



**STRATEGY
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**THE NEWEST AGE NOW BEGINS
THE FUTURE OF THE U.S.-JAPAN SECURITY ALLIANCE**

BY

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The Future of the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance

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Lieutenant Colonel Catherine T. Bacon

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ABSTRACT

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TITLE: The Newest Age Now Begins
The Future of the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance
FORMAT: Strategy Research Project
DATE: 7 April 1997 Pages: 26 Classification: Unclassified

The U.S.-Japan Security Alliance has linked both nations since the 1950s. During the Cold War, security issues were paramount. Japan recovered, and America contained Soviet Communism. Japan provided basing rights, and America provided the military muscle for security in Northeast Asia. However, the end of the Cold War and economic changes in Japan and America are straining the alliance. Some argue that the Alliance is no longer necessary, but it is still vital to bilateral security and economic interests. This research project will discuss the alliance by examining two tensions. trade tensions and social tensions. Large trade imbalances have caused the first tension, and the second tension was sparked by the rape of a young Okinawan girl by U.S. servicemen in September 1996. In April 1997, President Clinton and Prime Minister Hashimoto reaffirmed the importance of the treaty, but also announced that Futema Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) would close. To make clear the relevance of the alliance, this paper will analyze various aspects of both countries, including economic activities and security needs. Since a base has been closed, it is likely that more protests will follow. U.S. and Japanese planners should consider options for maintaining the Security Alliance.

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A NEW AGE NOW BEGINS¹

The Cold War is over, the century, nearly ended. Thus begins the new age. Embedded in this simple phrase are cataclysmic changes to the geostrategic environment which have caused the American people to reevaluate American interests, strategies, and security arrangements. This new age almost certainly will be the Pacific Century, an era supported by the economic colossus of Japan and fiercely fueled by the raging "Asian Tiger" economies of South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore.² Therefore, the new age finds Americans debating their security relationship with Japan. Many have suggested that America should withdraw into an isolationistic stance, making domestic policy our first priority. Others have suggested that American strategy no longer fits its diplomatic, economic, or military capabilities, given the significant changes in the geostrategic environment, in its domestic economic condition, and in its military force structure.

Therefore, many Americans question the efficacy of the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance.³ They argue that America can no longer afford to forward-deploy forces, especially not in Japan, whose incredible economic clout buffets the American psyche. Some argue pointedly that another reason forward deployment in Japan is not necessary is that the Cold War has ended, so threats in the Asia-Pacific region have disappeared. Both arguments are flawed. America cannot afford not committing forces to sustain the Security Alliance. By stationing forces and equipment in Japan, America insures its ability to participate in the dynamic Asian economies (see Fig. 1⁴) and simultaneously insures continued stability of the Asia-Pacific region.

Last April, in a joint statement reaffirming the alliance, President Clinton and Prime Minister Hashimoto declared that "Japan-U.S. security arrangements are vital to both nations."⁵ The central tenet of this paper is that the Security Alliance is still necessary and viable. To prove this argument, the first section will include a thorough examination of the geostrategic environment and a brief analysis of the two nations' histories, cultural tendencies, and perspectives of bilateral relations. The

next section will contain a discussion about the redefinition of the Security Alliance and an examination of two major tensions affecting the Alliance: economic friction over trade imbalances and social unrest over important basing rights in Japan. Finally, the last section will conclude with recommendations for strengthening the Security Alliance and insuring continued access to bases in Japan, the “linchpins”⁶ of U.S. forward presence in the Pacific.

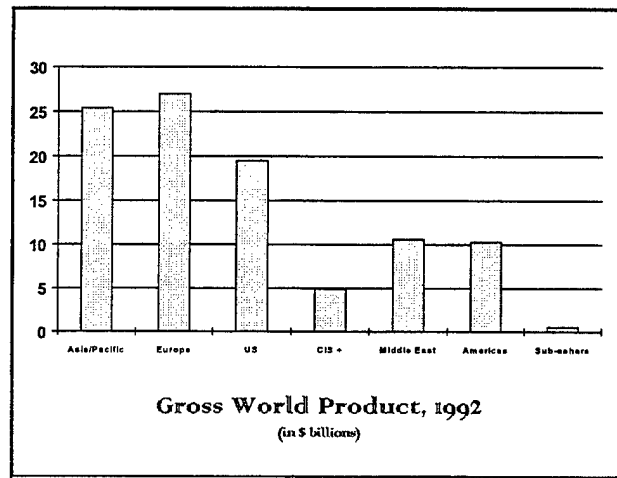


Figure 1

THE NEW GLOBAL GEOSTRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

To begin the argument, the geostrategic backdrop of the new age and the nature of the two nations, their traits, and their relationship must be reviewed. Geostrategically, the world of the 21st century is evolving from bipolarity to asymmetrical polarity.⁷ Once poised at the brink of lethal engagement, the bristling armies of the two super-powers, the former Soviet Union and the United States, have withdrawn and shrunk. By 1989, the USSR had begun to recall 206,000 of its troops from the Asian region. Even before its collapse in 1992, the Soviet military had been emasculated, with only 30 percent of its submarines, 40 percent of its surface combatant vessels, and 50 percent of its fighter aircraft operational.⁸ On the U.S. side, downsizing was draconian. Forces were withdrawn, ships moored, and aircraft hangared (Fig. 2).⁹ The brittle bipolar confrontation which

dominated the geostrategic environment of the world dissipated, and a promising era of multipolar cooperation seems to lie ahead. The world, weary of the Cold War, is about to enter the new century.

Branch	1989 Levels	Current Level
Total		
Active Duty	2.2 million	1.4 million
US Army Divisions		
Active / Reserve	18 / 10	10 / 5
USAF Fighter Wings		
Active / Reserve	24 / 12	13 / 7
USN		
Carriers / Major Warships	14 / 455	12 / 346

US FORCES' DRAWDOWN

Figure 2

However, now, with just a few years since the Cold War dissipation and still three years before the true dawning of the new century, the world grows anxious over newly emerging, terrifyingly different threats to security. Overshadowing “peace dividend” benefits from military drawdowns are new “transnational” threats which include global crime, terrorism, migration, and environmental problems.¹⁰ These new threats terrorize nation states, figuratively holding them hostage and forcing them to siphon resources to repair or thwart damages. All nations are vulnerable to these threats. Japan, the economic giant and America, the sole-surviving super power, are both vulnerable targets of choice, sure to garner media attention if attacked by any splinter terrorist group. Japan and America, preeminent in their economic and political powers, vulnerable in the unfamiliar, threatening geostrategic environment, together are the hesitant rising leader and the “reluctant guardian”¹¹ of the new 21st century and the Asia-Pacific.

NOTES FROM THE PAST, INSIGHTS FOR THE FUTURE

JAPAN

The new world and its threats confront Japan, like Janus, with two faces: full of promise and uncertainty. Once before, Japan experienced a similar confrontation. From the mid-16th century, for 300 years, Japanese *shogun* had ruled, locking the nation away in ruthlessly imposed isolation. In 1854, however, with an acrid blast from Commodore Matthew Perry's cannon, all changed. Forced open, servile Japan established relations with powerful America. Then, beginning in 1867, Meiji Restoration¹² leaders, desperately seeking national autonomy, rushed Japan headlong from feudalism into the Industrial Age in only twenty years and into the international arena by the 20th century. Militaristic leaders then lead Japan to imperialism, aggression, and humiliating defeat at the end of World War II. Today, at the beginning of the 21st century, recovered from World War II, pacifist Japan eagerly yet hesitatingly steps forward as a global power.

For despite having orchestrated a miraculous recovery from the ashes of World War II to the skyscraping heights of economic gianthood, Japan is paralyzed by conflicting emotions: it deeply yearns for international recognition for not only its economic, but also political and diplomatic successes, but it also deeply fears advancement. That the Japanese longing goes unfulfilled can be attributed to a variety of reasons--cultural traits, political scandals, economic difficulties,¹³ and environmental and social crises.

First, cultural traits inhibit Japanese from stepping forward. One well-known proverb--*deru kugi wa utareru*--warns that the protruding nail will be hammered down. Social behaviorists write extensively about the Japanese idea of "self." In her book, Understanding Japanese Society, Hendry states that "the word for individualism (*kojinshugi*) is seen as little different from that for 'selfishness,'...an undesirable, untrained state."¹⁴ She cites another researcher, Moeran, who described the "'problem' of individualism in Japanese society in terms of an 'internal cultural

debate.”¹⁵ Also contributing to their inhibition is a cultural leaning toward self-consciousness, a tendency closely connected with groupism. Reischauer describes the concept of *amae/amaeru*, the noun and verb for “sweet” and “to look to others for affection.” This concept, instilled in Japanese from birth, begins with the infant’s dependence upon its mother for gratification. It then evolves “...into psychic dependence for gratification by being enveloped in the warmth of the group and receiving its approval;” in this way, Japanese are socialized “...to be constantly worrying about what the other person thinks of him.”¹⁶ Their self-consciousness is further reinforced by educational values and practices that emphasize both the notions of perfection and the impossibility of achieving it; Van Wolferen reports that

in learning a skill--especially in connection with Japanese music, the traditional theater arts, or *judo*, *aikido*, *kendo* and *karate*--the emphasis is on automatic, endless, non-reflective repetition of what the teacher does. Mastery is reached by removal of the obstacles between the self and the perfect model....According to Japanese learning methods, the skill or art has an authoritative and predetermined existence demanding subservience....The self-consciousness that the traditional Japanese learning method generates in the earlier stages also tends to act as a brake.¹⁷

Thus, although the people and the leaders of Japan want to step up on the global stage, to accept responsibilities and respect commensurate with their economic power, they hesitate because of cultural mores.

A second reason for Japanese hesitancy to step into the world spotlight is their embarrassment over political scandal and bureaucratic ineptitude in dealing with domestic issues. During the last few years, Japan saw a succession of governments tainted by political or financial corruption or hobbled by fractious coalitions. The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), in power since 1955, was ousted in 1993.¹⁸ LDP Prime Minister (PM) Kennichi Miyazawa was replaced by the Japan New Party (JNP) candidate Morihiro Hosokawa in July 1993. However, only nine months later, the “clean” PM Hosokawa was himself forced to resign because of questionable links to a scandal-riddled parcel delivery company. A rapid succession of three more prime ministers¹⁹ (and their cabinets)

followed during the next two years until the LDP returned to power with PM Ryutaro Hashimoto's election in January 1996. This merry-go-round of resignations and elections left the Japanese electorate disaffected,²⁰ and not surprisingly, the quick shuffling of governments stalled recovery from Japanese economic turmoil and nagging recession, drawing even more negative public response. Similarly, huge corporate losses have also shamed the country. Weak fiscal management within an incredibly inflated domestic land market had allowed speculative trading practices to balloon until the late 1980s when the "bubble burst" and the economy slowed. This eventually resulted in higher unemployment rates²¹ and further recession. In 1996, the country had still not fully recovered when bad loans caused the top-eleven Japanese banks to post Y1.75 trillion losses, and when lax accountability practices allowed two *ronin* (persons who do not have or obey a master) traders to rack up \$3.7 billion (B) in losses,²² sending tremors through international stock markets and banking institutions alike.

Finally, the third reason Japanese hesitate to assume global leader responsibilities is because their self-confidence has been shaken by three shocking events. One literally earth-shaking event was the Great Hanshin Earthquake of 1995. Sixty-seven times the energy of the atomic weapon that leveled Hiroshima, the massive trembler destroyed 30-50 percent of Kobe, one of Japan's most modern and important ports and seventh largest city, and caused over 6,000 deaths.²³ Many people were asleep or still at home when the quake struck at 6:17 a.m., or else casualties would certainly have been higher. The Hanshin Earthquake also cracked Japan's confidence in its technological ability to quake-proof its communities, while the government's unconscionably slow emergency response and poorly coordinated relief efforts combined to shatter Japanese confidence in the effectiveness of their bureaucracy.²⁴ The most shocking event, however, occurred only weeks after the earthquake. This time Japan was appalled by sarin nerve gas attacks in the Tokyo subway. The attacks were terrifying because neither the agent nor the agents who perpetuated them were

detectable: sarin is a deadly, colorless, odorless gas and the members of the religious cult who perpetuated the attacks, from outward appearances, seemed to be ordinary Japanese! For the Japanese, who proudly proclaim that Japan is a “safe” country and the people are “one people,”²⁵ the sarin attack shook their confidence in their own culture.

Lastly, Japan was shaken by the reemergence of military threats. Because the Cold War had ended and because of rising confidence in the nation’s ability to maintain its security through diplomatic and economic measures, the nearly completely pacifist Japanese people had come to believe their country was safe from military threats. This was especially the case after the demise of the Soviet Union in the 1990s. However, the recent North Korean and mainland Chinese nuclear and military demonstrations on the Korean Peninsula and in the Taiwan Strait combined to rattle Japanese confidence in their defense capabilities.

AMERICA

The new world and its threats also present America with two confronting faces of promise and uncertainty. And, similar to Japan, American has also experienced a previous confrontation with a new world. In 1776, when American founders crafted the words “*Novous Ordum Seculorum*” onto the Great Seal of the new nation, the country faced a hopeful yet fearful beginning. Yet, by the War of 1812, America had already grown from a colonial weakling to regional power. As a young, powerfully industrialized nation, America flexed global muscle during World War I, and was the powerful brains and brawn of World War II. As one of the bipolar contenders, the U.S. contained Soviet hegemony and eventually emerged the victor, the last superpower of the century. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the 21st century, emotionally and financially weakened from the Cold War, America stands on the global stage both ready and reluctant²⁶ to continue leading as a global power.

For in spite of having conquered the Cold War foe, America is confused by mixed emotions concerning global leadership. "The American people remain committed to a global presence and to U.S. leadership, while insisting that the ambitious [National Strategy] goals be accomplished with only limited resources;" in other words, Americans still desire "number one" status, yet they are reticent about footing the bills for global leadership and security.²⁷ Thus, it will be difficult for America to achieve its three National Strategy objectives--the defense of the homeland, the pursuit of prosperity, and the promotion of democracy abroad. The task will be daunting for three reasons.

The first reason is that Americans' desire to be "number one" is hardly compatible with the team-player qualities necessary for 21st century global leadership. Being number one, standing on your own two feet, taking quick, sure action--these are characteristics that Americans admire and emulate from childhood. Thus, Americans have little patience for the requisite but tedious consensus-building in multilateral organizations. A similarly intolerant attitude toward poor management results in the nation not participating in coalitions it does not lead. American current "tardiness" in paying United Nation's dues is an example of disdain for inefficiency.

A second reason achieving American goals will be difficult is that the national coffers are no longer bottomless. The Cold War is won, but America moved from super-wealthy to super-debtor status. Although its 1995 Gross Domestic Product was \$6.7 trillion, it posted over \$100B in trade deficits, importing \$644B while only exporting \$513B.²⁸ While as an importer, the American nation is a big spender, as a reluctant global defender, it is frugal. Not only has foreign aid fallen, defense budgets have, too.²⁹ For example, from 1984-1994, defense spending dropped from over 6 percent to only 4 percent of the GDP.

The third reason Americans have mixed feelings about global leadership in the next century is that it is uncertain of how to respond to threats in a post-Cold War world. As former CIA Director James Woolsey observed, though the dragon has been slain, the forest is crawling with poisonous

snakes.³⁰ When confronted with complex, transnational or enduring geostrategic threats such as those in Rwanda or Bosnia-Herzegovina, American response has been slow and seemingly unsure. Of course, when clear threats to its interests emerge, America is still capable and willing of immediate and decisive response, clearly the case during the Gulf War.

Finally, as it enters the new century Americans will be leading in bilateral and multilateral relations. Former Secretary of State John A. Baker was the first to identify America's role in Asia as "the honest broker."³¹ Many Asian nations still feel the wounds of World War II and have yet to trust each other. With its relative objectivity, America links them. Baker said that President Bush's architecture for Asian-Pacific security was like a fan; the alliances connecting the U.S. to Thailand, Australia-New Zealand, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, and Japan represented strong but flexible spokes which originated in North America and spanned the Pacific, balancing the relationships and making the region secure.³² President Clinton visualizes a newer image to describe security in multilateral connections. In a 1993 speech, he described a new construct for security relations--a suit of body armor with overlapping plates which provide individual and collective protection for the entire body.³³ To be sure, in the future, America will use both mechanisms. By maintaining its force level in NE Asia (especially as a "bellwether" of its commitment), it will still be the balancer, but it will also seek to act as a team member of larger security coalitions, to share economic burdens to be sure, but more importantly to link the United States multilaterally throughout the Asia-Pacific region.³⁴

Reluctant, but nevertheless willing to engage, the United States is changing the focus of its interests, and it is redefining the ways it demonstrates leadership. During the Cold War, its primary interest was security, and its focus was on Europe. In the coming century, security is still important to America, but intertwined with economics. Thus, America will try to improvise a network of security alliances through involvement with multilateral organizations such as the Asian Pacific

Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the ASEAN Asian Regional Forum (ARF) while pursuing security goals.³⁵ Also, concentrating on the teeming markets of the Pacific Rim, it will use President Clinton's approach of competing, not retreating, to improve access to Asian markets. During the last four years, the U.S. has wrested twenty-four trade agreements with Japan alone, increasing American exports by 43 percent.³⁶

THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP REDEFINED

In his discussion on U.S.-Japan relations, Professor Iriye of Harvard, maintains that the relationship has been contextualized for the last fifty years by the Cold War and that both countries have been primarily concerned with security. Perhaps because the time-frame covered in his essay is post-World War II, Iriye does not discuss Japan's role in that conflagration. Thus, because he fails also to discuss any of the consequences of Japanese actions during the war, his essay seems at times disconnected with historical reality. Nevertheless, he finds the mark when he discusses the shallow rationalization for the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance. He contends that neither country developed any significant rationale for intellectually framing the relationship because both were "mesmerized" by security aspects of the alliance. Therefore, Japan became "Western" in its identification with its protector, and abandoned military pursuits for non-military objectives, particularly trade, while the United States assumed responsibility for its security.³⁷

An American perspective on the relationship can be found in an article by Wilborn. He also acknowledges that the framework for the alliance was the Cold War, resulting in the prioritization of security. However, Wilborn is more specific about both the costs and the benefits of the security relationship. Japan provided the military bases for power projection platforms. The U.S. provided the power. Japan enjoyed the safety of the American security umbrella, minimizing defense expenditures while capitalizing on economic recovery and expansion. The U.S. secured forward basing access while also receiving political support.³⁸ For example, Japan allowed the U.S. to

conduct both air operations and logistic support from bases in Japan during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Japan, tolerating a military build-up, supported the bilateral alliance so that it could be a pacific yet secure nation; America, tolerating economic imbalance, supported the alliance so that it could contain Communism.³⁹

NEW DIRECTIONS FOR BILATERAL SECURITY

While both Japan and America continue to be committed to their old relationship, both countries are following new directions to bolster their relationship and to reinforce the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance. According to Iriye, because of the historical influence of the long relationship and significant economic ties with America, Japan will likely retain "western" preferences.⁴⁰ At the same time, it will remain pacifist, for though not universal, Japanese legal, philosophical, and institutional attitudes toward pacifism are pervasive. However, in practical security matters, Japan's readiness to meet new security threats will continue to improve.⁴¹ For example, Japan maintains a small but potently equipped Self-Defense force. Though it spends only one percent of its GDP annually, in 1995 that was over \$47B.⁴² Its Self-Defense Forces include 150,000 ground troops, 160 surface vessels, and 490 aircraft.⁴³ America, too will remain strongly and visibly engaged--it is "...committed to maintaining its current level of approximately 100,000 troops in Asia..." to demonstrate American commitment to the region, to deter possible aggression by rogue states, and to facilitate "...rapid and decisive U.S. action should deterrence fail."⁴⁴ Still, despite the commitment of both nations, there are two major pressures straining the relationship and the alliance.

TRADE FRICTIONS

JAPAN IN ASIA

Japan fully comprehends and appreciates the importance of Asia. Throughout the last 50 years, the cornerstone of Japanese inter-regional and international policy has been the US-Japanese Security

Alliance. It has survived, and just as recently as April of last year, was reaffirmed by Prime Minister Hashimoto and President Clinton. Nonetheless, while this great bilateral agreement endures, diplomatic and economic aspects of the U.S.-Japanese bilateral relationships has changed.

From 1945 through the 1970s, Japan's trade focus was firmly fixed upon America. It needed American humanitarian assistance to rebuild, American military security to survive, and American markets to recover. From the 1980s, however, as its economic power grew, Japan began to focus on the world, and became especially interested in Asia. Now, Japanese officials are beginning to shift away from America-first security, diplomatic, and economic ties; Japanese leaders aim toward multilateralism. They strive mightily to increase ties with key nations around the world, particularly with key nations within the Pacific region. According to Lincoln, one of the primary ways Japan appears to curry good relations in Asia is through its Official Development Assistance (ODA),⁴⁵ indeed, the according to a Japanese ODA White Paper, financial aid is "a field in which Japan is capable of active contribution. ...In this way, ODA certainly leads to an increase in the esteem in which the Japanese people are held by the international community."⁴⁶

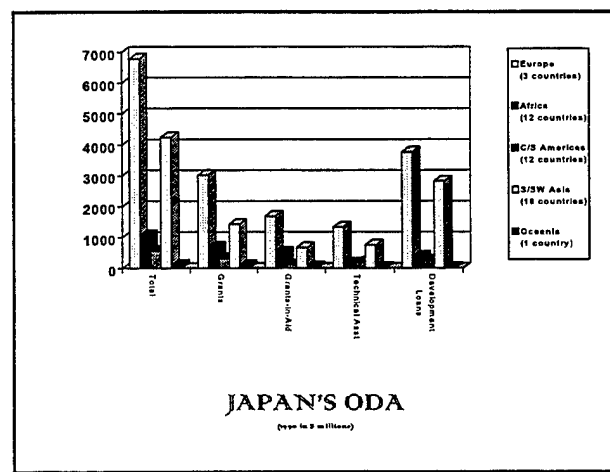


Figure 3

Simone and Feraru offer a thorough description of the evolution of Japanese ODA; while Japan was a minor donor in the 60s, it rapidly rose to the world's fourth largest donor in the 70s, and is now

the world's largest donor of ODA, distributing over \$9B to Newly Industrializing Countries (NICs) (see Fig. 3).⁴⁷ Not only did the amount of Japanese aid increase, the distribution expanded as well. Until early 1970, Japan disbursed 90-100 percent of its aid to Asian countries. Later in the 70s, distributions were made to other regions as well. Significantly, after the 1974 and 1978 oil shocks, Middle Eastern, African, and Latin American countries became ODA recipients. Nonetheless, while the number of countries receiving aid has increased, the proportions remain slanted decidedly in favor of the Asian region at an approximate ratio of 7:1:1:1.⁴⁸ For example, in 1988, Asia received over 62 percent of Japanese aid; the Middle East received just over 9 percent; Africa, nearly 14 percent; Latin America, a little more than 6 percent; and "others," 8 percent. Understandably, it could be argued that Japan is merely assisting regionally close or culturally similar nations. While this point holds true, it is also clear by the nature of its ODA that while "assisting" NIC economies, Japan is also assisting itself accomplish its own goals.

Certainly Japan is leading the pack of Asian "tiger" economies--actually, the Japanese prefer the "the flying geese" metaphor.⁴⁹ Japan forges ahead, and the other Asian nations benefit by following. By tracking after Japan's economic lead, Taiwan, South Korea, Thailand, and Singapore became the first to earn their tiger stripes. Other nations, too, such as Australia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and, most recently, China, with its huge potential consumer base, are chasing the pack (see Fig. 4⁵⁰). Yet while leading and assisting in other Asian nation development, Japan simultaneously enmeshes other economies within its own. For example Japanese ODA to China apportions only small amounts as grants, while stipulating larger percentages be treated as loans, thus diverting capital from Chinese markets.⁵¹

As evidenced with this self-serving aspect of its ODA, it is clear that Japan has embarked upon a strategy which will ensure its goals of diplomatic and economic international harmony and, perhaps

even of regional hegemony. Some, including former Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger,⁵² speculate that if Japan perceives diplomatic failure of its “assistance” programs, or that if it perceives

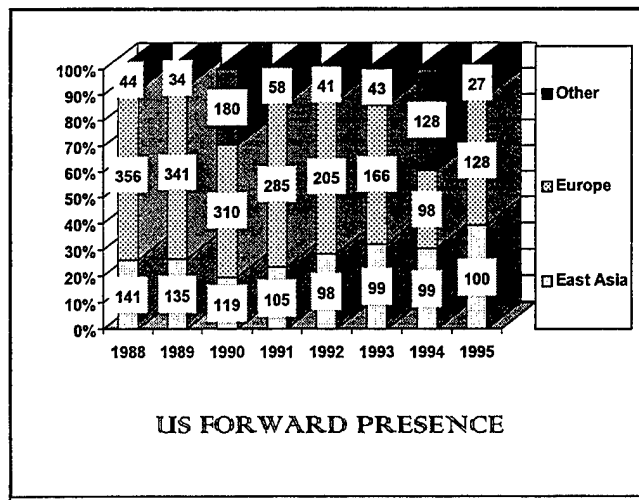


Figure 4

economic encroachment by other nations upon its Asian markets and resources (as it did over 60 years ago), it might once again discard the chrysanthemum and lift up its sword.⁵³

AMERICA IN ASIA

Unlike Japan, America recognizes, but does not fully comprehend the importance of Asia. Because of a rich heritage of common cultural and social bonds and because of shared alliances during World War I and World War II, America has traditionally maintained Europe-first attitudes in diplomatic, military, and economic issues. In contrast, except for brief interludes, the U.S. has ignored Asia. Today, America continues to assume that its interests there are secure, solidified by total victory over Japan in World War II, and Cold War victories in Korea and in Vietnam. Furthermore, because it now has no near-peer military counterpart in Asia, America also continues to believe that there are no threats to its national power. Although it dabbles in cultural and social exchanges and promotes diplomatic and military relations, in contrast to Japan, America hardly competes for economic supremacy or even parity in Asia. While it is politically incorrect to aim for “supremacy” in the new, post-Cold War international community, global interdependence is essential

for economic stability. America should match Japanese economic activity in Asia in order to maintain diplomatic and military influence while also obtaining equal financial footing or access to markets with other Asia-Pacific nations.

Instead, America is losing ground in Asia. The reasons for this loss of influence are complex, and the causes cannot be unilaterally eliminated. For example, many of the “free markets” in Asia are actually closed to American goods or slanted to favor either domestic products or in many cases, Japanese products. For example, in addition to gaining “esteem” with ODA, Japan uses transnational economic clout to leverage Asian markets and sway favored-national status in return for federally sanctioned business investments and technical training or assistance (essentially, job programs).⁵⁴

There are other reasons American influence in Asia is waning. First, embassies are closing,⁵⁵ and even those still in existence are “operating with one hand tied behind their backs” because of extremely limited budgets.⁵⁶ Secondly, military presence in Asia has been cut by 44, 0000 troops, also reducing the number of senior military officers in the region.⁵⁷ Thirdly, and even more significantly, financial assistance has been slashed by 38 percent (see Fig. 5⁵⁸). While large portions of American foreign aid are directed to Egypt and to Israel, all together, Asian NICs receive totals of

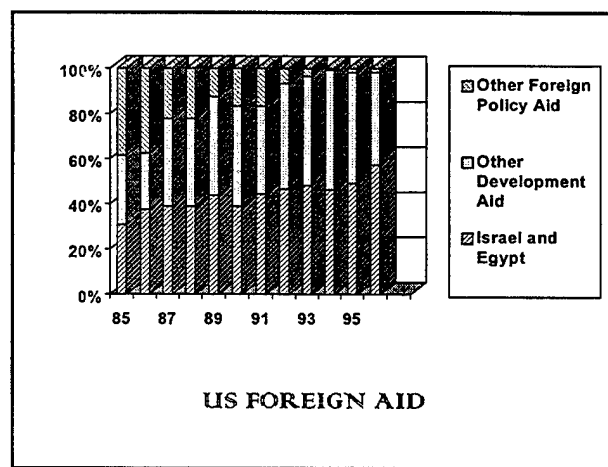


Figure 5

less than 2 percent. In terms of military aid, all is devoted to Egypt and Israel (see Fig. 6⁵⁹). In every category, while Japanese levels of economic assistance rose, American levels fell. In 1970, the U.S. was the world's largest donor, providing 40 percent. By 1993, Japan's share had grown to become the largest while America's quota had sunk to 16 percent.⁶⁰

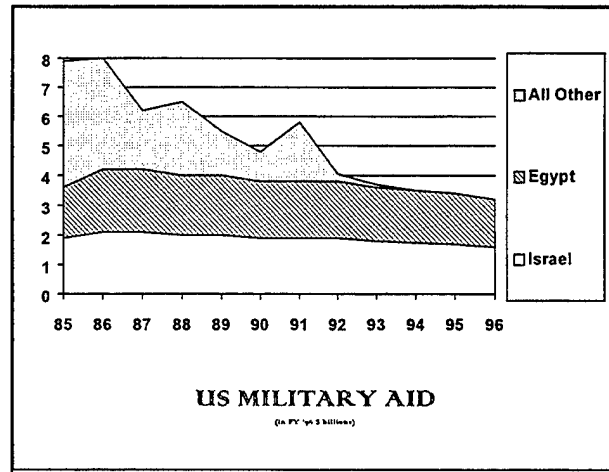


Figure 6

Some of the consequences of ebbing American influence are evident in Japan. Twenty years ago, the “best and the brightest” Japanese foreign service officers staffed the US section; today, they are feverishly working on Asian affairs or crafting a small, balanced military force.⁶¹ Yet, militarily, despite American emphasis on joint and combined operations, issues in which equipment interoperability is critical, neither the Japanese government nor the Self-Defense Forces have pursued significant numbers in acquiring joint equipment or weapon systems.⁶² Even more evident is the strain placed on the US-Japanese relationship after the notorious rape of a twelve-year-old Okinawan girl by three U.S. servicemen in 1995. Public outcry in Japan shook the alliance to the core. The crisis sparked serious domestic discussions between prefectural officials in Naha and the government in Tokyo and was only overcome after a summit between President Clinton and Prime Minister Hashimoto the following spring. At the summit meeting, both leaders were constrained by strong sentiment on both sides of the Pacific. They nevertheless emerged from their meeting, reaffirming

the importance of the security alliance. Still, damage has been done, and it is disturbingly clear that Japanese public support for the alliance has dimmed. Consequently, as Freeman said, it will be increasingly difficult to sustain the Japanese sense of the Security Agreement's importance.⁶³ This is because, ironically, like many Americans, many Japanese have come to believe that the alliance is no longer necessary because the Cold War is over. As a result, Japanese are less and less willing to overcome resentment to American crimes like the Okinawan rape and to overcome resentment to the inconvenience of basing of so many American troops in Japan.⁶⁴

This is problematic for American planners who fasten US strategy on the two linchpins of the need for a bilateral security pact and the consequent need bases for a significant military presence in Japan. If American strategy is only secured by these two pins, the future of American interests flutter helplessly in winds of change as Asian alliances, shaped by Japan, may well be realigned with stronger diplomatic and economic links in the Pacific Rim.

SOCIAL UNREST IN OKINAWA

Significant numbers of US forces have been based in the Japanese Prefecture of Okinawa since the end of World War II, and the U.S. was guaranteed basing rights since the signing of the US-Japan Mutual Treaty on 8 September 1951. With this treaty, post-war U.S. occupation of Japan ended, and an era of allegiance between the two countries began. Although Japan proper became free, Okinawa, the largest of the Ryukyu Archipelago, was deemed a US territory, and American military forces gobbled up much of the mostly coral island,⁶⁵ carving out training sites, lodgment areas, airfields, and port facilities to facilitate American foreign policy and the quick, strategic employment of military forces in the Pacific. Even though US Forces in Japan (USFJ) were also based on the main Japanese islands, most of the forces were based on Okinawa, under complete US control and jurisdiction. After Okinawa was returned to Japanese control in 1972, US control of the island ended, and US forces came under the auspices of the Japanese Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA).⁶⁶

The US-Japan Treaty survived wars, conflicts, social protest, policy revisions, and force level revisions during the span of the last 45 years. However, in the autumn of 1995, the rape of a twelve-year-old Okinawan girl by three US service members caused a simmering cauldron of local resentment to boil over. Okinawa erupted in protest. The results of a referendum on Okinawan bases reveal highly charged attitudes.⁶⁷ Nearly 40 percent of the population distrust the efficacy of the Security Treaty and, again, nearly 40 percent fail to recognize the treaty as beneficial to Japan. Nearly 80 percent strongly recommend revision of the SOFA; 72 percent favor phased base reductions, and 20 percent want immediate base reductions. All of these levels were much higher than in previous polls, super-charged by outrage over the child's rape.

However, Okinawans have been angry over US basing on their island for many years, though the level of anger has varied. The causes of their anger are many, and may stem, in part, from Japanese inaction. As the Japanese nation rebuilt from the wreckage of World War II, while it industriously rebuilt the mainland, it regarded Okinawa as it had always had: a largely ignored country cousin, too raw for its refined motherland. Japan long under-funded recovery programs in Okinawa, and, most irritatingly for many of the agrarian residents, had posted the bulk of American forces in their own, one of the smallest of prefectures--Okinawa. Today, though Okinawa constitutes less than 10 percent of Japanese land mass, it is the home of over 50 percent of all the USFJ.⁶⁸ The public reaction and the referendum gave Governor Masahide Ota enough support to declare his intention to phase all American bases out of Okinawa by 2015.⁶⁹ While many Okinawans oppose the bases, Japanese and American government officials and military planners nevertheless recognize that it is the key to the Security Alliance and to the stability of Asia.⁷⁰ Thus, despite the furor over the rape and despite the disproportionate concentration of American forces in Okinawa, the Hashimoto-Clinton summit reaffirmed the alliance and U.S. basing privileges in Japan.

Prime Minister Hashimoto and President Clinton met in Tokyo to discuss the Security Alliance April 1996. Anxious to defuse the situation, both leaders reaffirmed the alliance, but determined to close one of the bases in Okinawa, Futema MCAS, long-protested by residents as dangerous and excessively noisy for its urban location.⁷¹ Most of the personnel and assets stationed at Futema will be reassigned either to Kadena AB, Okinawa, or to Iwakuni MCAS on Honshu, Japan. While the base was "a tacit bargain,"⁷² sacrificed to atone for the young girl's rape, neither Hashimoto nor Clinton seemed concerned about the time-frame for the base's return: 7-10 years.⁷³ Still, a precedent has been set. Now that a major concession has been made, Governor Ota will certainly be encouraged to press for his removal plan. Giving up Futema was a "bold and brilliant" move because it temporarily solved the problem, but the conundrum remains.⁷⁴ Though the GOJ and the people of mainland Japan support the alliance provisions for USFJ basing, no other prefectural governments have agreed⁷⁵ to either expanding old or constructing new bases "in their backyard." This situation raises three options for the United States.

OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

First, force levels in Okinawa by could be reduced 25-30 percent by transferring personnel and equipment to other bases in Japan or elsewhere in the Asia-Pacific. Along with this, the return of an additional 10 disputed sites⁷⁶ in Okinawa should be expedited; including the return of control, in name and in function, of Naha Port. Also, phased reductions of Marine forces assigned to Okinawa, with subsequent return of bases and training sites could be accomplished by reassigning forces to Iwakuni MCAS or to US bases in Korea, former U.S. bases in the Philippines, or to bases in Australia. While these locations are less strategic than Okinawa, they would nevertheless allow U.S. forces to forward-deploy in the Asia-Pacific region, establish stronger alliance ties with other nations, and reduce the tensions, importance, and vulnerability of U.S. basing rights in Japan.

The second option would involve exploring off-shore base prospects in Okinawa. Japanese technology and construction companies, always eager to absorb some of the multi-billion dollar host-nation support supplied by the GOJ, have a solution to the “not in my backyard” dilemma: off-shore bases constructed on reclaimed land or artificial islands. Already having constructed Japan’s newest and largest airport, the Kansai International,⁷⁷ off of the megalopolis of Osaka, industry leaders have begun to suggest floating facilities⁷⁸ be constructed for US forces. Confinement to a high-tech island could be a glittering, imprisoning fate, but American forces, like Papillon,⁷⁹ would be incapable of further offense, noise would be abated, and land would be returned to Okinawans.

The last option would be to continue to retain all remaining Okinawan bases. Futema would be returned eventually, but not for 10 years. This option would further include an intensive campaign to recultivate local public support--establish sister-city relationships and schedule more open-houses, air shows, contact with local officials--to foster good relations and make the benefits of the Security Alliance more evident. Okinawan, Japanese, and Americans public support for the treaty would be increased. More vigorous education programs on all USFJ bases, both initial and recurring, would be conducted to better educate all American military members and civilian dependents, helping them to understand and value Japanese culture, customs, and laws, and become adept at bi-cultural relations.

The U.S.-Japan Security Alliance is still necessary and viable, and each of these options would help preserve the alliance. Any of the three would meet bilateral security goals. However, perhaps the best is the third option. Maintaining current basing in Okinawa, the most strategic location, would retain base infrastructures for power projection. Security levels and higher-level relations would be maintained, and over time, local relations could be improved as well. Most importantly, the Security Alliance would not only strengthened, but it would also continue the stability of the economically dynamic Asia-Pacific of the 21st century.

ENDNOTES

¹ Page Smith, A New World Now Begins (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976), 1-2. The title is taken from Virgil's *Novus Ordo Seclorum*, which was adopted as part of the Great Seal of the United States by its first Congress.

²For a discussion of this term and to the terms "Pacific Century," and "Pacific Rim," see Bruce Cumings' article, "What is a Pacific Century--and How Will We Know When It Begins?" in Current History, 93 (Dec 1994): 401-406.

³ The U.S.-Japan Security Alliance, instituted the 1950s, renewed in 1960 and 1970, was recently reaffirmed in April 1997; it is also known in Japan as the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the United States (MST).

⁴ Hans Binnenkijk, ed., "U.S. Security Challenges in Transition," Strategic Assessment (Washington: National Defense University, 1995), 18.

⁵ William J. Clinton and Ryutaro Hashimoto, "Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century," The Japan Times, 17 April 1997, <<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/news4-96/message4-17.htm>>, 5 Apr 1997.

⁶ Patrick M. Cronin and Michael J. Green, "Redefining the U.S.-Japan Alliance: Tokyo's National Defense Program." McNair Paper 31 (Washington: INSS, 1994): 3.

⁷ INSS, "Flashpoints and Force Structure" Strategic Assessment (Washington: National Defense University, [draft of] 9 Aug 1996), 211-12.

⁸ Michael Mandelbaum, "The United States and the Strategic Quadrangle," in The Strategic Quadrangle: Russia, China, Japan, and the United States in East Asia, ed. Michael Mandelbaum (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1995), 158.

⁹ David C. Morrison, "Defense: Redefining U.S. Needs and Priorities," Great Decisions (1994): 57. Data reported to have been collated from Bottom-Up Review slides and various Pentagon reports.

¹⁰ Strategic Assessment 1997, 211f.

¹¹ Charles W. Freeman, Jr., "Reluctant Guardian: The United States in East Asia," Harvard International Review, (Spring 1996): 38.

¹² The era marked by the reign of Emperor Meiji (b. 1852) who reigned from 1867 until his death. The Tokugawa Shogunate ended with his ascension to the Chrysanthemum Throne, and his country quickly became industrialized, achieving world power before his death in 1912.

¹³ Cronin and Green, 64.

¹⁴ Joy Hendry, Understanding Japanese Society, (London: Croom Helm, 1987), 49.

¹⁵ Brian Moeran, "Individual, Group, and *Seishin*: Japan's Internal Cultural Debate," Man, (1984B)" n.p. In Hendry, 49.

¹⁶ Edwin O. Reischauer, The Japanese (Tokyo: Tuttle., 1977), 141, 143. Born and raised in Japan, Reischauer was the Ambassador to Japan from 1961-1966.

¹⁷ Karel Van Wolferen, The Enigma of Japanese Power (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1993), 495-96.

¹⁸ Good sources of current information on Japanese politics can be found on the U.S. Department of State home page <http://www.state.gov/www/background_notes/japan_1196_bgn.html>.

¹⁹ Hosokawa was followed by the Japan Renewal Party (JRP) Tsutomu Hata, who ruled less than two months, a victim of political in-fighting. In June of 1994, the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ) Tomiichi Murayama was elected Prime Minister. He lead a three-way coalition as head of the government for a year and a half, until the LDPs Hashimoto returned the party to power in 1996.

²⁰ Michael Westlake, ed., "Japan," Asia 1996 Yearbook, 37 (1995): 142.

²¹Data compiled from the Statistics Bureau, Japan Statistical Yearbook 1993/94 (Tokyo: Management and Coordination Agency, 1993), 80; and from Michael Westlake, ed., "Japan," Asia 1997 Yearbook, 38 (1996): 147. Rising from 1.1 percent in 1983 to 2.7 percent in mid-1991, and now officially reported to be 3.5 percent although

Westlake reports that economists estimate actual unemployment rates are double that figure. From an American perspective, these rates are not particularly high, but from a Japanese perspective, they are very worrisome.

²² Michael Westlake, ed., "Japan," Asia 1997 Yearbook, 38 (1996): 147.

²³ Ken'ichi Miyamoto, "Learning the Lessons of Disaster," Japan Quarterly 43 (Jan-Mar 1996): 6, 13.

²⁴ Westlake, Asia 1996 Yearbook, 142.

²⁵ See Reischauer for an enlightening discussion on this point. He states that despite the fact that prehistoric blending of races occurred, the Japanese nevertheless view themselves as "homogeneous." While the Japanese population of nearly 124,000,000 is nearly 99 percent ethnic Japanese, there are also small percentages of indigenous Ainu and of ethnic Koreans, forcibly migrated to Japan during World War II.

²⁶ Freeman, 38.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook 1995 (Washington: CIA, 1995), 444.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Paraphrased by Cronin and Green, 7.

³¹ John A. Baker III, "America in Asia: Emerging Architecture for a Pacific Community," Foreign Affairs.5 (Winter 1991/92): 5.

³² Ibid., 4.

³³ Clinton spoke to the Korean National Assembly; cited in Thomas L. Wilborn, "International Politics in Northeast Asia: The China-Japan-United States Strategic Triangle," Strategic Studies Institute (SSI), (21 Mar 1996): 35.

³⁴ Bennendijk, "Strategic Forum," INSS 68 (Mar 1966): 2.

³⁵ Wilborn, 30-31.

³⁶ From Ambassador Charlene Barshefsky's testimony before the Trade Subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee on 18 March 1997, from <http://www.ustr.gov/testimony/barshefsky_7.html> and downloaded on 31 Mar 1997.

³⁷ Akira Iriye, "Understanding Japan-U.S. Relations, 1945-1995," Japan Quarterly 42 (Jul-Sep 1995): 256.

³⁸ Later, after economic recovery, Japan also began providing economic support, now providing for most non-salary costs of forward basing U.S. military personnel in Japan.

³⁹ Wilborn, 20-21.

⁴⁰ Iriye, 262.

⁴¹ Cronin and Green, 67, 69.

⁴² Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, (Washington: CIA, 1995): 216.

⁴³ The Japan Institute of International Affairs, White Papers of Japan: 1992-1993, (Tokyo: Institute of International Affairs, 1994): 62

⁴⁴ William J. Perry, Annual Report to the President and the Congress (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996): 13.

⁴⁵ Edward J. Lincoln, Japan's New Global Role, (Washington: the Brookings Institute, 1993): 111-117. [Both the information in the text and in the chart were derived from these pages.]

⁴⁶ The Japan Institute of International Affairs, 53.

⁴⁷ Vera Simone and Anne Thompson Feraru, The Asian Pacific: Political and Economic Development in a Global Context, (White Plains, NY: Longman, 1995): 341-344.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 344. Simon and Feraru report that this ratio is allegedly determined by the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

⁴⁹ Danny Unger and Paul Blackburn, eds., Japan's Emerging Global Role (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993): 32. The editors report, interestingly, that while the Japanese prefer this image, one researcher quoted an official of the Shanghai Institute of International Studies, expressing anxiety and dissatisfaction with the image: "Japan's view is always a flying goose formation with Japan as the head goose. Our memories are long, so we aren't about to fly in Japan's formation." Cited in Chalmers Johnson, "The Problem of Japan in an Era of Structural Change," "

Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies, University of California at San Diego, Research Report 89-04, June 1989.

⁵⁰ From various sources, cited in anonymous article, "China: A Funny-Looking Tiger," in The Economist (17-23 August, 1996): 18. Also, interesting to note that South and Latin American Pacific Rim countries' economies have an animal image, too: referred to as "Hard-scrambling Bobcats Eye the Tigers of Asia," in Los Angeles Times, 7 Jun 1994, sec. 1H, p. 13.

⁵¹ Simone and Feraru, 346.

⁵² See Casper Weinberger and Peter Schweizer, The Next War; another pair of authors with a similar view are Meredith LeBar and George Friedman, who wrote The Coming War with Japan.

⁵³ The image is from Ruth Benedict's seminal treatise, The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1946).

⁵⁴ Simone and Feraru, 346.

⁵⁵ Ms. Eleanor Bly Sutter of the State Department, interview with the author, 7 April 1997, Carlisle, PA. Ms. Sutter reported that, world-wide, twelve embassies have closed and that thirty more "big" departments or one-hundred "small" ones would also close.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Often a "problem" noted by the author in Asia. For example, from 1993-1995 during joint military exercises with the Republic of Korea, the Special Warfare Command (SWC) three-star general commander-in-chief's American Special Operations Command (SOC) counterpart was only a colonel. SWC personnel felt that the lack of rank at the exercise was an indication of lack of commitment.

⁵⁸ Binnenkijk, ed., Strategic Assessment 1996: Instruments of U.S. Power, (Washington: National Defense University, 1996): 53.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 54.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 53-54.

⁶¹ Cronin and Green, 3.

⁶² Binnenkijk, ed., "Instruments of U.S. Power," Strategic Assessment (Washington: National Defense University, 1996): 53. Japanese acquisitions of F-15s and P-3s testify to the modernity of their equipment; the Japanese have a hi-tech if not hi-volume military establishment.

⁶³ Freeman, 38-39.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 41. Consider, too, the following comment: "Some Japanese cannot feel good about paying for a watchdog that watches them." Cited in Selig S. Harrison and Clyde V. Prestowitz, Jr., "Pacific Agenda," in The Future of American Foreign Policy, ed. Charles W. Kegley, Jr. and Eugene R. Wittkopf (New York: St. Martins, 1992): 195.

⁶⁵ Etsujiro Miyagi, "Redressing the Okinawan Base Problem," Japan Quarterly 43 (Jan-Mar 1996): 31.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 32.

⁶⁷ A referendum was conducted by the Okinawan prefectural government on 8 Sep 1996, and the results can be found on the Ryukyu Homepage <<http://04/21/97/www.ryukyu.ne.jp/o-times/eng/19960910.html>>; downloaded 9 March 1997.

⁶⁸ Miyagi, 27.

⁶⁹ Downloaded from Okinawa Prefectural Homepage <<http://www.pref.okinawa.jp/basereturn.html>> on 17 Mar 1997.

⁷⁰ Strategic Assessment 1997, 115.

⁷¹ Mike Mochizuki, "Toward a New Japan-U.S. Alliance," Japan Quarterly 43 (Jul-Sep 1996): 5-6.

⁷² Ibid., 5.

⁷³ Consider for example the fact that Naha, which was identified 18 years ago for return, like the Futemas facility, with the proviso that an alternative site be provided in return, has not yet been handed over to Okinawan control.

⁷⁴ Mochizuki, 5.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 6.

⁷⁶ Identified by an Interim Report of the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO), which was established in November 1995 by the U.S and Japanese governments. The disputed lands are within the Northern Training Area, the Aha Training Area, the Gimbaru Training Area, the Sobe Communications Site, the Yomitan Auxiliary Airfield, most of Camp Kuwae, the Senaha Communications Station, portions of Makiminato Service Area, and portions of Camp

Zukeran. The Interim Report was downloaded from <<http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eap/japan/saco.html>> on 9 March 1997.

⁷⁷ Downloaded from http://www.kajima.co.jp/topics/per.../vol_15_1/kansai/island/index.html on 10 March 1997. Kansai International Airport (KIAP), built off-shore Osaka, Japan, is an example. Kajima Company, a civil engineering firm, in joint venture with others, built the 518 hectare (1 hectare=10,000 square meters) island; their part of the operation took almost six years, beginning in April 1987 and ending in December 1992. The one-runway island cost \$14B. Another article, downloaded on 12 March 1997 from <<http://www.timesofindia.com/120397/busi2.htm>> indicates that the addition of two additional runways is planned, with one of them projected to cost another \$14B. According to Hiroshi Tanaka, Director of International Affairs of the KIAP Company, "There is a problem with sinkage, which might be a problem if the weather is rough."

⁷⁸ Steel and shipbuilding companies have a different solution: a floating island. Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Nippon Steel, Sumitomo Heavy Industries, and others have convinced the Ministry of Transport that a floating steel structure could be used as an airport or logistic base. The floating, titanium-coated steel base would measure 300x60 square meters and are projected to be cheaper than making an artificial island out of reclaimed land. Downloaded from <<http://www.itd.nrl.navy.mil/ONRA/systems/1996/091996.html>> on 10 March 1997.

⁷⁹ From the 1973 American film about, "Papillon," starring Dustin Hoffman and Steve McQueen. The film depicted the French penal colony, in use until 1938, on Devil's Island, off the coast of French Guiana, and was used in confining political prisoners such as Alfred Dreyfus.

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