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The "Space Deterrence: The Delicate Balance of Risk" study by the Eisenhower Center for Space and Defense Studies has much merit to it. First, to undertake the task at all is praiseworthy given the enormity and importance of the topic. Second, the study contains many sensible points, ranging from the uncertain nature of deterrence to measures needed to physically protect space systems that policy makers and students of strategy would do well to note. But as noteworthy as the Space Deterrence study is, there are two wider points to consider that are not found in its pages. The omission of these points are not necessarily the fault of the authors of the study, given the parameters set out by the study's sponsor, but they are worth pondering nonetheless.

First, the aim of the study is perhaps overly ambitious. There is no guarantee that deterrence will work, but there are many things a state can do to maximize its chances of success in the deterrence mission. Maximizing the chances of success, however, is incredibly resource demanding, and not just in terms of materiel and finances. For example, in order to give deterrence a fair chance of success, sustained, disciplined, and focused political will is required. Such a commodity is not always in abundance, especially if politicians do not care about the stakes or have convinced themselves that deterrence does not require political support[41] Such a commitment of scarce resources is only plausible if the political stakes are high enough, and as a result it is doubtful if policy makers are truly serious about deterring attacks against space systems. Instead, such a massive undertaking is best done in the service of vital policy interests, such as utilizing a state's entire military capability (to include space systems), diplomatic acumen, and economic power in combination to deter other states from attacking United States territories and interests. Deterrence must be considered holistically, not just in terms of particular technologies.

Second, even if one were to accept the notion that scarce resources be spent on deterring attacks against one particular part of the U.S. military's vast capabilities, there is a woeful lack of thinking in policy circles about the very real prospect of deterrence failure. The United States could devote massive resources to space protection measures and invest a great deal of political will to deter attacks against space systems, yet all of this may well come to nothing. Adversaries may still feel that their best chance of success against overwhelming U.S. military might is to attack U.S. space systems despite efforts to deter against such attacks. In the face of this kind of

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[41]Much like politicians in the United Kingdom, who have mistakenly convinced themselves that Britain's nuclear arsenal has little, if any, political and therefore, strategic purpose. See Hew Strachan, "The Strategic Gap in British Defense Policy," *Survival* 51: 4 (August-September 2009): 56-57.

deterrence failure, what would the United States do? One way to avoid such a scenario is to strive for mission success without space systems in all defense planning and exercises – an effort that may have a deterrent value in-and-of-itself.

Lastly, as worthy as the Space Deterrence study is, one cannot help but hold the suspicion that the powers that ultimately approved the Space Deterrence study may have been looking at deterrence as a cheap way out of the thorny issue of space protection. Naturally, this author would be happy to be proven wrong about this suspicion, but if there is but a sliver of truth to the charge then policy makers should beware the temptation of using deterrence as an abrogation of strategic thinking. Space protection is essential for the future well being of U.S. space power and will not come cheap.