

US Stations New Nuclear Weapons in Germany

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The US is stationing up to 20 of a new type of B 61-12 nuclear bombs at the Büchel air base in the Eifel region. Altogether they have 80 times the explosive power of the nuclear bomb exploded in Hiroshima. This was revealed in the German television program "Frontal 21" on Tuesday.

The stationing of these bombs is part of the renewal of the American nuclear arsenal. "Frontal 21" referred to the current US budget plan, which indirectly refers to these plans, saying that the weapons will be integrated into German fighter-bombers starting in the third quarter of 2015.

At the same time, additional nuclear weapons locations in Europe are being upgraded with new B 61-12 nuclear bombs. These include the airbases in Incirlik, Turkey and Aviano, Italy.

Der Spiegel already reported last year that the first bombs costing about \$10 billion should be available in Europe in 2020. It said that the expansion of the air base in Büchel will cost an estimated \$154 million and that Germany will cover one-fifth of this.

According to "Frontal 21", the Social Democratic Party (SPD) defence policymaker Thomas Hitschler confirmed that the German government is going to invest €112 million in Büchel over the next few years. Among other things, the runway of the airfield will be fitted with a modern instrument landing system. In plain language, he said, "new, even more dangerous American nuclear bombs are due to come to Büchel and, in the case of war, would be directed to their targets by German Tornados."

The director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists, Hans M. Kristensen, described a possible horrific scenario to "Frontal 21": "In case of war, the nuclear weapons stationed in Germany would be used at the orders of the US president. The US forces would then hand over the nuclear weapons to the German pilots and these German pilots would then attack the target with nuclear weapons."

The stationing is "a hidden American weapons build-up," he said. The new bombs allow "themselves to be steered to the target" and are "much more precise than the nuclear weapons that have been stationed in Germany so far." This is "a new weapon" because the US previously had "no steerable nuclear bombs."

Kristensen called this "a very unusual scenario for a country that had pledged never to use nuclear weapons—either directly or indirectly."

That nuclear armament is taking place in Germany, and the fact that—after the terrible

crimes of the German military in two world wars—the German military could drop nuclear bombs is horrifying. It also violates German and international laws.

Articles I and II of the nuclear weapon treaty signed by Germany in 1969 forbids the acceptance of control over nuclear weapons or the transmission of them elsewhere. In the text “Humanitarian International Law in armed conflicts,” a set of regulations for soldiers in the German armed forces from June 2008, it reads: “In particular the deployment of the following weapons by German soldiers in armed conflict is banned: anti-personnel mines, nuclear weapons, bacteriological weapons and chemical weapons (for example, poison gas).”

The renewal of US nuclear weapons in Germany is a provocation against Russia and raises the danger of a nuclear war in Europe.

Moscow’s foreign office spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told “Frontal 21”: “It disturbs us that states that actually have no nuclear weapons carry out the deployment of these weapons and, indeed, within the framework of the NATO practice of nuclear sharing.” A Russian government spokesperson warned: “That could change the balance of forces in Europe. And without a doubt, that would require Russia take retaliatory action to re-establish strategic balance and parity.”

The current edition of *Spiegel Geschichte* (Spiegel History), under the headline “The bomb: The age of nuclear intimidation”, is devoted to the growing danger of a nuclear war. It gives an overview of the massive build-up of arms, which has taken place “above all since the outbreak of the Ukraine crisis”. In an “arms race 2.0,” the nuclear powers are modernizing their nuclear weapons “at great expense”, it says.

According to a study by the Bulletin of Nuclear Scientists, Washington wants to spend about \$350 billion on nuclear armaments in the next decade alone, including a new class of nuclear U-boats, new nuclear weapon-bearing long-distance bombers and tactical fighters, a nuclear cruise missile and the building of new nuclear weapons factories and simulation facilities.

Russia is also “in the middle of a broad modernization of its strategic and non-strategic nuclear armed forces”, according to a study, which says that two new Borei U-boats loaded with intercontinental nuclear rockets are “completely operational”. Furthermore, Moscow is working on a new strategic stealth bomber and, at the same time, is developing a new intercontinental rocket called “Sarmat,” which can carry up to 15 nuclear warheads.

The buildup of nuclear weapons in Büchel is taking place with the support of the German government. This confirms that German imperialism is not a “peaceful” intermediary between the nuclear powers, as it would like to present itself, but plays an active role in a development that threatens the survival of the entire human race.

Last October, in a paper titled “The nuclear dimension of the Ukraine crisis,” the think tank Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, which is close to the German government, warned: “25 years after the fall of the Berlin wall, there is no effective crisis reaction mechanism between NATO and Russia. It became clear how important direct channels of communication would be in April and September, for example, when there were dangerous marine manoeuvre incidents in the Black Sea.”

About one year later, the largest NATO manoeuvre to take place in Europe in decades, Trident Juncture, is scheduled for the end of September and the buildup of nuclear weapons is in full swing.

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