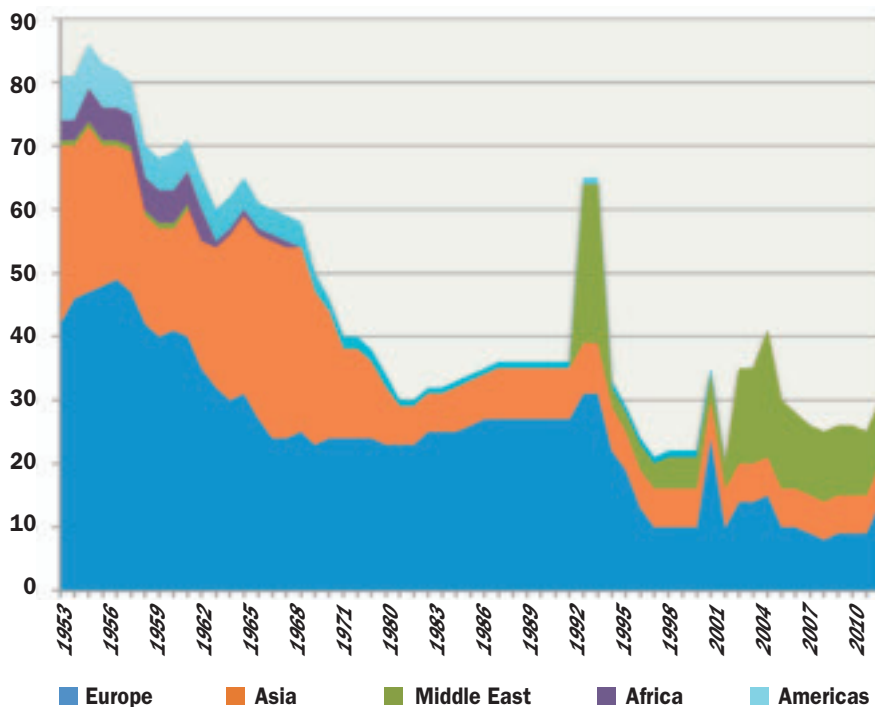


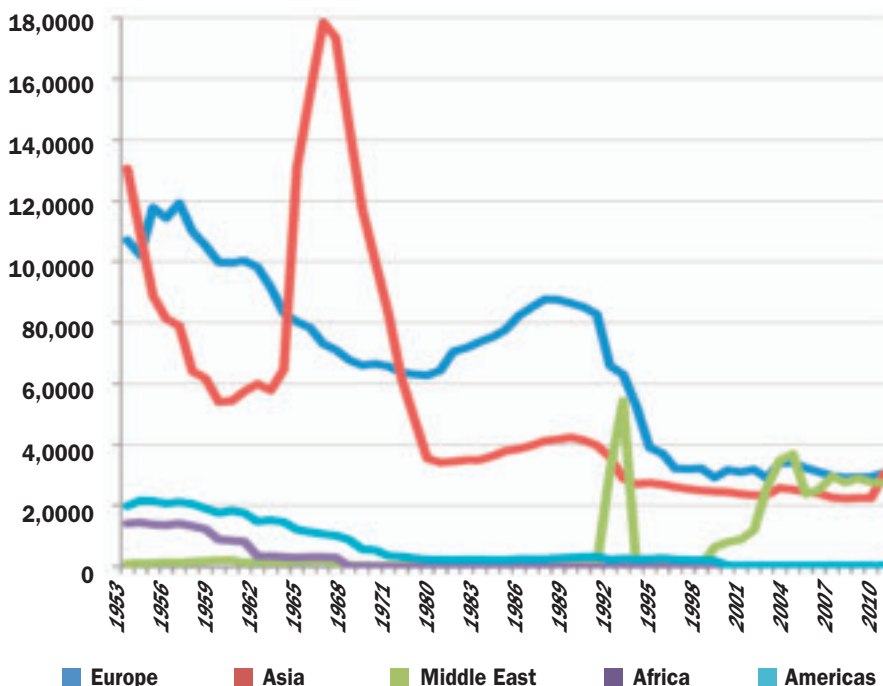
## Major USAF Bases Overseas, 1953-2011



## Not Over There

Since the onset of the Cold War, the Air Force has relied on a chain of foreign bases to maintain an enduring military presence worldwide. This once-enormous network has been geographically realigned and greatly reduced. Fig. 1 shows the scope of the decline—from nearly 90 to fewer than 30 major bases over six decades. Bases in Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas have faded away while the Middle East has grown in importance. Fig. 2 presents a mirror image in numbers of airmen. Today, USAF has only seven overseas fighter bases (RAF Lakenheath, UK; Spangdahlem AB, Germany; Aviano AB, Italy; Osan AB, South Korea; Kunsan AB, South Korea; Misawa AB, Japan; and Kadena AB, Japan). These are supplemented with dozens of smaller facilities and forward operating locations. Keeping even this remnant won't be easy. In the US, support for a large overseas presence has dwindled. This problem has been compounded by Pentagon budget pressure, foreign anti-Americanism, and emerging long-range strike threats that make it increasingly dangerous to keep troops in exposed locations.

## Active Duty Airmen Deployed Overseas, 1953-2011



Source: "The Posture Triangle: A New Framework for US Air Force Global Presence," by Stacie L. Pettyjohn and Alan J. Vick, RAND Corp.'s Project Air Force, published by the RAND Corp., Santa Monica, Calif., Dec. 5, 2013. Find the report on the RAND website at [http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR400/RR402/RAND\\_RR402.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR400/RR402/RAND_RR402.pdf).