

**Proposal White Paper**

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Title: The Political, Economic, and Social Effects of America's Overseas Military Presence

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## **The Political, Economic, and Social Effects of America's Overseas Military Presence**

The presence of American military installations and personnel around the world has been a defining feature of the global order since World War II. These installations have contributed to the solidification of alliances (Harkavy 1989), deterrence of rivals (Ikenberry 2004; Harkavy 1989), stabilization of global hot spots (Lake 2009a; Keohane 2005), protection of global commons (Wohlforth 1999), and power projection (Davis 2011). The maintenance of a large overseas military presence has been crucial to sustaining the open liberal economic order, through a “hierarchical” or “contractual” relationship with host governments (Brooks, Ikenberry, and Wohlforth 2013; Lake 2009b; Ikenberry 2011). Implicit in these theories is the notion of public consent to an American military presence. However, International Relations scholars and practitioners know little about how America's overseas military presence shapes, and is shaped by, the broader social, political, and economic environment of the host-state.

Recent studies have begun to look at the effects of US military deployments on a range of political and economic variables. Research has found that the increased presence of troops increases foreign direct investment (Biglaiser and DeRouen 2007), economic development (Kane 2012), economic growth (Jones and Kane 2012), trade activity (Biglaiser and DeRouen 2009), respect for human rights (Bell, Clay, and Martinez Machain 2016). Larger deployments generally correlate with lower levels of defense spending by the host-state (Martinez Machain and Morgan 2013; Allen, Flynn, and VanDusky-Allen 2014, 2016), and a decreased likelihood of civil war (Braithwaite and Kucik 2017). Last, American deployments correlate with increased social spending in some allied states (Allen, Flynn, and VanDusky-Allen 2014) and they appear to have a minimal impact on aggregate crime activity (Allen and Flynn 2013). However, these studies focus on explaining macro-level outcomes with country-level data, which does not allow for fine-grained causal explanation of individual attitudes. We have very little data that helps explain subnational phenomena, such as the general German opposition, accompanied by support from Germans close to the installations. Similarly, most Japanese support the continued American presence in Japan, but Okinawans overwhelmingly oppose it. Why does the surrounding community oppose the presence in one case and not the other, despite similar levels of economic dependence on the US installation? We propose a systematic approach that collects data on the relevant variables.

In spite of its importance, there is currently no comparable systematic research on public opinion and attitudes towards America's overseas basing. Most work focusing on the domestic effects of US basing has relied on anecdotal evidence (Yeo 2014; Calder 2007). Existing explanations of the effects of American basing on host regimes focus heavily on the local popularity of the US presence (Lake 2013; Cooley 2012). According to these theories, local popularity dictates whether American policy can support democratization efforts by the local population or is forced into a choice between maintaining access to critical strategic regions and advancing American ideals. Local popularity dictates whether the United States might be forced to abandon its foreign installations after a regime change or if the basing relationship can be sustained under a new government. Broad resistance to US military activities may constrain foreign leaders' ability to cooperate with the United States. Thus, the popularity of the American military presence in a state is critical to understanding the sustainability of US relationships with the host-state. The lack of high-quality data, at both the national and subnational levels significantly hampers researchers' ability to create a full picture of the political, economic, and social structure of basing.

Many of the aforementioned research topics have implications for the popularity of America's military presence within a country, and despite the critical role that local popularity plays in US basing abroad, neither practitioners nor scholars have access to high quality, comprehensive data on some key factors that should affect the local popularity of the US military presence. Our goal is to provide such data that can be used to study the impact of the US military on public attitudes by:

1. Creating a comprehensive dataset of the popularity of American activities and installations abroad, at both the national and subnational levels.

2. Fielding geocoded surveys within host countries that ask for individual perceptions of the American presence and its effects on a number of political, economic, and social dimensions.
3. Creating a comprehensive geocoded dataset of protest activity to examine the causes of, and to forecast future instances of, anti-American protests broadly speaking, and protests against the presence of American military personnel, more specifically.
4. Creating a comprehensive geocoded dataset on crimes committed by, against, or otherwise involving, US military personnel, civilian employees, and contractors.
5. Collecting new data US overseas military expenditures at the national and subnational levels to better understand the economic and social effects of a US military presence within the host-state.
6. Supplement quantitative data collection efforts with interviews to provide greater context and nuance to public attitudes.

### **Implications for National Security**

Many critical national security decisions might be alleviated with access to better data on the popularity of American forces within host nations. First, understanding the factors that shape public attitudes towards the US can help policymakers when making decisions to send military personnel overseas. Is a larger or smaller “footprint” advisable? Is more or less contact with local civilians better for the safety, security, and sustainability of the American presence? What *types* of contact have positive/negative effects? How do civilians in host nations respond to the presence of American forces over time, particularly if they have witnessed societal benefits to that presence, like economic development, administration of health aid, protection from internal and external threats, or democratic support for the host government? Lastly, how does the popularity of the US installation affect its ability to endure changes to the host government? We will produce data to help answer these questions, which range from those that confront company commanders to those that escalate to the President.

### **Methods**

To answer these questions, we have data collection effort that consists of five sections:

1. We will conduct a series of surveys in every country hosting a substantial presence of American military forces or those that are serving in a critical capacity.<sup>1</sup> First, we will use targeted Facebook advertisements to conduct electronic surveys with subjects in the countries of interest. This method has shown to provide a cost-effective means of gathering quality survey responses, and it can be targeted to particular regions and localities (Samuels and Zucco 2013). Second, we will contract with public opinion research companies to administer surveys on the ground in a selected sample of countries. Third, we will conduct targeted pre- and post-deployment surveys in select locations in Latin America to analyze the short-term impact of a US military presence. This approach will allow us to generate fine-grained data to identify specific causal mechanisms linking the US military to opinion formation. These separate methods will reduce the potential for measurement error due to the survey medium. Acceptance of this white paper will trigger a preliminary electronic survey of two host countries as a proof of concept.
2. Collect a new geocoded dataset on protest activities related to the US military presence (real or proposed) within a country that builds on existing datasets. New data would be collected from various domestic and international news sources. We already have access to some of these sources through our home institutions, while other sources will require payment for new data collection efforts. We plan to use machine coding software as well as student coders to ensure the validity and reliability of observations.
3. Collect new geocoded data on crimes related to the US military presence within a country. These crimes may be perpetrated by US military personnel, civilian employees, and contractors. We will also include data on criminal activity perpetrated *against* US military personnel, civilian

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<sup>1</sup> We estimate based on our own research and previous research (Harkavy 1989; 2011) that this will include approximately fifty countries per year.

employees, and contractors. We will code these data in an event-style format, allowing us to identify perpetrators, victims, number of parties involved, and the type of crime in question.

4. We will collect data on US overseas military expenditures by country, further disaggregating expenditures by location at the subnational level. We will classify expenditures by category to determine where and how the US military is spending money within the host-country, thereby allowing us to analyze the economic effects of the US military presence within the host-state.
5. A phase of the project, conducted during the three summer phases of the project, involves directed on the ground interviews with affected parties. While the vast bulk of this research is to create quantitative measures useable for immediate and future research, having a series of qualitative interviews in three of the regions (South America, Europe and East Asia) will provide contextualizing narratives for early projects on the data.

By gathering these data, this project will address the following research questions, as well as many others that this research team or other researchers suggest in the future:

- What individual, local, and regional factors shape individuals' attitudes towards the US military's presence within a state?
- Does proximity to US military facilities and personnel affect individual attitudes towards the US military?
- Which types of deployments are most likely to generate protests against the US military's presence?
- Do different types of deployments have disparate effects on public attitudes towards the US military?
- How do changes in the size of the American military presence within a state affect local and regional economic conditions?
- Do localities or regions near American military facilities see higher or lower rates of economic growth than regions without close facilities or personnel?
- Does the size of, or proximity to, a military facility increase opportunities for crime in a given locality or region?
- How much continued engagement or repeated interactions are needed to have a positive effect on public opinion on U.S. military presences?
- What are the short-term and long-term effects of US military deployments that engage in humanitarian and civic-assistance missions?
- Is the popularity of a US military presence dependent upon personal characteristics of specific individuals within the host state, such as their ethnicity, gender, or economic status?

### **Project Timeline**

1. Year 1 will focus on finalizing survey questions, establishing time tables for each survey and survey period, and begin electronic surveys in all US military hosts, along with on-the-ground surveys in a selected sample of host countries. We will also coordinate with United States Southern Command to identify the deployment schedules for their annual development-oriented deployments (New Horizons, Beyond the Horizon, and Continuing Promise) for Year 2.
2. Year 2 will involve the intense case-focus work in Latin America. We have contracted survey firms conduct targeted surveys in the countries hosting the New Horizons, Beyond the Horizon, and Continuing Promise deployments corresponding to Year 2. These deployments should occur between March and August of Year 2, and this approach will allow us to test the effects of a short-term military presence as a "natural experiment."
3. Year 3 will continue data collection across all avenues and compile the data into usable forms. We will make the data publicly available to academics and policy makers via an online dashboard, to inform future policy decisions, along with theory generation and testing.

**Team and Management Plan**

**Allen:** Associate Professor (Fall 2017) in the Department of Political Science, Boise State University.

Research addresses the defense implications of military deployments, the positive and negative externalities of US troop deployments, and the conflictual and cooperative decision-making between powerful and weak actors in the international system. Allen is on sabbatical in the 2018-2019 year and will devote a significant portion of that year to completion of this project. Allen will manage half of the graduate assistant team collecting data for the project (those at Boise State University).

**Flynn:** Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science, Kansas State University. Research addresses the political economy of US foreign policy, with a specific focus on the causes and consequences of US overseas military deployments. Recent research also employs research data in understanding the positive image the military conveys in direct assistance to individuals and communities in Peru. He will head the collection of military spending data, targeted public opinion surveys in Latin America, and broader public opinion survey development. Flynn is on sabbatical in the 2019-2020 year and will devote a significant portion of that year to completion and finalization of this project. Flynn and Martinez Machain will co-manage half of the graduate assistant team collecting data for the project (those at Kansas State University).

**Martinez Machain:** Associate Professor (Fall 2017) in the Department of Political Science, Kansas State University. Research addresses military policy, with a focus on the causes and effects of non-invasion military deployments abroad. Recent research also employs data in understanding the positive image the military conveys in direct assistance to individuals and communities in Peru. She will head the collection of protest data, targeted public opinion surveys in Latin America, and broader public opinion survey development. Martinez Machain is on sabbatical in the 2018-2019 year and will devote a significant portion of that year to completion of this project.

**Stravers:** Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Government and Clements Center for National Security Fellow at the University of Texas at Austin. Research addresses the domestic political fights over the distribution of American military resources between home and overseas bases, along with research examining the effects of an American military presence on host regimes. Stravers, while serving as first a pre-doctoral and then post-doctoral researcher, will focus on the day-to-day operations of the project, lead training efforts for data collection and software use, and refine data.

	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Subtotals</b>
<b>Salaries &amp; Wages</b>				
Faculty sabbatical salaries	\$0	\$119,500	\$76,000	\$195,500
Research assistant salaries	\$68,250	\$68,250	\$68,250	\$204,750
Pre/Post-Doc salary	\$58,500	\$58,500	\$58,500	\$175,500
<b>Travel-domestic</b>				
Conference presentations and collaboration	\$16,950	\$16,950	\$16,950	\$50,850
<b>Travel-International</b>				
Direct survey work	\$0	\$35,200	\$0	\$35,200
<b>Surveys</b>				
Survey contract work	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$195,000
Online surveys	\$70,500	\$70,500	\$70,500	\$211,500
<b>Software</b>				
Data storage, ARC GIS	\$29,500	\$0	\$0	\$29,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$308,700</b>	<b>\$433,900</b>	<b>\$355,200</b>	<b>\$1,097,800</b>

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