

Biography of George F. Kennan

George F. Kennan, the former honorary chairman of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy, received the National Committee on American Foreign Policy's first George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service in 1994. It honors an American who has served the United States in an exemplary way by making a seminal contribution to defining and illuminating the national interests of the United States.

George Kennan's training and experience as a Soviet specialist in the U.S. Foreign Service earned him the position of head of the State Department's first Policy Planning Staff. While serving in that role, he wrote for *Foreign Affairs* in 1947 the famous article, attributed to X, in which he coined the term "containment" to describe American strategy toward the Soviet Union. Before he left the State Department in 1953, George F. Kennan served as the ambassador to the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.

Ambassador Kennan's numerous books on Russia, the Soviet Union, the nuclear threat, and diplomatic and personal history, including *An American Family*, *Sketches from a Life*, *Around the Cragged Hill*, and *American Diplomacy: 1900-1950*, have won two Pulitzer Prizes and a National Book Award.

From 1953 until his death in 2005, this recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom was a scholar at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton University.