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The Defense Procurement Mess

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ment and testing of such a system would signal America's unmistakable intent to abandon the ABM Treaty and thus make moot questions of how the treaty might be strengthened by limitations on various technological developments. Likewise, he is less concerned with the impact of "exotic technologies" (e.g., lasers and particle beams) because they have less "creep-out" potential in the immediate future.

What this book purports to do, it does well. However, its narrow focus restricts its usefulness to those interested specifically in those technological developments that threaten the viability of the ABM Treaty regime in the immediate future.

D.K. PACE
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Gregory, William H. *The Defense Procurement Mess: A Twentieth Century Fund Essay*. Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1989. 219pp. \$19.95

Do not dismiss this book with a "Ho hum, another one of these muckrakers." Mr. Gregory presents a skillful tutorial on the defense systems procurement labyrinth. He identifies the issues from the competing perspectives of the various participants, he provides many examples of recent procurements, and he offers prescriptive suggestions for corrective actions.

Defense procurement has been a nightmare of horror stories about

cost and schedule overruns and performance shortfalls. Everyone has heard about the toilet seats and hammers, about amphibious vehicles that can't swim and aircraft that can't fly to specification. The American people have become justifiably critical of the stewardship practiced by the Defense Department and its component military services. No one has been spared. It is scant comfort that criticism and blame also attach to the Congress and to American industry. There is the stench of scandal—of violations of the public trust—by high officials. Mr. Gregory draws apt parallels to the tawdry reputation of the sutlers who supplied and provisioned the army during the Civil War and the Indian Wars.

Mr. Gregory brings to this work a lifetime of involvement with the defense systems acquisition world as a journalist and as editor-in-chief of *Aviation Week and Space World* (a position that he held for thirty years). His presentation is evenhanded. He provides a clear description of the environment and the pressures that impinge upon people at every level. At the same time, his measured cadences of illumination land like hammer blows. How, the reader asks, can we in the United States permit this farce to continue? How indeed!

If there is a central thrust to the cures that Mr. Gregory proposes, it is to curb the penchant for overmanagemnt and overregulation. It would do the author an injustice to characterize his approach as one of

laissez-faire toward industry. But it is more that than not. The question then arises as to whether the modern American business community with its MBA-focused, next quarter profit and loss statement fixation possesses the ethical and conceptual capabilities required to regulate itself. On the other hand, does Congress? Do we in the defense systems acquisition community?

The defense professional (in or out of uniform) can scarcely afford to be ignorant of procurement policy developments. William Gregory and the Twentieth Century Fund have provided a valuable contribution to understanding what is wrong and what the consequences may be if we don't fix the system.

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Dertouzos, Michael L. et al. *Made In America: Regaining the Productive Edge*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Commission on Industrial Productivity, 1989. 344pp. \$17.95

The harmful effects that could arise from an eroded capacity for timely industrial response have been repeatedly demonstrated during war games. The health of American industry is fundamental to our pursuit of viable national security policies.

Still, in real life, product lines such as consumer electronics, steel, and automobiles have all but disappeared from the American manufacturing base; and the disappearance of

American-made end items has been accompanied by atrophy in the supplier tiers. The implication for war is that our industry may not be able to produce. The implications for peace are found in our continuously worsening balance of trade, in our shrinking economic opportunities, and in the ultimate threat to our standard of living.

The authors of *Made in America* examine what went wrong with America's industrial productivity and propose ways to return the U.S. economy to the path of high productivity growth. Their proposals will require major restructuring of thought and practice in government, industry, labor, and education. The tone is positive and exciting—almost Rooseveltian!

The authors open with a multiple-count indictment of American industry: its inferior products; its inefficiency; its indifferent, ill-trained work force; the focus of its management on quick, short-term profits; and its design, engineering, and research community whose achievements have been surpassed in a growing number of fields. They document these charges through a series of industrial sector studies: automobile, chemical, commercial aircraft, consumer-electronic, machine-tool, semiconductor, and so on. They seek to establish causative factors, to identify "best practice," and to generalize indications of potentially corrective policies and actions.

Among these "best practices" are *simultaneous* improvement in quality,