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## The F-22 Has Played No Role in Iraq or Afghanistan

Michael Auslin ("The Case for Reviving the F-22 Fighter," Feb. 24) disregards the total cost of the F-22 program but factors in cost overruns for the F-35 to help his argument. At every stage in its development, the actual costs of the F-22 have exceeded projections. The F-22 is still at least twice as expensive as the F-35, and three times more expensive than the highly capable F-15s that it will replace.

Mr. Auslin also overlooks that the F-22 has played no role in the wars we are fighting today in Iraq and Afghanistan, instead raising the unlikely specter of conflict with China or Russia. China is currently spending only about 25% of what the U.S. spends on its military and dedicates most of its attention to containing the desires for freedom of its own people. Russia, with its shrinking population and weak economy, is simply not up to the task of threatening the U.S. militarily.

With the U.S. facing one of the most urgent fiscal crises in its history, the Pentagon should not be seeking another fancy aircraft in search of a mission. The U.S. military budget should not be based on confronting an adversary that exists mainly in the fevered imaginations of a few.

### **Christopher Preble**

*Cato Institute*

*Washington*

Mr. Auslin documents significant differences in performance capabilities between the F-22 and the F-35 that have consequences in securing global aims for our nation that are vital to our economic and security requirements. "Cheaper" and "more" ignores the problem experienced by both the Germans and the Brits in the Battle of Britain: the rapid loss of experienced pilots and the difficulty of replacing them. Competent combatants are the most important resource to conserve. What works in Afghanistan won't do in conflict with those fielding an array of sophisticated weapons and defense systems. The media and the public count casualties, not weapons costs and losses.

### **M. Michael Dorr**

*Kildeer, Ill.*

The Lockheed-Martin F-35, unlike the F-22 Raptor, is an international fighter with its production and development costs shared among the initial partnering countries. This historically has tended to drive down long-term ownership costs. The F-22 was always banned from export even though strong overseas demand remains. If Congress allows an F-22 production restart shared with allies, as it now permits with the F-35, costs will diminish and many new threats will remain in check.

### **George Kuda**

3/2/2011

Letters to the Editor: The F-22 Has Pla...

*Somers, Conn.*

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