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The Military Industrial Complex

by [Joe Escobar](#) – Friday, May 20, 2016, 9:17 PM

This thread is for discussions on The Military Industrial Complex topic.
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Eisenhower and the Military Industry Complex

by [Connor Miller](#) – Monday, May 23, 2016, 12:05 PM

One of the main reasons that Eisenhower wanted to build up the military industry so that no one would dare attack the US. If you think about it, it's basic military strategy, I have more weapons than you...so attacking me wouldn't be wise. A show of force if you will.

It is perplexing however to read about how an old WWII general suggested to future administrations and future Americans that we try not to let our military industry get out of hand. This was the guy who led the invasion of Normandy and now he's essentially telling the nation to back off? I wonder what the reaction was among households back then.

I also wonder what Eisenhower would think of military spending today, because the administrations of the present funnel a lot of resources into American intelligence, American presence overseas, weapons manufacturing and the like. Just reading some of the stats by the projectcensored article proves that.

In the end, while I think it's important to protect American interests around the globe, I think it's also possible to become overzealous, to overstep your bounds. We've certainly done that as a country.

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Complex vs lobby

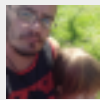
by [Luis Montoya](#) – Monday, May 23, 2016, 7:14 PM

I do agree with the commentator about the misuse of the vocabulary between complex and lobby. The impact that the right terminology is used is huge. Before even understanding what the topic is about you can just see the title of it and from there you would assume a positive or negative take on the subject. I think that the fact that Eisenhower oversaw a military buildup during a time of peace makes me understand better. He saw what

was really going on. And to make sure that we would never get in a war whether it be sought out or not he knew he needed to expand his military power. Concerns of this subject are still applicable today. The United States government is spending about \$1 trillion annually on defense-related purposes. There are 1,931 private companies working on counterterrorism, homeland security, and intelligence. Throughout the D.C. area, 33 buildings containing 17 million square feet of office space have been built since 9/11, the equivalent of 22 Capitol buildings. But despite the growth of government national-security workers, some 500,000 private contractors also have top security clearances. The military-industrial complex has the members of Congress and the public in a bit of a bind, nobody wants to argue with national security, especially when the very real threat of terrorism exists today.

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Re: The Military Industrial Complex

by [Shawn Jenkins](#) – Monday, May 23, 2016, 10:01 PM

I believe it was Albert Einstein who said "I know not with what weapons World War 3 will be fought, but World War 4 will be fought with sticks and stones." So there you have it folks. One of the most intelligent men in the history of mankind knew that the so-called Cold War could only end in massive nuclear destruction. It is inevitable. To be able to answer how the military complex is still relevant after the end of the cold war i would have to concede that it ended. Which i don't believe it ever truly will. That is the main reason we will always need that strong deterrent of a massive military force equipped with the best possible weapons. Eisenhower knew it better than most. He realized that the time of peace was the best time to build up your arsenal for use in time of war. The fact that that we had built up such a force was a great deterrent in and of itself.

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Re: The Military Industrial Complex

by [Connor Miller](#) – Thursday, May 26, 2016, 2:41 PM

Great quote there from Einstein. I also think it's interesting when you said that you don't think that the cold war has ended. I can somewhat agree with that, the cold war certainly left scars around the world when it came to the possibility of all out nuclear war.

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lifted Arms Ban

by [Clint Leigh](#) – Monday, May 23, 2016, 10:15 PM

I personally do and don't agree with the commentator about the misuse of the vocabulary (complex vs. lobby). The real issue is trying to decide which time period's context you are trying to put the speech into. In 1961 when Eisenhower gave his speech explaining the complexities of the situation was the most important point, so using the word complex makes perfect sense. Now in our time period we have a lot broader and larger government that is known for being swayed by lobbyist and special interest groups. So by replacing the word complex with lobby it gives Americans a more accurate term for our time period without changing the real meaning of Eisenhower's point.

I believe by using terms that are more truthful and more clearly defined that the discussion would only grow and include a lot more inquisitive minds as well as lessening the amount discontent that American citizens have for our government. When giving out truth and being descriptive you take the power away from anyone that is trying to discredit your cause. Most importantly with a more clear and truthful government it would be easier to follow a money trail to see who is funding the agenda.

Even though we were in a COLD WAR and building up our military, I believe that Eisenhower took his stance because he understood that the United States already had enough built up power to demolish the Earth many times over. By continuing to build up more would only be superfluous and would only make weapon manufactures push harder to create a larger industry with more political power. Being a general and then the commander-in-chief Eisenhower got to see who was profiting from the military buildup.

The article written by Peter Phillips shows how our military has continued to build even to date with our current administration. Just today it is all over the news that President Obama has lifted the arms band on Vietnam (a

communist country) to try and halt China (who has an arms embargo with the U.S. and the European Union) from continuing to imperialize small nations. We are also boosting our defense with our cyber units and even privet companies like Boeing are working on anti-drone weapons like lasers that can destroy them or even frequency scrambling technology that would make a drone lose control and fall out of the sky. The complexity of our military buildup is only getting worse drones and cyber terrorism and with that there will be a lot more lobbyists lobbying for more war/defense spending. It is sad to say that with the way of our world we live in, I don't see how we could stop building up our military without falling behind other countries or opening up our homeland to some type of attack whether it is a physical or cyber-attack.



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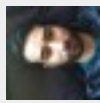
Obama, the Military and Historical Context

by [Sara Baker](#) – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 3:15 PM

Military complex, or just military lobby? While the terminology is important in understanding the history and outcome of the United State’s creation of a “fulltime” military, what I found most disconcerting was the speech Obama gave to the NSA. Most of it was alright, though I was tempted to shake my head at a few moments, the Obama’s near the finish, however made me want to throw up. “You wouldn’t expect China and Russia to have an open debate about citizens privacy.” (Paraphrase from speech) While he did finish with the reassurance of America being held to higher standards I felt like it was used as a threat rather than an example. Maybe I’m reading the tone wrong, but based on Obama’s other policies and actions while in presidency it is my opinion that it was to be considered a threat. A subtle threat, but a threat nonetheless. While some may disagree, I would like to point out his virtually unchanged military policy, and his breaking of bread with both dictators and communists as well as his tendency towards appeasement and spending rather than action and answers. Obama was ill prepared to be America’s leader, and he was ill prepared to keep the overwhelming number of promises he made during his campaign.Again, this is based on my opinion and a look back of what he’s done while in office. Do I know him personally? No. Can I look at his actions and reactions to gain understanding of his character? Yes. The military complex isn’t going anywhere. Do I agree with all the reasons in which it was birthed into existence? No, but do I see the need for a ongoing military? Yes. But I do have to mention that the majority of citizens who voted for Obama were hoping that the war would end, that he would be the answers to the “end of bloodshed” so to speak. Complex wise, our military in the U.S. does fit the description, however, when you look at the modern spectrum in addition to the historical one of our military growth most would agree it is shrouded and bathed in corporations and making “big, rich, men” happy so they’ll support America when we go marching off to war.

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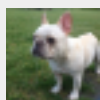
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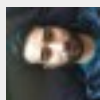
by [Jesse Dunlap](#) – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 6:07 PM

In relation to communication everything needs a proper term to project the right context. I don't know if Eisenhower was trying to warn or just raise the issue of too much spending on military and the long term effects of elite groups taking over or if he was simply wondering what was in store. The issue appears that out of context the Military industrial complex is seen as a force that when it becomes too big the people will no longer be able to control its power. Which can certainly seem the case when viewed from an outside perspective. I feel the term lobby would have been a better term to use as it seems less oppressive and more in the realm of something people can control. Lobby seems to be more of a specific term that points to what he was really trying to get at with all its complexity. Rather than this vague entity that could take over government and economic life. Hinting that there are many groups that are interconnected working to increase spending and profit for big corporations or wealthier politicians. So in essence I think had we looked at this more closely from a different definition and the groups involved, we would have more power in trying to reign in any corruption that might go on behind the scenes.



American military and industry
by Ankstina Qi - Saturday, May 28, 2016, 6:18 PM

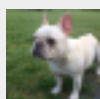
I think the commentator used the vocabulary correctly. These words tells me the cooperation between American military and the industry. The industry need to earn money by selling weapons to the military, and the military need the advanced weapons from the industry. According to Eisenhower's understanding, I felt like if a country wants to stay strong, they must get involved into the wars. Peace cannot solve problems, and the wars make the U.S become a great and powerful nation. During the Cold War, no one knows which country will start to fight against other countries first, and which country will be attacked. Therefore, Eisenhower believes that once they get enough weapons to protect their nation, even the war starts, they will not be bullied. Even today, America still owns nuclear weapons and do not want other countries to have it is simply because America wants to stay its dominant position. The industry still selling the weapons to the military for money, and the military still buying weapons from the industry to stay dominate.



Build Up in Peace Time
by Jesse Dunlap - Saturday, May 28, 2016, 6:19 PM

One might think that in a time of peace you would decrease military or at least keep it at a level playing field. The fact that Eisenhower built up the military during peace shows that there were some lobbyists and other profitters at play. More then that he felt that in order for us to keep ourselves safe we needed to stay competitive with the rest of the world and not fall behind. I believe it was his intent to show a strong arm that would keep others from trying to attack or enforce themselves on us through threats. Normally I would think decreasing military is a good thing but I can seen the point of view of keeping a strong presence in the face of others that wouldn't share democracies ideals.

I believe Eisenhower towards the end saw that although we need to keep ourselves competitive and strong. He also saw a problem with those who were trying to gain a foothold with more power and especially more profit. It appears he was witnessing the birth of the complexity of many groups moving forward to bring more money into the military and if unchecked or unregulated could lead to something more oppressive then protective. In summary Eisenhower wanted a strong military to contain communism but he also didn't want perhaps corrupt groups taking control of military spending and imposing their will on what the citizens and the president should decide how the military should be used.



The expensive military ox
by Ankstina Qi - Saturday, May 28, 2016, 6:25 PM



This picture shows that no matter it is democratic or liberal, they all need a huge amount of money to feed the military industrial complex ox.

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Applicable Today

by [Jesse Dunlap](#) – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 6:30 PM

The concern that we would grow to much may have become a reality depending on how you look at it. If you view your government as one that is corrupt and wants to oppress you then it would certainly seem the case that we have grown to big. If you view your government to be more trustworthy you may feel that it is doing its job correctly with its spying and heavy armaments. I do believe it may be a little to big to sustain all the money we put forth. In the article by Peter Phillips he states that, "The US now spends as much on war/defense as the rest of the world combined, making Americans the highest war-tax payers in the world." That would appear to be a heavy burden on our resources when we could also use it on more social welfare programs that would give us a hand up. So I think the concern large military infrastructure was and is founded by what Eisenhower said in terms of enormous spending and who's in charge of how we regulate it. Perhaps more transparency should come into play about why and who we are influencing with our military might.

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Escobar told us on the first day...

by [Christopher Cockman](#) – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 9:57 PM

Escobar told us on the first day of class this term to know the true definitions of words and their proper uses, so it is no surprise that that skillful deduction is coming into play now during week 9. Complex, in terms of the commentator, is a word Eisenhower used to describe the immense complexity of the Military Industry. To me, this is like asking someone what type of meat they're eating with the reply "a bird". It is true that much like the word complex, the person is not wrong by choosing that word to explicitly use in their description, but it is a safe word. By this I mean that is a generalization of sorts that is used to cover one's true ideals. By exchanging the word complex with lobby, it would prove the true nature and ideals of what was going on in the Military Industrial Complex of the time. Saying "complex" was a way to tell the truth but the full, and, most likely, negative truth. If he used the proper terminology, he would have created a negative view of America's biggest industry at the time, which would catalyze the downfall of optimism of capitalism.

I feel that Eisenhower, and most politicians in general, choose safe words like this to cover up true motives for sake of personal reverence. To build credibility, people of power say things to satisfy the intended party involved. If certain, more truthful terms were used in these situations, people of power wouldn't be able to uphold optimism. That is why in the NRA address Obama gave, he said that the NRA has the ability to tap into phones. This is a word that implies that they can but most likely won't. Just another way to provide false optimism to the intended audience a.k.a us "ordinary" people.

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