



## II.2 Composition

### ► Discuss the statement

#### Tipp

Der Operator **“discuss the statement“** beauftragt dich damit, Vor- und Nachteile des Zitats zu analysieren und einen geeigneten Schluss zu formulieren.

The reader of the British newspaper “The Guardian“ wants to state his opinion in reference to the leadership of the USA. He intimates that he is an opponent of the British Empire and that he does not approve the colonial system. Meanwhile he makes clear that the USA in a similar way represent an empire. Mentioning “exploitation, greed and slavery“ he criticises the American pursuit of power and domination as well as increasing wealth and consumption.

It is evident that not everything America does is great and that the country’s political leaders are not blameless. Let’s have a look at the consequences of globalisation. Globalisation implies outsourcing and therefore also the question of fair trade and working conditions for local labourers. Especially people from the Middle East are often exploited. The working conditions are unacceptable and the wage is scarcely enough to live so that even children have to go to work to earn more money for their families. Western companies with America leading the way often take advantage of those people’s situation. Nike as an example has been criticised for child labour and exploitation of its workers.

Related to this, the reader’s comment about “slavery“ reveals that countries in the Middle East are kind of dependant on Western countries. As the industrialised countries are aware of the people’s dependance they can set wages and working conditions extremely low. This performance represents an oppression similar to the one in the colonial past.

The reader probably wants to call attention to the mistakes of the past and warns not to make the same mistakes again. He calls America not to act just in its own interests because it is cheaper and more profitable.

Though it is beyond any question that there are not just negative aspects emanating from America. Hiring workers in the Middle East is not just profitable for America but also for the inhabitants. The people are given a chance to earn money and thus new perspectives of how to live their lives.

Besides, we all do profit from the expansion and the development in the USA. Just think about Microsoft, credit cards, Coca Cola, McDonald’s and fast food in general. These things are common standards in plenty of countries.

On top of that, America has always tried to help countries that are politically threatened, in an economical crisis or general in need. Of course America has all too often ulterior motives supporting those but nonetheless it means help for poor countries. Not long since America sent several thousand soldiers to Haiti due to the fatal earthquake to support the inhabitants rescuing entombed victims and providing assistance with reconstruction and development at the insular state.

Weighing the pros and cons, I come to the conclusion that comparing the USA with the British Empire is inappropriate. Whereas the empire was characterized by oppression and tyranny, the USA however is “the land of the free“ and has always welcomed every kind of person. Of course America has made mistakes and needs to make changes but nevertheless it is very open-minded and a country where “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness“ prevail.

► **Comment on the quote and on the cartoon****Tipp**

Deine Aufgabe hier ist es, einerseits deine eigene Meinung ausführlich zu erläutern ("comment on") und andererseits den Cartoon zu interpretieren und anschließend das Zitat auf die Kernaussagen des Cartoons zu beziehen.

**Beachte:** Diese Lösung ist sehr ausführlich, da wir sehr viele Argumente für dich dargestellt haben. In der Prüfung musst du nicht so detailliert vorgehen.

America has always been called "the land of the free" - a land of boundless opportunities which has built the fundament for immigrants from all over the world.

Just like this quote, the cartoon by M. Wuerkor calls into question to what extend America really is a free land.

In the center of the cartoon, there is a confused-looking man representing the American Joe Public. In his right hand he is holding the American flag. He is wearing a white shirt with the letters "UNITED WE STAND" on it, a bald head and just one shoe. The pockets of his pants are turned outward. Around him, there are six official guardians of the law who investigate him and his personal belongings.

On the left-hand side of the cartoon, you can see an officer with "FBI" on his jacket, who is carrying two boxes with the labels "BANK RECORDS" and "LETTERS". Next to him, there is a man smoking a pipe. He is looking like a chief officer who is overseeing the others.

In the foreground, you can see an inspector, who is examining the man's purse. He is wearing a trench coat, a hat and dark sunglasses which make him look like a typical detective. On the right-hand side, there is another man, who is dressed equally. He is bearing away a computer. Between him and the American man, there are two more officers. The one in the front is wearing a hat with "CIA" on it. He is analysing the man's shoe with a brush. The police officer behind him is inspecting the American with a magnifying glass.

The focus of attention is illustrated through a speech bubble including the words "FEELING SAFER YET?" which are coming from the chief officer.

The author puts this question to the readers of the cartoon and encourages them to think about America as a country that intends to be in control of everything. The American Joe Public holding the American flag is an example of the patriotic American people representing the American country as a unified nation with an ideal image - an image America wants to convey to the rest of the world.

That the officers and inspectors are all illustrated anonymously but anyway related to their agencies underlines the multiplicity of security organisations. These organisations are supposed to demonstrate the enormous control of the American state in reference to security procedures becoming obvious through the thorough inspection of the American. There are several surveillance agencies in the US whose job is to protect the American people and the country.

The presentation of the officers bringing away the computer and the boxes with personal data criticises the exaggeration of this surveillance - especially the one of the NSA. In 2013, it was uncovered that the organisation went way too far. They read emails of millions of people without permission. In reference to the quote, the question arises to what extend America still is a land of the free.

This motto was induced early from the ideals of the American Dream and from the Declaration of Independence. Here, the inalienable rights every American citizen has, fundamental



principles of American democracy, equality and liberty including individual, religious, political and economic freedom are formulated.

But how can Americans nowadays feel free when everything they put online is read by the surveillance authority that “keeps them safe”? Of course it means protection and prevention of attacks and offences but don't the people give away their rights of liberty and freedom while they are supervised and controlled all the time?

And on top of that, how can just twelve of fifty states allow same-sex marriages when the constitution affords that all people can live according to their abilities?

To put it together, America has been a country where people can feel free and safe but surveillance everywhere and all the time seems to overrun the country now. The fear of terrorists and attacks has become so high that living free in the former meaning isn't possible anymore. I might be wrong but America should slow down and start to tie in with its original principles.