

Old U.S. atom bomb madness revealed - modern Germany says YES in U.N. to nuclear weapons

Get rid of Ramstein Airbase NOW

by Dietrich Schulze

On 22 December 2015, something happened in the United States which is worth remembering in history. Plans to use atom bombs, contrived during the Cold War in 1956, listing in detail targets in Eastern countries, were declassified and made public. The matter received some publicity in the press. The aim of the following article is to show what links it to the present time and draw some conclusions.

Targets of U.S. atom bombs in 1956 in Eastern Europe and Asia now made public

James Burr of the National Security Archive at the George Washington University [1] writes that the United States planned to use atom bombs against more than 2000 targets in the East, i.e. Soviet Union, China, Eastern Europe including East Berlin. 91 atom bombs were meant to be dropped in that city alone. This, at least, was the plan of the "Strategic Air Command" SAC in 1956. SAC had earmarked 1100 airports and 1200 industrial centers as targets of systematic destruction. The atom bombs were of a size of 1.7 to 9 megatons, with the explosive power of 120 to more than 600 Hiroshima bombs.

Why did the U.S. not start a nuclear war at that time?

An article in Heise-telepolis-Magazin [2] looks into what happened with these plans until 1961. The U.S. military continued to pursue plans of a nuclear war. In 1961, John F. Kennedy became President. He continued Cold War policies, but did not wish to trigger a nuclear war. This may have cost his life two years later. But what was in 1956? Dwight D. Eisenhower was President of the United States. This man knew what war is. He was a general and Supreme Commander of the U.S. forces in 1944 in the final battle against Hitler's Wehrmacht, which involved heavy losses. This may explain why he hesitated in 1956 to start a nuclear war, despite overwhelming nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union. One year later, the U.S. war scenario was shattered by the Sputnik crisis. Suddenly the Soviet Union had superiority in carrier rockets for long-range nuclear weapons which could be deployed at any distance. In West Germany, a new army, the Bundeswehr, had been set up despite a large movement against re-militarisation, and in 1955 the country had joined NATO. In the next year, nuclear research centers had been set up in Karlsruhe, Jülich and Geesthacht. Adenauer and Strauss wanted atom bombs of their own. More about that later.



70 years ago, Hiroshima 6 August.
The ascending cloud shortly after the atomic bomb explosion. Source: Wikipedia /
Image: Madsuda Hiromichi
at the outskirts of the city

René Heilig ("Neues Deutschland") on the role of Ramstein

Let's come back to what became known about U.S. plans of a nuclear war in 1956. René Heilig, domestic editor of the daily "Neues Deutschland", provided a thorough analysis on 24 December

2015 [3] and was the first journalist who connected the revelations to a topic of current interest: "The military responsible for the targets was General Curtis LeMay (1906-1990). The crews of the bombers that flew against Nazi Germany called him »Iron Ass«. Later, his name was linked with Berlin Airlift. He sent the so-called raisin bombers. The citizens of West Berlin who had been inclosed by a Soviet blockade were provided with food, coal and confidence. A few years later, he was prepared to sacrifice the same people in a nuclear war whom he had helped to save. LeMay built the Strategic Air Command of the United States after WW II. The SAC with its headquarters at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska possessed almost 2000 bombers of different classes and 800 refueling aircraft. Up to 200,000 people, both military personnel and civilian technicians, were under LeMay's command. Permanently, he kept bombers with nuclear arms in the air, along the borders of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty countries. One important base of the SAC was Ramstein Airbase in Germany." This airbase – Ramstein – is the topic of current interest.

Eugen Drewermann on the Ramstein campaign

Let me quote some thoughts by Eugen Drewermann, Catholic theologian, suspended as a priest, known as an author who is critical of the Catholic Church and Church critical publicist. In his opening speech on 13 December 2015 during a planning conference "Stop Ramstein" at Offenbach in Germany [4], he underlined that Ramstein Airbase is playing a key role

- (1) in the deployment of drones all over the world,
- (2) in U.S. and NATO interventions,
- (3) in the policy of confrontation against Russia by the so-called missile defense shield.
- (4) in any use of nuclear weapons, because their operations center is located there.

War must be stopped and ruled out as an option of politics, was his passionate appeal.

Brandon Bryant: A whistleblower on Ramstein and drones

There is a unique contemporary witness for point no. #1 on Drewermann's list, i.e. the role of Ramstein in drone deployment: Brandon Bryant, former drone pilot. You should read the very detailed explanation [5] of the reasons why he received the Whistleblower Award. It mentions that he was at pains because masses of civilians were killed by drone operations which he had steered from Ramstein, and tells of his act of self-liberation by red-carding these instruments of murder and informing the world. The author of this article was involved in organizing the award presentation on 16 October 2015 at Karlsruhe, and reported in this online journal NRhZ on 21 October [6]. Brandon Bryant insisted on writing an Open Letter to President Obama on 18 November [7], together with three people who were similarly involved, to protest against drone deployment by the United States. He said this was the most devastating incitement of terrorism. Killing masses of people by drones was a recruiting program for new terrorists.

Subrata Ghoshroy speaking out against killer drones and nuclear weapons

As chance would have it, the author was asked four and a half years ago during a video interview at the University of Jena, concerning the "civil clause" [8] what a whistleblower is. As you can hear, I referred to scientist Subrata Ghoshroy, who spoke at the end of 2009 at the KIT Karlsruhe about the devastating militarization of U.S. universities and research institutions. It can be seen as an analogy that like Brandon Bryant was involved in warfare, he was involved in research for war. As an expert for laser weapons, his job was to assess the capability of the relevant industrial products. When he found that their performance was bluff and said the government should not pay for them for that reason, and insisted on that position when pressurized, he was shunted into an MIT group. Like Bryant, Ghoshroy developed an act of self-liberation. He converted from an arms scientist to a peace scientist, and works in that field with a high degree of commitment. Just two examples: On the National Action Day on May 2014 [9], he read out in front of the MIT – which is a center of research on drones for warfare – the names of people killed by U.S. killer drones. In August, he was in Japan to participate in a scientists' conference on Fukushima where the debate was on turning away from "civil" uses of atomic energy, in favor of an orientation to renewable energies. Here is his report in the renowned Bulletin of Atomic Scientists [10]. The tragic thing is

that Japan is developing a new militarism, denying its own history. In the middle of September, 45,000 people demonstrated in Tokyo against new security laws which permit the Japanese armed forces to perform operations abroad, in breach of the Constitution, which is a pacifist one for good reasons. A truly worrying contribution only a short time after the 70th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Reiner Braun on Germany's YES to nuclear weapons in the United Nations

On 8 December 2015, the United Nations General Assembly, with a great majority passed four resolutions which are aimed at getting closer to a ban on nuclear weapons. With two votes against, two abstentions, the government of the Federal Republic of Germany opposed this progress of nuclear disarmament, as ICAN reported [11], thus expressing its solidarity with those who possess nuclear weapons. What is really strange: Instead of an outcry from the peace movement, we have heard almost nothing. "Almost" – this includes one important voice of some weight: Reiner Braun, IALANA manager, since 2013 Co-President of the International Peace Bureau in Geneva. He was interviewed on 20 December by blogger Lea Frings of the German weekly FREITAG [12]. What is particularly interesting is the reasons for this appalling vote. Reiner Braun gave two clear explanations:

- It is an affront against the German Parliament, even against the program of the German Federal Government, which has formulated abolition of all nuclear weapons as one of the aims of German policy. This can only be understood as a form of total servility to U.S. and NATO interests. It has nothing to do with independent German policy devoted to peace. But it is in line with the foreign policy which is currently being pursued: a line of confrontation and hegemony. They want to be involved in nuclear weapons as well, even if it may only be in the form of some nuclear sharing.
- Banks providing credits and reaping shareholder profits and armament corporations are earning the earth from the development of new nuclear weapons. For years, the campaign "No to banks financing nuclear weapons" has been drawing attention to this close relationship. Deutsche Bank and Commerzbank are also involved here.

Brothers in nuclear arms at the Karlsruhe Research Center: One of them went offside ...

It is no new phenomenon in (West) German policy since WW II that they want to be involved in nuclear weapons for the purpose of hegemony in foreign policy. Adenauer and Strauss wanted atom bombs of their own, so the West German nuclear research centers set up in 1956 were staffed with reliable leading personnel. At Karlsruhe, this consisted of two Nazi lawyers and two armament experts who had formerly served in Hitler's Wehrmacht. History, however, took a different turn. On 12 April 1957, 18 renowned nuclear scientists issued the "Göttingen Manifesto" against rearmament of the German Bundeswehr with nuclear weapons [13], and Adenauer's government had to bury this most ardent desire. This, however, was the hour of nuclear cooperation with dictatorships like South Africa, Pakistan, Argentina with the aim of helping these countries to obtain atom bombs – to which, it was hoped, West Germany would also have access. This was many, many years ago.

Concerning one of the experts of those days, the Senate of the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology took a decision on 14 December 2015, after three years of debate: The KIT disassociates itself from the granting of the title of an "Honorary Senator" to Dr. Rudolf Greifeld in 1969 by the University, because of this man's Nazi past. The author published a resumé in NRhZ on 16 December [14]. Reiner Braun said, today's German government wants to be involved in nuclear weapons, even if it may only be in some kind of nuclear sharing. Is that really possible at all?

2012 debate on a German option concerning nuclear weapons

In July 2012, Eberhard Umbach, at that time KIT President, contributed the following opinion to the debate on a civil clause: "The Karlsruhe Research Center, established in 1956 for nuclear research, did have a civil clause: ›The company will only pursue peaceful purposes‹. This restriction was necessary and understandable at the time. But today, we are not in the least thinking of building bombs, and would not possess the technical capabilities." The author of this article expressed his astonishment: How could a trained physicist deny Germany's technical

capabilities? What is the purpose of his statement that nuclear technology is harmless - a dual use technology, which may be used both for civilian and for military purposes? Is it only harmless, can its use be kept under control in German hands, while at the same time we are told every day that it is extremely dangerous in Iranian hands?" An article in the daily "junge Welt" [15] on 4 August 2012, entitled "Only for peaceful purposes", written on the occasion of the anniversary of the dropping of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs, came to the reasoned conclusion that "the Federal Republic of Germany is also capable of building atom bombs."

It is also useful to have a look into the polemic pamphlet "Jetzt entrüsten" [16] – a pun on the German words for "disarm" and "outrage" -, which contains the contributions of a conference held at Karlsruhe in June 2012 on the responsibility of science, civil clauses, armament and nuclear research. Harry Block spoke at that conference of the technical "option of a state with nuclear weapons", while at the same time underlining the need for a conversion of science. By that he meant motivating nuclear scientists to get engaged in research for regenerative energies, out of their own accord. It's just a matter of really wanting to do it.

Civilian-military nuclear research at the KIT in 2015

What is really going on three years later? Read the documentation to a panel discussion on 29 April 2015 [17] with Green MP Sylvia Kotting-Uhl at KIT's Redtenbacher lecture hall on "Civilian-military nuclear research at the KIT – It's time to end it!" Why was the term "civilian-military nuclear research" used here? The KIT Institute for Nuclear and Energy Technologies (IKET) is carrying out research for soundless liquid metal cooling systems for large nuclear reactors. This is mainly of interest for nuclear submarines, because soundless cooling makes it very difficult to detect these. The point is that this type of research violates the civil clause which still exists in the KIT Law for major research funded by the German Federal government – explicitly only for peaceful purposes. As reported in the documentation the response of the German Federal Government of 22 December 2014 to a relevant interpellation of Green MPs is really a meaningless reaction to this breach of the civil clause that still exists for parts of the KIT.

On 2 December 2015, the website of Antiatom Neckarwestheim [18] (an alliance demanding the shutdown of the nuclear reactor located there) published a 14 page analysis, quoting 49 sources for international nuclear involvement under the title "KIT Karlsruhe – Nuclear Research and the International Scene - Part 1 Greenwashing by Atom Gurus? Part 2: Willing Henchmen or Responsible Actors?"

It needs to be remembered that the KIT is the largest national nuclear center in Germany and that the aim of a nuclear power phase-out is systematically being thwarted from this central place, with the backing of the German federal government and the state government of Baden-Württemberg. In the light of what has been cited here, there is only one plausible explanation: they are deliberately keeping open the option of nuclear weapons in German hands.

A final thought

The author had in mind to draw a number of conclusions here, but in the interest of brevity appeals to readers to use their own brains. Please do communicate your ideas to the author (his email address will be found below) and to others.

Just one final thought: Resistance from democratically-minded people of all shades "from below", against war, destruction of the environment and injustice, has been and remains a positive prime power of human history. "Tu ma was" let's do something, is a Bavarian saying. Courage of one's convictions, networked cooperation is on the agenda.(PK)

This translation <http://www.stattweb.de/files/civil/Doku20151231.pdf> was done in honor of the Whistleblower Subrata Ghoshroy (MIT).

Sources:

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- [2] <http://www.heise.de/tp/news/Atombomben-auf-Ost-Berlin-3055232.html>
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- [4] <http://lokale-friedensarbeit.de/aktuelles/pressemitteilung-der-friedenskooperative-eugen-drewermann-ramstein-ist-die-drehscheibe-der> [... wars of USA and NATO]
- [5] http://www.ialana.de/files/pdf/arbeitsfelder/whistleblowerpreis/whistleblowerpreis%202015/Jury_Begr_Br_Bryant_20_9_15.pdf
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- [10] <http://thebulletin.org/fukushima-today-first-person-account-field-and-conference-table8683>
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The author: Dr.-Ing. Dietrich Schulze (born in 1940) worked for 18 years for research in High-Energy Physics, and from 1984 to 2005 was Chairman of the Works Council of the Karlsruhe Research Center (now part of the KIT as "Campus Nord"). In 2008, he was a founder member of the "Initiative against Military Research at Universities" (Web documentation: www.stattweb.de/files/DokuKITcivil.pdf) at Karlsruhe. He is a member of the Advisory Board of "NatWiss – Scientists' Initiative for Peace and Sustainability", and works for "Universities for Peace – Yes to Civil Clauses", and as a publicist. He was also in charge of the preparatory team at Karlsruhe of the 2015 Whistleblower Award presentation. Email dietrich.schulze@gmx.de

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