

# The Fall of the Berlin Wall and the Multiplication of Western Walls

By [Prof. James Petras](#)

Global Research, November 16, 2014

Region: [Europe](#)

Theme: [History](#), [Law and Justice](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

*On November 9, 2014, Germany and its Western Allies, celebrated the 'Fall of the Berlin Wall' and the subsequent 're-unification' of the 'two Germanys'. Prime Minister Merkel described the 'historic event' as a "victory of freedom for all peoples in Europe and across the world." The entire Western media and officialdom echoed Merkel's rhetoric, as 300,000 Germans gathered at the Brandenburg Gate hailed their leader as she spoke of 'one people, one nation and one state in freedom, peace and prosperity...' But Merkel's discourse is a self-serving chauvinist fabrication which distorts the real consequences of a united Germany. Moreover, the Western celebration of 'fallen walls' is very selective.*

The notion that Germany was 'unified' democratically is of dubious historical accuracy. The consequences of a powerful unified Germany have not led to a peaceful prosperous Europe and Germany's current role in world politics, particularly its policies toward the Middle East, North Africa and the Ukraine, has been anything but peaceful.

## The Walls of Freedom and the Walls of Prison

While NATO regimes celebrate the 'Fall of the Berlin Wall' as the highest expression of freedom, these same political leaders support, finance and promote the construction of oppressive walls throughout world: Unified Germany and its NATO partners have supported Israel's Separation Wall dividing and caging millions of Palestinians for the better part of two decades. Apparently there are progressive and reactionary 'walls' - 'good walls' and 'bad walls'. Unlike the Palestinians, Berliners were never deprived of basic necessities and subject to random displacement or even murder - the Western airlift provided all for West Berliners. Israel's Separation Wall results in division and seizure of Palestinian land, ancestral homes, farms, schools and cultural sites while centuries-old olive groves are razed - depriving their owners of productive income.

The US has built its own massive 'Security Wall' along its Mexican border, incarcerating and even shooting refugees fleeing Washington's militarization of Central America and Mexico. The US 'Security' Wall condemns millions of Mexicans and Central Americans to live in terror and misery in murderous US client narco-states. In the past seven years, over 100,000 Mexican civilians have been killed under the reign of US-backed Presidents, who were elected through fraud, as they relentlessly pursue the US mandated "War on Drugs". Similar levels of killings ravage Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala where narco-gangs, with the backing of corrupt political, police and military officials, terrorize the cities and countryside. The death toll from US military interventions in Central America far exceeds those by the former-Soviet Union in Eastern Europe. The US border wall ensures that the survivors of this terror will remain exposed to the brutal rule of US-backed regimes.

At the same time, the civilized 'European Union' has erected its land and sea 'Walls *against refugees*' from Iraq, Syria, Libya, Lebanon and Palestine, fleeing NATO directed invasions and proxy wars in their countries. According to the UN Commission on Refugees, 13 million civilians have been displaced by US wars in Iraq and Syria. Many fleeing the war zones crash up against the European 'legal walls' - immigration restrictions, concentration or "internment" camps and prolonged detentions welcome their "flight to freedom".

Chancellor Merkel chose not to mention these 'civilized' walls against people fleeing NATO's 'humanitarian interventions'. Nor have the Prime Ministers and Presidents of Europe or the US and its 'ally' Israel acknowledged the deaths and suffering...because these are their Walls, their own 'barriers to freedom'.

#### Democratic Re-Unification or Annexation by Force

Merkel glosses over the crucial fact that the East Germans were never consulted or allowed to hold a free election to decide what kind of relation they would like with the West German regime. They were never asked under what terms and in what time frame "reunification" would take place. The West German regime seized control and dictated economic and social policies that destroyed their eastern neighbors' economy by fiat. Hundreds of thousands of East German factory-workers faced brutal arbitrary firings as the capitalist 'West' shut closed state factories. East German farmers looked on helplessly as their prosperous, stable co-operatives were dissolved on the orders of West German officials. Where was the democracy in this policy of brutal annexation and political viciousness that slashed the former 'East' Germans living standards, multiplied unemployment ten-fold, greatly prejudiced the welfare benefits and employment of female workers and devastated pensioners? Over 1.5 million Eastern German workers were uprooted and became economic refugees in the 'West' where wages were double the rate in 'liberated' East Germany. The wages were higher, but so was the job insecurity and the loss of social welfare provisions of the East. And if the death of 138 East Germans during 28 years, trying to escape over the Wall, was a tragedy, then what should we call the thousands who have drowned or died other horrible deaths trying to cross the Mediterranean to reach Europe or to scale the Wall separating the US and Mexico, or Israel's Wall strangling six million Palestinians?

There are many 'death strips' denying Latin Americans, Palestinians, Middle Easterners their freedom from want, blocking their escape from US-NATO wars and Israeli genocide. But those 'atrocious walls' were not mentioned by Chancellor Merkel at the Brandenburg Gate as she celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The scribes and scribblers from the New York Times, the Financial Times and the Washington Post did not mention these real, contemporary walls and their brutal toll. The selective denunciation of certain Walls contrasts with the politics of erecting 'other', more formidable Walls. Western walls of exclusion carry with them a denial of responsibility for the political and economic conditions that has driven millions of refugees to flee Central America, Palestine, the Middle East and North Africa.

US intervention and support of proxy death-squad regimes and the brutal military in Central America, from the 1960's to the 1990's, resulted in over 250,000 civilian deaths and the displacement of over 2 million refugees.

US-EU invasions and proxy wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria for over a decade have uprooted more than 13 million people and killed well over million civilians.

Israel's wars and occupation against the Palestinian people have resulted in over 500,000 Jewish colonial settlers grabbing Palestinian land since 1967. The self-proclaimed Jewish state forcibly displaced hundreds of thousands and killed, maimed and jailed over 300,000. To admit that the West constructs and maintains its own system of atrocious walls inevitably points to the policy of decades of prolonged bloody imperialist wars leading to millions of refugees.

Imperial wars are characterized by the construction and maintenance of complex '*Western Walls*', far deadlier and brutal than the Berlin Wall and less likely to fall. In fact, Western Walls are multiplying and being fortified by the latest surveillance technology. Larger budgets and more lethal arms for anti-immigrant police, has led to the brutal hunt, capture and incarceration of refugees – as Western regimes become more like police states .

The Malignant Consequences of the Fall of the Berlin Wall and the Annexation of East Germany

The annexation of East Germany vastly increased the economic power of Germany, providing German capital with several million skilled workers and trained engineers at no cost. Germany's enhanced power dictated the course of the European Union's economic policy. With the onset of the economic crisis, Germany's capitalist and political elite were well positioned to dictate the terms of 'recovery' – and impose the entire burden on the working and middle classes of Southern Europe and Ireland. Germany's ruling class, in firm control of the EU directorate, forced "austerity programs" on Greece, Portugal, Spain, Italy and Ireland. These regressive policies, which ensured that creditors would recover their loans with interest, led to spiraling unemployment rates, in some cases of over 50% for young people, and long-term, large-scale decline in living standards. 'Unified Germany' flexed its newly found economic muscle and extended its hegemony over the EU and ensured debt payments from its European subjects.

Unified Germany's economic power led to renewed political and military aspirations to engage and assert its presence in the US led imperial wars in the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia and the Ukraine. By the end of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century 'united Germany' was profitably supplying weapons, logistics and military missions in Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq. It provided Israel with weapons and economic aid while Palestinians were expelled from their homes and land. Merkel's imperial ambitions were revealed in her wholehearted backing of the far-right coup in Ukraine. Subsequently Germany imposed sanctions against Russia and supported the Kiev regime's savage military blitz against the Donbass. In the Ukraine, Germany once again, as in the 1930's, found allies among neo-Nazi collaborators and thugs willing to slaughter ethnic Russian speaking federalists in the East. Merkel's dream is to convert the Ukraine into a German-American client state, where German exports would replace Russian goods and German agro-mineral investors can exploit the country's raw materials.

Conclusion

It is obvious that Merkel, Obama and other imperialist rulers have a double standard with regard to '*Walls*' – they denounce '*Communist Walls*' while supporting murderous '*Capitalist Walls*' against refugees; they celebrate the fall of the Berlin Wall while they build bloodier Walls against the victims of their imperial wars.

Apart from the cant and hypocrisy of Western officialdom, there is a political logic guiding

these policies. The West's criteria , for deciding *which* Walls are worthy of support and *which* Walls should fall, runs along the following lines: Walls that keep out victims of imperialist wars are progressive and necessary for 'national security'; Walls that protect Communist, nationalist or leftist regimes are repressive, dehumanizing and must fall.

If we consider the larger political consequences of an event, like the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent arbitrary annexation of the East, it is clear that 're-unified' Germany's exercise of power has had a profoundly negative impact on the economies of Southern Europe and has concentrated dictatorial political powers in the hands of German decision-makers operating through EU headquarters in Brussels. Unified Germany has renounced its passive role and re-asserted its role in world politics: slowly at first as a passive junior partner to US imperialist wars in the Middle East and now, more decisively, by linking up with Ukraine rightists and thugs and imposing economic sanctions on Russia.

Germany's 'great fall' after World War II required a half century to "put all the pieces together again". But once in place, Germany seeks to project world power, particularly through its proxies in the EU and NATO, in alliance with US imperialism. The Fourth Reich increasingly looks back to the Third Reich.

The original source of this article is Global Research  
Copyright © [Prof. James Petras](#), Global Research, 2014

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Prof. James Petras](#)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long as the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)