June 6, 2005

06102005

DCN: 2351

Gen. Lloyd W. Newton.

RECEIVED

Sir;

I believe Secretary Rumsfeld made a serious error in selecting Cannon AFB for closure.

It would be very difficult to find an air base freer of incursion, with better flying weather, plenty of room for expansion and an adjacent munitions range. To this add the proposed super sonic airspace expansion and a city/base relationship that is exemplary and Cannon is exceptional.

The F-16 is being phased out it's true but the base can easily convert to the F-22 or F-35. The infrastructure is in place. Additionally where will units being pulled from Europe and Asiago?

The economic impact on the surrounding New Mexico, West Texas area will be devastating. New businesses that have

come here in the past few years and long established older firms will fold completely or suffer severe cutbacks. The local hospital has expanded greatly and increased the number of physicians and services available. This is due in a large part to cutbacks in services at the base hospital.

There are many retired service members in the area who rely on the base exchange and commissary for a large part of their shopping. These younger than my wife and I also use the medical facilities available.

Please step back and reassess the criteria used in selecting Cannon and I feel sure you will see that a grave error has been made. This facility offers much too much to be summarily done away with.

Respectfully,
Walter F. McDonough
SMSgt, USAF (Retired)