

English for Critical Thinkers



Eisenhower's Warning

Lesson Information

The Military-Industrial Complex is a phrase used to describe the comfortable relationship that exists between parties that are charged to manage wars (the military, the presidential administration and congress), and those companies that produce weapons, equipment and supplies for war (industry).

The term came into the public's general lexicon, following its introduction by President Eisenhower in his "Farewell Address" on 19 January 1961. Eisenhower originally used *Military-Industrial-Congressional* Complex.

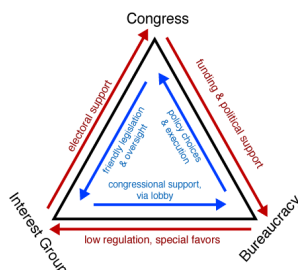
Topic:	Military-Industrial Complex
Tasks:	Video, error correction, discussion and writing a text reacting to an opinion.
Level:	CEF level B2-C1
Timing:	Depends on you.
Learner type:	Older teens & adults
Can-do's:	Can explain what the Military-Industrial Complex is, its consequences and our options. Can listen to an extract from a US President's speech and correct errors in the text. Can write a text responding to an opinion of Noam Chomsky.
Material:	1 copy of worksheets 1 & 2 per student.
Equipment:	Computer, internet connection, projector, media player. Of course, you can capture the video and play it offline.
Web Source:	The video clip used in this lesson can be found on YouTube at the following address: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8y06NSBBRtY

Further Resources:

- Eisenhower's 1961 [Farewell Address in full](#).
- An interesting website located at www.militaryindustrialcomplex.com.
- The [Wikipedia](#) and [Simple English Wikipedia](#) entries on the Military-Industrial Complex.
- The [Wikipedia](#) and [Simple English Wikipedia](#) entries on Dwight D. Eisenhower.
- An article in the British newspaper the Telegraph; [Ike was right all along: The danger of the military-industrial complex](#).
- The [Wikipedia](#) entry on The Iron Triangle.

Teacher's Notes

1. **Newspaper Headline.** Students discuss the newspaper headline from the image on the title page of this lesson; [project](#), dictate or write it on the whiteboard. Ask the students to consider specifically what threat Eisenhower was referring to? How could the defence industry threaten liberty?
2. **Brainstorm.** On the whiteboard write *The Iron Triangle*. Ask the students to brainstorm ideas for 2 minutes of what they think it refers to. Elicit ideas onto the whiteboard. Accept all ideas at this point.
3. **Image.** Project this image or hand out copies for students to study closer. The image can be found [here](#).



This image is a visual representation of the concept of The Iron Triangle. There are 3 main protagonists: an Interest Group (eg Banks, big corporations), the Congress and the Bureaucracy (aka the Administration aka the Government).

As you can see, there are a series of symbiotic relationships between the 3 groups.

One of those relationships is known as the military-industrial complex. That is to say, the relationship between the people who plan/manage/execute military actions, and those companies that produce supplies for them. The central concept of an iron triangle is the assumption that bureaucratic agencies, as political entities, seek to create and consolidate their own power base.

4. **Worksheet 1.** Video. Hand out copies to each student. Give the students 5-10 minutes to match the vocabulary with the definitions (question 1) and compare with a partner. Correct the vocabulary before the next activity.

Once the vocabulary matching activity has been corrected, tell the students they are going to watch an extract from a speech given by President Eisenhower in 1961. However, before the students watch the video give them 10 minutes to try and identify the 12 vocabulary errors. Play the video a couple of times to check their answers and find the rest of the errors.

Students can discuss the questions in the last activity (question 3) in pairs or in groups of 4. Feedback some of the ideas generated back to the group.

Answers.

Question 1

1-c 2-e 3-f 4-a 5-g 6-h 7-b 8-d

Question 2

See the [last page of this lesson plan](#) for the correct text with the errors highlighted in bold.

5. **Worksheet 2.** Writing. This can be done in class or for homework. Alternatively, use the Noam Chomsky text to drive a discussion with the students, using the discussion to generate ideas for the writing. The students make notes/plan in class and finish for homework.
6. **Follow Up.** Direct your students to visit these websites for more information or just take a look yourself: An article in the British newspaper the Telegraph; [like was right all along: The danger of the military-industrial complex](#).

Worksheet 1: Video

1. Match the vocabulary (1-8) with the definitions (a-h).

Vocabulary	Definition
1. Toil	a. A point half the distance along something such as a line
2. Take st/so for granted	b. Extremely big
3. Immense	c. Hard work, especially work which makes you feel physically tired
4. The midpoint	d. The way someone earns the money people need to pay for food, a place to live, clothing, etc
5. Unwarranted	e. Not appreciate something or someone.
6. Meshing	f. Extremely large in size or degree.
7. Vast	g. Not having a good reason and therefore annoying or unfair
8. Livelihood	h. When different things or people combine, and they suit each other or work well together

2. You are going to watch a video of former US President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Below is an extract from his farewell speech, given on 19th January 1961. There are 12 vocabulary errors in the text. Before you watch the video, read the text. Try to find the errors and correct them.

(Ladies & gentlemen, the President of the United States)

“Good evening my fellow Armenians. *Americans*

We now stand twenty years past the midpoint of a century that has witnessed fourteen major wars among great nations.

Until the latest of our world conflicts, the United States had an enormous armaments industry. American makers of plowshares could, with time and as required, make swords as well.

But now we can no longer risk emergency improvisation of national defense; we have been compelled to create a temporary armaments industry of miniscule proportions. Added to this, three and a half million men and women are directly engaged in the defense establishment.

This separation of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is old news in the American experience. The total influence - economic, political, even spiritual - is felt in every city, every State house, every office of the Federal government.

We recognise the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its minor implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society.

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.

We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted.

Only a distracted and unknowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together.”

3. Discuss.

1. Why do we need an arms industry?
2. How could the Military-Industrial Complex be a danger to the democratic process?
3. How can we protect ourselves from such dangers?
4. Can you have security and liberty together?
5. How influential is Big Business on government policy making?
6. Can you think of any other *Complexes*?

The correct text.

(Ladies & gentlemen, the President of the United States)

Good evening my fellow Americans.

We now stand ten years past the midpoint of a century that has witnessed four major wars among great nations.

Until the latest of our world conflicts, the United States had no armaments industry. American makers of plowshares could, with time and as required, make swords as well.

But now we can no longer risk emergency improvisation of national defense; we have been compelled to create a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions. Added to this, three and a half million men and women are directly engaged in the defense establishment.

This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence - economic, political, even spiritual - is felt in every city, every State house, every office of the Federal government.

We recognise the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society.

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.

We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted.

Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together.”