

Sputnik's Effect on American Education



Blame:

As is the case with human nature, when many Americans learned of the launching of Sputnik, they looked for someone to blame. Unfortunately, many people felt that the American education system had failed to prepare our students well enough in the Math and Science areas.

National Defense Education Act:

Responding to public outcry, Congress passed the National Defense Education Act in 1958. The law declared that the security of our nation depended on the development of the young men and women of this country. The \$1 billion education grant was meant to produce more scientists and mathematicians in this country by encouraging the brightest science and math students to go into teaching.

Everyday School Life:

Another effect Sputnik had on education was one on the everyday lives of the students. Students were made to go through daily "air raid" drills to prepare for nuclear attack. A siren would sound and they were expected to drop to the floor and hide under the desk. As everyone knows, this wouldn't save your life. It did, however, have the effect of making people feel safer in the increasingly dangerous Cold War world.



Sputnik's Effect on American Culture

Building a Bomb Shelter



Fear:

As you would expect, Americans had many reactions to the launching of the Soviet Satellite. Fear was by far the most important effect of Sputnik and this fear made Americans do many things. The construction of fallout shelters multiplied during this time and some people even refused to send their kids to school.

Anger:

Americans also reacted with anger. How could we fall this far behind the Soviets? Pressure was put on government officials and the military to “catch us up” as quickly as possible

THE BOSTON SUNDAY GLOBE—NOVEMBER 17, 1957

EVERY AMERICAN WILL BE AFFECTED

Sputnik Shadow Spells Crisis

By JOHN HARRIMAN

For some time now there has been a feeling in business that this country was coming to a major turning point.



No one sees now, or has seen, a serious depression in the offing. But whether they have said so or not, most observant businessmen have felt that the great tide of 1946-56 has reached its flood.

domestic producers through the Texas Commission, are costing Europe in the neighborhood of \$200 million a year in precious foreign exchange.

When we add to the above, the fact that Russia in Syria now sits astride pipelines carrying to the Mediterranean about 60 percent of Europe's oil, we may wonder if the second round of the Cold War is not now going to the Soviet Union.

This was a tide impelled

The first round we won in

Sputnik's Effect on American Government

Public Safety:

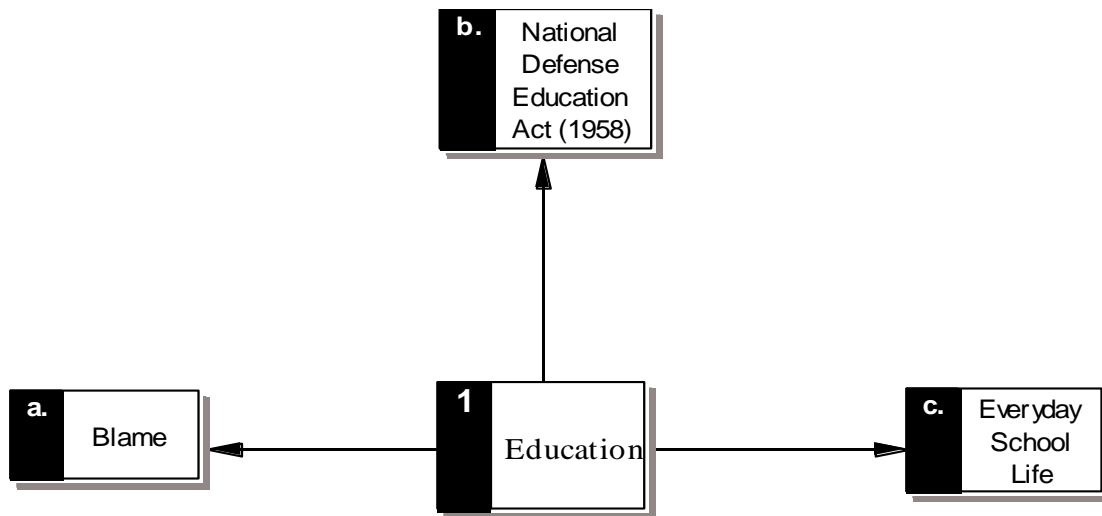
First, the government had to guarantee the safety of our citizens. The government put out pamphlets that described how to survive a nuclear attack, how to build a fallout shelter, where to go in case of an attack, and what to do in school and in your workplace just in case the attack came. Most of these solutions would not have been too effective, but they did help calm the nerves of the American people.

Military Response:

The military also responded to Sputnik as only they can. If the Soviets are advanced enough to launch a Satellite, they must have a huge stockpile of weapons. The American military began a huge increase in the production of nuclear weapons that would increase our total stockpile from around 5,000 missiles to 16,000 from 1958-1960.

NASA:

President Kennedy, in 1960, responding to public pressure by guaranteeing to the American public that we would be the first country to land on the moon. NASA (The National Aeronautics and Space Administration) was created for this purpose and the "space race" was on.



EFFECTS OF SPUTNIK

