**Chapter 27**

The Cold War

*Reviewing Objectives*

**A thorough study of Chapter Twenty-Seven should enable the student to understand:**

1. The background of United States relations with the Soviet Union before World War II.
2. The extend of collaboration between the United States and the Soviet Union during World War II and the differences of view that developed between the two nations concerning the nature of the postwar world.
3. The meaning of the doctrine of containment and the specific programs that implemented containment.
4. The problems of postwar readjustment in the United States, especially controlling inflation.
5. The nature of the Fair Deal – its success and failures.
6. The significance of China’s becoming communist to American foreign policy in Asia.
7. The circumstances that led to the United States participation in a “limited” war in Korea.
8. The reaction of American public opinion to President Harry Truman’s handling of the “police action” in Korea, including his firing of General Douglas MacArthur.
9. The nature and extent of American fears of internal communist subversion during the early Cold War years.

## Summary

The mutual hostility between the United States and the Soviet Union grew out of ideological incompatibility and concrete actions stretching back to World War I and before. The alliance of convenience and necessity against Germany temporarily muted the tensions, but disagreement over the timing of the second front and antagonistic visions of postwar Europe pushed the two nations into a "cold war" only a few months after the victory over the Axis.

The Cold War was marked by confrontation and the fear of potential military conflict. The United States vowed to contain communism by any means available.

Meanwhile, the American people, exhausted from a decade and a half of depression and war, turned away from economic reform. They were worried about the alleged Soviet threat in Europe, especially after Russia exploded its own atomic bomb in 1949. They were dismayed by the communist victory in China and perplexed by the limited war in Korea. Many Americans latched onto charges of domestic communist subversion as an explanation for the nation's inability to control world events. No one exploited this mood more effectively than did Joseph McCarthy.