

FOREIGN AID AND DEFENSE ALLIANCES

TEXT SUMMARY

For more than 50 years, a major tool of American foreign policy has been **foreign aid**—economic and military help for other nations. Foreign aid goes to countries that are the most crucial to meeting the United States' foreign policy objectives—in recent years, these have been Israel, the Philippines, and Latin American countries. Most economic foreign aid must be used to buy American goods and services, so the program also helps the U.S. economy.

Since World War II, the United States has constructed a network of **regional security alliances**—pacts in which the United States and other nations agree to work together to meet aggression in a particular part of the world. For instance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) promotes the collective defense of Western Europe. In areas such as the Middle East, no alliance exists because of conflicting U.S. interests—the United

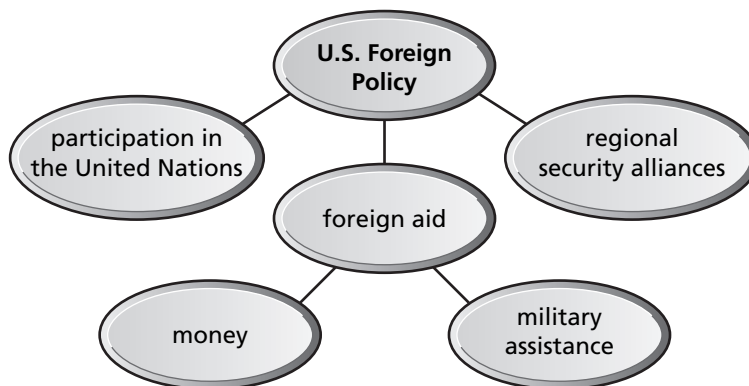
States has historically supported Israel while relying on Arab nations for oil.

The United States first showed its willingness to act as a world power when, after World War II, it led 50 nations in forming the United Nations (UN). The goal of the UN is world peace. It sends armed peacekeeping forces from member nations to help countries in conflict. The UN also sponsors economic and social programs, works to improve world health and protect the environment, and promotes human rights. It is composed of six major organizations: the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat. The **UN Security Council** bears the UN's major responsibility for maintaining international peace.

THE BIG IDEA

The United States works with other nations to ensure peace and political stability around the world.

GRAPHIC SUMMARY: Elements of U.S. Foreign Policy



The United States' foreign policy allows it to interact with and give aid to other nations.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the purpose of a regional security alliance?
2. **Diagram Skills** In what forms does the U.S. provide foreign aid?