

CHAPTER
17

Foreign Policy and National Defense

SECTION 1

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND NATIONAL SECURITY

TEXT SUMMARY

For over 150 years, Americans were more interested in **domestic affairs**—what is happening in this country—than in **foreign affairs**—events involving other countries. During that time, the United States practiced a policy of

isolationism, or a refusal to become engaged in foreign affairs. World War II, however, convinced Americans that the well-being of the United States required their involvement in world affairs.

A nation's **foreign policy** is every aspect of its relationships with other countries—military, diplomatic, commercial, and all others. The President takes the lead in making and carrying out U.S. foreign policy.

The State Department, headed by the secretary of state, is the President's right

arm in foreign affairs. International law gives all nations the **right of legation**—the right to send and receive diplomatic representatives. The President appoints **ambassadors** who each represent the nation and head an embassy in a country recognized by the United States. They and other embassy workers have **diplomatic immunity**—they cannot be prosecuted for breaking their host country's laws.

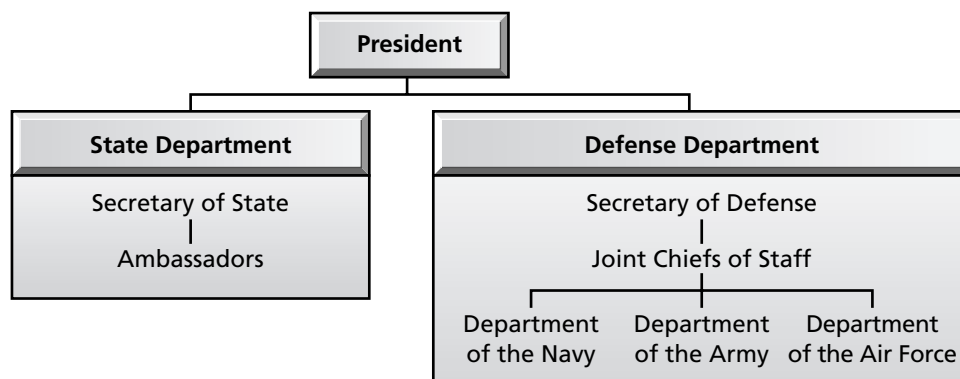
The Defense Department provides for the nation's defense by unifying the management of the armed forces. The secretary of defense is the head of the Defense Department and advises the President. The five Joint Chiefs of Staff serve as the principal military advisors to the secretary of defense. The three military departments—the Departments of the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force—are major units within the Defense Department.

THE BIG IDEA

Both the State Department and the Defense Department assist the President in making and carrying out foreign policy.

GRAPHIC SUMMARY: Key Players in U.S. Foreign Policy

In the United States, the President makes and carries out foreign policy with the help of key departments.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What event made Americans realize the United States must take a role in foreign affairs?

2. **Diagram Skills** By what two departments is the President advised on foreign policy?