
THESIS

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ABSTRACT

Though forged in the mid-twentieth century, America’s alliances with Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK) continue to be of vast importance. Though economic linkages have produced close ties between these states, the foundation of relations lies in security cooperation—most notably seen in the stationing of U.S. troops in Japan and the ROK.

However, if man is imperfect, then so are the military institutions to which he belongs. With bases in Japan and the ROK housing thousands of service personnel, members of the U.S. military have committed several acts—from the embarrassing to the appalling—inviting harsh rebuke from host countries and their populations. While the most horrendous crimes (e.g., rape, murder) are not commonplace, they have occurred repeatedly, triggering governments and citizens to wonder aloud: is the benefit of this alliance worth the crime it entails?

Viewing military crime as a static, isolated issue does not afford us the entire picture. My goal, therefore, is to explore trends in Japan- and ROK-based U.S. military crime as relates to external historical and social phenomena. I do this by using a vast assortment of primary and secondary sources—the former to collect trend data and the latter to juxtapose those trends against external factors.
The findings of this thesis demonstrate that such trends can be profoundly affected by social factors, like drug use and prostitution, as well as historical events, like the reversion of Okinawa in 1972 and Korea’s Kwangju Uprising in 1980. Afterward, I also review and examine some of the best methods of crime prevention: bridge-building between cultures, educating GIs, and engaging GIs in constructive activity. Finally, survey data shows that U.S. rhetoric against military crime does not always translate into legitimate methods of crime prevention.

In all, these findings suggest that U.S. military crime is not always a problem originating in military ranks; rather, it is a multifaceted dilemma that can be deeply affected by outside occurrences. For U.S. security relationships to improve in this era of globalization, it is essential for decision makers and researchers to look beyond immediate causes in favor of larger, overarching possibilities.
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Though established decades ago, U.S. bilateral security arrangements with Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK) remain vital. During confirmation hearings in January 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton referred to the U.S.-Japan alliance as “a cornerstone of American policy in Asia” that is “essential to maintaining peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.”1 Likewise, a June 2007 House resolution referenced “a shared interest in and commitment to peace, democracy, and freedom on the Korean peninsula, in Asia, and throughout the world” as the foundation of U.S.-ROK relations.2 Although the current administration is likely to add issues such as climate change to the foreign policy panorama, there can be no denial that security matters have provided the bedrock for these alliances.

The United States, for its part, executes its security role by stationing thousands of troops in both countries. Indeed, as of June 2008, nearly 60,000 active-duty personnel were stationed in Japan and the ROK alone.3 Such arrangements are asymmetrical; while the United States provides its Asian allies with safety from defiant and rising powers in the region, Japan and the ROK provide the U.S. government with strategic military

positions. The military presence, then, goes beyond simplistic notions of defending allies; indeed, it is a quid-pro-quo component of U.S. defense policy.

But the U.S. military is not a game piece to be deployed and maintained without consequence. Comprising U.S. forces are U.S. military personnel: men and women who come to the table with their own histories and narratives, skills and strengths, blemishes and flaws. Such factors most assuredly affect the military at-large; whereas aptitudes have traditionally earned the U.S. military honor and respect, poor conduct has substantially eroded its appeal and legitimacy.

It is interesting to note that Japan and South Korea are not the only countries with a history of base-related grievances against the U.S. Due to almost daily reports of crime, Filipinos viewed American GIs with suspicion merely months into occupation. In addition, it was not unusual for base commanders and other leaders to shield crime-committing GIs from punishment. Consequently, during negotiations, Philippines officials were insistent on exerting a generous degree of jurisdiction over U.S. troops; in the end, the U.S. budged on several points (even ceding all off-base jurisdiction to the Philippines) due to Filipino doggedness. For Filipinos, the issue concerned more than simply sovereignty: “...the jurisdiction issue had emotional implications that compounded the sense of insult other Asians felt. The unwillingness of the United States to recognize Philippine authority seemed to many Filipinos a judgment on their political

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5 Ibid., 159.
6 Ibid., 54-5.
maturity.”7 Other countries, like Turkey8 and Spain,9 also demanded the U.S. to address base issues. It was by no means a solitary, isolated problem.

And yet exploring crime as a static occurrence would not do the topic justice. Therefore, after briefly reviewing the literature and recapping past rifts in the alliances, I explore ways in which social and historical phenomena coincide with military crime trends identified in my research. While I do not seek to establish a directly causal link between the two, my goal is to show that such connections are within the realm of possibility. To attribute military crime to the awkwardness of overseas assignments (as do military sympathists) or to the aggressive/masculine nature of military training (as do feminists) is insufficient. Here, I intend to broaden the possibilities in hopes of seeking a deeper and perhaps more accurate understanding.

After addressing military crime as it relates to external factors, I will hazard a more direct and intimate view by considering crime prevention methods and results from surveys administered to veterans who were stationed in Japan and the ROK during the time period covered here.

It should be said at the outset that, expressly speaking, I seek neither to condemn the U.S. military nor censure its commitments abroad. However, the fact remains that, particularly in Japan and the ROK, military crime has become a lingering characteristic of the U.S. presence. Since this dilemma has the potential to tangibly affect relations, it is worthy of researchers’ toils.

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7 Cullather, 160.
Methodology

Persistent attempts were made to acquire statistics from the Pentagon, United States Army, United States Navy, United States Marine Corps (USMC), United States Air Force (USAF), United States Forces Korea (USFK), United States Forces Japan (USFJ), Korean National Police Agency, and the National Police Agency in Japan. Requests were either deferred to other offices or ignored altogether. A few gracious individuals suggested the possibility of utilizing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA); but due to my need for aggregate statistics (rather than individual records), FOIA was of little value.

The bulk of the data below, then, is a direct result of personal efforts. To attain a better understanding of crime trends, I sifted through a variety of Asian and American newspaper materials—Associated Press, Chosŏn Ilbo, Korea Herald, Korea Times, New York Times, Nikkei Weekly, Yomiuri Shimbun—covering the time period of this paper. Such data is used to review and examine noteworthy trends—both on their own terms and, using secondary sources, as part of a larger historical and social mosaic. Discussion of trend rates and incidence refers not necessarily to real numbers, but to percentages of crime as it occurs within a given time period. The below analysis is divided into two periods: 1965 to 1979, and 1980 to 1995.

Literature Review

This thesis is not the first work to consider military transgressions. Indeed, there exists a robust literature addressing base issues as they affect such factors as cultural
identity and gender. A brief review of this literature will demonstrate the current status of research into this important phenomenon.

In Okinawa and the U.S. Military, Inoue Masamichi, an anthropologist, explores the inter-Okinawan social ruptures instigated by the presence of U.S. bases. On one side are those anti-base Okinawans often depicted in the literature: middle-class individuals; native, marginalized groups; peaceniks; environmentalists; and veterans of the Battle of Okinawa. Opposing this faction is a group of blue-collar, working-class Okinawans that favors the base for economic reasons. “Most of the residents against the offshore base,” remarked a base supporter from Nago City, “are financially secure civil servants. But we do not have jobs. In order to make a living, we need the new base.” At the time of publication, the schism was tense. Working-class folks accused their base-supporting counterparts of elevating passion over practicality, while middle-class base opponents admonished their rivals’ desertion of principle. The concept of betrayal was not unnatural to the discourse.

And yet the situation had not always been so. In decades past, perceptions of unfairness had forcefully united the Okinawan populace in its victimization; collective memory of U.S. military rule, as well as Japanese superiority and mistreatment, served to mold a unique, exclusive Okinawan identity. To Inoue, two explanations account for the dissolution of such arrangements: the fall of Japan’s formidable economy

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10 Inoue, 126.
11 Ibid., 10.
12 Ibid., 125.
13 Ibid., 18.
14 Ibid., 41.
15 Ibid., 56.
(thus making it difficult to cover internal cleavages with claims of economic glory)\textsuperscript{16} and the reorientation of Okinawans from a unitary people to a diverse citizenry with varying interests.\textsuperscript{17} That base issues, including crime, have the poignancy to trigger such deep disagreements within a heretofore homogenous group is remarkable. Crime and related issues do not just affect their victim(s); indeed, they have the power to turn a people against itself.

The literature also addresses the effects of base issues on gender. In \textit{Bananas, Beaches and Bases}, Cynthia Enloe argues that women are purposely exploited not only in the international political system (“…relations between governments depend not only on capital and weaponry, but also on the control of women as symbols, consumers, workers and emotional comforters”\textsuperscript{18}), but in the construction of male-centric military base psychology as well. In India, the Cantonment Acts required British colonial police to perform genital exams on women living in close proximity to the bases—not for the women’s benefit, but so the British soldier could enjoy an uninhibited sex life without fear of contracting venereal disease (VD).\textsuperscript{19} Farther east, the large U.S. military presence, coupled with a dying sugar cane industry, resulted in several thousand Filipino women becoming prostitutes.\textsuperscript{20} This arrangement resulted in a low morale among female

\begin{footnotes}
\item[16] Inoue, 138.
\item[17] Ibid., 9.
\item[18] Cynthia Enloe, \textit{Bananas, Beaches and Bases} (London: Pandora Press, 1989), xi.
\item[19] Ibid., 82.
\item[20] Ibid., 86-7.
\end{footnotes}
members of the Navy, increased sexual competition among all females involved, and the introduction of the AIDS virus to the islands.

Encapsulating the groundwork of her argument, Enloe writes: “They need not only military hardware, but a steady supply of women’s sexual services to convince their soldiers that they are manly. To operate in the international arena, governments seek other governments’ recognition of their sovereignty; but they also depend on ideas about masculinized dignity and feminized sacrifice to sustain that sense of autonomous nationhood.” In Enloe’s estimation, sex-related base issues are simply undertones of a larger system that manipulates and uses women.

Political scientist Katharine Moon capitalizes on Enloe’s research; rather than focusing on the necessity of masculinity to the soldierization process, Moon explores the ways in which bilateral government relations (in this case, U.S.-ROK relations) affect the gender-military relationship. Her findings and opinions are especially germane given this paper’s focus on military crime and international relations.

According to Moon, the connection between prostitution and members of the U.S. military is well established. Unlike Europe, where many of America’s men in uniform are joined by their families, ROK has historically seen new recruits who are young, homesick, and more likely to behave impetuously. Moon quotes U.S. military chaplains extensively, many of whom attest to the ready access of GIs to Korean

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21 Enloe, 87.
22 Ibid., 91.
23 Ibid., 88.
24 Ibid., 196-7.
prostitutes.  

According to a 1977 *Stars and Stripes* advertisement, such activities were not only accepted, but encouraged: “Picture having three or four of the loveliest creatures God ever created hovering around you, singing, dancing, feeding you, washing what they feed you down with rice wine or beer, all saying at once, ‘You are the greatest.’ This is the Orient you heard about and came to find.”

Given the widespread acceptance and promotion of prostitution within the U.S. military, it is unsurprising that sexual deviancy—a focus of this study—is a recurring problem among U.S. military personnel.

But prostitution cannot exist on military participation alone; if the industry receives approval and blessings from above, it is bound to succeed. In this spirit, the ROK government continuously used prostitutes to demonstrate its seriousness toward bilateral relations. Following the 1972 Sherwood Report, which criticized Korea for not adequately controlling VD, the ROK government instituted a rigorous clean-up campaign which included prostitute registration, regular genital exams, and better VD clinics and detention centers.

Multiple interviews left Moon with the conclusion that insecurity vis-à-vis the U.S.-ROK alliance was the “main stimulus” for the ROK government’s diligence in implementing such programs. At the end of the day, the ROK government was convinced that “male-female fraternization” (by way of prostitution) made American GIs more willing to fight for Korea. ROK officials even instructed Korean women to emulate World War II Japanese prostitutes by sacrificing

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26 Moon, 20.
27 Ibid., 33.
28 Ibid., 95.
29 Ibid., 97.
30 Ibid., 114.
31 Ibid., 84-5.

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their purity for their country.\textsuperscript{32} Moon’s work raises the question: if a government treats its own women as mere chips and pawns, why should not GIs also regard them as objects?

Gerson discusses base issues with an eye toward opposition and protest. As one might expect, the U.S. military receives its most pointed resistance from the Japanese Left. This antagonism is most visible in National United Action against the Mutual Security Treaty—an annual protest day (every October 21) attracting communists, socialists, and peace activists.\textsuperscript{33} Gerson shows that such sentiment can be efficacious. After Kobe citizens pressured their officials into adopting a nuclear-free declaration, U.S. port calls ceased completely.\textsuperscript{34} Additionally, concerns about noise and environmental issues electrified the people of Miyakejima, who mobilized to elect anti-base leaders in hopes of staving off a U.S. base.\textsuperscript{35} Gerson’s work shows that opposition movements and actions should not be taken lightly.

**Preexistent Hostilities**

It is important to note that base-related issues caused tension in bilateral relations long before the time period covered here. During the 1950s, when Japan was negotiating its Security Treaty and SOFA with the United States, riots and demonstrations were commonplace. In addition to sovereignty and trade issues, a major source of discontent was crime. In 1957, Sergeant William Girard shot and killed a 46-year-old Soumagahara

\textsuperscript{32} Moon, 103.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 189.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 191.
woman who had been picking up exploded shells to sell their metal. The situation became even more egregious when, during trial (held in Japan), a fellow soldier testified that Girard shot the woman “for a joke.” The woman’s family was not offered remuneration because she was judged to have been stealing U.S. property. The 1950s also ignited Okinawan passions. In 1959, another Japanese woman was shot by a soldier who mistook her for a wild boar. Okinawans also bristled at the U.S. military’s aversion to compensating family members for GI-inflicted deaths.

With instances of military crime come concerns over criminal jurisdiction. This too aroused passions throughout Japan. Since the end of the Occupation, Japan had exercised minimal jurisdiction over American troops. Even Eisenhower remarked: “Out of 14,000 cases since 1953 in which Americans were subject to trial in Japanese courts, the Japanese had voluntarily relinquished jurisdiction in 13,642—or 97 percent.” Such conditions led to feelings of inferiority and inequality among Japanese—feelings that almost certainly hastened the negotiation of Japan’s SOFA.

The opposition was by no means paltry. Zengakuren, or the Federation of Students Self-Government Association, enjoyed support from the vast majority of Japan’s university students. This and other groups protested U.S. influence by invading Diet grounds, preventing Diet proceedings, and mobbing the car of Eisenhower Press

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38 Inoue, 47.
39 Ibid., 46.
40 Ibid., 47.
42 LaFeber, 319.
Secretary James Hagerty.\textsuperscript{43} Despite eventual agreement on the Security Treaty amendments, public unrest—particularly as directed against crime-related issues—did not go unnoticed.

Due to national security-related restrictions on ‘seditious’ (i.e., anti-U.S.) speech,\textsuperscript{44} the ROK did not experience large-scale rebellion in the face of military crime. However, a general intolerance did appear. During the early stages of the Korean War, U.S. forces were governed by the Taejon Agreement, which effectively concluded that “the U.S. could exercise exclusive jurisdiction over members of the United States military establishment in Korea and that U.S. forces would not be required to submit to any but U.S. courts.”\textsuperscript{45}

Over time, ROK authorities grew impatient with the provisions of the Taejon Agreement. As years slipped away following the 1953 ceasefire, peninsular peace seemed dubious and American troops remained. Eventually, the ROK lobbied to “regularize the situation” with a formal SOFA agreement, which it received in 1966.\textsuperscript{46} As was published in a \textit{Tong-A Ilbo} editorial, “During the past 16 years, U.S. military personnel here have been accorded the privilege of de-facto extraterritoriality. This constituted a blow to the pride and dignity of Korea as a sovereign nation. With the pact put into effect, they will be legally bound to abide by and respect the laws of our

\textsuperscript{43} LaFeber, 321.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., 450.
nation.” A Chosŏn Ilbo editorial similarly praised the SOFA as “meaningful in that Korea is permitted to uphold its rights as a sovereign state.”

The Japanese and Korean governments both faced pressure as a result of military crime and criminal jurisdiction. These criticisms and disagreements were communicated in various ways. Given the negotiation of SOFAs in both countries, it is clear that the Japanese, Korean, and U.S. governments understood and responded to those with relevant concerns.

**Of Drugs and Drafts: 1965 to 1979**

This time period saw many historical changes: the normalization of relations between the ROK and Japan (1965), the implementation of a U.S.-ROK SOFA (1966), the reversion of Okinawa to Japanese sovereignty (1972), the end of the Vietnam War (1975), the normalization of relations between Japan and China (1978), and the assassination of ROK President Pak Chong-hui (1979).

Despite this period of flux, my research yields one unavoidable string of continuity: the use and trafficking of drugs by U.S. military personnel. Over this period, drug violations in the ROK grew by double-digit rates, while in Japan, drug use accounted for 30 percent of all crimes. The significance of the drug problem is also noticeable in view of government response. In December 1970, Japan’s National Police Agency condemned the extensive sale of LSD and marijuana in Okinawa; as a result, the Police joined the Health and Welfare Ministry in creating branches to prevent smuggling

48 Ibid.
and trafficking of drugs in that region.\textsuperscript{49} Korean leaders also worried about drugs, and worked through the U.S. Campside Town Purification Committee (discussed above as it regarded prostitution) to tackle “illegal dealing of habit-forming drugs and other elements detrimental to…U.S. military campside towns.”\textsuperscript{50}

In one sense, elevated drug use among military personnel should come as no surprise; given the dominant demographic (young, unmarried males) in military ranks, the prevalence of addictive substances is an understood and established fact.\textsuperscript{51} However, I would suggest that the patterns outlined above are also international projections of domestic experiences. In their piece, Brodsky and Gfroerer describe a marked rise in domestic U.S. marijuana and cocaine use throughout the 1960s and 1970s.\textsuperscript{52} Gallup polls throughout these same decades portray increased usage of marijuana.\textsuperscript{53} Similarly, a 1990s RAND Corporation colloquium addressed “the spread of marijuana, the heroin epidemic, [and] the explosion in cocaine initiation” throughout the 1960s and 1970s.\textsuperscript{54} It is not altogether difficult, then, to attribute the military’s high rate of drug involvement not only to the pressures of the job, but also to the domestic conditions of the U.S. at the time.

In addition to drugs, the latter decade saw other trends came to the fore. As the 1970s progressed, incidence of rape and assault increased among GIs stationed in Japan.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[49]“Drug Sales Said Rampant In Okinawa,” \textit{Japan Times}, December 9, 1970.
\item[50]“Panel Formed to Purify U.S. Campside Towns,” \textit{Korea Herald}, February 2, 1972.
\end{footnotes}
Also at this juncture, crimes such as burglary and manslaughter appeared for the first time in my research.\(^{55}\) In Korea, rates of assault, murder, and contraband sales all increased.\(^{56}\) Indeed, it was during this period that some of Japan’s and Korea’s most notoriously memorable crimes were committed. For example, in 1972, Lt. Corporal J.S. Benjamin shot and killed Enokawa Seiyu, a base worker, for having allegedly stolen $10. Benjamin’s actions, as well as his remaining in U.S. custody throughout Japanese investigations, inflamed anti-base Okinawans and their sympathizers.\(^{57}\) After arguing through his attorney that he had inherited dementia from his mother,\(^{58}\) Benjamin was acquitted by the Naha District Court by reason of insanity.\(^{59}\) Such cases, involving brutal crimes and surprisingly soft-handed results, were ordinary during this time.

As one might guess, there are many ways to interpret these statistics. The first involves conscription. In 1973, as the Vietnam War was winding down, the 1967 Military Selective Service Act expired, effectively ending the draft.\(^{60}\) Within the scope of a year, the U.S. military—including those units deployed to the ROK and Japan—transitioned from a conscription-based force to an all-volunteer one. Debate persists on both sides. Is voluntary conscription positive because it gives the individual the freedom of choice, or does it result in a less trustworthy fighting force? The elevation of several crime rates in Japan and Korea between 1973 and 1979 legitimately calls into question the reliability of the volunteer army. In a 1974 *Newsday* editorial condemning U.S.

\(^{55}\) Personal statistics.
\(^{56}\) Ibid.
military crime in the ROK, the writers asserted that the voluntary nature of America’s ‘new’ military made it magnet for “poor, ill-educated youths who come from crime-ridden urban slums or relatively backward rural areas.”\textsuperscript{61} A Navy cryptologist based in Okinawa during the 1970s recalled that “the locals didn’t like the ‘grunt’ Marines at all,” a clear reference to USMC volunteer recruits sent almost immediately from Camp Lejeune to Okinawa.\textsuperscript{62} If indeed this new volunteer army was more given to criminal activity, it is understandable that publications and locals would be so critical of U.S. military personnel abroad.

Race may also have been a contributing factor to heightened military crime in these countries. Most of the situations I encountered were not evidence of soldier-versus-soldier racism, but rather, racism directed against black U.S. soldiers by the local populations. In Japan, certain Okinawan bars discriminated against African-American military personnel. While demonstrating against such segregation in August 1971, 30 black soldiers ransacked several bars and inns; these transgressions kindled the anger of hundreds of Okinawans, who immediately rose to the occasion and defended their local establishments.\textsuperscript{63} African-American GIs attracted similar reactions from Korean prostitutes. Such women chose not to service blacks for one of two reasons: blacks represented a smaller clientele than whites, or they “feared that fraternizing with black servicemen would mean physical abuse.”\textsuperscript{64} As a result, American military leadership persuaded Korean authorities to teach their prostitutes English and orient them to African-American culture; this they did using tapes, posters, magazine articles, and even

\textsuperscript{61} “American GIs in South Korea,” \textit{Japan Times}, January 28, 1974.
\textsuperscript{62} Survey data, available from author upon request.
\textsuperscript{63} “U.S. Servicemen Spark Okinawa Riot,” \textit{Japan Times}, August, 18, 1971.
\textsuperscript{64} Moon, 86.
drink coasters. Given these conditions, it is conceivable that such prejudiced treatment may have resulted in an upswing of crime committed by U.S. servicemen against Koreans and Japanese.

There are also country-specific explanations for this escalation in U.S. military crime. Due in large part to the 1950s demonstrations described above, U.S. authorities agreed to return Okinawa to Japanese rule in 1972. Although Okinawans were initially excited by the prospect of reversion, they soon learned that the arrangements were more intricate, and less ideal, than originally thought. This truth first rang apparent in the aftermath of a 1970 Koza brawl involving thousands of Okinawans and hundreds of American soldiers. After one of the most substantial uprisings in the history of U.S.-Okinawa relations, Japanese Prime Minister Sato Eisaku noted that he “understood how Okinawan residents feel” but would “not like to give an unfavorable impression to the U.S. because the reversion is drawing so near.” Due to situations such as this, Japan’s four major opposition parties and Ryukyu Chief Executive Yara Chobyo expressed deep concern, if not outright opposition, toward the idea of a reversion leaving U.S. bases intact. After reversion, many Okinawan landowners sought a return of land that had been formerly expropriated for military bases. Tokyo’s solution was the Special Measures Law for Land for American Military Bases—a measure compensating landowners for continued use of their land.

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65 Moon, 87.
As a result, the early reversion period saw a sense of disappointment and disenchantment sweep through Okinawa. According to one Okinawa-based military officer, the reversion especially strained ties concerning finances and safety. At the time of reversion, the Okinawa yen rate was brought into line with Japan’s ($1=¥145) and price controls disappeared. Okinawan service people (e.g., gardeners, sewers, maids) therefore tripled their rates, and were subsequently fired by American soldiers and households for having done so.\textsuperscript{70} In addition, Okinawan discontent jeopardized the safety of many U.S. military personnel living off-base. Before reversion, U.S. security personnel had monitored these areas; afterward, Okinawan authorities prohibited U.S. patrols, yet refused to patrol the areas themselves due to a near-total absence of Japanese in that area. “We off-base went virtually unprotected, and things got dicey,” he writes. “Lots of midnight robberies and house ransackings. Most of us installed extensive security systems and got dogs as protection. That didn’t help inter-cultural relations at all.”\textsuperscript{71} In light of these facts, perhaps the rise in Japan-based military crime was indeed a product of the Okinawa reversion—more specifically, the unmet expectations, false promises, and policy modifications it entailed.

Likewise, the crime increase in Korea might also have been triggered by domestic circumstances. Throughout the 1970s, and particularly during President Jimmy Carter’s term, the United States continually floated the idea of troop withdrawals. Such overtures were met with outright opposition from publications (“We firmly believe…in the staunch and unwavering determination of the United States to play continuously the leadership...“).

\textsuperscript{70} Survey data.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.
role in the defense of freedom and human dignity…”72 and leaders (Prime Minister Ch’oe Kyu-ha wanted to see U.S. troops in the ROK for “a long period of time”)73 alike. According to insiders, President Carter’s support of troop withdrawals was not so much motivated by a heightened trust in South Korea’s economic and military abilities, but by Carter’s personal aversions to Pak’s human rights record and style of government.74 Carter pursued this policy even after the U.S. House had rejected his plan by more than 200 votes.75 Conflicting attitudes came to a head during Pak’s and Carter’s first meeting in 1979. Pak spent the first 45 minutes of the meeting “snapping his finger to make points” against Carter’s withdrawal policy. His face red and jaw clenched, Carter passed a note to Defense Secretary Harold Brown: “If he goes on like this much longer, I’m going to pull every troop out of the country.”76 Thankfully, Pak stopped before Carter could make good on his threat.

I lay this groundwork to show that U.S.-ROK security relations during the 1970s were laced with distrust and suspicion. Throughout the research process, I encountered more than 20 instances of U.S. officials (most frequently Carter) pushing for troop withdrawals, and ROK officials and newspapers resisting them. Most assuredly, U.S. military personnel—the boots on the ground in Korea—were aware of the doubts permeating this relationship. It is not unreasonable to wonder if perhaps distrust at the highest levels of the U.S.-ROK relationship manifested itself in the form of crime at the

74 James Young, Eye on Korea (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2003), 40.
lower levels of the alliance. The military is not immune from the executive’s words and actions—especially when that executive doubles as commander-in-chief.

However, certain trends distinguish Japan and Korea from one another. As an aggregate, assault accounted for 23 percent of all crimes in the ROK, compared to 12 percent in Japan. Since the vast majority of assault victims were women (often prostitutes), one cannot entirely rule out the effect of prostitution on this statistic. Unlike Japan, where prostitution is illegal due to its incompatibility with “the ideals of democracy and…individual freedom,” prostitution in South Korea has existed legally since the 1970s. Perhaps the widespread legal acceptance of prostitution led to this difference in statistics. First, it is possible that Korea’s brand of legalized prostitution promoted growth of the industry. For proof, one need look no further than the Netherlands, where prostitution and brothels have become legalized within the past decade. Since that time, writes Daley, the sex industry has expanded by 25 percent, accounting for as much as five percent of the Dutch economy. With legalization came expansion, and with expansion ostensibly came greater use among the U.S. military.

Second, prostitution is likely to have increased aggression among U.S. soldiers in Korea. As a participant in the prostitution experience, men increasingly come to recognize that “they are entitled to sexual access to women…they are superior to women…and they are licensed as sexual aggressors.” Therefore, a legalized and far-reaching prostitution
industry may well have led to higher violence and aggression rates among GIs in Korea, thus explaining the higher assault rate mentioned above.

Korea and Japan also differ in their degree of jurisdiction claims. Statistics show that the ROK was approximately four times more likely than Japan to claim jurisdiction over a GI criminal case. This could be a function of boldness. Though the U.S. has played the more dominant role in both alliances, my research continually revealed a more intrepid ROK as compared with Japan. The ROK government’s audacity can be found as early as SOFA negotiations in the mid-1960s. Breaking with the convention of concurrent jurisdiction, the U.S. had initially requested ROK to forfeit its claim to jurisdiction even in the case of crimes committed off-duty (thus effectively rendering ROK void of any jurisdiction at all). ROK Foreign Minister Lee Tong-won flatly informed U.S. negotiators that unless the ROK was given some jurisdiction, Korea would nullify the entire SOFA pact. In Lee’s words, the right of primary jurisdiction was “something a sovereign nation should have.” Another example is Pak’s lecturing Carter, described several paragraphs earlier. To have seen Japan similarly threatening the U.S. during SOFA negotiations or Prime Minister Sato Eisaku openly admonishing President Lyndon Johnson would be completely contrary to Tokyo’s passive attitude toward the U.S. The two countries differ greatly in this respect.

Between 1965 and 1979, several trends are plainly observable. Korea and Japan both shared an increase in drugs as well as several other crime rates. The above attempted to explain these phenomena vis-à-vis conscription and racism. However,

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81 Personal statistics.
Korea and Japan also exhibited differing tendencies. The ROK saw an exponentially higher rate of assault, and was more willing to petition Washington for criminal jurisdiction. The following 15 years would bring further trends and considerations.

**From Kwangju to Rape: 1980 to 1995**

As my research came to include more modern history, statistics became increasingly difficult to locate. (This despite using online databases to search newspaper archives via keyword—an infinitely more resourceful method than the microfilm-only approach used in the last section.) However, this dearth of results reveals an interesting trend in itself. After years of living with the SOFA, bases, and U.S. military crime, perhaps Japanese and Korean news outlets (and their readership) had grown uninterested with reports concerning robbery and customs violations—stories that, except for intricate facts, largely duplicated any number of cases from yesteryear.

A more intricate explanation involves domestic political phenomena. Perhaps the drawdown of the Cold War, coupled with both countries’ deep emphases on economic issues, forced certain defense matters (i.e., military crime) out of newspaper headlines. During the 1980s, as the ROK was recovering from economic hiccoughs, its leadership tightened fiscal measures and monetary policy to battle inflation. As a result, real growth rose from around nine percent (in the early and mid-1980s) to nearly 13 percent (in the late 1980s). ⁸³ Korea’s GDP doubled between 1980 and 1987, and would more than

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double again by 1995.84 Japan saw similar success over this period—the continuation of ‘the miracle’—with a newfound dependence on domestic demand, electronics, and technology.85 Perhaps the positive news of economic boon indeed trumped the negative news of military malfeasance.

Despite limited statistics, certain trends were nevertheless evident. In Korea, incidence of assault, murder, and robbery all rose over this period.86 As above, history provides a sound rationale for these escalations. The Kwangju Uprising, a pro-democracy demonstration in 1980, caused Korean youth to direct their vitriol not only against their government, but against the U.S. military as well. After the assassination of General Pak in October 1979, Korean leaders declared martial law; though it ended in December, lingering aftereffects remained.87 After Chon Tu-hwan became acting director of the Korea Central Intelligence Agency, the crackdown intensified again, as an increasingly large group of students demanded campus reforms, restitution of student councils, termination of martial law, and Chon’s resignation.88 As president, Chon declared full-fledged martial law in May 1980 and banned all political activity. Protests in Kwangju started with several thousand students, but as the situation intensified and increasingly more students suffered beatings and bayonetings for their views, older citizens joined in the uprising, adding hundreds of thousands to its number.89 The U.S. earned accusations of complicity when General John Wickham authorized the Twentieth

86 Personal statistics.
88 Ibid., 11.
89 Ibid., 12-3.
Division of the ROK Army to leave the DMZ so it could help quell the uprising in Kwangju.\(^{90}\) Although some analysts have tried to excuse Wickham given the difficult situation, it is hard to avoid his stated belief that the ROK military was charged with “being watch-dogs on political activity that could be destabilizing.”\(^{91}\)

Following this instance, Korean activists were determined to seek revenge on the U.S. Whereas that generation’s parents had thought of the U.S. as saviors from the Japanese, Korean youth in the 1980s judged America as no better than the authoritarian regime governing their country. A host of anti-American activities—including the arson of the Kwangju U.S. Information Service—resulted.\(^{92}\) In turn, U.S. soldiers were not reluctant to strike back.\(^{93}\) As a 1988 Korea Herald editorial describes, “Most younger Koreans...hold Americans responsible for having permitted the violent repression by the Korean army of political disturbances in the city of Kwangju in 1980. The United States is closely associated in this segment of the public mind with the highly visible and generally distrusted Korean military.”\(^{94}\) Such treatment toward all things American—its military included—may certainly have resulted in heightened crime on both sides.

Similar tremors were felt in Japan. Rates of manslaughter, murder, and rape all climbed by double digits from the first period.\(^{95}\) Perhaps no recent crime stoked more nationalist sentiment or media attention than the 1995 Okinawa rape case. Having been unable to meet local women, and without enough money to hire a prostitute, one Navy sailor and two Marines conspired to rape a 12-year-old Okinawan schoolgirl who had

\(^{90}\) Bruce Cumings, Korea’s Place in the Sun (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2005), 382.
\(^{91}\) Clark, 11.
\(^{92}\) Cumings, 390.
\(^{94}\) “Anti-U.S. Sentiment Here Stems from Three Factors,” Korea Herald, January 8, 1988.
\(^{95}\) Personal statistics.
been walking home after shopping for a notebook at the local general store. The girl was tied-up, muzzled, and blindfolded with adhesive tape, then taken to a nearby beach where she was raped and beaten. In the aftermath, Okinawa Governor Ota Masahide used the episode to draw attention to the larger situation. For example, Ota noted that Okinawa had seen more than 4,500 criminal cases involving U.S. servicemen since the reversion. Ota did not intend to protest the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, but rather, the “idea that Okinawa, with 1.3 million people and less than 1 percent of the land area in Japan, is home to 75 percent of the United States military bases.” Tens of thousands of Okinawans mobilized in protest. Teruya Shuden, an Okinawa landlord, summed up the prevailing sentiment as such: “We Okinawans are [a] rather gentle people. There have been past murders that lead to small protests. But this rape, this time—well, we feel we cannot put up with any more.”

Unlike most brutal crimes committed by GIs overseas, this case sparked intense interest among the ruling elite in Washington. On the floor, then-Senator Joseph Biden remarked that the rape case represented “the most significant disagreement we have had with Japan.” Sen. Barbara Boxer in turn declared that the United States “should be publicly apologizing to the people of Japan.” During a subcommittee hearing on U.S.-Japan relations, Rep. Douglas Bereuter gleefully reported that “after some fast and

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96 Inoue, 21.
97 “Japan to Request Custody of Three GIs in Rape Case,” Daily Yomiuri, September 21, 1995.
mutually sensitive work the last couple of weeks…[American and Japanese parties] agreed on improvements in the implementation of criminal jurisdiction procedures under the bilateral Status of Forces Agreement.” In certain cases, Japan was now allowed custody before the time of indictment.104

It is difficult to guess what led to this spat of brutal crime during the early 1990s. Some survey respondents mentioned that relations between Americans and Japanese became especially strained whenever communists or socialists—both of whom tended to be more outspoken against the U.S. presence—wielded influence.105 This explanation would account for increased crime even outside Okinawa. Due in large part to economic collapse and rampant corruption, the public rejected the pro-U.S. Liberal Democratic Party—a heretofore fixture of Japanese politics—and instead supported a coalition fronted by Murayama Tomiichi, a socialist. This coalition was in power from 1993 to 1995.106 Even though Murayama turned out to be rather centrist on base issues,107 his political identity may have fanned American animosity, resulting in the crime increase described above.

This latter period was marked by decreased availability of data, which in itself is an interesting fact, and can be explained by general boredom with base issues or by new political preoccupations within each country. GI crime crescendoed both in the ROK and Japan, but under vastly different circumstances.

105 Survey data.
106 Schaller, 259.
107 Anni Baker, American Soldiers Overseas (Santa Barbara: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004), 137.
Crime Prevention

For a well-rounded understanding of military crime, brief attention must be paid to the more intricate factors as well. In the face of military crime, U.S. and host governments worked not only to punish crime committed, but also to prevent its future occurrence. This was done in three ways: bridge-building, education, and engagement.

By bridge-building, I refer to programs that endeavor to minimize the cultural gap between U.S. servicemen and Koreans. In 1967, Koreans and U.S. servicemen planned informal meetings in tearooms, churches, and homes to build friendships and teach each other foreign languages. They also visited Korean cultural and historical spots with one another.108 Ten years later, three ROK agencies, including the Ministry of Defense, funded a program allowing several GIs (and their wives) to enjoy museums, palaces, and live Korean entertainment.109 Perhaps the most significant effort was expended by the Korean-American Friendship Association, which arranged for U.S. service members to visit Korean homes and enjoy Korean food and customs. As evidence of the popularity of the program, 1980 saw almost 2,000 U.S. personnel visit 580 Korean homes.110

In no way was the Korean-American bond better solidified than via the Korean Augmentation to U.S. Army (KATUSA) program. KATUSA, a program that involves ROK Army personnel who are assigned to U.S. units, saw its beginnings in 1950, when Gen. Douglas MacArthur requested Korean augmentation of the depleted 8th U.S. Army. Although KATUSA numbers decreased after the Korean War, the arrangement has

109 “65 Tours Offered to GIs in March,” Korea Herald, March 4, 1977.
continued, and there remain some 4,000 KATUSA personnel today. KATUSAs, as they are called, receive U.S. training\(^{111}\) and even uniforms. Interestingly, barracks assignments ignore ethnicity factors. Writes Timm: “KATUSA soldiers do not have the option of refusing to be billeted with U.S. soldiers, nor do U.S. soldiers have the option of refusing to be billeted with KATUSA soldiers. They work together, train together, play sports together, eat together, live together, and, in the event of hostilities, would fight together.”\(^{112}\) If indeed U.S. military personnel who feel more comfortable in their surroundings are less likely to commit crimes, then such programs are invaluable.

The second and perhaps most obvious crime deterrent is education. This category includes books, lectures, courses, and visual aids. During the racial turbulence of the 1970s, for example, the 8\(^{th}\) ROK Army held an annual six-hour course on race relations for all American servicemen.\(^{113}\) In the late 1980s, United States Forces Korea (USFK) designed the three-part Korean Headstart Program to “help new personnel better understand the Republic in areas such as culture, customs, and traditions.”\(^{114}\) In Phase One, U.S. troops watched videotapes that explained the North Korean threat, shopping in Korea, and KATUSA program. During Phase Two, numerous military agencies expounded on information addressed in the videotapes. And finally, as part of Phase Three—which was voluntary—personnel took various language and culture courses through local USFK Education Centers.\(^{115}\) Japan also saw the application of education: in the aftermath of the 1995 rape, U.S. soldiers were exposed to a “thorough education”

\(^{111}\) Timm, 466.
\(^{112}\) Ibid., 468.
\(^{115}\) Ibid.
on “Okinawa’s history, culture, manners, and customs.” One must wonder, though, why such education was not made available before the rape occurred.

Last, U.S. soldiers were required to participate in various pastimes. When Maj. Gen. Henry Emerson—“The Gunfighter” of Vietnam fame—arrived in ROK in the mid-1970s, he felt that troops, suffering from idleness, were turning to crime. Accordingly, Emerson instituted a multifaceted campaign to engage the individual soldier. Elements of the plan included a rigorous exercise program, compulsory classroom education (even during on-duty hours), athletic competitions, and recreational activities (e.g., parachute jumping, scuba diving, rock concerts). While it is difficult to directly assess the effectiveness of this program, common sense dictates that when U.S. servicemen are busy participating in approved activities, they have less time to participate in unapproved activities.

In sum, a solid combination of all three factors—bridge-building, education, and engagement—is likely to be effective in combating U.S. military crime.

**Opinions from the Field**

Finally, this study would not be complete without considering the U.S. military perspective. To this end, surveys were distributed to individuals who had seen service in Japan and/or ROK between 1965 and 1995. These studies permitted respondents to answer questions about military relations with the local populations freely and elaborately.

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117 “American GIs.”
The beginning of the survey asked participants simply to appraise interactions with the local population. Responses ran the gamut from positive to negative. A Navy cryptologist described relations from a geographical perspective, explaining that in southern Okinawa, the military presence was generally appreciated, but as one moved farther north toward Air Force and Marine Corps. installations, the population was less cordial.\textsuperscript{118} From a different perspective, a ROK-based Army counter-intelligence agent held that overall relations depended on the individual, as well as his/her social upbringing. About a quarter of U.S. personnel, in his experience, never left the base, remaining isolated therein. Some 65 percent actively tried to adapt to life in ROK (learning the language, etc.), while 10 percent regularly frequented bars, brothels, and other ‘trouble spots.’ In his opinion, social status was a determinative factor of one’s behavior overseas:

\begin{quote}
In the American military there was a complete cross-section of society present. Each segment tended to gravitate to its own comfort zone and either find or create an environment where people of like interests drew together. The lower down the social-economic strata the more isolated the individuals made themselves. Those with higher education or more sophisticated experiences back home accepted that they were the strangers in Korea and embraced the opportunity to learn about the country in which they were serving.\textsuperscript{119}
\end{quote}

Obviously, he believes that an honest desire to engage Korean culture was a deterrent to crime.\textsuperscript{120}

Respondents were also asked about training and education received as preparation for life overseas. A Navy intelligence officer based in Yokosuka described his experience in Inter-cultural Relations (ICR), a mandatory two-week course that addressed “culture, customs, how to travel on public transportation, the SOFA and local laws, and

\textsuperscript{118} Survey data.  
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid.
many other tidbits of the Japanese way of life.” 121 A Navy cryptologist, on the other hand, recalled a three-hour lecture on Okinawan laws, culture, and history before deployment. 122 An official with the Army, similarly, described “a two-hour generic class about not being a stereotypical ‘ugly American’ while abroad.” 123 Immediately afterward, deployment-bound personnel were separated into smaller groups and given two additional hours of training relating to their target countries. 124 An Iwakuni-based USMC sergeant described Japanese language and cultural classes given on base—including free beginner classes, as well as advanced classes that charged a nominal fee. 125 While intentions are good, one must question the effectiveness of these programs; many individuals, myself included, have studied the language and culture for years, and yet still arrive in Japan and/or ROK unprepared to fully engage locals with clarity and respect. I understand that military personnel are not overseas for cultural enrichment; surely, though, there must be ways to prepare them more adequately for their missions abroad.

Turning to the issue of crime, some individuals recalled strong incentives against insubordinate behavior. As one Navy officer recounted, “It was always a big deal if a U.S. serviceman/woman screwed up off-base. Depending on the offense, sometimes the base commander would hold a mandatory ‘reminder’ session with the entire base population to remind us all of our obligations to act responsibly and respect our hosts.” 126 A USMC veteran explained that local base commanders were encouraged to handle incidents at the lowest level possible. “If there seems to be a trend or rise in incidents,"

121 Survey data.
122 Ibid.
123 Ibid.
124 Ibid.
125 Ibid.
126 Ibid.
he writes, “then the commanding general will come down very hard.” An Army intelligence officer confirmed this view, remembering that officers were “frequently reminded that we were guests [in ROK]...that anything we did to hurt the mutual respect between the two countries could also jeopardize our mission.”

Even so, it seems that good intentions were sometimes lost in action. According to an Air Force cryptological linguist based in Osan, some 50 bars lined the front gate of Osan Air Base. As a result, drunken brawls between U.S. airmen and ROK nationals occurred on an almost nightly basis. This persisted, she insists, despite a pervasive presence of military police (MP) in the area. In this case, the military’s logic seems problematic: if young people are given to risk-taking particularly in the form of alcohol consumption, and if we know that excessive alcohol consumption often leads to unruly behavior, then why do U.S. bases so blatantly offer this option to its personnel? While one cannot expect the U.S. military to completely repudiate alcohol, certainly the emphasis on drinking (as one’s primary pastime) can stand to be reduced.

According to survey results, certain military branches seem to have had higher expectations for their men than others. Unlike other branches, U.S. Navy personnel and Marines who committed crimes often endured double penalty. As explained by one sailor, those serving time in Japanese prisons were technically under Unauthorized Absent status, which necessitated official military punishment after release. Another Navy veteran recalled that, in most situations, Marines were court-martialed in addition

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127 Survey data.
128 Ibid.
129 Ibid.
130 Ibid.
131 Ibid.
to whatever sentences the Japanese court had rendered. Interestingly, this practice was referenced by neither Army nor Air Force veterans questioned in this survey.

U.S. military veterans who served in Japan and Korea do not deny the occurrence of crime. Rather, their opinions differ on the handling of and response to that crime. Whatever one’s opinions, these perspectives offer crucial insight: while the military seems to recognize the negative effects of crime, crime prevention requires renewed consideration and more innovative approaches. To address the issue of U.S. military crime effectively, one must understand not only the objections of host governments, but the inner-workings of the U.S. military as well.

**Conclusion**

In this paper, I primarily set out to explore the impact of historical and social factors on trends in the commission of U.S. military crime. From 1965 to 1979, crimes consistent across Japan and the ROK can be attributed to rampant drug use in the U.S., the transition to a volunteer army, and racism. However, as separate countries with distinct histories and cultures, country-specific phenomena—such as the reversion in Japan and legalized prostitution in Korea—can also explain these trends. In the latter period, U.S. military crime seems to have attracted less media attention than before. Student unrest after the Kwangju Uprising may have led to increased tension between Korean civilians and U.S. soldiers; a socialist-led government in Japan may have done the same.

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132 Survey data.
Looking at domestic factors within Japan and the ROK, it seems that a mixture of three measures—bridge-building, education, and engagement—would be a comprehensive and effective antidote to U.S. crime. Administered surveys reveal that different branches hold their servicemen to different standards. Additionally, the emphasis on bars at various bases demonstrates that, within the U.S. military, stated desires to minimize crime do not always translate into concrete action.

If the reader is convinced that U.S. military crime can be affected by external phenomena, then this thesis will have successfully served its purpose. My goal was neither to place all weight on external circumstance (thus completely exonerating the military) nor to direct all blame toward the military (thus underestimating the potential of external factors). Rather I endeavored to prove that even crime is largely affected by the events and interconnections of the world without. In viewing the situation as such, my hope is to have added a new dimension to viewing this important and pressing problem.

Perhaps most importantly, the foregoing is directly applicable to the situation today. Japan and the ROK continue to host tens of thousands of U.S. troops, an arrangement that does not seem likely to change in the near future. As globalization produces an increasingly intertwined and integrated world, the potential for external phenomena to affect bilateral relations is perhaps higher than ever before. Thus, a thorough understanding of this topic is necessary not only for researchers, but for policymakers as well.

This topic holds vast potential for future research. Throughout this thesis, I propose a number of smaller hypotheses—involving the effect of legalized prostitution

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133 “Active Duty Military Personnel Strengths by Regional Area And By Country.”
on troop aggression, for example—that are testable and open to debate. A deeper consideration of these possibilities would further develop the field and, more importantly, bring us closer to effectively treating the tumor of U.S. military crime.

In closing, this paper was not intended to chronicle or juxtapose every crime and event over the past half-century. Due to limited data and time, the aforementioned is only partial in nature, but can adequately serve as a foundation for future investigation. Further research into this topic is not only recommended, but imperative. As the world grows smaller, the external becomes larger. In this era of globalization, U.S. military commitments will not succeed unless their shortcomings are viewed in light of circumstances without.
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Department of Defense. June 20, 2008,


Survey data, completed and analyzed between February and May 2009. Redacted copies available from author upon request.


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*Korea Times*  
*New York Times*  
*Nikkei Weekly*  
*TIME*  
*Tong-A Ilbo*  
*Yomiuri Shimbun*
APPENDIX A: CRIME PERCENTAGES BY PERIOD

1965-1979

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1980-1995

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# APPENDIX B: NUMBER OF ACTIVE-DUTY PERSONNEL BY YEAR

## Japan

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Source: U.S. Department of Defense Statistics