

## Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

# EARLY



# BIRD

May 26, 2005

### Department of Defense Releases

N/A

### National News Articles

House Nixes Bid To Delay BRAC Round

Threat to Base Sends Senator on Maneuvers

Senate approves \$10 million for Groton sub base

Closure board may skip state

### Local News Articles

Local officials to lobby for bases (Atlanta, GA)

Keeping an Eye on the World:  
National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency  
(Washington DC)

All bets are off (Grand Forks, ND)

Fort Monroe plan pitched (Hampton Roads, VA)

State hires lobbying, consulting firms  
(Clovis, NM)

BRAC Commissioners Tour Peninsula  
Bases, But Not Oceana (Norfolk, VA)

BRAC chairman will visit Dahlgren today  
(Fredricksburg, VA)

Pentagon documents don't explain why  
Ellsworth is targeted for closure (SD)

County assesses Belvoir's impact (Fairfax, VA)

### Opinions/Editorials

Don't waste money on BRAC issue; we  
must do what's right for the U.S.  
(Anchorage, AK)

### Additional Notes

N/A

### Department of Defense Releases

N/A

### National News Articles

#### **House Nixes Bid To Delay BRAC Round**

Congress Daily

Megan Scully

May 26, 2005

An attempt to delay the latest round of proposed defense base closings and realignments was defeated by the House on a 317-111 vote Wednesday, before it passed its proposed FY06 defense authorization measure on a 390-39 vote.

During a day of amendments, the House also approved a last-minute compromise between House Armed Services Chairman Hunter and opponents, including Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, to require Congress be notified before any military positions closed to women be changed.

And the House again, by a 233-194 vote, refused to permit overseas military hospitals to perform abortions.

Rep. Jeb Bradley, R-N.H., offered the amendment to delay the base-closing round until after the Pentagon completes several top-level reviews, including the sweeping Quadrennial Defense Review, and after a substantial number of troops return from Iraq.

It was likely the last chance to delay the BRAC round, which might result in the closure of 33 major defense installations and the realignment of hundreds more.

"Let's be extremely careful before closing 33 major bases and hundreds of smaller facilities [not to] undermine the security of our nation," Bradley said. Delaying the BRAC round ensures that the government exercises the "necessary care and necessary restraint," he added.

Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee Chairman Joel Hefley, R-Colo., supported a two-year delay in BRAC last year, but said "with reluctance" he could not support the provision this year, largely because Rumsfeld's recommended list of closures has been released and the independent base-closing commission has started its work.

Hunter agreed, saying, "The horse is out of the stable at this point, and we have to move ahead with the process."

House GOP leaders like Majority Leader DeLay also weighed in. "I do not favor that amendment," DeLay told reporters Wednesday. "The BRAC process is just starting and there is absolutely no reason to delay the process. It's a process I have always supported."

DeLay opposed the amendment even though he is working against the Pentagon's proposal to retire 15 F-16 fighters used by the 147th National Guard unit at Ellington Field in his Texas district. "We are going to make our case," he said.

Meanwhile, the House approved an amendment that would prevent the Defense Department from waiving 50 percent U.S.-content requirements mandated by the Buy American Act.

The Pentagon has done that through memorandums of understanding with other countries permitting the department to substitute foreign components for those produced domestically.

The amendment, introduced by Small Business Chairman Manzullo, is another attempt by the House to wield the defense authorization process to strengthen "Buy American" regulations. Similar provisions have been turned down by the Senate and removed from the bill in conference committee.

The compromise on the role of women in combat was approved 428-1 as part of a broad manager's amendment offered by Hunter Wednesday.

The amendment, which underwent three major revisions in the last few weeks, requires the Pentagon to give Congress 60 legislative days' notice before making any changes in women's combat roles. Under current law, the Pentagon must notify Congress 30 legislative days before opening any of the 191 military positions closed to women.

Several lawmakers who publicly opposed the first two versions ultimately voted for the manager's amendment, including Rep. Heather Wilson, R-N.M., Armed Services ranking member Ike Skelton, D-Mo., Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee ranking member Vic Snyder, D-Ark., and Rep. Ellen Tauscher, D-Calif. Rumsfeld also voiced his support to Hunter.

### **Threat to Base Sends Senator on Maneuvers**

New York Times  
Sheryl Gay Stolberg  
May 26, 2005

WASHINGTON, May 25 - Senator John Thune has long been a darling of the White House, handpicked by President Bush as a rising Republican star. But just months after winning election by telling voters that his ties to Mr. Bush would help save their military base, Mr. Thune is facing a new reality.

At home in South Dakota, he is feeling the heat from his constituents, who are furious over the Pentagon's plans to close Ellsworth Air Force Base, the state's second-largest employer. But in the Senate there are only so many options available to a freshman - even if that freshman is Mr. Thune, who became a Republican celebrity by unseating the Democratic leader, Tom Daschle, last November.

One of those options is sending subtle messages to the White House that the base-closing recommendations are more important than party loyalty, which is exactly what Mr. Thune is doing.

"I've said all along that I'm going to play whatever cards I have to get the best possible outcome I can for my base," Mr. Thune said on Wednesday. In an interview with a South Dakota newspaper, *The Rapid City Journal*, he put it more succinctly: "What goes around, comes around."

Right now, Mr. Thune's cards include hedging on a matter of utmost importance to Mr. Bush, the vote on the nomination of John R. Bolton as ambassador to the United Nations, which could come as early as Thursday. He has also not taken a public position on the Central American Free Trade Agreement, which Congress has yet to vote on, and on Wednesday he implied that he might waver on Mr. Bush's judicial candidates, although he did vote to confirm Justice Priscilla R. Owen to the appellate bench.

"I'm undecided on Bolton," Mr. Thune said, "and I guess that's where I would leave it."

His reasons? "My reasons are my reasons," he said.

But if Mr. Thune was being cagey, his point was obvious, coming as it did in the context of a lengthy interview about the Ellsworth base and how he is trying to save it. And at least one Republican aide said Wednesday that Mr. Thune had told a fellow senator he was contemplating voting against Mr. Bolton to send a message to the White House about the base.

It is not as if he believes that Mr. Bush picked the wrong man for the job. Though he has never said outright that he would vote for Mr. Bolton, Mr. Thune has made supportive comments. Last month, on the MSNBC program "Hardball," he said of Mr. Bolton: "He is a guy who shakes things up. And I think the U.N. needs that."

Just what President Bush can do for Mr. Thune is unclear. As Mr. Thune said, "Their general posture has been, throughout this entire process, that these are military decisions based on military value." But people "in the hinterlands," he said, do not really believe that.

"There are a lot of folks out there," he said, "who, I think, perceive this process to be like most processes in Washington, to have a political component to it."

Mr. Thune's dilemma underscores the excruciating political reality that senators have faced during the base closing process. On Wednesday, he and Senator Olympia J. Snowe, a Republican of Maine who is fighting three proposed base closings in her state, introduced legislation that would force the Pentagon to release the data behind the recommended closings, which the Base Realignment and Closure Commission has said it intends to do.

On Thursday, Mr. Thune and several Senate Democrats, including Joseph I. Lieberman of Connecticut and Jon Corzine of New Jersey, will hold a news conference on another bill, introduced last week, to delay the base closings, though such bills have had little effect in the past. And he plans to introduce a third bill, this one to allow uniformed officers to testify at hearings on base closings.

Back in South Dakota, Mr. Thune's Democratic foes are busy saying "I told you so," and last year's campaign has come alive again in the press.

During the race, Mr. Daschle argued that, as minority leader of the Senate, he would have a seat on the base closing commission and could help spare Ellsworth, as he did 10 years ago when Bill Clinton was president. Mr. Thune countered that as a Republican, he would have the president's ear.

"John Thune said he had the ear of the president," Steve Hildebrand, Mr. Daschle's campaign manager, said Wednesday. "People are saying that, obviously, it was a deaf ear."

Mr. Thune also played up his Republican ties when he campaigned with Senator Bill Frist, the Republican leader. On a blustery day last May, the two men stood in a barren parking lot outside the Ellsworth base, against the backdrop of some retired jets. Dr. Frist told reporters that he could see a broader mission for Ellsworth and would work to protect the base from closing.

"As majority leader, I have come here to South Dakota to discuss this with John Thune," Dr. Frist said, adding, "I will share it in my discussions with the president of the United States."

Mr. Daschle has been diplomatic about the Ellsworth closing, saying only that he would work if he could to reverse it. But on the day the decision was announced, Mr. Hildebrand, still stinging, sent reporters an e-mail message. Under the title "what power in Washington really means," he wrote that Tennessee, the home state of Dr. Frist, would gain 1,088 jobs under the recommendations, while Nevada, the home state of the Senate Democratic leader, Harry Reid, would gain 1,059 jobs.

But Mr. Hildebrand concluded, "South Dakota, home of presidential ear-whisperer John Thune, loses 3,797 jobs and has a major closure in Ellsworth Air Force Base."

On Wednesday, Mr. Thune refused to detail what kind of whispering he was doing now with the White House.

"Let's just say there are ongoing discussions," he said. "I'm not going to characterize anything that is going on. The judges, the Bolton nomination, these are serious issues. I'm very serious about doing the right thing. The base situation in my state is also a serious matter for me, and I'm going to make sure I'm doing the right thing there."

### **Senate approves \$10 million for Groton sub base**

The Associated Press  
Susan Haigh  
May 25, 2005

HARTFORD, Conn. --State lawmakers on Wednesday sent Gov. M. Jodi Rell a bill that would provide \$10 million for improvements to the Navy submarine base in Groton as part of an effort to get the facility off the Pentagon's base closure list.

The fast-tracked legislation passed both the Senate and House of Representatives unanimously Wednesday. Legislators said they wanted to send a strong message to Washington that Connecticut is willing to fight for the submarine base.

Rell said she is willing to consider signing the bill, but questioned whether it makes sense to offer up \$10 million to the U.S. Navy at this point in the base closure process.

"If it passes, we'll go forward. I'm not sure it's timely," said Rell, who wants to first examine the Pentagon's rationale for placing the submarine base on the closure list.

The \$10 million, from state manufacturing bonds, would be used for infrastructure improvements at the base to enhance its military value, legislators said. The improvements could include dredging the Thames River to make it deep enough for Trident submarines to use the base.

"We must make sure the folks in Washington and the base closure commission understand the military value of having submarines, 18 fast attack submarines right here in Groton," said Sen. Catherine Cook, R-Mystic. "They won the Cold War and their new missions are winning the war on terrorism."

Members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission are slated to be in Connecticut on June 1 to take a look at the base.

The BRAC will hold a public hearing in Boston on July 6. Connecticut officials will have the opportunity to present two hours worth of arguments that it makes strategic and military sense to take the base off the list.

The BRAC must present its final base closure recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8.

Besides the \$10 million, legislators are considering setting aside another \$40 million in general obligation bonds to help both the submarine base and the neighboring Electric Boat shipyard. That money, however, still needs to be included as part of the new two-year state budget being negotiated.

This year's legislative session ends on June 8.

One senator after the other spoke Wednesday about the economic ripple effect the submarine base closure would have on Connecticut. Senate President Pro Tem Donald E. Williams, D-Brooklyn, said 8,500 direct jobs and 30,000 jobs across the state are at risk.

Williams said 526 manufacturing companies have been identified as vendors for the base.

"This is an issue that touches every corner of the state of Connecticut. The economic impact will be devastating for the state," Williams said. "But the most important issue for the Department of Defense is the strategic military value of the base."

Williams said the \$10 million would not be released if the submarine facility remains on the closure list.

One lawmaker voiced concern about the bill.

"I do have some reservations about the state of Connecticut giving money to the federal government when it seems that the federal government is cutting back on the state of Connecticut on so many other programs," said Rep. Reginald Beamon, D-Waterbury. Beamon voted for the bill, saying such an offer should be made in extraordinary circumstances.

Rep. Lenny Winkler, R-Groton, said the legislature offered a large sum of money in 1993 to dredge the Thames River for the fast attack submarines. The federal government ultimately paid for the project and the base was removed from the closure list.

"We fought back in 1993," Winkler said. "This will give the governor some clout, hopefully, to help with the fight to say that the Connecticut legislature is prepared to offer its services in any way to help keep the submarine base in Groton, Conn."

### **Closure board may skip state**

The Associated Press  
Ken Thomas  
May 26, 2005

WASHINGTON -- Two military installations slated for closing in Michigan may not receive a visit from members of the nation's base closing commission or get the chance to make a case before the panel, Michigan officials said Wednesday.

Members of Michigan's congressional delegation circulated a draft letter to send to Anthony Principi, the chairman of the nine-member panel, expressing concern that base closing commissioners may not visit the state. Installations in Battle Creek and Macomb County, near Detroit, have been selected to be closed.

The draft, which was under revision Wednesday, said members of the delegation were told Michigan "may not be visited by any of the BRAC Commissioners in the coming months nor will it be part of any of the upcoming regional hearings" that would allow community groups and political leaders to call for the bases to remain open.

"This concerns all of us a great deal," members of the delegation said in the draft letter, which was obtained by the Associated Press. The letter was expected to be sent to Principi later in the week.

The W.K. Kellogg Airport Air Guard Station in Battle Creek and the U.S. Army Garrison at Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Harrison Township were on a list of bases to be closed or realigned.

The closing of the Battle Creek base would mean the loss of 274 jobs and the shuttering of the garrison at Selfridge would result in 300 fewer jobs. Overall, Michigan is expected to gain 125 jobs under the plan because of additions at Selfridge and the Detroit Arsenal.

The nine-member Base Realignment and Closure panel, or BRAC, has said it would visit all bases slated for closure or major realignment under the plan announced May 13 by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. If approved, the plan would mean the closure of 33 major bases and downsizing 29 others, saving an estimated \$48 billion over 20 years.

BRAC officials have said groups of two or three commissioners will visit each base, preceded by an analyst who will compile detailed information on the site, its staffing and military function.

But Robert McCreary, a spokesman for the commission, said Wednesday the panel was trying to establish criteria on which bases would be visited, but it "doesn't mean that Michigan is not going to receive a visit."

John Burchette, director of Gov. Jennifer Granholm's Washington office, said BRAC

commission staff told him Wednesday the state would be ineligible to make a presentation at a regional meeting in Buffalo or St. Louis because the facilities had not lost a total of 300 civilian jobs or at least 400 jobs overall at the installations.

### Local News Articles

#### **Local officials to lobby for bases**

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution (Atlanta, GA)  
Add Seymour Jr.  
May 26, 2005

Local officials are preparing to lobby members of the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission, who are expected in Atlanta next month.

Commission members will be in town June 30 to hear the pitch to keep Fort Gillem open.

"Everyone's pretty much got one shot at it," said Forest Park Mayor Chuck Hall. "After that, it's up to the commission."

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld recommends that Fort Gillem in northeastern Clayton County, Fort McPherson in East Point, the Naval Air Station in Cobb County and the Naval Supply Corps School in Athens be closed. They are among the 33 major military facilities nationwide that may be shut down as part of the 2005 BRAC process.

Defense officials are hoping to streamline the number of military bases around the country as they reorganize the nation's military. Four other BRAC rounds --- 1998, 1995, 1993 and 1991 --- closed 97 bases.

This year's BRAC round would close Fort Gillem, with six Army groups now at the base moving to other bases around the Southeast. The Georgia Army National Guard would get a new home at the old base. A few existing active Army units would remain, as would a new, state-of-the-art, forensic crime investigation laboratory that will serve the entire Defense Department.

Georgia's congressional delegation has already begun lobbying commission members, who will decide over the next three months whether there will be any changes in the recommended list.

Clayton County and other affected communities will rally to keep their local bases open. Army officials estimate that 1,824 jobs --- 737 of those indirectly related to Fort Gillem --- would be lost, but closing the base would save the Defense Department \$421.5 million over the next 20 years.

"There's a \$671 million economic impact that's generated with Fort Gillem," said U.S. Rep. David Scott (D-Ga.). "That's what it means to us, so we will be prepared to tell the story."

Hall estimated a base on the BRAC list has only a 15 percent chance of getting off.

Lobbying efforts in the past have saved one Georgia base --- Moody Air Force in Valdosta when it was initially on BRAC's list in 1991.

### **Keeping an Eye on the World; National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, Proposed for Move To Fort Belvoir, Does Vital Work With Little Fanfare**

The Washington Post (Washington DC)  
Peter Whoriskey  
May 26, 2005

The proposed nationwide realignment of military personnel would add yet another significant U.S. intelligence agency to Fairfax County's roster, bringing the headquarters of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency and 8,000 employees and contractors to Fort Belvoir.

The Central Intelligence Agency, based in Langley, and the National Reconnaissance Office, headquartered in Chantilly, already call the county home.

"Fairfax County has always been the defense and security side of the river," said William D. Lecos, president of the county Chamber of Commerce, attributing its character to the

Pentagon's placement in neighboring Arlington County during World War II. "This reinforces the notion that Fairfax County is a great location for these sort of intelligence-defense-homeland security agencies and the contractors."

The defense industry is a pillar of Northern Virginia's economy, but Lecos and others said it was too early to predict what the impact of having the NGA headquarters in southeast Fairfax might be. Under the proposal, part of a broad reorganization of the nation's military installations announced by the Pentagon earlier this month, the NGA would move its headquarters in Bethesda and offices at the Washington Navy Yard and in Reston, Chantilly (Westfields) and Newington to Fort Belvoir. Such a huge presence in the county would put a spotlight on an agency that is little known.

The NGA, which has a worldwide workforce of about 15,000, creates intelligence maps that have been central to the military's success, officials said.

"When you see a Tomahawk missile fly through a window, we're the ones who've provided the coordinates," said David Burpee, an NGA spokesman. "We provide the ability to put each bomb on target."

In other words, as some have said, the unofficial NGA motto is: "We map 'em, you zap 'em."

The agency's maps and intelligence -- gathered by satellites and airplanes -- have, however, been put to a broad array of purposes: They have helped Patriot missile units navigate around patches of soft or wet sand during the Iraq war; assisted firefighters in the Aspen, Colo., area with forest fires; settled a border dispute in the Andes; identified possible sniper locations during a parade before the 2003 Super Bowl in San Diego; and secured the route for the funeral procession for former president Ronald Reagan in California last year.

The agency processes three terabytes of data daily. A terabyte is about a trillion bytes of computer data capacity.

"If it's a man-made or natural feature on the face of the earth that has national security implications, we watch it," Burpee said.

Combined with other shifts in military personnel, the workforce at Fort Belvoir is expected to rise from about 22,000 to about 40,000, and Fort Belvoir officials said they have about 90 days to complete site surveys and identify construction locations. The post already is the county's largest employer, with about 120 tenant commands that provide logistical and administrative support to the Army.

Local elected leaders, meanwhile, are scrambling to figure out how the area's already choked roads, as well as schools and housing, might accommodate the influx, which is expected to take place over six years if the proposal is approved by Congress and President Bush. On Monday, Board of Supervisors Chairman Gerald E. Connolly (D) called for an urgent meeting of the board's Fort Belvoir Committee and for the county to name a person to act as the point of contact between Fairfax and the Army.

Richard Arndt, a Fort Belvoir spokesman, said, "The bright spot that helps us along is that we have been working on an installation master plan. That master plan was almost finished [before the Pentagon announcement], and it called for growth."

NGA officials said they will need about 2.2 million square feet of office space, over about 150 acres, to accommodate their operations. It is unknown whether their site would be at Fort Belvoir itself or at the nearby former Engineer Proving Ground, where some officials believe some of the Fort Belvoir spillover will be located.

"It would be logical to go to the Engineer Proving Ground," said U.S. Rep. James P. Moran Jr. (D).

The NGA headquarters would relocate from a residential neighborhood in Bethesda, where the fenced brick facility on Sangamore Road, guarded by armed sentries, seems somewhat out

of place. That facility would be closed, officials said.

It is not yet clear how many of the NGA employees from Bethesda, the Navy Yard, Chantilly and Newington would have to move closer to Fort Belvoir. NGA staff members in the region commute from as far away as Gettysburg, Pa., West Virginia and the Richmond area. A Zip code analysis of employees showed that the center point of their addresses -- a kind of average -- is in Tysons Corner.

One of the key reasons for the moves, defense officials said, is security. Many elected leaders have said those concerns are misplaced -- and would cause unnecessary dislocations in Arlington and elsewhere -- but NGA officials said the safety fears are legitimate.

"Every one of our facilities is a force protection challenge because it's right next to a road or railroad," Burpee said. "A big truck or train of dynamite, and we've got problems. We don't control the roads. Anything could go on out there."

One aspect of intelligence reform efforts since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks has been an effort to get the various intelligence offices to work together better, and officials said that gathering the NGA facilities at Fort Belvoir would help achieve that.

The history of the NGA in fact shows how far-flung, in a bureaucratic sense, U.S. intelligence work has been. The agency, which was created in 1996 but traces its government mapping history as far back as the Lewis and Clark expedition, was formed from all or part of eight Department of Defense and intelligence agencies, including the Defense Mapping Agency, the Central Imagery Office, the National Photographic Interpretation Center and the Defense Dissemination Program Office. Portions of the National Reconnaissance Office, the Defense Airborne Reconnaissance Office and the Central Intelligence Agency also became part of the NGA.

The move also would place the agency slightly closer to one of its key partners, the National Reconnaissance Office in Chantilly. The office manages the satellites that gather data for the military and buys information from commercial satellite companies.

Of the relationship between the two agencies, Burpee said, "Once that signal hits the ground, we take care of the data."

### **All bets are off**

#### **With Ellsworth on the list, Thune, R-S.D., threatens no votes on Bush priorities.**

The Associated Press (Grand Forks, ND)  
Mary Clare Jalonick  
May 26, 2005

WASHINGTON - Since Republican John Thune defeated the Senate's top Democrat last November, he has been one of the most loyal Republicans to President Bush. He has traveled around the country to fundraise and championed the party's priorities on countless news networks.

But now that the Pentagon has targeted South Dakota's Ellsworth Air Force Base for closure, Thune is increasingly flirting with the opposition.

This week he threatened to vote against the nomination for John Bolton, Bush's embattled nominee to be United Nations ambassador. If he does vote against Bolton, he will be one of only a handful of Republicans to do so.

Thune also has declined to take a position on the Central American Free Trade Agreement, another Bush priority.

"Ellsworth will not go down without a fight," Thune said Wednesday. "I've made it clear that I am very disappointed with the Pentagon's decision."

Thune is also working to convince members of the Senate to co-sponsor a bill that would delay the entire base closing process.

Some congressional Democrats may be wary of partnering with Thune, the man who defeated Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle. Feelings still are bitter from that heated race, and national Democrats have sent out news releases attacking Thune for not being able to save Ellsworth.

The three members of the North Dakota delegation all Democrats have declined to co-sponsor the bill despite thousands of jobs that would be lost with the realignment of Grand Forks Air Force Base.

Other Democrats have joined the fight, though, including Democratic Sens. Tim Johnson of South Dakota, Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut, Max Baucus of Montana and Jon Corzine of New Jersey. All have threatened bases in their states.

If Ellsworth closes, about 3,800 military and civilian jobs will be lost in the Rapid City, S.D., area. The state has been fighting to keep it open since the most recent base closing about 10 years ago, and Thune made it a campaign issue last fall.

At the time, Daschle said he would be in a better position to save the base because he would be in line to appoint a member of the commission that reviews the list. Thune argued that his ties to President Bush could only help the state.

Thune has said he hopes his political clout will pay off as the base closing process moves forward. The commission is now reviewing the list, and will send it to the White House and Congress for approval this fall.

There is some evidence that his threats may be heard. Soon after Thune, Johnson and Maine Republican Olympia Snowe introduced a bill Wednesday to force the Pentagon to release more data on base closings, much of the information was released.

Bill Richardson, chairman of the political science department at University of South Dakota, says it's "time to collect" from the Bush administration.

"This is Thune's first real test," Richardson said. "If he pulls it off he will be the hero in South Dakota."

### **Fort Monroe plan pitched Hampton Mayor Floats His Proposal To Fight BRAC Closing**

The Daily Press (Hampton Roads, VA)

John M.R. Bull

May 26 2005

Hampton Mayor Ross A. Kearney II pitched a plan to expand Fort Monroe instead of closing it Wednesday to two visiting members of a federal panel reviewing the Pentagon's base closing list.

He described the two-hour breakfast meeting as "extensive."

"We were very well received," Kearney said. "I don't think they came here with any intent that their minds were made up, that they were just walking the dog."

Kearney proposed that Hampton spend \$13 million to construct new office buildings on the historic fort, and lease the one million square feet to the Department of Defense so that additional military-related operations could be transferred to the base.

He argued that the moat around the original fort on the base would make federal employees more secure than they would be if located elsewhere.

"I think we were given an open and fair shake," he said. But he got no promises on whether the base will be taken off the closing list.

"The mayor made a wonderful pitch," said William Leighty, chief of staff for Gov. Mark Warner.

The fort is home to 3,564 military and civilian personnel, many of whom would be transferred to Fort Eustis in Newport News under the base closing plan. Even with the transfer, Fort Eustis is slated to lose 2,100 jobs in the realignment.

According to projections, the base closing plan would drain \$560 million from the Peninsula's economy.

The Pentagon wants to consolidate military operations nationwide and shed unnecessary bases to streamline military response and save almost \$49 billion over the next 10 years.

The two members of the federal panel, known as the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, were on a fact-finding tour of Hampton Roads, touring area bases slated for closing or realignment.

Chairman Anthony Principi and retired Air Force Gen. Lloyd Newton toured three bases in South Hampton Roads on Tuesday - Naval Station Norfolk, Norfolk Naval Shipyard and Naval Medical Center Portsmouth.

Wednesday, Principi and Newton met with Fort Monroe and Fort Eustis base commanders and local public officials.

BRAC members will visit each of the 33 major bases slated for closing, and scores of smaller bases to be shut down, before this fall, when the panel will accept or modify the complicated base-closing plan.

The president and Congress will either accept or reject the panel's recommendations, but cannot change them. That is intended to reduce the role of politics in base closing decisions.

Kearney's pitch was "very beneficial," Principi said at a press conference after the Fort Monroe visit.

"I think we learned a lot," he said. "I can assure you we aren't a rubber stamp."

The prime consideration is Fort Monroe's military value at this point, but the cost of cleaning up buried ordnance must be carefully considered before deciding if it makes economic sense to close the base, Principi said.

"It's a beautiful base," he said. "It's rich in history. It's contributed a great deal to our national security over the years."

Experts say getting a base removed from the closing list is a long shot at this point. Only 15 percent of the bases slated for closing in the four previous base-closing rounds were saved.

To remove a base from the list, the federal panel must conclude the Pentagon "substantially deviated" from criteria established to evaluate the value and economic benefits of a military base, Principi noted.

"We're trying to be sure each one of these facilities ... gets an equitable opportunity" to make their pitch that closing would be a bad idea, Newton said. "We will make this a very transparent, very open decision."

Local and state officials were surprised to learn Wednesday that if Fort Monroe closes the Big Bethel Reservoir on the York County-Newport News border would also likely be unloaded.

They said they didn't realize the reservoir was officially part of the fort. The reservoir was built as a secure water supply for the fort, but has not been needed in the decades since the base was hooked up to Hampton's water system.

That the military owns the reservoir would seem to have no bearing on whether the base should be closed, but could have redevelopment potential if the military gives up ownership, Kearney said.

It is unclear whether the state, York County or Newport News would have the best claim to the reservoir.

### **State hires lobbying, consulting firms**

Clovis News Journal (Clovis, NM)  
Marlena Hartz  
May 26, 2005

SANTA FE — The state has hired a Washington, D.C., lobbying firm and an Albuquerque consulting company to help in the

effort to save Cannon Air Force Base from closing.

The base at Clovis is one of only two Air Force bases recommended by the Pentagon for closing nationwide under realignments announced earlier this month.

Gov. Bill Richardson announced Wednesday that Keystone International Inc. of Albuquerque had been hired to provide staff support and analysis.

The firm of Hyjek & Fix Inc. will lobby the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, which can change the Pentagon's proposals but must make its recommendations to the president by Sept. 8.

The firms were hired after a competitive bidding process.

The Clovis Committee of Fifty, which has supported Cannon for decades, hired international law firm DLA Piper to represent them in April.

According to Committee of Fifty member Chad Lydick, DLA Piper and the state-hired consultants will work together.

Hyjek & Fix Inc. will concentrate on the BRAC staff, Lydick said. DLA Piper primarily lobbies BRAC Commissioners.

"Every group has different contacts; Piper Rudnick has better access to the BRAC commission, Hyjek & Fix Inc. with the BRAC staff," Lydick said. "They will be helping the state analyze and put forth data for the BRAC staff. We're trying to make sure we have all the resources out there. But we're all one team."

New Mexico's congressional delegation is also putting pressure on the Defense Department, charging that the agency failed to release important data and as a result is compromising the work of the BRAC Commission.

In a letter sent Wednesday to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, the delegation said the

information that the department used to assess the value of the nation's military installations is essential for the commission to do its job.

The information was supposed to be released last week.

"All parties involved deserve adequate time to review how their bases were evaluated to prepare for regional hearings that will be held in just a few weeks and to develop informed challenges to the recommendations," the letter stated.

Sens. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., and Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., on Wednesday co-sponsored legislation that would require the Pentagon to release all documentation related to its BRAC list within seven days of the bill's enactment or the 2005 BRAC round would be canceled.

The lobbying firm hired by the state, Hyjek & Fix, is teaming with a Washington law and lobbying firm, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, on base closing issues, according to Scott.

The former director of administration of the 1995 base closure commission works for Hyjek & Fix.

Gary Van Valin, a retired Air Force colonel and Air Force Academy graduate, is president of Keystone. He unsuccessfully sought the Democratic nomination in the 1st Congressional District in 1998.

Part of the base closing commission will hold a hearing in Clovis on June 24.

President Bush must accept or reject the commission's recommendations in their entirety. If they are accepted, Congress can reject the recommendations in their entirety or they become final.

### **BRAC Commissioners Tour Peninsula Bases, But Not Oceana**

Norfolk Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA)  
Kate Wiltrout

May 26, 2005

HAMPTON - Their first-day itinerary included a local naval hospital and shipyard, then lunch and a "windshield tour" of the world's largest Navy base. On day two Wednesday, they ate breakfast at historic Fort Monroe before visiting Fort Eustis.

But what Anthony Principi and Lloyd Newton didn't do during their mid-week field trip to Hampton Roads might be just as significant: The two commissioners who will help decide the future of the nation's military bases stayed away from Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach.

The Navy's biggest East Coast jet base escaped major changes in Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld's May 13 recommendations for closing and realigning military

facilities. But during hearings last week in Washington, one of the nine appointed commissioners – retired Army general James T. Hill – said he was surprised that Oceana wasn't slated for closure because of the residential and commercial development that has grown up around it.

Principi, chairman of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, and Newton, a retired Air Force general, said Wednesday that it was premature to think about adding Oceana to the list, a move that would require the support of seven members.

Principi said there was "very, very significant encroachment at Oceana," but no decision has been made whether "to even consider" recommending the base for closure.

"We feel no need to really visit Oceana at this point. We don't want to send signals that are not already there," Newton said. "It is not on the list; ... if for some reason it was added, then it gives us that opportunity to go and visit."

That's not the case at Fort Monroe in Hampton, a 180-year-old Army post Rumsfeld proposed closing. The base's main tenant, headquarters of

the Army's Training and Doctrine Command, would shift to Fort Eustis in Newport News. Eustis' mission would be changed significantly, with 2,100 positions sent elsewhere.

At a news conference Wednesday, the pair said they were committed to making sure that Rumsfeld's recommendations were supported by solid data on bases' military value, the cost of environmental clean-up and the economic effect on communities.

"I can assure you we're not a rubber stamp," Principi said. "We are independent. We're going to do our own comprehensive assessment."

Members of the commission will visit at least 70 bases across the country during the next two months and will hold 16 public hearings. Commissioners have until Sept. 8 to submit recommendations for closure and realignment to President Bush.

Principi and Newton said Wednesday that their meetings with the commanders of Norfolk Naval Station and Norfolk Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth seemed to indicate that those facilities could handle the influx of a combined 4,800 jobs.

Rumsfeld's plan to shut down a naval shipyard in Kittery, Maine, would bring more than 1,700 civilian jobs to the local yard; the recommendation to shutter New London Submarine Base in Connecticut would result in another 2,800 positions shifting to Norfolk.

"Indeed, there's a lot of congestion in Norfolk, but it seems to me, preliminarily, that they do have the capacity, the pier space," Principi said of Norfolk Naval Station.

Principi said they learned that the shipyard would require some construction to make it ready to accept a submarine maintenance depot from New England.

Next week, Principi and Newton – along with one or two other commissioners, the chairman said – will visit Maine and Connecticut to learn about the places the jobs would come from.

Communities and legislators in New England are promising a big fight to keep their facilities open.

Hampton Mayor Ross Kearney II said he was pleased that the commissioners were open to hearing about alternatives to closure. The city has proposed building an office complex on the base, then leasing the space back to the military. Principi said similar arrangements have come out of past base-closure rounds.

"I don't think they came here with their minds made up," Kearney said.

### **BRAC chairman will visit Dahlgren today**

Freelance Star (Fredricksburg, VA)

Emily Battle

May 26, 2005

The naval base at Dahlgren will get a visit today from the head of the federal commission deciding which of the Pentagon's base-realignment recommendations to forward to the president.

Anthony Principi, chairman of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, this week has been touring Virginia military installations that were recommended for closure or realignment earlier this month.

That list proposes several changes at Dahlgren that would add up to a net loss of 351 jobs for the base, based on the Pentagon's calculations.

Principi will get briefings from Dahlgren's tenant commands and will tour the facility with a BRAC analyst. They will be trying to determine whether the Pentagon used the right set of facts when it decided to realign the Navy research center in King George County.

"The site visits are the main forum by which our commissioners and our staff learn the details of what military activities are really happening at the base, how the Department of Defense recommendations would affect the installation, and whether base-closure criteria were applied

correctly by the Pentagon,” Principi said in a written statement.

Other members of the commission are visiting bases all over the country starting this week, working toward a Sept. 8 deadline to forward recommendations to the president.

Principi will not be visiting Quantico Marine Corps Base, which stands to gain more than 3,000 jobs from the BRAC recommendations, or the Army’s Fort A.P. Hill, which would not be affected by the list.

The Dahlgren visit follows stops yesterday at Fort Monroe in Hampton and Fort Eustis in Newport News. The Pentagon has recommended closing Fort Monroe, which employs more than 3,500 people, and taking 2,152 jobs out of Fort Eustis.

Tomorrow, Principi will travel to Northern Virginia to learn about the effects of the Defense Department’s recommendation to move nearly 23,000 jobs out of leased office space in that area.

Linda Worrell, president of the Fredericksburg Regional Chamber of Commerce, said today’s visit at Dahlgren will probably be just between Principi and base officials. Media have not been allowed on bases during BRAC commissioners’ visits.

“This is his way to validate the information he got as it came through the DoD,” she said.

The chamber’s Military Affairs Committee continues to analyze the recommendations, with help from Madison Government Affairs, a Washington consultant the chamber has worked with for more than two years to protect the region from major losses in the BRAC process.

They’ve been reading through the more than 1,200-page BRAC report, as well as the data the region’s military bases provided to the Pentagon to make those decisions.

“We understand the recommendation [at Dahlgren] and why it was made,” Worrell said.

“But it’s a little bit too early to put out any kind of plan of action.”

The BRAC recommendations would move a few programs out of the Dahlgren base, including some chemical and biological research and some weapons research, but would bring other programs to Dahlgren from other locations.

Asked whether that would leave Dahlgren stronger or weaker in the event of another base-closure process, Worrell said it’s too early to tell.

“This is a discovery process. There’s lots of information. You pull one thread and you have to see where it comes from,” she said. “Every day we come closer to really understanding what it all means, and from that point it will be easy to say, here’s the game plan.”

### **Pentagon documents don't explain why Ellsworth is targeted for closure**

KOTA (SD)  
Jack Siebold  
MAy 25, 2005

Late today, the Pentagon released information on its base closure recommendations. This comes after pressure from congressional delegations with bases targeted for closure. But the released documents do not explain why Ellsworth AFB is targeted for closure, and it's 30 B-1 bombers moved to Dyess AFB in Texas.

Ellsworth Task Force director Pat McElgunn says there are a couple of tidbits in the release of data today. But he's still missing 10 percent of important information the community needs to argue its case before the Base Realignment and Closure commissioners next month.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld wants all B-1 bombers on one base. If it was Ellsworth, it would cost the military 53-million dollars to add two squadrons of bombers ... for things such as operations buildings, munition facilities and maintenance docks. That's according to documents released today. But those documents

didn't include data to compare that cost to moving the bombers to Abilene, Texas.

There were four areas the Air Force used to determine which was a better bomber base. While Ellsworth actually scored better in three of the four areas, not all are equal. The area Dyess scored better than Ellsworth was in current and future mission, worth 46 percent of the overall score. Dyess was 19 points higher in this category. But the Air Force has not released the data explaining why.

In another document, however, related to environmental issues, the Air Force acknowledges that Dyess has flight restrictions due to noise and those restrictions could actually increase if the bombers are moved there. Those same restrictions would not be an issue if Ellsworth was the sole B-One base.

June 21, three of the nine BRAC commissioners will conduct a regional hearing in Rapid City. It will be from 1 to 3 p.m. at the civic center.

### **County assesses Belvoir's impact**

Times Community (Fairfax, VA)

Dominic Bonaiuto

May 25, 2005

Fairfax supervisors acknowledged this week that they will need to use some restraint in their fight for federal assistance to help manage the massive growth planned at Fort Belvoir so as not to jeopardize the arrival of those jobs in the first place.

“We don't want to send too strong a signal so that these jobs then wind up in Nebraska,” Supervisor Dana Kauffman (D-Lee) said at Monday's board meeting.

Supervisor Michael Frey (R-Sully) said the county cannot appear to be “insensitive” or look like it is “trying to jump in the federal government's wallet” when other communities are “being devastated” by base closings.

Fairfax County and Northern Virginia were among the biggest winners and losers in the

Pentagon's latest Base Realignment and Closure recommendations, which would close 33 bases and realign 29 others to save \$48 billion over the next two decades.

Fort Belvoir in southeastern Fairfax is slated to gain more than 18,000 new military and civilian jobs in the next six years. It is the single largest net job increase contained in the report and will likely have a greater impact on the community than any major land use case in recent memory.

“The federal government does have some responsibility here,” said Chairman Gerry Connolly (D). “They can't just say, 'Good luck. You'll have to handle it.'”

At the same time, the Department of Defense is pulling up stakes on more than 6 million square feet of leased office space across the region, mostly in Arlington and Alexandria. But some of that space is in Fairfax—more than 900,000 square feet in Baileys Crossroads, not to mention small pockets of Tysons Corner and Reston.

“This will leave large areas of leased space empty, particularly in our revitalization areas,” said Supervisor Penny Gross (D-Mason), who represents the Baileys area.

Connolly said he has enlisted the help of the county's Economic Development Authority to assess the full impact on leased space within Fairfax—both the amount of space being vacated and the potential for ripple effects in the lease market once those offices in Arlington and Alexandria clear out.

Members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission are scheduled to tour some of that office space Friday with local and state officials.

Fairfax supervisors have already begun to push for road improvements around Belvoir, particularly the completion of the Fairfax County Parkway through a stretch of Army-owned land.

In addition, they are exploring the possibility of extending Metrorail to the base on either the

Blue line from Franconia-Springfield, the Yellow line from Huntington or both. Tying into the nearby Virginia Railway Express station at Lorton is another possibility.

Frey cautioned against “rushing into rail.” He noted the region already has given priority to a Metro expansion into western Fairfax and Prince William counties to accommodate growth there, not to mention the Dulles corridor Metro project.

“We have to remember the big picture here is to save money for taxpayers nationally,” said Supervisor Elaine McConnell (R-Springfield).

The post's leadership has been asked to survey its current staff and future arrivals about where they plan to live and how many children they will bring to assess the impact on local schools.

County officials noted that a majority of those people who currently live at Fort Belvoir commute to jobs off the post.

Base spokesman Richard Arndt said some of that research is already being done by the agencies slated to move here.

Belvoir has 90 days to submit a plan for executing the new recommendations. An interim report due about six weeks from now will give an indication of new facility needs on the base.

Supervisors have asked to meet publicly with base leaders soon to discuss all the ramifications.

Connolly acknowledged the county will walk a fine line as it moves forward in its discussions with the base and federal officials but added that “it would be imprudent if we did not at least lay out what we think the impacts will be.”

### **Opinions/ Editorials**

#### **Don't waste money on BRAC issue; we must do what's right for the U.S.**

Anchorage Daily News (Anchorage, AK)  
Kimberly Hall  
May 25, 2005

I am appalled by the amount of money the state is spending on the Base Realignment and Closure Commission process (“Fairbanks leaders rush to fight base closures,” May 18). I can understand wanting to keep all our military assets in place but this is wasting our money. How about having volunteers do a study if the state really feels there will be a benefit from it?

Everyone agrees the military needs to slim down its infrastructure but no one wants to give anything up on their own turf. Much thought, time and money has already been spent on creating a solid BRAC list. Let us not waste anymore. We need to get on board and do what's right for the United States, not just Alaska. Alaska will still have a healthy military presence once the BRAC list is finalized as is. Let the state and city spend the money on something else worthwhile.

### **Additional Notes**