

Media Frames of the Futenma Issue in U.S. Newspapers (2009-2010)

MAEDOMARI Kiyomi*

米国新聞における在沖海兵隊普天間基地移設問題報道のメディア・フレーム (2009-2010)

前泊 清美

要 旨

本稿は、米国主要新聞2紙（ワシントンポストとニューヨークタイムズ）による2009年から2010年の普天間基地移設問題報道をロバート・M・エントマンによる政治コミュニケーションのフレーミング理論を援用し、分析したものである。米国紙のメディア・フレームを抽出し、傾向を解明し、これらのフレームが鳩山政権の崩壊に大きな影響を与えたことを検証した。

要 約

本稿は、鳩山政権時の2009年9月から2010年6月のワシントンポストとニューヨークタイムズにおける在沖海兵隊普天間航空基地移設問題報道に関する66記事を分析し、両紙のメディア・フレームの酷似性を確認した。特に、日米同盟重視を強調するフレームの酷似性が高かった。記事の分析には、政治コミュニケーション研究者ロバート・M・エントマンのフレーミング理論を援用した。フレームの機能には、①結果や状況を問題点として定義する。②問題の原因を診断する。③それについての道徳的判断を示す。④問題の解決法、あるいは状況の改善法を推奨する（筆者訳）の4つがあり、両紙の記事はフレームが果たす機能すべてを満たしていることが確認された。多くの記事において、鳩山首相が中心的なアクターに据えられており、鳩山首相の政治的に「実現不可能な」公約、つまり普天間基地の沖縄県外および日本国外への移設が、ここでは長年の日米同盟を揺るがす上記①にあたる「問題」としてフレーミングされている。上記②問題の原因は、「経験のない、未熟な」鳩山新政権の発足であろう。鳩山政権は、2006年に日米で「合意」決定された普天間飛行場の辺野古移設を「破棄する」意思を米政府に伝え、米国政府、メディアの強い反発に遭う。米主要メディアは、こぞって、上記の③にあたる「道徳的な判断」を打ち出した。それは、沖縄の人々の負担を軽減するために、普天間基地は「できるだけ早く、人口がより少ない場所へ移設するべきだ」という判断である。移設地候補の決定を先送りにする鳩山首相に怒りをあらわにする沖縄の人々の様子を、米新聞が1、2行で端的に報道することにより、上述の「道徳的判断」は強化され、同時に、鳩山首相の「優柔不断さ」と「無能さ」を強調することにも成功し、移設地が決定されない責任を首相個人の「優柔不断さ」や「無能さ」に帰結する傾向が見られた。沖縄内外からの日米安保の見直しを求める声や、基地を全国の都道府県で平等に負担すべきだという議論はほとんど報道されず、普天間基地の移設が進まないのは、鳩山首相個人あるいは民主党政権の責任だという一貫した論調が押し通されていた。そして、その論調が示唆することは、首相が辺野古移設に同意し、早急に計画を進めない限り、普天間基地周辺の人々の生命が脅かされ続け、鳩山首相および民主党はその責任を取らなければいけないということであった。

さらに、この問題への解決策として提示されていたのは、普天間飛行場の「沖縄県内の人口がより少ない土地への移設」、つまり、沖縄県北部名護市の辺野古地区への移設であった。そうすれば、「核武装された北朝鮮」の脅威に対抗す

る「抑止力」として辺野古に建設予定の新基地が機能するという論理である。もう一つの解決策として米国新聞が挙げているのは、「鳩山首相の辞任」であった。また、地位協定や米軍基地から派生する環境汚染、「思いやり予算」に関する言及が皆無に近い点を指摘した。

ワシントンポストとニューヨークタイムスの記事では、日米同盟重視、普天間基地の辺野古移設ありきのメディア・フレームが顕著であり、普天間基地移設問題は、鳩山由紀夫首相の政治的手腕と関連して報道された。それらの報道は、日本のジャーナリストやメディア、政治エリートたちに影響を与え、鳩山政権崩壊の重要な要因の一つと考えられる。

キーワード：米国主要新聞、普天間基地移設問題、鳩山首相辞任、メディア・フレーム、フレーミングの機能

Summary

This paper examines 66 articles on the Futenma issue that appeared in two major U. S. newspapers, *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*, in 2009-10 and finds the media frames of both papers to be nearly identical, especially in highlighting the importance of the Japan-U.S. security alliance. Robert M. Entman's theory of framing in political communication is employed in analysis of the articles concerning Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's handling of the relocation of the Futenma U.S. air base. The newspaper articles successfully implemented all four functions of news framing and may have had influence on the resignation of Japan's Prime Minister in mid-2010.

Key words : MCAS Futenma relocation issue, U.S. newspapers, Media frame, Functions of Framing, The Hatoyama Administration

I. Introduction

This paper presents an analysis of 66 English language newspaper articles related to the issue of the proposed relocation of the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS-Futenma) in Okinawa, Japan. The articles appeared during the period of September 2009 through June 2010, the ten months during which Yukio Hatoyama served as Prime Minister of Japan. Two U.S. newspapers were targeted for investigation of coverage of the MCAS-Futenma relocation, *The Washington Post* (WP) and *The New York Times* (NYT), with NYT publishing nearly twice as many relevant articles as the number published by WP during

that period. Investigation of the structure and content of the articles reveals general uniformity in the presentation of information and views that could be interpreted as supportive of U.S. interests and the maintenance of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty signed in 1960; however, there are also notable gaps in the presentation of relevant information. The absence of information along with the presentation of interpretive views is such as to suggest a uniformity of journalistic treatment detrimental to the expressed concerns of the inhabitants of the island wherein the Futenma Marine Corps Air Station is situated.

The analysis presented here employs the

identification of media frames, in particular with reference to Robert M. Entman's theory of framing in political communication. Investigation of the 66 articles reveals that journalistic presentation of the issues surrounding the relocation of MCAS-Futenma, and the involvement of Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama in those decisions, fulfilled all four functions of the framing process of news: defining effects/conditions as problematic, identifying causes, conveying a moral judgment, and endorsing remedies/improvements (underline provided here for ease of reference). As mentioned, the period of investigation of news articles related to the MCAS-Futenma relocation problem coincides with Hatoyama's tenure of the office of Prime Minister of Japan, from 16 September 2009 to 2 June 2010, the date of his resignation. Scrutiny of the articles opens the question of direction of influence: does the news determine the reporting or does the reporting determine the news (and influence outcomes)?

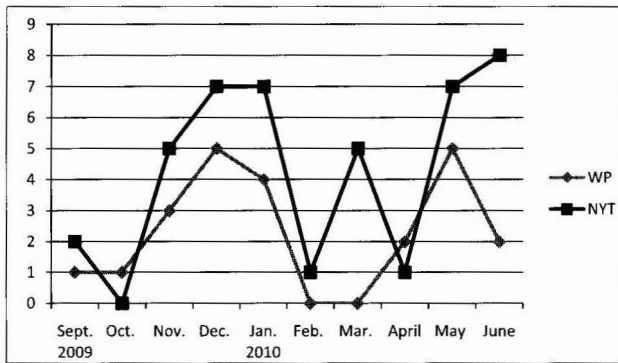
II. The Data: procedure of collection and criteria for inclusion

Using the key terms Okinawa, Futenma, and military to search within the database Lexis/Nexis, I was able to retrieve a large number of newspaper articles. After a preliminary analysis, I narrowed the collection to those U.S. newspaper articles relevant to the issue of the relocation of MCAS-Futenma which were published in either *The Washington Post* (WP) or *The New York Times* (NYT) during the ten-month period from September 2009 until the end of June the following year. I retrieved 25 articles from WP and 49 from NYT, but then further restricted the collection by excluding from analysis all editorials,

letters to the editor, and commentary columns, resulting in a data corpus of 23 articles from WP and 43 from NYT.

The selection of those two newspapers was motivated by (1) recognition of their being generally considered as politically influential in the United States, especially in Washington, DC, the seat of government of the United States, and (2) the fact that those newspapers have correspondents in Japan. Although the key terms also enabled retrieval of articles from other newspapers, investigation of those retrieved from *The Los Angeles Times* (LAT), indicated that they were not relevant to the issue of the MCAS-Futenma relocation. The exclusion of commentary and interpretive articles was done during the writing of this paper, and was undertaken for the following reasons: (1) those newspaper entries are few in number and are structurally different from those in the larger group of news-reporting articles, (2) the style of language use is intentionally less "objective" in those entries, and (3) though the use of frame analysis is inapplicable to those entries, the results of such analysis are not appropriately presented within statistical comparison of the body of retrieved newspaper articles. Nonetheless, in the analysis section of this paper, there will be occasional reference to some of those non-reportive articles.

The following graph presents the number of relevant articles appearing in the two newspapers, and is enumerated for each of the months in the designated ten-month period.



Graph 1. Number of relevant articles appearing in The Washington Post (WP) and in The New York Times (NYT) per month for a ten-month period. Key words: Okinawa, military, Futenma Database: Lexis /Nexis

III. The Analytical Framework: media frames and news framing

Journalists frame news in order to simplify complex issues. Gamson and Modigliani, defined a media frame as "a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events" (Gamson & Modigliani 143). However, because issues surrounding the relocation of MCAS-Futenma are interwoven with the process of diplomatic policy making, I prefer to utilize Robert M. Entman's concept of framing in political communication. According to Entman, the verb "to frame" or "framing" refers to the process of selecting and highlighting one or more aspects of a perceived reality, and enhancing the salience of an interpretation and evaluation of that reality (Entman 26). Basic functions of framing are identified as follows: "defining effects or conditions as problematic, identifying cause, conveying a moral judgment, and endorsing remedies or improvements" (underlining added here for ease of reference). Entman considered frames which perform at least two of these four functions to be substantive frames (Entman 5).

Investigation of the coverage of the MCAS-

Futenma issue in both U.S. papers indicates that all four functions of framing are present: identification of the issue as problematic, identification of cause, provision of moral judgment, and provision/endorsement of remedy. In both NYT and WP, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama is presented as the central actor. The campaign promise Hatoyama had made for relocating the Marine Corps Air Station in Futenma to mainland Japan or overseas was identified as a politically "unrealizable" promise, and the planned relocation was framed as problematic: the major U.S. and Japanese newspapers claimed that such a relocation, or attempt at a relocation different from the one agreed upon in 2006, would threaten the Japan-U.S. alliance. However, the cause of the problem was identified not as the existence of the MCAS-Futenma base or as the existence of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty (1960), but was identified as the consequence of the Hatoyama administration's being new and "inexperienced" and Hatoyama's "misguided" attempt to renege on the 2006 agreement between Japan and the United States regarding the relocation of MCAS-Futenma. The third function of framing, the conveyance of a moral judgment, could be found in newspapers in both Japan and the U.S.; the position taken was that the U.S. military air station should be moved to a less populated area as soon as possible, which implied the only possible location is Henoko in Okinawa for no other prefectures in Japan except that Osaka claimed to take the U.S. base in their backyard. That is, there was unanimity in the recognition of inappropriateness or injustice in allowing MCAS-Futenma to remain in its present location and circumstances, and that unanimity itself precluded investigatory discus-

ssion of the reasons for relocation. In reporting on Okinawans who were infuriated by Hatoyama's "indecisiveness" and "inability" to find a relocation site, it was therefore implied that Hatoyama was the primary cause for delaying the process of relocating MCAS-Futenma. The implication of such framing suggested that unless Hatoyama agreed to the earlier (2006) relocation plan, he would be held responsible for endangering the lives of those presently living near MCAS-Futenma. The fourth function of framing, the introduction of a remedy, was suggested in the U.S. and Japanese media: initially it was to relocate Marine Corps Air Station Futenma to a "less-populated area of Okinawa," but ultimately the media in Japan and the U.S. suggested another remedy: Hatoyama's resignation. It was suggested that the resignation would expedite the remedy initially offered: to expedite the relocation of MCAS-Futenma.

To reiterate, the Futenma issue is framed as problematic and the script is dominated by criticism against the Hatoyama Administration's mis-handling of the relocation. There was, however, only one story each from NYT and WP that would be categorized as scripts presenting the interests of residents in Futenma, reported as interviews with anti-U.S. base activists and educators. Okinawans' vocalized distrust of Hatoyama was then effectively used to support the newspapers' having framed the Hatoyama administration as one of the causes of the problem and his resignation as an expedient solution: "The United States doesn't know if it can trust Hatoyama or not," said Hiroshi Ashitomi, one of the protesters staging the sit-in in Henoko, "and neither do we Okinawans" (1/23/10 NYT). That quotation was strategically placed at the very end of the article.

The next section of this paper presents in more detail the framing used for reporting on the

Figure 1. Function of Frames in WP and NYT for the Futenma issue (2009-2010) created by the author

Function of Frames	Focus of Frames	
	WP	NYT
Defining Problematic effects/conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relocation of MCAS Futenma • Hatoyama's proposal: politically untenable and operationally unworkable • strained the Japan-U.S. security alliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relocation of MCAS Futenma • disrupts U.S.-Japan ties • damaging dispute to U.S.-Japan relations • Hatoyama angered the U.S.
Identifying cause/agent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "inexperienced" Hatoyama's politically "unrealizable" promise to move MCAS Futenma off Okinawa • Hatoyama reneged on the \$26 billion agreement in 2006 between Japan and U.S. to relocate MCAS Futenma within Okinawa, moving 8,000 marines to Guam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • politically toxic issue • politically "unrealizable" promise to move MCAS Futenma off Okinawa • Hatoyama reneged on the 2006 agreement between Japan and U.S. to relocate MCAS Futenma within Okinawa
Conveying moral judgment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCAS Futenma should be moved to a less crowded area in Okinawa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCAS Futenma should be moved to a less populated area in Okinawa
Endorsing remedy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCAS Futenma's relocation to a less crowded area in Okinawa; • Hatoyama's resignation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCAS Futenma's relocation to a less populated area in Okinawa; • Hatoyama's resignation

MCAS-Futenma issue and Hatoyama's inappropriate handling of the matter.

IV. Analysis

This section provides evidence that NYT and WP are indeed quite similar in their handling of information and in their framing for presentation of that information. This section begins with a chart of the topics that are covered, organized according to the media frames that are used for the presentation of those topics. Following that is a more detailed account of the information presented, with quotations from the newspapers. This section ends with focus on the information that is not presented. Figure 1 provides an easily understood organization of the information presented by the two newspapers and the functions of the frames employed for the presentation of that information. (See page 5)

IV.1. The objective, factual presentation of news and the illusion of completeness

Though newspapers carry a wide variety of type of articles, articles which are recognized as standard newspaper "news" articles are usually presented as if they were factual reports and contained all of the important or relevant information.

Both NYT and WP are nearly identical in their handling of this issue of the MCAS-Futenma relocation, but their articles appear to be predicated on the accepted importance of the Japan-U.S. alliance. They present this information, which is modified for value (as in the use of superlative forms), as if the information itself were uncontested fact.

Thus, in both U.S. papers, the United States

is repeatedly described as "Japan's biggest ally" (9/4/09 NYT), "Japan's closest ally" (12/16/09 NYT), "long time protector" (4/26/10 NYT), "military protector" (9/7/09 WP), and so on. As for Japan, it is described as "America's most important Asian ally" (1/12/10 NYT), and "America's closest ally" (12/11/09 WP). A quarter of the selected articles appearing in WP is from wire services such as Reuters and the Associated Press. Of the remaining 17 articles, written by WP reporters or staff, half clearly stressed the importance of the Japan-U.S. alliance by positioning the two nations as "the most important allies." About one third of the NYT articles used the same or similar expressions.

In an effort to emphasize the significance of the alliance, Japan is framed as being protected under the U.S. nuclear umbrella, and therefore defended from a nuclear-armed North Korea and a fast-rising China. Three times WP inserted the line "The U.S. is treaty-bound to defend Japan in case of attack," first in an article on September 17 (an article which introduced the new leaders of Japan), and again on November 17 (the only article that reflected Okinawan voices), and again on January 24 (which appeared the day after a candidate opposing the presence of U.S. bases won the mayoral election in Nago, the city within which lies Henoko, the site identified in the earlier, 2006 agreement). Repeatedly, the newspaper articles reminded the U.S. citizens and Japan of the agreed-upon "nuclear-armed protection." Both newspaper simplified that if the Japan-U.S. security alliance were not maintained as it had been for the preceding 50 years, "nuclear-armed North Korea" would become an imminent threat to Japan. Positioning Japan's neighbors as a threat

to peace was openly posed by the declaration: "Both Washington and Tokyo want to relocate Futenma to a northern part of Okinawa prefecture, calling it an essential deterrent to an ascendant China and a nuclear-armed North Korea" (11/21/10 WP underline added here).

By highlighting the importance of the Japan-U.S. alliance, both NYT and WP assume a political stance that supports the national interests of the United States. Reflecting the U.S. administration's stance, NYT and WP display Hatoyama's campaign to move MCAS-Futenma away from the island of Okinawa as an effort to disrupt US-Japan relationships. Repeatedly, NYT depicted Japan as having "frustrated and angered the Obama administration" (1/12/10 NYT) and Hatoyama's renegeing on the 2006 agreement as "raising the ire" of the Obama administration (1/24/10 NYT) for having "sown confusion and mistrust between the long time allies" (5/21/10 NYT). Almost half of NYT articles (21 of 43) depicted the U.S. administration as being annoyed with the Hatoyama administration, an important assertion in view of the fact that eighty percent of NYT articles (35 of 43) stressed the importance of the Japan-U.S. ties.

As already mentioned, half of 19 WP's own articles also clearly positioned Japan and the U.S. as closest allies or the U.S. as Japan's protector, and nearly as many articles had either the frame presenting China and/or North Korea as a threat or the frame presenting the solution that MCAS-Futenma should be relocated to Nago. Neither NYT nor WP attempted to question the very presence of the U.S. Marine Corps on Okinawa, but instead persisted in emphasizing the significance of the Japan-U.S. alliance, as follows:

The U.S. alliance with Japan is the centerpiece of American policy in Asia and has been a foundation of security in the region for decades. As the alliance has wavered, concern has spread across the region, with officials from South Korea to Australia expressing worries about the future of the U.S. security role (4/24/2010 WP underline added here).

After Hatoyama decided to give up his own Futenma relocation plan, NYT described the decision as Japan's having "dropped its resistance" to a previously negotiated arrangement to relocate MCAS-Futenma to another part of the island of Okinawa, the decision having been "driven in part by fears of hostility in [Japan's] neighborhood" (5/27/10 NYT). This positioning stresses the view of Okinawa's U.S. military installations as a deterrent to threats from China and North Korea.

However, throughout the ten-month period of newspaper coverage of the MCAS-Futenma issue, focus was not put on the plight of those adversely affected by the presence of MCAS-Futenma U.S. military base occupying a large and central portion of the town of Ginowan on the small island of Okinawa. Amid all the lines of criticism against the Hatoyama administration or against Hatoyama himself, only one or two sentences might be squeezed in to describe Futenma and its problems. This can be seen in the following media frame of the Futenma issue, with reference to Hatoyama's political performance: "For voters across Japan, the Okinawa issue is emblematic of Hatoyama's seeming inability to make up his mind in a timely way on a broad range of issues and campaign promises" (5/31/10 WP underline added here).

IV. 2. The illusion of neutrality and the use of experts

To emphasize the importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance, NYT often quotes remarks from "political analysts," "experts," and "senior government officials," and sometimes refers to anonymous sources. The selection of "political analysts" appears to be neutral at first glance, yet upon closer examination, NYT has effectively employed quotations from professors and researchers who are supportive of the Japan-U.S. alliance. The support of positions favorable to the U.S. is not balanced out by quotations from professors and researchers who articulate the plight of Okinawa.

In the article reporting Hatoyama's resignation, some "analysts" said that "[Japan] still views Washington as a largely benign protector" (6/3/2010 NYT). The inclusion of the adverb "largely" hints at the existence of views that the "protector" is not always benign, but those views are not presented, neither by the reporters nor by experts and analysts who, presumably on the basis of their professional expertise, are acquainted with those negative views. An editorial in NYT, appearing on Jan. 28, 2010, is an example revealing that even in the context of interpretive, in-depth coverage, this failure or refusal to present a fuller picture of the situation underlies the reporting of the newspapers. The editorial appeared after Susumu Inamine, an opponent to U.S. bases, won mayoral election in Nago. Before the election, the paper had reported that "this seemingly minor election could, in an indirect way, have major consequences for the United States' ties with Japan, Washington's most important ally" (1/23/10). It is apparent that NYT highlighted the view that there is no other option

for resolving the Futenma issue other than to move MCAS-Futenma to Henoko (in Nago) and that failure to accomplish that relocation will have adverse effect on U.S. relations with Japan.

It took the United States and Japan a decade to negotiate a deal that would reduce the number of American troops on Okinawa and reposition those that remain. Japan's new prime minister, Yukio Hatoyama, is refusing, so far, to commit to the agreement, and the Obama administration is being less than patient. Before any serious damage is done to this important alliance, both countries must work harder to find a compromise. The 2006 agreement was designed to lessen tensions between Okinawans and the more than 20,000 American troops they host. The deal includes moving 2,000 Marines from the Futenma United States Marine air station in the city of Ginowan to the less populated Nago on Okinawa's northern coast, and relocating 8,000 other Marines to Guam We hope the Obama administration shows flexibility and patience when two senior officials visit Japan for security talks this week. They should encourage Mr. Hatoyama to prove his commitment to being an "equal partner" by offering solutions. And the United States must make a more compelling case for stationing troops in Japan. (There are another 20,000 American troops stationed elsewhere in Japan or just off the coast.) The alliance is more important than the basing agreement. But the longer the agreement is in limbo, the more it stirs questions about the future of the alliance. There are worrying signs that

many of Japan's new leaders and its postwar generation don't understand the full value of the security partnership. A half-century of American protection remains a bargain for the Japanese. In much of Asia, it's seen as an essential balance against a rising China and a defense, if needed, against North Korea. The United States must respect Mr. Hatoyama's desire to strike a more independent course, including by seeking improved ties with China. A strong and equal partnership between Tokyo and Washington is in both countries' overwhelming interest. (1/28/10 NYT Editorial, underline added here)

The position of the people of Okinawa was not expressed as newsworthy and was generally not even alluded to in the articles. Instead, it was presented by an authority whose opinion had not been solicited by NYT reporters. On February 8, 2010, Sarah Kovner, assistant professor of history and Asian studies at the University of Florida, wrote a letter that was published on the editorial page of NYT under the heading "U.S. Bases in Japan," a title which obscures and removes Okinawa. In the letter, Kovner responds to the editorial quoted above and poignantly criticizes that editorial for its lack of account of the sufferings of the Okinawans.

A half-century of protection may seem like a "bargain," but for the men and women who live near the bases that are concentrated in Okinawa, they have been a tremendous burden. Your editorial should have noted why citizens in base communities have opposed the stationing of United States forces in Japan

for more than 50 years. Women have endured sexual violence from American servicemen. Homeowners worry about toxic waste left behind at abandoned bases. And everyone must endure the screams of jet engines and inebriated servicemen. All along, the United States military has resisted demands to turn over servicemen accused of major crimes to Japanese custody. Any assessment of the United States-Japan alliance must take into account the safety and welfare of the men, women and children who live with American bases, and not just the strategic interests of the two governments. (Sarah Kovner, 2/8/2010 NYT, underline added here)

The inclusion of this letter on the editorial page serves to present NYT as even-handed and neutral in their position of covering a problematic issue such as that of MCAS-Futenma. Nevertheless, the reader has no assurance that the letter of Kovner's appears unedited. For that matter, it is well possible that even by-lined news articles have been trimmed of the kind of reporting that Kovner complains is absent in NYT's accounts of the situation in Okinawa.

V. Information gaps as a consequence of framing

Here, I would like to raise three major points that received little or no coverage as a result of news framing. The lack of coverage of the following three issues may have influenced readers' perceptions and judgments concerning U.S. military-related issues in Okinawa, especially the Futenma issue and the role of the Hatoyama administration.

V. 1. Almost no report in NYT on SOFA and military-related crimes and accidents

Among the New York Times articles on Okinawa related issues, there are few that mention the crimes committed by the U.S. military personnel and dependents on Okinawa, and there is no commentary on the Status of Forces Agreement, which has been used to enable U.S. military personnel to evade Japanese legal prosecution for crimes committed against Japanese and Okinawan people.

I found only one out of 43 NYT articles concerning the Futenma issues which mentions the unfair "agreements" in SOFA (11/12/09), though the focus of the article was neither on the unfair treaty itself nor on the injustices done to the residents of Okinawa. The lack of reporting on the consequences of this unfair agreement quite likely has contributed to misunderstandings of Okinawan's protest against the U.S. military presence.

V. 2. Almost no report in the U.S. media on the "sympathy budget" (host nation support)

As NYT states in the 1/28/10 editorial, "A half-century of American protection remains a bargain for the Japanese," the idea of Japan's taking a "free-ride" on U.S.-Japan Security Treaty (1960) (1/30/10) is prevalent among the journalists and the readers of NYT. However, except for one case in NYT, in which Joseph Nye, a Harvard professor, briefly referred to it as Japan's "generous host nation support" and nothing further, neither NYT nor WP mention the presence of "host nation support," which was formerly termed "sympathy budget" by the Japanese.

According to *The Okinawa Times* (OT), "host nation support" pays for 70 percent of the expenses of the U.S. military in Japan. Japan pays three times more host nation support than does Germany. Japan pays the highest cost of host nation support for the U.S. military presence. It could be said that if the U.S. military installations in Japan are moved to mainland U.S., it will cost much more to maintain them. (5/7/11 OT translation mine)

V. 3. Inadequate coverage of environmental contamination caused by U.S. military

The perilous environment in Futenma was only briefly touched upon by NYT and WP (five articles in WP including two from AP, and two from the NYT). However, it is common knowledge among the Japanese bureaucrats that there is heavy environmental contamination on Okinawa.

VI. Conclusion

Through examining major U.S. newspapers, I have found that media frames of the Futenma issue in both newspapers are almost identical. Their media frames revolve around the importance of the Japan-U.S. security alliance. They framed the Futenma issue in connection with the new, "inexperienced" Hatoyama administration's "inability" to find a relocation site within Japan, thus, infuriating the Okinawans who have long protested against the U.S. military presence on their land.

Significant absence of reports on the Status of Forces Agreement, crimes committed by U.S. military personnel and their dependents, and environmental contamination derived from the U.S. bases may well have primed the readers' subtly

biased stereotypes of Okinawans and the plight of Okinawa. As Entman explicates in *Projections of Power*, this is the consequence of framing: "the coverage might neglect to provide explicit evaluations of the related event or issue. *The news frequently exhibits such voids in framing, gaps that audiences may fill by using tacit understandings, (that is, their existing schemas) or that they may simply ignore*" (Entman 23, italics mine). I would argue, therefore, that what assisted the media's neglect to provide Okinawan people's accounts of the Futenma issue can be equated to "willful blindness" reflecting the media's political stance to maintain the tight relationship between the two nations. In order not to have the U.S. bases removed from Okinawa or from Japan, resulting in the loss of host nation support (no mention in the article), the U.S. government and media insist, as they have always maintained, that "Okinawa and the Futenma issue" are Japan's domestic problem.

One could say that the media frames of the Futenma issue by these two major U.S. newspapers indirectly motivated the Japanese public to demand a new prime minister. Japanese reporters tend to be immensely influenced by powerful U.S. newspapers such as NYT and WP. Kensei Yoshida calls such journalists "brainwashed" propagandists of the Japan Handlers (Yoshida 91). When a WP columnist, Al Kamen, identified Hatoyama by the expressions "a big loser" and "loopy," Japanese newspapers reported on his comment: some Japanese reporters believed that his remarks invited a big plunge in opinion polls on Hatoyama and eventually led to his resignation (6/5/10 WP). Such reporters wrote articles in favor of U.S. national interests, which could

well have influenced the Japanese public to accept those views without critical thinking. Iyenger and McGrady found that after September 11, 2001, U.S. President George W. "Bush's popularity was closely tied to assessments of his performance on terrorism" (Iyengar 3884). Similarly in Japan, it could be said that Hatoyama's popularity was tied to his handling of the Futenma issue. Repetitive U.S. newspaper descriptions and media frames of negative images of Hatoyama's being an "indecisive" and "inexperienced" leader was what resonated in Japanese media accounts of Hatoyama. NYT claims that Hatoyama resigned "largely for his failure to move an American air base off Okinawa" (6/3/10) and calls the Futenma issue a "politically toxic issue that drove Mr. Hatoyama to resign" (6/7/10). That assessment was identical with the reportage of Japanese major newspapers at that time. In a future paper, I plan to look further into the priming effects that occur between U.S. and Japanese media.

This paper has examined two major U.S. newspapers' biased framing of the Futenma issue. To conclude, the coverage of the Futenma issues by *The New York Times* and by *The Washington Post* in articles appearing in late 2009 through mid 2010 emphasized the necessity of the Japan-U.S. security alliance and appear to have contributed to the collapse of the Hatoyama administration, with the result being a reversion to the decision made by the U.S. and Japanese government in 2006 to relocate the Futenma Marine Corps Air Station to a site within Okinawa.

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