



Written by [Kurt Hyde](#) on July 19, 2019

The Dark Side of the Space Race

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July 20 marks the 50th anniversary of man's first steps on the moon. This writer, as well as millions of other television viewers, watched with rapt attention on Sunday afternoon, July 20, 1969 as Neil Armstrong climbed carefully down the ladder from the Apollo Lunar Module and was the first human to put his foot on the moon saying, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." Many Americans, even those who objected to the price tag, felt proud of the accomplishment, especially since the Soviet Union had previously launched *Sputnik* (replica shown) into orbit, making it the Earth's first man-made satellite in October of 1957 and beating the American effort into space. Americans were relieved to see the United States beat the Soviet Union to the moon.

Though the effort to get to the moon was a success, the race into space itself was actually harmful to America and the concept of limited government because the race was used to scare Americans into allowing the U.S. government to tread where the Constitution forbade. And that fearmongering began early on.

Many Americans became frightened when *Sputnik* was launched into orbit. Adding to the angst, American citizens could see *Sputnik* in the night sky, passing overhead slowly but perceptibly against the background of relatively stationary stars. The Soviet satellite was especially visible when it was nearly overhead or in the Western sky at sunset when it was in the direct light of the sun and there was a dark or semi-dark sky in the background. From this, Americans perceived that Soviet technological achievement was greater than American technological know-how at that time.

Numerous news broadcasts of the day helped spread Americans' fears. There were interviews with frightened citizens, who expressed their fears in words and in their tone of voice. As the 50th anniversary of the moon walk approaches, archived news footage of those interviews are being replayed on television. They are worth watching because it was the emotional reactions of otherwise calm American citizens that enabled the Deep State to capitalize on the launch of *Sputnik* to bypass, or in some cases totally ignore, the U.S. Constitution in the name of winning the space race.

Were the Soviets Really Ahead of Us?



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While it certainly appeared at the time of *Sputnik* that the Communist Soviets were ahead of America technologically, and therefore communist oppression might engulf the United States, some Americans who were in positions to know the facts were adamant that some persons high up in the Eisenhower administration had blocked the United States from launching a satellite first.

Lieutenant General James Gavin, who was the commandant at the Army missile installation in Huntsville, Alabama, at the time of the *Sputnik* launch, said in a speech that America had the plans, the technology, the equipment, the knowledge, and everything that was needed to put a satellite into space and to beat the Russians for an entire year prior to the *Sputnik* launch. General Gavin was quoted as saying:

On the basis of our information I made several entreaties to the Department of Defense seeking authority to launch a satellite and shortly thereafter I was given a written order forbidding me to do so and this admonition was passed on to Werner von Braun [who headed the U.S. rocket program].

John F. McManus, president emeritus of The John Birch Society, related a personal experience of his own that occurred when he was speaking about higher-ups blocking a U.S. launch into space:

A man jumped up out of the audience right at that time and I couldn't restrain him. He couldn't restrain himself and he said: "You're right. You're absolutely right. I was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Air Force at that time, on loan to the Army. We knew that we could put a satellite in orbit. We were terribly frustrated. We were so frustrated, in fact, that we went to the Navy and we said, 'You take our plans, our parts, our technology, everything we have and you put the satellite in orbit and beat the Soviet Union and take the credit.'" And he added, "You know how frustrated we were when we were willing to let the Navy take the credit for something."

McManus concluded: "The simple fact of the matter is that forces within our own government kept us from being first in space and the activity that occurred after *Sputnik* is what they were seeking."

Unconstitutional Federal Involvement in Education

The blocking of an American space launch ahead of a Soviet launch led to a rapid growth of the federal government, as Americans' fears were played upon. One of the unconstitutional reactions to *Sputnik* was passage of the National Defense Education Act of 1958. Of course, there is no grant of power in the U.S. Constitution for the federal government to be involved in any way in education, but people were emotional and willing to support any program that might allay their fears. Congress, of course, knew that the NDEA was unconstitutional, so congressmen added language to keep people from rejecting the bill.

Section 102 of the bill was entitled "Federal Control of Education Prohibited." It said:

SEC. 102. Nothing contained in this Act shall be construed to authorize any department, agency, officer, or employee of the United States to exercise any direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum, program of instruction, administration, or personnel of any educational institution or school system.

The hands-off approach didn't last long. In fact, the architects of the bill didn't waste any time renegeing on their pledge not to establish federal control over education. Section 102 was contradicted by Section 1004 of the same bill. Section 1004 was entitled "Administration of State Plans." It specified federal control over state school plans, and if states didn't follow the lead of the federal government, federal monies would be cut off.



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The NDEA also contained a statement saying that its goal was to help education in the areas of “science, mathematics, and modern foreign languages and train[ing] in technology,” supposedly to help develop military leaders. To that end, it allowed the U.S. government to give student loans — simply a constitutional veneer covering unconstitutional activity. We know how that has grown. One look at today’s student-loan program shows how far this federal program has veered off its original stated course.

A second layer of veneer in the NDEA would have limited money distribution to patriots. Section 1001 (f) requires that any individual who receives payments under NDEA must sign an affidavit saying he:

is not a member of and does not support any organization that believes in or teaches, the overthrow of the United States Government by force or violence or by any illegal or unconstitutional methods, and (2) has taken and subscribed to an oath or affirmation in the following form: “I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America and will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States against all its enemies, foreign and domestic.”

That section of the NDEA was repealed in 1962. Sadly, today’s student loans are made to just about anyone, even illegal aliens, and have no requirement to be part of our national defense and, in many cases, their allegiance to foreign governments or foreign political movements is obvious.

Unconstitutional Federal Agencies

Using the same type of logic, the federal government has expanded its power again and again. For instance, it constitutionally justified for the U.S. government to pay for the development of technology provided it is used for defense purposes, but federal agencies often pay for activities they want to undertake on the flimsiest ties to national defense. Scientific achievements are great endeavors, but unless they are directly related to defense or something else that is constitutional, they are not constitutional.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) was formed in 1958 under such auspices. It was created during the *Sputnik* crisis, even though there had been military research and development in guided-missile technology in all branches of the military. The technology was recognized for its value in weapons, both offensive and defensive, as well as for reconnaissance satellites. The Army led the military in rocket propulsion because its team included Dr. Wernher von Braun, the world-famous rocket scientist from Germany, who came to America after World War II.

NASA’s goals include non-defense goals, including operation of the International Space Station, the goal of which is to bring “together international flight crews, multiple launch vehicles, globally distributed launch, operations, training, engineering, and development facilities; communications networks, and the international scientific research community.”

Of course, politicians use NASA to help get elected through capturing big NASA contracts for their districts.

Though the advanced technology that was developed as part of the space program has some beneficial uses in defense and in private enterprise, the building of multiple governmental agencies with a mix of constitutional and unconstitutional activities has left us with bureaucracies that exist until this day. President Ronald Reagan said, “No government ever voluntarily reduces itself in size. Government programs, once launched, never disappear. Actually, a government bureau is the nearest thing to eternal life we’ll ever see on this Earth!”



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