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“Fear of A ‘Scientific-Technological Elite:’ Contemporary Concerns in Light of Eisenhower’s Initial Conception – A Useful Heuristic or Obfuscating Rhetorical Device?”

Michael Schaefer

U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s January 17, 1961 farewell address to the nation is mostly widely known for the former president’s warning of “the unwarranted influence...[of] the *military-industrial complex*” (hereafter MIC). However, a “less-widely known, seldom quoted, and often poorly understood” – one could add academically under-analyzed - of Eisenhower’s critical phrases from the same speech is “the danger that public policy could itself become the captive of a *scientific-technological elite* (hereafter “STE”).”<sup>1</sup> This phrase has regained salience in the United States over last few years among a sociopolitical community critical of government COVID-19 protocols, Big Tech censorship, and centralized, top-down, elite-driven “public-private partnership” solutions to global concerns. Historical analysis will demonstrate Eisenhower’s conception of the STE was quite narrow and limited, and this myopia – whether accidental or intentional - lead to a distorted view of who had captured public policy. A review of the literature produced by contemporary critics of technocracy will show these critics have a broader understanding of the problem than did Eisenhower. These critics do not share a common political ideology, but, through the application of power structure analysis, this diverse lot of critics can come to a common understanding of the “STE threat,” avoid blind alleys of idealism and conspiracism, and, perhaps, forge a political coalition to confront it. Through reflection on this critical, historical phrase and its contemporary deployment, the author hopes to aid conference attendees and the general public to “identify and account for the connections between two emerging contemporary themes...the elite public-private ‘superclass’” with its

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<sup>1</sup> York, Herbert F., *Race to Oblivion: A participant's view of the arms race*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970, 9.

“unprecedentedly vast economic...social, political and economic influence” and “the rise of a system called technocracy.”<sup>2</sup>

To understand what President Eisenhower meant by “the scientific-technological elite,” it is necessary to consider Eisenhower as a speechmaker. Many scholars have pointed out Eisenhower’s faith in the power of words, having been a speechwriter for the Assistant Secretary of War Frederick Huff Payne from 1929-1932 and for General Douglas MacArthur in the 1930s. “Eisenhower understood the importance of language and took great pains to ensure that the words he delivered would convey precisely his intended meaning,” according to Richard V. Damms.<sup>3</sup> Eisenhower’s rhetorical style conveyed “commonality, dedication, considerateness, humility, and a special sort of moral vision” according to Martin J. Medhurst, the foremost author on Eisenhower’s speechmaking.<sup>4</sup> His home-spun style, however, concealed “a shrewd rhetorical strategist and tactician” who was willing to deploy “psychological warfare, black propaganda, and deception” against the enemy during wartime. “Eisenhower understood the nature of war was rhetorical...in which the battlefield was in the hearts and minds of the people, both in America and throughout the world.”<sup>5</sup>

Eisenhower was not the primary author of the Farewell Address, but it should be understood as reflecting his sentiments. His chief speechwriter at the time was Malcolm Moos, who had joined the White House staff as a special assistant in 1957 but became Ike’s chief speechwriter in the fall of 1958 after Arthur Larson left that role for an appointment at Duke

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<sup>2</sup> Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora, “The Rise of the Digital Technocracy” international conference website, <https://digitaltechnocracy.uj.edu.pl/>.

<sup>3</sup> “Eisenhower’s Farewell Address in history and memory,” in Michael Patrick Cullinane and Sylvia Ellis, eds., *Constructing Presidential Legacy: How We Remember the American President* (Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 77.

<sup>4</sup> *Dwight D. Eisenhower: Strategic communicator* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993) 5.

<sup>5</sup> Op. cit, xi; *Eisenhower’s War of Words: Rhetoric and leadership*. Martin J. Medhurst, ed. (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1994), 1.

University Law School. Prior to working at the White House, Moos was a professor of Political Science at Johns Hopkins University. Moos was a liberal Republican; although he championed Ike in 1956 during a debate against Arthur Schlesinger at the DC-area journalists' Gridiron Club, he acknowledged his politics were closer to Ike's Democratic rival, Adlai Stevenson, who campaigned on extending New Deal programs into education, health, and poverty, an international ban to aboveground nuclear weapons tests, and for an end to the military draft.<sup>6</sup>

Moos was assisted by Ike's brother, Milton Eisenhower, who, despite only possessing a bachelor's degree in industrial journalism, was then President of Johns Hopkins University. Prior to that role, Milton was a spokesman for the New Deal until 1941 under Henry A. Wallace, then Secretary of Agriculture but would later serve as FDR's second Vice President and then as nominee of the new Progressive Party in the 1948; the War Relocation Authority, where he resisted and attempted to reform the mass detainment of and property seizure from Japanese Americans from which he resigned under protest after only ninety days; the associate director of the Office of War Information from June 1942 to mid-1943, where he left to become President of Kansas State University and then Pennsylvania State University. Milton made significant edits to Moos' second draft of the farewell address.

The final hand in the speech was Captain Ralph E. Williams, Jr., a graduate of the University of Texas-Austin, who joined the Navy in 1941 and served as a member of Dwight D. Eisenhower's White House staff as assistant to Eisenhower's Naval aide, Captain Evan P. Aurand, from 1958 to 1961. He volunteered to assist Moos who approved, as William had won the Naval Institute's Prize Essay Contest five times, and Moos had no military experience.<sup>7</sup> Many historians have assumed that Moos invented the MIC phrase, but an interview with Williams by the Columbia Oral History Project made it clear that Williams was responsible for it. In the same

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<sup>6</sup> Oral History Interview of Malcolm Moos by T. H. Baker, November 2, 1972, Box X, DDE Diaries Series, Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower as President, 1953-61, Eisenhower Presidential Library. OH-260.

<sup>7</sup> Stephen Hess, "Eisenhower's farewell addresses: A speechwriter remembers," *Brookings*, January 9, 2017 <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/eisenhowers-farewell-addresses-a-speechwriter-remembers/>. Hess was also one of Eisenhower's speech writers at this time, and Williams has speculated that Hess was involved, but Hess says his contribution was early on and minimal.

interview, though, he made it clear that, when it came to draft speeches from his writers, Ike would:

find some things that he would throw out and others ideas he would think about, and he would scribble them into the marginal notes. He'd call Ann Whiteman [DDE's secretary] and he'd dictate maybe two or three pages of new material.... He would edit – not only the textual and substantive material – but he would fiddle with words...And, so, draft by draft, it literally became his very own speech from beginning to end.<sup>8</sup>

Stephen Hess, who was also a speechwriter for Eisenhower at the time but who did not work on the Farewell Address, confirms Eisenhower's heavy role in the crafting of his speeches.

According to Hess, Ike's speechwriters were not allowed to claim credit for any part of a speech; "this meant that all words were the President's."<sup>9</sup>

Although we now know Williams formulated the MIC phrase, responsibility for "the scientific-technological elite" phrase has remained unclear. A reexamination of drafts, memos, and letters at the Eisenhower Library can provide a clearer picture of the various iterations of this section and who made that precise word choice, but it is important to note that there was consensus among the authors on it. As Williams stated in his letter to the Martin M. Teasley, then Assistant Director of the Eisenhower Library:

I'm sure the President never thought about either the phrase or the concept itself until Mac Moos put the first draft under his nose. I am equally sure, for reasons too lengthy to go into here, that it struck a responsive chord in his breast. Ike may not always have said the right things, but he never ever put anything into a formal speech that he didn't believe and fully intend to say, as the few hacked-up drafts you have amply testify.<sup>10</sup>

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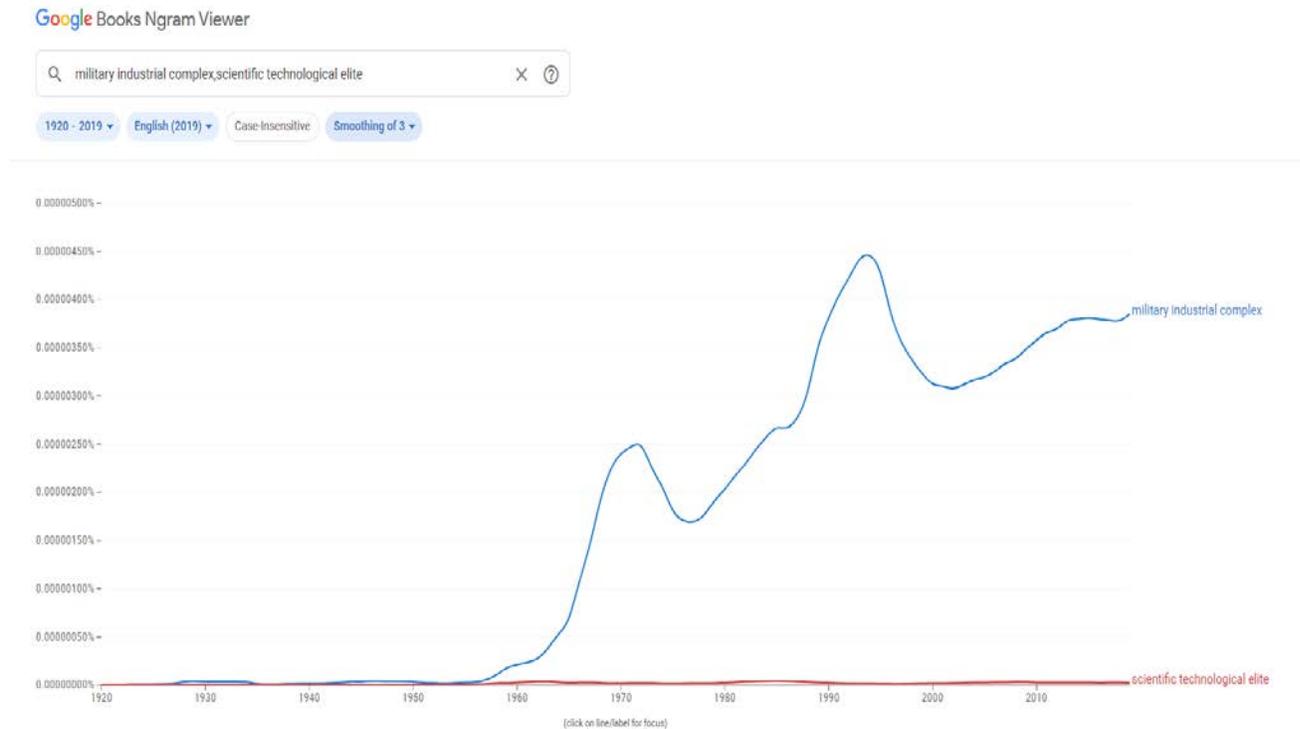
<sup>8</sup> Interview with Captain Ralph Williams by James Leyerzapf, Eisenhower Library Oral History Project, June 3, 1988, <https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/research/oral-histories/oral-history-transcripts/williams-ralph-503.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Stephen Hess, Eisenhower's farewell addresses: A speechwriter remembers," Brookings Institution website, January 9, 2017, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/eisenhowers-farewell-addresses-a-speechwriter-remembers/>.

<sup>10</sup> Letter from Ralph Williams to Martin Teasley regarding origin of term "military-industrial complex," December 28, 1985. DDE Library, Ralph E. Williams Papers, Box 1, Letters 1985-1988; NAID #16972138, <https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/research/online-documents/farewell-address/1985-12-28-williams-to-teasley.pdf>.

Whoever coined the STE phrase – Dwight or Milton Eisenhower, Moos or Williams – it should be understood as consistent with the president’s perspective. A careful combing through the Farewell Address’s various drafts will reveal a critical change of phrasing in the section on the postwar revolution in military technology can be understood as a rhetorical slight-of-hand; one which shifted the audience’s attention away from a greater “captor of public policy” and towards a less significant threat. Only proper historical contextualization of Eisenhower’s use of this term within his own political assumptions and experience as president can determine whether current critics of creeping digital technocracy have the same assumptions as Eisenhower or simply find, in turn, the phrase to be a useful rhetorical device.

Before one surveys historical works reflecting upon the Eisenhower presidency and his use of this ponderous phrase, it is useful to take an impressionistic view of the valence of the term “scientific-technological elite” in comparison to its associated phrase, “military-industrial complex.” One way to gauge the relative interest in these terms over time is to perform a Google n-gram search. This operation searches a corpus of texts scanned by Google; though vast, there are limitations to this as a method. Nonetheless, it gives us a snapshot:



**Figure 1: Screenshot of the tool from Google Ngram site, <https://books.google.com/ngrams>**

It is obvious from this line graph that the phrase “military-industrial complex” far outstrips “scientific-technological elite” in print discourse represented within the N-gram’s corpora, so much so that the later term barely appears. Similar comparisons can be made from searching academic databases which are primarily populated by academic journal articles but also contain books and some popular literature. A search of Google Scholar produces 67,300 hits for the term “military-industrial complex;” the term “scientific-technological elite” produces only 752. Similarly, a JSTOR search produce 10,851 for MIC but only 134 for STE. The results of this surface exploration are echoed in the historical literature.

A thorough examination of the historical literature on the Eisenhower presidency also reflects a greater interest with Eisenhower’s use of MIC over STE. Ralph Williams compared the two in a 1985 letter to Martin Teasley, then Assistant Director of Eisenhower’s Presidential Library: whereas the news media had “gleefully gnawed” on the MIC phrase in the twenty-five

years between when it was spoken and their interview, STE is “about as well-remembered as Edward Everett’s Gettysburg Speech.”<sup>11</sup> No historians have plumbed Eisenhower’s use of the STE phrase in-depth, even those who have focused upon the farewell address, although those who have focused on Eisenhower and science policy have provided more useful insights into what Eisenhower meant by the phrase. When STE is mentioned, it is typically conflated with or subsumed under the mantle of MIC. Primary source documents around the address make this conflation understandable: when Eisenhower and his speechwriters were asked on a few occasions to clarify what they meant by STE, not only were their explanations terse, the term only became further entangled and associated with the MIC; little to nothing was said about STE by the men who coined and delivered it as a distinct phenomenon. This is also the case because both concepts, particularly the STE, were nascent ones to the men who crafted the phrase; it felt right to Ike, it sounded right to his speechwriters, but, despite the political weight of these terms, they were conceptually underdeveloped in the minds of those who wrote and deployed them. A particularly critical phrase in the farewell address - “akin to” - is the transition phrase from discussion of the MIC to the STE, and has been overlooked: in what way was (or, presently, is) the STE related to the MIC? Is the STE wholly within the MIC? Are the STE particularly authoritative lobbyists for industries other than those with military contracts? Are they a threat to public deliberation due to their rarified expertise? What are the potential implications of the rapid expansion of federal funding for science? Eisenhower said: “the prospect of domination of the nation's scholars by Federal employment...and the power of money is ever present and is gravely

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<sup>11</sup> Letter from Ralph Williams to Martin Teasley, previously cited. Everett was a retired politician, minister, teacher, and diplomat who spoke for two hours prior to Lincoln’s two-minute address. He is not widely remembered; this author was entirely unfamiliar with Everett until he read this interview with Williams.

to be regarded,” yet historians have made little effort to interrogate or contextualize this part of the farewell address.

Historians of the Eisenhower administration writ large and biographers of Eisenhower have shown little interest in this provocative phrase. The first post-presidential, collective reflection of Eisenhower’s tenure included journalists, historians, and administration insiders, and all essays were previously published between 1955 and 1961. While this collection of essays, edited by Dean Anderson, renowned American historian and developer of the Presidential Oral History Project at Columbia University, includes the full text of Ike’s farewell address in the appendix, no comment was made upon it by any of the ten authors.<sup>12</sup> Charles C. Alexander (Ohio University) makes two references to the MIC in his history of the Eisenhower administration but no references to the STE.<sup>13</sup> Likewise with Chester J. Pach, Jr. (Ohio University), Elmo Richardson (Washington State University), Blanche Weisen Cook (City University of New York) and Piers Brendon (Cambridge).<sup>14</sup> Pach, in his introduction to the volume he edited, referenced the Farewell Address as Eisenhower’s most eloquent speech, highlighted the MIC phrase, and used excerpts to describe the STE but without naming it. On the following page, he cited recent invocations of the MIC, but he did not similarly discuss the STE.<sup>15</sup> William L. Hitchcock (University of Virginia) addressed the crafting of the farewell address and the MIC theme but did not reflect upon the STE.<sup>16</sup> Fred Greenstein (Princeton) revised historical understanding of Eisenhower’s leadership style by demonstrating Ike was much more hands-on with policymaking

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<sup>12</sup> *Eisenhower as President*. Dean Albertson, ed. New York: Hill & Wang, 1963.

<sup>13</sup> Alexander, Charles C. *Holding the line: The Eisenhower era, 1952-1961*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975.

<sup>14</sup> Pach, Jr., Chester J. & Richardson, Elmo. *The presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1979, 1991; Cook, Blanche Wiesen. *The Declassified Eisenhower: A divided legacy*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981; Brendon, Piers. *Ike: His life and times*. New York: Harper & Row, 1986.

<sup>15</sup> *A Companion to Dwight D. Eisenhower*. Chester J. Pach, ed. Chichester, England: Wiley Blackwell, 2017.

<sup>16</sup> Hitchcock, William I. *The Age of Eisenhower: America and the world in the 1950s*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018.

and party leadership than he was dull, delegating, and unengaged. However, Greenstein included no references to the farewell address at all.<sup>17</sup> Neither did any of the twenty-four presenters at the Proceedings of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Conference, held at Hofstra University, nor did professionally-educated, popular author Geoffrey Perret.<sup>18</sup>

Eminent and popular U.S. historian, Stephen E. Ambrose (University of New Orleans), authored five volumes on Eisenhower and served as an associate editor of Eisenhower's papers.<sup>19</sup> In the second volume of his biography of Ike, Ambrose let Eisenhower do the explaining of his use of the phrase "military-industrial complex" by stringing together pieces of his farewell address. And, while Ambrose then wrote, "Eisenhower next spoke of another great change...[and] issued a second warning, not so remembered later as the was the military-industrial complex phrase, but equally prophetic," he did not use the phrase "scientific-technological elite" as he did for the MIC. While limiting himself to the text of the Farewell Address to describe this unnamed threat, he did *not* include the phrase indicating "public policy could itself become the captive of" this group.<sup>20</sup> Of the fifteen authors who contributed to volume Ambrose edited with Günter Bischof (University of New Orleans), only two referenced the farewell address and the MIC but none raised discussion of the STE.<sup>21</sup> At least Louis Galambos (Johns Hopkins) was bold enough to claim the STE "buttressed the MIC and

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<sup>17</sup> Greenstein, Fred I. *The Hidden-hand presidency: Eisenhower as leader*. New York: Basic Books, 1982.

<sup>18</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower Conference. Hofstra University, 29-31 March 1984. Published as *Dwight D. Eisenhower: Soldier, president, statesman*. Greenwood Press, New York, 1987; Perret, Geoffrey. *Eisenhower*. Random House, New York, 1999.

<sup>19</sup> Ambrose, Stephen E. *Eisenhower and Berlin; The decision to halt at the Elbe*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1967; *The Supreme Commander: The war years of General Dwight D. Eisenhower*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970; *Ike's Spies: Eisenhower and the espionage establishment*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981; *Eisenhower: Soldier, general of the army, President-elect, 1890-1952* (vol 1) and *The President* (vol. 2). New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983-1984, and Eisenhower, Dwight D. (Dwight David), 1890-1969. *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*. Alfred D. Chandler, Jr. & Stephen E. Ambrose, eds. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970-2001.

<sup>20</sup> Ambrose, *Eisenhower: The President*, 612-613.

<sup>21</sup> *Eisenhower: A centenary assessment*. Günter Bischof & Stephen E. Ambrose, eds. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, c1995.

threatened to warp the countries universities and public policies” but does not provide further explanation nor documentation to that end.<sup>22</sup>

Only those scholars who have specifically focused their works on the farewell address or Eisenhower’s scientific challenges and policies have shed any light on what Eisenhower and his speechwriting team meant by the STE. Journalist Brett Baier focused Ike’s actions in his last days in office and devoted a chapter to the farewell address. Regarding the STE, he, like Galambos, suggested that the STE existed in the shadow of the MIC: “domination of *military* pursuits in the awarding of federal and private grants for scientific research - massive funding outlays that made the federal government and its *military* interests the de facto shaper of the knowledge industry.”<sup>23</sup> Baier’s greatest contribution to our understanding of STE was his use of an interview of Malcolm Moos by T.H. Baker on November 2, 1972, as part of the Columbia University Oral History Project. This interview was under embargo until January 21, 1995 by Columbia University and the Eisenhower Library, as Moos had not reviewed it for accuracy; it became available to researchers thirteen years after Moos’ death. While Baier summarized Moos’ reflections, it is worth reading Moos’ own words and his analysis of the three, fundamental experiences which gave rise to his formulation of the term “military-industrial complex:”

“[1] Naval attache Peter Aurand...[would] bring in these aerospace journals...it’s astounding and see some 25,000 different kinds of related companies in this thing. [2] Also, I had a student who was working on a study that I’d suggested on the number of people that were retiring from the armed forces at relatively young age...and becoming directors of industries, aerospace industries particularly...from the Air Force, the Navy, the Army. And a [3] third leg of the tripod, really, is the domination really [sic] of so much inquiry and research, scientific research and university life, by federal grants and research, by federal

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<sup>22</sup> Galambos, Louis. *Eisenhower: Becoming the leader of the free world*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018, 207-8.

<sup>23</sup> Baier, Bret. *Three days in January: Dwight Eisenhower's final mission*. New York, NY: William Morrow, 2017, 204.

grants and directing...and that this was a significant combination.” [numeration mine]<sup>24</sup>

Through this quote we see how the concept of MIC took shape in Moos’ mind and that the STE was one “leg.” The first leg encompassed two things: both the vast number of businesses that were involved in military contracting and the marketing of military images in professional journals; Ike would make reference to such ads in popular media. The second leg is what is now referred to as “the revolving door” between government – in this case, the U.S. military – weapons contractors, lobbying, and industry-funded think tanks. Although, he did not stress the term “military” when speaking of those federal grants, it is clear, given that Moos was asked to and was describing the MIC, it is not an extreme conclusion to see what force was “directing” scientists’ research.

These were Moos’ words. As we have seen, Eisenhower no doubt embraced Moos’ and his other speechwriters’ wording, but there is historical debate over what prompted Eisenhower to do so. Mississippi State University history professor, Richard V. Damms (Mississippi State University) has contributed more to our understanding of Eisenhower’s use of STE. As Damms indicated in the introduction, his work was authored to “fill a significant gap in the historiography of the Eisenhower era.”<sup>25</sup> According to Damms, there were a number of critical events that lead to Eisenhower’s fear of the STE: 1) the debate over J. Robert Oppenheimer’s security clearance in 1954; 2) the Technological Capabilities Panel (TCP) exercise of 1954—55; 3), the proposal for the Air Nuclear Propulsion program advocated by the Air Force, the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, and the aerospace industry (1957-1960); 4) the Soviets launching

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<sup>24</sup> Moos, Malcolm. Columbia University Oral History Project, interview by T.H. Baker, November 2, 1972 [Opened for research, 21 January 1995], Box 260, Oral History Series, Eisenhower Presidential Library, 34.

<sup>25</sup> Damms, Richard V. *Scientists and Statesmen: Eisenhower’s Science Advisers and National Security Policy*. Dordrecht, Netherlands; St. Louis, MO: Republic of Letters, 2015, 3-4. This text is a rare find: it is currently available in only two U.S. libraries - Harvard University and the Damms’s employer and is out of print.

of Sputnik on October 4, 1957 and the subsequent Gaither Report, and 5) the debate within his administration over arms control and nuclear test bans. The odd thing about these events in relation to Eisenhower's STE warning is that Ike appears to have won all in his struggles with his scientific advisors. While Ike did not consider Oppenheimer disloyal, he did question his influence over other scientists regarding policy considerations (Oppenheimer opposed the development of the hydrogen bomb and wanted complete public transparency over the scope of U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile). Eisenhower thought scientists should only provide technical and not policy advice, and so he allowed Lewis L. Strauss, Special Assistant to Atomic Energy Affairs and a Wall Street financier, to proceed with his campaign to remove Oppenheimer's security clearance, a process that lasted from December 1953 to June 1954, and who he congratulated for the way in which he handled this "most delicate situation." The whole affair demoralized many of the top scientists, who felt there was too much emphasis on internal security.

Partially overlapping in time with the Oppenheimer affair was the Technological Capabilities Panel (TCP) exercise, also known as the Killian Committee. Given growing concerns within the U.S. intelligence agencies about the Soviet Union's ICBM program and interservice competition over the defense budget, Eisenhower agreed to the proposal from Lee DuBridge, chairman of the Office of Defense Mobilization's Science Advisory Committee (SAC-ODM), that James R. Killian, Jr., president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the nation's largest academic military contractor, should lead a team of scientists independent of existing agencies to produce a technological analysis of his national security programs with particular focus on how the U.S. could prepare against a surprise attack.<sup>26</sup> Eisenhower hoped

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<sup>26</sup> The Killian Committee consisted of 42 technologists led by: DuBridge; James B. Fisk, vice president of research at Bell Labs; James H. Doolittle, retired Air Force General and vice-president of Shell Oil; James P. Baxter, military

Killian and other scientists on the panel would overcome the clamor for more funds for potentially duplicative military systems from the various branches of the DoD by recommending a coherent and consistent application of existing budget outlays. The Committee presented its report, "Meeting the Threat of Surprise Attack," to the National Security Council on March 17, 1955. The report advocated rapid development of ICBM and IRBM missiles, early warning systems to prevent a surprise attack, and new aerial reconnaissance technologies. Eisenhower embraced the report; even though it meant spending a billion more dollars, the President was able to produce a balanced federal budget for 1957. The TCP experience, according to Damms, "had restored a sense of mutual respect between the administration and the nation's leading scientists" that had been lost by the Oppenheimer affair.<sup>27</sup>

Damms presented yet another situation in which Eisenhower successfully used scientists to limit an unnecessary military expenditure: the nuclear-powered aircraft (ANP). While the technology had not come far enough to put a reactor on an airplane, the prospect was enticing from a strategic point of view, because such a plane would not have to land to refuel. The aerospace industry (General Electric and Pratt & Whitney), the Air Force, and the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy were advocating a massive increase in research into a program which had been ongoing since 1946 but which had encountered numerous technical complications, most notably designing a reactor light enough for the plane to become airborne. To assess the value of increased investment in the program, Eisenhower once again called upon Killian to produce an independent study of its cost and strategic effectiveness. The panel convinced Eisenhower that the program would divert money and talent from other atomic

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historian; Robert C. Sprague, the founder and owner of an electronic components manufacturing company, teams from Los Alamos and Brookhaven national laboratories and the Polaroid Corporation. In 1957, SAC-ODM would be elevated to the President's Scientific Advisory Committee (PSAC).

<sup>27</sup> Damms, *Scientists and Statesmen*, 113.

programs. However, instead of terminating the program – which President Kennedy would do in March 1961 – the panel recommended a significantly lower amount of spending on it, a plan Eisenhower approved as a fiscal, strategic, and political consideration. Eisenhower had yet again successfully deployed “his scientists” against the military-industrial complex.<sup>28</sup>

Another episode Damms and other historians have suggested were influential upon on Ike’s perspective of the STE was the public wrangling over a National Security Council report, NSC 5724, “Deterrence and Survival in the Nuclear Age,” better known as the Gaither Report, named after the committee’s chairman, H. Rowan Gaither, Jr. The report was written by the Security Resources Panel of the Office of Defense Mobilization’s (ODM) Science Advisory Committee and submitted at a National Security Council meeting on November 7, 1957. The Soviets had announced they had launched Sputnik a week before the committee completed its report, which they presented to the President in one of the largest NSC meetings in history a month later. More than ninety advisors and staff contributed to the report - much larger than the TCP – and its leadership consisted of representatives from government, military, academia, think tanks, and businesses, many of which had military contracts.<sup>29</sup> The purpose of the panel was to

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<sup>28</sup> Damms, Richard V. Containing the Military-Industrial-Congressional Complex: President Eisenhower's Science Advisers and the case of the nuclear powered aircraft. *Essays in economic and business history: Selected papers from the Economic and Business Historical Society*. 14 (March 1996), 279-289.

<sup>29</sup> The Gaither Committee’s leadership consisted of Frank Stanton, the president of CBS; two prominent Republican financiers, Robert Lovett and John J. McCloy, Isador Rabi, a Manhattan Project physicist who served chaired the General Advisory Committee (GAC) of the Atomic Energy Commission (1952-1956); Ernest O. Lawrence, Manhattan Project physicist Lawrence who advocated for the development of the hydrogen bomb after the Soviet Union's first nuclear test in August 1949; Navy Admiral Robert C. Carney, who served as commander-in-chief of the NATO forces in Southern Europe (1951–1953) and then as Chief of Naval Operations (1953–1954), and later chairman of Bath Iron works; USAF General James H. Doolittle; James B. Fisk; Army General John E. Hull, Vice Chief of Staff of the United States Army; Mervin J. Kelly, director of research, president, and ultimately chairman of the board of Bell Labs, and James R. Killian, Jr. The directors were H. Rowan Gaither, chairman of the boards of the Ford Foundation and The RAND Corporation; Robert C. Sprague; William C. Foster, a former Deputy Secretary of Defense; James A. Perkins, deputy chairman of the Research and Development Board of the Department of Defense; and Jerome Weisner, a professor of electrical engineering at MIT's Research Laboratory of Electronics. Supplying additional technical competence for the panel were Robert C. Prim, engineer and mathematician at the United States Naval Ordnance Lab and Bell Labs; Hector R Skifter, Assistant Director of Defense Research and Engineering for the Department of Defense; and Robert Calkins, John J. Corson, and James Baxter, who provided social scientific,

investigate the value and importance of a federal bomb shelter program in comparison to and in the context of other civil defense proposals, but the Committee immediately expanded the scope of its inquiry to cover more military technologies than bomb shelters, because a number of its members, once exposed to classified DoD and CIA reports, came to believe “the top echelons of the government did not fully appreciate...the extent of the Soviet threat.”<sup>30</sup> One of its assumptions was “that USSR intentions are expansionist, and that her great efforts to build military power go beyond any concepts of Soviet defense.” Although the report concluded that a “nationwide fallout shelter program” was “likely to save more lives for the same money in the event of a nuclear attack,” its authors effectively argued “the best defense is a good offence” when they wrote: “the main protection of our civil population against a Soviet nuclear attack has been and will continue to be the deterrent power of our armed force.” The report not only called for a 50% increase in military spending over 1956 levels, but also a build-up and global deployment of IRBM and ICBMs, proliferation and strengthening of Strategic Air Command (SAC) stations, rapid expansion of the early warning system, greater “limited war” spending, but also for “an improved and expanded program for educating the public in current national defense problems” so that the American people “are informed of the nature and probable duration of the threat,” to reinforce their “will and capacity...to do...what is required of them,” because “the

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economic, and historical insights. Editorial Note, Document 155. Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955–1957, National Security Policy, Volume XIX - Office of the Historian, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v19/d155>

<sup>30</sup> While the report does not specify who in the “top echelons” of the Eisenhower administration the authors were referred to, those people likely had access to the same intelligence, so any difference in assessment of the Soviet threat seems to be subjective. For example, in a memo between Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, and Ike, Dulles says of the Gaither reports’ scenarios: “these possibilities were so remote in practice that I doubted whether we would be justified in going to the extremes in the way of cost that alertness would require...I said I considered that such an attack without provocation involving casualties of perhaps one hundred million would be so abhorrent to all who survived in any part of the world that I did not think that even rulers would dare to accept the consequences.” Memorandum of a Conversation Between the President and the Secretary of State. White House, Document 157, Washington, D.C., November 7, 1957. Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955–1957, National Security Policy, Volume XIX, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v19/d157>.

future United States depends heavily upon an informed and supporting public opinion.”

According to media reports, Ike was pleased with the report and desired to make many of their recommendations a reality, but he doubted the American public could bear the full cost increase.<sup>31</sup>

As an NSC document, it carried the warning: “special security precautions be observed in the handling of this Report, and that access to it be limited on a strict need-to-know basis.” Despite this warning, someone(s) in-the-know - likely individuals from within the committee - began to feed information to the press. The *New York Herald Tribune* published a detailed description of the report on November 23, 1957; the *Washington Post* and *Times Herald* ran a story containing even more details on December 20<sup>th</sup> of the same year. This led to Congressional hearings and major newspaper editorials calling for the publishing of a “sanitized” version of the report.<sup>32</sup>

Not long after Eisenhower left office, Morton Halperin, who would later serve in the Johnson, Nixon, Clinton, and Obama administrations, then a research associate at the Harvard Center for International Affairs, wrote a history of Gaither Committee.<sup>33</sup> Halperin did not make reference to Eisenhower’s farewell address, but he concluded Eisenhower’s chief objection was

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<sup>31</sup> United States. National Security Council. Report 5724. Report to the President by the Security Resources Panel of the ODM Science Advisory Committee on Deterrence and Survival in the Nuclear Age, Document 158. Washington, November 7, 1957. Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955–1957, National Security Policy, Volume XIX, Office of the Historian, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v19/d158>.

<sup>32</sup> The entirety of the report would remain classified until 1973: Bernard Gwertzman, “Secret 1957 study released by U.S.” *New York Times*, Jan 20, 1973, 16, <https://www.nytimes.com/1973/01/20/archives/secret-1957-study-released-by-us-security-agency-overruled-on.html>.

<sup>33</sup> Halperin, Morton H. “The Gaither Committee and the Policy Process.” *World Politics* 13(3), 1961, 360-384. While Halperin’s citations are all from publicly available sources, he did thank Paul H. Nitze and others for “comments and criticisms” in the first footnote of this article. Nitze had been head of the State Department Policy Planning staff under Truman, but he would not be confirmed by the Senate in his new role John Foster Dulles had for him under the Eisenhower administration, because he had switched to the Democratic Party for the 1952 election. He was brought on as a special advisor to the Gaither committee. In that role, Nitze was critical in steering the committee to broaden the report beyond civil defense. *American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC 68* Ernest R. May, ed. Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin’s Press, 1993, 100.

the authors' "[over]estimation of the danger facing the country and the amount of money which the United States should spend for defense." It was not the report itself that bothered Eisenhower but the partial release of its contents. "The President's oft-repeated fear" was that the American people would panic in reaction to the report and clamor for more spending than the economy could endure.

Unlike Halperin, Valerie L. Adams (Arizona State University) explicitly connected Eisenhower's embrace of the STE phrase to the work of the Gaither committee:

What soured Eisenhower to civilian groups after the Gaither report was the lack of anonymity the members displayed and their persistence in trying to make policy by exploiting the fears of the public. Eisenhower respected the views of civilian experts, but he did not tolerate their wanting to assume more power and influence than they had - a position he made clear in his Farewell Address...<sup>34</sup>

For this interpretation, Adams relied heavily on Herbert York's *Race to Oblivion*. York was a physicist who worked on the Manhattan Project, the first director of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, the first Chief Scientist of the Advanced Research Projects Agency, and a member of PSAC. As he explained in 1977, Eisenhower was not referring to the science advisors in PSAC but to the "hard-sell technologists...and their psychopants" who invented the missile and bomber gap, tried to exploit the Sputnik launch, and leaked elements of the Gaither report to generate fear; the "scientists and engineers believed that only they understood the problem...many of them believed it was their patriotic duty to save the rest of us whether or not we wanted them to." But, York also noted that Ike "successfully and sensibly" dispensed with most of the outlandish proposals. Although some of these programs did get funded, at least for a while, these voices were "always annoying and irritating." Even though it appeared that York and other "sober" scientists aided Eisenhower in staying the hand of the MIC and STE, he

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<sup>34</sup> Adams, Valerie L. *Eisenhower's fine group of fellows: Crafting a national security policy to uphold the great equation*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2006, 192.

nonetheless endorsed Eisenhower's critique and expanded upon it. York began his government service "full of confidence in the technological fix." When he left, he saw the fundamental problem was "using technological palliatives to cover over serious persistent underlying political and social problems." Further, the technological advantage men like York gave to the U.S. drove the arms race: the weapons systems they first developed encouraged others to replicate, and the security of U.S. lives was diminished rather than secured.<sup>35</sup>

While a segment of the MIC and STE, as a combined lobby, were small gears accelerating the arms race, but the greater machine in which they operated, the engine that propelled the Cold War, was much bigger and influential. As Damms pointed out in his introductory chapter, scientists were "junior partners" who integrated themselves within an existing relationship. Damms insisted, rightly, that their role must be seen within the "corporatist" or "corporate commonwealth" interpretation of analysis of mid-century, American political history: "certain forms of power and initiative, such as national economic policy and national security policy, have increasingly been monopolized by hierarchically organized, self-regulating functional groups, such as big business," a relationship Eisenhower considered as "a necessary 'middle way' between unacceptable extremes of an outmoded, chaotic laissez-faire political economy and an all-powerful, regimented garrison state."<sup>36</sup> As we shall see when we look at contemporary applications of Eisenhower's critique of the STE, current American critics of technocracy, for the most part, do not accept corporatist government as necessary nor good. Rather than a middle way, they see it as the primary force operating against "the American way

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<sup>35</sup> Herbert York, "Eisenhower's Other Warning," *Physics Today*, January 1977, 9, 10. York was incorrect to blame the STE for the missile gap; it was the Air Force who greatly exaggerated the number of Soviet ICBMS; the CIA has a more sober assessment, but even they overestimated the count: Monte Reel, *A Brotherhood of Spies: The U2 and the CIA's Secret War*. New York: Anchor Books, 2019.

<sup>36</sup> Damms, Richard V. "James Killian, the Technological Capabilities Panel, and the Emergence of President Eisenhower's "Scientific-Technological Elite." *Diplomatic History*. 24(1), 2000, 5-6.

of life:” – individual liberty, government transparency, and democratic decision-making. Perhaps, it was Eisenhower’s acceptance of the U.S. political economy in the 1950s as representative of American values and way of life that made him point his finger at the scientific-technological elite who had the potential to kidnap public policy rather than at the class who had set the limits and direction of U.S. political economy.

Damms, along with other historians, have made good use of the documents available at the Eisenhower Presidential Library, but there are at least a few sets of documents that have not been thoroughly analyzed, and one of those are the draft versions of the speech cowritten by Moos, Williams, Milton and Dwight Eisenhower. Eisenhower first told Moos of his interest in a farewell address to the American people on May 20, 1959, of which Moos notes: “We should be dropping ideas into a bin, to get ready for this.”<sup>37</sup> The first inkling of it emerges in a note to Moos, presumably from Ike, although possibly from Williams, that reads: “This is my start. Plan to go from here to the Scientific Revolution and the twin dangers of government dominating scientific research through purse power, and the generalists becoming captive to technical specialists.”<sup>38</sup> The note is undated, but it appears after a memo from Dwight to Milton wherein Ike he has “no fixed idea” on the subject of the speech, dated May 25, 1959, and another memo dated April 5, 1960, wherein Ike recommended Moos re-read George Washington’s farewell address. Among the themes of Washington’s address Eisenhower considered relevant to his own times included “the dangers of ‘overgrown military establishments’” and “the necessity for an enlightened public opinion.” There is another undated document, a section of Moos’ first draft of

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<sup>37</sup> Memorandum to Malcolm Moos regarding address topics. Arthur Larson and Malcolm Moos Records, Box 16, Farewell Address (2); NAID #12611750, DDE Library, <https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/research/online-documents/farewell-address/memo-malcolm-moos.pdf>.

the speech from Moos which physically preceded the April 5<sup>th</sup> memo in that folder, which features the “military-industrial complex” but not “scientific-technological elite” phrase and also contains additional details not in the final version of the speech. By December 21, 1960, the second draft reads: “Yet we must be alert to the opposite danger that public policy may itself become captive of technological *opinions and pressures* [emphasis mine].” This phrase remains on a second version of the second draft dated December 29, 1960.

In the same folder, there is an undated note between drafts #2 and #3 from Eisenhower’s secretary, Ann Whitman, indicating Milton Eisenhower, “has completely rewritten the thing, so I would just wait.” In draft #3, dated December 30, 1960, the phrase “opinions and pressures” is crossed out and the word “elite” is written in pencil. However, the handwritten edit by Milton is dated January 7, 1961, and the word “scientific-“ has been added to “technological elite,” and that part is typed. The spatial placement of the note in the file suggests that the handwritten edits were Milton’s, but the dating does not. Why would Milton change the phrase from “opinions and pressures” to “elite” on December 29<sup>th</sup> and edit the speech again nine days later? The placement of Ann Whitman’s note is likely out of order. Milton added “scientific,” but he did not make the change from “opinions and pressures” to “elite.” Although neither Richard Damms nor Ariel Turley, archivist at Eisenhower’s presidential library, could verify the handwriting with certainty, Damms did indicate in correspondence with this author that “Milton and Dwight went over some drafts in the evenings together. The handwriting sample that you provide could well be DDE’s. It certainly resembles his handwriting.”<sup>39</sup> That choice of “elite” was likely the president’s.

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<sup>39</sup> Email, Richard Damms to Michael Schaefer, August 3, 2023.

## The Farewell Address and C. Wright Mills' *The Power Elite* (1956)

At least three scholars have speculated that two of the Farewell Address speechwriters, Milton Eisenhower and Malcolm Moos, were familiar with and influenced by C. Wright Mills' 1956 book *The Power Elite*. Richard V. Damms wrote "it seems highly likely that both [men] were quite conscious of Mills' critique."<sup>40</sup> Aaron Good claimed Moos was "surely influenced" by Mills."<sup>41</sup> James Ledbetter suggested "there are passages of *The Power Elite* that are so thematically close to Eisenhower's farewell speech that it almost seems surprising that Mills did not himself coin the phrase "military-industrial complex."<sup>42</sup> None of these scholars speculate on a similar origin for the STE phrase, and yet no direct evidence exists that either Milton or Moos were familiar with or influenced in their choice of words by Mills' *The Power Elite*.<sup>43</sup> In fact, we know from Ralph Williams' 1985 letter to Martin Teasley and his 1988 interview with James Leyerzapf that Williams was principally responsible for not only the MIC phrase but also the section on the rapid advance of science and technology but not the choice of the word "elite."

Regardless of whether either Eisenhower, Moos, or Williams read or were vaguely familiar with *The Power Elite*, it is exactly in the turn from the phrase "technological opinions and pressures" to the word "elite" that a Millsian critique is triggered in the mind of the familiar listener: "opinions and pressures" reflects a pluralist, liberal understanding of American

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<sup>40</sup> "Eisenhower's Farewell Address in History and Memory" in *Constructing presidential legacy: How we remember the American president*. Michael Patrick Cullinane and Sylvia Ellis, eds. (Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 91.

<sup>41</sup> *American Exception: Empire and the deep state* (NY: Skyhorse, 2022), 136.

<sup>42</sup> *Unwarranted Influence: Dwight D. Eisenhower and the military-industrial complex* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 44.

<sup>43</sup> Dwight Eisenhower was president of Columbia University from 1948 until his inauguration in 1953. C. Wright Mills began his professional career at Columbia University's Bureau of Applied Social Research in 1945 as a research associate, became an assistant professor in the university's sociology department in 1946, and was full professor by 1956. While at Columbia, he wrote *New Men of Power* (1948), *White Collar* (1951), and *The Power Elite* (1956). There is no mention of Mills in Travis Beal Jacobs' *Eisenhower at Columbia* (2001). There is no mention of Eisenhower as Columbia University president in Howard Press' *C. Wright Mills* (1978), Irving Horowitz' *C. Wright Mills: An American Utopian* (1983) nor in Rick Tilman's *C. Wright Mills: An American Radical and his American Intellectual Roots* (1984).

democracy; “elite” suggests a more entrenched power network less amenable to democratic processes.<sup>44</sup> Intentional or not, by attributing the appellation “elite” Eisenhower put greater onus on one category of participants in the inner circle of U.S. Cold War military policy than the other parties, mentioned or unmentioned: The scientists are an “elite” group one can point to; the combination of military and industry is “complex.”

While it is beyond the scope of this examination to probe Eisenhower’s intentions, we can turn to the most thorough analyst of Eisenhower’s rhetoric, Martin Medhurst (Baylor), for insight. No scholar has scrutinized the STE phrase to the extent Charles Griffin (Kansas State) did for the MIC, but Medhurst did identify seven recurring characteristics of Eisenhower’s speeches on foreign policy, three of which are of potential relevance to the Farewell Address: “withholding of the whole truth from the public forum; a calculated sensitivity to...word choice, [and] articulation, in black-and-white terms, of the values and goals of democracy versus those of communism.”<sup>45</sup> The last of these was reflected in the Farewell Address: referring to communism as “as hostile ideology – global in scope, atheistic in character, ruthless in purpose, insidious in method,” contrasted with the U.S.’s “basic purpose...to keep the peace, foster progress in human achievement, and to enhance liberty, dignity, and integrity among people and nations;” this polarized rhetoric was consistent throughout his foreign policy speeches and much elite-driven discourse of the time. A deeper understanding of the power elite in Eisenhower’s

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<sup>44</sup> Unlike 21<sup>st</sup> century English dictionaries, who have incorporated the sociological understanding of “elite” into their definition, the American dictionaries of the late 1950s-early 1960s merely suggest “the best” in any particular field. Google ngrams suggest the word “elite” experienced a surge during the Great Depression and took off again after the publication of *The Power Elite* only to taper off after 1969. This is broadly suggestive of mass understanding of “elite” in the Millsian sense, but more study is needed about the conventional understanding of the word “elite” in 1961 and the popular reception of *The Power Elite*.

<sup>45</sup> Griffin, Charles J. G. “New Light on Eisenhower’s Farewell Address.” In *Eisenhower’s War of Words: Rhetoric and Leadership*. Martin J. Medhurst, ed. East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1994, 273-284; Medhurst, Martin J. *Dwight D. Eisenhower: Strategic Communicator*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 73.

time will demonstrate how Eisenhower used the other two rhetorical techniques – telling only part of the story and a highly strategic choice of language - to simultaneously attract and distract the American people.

Mills' critique of American society in the 1950s occupied a position that was between the sanguine, pluralist or liberal interpretation of American politics on one hand and the overly deterministic and reductionist Marxist critique on the other.<sup>46</sup> Pluralism or liberalism, the most widely accepted theory in political science of American democracy, goes back at least to James Madison's Federalist Paper #10. The assumption is that no particular numerical minority, no "special interest" or "faction" - landowners, artisans, merchants, bankers, laborers – will be "united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community," because the majority, regardless of their diversity, can coalesce to prevent domination by a minority faction. If a majority faction arises – of particular concern to Madison and Hamilton were a propertyless majority – the check upon their oppression of the minority is a representative government and a diverse and geographically dispersed polity. As "a small number of citizens elected by the rest," these representatives "must be raised...to refine and enlarge the public views...whose wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country, and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations." In addition to representative

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<sup>46</sup> Mills' political sympathies were with the Left but not the partisan liberals (Democratic Party) nor Leninists. While intellectually influenced by Marx, he could more accurately be described as radical egalitarian democrat. He has been called "an American utopian" (Irving Louis Horowitz, New York: Free Press, 1983) and a "native radical;" he described himself as a Wobbly in spirit (Wobblies, or members of the International Workers of the World, were part of a radically democratic labor organization). He interviewed Fidel Castro and authored *Listen, Yankee* (1960) from the perspective of a Cuban revolutionary but also raised the toast: "To the day when the complete works of Leon Trotsky are published in the Soviet Union!" while being fêted there. See Benjamin W. Smith, "The Political Theory of Institutional Economics." Diss. (University of Texas at Austin, 1969), 230 as quoted in Rick Tilman, *C. Wright Mills: A native radical and his American intellectual roots* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1984), 5.

government, by “extend[ing] the [geographical] sphere [of a polity], you take in a greater variety of parties and interests... mak[ing] it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive...or if such a common motive exists, it will be more difficult for all who feel it to discover their own strength, and to act in unison with each other.”<sup>47</sup> Strengthening the federal government under the U.S. Constitution would be more likely to prevent tyrannical majorities from arising than under the Articles of Confederation, where more power existed in the states. Thus, instead of one “dominant class or a set of institutionally based elites,” such as capitalists in the first case or the clergy in the latter, there is a multiplicity of interest groups – economic as well as ideological – which form transitory and shifting coalitions. While “great inequalities in power and wealth” might emerge, “most pluralists also believe that corporate leaders are too divided among themselves to dominate government,” leading to “polyarchy” and not a singular hierarchy.<sup>48</sup>

Mills’ insight was that the wealthiest, most powerful men of his time were not “merely ‘meet[ing] the demands of the day and hour’” established by bottom-up, democratic desires nor market pressures; they *determined* the demands of the day, the direction of politics and the economy to which most people had little choice to follow. “The power elite is composed of men whose positions enable them...to make decisions having major consequences...for they are in command of the major hierarchies and organizations of modern society:” big corporations, the executive branch of the federal government, and the military, in “an intricate set of overlapping cliques share decisions having at least national consequences... In so far as national events are

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<sup>47</sup> James Madison, “The Same Subject Continued: The Union as a Safeguard Against Domestic Faction and Insurrection” (Federalist No. 10) *New York Packet*, Friday, November 23, 1787, <https://guides.loc.gov/federalist-papers/text-1-10#s-lg-box-wrapper-25493273>.

<sup>48</sup> G. William Domhoff, “Theories of Power: Alternative Theoretical Views - Pluralism,” Who Rules America? website, April 2005, [https://whorulesamerica.ucsc.edu/theory/alternative\\_theories.html](https://whorulesamerica.ucsc.edu/theory/alternative_theories.html).

decided, the power elite are those who decide them.”<sup>49</sup> Of those three, two are hierarchical – corporations and the military – and the third is only marginally amenable to democratic input. Aside from the president and vice president, the top 30 men inside the executive branch, the so-called “political directorate,” were not elected and often held those positions regardless of the president’s party.

These men were not themselves individually powerful despite their wealth or social status but principally through the institutions in which they work. If they were to take their wealth and name recognition out of these institutions and decided to work against them, or, say, use their wealth strictly for personal pleasure, they would see their power radically reduced.<sup>50</sup> They are “the inner circle of the upper social classes. They form a more-or-less compact social and psychological entity; they have become self-conscious members of a social class.”<sup>51</sup> Their members frequently intermarry. They were overwhelmingly college graduates from the east coast Ivy League universities, the military leadership being an exception. Whether born into the upper classes or not, as most were, they must be “selected, trained and certified and permitted intimate access to those who command the impersonal institutional hierarchies;” a common morality and psychology is necessary for the “roles they are allowed and expected to play.”<sup>52</sup> They are neither omnipotent nor entirely concealed, as vulgar Marxists and conspiracy theorists imagine, nor are they “so scattered as to lack any coherence as historical force” as the liberal/pluralist school contends.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Mills, 3, 18.

<sup>50</sup> See, for example, in the contemporary United States, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. Despite being the nephew of a president, son of an Attorney General and serious presidential candidate, a successful environmental attorney, and a lifetime member and contributor to the Democratic Party with a net worth of \$50 million dollars, he is either ignored or belittled in the mainstream media for daring to challenge political orthodoxy, most notably in relation to the most central political questions of the last three years: the Russia/Ukraine war and COVID policy.

<sup>51</sup> Mills, 11.

<sup>52</sup> Mills, 15.

<sup>53</sup> Mills, 16.

There have always been political elites in the United States, as one would expect, as long as there have been differences in wealth, education, and voting rights.<sup>54</sup> But, the source and character of that elite changed over time: from the Revolution until 1824, the national elite were more-or-less local elites who made their national reputations in the creation of the new nation after they had held many different roles in society: George Washington, for example, had been a state legislator, a slave plantation owner, a surveyor, a scholar, and a general. For the most part, they came from established families and were formally educated. From the early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the national elite were a loose coalition of “a plurality of top groups,” generally split by northern and southern regions, who achieved political power through the party system. This is the period in which the pluralist model held most true.

However, by the later half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, economic elites operating within industrial corporations (railroads, mining, manufacturing) became more powerful than political elites. During that period, the wealth of the “robber barons” like J.P. Morgan was so vast that they exercised hegemonic control over the political parties and generally used that wealth to prevent democratic interventions in the economy. By the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, around the time of the First World War and the creation of the Federal Reserve, following war, labor unrest, and the boom-and-bust cycle, a trend began for the economic elite to use the state to create a more stable marketplace. The fourth era, due to the similar historical forces (the Great Depression and World War II), heightened and cemented this increasing unity between the federal government and big business. But, due to popular mobilization to mass unemployment and the alternative of “real, existing socialism,” organized labor became a more powerful

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<sup>54</sup> Despite some variation between U.S. states, suffrage was generally limited to: white men of sufficient property; white men by the 1820s; men regardless of race (1870; regionally reversed for African Americans shortly thereafter); white men and women by 1920, and finally all adult citizens regardless of race by 1965).

political force, and the need to balance these disparate forces lead to the political elite temporarily becoming the most important elite faction: “the balancing act that [Franklin Delano] Roosevelt performed did not affect the fundamental institutions of capitalism,” but as eminent American historian Richard Hofstadter put it, “if the state was believed to be neutral in the days of TR [Teddy Roosevelt], the state under FDR could be called neutral only in the sense that it offered favors to everyone.”<sup>55</sup> The postwar era Mills was describing was in its fifth era, characterized by “a permanent war economy and a private-corporation economy...the most important relation of the big corporation to the state rests on the coincidence of interests between military and corporate needs.”<sup>56</sup> It was not only the coincidence of interests; the distinction and separation between these institutions was eroding. Rather than an economic elite, a political elite, and a military elite, “there is a political economy linked, in a thousand ways, with military institutions and decisions;” the “inner core” of this elite wield power within two or more of these institutions at different points in their lives, frequently rotating between them several times in the course of their careers.

As noted at the beginning of this section, Eisenhower’s use of “military-industrial complex” and “scientific-technological elites” trigger associations with Mills’ observations about the power elite in the United States with those familiar with this work. While the reader may rightly associate “industrial” with those businesses with military contracts, and, thus, a segment of the economic elite, Eisenhower did not mention nor did Mills give sufficient attention to the economic elite’s general role in the creation of U.S. foreign policy, nor of the centrality of the financial elite - banks and bankers, or, more broadly, the financial sector (retail, commercial, and investment banks; insurance companies; exchange markets; financial services and other attendant

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<sup>55</sup> Hofstadter, 307.

<sup>56</sup> Mills, 276.

financial institutions) – to creating the capitalist consensus.<sup>57</sup> Due to the broad base of their wealth at the commanding heights of the economy, the power elite “tended to be more concerned with inter-organizational relationships and the functioning of the economy as a whole rather than advancing particular corporate interests.”<sup>58</sup> Rather, Eisenhower’s focus on the specific interests of profits for military industries or the desire for discovery and experimentation among the STE as potential distortions of foreign policy priorities concealed the source of the broad, elite consensus for Cold War politics and shifted the emphasis on smaller players within that consensus.

Although they were often on the boards of directors of productive sector firms as well, by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the “titans of banking” were replacing “the barons of industry” as not only the most economically but politically influential power, and “the political and financial alliances between bankers and presidents and their cabinets defined, and continue to define, the policies and laws that drive the economy.”<sup>59</sup> The wealthiest individuals in their times, like J.P. Morgan and John D. Rockefeller, their families and the institutions they governed, elevated their wealth and status by investing the money they accumulated from their near-monopolies in their respective industries (steel and oil) across the economy through banking houses (Morgan and Chase National, now unified as JPMorgan Chase, respectively). As future U.S. Supreme Court justice, Lewis Brandeis wrote in 1933: “the power of the investment banker over other people’s money is often more direct and effective than exerted through controlled banks and

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<sup>57</sup> Mills claimed: “Not Wall Street financiers or bankers, but large owners and executives [“who sit in the political directorate”] in their self-financing corporations hold the keys to economic power.” (*Power Elite*, 125). This is not true of Mills’ successors, Peter Phillips and G. William Domhoff, who would note the centrality of banks. While it is true that, as wealth as grown more concentrated since Mills wrote *The Power Elite*, Mills understated the power of banks and bankers within the economic elite. Mills spoke of the power of “interlocking directorates” of corporate boards but failed to recognize bank presidents were often on those boards and vice versa.

<sup>58</sup> Peter Phillips, *Giants: The Global Power Elite* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2018), 23.

<sup>59</sup> Nomi Prins, *All the presidents’ bankers: The hidden alliances that drive American power* (New York: Nation Books, 2014), xvii.

companies...by the simple device of becoming the bank of deposits of the controlled corporations.”<sup>60</sup>

Wealth further concentrated at the top in the 1950s as several large banks and trust companies merged.<sup>61</sup> As wealth concentrated and financial institutions grew larger, the leaders of these institutions diversified their assets in or had their financial fate tied to more and more sectors of the U.S. and global economy. By the end of the 1950s, institutional investors held about 25% of the shares registered with the New York Stock Exchange.<sup>62</sup> The preservation and expansion of their wealth was dependent on information, and large financial institutions had the best ability to survey the economic landscape writ large. Also, through the system of “interlocking directorships,” they had not only the knowledge but power to shape the broader political economy.

As many historians and political scientists, including the notable Godfrey Hodgson, British journalist and historian, have noted, “for three-quarters of the twentieth century...the foreign policy of the United States was decisively influenced by a comparatively small group of men who belonged to what is loosely but usefully called the American foreign policy Establishment.” Their aspiration “was not modest: it was to the moral and political leadership of the world, no less. Specifically, it aspired to supersede the British Empire...many figures in the Establishment mold, as was said of the CIA’s Desmond FitzGerald, that “his inspiration was the

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<sup>60</sup> *Other People’s Money and How Bankers Use It* (Chevy Chase, MD: National Home Library Foundation, 1933), 15 as quoted by Prins, 4.

<sup>61</sup> The Bank of Manhattan merged with Chase National Bank, National City Bank took over First National Bank, Guaranty Trust merged with J.P. Morgan & Co. to form Morgan Guaranty Trust, and the Chemical Bank & Trust Co. bought New York Trust Co. Philip H. Burch, Jr., *Elites in American History, Volume 3: The New Deal to the Carter Administration* (London: Holmes & Meier, 1980), 124.

<sup>62</sup> Burch, 125.

British Empire.”<sup>63</sup> More specifically, Fordham accurately pointed out: “the chief architects of this internationalist Cold War policy came from internationally oriented investment banks and law firms on the eastern seaboard.”<sup>64</sup>

While Fordham was writing about the pivotal Cold War turn during the Truman Administration, what he wrote was equally true of the Eisenhower Administration, as some of the key players in national security remained in the executive branch despite the change in party leadership in the White House, as also recognized by Hodgson. Paul Nitze, head of the State Department Policy Planning staff under Truman, was formally out of government service during the Eisenhower administration, serving instead in academia as associate of the Washington Center of Foreign Policy Research and the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) of the Johns Hopkins University, was nonetheless a special advisor to the Gaither committee during the Eisenhower administration, had been an investment banker, and worked for Nelson Rockefeller from 1928 until the U.S. entered the Second World War. Robert Lovett, Assistant Secretary of War for Air under Truman, was the son of Robert S. Lovett, director of both the National City Bank of New York and Western Union, married into the Brown banking family that would become Brown Brothers Harriman & Co., left the Truman administration and returned to BBH in 1949 until Eisenhower persuaded Lovett to serve on his Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities in 1956. John McCloy, an attorney for the Rockefeller family, was Assistant Secretary of War during World War II, was the second president of the World Bank (1947-49), chairman of Chase Manhattan Bank (1953–60) and the Ford Foundation (1958–65), member (1953–89) and chairman (1953–70) of the Council on Foreign Relations. His Wall Street

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<sup>63</sup> “The Foreign Policy Establishment,” in *Ruling America: A history of wealth and power in a democracy*. Steve Fraser & Gary Gerstle, eds. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 217, 220. Hodgson was not critical but rather affirmative of this elite group for upholding the “Western liberal, capitalist world order.”

<sup>64</sup> *Building the Cold War Consensus*, 4.

support came from the leaders of Morgan Stanley, Chemical Bank, National City Bank, and J.P. Morgan. John Foster Dulles, a consultant to Truman's State Department and Eisenhower's Secretary of State, was a Wall Street attorney and partner at Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, one of the most profitable law firms in the world.<sup>65</sup> His brother, Allen Dulles, was the first civilian director of Central Intelligence Agency and its longest serving director to date, also worked for Sullivan & Cromwell, and was a director of the Council on Foreign Relations starting in 1927, the Council's secretary (1933-1944) and its president (1946 to 1950).<sup>66</sup> Desmond FitzGerald, who held positions within the CIA from 1950 until his death in 1967, rising to the position of Deputy Director of Plans, was also a Wall Street attorney. Winthrop Aldrich, president and chairman of the board of Chase National Bank (1930-1953) and whose sister, Abby Aldrich, was the wife of John D. Rockefeller Jr., traveled with other business leaders to Europe in 1952 to convince Eisenhower to run for president. George M. Humphrey, Eisenhower's Secretary of the Treasury (1953-1957), headed M.A. Hanna Co., which partially owned National Steel Corp., one of the top five steel companies in the U.S., Pittsburgh Consolidated Coal Co., the country's

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<sup>65</sup> Identifying the Dulles brothers as a Wall Street lawyer obscures their broader roles. John Foster had also been a director of the American Agricultural Chemical Co., American Bank Note Co., Babcock & Wilcox Co., and the International Nickel Co. of Canada, and on the board of the Bank of New York. He also served on the boards of the Carnegie Endowment for Peace and the Rockefeller Foundation. Burch, 128. Allen was director of J. Henry Schroeder Banking Corp., which had financial connections to Rockefeller interests, was a trustee and president of the CFR.

<sup>66</sup> There has been a tight relationship between Wall Street and the CIA dating to before Allen Dulles. William Joseph "Wild Bill" Donovan, founder of the OSS, the forerunner to the CIA, was a corporate Wall Street attorney whose first foray into intelligence gathering was on behalf of J.P. Morgan in 1920. Waller, Douglas C. *Wild Bill Donovan: The spymaster who created the OSS and modern American espionage* (New York: Free Press, 2011), 34. William Colby, OSS and early CIA operative and director in the 1970s, briefly worked at Bill Donovan's law firm. John Hay Whitney, Wall Street financier, had met Allen Dulles through the OSS. William H. Jackson, deputy director of the CIA (1950-1951), was a partner in Whitney's investment firm and director of the Spencer Chemical Company, the Great Northern Paper Company and the Bankers Trust Company. William P. Bundy, chief of staff for the CIA's Office of National Estimates, was the son of a Boston corporate attorney. Richard M. Bissell, Jr., responsible for the U-2 spy plane project and the Bay of Pigs invasion, was the son of the president of Hartford Fire Insurance. This connection was not only at the highest levels: "When we look at lower levels at specific operations [Iran, Guatemala, Cuba] – we find some of the most respected and respectable members of the upper class doing the dirty work." G. William Domhoff, *The Higher Circles: The Governing Class in America* (N: Random House, 1970), 254.

largest coal company, Hanna Mining Co., and the National City Bank of Cleveland. His successor, Robert B. Anderson, who had previously served as the Deputy Secretary of Defense (1953-4), was a member of the Rockefeller-dominated American Overseas Investing Co., the Hanover Bank of New York, and the Missouri-Pacific Railroad.<sup>67</sup>

Anderson was not the only representative of corporate and high financial leadership in Eisenhower's Department of Defense. Charles E. Wilson, Eisenhower's Secretary of Defense (1953-1957), had not only been president of General Motors but director of the National Bank of Detroit. His successor, Neil H. McElroy (1957-1959), had been president of Proctor & Gamble, director of General Electric and Chrysler corporations. He was followed by Thomas S. Gates, Jr., (1959-1961), partner at the investment firm Drexel & Co. and the Rockefeller-controlled International Basic Economy Co. His undersecretary was James H. Douglas, Jr., had been a director of Metropolitan Life Insurance, American Airlines, and Chicago Title and Trust. The same pattern applied to secretaries of the U.S. Army, Navy, and Air Force, Commerce and Labor.<sup>68</sup>

Elite wealth was critical not only to Eisenhower's policies but to his candidacy. Although lower-tiered financial elites like William H. Burnham (F.S. Smithers & Co., a small brokerage house) and Clifford Roberts (a securities firm associated with the R.J. Reynolds tobacco fortune) are reported to be Eisenhower's chief fundraisers, they built a network of donors that included the chairmen and presidents of the seven largest oil companies and other large corporations, and representatives of Morgan and Vanderbilt interests. Goldman Sachs head, Sidney Wienberg, helped to form Citizens for Eisenhower along with Wall Street financier John Hay Whitney, W.

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<sup>67</sup> Burch, 130.

<sup>68</sup> Burch, 131-139.

Alton Jones, president of Cities Services Co., the oil and gas conglomerate, and Paul G. Hoffman, president of Studebaker and the Ford Foundation; all were major donors as well.

The realist school of international relations contends issues of national security subordinate economics to more immediate political concerns, because foreign threats ostensibly affect the whole of society and therefore minimize domestic political conflict and through the prioritization of general over special interests. The rhetoric of U.S. Cold War propaganda emphasized the generalized threat of communism to “the American way of life” which assumes a broad unity of interest. While there may be small disputes on *how* the nation will protect itself from other states – which weapons systems will be the most effective, as was the case with Eisenhower’s warnings – the priorities of even the economically privileged are secondary to national security. However, when the conflict is not only between nation-states but between radically different theories of political economy, as the central conflict of the Cold War was, it is nigh impossible to separate economics from national security/foreign policy; they were radically intertwined, just as the political, economic, and military elite were in the 1950s. And, if the economic elites, a sliver of the citizenry, are the core architects of a central purpose of foreign policy, then one can imagine them “united and actuated by some common...interest” which could be “adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community.” In a mass society, one that had experienced intense class conflict just a decade before, one can foresee a need by that minority to construct “a majority of the whole [with] a common motive...to act in unison with each other,” and wars are seen as exceptional circumstances wherein the state is permitted to actively cultivate unity of action.<sup>69</sup> Or, as Benjamin O. Fordham, professor of political science and author of *Building the Cold War*

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<sup>69</sup> James Madison, op. cit.

*Consensus* put it, “The practice of treating a particular policy position as if it represented the ‘perceived national interest’ only begs critical questions about the reasons for this perception and how those holding it came to determine policy.”<sup>70</sup>

Jonathan Kirshner has argued in *Appeasing Bankers* that the financial sector has always been reluctant to support war, noting that wars typically undermine many of the macroeconomic conditions desirable to finance: low and predictable interest rates, stability of the exchange rate, and federal budgets, low rates of taxation, and a sustainable public debt.<sup>71</sup> However, there is another financial condition he recognized as desired by the financial sector – “unfettered access to international financial centers [one could add labor, resources, and markets] abroad” – which required some compromising the former ideal market conditions. Despite having to accept higher taxation and government spending, at least 18 of the nation’s 20 largest corporations directly benefited from U.S. military spending, and industries with military contracts consisted of 10% of the GNP between 1954 and 1959.<sup>72</sup> “Bankers had a propensity to capitalize on wars, but they were equally adept at profiting from peace, especially if it was backed by US military power and foreign policy initiatives that would augment and protect their financial expansion policies”<sup>73</sup> In this light, despite massively expanding the military-industrial complex and, in turn, giving rise to a “scientific-technological elite,” Eisenhower’s efforts to “contain” communism without having to tax and spend too much for it can be seen not as a compromise between multiple elite priorities but a fulfillment of the priorities of the most powerful of the elite groups: the economic elites, and the pinnacle of which was (an is) the banking establishment.

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<sup>70</sup> "Economic interests, party, and ideology in early Cold War era US foreign policy." *International Organization* 52, no. 2 (1998): 359-396.

<sup>71</sup> *Appeasing bankers: financial caution on the road to war* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 2.

<sup>72</sup> Burch, 71; Prins, 216.

<sup>73</sup> Prins, 195.

The principal organization through which the U.S. economic elite of the mid-twentieth century set the course of U.S. foreign policy was the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). The CFR has its roots at the end of the First World War, when President Woodrow Wilson established a research group of about 150 scholars, called "The Inquiry," to plan the postwar world. By the summer of 1918, the group was meeting under its current name and the leadership of Elihu Root, an attorney for major corporations and individual investors like Andrew Carnegie, who had also been Secretary of State for Theodore Roosevelt (1905 –1909) and Secretary of War for T. Roosevelt and McKinley (1899-1904).<sup>74</sup> It was funded first by individually wealthy members but in time by 26 large firms to develop “a program of systematic study by groups of knowledgeable specialists...[who] would stimulate a variety of papers and reports to guide the statecraft of policymakers” towards “American internationalism based on American interests.”<sup>75</sup> Whitney Shepardson, aide to Colonel Edward M. House, was quite candid when he reflected “we were concerned primarily with the effect the [First World] war and treaty of peace might have on postwar business.”<sup>76</sup> Since its origin after the First World War, The Council on Foreign Relations has always been composed "high-ranking officers of banking, manufacturing, trading and finance companies, together with many lawyers," including Herbert H. Lehman of Lehman Brothers investment bank, W. Averell Harriman of the private investment bank Brown Brothers Harriman, and John Foster Dulles. according to its own official history.<sup>77</sup> All key leadership

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<sup>74</sup> Root also worked for Carnegie as president or chairman of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace , the Carnegie Institution of Washington, and the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

<sup>75</sup> Peter Grose, *Continuing the inquiry: the Council on Foreign Relations from 1921 to 1996* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1996), x, 1. The first quotation belongs to Grose; the last portion is from the foreword by Leslie Gelb. The alternative option for the U.S. economy was the pursuit of resource self-sufficiency, which would have entailed greater government control of the economy: G. William Domhoff, “Why and How the Corporate Rich and the CFR Reshaped the Global Economy after World War II..and Then Fought a War They Knew They Would Lose in Vietnam,” Who Rules America? Website, October 2013, [https://whorulesamerica.ucsc.edu/power/postwar\\_foreign\\_policy.html](https://whorulesamerica.ucsc.edu/power/postwar_foreign_policy.html).

<sup>76</sup> Grose, 9

<sup>77</sup> Grose, 7.

positions in the Council were associated with Rockefeller interests by 1953.<sup>78</sup> It is no wonder why Nomi Prins, in her *All the Presidents' Bankers: The hidden alliances that drive American power*, wrote: “American power unfolds more like monarchy than a meritocracy. There are no accidents in global influence, no surprise emergences.”<sup>79</sup>

The postwar, government-created investment institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and Marshall Plan were government-backed, low-risk investments and created opportunities for the big US banks and businesses in Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East financing infrastructure projects to facilitate U.S. companies access to resources. In time, developing nations’ debts were used as leverage by these institutions to force privatization of natural resources, removing of tariffs, lowering social spending and subsidies on essential consumer goods. The U.S. not only succeeded the British Empire but the French as well; while the later granted nominal independence to their former colonies, often reluctantly, the U.S. reoriented the established, colonial economic relations to their benefit. The point of U.S. foreign policy was most accurately summarized by George F. Kennan, Head of the US State Department Policy Planning Staff, in early 1948; his frank assessment was not available to the general public until it was declassified in mid-1974:

We have about 50% of the world's wealth but only 6.3% of its population...Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity without positive detriment to our national security. To do so, we will have to dispense with all sentimentality and day-dreaming; and our attention will have to be concentrated everywhere on our

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<sup>78</sup> David Rockefeller was vice president of the CFR; George S. Franklin, Jr., was executive director of the CFR, David Rockefeller’s college roommate and husband to one of David’s cousins. John J. McCloy was not only Board Chairman of the CFR but of Chase Manhattan Bank, director of various major corporations, and a trustee of the Rockefeller Foundation; Henry M. Wriston, President of the CFR, was a trustee of the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Co. and son of Walter B. Wriston, an officer in National City Bank; Elliott V. Bell was Treasurer of the CFR, chairman of McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., trustee of the New York Life Insurance Co., and director of the Chase Manhattan Bank, and Frank Altschul, Secretary of the CFR, was chairman of General American Investors Co. Burch, 125.

<sup>79</sup> Prins, 194.

immediate national objectives. We need not deceive ourselves that we can afford today the luxury of altruism and world-benefaction."<sup>80</sup>

The reader may question to what extent these were “national” rather than “elite” objectives.

What does this mean for democracy? Whereas the traditional view of the executive branch is one that merely carries out the will of the people as expressed through legislation passed in Congress, Mills suggested that the rank-and-file members of Congress are not in the power elite; they are a middle level of power. And, as previously noted, the majority who hold key positions in the executive branch, secretaries and undersecretaries of Defense, State, and Treasury, are not elected and often hold these positions regardless of the party in power. Members of Congress are not only limited by the needs of campaign funds, most of which come from large donors, the pressures of lobbyists, and the temptations of office which can be a springboard to a more remunerative career, but they more often respond to the prerogatives of the power elite than they are generative of popular political priorities, at least on the most critical issues of the day. The power elite are not omnipotent, but the ability to restrain their prerogatives are hampered by “the increased secrecy behind which great decisions are made without benefit of public or even Congressional debate,” a secrecy demanded by a permanent war footing.<sup>81</sup>

Mills, who suffered from high blood pressure, died in 1962 at the age of 45, but his type of power structure research was picked up in the late 1960s by G. William Domhoff (UC-Santa Cruz). Domhoff updated *The Power Elite* in 1968 with the first edition of *Who Rules America?*, a title he has updated seven times, the latest in 2022. Domhoff was inspired in the early 1960s by

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<sup>80</sup> Memo by George Kennan, Head of the US State Department Policy Planning Staff. Written February 28, 1948, Declassified June 17, 1974. George Kennan, "Review of Current Trends, U.S. Foreign Policy, Policy Planning Staff, PPS No. 23. Top Secret. Included in the U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948, volume 1, part 2 (Washington DC Government Printing Office, 1976), as reproduced at [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Memo\\_PPS23\\_by\\_George\\_Kennan](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Memo_PPS23_by_George_Kennan).

<sup>81</sup> Mills, 296.

the civil rights movement, as were his social psychology students, who wanted to study something more relevant. Many of his students' papers were cited in the first edition of *Who Rules America*. Domhoff eventually incorporated the broader study of social power by Mann, particularly his "Four Network Theory:" power flows through organizations and institutions, and the primary networks of power are economic, political, military, and ideological. Domhoff melded his socioeconomic data and positional studies with Mann's century-straddling, multivolume analysis to create the "Class-Dominant, Four Network theory:" unlike the pluralist polyarchy, with its ever-shifting coalitions, and the Marxist economic "ruling class," power is concentrated at the top of these four networks with economics being the most important; cooperation between them determined not by some secret conspiracy but a coincidence of interests and external historical factors.

Elite power is not totalizing but hegemonic; in times of crisis and in response to mass resistance, sections of the power elite may be amenable to reform to stave off revolution. But, for the most part, despite elections and constitutional rights like freedom of the press, assembly, association, and petition, the elite are not easily dislodged. Not only are the majority of non-elites geographically dispersed and ethnically diverse, ownership or control over ideological institutions like think tanks, universities, and the media by the power elite makes it difficult for them to see themselves as having "a common motive...and to act in unison." Through the policy planning process, led by elite-funded institutions, the range of "solutions" to elite-defined "problems" are set within the limits defined by elite factions: the ultras versus the accommodators, those who choose more repression versus those who are willing to cede a little wealth and power rather than lose it all.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Domhoff has stripped *Who Rules America?* of its extensive citations and simplified its explanations for a wider audience at his website of the same name: <https://whorulesamerica.ucsc.edu/>.

Peter Phillips, political sociologist (Sonoma State), has updated Mills and Domhoff for the globalization era.<sup>83</sup> Despite international investments in trade, power elites were primarily based in and dependent upon nation-states, but, as trade and capital further globalize, a Transnational Capitalist Class is emerging with increasingly interconnections and common interests. This “superclass” consists of the 6000-7000 “Davos-attending, Gulfstream/private jet-flying, megacorporation-interlocked, policy-building elites of the world.”<sup>84</sup> They increasingly work together through international institutions like the World Trade Organization, the International Bank for Settlements, and the World Health Organization, meet and strategize together at events like the World Economic Forum, and show more of a common identity and interest with each other than they do with their fellow countrymen. They seek to eliminate all barriers to investment, though they are not without their conflicts, as they still rely on nation-states, many of which are nominally democratic, to enforce their prerogatives, and some of their wealth and political power are still rooted within national economies and polities.<sup>85</sup> Financial institutions, rather than productive corporations, are at the pinnacle of the global economy. The top 17 asset management firms as of 2017 had a combined worth of \$41.1 trillion, about one half of global GDP.<sup>86</sup> They are heavily invested in the same corporations and each other. BlackRock is a good example with investments in top military contractors like Lockheed Martin, Northrup Grumman, and Boeing, as well as media conglomerates like Comcast, Disney, Time Warner, 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, and Viacom/CBS.

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<sup>83</sup> Phillips, Peter, *Giants: The Global Power Elite*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2018.

<sup>84</sup> Phillips, 27.

<sup>85</sup> China and Russia are good examples of nations who straddle the fence between cooperation and competition with US and European capital. Increasingly, the other BRICS nations’ nationally-based capitalist classes are growing in strength and resisting dollar hegemony. There are still nationalist barriers to the borderless flow of capital.

<sup>86</sup> *Giants*, 37; “Global gross domestic product (GDP) at current prices from 1985 to 2028: 2017” Statista, April 2023, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/268750/global-gross-domestic-product-gdp/>.

Sociologist William I. Robinson (UC-Santa Barbara), who wrote the introduction to *Giants*, has brought the global power elite up to our present moment, describing the COVID crisis as a critical period for the evolution of global capitalism. In an interview with Phillips, on the podcast associated with Phillips' longstanding media criticism outfit, Project Censored, Robinson explained how new digital technologies - artificial intelligence, machine learning, big data, internet of things, blockchain, digital currencies, automation and globalization, nano- and biotechnology, 3D printing, quantum and cloud computing, autonomous vehicles, augmented/virtual reality, 5G network, collectively known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) – are drastically transforming capitalism, the entire global economy, and society.<sup>87</sup> The COVID lockdowns facilitated a new wave of predatory capital accumulation and advances in these digital technologies, which will, in turn, be used as mechanisms of social control on a restive population. This capitalist crisis is based on consolidation of capital – the global power elite have so much and don't know what to do with it; 1% of humanity controls 52% of the world's wealth, and they possess \$20 trillion of stagnant capital. It is enough capital to meet universal human need, but most of the world's political economy is designed for the accumulation of profit. So, the economic elite put it toward wild financial speculation, privatizing what were previously public functions, debt-driven accumulation, accumulation through dispossession by force, and invest in war and systems of mass social control and repression. Robinson did not invoke Eisenhower's "scientific-technological elite," but his analysis of how these and other tools will be used to create a "digital technocracy" are very much

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<sup>87</sup> Mickey Huff, William I. Robinson, and Peter Phillips, "Global Civil War: Capitalism Post Pandemic," Project Censored podcast, May 16, 2022, <https://www.projectcensored.org/global-civil-war-capitalism-post-pandemic/>. The interview is a quick summary of Robinson's latest book, *Global civil war: Capitalism post-pandemic*. Oakland, CA: M Press, 2022.

in common with other contemporary critics who have cited this critical passage from Ike's farewell address.

### **The Media: A Fourth Cold War Column Unmentioned in the Farewell Address**

There is one network in Domhoff's "Class Dominant Four Network Theory" we have yet to describe, and that is the ideological network, consisting primarily of the media. Just as Eisenhower was unable, due to his ideological assumptions, to describe the role that the U.S. economic elite played in driving the Cold War, likewise he could not create nor advocate for an intellectual atmosphere in which the everyday citizen could rationally weigh the pros and cons of greater or lesser military spending nor the influence of government spending on scientific research. According to Lowell Schwartz, "no US president during the Cold War understood or exploited propaganda quite as well as Dwight D. Eisenhower," who had "a deep appreciation for what propaganda could and could not accomplish from his days as Supreme Allied Commander in the Second World War."<sup>88</sup> Democratic theory abounds with the need for "an alert and knowledgeable citizenry" – (more often referred to as "an informed citizenry") as Eisenhower put it in his farewell address; thus the reason for the freedoms of speech and the press listed in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. However, the combination of repression and demonization of communism – real, existing, aspirational, or loosely associated with - that began under Truman and continued until the collapse of the Soviet Union created an environment in which public opinion was weighted against peaceful cooperation with or neutrality towards states and movements associated with communism.

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<sup>88</sup> Schwartz, Lowell. *Political Warfare against the Kremlin: US and British Propaganda Policy at the Beginning of the Cold War* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 148. It should be noted, however, that Schwartz only covered outward-facing, international and not inward-facing propaganda for the US audience.

The U.S. government began using propaganda on a grand scale through the Committee on Public Information with their entry into the First World War, which was created through executive order from the expanded wartime powers the US Congress had granted President Wilson. Lee Grieveson describes this as an “exceptional” exercise of state power: the U.S. government had not previously been the direct producer or distributor of persuasive literature; U.S. political traditions of free thought and limited government had (and, to a great extent, still do) contribute to suspicion of state-produced and distributed “information.”<sup>89</sup> Although the federal government engaged in information distribution and messaging during the New Deal, no campaign was comparable in scope and scale to the CPI until the creation of the Office of War Information (OWI) during the Second World War. In times of war, the modern state needs to influence opinions in order to influence behaviors – ration consumption, increase production, increase taxation, draft men into military service, etc.; in general, material sacrifice for a collective end – providing a rationalization for this exceptional situation. Political leaders felt they could not solely rely upon the “free market of ideas;” it was necessary to “manufacture consent” to mobilize bodies.<sup>90</sup> The Cold War was not a formally declared war like the first and second world wars, but the U.S. government fully committed to using propaganda to generate domestic support for this militarized conflict of indefinite duration.

In response to critical events, most notably communist uprisings against the Greek and Turkish governments, President Truman announced his foreign policy doctrine of "support for

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<sup>89</sup> Lee Grieveson, "War, Media, and the Security of State and Capital," in Cinema's military industrial complex. Haidee Wasson and Lee Grieveson, eds. (Oakland: University of California Press, 2018), 263.

<sup>90</sup> This phrase was coined by Lippmann, Walter. *Public Opinion*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922, 248, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001108116>. Coincidentally, Lippmann also popularized the term “cold war,” (*The Cold War: A study in U.S. foreign policy*. New York: Harper, 1947) although it originated with Bernard Baruch, Wall Street financier and chairman of the War Industries Board during World War I and advisor to the War Production Board during the Second World War. Glass, Andrew. "Bernard Baruch coins term 'Cold War,'" April 16, 1947, *Politico*, April 16, 2010, <https://www.politico.com/story/2010/04/bernard-baruch-coins-term-cold-war-april-16-1947-035862>.

democracies against authoritarian threats” on March 12, 1947, known as the Truman Doctrine. Truman eliminated the Office of War Information in late August 1945 but moved Voice of America, the international radio arm, to the State Department. U.S. outward-facing anticommunist propaganda began immediately after the end of the war, but the federal government did not seek to immediately stoke it at home; the Soviet Union had been a US ally during the war, and the degree to which the US would continue to cooperate with the Soviet Union in the postwar era was still debated within the political class.

However, knowing that he would be asking the American people to again sacrifice for another war just two years after the termination of the last one, Truman felt the need to promote his postwar foreign policy to the American people. He initially sought the assistance of the Ad Council, as he had previously dissolved the OWI, the wartime state propaganda organization. The Advertising Council evolved out of the Business Council, a collection of over sixty CEOs of the U.S.’s largest corporations, led by General Electric’s president, Gerard Swope, who accepted the cartelization of industries through the National Industrial Recovery Administration in June 1933 to fix prices and limit production.<sup>91</sup> When conservative Republicans and southern Democrats terminated the OWI’s Domestic branch mid-1943 for suggesting the federal government had a role in guaranteeing economic rights and discouraging racism – messaging to stimulate loyalty to the war effort among African Americans and the working class - the War Advertising Council as it was known - later just Advertising Council and finally Ad Council, a private industry association - picked up the slack. This patterned was repeated throughout the

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<sup>91</sup> This is the forward-looking business class who realized U.S. capitalism had developed to a stage that would require far more formal coordination between the economic elite, a kind of "state building by the capitalist class" as described by Domhoff, G. William. "C. Wright Mills, Power Structure Research, and the Failures of Mainstream Political Science," *New Political Science* 29 (2007), pp. 97-114, reprinted at: [https://whorulesamerica.ucsc.edu/theory/mills\\_critique.html](https://whorulesamerica.ucsc.edu/theory/mills_critique.html).

Cold War: while the U.S. federal government did directly produce propaganda for foreign distribution through the USIA, the CIA, and other departments, they tended to collaborate with private businesses when it came to the domestic audience. “After the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine, the Council began to explicitly present communism as dedicated to the destruction of the American way of life,” wrote Daniel Lykins in his book on the Ad Council’s role in shaping public support for the Cold War. Close to eleven hundred magazines, nine hundred billboard companies, the major networks and local radio stations, trade journals, and internal corporate magazines, donated space or time to the Council’s ads.<sup>92</sup>

As the Cold War military spending and domestic anticommunist political persecution intensified, so did calls for additional public persuasion. The draft – mandatory military inscription – had ended in 1946 but was reinitiated in 1948. In 1950, Edward Barrett, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, who had been the head of domestic information for the OWI and editor of *Newsweek* magazine, doubted that the American people were presently inclined to make the sacrifices necessary for a massive arms race of indefinite scope and length. However, he believed Public Affairs could overcome isolationist and pacific sentiment by exaggerating the Red Menace. Russell would refer to this practice as both “building public awareness of the problem” and a “psychological scare campaign” through which he could “whip up” public support.<sup>93</sup>

Russell made these comments upon reading a draft version of NSC-68, “United States Objectives and Programs for National Security,” a 66-page top secret National Security Council (NSC) policy paper drafted by the departments of State and Defense, a defining U.S. Cold War

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<sup>92</sup> Lykins, Daniel L. *From Total War to Total Diplomacy: The Advertising Council and the construction of the Cold War consensus* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003).

<sup>93</sup> Bernard, Nancy E. *U.S. television news and Cold War propaganda, 1947-1960*. Cambridge University Press, 1999, 84.

document that marked a shift of emphasis from the Cold War as an ideological and political struggle to an increasingly militarized one. Truman's military budget before NSC-68 was \$13 billion; it would rise to \$60 billion a year later. The need for "manufacturing consent" was expressed in contradictory terms in the final report:

The full power which resides within the American people will be evoked only through the traditional democratic process: This process requires, firstly, that sufficient information regarding the basic political, economic, and military elements of the present situation be made publicly available so that an intelligent popular opinion may be formed. Having achieved a comprehension of the issues now confronting this Republic, it will then be possible for the American people and the American Government to arrive at a consensus. Out of this common view will develop a determination of the national will and a solid resolute expression of that will. *The initiative in this process lies with the Government.* [emphasis mine]<sup>94</sup>

Frances Russell, director of the State Dept. Public Affairs director, felt Americans could be convinced on the need for massive, military expansion "to the degree U.S. security seemed threatened."<sup>95</sup> Multiple civilian consultants to the NSC, including Chester Barnard, chairman of the Rockefeller Foundation, and Undersecretary of State, Robert Lovett, recommended continuing the pattern of "public-private partnership" for this "strategic communication" rather than rely on messaging entirely produced by and bearing the full authorship of the federal government.

The Ad Council was by no means the only source of anti-Soviet propaganda, which saturated print media, radio, television, and film. The largest institutions in U.S. mass media were privately owned; most radio and 90% of television stations were owned by the corporate networks. Despite this pre-existing bias against communism among media owners, the federal

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<sup>94</sup> United States. State-Defense Policy Review Group, *NSC 68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security: A Report to the President Pursuant to the President's Directive of January 31, 1950*, April 14, 1950, <https://irp.fas.org/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-68-6.htm>

<sup>95</sup> Bernhard, 84.

government was not convinced the market would be sufficient to promote their anticommunist foreign policy, and so U.S. government information officers worked with network news producers to “sell the Cold War to the American public...Much of the about the early Cold War [1948-1954] was scripted, if not produced, by the defense establishment,” although this cooperation was voluntary.<sup>96</sup> The networks, not only corporately owned but dependent on other corporations for advertising, required loyalty oaths from their employees and purged suspected leftists from their payrolls. After 1954, television producers had largely internalized the message, and so the government’s role became less necessary.

Possessing a similar disposition to network news owners, “American film industry had effectively been at war with communism for three decades...before the appearance of William Wellman’s ‘The Iron Curtain’ (1948), often called Hollywood’s first Cold War movie” despite the presence of some communist and left-wing actors and directors in Hollywood in the 1930s to mid-forties.<sup>97</sup> Much like TV news, the federal government did not rely on pre-existing anticommunism in the film industry but took advantage of it to collaborate in the shaping of messaging and imagery. The FBI assisted in producing scripts, suggested edits and elements of production, and even made agents available as actors in feature films.<sup>98</sup> Communists and fellow travelers were portrayed “as a mixture of criminals, murderers, social misfits and sexual deviants, who were hypocritical, devious and emotionally detached, and engaged in illegal activities in order to weaken the USA and advance the Soviet cause of world domination,” as opposed to the everyday American who was depicted as “law-abiding, capable and peace-loving.”<sup>99</sup> As many as 107 anticommunist films in all possible genres – “musicals, Westerns,

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<sup>96</sup> Bernhard, 2.

<sup>97</sup> Shaw, Tony. *Hollywood's Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), 2.

<sup>98</sup> Shaw, 53.

<sup>99</sup> Shaw, 49.

biblical epics, romantic comedies, science-fiction fantasies, documentaries, detective thrillers and absurdist biopics” - were released 1948 and 1962.<sup>100</sup> The FBI regularly shared information from their files to loyal print, television, and film producers.<sup>101</sup>

Due to his continuing support of the business-lead, government-coordinated, Cold War propaganda campaign, Eisenhower was in a position at the end of his second term where he was asking U.S. citizens to support permanent military spending and sacrifices of their individual liberty on one hand but also to keep a watchful eye upon the designers, deployers, and manufacturers of those weapons. Eisenhower said, at the beginning of the MIC/STE section that the U.S. was “*compelled* to create a permanent arms industry of vast proportions” by “a hostile ideology – global in scope, atheistic in character, ruthless in purpose, and insidious in method” whose threat loomed “of indefinite duration.” In his role as president, he had to make difficult decisions requiring the best scientific advice regarding which weapons systems to invest in, but American citizens were not in the same position; they had neither the power nor the same access to intelligence he did. Ike was a committed anticommunist, but he also wanted to preserve macroeconomic stability.<sup>102</sup> He wanted to use the scientific-technological elite and the military-industrial complex to maintain the U.S.’s marginal nuclear supremacy over the Soviet Union and other socialist states or movements, but he didn’t want the self-interest of those groups to draw too much capital out of the domestic economy. How could U.S. citizens stay the hand of excess military spending and the drive for technological fixes while they were immersed in a sea of propaganda that told them the overall effort was necessary?<sup>103</sup> “Each proposal must be

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<sup>100</sup> Shaw, 48, 301.

<sup>101</sup> Shaw, 53.

<sup>102</sup> By “anticommunist,” the author refers not only to opposition to communist parties or states but any movement or organization advancing anything more than a modest, downward redistribution of wealth.

<sup>103</sup> Propaganda is rarely used as the only form of political warfare; it is almost always paired with censorship and restricting freedom of assembly, association and redress of grievances. The author does not have sufficient space to devote an entire section like this one to political repression. Suffice it to say that Communists and “fellow travelers”

weighed...to maintain balance” between state spending and the free markets, between needs and wants, the present and future, duty and liberty, but, in the context of censorship and propaganda, the citizenry’s sense of where the balance point should be had already been skewed. Lykins demonstrated this to be the case even before Eisenhower reached the White House: when Truman had decided to limit the U.S. military war in Korea to achieving the status quo ante bellum, anticommunist propaganda had already generated enough fear and loathing of communism that there was mass, popular support for “liberating” all of Korea.<sup>104</sup>

### **Eisenhower’s STE, Contemporary Critics of Technocratic Governance, and COVID-19 as a Radicalizing Event**

This author’s encounter Eisenhower’s farewell address, particularly with the phrase “scientific-technological elite,” mirrors American society writ large and the historical literature. During the 1980s, when I was in high school, I learned in-depth about U.S. foreign policy towards Latin America through participation on the school debate team. As a result of my religious upbringing, I volunteered with a Catholic peace group gathering signatures to ban weapons shipments to the Nicaraguan contras, and thus began an off-and-on involvement in the antiwar/anti-imperialist organizations and activism. I studied history and politics not only for professional ends but as an engaged citizen. I became familiar with the “military-industrial complex” phrase through Joel Andreas’ illustrated exposé, *Addicted to War: Why The US Can't*

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were politically demobilized through Congressional hearings, criminal prosecutions, loyalty screenings in the public and private sector, FBI investigations, and Supreme Court decisions. For further discussion, see Ellen Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1998).

<sup>104</sup> Lykins, 6, 110.

*Kick Militarism*, but the “scientific-technological elite” phrase did not have any resonance with me, and so it did not stick in my memory.<sup>105</sup>

My interest in this phrase began after hearing multiple contemporary critics of technocracy invoke it. On the January 2022 episode of the popular American podcast “The Joe Rogan Experience,” Dr. Robert Epstein, author, professor, and Senior Research Psychologist at American Institute for Behavioral Research and Technology, in discussing the power of online surveillance technology, particularly Google, referenced Eisenhower’s farewell address.<sup>106</sup> “I’m aware of the speech,” said Rogan. “Everyone always points to” the military-industrial complex,” replied Epstein, but “people failed to note” that Eisenhower also spoke of the “rise of a technological elite that could control public policy without anyone knowing...the technological elite are now in control.” Surprised, Rogan responded “Really?,” and it jogged a vague memory in me.<sup>107</sup> I wanted to know more.

This was during the COVID era, a time when many Americans and other people around the globe began to seek more critical insights about every aspect COVID phenomenon: its origins, its morbidity and lethality, the safety and efficacy of lockdowns, masks, vaccines, prophylactic and early treatments. I suspected, as a result of my self-education, that the mainstream media would only present a limited range of information, and that it was necessary

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<sup>105</sup> (San Francisco: AK Press, 2002); a 2015 edition exists with updates to include the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, drone warfare, ISIS, Syria, and more: <https://www.addictedtowar.com/store/p/addictedtowarbook>. The 2004 edition can be read for free on the author’s website: <https://www.addictedtowar.com/read-book>.

<sup>106</sup> The Joe Rogan Experience has almost four times as many monthly listeners (11 million) than the most popular U.S. news show, Tucker Carlson Tonight (3.24 million), and more than half the number of monthly listeners than next eight most popular U.S. news programs combined (18.17 million), including MSNBC and CNN primetime programming: Emma Nolan, “Joe Rogan Loses Top Spot on Spotify Podcast Charts,” Newsweek, 30 September 2021, <https://www.newsweek.com/joe-rogan-dethroned-spotify-chart-new-gaming-podcast-sapnap-karl-jacobs-number-one-1634239>; Ted Johnson, “Fox News Tops Third Quarter, But All News Networks See Year-Over-Year Declines.” Deadline, September 28, 2021, <https://deadline.com/2021/09/fox-news-msnbc-cnn-ratings-1234846126/>.

<sup>107</sup> “Episode #1768 – Robert Epstein,” 1:09:19 <https://open.spotify.com/episode/4q0cNkAHQOMBtu4NmeNW7E>.

to seek additional and alternative sources.<sup>108</sup> It was largely through Twitter that I was able to learn from and listen to more voices from what I would come to call the “COVID-Critical Community:” all those individuals who were critically examining any (and sometimes all) the conventional COVID wisdom transmitted through mainstream media channels. For the first time, I started to follow virologists, vaccinologists, epidemiologists, and practicing medical professionals. Before COVID, my Twitter follows were almost entirely political in nature, and most of them were to the left of the Democratic Party, from left Democrats like Bernie Sanders and Ro Khana through democratic socialists, and communists, but also libertarians, anarchists, and those who avoided ideological and partisan categorization. Some of the independent journalists I was already familiar with, like Whitney Webb, came from the “deep politics” research community, and I ran into more and more references to Eisenhower’s “scientific-technological elite” as I expanded my networked circle of follows.<sup>109</sup>

Another independent journalist whose podcasts I stumbled upon, Ryan Christián, founder and editor of The Last American Vagabond (TLAV) website, periodically uses a video excerpt of President Eisenhower reading the MIC and STE section of the farewell address as part of the introduction to his “Daily Wrap-Up” vlog and podcast. Christián is a chef by training but a journalist by passion and a recipient of the Serena Shim Award for Uncompromised Integrity in Journalism. He does not reveal the political foundation from which he operates but repeatedly rejects the “two-party paradigm/illusion.” If one searches Christián’s site, one won’t find any further use of the phrase (the TLAV website does not have transcripts of Christián’s podcasts),

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<sup>108</sup> By “mainstream media,” I am referring to corporate or wealthy-owned, legacy news media as well as some parastatal media entities like NPR and BBC. Scholars whose works taught me about the limitations of mainstream media include Noam Chomsky, Edward S. Herman, Ben Bagdikian, and Robert W. McChesney.

<sup>109</sup> While Webb does not invoke Eisenhower’s STE, at least in her articles – there are no transcripts of her podcasts on her site, <https://www.unlimitedhangout.com> – the words “technocracy” or “technocratic” appear over 150 times on her site in articles by and interviews with James Corbett, Patrick Wood, Iain Davis, Derrick Broze, and John Klyczek.

but one would find a sustained critique of the use of science and technology for social control. A search of [www.thelastamericanvagabond.com](http://www.thelastamericanvagabond.com) produces almost twenty articles expressing concern with technocracy and technocratic governance.

Similarly, Patrick Wood, perhaps the United States' most prolific, non-academic critic of technocracy and economist by training, uses the same segment of Eisenhower's speech in the intro to his podcast.<sup>110</sup> Spiro Skouras of Activist Post raised the specter of Eisenhower's STE in an interview with Wood; Wood acknowledged there were reasons to be critical of some of Eisenhower's policies as president – he did not name any – but that his use of the phrase was “a teaser” – a brief but not fully-evolved insight. Nonetheless, Eisenhower “understood technocracy...he knew exactly what he was talking about...He was a master politician...he understood technocracy as a threat to the political system.”<sup>111</sup> While Woods did little to explain Eisenhower's STE in his particular context, he nonetheless has devoted pages on his site to three others who also use the phrase: James Corbett, Dr. Joseph Mercola, and Vera Sharav.<sup>112</sup> Wood also uses the STE quote in his 2015 book, *Technocracy Rising*, where he assumes Eisenhower had near-prophetic abilities to predict programs like Total Information Awareness or, as Edward Snowden termed it, “turnkey totalitarianism.”<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Patrick Wood describes himself as “an economist by education, a financial analyst and writer by profession, and an American Constitutionalist by choice. [He] maintains a Biblical world view:” Patrick Wood, “About Us,” *Technocracy News*, <https://www.technocracy.news/about/>.

<sup>111</sup> “The Global Elite & The Coronavirus Coup D'état With Patrick Wood” July 20, 2020 <https://www.activistpost.com/2020/07/the-global-elite-the-coronavirus-coup-detat-with-patrick-wood.html>. Wood also invokes the STE phrase in his book, *Technocracy Rising: The Trojan Horse of Global Transformation* (Mesa, AZ: Coherent Publishing, 2015), p173, with a passing reference.

<sup>112</sup> Joseph Michael Mercola is an osteopathic physician and natural health advocate; Mercola's use of STE was through quoting Dr. Jeffrey Singer from *Reason*, a libertarian website. Vera Sharav is a Jewish Romanian-American Holocaust survivor. She has been a critic of the pharmaceutical industry since her teenage son died of a reaction to an atypical antipsychotic medicine.

<sup>113</sup> Wood does not use the STE phrase or invoke Eisenhower's farewell address in his 2018 book, *Technocracy: The hard road to world order* (Mesa, AZ: Coherent Publishing). He does, however, believe one of the goals of the technocrats is to “crush capitalism and free enterprise.” P164 Although Woods talks about capitalist concentration and capture of the state through the Federal Reserve as a deviation from the true spirit of capitalism, he also focuses

James Corbett is another deep politics researcher who, like Wood, has used the MIC/STE excerpt from Eisenhower's Farewell Address to open his podcast/vlog.<sup>114</sup> Unlike Wood, Corbett has contributed significantly to analyzing the STE in much more explicit and direct language than Eisenhower: "Big Science requires Big Money, either from Big Corporations or Big Government. But as we have already seen, when Big Corporations are funding the research, the 'science' is invariably skewed in the interests of the company who is paying for it."<sup>115</sup> Corbett has invoked Eisenhower's farewell address many times; in 2019, immediately after playing the STE video excerpt, Corbett provided a litany of examples of the way in which the STE is enmeshed within the MIC:

"Is it any wonder, then, that military contractors like Raytheon, Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman are among the leading funders in cutting edge research in nanotechnology, quantum computing, "human systems optimization" and other important scientific endeavors? Or that the Pentagon's own Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency provides billions of dollars per year to help find military applications for breakthroughs in computer science, molecular biology, robotics and other high-cost scientific research?..A common root in the pressures

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a lot of his scholarship on the Technocracy movement around Howard Scott and the definition provided in his Technocracy Incorporated newsletter: "the science of social engineering, the scientific operation of the entire social mechanism to produce and distribute goods and services." Given that Scott's system would put engineers in charge, it would be hard to imagine why the people he named as technocrats - Wood listed - particularly Bill Gates, Al Gore, Eric Schmidt, Jeff Bezos, and Elon Musk - would adopt a system wherein: "there will be no place for Politics or Politicians, Finance or Financiers." *The Technocrat* - 3(4) September 29, 1937, 3, <https://archive.org/details/TheTechnocrat-September1937>. Further, social engineering is more commonly understood to mean "the psychological manipulation of people" or "top-down efforts to influence particular attitudes and social behaviors on a large scale" by "specialists in handling the human challenges, just as they needed technical expertise (traditional engineers) to deal with non-human challenges" moreso than it is used to for the scientific management of production and consumption. "Social engineering (security)" and "Social engineering (political science)" Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_engineering\\_\(security\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_engineering_(security)), 13 August 2023 and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_engineering\\_\(political\\_science\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_engineering_(political_science)), 11 August 2023. The people he names technocrats are "not communists, socialists, or Marxists: "they [just] think that way." His analysis is, in this sense, more idealistic than materialistic.

<sup>114</sup> James Corbett is Canadian by birth but has lived in Japan since 2004 where he moved to teach English. This became the first time he had an internet connection in his home. He embraced the internet as a revolutionary leveling instrument; initially using it to consume content, he created his website in 2007 to share what he was learning. He considered himself a mainstream, progressive liberal before discovering contradictions in the official version of the 9/11 attacks. He now considers himself outside the left-right political spectrum. Like Webb, he is an independent journalist, not an academic, and has no formal associations with recognized deep politics or power structure researchers, but addresses much of the same material.

<sup>115</sup> "Episode 354 - Solutions: Open Science," The Corbett Report, 03/22/2019, <https://www.corbettreport.com/openscience/>.

that come from funding large-scale, capital-intensive, industrial research... There are deeper social, political and structural roots of this crisis.<sup>116</sup>

While agreeing with Eisenhower about the dangers of the MIC and STE, Corbett sees Eisenhower's "corporate commonwealth" not as reinforcing "American values" and "the American way of life;" but the opposite: "fascism, the merger of government and corporate power."<sup>117</sup>

Corbett made these observations before the COVID pandemic. While Corbett did not invoke the STE in this later context, he did make the connection between the concentration of global capital and the way in which the COVID crisis was used by the heavily capitalized:

If you're reading *The Corbett Report*, then you likely already know that the events of the last three years had nothing whatsoever to do with a virus. But if the pandemic was actually a scamdemic and it was never really about a viral contagion, then what was it about?... The scamdemic served a number of agendas and the various players on the grand chessboard each had their own incentives for playing along with it. But one of the most important—not to mention one of the most overlooked—answer is that the scamdemic was, at base, a financial coup d'état. And that entire coup d'état was engineered by (you guessed it) BlackRock... This week, I will explain how BlackRock's Going Direct reset paved the way for the massive economic and monetary transition that we have just lived through under the cover of the scamdemic.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Corbett, James. "Episode 353 - The Crisis of Science," *The Corbett Report*, February 23, 2019, <https://www.corbettreport.com/sciencecrisis/>.

<sup>117</sup> --, "Episode 325 - The Information-Industrial Complex," *The Corbett Report*, 12/18/2017, <https://www.corbettreport.com/episode-325-the-information-industrial-complex/>.

<sup>118</sup> --, "How BlackRock Conquered the World - Part 2: Going Direct," *The Corbett Report*, 11/20/2022, <https://www.corbettreport.com/how-blackrock-conquered-the-world-part-2/>. Corbett was not the first to postulate the COVID crisis was either fabricated or taken advantage of by the elite banking class to resolve contradictions in the global capitalist system. The first to do so was John Titus through Catherine Austin Fitts' website, the *Solari Report*: Titus, John, & Catherine Austin Fitts, "2020 Annual Wrap Up: The Going Direct Reset – The Central Bankers Make their Move," *The Solari Report*, January 28, 2021, [https://home.solari.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/sr20210128\\_2020-annual\\_Going\\_Direct\\_Titus.pdf](https://home.solari.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/sr20210128_2020-annual_Going_Direct_Titus.pdf). Fitts has a BA in History and an MBA from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, served as an American investment banker for Dillon, Read & Co. and as U.S. Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development during the George H. W. Bush administration. She has, since 2004, written on corruption in federal spending, arguing that a significant amount of tax dollars are being illegally diverted to fund covert intelligence operations clandestine military research and development: Sanders, Chris and Fitts, Catherine Austin. "The Black Budget Of The United States: The engine of a "negative return economy," *World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues*, 8, (2), April-June 2004, 17, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48504790>. Titus is a patent attorney with a Masters in electrical engineering. He started publishing commentary on his YouTube account, BestEvidence, following the 2008 financial crisis, and produced a feature-length film, "Bailout," which alleges criminal fraud. Although Titus and Fitts were the first ones to connect

While Corbett’s claim that the pandemic response “had *nothing* [emphasis mine] whatsoever to do with a virus” may appear to some a gross overstatement on its surface, we will, in the course of this essay, and in order to answer the two critical issues at the core of this conference, address the claim that it “served a number of agendas and the various players on the grand chessboard each had their own incentives for playing along with it.” Corbett and Woods have been referencing Eisenhower’s STE for years, but the COVID-19 pandemic would trigger more people to employ this phrase as an analytical tool and rhetorical frame by which to interpret unprecedented government policies.

An astute observer will recognize from articles referenced on TLAV, Technocracy.news, The Corbett Report, and The Unlimited Hangout, these critics are a somewhat insular group: Christián, Corbett, Webb, Woods, and Catherine Austin Fitts all interview each other. For the most part, this community of deep politics researchers and critics of technocracy tend to avoid ideological labels and partisan pigeonholing: Fitts supported the U.S. presidential campaign of Donald Trump in 2016, but she has also donated to political campaigns ranging from progressive Democrats Cynthia McKinney and Dennis Kucinich, Republicans Ron Johnson and Thomas Massie, and Libertarian Rand Paul. Woods describes himself as “American Constitutionalist... [with] a Biblical world view;” Corbett can be characterized as an anarcho-capitalist and perhaps

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“going direct” to the COVID crisis; they were not the first ones to report on BlackRock’s plan for the U.S. Federal Reserve to lend money directly to businesses rather than to commercial banks: Martens, Pam & Russ. “BlackRock Authored the Bailout Plan Before There Was a Crisis – Now It’s Been Hired by three Central Banks to Implement the Plan.” *Wall Street On Parade*, June 5, 2020, <https://wallstreetonparade.com/2020/06/blackrock-authored-the-bailout-plan-before-there-was-a-crisis-now-its-been-hired-by-three-central-banks-to-implement-the-plan/>. Russ Martens worked in magazine and music publishing for forty years. Pam Martens worked on Wall Street firms for 21 years at Shearson American Express (later Salomon Smith Barney) and A.G. Edwards & Sons as Vice President/Investments. Since her retirement in 2006, she has been an outspoken critic of Wall Street’s corrupt practices.

the same could be said about Cristián and Webb, although they are less forthcoming about their ideologies.

I previously described Corbett and Webb as “deep politics” researchers. The term “deep politics” was coined by Peter Dale Scott, a poet, retired University of California – Berkeley professor, and Canadian diplomat. Deep politics is what happens in the background of surface politics (elections, debates, publicly released legislative, executive, and judicial actions; that which is generally referred to as “politics” in mainstream discourse). While some of its actors may be employees within the upper ranks of executive branch, particularly the intelligence services or the military, it also includes members of the transnational economic elite and international criminal networks. While they may be public figures, and many of their documents are open access, their actions are not the focus of mainstream political news reporting, the documents of their operations are classified, and they typically escape legislative oversight and media attention until gross violations of ethics of law are involved. When their actions are revealed, the actors are rarely politically or legally punished. Deep politics is considered dominant over surface politics despite its semi-concealed nature. According to Scott, “decisions made at this level...[are] created to overcome restraints established by surface-level politics.”<sup>119</sup> Some better-known “deep events,” according to its researchers, include the assassination of U.S. President John F. Kennedy, the Watergate break-in and cover-up, the Iran-Contra affair, and the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

Who constitutes a “deep politics” researcher? Aaron Good, who is an independent author and podcaster get included, because of his academic background (PhD in political science,

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<sup>119</sup> Scott, Peter Dale. *The American deep state: Big money, big oil, and the struggle for U.S. democracy*. Updated ed. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), 25. See the book format of Aaron Good’s political science PhD dissertation, *American Exception: Empire and the deep state* (New York, NY: Skyhorse Publishing, 2022) for the most thorough and up-to-date discussion of the character and history of the U.S. deep state.

Temple University, 2020; dissertation: “American Exception: Hegemony and the Tripartite State”) and his personal and intellectual affiliations with Scott as well as power structure researchers like Peter Phillips, but Webb does not have a similar degree nor institutional affiliations. Although I include her in this category, she is an independent journalist and not an academic, and her journalism is more descriptive of the deep state’s operations than analytical of their origins and function within the U.S. and global political economy. Her first book, *One Nation under Blackmail*, certainly fits the “deep politics” description - “the sordid union between intelligence and organized crime that gave rise to Jeffrey Epstein” - as the subtitle suggests. Increasingly, there is crossover between the COVID-Critical Community, critics of technocracy, deep politics and power structure researchers such that the COVID phenomenon - from the origin of the virus through the development and deployment of vaccines – is being categorized by many in these three groups as a deep event.<sup>120</sup> This argument is implied if not outright stated by Corbett, Christián, Woods, and Webb. Other deep politics and power structure researchers, like Aaron Good and Peter Phillips, come from a more democratic socialist political tradition and were more cautious in embracing COVID-19 as “deep event,” whereas the other cluster of researchers not.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> The best representation of that argument to date is Robinson, Piers. “Cock-up or Conspiracy? Understanding COVID-19 as a ‘Structural Deep Event.’” Piers Robinson’s Substack, July 30, 2023, <https://piersrobinson.substack.com/p/cock-up-or-conspiracy>,

<sup>121</sup> Hunter, Greg. “Trump is Molotov Cocktail You Can Throw on Crooked System-Catherine Austin Fitts,” USA Watchdog, October 23, 2016, <https://usawatchdog.com/trump-is-molotov-cocktail-you-can-throw-on-crooked-system-catherine-austin-fitts/>; “Donor Lookup – Catherine Fitts,” *Open Secrets*, <https://www.opensecrets.org/donor-lookup/results?name=Catherine+Fitts>, retrieved September 4, 2023. This insularity has led to some mutual suspicion and lack of cooperation within the deep politics research community: the later see former as ideologically dodgy, analytically incoherent, and overly conspiratorial in their thinking, while the former see the later as “statists” and slow to see the COVID phenomenon as a “deep event.” The author’s evidence for this suspicion is in part based on private conversations with some of these researchers but also years of communication with activists of either tendency.

Despite their differences, these groups can be considered political radicals prior to the last three years, even if all of them did not immediately perceive the pandemic as a deep event. COVID-19 would become a politically radicalizing event not only for some everyday citizens but for many of the scientific and medical professionals who emerged as leaders in the COVID-Critical community. Initially, the scientists and doctors who I followed for alternative COVID information began to ask themselves why the tools of their disciplines – nonpharmaceutical interventions (masks, social distancing), hospital protocols, PCR tests, vaccines, etc. - were being applied in what seemed to them an unsubstantiated, even dangerous ways. This suspicion was further enhanced when they were censored by social media sites like LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. To answer that question, they began to look to history and politics to explain what was happening around them, and a number found insight in Eisenhower’s STE phrase. Two of the more prominent voices, Drs. Robert W. Malone and Peter A. McCullough, as they were removed from Twitter, set up accounts on Substack, a San Francisco-based blogposting site. Drs. Malone and Peter McCullough have both used the STE phrase in their Substack posts.<sup>122</sup> Malone was an American physician and professor of pathology with a background in biochemistry and multiple patents related to mRNA technology and had worked within the U.S. Department of Defense’s Dynport Vaccine Company in the early 2000s as well as for DoD’s Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) in 2020 to find pre-approved drugs for the treatment of COVID. McCullough, until he began speaking out against U.S. COVID policy, was cardiologist at Baylor University

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<sup>122</sup> Malone, Robert W. "Mass Formation: Deployed on You After Over 200 Years of Study," *Who Is Robert Malone?* January 10, 2022, <https://rwmalonemd.substack.com/p/mass-formation-deployed-on-you-after> and "Propaganda, Corporatism, and the Hidden Global Coup," February 28, 2022, <https://rwmalonemd.substack.com/p/propaganda-corporatism-and-the-hidden>; McCullough, Peter. "Lurching From One Crisis to the Next: Reflections on the general state of affairs at the end of 2022," *Courageous Discourse*, December 31, 2022, <https://petermcculloughmd.substack.com/p/lurching-from-one-crisis-to-the-next>. Before Elon Musk purchased Twitter, quite a few medical and scientific professionals who had been censored on social media moved to Substack, including Drs. Jessica Rose, Paul Elias Alexander, and others.

(Waco, Texas) Medical Center and professor of medicine at Texas A&M University. In terms of publications and citations, they were both outstanding scholars in their respective fields: Malone has a lifetime h-index of 53 and McCullough has an h-index of 126.<sup>123</sup>

As Malone explained it, his transformation began with the contradictions between his own experience with mRNA vaccines and drug repurposing and U.S. government policy: “looking back, I am struck by how sheltered and naïve I was (pre-COVID), and how much my worldview and my role in it have been radically shifted by subsequent events.” He has come to believe that COVID was “exploited to advance the economic and political interests of a small group of people...authoritarian control by governments in coordination with large global corporations (big finance, big pharmaceutical, big media, and big technology).”<sup>124</sup> Malone agrees with Corbett that corporate-public partnerships are more akin to fascism than the ideal of transparent, democratic government of, for, and by the people. Borrowing a term from sociologist Sheldon Wolin, Malone sees the U.S. is following a path towards “inverted totalitarianism” run by a semi-concealed group of managers who more subtly deploy censorship, propaganda, demonetization, and other technological methods used by “public-private partnerships” to “nudge” citizens to accept elite prerogatives. Inverted totalitarianism is different

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<sup>123</sup> The h-index is based the number of citations and author has received from a set of their most cited papers. A score of 40 after twenty years of publishing characterizes an outstanding scholar, and a score of 60 after 20 years, or 90 after 30 years, characterizes truly unique scholar: Hirsch JE. An index to quantify an individual's scientific research output. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science U S A*. 102(46) 15 Nov 2005:16569-72, <https://www.pnas.org/doi/full/10.1073/pnas.0507655102>.

<sup>124</sup> Malone, Robert W. *Lies My Gov't Told Me: And the better future coming* (New York, NY: Skyhorse Publishing, 2022), xi, xxv, 3. There are over fifty references to the World Economic Forum or its acronym (WEF) in Malone's book and quite a few on his Substack as well, and there a numerous references to “technocracy” and “technocratic.” Likewise, there are many references to WEF on Dr. Peter McCullough's Substack. McCullough's writing on his Substack are focused on early treatments and risks associated with vaccines to prevent COVID. He leaves most but not all of the political writing on his Substack to his co-author of *The Courage to Face COVID-19: Preventing Hospitalization and Death While Battling the Bio-Pharmaceutical Complex*, John Leake, (Dallas, TX : Counterplay Books, 2022), a freelance author and translator with a Master's degree in philosophy from Boston University. Leake's critique is libertarian: he interviewed Mises Institute board member Steven Berger in “Crony Capitalism and Vaccine Mandates,” *Courageous Discourse*, August 21, 2023, <https://petermcculloughmd.substack.com/p/crony-capitalism-and-vaccine-mandates>.

from the archetypal examples of fascism pioneered by Mussolini and Hitler: charismatic, authoritarian cults of personality around leaders who govern primarily through the threat of violence, mass rallies, and the subordination of all culture to the state. The inverted totalitarians, on the other hand, do not abolish legislative bodies and civil liberties; these facades remain but they lack meaningful power to curtail the interest of the ruling elites.<sup>125</sup> Yet, Malone is not clear on what the political economy of this globe-spanning new world order is: is it a perversion of capitalism - “crony capitalism” - as the libertarians say?<sup>126</sup> Is it “corporativism,” or “Capitalism with Chinese characteristics: a two-tiered economy, with profitable monopolies and the state on top and socialism for the majority below?”<sup>127</sup> Malone considers socialism “a failed model for governance” and inimical to free speech, democratic principles, and the right to bear arms.<sup>128</sup> He says the World Economic Forum’s “stakeholder capitalism is just another word for the implementation of Marxism,” despite it being “absolutely illogical in a capitalist economic system.”<sup>129</sup>

Additional references to Eisenhower’s “scientific-technological elite” and “technocracy” abound as this author writes, listens, and reads the analyses of those who believe they see it in

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<sup>125</sup> Wolin, Sheldon S. *Democracy incorporated: Managed democracy and the specter of inverted totalitarianism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008. A similar description was made almost thirty years prior by Bertram M. Gross, political scientist and government economic advisor, in *Friendly fascism: The new face of power in America* (New York: M. Evans, 1980), rereleased as part of the “Forbidden Bookshelf” eBook series (NY: Open Road Media, 2016), edited by Mark Crispin Miller and Chris Hedges. Miller was obviously familiar with Gross’s work before the pandemic, but none of the researchers referred to in this paper have made reference to it. Miller faced censure from his colleagues at New York University for requiring his students to read scientific journal articles challenging the effectiveness of masks against respiratory viruses and had been prevented from teaching his course on propaganda.

<sup>126</sup> Malone, Robert W. "Crony Capitalism, Big Pharma and Vaccines," August 4, 2022, <https://rwmalonemd.substack.com/p/crony-capitalism-big-pharma-and-vaccines>.

<sup>127</sup> --. "The Great Reset: ‘Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics:’ Today's news, tomorrow's problems...," Who Is Robert Malone? February 14, 2022, <https://rwmalonemd.substack.com/p/the-great-reset-capitalism-with-chinese>.

<sup>128</sup> --. "On Liberty and A Well-Regulated Militia Freedom Must be Fought For and Defended," August 16, 2023, <https://rwmalonemd.substack.com/p/on-liberty-and-a-well-regulated-militia>.

<sup>129</sup> --. "Marxism: ‘You Will Own NOTHING and Be Happy,'" July 2, 2022, <https://rwmalonemd.substack.com/p/marxism-you-will-own-nothing-and>.

action, some of them as its targets. U.S. Senator Ron Johnson, Republican from Wisconsin, posted four clips, including the MIC and STE sections, as well as the entirety of Eisenhower's Farewell Address, to Twitter/X on August 14, 2023, adding "The Covid Cartel censoring truth and sabotaging early treatment...Scientific elites scare us with climate and Covid alarmism. Political elites exacerbate division by pushing hate and fear."<sup>130</sup> Three days prior, in an interview with Fox News and in relation to the same concern (government messaging against ivermectin as a treatment for COVID), he said: "We are going down a very dangerous path, but it is a path that is being laid out and planned by an elite group of people that want to take total control over our lives," associating the COVID crisis with a greater agenda.<sup>131</sup> Max Blumenthal, editor at the Grayzone, recently reflected on the fundraising site GoFundMe freezing the Grayzone's account to raise money to hire new journalists "due to some external concerns:"

"That's why the national security state prefers this model. It's kind of a totalitarian neoliberal model where the public has absolutely no due process, no say and no way of knowing who is banning them out of existence...taking us into a technocracy, just a hard technocracy with the illusion of liberal democracy. The best mechanism we have is...going to some alternative Silicon Valley company...but it's the same neoliberal model. That's not a way out of this."<sup>132</sup>

Similarly, Democratic presidential primary candidate, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., one of the first Twitter accounts to be suspended after the Biden Administration began its term on January 20, 2021, made a reference to Eisenhower's MIC and STE phrases when asked by former

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<sup>130</sup> <https://twitter.com/SenRonJohnson/status/1691099792523567104>.

<sup>131</sup> <https://twitter.com/SenRonJohnson/status/1690009000857710592>.

<sup>132</sup> "Matt Taibbi and Max Blumenthal on Neoliberal Censorship," *Useful Idiots* podcast, September 1, 2023, <https://www.usefulidiotspodcast.com/p/matt-taibbi-and-max-blumenthal-on#details> 12-31-13:43-. Max Blumenthal is primarily known for his books and reporting critical of U.S. foreign policy. He does not make obvious his politically partisan or ideological commitments or foundations, but it is a fair assumption that he considers himself "to the left" of Bernie Sanders. He is willing to work in coalition with libertarians and conservatives, unlike much of the U.S. left, based upon his appearances at and Defeat the Mandates rally on January 23, 2022 (<https://odysee.com/@TheGrayzone:c/max-blumenthal-slams-the-corporate-state:5>) in Los Angeles and the Rage Against the War Machine rally on February 19, 2023, in Washington, D.C. (<https://rageagainstawar.com/#Speakers>).

mainstream media journalist turned independent podcast host, Sharyll Atkinson, what drives politicians to censor on behalf of pharmaceutical companies:

...partially it's money. The pharmaceutical industry is now the biggest industry in the world. It's bigger than oil, it's even bigger than the military-industrial complex, but it's part of the military-industrial complex. When Eisenhower made his speech in 1961 warning of the military-industrial complex that would overwhelm and devour American democracy and turn us into an imperium abroad and a surveillance state at home, he also specifically devoted several paragraphs of that speech to talking about the medical cartel, the federal scientific, bureaucratic apparatus that was part of the medical-military-industrial complex... You can no longer distinguish where the intelligence agencies end and the pharmaceutical industry begins. It's an entanglement."<sup>133</sup>

RFK, Jr. did not use the STE phrase, although that is what he meant by “the federal scientific, bureaucratic apparatus.” A close reading of the historical literature suggests that Eisenhower had a much narrower view of “the scientific-technological elite” and their threat to “capture” public policy. Kennedy, like Woods, invoke Eisenhower’s STE phrase to explain contemporary phenomenon even if they attribute to him an understanding of the phenomenon that goes far beyond the context of his remarks.

Richard Damms re-examined Eisenhower’s farewell address, in particular the MIC phrase “in history and memory,” in 2018, and suggested that critics of the military-industrial complex, particularly from the political left, had interpreted it in a way not in keeping with Eisenhower’s intent: “While his words were being marshaled to justify anti-[Vietnam] war actions by the left, a war which he had indirectly initiated, Eisenhower was advising his successors to pursue the conflict more vigorously.”<sup>134</sup> This author affirms the same for the STE phrase: Eisenhower had a much more conservative use for both terms. However, there are many

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<sup>133</sup> "Censorship Forum with Matt Taibbi and Glenn Greenwald," *RFK Jr* podcast, Aug 31, 2023, <https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/rfkjr/episodes/Censorship-Forum-with-Matt-Taibbi-and-Glenn-Greenwald-e28p0qa>, 42:50-47:10

<sup>134</sup> Damms, Richard V. “Eisenhower's Farewell Address in history and memory.” In *Constructing presidential legacy: how we remember the American president*. Edinburgh University Press, 2018, 95.

ways in which contemporary critics understand and defend themselves against the excesses of the scientific-technological elite in ways that are in common with Eisenhower's encounter with them: both Eisenhower and the researchers profiled in this paper understand that the STE is intimately tied to the military-industrial complex: Corbett understands research into 4IR technologies are capital-intensive, and U.S. politicians and the public are far more likely to accept publicly subsidized research in the name of national security. For the industries involved, the secrecy around issues of national security also helps protect this research from public scrutiny and economic competition. Webb was among the first to uncover connections between DARPA and the SARS-CoV-2 virus.<sup>135</sup> Other COVID-Critical researchers, Katherine Watt and Sasha Latypova, see the entire affair as a product of the national security establishment and the military-industrial complex:

Covid policy was managed by the National Security Council (NSC) acting on war footing and countermeasures were contracted for by the Department of Defense (DoD) and Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) without any effective regulatory oversight at any stage along the process: President Trump declared a Public Health Emergency (PHE) on March 13, 2020...Under a PHE, medical "countermeasures" are not regulated or safeguarded as normal pharmaceutical products...the United States Department of Defense (DoD) directed, oversaw and managed the development, manufacture and distribution of nearly all Covid countermeasures, largely utilizing DoD's previously established network of military contractors and consortia.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Webb, Whitney. "Coronavirus Gives a Dangerous Boost to DARPA's Darkest Agenda," *The Last American Vagabond*, May 2, 2020, <https://www.thelastamericanvagabond.com/coronavirus-gives-dangerous-boost-darpas-darkest-agenda/>; "Bioterror War Games, DARPA, Technocracy & COVID-1984," *Unlimited Hangout*, May 9, 2020, <https://unlimitedhangout.com/2020/05/press/whitney-webb-bioterror-war-games-darpa-technocracy-covid-1984/>. This video was deleted by YouTube for allegedly violating their terms of service, but a video with a similar title is available on Odyssey: Morić, Hrvoje. "Whitney Webb: Bioterror War Games, DARPA, Technocracy & COVID-1984," *Geopolitics & Empire*, March 8, 2021, <https://odysee.com/@GeopoliticsAndEmpire:f/WhitneyWebb-Bioterror-WarGames-Technocracy:4>.

<sup>136</sup> Latypova, Sasha. "Memo Sent to Sen Johnson and His Staff in December 2022 Detailing the crime committed by the US Government against all of us," *Due Diligence and Art*, September 7, 2023, <https://sashalatyova.substack.com/p/memo-sent-to-sen-johnson-and-his>. Latypova, like Malone, was an insider: she was a pharmaceutical research and development executive and entrepreneur for over 25 years with clients including Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson, Novartis, AstraZeneca, GSK, and many smaller biotech companies. To that end, she interacted with the FDA and other regulatory agencies on behalf of her clients.

Also, like Eisenhower, many citizens sought second opinions from equally competent but less politically connected medical and scientific experts on all things COVID-related to challenge the expert advice being served to them from the politically, economically, and ideologically networked.

There are many other parallels between Eisenhower's early days of the Cold War and the COVID era: not only the U.S. DoD but U.S. intelligence agencies were deeply involved in each period. Avril Haines, who became the Director of National Intelligence on the second day of the Biden Administration, had previously served as Deputy Director of the CIA and Deputy National Security Advisor under the Obama administration, was a key participant in Event 201, a high-level pandemic exercise hosted on October 18, 2019, in New York City by the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security in partnership with the World Economic Forum and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.<sup>137</sup> Dr. Andrew G. Huff, former EcoHealth Alliance vice president and senior scientist from 2014 to 2016, claims that Dr. Peter Daszak, president of EHA - the nonprofit pass-through organization through which multiple U.S. government agencies, including USAID, DTRA, DARPA, the NIH funded the collection and experimentation on coronaviruses - worked closely with the CIA and was used by them to collect intelligence on foreign laboratory capacity at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, the place from which SARS-Cov-2 may have originated. According to Huff, the entire program never could predict when and where a pandemic might emerge; rather, EcoHealth Alliance was used to "bypass the ban on dual

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<sup>137</sup> Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security. "Tabletop Exercise: Event 201," *Center for Health Security*, <https://centerforhealthsecurity.org/our-work/tabletop-exercises/event-201-pandemic-tabletop-exercise>. The Center has said the exercise was not a "prediction" of nCov-2019 but scenario planning for "fictional coronavirus pandemic." "Statement about nCoV and our pandemic exercise." January 24, 2020, <https://centerforhealthsecurity.org/2020/statement-about-ncov-and-our-pandemic-exercise-0>. An analysis of what the CIA knew and when they knew it would help citizens determine how theoretical or cognizant this exercise was. During the Trump Administration, Haines worked at Columbia University, WestExec Advisors, a political consulting firm established by the Biden Administration's Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, whose client list includes technology start-ups seeking government contracts, and the Brookings Institution.

use research of concern (DURC) infectious disease research that can be used for peaceful or harmful purposes...and set China up to fail.”<sup>138</sup> The CIA’s venture capital start-up, In-Q-Tel, funded and oversaw a spin-off company, Resilience, previously known as National Resilience and Resilience Government Services, to manufacture Moderna’s vaccine against COVID.<sup>139</sup> In-Q-Tel, before the world learned through mass media but after U.S. intelligence agencies knew of SARS-CoV-2’s existence, considered the need for “leveraging digital health technologies during large-scale epidemics.”<sup>140</sup> Recently, staff on the U.S. House of Representatives Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic and Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence received testimony from a CIA employee alleging agency leadership offered “significant monetary incentive” to the six of seven members of a CIA Covid Discovery Team who had concluded SARS-CoV-2 was of lab origin to change their position to zoonotic emergence.<sup>141</sup>

Another parallel between these two eras include role of the mainstream media in carrying forth the power elite narrative, massive use of public-private propaganda, and the use of the state to suppress dissident. Every aspect of the U.S. government’s COVID narrative was uncritically echoed in mainstream media, from its origins to the efficacy of lockdowns, masks, and early

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<sup>138</sup> Huff, Andrew G. *The Truth about Wuhan: How I uncovered the biggest lie in history*. New York: Skyhorse, 2022.

<sup>139</sup> Higgins-Dunn, Noah. “Moderna taps National Resilience’s new Canadian manufacturing site for COVID-19 vaccine production duties,” *Fierce Pharma*, September 8, 2021, <https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/moderna-taps-national-resilience-s-new-canadian-manufacturing-site-for-covid-19-vaccine>. Independent researcher and artist Destiny Rezendes has been the lead researcher on this front; she has many threads on her X since she published that article; see her account [https://twitter.com/dezzie\\_rezzie](https://twitter.com/dezzie_rezzie) and search for “Resilience.” See also her article “The Bio-Warfare of Terror,” *The Dez Says*, April 5, 2023, <https://thedezsays.com/2023/04/05/526/>.

<sup>140</sup> In-Q-Tel. b.next. “Roundtable Report - Leveraging Digital Health Technologies during large-scale Epidemics.” IQT.org, December 5, 2019, <https://www.iqt.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Digital-Health-Roundtable-Report.pdf>.

<sup>141</sup> United States. House of Representatives. Oversight Committee. “Testimony From CIA Whistleblower Alleges New Information on COVID-19 Origins,” September 12, 2023, <https://oversight.house.gov/release/testimony-from-cia-whistleblower-alleges-new-information-on-covid-19-origins/>. This appears to have been the case at the U.S. State Department as well. See: Zweig, David. “State Dept Investigator: US Govt Is Withholding Critical Information About The Lab Leak,” *Silent Lunch*, March 5, 2023, <https://www.silentlunch.net/p/state-dept-investigator-us-govt-is>.

treatments, to the safety and effectiveness of vaccines. The Trusted News Initiative, a consortium of Big Tech and media companies lead by the BBC but including Facebook, *Financial Times*, Google, *The Hindu*, *The Wall Street Journal*, AFP, CBC/Radio-Canada, Microsoft, Reuters, et. al., launched in 2019 “to protect their audiences and users from disinformation, particularly around moments of jeopardy, including elections.”<sup>142</sup> On 10 December 2020, they announced they would be targeting “vaccine disinformation” just three weeks after Pfizer announced the results of their Phase 3 study trial.<sup>143</sup> The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, through the COVID Community Corps, doled out \$13 billion to media companies, entertainers, social media influencers, “health professionals, scientists, community organizations, faith leaders, businesses, rural stakeholders, civil rights organizations, sports leagues and athletes, and Americans from all walks of life” to convince citizens to get vaccinated.<sup>144</sup> In addition to public funds, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation contributed over \$250 million to journalistic outlets as well as the forementioned Event 201; the Gates Foundation went from being the second to the largest funder of the World Health Organization, the global advocate of lockdowns and vaccines, after the Trump Administration withdrew financial support, and “Agenda Contributor” to the World Economic Forum.<sup>145</sup> Despite claims of editorial independence, Gates

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<sup>142</sup> British Broadcasting Corporation. “New collaboration steps up fight against disinformation,” BBC, 7 September 2019, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2019/disinformation>.

<sup>143</sup> --. “Trusted News Initiative (TNI) to combat spread of harmful vaccine disinformation and announces major research project,” BBC, 10 December 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/mediacentre/2020/trusted-news-initiative-vaccine-disinformation>.

<sup>144</sup> United States. Department of Health and Human Services. “U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Launches Nationwide Network of Trusted Voices to Encourage Vaccination in Next Phase of COVID-19 Public Education Campaign” HHS, April 1, 2021, <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/04/01/hhs-launches-nationwide-network-trusted-voices-encourage-vaccination-next-phase-covid-19-public-education-campaign.html>.

<sup>145</sup> Cheney, Catherine. “‘Big concerns’ over Gates foundation’s potential to become largest WHO donor,” *Devex*, 05 June 2020, <https://www.devex.com/news/big-concerns-over-gates-foundation-s-potential-to-become-largest-who-donor-97377>.

Foundation grants “shape the public discourse on everything from global health to education to agriculture...restricts how the money is used,” and exercises editorial influence.<sup>146</sup>

The flipside to propaganda, or “public information campaigns,” has always been censorship. While social media companies were demonetizing, disabling, or shadow-banning accounts, no one knew for sure, though many speculated, the impetus to do so was coming from outside these companies. After Elon Musk bought Twitter and opened up its internal communication to journalists, the role of the U.S. government became clear. Author Michael Shellenberger detailed the “Censorship-Industrial Complex” in his testimony before the U.S. House Select Committee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government.<sup>147</sup> Other journalists, including Matt Taibbi, who testified with Shellenberger, produced a similar report, a “citizen's starter kit to understanding the new global information cartel,” as they called it, later that spring.<sup>148</sup> This should not be too surprising, as the “upper ranks of Big Tech [are] swarming with ex-CIA and FBI” and other intelligence agencies as well as the Atlantic Council.<sup>149</sup>

Pressure from governments and concentrated capital on social media and fundraising platforms to censor and demonetize dissidents and tools like vaccine passes may be the first steps towards a “hard” digital technocracy, or they may be temporary exceptions in otherwise liberal states. While Chinese-like social credit scores may not be a reality for Americans today, political

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<sup>146</sup> Schwab, Tim. “Journalism’s Gates keepers,” *Columbia Journalism Review*, August 21, 2020, <https://www.cjr.org/criticism/gates-foundation-journalism-funding.php>.

<sup>147</sup> Shellenberger, Michael. “The Censorship Industrial Complex: U.S. Government Support For Domestic Censorship And Disinformation Campaigns, 2016 – 2022,” March 9, 2023, <https://judiciary.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/republicans-judiciary.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/shellenberger-testimony.pdf>.

<sup>148</sup> Schmidt, Susan; Lowenthal, Andrew; Wyatt, Tom; Taibbi, Matt; Techno Fog; C(ambell?), Genève, and Matt Farwell. “Report on the Censorship-Industrial Complex: The Top 50 Organizations to Know,” *Racket News*, May 10, 2023, <https://www.racket.news/p/report-on-the-censorship-industrial-74b>.

<sup>149</sup> Mangiaracina, Emily. “Upper ranks of Big Tech swarming with ex-CIA and FBI, ‘agents of the national security state,’” *LifeSite News*, 23 February 2023, <https://www.lifesitenews.com/analysis/upper-ranks-of-big-tech-swarming-with-ex-cia-and-fbi-agents-of-the-national-security-state/>.

dissidents already experiencing these early interventions are examining the rhetoric and strategies of their advocates for signs of potentially heightened control on the near horizon, much as Eisenhower warned the American people “public policy could itself become the captive of a scientific-technological elite.” It is important for those who invoke Eisenhower’s warning that the impetus for digital technocracy does not emerge from the STE, although they are necessary to the build it, except when those scientific-technological elite – people like Bill Gates, Peter Thiel, Elon Musk, or Eric Schmidt, all of whom are also enriched through military contracts – become members of the most important power network: the economic elite. Musk, despite being the wealthiest person in the world according to Bloomberg and Forbes, is still dependent upon government contracts and lenders like Morgan Stanley, Bank of America and Barclays.<sup>150</sup> For “going rogue” by releasing the #TwitterFiles, well-healed and connected advocacy groups have placed pressure Musk’s X.com advertisers.<sup>151</sup>

Although democratic socialist, deep politics researchers seek greater government intervention into the market, libertarians see existing state intervention as leading to “crony capitalism,” a distortion of the market, and conservative critics of the STE call the Transnational Capitalist Class “globalists” selling out their home country’s national interests, they all recognize, unlike Eisenhower, that the drive towards digital technocracy starts from the wealthiest. A common, political and economic leveling program requires a common rhetoric, but

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<sup>150</sup> SpaceX has received \$15.3 billion in government contracts since 2003, Tesla has benefited from tax credits estimated at around \$3 billion, and Musk is seeking an additional \$885 million in government funding to support broadband access in rural communities via his satellite internet company, StarLink: Fernholz, Tim. “Elon Musk’s SpaceX and Tesla get far more government money than NPR.” *Quartz*, April 13, 2023, <https://qz.com/elon-musks-spacex-and-tesla-get-far-more-government-mon-1850332884>; Hirsch, Lauren; Rennison, Joe and Conger, Kate. “Elon Musk’s Renewed Twitter Bid Puts Pressure on Wall St. Banks Backing Him.” *New York Times*, October 5, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/05/business/elon-musk-twitter-deal.html>.

<sup>151</sup> Rosen, Armin. “Who Funds the Campaign to Smear and Pressure Elon Musk?,” *Tablet Magazine*, May 06, 2022, <https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/who-funds-the-campaign-to-smear-and-pressure-elon-musk>.

a focus on the “scientific-technological elite” is a decoy and distortion. Come now, and let us reason together.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Holy Bible (KJV), Isaiah 1:18.