President Eisenhower called it the **military-industrial complex**. Others have called it an incestuous family network, where political, economic and bureaucratic interests mesh and where cozy relations are nurtured not only by mutual back-scratching, but also by a flow of corporate executives crisscrossing between high Pentagon jobs and the defense industry and a steady stream of retiring colonels, admirals, and generals moving right into jobs with Pentagon contractors. It is not unique to the Defense Department. The paradigm operates for virtually every department in the executive branch, for every major interest group, for every region of the country.

**Iron Triangle:**

An *alliance* between a congressional committee, an interest group, and an executive agency that serves each one’s interest (often at the expense of the general public).

**Concepts:** *sub-governments, issue networks, power complexes*

**Examples:** *medical-industrial complex; auto-industrial complex; agricultural-industrial complex*