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Regional Missile Defense from a Global Perspective

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To be sure, there are limits to how much we should draw from these two conflicts, especially since they have not ended yet. Furthermore, the editors acknowledge that whatever lessons might be learned will not necessarily prevent future failures. While the two conflicts are linked temporally, differing rationales for beginning them, different presidential administrations, and different adversaries limit the value of larger comparisons. Inputs from our allies and erstwhile partners—absent here—also would be beneficial to study. Yet the book is rich in detail and analysis, all underscoring the lesson of a decade-plus: that, while the United States might be able to support and enable its international partners, it cannot solve all their problems by itself.

DEREK S. REVERON



Regional Missile Defense from a Global Perspective, ed. Catherine McArdle Kelleher and Peter Dombrowski. Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2015. 328 pages. \$29.95.

As a collective voice on the topic, *Regional Missile Defense from a Global Perspective* offers a comprehensive discussion of the history, development, and present state of ballistic missile defense (BMD), infused with a distinctive blend of technical aspects and analysis of the geopolitical forces that shaped it. Using the Reagan administration's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) as an initial framework for discussion, the works of several notable experts in the fields of international studies, nuclear policy, national defense, foreign affairs, and political science are combined to yield a nuanced overview of the subject, expertly delineating the

parallel development of technological advances and ongoing political realities for participating nations. Threaded throughout the book are significant discussions on the implications of a regionally based missile-defense system having more than just a regional impact.

On the basis of operational concepts developed to protect London from V-2 rockets during World War II, U.S. efforts initially were envisioned to protect select cities from Soviet or Chinese intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) attacks. When this proved to be technically and financially prohibitive, scaled-back systems designed primarily to defend ICBM sites and their capabilities for strategic offensive operations were constructed. Arms-limitation talks between the superpowers during the early seventies further reduced the scope of this capability. However, because of President Reagan's concern during his presidency about the lack of an effective BMD for the country and his preference for a strategic alternative to mutually assured destruction, SDI was developed. With the overall goal of eliminating the threat posed by Soviet ICBMs, all aspects of ongoing research were combined under one program.

This point in history is the starting point for the book; from there it begins to construct the foundation for an examination of the technological challenges of developing a missile defense and the political realities these developments foster. Part 1, "U.S. Policies and Programs" (p. 17), starts with an examination of BMD policies as they evolved during the Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush administrations and some of the documents that defined the actual threat, examined technical controversies, and captured

congressional debates. This section concludes by documenting succinctly the Obama administration's challenges in developing a limited missile-defense capability while effectively integrating with our NATO allies in implementing missile defense in Europe.

Part 2, "Regional Dynamics" (p. 105), begins an engaging discussion by experts on the development, deployment, and subsequent policy impacts of BMD in the European, Levantine, and Middle East theaters. Contributing authors then examine issues such as the weakening of stability and a proliferation of additional BMD systems and associated counterefforts, which at times have led to a "one-upmanship" competition among regional players. The collection of essays builds the appropriate situational awareness for students of missile defense, and in 313 pages provides the reader, whether actively engaged in BMD responsibilities or merely interested, with an extensive and focused analysis by experts in their respective fields. The absence of an overemphasis on technological details enhances a welcome breadth of viewpoints that makes this volume a valuable addition to the curriculum of any BMD course of study.

The book also would serve well as the basis for an annual review and update of the complex issues surrounding missile defense, thereby providing a valuable resource as other, associated defense concepts mature. Its comprehensive scope could leave the reader questioning the appropriateness of a regionally based missile-defense system mind-set, given the global strategic impacts evident in not only the main players conceiving, constructing, and operating such systems but the interconnectivity that comes with the existence of partner

nations, the reality of international military-industrial complexes, and the difficulty in limiting the effects of any BMD mission on the stability of cooperative security agreements. As a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts, Ms. Kelleher and Mr. Dombrowski's effort clearly delineates the blurring of lines between regional and strategic missile defense on many levels. As the United States continues to evolve existing systems, enhancing integrated capabilities and international cooperation becomes even more important.

A convincing case for this is made evident beginning in part 3, "Critiquing Global Analyses" (p. 239). The editors' summation of the future of BMD describes the challenges facing future U.S. administrations as they endeavor to keep pace with rapidly evolving views on the effectiveness of BMD with regard to strategic defensive postures. Given the public scrutiny that continues to focus more closely on the consequences of major military applications of capabilities such as BMD, it will be difficult to act regionally without immediately considering global stability and strategic partnerships, as well as to work within the financial constraints existing in any national economy.

Although not a focal point of this book, perhaps the next edition could address the consequences of nonstate actors acquiring some limited BMD capability and the security challenges that would come with this development.

Regional Missile Defense from a Global Perspective yields a comprehensive set of knowledgeable viewpoints and constructs the appropriate framework for ongoing discussions on a timely and complex defense issue.

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