HST 203: U.S. History Sp19 (Escobar)

Forum 4

Military-Industrial Complex

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Military-Industrial Complex
by Joe Escobar - Friday, May 24, 2019, 5:31 PM

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

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Eisenhower Wasn't "Wrong".
by Zach Edmiston - Sunday, May 26, 2019, 6:32 PM

I think this is a very interesting topic, and I'm glad that we are coming to it in the final week of our forums. The most impactful part of Eisenhower's speech started around the 1:38 mark, where he states: "In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists, and will persist." That quote in particular had a big impact on me because I can 100% agree with Eisenhower on this point, and I believe in the modern day we have begun to see the very essence of what he is speaking about. I do get the ultimate point that Carlson is trying to make to us, especially around the 1:25 mark, where he begins to talk about the idea of companies and lobbyists having a vested interest in keeping conflict and war going, and how if there are companies specifically building armaments, it is going to be in their best interest to keep a conflict going, and to begin throwing their money towards the pentagon to keep conflicts going so that they can stay in business.

I think that using the proper terminology in this argument is essential. If we use the term complex, it seems as though there is a boogy-man who simply wants war and death, who will crawl out of the cracks and take over our country and turn us into a warring nation; however, when we use the "lobby" terminology, it turns into much more realistic entity. The term lobby shows us that it could very well be American businesses that could turn the country towards war with their monetary influence. As professor Escobar says: if you follow the money trail, you eventually find people's true intentions and interests. Eisenhower is in an interesting spot with this subject, as he was perpetuating the very thing that he later argues that we as a nation should be very wary of. My assumption was that as the military power grew in the nation, and he began to see companies taking serious interests in the monetary benefit of war; that he began to see a dark path that the country could begin turning down, and the future complications that it could have. I believe that Eisenhower is telling the truth, not only because of his character, and his undeniable pride as a prior General; but because it was likely that he only began to see the flaws in this system

as they began to exponentially grow, and make themselves much more known and visible. I do believe in the premise of what his goal was, making the nation of America so powerful that our mere presence would deter any form of attack; a “peace through strength” look upon the nation and world; and it was the creation and influence of the business of war that finally made him open his eyes and see the darkness at the end of the tunnel, and where this path would eventually lead the nation.

I think that Eisenhower was doing what he thought was right and best for the nation, I believe that it was the unfortunate timing of his realization that cast doubt upon his sincerity at the time, and made it seem as if he was revoking and betraying his prior ideals of building military might. I think that Eisenhower was trying his best to defend his nation, he just realized the error of his ways towards the finale of his term in office.

Sum of ratings:3 (1) 3

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Eisenhower's Farewell Speech

by Robert Whitney - Sunday, May 26, 2019, 10:24 PM

One bit of President Eisenhower's speech that really stood out to me was when he said "...but we can no longer risk emergency improvisation of national defense. We have been compelled to create a permanent armanance industry of vast proportions". This quote had an impact on me because I thought of hearing this at the time of the actual speech, and not in 2019. For my whole life, the US has had a vast military that has been ready for conflict at any moment, but for people in Eisenhower's time that was not true. It took massive amounts of preparation to get the country ready for war. If the United States were to go to war today, certainly it would have an effect on the economy, but it wouldn't force underprepared workers into new jobs like it did up until the late-mid 20th century. Also, if the United States were to go to war, we have a large reserve military, and the lives of day to day Americans, especially young men, would go on largely undisturbed.

This quote also interested me because I was able to see into a turning point of American military history. During Eisenhower's years we were fresh off a WWII victory and had established ourselves as a world superpower. This was all new to the people of the 1950s and 60s America. The Cold War had started soon after and the need for a prepared military became necessary. It was just interesting for me to listen to this speech as an American citizen at the end of Eisenhower's presidency after having watched all these changes in society occur. It makes me wonder what will be thought about my time period and what history classes will teach when it is all said and done.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Potential Downfall

by Nicolette D Erazo - Monday, May 27, 2019, 10:02 PM

In Eisenhower's Farewell Address he states,"Now this conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new to the American experience. The total influence-economic, political, even spiritual-is felt in every city, every Statehouse, every office of the Federal government. We recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toils, resources, and livelihood are all involved. So is the very structure of our society." This portion of his speech stuck out to me in the sense that he warns the people of the United States to watch out for the miltary-industrial complex. He implied that the changing nature of U.S. defense had led to a very powerful defense establishment, resulting from past wars, and if not careful, it could harm and weaken the institutions it was created to protect and every one will be a part of the downfall and be among the consequences.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Re: Potential Downfall

by Nicolette D Erazo - Tuesday, May 28, 2019, 3:01 PM

That is not to say that he is implying that a strong defense is bad or to return to a small military or budget. But I believe his point with these words "We recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications" is to address the fact that we have the tools to protect and enhance our freedoms and liberties, but if not carefully watched, have the capability to do the oppose, with the help of "misplaced power".

Sum of ratings:0 (1) 0

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Re: Potential Downfall

by Aidan McNarie - Friday, May 31, 2019, 10:33 PM

I feel that one of the major things that needs to be talked about here is also the fear that the affluence provided by a bloated arms industry might cause that industry to gain great enough control over the American people. Couldn't it be put that the worry Eisenhower felt was tied to the idea that a massive industry with a great hold over a large group of people's livelyhoods was the main worry? In that case, the "Military industrial complex" would already hold that "misplaced power". Rather, it is not the lobby quite in the way that podcast is talking about, but instead the vast control over the economy that should be worried about.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Re: Potential Downfall

by Nicolette D Erazo - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 7:56 PM

You make a good point here in the correction that the worry is about economic control rather than the development itself. I was under the assumption that Eisenhower was speaking about having the "Military Industrial Complex" as a whole impacting the American people, being a new and potentially threatening defense system in general, when in reality the "grave implications" felt would come to the people in the sense that the industry, being strong enough to do so, would take over the economy and impact the nation's way of life. You pointed out that this is the "misplaced power" and that the industry is already completely capable of making these changes because of it's strength and that is why Eisenhower wanted to warn the nation about it in his Farewell Address, not simply because of it's potential lead to change, but because of the specific and economic changes that could come to everyone.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Re: Potential Downfall

by Aidan McNarie - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 10:53 PM

I honestly feel as if either could work, really. Both interpretations are valid in reality. To be fair, your first interpretation is probably closer to the mark as to what Eisenhower meant. I doubt he wanted, no matter how grave the threat, to tell the American people that the threat was there and all it had to do was flex its new muscles. but then again, I am neither an accomplished high-ranking General, nor a president who has just finished their term, so who am I to say what exactly he meant. I started considering the alternative I presented as I read your first post. Like I said, In a way, both interpretations feel valid.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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The Military Industrial Complex and tax spending

by Aidan McNarie - Monday, May 27, 2019, 10:57 PM

Eisenhower's speech and his warnings of the military industrial complex were completely warranted in retrospect. The prevalence of the "Lobby" as the podcaster called it is noticeable and trackable. Calling it a lobby makes it no less insidious.

It is easy to say that there needs to be reforms regarding the Military Industrial Complex. But how do you reform something that is deeply embedded in our nation? I personally have no clue. In the face of a resurgent China and Russia, I get the feeling this problem won't be dealt with anytime soon. Meanwhile, our country will continue massive spending paying companies large amounts just to keep pace with technology and calls for modernization. (see F35 Lightning II joint strike fighter, a program that is expected to cost $1.5 trillion over its lifetime. source: https://www.aviationtoday.com/2018/09/04/f-35-program-update/) I don't think any sitting president or member of congress will do anything to change this. The most sensible option, in my eyes, would be streamlining of current programs, but a change in overall policy would need to include an overall look at the way we treat lobbying as a whole. And, again, I don't see that changing anytime soon.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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The business of war

by Cristian Alamo - Tuesday, May 28, 2019, 5:20 PM

Eisenhower's stating that "the proper meshing of huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so security and liberty can prosper together." Sounded to me like a warning to the future generations that we must find the proper balance of military spending so we do not infringe on liberties but are also prepared for the need to defend our homeland. I do agree with Carlson by changing the word complex to lobby would make it feel less scary. As stated by Carlson, it sounds almost like a mysterious organization wanting war vs lobby which would sound more like military organizations that lobby for more military spending. I believe Eisenhower's military build up made sense for him to oversee because he was a General in the military and he knew that having a military buildup would make protecting America much easier. It wouldn't force companies to stop its production of goods for citizen and it would also have us prepared in case we needed to defend the country in a last second situation. Eisenhower at the end of his tenure saw an abuse of this build up. Carlson in his podcast stated that many times generals would ask for more than was actually needed and I believe Eisenhower knew that as a formal general and addressed it to almost challenge the next administration to try and combat the industrial combat's abuse of the build up.

I believe President Obama's being compared to neo-conservatism when it comes to the military spending is fair. During the cold war the new left became more and more anti war especially because of the Vietnam war's failure. President Obama's ideologies goes against what the left has become. The fear of terrorism also reminds me of the United States constant fear of communism and its red scare. Post 9/11 creation of all these monitoring instruments to combat terrorism as well as the constant evolution of technology have created more and more instruments for the US government to be able to spy on citizens. The article shows that our government hasn't changed as much as we like to think. Terrorism has replaced communism as our boogieman and our stockpiling of weapons hasn't dropped off from the cold war. I believe the concerns of the subject still continue to this day is because the vast amounts of spending in the military that could go into other parts of the government that are in dire need of money. The article brings up our troubling unemployment rate and other internal problems that aren't being addressed as much as our military spending.

Sum of ratings:3 (1) 3

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Part: one Ike said what was on his mind.

by Adam Moore - Tuesday, May 28, 2019, 8:07 PM

The most interesting part of Eisenhower's speech happens within the first minute."3.5 million men and women are directly engaged in the defense establishment"(Eisenhower, 0:55) Out of the entire speech this small quote is at the heart of what the main issue is with a buildup of the military industrial complex. Now for the first time in our history during peace time many Americans where working to build armaments. The population of the United States at the time was less than two hundred million so more than one percent of the country was employed manufacturing armaments. All the other comments in the short clip we listened to can stem from this one quote.

I do not agree with the commentator's sentiment about language.Eisenhower knew exactly what he wanted to say and said it accordingly. In Eisenhower's speech he warns of such a buildup of arms. If you look back in our history, we as a nation do not merely build weapons that we do not intend to use. Truman dropped all the atomic bombs we had manufactured on Japan during WW II. Historically we only built armaments during war time, so it is understandable that we use what we have created.

Because Eisenhower oversaw military buildup during peace rather than war does have an impact on how I evaluate the situation. The world around the United States of America was full of dictators building up arms to maintain their power, so Eisenhower understood that in the wrong hands a mighty military could in fact end our republic.

The timing of Eisenhower's speech does little to change whether I believe him or not, but it does show his mistrust for human nature. In the hands of human's absolute power corrupts absolutely. With the military industrial complex new presidents would have exponentially more power than the previous. I believe he was concerned with how new presidents would wield this new military power the United States had.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Re: Part: one Ike said what was on his mind.
by Zach Edmiston - Friday, May 31, 2019, 1:09 AM

Hey Adam,

You make a good and relevant point in your first paragraph and throughout your post that I feel the urge to address. While in retrospect 1% of the total population of the United States working in some form to build armaments for the country may seem like a staggering number, I think that when you look at it in comparison to Russia and their involvement and participation in the arms race may make you think about your viewpoint. (even though I don't necessarily disagree with you on it.)

The people during the cold war lived in a tough time, they worried daily about the prospect of those that they love most being obliterated, or leaving for work and never returning; having to face the thermonuclear war on any possible moments notice, and I believe that likely made for not only a very paranoia filled period of history, but likely one that experienced a surge of patriotism as well.

Here is where we come to the point of disagreement, and where I feel your argument becomes a pseudo self-defeating one, as clearly this time period is an example of a time that the US was building up its nuclear armaments with the hope to never use them, despite our willingness to if pushed to that point. While one can certainly argue the effectiveness and morality of the concept of nuclear deterrence, you certainly cannot argue with all integrity that, "we as a nation do not merely build weapons that we do not intend to use." when we are very clearly not in the aftermath of a nuclear conflict. Now this very well may simply be a disagreement of language, as we "intended" to use our armaments if we were pushed to by foreign powers, but I personally cannot see the US twiddling our thumbs simply waiting for an excuse to throw the world into a nuclear war. In fact, our view on deterrence and our buildup of nuclear armaments could be argued as the very concept that saved us and allowed us to continue our democracy in peace from communist influence. "By the time of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, both the United States and the Soviet Union had developed the capability of launching a nuclear-tipped missile from a submerged submarine, which completed the *third leg* of the *nuclear triad* weapons strategy necessary to fully implement the MAD doctrine. Having a three-branched nuclear capability eliminated the possibility that an enemy could destroy all of a nation's nuclear forces in a first-strike attack; this, in turn, ensured the credible threat of a devastating retaliatory strike against the aggressor, increasing a nation's nuclear deterrence." (Wikipedia, Mutually Assured Destruction, Early Cold War section)

Though I think that is the main point of where your and my brains clash on opinion, I take a step back and look past the cold war, and at what I believe is more of the main point that you are trying to make; when the "enemy" is no longer a threat, and we are at TRUE peace, will the corporations, or the government for that matter, downsize their efforts to create not only armaments, but a massive surplus of them? Which brings up my opinion on the matter of Eisenhower's speech, and your interpretation of it. I believe that you are right about Eisenhower's worry about future presidents and leaders, due to the fact that "The world around the United States of America was full of dictators building up arms to maintain their power, so Eisenhower understood that in the wrong hands a mighty military could in fact end our republic." would dictate that we continue to strengthen our forces and our capabilities; but that creates a huge possibility of a misuse of power and armaments. I believe that he was worried about the lobbying (I prefer that term over the term "complex") pushing the country and future leaders to continue that path that he started, however with narrower judgement and a more itchy trigger-finger.

None of us have the answer as to whether deterrence was the best call at the time, it was a crude, brutish, and (possibly) morally condemnable method; all we can say now in the year 2019, is that it worked. One thing that we can all agree on (and facts support) is that if Russia sensed weakness within the US, history would not have happened the way that it did, (for better or worse depending on your opinion) and our nation would very likely look a lot more red than it does today. I think Eisenhower saw the necessity of deterrence and a strong military at the time, but he feared what the future could bring when the nation is being lifted up by nuclear arms.

Sum of ratings:3 (1) 3

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@Zach, Thank you for your response.
by Adam Moore - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 9:43 PM

Hey Zach,

I will reply to your bulkier paragraph as that is where the disagreement was addressed. I do take great issue with the way you misquoted me, doing this is not only dishonest but demonstrates the lack of care you took while reading my response to the questions at hand. “If you look back in our history, we as a nation do not merely build weapons that we

do not intend to use"(me). If you use the entire sentence (which you are supposed to while quoting), you will see that I said historically which is a very important part of the sentence. When speaking on the build up of our nuclear arsenal again we did use them. We may not have dropped the bombs on anyone, but we did test them extensively. We detonated nukes above ground, below ground, and in tropical paradises. We used our tests to show the enemy they did not want to start a thermonuclear war.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Obama Keeps Robert Gates

by Trenton Hough - Thursday, May 30, 2019, 3:57 PM

The article written by Peter Phillips talks about Barack Obama continuing military dominance around the world for the united states. The article states that Obama kept Robert Gates, the bush administration secretary of defense/war, making him the first U.S. president keep the other political parties' person. I think this shows how president Obama wanted to change a lot of things in the government but didn't want to be seen as week/scared. Keeping a strong military face in the world showed power and that he was not afraid to act if necessary. The article also says that Obama was "calling for an expanded war in Afghanistan" (Phillips). This goes along the same lines in showing the World he will do what it takes to get things accomplished. I think comparing him to the cold war era is a fair comparison. Although times and technology have changes, the same concepts hold true with what the American people want. They want to be able to say they have to most power in the world and fell safe and confident that they can back it up. Obama know they people will pay a little more in taxes if they know they will be protected from other world rivals. Obama also uses this to gain support from others.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Re: Obama Keeps Robert Gates

by Anna McNutt - Friday, May 31, 2019, 10:42 PM

The very first sentence of the Peter Phillips article caught my attention, as you talked about in your first sentence. " Continuing military dominance around the world" brings up a few points.

First, it is just a very strong sentence. We want to have dominance of the whole world. It sort of reminds me of communist countries wanting to control the world, although our dominance is not the same thing. We have had the strongest military for quite a while now, and therefor we have the most power. It is still a strange thought to some degree.

Secondly, this initial sentence brings up the fact that political parties don't separate every idea. Obama carried Bush's, a Republican, agenda. Politics are in fact not always black and white, one side or the other, as they often feel. Today it seems more so that you are either on one side or the other on important issues. In my personal experience I've heard people get labeled as extreme democrat or republican, too left or too right. I've listened to people close to me not even consider an idea if it can from the opposite of their political party. I'm sure that this has always been an issue to a certain degree, however it seemed that politics were a little less black and white, all or nothing, back in the 50's and 60's. For example, we learned in class that Eisenhower was invited to run as a democrat or republican, both sides wanting him. I can't see that happening today. Times have changed, and it seems that we are more divided. I think often we are too focused on the labels of parties or ideas. But really ideas can overlap.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Hyde was right

by Anna McNutt - Thursday, May 30, 2019, 5:53 PM

I've always loved That 70's show and it was fun to watch a little clip of it in class today. And hey, it was very relevant! Joe said that the clip had to do with our forum topic and I realized that it was the topic that I hadn't yer looked at. After watching the Obama video it made sense. Hyde had said -jokingly- that the government would soon have tracking devices on us and later they would have technology to read our minds. Although we haven't gotten as far as mind reading, we do essentially have tracking devices. Not only do we have tracking devices, our phones, but we could be watched through the camera, recorded, listened to. We've all known that for awhile so this isn't a big shock, our former president even verifies this. Obama's speech was supposed to be comforting, he says, "The men and women of the intelligence community, including the NSA, consistently follow protocols designed to protect eh privacy of ordinary people." That sounds great, and I'm sure they do follow protocols. However. the fact that they

could watch us or look through our texts or track our location is a bit creepy. Of course most of us don't have anything very important or even interesting to hide, I sure would not like to be watched and tracked. I do understand that having this technology helps to locate terrorists or stop something before it happens. Its smart, but its still creepy at the same time. What was meant as a joke in a sitcom, turned out to be foreshadowing. Whether the producers or writers had a correct theory or made a lucky guess, Hyde was right. It may not be as bad as he made it sound though. Obama claims that "the program does not involve the NSA examining the phone record of ordinary Americans." So that is a little comforting, but he continues to say: "Rather it consolidates these records into a database that the government can query of it has a specific leak." Basically, we're not being examined but we could be at any moment, all of our data stored away, if there is ever a question of our loyalty to the country.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Eisenhower's Military-Industrial Complex

by Alexander Marx - Friday, May 31, 2019, 10:04 PM

I believe Eisenhower is speaking quite plainly and truthfully during this farewell address. With the timing being at the end of his presidency there is less of a need to pander to potential voters and the chances of heartfelt truth are at their highest. He first lays out what the military industrial complex is before using the words, stating the establishment of a permanent arms industry and then referencing the 3.5 million people involved in the defense establishment (Eisenhower's speech video 0:47). Using these words to more simply lay out what is being created has a more reasonable tone to it than a term such as “military industrial complex” which, as Carson says on his podcast, sounds like a sinister group (Podcast 0:55). This initial description is in line with Carson describing it as more of a military industrial lobby, where many groups are involved and are working individually but for the same goals as opposed to one powerful entity controlling all of it. Due to past wars, I understand Eisenhower's wish to not have to go back to improvisational armament manufacturing and instead be prepared for war through a separate industry, and near the end of his speech he mentions why. He wishes for this to not encroach on American liberties and livelihood while allowing us to be ready for any potential conflict due to a rise of corrupt power anywhere in the world. Despite all of his intentions and whatever the military industrial complex entailed during it's conception, it would appear that it's main “purpose” has become profiteering for those involved as opposed to solely protecting our nation and peoples. This is backed up in the article by Peter Phillips citing numbers on the political involvements and incentives tied to the military industrial complex. Having “blank check” wars that we discussed in class allows for near limitless spending on military, and there will have to be some dramatic reform in order to reduce this. As I stated in a previous forum, when people in power are dealing with money, there's a slim chance that they will voluntarily decrease their own and their partner's profits.

Sum of ratings:3 (1) 3

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Re: Military-Industrial Complex

by Daniel Zavala - Friday, May 31, 2019, 10:42 PM

The most notable part of the speech to me is the line "We recognize the imperative need for this development, yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave complications." Mostly because it is somewhat unusual to hear someone considering the value of the military industrial complex and not just claim that is is entirely evil.

Concerning the podcast commentator, I would actually have to disagree with his statement about the use of the word 'complex', because, in truth, I would argue that the phrase 'complex' is perfect to describe what it has become. Of course I could also agree with Carlson in the idea that using the most accurate terminology is very important to avoid muddling the issue.

I was already aware that Eisenhower had helped to create the modern military complex, so that fact has had very little influence on my opinion on the subject. There are plenty of reasons for him to take such an opinion. I suspect it was because he saw the change America was undergoing, and he was worried about what we may become if we allowed our fears to overcome reason, and he thought this was his last chance to warn the nation. Of course there are plenty of other reasons that are just as likely. Finally, I could agree that the timing of his message makes it more believable. Because this is the end of the line for him, he is leaving office, and if he is pushing an agenda, this is arguably one of the worst times to try and do so.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Bruce Carlson & Ike

by Cameron Lindsey - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 11:17 AM

During Ike's speech he urges, "we recognize the imperative need for this development, yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications." -- I feel here he is speaking rationally and reasonably and this stands out because right there is a the fundamental difference between Ike and JFK's stance on the military-industrial complex. I think Eisenhower had a very healthy approach to the issue, and though I agree with our instructor that attempting to predict the future can be sophomoric--Eisenhower was someone who perhaps understood military-industrial relations better than anyone and judging by the current status quo his cautions were reasonable and spot on.

I do agree with the comments made by Bruce Carlson regarding the vocab, because the military-industrial complex really is about corporate lobbying. This is a great example of what past figures worried about and warned against: the private sector mixing with the federal gov. Using war for profit is a dangerous habit to get in to and though there are always a handful of reasons for entering a war, we can't ignore the paper-trail surrounding the issue.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Ike's speech -- lying, or telling the truth?

by Cameron Lindsey - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 11:48 AM

To expand more on Ike's speech on one hand I could be convinced that he was telling the truth. Seeing that he was on his way out, what reasons would he have to lie? At that point he had no one to win over or persuade, and he **could** have been genuinely concerned for our nation. A telling sign of this is that this was at a time of peace and he was noticing that there was still a military buildup. What could we be missing?

On the other hand, there's a lot that could go overlooked. After giving this some more thought, much like FDR knew we were heading into WWII plenty ahead of time, I think Ike knew damn well we were headed to war before we set foot in Vietnam. He was, after all, the first President to send bodies to South Vietnam. I'm pretty stuck on this question at the moment. Maybe someone else can chime in and help me out? If Ike oversaw the peace-time war production and did nothing to intervene, then why would he later warn against it? Could it have just been hindsight, or was there an agenda hidden in there somewhere? Maybe the answer is more obvious than it seems.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Military Industrial Complex: Does It Run Our Country?

by Eli Free - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 9:52 PM

"The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power," (Eisenhower video 1:53) this quote greatly resonates with me because of the everlasting debate that the military controls our country. I think that abuse of power has definitely been starting to happen a little bit more as time progresses. Especially with the raw power the president truly possesses in regards to military related decisions. I think that in time, if the power available to those in high seats of the military is not checked, our government will become so militarized that they will be the central component of our nation's government. It is interesting that Eisenhower advocated against misplaced power in terms of the Military Industrial Complex when he was a main contributor in getting the military to be so large scale. While I do agree that it was smart to increase the strength of our military to prove our worth and credibility as a nation, I think that he partially mentions this in his farewell speech as strategy to avoid any negative backlash towards beefing up our military. He was a very militaristic man and to see someone who was so military centric for so many years just, all of the sudden, switch up and become someone who wanted military power limited, seems a bit fishy to me. But, nonetheless I still agree with what he said and so think that it is a continuous problem our country faces even in today's society.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Obama & Foreign Policy

by Cameron Lindsey - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 10:02 PM

What I've learned from our history and our involvement in the Cold War is that we've been committed to the idea of containment since at **least** the beginning of that war, and we have patches from even before then where we we contained other non-democratic expansion. When Obama took office, he knew it would be a poor decision to make massive changes at the Pentagon and to pull out of Afghanistan immediately. After all, our goal of containing and eventually capturing/killing Osama Bin Laden had not been fulfilled.

Connecting Obama to neo-conservativism I suppose is fair in respect to his actions towards military spending and overall "support" of the military-industrial complex; yet I wonder if a better question to ask is what administration *hasn't* been in favor of the military-industrial complex since pre-FDR? Even with Ike's apparent disapproval, peace-time military buildup still was executed under his watch.

Something important I think we all need to pay attention to is the fact that we get from this article about how 151 congressional members had investments in defense companies. According to Peter Phillips, "The US military industrial complex is deeply embedded inside the Washington beltway. According to the most recent reports from OpenSecrets.org, 151 members of Congress in 2006 had up to $195.5 million of their personal assets invested in defense companies" (Peter Phillips, *Barack Obama Administration Continues US Military Global Dominance*). Let's not forgot that this was a democratic congress in 2010, which is why I don't like the term "neo-conservativism." Conservatives and liberals alike have always been partial to the MIC if it helps them. How much power does a President really have over a congress committed to going to and staying at war? How unpopular would Obama have been if he ended the War on Terror prematurely? Say what you will, but this was a smart political move from Obama.

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Re: Eisenhower's Farewell Address

by Daniel Quirk - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 10:57 PM

In the video, at 0:27-0:33 Eisenhower states "Until the latest of our world conflicts, the United States had no armaments industry." That was pretty crazy to me. If you think about it, the only reason we started our own weapons industries is to out-compete and intimidate others for our own safety. Personally, I agree with the commentator. He brought up a good point when saying "he chose complexity to reflect how there are so many interlocking pieces..." It just makes it sound like a super big deal that should be dealt with immediately so if it WAS lobby, it'd be a bit more accurate and less concerning. Also, Eisenhower said himself he wanted to dip out with a challenging question at hand, which he successfully did. Since Eisenhower was conducting a military buildup during peace it actually confuses me a lot. Why would you put out this kind of warning while at the same exact time basically advocating for it? That part doesn't make too much logical sense to me other than once this armaments competition is started, it's never going to end. Who wants to give up building weapons when it's possible your enemies are stocking up? If I'm being honest, it definitely makes me believe him more. Another intention could be a warning for the far-ish future. If the armaments race has been going for a bit there will definitely be advancements made (especially with all the nukes being made).

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