

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

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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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Re:neo conserveate and the military today
by [DAVID Welshman](#) - Sunday, May 26, 2019, 9:26 AM

I not growing updating the Cold War like my classmates, can only take what we learn and what we read into account. By saying that so far I feel that because of that time our country has become the for front for the world in military power. the Wikipedia has a good overview of the difference in political years and the government rules that made choices in regards to how to handle different governments around the world. The overall view I see and understand is that as a nation, our strength has been used to protect democracy and the people of other nations. We will not allow rulers of communist countries to abuse their power it threatens other countries or the USA. If they hurt their own people in horrific ways it is not acceptable and we as shown in the past will and must act. As far as Obama, I'm not a fan, however durning his years in office he did not try to take the approach that military is not needed. He knew that in order to keep America safe after we had experienced 9/11 that as a nation we needed to keep doing what was being done by our intelligence offices. This was shown by keeping some of Bush appointed officials in office. He did feel and made progress to give more transparency to the America people. This was after when running for office he attacked Hillary Clinton though on supporting the Bush administration when it came to supporting the war. He played the game and did what he felt was needed to get elected. Now what I think of his apologizing for everything under the sun, shameful. But for Neo conservative influence on Obama there was little left during his years in office.

We see how neo conservatives pick and choose through the years what they support and then how they get up in arms on what policies they disagree with, it to me seems like they want their cake and eat it too. Our foreign policies have change in some ways but the constant is protecting people and promoting democracy through the world. So as stated in the Wikipedia, neo conservative really is the desire to want to protect democracy and that of

human rights. That being said Im not sure I believe it when the article says that neo conservative basically boils down to Isreal's rights and the need to protect them. I feel that through out history they like many other groups try to use their view to sway the public.

Bernie had a good point in saying that technology is growing, but to say the NSA is going to watch all of Americans is not exactly true. Yes companies can see what habits the public has in shopping, eating, watching doesn't mean that the government is going to take that information and use it to oversea Americans. How ever the countries feel about the NSA listening to conversations they have is not important. Safety is more important for our country as a whole. Terrorist are dangerous and want to hurt anyone they feel is evil. Ive seen what they have done in person. The world has seen and felt the effects of what they do. Not just 9/11 but what just happened in New Zealand was not acceptable. Threats to England, France, Spain and others around the world is hurting peaceful efforts across the board. These free radical terrorist want to destroy all they see as enemies. Its not just about Isreal and its people as the neo conservative wing would like to portray. Our military is and must be strong to fight against the radical terrorist in the world. Other countries are also standing beside us in the effort. Have we taken a different approach when dealing with China or Russia yes, but do we monitor them sure we do, As they do us.

One interesting note the word Neo comes from the greek word neos meaning new. So basically Neo conservative means New conservative. what is a conservative its traditional values, cautious of change. So my take is that the new conservative movement in history since the Cold War is they are careful of the changes that happen in the world and want to make sure their traditional values are upheld. Im sure most will not agree but this is my take on what I have read or listen too so far.

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Re: Military-Industrial Complex: Eisenhower's Speech and Bruce Carlso

by [Joe Kiefer](#) - Sunday, May 26, 2019, 7:54 PM

When I listened to President Eisenhower’s speech, I found it quite interesting that this would be something that you would put in your farewell speech. The part that peaked my interest the most was when he was talking about the dangers of having companies that make weapons all the time. He said, “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 persists.”(Eisenhower video 1:37) The way I see it is, what he is saying is that when companies start making weapons as their only product and source of revenue, inherent dangers will come along with the benefits from heaving weapons that you can stockpile. The good in this was that if for some reason we would have to go to war again, you would already have the weapons ready to go and the economy and businesses would be able to keep people working and keep producing as they would not be needed for making military hardware. The inherent danger I think he was talking about was that when companies start making military weapons, one would think: what is going to happen when the government doesn’t need weapons anymore, what will happen to those companies if there is no demand for their limited product line?

When Eisenhower decided to allow this, he knew that those companies would lobby congress, I think that was a given having been able to hold the two top positions in the military, both General and President. As president, one would think that he would have a good idea of the capabilities and influence of the ones that would be running these companies. I just think that the lobbying was more of an underlying circumstance, rather than the potential of bigger and more disastrous problems, such as selling to other countries or finding ways to either prolong conflicts so weapons would be needed

So, I listened to the Bruce Carlson podcast and picked out the part that grabbed me, “I don’t think it was an extremely dark vision about American and uh, or the world would come to an end or anything like that. It was mostly, I think, probably, you know reading what he said about it, the term could have been changed to military industrial lobby,”(Carlson audio 3:15) I just don’t agree with his assessment of what Eisenhower’s farewell speech, one would think lobbying would be one least severe of the potential dangers, I mean that if you take and add in the human factor into all of this. The Congress was dealing with lobbyists and had been dealing with them since shortly after the first congress was convened. I think Eisenhower’s biggest fear was just what he said it was, “the disastrous rise of misplaced power”, causer anytime you have human beings involved the potential for disaster has gone up exponentially.

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Re: Military-Industrial Complex: Eisenhower's Speech and Bruce Carlso

by [Joe Kiefer](#) - Tuesday, May 28, 2019, 7:44 AM

When I started to write my initial post, I had not read chapter 29 which was the reading assignment for this week. I was surprised to find some relevant information to this topic while I was reading this chapter. When they were explaining the expansion fo the Nixon Doctrine, which they stated, "The White House made clear that the United States would not dispatch its troops to quash insurgencies but would generously aid anticommunist regimes or factions willing to fight their own battles."(textbook p.986) The result of this Doctrine was summed up in one line, "U.S. arms sales to the rest of the world skyrocketed."(textbook p.986) In my opinion, this is exactly what President Eisenhower was trying to warn about in the farewell speech that is in the forum materials. So what does this mean? The U.S. will not be sending troops around the world to fight, but it allowed the military industrial complex to propagate war around the world by selling arms to countries that wanted to fight. This stands in complete contradiction to what President Woodrow Wilson wanted to do in his proposal of the League of Nations where he wanted the league to settle disputes without the threat of continuous war around the world. Eisenhower wanted a military industrial complex to be able to have weapons of war available and ready in the need that would have to fight a war, to be prepared in the event of this scenario. I'm sure he never wanted the U.S. to be the nation that would be the arms dealer to countries that wanted to perpetuate war. I understand the goal of the Nixon Doctrine was to contain the spread of communism, but what happens when these countries, that have U.S. made weapons, decide that democracy is not the path that their country is going to go down. They have the weapons that we will be using, now our enemies have the ability to understand our military weaponry and can come up with ways to defend against it. This sounds like a scenario that would be classified as an unintended consequence. Let me know what you think.

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quote that interested me

by [Kaylee Calvert](#) - Monday, May 27, 2019, 9:25 AM

The specific quote in President Eisenhower’s speech that is the most interesting to me is, “This conjunction of an immense military establishment and large armed industry is new in the American experience. The total influence, economic, political, and even spiritual, is felt in every city, every statehouse, every office of the federal government” (Eisenhower’s speech 1:02). This quote stuck out to me because I could not imagine how I would feel in this time period when all of the military and arms industry was first introduced. During my short lifetime, this has all been in place already, it is nothing new, so I’m not really fazed by the fact that we have a large arms industry and insane weapons. Later in Eisenhower’s speech he also says, “we must not forget to comprehend its grave implications” (Eisenhower’s speech 1:26). This quote would not make me feel any better, probably worse.

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Corporations and the Military

by [Owen McCoy](#) - Monday, May 27, 2019, 10:43 AM

The military-industrial complex that Eisenhower described was “an informal relationship among military, political, and economic elites committed to expanding national security capabilities.” (textbook p.919) What the textbook and Carlson both also mentioned was the cooperation between corporations and the federal government to achieve these aims. If that sounds familiar, it should.

It was ultimately WWII that pulled the U.S. out of the Great Depression. The onset of war demanded that the U.S. make the most of its economic potential. “Striving to increase production, industry entered into a close relationship with government to promote scientific and technological research and development.” (textbook p.869) Furthermore, “the Roosevelt administration adopted a cooperative stance toward big business,” even going so far as to “postpone enforcement of antitrust laws.” (textbook p. 870) Such measures were arguably necessary for the war to be won, but it shows that by the time of Eisenhower’s farewell address, the “military-industrial complex” was not something new.

The military-industrial complex even dates back to WWI, the first time that the United States was involved in a “total” war. Head of the War Industries Board Bernard Baruch found a way to recruit corporations to the war production cause: by making it “too lucrative an activity to resist.” (textbook p.755) As a result, “war production increased, and manufacturers discovered the benefits of cooperation between the public and private sectors.” (textbook p.755) All of this raised some objections and had some unintended consequences (i.e. it wasn’t a good time to be a small business owner, and subsidizing corporations meant that war debt skyrocketed), but it worked so well in terms of economic mobilization that as we can see, it was repeated when needed.

Still, I’m not sure if I agree with Carlson’s description of a military-industrial “lobby.” The way he put it, “they [companies] would lobby the Pentagon and Congress, the Pentagon would also lobby Congress, and Congress would lobby the administration.” (podcast 02:__) However, from the examples above, it would appear that the opposite is true. That is to say, the complex seems to be initiated by the federal government in most cases. Both World Wars saw the federal government try to enlist corporations through financial incentives, and the military-industrial complex that emerged from Eisenhower’s presidency was a product of politics dominated by Truman’s **containment** and Eisenhower’s **New Look** for the military. Moreover, corporations were typically willing to cooperate seeing as war production was becoming profitable.

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President Obama and support for the Military-Industrial Complex

by [Matthew Berry](#) - Monday, May 27, 2019, 9:40 PM

In the article “Barack Obama Administration Continues US Military Global Dominance” by Peter Philips (3 MAY 2010) It connects President Obama to neo-conservatism and the continued support of the military-industrial complex. But I don’t think this is quite a fair comparison and here’s why. I served under the Obama Administration, and I can tell you that during that time, we did see a lot of policy changes that affected the military directly at the troop level. We also saw a lot of changes in standard operating procedures as well as changes in the rules of engagement. Unlike Vietnam, which has been part of our topic of study this last week, where we saw the use of weapons such as napalm and agent orange. The military has come a long way in developing new armaments, but also banning the use of others that could kill indiscriminately, or inhumanely disable/disfigure combatants as well as non-combatants. At the same time striving to limit the amount of non-combatant casualties, in conjunction with holding troops to higher standards during warfare through the UCMJ and ROE’s (UCMJ - Uniform Code of Military Justice; ROE - Rules of Engagement).

To say that President Obama was continuing support for the military-industrial complex just as the previous administrations during the Cold War was, is to take a pretty broad stroke at history in comparing the two very different times that we lived in. Take during the Cold War, in which the United States was not formally at war with Russia, but was indeed in a pretty serious arms race with the communist nuclear state and with “MAD” or “mutually assured destruction” (in class notes) in the back of our minds, we feared to cross a line that could have such dire consequences. So with that in mind we began to try to use containment of communism with proxy wars in places like Korea and Vietnam.

Fast forward to 2008 when President Obama took office, Congress had already adopted a number of authorizations for the use of military force. On October 16, 2002 Congress authorized the use of military force against Iraq (Declarations of War and Authorizations for the Use of Military Force: Historical Background and Legal Implications. fas.org). Unfortunately, as we know we did get sucked in further into Iraq and Afghanistan in a very similar way as Vietnam, in the sense that there was no real clear view of victory and no exit strategy that would usually exist in a formal war with let’s say Germany.

But, again I don’t think that President Obama really had an option to make to many large changes in his Foreign Policies, at least those that affected Iraq, and Afghanistan, due to the simple fact that he had inherited that war, and it is not really logical to expect that a newly appointed President would start making large changes to downsize the military or its capabilities in a time of war, especially with such an uncertain foe. The “War on Terror” or “Terrorism” was not only a “war without a front” (similar to Vietnam (quote from Ken Burns netflix series “Vietnam”)) but it was also a war on information. Massive amounts of information, that agencies such as the NSA, were in charge of gathering. Which seems to have unfortunately led to multiple cases of government spying on Americans. So I don’t know that it is fair question to ask whether or not President Obama should of continued the build up of the military-industrial complex, because it is obvious that he did. But rather did he really have a choice to continue in the same direction that his predecessor as well as the entire establishment was headed in at this time. I would say that at the time that President Eisenhower gave his farewell address to the nation, America was not in the same situation as when President Obama served our nation. That is to say that we were not just building arms to store them in case of an emergency, we were already at a state of “National Emergency” since 9/11.

“At any rate, mutually assured destruction was never our policy”

Henry A. Kissinger

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Eisenhowers quote

by [Gabe Sorber](#) - Monday, May 27, 2019, 10:14 PM

During President Eisenhower's farewell address, right after he says "The military industrial complex, he says, "the potential for disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist." This quote stuck out to me because I thought of who's to say and decide who/where the power belongs. I then remembered back to German propaganda showed to us in class. The Germans depicted Americans as gangsters who went around Europe killing women and children. Now I know that in that case Hitler was definitely a misplaced power, but why is America to say what is right and wrong. I feel that Eisenhower said this in order to keep that fear of communism and to end his presidency where it started, as a military-headed guy. Do you guys think that America should say where power should be dictated? Is it smart for America to continue its military growth during peace time?

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Re: Eisenhower's quote

by [Alex Davis](#) - Friday, May 31, 2019, 10:30 PM

I basically wrote my paragraph on this quote as well. Thought it was really interesting. I like your perspective on the Germans thinking we were gangsters just killing women and children and I do agree that Hitler was definitely a misplaced power. I also agree on Eisenhower trying to warn people on the fear of communism. I didn't state that specifically in my paragraph, because I was focusing on a more general output, but I like the idea. I like the point you made on why is America to say what is right and wrong. I get that America shouldn't be deciding everything, but I do believe America should have some say and continue military growth during peace time.

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Military-Industrial Complex: Which quote stands out?

by [Gregory Graff](#) - Monday, May 27, 2019, 10:21 PM

"The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists, and will persist." This quote is most impactful to me because since the end of WWII the United States has backed multiple overthrows of democratically elected governments and has used its overwhelming power to force countries to do what it desires. The US has backed coups in many Latin American countries and the Middle East and it will continue to do so.

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Waste and Blurred Lines in a Complex

by [Zachary Oswald](#) - Monday, May 27, 2019, 10:28 PM

The line from Eisenhower's speech that I found most interesting was "We recognize the imperative need for this development, yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications." This seems to sum up Eisenhower's position, that the rise of a military-industrial complex was needed for the Cold War but concerning nonetheless.

I agree with Carlson that Eisenhower could have used the word lobby instead of complex, but I feel that complex more accurately captures our contemporary situation. A military-industrial lobby explains the relationship between corporation, the military, and the government as one where corporations and the military lobby for intersecting and beneficial interest but are separate. However, in the modern era where private contractors are employed by the military in ever increasing numbers and military veterans, to include generals and Chiefs of Staff, find employment in the companies, the lines between the military and the private industry that supports it are blurred. This raises the possibility of a military that is motivated to increase profit for private corporations.

Eisenhower's peacetime military buildup is highly relevant to his remarks. War profiteering is an acceptable risk during wartime, in peace, it is a constant and needless drain on government resources. As he stated, the creation of a peacetime military-industrial complex was unprecedented in American history. Because these remarks come from his farewell address, he was likely more free with his opinions. I'm inclined to believe his remarks were more truthful in a farewell address since he could send out a warning without any concern for political ramifications.

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Eisenhower speech
by [Dylan Boleyn](#) - Wednesday, May 29, 2019, 8:38 PM

What specific quote or inclusion of information in President Eisenhower’s speech is the most interesting or has the greatest impact on you? Why? For me the quote that had the most impact on me was when Eisenhower says our toile resources and livelihood are all involved in this military industrial complex. In particular the part that impacted me the most was the involvement of our livelihood. Most of us work to support ourselves and so work becomes part of our livelihood and part of the income we earn to support ourselves goes towards this military industrial complex and to me what this means is that we are giving up some of our livelihood to support our defense system. This type of involvement I think is what esnihower is hinting at. The reason this insolvent that we have affects me and the reason I was impacted by this part of Eisenhower’s speech is because a large part of my earnings that I give to the government go towards the so called military industrial complex. This means that things like heath care and education two important things in my life have less support then I think they should. So when I heard one of our past presidents talking about our involvement in the military industrial complex it made me think of where we are now in our involvement in our military today which was why it was impactful to me.

Do you agree with the podcast commentator Carlson about the use or misuse of the vocabulary (complex vs. lobby)? I do agree with Carlson about the use of complex vs lobby. I agree that using the word complex sounds more secretive and something like the military industrial lobby/complex should not be secretive considering everyone’s involvement in it. The reason I think the word lobby is more correct and why it dose not sound secretive is because it often refers to political actions that are not held secret. Also the military has more to do with political powers more than a secret complex.

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Armaments
by [Kaleah Holmes](#) - Wednesday, May 29, 2019, 9:02 PM

"We have been compelled to create a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions" (Eisenhower video 0:53). I found this quote to be very interesting. It really demonstrates when America decided to be all about equipping their military. I think building up artillery, and heavy weaponry is important. We need to, as a country, be able to protect ourselves. however, the rate they built themselves up was too fast in my opinion. We do not need bombs, and bombs. Maybe just a few for emergencies.

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how foreign policy has changed
by [Levi Savage](#) - Wednesday, May 29, 2019, 10:56 PM

By the time the cold war ended the US was spending around 370 billion a year on the military. From that point onwards US spending dropped down to a low of 290 billion a year by 1998 (Our world in data military spending). Once 9/11 happened though defense spending jumped dramatically up 460 billion a year by 2007 and would continue to rise and pass 600 billion currently. By looking at this data we could come to the conclusion that the US was demilitarizing until 9/11 where we were thrown into a war that is still being fought to this day. If anything our nations foreign policy has just changed from containing communism to countering terrorism mostly in the middle east. It would appear we just rebranded a threat and increased military spending to continue having this massive military that has no enemy anywhere in the world that could challenge it and for just to have it sit there and look pretty for the whole world to see the Americans wasting hundreds of billions on a militery that does not have to be this large. Granted that does not mean spending was solely on military assets we spent large amounts on spying in this digital age where the wars are fought on cyberspace. And with Edward Snowden releasing hundreds of files many of which showed that the US was actively spying on millions of Americans and people around the world that may have nothing to do with our enemies. We have sacrificed some of our freedoms and privacy to have a little more security but when will it ever be enough when will the government change its ways a realize not everyone in the world is out to destroy them and start to live in a world where peace is not always won with bullets and tanks but through diplomacy talking with each other.

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Eisenhower' warning of influence from the military in normal life.

by [David Pineda](#) - Thursday, May 30, 2019, 12:24 PM

The most impact thing that Eisenhower said in his speech Was when he addressed the influence the military industrial complex has on in the American life. He said its felt economically and even spiritually(1:10 in the speech video). The reason this point made such a big deal to me was because he basically warned the American people that with the grow and rise of the the military industrial complex, their influence on the government will also grow, and that absolutely frightens me. He also states that the government must be ready to defend against anyone trying to attain power that is apart of the military so they can't take control.

The fact that Eisenhower oversaw the grow of the military during peace time helps me understand this more deeply because he knows how much more influential th military has become. He most likely has seen the lobbyists on behalf of the military companies and seen the direct influence that they have.

What makes this a little ironic is that he warns agains military officials intentionally or unintentionally gain power/influence on the government meanwhile he is an ex military general himself.

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complex vs. lobby

by [David Pineda](#) - Thursday, May 30, 2019, 12:33 PM

I think the term complex was used correctly because what did happen was permanent companies that would produce arms and armaments were established(1:57 of podcast). Which to me is what military industrial complex means. The commentator said so himself that a SIDE EFFECT would be those companies lobbying for more money and more job security in the government and congress(2:05 podcast). I believe that if the term lobby was used instead it would add a more negative connotation and perhaps scare more Americans. Because people would fear that all the companies that made stuff for the military were only lobbying for more power in the government and have their interests be listened to.

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President Eisenhower's Speech

by [Alex Davis](#) - Friday, May 31, 2019, 8:56 PM

The part of the farewell address that stood out to me was at 1:53 when Eisenhower states that misplaced power exists. It stood out to me, because he said our liberties are at stake. The video itself had a weird vibe to it so I don't know if that helped, but it almost seemed like Eisenhower was worried something was coming and that's why that line got my attention. I do agree with Carlson on his use of complex vs lobby. I think if lobby was used instead it wouldn't have sounded as serious, but I understand that complex was used to describe this whole topic, because of its complexity. I believe they're 2 different terms and in this sense used correctly. I don't think this discussion is clearly defined, but I believe it's truthful. I just think that the subject has a lot of questions to answer as a whole. The military buildup in a time of peace doesn't affect my own thinking. The Cold War was still going on and I think Eisenhower wanted to make sure no one else would attack us. I think Eisenhower took this position in the Cold War to get younger Americans attention in that anything could happen almost like a warning and part of me thinks that, because he knew he might not be around for a horrific event to happen if it did. Eisenhower leaving office makes me think he is telling the truth, because he doesn't have much to lose so why lie? I think his address was actually saying goodbye and a warning to people to keep their heads up. Hard questions to answer overall, but what are your opinions on the address?

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military-Industrial Complex and podcast

by [Sidney Axtell](#) - Friday, May 31, 2019, 11:04 PM

"May we be ever unswerving in devotion to principle, confident but humble with power, diligent in pursuit of the Nation's great goals". -Dwight D. Eisenhower

This quote really was an interesting ending for Eisenhower. He was really invoking the American democratic ideals. He tells his audience to embody liberty. Something compelling was how he stated that he wishes them to use their power for not only the greater good, but to contribute to making America great. When listening to the podcast, it goes over the ending of Eisenhower's speech. He explains that the concept of the ending, complex vs. lobby. Carlson explains that it "wasn't about the world coming to the end, but the term could have been changed to "Military industrial lobby" so it wouldn't have seemed so crazy." (Podcast 3min 30sec) He had used complex to reflect the complexity of the whole thing. Eisenhower also oversaw military build up in a time of peace, rather than war. To me, this affected my understanding a lot. It made realize that the speech summarized principles that had guided a lifetime of service to the United State

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Re: military-Industrial Complex and podcast
by [Sidney Axtell](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 12:29 AM

Another quote from the short video clip "We recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications." This quote was a great example as to what Eisenhower represented. His peaceful military buildup statements, never referenced a single achievement, but rather left a dark, personal view of powerful incompleteness on the subject of disarmament.

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Timing of the speech
by [Sidney Axtell](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 12:47 AM

The timing of Eisenhower's speech really is remembered for his references to the military-industrial complex. This speech was his warning to the nation, addressing to citizens, and about citizenship. Though some believe his speech was untruthful. An article I recently read discussed the naysayers viewpoints. "I think we should view the speech as an admission of failure on the president's part," Bacevich tells Raz, "an acknowledgment that he was unable to curb tendencies that he had recognized, from the very outset of his presidency, were problematic." (Eisenhower's Warning Still Challenges A Nation Article)

In my opinion I think Eisenhower's speech still holds true today. Nobody at the time knew how large of an impact his speech would make on America.

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The Military industrial complex, can this leviathan be meshed with liberty?:Ike's farewell speech and a warning from a great military leader. Re: Military-Industrial Complex
by [Jason Fitzsimmons](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 2:47 PM

I agree with Carlson's analysis and explanation of Ike's speech mentioning the industrial-military complex. Ike knew from experience that an industry dedicated to military equipment and arms would want to keep their factories operational, turning a profit and lobbying for more defense spending, which Ike saw as a "waste" of the nation's resources. Since WW2 the USA has seen an increase in peacetime military spending spree. Ronald Reagan looked at military spending as a strategy to bankrupt the USSR by initiating the 1.5-billion-dollar missile defense system, forcing our cold war adversaries to keep up or be at a distinct advantage. Ike certainly had the "inside baseball" on the politics of military spending, and the workings of the lobby and the push to keep the gears turning. He saw this as a danger and his farewell speech addressed these fears. One particular quote of Ike's speech I found thought-provoking was when he said:" The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist". He felt that defense spending should not be seen as something that has the potential to encourage a lobby seeking to profit off of continued military growth during peacetime. I believe Eisenhower was a great man who believed in the US constitution and the importance of meshing liberty with National defense in all sincerity. I believe he knew all too well the dangers of contractors and bureaucrats conducting a revolving door policy and increasing close uncompetitive ties based on pushing the US military into conflicts based on profit and taking little to no consideration for lives lost and geopolitical effects which can have little to do with national defense.

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Weighing a Complex Issue

by [Ryan Monett](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 5:31 PM

This is another extremely complex issue, so let's look at lobbying. To me, it is fairly wrong to have members of Congress with their pocketbooks aligned with anything to do with our national security interests. Their job (as we elected them to do) is to make and vote on laws. Not to cash in on wars, weapons and the like. It is important that their heads be for the American people rather than special interests and making money off the national defense. It's a conflict of interest, clearly.

If one were to ask a routine beat cop if they got payouts each time a taser gun was purchased across America or the World - don't you feel that we'd be outraged? *Because it would in affect alter how the officer used (and wanted to use) a taser.* Imagine if every cop had stock in bullets? Each time a bullet gets fired, they get a bump in their portfolio. Really? Obviously, this is a metaphorical example (but not far off) of what it sounds like is going on with Congress:

"151 members of Congress in 2006 had up to \$195.5 million of their personal assets invested in defense companies."

On another note, we saw in the video of President Obama discussing the NSA. It's important that we remember Mr. Escobar's statement in class: "Any country that cannot keep its citizens safe isn't a great country" (or something similar). This is true. People who argue about the NSA need to keep in mind something: *if you're not doing anything wrong, why are you worried?*

We know that we've been kept safe since 9/11 from a major terrorist attack. This is a complex issue, and we don't know just how many lives have been saved and from what type of potential attacks since 9/11. That's not in our hands, and I sleep better at night knowing I'm safe. As we do not see what comes across desks in Washington, it might just be best to live and let live.

--

Escobar, J. Class Lecture. Lane Community College

Video: Obama and the NSA

Quote: Forum 4 Materials

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Neo-conservative Obama?

by [Brayden Lane](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 5:59 PM

I personally don't think its a fair comparison because the lack of facts and more over generalizations about what he was going to do and did. For an example a quote given by the article was "The neo-conservatives, who dominated the most recent Bush administration, amplified this trend of increased military spending. The neo-cons laid out their agenda for military global dominance in the 2000 Project for a New American Century (PNAC) report Rebuilding America's Defenses." In this quote and many others he talks about past administrations such as Bush and Clinton increasing government spending on military and gives very little detail about Obama and says what he plans to do not has done. A second quote I found interesting was "Barack Obama's election brought a moment of hope for many. However, the Obama administration is not calling for decreased military spending, or a reversal of US military global dominance. Instead, Obama retained Robert Gates, thus making Obama the first president from an opposing party, in US history, to keep in place the outgoing administrations' Secretary of Defense/War." As it turned out during his administration Obama had Robert Gates until 2011 under him and then for the rest of his time in office had 3 more secretary of defenses in which 2 of 3 were democratic. The article to me also reveals how little our foreign policy has changed from president to president. In which we have stayed constantly pumping money into war efforts over seas in which both democratic and republican parties take place in. One quote I do find to be true is "The US military industrial complex is deeply embedded inside the Washington beltway." Which increases my belief that the U.S foreign policy has changed minimal overtime.

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Re: Neo-conservative Obama?
by [Sidney Axtell](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 9:00 PM

I agree with everything you've discussed. United States foreign policy has changed very dramatically between each president throughout the years. The article you mentioned was spot on when it came to our country's history. Although Americans always pay attention to the advice of their revered founder, the world's most definitely not the same anymore. The large amount of people that shape American foreign policy today have accepted the fact that the United States is a member of a world community. Thus, we can't ignore and avoid the importance of getting along. According to another article, it discussed how "Obama had taken on a number of major foreign-policy initiatives, including a renewed troop surge in Afghanistan, the negotiation of the New START nuclear arms reduction treaty with Russia, the NATO intervention in Libya, the withdrawal from Iraq, ongoing trade negotiations with China, and of course, the killing of al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden." (Barack Obama's Foreign Policy). This is current today because the fight over how much our country is willing to spend on military has been a large debate since President Trump's election. This quote is ironic now thinking about our countries current debates. "Barack Obama's election brought a moment of hope for many. However, the Obama administration is not calling for decreased military spending, or a reversal of US military global dominance. Instead, Obama retained Robert Gates, thus making Obama the first president from an opposing party, in US history, to keep in place the outgoing administrations' Secretary of Defense/War."

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Military-Industrial Complex is Complex
by [Maximillian Prentice](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 7:56 PM

I do find it interesting the Eisenhower speaks so gravely about a military-industrial complex and he was also an overseer of a peacetime military build-up. I think, regardless of that, Eisenhower's warning was very valid. The United States has a massive defense budget that has only continued to grow since WWII and all that money has to go somewhere; that somewhere is directly to the arms manufactures. I never knew that companies like Ford and General Motors produced arms during wartime. That process of arms production makes more sense to me. It acts as a boost to companies that are already a big part of the national economy, as well as meets the needs of the armed services.

I think that once the army reaches a certain size though, it creates a need for a specialized sector of business. Especially when the United States is fighting wars that last as long as the war on terror. The fact that "Clinton's model of supporting the US military-industrial complex held steady defense spending and increased foreign weapons sales from 16% of global orders to over 63% by the end of his administration" (Phillips) is also a contributing factor. But as the text book offers, "successful candidates must never appear 'soft' on national security issues" (890, Text).

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Re: Military-Industrial Complex
by [Sebastian Garcin](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 11:35 PM

I think it is pretty fair to say that the United States position against most forms of government that aren't based on democracy. As shown throughout our history class the United States has always leaned more to the radical rights than the radical left. While we aren't so anti-communist specifically anymore, we are still anti dictator, Rogue agents, and corrupt leaders. There are of course some exceptions to this like the younger Generations calling for communism to take over the US and such but overall we are still against it. Our Cold War against communism has been replaced by the war against terrorists

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