

## Germany's Involvement in the War against Terrorism?

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The war against terror is only a pretext. The US government is interested in strategic positions in the struggle over global power, wants access to oil sources and other raw materials, is interested in the control of pipelines. And specifically, the USA wants to keep the US dollar as the currency of trade for future oil business. Governments, secret services and the military know very well that it makes no sense to bombard training camps in Afghanistan, Syria or Libya while, anywhere in the world, potential terrorists can get whatever they need for terrorist attacks.

The Federal Republic of Germany's involvement consists, on the one hand, of *political* support and, on the other hand, of *strategic* support through offering military base camps.

The use of military base camps in the Federal Republic of Germany makes it possible or easier for the US armed forces to conduct their wars in the Near and Middle East, from Syria to Afghanistan, and in Africa, simply because the base camps are closer to the battlegrounds than US territory.

At the same time, these military base camps are the strategic basis in the conflict with the rivalling superpower of Russia.

Germany is the logistically crucial hub for the war machinery of the US, there are military exercise grounds, storage locations and ammunition depots.

These are the command centers for Europe and Africa.

**Ramstein Air-Base** is the headquarters of the US Air Force in Europe, the biggest Air Force base outside the USA and the most important airport for supplies and troop transportation to the Near and Middle East. It also functions as the logistics center of the US Army for Europe and Africa. It is the largest, busiest and most important military base in the world.

**Spangdahlem Air-Base** is next on the list of most important airports of the US Air Force. From there, bomber aircrafts fly directly to their targets in Iraq and Syria.

**In Wiesbaden, there are the Headquarters of the US Army** in Europe (formerly in Heidelberg); there, you will also find special units for intelligence gathering and espionage.

**The military exercise ground in Grafenwöhr is the largest of the US Army** in Europe. This is the most important training camp for the Army, including gunnery training on tanks and artillery, and the training of combat troops for deployment to countries such as Iraq. 15 000 US citizens live there permanently, soldiers and relatives alike (on an area of 20 x 12 km - 284 square kilometers). At present, Grafenwöhr is turning into the deployment area within the framework of the new confrontation with Russia. This is where drone pilots have been trained for a few years now, including flyovers over civil territory to the neighboring military exercise ground in Hohenfels, which is of similar size.

**In Ansbach Katterbach and in Illesheim** helicopter pilots get their training which includes flight exercises over densely populated areas even at night.

**The military hospital at Landshut belongs to the US Army**, and is located close to the base at Ramstein; it is the largest military hospital outside the USA.

Stuttgart (Vaihingen) is where the **US European Command (EUCOM)** is located which is the headquarters and high command over all US Armed Forces in Europe, lying very closely to the **US AFRICOM** command which is in charge of the planning and the implementation of interventions throughout Africa. The rapid reaction force that is part of it – a paratrooper unit – is situated in Vicenza in Northern Italy.

And in Böblingen, which is not situated very far from the other locations either, one can find the **Headquarters of the Marine Corps for Europe** and Africa.

Confusing for lay people is the fact that there is always an overall supreme command for all Armed Forces, for a certain region in the world, then the supreme command for the Air Force, and the supreme command for the army. The US generals who are the commanders-in-chief are, at the same time, the commanders-in-chief of NATO's military command structures.

The base camps I named were only a few, probably the most important ones. One source names 147 locations of the US Armed Forces in Germany.

In the course of the war against terrorism, the USA has added new permanent base camps for itself: In Kosovo, in Iraq, in Kuwait, in Bahrain, in Oman and in the United Arab Emirates; and in Afghanistan .... Hence, closer to the battlegrounds. Or even right in the middle of it ...

Having these base camps there is a partial goal in the global struggle for power. For the foreseeable future, Germany, however, seems to offer the better developed base camps, a better infrastructure and friendlier and safer surroundings also for the soldiers.

The US base camps are the remains of the nationwide occupation of Germany by the victorious Allies of World War II.

We used to have 300 000 US soldiers, now we have approximately 60 000.

Due to the number of base camps spread throughout Germany the US Armed Forces have, obviously, the potential of controlling Germany. This aspect seems absurd if one believes that the Federal Republic of Germany and the USA will be friends and allies forever. And also, this idea is quite popular with the German people. Every year, the US Army organizes a friendship festival in Grafenwöhr and there are 100 000 visitors – this is an example in this respect.

The currently dominating trend of the political elite in Germany is to work with the USA and to also give political support to US wars (not always military support.)

At the same time, the elite wants to turn the European Union into the strongest economic region and wants to reduce the dependency on the US dollar with the help of the euro; this, in turn, questions the global dominance of the USA. From an objective point of view, the USA is our most crucial competitor over resources and markets.

At the same time, the political elites of Germany make sure that Germany becomes independent in the field of military technology. Be it the Navy, ground warfare or the air force, Germany owns the know-how and the so-called systems leadership in all the areas of military technology. Due to their own space rocket, satellite communication, spy satellites and the future European navigation system (Galileo), Europe will be able to lead wars independently from the USA in a few years time.

Looked at it from this point of view, the political solidarity with the USA in the so-called war against terror is but a necessity for a transition period until the EU can lead its own wars.

For us, for the peace movement, it would be of utmost importance to convey to people in Germany that friendship with the people in the USA cannot mean supporting the criminal wars of the US government!

(Conclusion) **We demand the closing and the shutdown of all foreign military base camps everywhere, worldwide.** As always, we demand at the same time a general and complete disarmament, the dissolution of NATO, the abolishment of the military and, naturally, of the German Armed Forces. This is how we make it unmistakably clear that the withdrawal of US Armed Forces from Germany is not meant to be a transition toward European and certainly not German warfare in the world.

In political discussions we are always told: "Your politics is hostile toward Americans!"

No, it is not – we are against every war and against any preparation of war. We know that there are people everywhere, in the USA as well, who rise and render peaceful resistance against the wars of their governments. This is why we have invited CodePink from the USA to talk about their work!

... We are very happy to welcome you here!