

# America's Imperial Agenda and "Pivot" to Asia

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Major media editors support what demands condemnation. Wall Street Journal editors are worse than most.

They endorse Washington's imperial agenda. They believe might makes right. On January 2, they [headlined](#) "Victory in Okinawa," saying:

"...Japanese authorities will allow the US military to relocate an air base on the strategically significant island of Okinawa."

"Think of it as a triumph of democratic realism in the face of renewed regional threats."

America's presence constitutes the most significant regional threat by far. Not according to Journal editors. They falsely accused China of "saber-rattling." They want its "aggressive behavior deterred."

They claimed "nervous officials across Asia" want defense ties with America strengthened. Washington pressures them to do so.

Shinzo Abe's government is worrisome. It's reasserting Japanese militarism. It boosted military spending. It did so for the first time in a decade. It stoked tensions with China.

At issue are disputed islands both countries claim. So is Beijing's Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ). Japan has its own. So does America.

Abe is allied with Washington's East Asian imperial plans. Joint US/Japanese provocations are worrisome.

Journal editors claim Abe "has an opportunity to put Japan at the heart of a community of East Asian democracies."

Ones they have in mind deplore democratic principles. So does Abe. Stepped up militarism suggests why.

So does his new state secrecy law. It's a democracy muzzling act. Whistleblowers face prosecution like American ones.

State secrets include Fukushima truth-telling. Exposing government wrongdoing risks imprisonment up to 10 years.

Militarism and anti-democratic measures are very much linked. Critics fear Japan is returning to its bad old days.

Its earlier imperial policy used the Peace Preservation Act to imprison political opponents. Stepped up militarism combined with repressive legislation should give all regional neighbors pause for concern.

Increased US/Japanese militarism threatens world peace. East Asia may become a major flashpoint.

The US-Japan Security Treaty is longstanding. It dates from 1952. In 1960, it was amended. It stipulates that any attack on either country requires a joint response.

It authorizes American military bases. Building a new one in Okinawa enrages local residents.

They want no part of it. More on this below. Defense Secretary Hagel called Japan's decision "the most significant milestone" in realigning US regional forces."

It's "absolutely critical to the United States' ongoing rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region," he stressed.

It's worrisome US imperial outreach. It's part of Obama's Asia pivot. It's building up America's regional presence.

It's advancing its military footprint. It's challenging China and Russia more aggressively. It's doing it in their part of the world.

It's threatening world peace in the process. It gives pause to what US militarists plan. In his book "[Nemesis: The Last Days of the American Republic](#)," Chalmers Johnson said:

"Once upon a time, you could trace the spread of imperialism by counting up colonies."

"America's version of the colony is the military base; and by following the changing politics of global basing, one can learn much about our ever more all-encompassing imperial footprint and the militarism that grows with it."

America's empire of bases threatens world peace and security. Their presence harms host countries.

Environmental damage is extensive. Toxic pollution harms residents. Round-the-clock noise levels are intolerable.

Valued public land is used. US military personnel violate local laws. They're disruptive. They're largely unaccountable under so-called status of forces agreements (SOFAs).

Other nations don't get basing rights in America. Pentagon commanders demand it abroad. Doing so reflects imperial arrogance.

Residents have no say. US policy matters more. It runs roughshod over local rights.

Okinawa is Japan's southern-most prefecture. It's the poorest. It's Japan's Puerto Rico.

It's home to dozens of US military bases. They've been built there since 1945. Okinawa is US occupied territory. In "Nemesis," Johnson explained.

Between 1998 and 2004 alone, US military personnel were involved in 2,024 reported crimes or accidents. One guilty soldier alone was court-martialed.

Another 318 were administratively disciplined. All others were absolved. Their crimes included robberies, rapes, reckless homicide, assaults and much more.

None of this is tolerated back home. De facto SOFA immunity lets them get away with crimes too great to ignore.

Local residents are understandably furious. Okinawans more than most others. US forces infest their homeland. They control its most valued territory.

They take full advantage. Johnson knew Okinawa firsthand. During the Korean War, he was stationed there. He was a US Navy officer.

He co-wrote and edited "[Okinawa: Cold War Island](#)." Post-WW II, America occupied Japan. It wrote its constitution. It greatly influences Japanese policy today.

It's well dug in for the long haul. It maintains nearly 90 large and smaller army, air force, and naval installations.

Okinawa hosts over three dozen. It's home for over half the Pentagon's 50,000 US forces stationed in Japan.

It's a small sliver of land. It's around the size of a large US city. It's easy understanding why Okinawans hate Americans. They dominate island life. They do it abusively.

They practically pushed residents into the Pacific. They did it to facilitate occupation. Nearly seven decades after WW II ended, it continues.

SOFA-related criminal law compounds local outrage. It states:

"The custody of an accused member of the United States armed forces or the civilian component (shall) remain with the United States until he is charged."

Japanese authorities are effectively denied access to criminal suspects. It remains so unless or until they're indicted.

Local prosecutors are reluctant to press charges. Often they can't get enough evidence to do so. US authorities obstruct them. Crimes go unpunished.

A September 1995 incident affected US/Japanese relations at the time. Two marines abducted a 12-year-old Japanese girl.

They beat her. They raped her. They left her stranded alone on a beach. They returned to their base in a rented car.

Around 85,000 Okinawans protested. They demanded their grievances be addressed. US military authorities refused to turn over suspects to Japanese police custody.

America runs amok when it arrives. It does so with impunity. Local laws and customs mean nothing.

US military and civilian personnel get away with murders, robberies, rapes, drunken brawling, muggings, drug violations, arson, and other crimes.

Local residents have no defense. Their rights don't matter. Okinawans suffered for decades.

Women and girls endure most abuse. Their own authorities don't protect them. US military forces are trained to commit violence.

They take full advantage. Many do when they return home. Their accountability matters. Abroad it's anything goes.

In countries with non-white populations, abuses are especially egregious. Okinawan women and girls bear testimony to America's lawless presence.

Building a new Henoko Bay, Nago City base outrages northern Okinawan residents where it's planned.

Urashima Etsuko is an area resident. She's joint representative for the "Association of the 10 Districts North of Futami Who Do Not Want a Base."

She's general secretary of the "Association of Women Supporting the Inamine City Government." It's called the "Iinagu Association." On November 25, she wrote at length to Nago City's Mayor Susumu Inamine. In part she said:

"For 17 years, without letup, I have been opposing the construction of a base at Henoko."

Nago residents held a December 1997 referendum. It showed their resolve. They strongly oppose base construction.

"Despite this," said Etsuko, "our district has been riven by 'carrot and stick' policies carried out by a government determined to foist the base upon us come what may..."

Parents and children are divided. So are family members and relatives. Once warm human relations are ruptured.

"In inverse proportion to the new facilities built with Ministry of Defense subsidy, local small-scale businesses lapsed into bankruptcy and Nago's remoteness and backwardness deepened," said Etsuko.

"(W)e adults must bequeath to our children and grandchildren... nature and peace."

"We cannot help being consumed with anxiety (about the harm) reclamation of the bay and construction of a base" will cause local residents.

An " 'All-Okinawan' 'No' to base construction movement has been plainly established."

"(W)e find it hard to contain our deep anger that the government has ignored these developments..."

"(It) brush(ed) them aside and (intends) proceeding by force to the point of requesting that the Governor authorize reclamation works..."

Doing so “is the final stage preparatory to construction.” It’ll be hugely destructive to local residents.

Plans are for Nago to replace US Marine Air Station Futenma. Its forces would be reduced from 18,000 to 10,000. Others will be transferred to Guam and Australia.

Pentagon commanders can increase, reduce or transfer forces in any amounts freely as they wish. Given Obama’s Asia pivot, expect greater numbers in that part of the world ahead.

Okinawans will bear the burden of domiciling many. Years of protests were in vain. Abe’s militarism allies him with Washington’s regional plans.

China and Russia have reason for concern. Okinawan Governor Hirokazu Nakaima approved Nago’s construction. Abe pressure forced his compliance.

Outrageously he claimed “(t)he Abe administration has shown more consideration for Okinawa than any previous administration.” He referred to China, adding:

“Regardless of the will of the Okinawan people, the tension is heightening on (the) international front. Okinawa needs to play a certain role for that.”

It’s a launching pad for US forces. America’s presence is strongly resented. It’s an affront to Okinawan sovereignty.

It’s harmed residents for nearly seven decades. It remains entrenched longterm.

Local concerns don’t matter. Dominating East Asia is longstanding US policy. Obama’s Asia pivot prioritizes it.

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