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12 Islands of Imperialism

Military Bases and the Ethnography of U.S. Empire

DAVID VINE

In the late 1950s, officials in the U.S. national security bureaucracy started growing increasingly concerned that they were losing control of the world. Despite the unparalleled power of the United States at the end of World War II, the country's relative supremacy had started to decline. The Soviet Union had acquired its own nuclear arsenal and become another global superpower. China was emerging as a regional competitor. With the decolonization movement gaining momentum, Britain, France, and other Western nations were giving up their colonial possessions. In the East-West confrontation of the Cold War, the alignment of newly independent nations was up for grabs. With the United States allied with most of the former colonial rulers, a perception was building that many of the new nations—and the world—were tilting toward the East. Although the erosion of U.S. power and influence was ~~probably~~ less significant in reality than it was in perception (U.S. military and economic power remained unparalleled), this made little difference to U.S. officials.

"Virtually all of Africa, and certain Middle Eastern and Far Eastern territories presently under Western control," navy planner Stuart Barber predicted, would soon "drift from Western influence." The inevitable result, Barber told his superiors in 1958, would be "the withdrawal . . . denial or restriction" of U.S. and Western military forces across a wide swath of an increasingly unstable globe. The ability of the United States to use its military to influence global events would decline accordingly.[1]

Barber's response to such fears was what he called the "Strategic Island Concept." A naval intelligence officer during World War II, "Stu" Barber had seen the critical role hundreds of small Pacific island military bases played in defeating Japan. The U.S. Navy ought to have more such island bases, Barber told navy admirals. Island bases near hotspots in the so-called Third World, he argued, would increase the nation's ability to rapidly deploy military force

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wherever and whenever officials pleased. Island bases would help maintain U.S. dominance for decades to come. But to ensure the military had access to such bases, it would have to gain control over as many islands as possible as quickly as possible before they were lost to decolonization forever.

Barber started to "scan all the charts to see what useful islands there might be," he later recounted. After considering hundreds of possibilities from the Galapagos in the Atlantic to the Marshalls in the Pacific, Barber looked to the Indian Ocean, where he found "that beautiful atoll of Diego Garcia, right in the middle of the ocean."[2]

The only problem, Barber believed, was that any targeted island would have to be "free of impingement on any significant indigenous population or economic interest." Barber was pleased to note that Diego Garcia's population was "measured only in the hundreds."[3]

More than half a century after Barber drafted his Strategic Island Concept, Diego Garcia is a multibillion dollar U.S. air and naval base and one of the most ~~important~~ significant bases in the world. Located nearly 6,000 miles closer to the Persian Gulf than the east coast of the United States, British-controlled Diego Garcia has been a major, if little known, launchpad for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Long off limits to nonmilitary personnel, the island has been a secret CIA "black site," part of the CIA's "extraordinary rendition" program that has involved the extrajudicial transportation, interrogation, and torture of captured terrorist suspects. Prior to the establishment of the prison at Guantánamo, U.S. officials considered Diego Garcia as an alternate location. And for more than three decades, the base has been a centerpiece of U.S. attempts to control Middle Eastern oil and natural gas supplies.

Meanwhile, the people Barber described as numbering "only in the hundreds" (in fact, they numbered 1,500 to 2,000) have been living in exile for more than forty years. Between 1968 and 1973, the U.S. and British governments forcibly removed Diego Garcia's indigenous people—the Chagossians—and dumped them in impoverished exile in the western Indian Ocean islands of Mauritius and the Seychelles. Today, the military calls Diego Garcia the "Footprint of Freedom"—with no sense of the irony the name entails for the Chagossians.

Elsewhere, I have detailed the history of Chagossians' expulsion, their experiences in exile, and the people's struggle to return home and win proper compensation. While, I think it critical to explore and document the effects of empire at the same time as one explores how empires exert their power, for reasons of space, this chapter will focus on the latter.

Examining the history of Diego Garcia, this chapter aims to offer insights into the nature of the United States as an empire and the role of overseas bases in that empire.[4] U.S. Americans have long had trouble seeing their

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nation as an empire of any kind, given its powerful founding ideologies of democracy and freedom.[5] Many have thought that if the country was ever an empire, it was only briefly, and perhaps absentmindedly, so around the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the acquisition of the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Guam. (Many of the founders had little trouble reconciling imperial and democratic visions of the nation: George Washington referred to the United States as a "rising Empire.")[6]

For decades, revisionist historians and other leftist scholars have generally held that the United States has long been an empire. According to these scholars, following the conquests of 1898, the United States largely became a new kind of empire, an empire of economics, symbolized by "Open Door" trade policies initiated in China after the Boxer Rebellion.[7] Such scholars argue that the nation largely avoided the colonialism of the European powers based on territorial expansion and direct rule over subject peoples in favor of a more discreet, nonterritorial kind of economic imperialism. Economic control and exploitation, they say, have largely emanated from policies such as the "Open Door" in China and, later, the IMF and the World Bank. "The best-preferred strategy," says Neil Smith, "was to organize resource and commodity extraction through the market rather than through military or political occupation."[8] The use of state power to open up markets became the basis for continued imperialism.[9]

While I agree with the revisionists that the postwar period has been defined to a significant degree by economic forms of imperialism, I contend that the history of Diego Garcia shows how this understanding of U.S. empire is incomplete.[10] Here I follow a smaller group of scholars who emphasize military not economic might as the defining element of U.S. empire.[11] Several focus on the role of military bases, such as Diego Garcia. They argue that the United States has become an "empire of bases"—now numbering around 1,000—deploying military facilities globally, rather than colonizing foreign lands, to exert imperial control over weaker nations.[12] Today the United States controls around 95 percent of the world's foreign bases, thus possessing more bases than any nation, empire, or people in world history.[13]

The history of Diego Garcia and the "Strategic Island Concept" help demonstrate the importance of overseas bases to post–World War II U.S. power strategies and U.S. attempts to exert imperial control over much of the rest of the world. Overseas bases have long been a critical, but often overlooked, tool to launch wars and interventions, maintain systems of alliances, keep other nations in subordinate relationships, and maintain a global political-economic-military order to the perceived benefit of the United States and its elites.

Contrary to those who hold that the United States became an empire of economics in the twentieth century, Diego Garcia and island bases more

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His article would describe the population of Diego Garcia as consisting "largely of transient laborers," most of whom were "understood to have left."[43]

In 1965, in contravention of international agreements forbidding the division of colonies during decolonization, the British government paid Mauritius three million pounds to detach Chagos (a dependency of Mauritius since its settlement in the eighteenth century) and agreed to build an international airport for colonial Seychelles in exchange for its islands. A British official described the compensation as "bribes" to ensure both colonies would quietly acquiesce to the plan.[44]

A year later, the U.S. and British governments confirmed the arrangements with a little-noticed "Exchange of Notes." The Notes effectively constituted a treaty, but unlike a treaty, they required no congressional or parliamentary approval—allowing both governments to keep the plans hidden from their legislatures. Representatives for the two governments signed the agreement, as one of State Department negotiator told me, "under the cover of darkness," the day before New Year's Eve, 1966.

According to the Notes, the United States would gain use of the new colony "without charge."[45] In confidential agreements accompanying the Notes, however, the United States agreed to secretly transfer fourteen million dollars to Britain. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara had approved the transfer of funds a year earlier, which circumvented the congressional appropriations process. The money was, as other secret documents show, to be used to establish the territory, to pay off Mauritius and the Seychelles "generously" to avoid "agitation in the colonies."[46] It ~~also served~~ would also serve to take those "administrative measures" necessary to remove the islands' inhabitants.[47]

"ABSOLUTELY MUST GO"

The islands' inhabitants, the Chagossians, and their ancestors had lived in Diego Garcia and the rest of the previously uninhabited Chagos Archipelago since the late eighteenth century, when Franco-Mauritians created coconut plantations on the islands and imported enslaved and, later, indentured laborers from Africa and India. Over the next two centuries, this diverse workforce developed into a distinct, emancipated society and a people known initially as the Ilois (the Islanders). By the 1960s, Chagossians lived in what remained a plantation society, which was far from luxurious but provided a secure life, generally free of want, and featuring universal employment and numerous social benefits, including regular if small salaries, land, free housing, education, pensions, burial services, and basic health care in islands described by many as "idyllic."

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The Chagossians' expulsion unfolded in stages beginning in 1968. First, any Chagossians who left Chagos for medical treatment or for regular vacations in Mauritius were told that they could not return. Often they were marooned without family members and almost all their possessions. Next, the British began restricting supplies to Chagos, and by the turn of the decade more Chagossians were leaving as food and medicines dwindled. British authorities meanwhile designed a public relations plan that would, as Foreign Office legal adviser Anthony Aust proposed, "maintain the fiction that the inhabitants of Chagos are not a permanent or semi-permanent population."[48]

"We are able to make up the rules as we go along," Aust wrote. Anglo-American officials would simply represent the Chagossians as "transient contract workers" with no connection to the islands (continuing the line likely fed to the *Washington Post*).[49] Another Foreign Office official, D. A. Greenhill, was even more blunt in internal documents, when he called the Chagossians, "some few Tarzans or Men Fridays."[50]

In November 1970, after facing some resistance to the plan within the Pentagon and on Capitol Hill (almost entirely on financial grounds), the navy, backed by its former secretary and then deputy secretary of defense Paul Nitze, won its first (classified) construction funds from Congress. In briefing chapters delivered to Congress, the navy described the Diego Garcia's population as, "negligible. . . . For all practical purposes . . . uninhabited."[51]

In early 1971, the navy began construction on Diego Garcia and ordered the British to complete the removals. When some U.S. Navy officers raised concerns about removing the people, the navy's highest-ranking admiral, Elmo Zumwalt, sent a three-word reply: "Absolutely must go."[52]

And so, British agents, with the help of U.S. Navy personnel, herded the Chagossians' pet dogs into sealed sheds and gassed and burned them in front of their traumatized owners awaiting deportation. Between 1971 and 1973, British agents forced the remaining islanders to board overcrowded cargo ships and left them on the docks in Mauritius and the Seychelles. In the Seychelles, the refugees initially had to sleep in a former prison.

In exile, the Chagossians received no resettlement assistance and quickly became impoverished. In 1975, the *Washington Post* exposed the story of the Chagossians' expulsion for the first time in the Western press, describing the people as living in "abject poverty."[53] Five and ten years after the last deportations, the people received small amounts of British compensation. It totaled less than six thousand dollars per recipient. Some Chagossians, including all those in the Seychelles, received nothing. Numbering between five and ten thousand today, including those born in exile, most Chagossians remain impoverished. Most live as marginalized outsiders, still struggling to win proper compensation and the right of return.[54]

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The Strategic Island Concept revolved around a dream of strategically located, *people-less* bases. At the Concept's core was a realization that despite overseas bases' advantages, they involve significant risks in the form of protest, the imposition of operational restrictions by host governments, and, ultimately, eviction from strategic locations where large sums of money have been invested.

The Strategic Island Concept proposed avoiding these risks and protecting the United States' dominant position in the world by removing local peoples and postcolonial governments from the base equation. This meant finding remote and, in officials' eyes, insignificant islands where, with little attention, a small group of locals could be removed and where the United States could retain territorial sovereignty in perpetuity, either by purchase or by ensuring the maintenance of sovereignty by its closest Western allies. Officials would prepare the islands for base construction as future needs required.[55]

With the Chagossians removed, military planners were thrilled at the idea of a base with no civilian population within almost five hundred miles. The U.S. officials and their British counterparts wanted total, permanent control over Diego Garcia and the entire Chagos Archipelago without the possibility of outside interference or eviction by either foreign politicians or a population claiming rights to self-determination. Diego Garcia was attractive precisely because it was not subject to, as one navy officer ~~explained~~, "political restrictions of the type that had shackled or even terminated flexibility at foreign bases elsewhere."[56]

A Foreign Office brief emphasized the importance of being able to "to clear [Diego Garcia] of its current population. The Americans in particular attached great importance to this freedom of manoeuvre, divorced from the normal considerations applying to a populated dependent territory." The Foreign Office explained that U.S. officials "implied . . . we could not accept that the interests of the inhabitants were paramount and that we should develop self-government there."[57] The priorities of the U.S. and U.K. governments were clear: (1) Maintenance of complete political and military control over the islands, (2) the unfettered ability to remove any island populations by force, and (3) disregard for locals' inhabitants' international rights.

Given the "special relationship" between the United States and the United Kingdom, the U.S. military would have near *carte blanche* (pun intended given the racism underlying the plan) on the island. With any British role reduced to a few token functionaries and the right to be consulted before major U.S. deployment shifts, Diego Garcia is definitively a U.S. base and practically a U.S. territory (today, cars drive on the right side of the road).

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Diego Garcia thus had all the advantages and almost none of the disadvantages of an overseas military base in the eyes of military and diplomatic officials. It had all the advantages as a relatively surreptitious way to exercise U.S. power and was controlled, as one naval officer explained, by "a long-standing ally (the United Kingdom) unlikely to toss [the United States] out for governmental changes or US foreign policy initiatives."[58] Even more, in the British government, the U.S. government had a partner willing to ignore international law and human rights guarantees by removing an indigenous population from their homes.[59] The British would do the dirty work of the expulsion. They would dispose of the population. For just fourteen million dollars, the United States would always have the legal and political alibi that Great Britain is the sovereign and is thus ultimately responsible for any island inhabitants.

With the population successfully exiled, the U.S. government had (and still has) what is almost the perfect base: strategically located, free of any potentially troublesome population, under de facto U.S. control yet with its closest ally as sovereign to take any political heat, and almost no restrictions on use of the island, save periodically consulting with the British. Free reign over an idyllic and strategically located atoll in the Indian Ocean—it's no wonder navy personnel call it "Fantasy Island."[60]

DIEGO GARCIA EXPANDS

The history of Diego Garcia shows that much of the national security bureaucracy adopted the navy's concept as an important strategic framework. At the request of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the navy made plans for scores of strategic island bases around the globe. In the Indian Ocean, the idea was the basis for the creation of the BIOT and an initially planned "strategic triangle" of bases on Diego Garcia, the Seychelles' island Aldabra, and Australia's Cocos/Keeling Islands. Although the costs of the Vietnam War reined in the most far-reaching plans and left Diego Garcia as the only major base formally created under the Strategic Island Concept, the strategy became an important argument for the retention and expansion of major preexisting island bases, including those in Guam, Micronesia, Hawai'i, Ascension, Bahrain, the Azores, Okinawa, and Japan's Ogasawara Islands.[61]

In the Indian Ocean, U.S. officials coupled Diego Garcia with the first-ever build-up of U.S. naval forces in the region. Over time, the base and naval deployments increasingly enabled the insertion of military power into a large and unstable portion of the world. Fearing an unknowable and threatening future in the Third World, and increasingly in the Persian Gulf and Southwest

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Asia, officials crafted a plan for Diego Garcia to control the future through military force.

Far from being a geopolitical strategy alone, however, the intent was always political, military, and economic: Diego Garcia allowed what strategists euphemistically call "intervention" and the threat of intervention in the affairs of other nations but also helped protect U.S. business interests in the region. Initially, protecting U.S. access to Middle Eastern oil was just one of several motivations behind the military buildup. Within just a few years of the base becoming operational, however, oil was at the heart of Diego Garcia's raison d'être.

After the Iranian revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the base was at the center of the first large-scale thrust of U.S. military strength into the region. To respond to any future threats to the oil supply, Presidents Carter and Reagan developed a "Rapid Deployment Force" at bases in the region, including a rapidly enlarging Diego Garcia.[62] The base enjoyed the "most dramatic build-up of any location since the Vietnam War," with more than $500 million invested by 1986.[63] By now the total runs into the billions. The Rapid Deployment Force later became known as the U.S. Central Command, which has led the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In this evolution of Diego Garcia's role, the base's significance grows as one of the first steps by the United States to use overt military power in and around Southwest Asia to defend U.S. oil supplies (the establishment of a small naval force in Bahrain in 1949 was an important, though largely symbolic, forerunner).

Diego Garcia saw its first significant wartime use only during the first Gulf War, after the Cold War's end. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the base has become a pivot point of U.S. strategy for the control of areas from the Southwest to East Asia. Prior to September 11, 2001, and the subsequent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the U.S. military was in the process of turning Diego into one of four major "forward operating locations" for "expeditionary" air force operations and a recipient of an eastward shift of materiel and weaponry from Cold War European bases. "It's the single most important military facility we've got," respected Washington-area military expert John Pike told me in an interview in 2004. Pike, who runs the website GlobalSecurity.org, explained, "It's the base from which we control half of Africa and the southern side of Asia, the southern side of Eurasia." It's "the facility that at the end of the day gives us some say-so in the Persian Gulf region." The dream for many in the military is, as Pike explained, "to run the planet from Guam and Diego Garcia by 2015, even if the entire Eastern Hemisphere has dropped kicked us" from bases on their territory.

Diego Garcia shows how the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are, in important ways, the fulfillment of a strategic vision for controlling a large swath

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of Asia and, with it, the global economy. This dates from at least World War II, and has been advanced significantly by the establishment of the Indian Ocean base. As others have shown, the wars have significantly advanced the pursuit (if not the reality) of U.S. control over Persian Gulf and Central Asian oil and natural gas supplies—and with them, the global economy—through the presence of hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops and private military contractors and the creation or expansion of bases in at least Afghanistan, Iraq, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Djibouti, Pakistan, and, until their closure, in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.[64]

The strategic logic of Diego Garcia, of using bases to control resource-rich regions, becomes even clearer when one considers reports that the United States has explored plans to develop a new base off the oil-rich west coast of Africa, in the Gulf of Guinea, on one of the islands of São Tomé and Príncipe.[65] Without the freedom to create new large bases in Africa given the opposition they would likely generate, the Pentagon is using a growing collection of bases on the continent in an attempt to control another crucial oil-rich region amid growing competition, in Africa and globally, from China, Russia, and the European Union. At least one U.S. official has described the proposed base on São Tomé as "another Diego Garcia." Much as with Diego Garcia, U.S. officials have denied having any interest in a base on São Tomé.[66]

A NEW FORM OF EMPIRE

Contrary to those who stress U.S. empire's reliance on economic tools, Diego Garcia and the Strategic Island Concept represent a reliance on traditional imperial tools of overseas bases and military power to maintain U.S. dominance. Clearly, Diego Garcia and the Strategic Island Concept were not the only reactions to the relative decline in U.S. power during the Cold War—there were economic, political, and other military reactions as well. But they provided part of a solution to perceived threats while simultaneously answering the challenges posed by decolonization to the exercise of power through overseas bases.

In the nineteenth century, Britain and other European powers tied their expansionist success to the direct control of foreign lands. Given ~~its~~ framing of ~~the war~~ as an anticolonial struggle and ~~its~~ pledge to assist with decolonization upon war's end, ~~World War II made this~~ no longer an option for the United States. After the war, the creation of the United Nations enshrined the decolonization process and the right of nations and peoples to self-determination and self-government.

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"Decolonization did not mean that empires went away," writes Carole McGranahan, "but that they went underground, surfacing in guises ranging from socialist empire in the Soviet Union to various forms of neo-imperialist aggressive democracy as in the case of the United States. Yet each of these polities," she explains, "fiercely guarded itself against any accusations of empire or imperialism."[67]

Diego Garcia and the Strategic Island Concept were part of the invention of a new, more discreet form of empire, relying heavily on overseas bases and increasingly on isolated, often island bases to exert power. Responding to decolonization in particular, Diego Garcia helped usher in an ongoing shift of bases from locations near population centers to isolated locations insulated from potentially antagonistic locals. This model is now most clearly visible in the current "lily pad" basing strategy. Under the strategy, the Pentagon has been creating small, often-secretive bases that are isolated from population centers and potentially antagonistic locals, and that have as few political constraints as possible. Much as Barber initially envisioned a large stockpile of island bases, the military's aim has been to acquire as many bases as possible, in as many nations as possible, from Singapore and Poland to Honduras and Kenya.[68]

Alongside U.S. postwar economic and political power, the overseas base network became a major mechanism of U.S. imperial control that allows the control of territory vastly disproportionate to the land actually occupied. Without a collection of colonies, the United States has used what is likely the greatest collection of bases ever as well as periodic displays of military might to keep wayward nations within the rules of an economic and political system favorable to ~~the United States~~.[69] Indeed, it was the nation's unchallenged military superiority at the end of World War II that left it in a position to dictate much of the postwar international economic system upon which U.S. geoeconomic power is based.[70] While the total acreage occupied by bases has been relatively slight (especially compared to prior European empires), in the ability to rapidly deploy the U.S. military nearly anywhere on the globe, the basing system represents a dramatic expansion of U.S. power and a significant way in which the United States came to maintain its postwar dominance.

Specifically, bases and troops abroad have been "used to influence and limit the political, diplomatic, and economic initiatives of host nations," explains Joseph Gerson.[71] In the Philippines, for example, the United States used military and economic aid and defense promises to extract not only decades' worth of base access but favorable terms of trade and political influence as well.[72] With "a chain of military bases and staging areas around the globe," the United States developed "a means of deploying air and naval forces to be used on a moment's notice—all in the interest of maintaining . . . its political

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and economic hegemony."[73] "Global economic access without colonies" was the postwar strategy, explains geographer Neil Smith, "matched by a strategic vision of necessary bases around the globe both to protect global economic interests and to restrain any future military belligerence."[74]

To be clear, I agree with those who say that in the twentieth century, the U.S. empire has been characterized to a significant degree by economic forms of imperialism, such as the use of the World Bank, IMF, and World Trade Association to open and dominate markets and maintain other countries in subordinated relationships. The history of Diego Garcia illustrates how the U.S. empire has relied in important ways on the continued use of military force and on increasingly discreet overseas bases in particular to maintain its dominance. This is not to deny the significance of economics to U.S. empire, only to shift the balance toward the relatively underexplored military dimensions. In sum, Diego Garcia suggests a more balanced perspective on U.S. empire, highlighting how overseas bases, along with other military tools, have worked in tandem with and undergirded economic forms of power.

OF OCEANS AND EMPIRE: RETHINKING TERRITORIAL CONTROL

Viewed geographically, one sees how the small-scale acquisition of territory for island bases has allowed the United States to dominate large swaths of *ocean territory* upon which global trade and the nation's economic state might rely. Coupled with a powerful navy, island bases provide the force to effectively rule areas of ocean and any military or commercial traffic that might cross the seas (just as the Spanish, French, and British empires once did). At the turn of the twentieth century, the base at Guantánamo Bay, for example, owed its creation largely to U.S. leaders' interest in controlling the Caribbean and the major commercial trade route between the East Coast and the Central American isthmus, which was soon to provide passage to the Pacific. Since World War II, bases in the Pacific, from Okinawa and Japan's main islands to Guam and Pearl Harbor, have long allowed the U.S. Navy to make the ocean an "American lake." In the Atlantic, the navy enjoys unrivaled control from bases on the east coast, the naval station in Rota, Spain, and widespread access to other Atlantic port facilities. In the Mediterranean, the United States is again dominant with the help of extensive base and port facilities in Italy, Greece, and elsewhere around the sea. And in the Indian Ocean, maintaining a base on Diego Garcia—in addition to the Fifth Fleet's headquarters in Bahrain, other Persian Gulf facilities, and Camp Lemonier in Djibouti—has helped the United States exert similar control, particularly over Middle Eastern oil traffic.

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In the role that island bases and navies (including those floating bases, aircraft carriers) play in patrolling sea-lanes and protecting oceangoing commerce (including, but well beyond, oil), one sees a near literal way in which overseas bases undergird the economics of U.S. empire. Indeed, the ability of the U.S. Navy to provide unchallenged control of the Earth's major bodies of water since World War II, and thus to govern a significant proportion global trade, has been another underappreciated pillar of U.S. empire.

The significance of the sea extends further if we begin to think of *territory* not just as the surface of the Earth covered by land but also as the surface of the Earth covered by water. Seeing the significant degree of de facto sovereignty that the United States enjoys over the world's oceans points to the further similarity (albeit a more subtle one) between the U.S. empire and the European *territorial* empires of centuries past. The same applies to U.S. dominance in the skies given the U.S. Air Force's supremacy over other air forces and the ability of U.S. intercontinental ballistic and shorter-range missiles to threaten any location on the planet with a nuclear or conventional strike. Here, technological changes have allowed the U.S. empire to exert power and influence over the entire globe in ways that were impossible prior to the jet and missile age.

Even if one disagrees that the control of oceanic or aerial territory constitutes a functional equivalent to the control exercised by prior territorial empires, it is worth remembering that the United States was in the nineteenth century, and remains today, a land-based territorial empire. Although the westward expansion of the thirteen original states and their conquest of Native American lands and peoples have long been naturalized and concealed by narratives of manifest destiny and Euro-Americans' "right" to the continent, there was obviously nothing natural about the displacement, dispossession, and death of Native Americans at the hands of the U.S. military and settlers protected by that military. These were the first stages of an empire whose territorial possessions quickly rivaled that of the largest European powers.

CONCLUSION: IMPERIAL SHIFTS, IMPERIAL CONTINUITIES

The history of Diego Garcia and of the Strategic Island Concept points to both shifts and continuities in the evolution of the U.S. empire and empire more broadly.[75] On the one hand, the extent to which imperial control has been exercised through the base network and not through colonies represents a break with previous empires. On the other hand, Diego Garcia and the base network represent several long-standing imperial trends including the persistence of territorial acquisition and displacement, the growing

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53 Ottaway, "Islanders Were Evicted for U.S. Base." See also *Washington Post*, "The Diego Garcians."

54 See, e.g., Madeley, *Diego Garcia*; Vine, *Island of Shame*. As a result of their legal and political struggle, in 2002, Chagossians received full British citizenship, having previously been eligible for a kind of second-class citizenship along with residents of Bermuda, the Falklands (Malvinas) Islands, and other remaining British colonies.

55 See Vine, *Island of Shame*.

56 Ryan, "Diego Garcia," 133.

57 U.K. Foreign Office, "Steering Committee," para. 10–11.

58 Dunn, "Shore up the Indian Ocean," 131.

59 Expulsions and forced relocations are clearly prohibited by customary international law and a range of international and regional agreements. See Aceves, et al., "Declaration of International Law Scholars on Forced Relocation," 1, 31–32.

60 Dunn, "Shore Up the Indian Ocean."

61 U.S. officials eventually returned the Ogasawara Islands to Japanese sovereignty.

62 Bandjunis, *Diego Garcia*.

63 "Diego Garcia 'Camp Justice' 7°20'S 72°25'E," Globalsecurity.org, accessed October 15, 2017, https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/diego-garcia.htm.

64 See Vine, *Base Nation*, 41–42.

65 *Monthly Review* editors, *Monthly Review*, "U.S. Military Bases and Empire," March 2002, accessed August 11, 2017, http://www.monthlyreview.org/0302editr.htm.

66 VOAnews.com, "São Tomé Sparks American Military Interest."

67 McGranahan, *Imperial Formations*, 180.

68 See Vine, *Base Nation*, chap. 16.

69 ~~Chalmers~~, "America's Empire of Bases"; Editors, "U.S. Military Bases"; Johnson, *Blowback*; N. Smith, *American Empire*.

70 Editors, "U.S. Military Bases."

71 Gerson, "The Sun Never Sets," 14; see also Editors, "U.S. Military Bases."

72 Lutz, "Empire Is in the Details."

73 Editors, "US Military Bases," 13–14; see also n11.

74 N. Smith, *American Empire*, 349, 360.

75 See also Vine, "War and Forced Migration."

76 Scott, *Limuria*.

most

Johnson

This is the 2nd full reference — see n. 31. Hence it could be shortened as in n. 70 — or left as is.