After the War

Trace how federal choices changed work, school, and neighborhoods.

SS24.US2.11 "Analyze how cultural changes, economic growth, and government action during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations shaped the daily lives of Americans..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three federal actions in the passage. Number each action and one effect it had on Americans' daily lives with the same number.

Contracts, Classrooms, and Suburbs

1. In the early Cold War, a machinist might find steady work making parts for military aircraft. The Korean War and the arms race led the Truman and Eisenhower administrations to spend heavily on defense. Federal contracts helped aircraft companies expand, hire workers, and build lasting ties with the military and lawmakers. Families gained wages, but taxpayers funded the contracts. As jobs and profits came to depend on continued spending, the network Eisenhower warned about in 1961, the *military-industrial complex*, grew.

2. The competition reached beyond weapons. After the Soviet Union launched Sputnik in 1957, the Eisenhower administration created NASA in 1958 and backed new federal aid for science and math education. Students encountered more emphasis on those subjects, while universities and aerospace firms gained research funding and technical jobs. Although NASA was a civilian agency, firms that built rockets and electronic systems could also win defense work. Together, the space and arms races increased demand for skilled labor and strengthened relationships among government, researchers, and contractors.

3. Meanwhile, some families left cities for suburban houses. Federal mortgage programs and the GI Bill helped many veterans buy homes, and the 1956 Interstate Highway Act supported car travel. These benefits were unequal: discriminatory lending and housing practices shut many Black families out of new suburbs. Suburban growth shifted shoppers and taxpayers away from cities, weakening some city budgets. New suburban voters pressed local governments for roads, schools, and zoning rules, so decisions about public money increasingly reflected suburban priorities.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did defense contracts benefit workers while also helping the military-industrial complex grow?

2. How did the response to Sputnik affect both students and companies that worked with the government?

3. How did federal programs encourage suburban growth, and why did not all families benefit equally?

4. How did the shift toward suburbs change city budgets and local political priorities?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine that in 1959 a defense contractor plans to open a plant near new suburban homes outside your city. Write a brief statement to the city council recommending one city policy. Explain how federal spending and suburban growth could create both an opportunity and an unequal effect.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three federal actions in the passage. Number each action and one effect it had on Americans' daily lives with the same number. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did defense contracts benefit workers while also helping the military-industrial complex grow?	**Contracts created jobs and wages, while companies came to depend on defense spending and developed lasting ties with the military and lawmakers.**
2	How did the response to Sputnik affect both students and companies that worked with the government?	**Federal action increased emphasis on science and math in schools and provided research funding and technical work for aerospace firms.**
3	How did federal programs encourage suburban growth, and why did not all families benefit equally?	**Mortgage programs and the GI Bill helped many veterans buy homes, while highways supported car travel. Discriminatory lending and housing practices excluded many Black families.**
4	How did the shift toward suburbs change city budgets and local political priorities?	**Cities lost some shoppers and taxpayers, weakening budgets. Growing suburban populations pressed local governments to prioritize roads, schools, and zoning.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The city should expand bus service between its neighborhoods and the new plant. Federal defense contracts could create jobs for city residents, but workers without cars might struggle to reach a suburban workplace. The plant could also draw shoppers and taxpayers away from the city, reducing money for services. Bus service would help more residents reach the jobs while the council plans for possible budget losses.

Accept other accurate cause-and-effect links supported by the passage. For Part 3, the proposed policy should address a plausible effect on city residents, including an unequal effect.