

Moos Recalls Idea For Eisenhower's Militarism Phase

By Robert J. Donovan

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As demonstrated in the ABM debate and in the rising criticism of U.S. "militarism," Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower's warning against "the military-industrial complex" still touches a live nerve in politics and in the American conscience.

With the passage of time this warning, sounded in his farewell address of Jan. 17, 1961, has become his most memorable utterance as President.

It is the most quoted line he ever delivered. It has aroused interest throughout the world. Long after he left office Gen. Eisenhower remembered it with pride.

Nevertheless, neither the idea of uttering the warning nor the use of the phrase "military-industrial complex" originated with him.

Both the words and the idea came from Dr. Malcolm C. Moos, who is now president of the University of Minnesota and who was formerly President Eisenhower's speech writer in the White House. The following is an account of what happened, based on an interview with Moos:

One day in the fall of 1958 Moos, a political scientist and historian who had come to the White House from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, was showing President Eisenhower a book on great presidential decisions and speeches.

Included was George Washington's Farewell Address. The President was fascinated to hear Moos say that many historians believed Alexander Hamilton had ghosted the speech for Washington.

"I hope you'll be thinking about this," Gen. Eisenhower said, as Moos recalls his words.

He told Moos he hoped that on leaving office two years hence he could, as

Moos recalls his words, "say something significant."

Accordingly, Moos set up a separate file of items and ideas for a farewell message.

In those years he was familiar with the concern felt by educators over large Federal grants to universities for research. Johns Hopkins was a striking case in point. A large part of its budget came from Federal research grants.

What educators feared then, and still do, was that such grants might give the Government an influence on the campus that might threaten freedom of education.

Moos' office at the White House used to receive copies of magazines from the aerospace industry, the airplane industry and other industries doing a huge business with the Pentagon.

Moos, who continued at that time to lecture at Johns Hopkins, encouraged a student to write a doctoral dissertation about the military officers who retired in the prime of life and became officials of industries doing business with the Pentagon.

This was, of course, an element in the problem of a military-industrial complex.

"I don't know how I hit upon that phrase," Moos said. "I can't remember."

He said he may have read it somewhere. Yet, after the phrase became famous in later years, the Library of Congress, he said, was unable to find any previous reference to it.

In any case he thought the problem was one that the retiring President might wish to speak out upon.

The passage about the "military-industrial complex," therefore, was included in the draft of the speech he handed to Gen.

Eisenhower shortly after John F. Kennedy defeated Richard M. Nixon in the election of November, 1960.

"Ike liked the speech," Moos recalled. "He said, 'I think you have got something here, Malcolm.'"

"Something He Wanted"

"I was never sure about how he felt about speech drafts . . . On this one, though, I thought I could see that here was something he wanted, and profoundly wanted to say it. He said, 'Let's get Milton over and get going on this.'"

He was referring to his brother, Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower, then president of Johns Hopkins, with whom he often discussed important decisions.

When the speech was in final form, Moos and certain others suggested that the President deliver it before Congress. But Gen. Eisenhower preferred to speak from his office over television.

Three days before Kennedy was inaugurated, Gen. Eisenhower gave the people his farewell message. The celebrated passage, not much changed from the original draft, as Moos recalls, was as follows:

"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."

These words have been reverberating ever since as the country has once more increased its military power for the Vietnam war.

To many Americans the military-industrial complex is a source of deep concern. There is widespread anxiety that its influence—brought to bear on the appropriations mechanism in Con-

press—may thwart the will
of the majority, particularly
the matter of diverting
greater resources from mili-
tary to social purposes.

Unquestionably, a great
national debate has been
on the problem that was the
heart of President Eisen-
hower's fiscal program.