

## The Early Cold War Years

### Guide to Reading

#### Big Ideas

**Trade, War, and Migration** As the Cold War began, the United States struggled to oppose Communist aggression in Europe and Asia through political, economic, and military measures.

#### Content Vocabulary

- containment (p. 538)
- limited war (p. 545)

#### Academic Vocabulary

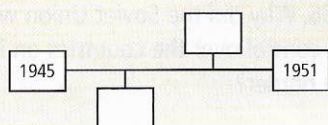
- insecurity (p. 538)
- initially (p. 541)

#### People and Events to Identify

- George Kennan (p. 538)
- Long Telegram (p. 538)
- Marshall Plan (p. 540)
- NATO (p. 541)
- SEATO (p. 545)

#### Reading Strategy

**Sequencing** Complete a time line similar to the one below by recording the major events related to the Korean War.



**TENNESSEE STANDARDS**  
United States History

**Performance Indicators State:**  
9.5 Identify areas associated with American containment policies (i.e., Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, East and West Germany).

**Performance Indicators Teacher:**  
9.5 Illustrate domestic and foreign policy issues of the Truman presidential administration.

President Truman worked to contain communism by supporting Greece, Iran, and West Germany. When Communist North Korea invaded South Korea, Truman and the UN sent troops to aid South Korea.

### Containing Communism

**MAIN Idea** The Truman Doctrine offered aid to any nation resisting communism; the Marshall Plan aided European countries in rebuilding.

**HISTORY AND YOU** Is there a conflict in the world today where you think the United States should intervene? Read on to learn how President Truman adopted policies designed to stop the spread of communism.

Despite growing tensions with the Soviet Union, many American officials continued to believe cooperation with the Soviets was possible. In late 1945 the foreign ministers of the former wartime Allies met first in London, then in Moscow, to discuss the future of Europe and Asia. Although both British and American officials pushed for free elections in Eastern Europe, the Soviets refused to budge. “Our relations with the Russians,” the British foreign minister gloomily concluded, “are drifting into the same condition as that in which we had found ourselves with Hitler.”

### The Long Telegram

Increasingly exasperated by the Soviets’ refusal to cooperate, officials at the State Department asked the American Embassy in Moscow to explain Soviet behavior. On February 22, 1946, diplomat **George Kennan** responded with what became known as the **Long Telegram**, a 5,540-word message explaining his views of the Soviets.

According to Kennan, the Soviets’ view of the world came from a traditional “Russian sense of **insecurity**” and fear of the West, intensified by the communist ideas of Lenin and Stalin. Because communists believed that they were in a long-term historical struggle against capitalism, Kennan argued, it was impossible to reach any permanent settlement with them.

Kennan therefore proposed what became the basic American policy throughout the Cold War: “a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant **containment** of Russian expansive tendencies.” Kennan explained that, in his opinion, the Soviet system had several major economic and political weaknesses. If the United States could keep the Soviets from expanding their power, it would be only a matter of time before the Soviet system would fall apart. Communism could be beaten without going to war. The Long Telegram circulated widely in



## PRIMARY SOURCE

### The Truman Doctrine



▲ President Truman signs the Foreign Aid Assistance Act, providing aid to Greece and Turkey; the use of aid to support nations resisting Communist pressure became known as the Truman Doctrine.

## PRIMARY SOURCE

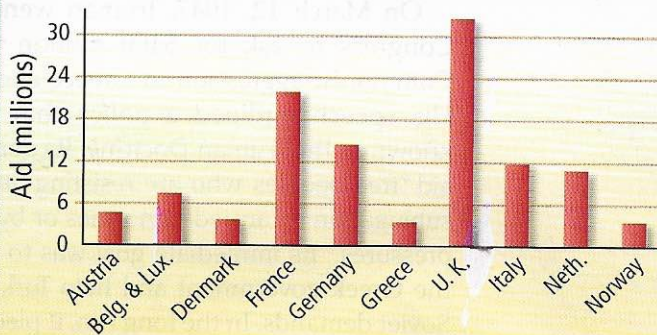
"The peoples of a number of countries of the world have recently had totalitarian regimes forced upon them against their will. The Government of the United States has made frequent protests against coercion and intimidation, in violation of the Yalta agreement in Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria. At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. The choice is too often not a free one. . . . I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures. I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way."

—Truman's address to Congress, March 12, 1947

## DBQ Document-Based Questions

- 1. Finding the Main Idea** What was the stated goal of the Truman Doctrine?
- 2. Drawing Conclusions** Which nation received the most aid through the Marshall Plan? Why do you think this might be?

## Marshall Plan Aid to Major Countries



Source: *The Marshall Plan Fifty Years Later.*

Truman's administration. The administration based its policy of containment—keeping communism within its present territory through the use of diplomatic, economic, and military actions—on this document.

## Crisis in Iran

While Truman's administration discussed Kennan's ideas, a series of crises erupted during the spring and summer of 1946. These crises seemed to prove that Kennan was right about the Soviets. The first crisis began in Iran in March 1946.

During World War II, the United States had put troops in southern Iran while Soviet troops occupied northern Iran to secure a supply line from the Persian Gulf. After the war, instead of withdrawing as promised, the Soviet troops remained in northern Iran. Stalin then began demanding access to Iran's oil supplies. To increase the pressure, Soviet troops helped

local Communists in northern Iran establish a separate government.

To American officials, these actions signaled a Soviet push into the Middle East. The secretary of state sent Stalin a strong message demanding that Soviet forces withdraw. At the same time, the battleship USS *Missouri* sailed into the eastern Mediterranean. The pressure seemed to work. Soviet forces withdrew, having been promised a joint Soviet-Iranian oil company, although the Iranian parliament later rejected the plan.

## The Truman Doctrine

Frustrated in Iran, Stalin turned northwest to Turkey. There, the straits of the Dardanelles were a vital route from Soviet Black Sea ports to the Mediterranean. For centuries, Russia had wanted to control this strategic route. In August 1946, Stalin demanded joint control of the Dardanelles with Turkey.



For more of the text of Truman's Address to Congress, see page R54 in **Documents in American History**.



Presidential adviser Dean Acheson saw this move as another move in a Soviet plan to control the Middle East, and he advised Truman to make a show of force. The president declared, "We might as well find out whether the Russians are bent on world conquest." He then ordered the new aircraft carrier *Franklin D. Roosevelt* to join the *Missouri* in protecting Turkey and the eastern Mediterranean.

While the United States supported Turkey, Britain tried to help Greece. In August 1946 Greek Communists launched a guerrilla war against the Greek government. For about six months, British troops helped the Greeks fight the guerrillas. The effort strained Britain's economy, which was still weak from World War II. In February 1947 Britain informed the United States that it could no longer afford to help Greece.

On March 12, 1947, Truman went before Congress to ask for \$400 million to fight Communist aggression in Greece and Turkey. His speech outlined a policy that became known as the Truman Doctrine. Its goal was to aid "free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures." Its immediate goal was to stabilize the Greek government and help Turkey resist Soviet demands. In the long run, it pledged the United States to fight the spread of communism worldwide.

## The Marshall Plan

Meanwhile, postwar Western Europe faced grave problems. Economies and cities were ruined, people were nearing starvation, and political chaos was at hand. The terrible winter of 1946 made things worse.

In June 1947 Secretary of State George C. Marshall proposed the European Recovery Program, or **Marshall Plan**, which would give European nations American aid to rebuild their economies. Truman saw the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine as "two halves of the same walnut," both essential for containment. Marshall offered help to all nations planning a recovery program:

### **PRIMARY SOURCE**

"Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a

working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist."

—quoted in *Marshall: Hero for Our Times*

Although the Marshall Plan was offered to the Soviet Union and its satellite nations in Eastern Europe, those nations rejected the offer. Instead, the Soviets developed their own economic program. This action further separated Europe into competing regions. The Marshall Plan pumped billions of dollars worth of supplies, machinery, and food into Western Europe. Western Europe's recovery weakened the appeal of communism and opened new markets for trade.

## The Berlin Airlift

President Truman and his advisers believed that Western Europe's prosperity depended on Germany's recovery. The Soviets, however, still wanted Germany to pay reparations to the Soviet Union. Eventually, the dispute over Germany brought the United States and the Soviet Union to the brink of war.

By early 1948, U.S. officials had concluded that the Soviets were deliberately trying to undermine Germany's economy. In response, the United States, Great Britain, and France announced that they were merging their zones in Germany and allowing the Germans to have their own government. They also agreed to merge their zones in Berlin and to make West Berlin part of the new German republic.

The new nation was officially called the Federal Republic of Germany, but it became known as West Germany. The Soviet zone eventually became the German Democratic Republic, also known as East Germany. West Germany was not allowed to have a military, but in most respects, it was independent.

The decision to create West Germany convinced the Soviets that they would never get the reparations they wanted. In late June 1948, Soviet troops cut all road and rail traffic to West Berlin hoping to force the United States to either reconsider its decision or abandon West Berlin. This blockade provoked a crisis. President Truman sent bombers with atomic weapons to bases in Britain and the American commander in Germany warned: "If we mean to hold Europe against communism, then we



must not budge." The challenge was to keep West Berlin alive without provoking war with the Soviets. Instead of ordering troops to fight their way to Berlin, and thereby triggering war with the Soviet Union, Truman ordered the air force to fly supplies into Berlin instead.

The Berlin airlift began in June 1948 and continued through the spring of 1949, bringing in more than 2 million tons of supplies to the city. Stalin finally lifted the blockade on May 12, 1949. The airlift symbolized American determination to contain communism and not give in to Soviet demands.

## NATO

The Berlin blockade convinced many Americans that the Soviets were bent on conquest. The public began to support a military

alliance with Western Europe. By April 1949, an agreement had been reached to create the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)—a mutual defense alliance.

**NATO initially** included 12 countries: the United States, Canada, Britain, France, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, Portugal, the Netherlands, Norway, Luxembourg, and Iceland. NATO members agreed to come to the aid of any member who was attacked. For the first time in its history, the United States had committed itself to maintaining peace in Europe. Six years later, NATO allowed West Germany to rearm and join its organization. This decision alarmed Soviet leaders. They responded by organizing a military alliance in Eastern Europe known as the Warsaw Pact.

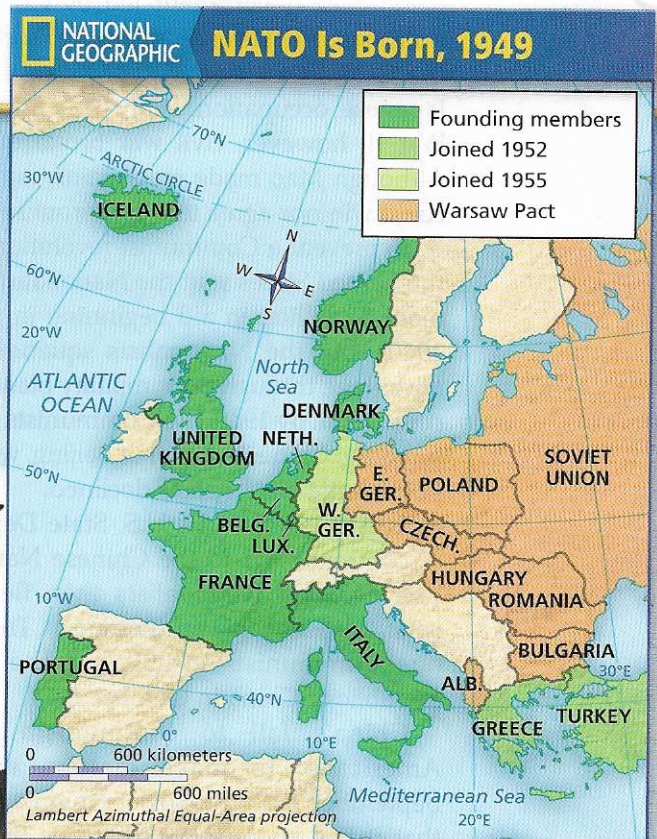
**✓ Reading Check Evaluating** What triggered the beginning of the Berlin airlift?

**History ONLINE**  
**Student Web Activity** Visit [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com) and complete the activity on the Berlin Airlift.

### PRIMARY SOURCE

#### The Berlin Airlift, 1948–1949

After the Soviet Union blockaded West Berlin, the United States delivered 4,000 tons of food, medicine, coal and other supplies that were needed every day to keep the city functioning. A cargo plane had to land with supplies every three and a half minutes. To keep the airlift running, crews stayed onboard and food was brought to them while the planes were unloaded and refueled. Meanwhile, 20,000 volunteers in Berlin built a third airport, enabling the flow of supplies to increase to 13,000 tons a day.



### Analyzing VISUALS

- 1. Interpreting** Which nations are the founding members of NATO?
- 2. Identifying** Which NATO nations shared a border with one or more Warsaw Pact nations?



# The Korean War

**MAIN Idea** Attempts to keep South Korea free from communism led the United States to military intervention.

**HISTORY AND YOU** What happens to someone who disobeys a coach, employer, or teacher? Read on to learn what happened to General MacArthur when he criticized the president.

The Cold War eventually spread beyond Europe. Conflicts also emerged in Asia, where events in China and Korea brought about a new attitude toward Japan and sent American troops back into battle in Asia less than five years after World War II had ended.

## The Chinese Revolution

In China, Communist forces led by Mao Zedong had been struggling against the Nationalist government led by Chiang Kai-shek since the late 1920s. During World War II, the two sides suspended their war to resist Japanese occupation. With the end of World War II, however, civil war broke out again. Although Mao made great gains, neither side could win nor agree to a compromise.

To prevent a Communist revolution in Asia, the United States sent the Nationalist government \$2 billion in aid beginning in the mid-1940s, but the Nationalists squandered this advantage through poor military planning and corruption. By 1949, the Communists had captured the Chinese capital of Beijing, while support for the Nationalists declined.

In August 1949 the U.S. State Department discontinued aid to the Chinese Nationalists. The defeated Nationalists then fled to the small island of Taiwan (Formosa). The victorious Communists established the People's Republic of China in October 1949.

China's fall to communism shocked Americans. To make matters worse, in September 1949 the Soviet Union announced that it had successfully tested its first atomic weapon. Then, early in 1950, the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union signed a treaty of friendship and alliance. Many Western leaders feared that China and the Soviet Union would support Communist revolutions in other nations.

The United States kept formal diplomatic relations with only the Nationalist Chinese in

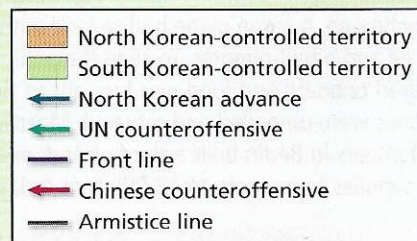
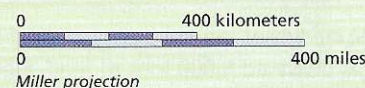
## INFOGRAPHIC

### The Korean War, 1950–1953



#### ▲ June–September 1950

North Korean troops invade South Korea, driving South Korean and UN forces south into a small perimeter around Pusan.



Taiwan. It used its veto power in the UN Security Council to keep representatives of the new Communist People's Republic of China out of the UN, allowing the Nationalists to retain their seat.

## New Policies in Japan

The Chinese revolution brought about a significant change in American policy toward Japan. At the end of World War II, General Douglas MacArthur had taken charge of occupied Japan. His mission was to introduce democracy and keep Japan from threatening war again. Once the United States lost China as its chief ally in Asia, it adopted policies to encourage the rapid recovery of Japan's industrial economy. Just as





▲ **September–November 1950**

Led by General MacArthur, UN troops land behind North Korean lines at the port of Inchon. North Korean forces fall back rapidly, and the UN forces head north into North Korea.



▲ **November 1950–January 1951**

As UN forces near the Chinese border, Chinese troops cross into North Korea driving the UN back. MacArthur wants to attack Chinese territory. He publicly argues with Truman and is fired.



▲ **January 1951–July 1953**

Led by U.S. General Matthew Ridgway, the UN forces push the Chinese and North Korean forces out of South Korea. The war bogs down into a stalemate along the 38th parallel.



◀ *Soldiers of the U.S. 2nd Infantry Division man a machine gun near the Chongchun River in Korea, December 15, 1950.*

**Analyzing GEOGRAPHY**

- 1. Human-Environment Interaction** What occurred at the port of Inchon in 1950?
- 2. Location** What geographical feature forms the border between China and North Korea?

the United States viewed West Germany as the key to defending all of Europe against communism, it saw Japan as the key to defending Asia.

**The Korean War Begins**

At the end of World War II, American and Soviet forces entered Korea to disarm the Japanese troops stationed there. The Allies divided Korea at the 38th parallel of latitude. Soviet troops controlled the north, while American troops controlled the south.

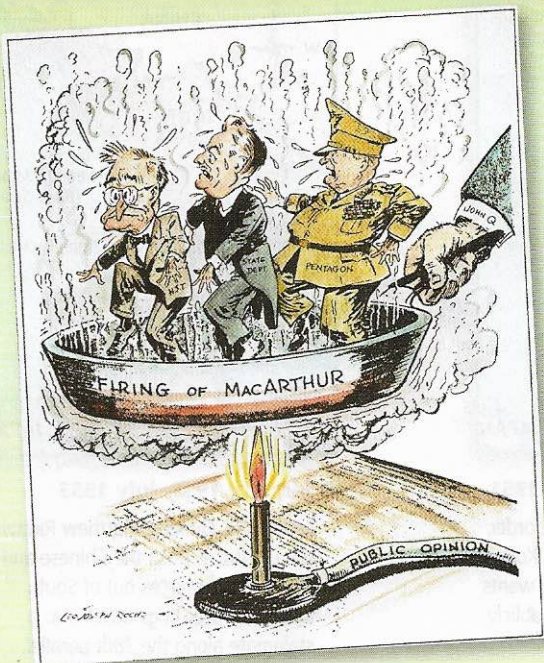
As the Cold War began, talks to reunify Korea broke down. A Communist Korean government was organized in the north, while an American-backed government controlled the south. Both governments claimed authority

over Korea, and border clashes were common. The Soviet Union provided military aid to the North Koreans, who quickly built up an army. On June 25, 1950, North Korean troops invaded the south, rapidly driving back the poorly equipped South Korean forces.

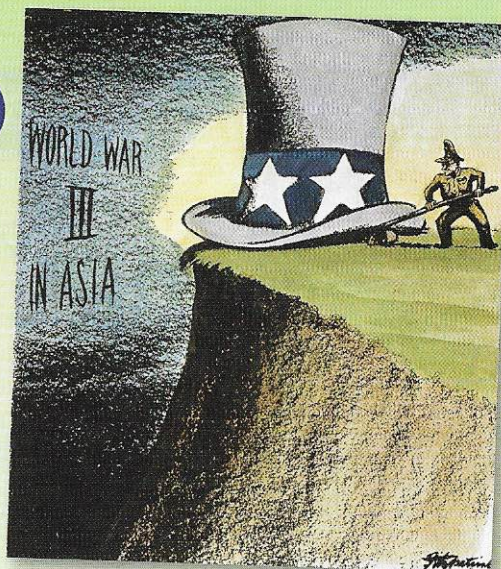
Truman saw the Communist invasion of South Korea as a test of the containment policy and ordered United States naval and air power into action. He then called on the United Nations to act. Truman succeeded because the Soviet delegate was boycotting the UN Security Council over its China policy and was not present to veto the American proposal. With the pledge of UN troops, Truman ordered General MacArthur to send American troops from Japan to Korea.



## Truman vs. MacArthur



▲ President Truman, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, and "The Pentagon" are held over the flame of public opinion for firing General MacArthur. "John Q." refers to "John Q. Public," or the American people.



▲ Entitled "Not a General's Job," this cartoon suggests that MacArthur had overstepped his authority in Korea.

## Analyzing VISUALS

- 1. Identifying Points of View** Which of the cartoons supports President Truman's decision to fire General MacArthur? Explain.
- 2. Making Inferences** What does the cartoon on the right imply MacArthur was trying to do in Asia?

The American and South Korean troops were driven back into a small pocket of territory near the port of Pusan. Inside the "Pusan perimeter," as it came to be called, the troops stubbornly resisted the North Korean onslaught, buying time for MacArthur to organize reinforcements.

On September 15, 1950, MacArthur ordered a daring invasion behind enemy lines at the port of Inchon. The Inchon landing took the North Koreans by surprise. Within weeks they were in full retreat back across the 38th parallel. Truman then gave the order to pursue the North Koreans beyond the 38th parallel. MacArthur pushed the North Koreans north to the Yalu River, the border with China.

**China Enters the War** The Communist People's Republic of China saw the advancing UN troops as a threat and warned the forces to halt their advance. When those warnings were ignored, Chinese forces crossed the Yalu River in November. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese troops flooded across the border, driving the UN forces back across the 38th parallel.

As his troops fell back, an angry MacArthur demanded approval to expand the war against China. He asked for a blockade of Chinese ports, the use of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist forces, and the bombing of Chinese cities with atomic weapons.

**Truman Fires MacArthur** President Truman refused MacArthur's demands because he did not want to expand the war into China or to use the atomic bomb. MacArthur persisted. He publicly criticized the president, arguing that it was a mistake to keep the war limited. "There is no substitute for victory," MacArthur insisted, by which he meant that if the United States was going to go to war, it should use all of its power to win. Keeping a war limited was, in his view, a form of appeasement, and appeasement he argued, "begets new and bloodier war."

Determined to maintain control of policy and to show that the president commanded the military, an exasperated Truman fired MacArthur for insubordination in April 1951. Later, in private conversation, Truman explained:



"I was sorry to have to reach a parting of the way with the big man in Asiã, but he asked for it and I had to give it to him."

MacArthur, who remained popular despite being fired, returned home to parades and a hero's welcome. Many Americans criticized the president. Congress and other military leaders, however, supported Truman's decision and his Korean strategy. American policy in Asia remained committed to **limited war**—a war fought to achieve a limited objective, such as containing communism. Truman later explained why he favored limited war in Korea:

### PRIMARY SOURCE

"The Kremlin [Soviet Union] is trying, and has been trying for a long time, to drive a wedge between us and the other nations. It wants to see us isolated. It wants to see us distrusted. It wants to see us feared and hated by our allies. Our allies agree with us in the course we are following. They do not believe we should take the initiative to widen the conflict in the Far East. If the United States were to widen the conflict, we might well have to go it alone."

—from "Address to the Civil Defense Conference," May 7, 1951


As Truman also noted, America's allies in Europe were much closer to the Soviet Union. If war broke out, Europe would suffer the most damage and might well be attacked with atomic bombs. This concern—that all-out war in Korea might lead to nuclear war—was the main reason why Truman favored limited war. This concern shaped American foreign policy throughout the Cold War.

## Changes in Policy

By mid-1951, the UN forces had pushed the Chinese and North Korean forces back across the 38th parallel. The war then settled down into a series of relatively small battles over hills and other local objectives. In November 1951, peace negotiations began, but an armistice would not be signed until July 1953. More than 33,600 American soldiers died in action in the Korean War, and more than 2,800 died from accidents or disease.

The Korean War marked an important turning point in the Cold War. Until 1950, the United States had preferred to use political pressure and economic aid to contain communism. After the Korean War began, the United States embarked on a major military buildup.

The Korean War also helped expand the Cold War to Asia. Before 1950, the United States had focused on Europe as the most important area in which to contain communism. After the Korean War began, the United States became more militarily involved in Asia. In 1954 the United States signed defense agreements with Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Australia, forming the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (**SEATO**). American aid also began flowing to French forces fighting Communists in Vietnam.

 **Reading Check Analyzing** How did President Truman view the Communist invasion of South Korea?

# Section 2 REVIEW

## Vocabulary

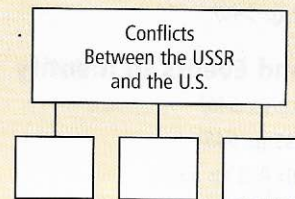
1. **Explain** the significance of: George Kennan, Long Telegram, containment, Marshall Plan, NATO, limited war, SEATO.

## Main Ideas

2. **Explaining** How did the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan address the spread of communism?
3. **Describing** What originally led to the formation of two Koreas?

## Critical Thinking

4. **Big Ideas** How did the Long Telegram influence U.S. foreign policy?
5. **Categorizing** Use a graphic organizer similar to the one below to list early conflicts between the Soviet Union and the United States.



6. **Analyzing Visuals** Study the maps of the Korean War on page 543. When did the United Nations control the most territory in Korea? When did both sides finally agree on an armistice line?

## Writing About History

7. **Persuasive Writing** Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper explaining why you agree or disagree with President Truman's firing of General MacArthur.

**History ONLINE**

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