

News Online

- Nation
- Biz/Finance
- Technology
- Arts & Living
- Sports
- Opinion
 - Editorial
 - Thoughts of the Times
 - Today's Column
 - Desk Column
 - Letter to the Editor
 - The Dawn of Modern Korea
 - Another Korea
 - What's Your Take?
 - Letter from America
 - Random Walk
 - Sean Hayes
 - Michael Breen
 - Views From Overseas
 - Jon Huer
 - Tom Plate
 - Living Science
 - Pacific Perspective
 - Guest Column
 - Times Forum
 - Readers' Forum
 - Cartoon
 - Great and Simple Things
 - Back Home
 - Ideas & Ideals
 - Jim Hoagland
 - Choi Yearn-hong
 - Today in History
 - Reporter's Notebook
 - Washington Lounge
 - Hyon O'Brien
- Community
- Special
- The Learning Times
 - About English News **NEW**
 - iBT TOEFL **NEW**
 - Essay **NEW**

이제 코리아타임스의 기사를 음성으로 들으세요!
매일 하루 10분 기사를 보면서 원어민의 방송을 들어보세요.

04-29-2010 17:34



Okinawa and Problems of Empire

By Doug Bandow



A bloody military battlefield in 1945, Okinawa is the subject of an equally bitter political fight today. A majority of the prefecture's residents want the American military to go elsewhere.

The U.S.-Japan alliance is almost 50 years old. The treaty's terms are simple. The U.S. agrees to defend Japan. Tokyo agrees to be defended.

Japan's international role has been circumscribed by Article 9 of the post-war Japanese constitution, domestic pacifism growing out of World War II and regional fears of revived Japanese imperialism.

Concern in Tokyo is growing over China's rising military expenditures and North Korea's ongoing nuclear program, but the pace of policy change remains glacial.

Last August the Democratic Party of Japan ousted the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party. The DPJ advocated a more independent foreign policy and the new government let expire authority to refuel U.S. and other allied ships in the Indian Ocean.

Even more controversial are American bases in the prefecture of Okinawa (the largest island of which also is named Okinawa). In April and May 1945, the island suffered through one of the most brutal battles of World War II.

After the war, the occupying U.S. military loaded the main island with bases. Okinawa was not turned back to Japan until 1972, but with only a modest U.S. military drawdown.

Today the prefecture, Japan's smallest with just 0.6 percent of the country's land area, hosts roughly three-quarters of American military facilities and two-thirds of American military personnel — some 27,000 personnel stationed on 14 major bases — located in Japan.

The rape of a 12-year-old girl by U.S. personnel in 1995 led to mass protests. A decade later the American and Japanese governments agreed to move the Marines Corps Air Station at Futenma to a less heavily populated area on Okinawa.

However, Okinawa residents want to remove, not relocate the base. The DPJ government announced plans to revisit the 2006 agreement while the Obama administration demanded that Tokyo live up to its responsibilities. The Hatoyama government is holding consultations, with a decision promised for May.

The ultimate decision lies in Tokyo. If Washington is going to both defend Japan and use Japanese territory as a launch pad for intervention elsewhere, troops must be stationed somewhere, and Okinawa is centrally located.

In fact, there's no reason for the U.S. to do either. The Cold War ended long ago. Enemy threats are far fewer and allied capabilities are far greater.

True, President Barack Obama says that "America's commitment to Japan's security is unshakable," but does that mean the U.S. forever must defend that nation? The 1951 military treaty committed Japan to "increasingly assume responsibility for its own defense against direct and indirect aggression."

Tokyo is capable of defending itself. Moreover, the U.S. would be far more secure if its allies and friends created forces to discourage aggression and worked together to encourage regional stability, rather than depended on Washington.

If the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force located on Okinawa is not needed to defend Japan, then what is it for? Not to reinforce South Korea, which vastly outranges the

Most Read Stories

- Korea's Can-Do Determination Reigns
- 'We Will Remember You Forever'
- [Exclusive] Government Bends Its Rules..
- Hospitals Skeptical of Medical Tour Pr..
- Experts Say Specific Tech Mandates Mak..
- One in Eight Foreign Students Violate ..
- Defectors Play Key Role in Fight for N..
- Generous Compensation Expected
- Chung, Hiddink to Join Forces to Host ..
- Tearful Tribute Across Nation

How to Study English?

영어열풍 일으킨 '깜백이' 써보니 극찬받는 이유 있었다

한정판매

2010년 프로야구 필수품

Most Viewed Photos



Ugly Immigration Law



Risk of Contagion



Hyundai-Kia Automotive Group Chairman Chung Mong-koo ...



Date Sexy Korean Women
 Korean Dating and Singles Site. Find the Perfect Korean Woman Now!
www.KoreanCupid.com/Dating

Ads by Google

Fly Cheap to Okinawa
 70% off Okinawa Air Fare Compare Okinawa Flights - Save
Okinawa.Air.Asia.com

North on virtually every measure of power.

There also is much talk about maintaining regional stability. But most potential conflicts would not warrant American intervention: Should Washington help the Thai government fend off "red shirt" demonstrators? America should avoid, not seek out, war.

Even if U.S. forces left, Okinawa's future would be tied to the more basic question of Japan's foreign policy and military posture. If Japan took over responsibility for its own defense, as well as contributed to regional and global security, it would have to maintain its own military.

The Japanese government needs to assess future dangers and decide on appropriate responses — without assuming that the U.S. Marines will show up to the rescue.

Fairness suggests a major drawdown from Okinawa irrespective of whose military is protecting Japan. If the U.S. disengaged militarily, these decisions could be made without pressure from Washington.

The two countries would still have much to cooperate about, including security. The governments could focus on issues of mutual interest, sharing intelligence, preparing emergency base access and otherwise cooperating to meet international challenges.

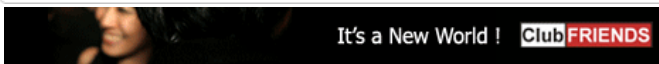
With the rise of numerous prosperous allied and friendly states — most notably Japan, but also South Korea, Australia, India and others — the U.S. should step back, prepared to deal with an aggressive hegemon should one arise but determined to avoid being dragged into routine geopolitical squabbles.

Then Tokyo could chart its own destiny, including deciding what forces to raise and where to base them.

The Japanese government could no longer use American pressure as an excuse for inaction in Okinawa. Then Okinawans finally might gain justice — after 65 long years.

Doug Bandow is a senior fellow at the Cato Institute. A former special assistant to President Ronald Reagan, he is the author of "Foreign Follies: America's New Global Empire" (Xulon Press). He can be reached at ChessSet@aol.com.

Ads by Google



ad plex

성인광고! 동영상광고로 해볼까?	내한도는? 조회기록없이 자동확인
아빠 취미는 성인장난감	성인광고! 동영상광고로 해볼까?
여성이 황홀해하는 남성크기?	아빠 취미는 성인장난감
나의 예상 연금수령액은 얼마?	24K금시계 59,800원



24K금시계 59,800원



2010년 프로야구 필수품



아빠 취미는 성인장난감



전문가도 놀란 양파즙 6가지!



Reader's Comments

Other View

Notice From KT Website Manager

Bad language will not be tolerated. All comments considered discriminatory against race or sex, or which are considered offensive against certain people, will be eliminated by the manager. Violators will be deprived of their membership. **Please stay on topic.**

Managerial regulations

You must log in to use this service.