

## Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

# EARLY



# BIRD

June 11, 2005

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## **BRAC members visit Walter Reed**

The Associated Press  
Marty Niland  
June 10, 2005

The city's congressional delegate pledged Friday to fight to save the Walter Reed Army Medical Center from the Pentagon's ax, but also urged members of the surrounding community to be realistic.

The Defense Department wants to merge Walter Reed with the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., and other Washington area military hospitals.

After touring Walter Reed with members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-DC, also said the burden would be especially difficult because she believes the panel is inclined to follow the recommendations of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

"The indictment, the presumption, is in favor of the Pentagon," said Norton, the city's nonvoting House member.

The argument to save Walter Reed must be made on military value, Norton said, because the panel is not likely to consider pleas from the community, economic factors, or the historic value of the nearly 100-year-old installation in Northwest Washington.

"We believe this facility right here has military value equal to the value it would have in a consolidated Bethesda hospital," she said.

BRAC Chairman Anthony Principi was supposed to lead the fact finding mission, but did not attend because he was ill, BRAC staff members said. He was replaced by retired Gen. Lloyd Newton, a member of the commission.

Newton acknowledged that the commission's decision would hinge on getting the best resources for military members. But he also said the panel would get information from the community - and denied any bias in favor of the Pentagon.

"This commission is not a rubber stamp," he said. "It is an independent commission."

Norton acknowledged it would be a difficult struggle for the city, but she noted that there is a chance for success. She recalled the last round of base closings, when she said she saved 10,000 jobs at the Washington Navy Yard that were slated to be moved to California.

If the Pentagon does prevail, and Walter Reed is closed, Norton said the city's next fight would be for control of the land.

"The government does not give away land and there would need to be some negotiations," Norton said. "The good news is, I'm on the committee."

## **Senators meet with BRAC commissioner**

The Associated Press  
June 10, 2005

A member of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission has assured New Mexico's two senators that data behind the Pentagon's decision to recommend the closure of Cannon Air Force Base would be scrutinized before the base's fate is decided.

Sens. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., and Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., said they received the assurance from retired Brig. Gen. Sue Turner during a telephone call Thursday to discuss the base and the commission's upcoming hearing in Clovis.

The senators told Turner they are concerned about the economic impact that closing the base would have on eastern New Mexico and West Texas.

They also said Cannon is the only spot in the nation where airspace is increasing. The Air Force has been working to expand the training range around Cannon - both in space and supersonic capabilities. The base's supporters have expressed frustration that the Pentagon did

not take the planned expansion into account in its analysis.

"The more we review the data the Pentagon is giving us for wanting to close Cannon, the more skeptical I become that the justifications have merit," Domenici said. "I think it's important that the BRAC commissioners have a sense of the misgivings we have."

Bingaman said that as the days go on, more flaws are being found in the Pentagon's rationale for putting Cannon on the closure list.

"We have a strong case to make for keeping Cannon open and based on the conversations we've had so far with BRAC commissioners we have reason to believe they will hear us out," Bingaman said.

Gov. Bill Richardson was meeting Friday morning with one commissioner, James Hansen, in Salt Lake City and planned a telephone call with the head of the commission, Anthony Principi, in the afternoon. He is to meet with Turner on Saturday, along with Lt. Gov. Diane Denish, who heads the state's Military Base Planning Commission, and Hanson Scott, director of the state Office for Military Base Planning and Support.

Richardson said he pledged to personally speak with the nine members of the BRAC about Cannon's military and economic importance.

"I will continue to convey my total opposition" to closing Cannon, he said.

The next step for the base commission is to review the Pentagon's recommendations and hold hearings, including the June 24 hearing in Clovis. It would take five of the nine commissioners to remove a base from the list.

The panel's recommendations are due to President Bush by Sept. 8. The president may accept or reject the entire list. If he accepts it, it goes to Congress for a yes or no vote, again on the entire list.

The Pentagon has estimated it would save \$2.7 billion over 20 years by closing Cannon, costing 2,385 military employees and 384 civilian jobs on base and about 2,000 more indirect jobs. Cannon's economic impact has been estimated at \$200 million a year - about a third of the local economy.

### **North Dakota to Get Predators, Global Hawks over Next Few Years**

Inside the Air Force

Martin Matishak

June 10, 2005

The Air Force is taking advantage of a series of recent decisions affecting two air bases in North Dakota to further develop its unmanned aerial vehicle program, while at the same time expanding the reach of a new directorate and increasing its homeland defense profile.

The service has plans to retire the 119th Fighter Wing of F-16s at Hector International Airport Air Guard Station, ND. The Defense Department recently announced it would transfer all active duty KC-135 tanker aircraft now based at Grand Forks Air Force Base, ND, to four other bases in the United States as part of its 2005 base closure and realignment plan. The plan said Grand Forks ranked lowest in military value of all active duty KC-135 tanker bases. But the base ranked highest in military value for the service's UAV mission, according to BRAC documents.

Those two moves, coupled with an increasing focus on homeland defense, have lead the Air Force to view both North Dakota installations as prime sites for a "family of UAVs" that would include squadrons of Predators and Global Hawks, service officials said last week. The decision also will expand the service's portfolio of total force initiatives aimed at better integrating its active, Guard and Reserve components.

"First, we will replace the F-16 mission with what we call an 'active associate' Predator unit, which means the Guard will retain primary responsibility for the UAVs and an active duty

unit will work with them," Lt. Gen. Stephen Wood, Deputy Chief of Staff of Plans and Programs, told reporters at a June 3 Pentagon briefing.

The service's Directorate of Future Total Force is designed to "maximize the Air Force's overall combat capabilities and allow [the service] to continue to be a primary enabler in joint service operations through [a] new Force Structure focused on programs, forces and technology, and new Organizational Concepts that fundamentally improve the effectiveness of . . . Active Duty, Guard and Reserve people," Air Force officials said in a March statement. The directorate also keeps tabs on emerging missions and the service's role in those tasks.

While many of the details, including costs and time frame, about realigning the bases remain unclear due to the current BRAC round, officials involved in the effort anticipate most of the UAVs would be stationed at Grand Forks with a control station and operators at Hector, Brig. Gen. Charles Ickes, Deputy Director of the Air National Guard told reporters during the June 3 briefing.

This type of "split operations" is a concept the service uses to increase "reach-back" with its Predators at Nellis AFB, NV, Wood explained. That philosophy uses Guardsman and reservists to pare down the service's reliance on involuntary overseas deployments for active duty forces.

Wood said the bases would support a "mixed squadron" of roughly 12 Predator A and Predator B aircraft. The details of the Global Hawk transfer have not yet been worked out because the UAV is still in development, the three-star added.

The Global Hawk squadron, also with split operations, would be the second such squadron in the continental United States after Beale Air Force Base, CA. Another future squadron may be based at Andersen AFB, Guam.

The potential Predator squadron would be one of 15 the Air Force envisions. Wood told reporters

four squadrons would be based at Indian Springs Air Force Auxiliary Field at Nellis AFB and three others would be based with other FTF initiatives in Texas, New York and Arizona.

Officials anticipate the Predator squadron at Grand Forks would support one orbit overseas, one orbit in CONUS for training and border security purposes. Plans are to retain the ability to surge to a third orbit if a combatant commander requires it, Ickes said.

The force mix of active duty, Guard and Reserve personnel at Grand Forks and Hector is still being worked out, according to a DOD spokesman.

### Local News Articles

#### **Norton Asks Leaders To Hold Off Carving Up Walter Reed Property**

The Washington Post (Washington DC)

Spencer S. Hsu

June 11, 2005

District leaders face a "heavy burden" in overturning a Pentagon plan to relocate Walter Reed Army Medical Center but must fight that battle before considering other uses for the prime 113-acre site in Northwest Washington, Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.) said yesterday.

The District would lose 6,000 jobs under the Pentagon's base closings proposal -- one of the country's hardest-hit cities. A nine-member Base Realignment and Closure Commission is reviewing the proposal, unveiled last month by Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, before making recommendations Sept. 8 to President Bush.

District and Northern Virginia lawmakers are mobilizing in opposition to the proposed job cuts in their jurisdictions but also are cautioning communities against expectations that they will stop the changes. Norton announced that the base closures panel will have a public hearing in the District on July 7, the same day that Virginia lawmakers expect the commission to take

comments on plans to move more than 20,000 defense workers from leased office space in Alexandria and Arlington.

Members of Congress have focused on the high cost of the Pentagon proposals and have challenged Defense Department assumptions of real military value in consolidating military medical operations, abandoning leased space and dispersing workers from the capital.

"The indictment, the presumption, obviously, is in favor of the Pentagon" on the recommendation to close Walter Reed, Norton said during a media briefing after a visit with commission members. "But this fight has only begun, and the worst thing we could do is begin thinking what other uses we could be making of the facility."

Rep. James P. Moran Jr. (D-Va.) said that he "held out hope" of keeping military jobs in the leased space in Northern Virginia but that he has not seen signs of flexibility from the Pentagon. "There's a real question as to the necessity of moving people around when it doesn't contribute to mission effectiveness or cost savings, especially when the money is going to have to come from military compensation and benefits," he said.

A member of the commission and some of its senior staff met yesterday with District residents at Norton's request after touring Walter Reed and Bolling Air Force Base, also in Washington, as part of tightly scheduled fact-finding missions at affected bases across the country.

Chairman Anthony J. Principi was expected to lead the visit but was ill, a spokeswoman said. Retired Air Force Gen. Lloyd W. Newton, a commission member, took his place. He emphasized that the panel would not be a "rubber stamp."

Asked what struck him most at Walter Reed, Newton said, "There were a host of compelling things, especially the high quality of research." He summarized the choice facing the commission, saying, "Can you deliver that better care and better medical research for the men and

women in uniform with the recommendations the Department of Defense made, or is there another option?"

To replace the D.C. complex, the Pentagon has proposed a \$200 million expansion of the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, to be renamed the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, and a \$500 million, 165-bed community hospital at Fort Belvoir in southeast Fairfax County. It said those changes would unify health services across the military branches.

Norton said that proposal might cost more than it saves, and noted that after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, federal authorities opposed consolidating operations.

"I don't buy at all that consolidation automatically brings military value," said Norton, accompanied by Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners Faith Wheeler and Douglas Payton, who represent about 4,000 residents near Walter Reed.

"Certainly, we believe this facility right here has military value equal to the value it would have in a consolidated Bethesda hospital," Norton said. "I want to make sure we are using criteria that are permanent considerations and permanently important."

At the briefing, D.C. Council member Adrian M. Fenty (D-Ward 4) said residents fear the "great unknown. They are very supportive of Walter Reed, but they're also very scared about what could come here" if the Army leaves and about the degree of input they would have. Fenty and Norton said residents oppose a "K Street-style office complex," noting that the federal government is hungry for office space.

### **Richardson meeting with BRAC commissioners**

The Associated Press (Clovis, NM)  
June 11, 2005

Gov. Bill Richardson is meeting with members of the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission to voice opposition to the Pentagon's plan to close Cannon Air Force Base near Clovis.

"I feel good that the arguments we're making to the commission ... are making sense, that the arguments are getting a good reception," Richardson said Friday.

Earlier in the day, he met in Salt Lake City with one member of BRAC, James Hansen. After returning to New Mexico, he spoke by telephone with the head of the commission, Anthony Principi.

"There is a lot of time before they vote. I feel encouraged. I feel positive that we have a slight chance, an uphill chance, at best," Richardson said of the possibility of getting the commission to remove Cannon from the closure list.

The governor said he's telling commissioners that the Air Force "made a mistake" in assessing the military value of Cannon and failed to consider the base's potential for expanded training space.

In addition, Richardson contends that the Air Force significantly underestimated the economic impact on Clovis and eastern New Mexico if the base was closed.

Richardson plans to meet Saturday with commission member Sue Turner, joined by Lt. Gov. Diane Denish, who heads the state's Military Base Planning Commission, and Hanson Scott, director of the state Office for Military Base Planning and Support.

Richardson said he pledged to personally speak with the nine BRAC members about Cannon's military and economic importance.

Sens. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., and Pete Domenici, R-N.M., were among a bipartisan group of senators who on Friday warned the Pentagon not to transfer any personnel or military activities permanently until the commission has completed its work.

BRAC commissioners should get enough time for an independent analysis of the installations targeted by the Pentagon before permanent changes are made, the senators wrote in a letter to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

"We request your assurance that there will be no effort by the Department of Defense to preemptively identify or carry out any permanent transfer of activities or personnel from any installations identified by the department for possible closure or realignment prior to congressional consideration of the final list of BRAC recommendations, except for reasons of national security or a military emergency," they wrote.

The commission has begun the process of holding hearings in communities affected by the Pentagon's recommendations, released May 13.

Commissioners plan a June 24 hearing in Clovis over the Cannon recommendation. It would take five of the nine commissioners to remove a base from the list.

The letter to Rumsfeld also asked that the commission be allowed to call on members of the military for expert testimony.

"We request that you permit any member of the armed forces to freely answer questions and-or provide to the commission testimony as to the military value of any military installation for the purposes of the commission's consideration of the secretary's recommendations" for changes in the nation's military installations, the senators wrote.

Cannon's supporters are arguing that it is the only spot in the nation where airspace is increasing.

The Air Force has been working to expand the training range around Cannon - both in space and supersonic capabilities. The base's supporters have expressed frustration that the Pentagon did not take the planned expansion into account in its analysis.

The commission's recommendations are due to President Bush by Sept. 8. He may accept or reject the entire list. If he accepts it, it goes to Congress for a yes or no vote, again on the entire list.

### **BRAC commissioner member says Fort Gillem could avoid closure**

The Associated Press (Atlanta, GA)  
June 11, 2005

Fort Gillem might be able to avoid being closed by the Department of Defense, said James T. Bilbray, a member of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

"Fort Gillem has an excellent chance of getting off this list," Bilbray said Friday after visiting the base. "I can't guarantee anything but I was very, very impressed."

Fort Gillem - along with Fort McPherson, the Naval Air Station in Marietta and the Navy Supply Corps School in Athens - has been tapped for closure.

What might help Fort Gillem avoid closure is more than \$240 million in new building projects there including a state-of-the-art forensic crime lab and facilities for the Georgia Emergency Management Agency, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Red Cross, U.S. Rep. David Scott said.

Bilbray said the figures given by Department of Defense officials on the cost to close Fort Gillem and relocate its operations did not match figures given by base and local officials.

"I think (the Defense Department's) figures are very, very low," Bilbray said. "We're going to analyze it very closely."

BRAC commissioners have been visiting bases recommended for closure. They are deciding whether to change the list or pass it on to President Bush as is.

Congress will decide in November which bases will be spared. In previous base closing rounds, most bases on the list ended up shutting down.

Supporters of the four Georgia bases will have one more chance to try to persuade commissioners on June 30 during a hearing at Georgia Tech.

### **Fort Gillem has 'chance' of getting off list for closure**

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution (Atlanta, GA)  
Add Seymour Jr.  
June 11, 2005

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**Air Force proposes slashing 580 jobs; Civic leaders will travel to Washington, D.C., next week to lobby for the Air Base.**

Duluth News-Tribune (Duluth, MN)

Chuck Frederick

June 11, 2005

148th Fighter Wing

In addition to losing its jets, Duluth's 148th Fighter Wing is facing the prospect of losing more than half of its members.

More than 580 full-time and traditional Air National Guard positions would be eliminated in Duluth by 2011, according to Air Force recommendations acquired Friday by the News Tribune and confirmed by the 148th.

The recommendation to the Department of Defense hasn't been released publicly and wasn't included last month when the department issued its list of proposed base closures and realignments. That list called for Duluth's fighter jets to be retired by 2007, leaving the future of the 148th and its mission in limbo.

Meanwhile Friday, Duluth Chamber of Commerce officials, Mayor Herb Bergson, airport officials and others were making plans to travel next week to Washington, D.C., to lobby on behalf of the Duluth Air Base.

The seven-person contingency from Duluth is scheduled to meet with members of Congress and military generals.

"Our goal is to help identify a new mission for the 148th," said Pat Mullen, chairman of the chamber's Military Affairs Committee. "We have so many things the Air Force values. We want them to see we're a viable base for the future."

"We want to make sure we know as much as we can about all of this," said Steve Greenfield, chairman of the chamber board. "And we want to make sure our elected leaders are grasping the potential gravity of this situation."

A public meeting later this month about base closures in Grand Forks, N.D., is expected to include a half-hour for Duluth representatives to make a case for the Duluth base. Next week's trip to the nation's capital will help city leaders determine how best to use their 30 minutes, said Andy Peterson, the chamber's director of public policy.

"These are a lot of great jobs in Duluth," Peterson said. "We still have hope we can bring another mission here that's just as viable as what we have now."

The chamber is paying travel expenses for four of its members to attend meetings in Washington on Thursday and Friday, Greenfield said.

Bergson said he wasn't sure how the cost of his trip would be covered.

"It's an important trip. I need to make it," said Bergson, who hastily rearranged his schedule to accommodate the travel. "I'm more concerned about the jobs we could lose than how this trip will be paid for. We're talking about one of the city's leading employers here. I mean, these are the people who flew over the Pentagon after 9/11.

"We need to go out there and let our congressional delegation know we're not going to take this lying down," he said. "It doesn't just affect Duluth. It affects the whole region."

The 148th estimates its economic impact on the Northland at \$85.1 million. That includes \$41.4

million in wages. The base is the ninth-largest employer in the Twin Ports.

About 400 of the wing's 1,100 members work at the base full time. The Air Force recommendation calls for the elimination of 132 full-time jobs and 451 traditional, part-time guard positions.

That parallels the number of 148th staffers who maintain and fly the jets scheduled to be eliminated in Duluth, wing spokesman Capt. Chris Cloutier said. He confirmed the Air Force's proposal for personnel reductions in Duluth.

"Those are numbers we've heard," he said. "But we don't really know what comes next. Answers are slow in coming. We're as anxious as our chamber and our community to find out."

"We're very happy we have the support of the community," the 148th's Col. Frank Stokes said. "We can't go bang on the politicians' doors. We're here to salute and do what's asked of us. We hope they (the Duluth delegates) meet with success. We're hoping there's a mission for us that will maintain what we have here now."

Even if its jets are retired and not replaced and its membership is reduced by the proposed 53 percent, the Duluth Air Base will remain open, according to the Air Force recommendations. Aircraft from other bases would rotate through Duluth and operate from Duluth as assigned by U.S. Northern Command.

Ultimately, decisions about base closures and military changes will be made by Congress. The Northland's congressional representatives in Washington have vowed to support Duluth.

"The disturbing news is that the long-term mission of the 148th Fighter Wing is in jeopardy," U.S. Rep. Jim Oberstar, D-Minn., said in a May statement. His office confirmed Friday a meeting is being arranged next week with the Duluth delegation.

"The breather is that we have a window in which to seek a new mission," he said.

Sen. Mark Dayton's press secretary, Semonti Mustaphi, said Friday the senator has "serious questions about the way the Air Force went about making decisions."

"He looks forward to working with the... Minnesota delegation and Duluth community leaders," Mustaphi said.

Sen. Norm Coleman said the Pentagon's recommendations, overall, recognize the importance of Minnesota's military installations. However, he said, "I am very concerned about the implications of some of the recommendations, including the possible 'parking' of F-16s at the Duluth base... without any clear follow-on mission.

"With hundreds of jobs at stake, clarification is needed," Coleman said in an e-mail. "Clearly, this base is vital to the economic stability of the (Duluth) region."

**Lawmakers get into 'high gear' to save Willow Grove air base;  
A rally is planned and petitions are proposed,  
all before a commission reviewing a Pentagon decision.**

Philadelphia Inquirer (Philadelphia, PA)  
Marc Schogol  
June 11, 2005

Local legislators and community leaders are mounting an offensive to reverse the Pentagon's recommendation that the Willow Grove air base be closed.

Gov. Rendell will speak at a "Save Our Base Day" rally on June 27 at Hatboro-Horsham High School, where people will be urged to sign and write anti-base closing petitions and letters.

Residents also are being asked to join a July 9 bus caravan to Baltimore, where local officials will make their case to the independent commission reviewing the Pentagon decision.

"This is a tough battle, a battle we are prepared to wage and wage well," State Rep. Josh Shapiro

(D., Montgomery) said yesterday at a news event adjacent to the Horsham base.

Outlining the campaign at the Delaware Valley Historical Aircraft Association Museum, Shapiro and others stressed that the base is too economically and militarily important to close and that the legislature is prepared to allocate additional funds to efforts to save it.

"We are in high gear," State Rep. Eugene McGill (R., Montgomery) said. About 3,000 people already have signed petitions urging that the base, established during World War II, be kept open.

McGill and Shapiro, along with State Rep. Sue Cornell (R., Montgomery), said they believe the commission is not fully aware how crucial Willow Grove is in the war on terrorism here and abroad.

The base, which has units from all the military services, has played a vital role in the post-9/11 military mobilization, they said.

The Naval Air Station and Joint Reserve Base at Willow Grove was one of 30 major military bases nationwide, including Fort Monmouth, N.J., on a list of recommended base closings issued by the Pentagon last month.

The proposed base closings are part of an effort to save \$50 billion and transform the military over the next two decades.

If Willow Grove is closed, the cost could be more than 1,200 civilian and military jobs at the base on the border of Montgomery and Bucks Counties.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) will submit a final list of recommended closures by Sept. 8 for approval by the President and Congress.

Members of the BRAC commission are expected to visit Willow Grove shortly before the hearings in Baltimore.

## **Fairbanks businesses to shut down for hearing;**

**BRAC: About 40 employers agree to let workers attend meeting on Eielson's fate.**

Anchorage Daily News (Anchorage, AK)

Tataboline Brant

June 10, 2005

About 40 Fairbanks-area businesses and organizations, including city offices, plan to close down or go to skeleton crews on Wednesday to let their workers attend a hearing about possible cuts to Eielson Air Force Base.

Eielson has been targeted by the Pentagon in a nationwide review of military installations for serious downsizing. At stake are 2,821 military jobs and 319 civilian jobs.

Air Force officials this week released more documents outlining plans to turn Eielson into a training base if the cuts go through. About two-thirds of the base would stay fully operational and run war games from early spring through late fall, the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner reported Wednesday, quoting official Air Force documents. It is still unclear how many people such training might bring to Eielson.

At least three of nine commissioners appointed to review the Pentagon's suggestions have scheduled a public hearing in Fairbanks from 1 to 3 p.m. Wednesday at the Carlson Center.

U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens also plans to be there, his office said Thursday.

The two Alaska task forces working to save Eielson have asked Fairbanks-area businesses, which stand to take a big economic hit if the base is downsized, to consider giving employees paid time off to attend the hearing.

"We need to show that Fairbanks and North Pole are solidly behind keeping Eielson," Jim Dodson, chairman of two task forces, said in a written statement Wednesday. "This is a big part of the race to save our base."

Several entities plan to close or go to a skeleton crew during the hearing, according to a list of

the organizations provided by officials at the Save Eielson headquarters in Fairbanks, which represents both the statewide and Fairbanks-area task forces. They include the Fairbanks city and borough, news organizations, car dealerships, construction companies, unions, universities, plumbing and auto stores, banks, credit unions, brokerage and mortgage firms, and an oil company, according to the list.

Save Eielson officials did not know how many of the businesses allowing employees to attend the hearing are paying them for the time.

### **Leaders use familiar strategy for opposing arsenal job cuts**

The Associated Press (Rock Island, IL)  
Todd Dvorak  
June 10, 2005

As Quad Cities leaders prepare their fight to save hundreds of jobs at the Rock Island Arsenal, they are dusting off a strategy that spared many of the same positions the last time the Pentagon reshaped the nation's military.

The arsenal, a fixture on the 946-acre Mississippi River island since the Civil War, is one of the largest government-owned weapons factories in the world.

For decades, it has supplied the U.S. military with bullets, howitzers and armor plating. At the same time, it is the region's second-largest employer, providing some 6,500 jobs for a region that lost thousands when Caterpillar and Case-International Harvester left in the 1980s.

Now economic development officials are again facing the challenge of persuading the federal government to reverse a recommendation that would relocate up to 20 percent of the arsenal's work.

Their argument has a familiar premise: Moving the jobs off the island would be far more costly than Pentagon estimates and would meddle with some of the best-performing units in the military.

"The whole gist behind the move is to save money," said Thom Hart, president of the Quad City Economic Development Group. "But if a move costs more than you can save ... or if you don't have a quick payback on initial costs ... then it's not worth it.

"And that's what we're saying. It's a simple, economic, mathematical model we're relying on here."

The strategy worked the last time the Pentagon suggested moving jobs from Rock Island, in 1991. The recommendations were reversed two years later, preserving some of the same arsenal jobs that are now slated for transfer.

Last month, in an effort to make the military more efficient and better equipped to fight terrorists, the Pentagon proposed sweeping changes to the nation's constellation of bases. It recommended closing 33 and downsizing hundreds of others to consolidate operations, make the military more responsive and save up to \$7 billion annually.

The plan doesn't propose shuttering any of Illinois' four military bases, but it calls for the transfer of four of the Rock Island Arsenal's 60 tenants, including one of its biggest divisions, the Tank-automotive and Armaments Command, or TACOM.

The Pentagon estimates the arsenal's loss at 1,263 jobs.

But local officials say the estimates are based on 2003 payroll data, and that the actual job loss is closer to 1,600 - many of them white-collar positions with salaries above the local average.

Of those, TACOM represents about 1,100 jobs, civilian and military. The division oversees production of self-propelled artillery systems, combat vehicles and the armor plating kits used on Humvees now hauling soldiers and supplies across Iraq.

Most TACOM jobs would move to division headquarters in Warren, Mich., where the Pentagon plans a new office complex. A smaller

sector of TACOM would move to Columbus, Ohio.

But Quad Cities officials, who have spent the past two weeks poring over Pentagon data, contend the move fails to meet two key criteria - cost effectiveness and military value, a measure that includes mission performance.

Moving TACOM to suburban Detroit would mean additional costs for training new staff and building new office and parking facilities.

TACOM and the other divisions slated for transfer from Rock Island also are some of the highest-performing administrative units in the military, arsenal and local officials said.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission is reviewing the Pentagon plan and has until September to submit a proposal to President Bush. Historically, it has modified 15 percent to 25 percent of the Pentagon's recommendations.

"I can assure you there is no lack of performance at the arsenal," said commission member Sam Skinner, who toured the island last month and, as an Illinois native, could be a key ally for the state's bases.

"If there's not a good military reason ... and it doesn't make sense economically ... I think the commission will take a hard look at any recommendation," Skinner said.

Two other Illinois bases would suffer significant losses under the Pentagon plan: Naval Station Great Lakes would lose 1,263 jobs and a medical training center for enlisted Navy personnel, and the Air National Guard station in Springfield would lose 163 jobs, including its 183rd Fighter Wing.

Hart and others will press their case again at a hearing on the recommendations June 20 in St. Louis.

"We just think these recommendations just don't hold water," said Tim Frye, marketing manager for the Rock Island Arsenal Development Group.

The arsenal includes the Army's last remaining foundry. With its own foundry, metal-casting and welding shops, the arsenal is the only such factory that can take an ordnance design from raw material to finished product.

At its peak during the Cold War, the arsenal employed more than 17,000 people making heavy artillery and other ordnance.

Today, the arsenal employs just 6,500, but local suppliers, vendors and contractors provide another 12,000 jobs throughout the region.

The arsenal's total economic impact is estimated at more than \$1 billion a year, local officials said.

At the same time, local officials acknowledge that the Quad Cities area is better equipped than in the past to handle downsizing at the arsenal. Unemployment is below the national average, at 4.8 percent. The housing market remains strong and the economy is more diverse, less dependent on manufacturing.

"We don't relish losing any number of jobs of any kind," said Gene Holst, chief executive officer of the Quad City Area Realtors Association. "But I think the Q-C area could absorb that kind of loss, which I believe would only be a temporary one."

### **Lawmakers throw support behind anti-base closing groups**

The Associated Press (Augusta, ME)  
Francis X. Quinn  
June 10, 2005

State legislators Friday offered their support of efforts by community groups working to defend Maine's military bases.

Dozens of lawmakers joined in a bipartisan display of unity at the State House. They praised local activists and pledged to make \$100,000 available for the cause.

"We could not be prouder" of base proponents, said Senate President Beth Edmonds, D-Freeport.

House and Senate leaders also cited the backing being offered by Maine's congressional delegation.

The Pentagon announced its list of proposed base closings and realignments on May 13.

The listings for Maine resulted from "an unfair decision made without the right amount of information," said House Speaker John Richardson, D-Brunswick.

Pentagon recommendations call for closing the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard on the New Hampshire border and a Defense Finance Accounting Service center in northern Maine, as well as stripping aircraft and half of the military personnel from Brunswick Naval Air Station.

Hearings by the independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission are scheduled to begin next week. The commission will review the Pentagon's recommendations and submit a final list to President Bush by Sept. 8. Bush and Congress can then accept or reject the list in its entirety.

Members of Maine's congressional delegation issued a statement Friday lauding their allies in Augusta.

"This show of unified, bipartisan, bicameral support from the state Legislature and the Governor will help to bolster our efforts in Congress and in the affected communities to fight the proposed base closings in Maine," the statement said.

"Support from the state is necessary at all levels - from state and local government, community groups, and citizens - in order to send the strongest message possible to the BRAC Commission about the value of Maine's military facilities to national security and to our state."

The administration of Gov. John Baldacci has cited estimates that closing the facilities in

Kittery and Limestone and realigning the base in Brunswick would cost close to 12,000 jobs in Maine.

### **Tackett predicts impartial hearing**

The Charleston Gazette (Charleston, WV)  
June 10, 2005

West Virginia Adjutant General Allen B. Tackett said Thursday he is confident the 130th Airlift Wing will get a fair and impartial review by a team from the Base Realignment and Closure Commission when it visits the Charleston Air National Guard base on Monday.

"And I think that when we have the opportunity to tell our story, we stand a good chance to persevere in this process," Tackett said.

Retired Navy Admiral and former NATO supreme commander Harold W. Gehman Jr., a member of the BRAC Commission, will visit the 130th and hear briefings from department heads at the base during a three-hour appearance. Two BRAC data analysts will accompany Gehman.

The 130th was one of 62 major military bases and 700 smaller units the Pentagon recommended last month for closure or downsizing. Under the plan, the unit's eight C-130 Hercules cargo aircraft, along with eight from an Air National Guard unit in Pittsburgh, would be transferred to Pope Air Force Base in North Carolina, adjacent to the huge Fort Bragg Army installation.

If BRAC commissioners and the president approve the recommendations, the 130th would lose nearly half its 320 full-time military and civilian employees, according to Defense Department planners. Tackett said many of the remaining 700 full- and part-time employees would eventually resign or retire following the transfer of the unit's aircraft.

"When young people join this unit, most of them want to fly on or repair these aircraft," Tackett said. If the airplanes go, many members of the unit would retire or decide not to re-enlist, rather

than drive long distances to train with Air Guard units that retained their aircraft, he said.

The Pentagon plan also called for transferring some components of the 130th to the 167th Airlift Wing in Martinsburg.

"We polled 98 members of the 130th's air support unit, and only two said they would transfer to Martinsburg," the adjutant general said. "This air support unit was twice named the Air Force's best in the world. ...To throw them out of the Air Force this way is unbelievable to me."

One of the main reasons cited by the Pentagon for sending the 130th's aircraft to Pope is that the Charleston airbase has only enough room to accommodate eight of the four-engine C-130s.

"The data they asked for didn't ask for specifics, other than our parking plan, which was drawn up for the eight aircraft we are assigned," said Tackett. "They didn't ask how many we could park here. We have the space for 16 planes, and maybe more."

During a training exercise on Sunday, 15 C-130s landed and parked at the Charleston airbase.

Tackett said the Pentagon recommendations also failed to take into account the Air Guard unit's role in responding to emergencies within the state, and helping Army National Guard units meet their training goals.

"The Pentagon doesn't realize that the citizens of West Virginia need these planes when they're not being used for war-fighting," he said. "In my 10 years as adjutant general, National Guard units have been called up 57 times for state emergencies. These planes recently carried food and water into the Northern Panhandle when slides and floods blocked the roads."

The 130th is also among the most fully staffed and battle-ready units in the Air Force, Tackett said. "It's operating at 103 percent strength now, and has never received an operational readiness inspection rating less than 'excellent.'" They've

done their jobs well and gone to war, and were given missions that other units couldn't do."

Last week, a C-130 loaded with personnel from the 130th left Charleston for Uzbekistan, to take part in the unit's 11th consecutive 60-day deployment in support of the military effort in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Tackett said BRAC commissioners "are the good guys in this process. ... They're part of a system of checks and balances that ensures that all the facts are known before a decision is made. It's a tough job -- one I certainly wouldn't want."

Following Monday's visit, a public hearing on Pentagon recommendations for the BRAC Commission regarding the 130th and other bases in the region will be held June 28 in Charlotte, N.C.

The nine-member commission can change recommendations before they are presented to President Bush and the public on Sept. 8. By Sept. 23, the president must either send the report to Congress for final approval, or sent it back to the BRAC Commission for further evaluation.

If the report is returned to the commission, BRAC members have until Oct. 20 to revise and resubmit it to the president, who must in turn forward it to Congress by Nov. 7.

Once Congress receives the recommendations, it has 45 days to enact a joint resolution to either accept or reject the report in full.

### **Too many cooks spoil BRAC strategy recipe**

**More than 100 attend session about Ingleside**  
Corpus Christi Caller-Times ( Corpus Christi, TX)

Fanny S. Chirinos  
June 10, 2005

PORTLAND - A community strategy session to try to remove Naval Station Ingleside from the BRAC list didn't materialize Thursday, largely

because "there were so many people that we just couldn't do that," said Bill Kenyon, BRAC Response Strike Force communications director.

"We thought it was going to be a small group of people, like the dinners we had been having," Kenyon added. "We still learned some more stuff. It served its purpose."

More than 100 community leaders met Thursday and agreed Ingleside still had a chance to be removed from the closure list at the July 11 BRAC commission hearing in San Antonio.

Another surprise at the meeting was that media representatives were kept from attending.

"The meeting was closed because we wanted to give these leaders the opportunity to express themselves freely without scrutiny," said Jonathan Black, director of research with the secretary of state's office. "Future meetings will not be closed because we saw there was no need for it."

Portland Mayor David Krebs and Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce president Terry Carter said they were not aware media had been asked to leave.

Toward the end of the meeting, there were some sensitive technical discussions, Carter said.

"Other military installations would love to know how we're going to handle our case," he said. "That might have played a part on why media was asked to leave, but I don't know."

Caller-Times publisher Patrick J. Birmingham said he was surprised and disappointed that any member of the media would be asked to leave a public meeting on base closures.

"Texas Secretary of State Roger Williams and other members of the state's BRAC Response Strike Force visited the Caller-Times and spoke with the editorial board just (Wednesday) stressing the importance of community involvement and unity," Birmingham said. "And then today to turn around and ask members of

the media to leave a public meeting is disingenuous to say the least."

It is unclear whether the closed meeting violated any state open meeting laws. Most members of the San Patricio Commissioners Court were present at the meeting, though they did not sit together, Krebs said. Generally, if a quorum of a government entity attended the meeting, it would be required to post public notice.

William Ehrie, chairman of the Texas Military Preparedness Commission, told the group what to expect at the July meeting.

"As I understand it, we'll be given 20 minutes to make our case and will be told that day if we remain on the closure list or are removed," Krebs said.

The Pentagon on May 13 recommended closure for Ingleside and three other Texas bases along with the realignment of six others, including Naval Air Station Corpus Christi and the Corpus Christi Army Depot. Williams also will visit the Red River Army Depot, Brooks City Base in San Antonio and Lone Star Army Ammunitions Plant, which also are on the base closure list.

"We must not focus on the why, but on the how," Williams, chairman of the BRAC Response Strike Force, said. "How can we make our case? This is a big deal not only for Ingleside, but for Texas and the entire country."

The strike force has brought in state analysts to prepare for a visit to Corpus Christi and Ingleside by BRAC commissioner James T. Hill on July 7-8, Ehrie said after the meeting.

"I think it'll be successful," Ehrie said. "We've done a lot of listening and have heard very positive things."

Judy Hawley, a member of the South Texas Military Facilities Task Force, said this was the first time area leaders had seen the state come in with personnel, leadership and ideas to help with BRAC issues.

"(Williams) has inundated himself with the statistics and flavor of the area," Hawley said. "It could only help us with our case in July."

**Going to the source;  
North Dakota leaders consult with Air Force,  
National Guard officials in preparation for  
June 23 BRAC hearing**

Grand Forks Herald (Grand Forks, ND)  
Elisa L. Rinehart  
June 10, 2005

Base retention leaders teamed up Thursday in Washington to talk with National Guard officials and ask, among other things, for feedback on how to address base closure commissioners when they visit Grand Forks on June 23.

Gov. John Hoeven, Gen. Michael Haugen, commander of the North Dakota National Guard, and the congressional delegation talked to two top National Guard officials to make the case that Fargo's Air National Guard Base should continue to house a flying mission after the F-16A model retires in 2007.

Hoeven said that possible replacements include a more advanced F-16 fighter jet and the C-27J, a light cargo aircraft being built.

Another option for Fargo is the CASA 295, a similar cargo aircraft. The manufacturers of both aircraft are competing for a contract with the Army National Guard, Haugen said.

An Army National Guard unit stationed in Fargo could operate either one of the tactical airlift planes, he said.

"What we're trying to do here is see what are the possibilities for this type of aircraft without going to the Air Force," Haugen said. "This is an issue of the National Guard."

Haugen said that it was an excellent meeting.

Base retention leaders asked for pointers on how to present their case to the Base Closure and Realignment subcommittee, Hoeven said.

They were advised to keep building the North Dakota Air Space Initiative, which promotes the state's uncrowded air space as a safe military training field, he said.

When talking about bringing flying missions to Grand Forks and Fargo in addition to the drones, Guard officials acknowledged the need to keep a National Guard flying mission in each state, Hoeven said.

Sen. Kent Conrad, D-N.D., said they pushed for keeping one or two KC-135R Stratotanker squadrons permanently in Grand Forks.

Hoeven said Air Force officials, in a later meeting, reminded him that unmanned aerial operations are important growing missions and that other communities have been asking to host them.

**Business Leaders, Officials to Lobby Base  
Closure and Realignment Commission**

San Antonio Express-News (San Antonio, TX)  
L.A. Lorek  
June 10, 2005

A group of 100 government and business people plans to lobby Pentagon officials to keep a group of military intelligence jobs here.

During a trip to Washington on Sunday, "We do intend to bring it up to the (Base Closure and Realignment) commission," said retired Air Force Brig. Gen. John Jernigan, who heads San Antonio's military missions task force. "We believe there is a benefit to the customer to keep them here." Under the BRAC recommendations, the Defense Department will relocate the Cryptologic Systems Group at Lackland AFB to three bases, eliminating more than 700 intelligence jobs in San Antonio.

The move will result in an economic loss of \$ 3 billion of future defense dollars, according to Oscar Balladares, Lackland's public information officer.

But more important, it will hurt San Antonio's growing intelligence community and decrease

the nation's national security readiness, said Scott Gray, vice president of OnBoard Software, a military contractor in San Antonio.

"This proposed BRAC realignment can jeopardize our national security posture," according to a paper written by Gray, OnBoard founder David Spencer and other concerned citizens. "The imminent expansion of NSA in the San Antonio region will also suffer as a result of losing this key support organization." If San Antonio loses the group, called CPSG, it would lose more than 200 military, 300 civilian and 200 contractor jobs. The various functions are to be moved to Tobyhanna Army Depot, Pa., Robbins AFB, Ga., and Hanscom AFB, Mass.

In addition, CPSG works closely with the Air Intelligence Agency at Lackland and the National Security Agency in San Antonio.

CPSG supports missions such as intelligence collection, homeland security, counter-terrorism, military operations, cyber security and law enforcement. It includes the Signals Intelligence, Communications Security, Information Assurance and Cryptographic Modernization units.

CPSG's customers include the National Security Agency, National Reconnaissance Office, all military services, NASA, foreign allies and other agencies.

During the 1995 BRAC, the Pentagon excluded the CPSG from the recommendation to close Kelly AFB. The local lobbyists hope to get it excluded again.

### **Barrett lobbies to keep 440th Wing open; Team from state meets with base closure panel**

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (Milwaukee, WI)  
Katherine M. Skiba  
June 10, 2005

Washington - Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett on Thursday joined the ranks of officials from Wisconsin visiting to urge that the 440th Airlift Wing remain at Mitchell International Airport.

Barrett met two analysts from the Base Realignment and Closure Commission in Arlington, Va., saying afterward that he was "guardedly optimistic" about the Air Force Reserve unit staying put.

The commission is evaluating the Pentagon's list of bases recommended for closure or realignment. While the panel may modify the list, only 15% of those identified for closure have survived previous rounds of base closings, he said.

Asked the likelihood of keeping the unit, Barrett said: "There's no question we're swimming upstream."

He was joined in his meeting by Paul Bock, chief of staff to Sen. Herb Kohl, a Wisconsin Democrat, and two lobbyists from Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek, hired by the governor to make the case for the 440th. They are John Rogers and Steve Moffitt.

The 440th operates eight C-130H Hercules transport planes. The Air Force would send the wing to an Air Force base in North Carolina and distribute its aircraft to two other Southern states. Its aim is to have fewer, larger squadrons to streamline and bolster readiness.

Barrett, for his part, said the strongest case for retaining the unit was its successes in recruitment and retention of personnel.

While the unit recruits from Milwaukee, he noted that it has offices in Chicago and Green Bay, giving it a population base of 12 million from which to draw.

"There's the issue of patriotism," he remarked, saying people wanted to serve as reservists in the armed forces, particularly the Air Force, while living at home. "They should not be denied that opportunity," he said.

1995 list

Barrett, who spent 10 years representing Milwaukee in the House of Representatives, had

a hand in getting the 440th off the base closure list in 1995. Rogers, a former Pentagon official, also played a role then as a lobbyist.

Rogers said the mayor's arguments seemed to have resonance with the analysts, calling that the day's good news. "The bad news is this is an incredibly tough lift," he added.

In a related development, Gov. Jim Doyle and the state's 10 federal lawmakers asked Thursday that a federal official visit the 440th Airlift Wing. An analyst visited last week, but the lawmakers want one of the nine commissioners to assess the unit.

In a letter to commission chairman Anthony Principi, the lawmakers disputed a report that 266 full-time civilian jobs would be lost at the wing, saying the number is 379. Also at stake are 1,320 part-time reserve positions.

Commissioners have been visiting installations facing 300 or more civilian job losses or a combined 400 civilian and military jobs.

### **Opinions/ Editorials**

#### **Pre-emptive strike to save Duluth air base is prudent**

Duluth News-Tribune (Duluth, MN)  
June 11, 2005

So, the Pentagon had the Duluth Air National Guard unit in its big-gun sights after all when it made its list of installations to close or have their missions drastically reduced.

Now we learn -- in a document acquired Friday by the News Tribune -- that in addition to having its fighter jets retired in 2007 (reported last month), Duluth's 148th Fighter Wing could lose more than half of its members by 2011.

The proposed reduction was not mentioned in last month's list of base closures and realignments. The future of the Duluth unit was left in limbo.

Duluth's Air National Guard unit is an important part of this region's economy, the loss of which would have a profound impact on life here -- economically and socially. The unit estimates its economic impact is \$85.1 million annually. Some 400 of the unit's 1,100 members work full time at the base. The unit is the city's ninth-largest employer.

So now Duluth joins Grand Forks and Fargo -- both drastically affected by last month's announcement -- among upper-Midwest cities in trying to persuade military and political officials in Washington of the importance of their units to this region and to national defense.

To that end, Mayor Herb Bergson, Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce officials, Duluth International Airport officials and others have hastily arranged a trip to Washington next week to lobby Congress members and Pentagon officials.

Both Rep. Jim Oberstar and Sens. Mark Dayton and Norm Coleman have expressed concern about the proposal. They will meet with Duluthians next week.

Local interests from every community affected by the proposed cuts are converging on Washington to try to rescue their military installations from closure or downsizing. We can only hope that Duluth's leaders will be able to influence those who make the decisions of the importance of our unit to national defense and its impact on our economy. As Bergson noted Friday, "These are the people (the 148th) who flew over the Pentagon on 9/11." These are also the people who today are serving in Iraq.

Clearly, military realignments are periodically needed in the interest of economy and defense. Duluth lost a major U.S. Air Force base -- not an Air National Guard unit -- in the early 1970s. Much of that installation is now a federal prison.

The group representing Duluth's interests would be well advised to bring that out in its dealings with officials in Washington next week. Duluth, in a sense, has paid its base-closing dues.

The final decision will be up to Congress. Almost nothing is as "political" as the final decision on military base closings. This will be an important test of this region's clout in Congress.

**DFAS Numbers must add up**  
Bangor Daily News (Bangor, ME)  
June 10, 2005

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission has complex decisions to make about hundreds of bases targeted by the Department of Defense and relatively simple ones to make about the Defense Finance and Accounting Service centers, including one in Limestone.

For DFAS, it must ask two sets of questions: Will the quality of work and the cost of operation be greater or lesser under Defense's proposed consolidation of services? And, does economic recovery from previous base closings matter to the current round?

The Pentagon also cites security as a reason for shutting down 21 DFAS centers and concentrating operations in Colorado, Indiana and Ohio, but the department should first provide evidence of a problem before offering consolidation as a solution. Estimated savings by closing the centers is \$ 158 million between fiscal years 2006 and 2011, with annual savings of \$ 120 million thereafter; the number of personnel needed and other costs, however, have yet to be made public.

According to Defense records, the square-foot cost of operations at the facilities scheduled for expansion -- Denver (\$ 9.15), Columbus (\$ 8.27) and Indianapolis (\$ 11.11) -- is considerably higher than the cost at Limestone: \$ 4.39 per square foot. In addition, locality pay, which is the adjustment to government salaries based on area salaries, is lower in Limestone and other rural areas than in the cities scheduled for expansion.

As for quality, Limestone has grown and been given expanded responsibilities precisely because it was a low-cost, high-accuracy center.

It has not only won government awards for its service but two years ago received a \$ 6 million expansion contract. It and a DFAS center in Dayton, Ohio, also scheduled to close, currently do all of the accounting for the Air Force.

Though a date for his visit is so far unscheduled, retired Air Force Gen. Lloyd Newton, one of the four base closure panelists who visited Maine recently, will be back this summer to visit Limestone. What he will see is a former Air Force base transformed to civilian use by a lot of hard work and a steady stream of federal support. Previous base closures were made less painful and ultimately more acceptable by locating needed government services at those bases, providing jobs and attracting other businesses to these new centers. Loring has been successful, but the loss of 360 jobs associated with DFAS would be a serious set back. More broadly, communities nationwide will be less likely to trust Defense recovery plans if they know Defense could cancel them a couple of years later.

Eventually -- perhaps before the

September deadline -- the Pentagon may release all of the details that went into its closure decisions, and Maine will have a better idea of how Limestone compares with the consolidated bases. So far, however, the closure plan seems (forgive us) baseless.

### *Additional Notes*