Omolade Mitchel Omokorede

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peace and conflict studies\

pcs 312: the military and new technologies.

Question: discuss the fear of Dwight Eisenhower and the reality of his fear in the industrialization of warfare in the 20th and 21st centuries.

INTRODUCTION   
The military industrial complex (MIC) is an informal alliance between a nation's military and the defense industry that supplies it, seen together as a vested interest which influences public policy. The term is most often used in reference to the system behind the military of the United States, where it is most prevalent due to close links between defense contractors, the Pentagon and politicians and gained popularity after a warning on its detrimental effects in the farewell address of President Dwight D. Eisenhower on January 17, 1961. Despite his military background and being the only general to be elected president in the 20th century, he warned the nation regarding the corrupting influence of what he describes as the "military-industrial complex". Until the latest of our world conflicts, the United States had no armaments industry. He also expressed his concomitant concern for corruption of the scientific process as part of this centralization of funding in the Federal government, and vice-versa: His remarks, issued during a televised farewell address to the American people, were particularly significant since Ike had famously served the nation as military commander of the Allied forces during WWII. Eisenhower urged his successors to strike a balance between a strong national defense and diplomacy in dealing with the Soviet Union. He did not suggest arms reduction and in fact acknowledged that the bomb was an effective deterrent to nuclear war. However, KNOWING THAT that America’s peacetime defense policy had changed drastically since his military career, Eisenhower expressed concerns about the growing influence of what he termed the military-industrial complex. Before and during the Second World War, American industries had successfully converted to defense production as the crisis demanded, but out of the war, what Eisenhower called a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions emerged. This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience Eisenhower warned, "[while] we recognize the imperative need for this development...We must not fail to comprehend its grave implications we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence…The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist." Eisenhower cautioned that the federal government’s collaboration with an alliance of military and industrial leaders, though necessary, was vulnerable to abuse of power. Ike then counseled American citizens to be vigilant in monitoring the military-industrial complex. Ike also recommended restraint in consumer habits, particularly with regard to the environment. "As we peer into society’s future, we–you and I, and our government–must avoid the impulse to live only for today, plundering, for our own ease and convenience, the precious resources of tomorrow," he said. "We cannot mortgage the material assets of our grandchildren without asking the loss also of their political and spiritual heritage."