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DCN: 715

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

Chairman

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi

Delivered

RECEIVED
5/25/05
KTJ

Commissioners - Base Realignment and Closure Commission
Governor Bill Richardson, FAX
Senator Pete Domenici, FAX
Senator Jeff Bingaman, Email
Representative Tom Udall, FAX
Representative Steve Pearce, FAX
Representative Heather Wilson, FAX
Publisher & Editor – Clovis News Journal, Email
Major General Hansen Scott, USAF Retired, Email

We are writing this letter to say that we want Cannon Air Force Base to stay open and **NOT** remain on the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's (BRAC) list of Bases to be closed.

Currently, Ken is the Chief Financial Officer and Director for ACCESS ANYTIME BANCORP, INC. of Albuquerque, New Mexico, which is the holding company for ACCESSBANK (formerly FIRSTBANK) (Bank) of Clovis, New Mexico for whom he currently serves as an Executive Vice President and Director. From October 1991 through January 2003 he served as the President, Chief Executive Officer and Director of the Bank and from 1996 through 2002 he served as the President and Director of the Bank's holding company. Prior to the Bank and the holding company he served as a Loan Officer and Compliance Officer for First National Bank of Clovis and the Western Bank of Clovis. When we came to Clovis Ken was a branch manager with Associates Financial Services of New Mexico.

In 1966 Ken came to Cannon Air Force Base TDY with the New Mexico Air National Guard as an E-4. When he got out of the Air Force in 1969 we came back to Clovis because of how he was treated by the people of Clovis and Portales.

Ken has been very active in the Air Force Association (AFA) at the local and state levels. Diana and our son Mitch have been AFA members since the mid 70s. Locally Ken has served as President of the Llano Estacado Chapter for seven terms. Currently, he is the Chapter's Treasurer and has served in that position three terms. He has been the Treasurer for the Air Force Association of New Mexico for the past twenty-three years. In the past he served as the President for three years. In 1990, Ken was awarded the Air Force Association's Llano Estacado Chapters "D.L Ingram – The Spirit of Cannon Award", which is awarded by the chapter to the person the AFA chapter leadership believes exemplifies the relationship between the local communities and Cannon Air Force Base. Ken is proud to say that he is a member of the Clovis/Curry County Chamber of Commerce and the Committee of Fifty. He served two years as the Treasurer of the Chamber of Commerce and was Chairman of the Chamber's Committee of Fifty. Also, Ken has been the Honorary Commander for Cannon's Command Chief Master Sergeant since 1992.

Diana is a French and Spanish teacher at Eastern New Mexico University in Portales, New Mexico and the Clovis Community College. She retired from the Clovis School System after 27 years and 3 years in the Texico School System. In the past she has taught both dependents and soldiers from Cannon. She has had several students from "Peace Garvin II" of the Singapore Air Force.

Our son Mitch is now employed as a computer lead analyst and lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico. However, Mitch has, in the past, represented Ken when he has been unable to attend some Air Force Association functions.

The reason we have stated our employment and volunteer work above is so that you can see that Ken has some expertise with the military, and as a civilian he knows what decisions you have to act upon.

The Ronald Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005, Public Law 108-375, which amended the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990, Public Law 101-510 indicated the current Selection Criteria to be used by the current Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC).

When applying Public Law 108-375 **Military Value** (which includes the first four criteria listed below) was to be the priority consideration to be used by the Department of Defense and the commission.

“1. The current and future mission capabilities and the impact on operational readiness of the total force of the Department of Defense, including the impact on joint warfighting, training, and readiness.”

The current and future mission capabilities of the Department of Defense are not known to these letter writers, so we will not attempt to answer this criteria. The only thing we know for sure is that the Air Force has published the fact that they will downsize their F-16 fleet. Reading between the lines, it would appear the Air Force wants the new F-22 at any cost. During the deployment of Cannon's aircrews into the Armed Expeditionary Forces (AEF) these aircrews have performed at levels that have exceeded that of other wings or units. The impact on joint warfighting, training, and readiness is difficult to measure because of the May 10, 2005 order from the Gen. John Jumper, the Air Force chief of staff, to cut its 2005 operations and maintenance spending. This means that Cannon's aircrews must cancel "noncritical" travel, supplies and equipment as well as "decrease flying hours that don't directly support the operations in Iraq and Afghanistan". Gen. Jumper's letter goes on to state that squadrons must "reduce logistics support and invasive procedures 'to minimum levels,' a move reminiscent of the 1990s drawdown when aircraft availability rates suffered from a lack of repairs". Since the majority of the squadrons at Cannon are training units, all of them will be adversely affected by Gen. Jumper's order.

According to the Clovis/Curry County's website, "The sun shines an average of 335 days annually in Clovis and Curry County". In examining the Air Force's infrastructure we do not need to tell you that this is terrific and offers the Air Force a great deal of great flying weather. Speaking of flying, we should point out that the Melrose Bombing Range (Range) is located approximately 40 miles to the West of Cannon Air Force Base, which can be reached in a very short time. The time it takes for Air Force jets to reach the Bombing Range is something that saves a tremendous amount of fuel and thus cost, which is a very efficient and effective use of Air Force resources and thus savings to the United States Taxpayer. It is my understanding that in September 2005 the New Mexico Training Range Initiative (NMTRI) will expand several Military Operating Areas (MOAs) and allow our flying crews to train as they fight, that is super sonic. The fact that the Range is so close to Cannon also improves the operational efficiency of the Air Force's jets.

- “2. The availability and condition of land, facilities, and associated airspace (including training areas suitable for maneuver by ground, naval, or air forces throughout a diversity of climate and terrain areas and staging areas for the use of the Armed Forces in homeland defense missions) at both existing and potential receiving locations.”**

Here again, it is difficult for the writers of this letter to know exactly the availability and the condition of Cannon's land, and facilities, and we do not know which locations are being considered as potential receiving locations.

From our knowledge, there is ample land and there are facilities of a very high quality available to support both the plus up of aircraft and troops. It is our belief that Cannon could handle at least 50 more airplanes and/or 2,500 additional troops.

- “3. The ability to accommodate contingency, mobilization, surge, and future total force requirements at both existing and potential receiving locations to support operations and training.”**

The second paragraph in criteria two could apply to criteria three as well.

In addition, we do not believe that the DOD took into account the changes that will be taking place in the New Mexico Training Range Initiative (NMTRI) very soon. Because of the NMTRI our pilots will have available to them Super Sonic airspace in which to train and this is very important fact that should not be lost in this evaluation of Cannon Air Force Base and its associated ranges. We are not in favor of letting the DOD separate the two entities ie: the Air Base and the Range.

- “4. The cost of operations and the manpower implications.”**

We have been told that Cannon Air Force Base has one of the cheapest costs of operation with fewer airman being needed.

Other Considerations

Since the following four criteria were not DOD's prime focus, we will only comment that without Cannon's payroll and manpower the twelve communities around here that depend on Cannon's manpower and income will suffer a lot. Without Cannon's manpower, groups such as the Boy Scouts of America, the Girl Scouts of America, all Little Leagues, Habitat for Humanity, etc. will be hurting for volunteers to help with their programs. We would imagine that some of these programs will even become nonexistent.

- “5. The extent and timing of potential costs and savings, including the number of years, beginning with the date of completion of the closure or realignment, for the savings to exceed the costs.”**
- “6. The economic impact on existing communities in the vicinity of military installations.”**
- “7. The ability of the infrastructure of both the existing and potential receiving communities to support forces, missions, and personnel.”**

“8. The environmental impact, ~~and~~ the impact of costs related to potential environmental restoration, waste management, and environmental compliance activities.”

We do not think that the DOD has examined the Air Force’s infrastructure and reorganized it to make the most efficient and effective use of all its resources; improve operational efficiency; save taxpayer dollars; advance transformation and enhance the combat effectiveness of our military forces.

If the above Range and the NMTRI are not enough to show the needed **Military Value** we would offer the fact that the following awards have been won by the Troops at CAFB over the past two and one half years, which means that the men and women at Cannon have a very high work ethic:

AIR COMBAT COMMAND AWARDS (ACC):

1. 27th Fighter Wing - Safety Office – 2003 ACC Flight Safety Special Achievement Award
2. 27th Fighter Wing - Detachment 224 AFOSI – 2003 ACC Small Office of Special Investigations Detachment of the Year
3. 27th Fighter Wing - Services Squadron –2003 Winner and 2004 Finalist ACC for Eubank Award
4. Cannon Air Force Base – 2003 ACC Winner and 2004 Runner-up for the ACC Self Help Program
5. 27th Fighter Wing – Maintenance Operations Squadron – 2003 ACC Finalist for Maintenance Training Flight of the Year
6. 27th Fighter Wing – Medical Operations Squadron - 2003 ACC Outstanding Medical Logistics Activity Team Award – Category 4
7. 27th Fighter Wing – Operations Support Squadron – Airfield Operations Flight of the Year
8. 27th Fighter Wing – Services Squadron – 2004 Whispering Winds Golf Course in ACC
9. 27th Fighter Wing – Services Squadron – 2004 ACC Services Fitness and Sports Award
10. 27th Fighter Wing – Aeromedical Dental Squadron – 2004 ADOS ACC Quarterly Safety Award
11. 27th Fighter Wing – Maintenance Group – 2004 Clements McMullen Daedalian Weapons System Maintenance Trophy
12. 27th Fighter Wing – 2004 ACC Safety Special Achievement Award
13. 27th Fighter Wing – Aeromedical Dental Squadron – 2004 ACC Unit Safety Award of Distinction
14. 27th Fighter Wing – Mission Support Squadron – 2004 Alutiiq Team of the Year
15. 27th Fighter Wing – Mission Support Squadron – 2004 Nathan Altschuler Award for Excellence in Education Program
16. 27th Fighter Wing – 2004 ACC Flight Safety Achievement Award
17. 27th Fighter Wing – 2004 ACC Flight Safety Award
18. 27th Fighter Wing – 2004 ACC Explosives Safety Award
19. 27th Fighter Wing – 2004 ACC Medical Safety Achievement Award
20. 27th Fighter Wing – 2004 ACC Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (AFOUA)
21. 27th Fighter Wing – 2004 ACC Colombian Trophy
22. 27th Fighter Wing – 2005 CINC Installation Excellence Award

AIR FORCE AWARDS:

23. 27th Fighter Wing – Civil Engineering Squadron – 2003 Society of American Military

- Engineers Major General Robert E. Curran DCN 715
24. 27th Fighter Wing – Safety Office – 2003 Colombian Trophy
 25. 27th Fighter Wing – Maintenance Group – 2004 Clements McMullen Daedalian Weapons System Maintenance Trophy

OTHER AWARDS:

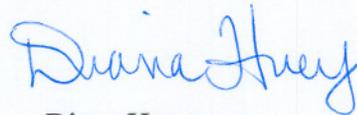
26. 27th Fighter Wing – Maintenance Group - 2004 Secretary of Defense Maintenance Award
27. CAFB Enlisted Spouses Club – 2004 Fisher House Foundation, “Newman’s Own” Award
28. 27th Fighter Wing – 524th Fighter Squadron – 2003 David C. Schilling Award
29. 27th Fighter Wing – 2004 Winner of “Green Zia” Environmental Excellence Award – (7th Consecutive Year and Tree City 4th Consecutive Year)

Again we are writing this letter to say that we want Cannon Air Force Base to stay open and **NOT** remain on the Base Realignment and Closure Commission’s (BRAC) list of Bases to be closed. Also, we think that the flying time available, the flight time to the range and the past awards given to the men and women a Cannon need to be considered as **Military Value**.

Sincerely,



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