

Title: No Fly Zone? Assessing USAF Options for Countering China's A2AD Capabilities

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## **SYNOPSIS:**

For many years China has been building anti-access / area denial (A2AD) forces to undermine US power projection capabilities into Maritime East Asia (MEA). The United States has responded by developing new operational concepts and weapons, designed to permit US forces to operate effectively in the region without excessive exposure to Chinese attacks. Where does this competition stand? This paper focuses on one of the core pillars of US power projection — land-based theater air power — and asks: are the USAF's efforts to reduce vulnerability through dispersion, maneuver, missile defenses, base hardening, counter-ISR, and other steps likely to succeed? We create a new, open-source, transparent model that allows the user to vary US deployment strategies, operational concepts, and active and passive defenses, to explore the ability of land-based air power to contribute to key US missions in MEA. The results have implications for both wartime outcomes and peacetime US alliance strategy.

## **BIOs:**

Daryl Press is a Professor of Government at Dartmouth and the Director of the Dartmouth Initiative on Global Security. His research focuses on U.S. foreign policy, deterrence, and the future of warfare. He has published two books, *Calculating Credibility* (2005) and *The Myth of the Nuclear Revolution* (2020), and his work has appeared in leading academic journals such as *International Security*, the *American Political Science Review*, and *Security Studies*, as well as in popular outlets including *Foreign Affairs*, *The New York Times*, and *The Atlantic Monthly*. Press is the co-founder of the Strategic Forces Bootcamp, in partnership with Sandia National Laboratories, and the Seminar on Conventional Force Analysis—a project to revitalize the field of open-source conventional military analysis. His current research is on the changing military balance in Asia and its implications for U.S. foreign policy. Press received his undergraduate education at the University of Chicago and his PhD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Nicholas Anderson is Assistant Professor of International Affairs at the Elliott School of International Affairs at The George Washington University. His research focuses on territorial conflict, military intervention, conventional military operations, and East Asian security. His research has been published in *International Security*, *International Interactions*, and *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, among other outlets. He received his Ph.D. in political science from Yale University.