

What Do You Know About The U.S. Base Camp Darby?

Informative Dossier Created By
**Committee For The Dismantlement And Reconversion To Exclusively
Civilian Use Of Camp Darby**

THE BASE

There are only 6 U.S. military bases in the entire world capable of guaranteeing an immediate simultaneous mobilization of troops, weapons, munitions and equipment: Camp Darby is one of them.

During the summer, we often drive by that fenced area on our way to the beach. 10 Km. of fencing, barbed wire and video cameras. We have become accustomed to the point of forgetting that part of the pine forest near our homes is closed and inaccessible. Why?

*What is Camp Darby, why was it built and for what use?
What is inside? Who works there? How many between military personnel and civilian?
What are all those large structures visible from the fence?
How many weapons are stored in the silos buried in the pine forest?
What type are they: conventional, chemical, nuclear?
Have there ever been any accidents involving the weapons silos?
Many questions, but few if any responses.
One thing we know for certain is that the weapons at Camp Darby are constantly used to kill.*

*Could something else be located in the pine forest to replace Camp Darby?
Is it even possible to think of reconverting the area to civilian use?
Would reconversion guarantee job opportunities?*

This brief pamphlet is a collection of information on the base at Camp Darby. It contains useful information and answers to questions that clarify once and for all that eliminating this military base from our area of is not only possible but also necessary and urgent.

Reading these pages will help counter the excuses made by politicians and local administrators who postpone ad infinitum the concrete policies aimed at eliminating this immense U.S. weapons depot from our land.

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POSITION

The base is located in the pine forest of the *Tombolo*, in the province of Pisa, but actually on the outskirts to the north of Livorno (Leghorn).

It occupies roughly 1000 hectares (2500 acres), in an ideal position for the Mediterranean basin.

Railway lines arrive inside the base, connecting it to the Pisa Airport, the Turin-Rome railroad, the Navicelli Canal leading to the Port of Livorno and it is also near the Pisa exit on the A12 Autostrada.

LEGAL STATUS

The *Tombolo* base was granted to the United States in 1951, thanks to a bilateral agreement signed by the Italian Defense Minister of the time together with the U.S. government and the Pentagon. ***To this day the treaty remains highly classified.***

Camp Darby is not under extra-territorial conditions, in fact the treaty does not allow for the surrender by the Italian Republic of sovereignty of the area, but only its concession to the U.S. armed forces.

The commander of the base is an Italian officer (Colonel Raffaele Iubini, since 2005), together with a U.S. commander (Lieutenant Colonel Steve Sicinski, since 2005).

Additionally, the base is under the authority of the commander of the 22nd Setaf group of Vicenza, the primary U.S. Army base in Southern Europe, to which Camp Darby is assigned.

But who really commands Camp Darby?

Camp Darby, as with other U.S. bases in Italy, is included in the chain of command of the Pentagon and therefore not subject to Italian decision making mechanisms.

"*The Shell Agreement*", a 1995 memorandum of understanding between Italy and the U.S., attributes the Italian authorities tasks relative to the security of the base, but not the authority to establish the use thereof.

The duration of the concession of the base as per the treaty is not in the public domain; according to most sources the duration is 99 years and will therefore expire in the year 2050.

STRUCTURES AND DETACHMENTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA

Camp Darby is a U.S. military base, but also hosts a NATO command within its confines; it is managed by the U.S. Army and is their principal logistical structure in the Mediterranean. The base also functions as a weapons depot and maintenance facility.

Inside Camp Darby are the offices of 26 Army, Air Force and Pentagon support structures; there is also a training base for the Army National Guard.

Units present:

31st Munitions = Army and Air Force munitions

Assigned to the U.S. base at Aviano, Italy

31st Corps of Engineers airport repair and fuel management for the U.S. Navy

Assigned to the U.S. base at Ramstein, Germany

D.U. management office = destruction of obsolete vehicles

Food shops (24 Italians employed)

School for the children of military personnel

(these three divisions answer directly to Washington)

13th Military Police (equivalent to the Italian *carabinieri*)

Assigned to the command present in Vicenza

14th Movement Control Team transportation of vehicles and munitions inside and out of the base.

Assigned to the command present at the U.S. base in Heidelberg, Germany (which is also the headquarters of the US Army Supreme European Command)

M.I. Military Intelligence (66 between U.S. and Italian personnel)

Assigned to the command present at the U.S. base in Heidelberg, Germany (which is also the headquarters of the US Army Supreme European Command)

AFN CID 106 FM (the base radio station)

Assigned to the command present at the U.S. base in Heidelberg, Germany

Criminal Investigations Division

Assigned to the command present at the U.S. base in Heidelberg, Germany

Contract Office

Assigned to the command present at the U.S. base in Heidelberg, Germany

839th Transportation Battalion (nautical transport within and outside the base)

This battalion is assigned directly to a command in the state of Illinois.

As documented by the organization *Global Security* (www.globalsecurity.org whose data have thus far proved reliable), the 31st Munitions Maintenance Squadron based at **Camp Darby** «is responsible for USAFE’s largest and most dispersed conventional munitions stockpile, consisting of 21,000 short tons collocated in Italy, **and two classified sites located in Israel**»

The number of permanent residents, between personnel and their families, exceeds 2,000.

The military personnel consist in approximately 350 U.S. Army and Air Force service members. Additional “militarized” civilian personnel is supplied by U.S. Department of Defense contractors.

The majority of the U.S. personnel live with their families in off base housing.

During the summer, the lodging facilities become a tourist attraction due to their location on the Italian Riviera just a short distance from the seaside resort of Tirrenia. The recreation centers under the *MWR* department (Morale Welfare Recreation) – which is composed of a campground and beach establishment in Viale del Tirreno – host over **50,000 tourists annually**, between active duty and retired service members and their families.

There are approximately 580 Italian employees, including maintenance workers, cleaning personnel and laborers, some of which depend directly from Washington; others are employed by Italian firms contracting for services within the base.

The Italian workers are supported by a national coordination of CISL trade unionists, which deals with civilian personnel on U.S. military bases in Italy; other trade unions such as **Cgil, RdB/CUB and Cobas are forbidden entry.**

The base is surrounded by other important military structures: situated at San Piero a Grado is the Multiforce Center for Military Application Studies (CISAM), formerly headquarters for the Italian military nuclear reactor.

<u>Base Population</u> <u>(residents and employees)</u>	
✓	2000 permanent residents
✓	350 U.S. military personnel
✓	700 members of the National Guard
✓	580 Italian civilians

Located next to CISAM is an **Italian naval research center**.

Just a few kilometers away is the **communications center of Coltano**, a fundamental node in the Pentagon's global telecommunications system; and finally, near the port of Livorno an administrative and logistical detachment is stationed.

THE BASE IN NUMBERS

There are a total of 125 munitions depots, 90 of which are "covered" (50 for the Army—specifically armored vehicle munitions – and 40 for the Air Force). The deposits store some 20,000 tons of munitions for artillery, missiles and aerial bombs. Capable of arming a complete armored division, the equipment present includes: 2,600 vehicles between Abrams tanks (35), Bradley Fighting Vehicles (70), jeeps and trucks. In 1999, the total capacity of the deposits was certified to be 32,000 tons of ordnances. According to estimates, the base houses over 1.5 million munitions. The sum total of materials is valued at 2 billion USD, missiles and ordnances excluded. These are all estimates, and probably less than the actual numbers, which increase drastically during military operations in the various theatres of war, **as was the case during the summer of 2006 for the 36 days of bombardments in Lebanon**.

HISTORY OF THE BASE

On July 19, 1944 the troops of the Fifth Army under the command of General Mark Clark occupied and liberated Livorno from the Germans. The city was in ruins; the port and various structures in the city had sustained serious damage.

On August 20 of the same year, the first U.S. ships began arriving; the port, under complete control of the Allied Command, was quickly put back to use. And so Livorno became the main strategic port of the Allied Forces in the Mediterranean and the pine forest of the *Tombolo* was converted into an enormous deposit supporting the Allied Forces. The "Camp" was more or less cordoned off: it comprised the Port of Livorno, the airfield of San Giusto on the outskirts of Pisa and the colonies of Calambrone. Inland it extended up to the border of Coltano, where a prisoner of war camp was set up for Germans and fascists.

All types of trade and trafficking flourished around these structures in the Tombolo, including black market trade and prostitution. Fugitives and deserters camped out in the pine forest taking advantage of the huge quantities of goods arriving at this advanced U.S. base. The Tombolo was also a "Rest Camp," with soldiers arriving from the front lines for rest, reorganization and provisions.

On August 31, 1944 the U.S. Air Force carpet-bombed the industrial area and some neighborhoods in Pisa. There was no sign of any Germans in the area. Over 3,000 civilians were needlessly killed. But reconstruction, as is known, is always a very lucrative business...

On February 10, 1947 a peace treaty was signed that provided for the return of the civilian and military structures to Italy and the withdrawal of the remaining troops by the end of the year.

On November 5, the Allied Forces returned the airfield to the Italian Air Force. On December 14 the last contingent of U.S. troops left Livorno.

In reality, the U.S. military never left, though the troops were no longer there as occupying forces.

In 1948 an agreement was signed between Italy and the U.S. that provided for the creation of a U.S. disembarkation center on the Assab Pier in the port of Livorno.

The area of the Tombolo, together with the port of Livorno, were also used in emigration operations for the refugees from Istria en route to the U.S., Canada and Australia following

the occupation of the Dalmatian peninsula. Much of the aid of the European Recovery Program (ERP), or "Marshall Plan", flowed through this node.

In 1951 the base at the Tombolo was granted to the United States via a bilateral treaty and in 1952 it assumed the legal name of Camp Darby, in memory of the U.S. general William O. Darby, killed in Alto Adige April 30, 1945, the final day of the war.

In 1955, following the signing of the Austrian State Treaty, all U.S. occupying forces in Austria were withdrawn, and according to the agreement signed with Italy, Camp Darby became the base for withdrawal and re-embarkation of soldiers, equipment and supplies.

CAMP DARBY CONNECTION

THE BASE AND ITALIAN INTERNAL POLITICS A HISTORY OF INTERFERENCE

THE CASSON-MASTELLONI INVESTIGATIONS

The base also played a central role in the strategy of destabilization that bloodied Italy in the 1970s and 1980s. Starting as far back as 1974 news was circulating regarding the use of the base for training of neo-fascists, news later confirmed by the investigations of two judges from Venice, Casson and Mastelloni.

1990 – An investigation conducted by Judge Casson revealed that Camp Darby was the main strategic base, known in code as "Base A", of the secret paramilitary, anti-communist network *Stay Behind*, better known as Gladio, and was used for training as well as weapons and munitions storage.

March 1997 – As part of the investigation carried out by Judge Mastelloni on the crash of an Argo 16 aircraft of the Italian Air Force in Marghera on November 23, 1973, a series of interesting circumstances emerged regarding the base at Camp Darby.

- 1) It would seem, in fact, that in the 1970s in the underground deposits hundreds of nuclear warheads were stored; according to Mastelloni the nuclear weapons were still -- in 1997 -- hidden away in the deposits.
- 2) The investigation by Mastelloni also determined that Camp Darby was indeed «Base A», thereby confirming the investigation by Casson.
- 3) Access to the base was given to exponents of the extreme right thanks to permits issued by U.S. commanders.

- On March 6, the day after the story was published by the press, Dr. Maselli, press officer and spokesperson for the general command of *Setaf* – the NATO command in Italy –, officially denied the news leaked from the office of Judge Mastelloni: *"Atomic bombs at Camp Darby? It's an old story that resurfaces from time to time, but I can deny it. Conventional weapons, yes, they can be found, given that this is a military base, but that's it." "I certainly won't comment on the investigation of an Italian judge. We'll see when the conclusions are drawn from the investigation. For now, I can exclude that at Camp Darby there are atomic weapons."*

Why then, did the U.S. commander of the Tuscan base refuse to receive the Venetian magistrate? Why did the Italian government then quickly place the entire matter under state secret? And above all, that *"for now, I can exclude that at Camp Darby there are atomic weapons"* certainly doesn't mean that nuclear weapons had never been stored at the base.

THE NIGHT OF THE MOBY PRINCE

- On April 10 1991 the ferry Moby Prince was engulfed in flames in the port of Livorno. 140 people were burned to death, and just one survived, Alessio Bertrand. It was the worst tragedy of the Italian maritime since WWII. That night there were five U.S.

naval ships returning from Iraq anchored in the port. The tragedy took place at 10:25pm, when the ferry, which was leaving the port, crashed into the Agip oil tanker, the *Abruzzo*, docked right between one of the military ships and another Agip tanker, the *Napoli*.

The committee of families of the victims maintains that the tragedy is linked to the movement of U.S. ships. According to testimony of Italian military personnel, one of the U.S. naval ships was loading weapons and munitions at the north end of the port in the area of Calambrone -- an off limits area -- and using procedures that did not comply with safety regulations, which require such operations to be carried out during daylight hours and near the Navicelli Canal, far from the routes of civilian navigation.

After writing to the U.S. Embassy in Rome for years asking that the radar traces and satellite images of that night be turned over, in May 2002 the council member from the Tuscany region, Erasmo D'Angelis received the first and only official document from the U.S. on the Moby Prince incident from the head of the U.S. military legal office, John T. Oliver.

It firstly confirmed the presence of 5 U.S. naval ships in the port of Livorno the night of the incident, discrediting therefore the version furnished 11 years prior by the commander of the *Leghorn Terminal* of Camp Darby, who had communicated the names of just three military vessels destined to dock.

Secondly, it denied the existence of the material requested. *"Camp Darby is not now in possession, nor was it at the time, of equipment capable of intercepting the radio communications of the Moby Prince."* *"Camp Darby is not equipped with radar. The U.S. government had no reason to monitor the port of Livorno with a system of satellite images and was not doing so. Therefore, no images or recordings of any type are available."*

So, Camp Darby, the most important U.S. military and logistical base in Southern Europe and the Mediterranean area, in contrast with the "small" military airfield of San Giusto, is not equipped with radar. No monitoring, no satellite coverage, no possibility to record movements or communications between the ships docked in the port and the port authorities. If, as claimed, no radar exists, the helicopters of the base may not fly at night, not even in case of emergency: therefore any emergencies must take place during the day, in sunlight, and preferably during office hours...

EXPANSION PLANS

RECENT CHRONOLOGY

News of the expansion of Camp Darby Dating dates back to the early 1990s, based on a NATO project that provides for the construction of various infrastructures totaling approximately 52 million USD.

The project was presented to Comipar, a committee that includes Tuscany and in this case the region requested additional information and documentation before announcing its position.

Comipar (Mixed Committee on Military Servitude) is a committee that by law undertakes the examination of problems tied to the coordination between territorial and socio-economic development plans for the region and the programs of the military installations and the resulting limitations. The committee meets twice yearly and has a solely consultative function, as the final decision is left to the Defense Ministry. In any event, a negative opinion of the committee results in a mandatory re-examination by the Ministry.

In 1993, for the first time in the history of the base, a meeting between the authorities of Camp Darby and the local institutions, represented by the then president of the Tuscany Region, Vannino Chiti, took place.

On October 10, 1996, the Comipar approved the NATO dossier, after having received the observations aimed at reducing the environmental impact of the project presented by a representative of the Parks Authority and supported by the Region.

In 1997, the president of the Pisa Province, Gino Nunes, and the mayor of the city, Piero Floriani, made a formal request that Camp Darby be returned again to Italy and that the base be dismantled. **The very next day both specified that they did not request closure of the base.**

In May 2002, the Italian commander at Camp Darby made a request to the University of Pisa asking that an area near the base be fenced off. The area was, at the time, granted to the university.

On January 23, 2003, the Undersecretary of Defense, Francesco Bosi, responding to an interrogation by Member of Parliament Mauro Bulgarelli (Green Party), stated that a contract of about 2.5 million USD, to be paid by the U.S., was being carried out for the readjustment of storage facilities in which there had been structural failings* and for the maintenance of others. Bosi specified that the work had already been given approval by the Joint Committee on Construction.

*The "readjustment" no doubt refers to the repair work done following a disastrous accident, which is covered on page 10.

March 2003. With an amendment to the NATO package for possible military projects, the project to renovate and expand the *Navicelli*, the man-made canal that links the Pisa dockyard to the Arno River floodway canal and on to the port of Livorno, was financed.

The work was to start in 2005 with the completion set for the year 2010.

Responding to an interrogation by Member of Parliament Elettra Deiana (Refounded Communist Party), Defense Undersecretary Bosi affirmed that the work concerned only repairs on the dock of the Tombolo relative to the canal, for which the required authorization had been requested from the military administration. Since this area is state owned property belonging to the Ministry of Defense, for the work inside the base, there was a further request for authorization from the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, which was granted. Additionally, the regional Parks Authority Migliarino - San Rossore - Massacciuccoli and the firm Navicelli, a mixed public private company of which the majority holder is the Municipality, Province and Chamber of Commerce of Pisa, were also involved.

On March 18 2003, the Academic Senate of the University of Pisa denied the request made by Camp Darby. The governing authority of the university approved a motion that made explicit reference to Article II of the Statute, which defines the fundamental values that inspire the actions of the university.

On June 17 2003, the President of the Tuscany Region, Claudio Martini, visited the base and was received by the Italian commander, Ilio Venuti, and the U.S. counterpart, Charles Leaming. After the visit, Martini declared to the press, *"The question remains open and it seems to me that the issue of a less militarized and more civilian future regards more than just Camp Darby. I feel this is an issue that all those who love peace and want to see the role of maintaining peace and of humanitarian activities reinforced should hold dear. Naturally it is not a question that can be resolved immediately."* And thus the idea of a progressive reconversion to civilian use of Camp Darby was confirmed.

On July 2 2003, the Comipar unanimously approved a dossier containing the project for the expansion of the base practically identical to the one already approved in 1996; it was put to a vote for a second time because the proposal had passed from the hands of NATO to become a direct request from the United States. **And so it was confirmed by unanimous vote, including technicians from the Tuscany Region, delegated in their role by the ruling majority of the regional government.**

February 2004. News began circulating that the U.S. command at Camp Darby was working to obtain a dock in the port of Livorno for its exclusive use, where naval ships would load and unload. Following the publication of the news, the Commissary of the Livorno Port Authority, Bruno Lenzi, declared he had received no requests from Camp Darby for a dock in the Port of Livorno, specifying that the U.S. base might eventually request preferential docking privileges but not a concession.

March 4 Following the publication of news regarding expansion of the U.S. military base, Martini, president of the Tuscany region declared, *"I want to state with clarity that with respect to decisions relative to the use of the territory outside the base we will not allow anyone to make decisions that should be made by local authorities. More in general, as far as I'm concerned, I confirm my idea: in the future of Camp Darby I see a progressive reconversion toward civilian use. But this is a question of a more general nature and in the long term."*

March 8 In a memo sent out at the end of a session of the Regional government dedicated to the question of the announced expansion of the base, Martini declared: *"Our position is clear. We want to start thinking of a reconversion to civilian use of the military base at Camp Darby. Our choices and our actions will be increasingly inspired by this orientation. (...) for some time I have supported that, in the future, the base of Camp Darby should be converted to civilian use, transforming its exclusively military nature and **instead assuming that of peace-keeping**, in other words developing those activities that are aimed at guaranteeing peace, cooperation and humanitarian aide around the world."*

March 5 the City Council of Livorno approved an Order of the Day that expressed its opposition to the expansion of the base at Camp Darby and requested its reconversion to civilian use. In addition to the Green Party and the Refounded Communist Party, who were part of the opposition, also the majority party Ulivo voted in favor of the measure. The only vote against the measure was by a representative of the civic list "Livorno insieme", while the council members of the center right coalition did not vote, as they were not present.

March 2004 the Regional Council voted against a motion presented by the center right coalition that supported the request made by the U.S. for the expansion of the base. On that occasion, Council member Riccardo Conti declared that the Region is opposed to the use of the Port of Livorno for the expansion of the military base and that the time has come to reconsider the functions of this military presence in Tuscany, proposing the reconversion and hoping that the base will pass under the control of international organizations such as NATO or the United Nations.

December 2 2005. The President of the Tuscany Region, Claudio Martini, in an article on "Il Tirreno" entitled *"After the Maddalena, let's transform Camp Darby"* declared, " ...We do not wish to cast doubt on the agreement or the alliances built upon it (referring to the bilateral agreements between the U.S. and Italy that granted the land for the base), but we favor reconsideration of the military use of the base, and we wish to see its reconversion to civilian use." He continued saying, "...We never spoke of closing the base. We know that it is very difficult to establish a date for the dismantlement... The priority (today) is the fight against terrorism. To combat terrorism we do not need wars or military bases. We need peace-keeping operations... In this prospective, the peaceful future of the base at Camp Darby fits in perfectly."

THE GUASTICCE PROPOSAL

In August 2005, news circulated that the large U.S. base between Livorno and Pisa might double in size, obtaining another area for the expansion.

The area indicated is the plain of Guasticce, also between Livorno and Pisa, near the interport and floodway canals, where an area of 1 million square meters was available.

The Mayor of Livorno, Alessandro Cosimi, stated that the news, though not official, was credible: "*Where there are elements of transparency in regards the military base at Camp Darby, **there can be discussion**. Of course, we will look upon it with less benevolence if instead the proposal is surrounded by secrecy and exclusively military logic.*" Cosimi later denied making the declaration.

The mayor of Pisa, Paolo Fontanelli, reminded all that the cities of Pisa and Livorno had taken a common stand on the issue of the base, affirming that "*...a possible expansion of the base would be in the opposite direction of the path we have chosen together with the Tuscany Region. It would, therefore, be unacceptable.*"

On November 7 2005, the municipality of Collesalveti approved a motion for the dismantlement of Camp Darby and the reversion to civilian use. The measure taken by the City Council sent a strong message regarding the direction to take against foreign military bases in Italy.

In light of recent news (January 2007) we have received from Vicenza, where the Pentagon (with the approval of the current Prodi government) plans to build a new base for 2,000 soldiers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, the proposal of expansion of the base at Camp Darby once again becomes dramatically current.

THE ROLE OF THE BASE IN RECENT CONFLICTS

Where the weapons stored at Camp Darby have been used

- ✓ **1960s** Vietnam
- ✓ **1980s-'90s** Middle East and Latin America
- ✓ **1991** Iraq
- ✓ **1998** Balkans
- ✓ **1999** Yugoslavia
- ✓ **2003** Iraq
- ✓ **2006** Lebanon

The base has played a fundamental role in U.S. military operations in the Middle East, especially in the 1980s, even more so than the anti-Soviet function for which it originated.

In virtue of its location in the Mediterranean, it served to refuel the aircraft carriers that more than once bombarded Libya. In addition, large quantities of weapons destined for paramilitary organizations in Central America departed from Camp Darby. In fact, in 1986 it was revealed that the base had been at the center of secret arms trafficking to Iran, the so-called *Iran Contra* scandal, organized by the CIA, and in which the Italian government was guilty of "being distracted."

Additional confirmation of its strategic importance comes from the fact that approximately 4,000 tons of bombs and grenades used in Iraq during Operation Desert Storm in 1991 came from Camp Darby, just as 60% of the bombs dropped in Yugoslavia in 1999. For example, in December 1998, on the eve of the conflict in the Balkans, some 3,000 cluster bombs passed through the port of Livorno.

Camp Darby, especially following the closure of many U.S. bases in Germany, has become increasingly important in the strategy of projection toward Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean and the Near East.

Camp Darby is a true "one stop shopping" center of the U.S. armed forces, where you can find just about anything, from a button to a missile, all in the broadest definition of the concept of "**pre-positioning**" of forces and material. In practice it's about leaving

everything necessary to launch a war in various parts of the world, aside from the military personnel to wage it. The troops train in bases located in the U.S. and are literally "projected" on the field where all you need to do is put the tank in gear and depart.

- The difficulties encountered by the U.S. military in Iraq and Afghanistan are forcing military leaders at the Pentagon to place the troops closer to conflict zones: the proposed **construction of a new U.S. base in Vicenza, at the "Dal Molin" airport**, is a step in this direction.
- News circulating in 2005 on plans to **double the size of Camp Darby at Guastice** (Livorno) thus acquires a sinister level of concreteness, given that more troops in Italy will obviously call for more logistical support.

ISSUES OF SECURITY

THE BASE AND ENVIROMENTAL CONTAMINATION

The base has had a high impact on the environment and local society.

In terms of the ecosystem, one only need consider that the pine forest of the *Tombole* is one of the last remaining of those once covering the coasts of the Mediterranean. Deer and wild boars still roam inside the base. The U.S. military, for reasons of security, appropriated 2 million USD to remove underbrush, thereby compromising the flora and fauna present.

In general, military sites create enormous problems with pollution. The typical operations that take place on bases require a variety of industrial processes, some specifically military, others similar to the routines of civilian industries.

It's enough to know that among the sites destined for clean-up by the province of Pisa, **roughly half are found inside Camp Darby**. This is, however, probably just the tip of the iceberg: thorough inspections of the base would be needed in order to assess its actual environmental impact.

IN AUGUST 2000* DISASTER LOOMED DUE TO THE COLLAPSE OF WEAPONS STORAGE DEPOTS

According to the web site www.GlobalSecurity.org, which reported news from a technical journal of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in the summer of 2000 there was an emergency removal of large numbers of ordnances at the base of Camp Darby.

Revelations, starting in the spring of the same year, of a partial collapse of the structures covering some of the refrigerated munitions depots built in the center of the pine forest, and which had furthermore previously undergone restoration work were what brought about this emergency. The explosives stored in the structures were moved to other depots, utilizing military personnel and remote controlled robots in order to avoid greater risks.

In particular, eight underground deposits and igloos containing 100,000 ordnances with 23 tons of high-grade explosives were removed with great caution.

The operation lasted 12 days and was described by the U.S. military as "extremely delicate," and even "*a small miracle*".

All this, of course, **in absolute secrecy**. Not only were the Italian civilian authorities kept in the dark, but also the nearby residents who in fact multiply during the summer as they spend time at the seaside resorts.

The news, disclosed in Italy by the newspaper *Corriere della Sera* only on January 13 2003, provoked various reactions, but without consequences.

DEPLETED URANIUM

In February 2003 Members of Parliament Paolo Cento and Mauro Bulgarelli of the Green Party and Elettra Deiana of the Refounded Communist Party visited the base and were

received by the Italian commander Col. Ilio Venuti and by the U.S. Col. Walton Carrol, responsible for all U.S. logistical support bases. Col. Carrol denied the presence of nuclear weapons, but confirmed the presence of depleted uranium based munitions, both for aircraft and tanks. He also specified that the movement of such munitions, inside the base and out, take place constantly, using both water and land based transportation, but not rail.

But what are these depleted uranium based munitions? What do they provoke?

In regards the danger of depleted uranium, there exists today a disturbing collection of scientific evidence that supports the idea of health risks to military personnel and civilian populations that come in contact with the metal after its explosion.

Depleted uranium, that is natural uranium that has been deprived of its "fissile" component, can be produced both as a byproduct of enrichment of nuclear fuels (to make nuclear warheads or fuel for nuclear plants), or as a reprocessing of exhausted fuel. It is relatively innocuous in its inert state, but becomes extremely harmful if, following its combustion or oxidation, it is inhaled or ingested as a dust or oxide.

The radioactive particles and the oxides over time provoke a wide range of cancers: from lung and bladder tumors to leukemia. In addition to the harm caused by the radioactivity there is the much more grave damage caused by the chemical toxicity of this material, as with all heavy metals. In fact, if the oxides come in contact with water tables and enters the food chain via produce, meat or milk products, the physical damages can increase and reach dangerous levels. Various independent studies in Italy maintain that depleted uranium is responsible for several types of tumors diagnosed in Italian military personnel deployed to Kosovo. Other studies show a high incidence of leukemia and birth defects in areas (such as Iraq, Afghanistan and Kosovo) where there was great usage of these munitions.

Roughly one third of U.S. troops returning from the war in Iraq in 1991 have been afflicted by the so called "Gulf War Syndrome", consisting in a complex pathology which includes cancer, birth defects, hemorrhages, respiratory difficulties, chronic fatigue, memory loss, lack of concentration and personality disorders.

Depleted uranium, whose characteristics are considered "exceptional" by the military for the results obtained and its relatively low cost, makes no distinction between "good guys" and "bad guys." It hits anyone who happens to find themselves within 60 to 70 meters from the target at the moment of impact. In the short to mid-term DU produces consequences related to contamination of the environment and the food chain. The major risk, therefore, is that of unforeseen consequences in the long term to the civilian populations living near the contaminated areas.

A residual amount of half a kilogram of depleted uranium represents a source of contamination 3000 times that of the level established by Italian law DL 230/95. It is highly probable, therefore, that handling even tiny fragments of depleted uranium carries the risk of being contaminated in the terms described in the law.

A layperson would therefore ask the question: *given that the Italian military does not use depleted uranium, why are foreign armies allowed to maintain these weapons that pose such a high level of risk?*

WHO PAYS FOR THE EXPENSES OF U.S. BASES IN ITALY? ITALIAN TAXPAYERS, NATURALLY....

Italian taxpayers contribute not only to the military budget of their own country, but also the costs of the U.S. bases in Italy.

Direct contributions in the form of cash but also tax breaks and discounts on transportation, tariffs and services.

Relative to other nations, Italy is the NATO country that pays the highest percentage to the U.S.: 37% of the costs compared to 27% in Germany. Direct and indirect contributions «in addition to those paid to NATO», as explained by the U.S. *Report on Allied Contributions to the Common Defense*.

Annual contributions: in 1999 480 million Euro were appropriated for U.S. bases, in 2001 324 million Euro and about 367 million Euro in 2002.

But wait, there's more!

In the bilateral agreements between Washington and Rome there is a clause called "*Returned property - residual value*" that provides for a fee for "improvements" made on the land. The agreement is top secret, but traces filtered out on page 17 of the «preliminary observations» that the GAO (Government Accountability Office), the investigative branch of the U.S. Congress that audits public spending (similar to the *Corte dei Conti* in Italy), delivered to the U.S. Congress in July 2004. We read: «The bilateral agreements establish that if the Italian government reutilizes the returned properties within three years, the United States may reopen the negotiations for the residual value». Which more or less means: if the properties are put to use during the 3 year period, the reimbursement fees paid to the U.S. may increase. ITALIANS WILL END UP PAYING NOT ONCE BUT TWICE FOR CONTAMINATED LANDS WHERE FOR OVER 50 YEARS THE U.S. HAS HAD THEIR MILITARY BASES!

WINNING OUR HEARTS AND MINDS? NO THANKS!

Wars are fought with weapons on foreign fronts and with politics on domestic fronts. Sometimes they go hand in hand, and you can't distinguish one from the other.

From 1945 to today, Italy has played the role of strategic back-lines for all wars, from the Middle to the Far East, in Eurasia and the Horn of Africa.

The Pentagon is working so that this will also be the case for the future.

From the post WWII occupation to today many things have changed. During the cold war, Italy was the site for experiments in what Henry Kissinger and Edward Luttwak called "**low intensity war.**" In order to prevent a political change in Italy, the U.S. bases became organizing and training grounds for fascists, members of Gladio and corps working outside the official Italian State – (*) *see the chapter of this pamphlet entitled "Camp Darby Connection."*

Today, U.S. military strategists are attempting a different approach with the local populations who live near the numerous military bases present in Italy.

The objective: "**win the hearts and minds**" of the people.

And this is a plausible explanation for the "diplomatic offensive" which began December 2, 2005. In a press conference held by the new U.S. commander of Camp Darby, Lieutenant Colonel Steve Sicinsky, communicated the desire to "open the base to the city", making the various infrastructures (athletic fields, gyms, recreation areas) available to the social and cultural associations of Pisa and Livorno.

Recently there was even talk of a direct involvement of the base in "civil protection" of the neighboring areas.

The latest news, which fits right into this strategy, concerns plans for the local soccer team of Pisa to train inside the base, as reported by the press on August 23 2007.

The commander of the base at Camp Darby found an unexpected ally in the managers of the team and (less than surprising) political "cover" by local and regional administrators.

For some time we, too, have asked that Camp Darby be opened to:

- The Italian magistrates who for years have been unable to conduct investigations on the direct involvement of the base in destabilization strategies in Italy - (*).
- The Italian workers who are members of the trade unions who have been discriminated against by a shameful regulation that transforms an Italian territory into colony under the laws of Washington.
- Inspections of the hundreds of silos containing tons of unidentified weapons.

But our requests of access to the base have fallen on deaf ears...

The declarations made by the president of the Pisa soccer team, **Leonardo Covarelli**, regarding training inside the base are disconcerting.

How is it possible that the manager of a team, in a moment in which the field of sports is sponsoring campaigns for peace and solidarity, attempts to disassociate the training from the location in which it takes place?

Does Covarelli know that weapons which destroy the lives of thousands of people on the various war fronts depart on a daily basis from that base, just a few meters from the athletic fields?

The Tuscan anti-war movement, currently committed to the struggle against the construction of a new U.S. base in Vicenza at Dal Molin, plan a decisive mobilization against this use of Camp Darby. And cannot guarantee the possibility of training in tranquility.

The declarations of the **Pisa City Council Member Fabrizio Cerri**, who deals with sports for the city, are also disconcerting.

An administrator who is well informed on the issues of Camp Darby cannot attempt to treat this choice as unimportant. This would further link the military base to our community, a base that should be closed, a foreign body and enemy to all of us.

A city council member who doesn't consider the problem of the resuming in tranquility the championship which finally sees the local team in Serie B, is not doing service to the city.

And finally, the **Vice president of the Tuscany Region, Federico Gelli**, who on August 24, 2007 declared: *"...the training of the Pisa team at Camp Darby is a good idea. It's in line with the idea of reconversion of the base..."* (!?)

To justify his declaration, Gelli cited a letter sent by the Region a year earlier to Prime Minister Prodi regarding the "renegotiation" of U.S. bases in Italy. The Tuscan solicitation was taken quite seriously by the Italian government: Prodi decided to approve **a new U.S. base in Vicenza**, therefore, **a future expansion of the base at Camp Darby**.

ANYTHING BUT RECONVERSION!!

The decision of the Pisa soccer team managers to send its players to train in a military base is irresponsible. And the political cover afforded the decision, shameful.

Camp Darby is directly involved in the ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq and Lebanon.

Italy is going through a moment of much tension, with the upcoming mobilizations against the construction of the new U.S. base in Vicenza.

At no time would this decision be opportune.

However, to decide now to send a local soccer team to train among U.S. military vehicles is, aside from demonstrating a lack of sensitivity, just plain wrong.

It is our hope that the managers of the Pisa team find another "peaceful" location for training.

The Committee for the dismantlement and reconversion to exclusively civilian use of the U.S. base at Camp Darby

Press release of August 29, 2007

OUR PROPOSALS

THE PREVENTIVE AND ACTIVE CONVERSION FROM MILITARY TO CIVILIAN

A NECESSARY PREMISE

All military bases, which pose dangers and consume excessive amounts of energy, should be urgently dismantled without distinction.

The closure of a military base is a contribution to disarmament, however...

We must also avoid that the base be replaced by activities of Peace-Keeping, or civilian activities that are harmful, polluting or speculative.

Military bases are neither immovable nor eternal, and military hierarchies are not omnipotent, anything but. Comparable to an encampment, a base is a mobile structure, more precarious than would seem. In a short period of time, a base, an instrument of war and destruction, can also cause damage of various types (accidents/attacks) and seriously pollute the land where it is located.

WHAT TO DO?

The proposals presented here in brief, should be considered as indications, given that the forms and the contents of the struggle for the dismantlement and conversion of the base at Camp Darby will depend on the involvement of the discussion locally, something we hope for and actively solicit.

1) NO TO THE ALTERNATIVE OF "PEACE-KEEPING"

*The definitions of peace-keeping and peace-enforcing adopted by the United Nations refer to two different situations in which the objective is **peace-making**.*

The experience in the field has shown that these two forms of military intervention do not change the substance of the objectives: to impose by force the will of the so-called "international community," in other words the most militarily and economically powerful nations.

Peace-keeping is the "multilateral" method preferred by European countries, while peace-enforcing has been adopted as of late by the U.S. in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The aggression in 1999 against ex Yugoslavia (over 1,500 civilian victims, of which 500 children) was the first concrete example of peace-keeping.

The current presence of the UNIFIL forces in Lebanon is the second.

In both cases, the European armed forces tried to impose their will, using methods that differ from those employed by the U.S., by working with the West-supporting forces already present in the area: the Albanians/Kosovars in Yugoslavia, the Israelis in Lebanon.

Two sides of the same coin.

For the above reasons we are absolutely against the idea of using the 1000 hectares today occupied by the U.S. military for a new war base masquerading as European style peace-keeping.

There are no "just" wars, or even worse, "humanitarian" wars.

2) IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENTAL INSPECTIONS

To counter the disinformation, immediate independent monitoring of the area surrounding the base, following the example of Sardinia, where the local population works together with researchers who are constantly supplied with algae samples, are needed.

In addition, demands should be made on public institutions to contract competent third party civilians to "preventively" verify the state of the environment inside the base, to collect data on the re-qualification to civilian use of the structures and try to avoid unwanted surprises at the moment the base is closed.

Information must be obtained on the state of the buildings and other data useful for planning the re-qualification of the area. Military sites are always contaminated and the clean-up, mandatory by law, is a complex process and not without difficulties.

3) PREPARE FOR THE CONVERSION

We propose that local administrators commit to the objective of "Preventive Reconversion" of the U.S. base at Camp Darby, in other words a political and operational approach that starts immediately, and therefore prior to the departure of the troops, by planning and organizing for the conversion of the area to exclusively civilian use.

We will solicit local administrators to make a proposal to the Tuscany Region for the creation of a "**Regional Fund for the Reconversion**" from which to draw funds to begin the independent environmental inspections, promote studies for the re-qualification of the area, to finance study grants for re-use projects, to promote training courses for the re-qualification of civilian workers of the former base, to organize teams of experts (engineers, architects, economists, environmentalists and grass roots activists) capable of putting together concrete proposals of reconversion that can be put in place right away, and anything else deemed necessary to emphasize the concrete desire to remove this base of death from our area.

4) START THE DISCUSSION

It is necessary to freely disseminate information critical of the activities of the base and organize public discussions in all the municipalities and neighborhoods in the vicinity of the base on the various issues. These discussions can include issues such as the environmental impact of the base, the problems associated with the clean-up and the best choices for the post-base area. The local press should also be asked to give more space to the issues and problems, thereby countering the myth of the beneficial nature of the base.

These local informational activities should look for solidarity beyond Italy's borders, starting first and foremost with the peace movement in the U.S., through articles and publications in English on the serious problems of the U.S. bases on foreign soil, in order to have a direct impact on U.S. public opinion.

5) DETERMINE THE PERSONS INTERESTED IN RECONVERSION

Through a coordinating office of proposals in favor of the conversion, contact can be made with workers, cooperatives, associations, businesses and trade unions willing to declare their immediate and solid commitment in favor of the conversion. These realities should also affirm their refusal to collaborate with the activities of the base, for example by not accepting work involved in the expansion of the base.

From the information obtained, those interested could indicate their interest in the use of some of the buildings inside the base, to be used for their activities.

6) CREATE ALTERNATIVES

The civilian alternatives merit immediate action.

Near the military base, the headquarters of the principal activities that will replace the military structure could be located, occupying a part of the area.

Thus the threats of economic problems and job loss could be dismissed, just as the re-use for military ends of the base and other uncertainties tied to the time required for conversion.

Workers must be put in the conditions to organize themselves to promote civilian work activities, through a critical and constructive preliminary reflection and concrete help, in terms of projects as well as economic and administrative assistance, thus contributing to reduce the timeframe for closure and conversion of the base.

The proposals for civilian alternatives should also be based on the current reflections on the environment occurring on an international level, due to the serious environmental crisis.

One option could be taking advantage of the field of solar energy, something that has already been proposed in Friuli Venezia Giulia, and would be suitable to be experimented and used in the large spaces of ex military bases.

Proposals exist.

What is missing is serious determination to put the "**question of Camp Darby**" at the center of political and administrative attention, transforming the increasingly ambiguous pacifist declarations into concrete decisions to convert our territories from war to peace.

The *Committee for the dismantlement and reconversion to exclusively civilian use of Camp Darby* has the objective of maintaining constant pressure on political and social forces, on a local, regional and national level, through informational campaigns, public initiatives, peaceful demonstrations, until our area is freed of this base of war, from which each day weapons of mass destruction to be used against the peoples of the world depart.

To contribute to our work, contact us, help us, advise us
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This pamphlet was written by:

**COMMITTEE FOR THE DISMANTLEMENT AND RECONVERSION TO
EXCLUSIVELY CIVILIAN USE OF CAMP DARBY**

The committee was created on March 2, 2005 from the need for continuous efforts to confront the issues related to the presence of the base. Its areas of intervention were determined to be research, information, counter information and local mobilizations.

To learn more visit our web site: **www.viacampdarby.org**

To contribute to our work, contact us, help us, advise us
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