

Military-Industry Ties Hit

It's not a conspiracy, but a natural partnership. Nevertheless, that partnership threatens to become a Frankenstein's monster that could grow to control the federal government that created it.

The partnership in question is the military-industrial complex. Its dangers were detailed in Washington recently by a Michigan State University economist.

DR. WALTER ADAMS, in a paper presented to the American Economic Association, said:

"The complex is not a conspiracy between the 'merchants of death' and a band of lusty generals, but a natural coalition of interest groups with an economic, political or professional stake in defense and space."

Adams took issue with Harvard economist J. Kenneth Galbraith's theory that the emergence of giant, all-powerful corporations is inevitable in the new industrial state.

"Concentration is often the result of unwise, man-made, discriminatory, privilege-creating governmental action," he said.

"Defense contracts, research and development support, patent policy, tax privileges, stockpiling arrangements, tariffs and quotas and subsidies have far from a neutral effect on our industrial structure. In all these institutional arrangements government plays a crucial, if not a decisive role."

ADAMS SAID the military-industrial complex includes the armed services, industrial contractors, labor unions and a large segment of Congress itself.

"Every time the Congress authorizes a military appropriation, it creates a new constituency (i.e., propaganda machine) with a vested interest in its perpetuation and aggrandizement."

The proposed \$40 billion "thick" anti-ballistic-missile system involves an estimated 28 private contractors with plants in 42 states, Adams said. This means 84 senators and 172 House members have a built-in interest in the project.

Adams said there is little hope "the corporate guard of auditors in the General Accounting Office... or a handful of disinterested university analysts will constitute a dependable and adequate force of countervailing power."

THE PETROLEUM industry was cited as an example of a government-sanctioned cartel that stifles competition with the blessing of Congress.

"Under the antitrust laws, it is a per se offense for private firms to fix prices or allocate markets, yet in the name of conservation the government does for the oil companies what they could not legally do for themselves," Adams charged.

He noted also the oil companies receive a more visible favor, the 27 1/2 per cent depletion allowance against gross income.

ADAMS SAID the government should not interfere in those markets which, in the absence of such interference, would be workably competitive.

And the government should preserve and use effective yardsticks for measuring and controlling monopoly performance, he said, adding:

"The public must recognize that the servants of the military-industrial state cannot be allowed to become its masters—either in the name of 'free enterprise' or under the guise of promoting the national security."

Court Finds Itself With A Menagerie

When Alexander Nicholas Orloff Jr., who just happened to own a pet shop, filed a petition of voluntary bankruptcy in Denver, the federal bankruptcy court there didn't realize what it was getting into.

The court is now the technical guardian of a menagerie that includes two box constrictors, a tiger lizard, four other lizards, two geckos, two parakeets, four canaries, one gerbil, 12 alligators, tropical fish, hamsters, mice, rats, guinea pigs, rabbits and a few unidentified creatures.

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