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English 1110.01, MWF 12:40-1:35

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Assignment: Common Sense

February 09, 2017

### Money Matters

In the late 1950's something changed the world. The start of the Cold War and the beginning of the space race had begun. Little do people know, this was the start of a new era of science and technologies.

In 1957, the Soviet Union shocked the world by launching the first satellite, Sputnik, to travel around Earth's orbit. This was a huge achievement for humanity, but it also threatened the United States a by giving the Soviet Union the capability to launch Nuclear Missiles from outside the atmosphere. Nearly 10 months later, on July 29<sup>th</sup>, 1958 Nasa was created. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration was designed to rival the Russian space administration, Roscosmos State Corporation. This is what started the "Space Race".

Nasa was placed under the executive branch of the United States government as an independent agency responsible for the civilian space/aeronautical program. Nasa became well known on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 1961 when President John F. Kennedy announced that the United States would put a man on the moon. This operation was known as the Apollo mission. At the time the federal budget for Nasa spending was only at 0.9%. By 1966 the federal budget for Nasa rose from 0.9% to 4.4% pouring nearly 6 billion dollars into the space program each year. By this

time astronaut John Glenn had been the first American to circle the Earth, the first generation of Gemini III was launched, and Intelsat I was launched being the first commercial satellite.

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1969 Nasa landed the first astronauts on the moon with the success of the Apollo mission. This was the peak of the Space Race and ultimately ended the space race 3 years later. This was a monumental mark in history with Neil Armstrong taking the first human step on the moon. But landing on the moon wasn't the greatest accomplishment. Many people are unaware of the technologies that came out of the Space Race. During the Nasa testing and research for the Apollo missions, billions of dollars were put towards solving problems with the rocket technology and the safety/convenience for the astronauts. Some of these new technologies involved microchips, smoke detectors, Velcro, MRI machines, laptops, telemedicine such as pacemakers and blood pressure monitors, 3D graphics, satellite imagery/navigation and communication, solar cells, and the beginning of artificial limbs. These are only a few of the new discoveries that came out of this decade.

All the technologies that came out of the space race were due to the federal budget funding to Nasa during that time. Sadly, after Nasa put a man on the moon the federal government pulled nearly half the funds which reduced the amount of research and space missions. Not only does this limit the amount of rocket missions, it also reduces the research going into new technologies and scientific discoveries.

Earlier this year Nasa announced that they plan on sending a manned mission to Mars in 2025-2030. This is nearly 60 years after putting a man on the moon. If the federal budget would have remained the same for Nasa as it did in 1967, who's to say that humans would be on Mars today. With this budget Nasa was able to put a man on the moon in 10 years. With this budget

and more time Nasa could have done so much more. So many more technologies could have been inspired and benefit our world today.

At this point in time the money allotted for space exploration and research will never reach the amount that it once was. There would need to be another “space race” or some other inspiration to create this federal spending in Nasa. Furthermore, humanity saw what federal spending in the space administration could do and it would only make sense to continue that funding if they wanted to benefit humanity with science and technologies and further our exploration in the stars.