a US postwar foreign policy solid foundation for decades. The study of George Kennan’s legacy, his political views, theoretical concepts and practical experience is very important for specialists in international relations and US history, and for government officials to understand the decision-making process concerning foreign policy issues, the formation of doctrines and US foreign policy in general.

Keywords: Long telegram. The doctrine of containment. International relations. Russian-American relations. Diplomacy.

THE FORMAÇÃO DA POLÍTICA EXTERNA DOS EUA NO PÓS-GUERRA: O “LONG TELEGRAM” DE G.F. KENNAN E A TRADIÇÃO DO REALISMO POLÍTICO

LA FORMACIÓN DE LA POLÍTICA EXTERIOR ESTADOUNIDENSE DE POSGUERRA: EL “LONG TELEGRAM” DE G.F. KENNAN Y LA TRADICIÓN DEL REALISMO POLÍTICO

RESUMO


RESUMEN

George Frost Kennan (1904-2005) es un famoso diplomático e historiador estadounidense, autor del “Telegrama largo” y la doctrina de la “contención”. Es un participante activo en la formulación de la Doctrina Truman y el desarrollo del Plan Marshall. Fue uno de los creadores del "realismo" político, una escuela de pensamiento dominante en la teoría de las relaciones internacionales. George Kennan es una de las figuras clave en la historia de la Guerra Fría y la rivalidad geopolítica soviético-estadounidense. La “contención” conceptual, teoricamente justificada, ofrecida por Kennan se ha convertido en una base sólida de la política exterior estadounidense de posguerra durante décadas. El estudio del legado de George Kennan, sus puntos de vista políticos, conceptos teóricos y experiencia práctica es muy importante para los especialistas en relaciones internacionales y la historia de EE. UU., Y para que los funcionarios gubernamentales comprendan el proceso de toma de decisiones sobre cuestiones de política exterior, la formación de doctrinas y la política de EE. UU. política exterior en general.

INTRODUCTION
The era of the Cold War had a tremendous impact on both American and Russian history. Kennan was the first to give an accurate scientific characterization of the Soviet state for that period of time, and also predicted the evolution of ideology in the USSR. The research goal is to study the influence of George Frost Kennan’s creative heritage on the formation of the post-war U.S. foreign policy. In accordance with the goal, the following tasks have been set:

1. To reveal the essence, structure and significance of the “Long Telegram” for the formation of the post-war U.S. foreign policy;
2. To analyze the theoretical objectives of George Kennan’s “political realism”.
3. To evaluate George Kennan’s activities as a diplomat, statesman, and a specialist in international relations.

METHODOLOGY
The works used in this article, affecting various aspects of George Kennan’s life and activities, can be divided into two groups. The first group is foreign works, which are divided into three sections.

The first one mainly presents the works of significant Kennan biographers, such as Hixson W.L.: George F. Kennan Cold War Iconoclast (1989), Gaddis J.L.: George F. Kennan: An American Life (2011), etc.

The second section is works of prominent experts in U.S. history, international relations and diplomacy. Gaddis J. I. We Now Know. Rethinking the Cold History (1997), H. Kissinger Diplomacy (1997) etc.


The second group is Russian historians’ works devoted to Kennan’s activities:


METHODS
The historical-biographical method, which helps to examine the diplomat’s personality, also the historical-genetic method, which assists in tracing the sources of phenomena, their connection, the transition of one event to another and the historical-comparative method is needful to compare various events in international relations.

RESEARCH RESULTS
“George F. Kennan occupies a secure place in the history of the Cold War. Every student of that history knows of the “Long Telegram” that, in 1946, he wired to Washington from his embassy station in Moscow” (CONGDON 2008). Kennan already had the fruitful experience of diplomatic work in the USSR since the opening of the American embassy since the early 1930s. In the second half of the 1940s, Kennan was the right-hand man of the American ambassador to the USSR, W. Averell Harriman, and often acted as a substitute.

Substituting the Ambassador Harriman, Kennan participated in the coordination of various issues related to the trials of war criminals, the decisions of the Moscow conference of three foreign ministers, the entry of US citizens into the territory of Eastern Europe, the revision of the armistice regime for Italy, and the “the transfer to the Soviet Union a part of ships of the Japanese naval fleet” (The Letter from the Assistant People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR S.A. Lozovsky to the Charge in the Soviet Union G.F. Kennan on the Transfer to the Soviet Union a Part of Ships of the Japanese Naval Fleet. Soviet-American Relations 1945-1948. M., 2004), and also talked with Molotov about nuclear bomb test by the Americans.

In mid-February 1946, a request was received at the US Embassy in Moscow from Washington. The USSR refused to follow the recommendations of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, so the embassy was offered to express its opinion on this matter.
Taking the opportunity and feeling for the first time that his analytical abilities, knowledge of the subject and special talent to give expressive (sometimes refined) literary forms to an ordinary official memo, could be in demand in the current situation of aggravation of Soviet-American relations, Kennan’s long telegram (8 thousand words) number 511 is confessional, believing that its contents may not please both the leadership of the State Department and high officials in the White House (MALKOV, 2009).

*Like the speech of a Protestant preacher in the 18th century, this telegram is divided into five parts:

Basic features of post-war Soviet outlook;

Background of this outlook;

Its projection in practical policy on official level;

Its projection on unofficial level (with the help of different political and subterranean organizations);


The telegram was extremely extensive indeed, but clearly structured, filled with a substantial amount of theses. (GADDIS, GEORGE, 2011).

Historians note, that “the effect of the Long Telegram was rapid and sensational. It arrived in Washington on a holiday, Washington’s birthday, 22 February. Soon it was circulated, reproduced, sent and read by the secretaries of war and navy and, it seems, by President Truman himself”. (LUKACS, 2007).

W. Hixson, his biographer, stated: “the Long Telegram provided the first of several lifelong demonstrations that Kennan was a man who could command influence through the force of his arguments and the power of his prose”. (HIXSON, GEORGE, 1989).

In the first part, Kennan gives the basic postulates of the post-war Soviet worldview. Kennan comes to the conclusion that the USSR aims at to strengthen its power precisely in contrast to the Western states, also to incite conflicts between capitalist states, the struggle against socialists and social democrats in the West, and attempts to pressure the governments of capitalist countries with the help of democratically progressive elements within these states “whose reactions, aspirations and activities happen to be “objectively” favorable to interests of USSR” [http://www.coldwar.ru/bases/telegramm.php].

Part Two is about basic principles of Soviet outlook, Kennan underlined, “it was no coincidence that Marxism, which had smoldered ineffectively for half a century in Western Europe, caught hold and blazed for first time in Russia. In this dogma, with its basic altruism of purpose, they found justification for their instinctive fear of outside world…basically this is only the steady advance of uneasy Russian nationalism, a centuries old movement in which conceptions of offence and defense are inextricably confused”. Kennan describes the government hypocritical, secretive and insincere, which is “actually a conspiracy within a conspiracy”, and even Stalin himself does not receive anything like an objective picture of outside world.

In the third part of the report, Kennan writes about the official plane of the implementation of the USSR program. The USSR will take part in the activities of international organizations, in order to achieve its own goals, attempts will be made to reduce the influence of the capitalist countries in relation to colonial and dependent peoples. An illusion of cultural collaboration and a “correct” course towards individual foreign governments will be created in every way, “with great stress being laid on prestige of Soviet Union and its representatives and with punctilious attention to protocol as distinct from good manners”.

In the fourth part Kennan concentrates his attention on unofficial plane of Soviet foreign policy. Here he notes underground operations of the Comintern, the eagerness of Soviet Government to exert influence with the help of a wide variety of national associations or bodies, international organizations, international labour movement, Russian Orthodox Church and others. Through these actions “political and strategic potential of major western powers” and their world influence will be undermined, and capitalist states will be set against one another. In the fifth and the last part there are some practical conclusions that the USA should come to.

Henry Kissinger notes: “but where Kennan differed from other experts was that he described the mechanism by which, sooner or later, through one power struggle or another, the Soviet system would be fundamentally transformed. Soviet Russia might be changed overnight from one of the strongest to one of the weakest and most pitiable of national societies. (Cit.1994).
The following passage in the telegram is especially interesting: “We must formulate and put forward for other nations a much more positive and constructive picture of sort of world we would like to see than we have put forward in past... We should be better able than Russians to give them this. And unless we do, Russians certainly will” (http://www.coldwar.ru/bases/telegramm.php).

The telegram arrived very on time, almost simultaneously with Stalin’s famous speech at the Bolshoi Theater on January 21, 1946 and Churchill's speech on March 5, 1946. Six months before these events after the Potsdam Conference, Truman wrote: “Our experience with them in Germany and in Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Poland was such that I decided not to take more risk in joint ventures with the Russians... Strength is the only thing that Russians understand”. Kennan gave his own definition to what Truman wrote about—“the logic of power”, the only logic that the Soviet leaders understand.

Experts in the theory of international relations attribute George Kennan's legacy to the so-called “realistic” tradition, which postulated the Cold War as a traditional development of the force conflict in international relations. "Realists" analyze international relations from the standpoint of pragmatism, behaviorism, psychoanalysis, structural and functional method (SOGRIN, 1987).

The forceful aspect of US foreign policy must be formulated according to strict logic and efficiency, and there is no place for good moral impulses and expansion of the American way of life. Since the most important topic in the second half of the twentieth century was the issue of relations between the USA and the USSR, the perspective of these relations was in the center of attention. There was the policy of “containment” in the foundation for building relations between the two great states in the first post-war years.

George Kennan in 1947-1949 was the head of the Policy Planning Staff of the U.S. Department of State. He took part in the formulation of the "Truman Doctrine" and the "Marshall Plan" and other important foreign policy platforms of the U.S. government.

The primary goal of “containment” was to redress the balance of power that was disrupted as a result of World War II, and to restore the political stability and economic potential of Western Europe (including the western zones of occupied Germany) and Japan as the main world power centres capable of creating superior counterweight to the “Soviet orbit” (PECHATNOV, 2006). For Kennan the ultimate aim was not US hegemony or the division of the world into Soviet and American zones of influence, but a world internally balanced by the natural centres of power - the USA, Western Europe, Russia, Eastern Asia.

History has shown the foresight of the basic strategy presumptions of “reducing power and influence" of the USSR — the diagnosis of the weaknesses of the “socialist camp" and the forecast of its fate, including the interconnection of the collapse of the system and the Soviet regime in the USSR itself. Kennan was mistaken only in one thing — he underestimated the ability of the late Soviet leadership to renounce its control of Eastern Europe without a fight, which made possible the very peaceful withdrawal of the Soviet Union from it that the American strategists could not figure it out. The same renouncement led to the collapse of the socialist system, which also had not been foreseen by Kennan and his colleagues’ evolutionary scenario (PECHATNOV, 2006).

**Discussions**

In the 1950s and 60s, Kennan attracted attention as the author of several major scientific works on Russian-American relations. By the beginning of the 70s, he had already had: the legendary “American Diplomacy” (1951), a Pulitzer Prize-winning book “Russia Leaves the War” (1956) and “Russia, the Atom and the West” (1958), a collection based on the famous Reith lectures”.

In the 1980s, the interest in Kennan’s personality increased significantly. In the work “Wise Men. Six Friends and the World They Made” (1986) W. Isaacson and E. Thomas studied George Kennan’s life, the period of his diplomatic service was analyzed in sufficient details. (ISAACSON THOMAS, 1986). One of the most successful biographies of George Frost Kennan is considered to be Walter Hixson's work “George F. Kennan Cold War Iconoclast” (1989). Hixson comes to the conclusion that “Kennan has earned his reputation as one of the West’s preeminent experts on the Soviet Union” (HIXSON, GEORGE, 1989).

In 1994, the solid work “Diplomacy” was published by the former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. In the chapter “The Success and the Pain of Containment” he admitted: “the doctrine of "containment" was the very theory that inspired America for more than four decades of construction, struggle and eventually led the country to triumph”
(KISSINGER; DIPLOMACY, 1997).

Three years later “We Now Know. Rethinking the Cold War History” (1997) by the famous historian John Lewis Gaddis appeared. The author indicated that, according to Kennan, the task of “containment” was “to prevent the Soviet Union from controlling defeated but still potentially dangerous enemies” (GADDIS, 1997). after the Second World War.

In November 2011, “George F. Kennan: an American life” was published by John Lewis Gaddis. Gaddis is considered the most authoritative among Kennan’s biographers, he gives us a comprehensive and multilateral characterization of the diplomat. Now it is time to analyze modern Russian researchers’ work devoted to Kennan.

The 2000s were marked by the appearance of several major monographs and articles. In 2004, the article “Patriarch of American Diplomacy” was published by the Chairman of the World Council of Former Ministers of Foreign Affairs A.A. Bessmertnykh. The author recalled Kennan as the diplomat and noted that Kennan thought that “the concepts expressed by him in other publications were later distorted by interpreters both in the USA and in other countries” (BEESMERTNYKH, 2004).

In 2007, famous americanist V.O. Pechatov published a thorough article “Man for all times (in memory of George Kennan)”. He wrote: “In Kennan’s reaction to the collapse of the Soviet system, there was neither a shadow of malevolence, nor even intellectual satisfaction from his realized predictions” (PECHATOV, 2007). In 2009, the comprehensive treatise “Russia and the United States in the 20th Century” was published by V.I. Malkov. The author devotes an entire chapter to George Kennan in his fundamental sociocultural historical research. (MALKOV, 2009).

CONCLUSION

Kennan’s conclusions and practical recommendations regarding the Soviet Union and the development of Soviet-American relations, drawn up in the “Long Telegram”, formed the basis of the US foreign policy during the Cold War. George Kennan had a primary role in developing the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and a number of critical directives and events. Kennan worked side by side with representatives of the top political and military elites of the United States and the USSR.

George Kennan established himself as a scrupulous historian of Russian-American relations and the author of famous works on American foreign policy. George Kennan and Hans Morgenthau are considered the founders of “political realism.” The “realism” of both became the fundamental basis for the “neo-realism” or “structural realism” that took shape at the end of the 20th century and is now very relevant.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

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Received: 20 Oct.2020

Approved: 01 Dec.2020

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