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THESIS

**FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE MARINE CORPS
BASING IN THE PACIFIC: OKINAWA PROTEST AND
THE DEFENSE POLICY REVIEW INITIATIVE**

by

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June 2021

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**FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE MARINE CORPS BASING IN THE PACIFIC:
OKINAWA PROTEST AND THE DEFENSE POLICY REVIEW INITIATIVE**

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ABSTRACT

Antibase sentiments in Okinawa challenge the U.S.–Japan alliance and restrain U.S. military operations at a moment when the balance of power is shifting in East Asia. U.S. bases in Japan are vital for maintaining a credible forward presence that safeguards allied interests. Sustained pressure from protest has compelled the USMC to reduce force posture by repositioning farther from the region. The Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI) outlines the plan to realign 55% of the force from Okinawa, predominantly to Guam, by FY2031. To explain the pressure on U.S. access, this thesis identifies the most significant drivers of U.S. base protest in four general categories: proximity, sovereignty, democratic responsiveness, and external threat perception. Within each category, factors were examined from general, Japan-, and Okinawa-specific vantages to delineate their significance in explaining protest. The analysis finds that proximity and external threat perception significantly influence protest. The DPRI has mitigated many drivers of protest, specifically those associated with factors identified in Okinawa, suggesting protest will decrease in the region. However, such actions also inhibit military operations. The U.S.–Japan alliance must achieve a Host Nation Support Agreement that complements the DPRI to enable multilateral military operations intent on enforcing the authority of the internationally recognized order within the region.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFB	Air Force Base
DPRI	Defense Policy Review Initiative
DOD	Department of Defense
FRF	Futenma Replacement Facility
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GOJ	Government of Japan
INDOPACOM	Indo-Pacific Command
JCG	Japanese Central Government
JSDF	Japanese Self-Defense Force
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MCAS	Marine Corps Air Station
NCIS	Naval Criminal Investigative Service
NMI	Northern Mariana Islands
SACO	Special Action Committee on Okinawa
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
U.S.	United States
USFJ	United States Forces Japan
USFK	United States Forces Korea
USMC	United States Marine Corps

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Antibase sentiments in Okinawa challenge the United States–Japan alliance and restrain U.S. military operations at a moment when the balance of power is shifting in East Asia. U.S. bases in Japan are vital for maintaining a credible forward presence that safeguards U.S. interests and Japan’s security. However, Okinawan protest has pressured policymakers to reduce or eliminate U.S. presence. Over the last two decades, the sustained pressure of protest has compelled the Marine Corps to reduce forces near densely populated areas—and to move them farther away from the region. The Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI) outlines the Marine Corps’ plan to realign 55% of the force from Okinawa, predominantly to Guam, by FY 2031. To explain what causes political pressure over U.S. access in Okinawa, this thesis identifies the most significant drivers of U.S. base protest, in four general categories: proximity, violation of sovereignty, democratic responsiveness, and external threat perception. Within each general category, factors that incite protest were examined at general, Japan-, and Okinawa-specific levels to delineate their significance in helping explain protest. The analysis finds that proximity and external threat perception significantly influence levels of protest. Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma observes the most protest because of perceived sovereignty violations and factors of proximity. The DPRI has mitigated many drivers of protest in Guam—specifically, those associated with factors of proximity identified in Okinawa—suggesting U.S. base protest overall will decrease in the region. However, such actions also inhibit military operations. The thesis argues that the U.S.-Japan alliance must achieve a Host Nation Support Agreement to complement the DPRI that enables multilateral military operations intent on enforcing the authority of the internationally recognized order within the region.

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I. U.S. BASES, INTERESTS, AND PROTEST

A. INTRODUCTION

Antibase sentiments in Okinawa challenge the United States–Japan alliance and U.S. military operations in East Asia at a critical juncture in the region’s shifting balance of power. While the bases support both vital U.S. interests and Japan’s security, Okinawan protest pressures both U.S. and Japanese policymakers to reduce or eliminate U.S. presence. Over the last two decades the sustained pressure of protest has compelled the Marine Corps to reduce forces near densely populated areas—and to move them farther away from the region. Though Okinawa only represents 1% of Japan’s total population, protests have effectively altered and significantly impacted Marine Corps strategy and operations in the Pacific. The Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI) outlines the Marine Corps’ plan to realign 55% of the force from Okinawa, with approximately 4,100 Marines to be shifted from Okinawa to Guam, 2,700 to Hawaii, 1,300 to Australia, and 800 to the continental U.S. by FY 2031.¹ Managing the basing issue in Okinawa is critical to the resilience of the U.S.-Japanese alliance and to military readiness for addressing emerging threats in the Indo-Pacific Theater.

This thesis identifies significant drivers of protest and groups them into four general categories to explain U.S. base protest: proximity, violation of sovereignty, democratic responsiveness, and external threat perception. Within the general category of proximity, the distance between the base and host populations relative to population density proves to be the most statistically significant variable in explaining levels of protest, via exposure to military operations, vehicular accidents and servicemember crime. The general analysis seeks to explain the variation associated with variables of protest for U.S. bases in East

¹ Brian Lepore, *Marine Corps Asia Pacific Realignment: DOD Should Resolve Capability Deficiencies and Infrastructure Risks and Revise Cost Estimates*, GAO-17-415 (Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office, 2017), 10.; Shawn Snow and Todd South, “Congress Wants a Review of the Corps’ Plan to Distribute Forces Across the Indo-Pacific,” *Marine Corps Times*, July 1, 2019, <https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2019/07/01/congress-wants-a-review-of-the-corps-plan-to-distribute-forces-across-the-indo-pacific/>

Asia, and in particular for Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma—the most protested U.S. base in Japan.²

The identified protest drivers – especially proximity, including exposure to exercises and U.S. service member criminal activity – are likely to remain the greatest drivers of protest in Okinawa into the near future. If it is presumed that protest will remain relatively consistent, then it is likely that democratic responsiveness or elevated external threat perception will have the greatest influence on levels of protest through the implementation of the DPRI. The U.S. and the Government of Japan (GOJ) maintain the advantage of time and resources compared to the recent modern era of U.S. base protesters—as noted by one Okinawan protester who needed to return to Tokyo to “resume his study of foreign relations, because he needed to eventually get a job and earn a living.”³

On Guam, the DPRI has mitigated several drivers of protest that were identified in Japan and South Korea. Guamanians are U.S. citizens and have historically exhibited higher levels of favorability toward U.S. military presence than that observed in South Korea and Okinawa, and this makes the likelihood of future significant mobilized protest comparatively low. Protests in Guam, while comparatively small-in-size and less frequent, have generally addressed sovereignty issues such as land rights, desire for federal voting rights, and environmental protectionism. The DPRI is also largely a transfer of Marines from Okinawa to Guam; and characteristics that make Marines unique from other services, including that one contingent of the force that will deploy on a rotational basis, are anticipated to have a degree of social impact on the Guamanian population.

The research concentrates on U.S. base protest in Japan, and specifically Okinawa, to delineate the impact the DPRI will have in Okinawa and Guam. Its assessments suggests that over time, the DPRI will likely decrease overall base protest in East Asia, to include Guam. However, the U.S.-Japan alliance must agree to a Host Nation Support Agreement

² Charmaine N. Willis, “Incidents, Accidents, and Activists: An Analysis of Anti-US Military Base Mobilization in Japan,” *Midwest Political Science Association Conference* (New York: University at Albany, 2018), 4.

³ Mayuko Ono and Tim Kelly, “Outnumbered and Elderly, Okinawa Protesters Oppose U.S. Military Runway,” *Reuters*, April 3, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-okinawa-henoko/outnumbered-and-elderly-okinawa-protesters-oppose-u-s-military-runway-idUSKCN1RF0KC>.

that supports a credible forward posture in East Asia that enforces the authority of the international order.

B. THE IMPORTANCE OF FORWARD U.S. BASES

As history has demonstrated and the future necessitates, the United States will continue to play a key role as a force for regional stability in the Indo-Pacific in support of U.S. diplomatic and economic aspirations. To do so, the United States must be prepared by sustaining a credible combat-forward posture; strengthening alliances and building new partnerships; and promoting an increasingly networked region.

—Department of Defense⁴

The United States maintains approximately 587 bases that span 42 countries and the Department of Defense (DOD) relies on sustained access to foreign territory to enforce the internationally recognized—rules based—order.⁵ The U.S. forward posture “assures allies, dissuades potential challengers, deters our enemies, and [is capable of] defeating aggression if necessary.”⁶ The countries with the second greatest number of foreign bases are France and the United Kingdom with roughly 12 each, and Russia is fourth with 9.⁷ The Japanese Self-Defense Force (JSDF) operates one foreign base in Ambouli, Djibouti, adjacent to the Djibouti–Ambouli International Airport, to assist in anti-piracy operations. Foreign bases enhance “proximate power,” as “the ability to project power declines with distance.”⁸ U.S. defense strategists argue that persistent forward access supports capacity for contingency response through four major methods:

⁴ Department of Defense, *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report: Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region* (Washington, DC: DOD, 2019), 3. <https://media.defense.gov/2019/Jul/01/2002152311/1/-1/1/DEPARTMENT-OF-DEFENSE-INDO-PACIFIC-STRATEGY-REPORT-2019.PDF>

⁵ Ryan Hass, *Stronger: Adapting America’s China Strategy in an Age of Competitive Interdependence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021), 34.

⁶ Michael Lostumbo et al., *Overseas Basing of U.S. Military Forces: An Assessment of Relative costs and Strategic Benefits*, RR-201-OSD (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2013), 73. https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR200/RR201/RAND_RR201.pdf.

⁷ John Glaser, *Withdrawing from Overseas Bases: Why a Forward-Deployed Military Posture is Unnecessary, Outdated, and Dangerous*, CATO Institute (Washington, D.C.: CATO, 2017), 4.

⁸ Stephen M. Walt, “Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power,” *International Security* 9, no. 4 (Spring, 1985), 10.

- In-place forces enabling response to high-consequence, low-probability major events, in conjunction with longer reach assets
- global infrastructure to enable high-volume force flows for major wars and rapid response to smaller contingencies in unpredictable locations
- seaborne forces to also respond quickly to globally dispersed, unpredictable, small-scale contingencies and major events
- basing access to enable air; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR); and logistics support from nearby safe havens. (Lostumbo et al., 2013, 37)

The bases support three core U.S. interests:

- provide security for Americans and allies
- expand trade and economic opportunities
- support democratic norms. (Green et al., 2016, 32–43)

The United States National Security Strategy directs the Department of Defense to be globally present and responsive. Access abroad to key ports, air bases, and troop staging areas is critical to employment options and response times.

1. Reinforcing Order through Deterrence

The DOD’s capacity to deter adversaries by discouraging actions through fear of consequence is correlated with proximity, capability, and credibility. A recent RAND study quantified the deterrent value associated with different types of forward positioned military assets, “U.S. forward posture indeed generally has deterrent effects when deployed near the ally or partner state to be defended.”⁹ It was identified that ground forces have the greatest influence on deterrence compared to air or naval assets, as depicted in Figure 1. Findings also suggested that permanently stationed ground forces, such as the Marines in Okinawa, are the greatest asset to signal resolve to both allies and adversaries.¹⁰

⁹ Bryan Frederick et al., *Understanding the Deterrent Impact of U.S. Overseas Forces*, RR2533 (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2020), xvi, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR2500/RR2533/RAND_RR2533.pdf.

¹⁰ Frederick et al., *Understanding the Deterrent Impact of U.S. Overseas Forces*, 11.

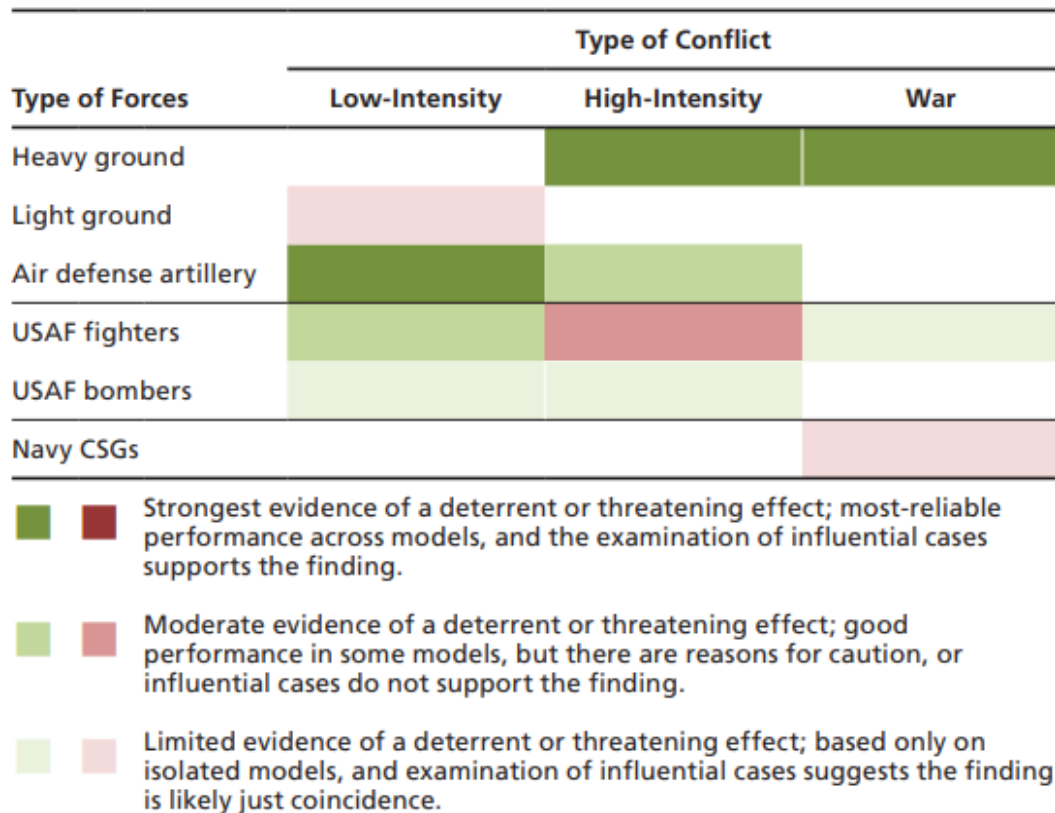


Figure 1. Deterrence: Statistical Results for Nearby U.S. Forces¹¹

2. Reinforcing Order through Compellence

Forward bases significantly enhance U.S. compellence efforts, or the capacity to coerce an opponent to act in a desired manner, that are increasingly being applied for diplomatic ends. The capability and credibility associated with the threat, as factors of proximity, were identified as the most significant variables in changing the belligerent's actions or policy.¹² Chamberlain illustrates that from 1945 to 2007, the "target [country] conceded to U.S. demands before the application of force in eight of the nineteen crises in which the United States issued a compellent threat."¹³ Within her sample size of 63

¹¹ Source: Frederick et al., *Understanding the Deterrent Impact of U.S. Overseas Forces*, 36.

¹² Dianne Pfundstein Chamberlain, *Cheap Threats: Why the United States Struggles to Coerce Weak States*. *Cheap Threats* (Washington: DC, Georgetown University Press, 2016), 70, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1c3sndc>.

¹³ Chamberlain, *Cheap Threats*, 70.

instances, she identified an increasing trend in the utilization of compellence compared to that of the period during the Cold War.¹⁴

There is statistical significance between the capable and credible threat and the success rate associated with the application of deterrence or compellence. A large ground force, in proximity to the belligerent, was identified as the greatest influence on both deterrence and compellence. This suggests that a forward positioned ground force is the greatest asset for achieving changed behavior or policy in a belligerent.

U.S. forces do not have to serve as the front-line-effort for partners' and allies' security posture to maintain the advantages of a forward presence: balanced security cooperation is more sustainable. The glue of the U.S. military alliance network is security cooperation operations that "encourage and enable international partners to work with the United States to achieve strategic objectives."¹⁵ Security cooperation builds partner capacity and capability, integrates long term asset supply chains, and creates a more adaptable and resilient security structure within a given region. Security cooperation enhances military interoperability, creates trust in a unity of effort, enhances relationships, establishes norms for interactions, and demonstrates resolve within the alliance structure. These benefits have significant residual impacts on diplomatic and economic cooperation. The tempo for such operations in Northeast Asia is constant, bases are required to facilitate cooperation efforts.

Calder suggests that it would cost the United States over \$100 billion to replace its bases overseas.¹⁶ He proposes a "Fortress America" strategy through which the United States withdraws from foreign bases and allocates resources to enhance "nuclear, naval, and long-range aerospace capabilities, and [to] leverage its global influence through a detached, balance-of-power oriented 'offshore-balancing' strategy."¹⁷ Calder accepts this is contrary to realist tendencies to support direct foreign military presence to foster

¹⁴ Chamberlain, *Cheap Threats*, 57.

¹⁵ Lostumbo et al., *Overseas Basing of U.S. Military Forces*, 87.

¹⁶ Kent Calder, *Embattled Garrisons: Comparative Bases Politics and American Globalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 209.

¹⁷ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 210.

deterrence, but he maintains that the United States “need not reach out to transform others.”¹⁸

Unilateral empire and imperial governance have proven unsustainable; however, the modern era of interdependence presents new opportunities for multilateralism and cooperation. Nuclear weapons, precision long range munitions, and the magnitude of interdependence have changed the character of war. Calder might not fully account for the strategic advantages that forward presence brings to alliance structure and security cooperation, deterrence and compellence factors that are enhanced by forward bases. A resilient, adaptable, well-balanced alliance structure is more sustainable than unipolar empire.

C. FORWARD BASING IN JAPAN AND OKINAWA

Japan is the most critical U.S. ally in Asia. The U.S. and Japan account for roughly 30% of the world’s gross domestic product and over 40% of all world military expenditures.¹⁹ The U.S. maintains the largest forward permanent presence in Japan, stationed across roughly 130 bases, pursuant to the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security of 1960.²⁰ The military alliance is interoperable and conducts numerous cooperation exercises scaling from small unit training to Theater Level Exercises such as KEEN SWORD, EXERCISE MALABAR, Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC), RESILIENT SHIELD, among many others.²¹ Active government-to-government sales cases between the U.S. and Japan amount to over \$20 billion; and in July 2020, a \$23.11 billion deal for an additional 105 F-35 Joint Strike Fighters became the

¹⁸ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 210.

¹⁹ Nan Tian et al., *Trends in World Military Expenditures* (Sweden: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2020) 2, https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/fs_2020_04_milex_0_0.pdf.

²⁰ “Guidance from the Commander, U.S. Forces Japan,” U.S. Forces, Japan, (September 13, 2020), <https://www.usfj.mil/About-USFJ/>.

²¹ U.S. Department of State, *U.S. Security Cooperation With Japan* (Washington, DC: Department of State, 2020), <https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-japan/>. David Brennan, “U.S., Japan Begin Joint Military Drills after China Enters Japanese Waters,” *Newsweek*, February 22, 2021. <https://www.newsweek.com/us-japan-begin-joint-military-drills-china-enters-japanese-waters-1570892>.

second largest Foreign Military Sales (FMS) contract on record.²² The Department of Defense (DOD) emphasizes that the U.S. forward presence and bases further demonstrate resolve to U.S. interests and ideals in the region and that the bases are symbols of strength and commitment to partners and allies for security in East Asia and beyond.²³

The largest concentration of active-duty U.S. military troops stationed overseas reside in Japan.²⁴ As of 2016, Japan hosted 20% of the total number of U.S. active-duty military personnel permanently stationed overseas, or 38,818 servicemembers.²⁵ As of 2021, including rotational forces that deploy for months at a time, Japan hosts “approximately 54,000 military personnel, 45,000 dependents, 8,000 DOD civilian and contractors employees, and 25,000 Japanese workers.”²⁶ The U.S. bases’ locations in Japan are shown in Figure 2.

²² U.S. Department of State, *U.S. Security Cooperation With Japan*.; David Brennan, “U.S., Japan Begin Joint Military Drills after China Enters Japanese Waters,” *Newsweek*, February 22, 2021. <https://www.newsweek.com/us-japan-begin-joint-military-drills-china-enters-japanese-waters-1570892>.

²³ Catherine Lutz, *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against U.S. Military Posts* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 2–3.; Michael Green et al., *Asia-Pacific Rebalance 2025: Capabilities, Presence, and Partnerships*, (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2016), 32–43.

²⁴ Kristen Bialik, “U.S. Active-Duty Military Presence Overseas is at its Smallest in Decades,” Pew Research Center, last modified August 22, 2017, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/08/22/u-s-active-duty-military-presence-overseas-is-at-its-smallest-in-decades/>.

²⁵ Bialik, “U.S. Active-Duty Military Presence Overseas is at its Smallest in Decades.”

²⁶ “Guidance from the Commander, U.S. Forces Japan,” U.S. Forces, Japan, (September 13, 2020), <https://www.usfj.mil/About-USFJ/>.

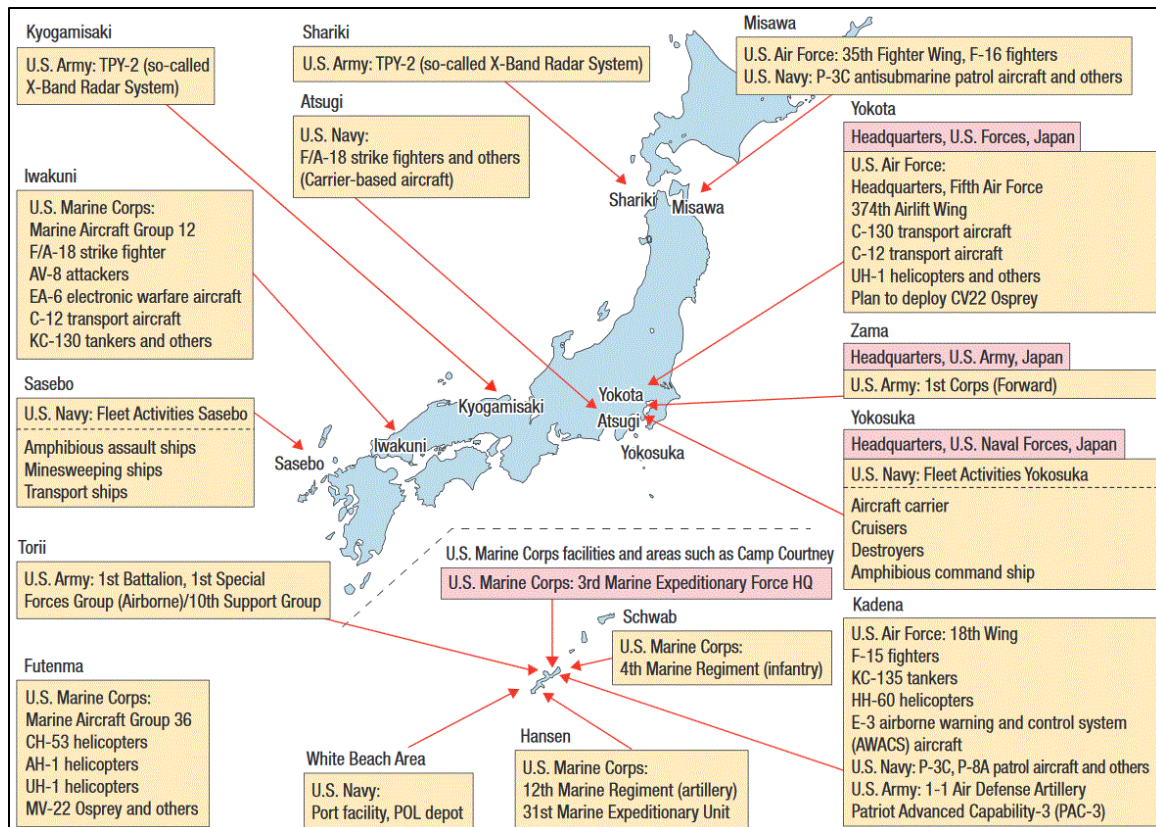


Figure 2. U.S. Military Bases in Japan (2016).²⁷

Of the total number of active-duty personnel stationed in Japan, roughly 55%, or 30,000 troops, maintain a constant presence on Okinawa.²⁸ Okinawa prefecture represents 0.6% of Japan's total land mass and 1% of its total population, yet it hosts 32 bases that comprise 70.6% of all U.S. military facilities in Japan.²⁹ The Okinawan bases' locations are shown in Figure 3.

²⁷ Source: Japan Ministry of Defense, *Defense of Japan-White Paper 2016* (Tokyo, Japan: MOD, 2016) https://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/pdf/2016/DOJ2016_2-4-4_web.pdf

²⁸ Matthew M. Burke and Hana Kusumoto, "Okinawa Governor Calls for Dramatic Reduction of U.S. Military Footprint on the Island," *Stars and Stripes* February 18, 2021. <https://www.stripes.com/news/pacific/okinawa-governor-calls-for-dramatic-reduction-of-us-military-footprint-on-the-island-1.662609>

²⁹ Okinawa Prefectural Government, *U.S. Military Base Issues in Okinawa* (Washington, D.C.: Okinawa Prefectural Government D.C. Office, 2020), <https://dc-office.org/basedata>

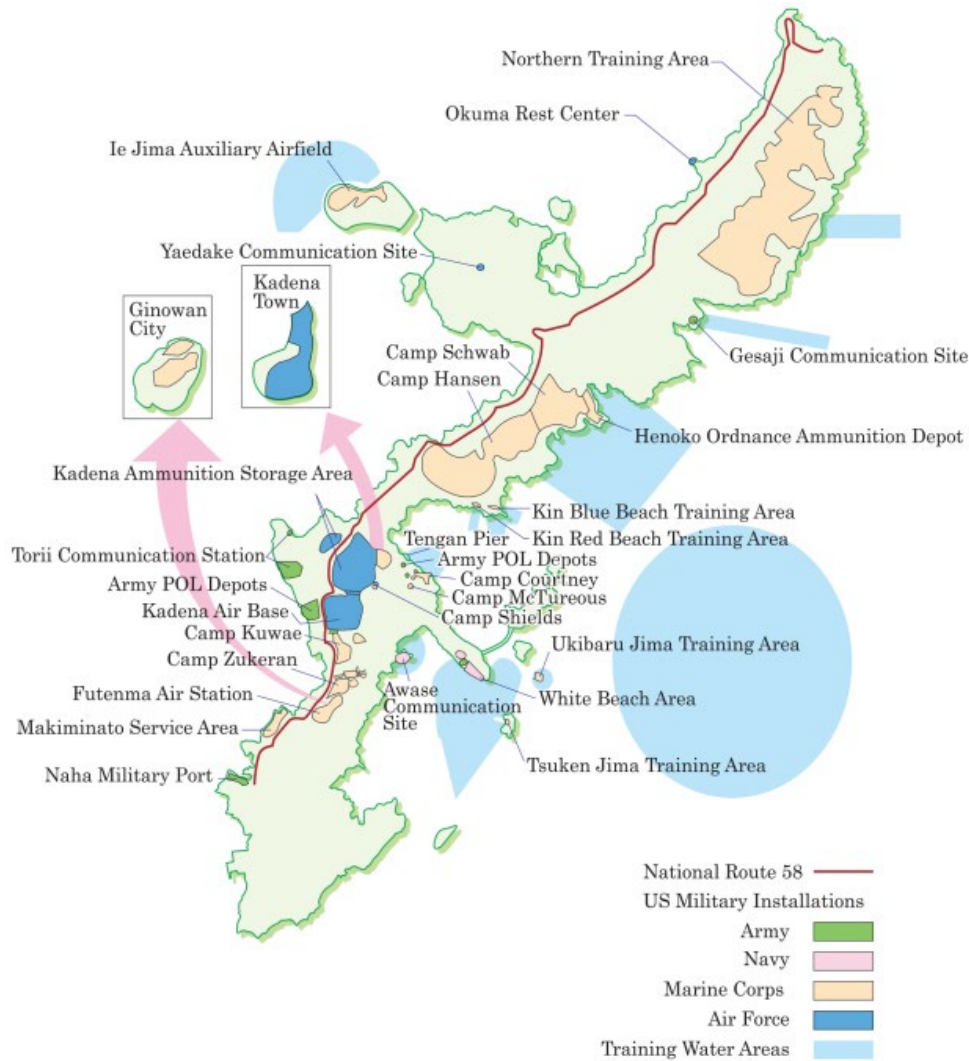


Figure 3. U.S. Military Bases and Facilities on Okinawa.³⁰

1. Background on U.S. Forward Basing in Okinawa

Okinawan mobilized protests date back to the early 1950s, when society condemned war crimes perpetrated by Japanese soldiers during WWII. A heightened number of protests were observed in the mid-to-late 1950s as the mainland supported U.S. efforts during the Korean War. From the 1960s to 1970s, protests revolved around the U.S.'s operating out of Okinawa to support war efforts in Vietnam and against the Soviet

³⁰ Source: Dennis C. Blair and James R. Kendall, *U.S. Bases in Okinawa: What Must Be Done, and Quickly*, Sasakawa USA (Washington, DC: Sasakawa Peace Foundation, 2015), 2, <https://spfusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/US-Bases-in-Okinawa.pdf>

Union during the Cold War.³¹ One of the fundamental reasons for protest throughout the late 20th century was the contention that for the Japanese government to mandate Okinawan hosting of U.S. forces conducting operations violated Japan's constitution, specifically Article 9, which "forever renounce[s] war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes."³²

Scholars highlight that in the case of Okinawa, host-nation community protest demands strategic reevaluation of current U.S. force alignment.³³ Foundational in Okinawans' protest is the disproportionate footprint of U.S. forces in Okinawa relative to the mainland. The earliest accounts of Okinawan protest toward U.S. presence date to 1946, when U.S. forces expropriated private lands for forward bases after the Battle of Okinawa during WWII.³⁴ Over the past few decades, protest has evolved to include issues pertaining to U.S. servicemember criminal activity, claims against violations of sovereignty, harmful impacts to the environment, nuisance and risks associated with military exercises, and anti-war sentiments, among many others. The scale of protest has ranged from over 90,000 citizens marching in 1996 to rally against the renewal of land leases for bases, to, more commonly, single individuals or small groups demonstrating at the gates of U.S. military bases.³⁵ Three recent inflection points that impacted U.S. base strategy include a 1995 rape incident involving a 12-year-old girl and three convicted U.S. service members that resulted in the U.S.-Japan Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO), the 2002 Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI) that served as the impetus for base consolidation

³¹ Steve Rabson, "Okinawan Perspectives on Japan's Imperial Institution," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 6, no. 2 (February 1, 2008) <https://apjpf.org/-Steve-Rabson/2667/article.html>

³² U.S. Library of Congress, "Japan: Article 9 of the Constitution," (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 2020) <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/japan-constitution/article9.php#:~:text=Article%209%20of%20Japan's%20Constitution%20reads%20as%20follows%3A&text=Aspiring%20since rely%20to%20an%20international,means%20of%20settling%20international%20disputes.>

³³ H.D.P. Enval and Kerri Ng, "The Okinawa "Effect" in US-Japan Alliance Politics," *Asian Security* 11, no. 3 (2015): 231–233; Akikazue Hashimoto, Takara Kurayoshi, and Mike Mochizuki, *The Okinawa Question: Futenma, the United States Japan Alliance and Regional Security*, (Washington, DC: The George Washington University, 2013); 1–12.

³⁴ Lutz, *The Bases of Empire*, 250.

³⁵ Martin Fackler, "90,000 Protest U.S. Base on Okinawa," *The New York Times*, April 25, 2010, <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/26/world/asia/26okinawa.html>

and force realignment, and the 2010 resignation of the Japanese prime minister, Yukio Hatoyama, who claimed he stepped down due to his failure to reduce U.S. base presence.³⁶

The U.S.-Japan alliance and forward U.S. presence faced a particularly challenging inflection point upon the 1995 rape incident, whose consequences impact U.S.-Japan-Okinawan relations to this day.³⁷ Political pressure mounted after the commander of U.S. Pacific Command, Admiral Richard Macke, stated on November 17, 1995, “I think that [the rape] was absolutely stupid. For the price they paid to rent the car, they could have had a girl.”³⁸ Admiral Macke was relieved of command shortly after. Around the same time, news reports alleged the Marine Corps’ public affairs officer in Okinawa stated, “it was just another rape.”³⁹

Protesters in Okinawa and some analysts say that the United States should reduce its presence because of the burden bases impose on host-nation communities. Moreover, they hold that the bases in Okinawa benefit U.S. and mainland Japan’s interests at the expense of Okinawan civil rights. In 1995, in response to the rape incident, then Okinawan governor Masahide Ota “challenged the central government’s land expropriation policy by refusing to approve a renewal of the government order to compel the provision of privately held land for U.S. military use.”⁴⁰ Okinawan protesters asked, “Why does Okinawa continue to bear an excessive burden of hosting the majority of U.S. bases in Japan, and why does Okinawa continue to be treated like this?”⁴¹

It is important that the narrative of U.S. base protest in Japan distinguish Okinawa from the mainland. From 1992 to 2017, approximately 77% of notable mobilized protests toward U.S. bases in Japan occurred in Okinawa. Moreover, it is important to recognize

³⁶ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 232.

³⁷ Robert D. Eldridge, “Remembering the Okinawa Rape Incident that Changed Japan-U.S. Military Relations,” *The Japan Times*, November 16, 2020, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2020/11/16/commentary/japan-commentary/okinawa-rape-japan-us-military/>.

³⁸ Eldridge, “Remembering the Okinawa Rape Incident that Changed Japan-U.S. Military Relations.”

³⁹ Eldridge, “Remembering the Okinawa Rape Incident that Changed Japan-U.S. Military Relations.”

⁴⁰ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 17.

⁴¹ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 1–12.

that one base attracted by far the most protests. Figure 4 shows that Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma observed not only 45% of the total number of protests on Okinawa, but also 35% of the total number of protests observed across all of Japan, making it by far the most protested U.S. base in Japan—and possibly worldwide.⁴²

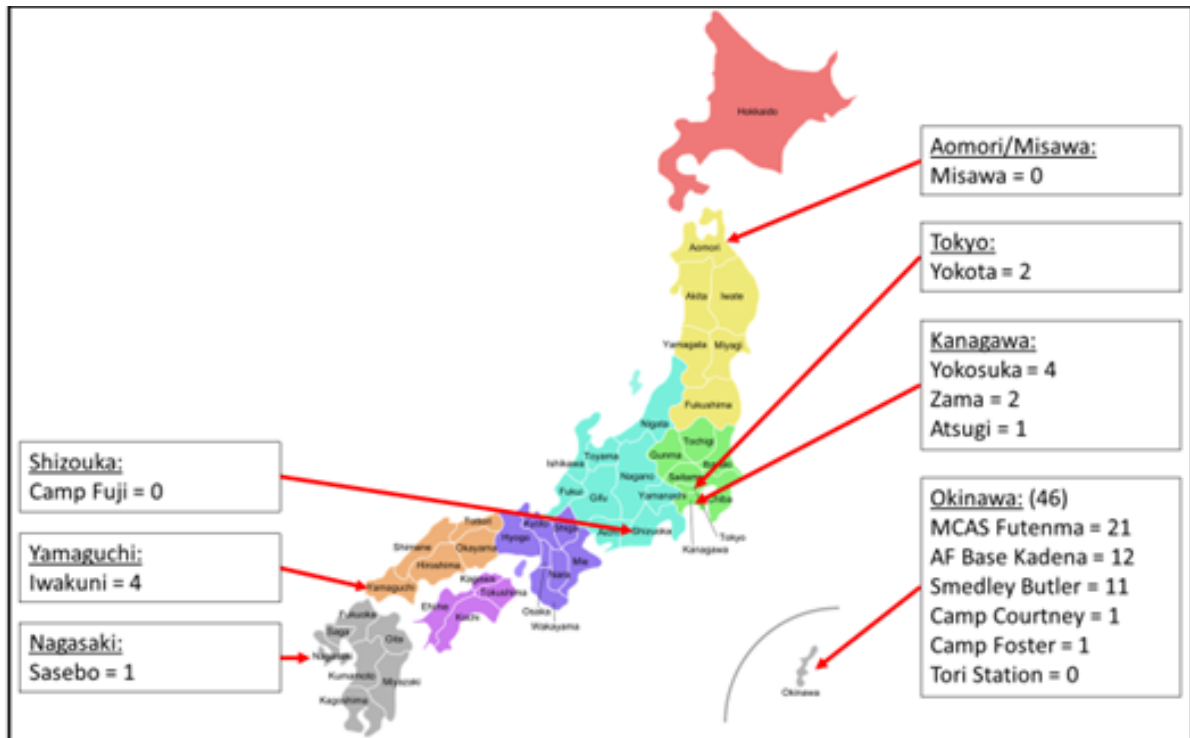


Figure 4. Disparity of Major U.S. Base Protest Between Mainland Japan and Okinawa (1992-2017)⁴³

2. Background on U.S. Response to Okinawan Protest

To address the public outcry over both the rape and fumbled responses from U.S. officials, the U.S.-Japan Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) was formed in November of 1995. While the servicemembers associated with the rape were stationed at

⁴² Willis, “Incidents, Accidents, and Activists,” 4.

⁴³ Adapted from Willis, “Incidents, Accidents, and Activists,” 4.

Marine Corps Base Camp Hansen, approximately 20 miles north of the densely populated city of Ginowan, MCAS Futenma became the focal point for base reduction efforts.⁴⁴

Futenma was identified by SACO as the most suitable option for “reducing the impact of the activities of U.S. forces on communities in Okinawa ... while fully maintaining the capabilities and readiness of U.S. forces in Japan.”⁴⁵ MCAS Futenma spans approximately 1,200 acres in the middle of the densely populated Ginowan City, where 91% of the base is owned by 3,396 private Okinawan citizens who receive approximately \$68 million annually in rent.⁴⁶ Despite such significant compensation to local residents, some say Futenma has come to symbolize Okinawa’s general grievances toward mainland Japan. In 2019, the Governor of Okinawa, Denny Tamaki, stated that the failure to respond to Okinawan’s demands to eliminate Futenma is “disregard of the will of the people, the trampling of democracy, and the destruction of local government autonomy.”⁴⁷

Elevated levels of protest inspired demands for MCAS Futenma to be removed off Okinawa entirely. A May 2012 survey conducted by the newspapers Ryukyu Shimpo and Mainichi Shimbun found that 84.1% of Okinawans opposed MCAS Futenma’s relocation, a 17.1% increase from 2009.⁴⁸ At a 2009 campaign rally in Okinawa, Yukio Hatoyama, the prime minister of Japan and a member of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), stated, “if everyone agrees on a relocation [of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma] out of the prefecture [we must] act assertively in that direction.”⁴⁹ After receiving pressure from then U.S. President Obama in Tokyo in November 2009 to relocate the base within Okinawa, Hatoyama abandoned his policy to reduce U.S. presence. Hatoyama later resigned as Prime

⁴⁴ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 17.

⁴⁵ U.S. Department of State, *SACO Final Report* (Washington, DC: Department of State, 1996), https://1997-2001.state.gov/www/regions/eap/japan/rpt-saco_final_961202.html.

⁴⁶ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 36.

⁴⁷ Thisanka, Siripala, “Okinawa and Japanese Government Locked In Hostile Battle Over U.S. Base Relocation,” *The Diplomat*, December 21, 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/12/okinawa-and-japanese-government-locked-in-hostile-battle-over-us-base-relocation/>.

⁴⁸ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 20.

⁴⁹ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 42.

Minister, claiming this was justified recourse for having failed to accomplish his campaign promise to reduce the U.S. base presence on Okinawa.⁵⁰ It should be noted that in the 2006 Okinawan gubernatorial election, Hirokazu Nakaima won with 52.3% of the vote running on economic development. His more “progressive” opponent had stressed a more aggressive plan for closing U.S. bases.⁵¹

As of 2021, Futenma remains operational in the city of Ginowan, but a 2019 referendum to entirely remove the base off Okinawa is the latest indication of the level of U.S. base protest. The referendum represented approximately 52% of Okinawans, 72% of whom voted against the relocation of MCAS Futenma, presumably supporting its removal entirely.⁵² Kazuhisa Ogawa, a Japanese military analyst present at the 1996 SACO agreement, says the relocation has not occurred for over twenty-four years “because of ill-informed analysis and poor negotiation of the U.S.-Japan alliance.”⁵³

D. U.S. RESPONSE TO PROTEST: REALIGNMENT WITHIN OKINAWA AND TRANSFER TO GUAM

Many scholars argue that the strategic importance of the bases requires they be maintained despite the protest, on the assumption that the protests are outweighed by the magnitude of strategic importance the forward bases provide to the U.S.-Japan Alliance. Armitage and Nye assert, “The alliance has spent far too much high-level attention over the past decade on the details of the disposition of U.S. forces on Okinawa.”⁵⁴ They maintain that protests have distracted Japan from the more pressing decision between complacency or “securing her status as a tier-one nation and her necessary role as an equal

⁵⁰ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 232.

⁵¹ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 42.

⁵² Matt Burke and Aya Ichihashi, “Okinawa Voters Say No to U.S. Base Relocation Plan in Prefecture-Wide Referendum,” *Stars and Stripes*, February 24, 2019, <https://www.stripes.com/news/pacific/okinawa-voters-say-no-to-us-base-relocation-plan-in-prefecture-wide-referendum-1.570234>.

⁵³ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 61.

⁵⁴ Richard L. Armitage and Joseph S. Nye, *The United States-Japan Alliance: Anchoring Stability in Asia*, Center for Strategic & International Studies (Washington, DC: CSIS, 2012), 14, https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/publication/120810_Armitage_USJapanAlliance_Web.pdf.

partner in the alliance.”⁵⁵ Furthermore, they suggest that the alliance’s force alignment should prioritize China’s emergent aggressiveness and North Korea’s persistent nuclear threats over protest exhibited by less than 1% of Japan’s population.⁵⁶

The United States has generally responded to Okinawan protest by reducing the number of bases or relocating them out of densely populated communities. In 1996, the SACO agreed to “return Futenma Air Station within the next five to seven years, after adequate replacement facilities are completed and operational.”⁵⁷ Political pressure from Okinawans advanced efforts to consolidate bases, relocate Marines off Okinawa, and to move the Futenma Air Station north to Camp Schwab—also known as the Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF). The concession to Okinawans’ protest “proved to be a huge turning point for Okinawan sentiments toward U.S. military bases.”⁵⁸ However, significant terms in the SACO agreements were never met and timelines continued to be extended.

The failures of SACO were the impetus for the 2002 joint U.S.-Japan Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI). The objective remained, “to reduce the U.S. footprint in Okinawa, enhance interoperability and communication [with Japanese forces], and [to] better position U.S. forces to respond to a changing security environment.”⁵⁹ The DPRI was revised in April 2012 and further specified that nearly 55% of the troops on Okinawa would be realigned off the island: 4,100 Marines would relocate from Okinawa to Guam by year 2026, 2,700 Marines to Hawaii by 2031, and 800 Marines to the continental United States. Marine officials stated that “the decision to relocate 800 Marines to the continental United States was made because there was a need to further reduce the Marine Corps’ presence on Okinawa.”⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Armitage and Nye, *The United States-Japan Alliance*, 15.

⁵⁶ Armitage and Nye, *The United States-Japan Alliance*, 1–15.

⁵⁷ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 34.

⁵⁸ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 17.

⁵⁹ Lepore, *Marine Corps Asia Pacific Realignment*, 6.

⁶⁰ Lepore, *Marine Corps Asia Pacific Realignment*, 10.

Most of the realignment off Okinawa, specifically the 4,100 Marines, is a transfer of forces to Guam. It is planned for Guam to receive an additional 600 Marines from the continental United States. In total, Guam is planned to host approximately 5,000 Marines by 2028.⁶¹

The Marine Corps has also modified its force structure to reduce force concentrations in East Asia. Infantry regiments operating in the Pacific are modifying force design to become Marine Littoral Regiments (MLR). MLRs are expected to reduce force presence in Okinawa. The MLR is comprised of approximately 2,000 Marines “task-organized around an infantry battalion along with a long-range anti-ship missile battery.”⁶² In July 2020, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General David Berger, stated that the MLR would not increase the number of Marines hosted by Japan.⁶³

The DPRI, FRF, and reconfigured Marine Corps force design are substantial initiatives intended to reduce U.S. base protest, and thus enhance U.S.-Japan relations. With reduced protest, access is more likely to be maintained as political pressure is alleviated. Guamanians, also U.S. citizens, exhibit exceptionally higher levels of favorability towards the U.S. than observed in other parts of East Asia. Instances of protest in Guam have been minimal and have pertained to indigenous land rights, desires for federal voting rights, and environmental protectionism. The DOD realignment in East Asia is likely to reduce protest; however, the shift in forward posture presents other challenges to U.S. interests in the region.

The remainder of the thesis will examine the significant drivers of protest that have pressured policymakers to reduce U.S. forward presence and assess the DPRI’s overall

⁶¹ Todd South, “Marine Corps Plan to Relocate from Okinawa to Guam Needs a Review, Commandant Says,” *Marine Corps Times*, May 3, 2019, <https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2019/05/03/marine-corps-relocation-from-okinawa-to-guam-worthy-of-review-commandant-says/>.

⁶² Megan Eckstein, “Marines Testing Regiment at Hear of Emerging Island-Hopping Future,” *United States Naval Institute*, June 4, 2020, <https://news.usni.org/2020/06/04/marines-testing-regiment-at-heart-of-emerging-island-hopping-future>.

⁶³ Wyatt Olson, “Marines Aim to Send Mobile Anti-Ship Units to Japan with Eye on Defending against China,” *Stars and Stripes*, July 23, 2020, <https://www.stripes.com/news/pacific/marines-aim-to-send-mobile-anti-ship-units-to-japan-with-eye-on-defending-against-china-1.638644#:~:text=About%2022%2C000%20Marines%20and%20sailors,regiments%20in%20Guam%20and%20Hawaii>.

impact for decreasing protest in the region. The independent variables that influence protest are generally categorized into four groups: proximity, violation of sovereignty, democratic responsiveness, and external threat perception. Given the vital nature of forward bases to U.S.-Japanese interests, mitigating drivers of protest is critical to future access and military operations.

In the following, Chapter 2 assesses the strength associated with each general driver of protest from general, Japan-, and Okinawa-specific perspectives. The findings indicate that the distance between the bases, specifically their operations and contact with servicemembers in relation to host nation population density, have significant influence on levels of protest. In general, factors associated with violation of sovereignty and democratic responsiveness recede as drivers of protest when bases were relocated out of densely populated areas. The evidence also suggests that as perception of external threat increases, so does favorability for U.S. bases. Chapter 3 examines which variables DPRI properly mitigates to reduce the potential for future base protest. Guam is unique among bases in East Asia because Guamanians are U.S. citizens; and, as such, perceive sovereignty issues as less of a factor. In Guam, the DPRI offsets most military operations from densely populated areas, and new military infrastructure is not expanding upon existing base property. The thesis concludes with a recommendation: that the U.S.-Japan alliance agree to a Host Nation Support Agreement that modifies Japanese basing policy to support multilateral operations in the region.

II. EXPLAINING PROTEST: JAPAN / OKINAWA / FUTENMA

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines U.S. base protest in Japan to evaluate hypotheses about the greatest drivers. Each driver of protest will be presented in general, regional, and then Okinawa-specific assessments. The chapter will conclude with Okinawa-specific implications that suggest that over time, protest is expected to decrease. The literature attaches statistical significance to explanatory factors involving U.S. base proximity, violation of sovereignty, democratic responsiveness, and external threat perception. Many of the independent variables covary with factors of proximity. Given that MCAS Futenma triggers the strongest measures among the general variables of protest, in relation to the bases examined, it is assessed that overall protest in Okinawa will decrease once the Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF) construction is complete. It is not likely that a similar level of protest will remain and transfer to another base.

First, proximity tends to be the most significant driver for protest. The literature presents numerous viable case studies of base relocations and closures in both South Korea and Japan that effectively reduced protest. Historically, most issues of proximity revolved around exposure to the U.S. base operations and interactions with service members in host nation communities. Polling data depicts significant changes in U.S. favorability after base relocations and closures. This favorability was greater when bases were relocated out of more densely populated areas. This is particularly relevant to current efforts in Okinawa to relocate MCAS Futenma to Camp Schwab. Futenma triggers more effects of proximity and observes more protest than any other U.S. base in Japan. U.S. basing strategies that mitigate factors of proximity while maintaining the necessary degree of access are critical to sustainable forward presence. The most influential factors of proximity must be viewed in relation to other variables to project how effective the DPRI will be at reducing overall U.S. base protest.

Second, perceptions pertaining to the violation of sovereignty prove to be a significant protest platform. Generally, this involves two components: land rights and

jurisdiction over prosecution of U.S. servicemembers. Okinawa represents approximately 0.6% of Japan's total land mass and 1% of its total population, yet it hosts 32 bases that comprise 70.6% of all U.S. military facilities in Japan.⁶⁴ Okinawa hosts the preponderance of U.S. servicemembers, but it faces certain constraints on its ability to prosecute criminal activity, as outlined in the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA).

Third, Okinawans' historical perceptions of democratic responsiveness associated with U.S. base policy is critical to the relationship between Okinawa and mainland Japan. Cooley and Hopkin argue that as Japan's central government becomes more effective at responding to protest, U.S. base issues in Okinawa will become depoliticized over time.⁶⁵ The literature makes a cross-national observation that U.S. bases receive limited political attention when the majority's views are effective at modifying U.S. base policy. Today in Okinawan politics, it is the norm is for political candidates to state a platform on U.S. base policy as they announce their candidacy. A competing explanation would be that mainland Japan is exercising authoritative measures on Okinawan democracy, and that the mainland's lack of responsiveness detracts from its legitimacy in governing over Okinawa issues. Over the decades, the GOJ has responded to Okinawan protest with political overtures and concessions that have generally kept U.S. base policy out of federal-level politics.

Lastly, external threat perception exhibits statistical significance in influencing levels of protest toward U.S. bases, and toward U.S. favorability in general. Simply stated, the more people fear outside threats against the country at large, the more they appreciate the presence of U.S. bases, and the less they protest (although, secondarily, some feel the bases increase the degree to their own communities in particular become targets for adversaries). In general, protest decreases when the nature of the U.S. presence becomes viewed less as transactional and oppressive and more as a partnered security effort against the external threat.

⁶⁴ Okinawa Prefectural Government, *U.S. Military Base Issues in Okinawa*.

⁶⁵ Cooley and Hopkin, "Base Closings," 499.

B. DRIVERS OF PROTEST AND CASES

This section will provide an in-depth examination of the four independent variables that best explain levels of protest toward U.S. bases abroad. Cases studies in Japan and South Korea are evaluated to assess cross-national and specific factors of proximity, violation of sovereignty, democratic responsiveness, and threat perception that contribute to protest.

1. Proximity

Existing research shows that base proximity to densely populated host-nation communities covaries with many variables associated with exposure to military criminal activity and nuisance perception via cultural insensitivities and military exercises, and grievances over violation of sovereignty toward the U.S. and Tokyo.⁶⁶ These factors seem to provide the most explanatory value over levels of protest in both Japan and South Korea, and particularly in Okinawa.

Reduced protest, and improved levels of favorability toward the United States, were observed in South Korea when a large base was relocated south out of the capital of Seoul to a more rural region. South Koreans' favorability toward the United States increased by over 15% after the base relocation and then held at about 80% favorability year after year.⁶⁷ This suggests level of protest in Okinawa should be reevaluated once the construction of Marine Corps' Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF) and force realignment to Guam is complete. It should not be presumed that protest will subside after the completion of FRF construction without an accurate assessment of proximity and contact as factors. It would be prudent to assess the impacts of the FRF prior to implementing any further force realignment off Okinawa at the detriment of operational advantages.

The distance between a given U.S. base and its host-nation community has a significant impact on many variables that drive protest. The closer bases are to densely populated areas, the more exposure citizens have to the burdens indicated by protesters.

⁶⁶ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 129–139, 166–175.

⁶⁷ Global Indicators Database, *South Korea* (Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center, 2020), <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/database/indicator/1/country/kr/>

Calder's "Contact Hypothesis" examines proximity and argues it to be of significance in explaining cross- and intra-national variation in levels of protest: "In Japan, for example, opposition to U.S. bases is strongest in Kanagawa Prefecture, just south of Tokyo, which is one of Japan's most urban jurisdictions, and in Okinawa, which is also densely populated."⁶⁸ Kagotani and Yanai identify evidence of stronger support for U.S. presence in Okinawan municipalities farther away from Marine Corps bases. Specifically, pro-base political platforms enjoyed more elevated support the farther away candidates campaigned from U.S. bases (specifically, from most populated base on Okinawa, Air Force Base Kadena).⁶⁹

Calder attributes this role for proximity to the fact that "American soldiers tend to be young, active, and often culturally insensitive, making it likely that personal contact with local citizenry will lead to conflict."⁷⁰ He further maintains that these sentiments hold even if the host country generally supports a U.S. presence. In Figure 5, Calder illustrates a strong relationship between base tensions and civilian-military population densities.

⁶⁸ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 86.

⁶⁹ Koji Kagotani and Yuki Yanai, "External Threats, U.S. Bases, and Prudent Voters in Okinawa," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 14, no. 1 (January 2014): 104, <https://doi.org/10.1093/irap/lct017>.

⁷⁰ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 120.

<i>Base Locations^a</i>	<i>Level of Tension^b</i>	<i>Density^c</i>	<i>Base Personnel</i>
Japan			
Kanagawa	High	3.639	16,511
Okinawa	High	0.598	16,253
Aomori	Low	0.150	4,102
Nagasaki	Moderate	0.361	3,203
Yamaguchi	Low	0.244	2,742
South Korea			
Kyonggi-doe (North of Seoul)	High	1.049	25,579
Seoul	High	16.994	4,615
Cholla buk-doe	Moderate	0.238	2,766
Daegu	Low	2.868	1,531
Kyongsangbuk-doe	Moderate	0.142	1,354
Kangwon-doe	Moderate	0.092	1,043
Busan	High	4.827	377

Sources: U.S. Department of Defense, Base Structure Report, 2005 edition; Japan Statistical Yearbook 2006; and Korean National Statistical Office website, at <http://www.nso.go.kr/eng/index.html>.

Notes:

- a. "Base locations" denote prefecture/province rather than city.
- b. "Level of tension" is defined in terms of relative number of incidents and demonstrations.
- c. "Density" figures are for population density of individual prefectures/provinces, expressed in terms of thousands of residents per square kilometer.

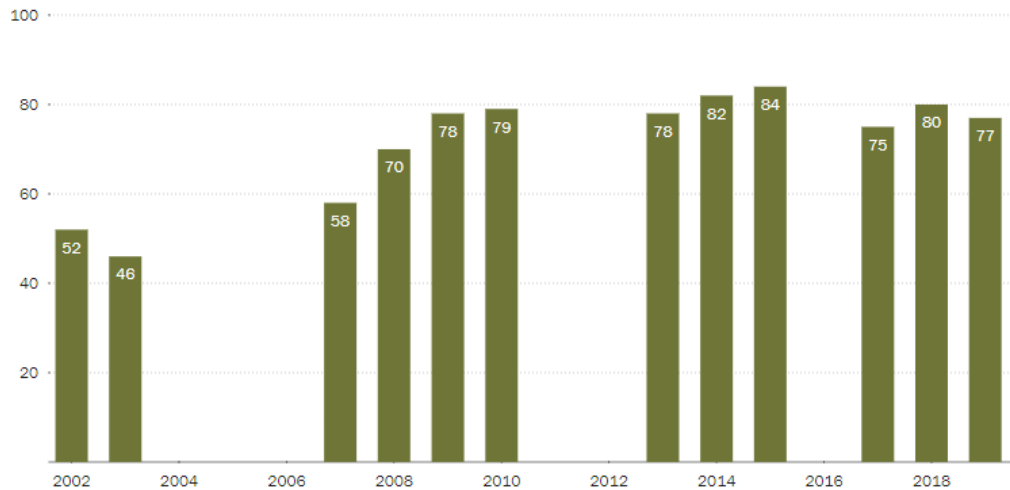
Figure 5. Demonstrating the "Contact Hypothesis": Evidence from within Key Nations.⁷¹

a. Proximity Case in South Korea

One important example illustrating the role of proximity is the reduction in protest observed after U.S. forces were relocated out of Seoul, South Korea in 2002 (Figure 6). In South Korea from 2008 to 2018, antibase sentiments reached their lowest historical levels after U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) relocated from Yongsan Garrison in downtown Seoul to Camp Humphreys, 40 miles south in Pyongtaek.⁷²

⁷¹ Source: Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 122.

⁷² Andrew Yeo, *Activists, Alliances, and Anti-U.S. Base Protests* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 121–135.



Percent of South Korea responding **Favorable**, all years measured.

Figure 6. South Korean's Favorability Toward U.S. After 2002 Base Relocation⁷³

Allen *et al.*, though, disagrees that proximity increases levels of protest. It presents evidence that increased contact, or “interactions,” is actually correlated with more favorable attitudes toward U.S. military personnel.⁷⁴ It finds that “personal contact yields a larger coefficient in predicting positive attitudes”⁷⁵ toward U.S. military presence. It was assessed that social capital and economic interest achieved soft power advantages that eventually reduced protest over time. A shared identity and culture materialized when service members and their dependents integrated within the host-nation community. As military members, in some cases, marry into the local community, children attend local schools, play sports, families become more involved in the community, friendships form, and culture is shared, which reduces prejudice and increases positive perceptions.⁷⁶ Moreover, Moon adds that support for U.S. bases increases when time of exposure between service members and host-nation civilians is increased. “Enduring contacts and interactions

⁷³ Source: Global Indicators Database, *South Korea*.

⁷⁴ Michael A. Allen, Michael E. Flynn, Carla Martinez Machain, and Andrew Stravers, “Outside the Wire: U.S. Military Deployments and Public Opinion in Host States,” *American Political Science Review* 114, no. 2 (May, 2020) 326–339, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055419000868>.

⁷⁵ Allen, Flynn, Machain, and Stravers, “Outside the Wire,” 335–337.

⁷⁶ Allen, Flynn, Machain, and Stravers, “Outside the Wire,” 328,

between U.S. military and local peoples in South Korea and Okinawa have been conducive to the production of ambivalence and postcolonial agency.”⁷⁷ It is through increased interaction and exposure that Calder’s stereotype of the “young, active, and often culturally insensitive”⁷⁸ service member becomes inaccurate.

b. Proximity Case in Okinawa

The contact hypothesis suggests that proximity covaries with exposure to U.S. service member criminal activity as an influence on levels of protest. According to numerous polls, the issue that prompts the most discontent among Okinawans is criminal activity alleged against military personnel. From 1972 to 1995, there were 12 cases of murder, 355 reported robberies, and 11 rape charges levied against U.S. military personnel.⁷⁹ The event that created the greatest uproar and fomented political fervor for base closures was the 1995 rape of a 12-year-old girl by three U.S. military personnel.⁸⁰ From 1976 to 2009, the period between 1995 to 1997 observed one of the greatest levels of discontent toward U.S. military bases (Figure 7). The peak of unfavourability in Figure 7 came in 2009. This was likely attributable to the opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) presenting U.S. basing issues at the front and center of its political agenda.

⁷⁷ Seungsook Moon, “Culture around the Bases: A Forum on the United States Military Presence in Northeast Asia,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 75, no. 1 (February 2016), 34, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021911815001588>.

⁷⁸ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 120.

⁷⁹ Lutz, *The Bases of Empire*, 252.; Enval and Ng, “The Okinawa “Effect” in US-Japan Alliance Politics,” 231–233.

⁸⁰ Lutz, *The Bases of Empire*, 253.

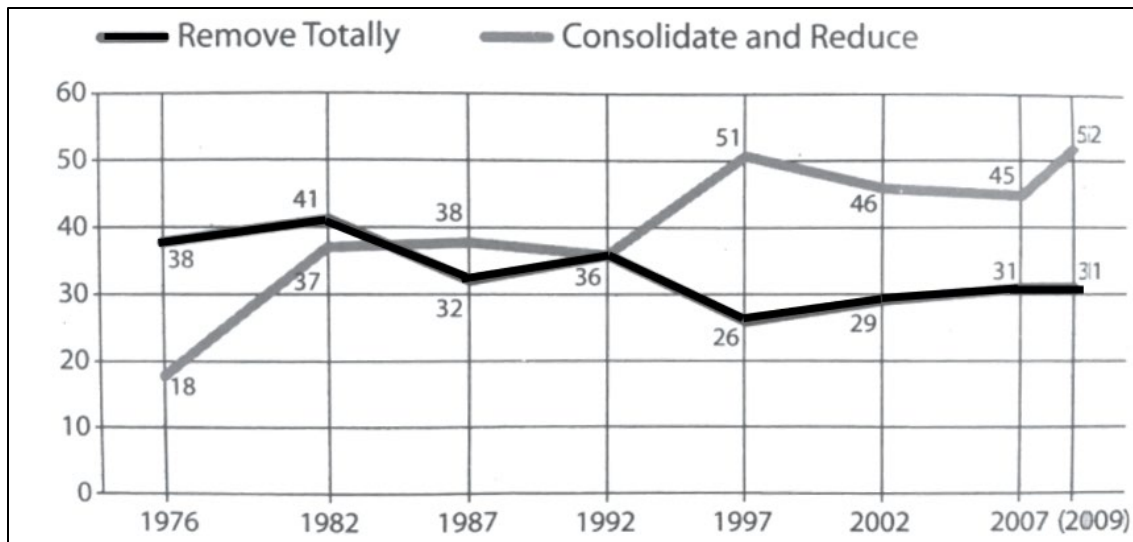


Figure 7. Okinawan Opinion regarding U.S. Military Bases on Okinawa.⁸¹

This suggests that perceived U.S. servicemember criminal activity might be the strongest driver of Okinawans' anti-base sentiment. It is worth mentioning that while "crime rates of U.S. forces in Okinawa remain well below that of the overall population," this fact does not ease reactions to high-profile crimes perpetrated by servicemembers.⁸² Hashimoto maintains that certain media outlets exploit antibase sentiments to exacerbate the perception that "disproportionately find United States Forces Japan (USFJ) military and civilian personnel and their dependents responsible for accidents and crimes."⁸³

Another factor unique to Okinawa is that it hosts the largest contingent of forward deployed U.S. Marines in the world. Higher rates of crime, sexual assault, and vehicular accidents are consistently observed among U.S. youth between the ages of 17–24, and this age demographic is overrepresented in the Marine Corps compared to the other services.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Source: Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 18.

⁸² Eric L. Robinson, "Lost in Translation: U.S. Forces and Crime in Japan" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2015), 1, <https://calhoun.nps.edu/handle/10945/47321>

⁸³ Robinson, *Lost in Translation*, 1.

⁸⁴ "Prevalence Rate of Violent Crime in the United States from 2005 to 2019, by Age," *Statista* (September 15, 2020) <https://www.statista.com/statistics/424137/prevalence-rate-of-violent-crime-in-the-us-by-age/>

Approximately 70% of the Marine Corps' enlisted force is 17 to 24 years old, compared to figures of 45% in the Army, 41% in the Navy, 40% in the Air Force, and 30% in the Coast Guard.⁸⁵

Related, Allen et al., which disputes proximity as a factor of increased protest, does not account for differences in rates of accidents, crime, or rotational presence associated with different types of U.S. forces when examining contact with host-nation communities.⁸⁶ Per capita, U.S. forces on Okinawa are associated with higher crime rates and vehicular accidents than any other forces in Japan. For example, Okinawa hosts approximately 18,000 Marines—more than any other country in the world—and over 5,000 of them deploy on a temporary rotational basis.⁸⁷ The Marines on Okinawa represent roughly 55% of the total U.S. active-duty population on Okinawa. It is important to note that the Japanese Ministry of Defense (MOD) reported that between 2004 and 2013, 9,962 accidents and crimes were attributed to SOFA members – and while 48% of those occurred on Okinawa, U.S. forces in Okinawa only represented approximately 33% of the total number of forces under U.S. Forces Japan.⁸⁸ Naval Criminal Investigative Services (NCIS) reports that the Marine Corps, compared to the other service branches, tends to have a larger number of annually reported sexual assaults perpetrated by Marines against fellow servicemembers. In 2018, it had “an incidence rate of nearly 11%, followed by the Navy, 7.5%; the Army, 5.8%; and the Air Force, 4.3%.”⁸⁹ Such statistics are relevant when examining the type of contact U.S. bases have with the local community.

⁸⁵ “Demographics of the U.S. Military” *Council on Foreign Relations* (July 13, 2020) <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/demographics-us-military>.

⁸⁶ Allen, Flynn, Machain, and Stravers, “Outside the Wire,” 326–339.

⁸⁷ Commander U.S. Forces Japan, *Guidance from the Commander* (Yokota Air Base, Japan: USFJ, 2020) <https://www.usfj.mil/About-USFJ/>.

⁸⁸ Commander U.S. Forces Japan, *Guidance from the Commander*.; Mizuho Aoki, “Japan Paid ¥380 Million in Compensation for Accidents by U.S. Military Personnel,” *The Japan Times*, August 13, 2014, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/08/13/national/japan-paid-%C2%A5380-million-past-decade-compensation-accidents-caused-u-s-military-personnel/>.

⁸⁹ Patricia Kime, “Despite Efforts, Sexual Assaults Up Nearly 40% in U.S. Military,” *Military.com*, May 2, 2019, <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2019/05/02/despite-efforts-sexual-assaults-nearly-40-us-military.html#:~:text=A%20new%20survey%20of%20active,sex%20crimes%20in%20the%20ranks>.

c. *Proximity Case for MCAS Futenma*

Mochizuki contends that MCAS Futenma became the premier symbol for Okinawan protest as the population density surrounding the base increased.⁹⁰ He argues that “because so many people reside and go about their daily activities in close proximity to this facility, many commentators have called Futenma Air Base one of the most dangerous military bases in the world.”⁹¹ When examining the heightened protest associated with MCAS Futenma, it is important to understand characteristics about the base: first, its location relative to Okinawan population density (Figures 8 and 9); and, second, the orientation of flight paths and frequency of operations over Okinawan population density (Figures 10 and 11).

First, MCAS Futenma is in the middle of Ginowan city, which has a population of over 97,000 citizens. Figure 8 shows Futenma’s s large population density compared to other U.S. bases in Okinawa, at approximately 4,909 people per square kilometer.⁹² This is notable when compared to Kadena Air Force Base, which is significantly larger but only observed half the number of protests as Futenma from 1992 to 2017, and which is surrounded by an area with less than a third of Futenma’s population density.⁹³

Furthermore, Okinawans are significantly more exposed, both audibly and visually, to MCAS Futenma operations than to those of any other base in Okinawa. Annually, over 23,000 aircraft landings and takeoffs occur throughout the day and night.⁹⁴ The military aircraft involved are highly visible and noisy due to the relatively short size of the buildings that form Ginowan’s skyline. Figure 9 shows areas of the population and the decibel exposure associated with average daily aircraft operations; of note, 60 decibels are comparable to the noise level of normal conversation.

⁹⁰ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 36.

⁹¹ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 36.

⁹² Thomas Brinkhoff, “City Population,” Google Analytics, October 17, 2020, <https://www.citypopulation.de/php/japan-admin.php?adminId=47>.

⁹³ Willis, “Incidents, Accidents, and Activists,” 4.

⁹⁴ United States Marine Corps Installations Command, *Environmental Review for Basing MV-22 Aircraft at MCAS Futenma and Operating in Japan* (Washington, DC: Pentagon, 2020), 3–1, https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/anpo/osprey/haibi/pdf/env_review.pdf.

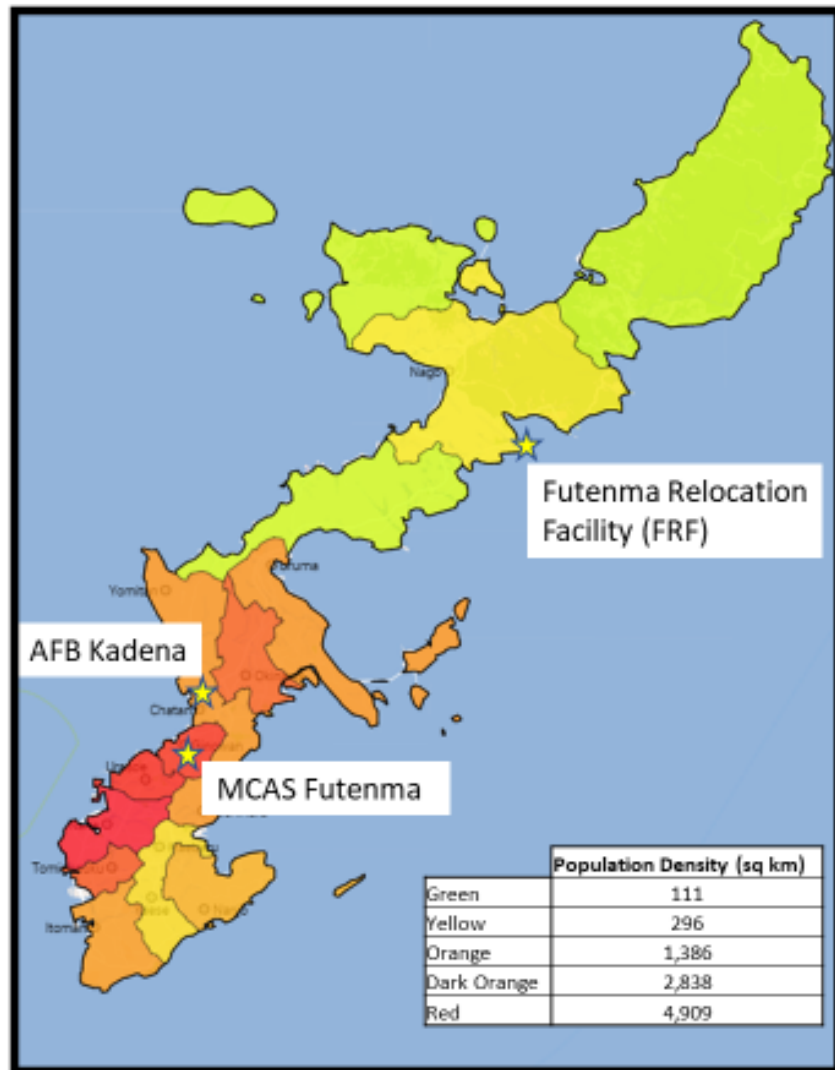


Figure 8. Okinawa Population Density Relative to Most Protested Bases.⁹⁵

⁹⁵ Source: Thomas Brinkhoff, "City Population," Google Analytics, October 17, 2020, <https://www.citypopulation.de/php/japan-admin.php?adm1id=47>.

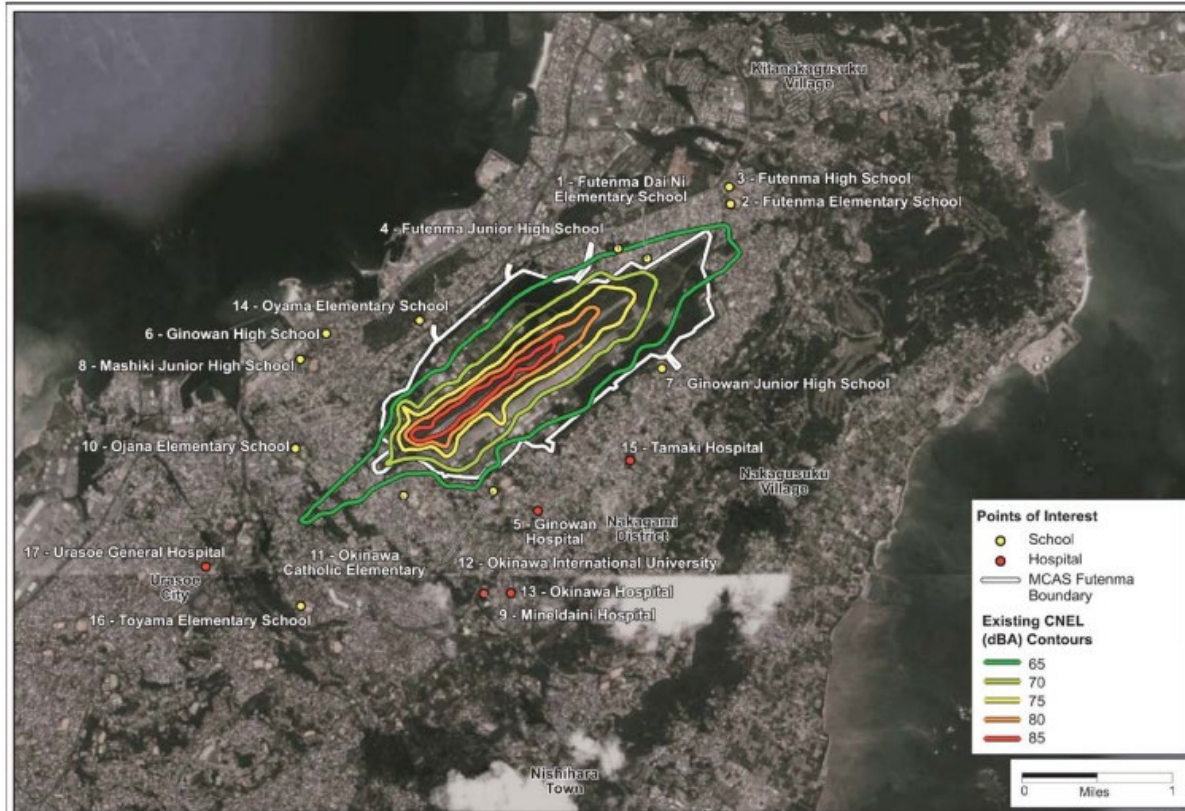


Figure 9. CNEL Contours for Average Daily Aircraft Operations at MCAS Futenma (2012).⁹⁶

Second, Okinawans' exposure to military operations is further intensified by the specific flight paths used in and out of MCAS Futenma (Figure 10). Futenma is approximately 5 miles from Okinawa's capital city, Naha. Aircraft flight patterns for takeoff and landings bisect some of the most densely populated areas of Okinawa. Figure 11 shows that over 35% of the annual air operations on Futenma are fixed-wing aircraft that have low-angle takeoffs and landings that exacerbate noise disruption. On the other hand, Kadena AFB is over 12 miles from Naha City Hall, and its aircraft flight paths are oriented into the East China Sea and into the rural Udonshiki Forest. Kadena AFB observes significantly fewer protests than MCAS Futenma; however, characteristics of Kadena significantly reduce host nation exposure to military operations.

⁹⁶ Source: United States Marine Corps Installations Command, *Environmental Review for Basing MV-22 Aircraft at MCAS Futenma and Operating in Japan* (Washington, DC: Pentagon, 2020), 3–15, https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/anpo/osprey/haibi/pdf/env_review.pdf.

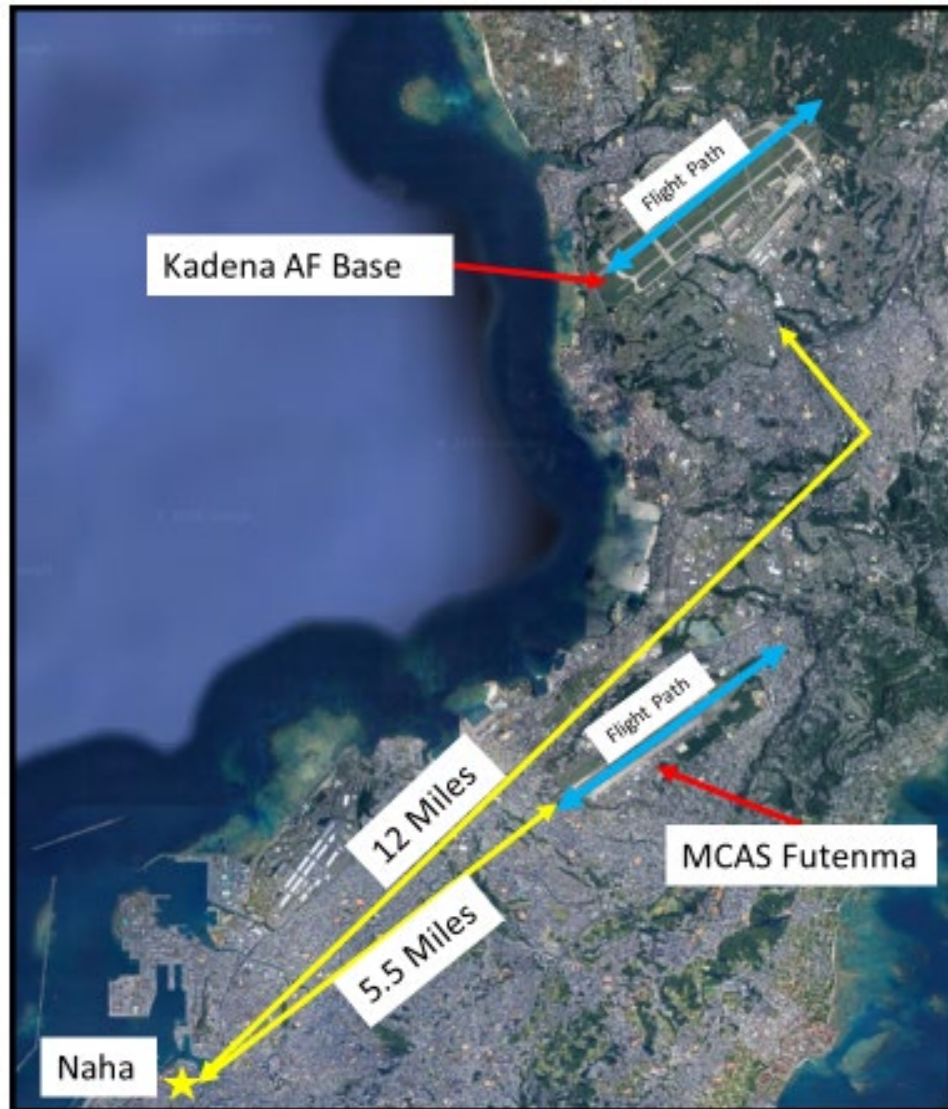


Figure 10. Google Earth. Orientation of Kaden and Futenma Relative to Greatest Population Density.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Adapted from *Google Earth*, earth.google.com/web.

Based or Transient	Aircraft Category	Aircraft Type	Departure				Arrival ¹				Patterns ²				Total			
			Day (0700-1900)	Eve (1900-2200)	Night (2200-0700)	Total	Day (0700-1900)	Eve (1900-2200)	Night (2200-0700)	Total	Day (0700-1900)	Eve (1900-2200)	Night (2200-0700)	Total	Day (0700-1900)	Eve (1900-2200)	Night (2200-0700)	Total
Based	Navy/ Marine	UC-35	510	23	-	533	280	238	15	533	567	65	-	632	1,357	326	15	1,698
		UC-12W	273	14	-	287	177	105	6	288	393	27	-	420	843	146	6	995
		KC-130J	608	102	-	710	532	162	18	712	1,109	102	-	1,211	2,249	366	18	2,633
		CH-53E	152	111	-	263	151	102	9	262	478	153	-	631	781	366	9	1,156
		AH-1W	211	154	-	365	210	142	13	365	665	213	-	878	1,086	509	13	1,608
		UH-1N	154	112	-	266	153	104	10	267	484	156	-	640	791	372	10	1,173
		MV-22	1,741	745	86	2,572 ⁵	1,748	701	123	2,572	1,061	430	71	1,562	4,550	1,876	280	6,706
Transient	Navy/ Marine	FA-18C/D ³	341	69	-	410	391	19	-	410	80	15	-	95	812	103	-	915
		P-3	36	-	-	36	35	-	-	35	1,093	-	-	1,093	1,164	-	-	1,164
		Other Military ⁴	252	83	2	337	274	57	6	337	120	11	-	131	646	151	8	805
		General Aviation ⁵	511	57	-	568	526	61	-	587	694	78	-	772	1,731	196	-	1,927
Totals	Based		3,649	1,261	86	4,996	3,251	1,554	194	4,999	4,757	1,146	71	5,974	11,657	3,961	351	15,969
	Transient		1,140	209	2	1,351	1,226	137	6	1,369	1,987	104	-	2,091	4,353	450	8	4,811
Grand Total			4,789	1,470	88	6,347	4,477	1,691	200	6,368	6,744	1,250	71	8,065	16,010	4,411	359	20,780

Figure 11. Flight Operations MCAS Futenma (2013) ⁹⁸

⁹⁸ Source: United States Marine Corps Installations Command, *Environmental Review for Basing MV-22 Aircraft at MCAS Futenma and Operating in Japan* (Washington, DC: Pentagon, 2020), 2–21, https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/anpo/osprey/haibi/pdf/env_review.pdf.

d. Proximity: Risks Associated with Exercises

Another variable associated with proximity is the host communities' increased exposure to the nuisance and risks associated with military exercises. Accidents associated with military exercise triggered grievances pertaining to sovereignty as well: these instances tended to be the tangible picture or event that was leveraged to justify protests.

South Korean protesters have expressed similar concerns over aircraft and vehicle accidents. Kawato describes numerous cases in the 1990s and early 2000s in South Korea in which protest intensified after accidents associated with military exercises. In 2002, opposition to U.S. bases escalated when a U.S. military armored vehicle crashed on Highway 56 and killed two South Korean girls.⁹⁹

Marine Corps Air Station Futenma is where MV-22 Ospreys operate, and during the platform's initial fielding in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it was associated with several accidents that elevated protest across Okinawa. Accidents associated with MCAS Futenma presumably also tend to become front-page news more often because the risks are perceived to be elevated by the density of its surrounding city of Ginowan. In 2005, a CH-53D crash landed on Okinawa International University and civil uproar demanded change to the current U.S. base layout.¹⁰⁰ In 2016, when an Osprey crashed off the coast of Okinawa, protesters took to the streets and attempted to block the entrances to U.S. bases.

While these crashes associated with MCAS Futenma spurred mobilized protest, similar accidents involving Kadena Air Force Base, which is not located within a densely populated city, prompted significantly less.¹⁰¹ In 2004, when two F-15s bumped each other off the south coast of Okinawa, protesters did not take to the streets (though a Kadena

⁹⁹ Yuko Kawato, *Protests Against U.S. Military Base Policy in Asia: Persuasion and Its Limits*, (CA: Stanford University Press, 2015).

¹⁰⁰ Enval and Ng, "The Okinawa "Effect" in US-Japan Alliance Politics," 233.

¹⁰¹ Willis, "Incidents, Accidents, and Activists," 4.

Town assembly held a meeting with U.S. officials to submit a resolution calling for stricter safety measures to be implemented to prevent future accidents).¹⁰²

2. Violation of Sovereignty

Two components of perceived violation of sovereignty tend to incite protest: land rights and jurisdiction to prosecute U.S. servicemembers. Okinawa is significantly smaller than mainland Japan but is tasked by the national government with hosting the vast majority of U.S. forces.¹⁰³ Additionally, Okinawa faces certain legal restraints to prosecute criminal activity, as outlined in the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). The jurisdictional boundary between U.S. servicemembers and host nation communities is one factor that drives protest across Northeast Asia.

a. Sovereignty Grievances in South Korea

In South Korea, the United States in 2002 reduced the number of bases from 41 to 23 through the Land Partnership Plan and relocated U.S. Forces Korea Headquarters, and the Army's Second Infantry Division, from the densely populated capital of Seoul forty miles south to the rural area of Pyeongtaek. In 2005, roughly 12,000 protesters, to include Okinawans, demonstrated against the relocation to Pyeongtaek in favor of complete base closure.

Criminal jurisdiction over U.S. servicemembers alleged of crime is one of the most protested sovereignty issues in South Korea. In 2001, concessions were made in the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) that allowed service members to be transferred to the custody of Korean authorities if indicted. The revision to the SOFA was the result of "several well-publicized crimes committed by USFK personnel against Koreans."¹⁰⁴ Protesters maintained that U.S. courts-martial proceedings had been too lenient on U.S. servicemembers, that justice was not being delivered to the Korean victims, and that South

¹⁰² Hana Kusumoto, "F-15s Flying Again at Kadena; Okinawa Local Officials aren't Happy about it," *Stars and Stripes*, October 9, 2004, <https://www.stripes.com/news/f-15s-flying-again-at-kadena-okinawa-local-officials-aren-t-happy-about-it-1.24833>.

¹⁰³ Okinawa Prefectural Government, *U.S. Military Base Issues in Okinawa*.

¹⁰⁴ Kawato, *Protests Against U.S. Military Base Policy in Asia*, 100.

Korea had jurisdiction over servicemembers in both off and on-duty status and should be able to detain suspects through the duration of the legal proceedings.¹⁰⁵ This issue resurfaced after the previously mentioned Highway 56 incident in 2002, which spiked protest when the U.S. servicemembers fell under military jurisdiction and could not face civil trial.¹⁰⁶ In the early 2000s, protests brought about new conditions in the SOFA agreement placing constraints on off-base military exercises and introducing more robust safety measures.¹⁰⁷

b. Sovereignty Grievance in Okinawa

Fundamental in Okinawa's platform of opposition toward Tokyo is the disproportionate representation of U.S. forces on Okinawa compared to the mainland. Smith notes that the disproportionate concentration dates to the 1969 Sato-Nixon communique that resulted from "popular opposition to U.S. forces [that] peaked during the Vietnam War." The U.S. returned the Ryukyu Islands to Japan on the condition that the bases could remain.¹⁰⁸ Smith adds, "The consequence was a consolidation and reduction of U.S. bases on the mainland Japanese islands while the U.S. military concentrated its forces in Okinawa Prefecture."¹⁰⁹ In May 1973, a poll administered by *Asahi Shimbun*, identified that 62% of surveyed respondents on Okinawa stated they were "disappointed" about reversion to Japan after their expectation for a reduction of U.S. bases failed to materialize.¹¹⁰

The dominant complaint among Okinawan protesters is that approximately 75% of all U.S. forces in Japan are based in Okinawa rather than proportionally arrayed across

¹⁰⁵ Kawato, *Protests Against U.S. Military Base Policy in Asia*, 100.

¹⁰⁶ Stacie L. Pettyjohn, and Jennifer Kavanagh, *Access Granted: Political Challenges to U.S. Overseas Military Presence, 1945–2014*, RR1339 (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2016), 15.

¹⁰⁷ Kawato, *Protests Against U.S. Military Base Policy in Asia*, 116.

¹⁰⁸ Sheila Smith, *Japan Rearmed*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019), 176.

¹⁰⁹ Smith, *Japan Rearmed*, 177.

¹¹⁰ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 16.

other Japanese prefectures.¹¹¹ As of 2016, U.S. bases occupied approximately 15% of mainland Okinawa's landmass.¹¹² This fact contributes to protesters' grievance that Okinawan sovereignty is worth less than citizens' on the mainland. Protesters often hold that the concentration of bases represents an almost untouchable foreign power that maintains the privilege of separate jurisdiction. Calder classifies this group as "nationalistic protesters, who oppose bases primarily on cultural grounds, or due to the perceived violence they impose on national sovereignty."¹¹³ Since the mid-1990s, the United States has undertaken significant efforts to acquiesce to grievances over violations of sovereignty by consolidating the number of bases and returning land to Okinawans. Dating back to 1998, the United States has agreed to return 12,000 acres, or 21%, of the land it originally occupied on Okinawa (Figure 12).¹¹⁴ However, as of 2016 only 9,000 acres, or 17%, of the original acreage, had been returned.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ Reginald L. Furr, Brian J. Lepore, Colin L. Chambers, Nancy L. Ragsdale, and Julio A. Luna, *Overseas Presence: Issues Involved in Reducing the Impact of the United States Military Presence on Okinawa*, GAO/NSIAD-98-66 (Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office, 1998), 16, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GAOREPORTS-NSIAD-98-66/pdf/GAOREPORTS-NSIAD-98-66.pdf>.

¹¹² Okinawa Prefectural Government, *U.S. Military Base Issues in Okinawa*.

¹¹³ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 84.

¹¹⁴ Yeo, *Activists, Alliances, and Anti-U.S. Base Protests*, 80.

¹¹⁵ Curt Mills, "U.S. Returning Okinawa Land to Japan," *U.S. News*, December 21, 2016. <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2016-12-21/us-returning-thousands-of-acres-on-okinawa-to-japan>.

Land Return	Proportion Returned	Date	Replacement Facility
MCAS Futenma	All	Between 2001 and 2003	Sea-based facility
Northern training area (9,000 acres)	More than half	March 2003	Remaining northern training area
Aha training area	All	March 1998	Acreage added to northern training area
Gimbaru training area	All	March 1998	Kin Blue Beach training area and Camp Hansen
Sobe communications site	All	March 2001	Camp Hansen
Yomitan auxiliary airfield	All	March 2001	Ie Jima auxiliary airfield
Camp Kuwae	A major portion	March 2008	Camp Zukeran and other facilities
Senaha Communication Station	Nearly all	March 2001	Torti Communication Station
Makiminato service area	Some	Between 1998 and 2000	Remaining Makiminato area
Naha port	All	No date established	Urasce pier area
Housing consolidation on Camps Kuwae and Zukeran		March 2008	Remaining portions of Camps Kuwae and Zukeran

Figure 12. Land Planned for Return to Okinawa Under SACO.¹¹⁶

A related component to violation of sovereignty pertains to Status of Forces Agreements (SOFA). As recent as October 2018, newly-elected Okinawan Governor Denny Tamaki made public appeals to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to conduct a “fundamental review of Japan’s agreement with the United States on the status of U.S. forces.”¹¹⁷ He asserted that far too often Japanese police officials are denied access to U.S. bases to question suspects, and that Japanese authorities are restricted from conducting

¹¹⁶ Source: Reginald L. Furr, Brian J. Lepore, Colin L. Chambers, Nancy L. Ragsdale, and Julio A. Luna, *Overseas Presence: Issues Involved in Reducing the Impact of the United States Military Presence on Okinawa*, GAO/NSIAD-98-66 (Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office, 1998), 26, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GAOREPORTS-NSIAD-98-66/pdf/GAOREPORTS-NSIAD-98-66.pdf>.

¹¹⁷ “Spotlight: New Okinawa Governor Urges Abe to Forego U.S. Base Move, Fundamentally Review SOFA,” *Xinhua News Agency* - CEIS, Oct 12, 2018. ProQuest.

investigations in cases in which U.S. military hardware was involved in accidents in public.¹¹⁸

3. Democratic Responsiveness

Existing cross-national literature also finds that levels of protest are significantly affected by the degree to which constituents feel government is responsive to their grievances.¹¹⁹ A popular protest platform in Okinawa is that the Japanese central government is represented by a “policymaking process that subjugates the interests of particular groups of citizens to the ‘national’ interest in security.”¹²⁰ Mulgan contends that the Japanese central government subordinates Okinawan human and property rights to maintain provisions in the security treaty with the United States. She further holds that this effort is “aided and abetted by a nominally independent judiciary and in particular by a Supreme Court that has subordinated its rights of judicial review to a consistently conservative, pro-regime posture.”¹²¹ She points to the central government’s “legalistic and coercive” approach and the leveraging of compensation packages to address Okinawan protest as tactics typically utilized by authoritarian regimes.¹²²

Japan and South Korea are arguably among the most responsive democracies in Asia, as competitive democratic elections force strong parties to take a position when faced with substantial protest; and base restructuring and U.S. force realignments have been modified as a result. This logic suggests that if Japanese and South Korean national-level governments prioritize effective responses to U.S. base protest, grievances should diminish over time. The severe disparity in Okinawan and mainland political ideology and objectives are assessed further in the following section about Okinawa’s protest of U.S. bases.

¹¹⁸ “Spotlight: New Okinawa Governor Urges Abe to Forego U.S. Base Move, Fundamentally Review SOFA,” *Xinhua News Agency*.

¹¹⁹ Robert Weiner, “How can Democracy Matter?” (class notes for NS3620: Survey of Asian Politics, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, 2020).

¹²⁰ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 90.

¹²¹ Aurelia George Mulgan, “Managing the U.S. Base Issue in Okinawa: A Test for Japanese Democracy,” *Japanese Studies* 20, no. 2 (August 4, 2010) 159. doi:10.1080/713683781

¹²² Mulgan, “Managing the U.S. Base Issue in Okinawa,” 159–160.

Pettyjohn and Kavanagh support Cooley and Calder’s arguments about the variable of democratic responsiveness (Figure 13). When measuring Okinawa’s democratic responsiveness, it is worth remembering authoritarian regimes, comparatively speaking, are perhaps more appropriately classifiable as ones that tend to make basing agreements that “lack popular legitimacy.”

Regime Type	Impact on Basing Agreements	Access Risk
Consolidated democracy	• Legitimate agreements • Established party system moderates officials’ positions on bases • Technocratic administration of agreement routinizes U.S. presence	Low
Democratizing	• Previous agreement lacks legitimacy • Weak institutions lead candidates to appeal to nationalism, politicizing U.S. bases • Opportunity to forge a more equitable and legitimate agreement	Medium
Authoritarian	• Agreements lack popular legitimacy • Unconstrained decisionmaking enables leaders to make sudden changes to U.S. access • Contingent on the leader who made agreement • Unlikely to persist beyond the regime	High

Figure 13. Basing Agreements and Regime Type.¹²³

States that function at higher levels of democratic responsiveness are characterized by “stable institutions, and a well-developed party system—that together help depoliticize the issue of U.S. bases.”¹²⁴ Historical instances of democratic transition, particularly in Asia, have exhibited heightened contention over U.S. basing issues as political entrepreneurs exploited such sentiments in political competition.¹²⁵ At the national level in Japan, U.S. bases draw relatively limited political attention. U.S. basing issues tend to gain prominence in smaller localities, such as Okinawa.

¹²³ Source: Stacie L. Pettyjohn, and Jennifer Kavanagh, *Access Granted: Political Challenges to U.S. Overseas Military Presence, 1945–2014*, RR1339 (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2016), 42.

¹²⁴ Pettyjohn, and Kavanagh, *Access Granted*, 44–45.

¹²⁵ Cooley and Hopkin, “Base Closings,” 499.

Historically in Asia, less democratic governments have tended to offer U.S. access in exchange for monetary benefits that enhance regime survival.¹²⁶ Cooley and Hopkin quantitatively demonstrate that “checks and balances, and independent judiciary, and diverse media are all likely to reduce the scope for nationalist appeals [apparent in periods of democratic transition] as they increase stability across different policy domains.”¹²⁷ More responsive democracies have overlapping authorities that balance power and hold officials accountable to protests held by the majority. Additionally, in responsive democracies voters have multiple avenues to pursue conflict resolution rather than resorting to protest.

a. Democratic Responsiveness: Okinawa’s Grievances Toward Tokyo

According to the literature, democracy in Okinawa is not contested; however, the U.S. alliance with Japan is likely to become more strategically strained if the Japanese central government is perceived as unresponsive to Okinawan protest. If Okinawans perceive that their interests are becoming further divergent from the mainland, or that majority interests lack the power to effect change, this could strain local-national relations. It could further escalate to the point of straining U.S.-Japanese relations.

A recent example of unresponsiveness from Tokyo occurred in 2019, when then-Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe stated that plans to relocate Marine Corps Air Station Futenma would proceed despite referendum results in Okinawa against the measure. The 2019 poll, which captured 52% of the Okinawan population, showed that 72% opposed the relocation and 19% favored it.¹²⁸ While a significant contingent opposed the relocation of the base, the poll did not represent the majority of Okinawa.

A 2017 Congressional Research Service report notes that “the attitudes of native Okinawans towards U.S. military bases are generally characterized as negative, reflecting a tumultuous history and complex relationships with ‘mainland’ Japan and with the United

¹²⁶ Kawato, *Protests Against U.S. Military Base Policy in Asia*, 29.

¹²⁷ Cooley and Hopkin, “Base Closings,” 499.

¹²⁸ “Tokyo to Overrule Referendum on U.S. Base,” *BBC News*, February 25, 2019, sec. Asia.
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-47353504>.

States.”¹²⁹ Gintautas asserts that the Japanese government’s failure to address the Okinawa issue “has led to a dangerous dearth of public support at the popular, grassroots level as seen by the successive elections of anti-base governors and in almost every public base-related referendum held in the last decade.”¹³⁰ Stewart not only supports this assertion but also states further that “according to several experts, Japan’s main security concern is the possibility of Okinawa declaring independence, in part due to its grievances against Tokyo and Washington.”¹³¹ The anti-base issue in Okinawa is so prominent that it eclipses any other topics in local elections. As one University of Ryukyus law student noted, “this phenomenon exists because voters are so much more easily moved by a politician’s stance toward the U.S. military than their stance on local funding for a new school.”¹³²

b. Compensation Politics

The GOJ’s tendency to respond to Okinawan protest with political compensation has proven effective at moderating protest, but not at addressing core issues. The GOJ utilizes various branches within the Ministry of Defense to address Okinawans’ grievances toward U.S. bases; the principle means for resolving issues is pork barrel incentives and cash settlements.¹³³ In 2006, the budget for handling such grievances totaled over \$5 billion, which comprised approximately 11% of Japan’s total defense budget.¹³⁴ In 2018, the GOJ paid approximately \$3.28 billion in compensation to Okinawans who claimed to be negatively impacted by U.S. bases.¹³⁵

¹²⁹ Emma Chanlett-Avery and Ian E. Rinehart, *The U.S. Military Presence in Okinawa and Futenma Base Controversy*, CRS Report No. R42645 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2016), 21, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R42645.pdf>

¹³⁰ Balys Gintautas, *Loosening the Okinawan Knot: A Mixed-Methods Study of Okinawan Public Perceptions of the U.S. Military*, RGSD-A814-1 (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2020), 20–21, <https://doi.org/10.7249/RGSDA814-1>

¹³¹ Devin Stewart, *China’s Influence in Japan: Everywhere Yet Nowhere in Particular* (Washington, DC: CSIS, 2020), 3, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/chinas-influence-japan-everywhere-yet-nowhere-particular>

¹³² Gintautas, *Loosening the Okinawan Knot*, 66.

¹³³ Chiyomi Sumida, “Japan’s DFAA Dissolved, but Work Goes On,” *Stars and Stripes*, June 1, 2007, <https://www.stripes.com/news/japan-s-dfaa-dissolved-but-work-goes-on-1.64797>

¹³⁴ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 133.

¹³⁵ Gintautas, *Loosening the Okinawan Knot*, 10.

Agencies within the Ministry of Defense are responsible for allocating funds and resources to Okinawans who file claims against injuries, accidents, noise pollution, and criminal activity perpetrated by U.S. personnel. There are approximately thirty-six offices across Japan that are responsible for serving as the liaison between citizen grievances and the U.S. military. These offices are “endowed with unique structures, networks, and organizational goals conducive to politically efficient compensation politics.”¹³⁶ The liaison offices serve a critical role in civil-military relations and effectively utilize compensation tools to ease protest against U.S. bases. Some allege the compensation packages are tools to apply “economic incentives and coercive legal measures [to] undermine antibase pressure.”¹³⁷ Financial support has proven to be an effective means for coopting victims of crime. Calder asserts that such tactics tend to be employed more often in authoritarian regimes or less responsive democracies.¹³⁸ In 2019, a Japanese high court ordered 26.1 billion yen (242.36 million U.S. dollars) to be paid by the Japanese government to approximately 22,000 Okinawan plaintiffs over aircraft noise from U.S. bases.¹³⁹

4. Threat Perception

The literature also finds that higher external threat perception tends to reduce protest. Pettyjohn and Kavanagh find that U.S. base favorability grows elevated during instances of heightened external threats (Figure 14).

¹³⁶ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 134.; Jeffrey W. Hornung, *Managing the U.S.-Japan Alliance: An Examination of Structural Linkages in the Security Relationship*, Sasakawa Peace Foundation (Washington, DC: Sasakawa, 2017), 16. <https://spfusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Managing-the-U.S.-Japan-Alliance.pdf>

¹³⁷ Yeo, *Activists, Alliances, and Anti-U.S. Base Protests*, 64.

¹³⁸ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 118–133.

¹³⁹ “Japanese Gov’t Ordered to Pay Compensation Over U.S. Aircraft Noise at Okinawa Base,” *Xinhuanet.com Asia & Pacific*, September 11, 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/11/c_138384414.htm

Type of Access Relationship	Host-Nation Motive for Providing Access	Effect on Access	Access Risk
Transactional	Material benefits	Volatile	High
Mutual defense	Perception of shared threat	Stable when facing common threat	Medium
Enduring partnership	Elite security consensus	Depoliticized	Low

Figure 14. Character of U.S. Base Access in Relation to External Threat.¹⁴⁰

Pettyjohn and Kavanagh suggest the type of relationship the United States has with the host-nation is critical in explaining levels of base support. They find that when the relationship is transactional, protest increases, since interests are less aligned. Elevated support for bases exists when the U.S. presence supports host-nation interests and when its missions against external threats are viewed as legitimate.¹⁴¹ However, host nations tend to challenge U.S. access when they fear becoming implicated in conflicts that diverge from their national interests.¹⁴²

After World War II, amid the looming threat of communism, the United States faced limited protest with respect to military access in Japan and South Korea. However, access was challenged and protest increased after the Cold War.¹⁴³ Some scholars note that politicians can more easily justify the presence of U.S. bases when discussing significant external security threats, but, at the same time, that it is challenging to assess the population's perceived threat level.¹⁴⁴ In general, it is presumed that Okinawan support increases during instances of North Korean provocation and Chinese aggression.

¹⁴⁰ Source: Stacie L. Pettyjohn, and Jennifer Kavanagh, *Access Granted: Political Challenges to U.S. Overseas Military Presence, 1945–2014*, RR1339 (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2016), 47.

¹⁴¹ Pettyjohn, and Kavanagh, *Access Granted*, xv-xvi.

¹⁴² Pettyjohn, and Kavanagh, *Access Granted*, 49.

¹⁴³ Pettyjohn, and Kavanagh, *Access Granted*, 49.

¹⁴⁴ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 91; Enval and Ng, “The Okinawa “Effect” in US-Japan Alliance Politics,” 230–231.

¹⁴⁴ Lutz, *The Bases of Empire*, 251.

Kagotani and Yanai find that “external threats do encourage Okinawans to support pro-base candidates.”¹⁴⁵ They present regression analysis demonstrating that for every “one-point increase in Japanese risk perception of war, the vote share of pro-base candidates increases by .37 points.”¹⁴⁶ Or, for every 10% of respondents who perceive a risk for war, a pro-base candidate would receive approximately a 3.7-point increase.

Some in Okinawa also feel made into a target at the same time, though. In March 2013, North Korea threatened to strike U.S. bases in Okinawa after American B-52s bombers were said to be conducting military drills out of Kadena Air Force Base on Okinawa. The North Korean Central News Agency published a statement reminding the U.S. that Okinawa is “within the range of our precision target assets.”¹⁴⁷ Protesters have expressed concern that U.S. military presence and operations draw Okinawans into U.S. conflicts. When asked during a 2017 Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) news segment if she felt safer with U.S. forces in Okinawa, one respondent replied, “Less safe. It means we became a target.”¹⁴⁸

C. OKINAWA SPECIFIC FACTORS OF U.S. BASE PROTEST

This section presents main drivers behind a higher level of mobilized protest in Okinawa compared to mainland Japan. To explain the disparity between Okinawa and mainland Japan’s levels of mobilized base protest, Willis utilized Poisson and negative binomial regressions to examine “the number of protests per base over the 26-year period from 1992 to 2017.”¹⁴⁹ “Protests” was identified utilizing news articles catalogued by LexisNexis. “For every news article that mentioned a discrete protest, a ‘1’ was recorded for the corresponding base.”¹⁵⁰ Independent variables included distance from China,

¹⁴⁵ Kagotani and Yanai, “External Threats, U.S. Bases, and Prudent Voters in Okinawa,” 92.

¹⁴⁶ Kagotani and Yanai, “External Threats, U.S. Bases, and Prudent Voters in Okinawa,” 109.

¹⁴⁷ “North Korea Threatens U.S. Bases in Okinawa, Guam as ‘Within Range,’” *South China Morning Post*, March 21, 2013, <https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/article/1196110/north-korea-threatens-us-bases-okinawa-guam-within-range>

¹⁴⁸ “On Okinawa, Many Locals Want U.S. Troops to Leave,” PBS News Hour, September 16, 2017, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/okinawa-locals-want-u-s-troops-leave>

¹⁴⁹ Willis, “Incidents, Accidents, and Activists,” 17.

¹⁵⁰ Willis, “Incidents, Accidents, and Activists,” 17.

number of military personnel permanently stationed at the U.S. base, base-related incidents, base proximity, and per capita income (PCI).¹⁵¹ In the model that exhibited the best relationship explaining the frequency for mobilized protest, independent variables that showed the highest degree of statistical significance included the number of military personnel permanently stationed at the U.S. base and the number of incidents associated with a base (Figure 15). Willis concludes that “high numbers of military personnel and high numbers of base-related incidents are associated with a greater anti-US base protest frequency.”¹⁵²

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model4
Distance_China	0.035*** (0.013)	0.024* (0.013)	0.037** (0.017)	0.021 (0.018)
Personnel	0.000*** (0.000)		0.000*** (0.000)	
Base_Proximity	-0.011* (0.006)	-0.012* (0.006)	-0.011 (0.007)	-0.011 (0.007)
PCI	-0.062* (0.036)	-0.053 (0.036)	-0.041 (0.048)	-0.020 (0.053)
Population	0.001 (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)	0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.002)
Incidents		0.062*** (0.017)		0.114*** (0.044)
AIC	87.202	92.140	72.018	74.161
BIC	91.036	95.974	76.491	78.635
Log Likelihood	-37.601	-40.070	-29.009	-30.081
Deviance	41.965	46.903	12.401	13.230
Num. obs.	14	14	14	14

p < 0.01, *p* < 0.05, *p* < 0.1

Figure 15. Poisson and Negative Binomial Regressions of Japanese Antibase Protests.¹⁵³

Although Okinawa has high-intensity versions of many of the types of factors Willis describes, it also has certain protest drivers that are unique. These models fail to

¹⁵¹ Willis, “Incidents, Accidents, and Activists,” 17–20.

¹⁵² Willis, “Incidents, Accidents, and Activists,” 26.

¹⁵³ Source: Willis, “Incidents, Accidents, and Activists,” 24.

capture the influences associated with the number of service members permanently stationed at a U.S. base in relation to the proximity of the base to a densely populated community. For example, Kadena Air Force Base maintains a population of over 20,000 servicemembers compared to MACS Futenma's 4,000, yet Kadena observed 42% fewer protests than MCAS Futenma.¹⁵⁴ This suggests there are unique characteristics about MCAS Futenma that inspires increased protest.

1. Normalization of Protest in Okinawa

Anti-base discourse has normalized in Okinawan culture—manifested by a 70-year history of protest.¹⁵⁵ The director of the Peace Philosophy Centre holds that Okinawan's activism for protest “comes from centuries of colonization, oppression and abuse. It's a relatively small community and has a strong sense of national/ethnic identity. Many protest efforts come from Okinawa's long-standing situation of being isolated and abandoned by much of the Japanese mainland media.”¹⁵⁶

On mainland Japan, the act of protesting is viewed to be less socially acceptable and the central government is more active in its efforts to prevent protests. Demonstrators face authoritative pressure and legal repercussions under the guise of threatening state security; “the nail that sticks out (by protesting) will be hammered down.”¹⁵⁷ “[Mainland] Japanese have a weakness against the establishment, authority and the bureaucracy.”¹⁵⁸ In 2013, Japan passed a “state secrets law” that gives police wider jurisdiction for cracking down on civil disturbances. On the mainland, protesters often “don white flu masks and pull down their hats to make it harder for the police filming the protests to identify

¹⁵⁴ “Kadena Air Force Base in Okinawa, Japan,” *Military Bases.com*, October 2020, <https://militarybases.com/overseas/japan/kadena/>; “MCAS Futenma Marine Corps in Ginowan, Japan,” *Military Bases.com*, October 2020, <https://militarybases.com/overseas/japan/futenma/>;

¹⁵⁵ Adapted from Charmaine N. Willis, “A History of Base-Related Incidents and Marginalization is-à-vis the Japanese Mainland Fostered the Emergence of a Contemporary Collective Okinawan Ethnic Identity,” (NY: University at Albany, SUNY, 2020), <https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/sites.dartmouth.edu/dist/d/274/files/2019/09/CWillis-NEWJP-Poster.pdf>

¹⁵⁶ Eric Johnston, “Public Protest in Japan: Power to the People?” *The Japan Times*, December 20, 2014, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/life/2014/12/20/general/public-protest-japan-power-people/>

¹⁵⁷ Johnston, “Public Protest in Japan: Power to the People?”

¹⁵⁸ Johnston, “Public Protest in Japan: Power to the People?”

them.”¹⁵⁹ Many Japanese fear the new law will intimidate activists and inhibit them from participating in civil discourse against the central government.¹⁶⁰

Okinawans appear to be less deterred by the new state secrets law. In Okinawa, central-government prosecutors announced in November 2017 that they were “seeking a prison sentence of two and a half years of hard labor for prominent anti-base protester and chairman of Okinawa Peace Activity Center, Hiroji Yamashiro.”¹⁶¹ After his arrest on November 26, approximately 3,000 protestors organized a sit-in outside of Marine Corps Base Schwab, where construction is underway for the relocation of MCAS Futenma. When evaluating the level of U.S. base protest in Japan, the difference in protest culture between the mainland and Okinawa must be considered.

2. Okinawa’s Ethnocultural Identity of Oppression by Tokyo

Okinawans commonly accept a historical narrative of a “tumultuous” relationship with Tokyo which has coalesced into a normalized political identity. Flint notes that that identity has evolved into a principal “tool for political gain” in Okinawan local politics.¹⁶² Political entrepreneurs have gone further to exploit this expressed divergence with the mainland as an ethnic cleavage. Many Okinawans identify first as Okinawan, then as Japanese.¹⁶³ Antibase sentiments could be an underlying unifier and symbol of ethnocentric politics and grievances toward Tokyo.

Okinawa’s tumultuous history with the mainland spans 500 years, covering the 1609 Satsuma Invasion, the 1879 annexation of the Ryukyu Islands by the mainland,

¹⁵⁹ Johnston, “Public Protest in Japan: Power to the People?”

¹⁶⁰ Johnston, “Public Protest in Japan: Power to the People?”

¹⁶¹ David Kaye, “Anti-US Base Activist Faces Imprisonment as Okinawa Protests Continue,” *Civics*, August 2, 2018, <https://monitor.civics.org/updates/2018/02/08/anti-us-base-protester-faces-imprisonment-protests-continue/>

¹⁶² Monica, Flint, “Governor Takeshi Onaga and the U.S. Bases in Okinawa: The Role of Okinawan Identity in Local Politics,” *New Voices in Japanese Studies* 10 (July 2018): 29–34, <https://doi.org/10.21159/nvjs.10.02>.

¹⁶³ Willis, “A History of Base-Related Incidents and Marginalization vis-à-vis the Japanese Mainland Fostered the Emergence of a Contemporary Collective Okinawan Ethnic Identity.”; Flint, “Governor Takeshi Onaga and the U.S. Bases in Okinawa,” 35–36.

oppression during the 1945 Battle of Okinawa, and the 1945 United States occupation supported by the mainland.¹⁶⁴ Flint notes, “Okinawan identity [has] become integral to anti-base discourse.”¹⁶⁵ Willis further adds that “there is more solidarity between Okinawans regardless of their perspective on the bases than between Okinawans and mainland Japanese with the same view of the bases.”¹⁶⁶

3. Identity Politics and MCAS Futenma

MCAS Futenma has become a core symbol of Okinawans’ identity of protest and grievances toward Tokyo. It is likely that its relocation would cause a substantial shift in political capital favoring the LDP and the GOJ. Okinawan politicians have campaigned on the sensitivities associated with U.S. bases and what they represent, emphasizing messages of “identity over ideology.”¹⁶⁷ A political concession to Okinawans by the GOJ would diminish the shared perception that Okinawa’s position is inferior to the mainland’s political objectives.¹⁶⁸ The question is whether the resulting shift in domestic political capital would be proportional to the decline in the strength of the U.S.-Japan alliance. In 2009, Okinawans expressed high expectations that the central government would “finally promote Okinawa’s interests vis a vis the United States,” when Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama pledged to relocate MCAS Futenma outside of Okinawa.¹⁶⁹ However, “Japan’s top security policy officials undermined Hatoyama by advising their U.S. counterparts to stand firm” against the relocation, and Hatoyama claims this failure to overturn the Japanese bureaucracy was the cause for his resignation June 2010.¹⁷⁰ To this day, over

¹⁶⁴ Flint, “Governor Takeshi Onaga and the U.S. Bases in Okinawa,” 30.

¹⁶⁵ Flint, “Governor Takeshi Onaga and the U.S. Bases in Okinawa,” 30.

¹⁶⁶ Willis, “A History of Base-Related Incidents and Marginalization vis-à-vis the Japanese Mainland Fostered the Emergence of a Contemporary Collective Okinawan Ethnic Identity.”

¹⁶⁷ Flint, “Governor Takeshi Onaga and the U.S. Bases in Okinawa,” 38.

¹⁶⁸ Flint, “Governor Takeshi Onaga and the U.S. Bases in Okinawa,” 43.

¹⁶⁹ Hashimoto, Mochizuki, and Takara, *The Okinawa Question*, 43.

¹⁷⁰ Andrew L. Oros, *Japan’s Security Renaissance: New Policies and Politics for the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 100–101.

thirty years later, MCAS Futenma remains located in Ginowan and represents the most significant political impasse between Okinawa and the Government of Japan.

D. CONCLUSION

There is a growing concern among U.S. and Japanese security strategists that U.S. base protest will continue to contribute to the political impasse between Okinawa and the mainland; however, findings suggest that the status quo is likely to persist for the foreseeable future.¹⁷¹ If the DPRI maintains progress, Okinawans continue to be compensated for their burden share of U.S. bases, and external threat perception increases, protest in Okinawa could presumably decrease overtime. Grievances rooted in history and codified by an Okinawan perception of superiority held by the mainland have advanced antibase sentiments and Tokyo has responded with more subsidies and heightened effort to reduce U.S. presence. The 1995 rape incident propelled diplomatic efforts to reduce the burden on Okinawans and MCAS Futenma came to symbolize the “core” of Okinawan grievances toward Tokyo. Characteristics of Futenma such as proximity, heightened exposure to military operations, and its identity as a political symbol contribute to its exceptionally high level of protest. Compensation politics lack long term viability; however, current efforts to relocate Futenma and the decline of a cohort with experiences associated with the Battle of Okinawa are likely to reduce future U.S. base protest in Okinawa.

¹⁷¹ Stewart, *China's Influence in Japan*, 3.

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III. U.S. RESPONSE TO OKINAWA PROTEST: DEFENSE POLICY REVIEW INITIATIVE (DPRI) AND BASING IN GUAM

The Department is modernizing its force posture in Guam, in keeping with Guam's position as the westernmost territory of the United States and a strategic hub for our joint military presence in the region. We are establishing a Marine Air Ground Task Force of 5,000 U.S. Marines in Guam starting in the first half of the 2020s as a central feature of the U.S.-Japan realignment plan.

—The Department of Defense ¹⁷²

This chapter examines the U.S.-Japan allied response to the protest in Okinawa, as outlined in the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI). The Marine Corps plans to realign approximately 55% of its forces in Japan to Guam, Australia, and Hawaii as a direct result of pressure from U.S. base protest in Okinawa. The transfer of Marines could begin as early as October 2024 and is projected to be completed by 2031.¹⁷³ This chapter will examine the DPRI's realignment of Marines to Guam based on the explanatory factors for protest identified in Okinawa, specifically with regard to proximity, base characteristics, imposition on sovereignty, and grievances toward the U.S. government. In addition, this chapter will identify potential drivers for future protest, such as the social impact of additional Marines, increased awareness of environmental impacts of base operations, and Guamanians' desire for federal voting rights. Much of Guam's antibase protest is driven by grievances associated with ethnic and national self-determination efforts that manifest in demands for land rights. Land currently part of Andersen Air Force Base (AFB) is where construction is underway for the new Marine Corps headquarters. Because Andersen AFB represents the largest majority of the current basing presence, it will be utilized as a proxy to establish the baseline and prospects for protest in Guam. Additionally, this chapter will

¹⁷² Department of Defense, *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report: Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region*, (Washington, DC: DOD, 2019), 23, <https://media.defense.gov/2019/Jul/01/2002152311/-1/-1/1/DEPARTMENT-OF-DEFENSE-INDO-PACIFIC-STRATEGY-REPORT-2019.PDF>

¹⁷³ Chanlett-Avery, Mann, and Williams, *U.S. Military Presence on Okinawa and Realignment to Guam*, 1.; Burke, "Marines' Move from Okinawa to Guam Could Begin as Early as October 2024, Report Says." ; Lepore, *Marine Corps Asia Pacific Realignment*, 10.; Snow and South, "Congress Wants a Review of the Corps' Plan to Distribute Forces Across the Indo-Pacific."

evaluate the extent to which the DPRI will likely resolve in Guam the identified drivers of U.S. base protest in East Asia. The level of base protest in Guam is not likely to reach that observed in Okinawa. However, social impacts brought by additional Marines (which will almost double the number of total U.S. forces on Guam), growing awareness of the environmental impacts of the military, and Guamanians' desire for federal voting rights will require attention to ensure protest does not disrupt base policy.

A. CURRENT STATUS OF DPRI

The U.S. and Japanese government believe the future strength of the alliance is contingent on reducing the pressures associated with U.S. base protest on Okinawa; this strategy is outlined in the DPRI. Figure 16 exhibits DPRI's plan for the Marine Corps' realignment in the Pacific and land plots planned for return to Okinawans. The number of rotational and permanently stationed Marines on Okinawa is planned to decrease from 29,600 to 11,500, and roughly 4,100 Marines and 1,300 dependents will relocate to Guam by FY 2028.¹⁷⁴ Additionally, 2,700 Marines are slated to relocate to Hawaii, 1,300 to Australia, and 800 to the continental U.S.¹⁷⁵ The reduction of Marines in Okinawa is accompanied by plans to return approximately two-thirds of the roughly 390,000 acres of land currently occupied for Marine bases back to their original Okinawan land owners.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ South, "Marine Corps Plan to Relocate from Okinawa to Guam Needs a Review, Commandant Says."; Office of Inspector General, *Interagency Coordination Group of Inspectors General for Guam Realignment annual Report* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, 2020), <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jan/31/2002241739/-1/-1/1/INTERAGENCY%20COORDINATION%20GROUP%20OF%20INSPECTORS%20GENERAL%20FOR%20GUAM%20REALIGNMENT%20ANNUAL%20REPORT%202020.PDF>

¹⁷⁵ Lepore, *Marine Corps Asia Pacific Realignment*, 9.

¹⁷⁶ Source: Okinawa Prefectural Government, *What Okinawa Wants You to Understand about the U.S. Military Bases* (Washington, DC: Okinawa Prefecture Washington, D.C., Office, 2018), <https://dc-office.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/E-all.pdf>.

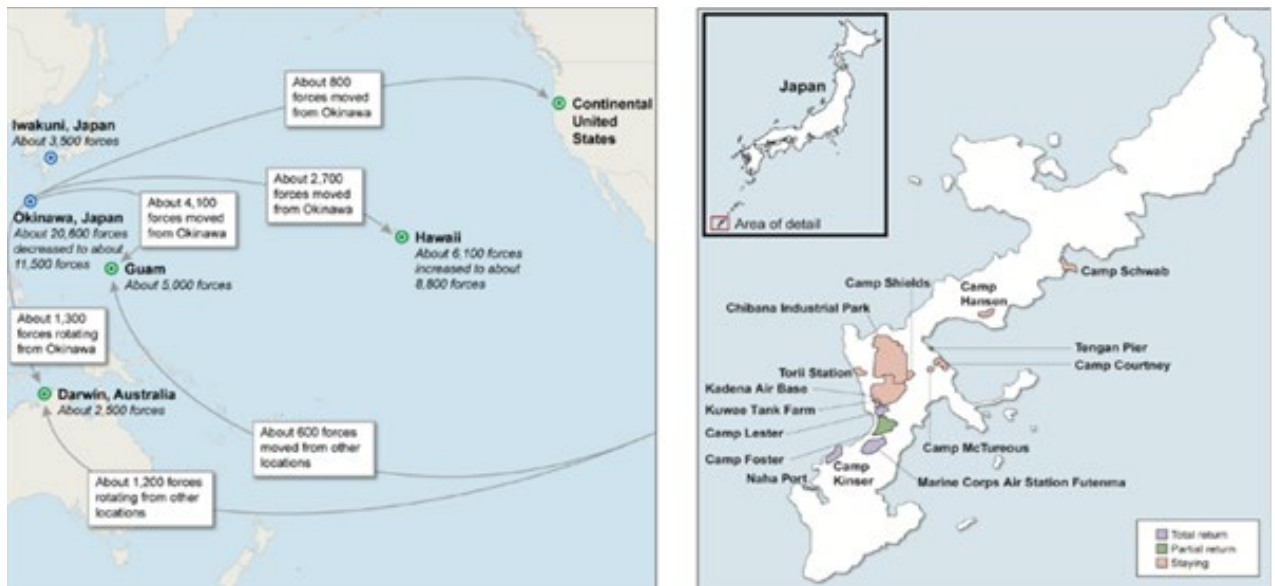


Figure 16. DPRI Marine Realignment (left); Base Consolidation (right).¹⁷⁷

On September 2020, the Marine Corps activated Camp Blaz, Guam, to receive approximately 5,000 Marines by 2028 from III MEF in Okinawa.¹⁷⁸ The Camp is located at the Northwest Field on Andersen AFB, as shown in Figure 17. The base was named for Brigadier General Vicente “Ben” Tomas Garrido Blaz, the highest-ranking Chamorro to have ever served in the Marines and a former congressman for Guam.¹⁷⁹ On February 11, 2020, the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Pacific awarded a \$204 million contract, paid for by Japan, to build two bachelor enlisted quarters (BEQ) complexes at Camp Blaz, expected to be completed by September 2023.¹⁸⁰ The timeline for transition “expects Marines to begin arriving in Guam by 2024, with 2,500 there by

¹⁷⁷ Adapted from Lepore, *Marine Corps Asia Pacific Realignment*, 9 and 12.

¹⁷⁸ Seth Robson, “Marines Activate Camp Blaz on Guam, the Corps’ First New Base Since 1952,” *Stars and Stripes* (September 30, 2020) <https://www.stripes.com/news/pacific/marines-activate-camp-blaz-on-guam-the-corps-first-new-base-since-1952-1.647005>

¹⁷⁹ Matthew M. Burke, “New Marine Base on Guam to be Named for Revered General, Legislator,” *Stars and Stripes* (October 23, 2018) <https://www.stripes.com/news/new-marine-base-on-guam-to-be-named-for-revered-general-legislator-1.553124>

¹⁸⁰ Krista Cummings, “Navy Awards Government of Japan-Funded Contract for Work on MCB Guam,” Naval Facilities Engineering Command (Washington, DC: NAVFAC, 2020), https://www.navfac.navy.mil/navfac_worldwide/pacific/about_us/guam_realignment.html.

2026 and the full 5,000-Marine force to be in place by 2028.”¹⁸¹ Only 1,300 Marines are expected to be permanently stationed on Guam, with an additional 3,700 deploying from the Continental United States on a rotational basis—similar to the Marine Air Ground Task Force pattern of deployment to Australia’s Northern Territory in Darwin.¹⁸² Family members of those Marines permanently stationed on Guam are to live at Andersen AFB, where construction is underway for an additional 300 houses to compliment the bases’ residential area.¹⁸³ As of September 2020, “the Japanese government is funding \$3 billion worth of projects for the Marines’ relocation, with the U.S. government spending another \$5.7 billion.”¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹ South, “Marine Corps Plan to Relocate from Okinawa to Guam Needs a Review, Commandant Says.”

¹⁸² Robson, “Marines activate Camp Balz on Guam, the Corps’ First New Base Since 1952.”

¹⁸³ Robson, “Marines Activate Camp Blaz on Guam, the Corps’ First New Base Since 1952.”

¹⁸⁴ Robson, “Marines Activate Camp Balz on Guam, the Corps’ First New Base Since 1952.”

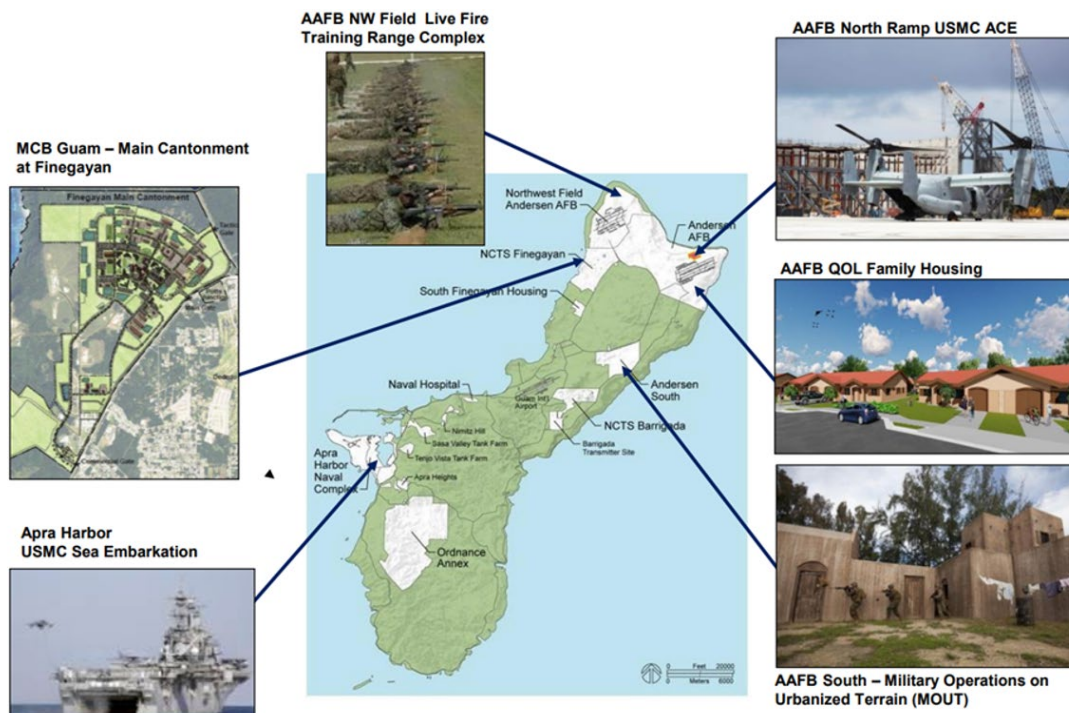


Figure 17. Locations of Guam’s Force Structure Increase.¹⁸⁵

B. BACKGROUND OF U.S. BASES ON GUAM AND INCIDENTS OF PROTEST

Guam is the westernmost U.S. territory, approximately five times smaller than Rhode Island, and about 28% of its landmass is occupied by the U.S. military. As of 2017, Guam was home to 159,358 residents, of whom 5,374 were military personnel and 6,470 were servicemembers’ dependents.¹⁸⁶ The U.S. military, tourism, and construction are the Guam’s top three industries; and, as of 2018, base construction projects were the largest contributor to private sector growth within the construction industry.¹⁸⁷ Guam’s citizenry is multi-ethnic and multi-racial, and Chamorros, whose claims to Guamanian ancestry

¹⁸⁵ Source: Commander Joint Region Marianas, “Full Brief Presented at Roundtable Meeting,” Navy Installations Command (October 4, 2017) <https://www.cnmc.navy.mil/regions/jrm/om/marine-corps-base-buildup-information.html>

¹⁸⁶ Jeffrey W. Hornung, “The U.S. Military Laydown on Guam: Progress Amid Challenges,” Sasakawa USA (Washington, DC: Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA, 2017) 2.

¹⁸⁷ “Gross Domestic Product for Guam,” Bureau of Economic Analysis, February 16, 2021. 2019 <https://www.bea.gov/news/2021/gross-domestic-product-guam-2019>

stretch back 4,000 years, make up the largest group, at about 37%.¹⁸⁸ Filipinos are the second largest ethnic group, at 26%; other Pacific Islanders comprise 11%, and Whites represent 7%.¹⁸⁹

Guam became a U.S. colony through a bloodless defeat of the Spanish in 1898. The island was seized by the Japanese during WWII on December 10, 1941, and remained under Japanese occupation to support war efforts until the U.S. “liberated” Guam on July 21, 1944.¹⁹⁰ Liberation Day is celebrated annually on Guam with a parade to honor the U.S. military on Marine Drive, one of the busiest streets in Guam.¹⁹¹ However, independence from U.S. Naval administrative control was not gained until considerable protest convinced President Harry S. Truman to intervene and grant independence in 1950.¹⁹² Protests had centered around a “crusade against colonialism,” and demands for independence as a reward for “courageous opposition to the Japanese occupation.”¹⁹³ To this day, Guam remains a self-governed U.S. territory whose officials lack federal voting power.

Rogers argues that once liberated from the Japanese, Guamanians remained relatively “passive in regard to political status in the years from 1950s into the 1960s.”¹⁹⁴ He argues that U.S. base protests began to arise in the 1970s over the land used by U.S.

¹⁸⁸ Jon Letman, “Guam: Where the U.S. Military is Revered and Reviled,” *The Diplomat*, August 29, 2016, <https://thediplomat.com/2016/08/guam-where-the-us-military-is-revered-and-reviled/>

¹⁸⁹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Overview of the State – Guam 2020*, (Rockville, MD: HRSA, 2021), <https://mchb.tvisdata.hrsa.gov/Narratives/Overview/27e602c4-2c10-46fb-8300-4d3a17ba5fe4#:~:text=The%20March%202018%20Guam%20Labor,willing%20and%20available%20to%20work.>

¹⁹⁰ “Invasion of Guam: July 21-August 10, 1944,” National Museum of the U.S. Navy, April 8, 2021, <https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/museums/nmusn/explore/photography/wwii/wwii-pacific/mariana-islands/guam.html>

¹⁹¹ Letman, “Proposed U.S. Military Buildup on Guam Angers Locals Who liken it to Colonization,” *The Guardian*, August 1, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/aug/01/guam-us-military-marines-deployment>.

¹⁹² Timothy P. Maga, “The Citizenship Movement in Guam, 1946–1950,” *Pacific Historical Review* 53, no. 1 (February 1984) 59.

¹⁹³ Maga, “The Citizenship Movement in Guam, 1946–1950,” 59–60.

¹⁹⁴ Robert F. Rogers, “Guam’s Quest for Political Identity,” *Pacific Studies* 12, no. 1 (November 1, 1988) 52.

military to support operations in Vietnam.¹⁹⁵ After the Vietnam War, in 1975, the U.S. granted commonwealth status, or the right to self-government, to Guam's neighboring islands Northern Mariana Islands (NMI).¹⁹⁶ This act triggered "the political status issue [and] rekindled Chamorro consciousness and gave it a cause."¹⁹⁷ To this day, Guam is not a free commonwealth and its official political status remains "unincorporated territory of the United States."¹⁹⁸

A small group of young Chamorro activists who had been educated in American universities after WWII organized and petitioned the United Nations for self-determination in Guam.¹⁹⁹ As in Okinawa, activism for sovereign land rights began to coalesce around U.S. military basing. Since the establishment of Andersen AFB in 1945, protests directed at the base have generally been limited in number and characterized by small gatherings. Even during the Vietnam War, one of the periods when anti-U.S. base sentiment was highest in East Asia, the Lieutenant Governor of Guam claimed that the majority of Guamanians supported military buildup on the island because of the prospect of economic opportunity.²⁰⁰ The examples below represent instances of significant protests associated with Andersen AFB:

- The earliest identified protest of significance occurred in July 21–29 1992, when future Senator Angel Santos and the Nasion Chamouru Activist Group protested at Potts Junction at the entrance of the Northwest Field of Andersen AFB and NAS Agana.²⁰¹ One of the most significant periods of

¹⁹⁵ Rogers, "Guam's' Quest for Political Identity," 53.

¹⁹⁶ Rogers, "Guam's' Quest for Political Identity," 53–54.

¹⁹⁷ Rogers, "Guam's' Quest for Political Identity," 58.

¹⁹⁸ Robert A. Underwood, "Guam's Political Status," *Guampedia* (March 11, 2021) <https://www.guampedia.com/guams-political-status/>

¹⁹⁹ Rogers, "Guam's' Quest for Political Identity," 58.

²⁰⁰ Joseph B. Treaster, "Guam a Center of U.S. Build-Up As Vietnam Pullout Progresses," *The New York Times*, October 7, 1972, <https://www.nytimes.com/1972/10/07/archives/new-jersey-pages-guam-a-center-of-us-buildup-as-vietnam-pullout.html>

²⁰¹ Jeffrey Meyer, "36th Wing, Andersen AFB, Guam: Heritage Pamphlet," 36th Wing Historian (June 2014) <https://www.andersen.af.mil/Portals/43/36%20WSA%20TENANT/ComRel/Andersen%20Heritage%20Pamphlet.pdf>

civil rights protests on Guam was from 1992 to 1993 and centered around the U.S. military presence.²⁰² This was after military presence on Guam increased to support the 1991 Gulf War against Iraq's Saddam Hussein's invasion into Kuwait.²⁰³

- In October 2011, the Taotaomona Native Rights group, who represent ethnic Chamorros, protested at the gate of Andersen AFB over the DOD's decision to "shift some U.S. Marine Corps' jet fighter training from Okinawa to the U.S. territory." We Are Guahan, another Guamanian activist group, sued the DOD over construction occurring on archeological sites that contained ancestral Chamorro graves.²⁰⁴
- On September 23, 2017, roughly a dozen protesters assembled at the front gate to Andersen AFB to protest planned construction for the firing range at Northwest Field Live Fire Training Range Complex. During the demonstration, one protester, Harold Cruz, was arrested.²⁰⁵ Cruz proclaimed he had been arrested eight times in the past while alongside the late Senator Angel Santos, an iconic Chamorro activist and protest leader.²⁰⁶

²⁰² Michael Bevacqua and Manuel Cruz, "The Banality of American Empire: The Curious Case of Guam, USA," *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 11, no. 1 (Summer 2020): 133, <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/361824dg>

²⁰³ Robert F. Rogers, *Destiny's Landfall* (HI: University of Hawaii Press, 2011) 265.

²⁰⁴ Travis J. Tritten, "Group to Protest Shift of U.S. Military Exercise from Okinawa to Guam," *Stars and Stripes*, October 11, 2011, <https://www.stripes.com/news/pacific/guam/group-to-protest-shift-of-u-s-military-exercise-from-okinawa-to-guam-1.157452>

²⁰⁵ John I Borja, "One Arrested in Firing Range Protest at Andersen," *Pacific Daily News*, September 23, 2017, <https://www.guampdn.com/story/news/2017/09/23/one-arrested-firing-range-protest-andersen/695325001/>

²⁰⁶ Borja, "One Arrested in Firing Range Protest at Andersen."

- On July 11, 2019, over 50 protesters demonstrated at Chief Quipuha Park in Hagatna to protest new base construction at the Northwest Field firing ranges at Andersen AFB.²⁰⁷

C. OKINAWA AND GUAM: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF VARIABLES THAT DRIVE U.S. BASE PROTEST

The DPRI is a U.S.-Japan joint effort to reduce U.S. base protest in Okinawa; however, cross-national independent variables that influence such protests can provide insight into the likelihood it will impact levels of base protest in Guam. Given what was identified in Okinawa, prospects for future protest on Guam can be assessed by evaluating how the DPRI has dealt with base proximity and physical characteristics, impositions on sovereignty, and levels of grievance or local support.

1. Proximity

The Okinawan case illustrates that one of the most significant drivers of U.S. base protest is base proximity to population-dense areas. Factors known to contribute to proximity's effects included heightened exposure to military operations and to servicemember accidents and crime. Compared to MCAS Futenma on Okinawa, and to MCAS Iwakuni, MCAS Atsugi, Fleet Activities Sasebo and Yokosuka on mainland Japan, U.S. base locations in Guam are relatively distant from regions with the highest population density (Figure 18). Another contributing factor is Guam's significantly smaller population density, at 313 per square kilometer, compared to Okinawa's 574 people per square kilometer.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁷ Norman M. Taruc, "Protesters Rally in Hagåtña Against Firing Range Complex," *The Guam Daily Post*, July 11, 2019, https://www.postguam.com/news/local/protesters-rally-in-hag-t-a-against-firing-range-complex/article_b874a8a6-a2fa-11e9-be2a-bf383fd9d1a1.html

²⁰⁸ Thomas Brinkhoff, "City Population," Google Analytics, October 17, 2020, <https://www.citypopulation.de/en/guam/>; Thomas Brinkhoff, "City Population," Google Analytics, October 17, 2020, <https://www.citypopulation.de/php/japan-admin.php?admlid=47>

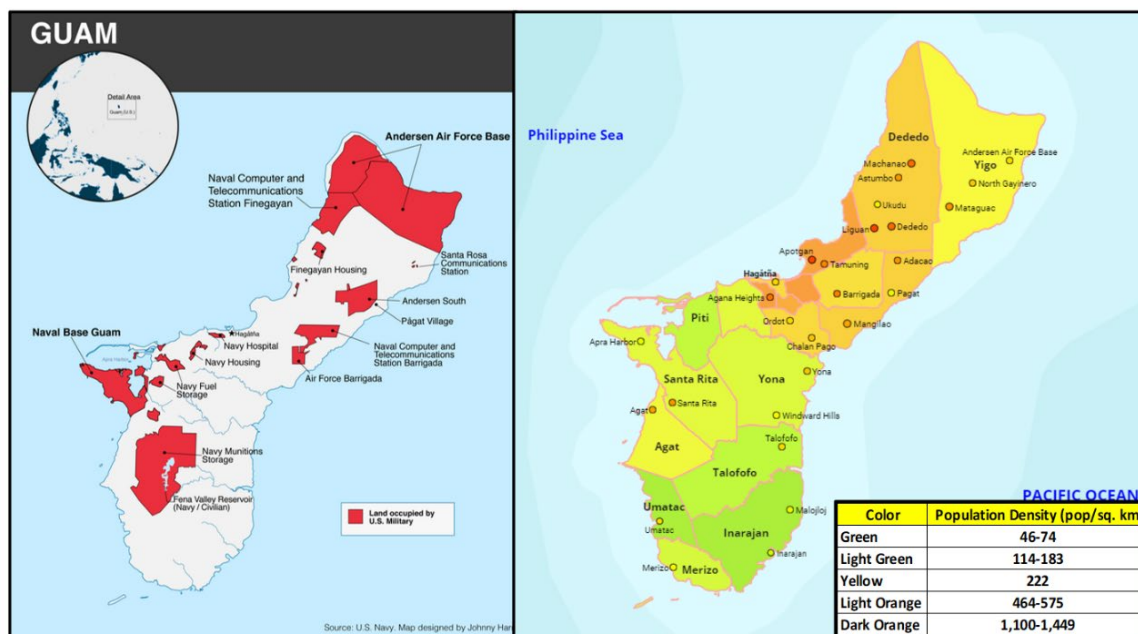


Figure 18. Proximity of U.S. Bases Relative to Guam Population Density.²⁰⁹

a. Exposure to Military Operational

Although plans call for a static multipurpose machine-gun range to be built on the northwest corner of Camp Blaz, the DPRI has taken considerable measures to reduce civilian exposure to military operations by offsetting maneuver exercises to the significantly less inhabited islands of Tinian (population 3,136) and Pagan (population 0), represented in Figure 19.²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ Source: Thomas Brinkhoff, “City Population,” Google Analytics, October 17, 2020, <https://www.citypopulation.de/en/guam/>; Johnny Harris, *Guam*, U.S. Navy Map (November 2018) <https://www.pnccguam.com/from-brac-to-obrac-base-closures-deemed-necessary/>

²¹⁰ “Understanding the Population of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,” United States Census 2020, accessed April 8, 2021, https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/sis_2020map_cnmi.pdf; Robson, “Marines Activate Camp Blaz on Guam, The Corps’ First New Base Since 1952.”

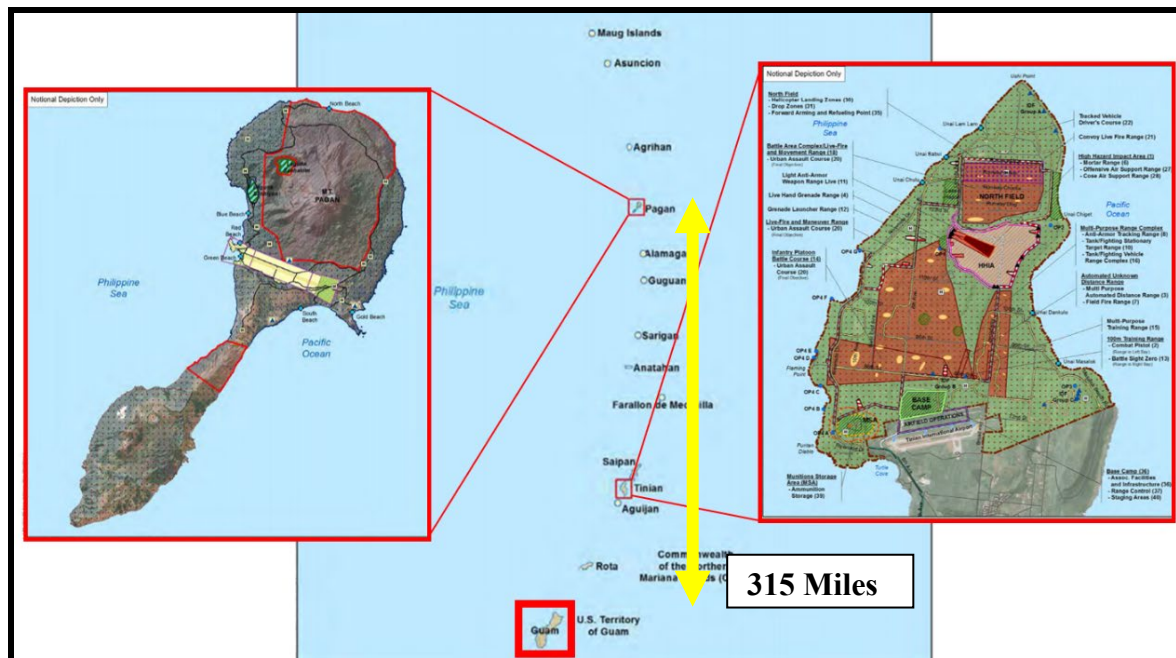


Figure 19. Locations of Marine Realignment to Guam, Tinian, and Pagan.²¹¹

On Okinawa, one main issue associated with exposure to military operations has been aircraft accidents. Okinawans have been concerned about aircraft accidents occurring in the densely populated village of Ginowan. However, on Guam, Marine aviation will operate out of Andersen Air Force Base, which is located approximately 8 miles northeast from the most densely populated town of Tamuning. This aviation offset significantly mitigates risks associated with operational accidents and noise pollution imposed on citizens. Construction for a new Marine aircraft hangar on Andersen AFB is expected to be complete by spring of 2021.²¹² Furthermore, aviation flight paths are oriented toward the Pacific Ocean rather than bisecting densely populated areas such MCAS Futenma in Ginowan, Okinawa.

²¹¹ Source: Naval Facilities Engineering Command, “Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Joint Military Training Unconstrained Training Concept for Tinian and Pagan,” (Washington, DC: NAVFAC, 2014) <https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=791980>

²¹² Robson, “Marines Activate Camp Balz on Guam, the Corps’ First New Base Since 1952.”

The U.S. Navy Commander of Joint Region Marianas, Rear Admiral Shoshana S. Chatfield, testified in 2017 to then Senator of Guam, the Honorable Telenia C. Nelson, that the Department of the Navy had taken significant measures to maximize the distance between operational noise and the civilian population. The more complex ground force maneuver training, or non-static live-fire exercises, are to take place on the separate islands of Tinian and Pagan. Moreover, Marine aviation operations will occur on the already existing Andersen Air Force Base that is offset from the most densely populated city Tamuning. Current plans for live-fire training on Guam mostly consists of small arms that will take place at the Northwest Live Fire Training Complex, 10 miles north of Tamuning. Admiral Chatfield asserted “most noise for those outside of the safety buffer during range operation to hear noise no louder than a normal conversation.”²¹³

b. Exposure to Servicemember Accidents and Crime

While the DPRI has reduced the factor of exposure to larger military exercises, which was a significant driver of base protest in Okinawa, it is less apparent how the initiative plans to address the social impact brought by the influx of Marines. Many scholars accept that high profile negative events such as vehicular accidents and crime tend to sway public opinion about military bases.²¹⁴ Characteristic unique to Marines, compared to the other U.S. services, should be factored when making inferences about future protest associated with the realignment to Guam.

As noted above, the total number of vehicular accidents and crime rates associated with forces on Okinawa, predominantly Marines, has been the highest among all U.S. Forces stationed in Japan.²¹⁵ This was largely attributed to the Marine Corps’ overrepresentation younger servicemembers, who tend to be associated with higher rates

²¹³ Rear Admiral Shoshana S. Chatfield, “Written Testimony Relative to Legislative Resolution 228–34,” Department of the Navy, Joint Region Marianas (Guam: Joint Region Marianas, 2017) <https://www.cnmc.navy.mil/regions/jrm/om/marine-corps-base-buildup-information.html>

²¹⁴ Allen, Flynn, Machain, and Stravers, “Outside the Wire,” 326–340.

²¹⁵ “Guidance from the Commander, U.S. Forces Japan,” U.S. Forces, Japan, (September 13, 2020), <https://www.usfj.mil/About-USFJ/>; Aoki, “Japan Paid ¥380 Million in Compensation for Accidents by U.S. Military Personnel.”

of crime, sexual assault and vehicular accidents.²¹⁶ Guam, similar to Okinawa, tends to observe significantly lower crimes rate than those in the United States.²¹⁷ A high-profile crime committed by a Marine on Guam would likely increase incidents of significant protest, such as the one observed on July 3, 2020, when approximately seventy Guamanians organized outside Andersen AFB to protest construction under way for the U.S. Marine Corps Base, Camp Blaz.²¹⁸

Chapter 2 also noted that rotational servicemembers, as opposed to permanently stationed personnel, are associated with higher crime rates: “In aggregate, the mere presence of troops does not increase the criminal activity in a state; however, [...] the presence of foreign deployed troops is associated with higher levels of property-related crimes in a country.”²¹⁹ As of 2020, the DPRI plans for 1,300 of the total 5,000 Marines on Guam to station permanently, while the other 3,700 will deploy to Guam on a rotational basis.²²⁰ It can be inferred that the rotational nature of these forces, and the lack of the social embeddedness that tends to follow longer exposure between forces and the host-nation society, will have a social impact on Guam’s society. Marine base policy for rotational forces in Guam should mitigate the discussed drivers of societal resistance to U.S. military presence on Okinawa.

Some Guamanians have already expressed opposition to the social dynamic imposed by the relocation of the Marines to Guam. Natividad asks, “Why is the government of Japan willing to pay so much money to transfer Marines from Okinawa to Guam?”²²¹ She underscores the long history of sexual violence perpetrated by U.S.

²¹⁶ “Demographics of the U.S. Military” *Council on Foreign Relations*.

²¹⁷ “Crime Stats: Compare Key Data on Guam & United States,” *Nation Master*, accessed March 17, 2021, <https://www.nationmaster.com/country-info/compare/Guam/United-States/Crime>

²¹⁸ Jojo Santo Tomas, “‘It’s Just an Injustice All Around’: Protest Against Military Construction Process,” *Pacific Daily News*, July 3, 2020, <https://www.guampdn.com/story/news/2020/07/03/speaking-out-now-could-save-future-sites-desecration/5370516002/>

²¹⁹ Michael A. Allen and Michael E. Flynn, “Putting Our Best Boots Forward: U.S. Military Deployments and Host-Country Crime,” *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 30, no. 3 (June, 2013) <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0738894213484055>

²²⁰ Robson, “Marines Activate Camp Balz on Guam, the Corps’ First New Base Since 1952.”

²²¹ Letman, “Guam: Where the U.S. Military is Revered and Reviled.”

Marines on Okinawans. Vivian Dames, host of a Guam Public Radio program, has stated, “The thing is, it’s not reducing the burden, it’s simply shifting it somewhere else—in this case to Guam.”²²²

An additional 5,000 Marines on Guam is going to affect proximity as a factor for protest; however, the significant influence associated with exposure to military exercises has been significantly reduced by offsetting from densely populated areas. Considering the mitigation measures to offset operational impacts, a high-profile crime or accident is the event most likely to influence proximity. At the nascent stages of the realignment to Guam, it would be prudent to introduce liberty policies for the rotational Marine forces like those in Okinawa until social impacts and responses can be assessed.

2. Sovereignty Concerns

There are limited indications that protest is likely to increase in Guam in the near future. The DPRI has taken extensive precautions so as not to incite protest over the military buildup in Guam. However, unfavorability toward the U.S. bases could manifest for many various reasons. If protest in Guam were to increase, it would likely coalesce around sovereignty concerns. Like on Okinawa, Guam’s protests are partly fueled by concerns over land expropriation, democratic responsiveness, desire for federal voting rights (or, in Okinawa, for more influence to be attached to the voting rights they do already enjoy), and environmental awareness. Currently, local level support for the U.S. military in Guam is high, and this will be critical to maintain to prevent base policy from exposure to domestic political pressure in the future.

a. Land Expropriation

The 2010 environmental impact statement (EIS), overseen by the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), evaluating new base construction on Guam, laid out considerations for acquiring an additional 688 acres of civilian-owned land. In 2012, after significant efforts were undertaken to engage the Guamanian public and government, the DOD made significant concessions and reduced the total number of Marines relocating to Guam from

²²² Letman, “Proposed U.S. Military Buildup on Guam Angers Locals Who Liken it to Colonization.”

8,600 to 5,000.²²³ Furthermore, the EIS recommended avoiding further land acquisition on Guam and the U.S. DOD decided to construct the new Marine base on federally owned land in Finegayan.²²⁴

This critical decision to avoid further land acquisition is likely to reduce prospects for Guamanian base protest with respect to violation of sovereignty. Land expropriation for U.S. bases in Okinawa during WWII was one of that location's greatest drivers of modern protest. The 1956 Price Report, directed by the U.S. House of Representatives' Armed Services Committee, detailed the expropriation of approximately 45,000 acres on Okinawa for U.S. basing. Foundational in fueling U.S. base protest was the narrative of Okinawans' "fighting to reclaim their land."²²⁵

Debates about U.S. land ownership on Guam are minimal due to U.S. control of the island ever since the Treaty of Paris ceded the territory to the U.S. government after victory in the 1898 Spanish-American War. While there have been several instances of the Chamorro people of Guam filing lawsuits against new federally funded construction projects, these demands tend to be satisfied with assurances for safe handling of ancient Chamorro remains. While mobilized protest in Guam is minimal compared to Okinawa, the latest instance was in late 2019 when more than 2,000 people gathered "to voice their discontent, express solidarity with one another, and demand CHamoru [sic] self-determination" as a result of the prospects of federal land annexation.²²⁶ The protest occurred during a Guam legislative committee hearing to deliberate on the construction of the Northwest Firing Range on Andersen AFB. Guam's representative Senator Telenia Cruz addressed the protesters, and the event did not impact the proceedings.²²⁷

²²³ Rear Admiral Chatfield, "Written Testimony Relative to Legislative Resolution 228-34."

²²⁴ Commander Joint Region Marianas, "Full Brief Presented at Roundtable Meeting," Navy Installations Command (Guam: Joint Region Marianas, 2017) <https://www.cnmc.navy.mil/regions/jrm/om/marine-corps-base-buildup-information.html>

²²⁵ Lutz, *The Bases of Empire*, 251.

²²⁶ Chris Gelardi and Sophia Perez, "Biba Guahan!: How Guam's Indigenous Activists Are Confronting Military Colonialism," *The Nation*, October 21, 2019, <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/guam-colonialism/>

²²⁷ Gelardi and Perez, "Biba Guahan!: How Guam's Indigenous Activists Are Confronting Military Colonialism."

b. Democratic Responsiveness

Earlier chapters established Okinawa's grievances and professed subjugation at the hand of Tokyo. "There are similar complaints on Guam, a 30-mile-long tropical island of only 160,000 people, which is already home to large air force and naval bases."²²⁸ Natividad, one of the island's most vocal opponents of the Marine relocation, argues that "the whole Guam buildup was set in motion because we're a U.S. colony, and they think they can do whatever they want with our land."²²⁹

Despite being legal U.S. citizens, Guamanians do not pay federal taxes or take part in U.S. federal democracy: "they vote for local legislature, a governor, and a delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives—a delegate who cannot vote—but their choice for president, marked on the same ballot, carries no weight."²³⁰ In 2016, Guam's Governor, Eddie Baza Calvo, stated, "This American territory is not enjoying democracy... It's up to our people to decide which way to go: whether to be fully in union with the United States or chart a separate course."²³¹ Dave Lotz, a local historian on Guam since 1970, further characterized the lack of democracy in that "The future of the island and the people here is decided by the Pentagon, not the people of Guam."²³²

There is an inherent dissonance in federal decision-making for U.S. basing between Okinawa and Guam. Okinawans retained a right to vote in federal elections—Guamanians do not. Guamanians have less of an ability to act upon their grievances. With respect to democratic responsiveness, there are grounds for elevated future protest in Guam over the fact that the U.S. federal government is not beholden to a constituency in Guam.

²²⁸ Anna Fifield, "Some in Guam Push for Independence from U.S. as Marines Prepare for Buildup," *The Washington Post*, June 17, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/some-in-guam-push-for-independence-from-us-as-marines-prepare-for-buildup/2016/06/16/e6152bd2-324b-11e6-ab9d-1da2b0f24f93_story.html

²²⁹ Fifield, "Some in Guam Push for Independence from U.S. as Marines Prepare for Buildup."

²³⁰ Mar-Vic Cagurangan, "The U.S. Election that Doesn't Count: Guam Goes to the Polls but Votes won't Matter," *The Guardian*, October 30, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/31/the-us-election-that-doesnt-count-guam-goes-to-the-polls-but-votes-wont-matter>

²³¹ Fifield, "Some in Guam Push for Independence from U.S. as Marines Prepare for Buildup."

²³² Alexandra Ossola, "Guam's Ecological Fate is in the Hands of the U.S. Military," *National Geographic*, December 27, 2018, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/article/guam-endangered-species-ecology-threatened-us-military-base-expansion>

c. *Desire for Federal Voting Rights*

Guam's citizens have desired commonwealth status ever since the Northern Mariana Islands gained such status in 1976.²³³ Guamanians are granted U.S. citizenship through the 1950 Organic Act of the Territorial Government of Guam; however, this act does not authorize federal voting rights. Guam's representatives in the U.S. Congress do not have voting power.²³⁴ In 1982, a poll found that 73% of respondents favored commonwealth that would lead to statehood.²³⁵ In 2020, one resident who moved to Guam from California stated, "I am deeply unhappy that as a U.S. citizen formerly residing on the mainland, I have to give up my voting rights for president simply by moving to another part of the US."²³⁶

Statham argues that the citizens of Guam have a natural right to statehood or independence and that it is unconstitutional for the U.S. to retain Guam, and its citizens, as a "possession."²³⁷ In 2016, the Governor of Guam, Eddie Calvo, stated, "Guamanian soldiers have gone to fight in countries so they can have democracy and vote, yet we have never voted for the person who sends us to war."²³⁸ In 2020, six Guamanian citizens filed a class action suit in federal court with residents of the U.S. Virgin Islands to obtain voting power in presidential elections.²³⁹

The legal restraint over Guamanian's voting power to impact U.S. basing policy will likely factor in future levels of increased protest. This condition factored heavily on Okinawan's perceived lack of power to change U.S. base policy even while retaining the power to vote in federal elections. Disenfranchisement brought on by lack of representation

²³³ Rogers, "Guam's Quest for Political Identity," 50.

²³⁴ Cagurangan, "The U.S. Election that Doesn't Count."

²³⁵ Alex Frangos, "Plan to Shift U.S. Forces in Pacific Hits Speed Bumps on Guam," *Wall Street Journal*, January 7, 2013, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887323874204578217490207346314>

²³⁶ Cagurangan, "The U.S. Election that Doesn't Count."

²³⁷ Robert Statham Jr., "US Citizenship Policy in the Pacific Territory of Guam," *Citizenship Studies* 2, no. 1 (November 2007) <https://doi.org/10.1080/13621029808420671>

²³⁸ Fifield, "Some in Guam Push for Independence from U.S. as Marines Prepare for Buildup."

²³⁹ Cagurangan, "The U.S. Election that Doesn't Count."

over laws imposed is a politically popular issue. It is likely, in the event an unpopular base policy is passed, that popular support will swing to a platform supporting federal voting rights.

d. Environmental Awareness

Given the current DPRI realignment plan, there are relatively limited environmental impacts associated with Guam. Construction projects are extremely scrutinized for cultural and environmental impacts given the political atmosphere on Guam, especially in comparison to typical civilian projects. However, more consideration might be given to potential impacts if the current trend of military force buildup in the Pacific persists. Mitchell details both the environmental impacts that were brought by military operations during the Cold War and evidence of increased environmental concerns among Guamanians. Elected officials in Guam have increased rhetoric “stridently speak [ing] out against the damage to their island.”²⁴⁰ Mitchell also details modern instances of increased “spills and dumps of fuel, pesticides, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), asbestos, and lead” contamination associated with U.S. bases abroad, to include Guam.²⁴¹

Mitchell warns of existential consequences in the Marshall island region from the nuclear tests that were conducted by the U.S. after WWII: “[when] the U.S. detonated the equivalent of more than ten Hiroshima-sized bombs a week for a dozen years, the explosions were so destructive that regional maps had to be redrawn because some small islands had been vaporized.”²⁴² The American Cancer Society designated the region “extreme” when comparing cancer rates to other regions in the world. Another impending flashpoint is the eroding concrete enclosure that sealed approximately 110,000 tons of

²⁴⁰ Shannon Tiezzi, “How the U.S. Military Wound up ‘Poisoning the Pacific’: Author Jon Mitchell Discusses the Environmental Contamination that has Accompanied the U.S. Military Presence in Japan, Guam, the Marshall Islands, and Elsewhere,” *The Diplomat*, November 4, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/11/how-the-us-military-wound-up-poisoning-the-pacific/>

²⁴¹ Tiezzi, “How the U.S. Military Wound up Poisoning the Pacific.”

²⁴² Tiezzi, “How the U.S. Military Wound up Poisoning the Pacific.”

radioactive material into a nuclear crater on Runit Island.²⁴³ Increased environmental awareness among the Pacific Island populations is likely to accompany future increases in U.S. force buildup in the Pacific.

While political activism in Guam is limited, especially when compared to Okinawa, the preponderance of activist groups revolves around the military buildup on the island. “We are Guahan” is a small activist group on Guam that protests the Marine buildup primarily on the premise of environmental impacts imposed by military facilities and operations. The group was founded around 2009–2010 after a group of volunteers agreed to meet weekly and review the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pertaining to construction plans for the new Marine Corps base on Guam.²⁴⁴ The group has a mailing list and Facebook following of approximately 2,000 (or 1% of Guam’s population) where it regularly publicizes identified environmental impacts of current military operations.²⁴⁵ The group attempted to sue the DOD when plans for the current shooting range at Northwest Field on Andersen AFB was in development – but these grievances had little political impact on Guam.²⁴⁶ We are Guahan joined other environmental activist groups on Guam to obtain 8,000 signatures to protest the shooting range on grounds that “the lead from the bullets in the range could contaminate the aquifer that provides drinking water to the entire island.”²⁴⁷ Guam’s Coastal Management Program and Environmental Protection Agency determined that the Northern Guam Lens aquifer, the primary source of potable water for 80% of the population, is not at risk as a result of construction projects or in violation of the Safe Drinking Water Act.²⁴⁸

²⁴³ Tiezzi, “How the U.S. Military Wound up Poisoning the Pacific.”

²⁴⁴ Cara F. Mays and Leevin Camacho, “We Are Guahan,” *Guampedia*, accessed 7 March 2021, <https://www.guampedia.com/we-are-guahan/>

²⁴⁵ “About” We Are Guahan, accessed 7 March 2021, <http://www.weareguahan.com/about-weareguahan/>

²⁴⁶ Frangos, “Plan to Shift U.S. Forces in Pacific Hits Speed Bumps on Guam.”

²⁴⁷ Ossola, “Guam’s Ecological Fate is in the Hands of the U.S. Military.”

²⁴⁸ Guam Coastal Management Program, *Section 309 Assessment and Strategy* (Guam: Bureau of Statistics and Plans, 2015), 40–41. <https://coast.noaa.gov/data/czm/enhancement/media/gu309-2016-2020.pdf>

e. Elevated Level of Local Support

In April 2011, U.S. Senators James Webb and Carl Levin met with local government officials in Guam who conveyed general support by the population of the Marine realignment and subsequent increased force presence.²⁴⁹ There is a significant contingent of native islanders who strongly support the U.S. military and emphasize its positive pathway for advancement to youth and families. A factor that contributes to this sentiment is the disparity in living standards between military members and indigenous Guamanians. Guam observes “among the highest recruitment levels [for the U.S. military] in the nation.”²⁵⁰ U.S. military service is highly revered in Guam and many families boast about generations of military service; “One in every 20 of Guam’s 165,000 residents is a military veteran, according to the U.S. census.”²⁵¹ Parents encourage children to enlist because “In many young people’s minds the military service is the tried-and-true road to wealth and well-being and so they quickly get with the program.”²⁵² This social dynamic is likely to be reinforced if Marines continue to be viewed favorably in the community.

Guam’s Congresswoman, Madeleine Bordallo, highlighted the positive economic impacts to the Marine relocation to Guam. She stated, “Guam, which has a historically symbiotic relationship with the military, will benefit significantly from the associated investments [from the Marine realignment] in our community.”²⁵³ Congresswoman Bordallo believes the strong military partnership “could position Guam as a regional hub for IT infrastructure,” likely reducing the economy’s dependence on tourism.²⁵⁴ Guam’s

²⁴⁹ Shirley A. Kan, *Guam: U.S. Defense Deployments*, GAO-7-5700 (Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office, 2014), 17.

²⁵⁰ Letman, “Guam: Where the U.S. Military is Revered and Reviled.”

²⁵¹ Josh Hicks, “Guam: A High Concentration of Veterans, but Rock-Bottom VA Funding,” *The Washington Post*, October 29, 2014, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/federal-eye/wp/2014/10/29/guam-a-high-concentration-of-veterans-with-little-va-funding/>; Cagurangan, “The U.S. Election that Doesn’t Count.”

²⁵² Letman, “Guam: Where the U.S. Military is Revered and Reviled.”

²⁵³ Letman, “Guam: Where the U.S. Military is Revered and Reviled.”

²⁵⁴ Letman, “Guam: Where the U.S. Military is Revered and Reviled.”

Labor Force Participation Rate was 57.9% in 2018, compared to the U.S. 62.9%.²⁵⁵ Since 2018, approximately 5% of Guam's residents work for the military bases and are employed by the U.S. federal government.²⁵⁶ Some on Guam favor the Marine realignment because "The U.S. federal government puts \$600 million a year into Guam through Social Security and taxes paid by military personnel stationed here. That's not including food stamps and school lunches and things like that."²⁵⁷ An economic impact survey, funded by the DOD, found that the new Marine base would bring roughly 3,000 full-time civilian employment opportunities, and generate \$40 million a year for Guam tax revenue projected by 2021.²⁵⁸

D. CONCLUSION

There are limited indications that, absent a high-profile crime or accident, U.S. base protest will increase on Guam as a result of the DPRI. It is evident that the DPRI has mitigated many of the drivers of U.S. base protest that were identified in Okinawa and across Northeast Asia. It can be presumed that if grievances surmount to elevated levels of protest, the U.S. government will respond with economic or policy concessions to the Guamanian citizens. Grievances will likely manifest from the social impact brought on by additional Marines, increased awareness of environmental impacts as a byproduct of military operations, and citizens' desire for federal representation to influence base policy. Many Okinawans had expressed enmity toward Tokyo over sluggish responses to referendums to change U.S. base policy—and Okinawans retain national-level voting rights. Some Guamanian natives have expressed similar concerns, and activism has targeted the Marine realignment and new base construction at Andersen AFB. These grievances are likely to coalesce and amplify over not having federal voting rights in Guam. These pressures will likely be alleviated to a degree by the large veteran population in Guam that supports the U.S. military, and by the potential economic opportunities brought

²⁵⁵ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Overview of the State – Guam 2020*, (Rockville, MD: HRSA, 2021), <https://mchb.tvisdata.hrsa.gov/Narratives/Overview/27e602c4-2c10-46fb-8300-4d3a17ba5fe4#:~:text=The%20March%202018%20Guam%20Labor,willing%20and%20available%20to%20work.>

²⁵⁶ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Overview of the State – Guam 2020*.

²⁵⁷ Fifield, "Some in Guam Push for Independence from U.S. as Marines Prepare for Buildup."

²⁵⁸ Fifield, "Some in Guam Push for Independence from U.S. as Marines Prepare for Buildup."

by new jobs from the growing base. The DPRI has taken significant measures to mitigate drivers of base protest by offsetting military exercises and avoiding additional land expropriation. Overall, the level of base protest in Guam will likely not reach levels observed in Okinawa – if high-profile crimes perpetrated by Marines, rapid influxes of military presence, and environmental disasters can be prevented. These events are the likely triggers for activism to coalesce into a significant protest movement. Diplomatic and DOD officials must implement mitigation measures to prevent triggers that might risk the access and military operations on Guam required to uphold U.S. ideals and interests in the Indo-Pacific.

IV. MOVING FORWARD

Forward military basing in Northeast Asia enhances U.S. capacity to maintain a regional balance of power that promotes peace, stability, and freedom through an alliance structure predicated on rules based democratic ideals. A shift in the regional balance of power and authority could jeopardize the duration of such ideals unless stakeholders in the alliance respond to the challenge to the status quo. The U.S.-Japan alliance effectively reinforced a shift in this balance by transferring a significant contingent of Marine forces farther out of the region. The impetus of the shift was not the immediate challenge of the status quo but protest in Okinawa, which had reached an inflection point in 1995. Ever since, the momentum of antibase sentiments, bolstered by proximity and perceptions of imposition on sovereignty, has led the U.S. to increase its efforts to reduce the burden of hosting U.S. forces on Okinawa. This thesis' major finding is that factors of proximity had the greatest influence on protest in Okinawa. Efforts to reduce protest, outlined in the DPRI, have led to base consolidations throughout Japan—reducing U.S. forward posture in the region. It is evident DPRI will reduce overall U.S. base protest in East Asia; however, the alliance will have to modify basing policy to maintain a credible forward presence that effectively confronts existential security challenges.

A. MULTILATERAL HOST NATION SUPPORT AGREEMENT

The structure of the U.S.-Japan alliance in the region has also shifted from one of interoperability to one of interdependence. With the relative decline in U.S. forward presence, it becomes more critical for Japan to take a more active role in its security and capacity for effective deterrence. Today, the JSDF is becoming more of an instrument of foreign policy leveraged by the GOJ. However, the GOJ “continues to shy away from difficult choices when it comes to planning for the use of force.”²⁵⁹ The JSDF has the capability and capacity to confront military challenges in the region, but the GOJ also

²⁵⁹ Smith, *Japan Rearmed*, 225–226.

faces the difficult task of informing its constituents of the actions required to defend the rules based order and democracy in the region.

Japan's basing policies must evolve with the security relationship to enhance military cooperation. Armitage and Nye assert that the U.S.-Japan alliance must agree to a Host Nation Support Agreement "as soon as possible."²⁶⁰ This policy change would allow North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) planners to operationalize Japan's defense posture in the region. A formal, prearranged policy that authorizes NATO forces to operate from Japanese territory would improve the alliance's capability and credibility to support peace, crisis, and war operations. JSDF and NATO planners could utilize more Japanese territory and key access options to support multilateral exercises and operations in the region. To advance this agenda, Armitage and Nye insist that Japan and South Korea relationship must evolve within the alliance by "focus [ing] on the future, and not the past."²⁶¹

Projections indicate that the DPRI will reduce political pressure on U.S. access in Okinawa and mitigate its drivers in Guam; however, the U.S.-Japan alliance faces new challenges with the shift in the balance of power in the region. Participant nations of the international order maintain the capability and capacity to collectively respond to the challenge of the status quo, but relationships among countries, and policies, must evolve with the existential multipolar security environment. Democratic nations must overcome past generational grievances associated with wartime conflict to effectively cooperate and combat the prospects of authoritarian oppression in the region. The U.S.-Japan alliance, and respective administrations, must address these challenges and co-lead the new multipolar world.²⁶²

²⁶⁰ Richard Armitage et al., *The U.S.-Japan Alliance in 2020: An Equal Alliance with a Global Agenda*, (Washington, D.C.: CSIS, 2020), 4. https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/201204_Armitage_Nye_US_Japan_Alliance_1.pdf

²⁶¹ Armitage et al., *The U.S.-Japan Alliance in 2020*, 5.

²⁶² Armitage et al., *The U.S.-Japan Alliance in 2020*, 9.

B. TRAJECTORY OF U.S. BASING IN OKINAWA

A recent decade-long construction delay for the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma Replacement Facility, or FRF, complicates near term conjecture about levels of protest in Okinawa.²⁶³ MCAS Futenma is arguably the most protested U.S. forward base in the world and construction for its relocation to Camp Schwab was originally projected to be complete by 2022; however, the recent discovery of weak foundation issues and deep fault lines requires 77,000 sand pillars and has delayed anticipated completion out to 2032.²⁶⁴ Moreover, protests at the construction sites in 2019 significantly extended delays, only allowing for 1% of the planned landfill work to be completed; Lummis notes, “At that rate, landfill will be completed in 100 years.”²⁶⁵ It is likely that airfield operations at Futenma will continue well into the near future.

The nature of compensation politics between the GOJ and Okinawa and age demographics in Okinawa, though, shed some light on the long-term trajectory of protest in Okinawa.

1. Implications for Compensation Politics

Without a significant disruption, compensation politics will likely regulate U.S. base protest at levels that do not intensify pressure on current U.S. force posture. While the GOJ’s efforts at burden reduction (*futan keigen*) in Okinawa, predominantly in the form of increased subsidies, fail to address Okinawa’s underlying grievances toward Tokyo, they are effective at maintaining the status quo. Cooley describes a substantial number of compensation initiatives and voter data that depict a structurally “stable political equilibrium” that has allowed the GOJ and Washington to “secure Okinawa’s majority acquiescence to the continuing U.S. presence.”²⁶⁶ Okinawa is the least wealthy

²⁶³ Douglas Lummis, “US Marines Futenma Replacement Facility in Okinawa Delayed – For How Long?” *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 18, no. 3 (February 2020), <https://apjif.org/2020/3/Lummis.html>

²⁶⁴ Lummis, “US Marines Futenma Replacement Facility in Okinawa Delayed – For How Long?”

²⁶⁵ Lummis, “US Marines Futenma Replacement Facility in Okinawa Delayed – For How Long?”

²⁶⁶ Alexander Cooley and Kimberly Marten, “Base Motives: The Political Economy of Okinawa’s Antimilitarism,” *Armed Forces and Society* 32, no. 4 (July 2006): 568, ProQuest.

prefecture in Japan, and between 1972 and 1999 Tokyo provided over 5 trillion yen in subsidies.²⁶⁷ However, Gintautas alleges that an “overreliance on compensation politics in Okinawa ... has created systemic risks that pose a threat to the long-term political sustainability of the [US forces in Okinawa].”²⁶⁸

According to Calder, compensation politics work if “(1) resource flows continue unabated to target constituencies, and (2) no ambitious base relocation efforts are pursued.”²⁶⁹ Gintautas finds potential for economic and social changes to disrupt the flow of compensation to Okinawan citizens.²⁷⁰ In FY2018, Japan’s compensation budget for Okinawa was 6–8% of the total defense budget, or .35% of Japan’s total budget. Gintautas underscores the fact that Japan’s “government debt relative to GDP is the highest ever recorded in the OECD area,” introduces risk for disrupting compensation.²⁷¹ Japan’s declining economic prospects, largely attributed to its aging population and low birth rates, potentially jeopardize the long-term sustainability of compensation politics.

In addition to potential future budgetary constraints’ disrupting, or eliminating, compensation to Okinawans, “other changes such as the election of a less hawkish prime minister, a reduction in tensions with North Korea or China, domestic pushes to increase welfare spending, or even a surge in Japanese antimilitarism or nationalism, all have the potential to interrupt the flow of compensation payments that have thus far secured Okinawan acquiescence for U.S. forces in Okinawa.”²⁷² Oros illustrates this distinction during the DPJ’s short term as the majority, from 2009–12, when the Diet took actions to distance itself from the United States and balance priorities more toward an Asia for Asians. In fact, one of the DPJ’s three “primary goals for change in Japan’s security

²⁶⁷ Cooley and Marten, “Base Motives,” 572.

²⁶⁸ Gintautas, *Loosening the Okinawan Knot*, 20.

²⁶⁹ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 246.

²⁷⁰ Gintautas, *Loosening the Okinawan Knot*, 21.

²⁷¹ Gintautas, *Loosening the Okinawan Knot*, 22.

²⁷² Gintautas, *Loosening the Okinawan Knot*, 22.

practices” was “closer ties to China and other Asian states.”²⁷³ It is not entirely out of the question that Japan would distance itself from the U.S.-Japan alliance if the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) were to lose its dominance in the Diet and the opposition came to power for longer than a few years.

To Calder’s second point, compensation politics only work in the absence of ambitious base relocation efforts as vested interests desire to maintain the basing status quo.²⁷⁴ Efforts such as SACO and the DPRI could have unintended consequences such as increasing protest as fewer Okinawans are coopted. Figure 20 presents the collective efforts of the 1996 Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) agreement and the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI). Both SACO and DPRI represent significant efforts aimed to consolidate or reduce U.S. bases on Okinawa. Gintautas argues that base reductions and relocations can actually intensify protest after the “burden” demanding compensation no longer exists. This presents significant political ramifications as there are over 43,000 landowners in Okinawa who receive approximately ¥ 362.8 billion (roughly \$3.28 billion) annually for hosting U.S. bases.²⁷⁵ Gintautas adds this will “reduce overall political support for the remaining bases since the co-opted supporters lose their economic incentives to continue supporting base presence.”²⁷⁶ While base reductions may ease the burden and reduce protest in local communities, the wealthy faction of landowners are likely to contribute to increased protest once no longer compensated.

²⁷³ Oros, *Japan’s Security Renaissance*, 112.

²⁷⁴ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 246.

²⁷⁵ Gintautas, *Loosening the Okinawan Knot*, 11.

²⁷⁶ Gintautas, *Loosening the Okinawan Knot*, 22.

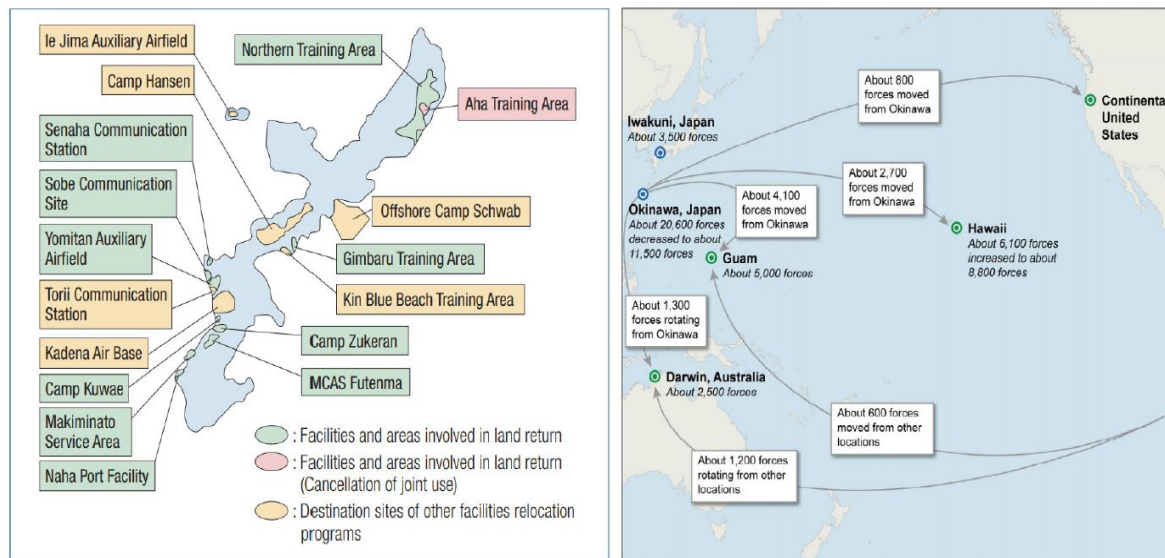


Figure 20. SACO Land Return (left) and DPRI Marine Relocations.²⁷⁷

2. Okinawan Demographics and Implications for Protest

Gintautas proposes that as the Battle of Okinawa age cohort begins to disappear, protest will likely decrease. While the greatest policy concern among Okinawan voters is resolving the U.S. base problem (Figure 21), many scholars argue this is representative of one particular cohort rather than an issue consistently represented within an age demographic. Johnston notes, “the core anti-base protesters are older; many were children during the Battle of Okinawa in 1945.”²⁷⁸ Morrison and Chinen identify a condition of “base fatigue” among 60 millennials who were interviewed and who reside in Okinawa.²⁷⁹ Two-thirds of those interviewed had never participated in mobilized protests in Okinawa and elected that protests were ineffective at producing real policy changes.²⁸⁰ Gintautas provides empirical evidence that base issues tend to be less

²⁷⁷ Source Gintautas, *Loosening the Okinawan Knot*, 10.

²⁷⁸ Johnston, “Public Protest in Japan: Power to the People?”

²⁷⁹ Charles E. Morrison and Daniel Chinen, *Millennial+ Voices in Okinawa: An Inquiry into the Attitudes of Young Okinawan Adults toward the Presence of U.S. Bases*, East-West Center (Honolulu, HI: U.S.-Japan Foundation, 2019), 15, <https://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/bitstream/10125/61915/millennialvoicesokinawa.pdf>

²⁸⁰ Morrison and Chinen, *Millennial+ Voices in Okinawa*, 15.

important among younger Okinawans (Figure 22). Between the ages of 15–29, 71.3% of Okinawan respondents ranked U.S. base issues as being below their top three policy concerns. The director of the Vancouver-based Peace Philosophy Centre agrees with Gintautas’ observations and adds that “the traditional anti-base movement is rapidly aging.”²⁸¹ He argues, “Protesters tend to use the same tactics as they did back in the 1960s — which turns off younger Okinawans and mainland Japanese who move to Okinawa. I think young people come to places where they can participate, feel respected and have fun, not to places where they have to listen to boring speeches of old people one after the other.”²⁸² Evidence suggests U.S. base protest in Okinawa will decline over time regardless of future compensation or concessions made by the GOJ.

²⁸¹ Johnston, “Public Protest in Japan: Power to the People?”

²⁸² Johnston, “Public Protest in Japan: Power to the People?”

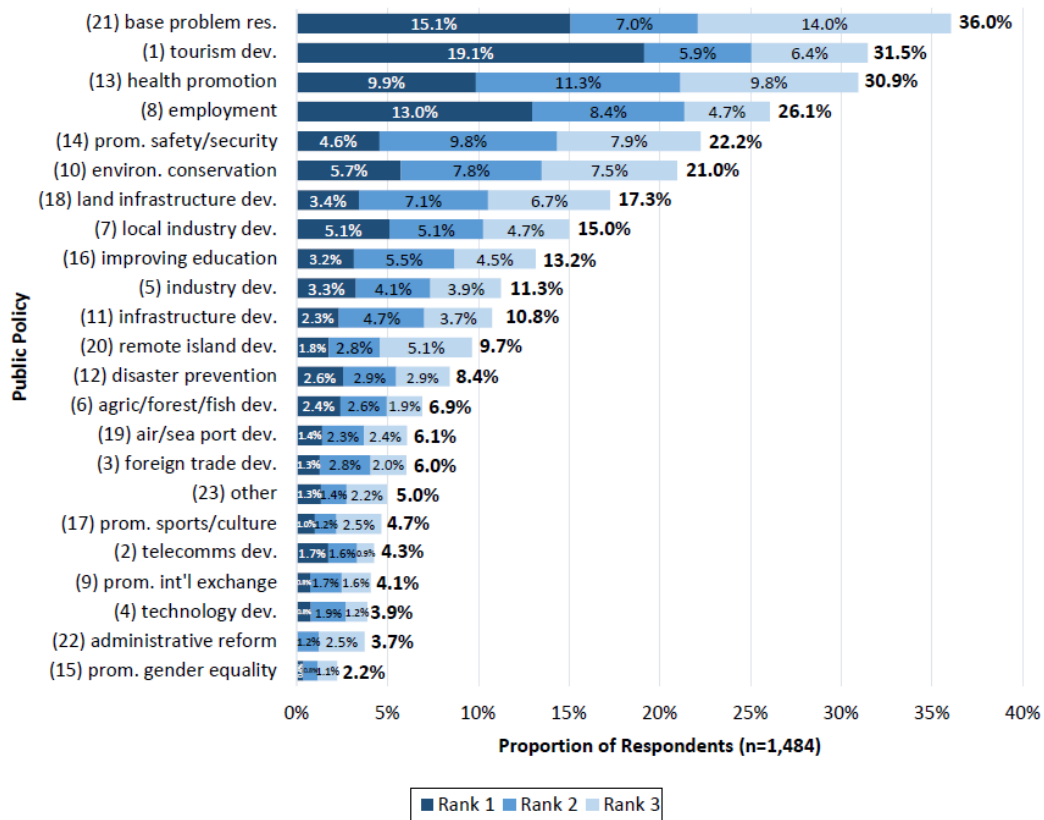


Figure 21. Okinawan Public Policy Priorities (2015)²⁸³

²⁸³ Source: Gintautas, *Loosening the Okinawan Knot*, 63.

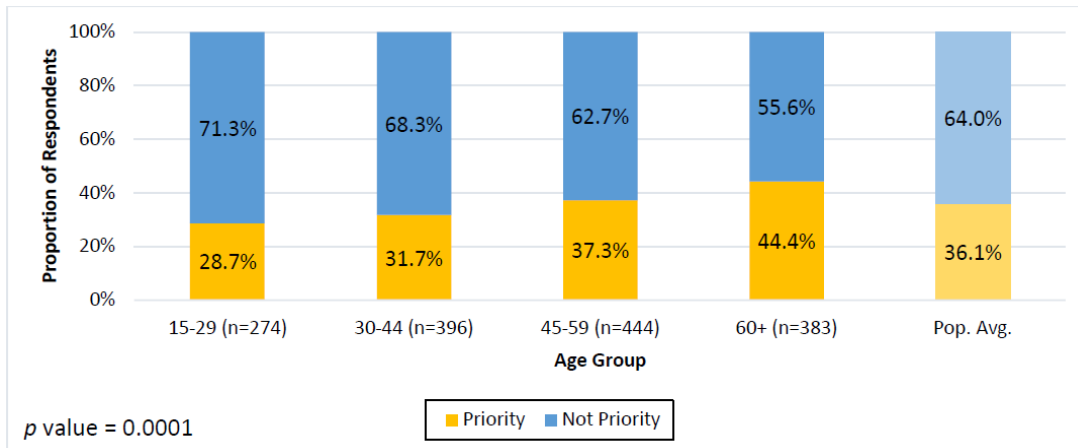


Figure 22. Base Problems, Top Three Public Policy Priority Across Ages (15-year groups)²⁸⁴

C. TWO BASING STRATEGIES FOR CONSIDERATION

1. “Singapore Model” Supplemented with JSDF

If Okinawan political issues do reduce the future viability of the island as a U.S. basing option, though, Kent Calder proposes a scalable force option in his “Singapore Model,” characterized by a substantially smaller U.S. footprint of planning, legal, logistical, and intelligence personnel well connected with host-nation and higher-echelon military planners and intelligence assets. The base would require a small footprint of U.S. service members that would facilitate reception of forces for large scale operations if directed. This would reduce the “contact” of U.S. service members within high-density population centers and civilian exposure to military exercises, while maintaining operational situational awareness. Such a base could accommodate prepositioned equipment near a carrier dry-dock, as with the U.S. military footprint in Singapore.²⁸⁵ Alleviated from the pressure (comparatively) from host-nation protest, the DOD could maintain and operate from multiple access points rather than concentrating forces and presenting an adversary with first strike advantages. Multiple access points from different strategic locations across an array of different countries would increase situational

²⁸⁴ Source: Gintautas, *Loosening the Okinawan Knot*, 71.

²⁸⁵ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 60–63.

awareness of the operating environment and offer more operational maneuver and strike options.

A second prong to this model would be supplementing the U.S. force reduction on Okinawa with an increased presence of Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF). This would alleviate protest associated with cultural insensitivities, issues of sovereignty violation, and elevated reactions to crime perpetrated by U.S. service members. The Japanese Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade operates in similar fashion to the USMC, and Okinawan training facilities and infrastructure could support more bi/multilateral venues for U.S.-Japanese security cooperation. Operationally, access would be maintained for the USMC by an ally force, and exercises could simulate bilateral contingency responses that would deploy from Okinawa. The existing infrastructure could serve as staging areas for pre-positioned assets and requisite logistics much as it exists today. Naha Port alone has over 7 deep water berths that could support massive naval fleet and troop movements.²⁸⁶

2. Status Quo: Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF)

A second option would be to maintain the status quo while resuming efforts to relocate MCAS Futenma—FRF. The United States has yet to see the impacts the FRF will have on protest. Protest in Okinawa has the same prospects of reversal toward heightened U.S. favorability as observed after forces were relocated out of Seoul in South Korea. The relocation would reduce Okinawans' exposure to U.S. forces' military exercises, crime, and sovereignty violations. Existing literature finds that protest is dynamic and varies over time. It is also possible that over time, Okinawans' external threat perception is heightened and protest decreases on its own. It is also worth noting that some might argue that protest in Okinawa is not intense enough for concessions to be made. Pagan contends that despite Okinawans' best efforts, they "remain fragmented and unable to raise their concerns to the proper audience and agenda setting level, [and] the status quo will remain in effect."²⁸⁷

²⁸⁶ "Naha Port," Global Security.org, accessed September 2, 2020, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/naha-port.htm>

²⁸⁷ Joseph Pagan, "Efforts to Generate A New Wave of Okinawan Resistance," *Asian Studies International Journal* 1, no. 1 (December 2019) 41, <https://asianstudies.info/2019/ASIJ.19.06.pdf>

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