

The Architecture of Empire:
Globalization and the Politics of U.S. Overseas Basing

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Abstract

Commentators have recently referred to the U.S. overseas network of military installations as an empire, yet very few have examined the theoretical and practical significance of such an analogy. This article explores the analytical similarities and differences that the U.S. basing network exhibits compared to that of an archetypical imperial system. Like imperial systems, the U.S. relies on an array of heterogeneous, segmented contracts and bargains to underpin its basing arrangements. Unlike typical empires, however, the United States cannot actually control the foreign policy decisions of its peripheral elites. As historical examples suggest, this has rendered the United States vulnerable to political cross-pressures, intermediary exits and periodic bargaining failures when dealing with overseas base hosts. Moreover, globalizing processes, especially increasing information flows and the transnational networking of anti-base movements, further erode U.S. capacity to maintain multivocal legitimization strategies and keep the terms of its individual basing bargains isolated from one another. A case study of the rapid contestation of the terms of the U.S. basing presence in post-Soviet Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan illustrates some of these dynamics.

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Note: This paper was written nearly a year ago, i.e., prior to the US expulsion from Manas.

The United States stands at the center of a vast overseas network of military bases and access agreements. In return for various side payments—such as economic aid, trading rights, and military security—host countries allow the United States to station troops on their soil, conduct military operations across their airspace, or otherwise use their territory for the projection of American power. In the process, they concede limited, but often consequential, aspects of their sovereign authority to the United States.¹

This network plays a critical role in American primacy, foreign relations, and grand strategy.² Barry Posen argues that “two important Cold War legacies contribute to U.S. command of the commons—bases and command structure.” While the fundamental source of American primacy stems from its military capabilities, its command of the commons “is further secured by the world-wide U.S. base structure and the ability of U.S. diplomacy to leverage other sources of U.S. power to secure additional bases and overflight rights as needed.”³ Several commentators note how American bases often become enmeshed in the domestic politics of host countries or even become flashpoints for anti-American sentiment.⁴

¹ Recent works include Calder 2008; Cooley 2008a; and Sandars 2000.

² See Desch 1993; Desch 1989; and Harkavy 1989.

³ Posen 2003, 16, 21.

⁴ See Cooley 2008a; Moon 2003; and Duke 1989. The American military presence in Saudi Arabia, for example, provided Al-Qaeda with one of its major justifications for waging “war” against the United States and the Saudi government. See Pape 2005b.

Many commentators, in consequence, point to U.S. overseas basing as evidence for the existence of an American Empire.⁵ Chalmers Johnson, reflecting on the lack of systematic attention to the dynamics generated by the basing network, speculates that “Perhaps the Romans did not find it strange to have their troops in Gaul, nor the British in South Africa.” But, he argues, “it is past time... for Americans to consider why we have created an empire... and what the consequences of our imperial stance might be for the rest of the world and for ourselves.”⁶

Proponents of the “American Empire” position, however, seldom provide a great deal of value-added to debates about American grand strategy; they fail to demonstrate how thinking about imperial dynamics produces novel ways of understanding the challenges faced by U.S. policymakers.⁷ We argue that the U.S. overseas basing network displays many structural similarities with imperial systems: it comprises a *rimless hub-and-spoke system* of largely *bilateral, variegated and asymmetric contracts* between the United States and host governments.⁸

But American basing relations also diverge from those of traditional imperial orders. The United States exercises far less control over the policies of peripheral units than that associated with an ideal-typical empire. It enjoys comparatively limited ability to monopolize relations among peripheries, curtail the influence of alternate patrons, and is susceptible to periodic bargaining failures with its base hosts.

⁵ See Bacevich 2002, Ignatieff 2003, Johnson 2000, Kaplan 2005, Rosen 2003, Sandars 2000.

⁶ Johnson 2000: 5.

⁷ Nexon and Wright 2007: 254-255; Motyl 2006.

⁸ See Galtung 1971; Motyl 1999 and 2001; Nexon and Wright 2007; Tilly 1997.

These similarities and differences account for key political dynamics in the U.S. overseas military basing network. Drawing upon the emerging theoretical literature on imperial dynamics, we show that the U.S. overseas basing network involves many of the organizational pathologies found in imperial systems. U.S. bases provide a varying mix of benefits—such as security, political support or economic goods—to each host country’s government. U.S. officials must keep each of these deals with individual base hosts compartmentalized or segmented, while they justify this array of heterogeneous bargains through the use of multivocal legitimating strategies. At the same time, U.S. basing agreements are vulnerable to cross-pressures from across the network for amendment and renegotiation of contractual terms. And because the United States does not actually exercise a great deal of “rule” over the leadership of its host countries, the political benefits derived from the hub-and-spoke structure of the network often prove fragile. Agency problems between the core and governing rulers in peripheries, already endemic in imperial relations, are even more intense over the basing network. At the extreme, disaffected overseas base hosts may unilaterally abrogate the terms of an agreement or even expel the U.S. military from its territory.

Our analysis suggests, moreover, that globalization processes—involving, for example, enhanced global communications and opportunities for transnational mobilization—are already rendering the United States more vulnerable to credible threats of exit from host countries, coordinated resistance to aspects of U.S. basing policy, and “hypocrisy costs” endemic to maintaining heterogeneous bargains with a variety of different kinds of base hosting regimes. Processes that once took decades now

play out in a matter of years, as suggested by a case study of the evolution of the U.S. basing presence in Central Asia.⁹

Given that that U.S. planners, as part of the Global Defense Posture Review (GDPR), are currently expanding basing and access agreements into regions where the United States has not traditionally maintained a basing presence, this argument predicts increasing political volatility across the new U.S. basing network.¹⁰ The United States must pay attention to how dynamics that stem from the quasi-imperial character of its basing network impact its ability to forge favorable agreements with host countries. If it does not, then it will face growing political difficulties with legitimating and maintaining a basing system that plays an important role in its command of the global commons.

The article proceeds as follows: First, we provide a schematic overview of U.S. overseas basing and the varying agreements and contracts that underpin the basing network. Second, we examine the supposed “imperial” character of the U.S. basing network. Drawing on structural accounts of empires and their dynamics, we highlight points of convergence and divergence between the U.S. overseas basing network and imperial systems. We assess the implications of these similarities and differences, and illustrate them through the historical record of U.S. basing agreements after the Second

⁹ For discussions of “hypocrisy costs” see Greenhill 2002.

¹⁰ Although some aspects of the GDPR have been scaled back since its introduction in 2002, it remains the basis for the most fundamental realignment of the U.S. basing posture since World War II. The presence in major Cold War hubs such as Germany, Korea and Okinawa is being significantly reduced, while new lighter bases are being established in new areas such as the Black Sea countries (Bulgaria and Romania), Africa (including the creation of the new regional command AFRICOM) and Central Asia. For critical discussions and overviews, see Cooley 2008b; and Campbell and Ward 2003.

World War. Third, we present series of propositions about how globalization processes should impact the political dynamics of the basing network and provide preliminary evidence for these dynamics. Fourth, we provide an extended case study of U.S. basing dynamics in Central Asia. We conclude with some recommendations for U.S. basing policy.

The Architecture of the US Overseas Basing Network

In the aftermath of the Second World War the United States established a worldwide network of overseas bases and installations.¹¹ Despite predictions of a global drawdown in its overseas military presence, the United States, particularly after September 11, 2001 attacks, expanded the scope of its global overseas military presence, even as it reduced its deployments in major Cold War hubs such as Germany, Japan and Korea.¹² According to the United States Department of Defense's 2006 Base Structure Report, the United States currently maintains a network of 766 overseas military installations and another 77 on non-continental U.S. territory.¹³

Forms of Bilateral Basing Contracts

Most base and access agreements take the form of a bilateral contract signed with the government of a base host. Overseas host governments usually must provide legal

¹¹ See Sandars 2000.

¹² See Campbell and Ward 2003.

¹³ United States Department of Defense 2006.

consent to a foreign military presence.¹⁴ The United States usually acquires its bases through voluntary contracting with host countries or by imposing legal obligations in the aftermath of a conflict or occupation of the host nation. But even where the United States initially obtained basing rights as a result of military occupation, and therefore imposed a highly asymmetric accord, U.S. officials soon found themselves forced to renegotiate the basing contract on terms more favorable to the base hosts.¹⁵

It should come as no surprise that forms and terms of bilateral base access agreements vary considerably between the United States and different host countries. These agreements take the form of formal bilateral treaties, tacit agreements, executive agreements, military-to-military protocols and/or exchanges of diplomatic notes. Some bases are exclusively host country facilities, others sending country facilities, joint-use facilities or, in the case of some European North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries, multilateral facilities.¹⁶ In some cases, basing agreements comprise aspects of broader security agreements or mutual defense pacts. The United States-Japan Mutual Security Treaty, for example, has governed both U.S. basing rights and its security relations with Japan since 1960.

The United States and some host countries also bundle basing rights into broader bilateral accords that sets a framework for security cooperation, economic assistance,

¹⁴ Woodliffe 1992. There are some notable exceptions to the consent rule, such as the U.S. military's direct administration over the Japanese island of Okinawa between 1952 and 1972, and its continued use of Guantanamo Bay in Cuba. Also in the European context see Lundestad's famous "empire by invitation" thesis in Lundestad 1986.

¹⁵ Both postwar Japan and the Philippines fit this pattern. See Cooley 2008a; and Sandars 2000.

¹⁶ On base acquisition and contractual form, see Stambuk 1963.

and military aid. The “defense and economic cooperation agreements” (DECAs) that the United States signed with Greece, Spain and Turkey during the 1970s and 1980s fit this pattern.¹⁷ A few arrangements take a more informal form, such as those that govern the long-standing American military installations in the United Kingdom.¹⁸ Others are governed by non-security accords, such as the US-UK Treaty on intelligence sharing which legally underpins the stationing of U.S. joint-use installations in Australia.¹⁹ Agreements also differ with respect to their duration. Some contracts grant the United States access for a specified period of time before and may be renewable. Some persist indefinitely until the parties agree to terminate the arrangement. Agreements may remain secret or classified at the behest of the host government, while others are ratified by a host country’s legislature.

Basing agreements also differ with respect to the types of issues that they govern. Agreements may detail, or set ceilings on, the number of troops that can be stationed or rotated through the host, or may impose restrictions on the types of military hardware or weapons, such as the stationing of nuclear weapons. Basing agreements may also specifically address issues of sovereignty, such as which country legally controls or polices the basing territory, the permissions and consultation procedures necessary for base operations, the types of activities that the bases can be used for and the criminal

¹⁷ See Murphy 1991.

¹⁸ On legal status of U.S. bases in the U.K., see Duke 1987.

¹⁹ See Ball 1980.

jurisdiction and other legal procedures that apply to foreign troops stationed on the base.²⁰

Basing agreements also differ in the type of *quid pro quo* offered by the parties to the arrangement. Although U.S. officials consistently refuse to label economic packages as “rent,” hosts often demand substantial compensation packages for granting base rights.²¹ On the other hand, certain countries, most notably Japan and Korea, now defray the costs of the stationing of U.S. troops by providing sizable bundles of host country support.²²

Finally, some host countries demand apparently unrelated political concessions, such as when the government of Portugal during the 1960s threatened to evict the United States from base facilities in the mid-Atlantic Azores if the U.S. government did not stop supporting liberation movements in Portugal’s African colonies.²³ Thus, the exact terms and conditions that govern the deployment of personnel and assets, sovereignty rights, and side-payments vary considerably across space and time.

Status of Forces Agreements and Legal Provisions

Such sources of variation in basing agreements fail to exhaust the heterogeneous character of the U.S. overseas basing contracts, as the legal terms of base contracts also vary. The most important of these are the Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs), which detail the legal status, rights and obligations of U.S. personnel while stationed in the

²⁰ See Cooley 2008a, Chapt. 2.

²¹ See Clarke and O’Connor 1993; and Harkavy 1989, 340-356.

²² See Calder 2008 and 2006.

²³ See Rodrigues 2004.

host country, and also differ across the network.²⁴ SOFAs cover such issues as the freedom of movement of American troops, their tax status in host country, criminal jurisdiction, import and export rights and duties, drivers' licenses, registration fees, and any other areas in which the presence of U.S. forces must be reconciled with the laws of a host country.²⁵ As of the year 2000, the United States officially maintained 105 SOFAs with 101 countries.²⁶

The procedures that govern the criminal jurisdiction over U.S. troops usually present the most contentious elements of SOFAs. Throughout wartime, and in the immediate years following the Second World War, "the law of the flag" generally governed American military personnel. They enjoyed an extra-territorial legal status akin to that of diplomatic immunity. Host countries, however, complained that foreign forces should be subjected to their domestic laws.

The NATO SOFA, adopted by founding members in 1952, offered a novel solution to the jurisdiction problem. It apportioned jurisdiction between the sending and host country according to a system of "concurrent jurisdiction," whereby jurisdiction would be apportioned according to a set of pre-determined categories such as the type of crime involved and the defendant's duty status.²⁷ The NATO SOFA's multilateral status also distinguishes it from other SOFAs: its provisions apply equally

²⁴ Erickson 1994. Although the NATO SOFA is a reciprocal, multilateral arrangement that standardizes certain issues—such as criminal jurisdiction procedures—across NATO member countries, individual bilateral accords specify additional country-specific issues.

²⁵ On the range of issues covered by SOFAs, see Erickson 1994.

²⁶ Eichelman 2000, 23. Also see Stambuk 1963.

²⁷ On the development of the NATO SOFA, see Delbrück 1993.

to all NATO members that have troops stationed in other member states. The NATO accord subsequently has emerged as the “gold standard” for other host countries as even non-NATO base hosts seek to negotiate (or renegotiate) bilateral SOFAs with similar terms. SOFAs, nevertheless, vary considerably in their scope and terms. Some of the more asymmetric ones still guarantee extra-territoriality for U.S. forces, while others may have more restrictive clauses that regulate U.S. military members in accordance with host-nation law. Agreements that cover the status of visiting forces for U.S. troops that are temporarily deployed (Visiting Forces Agreements or VFAs) may similarly vary.

In sum, the forms, terms, provisions and duration of U.S. overseas base agreements and access agreements are heterogeneous contracts between the United States and host governments. They vary considerably across different hosts, but can also vary over time within the same base host.

An Empire of Bases?

Most scholars identify empires as hierarchical core-periphery systems. An imperial relationship exists when a core exerts effective control over a subordinate periphery.²⁸ Analysts of empire often distinguish between “formal” and “informal” imperial systems. In the latter, a core achieves domination over a periphery “through

²⁸ See Doyle 1986, Motyl 1999, Motyl 2001.

the collaboration of a legally independent (but actually subordinate) government in the periphery.”²⁹ As Lake argues, in an informal empire peripheries are “nominally sovereign but functionally dependent and therefore controllable agents.”³⁰ From this perspective, the association between U.S. overseas basing and its putative informal empire hinges upon, first, the concessions of sovereignty that form part of basing agreements and, second, arguments about the degree of control and influence the U.S. gains through its basing presence.

A more focused approach shared by scholars examining imperial organization treats empires as a particular *kind* of core-periphery systems, one in which interactions—including authority relations—run from the core to the periphery, but peripheries themselves are relatively disconnected and segmented from one another. As Motyl argues, “core-periphery relations resemble an incomplete wheel, with a hub and spoke but no rim.”³¹ Thus, a number of commentators draw a comparison between the American basing network and imperial system based upon its generally bilateral character. Ikenberry, who rejects imperial characterizations of the United States, contrasts liberal multilateralism of the kind associated with NATO with a “neo-imperial logic” that “would take the shape of a global ‘hub and spoke’ system.” Its hallmarks: “bilateralism, ‘special relationships’, client states, and patronage-oriented foreign policy.”³²

²⁹ Doyle 1986, 38.

³⁰ Lake 1996, 9.

³¹ Motyl 1999, 121. See also Galtung 1971.

³² Ikenberry 2005, 136.

Nexon and Wright's model of ideal-typical empires clarifies the structural similarities between the U.S. basing network and the organization of empires. They argue that the rimless hub-and-spoke character of authority relations in empires derives from the combination of two factors: First, rule through intermediaries who enjoy some degree of autonomy over local rule-making and enforcement; Second, heterogeneous asymmetric contracting between the core and its peripheries.

"Empires," they note, "like all political systems, are based upon bargains that specify rights and obligations. For instance, imperial bargains may involve an exchange of basing rights in the periphery for access to markets in the core." Furthermore, "informal empires generally involve very high levels of intermediary autonomy" because "intermediaries in informal empires are local elites who have their own independent power-base among members of the local population..."³³ As O'Reilly and Renfro also reason, "To succeed at informal empire... Washington must co-opt or coerce local elites; without their complicity, the United States could not maintain its privileged position within any country or region."³⁴

The aggregate U.S. basing network clearly involves *some* of these characteristics. The United States stands at the center (core) of an extensive set of asymmetric bilateral contracts in which host states (peripheries) concede aspects of their sovereignty and allow the presence of American troops on their soil in exchange for some package of benefits, such as security guarantees or informal *quid pro quos*. The leadership of host

³³ Nexon and Wright 2007, 253, 259.

³⁴ O'Reilly and Renfro 2007, 139.

countries operates, in at least some respects, as brokers (intermediaries) between the U.S. officials and their domestic constituencies.

But there are important divergences between the structure of the U.S. basing network and those of ideal-typical imperial orders. Although U.S. base rights may partially control aspects of a host country's sovereignty, that control is usually more delimited than we would associate with full-blown imperial relations. Even when they involve significant sovereign concessions, base agreements usually are bounded by the territory of the base and delimited to the use and functions of these installations; moreover, they do not govern other aspects or functions of the host country's institutions, beyond occasional provisions for joint consultations over security arrangements.³⁵

Influence can, of course, bleed into rule when exercised consistently over a policy arena, but the degree of influence exercised by U.S. officials over host countries seldom passes a threshold beyond which we could easily characterize host-countries leaders as "viceroys" or "proconsuls" of the United States.³⁶ To the extent that host country elites act as brokers between American demands related to or surrounding basing agreements, then, they generally enjoy far more autonomy than we would normally associate with imperial intermediaries.

³⁵ Although we do note that certain postwar arrangements, for example the first agreements between the United States and Italy and Japan, allowed for the intervention of U.S. forces in the country's internal politics in the event of domestic political instability or internal threats.

³⁶ Nexon and Wright 2007, 266. See also Kagan 2002; Motyl 2006, 244.

Not all U.S. basing arrangements are exclusively bilateral. As we have seen, both the multilateral status of U.S. bases in Europe and the NATO SOFA complicate any description of the network as exclusively composed of segmented peripheries.³⁷ But strong elements of asymmetric heterogeneous contracting operate in U.S. basing arrangements even within NATO hosts as U.S. officials readily agree to compartmentalize different forms of base contracts among NATO countries. Some, such as Italy and Turkey, stressed the NATO purposes of facilities for their internal political purposes. Others, most notably Greece in the 1980s, made no mention of the alliance in renegotiated basing agreements.³⁸ Such variations in local basing forms among NATO countries reflected a U.S. willingness to conform these access agreements to fit the local political pressures and needs of its hosts.³⁹ And, from a global perspective, U.S. basing arrangements remain a rimless hub-and-spoke system with NATO as, in its most multilateral interpretation, one spoke of the network.

These differences render descriptions of the U.S. basing network as an archetypical “empire” problematic. They do not, however, imply that none of the dynamics associated with imperial systems operate in the U.S. basing network. A comparison between the structural dynamics of empire and those found in the U.S. basing network, particularly one that pays attention to the effects of structural variation

³⁷ On the U.S. use of multilateralism versus bilateral organizational forms in its security relations with Europe and Asia, see Hemmer and Katzenstein 2002; and Katzenstein 2005.

³⁸ For a comparison of the varying emphasis on NATO in the Greek and Turkish agreements, see Stearns 1992.

³⁹ Consider, for example, the U.S. response to France’s withdrawal from the NATO unified command and the negotiations for continued NATO overflight rights. See Bozo 2006.

between the two, provides a great deal of analytic leverage over the political challenges faced by American policy makers.

Imperial Dynamics in the U.S. Overseas Basing Network

A number of dynamics follow the rimless hub-and-spoke structure of imperial systems, for which we see a good deal of evidence in the historical evolution of the U.S. basing network. First, processes of “divide and rule” supplant traditional balancing logics. Second, central authorities must contend with cross-pressures generated by the differing demands of peripheries. Third, imperial authorities face tradeoffs associated with differing levels of intermediary autonomy. Fourth, empires often seek to minimize resistance to their demands in peripheries by engaging in strategies of binding and/or pivoting within the polities of segmented peripheries.

Macrolevel Divide and Rule

The importance of aggregate divide-and-rule process to imperial orders stems from the segmented, or disconnected, character of peripheries. Imperial cores privilege keeping their various peripheries compartmentalized, while mediating relations among these different peripheries.⁴⁰ The segmented nature of imperial networks and the heterogeneous character of imperial bargains usually mean that backlashes against the terms of such asymmetric contracts tend to remain localized. In “the absence of cross-

⁴⁰ Nexon and Wright 2007, 261.

cutting ties and sources of collective identification across peripheries” disputes over particular imperial bargains rarely trigger cross-periphery mobilization.⁴¹

The United States has utilized asymmetric bilateral contracting to minimize the risks of collusion among weaker allies and between them and adversaries.⁴² And the heterogeneous and bilateral structure of the U.S. basing network did, in fact, work against cross-country anti-basing collaboration for much of the Cold War. In East Asia, most notably, U.S. officials concluded a series of bilateral treaties and security arrangements with large base hosts such as Korea, Japan, and the Philippines.⁴³ U.S. officials retained direct military administration over the island of Okinawa, as a result of the 1952 Peace Treaty with Japan and until 1972, effectively decoupling the strategic hub from the main islands, in order to ensure unrestricted use rights and operations that would not be subject to negotiations with Tokyo.⁴⁴

In the Azores and Greenland, as well, the U.S. forged relations with local island governments in order to ensure its military presence independently of these islands’ national mainland governments; U.S. planners were prepared even to support independence movements on the Azores when it appeared in 1974-75 that Communist forces might take over the central government in Lisbon.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Nexon and Wright 2007, 261-262.

⁴² On successful American attempts to restrict interstate relations in South America in the 1940s, see Dorn 2002.

⁴³ See Hemmer and Katzenstein 2002; and Katzenstein 2005.

⁴⁴ On Okinawa, see Eldridge 2001 and Johnson 1999.

⁴⁵ On the U.S.-Greenland-Denmark relationship, see Dragsdahl 2005. On the question of whether the U.S. covertly supported Azorean independence movements in order to guarantee base access, see Cooley 2008a, chapt. 5.

The U.S. basing network does not, however, reflect patterns of full-blown imperial rule. The United States, with some prominent exceptions such as Okinawa prior to reversion, generally has been either unable or unwilling to bear the governance costs associated with robust imperial rule.⁴⁶ Unlike powerful empires, U.S. defense officials cannot monopolize relations between host countries and third parties by fiat.⁴⁷ Host countries enjoy, in principle, a great deal of freedom in interacting, negotiating, and communicating with states both inside and outside of the basing network.

It follows that the divide-and-rule benefits of the U.S. basing network have always been precarious. They depend largely upon contextual factors—such as rivalries and inter-periphery hostilities, a lack of opportunities for actors to interact with one another or their failure to make good on cross-boundary channels to act collectively, and host-country suppression of trans-regional and trans-national interaction—to translate into “firewalls” against the spread or resistance. As we argue in the next section, a variety of globalizing processes are further eroding the conditions of possibility for such firewalls.⁴⁸

Cross Pressures: Ratcheting Effects among Contracting States

The same structural factors that contribute to divide-and-rule dynamics also produce strong cross-pressures on central authorities in segmented hub-and-spoke systems. Central authorities must “navigate between different ‘pushes and pulls’ as

⁴⁶ See Lake 1996.

⁴⁷ See Galtung 1971, 89.

⁴⁸ Nexon and Wright 2007, 262, 268.

actors in peripheries attempt to shape... policy in favorable ways."⁴⁹ They can manage such cross-pressures by acceding to peripheral demands or providing side payments, but such policies risk ratcheting up "obligations" to peripheries, while "draining imperial resources." Or they can choose to pay the costs of ignoring such demands, which may culminate in dangerous resistance to imperial policies and bargains.⁵⁰

Imperial structures endow central authorities with two major advantages in coping with cross-pressures. First, segmentation reduces the probability that peripheral actors will closely monitor the nature of the bargains between imperial cores and other peripheries. They are therefore less likely to compare and "ratchet up" the terms of their imperial bargain. But we see some of these dynamics in historical empires, particularly in those with lower barriers to long-distance communications.⁵¹

In the case of the U.S. basing network, U.S. officials have had to cope with two major categories of ratcheting cross-pressures. First, in base hosts that received aid and other forms of compensation in exchange for granting base rights, periodic renegotiations created a ratcheting effect that greatly increased the *quid pro quo* demanded of U.S. negotiators. During the 1970s and 1980s, U.S. officials provided "rent-like" packages to base hosts such as Spain, Portugal, Turkey, Greece, Panama, Philippines, Thailand and Ethiopia, mostly comprised of disbursements of Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and Military Assistance Programs (MAP).⁵² U.S. base negotiators in the Mediterranean region in the 1970s and 1980s expressed surprise, in fact, that host

⁴⁹ Nexon and Wright 2007, 263.

⁵⁰ Nexon and Wright 2007, 263.

⁵¹ Nexon and Wright 2007, 263.

⁵² See Harkavy 1989, 340-356.

countries justified their demand for increased cash payments by citing terms reached with other host nations.⁵³

As information about *quid pro quo* and basing arrangements became widely disseminated across countries that hosted site-specific U.S. facilities, demands for rental payments and other forms of compensation increased significantly. As a result, pressure for greater side payments increased, as one base contract reached with a host country raised the demands of other countries in their subsequent negotiations.⁵⁴ During the 1990s, host country demands for compensation ceased as the end of the Cold War led to an overall reduction of the U.S. overseas military presence; many long-standing allies in Europe, East Asia and the Gulf defrayed some of the costs of stationing the U.S. presence. In the post-9/11 era, however, new base hosts once again seek greater economic compensation in exchange for basing rights. U.S. basing agreements reached with Djibouti, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan have included substantial *quid pro quo* for host governments, albeit much of it tacit or in the form of private goods.

The second ratcheting effect across U.S. basing agreements has been the steady convergence of individual bilateral SOFAs with the NATO SOFA. Non-NATO countries have concluded separate bilateral SOFAs with the United States and their terms have varied considerably. From the beginning of the postwar era, base hosts have compared their bilateral terms with those of other hosts to determine the “fairness” of their deal.

⁵³ Robert Kealey, “Bargaining Over US Bases in Europe Intensifies as Their Relative Importance Gains,” *Wall Street Journal*, November 5, 1987, 1. Also see McDonald and Bendahmane 1990.

⁵⁴ For details, see Clarke and O’Connor 1993; and John W. Finney, “Kissinger Legacy: US Bases Around the World are not Cheap,” *New York Times*, January 2, 1977, 112.

Thus, in the 1950s and 1960s, negotiators from the Philippines publicly decried the fact that the Philippine SOFA was less favorable to the host nation than the U.S. agreement with Japan, the vanquished World War II belligerent.⁵⁵ Such disparate base hosts as South Korea, Bahrain, the Philippines and Japan eventually demanded the inclusion of NATO-style procedures to determine exclusive and concurrent criminal jurisdiction procedures in their bilateral SOFAs and/or broader basing accords.⁵⁶ Over time, as a result of several renegotiations, these bilateral accords also converged with the NATO model as they have established joint panels and review boards to determine disputes on SOFA-related matters.

The Korean case is especially instructive. In 1966, the two countries replaced the *de facto* extra-territoriality enjoyed by U.S. troops since the end of the Korean War with an agreement that still remained highly favorable to the United States. After 25 years of the 1966 SOFA, the ROK and United States signed a substantial SOFA revision in 1991 that included the adoption of NATO-style provisions on criminal jurisdiction. However, throughout the 1990s Korean civic groups and NGOs demanded a “fairer” SOFA along the lines of the Japanese model, prompting yet another renegotiation of SOFA provisions after the election of the progressive reformer Kim Dae Jung.⁵⁷ In 2001, another U.S.-ROK SOFA was signed, this one bringing the pre-trial custody provisions for the most serious of crimes in line with the NATO and Japanese models.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Berry 1989, 63-65.

⁵⁶ For more details on this convergence to the NATO model, see Egan 2006, especially 313-329.

⁵⁷ On civic groups and their campaign for SOFA reforms in the 1990s, see Moon 2003.

⁵⁸ For a comparative assessment of the 2001 ROK-SOFA, see Jung and Hwang 2003.

As of 2006, 48 host nations were formally bound by the criminal jurisdiction procedure of the actual NATO SOFA, including the newer Partnership for Peace countries, while dozens of other hosts with bilateral agreements, such as Korea, Philippines and Japan, *de fact* adopted the NATO formula.⁵⁹ In short, convergence around the NATO SOFA is an example of institutional isomorphism across the contracts maintained by the United States with its various base hosts.

Multivocal Signaling, and Hypocrisy Costs

Peripheral segmentation and cross-pressures facilitates “multivocal signaling” by the core across the imperial network: the ability of central authorities, through their rhetoric and practices, to send discrete signals to different peripheries. If imperial authorities succeed at doing so, they enhance the legitimacy of their heterogeneous bargains and therefore avoid some of the dangers associated with cross-pressures. But their ability to engage in multivocal signaling generally diminishes as key actors communicate across peripheries; such actors gain an increasing ability to “compare notes” about their interpretations of imperial signals and demand clarification from imperial authorities.⁶⁰

The failure of multivocal signaling, whether that signaling is deliberate or inadvertent, generates the particular type of cross-pressure effect that we term *hypocrisy*

⁵⁹ See Ergan 2006. Ergan does not provide data on the total number of SOFAs in effect in 2006. Eichelman estimates that in the year 2000 the United States had 105 SOFAs with 101 foreign countries. Eichelman 2000, 23.

⁶⁰ Nexon and Wright 2007, 263-264.

costs. A number of dangers result when audiences perceive central authorities as engaging in inconsistent practices. They may come to view central authorities commitments as less credible or, perhaps even worse, they may come to believe that central authorities are actually committed to actions inconsistent with local preferences.

Because the United States does not monopolize relations between host countries, it has always been vulnerable to charges of hypocrisy related to both its heterogeneous basing agreements and the foreign policies implicated in them. In the early decades of the Cold War, it could offset these vulnerabilities by engaging in multivocal signaling. But as the spread of literacy, mass media, and global communications enhanced general access to information about its policies in different states and regions, the United States faced greater risks from cross-pressures and their resulting hypocrisy costs. Such tensions were manifest in periodic attempts to pressure overseas base host regimes to improve their human rights records and/or democratize.

U.S. attempts to legitimate its policies varied somewhat across its basing network during the Cold War. U.S. policymakers generally responded to charges of hypocrisy by pointing to the overall threat posed by the Soviet Union and global Communist expansions. This was particularly true of the basing agreements that the U.S. maintained with authoritarian figures in peripheral base hosts such as South Korea, Philippines, Thailand, Ethiopia and Panama.⁶¹ This legitimation strategy of anti-Communism explained away different stances through a relatively uniform set of narratives that, nonetheless, had different resonances with different audiences.

⁶¹ Schmitz 2006. On the Philippine case specifically, see Bonner 1988.

In Europe, however, where U.S. troop deployments and bases were presented not only as defending against the Soviet threat, but also as furthering a multilateral community of transatlantic values, U.S. officials had a more difficult time justifying their dealing with authoritarian rulers such as General Franco in Spain, Portugal's Prime Minister António Salazar, periodic Turkish military governments and the dictatorship of the Greek colonels. From the initial signing of the 1953 Madrid Pacts, bargaining with Franco over base rights was particularly challenging for U.S. policymakers, given that the rest of Western Europe had ostracized the Spanish dictator. At periodic renegotiations for base rights, U.S. officials had to publicly deny that these basing agreements endorsed the rule and undemocratic practices of the strongman, even while they supplied his government with substantial military hardware and compensation packages.⁶²

Intermediary Autonomy and Exit Options

A central observation in the literature on empire is that while the center relies on the resources and legitimacy of local intermediaries, it risks the subversion of its policies when it is unable to adequately monitor and sanction the intermediary for non-compliance or opportunistic behavior.⁶³ Even if we classify the U.S. basing network as part of an informal empire, we need to recognize that U.S. relations with leaders of host countries usually skew towards the limits of intermediary autonomy.

⁶² On Spain, see especially Viñas 1981 and Whitaker 1962.

⁶³ See Nexon and Wright 2007; Cooley 2005a, 58-62; Tilly 2003, 4.

The United States, therefore, confronts the potential for even greater principal-agent problems in its relations with the leaders of host countries than in the classical imperial formulation. During the Cold War the United States, in certain cases, proved willing to sponsor coups or otherwise engage in high-stakes meddling in the domestic politics of host countries to preserve its strategic interests and install friendly regimes.⁶⁴ More often, however, the United States usually accommodated renegotiations of its basing agreements, or even accepted bargaining failures and host-country exit, rather than resort to the kind of overt force often associated with empires attempting to uphold their asymmetric bargains.⁶⁵

Indeed, by the 1950s and 1960s the increasing autonomy enjoyed by the leadership of host countries, despite their dependence on the U.S. security umbrella, played an important role in their decisions to seek more favorable terms in U.S. basing contracts. Host country leaders such as Ramon Magsaysay in the Philippines and Kishi Nobosuke in Japan harnessed growing nationalism and domestic political agitation against the putative “imperial” terms of the U.S. presence for their political advantage.⁶⁶ They demanded SOFAs that smacked less of U.S. imperial prerogatives, curtailed the territory used by U.S. forces, secured mutual security guarantees, and otherwise attempted to improve the basic bargains associated with U.S. bases. The most important of these renegotiations were concluded with the Philippines in 1958, Japan in 1960, and Korea and Turkey in 1966.

⁶⁴ Kinzer 2006.

⁶⁵ See Sandars 2000.

⁶⁶ See Cooley 2008a.

A related implication stems from our earlier observation that the U.S. basing network, despite having imperial characteristics, does not generally involve the monopolization of peripheral interaction by the core. It therefore expands the potential *exit options* for host countries. Because they retain the ability to independently contract with third parties, the leadership of host countries enjoys opportunities to make agreements that substitute for the goods provided by the United States.⁶⁷ At a minimum, the greater availability of such exit options enhances the leverage of host countries, as the British experienced when Libya curtailed their base access in the late 1950s.⁶⁸

The major barriers to credible threats of exit by host countries during the Cold War stemmed from the dynamics of bipolarity. While a few host countries, particularly in the developing world, enjoyed a strategic position that enabled them to pivot between the two poles, most major U.S. basing partners – Britain, West Germany, Japan, Turkey and Korea – viewed the Soviet Union as a major security threat rather than a potential alternative partner. Yet the French under Charles de Gaulle, no friend of the Soviet Union, defected from NATO’s joint command and expelled the U.S. military presence in 1966.

⁶⁷ On these dynamics in asymmetric relations see, e.g., Dunning 2004, Ikenberry 2005, Roeder 1985.

⁶⁸ Worrall 2007, 323.

Binding and Pivoting in the U.S. Basing Context

Because empires seek to reduce resistance to their asymmetric bargains within peripheries, they engage in a number of different strategies to co-opt and/or isolate local actors. “Within-segment divide and rule is inherently more difficult than across-segment divide and rule,” and depends upon manipulating fault lines between actors that often interact a great deal. Empires pursue two non-exclusive strategies to minimize resistance: “pivoting strategies” that involve maintaining their “ability to triangulate among different local factions, and even their own intermediaries” and “binding strategies” in which empires “develop a class of local actors—often local elites who themselves may act as intermediaries—whose status, material position, or ideological orientations tie them closely to central [imperial] authorities.”⁶⁹

There are some important parallels with the dynamics of the American basing network. Given the autonomy enjoyed by the leaders of host countries, the United States has strong incentives to engage in binding strategies that give government officials strong cognitive and material incentives to commit to uphold the basing arrangement. During the cold war, the U.S. Department of Defense generally favored binding strategies, especially when it could provide military assistance or other private goods that would help secure the loyalty of a base host regime and its military supporters.

For example, the bilateral accords that governed the presence of U.S. forces in hosts such as the Philippines and Thailand also included large transfers of military aid

⁶⁹ Nexon and Wright 2007, 265. Compare Ikenberry and Kupchan 1990.

earmarked for host country militaries, thereby providing a significant source of private goods that ensured continuing access and loyalty.⁷⁰ In policy debates over whether to pressure host regimes such as the Philippines (until 1985) over human rights questions or Portugal on the decolonization question (1961-62), DoD and its preferred binding strategies won the day over the State Department and Congressional pressures for political liberalization.⁷¹ During the Reagan years, binding strategies were codified by the so-called “Kirkpatrick Doctrine” that explicitly advocated maintaining a strong commitment to authoritarian anti-Communist allies, reasoning that sustained engagement, not public criticism, was the best mechanism to nudge regimes towards enacting domestic reforms.⁷²

However, when these base hosts eventually democratized, binding strategies and their legacies generated serious downstream political and operation problems for the United States. New or democratizing regimes in varied base hosts such as Libya, Thailand, Greece, Spain, Turkey, Philippines and Panama claimed that basing accords signed with previous authoritarian regimes were illegitimate; these countries all terminated or refused to renew certain basing contracts with the United States.⁷³

The “pivoting strategies” adopted by the United States, for their part, translate less into conventional imperial forms of divide-and-rule than into ensuring that the benefits associated with the basing agreement extend to politically important

⁷⁰ On levels of military assistance and its tie-in to Cold War basing rights, see Harkavy 1989, 340-56.

⁷¹ Cooley 2005b.

⁷² For a favorable retrospective assessment of this logic, see Adesnick and McFaul 2006.

⁷³ Cooley 2008a.

constituencies beyond just the regime of the host state. This, in principle, enhances the stability of basing agreements in the face of democratic or non-democratic regime change in host countries. Indeed, some host-country regimes themselves have pursued policies designed to domestically lock-in basing agreements in order to reduce the political risks of accepting the American presence. The most institutionalized example of this may be in Japan, where Tokyo, through a well-funded program of host-nation support, has created a series of internal constituencies (base worker unions, utility companies, construction firms) that benefit from the continued U.S. basing presence.⁷⁴

When applying pivoting strategies to autocratic hosts, the United States faces potentially difficult tradeoffs. Its attempts cultivate support among other domestic constituencies in the host country may be perceived by host rulers as threats to their autonomy—or even their very survival. One of the most notable examples of a shift from binding to pivoting strategies in an authoritarian setting occurred in U.S. policy towards the Philippines in 1985, when U.S. officials untied themselves from Marcos, calculating that continued support for Marcos would drive moderate Philippine political opposition into the hands of the Communists, thus jeopardizing both future U.S. influence and U.S. basing rights.⁷⁵ However, new Philippine leaders and key

⁷⁴ See Calder 2006; Cooley and Marten 2006.

⁷⁵ In testimony before the Congress in November 1985, Paul Wolfowitz— then Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs—reasoned: “While the strategic importance of our facilities at Subic and Clark is beyond debate, it should be stressed that our policy is not, and must be not, hostage to the bases. We are convinced that democratic reform is essential to thwart a Communist victory that would end at one stroke both our hopes for democracy in the Philippines and our access to these vital military facilities.” Quoted in “U.S. Stresses Manila Democracy,” *New York Times* November 13, 1985, A4.

legislators still considered the bases as a legacy and symbol of Marcos' authoritarian rule. In 1991 the Philippine Senate refused to ratify the extension of the U.S. basing presence at Subic Bay.

At the risk of over-generalization, then, we observe that in dealing with authoritarian base hosts, a trade-off exists between adopting binding versus pivoting strategies. Binding strategies may secure a regime's loyalty, but risk alienating a democratizing successor. Conversely, pivoting strategies risk upsetting an authoritarian base host, but may provide longer run stability in basing rights in the event of a regime change and a later democratizing setting.

Globalizing Processes and the New U.S. Basing Network

The United States is currently expanding and reconfiguring its overseas base network to cope with a new strategic posture. This realignment is taking place during a period of increasing globalization in international politics. Our previous analysis suggests that processes of globalization will likely exacerbate a number of structural tendencies in the American overseas basing network. These effects not only have general implications for the network, but also specific ones for U.S. relations with new host countries in such areas as Africa, Central Asia and the Black Sea. U.S. planners believe that the relatively small size, flexible structure, and temporary nature of these bases may reduce opposition to their presence within host countries. But the lighter social and political footprint entailed by these new bases will likely leave the United States more vulnerable to credible threats of exit, fail to reduce its hypocrisy costs, and

do little to obviate the risks of coordinated resistance to basing agreements. We expect that globalizing forces are likely to both politicize and destabilize overseas basing arrangements.⁷⁶ Further, we expect globalization to increase the occurrence of bargaining failures and unilateral demands for renegotiation of base contracts across the network of overseas base hosts.

The GDPR and the Rise of the More Flexible Base

The Pentagon's current Global Defense Posture Review (GDPR) marks the first fundamental transformation of U.S. basing posture since World War II as U.S. defense planners adjust to new strategic imperatives such as the global war on terror.⁷⁷

The GDPR will reduce U.S. forces in several major Cold War base hosts—especially Germany, Korea and Japan—and will establish a global network of smaller, more flexible facilities known as Forward Operating Sites (FOSs) and Cooperative Security locations (CSLs). These new-style bases will be located in several regions where the United States has not traditionally maintained a presence, including Africa (Djibouti and Kenya), Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan) and the Black Sea (Bulgaria and Romania).⁷⁸ FOSs and CSLs will lack the extensive hub of housing complexes, social and recreational facilities that have traditionally characterized U.S. bases, and instead, contain barebones facilities that can be expanded in a time of crisis. U.S. negotiators are also seeking guarantees of “strategic flexibility” from new base hosts, or the right to use

⁷⁶ Cf. Barnett 2004.

⁷⁷ See Campbell and Ward 2003.

⁷⁸ See Cooley 2008b.

the bases for various operational purposes without having to secure prior approval from the host country. Because of their relatively small size and operational flexibility, FOSs and CSLs have been referred to as “light switch” bases or “lily pads.”

Thus, the United States seems set to abandon its traditional role as an “offshore balancer” and, in line with the new National Security Strategies of 2002 and 2006, more directly engage regional threats such as terrorists, armed gangs, pirates and insurgents.⁷⁹ In his 2004 statement to Congress about the basing realignment, then Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Douglas Feith explained, “we’re dealing with challenges that are global in nature – so global strategies and actions are necessary to complement our regional planning. We need to improve our ability to project power from one region to another and to manage forces on a global basis.”⁸⁰

The Impact of Globalization

We view globalization as an analytically distinct bundle of processes including *internationalization*, the increase in territorially based exchange by states across borders, *interdependence*, the increase in connections among states, and *regionalism*, the increase in exchange and information flows within the same geographic area, such as the European Union.⁸¹ Globalization forces reorder many of the spheres that affect a state’s capacity and its traditional activities. In the realm of national security, for instance, globalization changes the traditional security considerations of individual states by increasing

⁷⁹ On offshore balancing, see, for example, Layne 2006.

⁸⁰ Feith 2004.

⁸¹ See Keohane and Nye 1989 and Katzenstein 2005.

opportunities for economic exchange, diffusing information and promoting marketization.⁸²

Another dimension of globalization involves the relative shift in industrial and post-industrial production away from the United States. The globalization of production is part of the rapid growth experienced in, for example, the People's Republic of China. The contemporary trading regime also enhances interdependence by reducing barriers to the flow of resources, goods, and services. Asymmetric interdependence generated by the location of exploitable natural resources also currently enhances the wealth and influence of such states as Russia and Venezuela. While some of these developments reflect possibly short-term spikes in commodity prices, they are part of the changing landscape of interconnection among and between states and how that changing landscape alters the terms of power in the international system.

These developments potentially alter the network dynamics of imperial and empire-like orders. Global flows of economic activity and information erode the firewalls that traditionally segment hub-and-spoke peripheries from one another. They compromise the imperial center's position as the exclusive mediator of peripheral relations while expanding the potential for actors in peripheries to coordinate resistance against and demands upon central authorities.⁸³

They are likely, therefore, to exacerbate many of the ways in which the structure of the U.S. overseas basing network creates the pitfalls of imperial systems without

⁸² See Kirshner 2006.

⁸³ Nexon and Wright 2007, 268.

providing the benefits that accrue to genuine imperial orders. In brief, globalization (1) enhances the exit options of host countries and bargaining leverage over the United States (2) renders multivocal signaling difficult and hypocrisy costs more intense; and (3) diminishes the barriers to cross-host-country collective mobilization against U.S. asymmetric basing agreements. Taken together, these developments should increase the frequency and magnitude of pathological processes in the basing network.

Increasing Autonomy and Enhanced Exit Strategy

Many observers contend that globalizing forces will increase the autonomy and exit option of weak states. They argue that, first, increasing Chinese financial and “soft power” influence, Russian reassertiveness, and even the activities of Venezuela’s Hugo Chavez, complicate American influence by providing alternative sources of economic and military support.⁸⁴ Second, growing forms of complex interdependence grant militarily weak states new pathways of leverage over great powers such as the United States.⁸⁵

The GDPR, with its emphasis on more flexible and temporary bases and access arrangements of FOSs and CSLs, is likely further to bolster the autonomy and exit options of base hosts. First, the very fact that U.S. policymakers emphasize the non-permanent nature of these facilities actually makes it more difficult for U.S. officials to convince potentially welcoming base hosts that U.S. forces will commit to a long-term stay. And the move away from heavy bases affords U.S. officials far fewer

⁸⁴ See, for example, Forero and Goodman 2007; Gat 2007; Kagan 2007 24-30.

⁸⁵ For a theoretical treatment, see Keohane and Nye 1989.

instruments—such as aid guarantees, promises of economic development in base hosting locales—to offer as concessions to host countries. Indeed, faced with the prospect having to provide *quid pro quo* to new base hosts, U.S. officials face the politically problematic choice of having to provide tacit or private goods, which risks future criticism and contractual renegotiation in the event of a regime change, or offer no *quid pro quo* at all, which seriously diminishes the benefits that any given base host derives from a U.S. presence. In Djibouti, for example, the government of President Ismael Gulleh has been increasing sharply its annual demands for rent and *quid pro quo* since the U.S. first established its FOS in 2002. While in 2002, the United States provided \$7 million in aid to the small Horn of Africa country, the packages grew to over \$90 million in 2003 and 2004, with pure rental payments by themselves increasing to \$30 million in 2007.⁸⁶

Increased Hypocrisy Costs

The same mechanisms discussed above means that globalization should enhance the likelihood and dangers of hypocrisy costs, while diminishing the ability of the United States to reap the benefits of multivocal signaling.

When contracts are heterogeneous and asymmetrical, global flows of information allow each periphery to more readily observe network-wide inconsistencies in the imperial center's legitimating strategies and contractual concessions. If different peripheries become aware of seemingly contradictory terms of their contracts, the

⁸⁶ Cooley 2008b, 85.

center may find it difficult to convince each periphery that it remains committed to upholding the terms of its individual imperial bargain. As the terms of imperial bargain seemingly contradict one another, multivocal legitimation strategies will actually erode the center's legitimacy. If the center cannot convincingly reconcile these seemingly contradictory bargains, the core will face accusations of inconsistency both within and outside of the imperial network. Such hypocrisy costs will prove particularly important when global competitors or opposition forces within peripheries attack the reputation and delegitimize the imperial core and its bargains. In turn, rising hypocrisy costs make it more difficult for imperial intermediaries to justify their political authority purely in terms of sharing common values or identities with the core power.

More acute hypocrisy costs are particularly dangerous in the context of basing agreements, which by their nature require concessions of sovereignty to the United States. Over recent years we have seen significant evidence of sharply rising hypocrisy costs across the America's basing network. The use of the American global basing network for activities seemingly at odds with American justifications of promoting human rights and democratization, or its purported joint security mission with the host country, has proven especially damaging to U.S. legitimacy and credibility.

Two of the most globally damaging stories of inconsistent U.S. behavior involve, in fact, precisely its use of overseas bases for activities that contravene international norms and law. The first is its use of Guantanamo Bay Naval Base as an extra-territorial facility for the detention of terrorist suspects and enemy combatants. The second

concerns allegations that the Central Intelligence Agency took advantage of the U.S. network of global bases to transport prisoners to third countries where they were tortured during interrogation.⁸⁷ In 2006, Swiss rapporteur and Senator Dick Marty presented a report to the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly that alleged that 14 European countries had collaborated to facilitate a "spider's web" of illegal flights; the well-publicized report further alleged that the U.S. operated on-site secret prisons and detention facilities on military bases in Kosovo, Romania and Poland.⁸⁸ By summer of 2006, the issues of Guantanamo Bay and illegal CIA flights dominated European media coverage of U.S. foreign policy; even supporters of the Iraq intervention within these host countries criticized both policies.⁸⁹

Further, the rise of new global and regional media outlets helps to disseminate reports of "hypocritical" U.S. foreign policy practices across different peripheries. For example, the last decade has witnessed a steady rise in new talk shows on Arab satellite news channels, including the Qatar-based Al Jazeera network.⁹⁰ Talk news programs, such as the popular "who believes America," exposed the United States to routine accusations of hypocrisy, including the selective application of its core political principles and democratic values across its different peripheries. Marc Lynch observes

⁸⁷ See Grey 2006.

⁸⁸ Dana Priest, "CIA Holds Terror Suspects in Secret Prisons," *Washington Post*, November 2, 2005, A1. For the Marty Report, see: http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/CommitteeDocs/2006/20060124_Jdoc032006_E.htm

⁸⁹ For a sampling, see Jefferson Morley, "Guantanamo as Backdrop to Bush's Trip to Europe," *Washington Post*, June 21, 2006. http://blog.washingtonpost.com/worldopinionroundup/2006/06/guantanamo_as_backdrop_for_bus.html

⁹⁰ Lynch 2006, 197-201.

that when faced with accusations of hypocritical behavior, defenders of American foreign policy on these programs often assert U.S. national self-interest as reasons for these inconsistent policies. But they seldom challenge the merits of the actual charges of hypocrisy.⁹¹ Although sometimes seen as sui generis, these developments intersect in predictable ways with the structure of the U.S. overseas basing network: they constitute specific pathways of a general process in which cross-periphery and trans-periphery interaction erodes the segmented character of imperial and empire-like systems and, in doing so, undermine multivocal signaling.

Public opinion polls provide suggestive evidence that these hypocrisy costs have inflicted considerable damage on America's international prestige and legitimacy. In January 2007 an international poll of over 26,000 respondents from 25 countries conducted by the Program on International Policy Attitudes indicated that 67% of participants disapproved of the U.S. government's treatment of Guantanamo detainees (15% approved), while the overall view of the U.S. role in world affairs as "mainly negative" had risen from 46% in 2005 to 52% in 2007.⁹² The same poll found that 67% of respondents believed that U.S. forces in the Middle East "provokes more conflict than it prevents," compared with 17% that view it as a stabilizing force. While the costs of anti-Americanism are often difficult to assess,⁹³ increasing public hostility to the United

⁹¹ Lynch 2006, 202.

⁹² See:

http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/home_page/306.php?nid=&id=&pnt=306&lb=hmpg1

⁹³ See, for example, Katzenstein and Keohane 2006.

States has, as we have seen, complicated its ability to negotiate and maintain favorable basing agreements.

The Mobilization of a Transnational Anti-Base Movement

Globalization also affords more opportunities to non-state actors who are committed to contesting basing arrangements to network and mobilize across peripheries. The rise of transnational networks of NGOs has been facilitated by the rise of cheap information technologies that can network like-minded actors across countries. Technologies such as the internet, cell phones and new media allow even small NGOs to project their claims on a global level and facilitate networking with other like-minded groups.⁹⁴ Further, as Clifford Bob observes, in order to successfully compete for Western media and NGO attention, insurgencies and social movements in remote parts of the developing world must frame local issues and grievances in more global or universal terms.⁹⁵

During the Cold War, the presence of U.S. forces and installations gave rise to certain domestic protest movements, the most vocal of which were the anti-nuclear movements and campaigns in Western Europe during the 1980s. For the most part, however, these coalitions were very much national in orientation and primarily affiliated with certain domestic political parties, such as the Social Democrats or

⁹⁴ See discussion of the “spotlight effect” in Spar 1998.

⁹⁵ Bob 2005. According to Bob, “insurgent groups magnify their appeal by framing parochial demands, provincial conflicts, and particularistic identities. Clients must emphasize the universalistic aspects of parochial conflicts.” 31.

Greens.⁹⁶ Base protests in general were matters of domestic politics and social mobilization, not transnational movements.

Consistent with the rise of other transnational NGOs in other domains, anti-base NGOs and coalitions have proliferated throughout the 1990s and 2000s, first networking disparate movements within countries into anti-base coalitions and then extending across borders.⁹⁷ These groups now stage anti-base campaigns and advise each other on base-related issues such as the environmental impact of bases, crimes and accidents involving U.S. troops, the terms of the SOFA and the sex trade surrounding the U.S. troops presence.⁹⁸

The Korean case, in particular, points to the distinct opportunities offered to anti-base movements by new information technologies, as these movements maintain websites, news sources and extensive email lists as part of their activities. Moreover, many of these previously exclusive national movements now regularly interact with one another and actively exchange information about specific issues, tactics and campaigns.⁹⁹ Anti-base movements from around the world have even begun to hold joint conferences, including a 2003 conference in Jakarta in which NGOs from 26 countries participated and produced the joint declaration “Jakarta Peace Consensus” that demanded the removal of U.S. overseas bases.¹⁰⁰ In March 2007, the new

⁹⁶ See Joffe 1987

⁹⁷ See Price 2003; and Keck and Sikkink 1997.

⁹⁸ On the networking of Korean movements, see Moon 2003. On Okinawa, see Spencer 2003.

⁹⁹ Lutz 2007, 33; and Moon 2007, 140.

¹⁰⁰ Lutz 2007, 33. For the declaration see [accessed June 2007]: <http://www.focusweb.org/publications/2003/jakarta-consensus.pdf>

International Coalition for the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases held the largest anti-base conference to date in Ecuador, with the participation of 400 activists from over 40 individual countries.¹⁰¹

The demonstration effects of global anti-base campaigns have even prompted new anti-base protests to emerge in countries such as Turkey and Italy, hosts that historically have witnessed very little anti-base protests by domestic civil society groups. For example, in Turkey during the 2003 run-up to the vote in the Turkish parliament to authorize the use of Turkish territory to the U.S. military, anti-base groups organized unprecedented anti-war rallies and protests.¹⁰² Similarly, in February 2007 tens of thousands of demonstrators took to the street of Vicenza to protest the Italian government's plan to expand the base at Vicenza to accommodate additional U.S. troops from Germany.¹⁰³ The demonstrations in Italy actually precipitated a "no confidence" vote that briefly brought down Romano Prodi's left-wing political coalition (as Prodi had opposed the protest) and were remarkable for a host country that traditionally has been one of the most supportive of the U.S. presence.¹⁰⁴

Compression Effects

¹⁰¹ See the group's website: <http://www.no-bases.org/index.php?mod=conference&bloque=1&idioma=en>

¹⁰² See Altinay and Holmes 2008.

¹⁰³ See Stephen Brown, "U.S. Base Protest Poses Dilemma for Italian Left," *Reuters*. February 14, 2007; and "Thousands Protest U.S. Base Expansion in Northern Italian City," *International Herald Tribune*. February 17, 2007

¹⁰⁴ See Cooley 2008a chapt. 6; and Monteleone 2007.

A final expectation is that increasing globalization should increase the frequency and magnitude of these network effects. At least some of these dynamics operated in the U.S. overseas basing network in the past. But globalization processes accelerate the speed with which they come into play in U.S. basing negotiations and renegotiations, meaning that we should expect process that took decades play out in the space of a few years. The following case studies of the rapid evolution and contestation of the U.S. basing presence in Central Asia demonstrates the speed with which these globalizing process can now undermine the stability of basing contracts.

Case Study: The Network Effects of the US Basing Presence in Central Asia

The above claims find support from the recent history of U.S. basing contracts in the post-Soviet Central Asian states. In the months following 9/11, U.S. officials concluded agreements with the governments of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan to establish military bases to support operations in nearby Afghanistan. Both of these new base hosts committed to joining the U.S.-led war on terror, however the exact terms of their basing contracts and *quid pro quo* varied.¹⁰⁵ In the Uzbek case, in exchange for using the old Soviet airbase near the southern towns of Karshi Khanabad (K2), U.S. officials agreed to target the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan in its military operations and provided Uzbekistan with about \$300 million in assistance in 2002, \$120 million of which was military hardware and surveillance equipment for the Uzbek army and \$82

¹⁰⁵ For details see Cooley 2008b.

for the internal security services.¹⁰⁶ A bilateral security deal (The U.S.-Uzbek Declaration on Strategic Partnership), signed in 2002 Presidents Bush and Karimov, accompanied the basing agreement.

In the Kyrgyz case, the United States provided largely economic assistance in exchange for the coalition air base at Manas airport. Much of the assistance took the form of private goods to Kyrgyz elites. Airport service companies with ties to the ruling family of President Akayev received lucrative contracts, while the Manas airport authority collected civil aviation-level fees for each take-off and landing performed by a military aircraft (about \$7,000 for transport planes). Most significantly, companies owned by the President's son and son-in law were awarded \$110 million in fuel subcontracts from 2003 to 2005.¹⁰⁷ Overall, base-related economic activity accounted for between 5% and 10% of Kyrgyz GDP during the same time.¹⁰⁸

Eviction from Uzbekistan: Legitimacy and Credibility Problems

The terms of both of these base contracts came under pressure from the dynamics discussed above. In the Uzbek case, the United States suffered an erosion of its credibility and overall legitimacy as a result of the Uzbek government's increasing domestic repression and crackdown on all forms of internal dissent and opposition.

¹⁰⁶ Akbarzadeh 2005, 78.

¹⁰⁷ Much of that money found itself into private offshore accounts according to an FBI investigation On the fuel contract details, see: David Cloud, "Pentagon's Fuel Deal is Lesson in Risks of Graft-Prone Regions," *New York Times*. November 15, 2005, A1.

¹⁰⁸ See Alexander Cooley, "Depoliticizing Manas," PONARS Policy Memo 362, February 2005. Available on-line at: http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/pm_0362.pdf

The most controversial of these interventions took place in the eastern city of Andijon in May 2005, when Uzbek security forces fired into a crowd of demonstrators it claimed were militant Islamists. Although the Uzbek government claimed that 180 people were killed, the majority of them Islamic terrorists, Western human rights organizations put the death tally at 700 to 800 people, most of them ordinary residents who were protesting government policies.¹⁰⁹ While the governments of Russia and China offered strong support for Karimov's tough actions, the European Union, international organizations and most Western governments denounced the Andijon crackdown and demanded an international investigation into these events.

The fallout of Andijon intensified the legitimacy and credibility problems that the base in Uzbekistan created for U.S. officials. Continued U.S. support for Karimov and his brutal actions seemed starkly at odds with the Bush administration's foreign policy doctrine of promoting democracy abroad, especially given that in the summer of 2004 the U.S. Congress failed to certify Uzbekistan's compliance with its human rights obligations.¹¹⁰ But U.S. military officials, out of fear of losing base access in Uzbekistan, blocked the announcement of a joint NATO communiqué that would have called for an international investigation into the events at Andijon. At the same time, a bipartisan group of U.S. senators called for an investigation to determine whether U.S. military equipment had been used in the crackdown. Even neo-conservatives and Iraq hawks, like the editor of the *Weekly Standard* William Kristol, publicly questioned whether

¹⁰⁹ On Andijan, see Human Rights Watch 2005 and Crisis Group 2005.

¹¹⁰ See Nichol 2005.

continued U.S. support of Karimov comported with the broader U.S. goal of promoting democratic change in the Middle East, despite Uzbekistan's strategic usefulness.¹¹¹

The Uzbek regime, for its part, became increasingly skeptical about the credibility of the U.S. commitment to support the Karimov government. Even before Andijon, Uzbek officials were concerned by the "colored revolutions," backed by the United States, in Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine.¹¹² When a similar "Tulip revolution" took place in neighboring Kyrgyzstan in March 2005, ousting long-time President Askar Akayev, Uzbek officials became increasingly fearful that the U.S. government would promote democratic regime change in Uzbekistan.¹¹³

Rifts within the U.S. government concerning how to respond to the events Andijon further exacerbated Tashkent's concerns. The regime signaled its disapproval of U.S. criticism by curtailing nighttime flights in June 2005.¹¹⁴ In late July, the United States supported a UN plan that called for the transfer of Andijon refugees that had fled to neighboring Kyrgyzstan to West Europe. For the Uzbek government, which demanded that the refugees be returned to Uzbekistan for police interrogation, this was the final signal that the U.S. government was no longer a credible partner. Just a day later, Tashkent served official notice that it was ending the basing relationship and gave U.S. forces 180 days to vacate the K2 facility. The mixed message sent by the U.S.

¹¹¹ See "Stephen Schwartz and William Kristol, "Our Uzbek Problem," *Weekly Standard*. Vol. 10, No. 5, May 30, 2005. Available at [accessed June 2007]: <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/005/635ihrh.asp>

¹¹² On these revolutions and the international context, see Bunce and Wolchik 2006. On their modular nature, see Beissinger 2007.

¹¹³ Beissinger 2007, 270.

¹¹⁴ On these later events leading to the eviction, see Cooley 2005b.

government coupled with its vigorous support of the “colored revolutions” in other post-Soviet countries clearly eroded the credibility of the U.S.’s commitment to Karimov. Uzbek ties with Russia and China, for their part, made exit a realistic option for Karimov’s regime.¹¹⁵

Contestation in Kyrgyzstan: Demands for Contractual Renegotiation

The eviction from Uzbekistan also impacted negotiations over a new basing contract in neighboring Kyrgyzstan. The ouster of President Akayev in March 2005 prompted the new Kyrgyz government, led by Kurmanbek Bakiyev, to question the terms of the initial deal and claim that the base contract had not benefited Kyrgyzstan as a whole. The prior regimes had not disclosed the terms of the U.S.-Kyrgyz basing agreement to the public; they were not even on the political agenda for the various anti-Akayev movements.¹¹⁶

While the change in Kyrgyz regime prompted contractual renegotiations, the Uzbek eviction gave Kyrgyz negotiators new confidence to demand a vastly increased price as *quid pro quo*. In the fall of 2005, Bakiyev publicly demanded that the United States provide a \$200 million annual side payment for the base, which amounted to a staggering 100-fold increase in rent for Manas. The negotiations became increasingly contentious until, in July 2006, the sides finally signed a new five-year deal worth \$150

¹¹⁵ See Jim Nichol, “Uzbekistan’s Closure of the Airbase at Karshi-Khanabad: Context and Implications.” *CRS Report for Congress*, 7 October 2005. http://digital.library.unt.edu/govdocs/crs/data/2005/upl-meta-crs-7519/RS22295_2005Oct07.pdf. Accessed 6 November 2007.

¹¹⁶ Cooley, “Depoliticizing Manas.”

million in total aid, \$17 million of which in the form of a lease payment for the use of Manas.¹¹⁷ However, Kyrgyz officials continue to express their dissatisfaction with the compensation level and insist that they will demand even greater compensation at the next renegotiation.¹¹⁸

A series of base-related accidents and incidents also drew increased scrutiny of the criminal jurisdiction terms of the initial SOFA. Under the original December 2001 arrangement, the U.S. enjoyed exclusive jurisdiction or extra-territoriality over all crimes committed by U.S. personnel in Kyrgyzstan. However, when in December 2006 a U.S. guard shot and killed a Kyrgyz base worker at the entrance to the base, Kyrgyz politicians, NGOs active in the country, and the media all questioned the terms of these jurisdictional arrangements and called for a SOFA revision.¹¹⁹ Indeed, Kyrgyz news agencies found that covering such base-related incidents dramatically increased their readership and internet site hits both at home and from abroad, thereby encouraging them to further cover base-related topics and rumors.¹²⁰ After an initial period of relative depoliticization of the issue from 2001 to 2005, the U.S. base soon after become the major foreign policy issue and debate within Kyrgyz domestic politics and the object of institutional competition among the government, legislature and the courts.

¹¹⁷ The text of the final accord can be found on the U.S. Embassy in Kyrgyzstan's website [accessed May 2007]:

http://kyrgyz.usembassy.gov/july_14_joint_statement_on_coalition_airbase.html

¹¹⁸ Authors' interviews with Kyrgyz officials. Bishkek, January 2008.

¹¹⁹ See John K. Daly, "U.S. Air Base at Manas at Risk over Shooting Suspect?" *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, May 4, 2007. Available at [accessed May 2007]: http://jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2372144

¹²⁰ Authors' interviews with Kyrgyz newspaper editors and media outlets. Bishkek, January 2008.

Globalizing Processes and Network Effects in the New Central Asian Bases

Despite the small size of the U.S. deployments in these Central Asian countries, the evolution of these base contracts demonstrates many of the cross-peripheral network effects outlined in this paper. In the Uzbek case, the U.S. use of multivocal legitimation strategies to justify strong U.S. backing and military support of its new security client generated both general hypocrisy costs and credibility problems for U.S. defense planners. After the events in Andijon, U.S. State Department officials had a difficult time in reconciling support for Karimov's regime with other democratization efforts in the Middle East and former Soviet Union. At the same time, this ambiguity over its other peripheral goals and bargains also diminished U.S. credibility with the Uzbek government itself, prompting the eviction from K2. In turn, the Uzbek eviction encouraged the Kyrgyz government to demand a dramatic increase in compensation payments from the United States. Remarkably, changes in these base contracts occurred quickly in 2005 after over 3 years of relative stability and the relative depoliticization of these initial agreements. Instructively, despite their best efforts, U.S. planners were not able to effectively segment or firewall these Central Asian base deals; they struggled, instead, to come to terms with negotiating changes in these initial base contracts as regional and global developments altered these base hosts' calculus about the political usefulness of the original deals.

Conclusions

The United States has constructed an empire-like overseas basing network composed largely of heterogeneous and asymmetric bargains. As was the case with its historical—and overtly imperial—counterparts, these bargains implicate American foreign and military policy in the domestic politics of multiple peripheries. Unlike traditional empires, corresponding levels of U.S. influence in these peripheries seldom rises to the level of rule. In consequence, the United States faces significant restrictions in its ability to use coercion to maintain its presence, must deal with intermediaries that enjoy greater autonomy than those typically associated with imperial subalterns, and exercises less ability to control relations among its peripheries. These features of the U.S. overseas basing network have often generated greater loyalty on the part of its basing partners and reduced its governance costs, but they also exacerbate many of the vulnerabilities associated with rimless hub-and-spoke political orders. Processes associated with globalization magnify many of these vulnerabilities.

This raises significant theoretical and practical concerns about current American policies. First, the United States faces growing and unmitigated hypocrisy costs associated with its basing agreements. These hypocrisy costs not only generally erode American “soft power,” but also undermine its capacity to negotiate favorable deals with host countries. The thrust of this argument may strike some as reminiscent of recent claims about “soft balancing.” After all, proponents of the soft-balancing hypothesis argue that U.S. unilateralism and other unpopular policies are driving states

to engage in a variety of forms of “pre-balancing” to increase the costs of U.S. force projection and prepare for a possible transition to direct balancing in the future.¹²¹

But our analysis recasts the terms of the debate. The dynamics we identify stem not from the theoretical logic of international anarchy and balancing behavior, but from hierarchical characteristics of the contemporary order. Our analysis suggests, in fact, a different interpretation of at least some of the supposed evidence of soft balancing. Governments of base hosts and ruling elites will continue to support basing agreements only when it is in their domestic self interest to do so. U.S. military power, despite its considerable superiority, cannot compel unwilling base hosts, as we saw with Uzbekistan, to accept agreements that it may consider detrimental to its own regime survival. These trends create further challenges for American primacy—by increasing the costs of the American “command of the commons”—through *non-balancing* processes rooted in how the structure of the American basing network intersects with transnational forces and the domestic politics of host countries. Moreover, the United States already faces “ratcheting effects” involving its agreements with host countries across its network. These effects once took decades to unfold, but now seem to be developing within a much shorter time span.

In addition, increasing connectivity between actors in host countries is expanding resistance to U.S. policies implicated in U.S. basing agreements. Given the “information revolution” associated with globalization, the United States cannot expect such limited insulations to escape both domestic and international scrutiny, as was the

¹²¹ Pape 2005; Paul 2005.

case in both Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. The erosion of cross-periphery firewalls carry with them, on the one hand, a diminished capacity for U.S. policymakers to engage in multivocal signaling and, on the other hand, greater capacity for cross-periphery coordination by anti-basing movements.

Although some may find even our limited analogy between imperial systems and the U.S. overseas basing network objectionable, the empire-like qualities of the network also suggest some important ways that the United States might mitigate these dynamics. First, greater multilateralism in the American basing network—including preemptive steps towards more uniform basing agreements—might reduce future risks of ratcheting effects and perceptions of inequity among the leaders and populations of host countries. The common NATO SOFA, for example, went a long way towards securing U.S. basing arrangements in Europe and defusing the once politically sensitive issue of criminal jurisdiction. Granting the NATO SOFA as a type of “most favored nation” concession to new base hosts could mitigate some of the potential criticisms of the legal basis of the U.S. military presence. American policymakers have long recognized that multilateral contracting reduces cross-pressures in the form of ratcheting effects; it does so, at least in principle, by recasting basing agreements as part of a collective enterprise rather than either an “imperial” relationship or one based entirely on *quid pro quos*.

Second, U.S. officials need to recognize that they can no longer avoid serious hypocrisy costs from inconsistent rhetoric and practices surrounding basing agreements. To the extent that the GDPR entails adding an increasing number of

heterogeneous, often ad hoc, basing agreements, it may build in greater hypocrisy costs for the United States over time. The United States should, at least, strive to adopt low-cost measures to reduce perceptions of hypocrisy and inequity across its basing arrangements. U.S. officials cannot count on host countries, in this age of global media and communications, to maintain the confidentiality and compartmentalize individual basing agreement provisions or tacit deals. But at a more general level, U.S. officials must adapt to their diminishing ability to “speak out of both sides of their mouths,” with all the implications that entails for its overseas basing network and associated policies.

Finally, when dealing with new base hosts the United States should make efforts to adopt more proactive pivoting strategies over its traditional preference for binding strategies. Measures such as formally ratifying agreements in a host’s legislature and providing public goods, as opposed to private payments, are concrete steps that can ensure a broader base of support for the United States military presence than just the support of the ruling regime and its security services. This is especially important in politically volatile and internally unstable countries that are susceptible to rapid regime change and democratizing pressures. As internal political turbulence in new base hosts such as Pakistan and Kenya escalates, the U.S. basing presence may become rapidly delegitimized if it becomes associated with actively supporting the undemocratic practices of sitting rulers.

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