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# **OKINAWA AND US MILITARY BASES**

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For Japanese Foreign Policy (GOV 365C)

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# About me

- Form Kyoto, Japan
- PhD Candidate at the Department of Government
- Study international security by using game theory and statistics
- Like anime and manga
- English is my second language

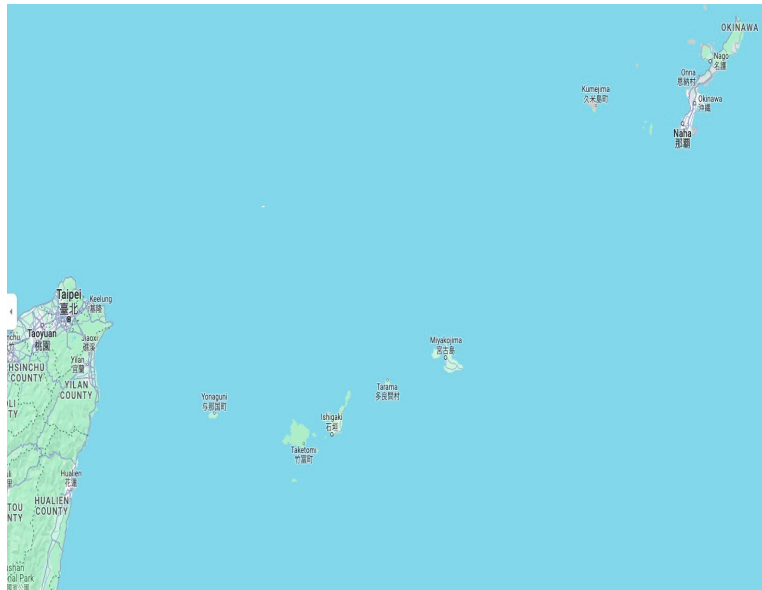
# What we will learn today

- A historical background of Okinawa
- Recent controversies over US bases in Okinawa
- Theories and examples of public opinion and military bases

# Map



# Map



Economist.com

# Okinawa in History

- Ryukyu (琉球) Kingdom
- Distinct culture and language
- Annexation of Okinawa in 1879





# Battle of Okinawa



# Battle of Okinawa

- From March to June in 1945
- 12,520 US soldiers and 65,908 Japanese soldiers died
- 122,000 Okinawan deaths (more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of people in Okinawa)
- More than 300 Koreans died



# Battle of Okinawa



# Battle of Okinawa



# After the War

- Governed by the US (not by GHQ) even after Japan's independence (1952)
- April 28<sup>th</sup> as the Humiliation Day
- “Bayonets and Bulldozers”

# After the War

- Used in the Korean War (1950) and the Vietnam War (1960s)
- Accidents and crimes by US soldiers
- Social movements

# After the War

- Returned to Japan in 1972
- Smiling faces
- Behind dirty politics







WHAT STARTS HERE CHANGES THE WORLD

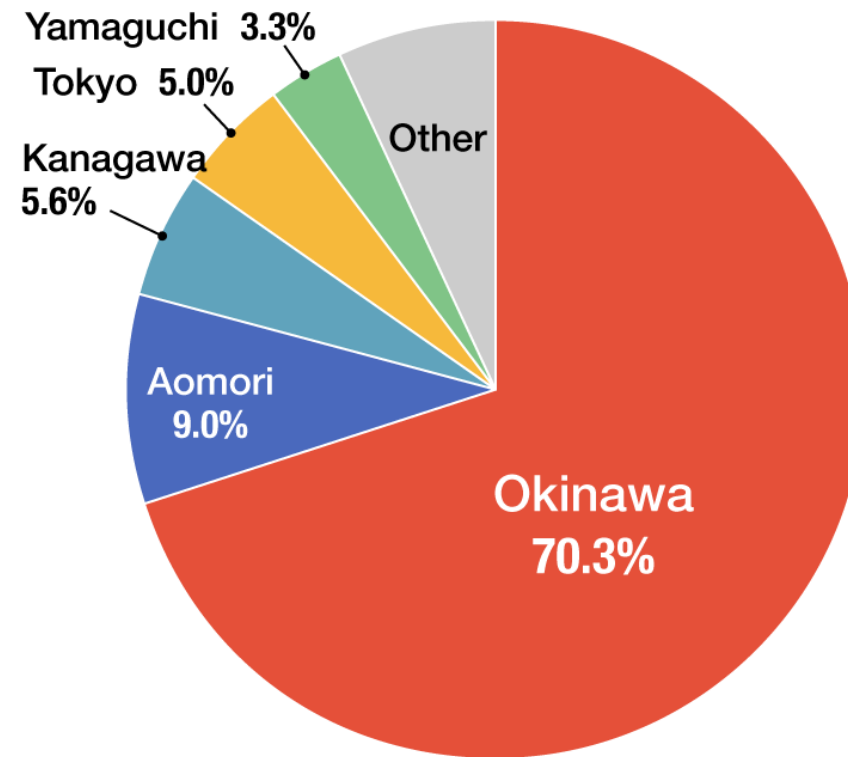
# US Bases in Okinawa





# Facts

## Concentration of US Military Installations in Japan (As of March 2020)



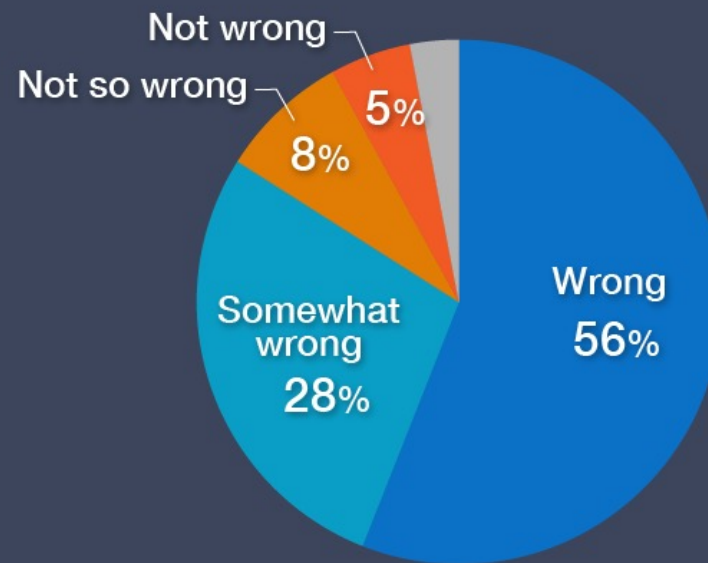
Created by *Nippon.com* based on data from the Okinawa prefectural government.

# Facts

- Now, 70% of US bases are in Okinawa
- Okinawa shares 0.6 % of Japan
- 25,843 US soldiers in Okinawa
- 10,869 in mainland (2020)

# Facts

**What do you think about 70% of US bases in Japan being located in Okinawa?**



Respondents: 812 Okinawa residents  
NHK POLL

# Facts

- Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma
- “The most dangerous base in the world”
- In 1996, US and Japan agreed to return Futenma
- 28 years later, nothing has changed...

# US Bases in Okinawa

- Why are US bases concentrated in Okinawa?
- Why is not the Futenma problem solved yet?

# US Bases in Mainland in the 1950s

- Large opposition movements in mainland after independence
- Requisition without enough compensation

# US Bases in Mainland in the 1950s





# US Bases in Mainland in the 1950s

- Large opposition movements in mainland after independence
- Requisition without enough compensation
- Typical NIMBY movements

# What is NIMBY?

- “Not In My BackYard”
- Opposition movements against infrastructure by local residents
- Distributed benefits
- Concentrated costs

# US Bases in Mainland



Blue points: returned US bases  
Yellow points: existing US bases

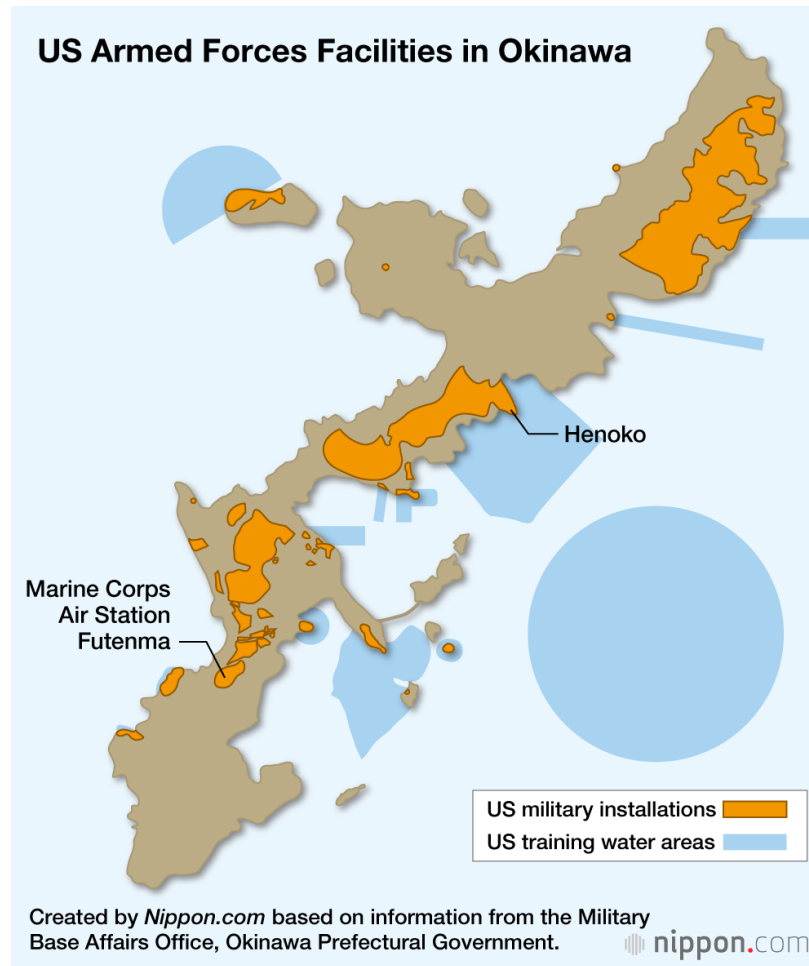
# US Bases in Okinawa

- In the 1950s, 10% of US bases in Japan are in Okinawa
- In the 1970s, 60% is in Okinawa
- Now, 70% is in Okinawa

# Futenma

- A rape case by three US soldiers
- Agreed to return Futenma in 1996
- with the condition that they move to another place in Okinawa
- Henoko was chosen in 2006

# Futenma



# Futenma

- New leader of Japan in 2009
- “At least, outside of the prefecture” “Trust me”
- Guam turned out not to be feasible
- A few years later, they reached the same conclusion





# Futenma

- In 2012, Abe became the PM
- New leader of Okinawa  
Takeshi Onaga
- Retracted the approval of  
construction in 2015
- Went to a court



# Futenma

- In 2018, the gov't finally started the construction
- Governor Denny Tamaki disapproved a necessary change of the plan
- Another conflict in court



# Futenma: Key Takeaways

- Conflict mainly bet. Okinawa and Tokyo
- Okinawans say no
- (Probably) the US interest in Okinawa narrowed the negotiation range
- NIMBY

# Public Opinion and Military Bases

*American Political Science Review* (2020) 114, 2, 320–341  
doi:10.1017/S0003055419000868

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## Outside the Wire: U.S. Military Deployments and Public Opinion in Host States

MICHAEL A. ALLEN *Boise State University*

MICHAEL E. FLYNN *Kansas State University*

CARLA MARTINEZ MACHAIN *Kansas State University*

ANDREW STRAVERS *RAND Corporation*

*How do citizens within countries hosting U.S. military personnel view that presence? Using new cross-national survey data from 14 countries, we examine how different forms of exposure to a U.S. military presence in a country affect attitudes toward the U.S. military, government, and people. We find that contact with U.S. military personnel or the receipt of economic benefits from the U.S. presence correlates with stronger support for the U.S. presence, people, and government. This study has profound implications for the role that U.S. installations play in affecting the social fabric of host nations and policy implications for the conduct of U.S. military activities outside the United States.*

*International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* Volume 23, (2023) 325–349  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/irap/lcac002> Advance Access published on 6 April 2022

## Revisiting negative externalities of US military bases: the case of Okinawa

Takako Hikotani <sup>1</sup>, Yusaku Horiuchi <sup>2</sup>, and Atsushi Tago<sup>3,4,5,\*</sup>

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# Public Opinion and Military Bases

- Allen et al. (2020) study public opinion on US in 14 countries
- US military deployment increases people's attitudes towards US

AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE REVIEW (2020) 115(4), 260–281  
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# Public Opinion and Military Bases

- Social contact
- Economic benefit

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# Public Opinion and Military Bases

- Does this apply to Okinawa?
- Support for the alliance with the US is high
- 67% of Okinawans think the alliance is important (77% on national sample).



# Public Opinion and Military Bases

## Social contact

- US Marines do volunteer, English education, and sports exchange activities
- The local gov't emphasizes the negative effects

# Public Opinion and Military Bases

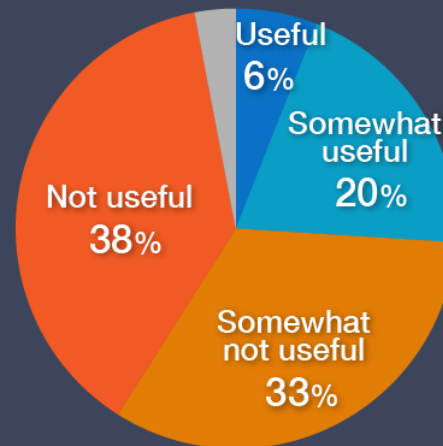
## Economic benefit

- Marines: Impact of US bases is 241 billion yen. The second largest employer
- The local gov't: the dependency of the Okinawan economy on US bases is 5%

# Public Opinion and Military Bases

## Economic benefit

**Are US bases in Okinawa useful  
for your job or personal life?**



Respondents: 812 Okinawa residents  
NHK POLL

# Public Opinion and Military Bases

- Hikotani, Horiuchi, and Tago (2022) reanalyzed Allen et al. (2020) 's original data
- Okinawans have more social contacts and economic benefits
- They have less favorable view towards US troops

# Conclusion

- Today, we learned
- Historical challenges Okinawa have faced
- Controversies over Futenma and US bases
- Local public opinion in Okinawa

# Thank you!!!