

# The US Empire Has Up to 1,000 Military Bases in 80 Countries

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*On the weekend of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Baltimore University hosted more than 200 activists in the peace, environment, and social justice movements to launch a new initiative known as the Coalition Against US Foreign Military Bases, the Nation [reported](#).*

In a series of panels that lasted over two days, the conference attendees highlighted the horrors of American foreign policy despite the fact Martin Luther King warned against these horrors over 50 years ago, a fitting reminder to heed the warnings of Dr. King.

According to the panel, the U.S. has over 800 formal military bases in 80 countries, “a number that could exceed 1,000 if you count troops stationed at embassies and missions and so-called ‘lily-pond’ bases, with some 138,000 soldiers stationed around the globe,” the *Nation* notes.

[According](#) to David Vine, author of *Base Nation: How U.S. Military Bases Overseas Harm America and the World*, maintaining bases and troops overseas cost \$85 to \$100 billion in 2014, while the total for bases and troops in war zones was between \$160 billion and \$200 billion.

The *Nation* also highlighted Vine’s claim that only some 11 other countries have bases in foreign countries, around 70 altogether. Russia is believed to have at least 26 bases in nine countries. They are mainly in former Soviet states, as well as Syria and Vietnam. The U.K., France, and Turkey have around four to ten bases each, and a handful of global bases are occupied by India, China, Japan, South Korea, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands. This might all change in the years to come, however, as China may be [looking](#) to build bases of its own in the [Middle East](#).

**Once the U.S. establishes itself militarily in a nation, it rarely leaves. Consider that after the defeat of Germany in World War II, the U.S. never [left the country](#).** It has maintained its bases there ever since. Germany’s Ramstein base is now the “[hub](#)” for America’s global drone assassination program throughout the Middle East.

The British spy agency, the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), has [been using a base](#) in North Yorkshire called Menwith Hill to assist with America’s targeted killings in the Middle East, using an unknown number of employees.

This is but one example of how American bases overseas can be used to [commit mass](#)

[suffering](#) in the Middle East, and the effects of these bases on the local populations are far too many to document.

For example, in Okinawa, Japan, the U.S. was [suspected](#) of housing and burying Agent Orange at its unpopular base in Futenma. Protests are not uncommon, with a specific sit-in protest lasting more than 5,000 consecutive days, as [reported](#) by the *Japan Times* at the end of last year. Rapes, theft, assaults, and murders committed by U.S. personnel there are all [rather common](#).

The most famous incident involved the rape of a 12-year-old girl by three U.S. servicemen in 1995. The Okinawans have been protesting the U.S. military presence ever since, but the U.S. refuses to budge (with the exception of its proposal to relocate the base to a separate location, which is yet to appease the locals' concerns).

“U.S. bases in Korea and Japan are vehicles of the Cold-War threat of China. Bases are not the spoils of the past war as some believe; they are the purpose of the war,” Satoko Oka Norimatsu, editor of the *Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* and author of *Resistant Islands: Okinawa Confronts Japan and the United States*, told *Anti-Media*. Norimatsu also said resisting the U.S. base presence and its plans to relocate is important for Okinawa because “U.S. bases concentrated in Okinawa are a form of colonial oppression by Japan that’s continuing for over four centuries.”

“Some people in Okinawa believe that if Japan as a whole wants to maintain the U.S.-Japan military alliance, it should be Japan who carries these bases and not Okinawa,” she added.

Okinawa is just one instance of anti-U.S. sentiment brought on by its unwelcome military presence. In Okinawa, the U.S. reportedly takes up about one-fifth of Okinawan land. In 2004, Gangnam Style singer Psy released a song that was heavily critical of the U.S. military after an incident caused by a military vehicle that killed two young Korean girls. [According](#) to *CNN*:

“CNN was able to translate the lyrics as saying, ‘Kill those f-ing Yankees who have been torturing Iraqi captives and those who ordered them to torture,’ and going on to say, ‘Kill them all slowly and painfully,’ as well as ‘daughters, mothers, daughters-in-law and fathers.’”

It may be for this reason that [the Nation](#), one of the few outlets to [document](#) this issue over the past few years, is highlighting the movement to bring an end to this disastrous and unnecessary foreign policy, which at its heart turns local populations against the U.S. across the globe.

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