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New CNAS Report Examines F-35, American Power and the Global Defense Industry

WASHINGTON, DC, FEBRUARY 22, 2010 – Secretary of Defense Robert Gates' recent firing of the F-35 Program Manager has heightened concerns in the policy community that the plane is failing to meet its economic and military objectives. But in a [new report](#), CNAS Non-Resident Senior Fellow [Ethan Kapstein](#) suggests that the multinational F-35 exemplifies the complexity of the Pentagon's global acquisition strategy.



In the report [Arsenal's End? American Power and the Global Defense Industry](#), Kapstein argues that the Pentagon has abandoned the post-war American strategy of serving as the free world's "arsenal" and instead has focused on becoming the "hub" of a global defense-industrial network. Far from being an isolated case of poor program management, Kapstein argues, the F-35 could exemplify deeper problems with Pentagon acquisition strategy. Addressing those problems, however, would require making data on international defense procurement available to the research community, Kapstein points out.

Unlike the majority of defense acquisition analyses, which tend to focus on the causes of cost overruns and delays that are associated with the procurement of nearly every major weapons platform, [Arsenal's End?](#) focuses on some of the deeper changes shaping the structure of America's defense-industrial base, changes that could have a significant impact on the nation's ability to prosecute major conflicts in the future.

[Read the full report here.](#)

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