"Party Politics and Base Politics:
The Rise and Decline of the U.S. Military Bases Issue in Spain, 1975-2005"

Alexander Cooley and Jonathan Hopkin

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Alexander Cooley is Associate Professor of Political Science at Barnard College, Columbia University. He is the author of *Base Politics: Democratic Change and the US Military Overseas* (Cornell University Press 2008) and *Logics of Hierarchy: The Organization of Empires, States and Military Occupations* (Cornell University Press, 2005).
Address: Department of Political Science, Barnard College, Columbia University
3009 Broadway, New York NY 11217. Email: acooley@barnard.edu

Jonathan Hopkin is Senior Lecturer in Comparative Politics in the Department of Government at the London School of Economics and Political Science. He is the author of *Party Formation and Democratic Transition in Spain* (Palgrave 1999), and articles in journals such as the *European Journal of Political Research*, *Governance, Political Studies*, the *Review of International Political Economy*, *Party Politics*, and *West European Politics*.
Address: Department of Government, London School of Economics and Political Science
Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE. Email: J.R.Hopkin@lse.ac.uk

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I Introduction

Just days after the dramatic election victory of the Spanish Socialist Worker's Party (PSOE) on March 14, 2004, Spanish President-elect Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero ordered the withdrawal of Spanish troops supporting the American-led military presence in Iraq. During the election campaign, Zapatero had been scathing in his criticism of the Iraq war and the Aznar government's almost unqualified support for the Bush administration's policies. Zapatero's withdrawal announcement fulfilled a major campaign pledge and the Spanish public and media broadly supported the decision, even as U.S.-Spanish relations markedly deteriorated.

Much less publicized was the fact that as Spanish troops withdrew from their positions in Iraq, military facilities on Spanish territory were being used daily for the support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). U.S. armed forces at the Morón airbase and the Rota naval station continued to fly hundreds of staging and logistical missions. Despite Zapatero's vigorous opposition to the war and the strong public support for this stance, the new Spanish government never requested that the United States stop using military bases in Spain for the campaign, nor did it curtail the blanket authorization that the Aznar government had given for OIF-related activities.[1] American officials in Spain had prepared for such a request and were surprised when it never materialized.[2] How

[1] Authors' interviews with U.S. defense and political staff and Spanish defense analysts. Madrid, April 2005.

[2] Authors' interviews. Madrid, April 2005.

could the Spanish government publicly oppose the Iraq campaign, withdraw Spanish troops from the Middle Eastern theater and yet still allow the use of bases in Spain for the conduct of the same war?

Analytically, the above puzzle suggests that the politics surrounding the control and operation over foreign military bases is neither reducible to purely strategic factors, such as security agreements and threat considerations, nor to domestic pressures such as public opinion. In the security realm, the Spanish troop withdrawal was rooted in a defense doctrine held by the PSOE leader that active military intervention in Iraq would exacerbate the growth of global Islamic terrorism and subject the Spanish public to similar attacks as the March 11, 2004 bombings (*El País* 2004*; La Vanguardia* 2004). Moreover, the Zapatero government was willing to pay the price of damaging bilateral relations with the United States and destabilizing the bilateral security relationship over the Iraq issue, so it made little sense to continue authorizing use of its military facilities for purposes totally inconsistent with this new Spanish security doctrine. Similarly the tide of anti-American public opinion and overwhelming opposition to OIF by the Spanish public would seemingly have demanded that the Spanish bases also close down, yet, apart from proclamations by the minor left wing umbrella party Izquierda Unida, no such political demands were made of the PSOE by politicians, civic groups or the media.

We argue that the key to explaining this disjuncture between security policy and public opinion, on the one hand, and the political status of bases, on the other, lies in the evolution of Spanish party politics after Franco's death. More generally, we argue that the political salience of the foreign military presence in a host country or "base issue" tends to be elevated to national prominence and political debate during the period of

democratic transition and the initial phase of party consolidation. During this period issues of sovereignty, legislative transparency, party accountability and external support for a previous anti-democratic regime all become inextricably tied to the issue of the foreign military basing presence, as party elites engage in aggressive mobilization strategies. Conversely, during periods of consolidated democracy, the foreign military presence is depoliticized or taken off the political agenda, as party politicians treat the issue as a non-revocable contractual obligation and, instead, emphasize issues of competence in governance and foreign policy in an effort to appeal to moderate voters.

As a result, the importance of foreign military bases to domestic politics will vary depending on domestic political developments and consolidation, rather than simply security considerations or public opinion (Calder 2007, Cooley 2008. Sandars 2000, Duke and Krieger 1993; and Duke 1989). Ironically, we suggest that party system dynamics in stable democracies may actually constrain host countries on bilateral agreements and security issues to a greater extent than is the case for democratizing polities. The PSOE's silence on the U.S. basing issue in 2004 stood in stark contrast to its more confrontational stance during the earlier period of democratic consolidation. For example, in 1986 the PSOE government, then headed by Felipe González, publicly denounced the U.S. bombing campaign against Libya and prohibited use of Spanish bases for that mission (Grimmet 1986). Accordingly, our essay demonstrates potentially important causal pathways between two sets of literatures – party politics and international security – that are rarely brought into theoretical dialogue by scholars in either subfield (Rathbun 2004).

Focusing on the base issue and institutional change in host nation also yields fresh analytical insights into important topics concerning U.S. hegemony and its relations with allies. First, contrary to the prevailing wisdom that suggests growing transatlantic drift between Europe and the United States, the politics of the base issue suggests a historically high level of bilateral military cooperation on this important security issue. So, for example, even though the governments of democratically consolidated base hosts such as Spain, Germany and Greece opposed the 2003 Iraq military conflict, they all offered unrestricted base access to the United States for the campaign. Second, understanding the exact sequences and interplay between domestic democratization, party political change and basing politics is all the more important given that the United States currently remains committed to maintaining a network of overseas military bases while promoting internal democratic change abroad (Barnett 2004). Under certain circumstances these two aims may actually work at cross-purposes as the party dynamics of a democratic transition may actually undermine domestic political support for the presence of U.S. forces. According to our analysis, the legal status of U.S. bases in democratizing regimes such as Afghanistan and Iraq is itself likely to become caught within the highly politicized debate and institutional competition that characterize transitioning polities. Ironically, it may well be that the highly volatile contentious democratic transition, not the security situation in these countries, will determine if and when U.S. troops leave.

We proceed as follows: the next section outlines a theory of democratic change and party system consolidation that analyzes the political importance of the basing issue through various stages of the democratic transition process. We then illustrate our

argument by charting the evolution of the basing issue through five distinct periods of Spain's political development beginning with Franco's authoritarian rule and ending with the election for a second time of a Socialist government under Zapatero in 2004. After evaluating our explanation against two other possible theoretical approaches, a systemic security explanation and a public opinion explanation, we present some comparative conclusions and suggestions for further refinement and empirical investigation.

II Base Politics and Democratic Party Politics

The issues covered in basing agreements are numerous and touch upon aspects of both domestic politics and foreign relations (Cooley 2008; Harkavy 1989 and 2005). Typically, agreements over the stationing of foreign military troops include sections that specify facilities, property rights and troop levels, the apportionment of sovereignty over the facilities, and consultation procedures for the use of the bases for out-of-area operations. In addition, most basing accords also feature a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) that details the legal rights and obligations of the host and sending countries over a variety of issues such as taxation, immigration and the exercise of criminal jurisdiction over foreign military personnel (Woodliffe 1992).

Although these issues are important in their own right, they will not necessarily become objects of broader political concern unless interested domestic actors bring them to the agenda. We argue that much of the political salience of basing issues is conditioned by the party politics and changes in the democratic system within a host country. Our theoretical explanation is not intended to replace more traditional security perspectives on bilateral security ties, nor is it meant to imply that certain actions undertaken by the

foreign militaries should not in themselves be the subject of domestic political attention.[3] However, we demonstrate that the link between base politics and domestic party politics is very strong, and, as other scholars have noted in questions of sovereign transfers and territorial partition (Spruyt 2005; Kahler 1984), the domestic political environment can magnify the significance of base-related issues. Moreover, we intend to show both theoretically and empirically that the party political approach explains important variations in the basing issue across different periods of democratic transition and consolidation that other potential explanations cannot.

Why Transitional Party Environments Mobilize the Basing Issue

Key to our understanding of the basing issue is the distinction between a newly emerged democracy and a stable or mature democracy. These distinctions have been discussed in the political science literature, albeit in different contexts. Comparativists have examined the dynamics of democratization and democratic consolidation, locating the case of Spain among the 'third wave' of democratic transitions (Gunther, Diamandouros and Puhle 1995; Linz and Stepan 1996; O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitefead 1986). International relations scholars also have examined the peculiar foreign and military policies of democratizing polities. For example, in their contribution to the "democratic peace" debate, Snyder and Mansfield argue that "democratizing" states – regimes that have held elections but whose elites still manipulate and alter the basic political institutions and democratic rules – are more expansionist and war-prone than either their authoritarian states or consolidated democracies (Mansfield and Snyder

[3] For example, some crimes and incidents involving US military personnel are so serious as to warrant media coverage and national attention. See Johnson 2000.

2005). Here we regard new democracies as regimes that have successfully consolidated by changing power to an opposing party, but have not yet elected that opposition party to a second non-consecutive term. Thus, new democracies may be consolidated and exhibit institutional stability, but they still lack the experience or continuity of systems with sustained party alternation.

We expect base politics to become a salient party political issue in new democracies for three reasons: First, new democracies lack a consolidated party system. In the initial phase of democratization, party systems are characterized by high degrees of fluidity and uncertainty, as political entrepreneurs and party organizations jockey for position (Gunther, Sani and Shabad 1986). Party politics in democratic transitions usually involves a very large number of party formations, which are often contesting the same political space and electoral market. Low levels of party identification amongst voters provide incentives for ambitious politicians to set up their own parties, rather than accept subordinate positions in larger formations. The large number of parties creates a very competitive environment in which the stakes are high, leading to aggressive electoral strategies and high discounting of the likely need to cooperate with rival parties in the future. Party organizations are often short of resources and lack a substantial membership, encouraging leaders to adopt intransigent positions to shore up the activist base. In such situations, party competition is likely to take on the typical features of polarized pluralism, in which parties concentrate on mobilizing core constituencies with hard-line discourses and an emphasis on ideological distinctiveness. Political parties representing social groups hostile to foreign bases will be reluctant to compromise on the basing issue until their institutionalization is secured.

Second, newly emerged democracies are particularly susceptible to nationalism. In the new fluid environment of competitive elections, political elites in democratizing polities often use nationalist claims and myths to legitimize their rule and control over political institutions (Snyder 2000). Base-related issues that deal with national sovereignty – such as the use rights of bases, their operational command, and the status of forces - are especially likely to resonate in such a political climate. The presence of the foreign bases can also be linked with external support for the previous authoritarian regime: political figures in transitioning countries such as Korea, Philippines, Greece, all explicitly linked the historical presence of U.S. military forces with American support for previous anti-democratic regimes. The presence of military bases during the transition provides an effective target for nationalist and populist appeals.

Third, political elites in new democracies are in a position to argue that previous basing agreements that were negotiated before the transition are now illegitimate. By appealing to the democratic notions of transparency and accountability, new democracies can effectively claim that previous base contracts were secretive or not publicly debated and therefore need to be renegotiated. Although altering or reneging on a previous agreement is risky, democratizing governments can use their newly acquired electoral mandates to revise previous agreements on more favorable terms. Thus, the "audience costs," to use James Fearon's (1994) formulation, of base-related issues in new democracies, especially when it comes to agreements concluded in the previous non-democratic era, are particularly high.

Why Stable Party Systems Demobilize the Basing Issue

By contrast, these three factors – party politics, nationalism, and the contracting environment – play out very differently when a country's political system becomes consolidated. First, increased party system institutionalization creates very different incentives for party politicians over basing issues. Once the initial fluidity of party politics declines, the surviving parties are able to define their strategies towards basing issues with greater autonomy and flexibility. These successful parties have fewer competitors to deal with and begin to hegemonize their niches in the electoral market. Party discourses on the basing issue can therefore be moderated to attract broader sectors of the electorate without exposing the party to incursions into its core vote. The most significant parties will either be in government or aspiring to win power, so party messages will have to reconciled with the practicalities of governing the basing issue. With the increasing closure of the electoral market and the relative security of the major parties (Katz and Mair 1995), interparty cooperation on foreign and security policy becomes less costly, particularly in view of the likelihood that parties will have to deal with each other into the future, making 'cut and run' strategies self-defeating.

Internally, the organizational consolidation of the most successful parties, in terms of secure finance and a more reliable activist base reduces the need to adopt hard-line attitudes to maintain cohesion. The process of party institutionalization also leads to a shift in the types of incentives distributed by the party leaderships: whereas 'ideological' incentives predominate in the initial phase, after a few elections many party members will hold elected office at various levels of government, giving them a 'material' incentive to contribute to the party's long-term survival (Panebianco 1988). This commitment to the

party as an institution enhances leadership autonomy to define policy towards controversial issues such as foreign bases in less ideological and intransigent ways.

Second, in stable democracies nationalism-related issues generate less electoral advantage than in the transition phase. As political institutions consolidate and uncertainty over the future political landscape diminishes, nationalist discourses and policies are likely to lose their electoral appeal. Effective democratic institutions such as constitutions, checks and balances, an independent judiciary and a diverse media are all likely to reduce the scope for nationalist appeals as they increase stability across different policy domains (Tsebelis 2002).

Finally, by contrast to the uncertain contracting environment that characterizes transitional polities, more consolidated democratic governments must observe and adhere to contracts and treaties negotiated by previous governments in order to retain their credibility. Ratification of a treaty by a democratic legislature enhances the credibility of these commitments (Martin 2000). Stable democracies can also break promises, but "politicians know it is costly to break major promises, including treaty obligations" (Lipson 2003, 6). As a result, perhaps surprisingly, this constraining effect of democratic stability on contracting also constricts a stable democracy's ability to unilaterally revisit basing accords. The very fact that a governing basing agreement was executed with another democratic government lends it a legitimacy that is absent in agreements concluded with a non-democratic government.

Table 1: Characteristics of Regime Types and Base-Related Issues

Base-Related Issue	*Authoritarian Regime*	*Newly Democratic Regime*	*Stable Democratic Regime*
Party Issues and Agendas	Single party rule; Political order and regime preservation paramount	Uncertain; in flux; need to mobilize ideological base and secure position in electoral market. Aggressive strategies	Less competitive environment, mobilization around competence, not ideology
Strength of Nationalism	High; conflated with the support of the non-democratic leader	High, but redefined. Subject to electoral pressures and party contestation	Low
Sanctity of Previous Base-Related Contracts	Uncertain; ability to revoke agreements unilaterally	Illegitimate: executed with an anti-democratic government	Legitimate: executed with a democratic government; need to preserve credibility

III Background to the Spanish Case: Overview and Justification

The Spanish case offers an instructive illustration of these domestic party system dynamics, both because of its importance as a base-hosting country and the fact that it has exhibited considerable variation in its domestic party structure during the last thirty years.

United States Military Facilities in Spain

Spain historically has been a relatively important host to United States military installations and troops. The four most important facilities established by the 1953 pact were the deepwater harbor and facilities at Rota, Torrejón air base, Morón air base, and Zaragoza air base (See Table 2). In addition, several smaller sites were also established in the 1950s and 1960s including seven radar aircraft and warning sites, supply and storage sites, a fuel pipeline and a few smaller classified installations (Nash 1957, 153). In 2004, Rota and Morón remained the two major facilities still in regular use by U.S. armed forces and both were used for operations supporting the military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. In terms of personnel, U.S. troop levels numbered between 7,000 and 8,000 when the bases became operational in the 1950s and rose steadily to about 12,000 in the 1980s before being cut by about 40% as a result of the 1988 accord.

Table 2: Overview of the Four Major United States Military Facilities in Spain, 1982

Installation (city)	*U.S. Service*	*Purpose/Function*	*Date of Operation*
Morón (Seville)	Air Force	Logistical support, refueling, storage, tanker aircraft	1957-present, (standby, 1971-1983)
Rota (Cadiz)	Navy	Harboring and maintenance facilities; naval station, surveillance, naval aircraft, storage, communications	1953-present
Torrejón (Madrid)	Air Force	Air Force headquarters, tactical fighter wing, airlift, aircraft deployments	1953-1992
Zaragoza (Zaragoza)	Air Force	Logistical support, refueling aircraft and support; fighter and weapons training, rescue aircraft	1954-1992

Source: Agreement on Friendship, Defense and Co-operation Between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Spain. July 2, 1982. TIAS 10589, note 506.

Spain's Changing Party System

Although only a single country case, Spain also exhibits considerable variation in its party system development, allowing us to chart possible changes in the basing issue in distinct political phases. Over the course of the U.S. military presence, the status of the U.S. bases as a domestic political issue varied over five distinct phases spanning the era of Franco, the initial transition (1975-1980), democratic consolidation and Socialist dominance (1980-1989), the post-Cold War period which saw a second alternation in power (1989-2003) and the PSOE's re-election in 2004. Of these eras, the basing issue was at its peak in Spanish politics during phase 3, during which the issue played an important role in two election campaigns for the PSOE and was strategically entangled by the government into the 1986 NATO referendum. In each of these phases, we also

show how these domestic party pressures affected the Spanish negotiating positions on bilateral basing agreements.

The Authoritarian Legacy: Franco and the Madrid Pacts of 1953

The U.S. military presence in Spain was enshrined by the Madrid Pact of 1953, now considered an important marker for the Franco regime's consolidation and Spain's post-World War II international relations. The election of Dwight Eisenhower in 1950 initiated a more conciliatory approach to the Franco regime and the Korean War underscored the need to American defense planners to bring the Spanish military into the rubric of Western interests (Iñiguez 1998). After two years of extensive transatlantic shuttling and negotiations, the accords signed in 1953 allowed U.S. armed forces to be stationed in exchange for an economic assistance package and military hardware (Liedke 1999; Dabrowski 1996; Whitaker 1962, 44-62). The agreement itself was composed of three official pacts covering a Defense Agreement, Mutual Defense Assistance and an Economic Aid Agreement.[4] The Defense Agreement also included several secret technical annexes that were classified at the request of the Spanish government covering the operational issues, sensitive installations, nuclear questions and the legal status of United States forces in Spain (Viñas 1981).

In exchange for granting the right to use these facilities, Spain received extensive aid, amounting to around $1.1 billion in cash and an additional $300 million in ExIm credits in the first 10 years of the agreement. Compared to other agreements, even others of the early Cold War era, the Spanish pact was favorable to the United States. In

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[4] "Use of Military Facilities in Spain." Signed September 26, 1953. TIAS 2850.

addition to being granted "virtually complete jurisdiction over its forces in Spain," it retained the right to "house, provide security, discipline and welfare, store and maintain provisions, supplies and equipment, and maintain and operate facilities as necessary" (National Security Council 1954). In the realm of status of forces and criminal jurisdiction, the United States retained de facto exclusive jurisdiction over the activities of its personnel in Spain (Nash 1957, 157-58).

The Madrid Pact and subsequent agreements did not completely satisfy Franco's main allies, the Spanish military and the Catholic Church. Some conservative officers still harbored anti-U.S. resentment from the 1898 War while others subsequently resented the poor quality of the military hardware sent by the United States or were concerned that the location of important facilities near major population centers had made several Spanish cities potential targets in a nuclear exchange (Nash 1957, 156). The Spanish church, too, had deep misgivings about the potential for non-Catholic American chaplains to proselytize and the impact of thousands of young American troops on traditional Spanish social values.

Regardless of these mixed views, there is little doubt that the Madrid Pact and its subsequent revisions served Franco's political interests. Signed shortly after the Concordat with the Vatican in 1953, Franco gained in international legitimacy and could hope for further future integration into the institutions of the West (Preston 1993, 624). And while some events – most notably the 1966 Palomares incident where two American planes collided and four atom bombs had to be recovered – drew public concern, the regime's close monitoring over the press ensured that controversial issues surrounding the bases remained off the political agenda.

Overall, during Franco's rule the 1953 Pact was amended or updated on four occasions, but the essence of the 1953 pact was always preserved: Spain authorized the use of these military facilities and, in exchange, received economic and military assistance and enhanced bilateral cooperation (Viñas 2003a). However, Spanish negotiators failed to extract a security guarantee from the United States or support for NATO membership in any of these negotiations. Officially, American negotiators tried to distance themselves from condoning the regime while retaining Spanish cooperation for the operation of the bases. Practically, such distinctions proved difficult to maintain.

III The Pacted Transition, the PSOE and the Rise of the Basing Issue in Spanish Politics

Phase #1: The Pacted Transition, 1975-1980

The transition to democracy in Spain began shortly after Franco's death by natural causes at the end of 1975. For a period of six months, little changed: King Juan Carlos took over as Head of State, as envisaged by the constitutional arrangements laid down in the 1969 Succession Law, and the authoritarian government of Carlos Arias Navarro was maintained, with small changes. This government quickly concluded the 1976 basing agreement (Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, January 1976), which proved uncontentious, maintaining the U.S. military presence along similar lines to the previous two decades, with a slightly improved economic package, and some concessions on the use of Rota by nuclear submarines. But the increasing levels of social conflict forced a change of government in July 1976, with the appointment of Adolfo Suárez, who became the architect of democratic transition.

The Spanish 'model' of democratic transition has been the subject of an extensive literature (Hopkin 2004; Bermeo 1994; Colomer 1991), focusing on the successful use of elite pacts – referred to at the time as 'consensus' (*consenso*) – to resolve the most contentious issues dividing the political forces and establish working democratic institutions. The new generation of ambitious regime politicians around Suárez, in collaboration with moderate and conservative opponents of the dictatorship, piloted a strategy of secretive negotiations with hardline Francoists on the one hand, and the left-wing and peripheral nationalist opposition on the other. In this context, a divisive debate over the status of the U.S. military presence on Spanish soil could have destabilized the transition process with uncertain consequences.

The parties most concerned about the basing issue were the Spanish Communists (PCE) and Socialists (PSOE), both formally Marxist parties. These parties were opposed to Spain's military alignment with the West, and to the American military presence in Spain. Yet the political debate in the new democratic parliament elected in 1977 barely touched upon the bases issue. As over many other contentious issues the main driver of consensus was the Communist Party, eager to win respectability in the new democratic context, and determined not to jeopardize the transition process. The relative success of the Socialists in the 1977 elections meant that they could aspire to govern Spain without the need for any left alliance with the Communists. The Communists and the governing Union of the Democratic Centre (UCD) therefore shared an interest in curtailing the Socialists' electoral growth, and developed an effective parliamentary collaboration during the passing of the 1978 Constitution. The PCE fulfilled its side of the deal by accepting the 1976 agreement, going so far as to argue that the best way to get rid of the

bases was to 'move towards the dissolution of the two military blocs' on a global scale (Mesa 1992, 157).

The Socialists' electoral strategy rested on winning over centrist voters, an objective facilitated by the party's formal disavowal of Marxism in 1979. During Suárez's period as Prime Minister, the Socialists chose not to mobilize around the basing issue, largely in order to facilitate the transition process (Santos Juliá 1997, 482-504), whilst Suárez, sympathetic to the 'non-aligned' currents in the Spanish Foreign Ministry, deliberately delayed Spain's integration into NATO. Despite the formal divide between the parties on the basing question and on defense and foreign policy in general, the issue was sidelined during this period, with the bases rarely being mentioned and the UCD refusing even to adopt a formal position on NATO membership until 1979 (Mesa 1992; Lillo 1996). On taking office, the second Suárez government vaguely announced its intention to open a parliamentary debate to discuss Spain's entry into NATO, but this debate did not take place until several years later (Government of Span 1977). The UCD Foreign Minister invoked consensus between the parties over foreign policy issues (effectively a Socialist veto), and the Socialists in return adopted a restrained approach in parliamentary debates (Lillo 1996, 170-1; Yañez 1978). During the initial phase of the transition, the main parties' commitment to consensus as a way of protecting nascent democracy prevented mobilization on the basing issue.

Phase #2: Political Competition and Politicization, 1981-1988

With the end of the formal constituent process in 1978 and the UCD's second electoral victory in 1979, the transitional consensus began to unravel, and foreign and

defense policy became an arena for political competition (del Arenal 1992). Internal tensions within the UCD undermined Suárez's immobilism over NATO, forcing him into a formal commitment that blew apart the intraparty consensus on foreign policy. The elite pact on the issues of NATO and the bases was effectively terminated by Suárez's resignation, and the failed coup attempt of February 1981 precipitated by it. Immediately after, Suárez's successor as Prime Minister Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo launched an all-out public campaign on the NATO front, in part to consolidate civilian control over the armed forces, in part to pacify conservative factions within the UCD.

Simultaneously, on the bilateral front, the Calvo Sotelo government negotiated the new Agreement on Friendship, Defense and Cooperation on July 2, 1982, just two weeks after concluding NATO membership. The five-year agreement retained the basic bases-for aid formula, but extended the NATO SOFA to the American presence and gave Spanish authorities a greater say over "out-of-area" operations (Agreement on Friendship, Defense and Co-operation Between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Spain, 1982). The Treaty also offered a full U.S. security guarantee and established a joint council to review base-related issues semi-annually. Despite growing anti-Americanism, exacerbated by U.S. Secretary of Defense Alexander Haig's imprudent remark that the 1981 attempted coup in Spain was an "internal matter" and a looming election campaign, the Calvo Sotelo government did not extract a pledge from the American side to reduce American forces. Overall American negotiators were satisfied with the agreement and were surprised that, given the domestic political climate, Spanish negotiators had not held out for more concessions (Planty 1990). Calvo Sotelo's own subsequent explanation of this is that the UCD had no future as a political party, and

that he therefore decided to use his premiership to consolidate Spain's adhesion to the Western security framework, irrespective of the electoral cost (Sotelo 1990).

As NATO and bilateral negotiations were pursued, the electoral campaign of 1982 saw the rise of these security agreements as important electoral issues. The PSOE, on the verge of attaining power for the first time, adopted an anti-NATO platform in 1981, and its charismatic leader Felipe González campaigned aggressively on the issues, pledging a national referendum on the question of NATO membership. The appeal resonated with much of the public and in particular with Socialist activists, disoriented by González's centrist changes to the party's official ideology in 1979, and strongly opposed to NATO and the American military presence. In adopting an aggressive strategy, the Socialist leadership was prioritizing the requirements of party institutionalization, mobilizing support and shoring up the party's radical activist base, and electoral advantage, at the expense of creating future problems once in government. After the electoral victory of October 1982, the González government froze Spain's integration into NATO's military wing and delayed ratification of the bilateral accord. On February 24, 1983 his government added a protocol to the Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA) that explicitly kept the bilateral bases accord and the issue NATO membership distinct. In turn, this protocol allowed the Socialist President to support the implementation of the 1982 agreement in the Spanish parliament and ensured that Spain could potentially withdraw from NATO while retaining the basing agreement. (Duke 1989, 258-9). Although, the decision to support the 1982 DCA was not popular with much of the PSOE party base, only the Communist Party, freed from its obligations towards the UCD, adopted the platform that it would remove American bases from Spanish soil.

At this time, the basing issue was emerging as a particularly contentious one at the local level, especially in PSOE-dominated areas that hosted American military facilities. Since 1979 when the local elections put PSOE mayors into office in three of the four major base-hosting cities, local PSOE leaders had remained vocal critics of the state of the American presence and held regular meetings to discuss base-related issues and political strategy (Dabrowski 1986, 228-230). Growing militancy on issues such as local tax liabilities, criminal jurisdiction and compensation for U.S. activities created an increasingly charged local political environment. Demonstrations with thousands of protestors chanting "No NATO, bases must go!" became regular events in Zarogoza, Rota and Madrid. The issue often caused tensions between local PSOE representatives and the national leadership that refused to call for base closures (Roldán 1998, 145-7). The PSOE was challenged from the left on the basing issue, as the Spanish Communists worked hard to mobilize anti-American feeling in order to recover from their poor result in the 1982 elections and shore up their position as the left alternative to the government.

This growing anti-base sentiment was the backdrop under which the NATO referendum was finally held in March 1986. However, the 1986 referendum was not presented as a straight vote on the issue of Spanish membership in NATO. In a remarkable example of issue-framing, González worded the referendum so that it asked the public to support the Spanish government to remain in NATO subject to three conditions:[5]

1. The participation of Spain in the Atlantic Alliance will not include its incorporation in the integrated military structure.

[5] The precise wording of the referendum was: "Do you consider it advisable for Spain to remain within the Alliance under the terms [as outlined above] agreed to by the nation's government?"

2. The prohibition to install, store, or bring nuclear weapons into Spanish territory will be maintained.
3. The American military presence in Spain will be reduced progressively.

Thus, having effectively separated the issue of the U.S. bases from NATO membership in his 1982 election campaign, two of the three referendum conditions re-entangled the issues. In particular, the promise of a significant reduction in the U.S. military presence appealed to overwhelming public sentiment against the presence of 12,000 American troops. The base-related conditions also put many rank and file members of the PSOE at greater ease with supporting González's volte-face on the NATO issue. PSOE spokesmen also warned of the adverse consequences that a "no" vote would have upon Spain's impending admission to the European Community. Despite adverse polls, the actual vote resulted gave a "yes" victory with 52.5%, against 39.9% "no" votes. Seven out of ten PSOE supporters voted "yes", despite the party's previous opposition to NATO, while nationalists and communists overwhelmingly voted "no" (Boix and Alt 1991). The 'Civic Platform' around which the 'no' vote congregated became the basis for a new radical left movement dominated by the PCE, *Izquierda Unida* (United Left).

The inclusion of the base-related provisions also turned out to be an effective political tool for PSOE base negotiators as they renegotiated the bilateral agreement for the first time. Throughout the contentious talks of 1986-7, Spanish negotiators insisted that the democratic referendum had made a significant reduction of U.S. forces and the closure of Torrejón non-negotiable.[6] In doing so, the Spanish side abandoned any requests for economic or military assistance and separated the basing issue from all other areas of bilateral cooperation. The final agreement reduced the U.S. presence by 40% and

[6] Authors' interview with high-ranking Spanish negotiator of the 1988 agreement. Madrid, April 2005. Also see Viñas 2003a, 471-510.

terminated the American presence at Torrejón and Zaragoza air bases within three years (Duke 1989; *El País* 1988a).

The 1988 agreement allowed González to claim that he had adhered to moderate public opinion which supported a reduction in the US presence, and kept his campaign promise to reduce the American presence (*El País* 1988b). In March 1989 the treaty was comfortably ratified in parliament, with Foreign Minister Fernández Ordóñez assuring that the agreement contained no secret clauses and the government's non-nuclear pledge would be maintained. Contrasting the 1988 accord with the 1953 Pact of Madrid, historian Angel Viñas writes: "in the history of the bilateral relationship this agreement is the exact counterpoint of what the Franco regime had consented to in 1953. The enshrined imbalances, dependence, and trends toward a lack of proper supervision of U.S. activities in Spain were transformed into a well-balanced compact of duties, rights and responsibilities strictly respecting the full sovereignty of these parties" (Viñas 2003b, 21). The Socialists, after enthusiastically mobilizing anti-American sentiment in order to win power in 1982, had managed to extricate themselves from the political commitment to remove the U.S. military presence from Spain, defusing the bases as a political issue as Spanish democracy consolidated.

IV Dynamics of Democratic Consolidation and Depoliticization

Phase #3: Democratic Consolidation and Depoliticization, 1989-2003

By the end of the 1980s, the Spanish party system was institutionalizing, with a stable two-party system at the statewide level, and well-entrenched and financed party organizations (Van Biezen 2003, Chapt. 4). The Socialist party had resolved the critical

problem of Spain's NATO membership and the status of U.S. bases, and therefore had no interest in reviving such a divisive issue. The conditions were ripe for the issue to be taken off the political agenda.

Perhaps ironically, the 1988 accord which finally secured Spain's status in the Western bloc was quickly followed by the collapse of communism in the Eastern bloc and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The changes in the international situation had contradictory effects. On the one hand, the end of the Cold War made the U.S. bases in Spain less of a polarizing left-right issue in Spanish domestic politics, since American military power was no longer directed predominantly at 'protecting' the West from Communism. On the other, the emergence of a new security environment had the potential to exacerbate left-right divisions over the basing issue, since the U.S. military presence was no longer so easily justifiable in terms of Spain's immediate security needs. In short, the changing international situation does not provide an obvious answer to the puzzle of why the basing issue disappeared from the Spanish political map after 1988.

Indeed, the new arrangement was put to the test as early as 1991, with the U.S.-led Operation Desert Storm against Iraqi forces in Kuwait. The González government moved quickly to offer not only its political support, but also full use of U.S. bases in Spain for air operations. The Spanish government's position was justified in terms of Spain's international obligations as a fully-fledged member of the community of Western European democracies. In the first half of 1990, Spain signed a protocol of integration into NATO's military structure, and entered the Western European Union. The Gulf War provided an opportunity to consolidate Spain's new-found status (Powell 2001, 467-8). However, mindful of the potential political cost of Spain's involvement through the U.S.

bases, the González government tried its best to understate this involvement, to such an extent that both the anti-war Izquierda Unida and the pro-war conservative party the Partido Popular joined forces to criticize the government's silence on the issue (*El País* 1991a and 1991b).

The relatively limited attention paid to the bases at a time when they were of such critical strategic usefulness to the United States supports our contention that patterns of party competition determine the salience of the basing issue in new democracies. Given the conservative PP's longstanding Atlanticism, the only major party that could revive the bases as a major subject of political contestation was the PSOE. But the Socialists were solidly entrenched in the government, and had no interest in mobilizing anti-American feeling after having made such strenuous efforts to neutralize the basing issue. The PP would not gain by mobilizing around a conservative nationalist appeal to sovereignty – after all, the Franco regime, not the Socialists, was responsible for the original lop-sided basing agreement. As a result, party competition focused on other issues.

The end of the period of Socialist dominance, and the election of a conservative administration under José María Aznar in 1996, did not substantially affect this equilibrium. The Socialists went through a period of internal disarray after González's departure, and to the extent that the party had a coherent strategy of opposition, it did not involve reviving anti-NATO and anti-base commitments, from which the party would then subsequently have to extricate itself. The relatively free ride this offered the PP administrations after 1996 did, however, lead to a shift in Spanish foreign and security policy, with Aznar adopting an enthusiastically Atlanticist line involving the completion

of Spain's full integration into the NATO military structure, the negotiation of a new subregional NATO command on Spanish soil, and strong support for the bombing of Iraq in 1998 (Herrero de Miñón 2000). The Socialists relative indifference and the decline of Izquierda Unida throughout the 1990s allowed these policies to be adopted in a context of relative consensus, even though Spain did not receive any significant influence or payback for these gestures.

Survey data (see Table 3) show that in the period between the first Gulf War and the second Iraqi crisis after 2002, public acceptance of U.S. bases became consolidated: those favoring the bases' maintenance grew from almost 18 per cent to almost 27 per cent, whilst those favoring their total elimination declined from just under half of respondents (48.1 per cent) to just under a third (31.9 per cent). The growth in numbers favoring a reduction of the U.S. military presence (from 21.5 to 30.1 per cent) suggests that Spaniards remained unenthusiastic about the bases, but by the time of the second Iraqi conflict the issue had become largely politically defused. This change in public opinion was driven at least in part by the realization by the major parties that they would be unlikely to benefit from mobilization around the basing issue.

Table 3: Level of Public Support for U.S. Military Bases in Spain

Survey Question: "U.S. Bases in Spain Should be.."	**1991**	**1992**	**1995**	**1997**	**2002**
Maintained	17.9	15.2	18	20	26.8
Reduced	21.5	21	22.9	24.7	30.1
Eliminated	48.1	45.3	37.3	30.1	31.9
No Opinion/Response	12.6	18.4	21.8	25.2	11.2

Source: INCIPE 2003, 107.

Phase #4: The 2004 Election and the Zapatero - Iraq Controversy, 2004-2005

This apparent consensus began to dissolve after the re-election of Aznar in 2000. The events of 9/11 were particularly important as Aznar declared his unwavering support for the U.S. after the Al-Qaeda attacks and linked his relentless anti-ETA campaign with the global war on terrorism. In addition to aggressively fighting terrorism, Aznar also sought to make Spain a bigger player on the global stage. His misgivings about the efficacy of the European Union, and in particular France, seemed reinforced when Spain's northern neighbor refused to support claims of Spanish sovereignty during the Spain-Moroccan skirmish over the deserted island of Perejil in summer of 2002.

However, Aznar's unwavering support for the American-led military campaign in Iraq, despite polls indicating the opposition of 85-90% of the Spanish public, proved the most divisive issue of his tenure. When a series of coordinated train bombs killed almost 200 citizens in Madrid on March 11, just three days before the general election, investigators' preliminary findings that Al-Qaeda was responsible not only undermined Aznar's credibility, but also validated Zapatero's campaign claim that OIF had exacerbated global insecurity. With strong public support for his Iraq policy, Zapatero

was able to use his election victory to fulfil his campaign pledge to withdraw the 1,300 Spanish troops from the Iraqi theater.

Even though the Spanish withdrawal and the accompanying deterioration in Spanish-US relations received much domestic and international media attention, the issue of the use of the Spanish-US bases for OIF remained on the backburner. Remarkably, Zapatero never once mentioned the possibility of withdrawing Spanish blanket support for the use of Rota and Morón in OIF operations, nor did PSOE party members bring up the issue. Several anti-war demonstrations had taken place outside of Rota and Morón during the run-up to the war, but these were portrayed in the media as antiwar, not anti-base gatherings. Of the Spanish political parties, only Izquierda Unida was interested in discussing the basing issue even though some polling suggested that any prohibition on the use of the bases would have enjoyed broad public support. In a fall 2002 public opinion survey, only 20% of respondents supported the use of the bases on Spanish territory to support an attack on Iraq while 74% of those opposed their use (INCIPE 2003, 209).

Interestingly**,** part of the U.S. reprisal against the Zapatero government's Iraq actions was targeted at an economic issue surrounding the bases. In summer 2004 U.S. defense officials froze consideration of the Aznar government's request to move the U.S. Navy sixth fleet from Naples to Rota. In so doing, U.S. officials tabled a plan to invest $150 million to upgrade and expand the facilities at Rota, including maintenance contracts with the Izar naval yard that would have resurrected the shipyard and potentially salvaged thousands of Spanish jobs (*Financial Times* 2004). Remarkably, then, the basing issue was brought up in the aftermath of the Iraqi troop withdrawal, but

by the United States in order to punish Spain for its decision in Iraq. However, the Socialists' reluctance to raise the basing issue made sense from the point of view of party strategy. Opposing OIF and removing Spanish troops from Iraq would damage U.S.-Spanish relations, but Zapatero and his advisors could reasonably hope that such damage could be repaired in time, allowing the Spanish government to revert to its previous - quietly Atlanticist - position. Bringing the bases into the equation, however, would have implied drastic structural adjustments to the relationship, bringing a long-term shift in Spanish security policy, as well as probably causing some economic damage to the localities concerned. The policy the Zapatero government actually followed made the most sense both for the government's room for maneuver on policy, and for the party's long-term electoral interests.

V Assessment and Alternative Explanations

While several other potential variables could be chosen, Table 4 demonstrates how the expectations of the party system approach compare with those of an international security explanation, that would examine the basing issue as part of broader trends in the security relationship, and a public opinion explanation, that would emphasize the importance of anti-Americanism within Spanish society. Neither of these can fully account for the observed variation on the basing issue in the Spanish case that the party political explanation can.

Although a security explanation could account for the cooperative post-Cold War relations between the two countries, it would have difficulty explaining the non-politicization of the bases issue during the immediate transition and then its rapid

politicization in the following 1981-1988 period. Most importantly, a bilateral security explanation cannot account for why the Zapatero administration withdrew Spanish troops from Iraq, but then allowed the United States to maintain its use of the military bases for the same campaign. Since Zapatero was willing to strain the security relationship with the United States with his Iraq troop withdrawal, why would he not also do so on the question of the bases? The security perspective is important, but is ultimately indeterminate.

A public opinion explanation that would be centered around levels of anti-Americanism among the Spanish public also has important shortcomings. Empirically, such a public opinion explanation fails to account for why the American bases and NATO membership issues were off the political agenda during UCD rule (1975-1981) as well as the most recent phase (2004-) despite very high levels of anti-Americanism. Our findings thus support Risse-Kappen's (1991) observation that different types of domestic institutional structures in democratic polities mediate between public opinion and policy outcomes. Moreover anti-Americanism itself is subject to the same types of agenda setting, political mobilization and two-level interactions by political elites that we have identified for the base issue (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007).

Table 4: Summary of Contending Approaches to the Evolution of the Base Issue in Spanish Democratic Politics

Bases Issue	1976-1980	1980-1989	1989-2003	2004 -
Salience of US Bases Issue in Spanish Politics	**Low:** Uncontested 1976 and 1982 accords	**High:** Contested 1988 accord	**Low;** Gulf War; 2002 Exchange of Notes	**Low;** Despite withdrawal of Spanish troops from Iraq
Public Opinion explanation: Level of Anti-Americanism	High Post-Franco; view that the US supported Franco	High Anti-NATO platform and referendum stirs up anti-American sentiment	Low Period of calm; Aznar's Adoption of an Atlanticist orientation in 1997	High Anti-Bush sentiment is strong; 85-90% of the Spanish public opposes Iraq War
International Security explanation: Tensions in U.S. Spanish – Bilateral Security Relations	Moderate Hands-off approach by the US government to the transition	High US suspicious of PSOE intentions on NATO; hard base negotiation in 1986-1988	Low Gonzales supports Gulf War; relations under Aznar, are very close in all areas	High Shift to pro-Europe orientation; relations markedly decline as Spanish troops withdraw from Iraq
Party Politics: Nature of democratic politics and consolidation of Party system	Low UCD-Communist Pact to not bring up NATO or bases in political so as to preserve unity during the transition	High Pact is gone; PSOE uses status of NATO and US bases to win 1982 and 1986 national and local elections;	Low Consolidated into socioeconomic differences; stable 2-party system; corruption and nationalism the salient issues	Low repoliticization of foreign policy by Aznar and Zapatero, but not the bases issue; PSOE unwilling to resurrect agreement it "corrected" in 1988 or change Aznar's base policy from 2002

VI Conclusion: Understanding Base Politics and Democratic Politics

This essay has illustrated how a careful analysis of the dynamics of electoral and party politics in democratizing nations can enhance our understanding of the politics of foreign basing. Whilst security concerns, the broad international environment and the underlying status of bases in the host country's public opinion all affect base politics, they are insufficient on their own to account for the fluctuations in the salience and intensity of political discussion of foreign military presence. Instead, here we have focused on the structure of party competition, and the strategies adopted by political leaders to mobilize electoral support, undermine rival parties, and build their party organizations. Party leaders' calculations of their political interests can lead them to whip up antagonistic sentiment about foreign military bases in some period, and seek to defuse the issue in others.

We have argued that the early phases of democratization are particularly vulnerable to the partisan exploitation of the basing issue for electoral gain and to meet the expectations of party activists, as political leaders are concerned to consolidate their parties' place in the party system, even at the expense of taking on high-risk political commitments. But when democratic party politics becomes more solidly established, the incentives to mobilize around the basing issue decline rapidly. In this post-transitional phase, populistic and demagogical campaigns against bases are unlikely to be embraced by parties with aspirations to take on governing responsibilities, because of the acute difficulties they will face in living up to expectations when they win power.

In general, this reflects the tendency of established party systems to become 'cartels' (Katz and Mair 1995; Blyth and Katz 2005), in which the major parties seek to limit the range of policy alternatives presented to the electorate in a bid to secure their power and make life easier when in office. Although this is seen most obviously in recent changes to party competition over economic policy, the same logic applies to security policy, with the main governing parties seeking to avoid divisive public discussion of security arrangements involving the ceding of military bases to a foreign power. This even holds in periods when major foreign policy issues are the subject of bitter political contestation, such as in Spain immediately before and after the 11 March 2004 bombings.

More broadly, we believe that our theory should be applicable to a range of democratic countries in many different regions that have hosted foreign military bases. Indeed, a cursory examination of Greece and South Korea reveals a similar pattern of the rise and decline of the base issue to that of the Spanish case. As the Greek political system underwent consolidation in the 1980s, the Greek Socialist Party (PASOK), led by fiery populist Andreas Papandreou, became less aggressive on the base issue in its second term, before dropping it altogether after it regained power in the 1990s. And just like Spain, the Greek government in 2003 opposed OIF but still allowed the United States the use of the Souda Bay naval facility for Iraq operations. Similarly, the U.S. basing presence was central during the 2002 Korean presidential campaign, as the party system of South Korea's young democracy remained ill-defined and unconsolidated, allowing then candidate Roh Tae-Woo to focus his campaign on the negative aspects of the U.S. military presence in Korea. Conversely, in countries with stable electoral systems for many decades, especially Italy and Japan, the U.S. military presence was relatively

depoliticized for many decades, despite the strong public support for the Communist Party in the Italian case. A more extensive comparative study of several base hosts with different types of party systems could further test and refine our theoretical claims.

More practically, our study suggests a potential tension in current U.S. foreign policy as the United States tries to maintain an extensive military presence around the world while promoting democratization. Encouraging democratic reforms in countries where it has a military presence could well be a viable way of securing basing arrangements in the long run. However, as the Spanish case also demonstrates clearly, this rosy scenario is not so easily achieved, because the initially destabilizing effects of intense party competition in the phase of transition to democracy bring the basing issue to the forefront of electoral politics, with unpredictable consequences. Ironically, even if countries with strong authoritarian legacies such as Afghanistan and Iraq manage to establish a formally democratic political system, electoral politics and a lack of well established parties will almost certainly make the status of U.S. forces in both of these countries the object of heated political debate, intense democratic opposition and electoral campaigning.

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