

HST 203: History of the United States Sp17 (Escobar Meta 41054 41053)

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The Military-Industrial Complex

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The Military-Industrial Complex

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The Military-Industrial Complex

by Joe Escobar - Saturday, May 27, 2017, 12:18 AM

This thread is for discussions on the The Military-Industrial Complex topic.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post, something that describes which question(s) you are addressing . Do NOT simply leave it RE: The Military-Industrial Complex

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Re: The Military-Industrial Complex - Why would Eisenhower, a former general, and outgoing commander-in-chief, take this seemingly contrary position in the middle of the Cold War?

by Morgan Brown - Monday, May 29, 2017, 12:11 PM

As the commentator said, a military industrial "lobby" is certainly less intimidating than a complex, which, along with the overall feeling of Eisenhower's speech, have a very dark, ominous tone to them, which is bizarre considering Eisenhower was the main cause of said complex. Maybe Eisenhower regretted creating the situation, and wanted the American people to be aware of the problems he saw; as he put it in his own memoir, to "challenge Americans" to solve it. Still, the thought of a president saying something against the system of power

seems completely impossible at that time, at the height of Cold War fears and paranoia over communism. Perhaps it was only possible due to the slower, more subtle nature of the Cold War.

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False meanings for words

by Nick Coleman - Monday, May 29, 2017, 10:00 PM

I think Ike was not misusing the word “complex” like the commentator in the pod cast implies, but rather using it to create an effect. He was experienced military leader before his presidency and he probably spoke like one as well. I think the term works fine but it does sound more harsh than “lobby”. I think the fact that Ike oversaw the military build-up during a time of war meant that he was very aware of the complexities of this issue. Weather he used the word on purpose or misused it, using truthful and well-defined words would make any conversation easier. That is not always the case especially today with “fake-news” and misusing words or completely making them up. With today’s technology when one can splice speeches together and make videos go viral, it is even easier to imply false meaning to words.

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Lobby Instead of Complex

by Michaela Ensele - Monday, May 29, 2017, 10:18 PM

After listening to the commentator I was able to understand in more depth what Eisenhower meant by the term Military- Industrial Complex. Eisenhower's eludes to the Military-Industrial Complex as America's growing want for producing arms or military materials. I do agree with the commentator, if Eisenhower would have used the term lobby instead of complex it would sound better. Using certain terminology can have a huge impact on the audience a speaker is trying to reach. Eisenhower's stance about military spending whether it being too much or unjustified, his use of the word complex makes the term sound more complicated or as the commentator says “a sinister bunch of people that that are going to take over the country, bring us to perpetual war.” If the correct or more truthful term such as lobby, meaning a group seeking to influence politicians about an issue was used, in my opinion would make it more clear to understand. Using the term complex makes the issue of military spending sound much more complicated then it really was.

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Re: Lobby Instead of Complex

by Alicia Lundeen - Saturday, June 3, 2017, 11:32 AM

Hi Michaela,

I found your response to refreshing, I too can agree with the way the terminology was used. To me, it can almost be used as propaganda against the others who don't agree. More Americans would go against the idea if the President came out and said were taxing you for

this, that and the other when there is no perceived threat. The complications that would come from that would be enormous rather than helpful for America at that time. Seeing as this was his farewell address, Eisenhower warns the MIC is both good and bad, however America needed more truth at that moment that a warning to come.

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Is the MIC worthy of the good American cause?

by Alicia Lundeen - Monday, May 29, 2017, 11:19 PM

The MIC, Military–Industrial Complex is a casual alliance between a nation's military and the arms industry. A powerful influence behind this relationship between the government and defense-minded corporations is that both sides benefit. Companies would be better if they would function under war operations, however more business means more war. This business model was worked out through the Pentagon asking congress for yet more funds. At his farewell address, Eisenhower had been concerned about the growing size and cost of the American defense establishment since he became president in 1953. After the Korean War, Eisenhower never wanted to be viewed as weak to provoke an attack that was unjust. Eisenhower warned that this new military-industrial complex could weaken or destroy the very institutions and principles it was designed to protect. This came to light during the Cold War, Eisenhower considered the MIC a requirement to prevent the Soviet Union from becoming more hostile. with the United States possessing a peaceful military, war would be dangerous as a means to victory for the communists. Eisenhower never called for the MIC to be removed, he more urged citizens to be attentive so that its power would not be abused.

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Re: The Military-Industrial Complex

by Garrett Warner - Thursday, June 1, 2017, 2:11 PM

Eisenhower's farewell address is eery to me. As he explains how the US workforce will continue to manufacture military equipment. He suggests that this comes with a "grave danger" however, because if things got out of hand then another possible war could take place. Of course with the Cold War, the USSR and America were in an arms race with not only nuclear weapons but normal military grade weapons as well. It is interesting to see that our government is still spending ridiculous amounts of money for the military. I understand the power aspect of having a big military but there has to be a point when the spending either gets cut off or decreases exponentially. Billions and billions of dollars were poured into the military budget during the Obama administration and now Trump will be putting more money into it, too. It is frustrating to see hard-working American tax dollars put into defense when, in my opinion, should be put into a better infrastructure.

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Power of Terminology

by Andrew Erkert - Thursday, June 1, 2017, 11:33 PM

I agree with the podcast speaker in the idea that using the term “complex” instead of “lobby” makes it sound worse. Both make sense for the situation though. We, being fresh off an election year, have heard about lobbying all year last year on campaign ads, the internet, news, etc. so perhaps calling it a “lobby” is more familiar and may or may not sound worse depending on how one feels about lobbyists. I think that by calling it a complex, fewer Americans can comprehend the idea as clearly as they would’ve if the term lobby was used instead. The word “complex” instinctively causes something to seem more difficult to understand. This power of terminology is used in most forms of media and is very effective on the casual audience members. It can influence how someone perceives something profoundly.

The Eisenhower speech is very interesting for someone of his past. I think he said this because he knew his presidency was finished so there wasn’t much at stake for him criticizing the rising issue of this lobby/complex. I believe that it may have been on his mind for a few years but was hesitant to bring it up because of the focus on the build-up. Perhaps he felt that he could influence Americans to be somewhat wary of the growing military influence on society and economy for the future, since the Cold War was in progress and seemed that it would be in the American picture for years to come.

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Re: Keep spending responsibly

by Jason Pickens - Friday, June 2, 2017, 2:20 PM

How are the concerns of this subject still applicable today, years after the conclusion of the Cold War in 1989?

I can say that the concerns of the subject of military spending and Military industrial Complex have remained applicable after the fall of the Soviet Union. It has to be obvious to anyone who follows the news and keeps up with U.S. involvement in foreign affairs. Just because our greatest adversary collapsed, it did not mean that the U.S. should have scaled back defense spending so drastically that we let our guard down for a punch in the mouth, but rather a smarter way of spending money and wiser investments in our military spending. In the podcast, the reference was made that “ Since Eisenhower was a general, he know first hand that other military officers wanted more equipment than what was needed”. (podcast 1:20). I must say, this is so true. Even though ther is no Soviet threat anymore, we still have other threats and enemies that have evolved. I think the General officers were correct in wanting this war machine to keep being fed because it allowed us to carry our equipment over into other theaters of conflict after the cold war. However, responsible spending is paramount!

-Jason

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Re: Keep spending responsibly

by Alicia Lundeen - Saturday, June 3, 2017, 11:22 AM

Hi Jason,

Your response says a lot and I can agree with most of it. I would say your answer to the idea of spending goes back to about how our country goes to risky decision making when listening to our military personal. I too believe that this decision was a good thing for the country, with outside forces still threatening, we have this has a backbone for past, present and future of defense. While it could always be scaled back, American is better for it today.

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Complex vs. Lobby

by William Mc Mahon - Saturday, June 3, 2017, 12:15 PM

I appreciated, and agree with, the podcast's re-labeling of the Military-Industrial-Complex as a lobby instead of a complex.

From what the speaker said I feel that lobby is a more appropriate label. When I hear complex I think of what he described, a specific place or thing. It makes it sound like there is some collection of factories all building bombs and planes right next to each other. Not only is this innacurate, it skews the focus away from what is really of concern with this issue and that is the lobbying.

Capitalism requiries growth as the basis of the economy. Since the companies making and designing military equipment are private, they need to continually make profits just like any other corporation. What is unique about this situation is that in order for those companies to keep making profits, the U.S. must be using those weapons. There must be a demand for the supply.

I believe this lobbying does influence our government's decisions about whether or not to use these weapons. Since Eisenhower's speech we seem to be drifting more and more into a perpetual state of war. The connection may be subtle, but we do always seem to find a need for all the new technologies being developed for use in military operations.

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