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## Major Troop Withdrawals From Europe

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Distinctly Catholic

I mentioned earlier that I had been prescient. In January, I wondered why the United States, with all its many financial burdens, had not taken steps to draw down the enormous U.S. forces in Europe. After all, these bases produce a lot of revenue to the neighborhoods where they are located and they could just as easily be closed or at least relocated to Ohio.

I have received confirmation that the White House will shortly announce just such a draw down of troops, especially Army forces. In Germany, which once had more than a whole Army division, only three brigades will be left. The large Air Force installations in Europe will not be affected by the changes.

It will be curious to see how this plays politically. Coming on the heels of President Obama's desire to let Europe take the lead in confronting the crisis in Libya, I suspect conservatives will be yelping about an abdication of U.S. leadership. But, I suspect many swing voters feel the U.S. is over-extended and that there is no excuse for maintaining foreign military missions that serve no direct and obvious purpose.

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