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A Return to Resistance and Struggle in a Militarised Asia-Pacific: An Interview with Daniel Broudy

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Daniel Broudy revisits *Under Occupation: Resistance and Struggle in a Militarised Asia-Pacific* (Cambridge Scholars, 2013) and re-examines his research of the present protest movements around Henoko and Futenma MCAS. He positions government and military public relations activities in contemporary Okinawa in his past work in imagery analysis with the United States Army in Korea and Panama and the roles that image and text play in mass communication and in shaping public perception and understanding both within and beyond the military community. Included in the dialogues are critical reflections on the socializing processes established to prepare the public mind to accept propaganda, the methods of resistance that people register against it, and the structures of power in place to control public awareness and perception of larger social issues. Broudy discusses ways in which resistance movements might peacefully win the ongoing war for public opinion in Okinawa.

propaganda | metaphor | militarism | post-war Okinawa
diplomacy | development | neo-liberalism | occupation

Political Discourse, Public Relations, & Military Actions

Maki Sunagawa: You arrived in Okinawa in 1995 with the U.S. military's support system for higher education. That was with the University of Maryland, Asian Division? Can you describe your introduction to that system? Did you find any difficulties or contradictions in teaching at university in the American overseas military community?

Daniel Broudy: That's right, I began with Maryland in 1994 in Seoul, Korea almost immediately after I resigned from active duty in the U.S. Army. I fell in love with Seoul while stationed there from '92 to '93 but had received orders to Washington, D.C. just as my tour was coming to a close. I wanted badly to return to Seoul even as I got situated into my new job in D.C. I wasn't there very long before I resigned and returned to Korea. Before leaving active duty, I was given a pink (reserve) ID card which, I later discovered, granted me access to Yongsan Garrison, headquarters for the 8th Army,

the U.N. Command, and the University of Maryland Asian Division, Korea — among various other headquarters. I already knew my way around the garrison, so I walked to the university staff office one afternoon, and was hired on the spot after a brief interview. Serendipity struck as I later found the director had needed someone in my field immediately to take over some classes in the area.

What difficulties were there? Well, regarding academic freedom to teach my mostly military students about misplaced modifiers, rhetorical grammar, and critical thinking about current issues, the university administration was intent to keep up appearances that the institution was first and foremost all about higher education and maintaining teaching excellence. I've heard in recent years, though, that the administration periodically warns its faculty to refrain from looking into and lecturing about any sensitive political issues facing contemporary society. That kind of prohibition probably makes researching, writing, and teaching in the humanities and social sciences a bit difficult. But, my classes in Korea usually had a nice mix of military members and local nationals — mostly young Korean men and women keen to have a taste of American-styled university coursework. In those days, Korean nationals were free to enter the bases and join classes. I'm unsure if that still holds true today.

Orwell's "Politics and the English Language," an essay in a Norton anthology we routinely used, consistently proved to be an excellent departure from the political propaganda in Britain's wartime public discourse and the same in America's far-flung bases of empire in East Asia. The centerpiece of his analysis pointed to political speech and writing, which in his view had become 'largely the defence of the indefensible.' 'What case can be made', I'd ask in light of Orwell's point, 'to see the language and imagery we encounter today in the various media we consume as the produce of indefensible political positions'? You know, we are reminded everyday of what a grave danger North Korea is to the peace-loving people of the South. The message of the North Korea menace is a constant news theme that shapes our perceptions of those people in the North as well as how we see ourselves in relation to them. My goal was not to subvert the western narrative but to foster a careful re-examination of it, so I wondered aloud if the great material wealth of South Korea was threatened in any way by the widespread poverty of the North. Wasn't the massive military might of the United States and South Korea enough to annihilate the North in short order? The resulting discussions from questions like these were always lively indeed.

Some students, mostly military members, would agree immediately that something didn't seem quite right between the purported threat and the rampant poverty while others would question the posing of such queries, patently absurd on the face of it, they believed. Students in the military, those

I'd seen in my classes at least, tended actually to be the most thoughtful in their critical reflections on the conditions. Not precisely certain why. Maybe they generally knew that the propaganda disseminated constantly, day in and day out, through AFRTS and other media sources was little more than unmitigated bull.

M.S.: What do you mean by that? Are the messages in the propaganda just 100 percent fabrication?

D.B.: No. The details in the messages are factual, rooted in real past events, but the background drama that frames the historical narratives, the lines given to actors who re-enact to dramatize what the actual war heroes had said in battle, the added background sounds of exploding bombs and accompanying orchestral arrangements, for additional drama, make them all like a manufactured mockery of war itself. In their effort to deepen the general sense of pride people are expected to have in wartime actions, the messages seem to have the opposite effect.

I mean, if you've ever come into contact with any of these productions, you know immediately they're not only propaganda but also quite unsophisticated, bordering on hokey. AFRTS reminds its audience periodically that the network is prevented from airing commercial advertising, but it still advertises the glories that can be realized in wartime actions. So that we're clear, I'm referring to the television or radio spots slipped into the usual programming during 'commercial' breaks. These are pieces of mass propaganda that feature brief melodramatic re-enactments and commentaries glorifying the actions of past war heroes. No previous war, battle, nor heroic action is spared from being exploited for praise and reproduction as a 20- to 30-second narrated moment of American military history. In the East-Asian theatre of military operations (as it were), what's interesting is that you will notice a kind of cross-fertilization of these productions in both Japan and Korea.

I say 'cross-fertilization' because a Marine presence largely dominates Okinawa today while an Army presence dominates South Korea. In Okinawa, for example, while listening to the radio, you can hear of the daring exploits of the Army sergeant who saved his squad, single-handedly, from certain death at the Battle of Chosin Reservoir while in Korea you can hear of the heroism of a Marine commander who braved a hail of machinegun fire at Kakazu Ridge to rescue his stranded men.

The courageous actions of noted Navy and Air Force figures of the past also feature in these sorts of productions. Huge feats of bravery — to be sure — in real life, but cheapened by a banal melodrama ... made worse, I think, by the monotonous repetition that only radio and television technologies can generate.

When I initially encountered these propaganda spots in the military at my first duty station in Panama in the late 1980s, it didn't take long to conclude that much of the media we consume in AFRTS programming is meant to reinforce the re-programming of our minds from months of intense military training. To answer your earlier question, I'd estimate the great majority of people who serve in the military, who get deployed, who carry out orders to take this or that hill, or who go on night patrol, already know that their senses are being assaulted everyday with media messages meant to fortify a particular line of thinking about who they are and who the enemy is. It isn't natural, obviously, for a normal human to take the life of another human being; this is why, I think, the message of maintaining a necessary level of conceptual aggression must be consistently reinforced anywhere, anytime. But, resistance and mockery of the establishment certainly endure.

My arrival in Panama, for example, in 1987 saw me analyzing imagery in support of ongoing proxy wars in Central America. Near the end of the tour, the focus shifted dramatically to operations within theatre. The first George Bush (H.W.) concluded, among other things, that it was necessary to bring in Manuel Noriega, dictator of Panama, to face drug trafficking charges in a Miami court. That's interesting, isn't it? Just imagine, for a second, if Iraq ever followed through with an indictment of the entire Bush administration for wrecking their country. What name might the Iraqi people give to the operation for carrying out such a legal maneuver? The U.S. military action to remove Noriega was given the codename 'Operation Just Cause' — a fitting way to control the conceptual frame that the cause for massive military aggression was justified.

Of course, this is also part of the nominalization of violence. Foucault talked about the 'examination' in *Discipline and Punish* as a kind of expression of power. Who has the power to enact the examination on people? Who is the examiner? You know, in the discourse, when processes are turned into things, nouns, we begin to think in terms of the things, like the operation itself — a surgical procedure to be sure — co-opted for another context by a new expression like 'surgical strike'. The question is, who is the surgeon with the power to operate on some particular body? In that period, Panama was the body under examination, the object of an operation. This way of using language, in the case of the invasion, hides the hideous turn of 'operation' from life saving to life taking. So, for much of 1987 and '88, you could see the discourse in the military community across Panama, while mostly centered on regional conflicts and the ongoing war on drugs, suddenly turn sometime in mid-1988 to focus on in-theatre operations, to shift dramatically onto the leader of Panama itself and what kind of operation would be necessary to extract him, a kind of tumor.

By that time, I had already made good friends with a few local people, so you might imagine how troubling that feeling of tension was. Growing hostility illustrated in the propaganda campaign against Noriega made contact with my Panamanian friends somewhat uncomfortable, you might say. Finally, when December of 1989 arrived, my military friends and I understood the extent to which the U.S. would go to assert its political will with military force. I can recall a casual conversation with some members of the 82nd Airborne who'd been deployed, actually parachuted into Panama for the conflict, brief as it was. When the question arose of why the invasion was even necessary, one soldier cynically remarked, 'Just cuz' — meaning 'just because we can do it'. That kind of mockery in renaming the reality really resonated with me. I haven't forgotten that remark. The subtext in the tone of his voice told me he wasn't proud of what he had done in Panama.

Diplomacy, Power, & the Creative Deployment of Names

M.S.: Speaking of naming, in your 2013 edited volume, *Under Occupation: Resistance and Struggle in a Militarised Asia-Pacific*, you wrote that post-war diplomats John Steeves and Olcott Deming were important actors in changing the growing international perception of the U.S. military presence in Okinawa as an occupation force to that of a tenant who is abiding by the terms of a lease. I admit that I had never learned in school about the details of the plans that were drawn up for Okinawa after the war, but, as you say, the actual shift in our perceptions of the U.S. presence was crucial to continuing the occupation in perpetuity. So, you're saying that it is vital for a change in conditions on the ground, so to speak, in order to change concepts in the mind and, therefore, the language we use to describe and name things?

D.B.: Yes, you're referring to a discussion we took up on naming and framing, which comes out of a much longer and enduring debate in cognitive science and linguistics about whether language shapes our perceptions or whether our perceptions give shape to the words we choose. Lots of work done by George Lakoff at Berkeley on metaphor as a window into the way in which the mind orders and makes sense of the world's phenomena. For Peter and me, this was a useful way of looking at the conditions the U.S. military planned to create in Okinawa and how the U.S. diplomats of that time planned to change those conditions so as to change how people perceived what was happening during the occupation years. What I mean by 'occupation years' is the era of U.S. military governance, USCAR as it was then known, which signified a kind of code for 'military dictatorship'.

Others in that volume you're referring to argue that the occupation is actually ongoing, that the present conditions represent a double-colony comprised of Tokyo and Washington elites working from the top of the social pyramid,

as it were, to lay the plans for Okinawa's continued 'development' or, if you prefer, destruction. That is to say, if you take time to observe the present conditions through the lens of development as an antidemocratic process, you can argue then, quite easily, that Okinawa is still under occupation. You know, when powerful policymakers can effectively define society, in this case Okinawa, in terms of two opposing halves — one developed and one underdeveloped — and are also free to impose upon various communities within Okinawa this oversimplified conception of development, then what you have is an antidemocratic state — a condition thoroughly discussed in Doug Lummis' *Radical Democracy*.

There seems to be a growing common sense that woven into Okinawa's continued economic development is its unquestioning compliance with larger plans in place to develop even further Okinawa's military landscape and seascape. It seems reasonable, therefore, that local people continue to wonder how truly altruistic the central planners in Tokyo are, especially when you drive by recently returned land on Camp Foster and see the huge construction project underway for the International Medical Research Institute — Japan's planned version of America's NIH. These projects seem on the surface to be in keeping with the diplomatic work done by Steeves and Deming, to alter long-standing conditions in a way that changes widespread perceptions that Okinawa is little more than a site for a particular kind of development in the imaginations of powerful central planners.

So, as I was saying earlier, you've got to thank those two postwar diplomats, I think, for having the foresight to work hard to change the reality of a military dictatorship so that people would begin to change the words they use to describe what they were observing during that time. I don't mean 'thank' literally, because their sensitive diplomatic work in that period did effectively pave the way for the present conditions, or at least how the present conditions are largely perceived by the U.S. military forces — 'we're all just neighbors to the Okinawans because we have a legal lease on the land here'. Of course, perception can also shape attitude, this is why so many Americans in the military community are almost entirely bewildered, or even sometimes indignant, when they encounter shouting protestors and signs at the front gates urging them to 'get out'. I should also say, though, that a noticeable number of military men and women do offer some very clear signs of their stealthy solidarity with the protestors.

M.S.: Earlier, when you say 'how people perceived', are you referring to the Russians and Chinese, those people? I'm asking because of another diplomatic communication I've been studying. This communication, previously classified Top Secret, expresses the 'hopes' of Hirohito in 1947 through his advisor Hidenari Terasaki to General Douglas MacArthur through his political advisor William J. Sebald. In the memorandum, we can see that Mr. Sebald referred to the

Emperor's 'hope' that the U.S. military would continue an occupation under 'the fiction of a long-term lease'. Isn't it possible these diplomats were just trying to return the conduct of the occupation back to its original mission in order to keep up the ... illusion of a lease on the Okinawan land so Russians and Chinese would be less likely to make similar military basing claims?

D.B.: Good questions and a great point. As we argued in the book, an outside observer can grasp a good understanding of the U.S. military's self-perception during that time by looking at the metaphors that prevailed in the discourse of the overseas military community. If we look at the conditions of Okinawa from the [perspective of the] 1947 memorandum you're referencing and the decade that followed, it is easy to infer, quite reasonably, that U.S. military leaders took various liberties in interpreting what 'fiction' and 'a long-term lease' actually meant to the governing forces. After all, they were also fighting for 'freedom' and 'liberty'. The period that followed saw significant base expansion on Okinawa, as you know, so the Emperor's concept of the 'lease' as kind of 'fiction' may have been interpreted by the occupying forces as a permission slip to conduct frontier activities. After all, it wasn't until the mid- to late-'50s that clearer evidence of the diplomatic efforts undertaken by Steeves and Deming emerged. The inability or unwillingness to introduce more progressively a radically different approach to military occupation seems to have allowed for the various campaigns undertaken to grab land to make more garrisons. The Isahama farmers and their resistance to the bayonets and bulldozers that rolled up to the rice fields to destroy the resistance as well as the agricultural land is but one example. Otis Bellⁱ wrote about this as an eyewitness to the events in 1954. Helen Mearsⁱⁱ is certainly worth reading too.

We can infer, too, from the diplomatic cables that it was useful to create the fiction of a lease not only to protect Japan against potential claims that might come from China or Russia, but also to obscure from view from the American people what the U.S. military was up to. Of course, it was much easier then to conceal such overseas activities from domestic public purview stateside, even as occasional investigative journalism reported on the ambitious annexation of local land. Post-war America was about bringing home the troops, aiding nations in post-war reconstruction, re-populating, and retooling the economy for major peacetime economic output. To create a consumer economy and consumer needs to gobble up the fruits of the great material production underway. Building a global empire of military bases was not a part of the American plan — at least from the viewpoint of the burgeoning middleclass. Helen Mears pointed this out in 1956, 'no one thought of Okinawa as a permanent conquest of territory'.

You refer in your question to 'the original mission', which was to create the fictional narrative of a lease. A 'lease' implies a beginning and an end as well as the power of a landholder to negotiate the terms, but Eisenhower himself — despite his often-cited warnings about a growing military-industrial complex in his farewell address — spoke in a 1954 State of the Union speech about the plan to maintain bases in Okinawa indefinitely. So, much can be understood when we look at perception, and perception can be accessed through careful explication of metaphor used in the context of a particular era.

We originally adopted the idea from George Lakoff and Mark Turner in More Than Cool Reason (1989). Nowadays, there's a massive literature in cognitive linguistics and metaphor. Since metaphor is so pervasive and so unconsciously woven into our discourse practices, carefully studying the salience of various metaphors in a discourse community will help bring to light something quite profound about the beliefs and presuppositions and prevailing ideologies that people embrace. See for a second how the verb 'embrace' metaphorically refers to another implied metaphor 'hold'. Can we actually embrace and hold ideas? Only in the metaphorical sense. Maybe pointing this out has raised the importance of metaphor as an unconscious activity to your own conscious awareness? Well, it turns out that it's not so easy to resist certain literal realities created by or imposed upon us by the powerful in society because language also holds the power to create metaphorical realities, and these take some greater mental effort to even notice in the first place. In other words, language can be used in ways that mask long-standing hideous realities, and we're hard pressed to confront them because words can also anesthetize the critical mind. A quick look at the highly emotive words used by Ted Cruz or Donald Trump in their present presidential bids and the effect their language uses have on their unquestioning supporters tells us much about the ability of metaphors to arrest the development of thought.

Consider, too, how Emperor Hirohito's post-WWII concept of the lease as a fiction gave birth to and nurtured the metaphorical reality of the 'guest-host' relationship that has since developed, and even its more pleasantly sounding contemporary alternatives — 'neighbor' and 'friend'. As we argue in the book, these are like metaphorical heirs of past events, and they're not easy to grapple with, to challenge, because they are so deeply seated in the discourse. Years of use have made them an unconscious choice in the lexicon. For the overseas U.S. military community, these metaphors are incredibly positive and represent a deeply held self-perception that the community is first and foremost a friend and neighbor because, among various other reasons, you (Okinawans) are such good 'hosts'. I'm not suggesting, either, that the Americans serving here in this military community do not genuinely see themselves as neighbors

and friends. I know many Americans who have huge respect and love for the local people (me among them), but those feelings and perceptions develop within a larger legal system that doesn't represent equality in terms of democratic decision-making. People on both sides, thus, feel forced into obeying the details and terms of an agreement that they didn't even make to begin with.

The metaphorical representations of the relationship are actually spelled out in the SOFA, which very likely clash with those spelled out, or expressed, in the local public discourse. Look, also, at the language used in the SACO 'agreements' meant to assuage local outrage over the 1995 rape, and you can begin to understand the root cause of ongoing anger. Seems safe enough to put the word 'agreements' in scare quotes, too, since not a single local voice was part of the discussions on SACO.

I haven't taken up any systematic study of the metaphorical choices made and expressed in local Japanese media that frame the presence of the friendly 'tenants', or 'guests', but given the results of the elections that have brought so many anti-base politicians into power, especially since the plans for Oura Bay have unfolded, I imagine the metaphors aren't so positive. That is, I don't think the metaphorical reality is as positive as we are led to believe when we see rare images of love and support for the U.S. military expressed in bumper stickers or on banners hanging at the front gates where the protest movements converge.



It seems one obvious signifier of the growing success of the local grassroots protest movement is the perceived necessity to counter it with more sophisticated *anti-anti-base* propaganda. The groundswell of *popular protest* that came out of the basing of the Ospreys at Futenma in 2012 also saw the emergence of a counter-movement that had, most likely, taken grave note of a potential fundamental threat to the present system. This is why it was necessary to create a strong counter-narrative replete with more explicit signs of support for the U.S. troops here. Note that the so-called 'Osprey Fan Club' did not even exist prior to the huge public

demonstration against it in Ginowan City as well as subsequent demonstrations. You see signs and symbols, at times, of the counter-narrative in occasional bumper stickers, on patches sewn on uniforms, and at sites of protest.

'You are our friends', that's the message that needs to be reinforced, evidently, by the minority of local but vocal economic beneficiaries of the status quo. As you know, it's not until someone, or some group, comes along and attempts to upset the order that you begin to see push back. There's much truth in the old Japanese proverb, *出る釘は打たれる*, (The nail that sticks out gets hammered down), but that holds for any society. Since the elite power-holders, at present, seem not to mind asserting their military plans for Henoko and Takae and Futenma, one way to empower the movement against those plans is to undertake an island-wide campaign of re-naming.

Let's just pause and consider for a moment how the name 'Camp Schwab' itself resonates with people, especially with those actively engaged in the resistance to the destruction of Oura Bay. The names we assign to things and ideas and situations signify other things. Names are loaded with connotations, with *mythologies* as Roland Barthes noted. 'Schwab' is also not a natural name for the actual topography of that region — literal or political. The history of that region of the island long predates the name it bears now, which is a humiliating kind of setback for the natural development of the island community.

ADon't you also think that the recent agreement between Japan and Korea as regards the 'comfort women' issue is also a kind of defeat for the natural development of honest and open communications between women across national boundaries? Did the mostly male power holders in Seoul and Tokyo ask the women themselves whether the agreement between these two nations would be, in some way, a sufficiently comforting resolution? It was largely the men who negotiated on behalf of the women. What's also outrageous is the metaphor of 'comfort' that was used for so long to conceal a quite different reality.

Recall Shakespeare's line for Juliet, 'What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.' While a name on one hand can seem meaningless and arbitrary, it can, on the other, hold powerful historical and conceptual associations. If the name 'Camp Schwab' in contemporary Okinawa conceals a kind of discrimination, one way to wrest some control over the situation is to control the naming of it. Romeo disavowed the Montague name, if you recall. Camp *差別* (*sabetsu*) may be an expedient replacement for Schwab, a step toward re-defining what meanings such a new name might hold for the people disgusted by the symbolic (and literal) violence it represents.

M.S.: But, when we name something, aren't we also admitting to a certain reality that, in the case of modern Okinawa, is kind of ugly? Personally, I feel kind of anxious because I don't want language to keep supporting an already existing ugliness.

D.B.: That's a really excellent point. You are certainly right, on one hand. Assigning a name to something communicates also a general acknowledgement that the thing so named actually did exist, or continues to. We tend to feel emotionally better off ignoring that which engenders anxiety and anger. This is what some war survivors report, or others who've experienced hideous horrors. It feels better not to give voice to the memory, since doing so returns it to your explicit awareness, so the images stored inside memory that represent historical realities get suppressed further. Yet, anxieties and angers also have a way of escaping in unproductive or unhealthy behaviors.

It can also be quite empowering, though, to finally name and define those complex and ineffable feelings. Wrapped up in the act of naming and defining is the expression of a kind of power. Recall that names are signifiers, that the names of all the military bases signify a kind of outside dominance. The present names for the bases represent an inheritance that the people 70 years ago struggled against. So, there's the historical aspect as well. The names have survived for decades. Recall the late Herbert Schiller who worked out the theory and described the practice of 'definitional control', — the ability of the governor to explain, promote, and disseminate a particular view of reality local or global. He literally used the word 'governor', but a case can be made to interchange 'president', 'prime minister,' 'emperor', 'citizens', and so on.

When the Governor during that period of history was the USCAR High Commissioner, it was hardly achievable for the local people to rename and redefine the bases and the realities of their activities, given the relatively huge amount of power the establishment had in that era and its ability to control communications. Of course privately, people very likely challenged the names, but they didn't have the power to make the names stick in a codified history. Oral traditions can fade away or devolve, and so we don't have easy access to the names and metaphors given to the occupation, the occupiers, and their expanding network of bases during that period. If we really want to understand, we have to go out and do some more fieldwork and interview the dwindling number of survivors of that era.

Any occupying force goes early for control over the language since it underpins just about all of our vital activities as humans. Makes sense? Control the intellectual tools, the signs, the symbols, and then you'll have some control over perception and understanding. To your earlier point, though,

the present Governor is, in some ways, trying to re-name the Washington and Tokyo project for Oura Bay. It is an effort to turn the public's focus onto explicit names. Look at the language in SACO to see how it conflicts with the Governor's current label for the plan — illegal.

Persuasion, Emotion, & the Manufacture of Compliance

M.S.: You're saying a lot about processes that can possibly be reversed in the interest of recapturing some kind of power. I'm curious also what kinds of socializing processes are present in American society that persuade young people to enter military service. Were you persuaded by these processes?

D.B.: America is a truly amazing experiment, but we're not noted for having a 'peace' constitution. Such a development, I think, would be utterly astounding.

When the 'Star Spangled Banner' (our national anthem) includes allusions to and tacit pride in warfare and the 'Pledge of Allegiance' urges submission to that banner (the sacred symbol of state power), and these civil hymns form part of the schooling we submit to, you might begin to see how the subtle programming for becoming a more receptive citizen to the pervasive reality of militarism begins early on. I'm sure you recall in your readings an interesting quote from *Manufacturing Consent* that bears repeating. Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky said something like, 'It is the role of media to communicate the messages and symbols of the dominant culture, to inform, entertain, and inculcate citizens with the beliefs and codes of behavior that will integrate them into society's institutions'. Their point, they went on to make quite succinctly, is that democracies require a system of propaganda, and we begin consuming a steady diet of it from a fairly early age. Before we're even fully aware of the concept of allegiance, for example, we're confirming it in grade school. I did some research on this some years ago when President Obama was a Senator and was being roundly castigated in the FOX 'News' universe for refusing to wear a facsimile of the national flag cast in a lapel pin for his business suit. (I think the religious fervor of rising nationalism may have bothered him on the campaign trail.) Anyway, that non-issue got me to thinking about the Pledge and various other salutes in general as evidence of coercion and obedience.

Concepts of freedom and liberty put forward by the various governments that come and go with each election cycle cultivate the doctrinal foundation of the state religion; the flag (or Old Glory) is the central symbol of adoration as well as any image of the bald eagle, and the hymns are sung, or recited, at schools, sporting events, and other mass gatherings of spectacle. Watch FOX, or any of the other corporate media clones, and note the profusion of state

symbols and colors wrapped up in the messaging. What's interesting, to me, are the various churches outside the bases that serve the service members in overseas military communities but can't seem to get enough of the state symbols of power and feel so moved by the spirit of patriotism to include these images in sanctuaries of worship.

So, we might infer that the well-adjusted citizen has actually come to mean a fully acculturated consumer of propaganda; it is pervasive, urging us to observe the messages about what to eat and drink, where to shop, what to think, who to love and hate, and where to go for comfort. The people who are able to filter out the bullshit and see reality as it is, not how it's contrived, are able to make more informed and careful decisions, seems to me. I was thoroughly persuaded at one point in my life that joining the military was the most prudent decision I could make after college.

I'd resisted taking the reserve officers training path (ROTC) in college, but after graduation, with the pressure of paying student loans weighing on my mind, I made what I'd thought was a reasonable and pragmatic decision. A student debt of twelve thousand dollars in the mid-1980s, I felt at the time, was quite considerable. My father was a WWII vet, and one evening while we were sipping on some beer, an advertisement appeared on the TV. Can't recall if it was the Marine Corps or the Army, but the details presented the prospect of seeing the world and getting paid while serving in uniform. The glossy images and sounds that couched the messages were incredibly persuasive. I might have gone off to visit the recruiter the very next day.

Since the American government has long abandoned enforcing compulsory military service for its young people, the result has been a consistent and largely successful campaign of active recruitment and retention. In terms of the number of recruits needed annually, the targets are achieved, it seems, through the promise of access to free higher education. During my tenure with Maryland, the vast majority of my students who were serving in the military reported that the benefit of a college education was too good to pass up. It seems the message to young people today who are thinking about university now think seriously about joining the military as a way of getting a degree without risking future economic slavery servicing student loan debts for decades to come.

This is probably why Bernie Sanders' egalitarian plan for young people preparing for college isn't so popular with the elites: it doesn't square with larger plans in place, goading the masses of young people to contemplate sincerely the military option. The messages in these recruiting ads are very powerful, thanks to generous annual military budgets covered by tax dollars. When I think about the sheer persuasiveness of these sorts of ads, I'm reminded of a really interesting observation that the nephew of Sigmund Freud

made in the late 1920s. Edward Bernays pointed out in his well titled book *Propaganda* that manipulation of the habits and opinions of the public, I'm paraphrasing, is central to democratic societies and that those who manage these invisible mechanisms comprise an invisible government, the actual ruling powers of society.

He's widely seen as the progenitor of the modern public relations industry since he managed to effectively apply to advertising techniques many of his uncle's theories concerning human behavior and desire. He reasoned that our emotional responses to stimuli are triggered by our desires, which tend to be irrational. Knowing what we generally do about any military service, the rational mind naturally rejects its inherent dangers, so a successful campaign to enlist new members to the ranks must create a strong image of pathos that can override the faculty of reason.

The connection between military service, its associated horrors, and human desire must be highly manufactured and rooted in our emotions. You can see these connections today reinforced in the countless choreographed family reunions of military men and women returning from deployment, all of which are staged and broadcast for public consumption in sports stadiums and arenas. You might have seen recent news of the Department of Defense paying the National Football League millions of dollars to stage these spectacles. What's strange is a system that appropriates public funding to encourage public displays of very personal and emotional reunions between family members separated by military conflicts but manufactured by highly concentrated forms of private wealth.

M.S.: Have you seen any similar exhibitions of public relations in Okinawa? I thought you might have some opinion about the recent use of Santa Claus and his visit to Camp Schwab for a Christmas party in early December as well as to a local elementary school in Henoko District to hand out toys to the children. I'm asking because the tradition of inviting young kids from Henoko has been expanded this year to include kids from two other surrounding districts — the very ones, incidentally, that the Minister of Defence (Suga Yoshihide) had asked to accept the new base. This is the same person who reportedly is giving money to these districts because the protestors at Schwab are 'too loud', and the money — 100,000 USD — he has funneled to each is to be used for developing cultural exchange programs with the base.

D.B.: I wasn't aware of Santa Claus' recent appearance, but from your description it sounds as though he's also dressing up in fine business attire and working as a bureaucrat in the halls of power. To your first point about Santa, I'm sure it is in keeping with a long tradition, maybe related to the Toys for

Tots Foundation, which is a very successful charity that helps provide toys to needy children during the Christmas holiday. Everyone loves Santa, especially when he's doling out toys and tasty treats, but in the eyes of children, this particular Santa represents a very friendly sort of bridge between the foreign culture that exists on the base adjacent to the town. The sweets, and the sweet gestures of gift giving, represent excellent annual opportunities to condition the tastes, so to speak, of the next generation of local people to see for themselves how palatable the present conditions can be.



M.S.: You know, the kids also received hot dogs, chips, and cake.

D.B.: What better way to build emotional connections with the friendly neighbors than sampling their sugars, salts, and saturated fats? You asked about other examples too. One of the more interesting public relations initiatives I've seen in recent years appeared on Futenma MCAS in the spring of 2013. The Corps calls it 'public affairs', a smart way of casting concepts and practices of propaganda. During those months of the most vocal protests against the Osprey, Futenma staged an event that opened up the gates to 300 local people. It was known as 'Osprey Family Day', as well as 'Osprey Open House Day' in other media, and a couple of my colleagues tried to join the tour but were turned away.



MV-22 Osprey Open House Day - Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, Okinawa, Japan

The first name of the event suggests that those who join the tour, or who even seek to join, are somehow part of the Osprey family, which connotes explicit consent of their presence — 'their' meaning the aircraft itself. Wrapped up in concepts of 'family' also tend to be images of 'neighbor', and 'friend'. The second name suggests a public gathering that is open to all, neither of which appear to be the case. Reality didn't seem to align with the names given to these opportunities.

Private Wealth, Global Dominance, & Counter-narratives

M.S.: I want to return just briefly to a point you made earlier about private wealth. Can you expand on that a bit?

D.B.: Here's an illustration. One of my most admired historical personalities, General Smedley D. Butler wrote a brilliant exposé in 1935 that laid bare the realities of war and the industries that prepare people for it. Butler is such an important figure in military history — as well — that some highly observant member of the Marine Corps saw to it that the entire collection of Marine bases throughout the prefecture of Okinawa should be named after this General. Not Chesty Puller, but Smedley Butler. This fact alone should tell you something about Butler's apparently little-known but nonetheless immense authority and influence.

His little tome *War is a Racket* (a really apt title by the way) is a profound revelation for those who suspect but aren't yet entirely sure war is about business — very, very big business. In the mass media, appeals to patriotism and honor and courage during wartime are only emotive veils under which move the tedious and sometimes hideous routines of business. The owners of capital and those who own the means of production are the central targets of Butler's concise and, at times, highly poetic rage. He speaks from decades of experience (over 30 years) working in the military as a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism — his words — making various countries safe for American capital investment and exploitation. According to General Butler himself, Nicaragua, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic were among the half dozen countries he helped 'rape for the benefit of Wall Street'. I think he mentioned China as well. What's interesting is that Woodrow Wilson, before he ascended to the presidency of the United States, was already talking publicly about these practices — the demands that business had, still have, in seeing the entire globe as its

rightful domain of influence and unencumbered activity. The Wilson Doctrine embraced the presuppositions of neoliberal capitalism, and this ideology has since informed the global frontier activities of big business backed by military might.

Since the manufacturer insists on the world as a market, the flag of this nation will follow him and the doors of nations closed against him will be battered down. I think Wilson put economic and military intervention in those terms. It's memorable because it unflinchingly presupposes that military muscle must necessarily make way for private business and the spread of new markets. It's astonishing, too, because of the widespread belief that an unregulated free market is actually achievable — and beneficial. Of course, there's another kind of war going on too. The battle is for the public mind and the battlefield the media landscape. Calls for 'smaller government', 'free trade', and 'deregulation' camouflage ugly realities that are neither free nor small. These agreements over trade worked out in exacting secrecy signify the huge extent to which neoliberal ideology has infected the globe where free trade has come to mean freedom *from* protective regulations for people and environment and where smaller governments are made powerless against multinational corporations seeking, at every turn, to maximize profits and market dominance.

As General Butler observed, the military is a business meant to protect the larger interests of global banking and business. Consumers, you know, you and me, we're not invited to review the activities and agendas of the corporate aristocracy. We're just faceless parts of a larger public conditioned to consume what's put in front of us. Legal battles over control of labeling what is and isn't in your food, for example, should remind us that profit takes precedence over food safety. Look at the way, also, in which the plans to destroy Oura Bay have unfolded right before your eyes. It doesn't matter to the central planners that these activities are illegal. One may wonder whether lawmakers feel free to ignore the laws they themselves enact. What really matters, though, is the potential for huge gains in business, in banking, in construction, in the defense industry, in logistics and other areas of support. We use the 'revolving door' as a metaphor to capture how the interests of industry, corporate media, militarism, and judicial systems remain interlocked and mutually supportive of one another.

Retired military members who demonstrate their consent to this system through dedicated service receive wider access to work in the complex that Eisenhower once spoke of and warned about. When war is in the making, you can easily see how many so-called experts come out of the woodwork and appear, as paid consultants, in the mass media to help lay the conceptual groundwork that this dictator or that is a threat to democracy or freedom or liberty. As you know, they are a threat to business or a potentially lucrative market.

Public Awareness, Mass Media, & the Struggle for Truth

M.S.: What was the catalyzing event that changed your perceptions of U.S. military goodwill in the world?

D.B.: The event was actually many stretched across many years. I can't really pin down one in particular. During the Reagan Administration, when I was in college, I got my first taste of what gunboat diplomacy and international outrage means. After a nightclub in Berlin was bombed in the spring of 1986, Reagan responded maybe a week later by launching missiles and dropping bombs on various targets in Libya. The two nations had already been in disputes over territorial claims, and the bombing of the disco in Berlin, which the U.S. claimed had come on order from Muammar Gaddafi, served as a nice pretext for an American reply. Actually, the reply was like a sledgehammer hitting a butterfly. I'm leaving out lots of background details, but my point is about law, diplomacy, and acts of war. After the massive attack on Tripoli became news, a huge demonstration gathered in front of the university library where I was passing by on my way to class. I recognized mostly international exchange students there from Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Germany, Ireland, and the Netherlands.

These were young students, some of whom I'd known and partied with periodically. I'd never witnessed, firsthand, such visceral outrage in a crowd before then. That demonstration, kind of, served to awaken my critical awareness of how bombs and missiles are deployed as extensions of diplomacy. Detached observation can teach you much. At the time, I should have been angered too, I admit, but I simply wasn't well read enough in international politics to gather with my friends and oppose the use of military force in this way. I stood by, observed, and managed to learn something new.

As you know, the invasion of Panama came a few years later, and since I was there in it, I didn't have the luxury of standing at a distance to observe carefully what valuable nuggets of subtext might be mined from the public discourse. Back then, I had already grown somewhat skeptical of the stories developed and presented in the major news media. After I left Panama in the spring of 1990 and was reassigned, I saw a similar pattern develop again in the media with the demonization of Saddam Hussein. He had been a huge friend of the U.S. in the '80s, receiving tons of weapons and monetary backing for his war with Iran, but now he was a devil. When he was oppressing and using chemical weapons against his own people, U.S. corporate media had scarcely anything to say about that, at the time. But, a bit more than a decade later, during the planning stages for the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the U.S. corporate media couldn't feed the American public enough gory details about Hussein's past atrocities from the 1980s.

Unworthy victims in one era of history become, in another, quite worthy of tightly focused corporate news coverage. Herman and Chomsky actually predicted this kind of media behavior, something like the victims of enemy states will be ‘worthy’ and subject to more extensive and offensive coverage than those victimized by the U.S. — or its clients — who are inherently ‘unworthy’ of the same sort of coverage. Their prediction certainly seems accurate, not only in U.S. corporate media but also throughout the world. Have a look at major news coverage of events by big media in South Korea. The very local struggle on Jeju Island against Seoul’s nearly finished plans for a new naval base in Gangjeong Village hardly receives any mention in the nation’s big media.

Since the story of this struggle is so effectively marginalized, the issues that the new naval base present don’t rise to the public’s consciousness. Hardly anyone cares because hardly anyone knows. I read an article the other day in one of Korea’s major dailies that Seoul is now the world’s number one client for Washington’s military hardware. Is there any wonder why so many people in mainland Japan, too, have nearly not a clue about what is happening in Okinawa? The chasm between coverage of the Henoko and Takae issues as presented for public consumption in national news and local news is very wide indeed.

The struggle for locating an accurate image of the world endures. It is a strange time to be alive, isn’t it, when grassroots attempts to preserve or make peace are labeled as radical. If you see your neighbor sharpening his knife, logic dictates he intends to use it. The present social world is awash in knives, those who make them, look after them, buy and sell them, and seek ways of using them. More knives means more profits for everyone involved in their manufacture and maintenance, but also more instability and suspicion and the potential that a knife fight will be breaking out soon.

Static Conditions, Perceptions, & the Rise of Apathy

M.S.: Finally, you’ve discussed your experiences with overseas students in the military and working within the military community, but can you comment on what you see in your local students here? How do they seem to you to perceive the social and economic situation created, in many ways, by the American bases here?

D.B.: Over the years, I’ve noticed that my local students seem to abide in a few different camps — those who express no opinion about the American military presence, those who remain visibly unhappy about it, and those who represent some of its most zealous supporters. This last camp, a consistently small but present group, tends to work part-time on any one of the many bases, and they seem intent to do so, since their college education, they believe, can get them

access to purportedly good jobs where they can serve fast food or operate a cash register. This is a quick generalization, I admit, but it is undeniable that work in clerical support largely dominates the on-base job market for local people.

If the bases were such a significant economic boon for the local economy, my students also wonder, why does Okinawa consistently rank at the very bottom of economic output among all Japanese prefectures. The island hosts the vast majority of U.S. bases in Japan yet remains mired at the bottom in terms of socioeconomic progress. Rates in truancy, dropout, educational achievement, alcoholism, drunken driving, divorce, substance addiction, environmental contamination and degradation, domestic abuse, and basic pay reveal deep problems across local society. Some of my students undertake elaborate research projects during their university training to try to uncover the root cause of these ongoing social and economic inequities and puzzle over these facts while pursuing work on base. Mystifying.

In recent years, when classroom discussions unfold over government plans to reclaim Oura Bay, a fair number of students even hint that it is probably better to just obey. This is a reflection, seems to me, of what is generally expected of students during their formal schooling years: that is, to shut up, keep your head down, follow directions, keep your opinions to yourself. These students seem to see no sense in publicly questioning, let alone actively challenging government designs for Okinawa. Maybe *velleity* best describes their current mental state, as they say they wish that the government would do this or that, but their wishes fail to lead to any sort of significant action in speaking out.

Apathy is maybe another way to explain the lack of political arousal among young people. They may sense that they are simply powerless and the communications technologies they are addicted to reinforce a sense of alienation from the real world. You know, why worry about what’s happening in society when so much more is happening in the parallel universe of cyberspace? This is where so many of our students actually appear to get their information about real social issues — visiting blogs and YouTube, participating in SNS, and text messaging. They can conveniently feast on the mediated versions of real events, so why bother going to Henoko or Takae and being an engaged witness? Why bother caring about what some politician is saying about these issues? Maybe that’s the general feeling — the sense that what the powerful are saying is already generally unquestionable.

M.S.: You’re making some interesting points. We can understand the attitudes young people have toward politics and social issues reflected in the low turnout at the voting booths. The low interest can be explained, I think, by looking

back at recent history. When voters in Nago City thought they were voting for an anti-base candidate, they got Kishimoto who, when he got into office, later changed. This is why Inamine won Nago so dramatically during the election cycle that followed. The same thing happened with former Governor Nakaima. The people, trusting his promises, voted him back into office in 2010 on the pledge that he would oppose the destruction of Oura Bay, but he changed in 2013 and did a 180. Mayor Matsumoto, the current mayor of Urasoe City was also elected on a promise to oppose the plan for relocating the Naha Military Port to his city, but he ended up accepting the plan. We can say the same about the present Ginowan City mayor. He came into office four years ago on the promise that he would also oppose the relocation of Futenma within the prefecture. People believed that one too, but now he changed his story.

D.B.: Evidently, promises are made and broken as routinely in politics as in romance. You know, another way to say 'elect' is 'élite' from Old French, I believe. Maybe we sense that elected officials perceive themselves to be elite and, thus, scarcely answerable to the masses that select them for public office because their promises are written in the sand. Nowadays, private wealth seems to have effectively purchased political power, and so the elect answer to other sources of support. Still, I hold out hope that some elected leaders still do exist and who in their own way continue to echo the sentiments of President Eisenhower, that the world in arms represents a kind of theft from those who hunger and are not fed, who are cold and not clothed. I think his most salient observation in that speech still resonates with great relevance today, under the cloud of threatening war, the world in arms is humanity hanging on a cross of iron.

Bios:

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ⁱ Otis W. Bell. "Play Fair with the Okinawans," *The Christian Century*. January 20, 1954.

ⁱⁱ Helen Mears. "Okinawa: Orphan of Conquest," *The Nation*. November 3, 1956.