

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

July 12, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

[Army National Guard changing unit missions \(Sioux Falls, SD\)](#)

National News Articles

[Pennsylvania Governor Sues Pentagon Over Base Cuts](#)

[Hawthorne greets BRAC official warily \(Reno, NV\)](#)

[State Sues Pentagon To Save Willow Grove](#)

Opinions/ Editorials

[Armed Services Chairman Warner Blasts Rumsfeld's BRAC Folly](#)

Local News Articles

[Blagojevich Fights To Keep Fighter Wing In Illinois \(St. Louis, MO\)](#)

Additional Notes

N/A

[Thousands Show Up In Effort To Sway BRAC \(San Antonio, TX\)](#)

Department of Defense Releases

[BRAC Commission Hears Bliss' Case \(El Paso, TX\)](#)

National News Articles

Pennsylvania Governor Sues Pentagon Over Base Cuts

New York Times
July 11, 2005

[Ellington Shake-Up Rebutted \(Houston, TX\)](#)

[Stratford Offers A Base-Closure Story Without A Happy Ending \(New London, CT\)](#)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Pennsylvania's governor and two U.S. senators sued the Pentagon on Monday to prevent deactivation of a Pennsylvania Air National Guard unit in a bid to save a military base from closure.

[BRAC commissioner visits targeted bases in Reno, Hawthorne \(Hawthorne, NV\)](#)

[Arsenal employees refuse to bail out until they learn about jobs \(Davenport, IA\)](#)

In what is being viewed as the first lawsuit of its kind, Gov. Ed Rendell, joined by Pennsylvania's Republican Sens. Arlen Specter and Rick Santorum, is invoking the "militia clause" of the U.S. Constitution to prevent de-activation of the national guard's 111th Fighter Wing at the

[Snyder says LRAFB needs advocates to keep boost in place \(Little Rock, AR\)](#)

Willow Grove Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base.

The base near Philadelphia is among 837 facilities the Defense Department has earmarked for closure or cutbacks in the first round of domestic base reductions in a decade.

The suit, filed in U.S. District Court in Philadelphia, names Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld as a defendant. It claims that federal law prohibits the changing, relocation or withdrawal of a National Guard unit without the approval of the governor of the state in which the unit is located.

The closure of the Willow Grove base would cost 1,232 direct jobs, including more than 1,000 associated with the 111th, which operates A-10 ground attack aircraft and has been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan in recent years.

Rendell told the Base Realignment and Closure Commission last week that he would not consent to the deactivation of the fighter wing.

In a statement, he said the 111th must be kept "available, to me as governor, to perform state active duty missions dealing with homeland security, natural disasters and other state missions."

Although Pennsylvania may not need the tank-bombing capabilities of its 15 A-10 "Warthogs," Rendell said the fighter wing has valuable medical, communications and intelligence personnel, trucks, buses and other equipment that could be put to use in a local emergency.

A National Guard spokesman declined to comment directly on the lawsuit, saying it was an issue that "would have to be sorted out by the lawyers."

State Sues Pentagon To Save Willow Grove

Philadelphia Inquirer
Marc Schogol
July 12, 2005

In a novel attempt to keep Willow Grove air base open, Pennsylvania sued the Pentagon yesterday to prevent it from deactivating an Air National Guard unit at the base, claiming it's illegal without state consent.

The Pentagon in May recommended closing Willow Grove Naval Air Station and Joint Reserve Base and reassigning nine of the 15 planes attached to the 111th Fighter Wing of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard to Maryland, Idaho and Michigan. The remaining six would be taken out of service.

But at a Center City news conference yesterday, Gov. Rendell and state Attorney General Tom Corbett cited several clauses in the federal legal code, including one saying that "a unit of the Army National Guard of the United States or the Air National Guard of the United States may not be relocated or withdrawn under this chapter without the consent of the governor of the State."

The language of the law is absolutely clear, Corbett said. "This is a no-brainer."

Rendell said the 111th Fighter Wing is the only National Guard unit that the Department of Defense has slated for deactivation.

"I was never consulted and never consented," Rendell said yesterday. "I didn't then and I don't now."

Glenn Flood, a Department of Defense spokesman, defended the department's base-closing process. He said "the National Guard Bureau and all the people representing the Guard were players in that process."

The National Guard Association, a Washington organization representing current and former Guard officers, said Pennsylvania is the only state that has filed such a suit.

The federal laws cited in the suit filed in U.S. District Court in Philadelphia yesterday are based on a state's constitutional right to raise and maintain militias, Rendell said.

Unlike the military Reserves, which are always under federal control, the National Guard has a dual status. The Guard is primarily state controlled and deployed to assist with state emergencies such as hurricanes and other natural disasters, but it can be federalized for national duty.

The state's lawsuit came just four days after Rendell and other officials were in Washington to persuade the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission not to close Willow Grove or the Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station. More than a dozen smaller installations were also on the base-closing list for a net loss of 1,878 jobs in Pennsylvania.

The base-closure commission is charged with reviewing the Pentagon recommendations and issuing a final report to President Bush and Congress by Sept. 8.

The governor said "we still have an excellent chance" to convince the commission to keep the Willow Grove base open.

On speaker-phone hookups from Washington, U.S. Sens. Arlen Specter and Rick Santorum supported Rendell's action. Specter said that with its jet fighters, the 111th was "very important for homeland security," especially "in case there was an attack on Southeast Philadelphia. The National Guard is there to protect the state."

The unit represents about one-fourth of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard, Rendell said. Since Sept. 11, 2001, most of the 111th's approximately 1,000 members have seen military action or been deployed to Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait and elsewhere overseas.

Santorum said the Department of Defense's decision to deactivate the 111th was just another example of "shoddy work" and the base-closing procedure's "comedy of errors."

Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, was quoted by the Associated Press in May as saying that states could make the argument that the Pentagon has no legal

power to close Guard bases without the consent of governors.

"It's a very valid argument; it's exactly the right argument," Blum said.

Yesterday, however, a spokesman for the National Guard Bureau declined to either support or oppose Rendell's argument.

"Our position is that it is something that's going to be addressed in the legal venues," said Lt. Col. Mike Milord. "It's for the lawyers to settle."

Willow Grove, which houses units from all the military services, currently is maintained by the U.S. Navy. If the state's lawsuit is successful, the 111th would remain active and under state control.

Local News Articles

Blagojevich Fights To Keep Fighter Wing In Illinois

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (St. Louis, MO)
Bill Lambrecht and Harry Levins
July 12, 2005

WASHINGTON -- Asserting his role as commander-in-chief of the Illinois National Guard, Gov. Rod Blagojevich on Monday challenged the legality of a Pentagon proposal to move F-16s from the 183rd Fighter Wing in Springfield, Ill. to Indiana.

Blagojevich declared in letters to the government that he would not consent to the Pentagon's base realignment plan for the central Illinois aircraft, a step he contended is necessary for the plan to be carried out by the Base Realignment and Closing Commission (BRAC).

"This lack of consultation compromises the integrity of the process used to develop the BRAC recommendations and disregards my role as commander-in-chief of the Illinois National Guard," Blagojevich wrote in letters to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and BRAC chairman Anthony J. Principi.

Blagojevich is relying on a section of federal law that reads, "A unit of the Army National Guard of the United States or the Air National Guard of the United States may not be relocated or withdrawn under this chapter without the consent of the governor of the state..."

In an interview, Blagojevich said he would decline to give his consent because removal of 17 fighter jets from Springfield would threaten the security of his state and cities in Illinois and Missouri.

Blagojevich noted the presence of 11 nuclear reactors in Illinois and 28 locks and dams on the Mississippi and other rivers that are protected by the Air National Guard planes based in central Illinois.

"Moving these fighter planes jeopardizes all of our assets and puts in more peril big cities like Chicago, St. Louis and Kansas City," he said.

Several other states have protested on similar grounds since the Pentagon made its recommendations in May.

On Monday, Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell declared his intent to sue prevent shifting planes from the 111th Fighter Wing near Philadelphia.

Like Blagojevich, a fellow Democrat, Rendell declared, "I will not agree to deactivation of this unit."

In Missouri, the 131st Fighter Wing at Lambert Field also would lose fighters under the realignment proposal. Gov. Matt Blunt, a Republican, testified last month at a BRAC regional hearing that the realignment "would lead to a hole in the protection of our heartland."

Blunt spokeswoman Jessica Robinson said Monday that Blunt "is certainly considering all options, but he has not made a decision whether or not to take the same path that the Illinois governor is taking."

Defense Department spokesman Glenn Flood said that the Pentagon assumed when making its

made its recommendations that the law establishing base closure procedures superceded other laws.

Flood added that the Pentagon was awaiting clarification from the Justice Department.

BRAC spokesman Jim Schaefer said the commission had requested guidance from the Justice Department on questions surrounding states' authority after hearing arguments similar to those of Blagojevich.

Schaefer said he hopes that that the commission members get their questions answered by next week. The commission expects to prepare a final list of base closings by Sept. 8; Nov. 7 is the deadline for President George W. Bush to certify the list and submit it to Congress, which has 45 days to reject it.

Richard H. Kohn, former chief historian of the Air Force and now a history professor at the University of North Carolina, said the issue could end up in court as a way of delaying BRAC.

He said that the Pentagon might decline to provide money for a National Guard unit in dispute. It costs the federal government tens of millions of dollars annually for each Air National Guard unit and the federal government owns the aircraft.

Blagojevich said he doubted that the dispute would get that far.

"I can't imagine the Department of Defense, which has the responsibility of keeping our nation secure, would single out Illinois because we're fighting for our National Guard unit," he said.

Thousands Show Up In Effort To Sway BRAC

San Antonio Express-News (San Antonio, TX)
Sig Christenson
July 12, 2005

Thousands of Texans converged on the 2005 base closure commission's regional hearing Monday in San Antonio, hoping it would be the turning point in a desperate battle to save their installations and key missions.

Four commissioners, three of them with Alamo City ties, gave no hint of whether the platoons of boosters clad in brightly colored T-shirts and armed with placards bearing small American flags had dented Pentagon plans to close their bases.

They listened intently during a 5 1/2-hour hearing — the 13th held by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission — while a parade of experts argued that proposals to close bases or realign missions in San Antonio, Texarkana, Wichita Falls, Abilene, Corpus Christi and Ingleside, among other towns, were flawed and would jeopardize security.

"Commissioners, this is the last authorized BRAC. I urge you to err on the side of caution," said Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas. "If you close facilities that are needed in the future, particularly facilities that will cost hundreds of millions of dollars to replicate ... are we doing what is right for our men and women in the armed services? Are we doing what is right for our country?"

That was an oft-repeated theme at the session, not the thousands of jobs that stand to be lost.

The nation's fifth BRAC round since 1988 would close 33 major installations — three in Texas, including Brooks City-Base in San Antonio. The closures aim to save money and raise readiness, but as at other regional hearings, critics Monday contended the Pentagon is going after the wrong bases.

Those installations include the other two set to close in Texas — Naval Station Ingleside and Red River Army Depot, which account for 7,700 jobs and are major cogs in their local economies. Corpus Christi Naval Air Station would stay open but lose about 1,000 workers.

Elsewhere, Fort Hood would part with more than 8,000 troops by the end of the decade, Air Force bases in Abilene and Wichita Falls would see missions realigned — one to San Antonio — and the Texas Air National Guard's 147th Fighter Wing at Houston's Ellington Field would be inactivated.

Most of those testifying came to bash this year's BRAC and all touted their bases. U.S. Rep. Solomon Ortiz, D-Corpus Christi, could have spoken for advocates from Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas when he told the commissioners, "We have a great story to tell about our bases in South Texas and what role they play."

Former Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce Chairman Charlie Amato praised BRAC's call for the city to become a center for enlisted medical training, a move that would bring 3,500 jobs and \$1 billion in new construction.

While urging the panel to support the Defense Department Center for Joint Enlisted Training, an action that is to bring 9,364 jobs to Fort Sam Houston, he and other local experts didn't battle to save Brooks and its 2,923 workers or Wilford Hall Medical Center, which is to become a clinic. They argued instead for keeping three missions at Brooks that leaders say dovetail neatly into the Alamo City's medical and technology sector.

Retired Brig. Gen. John G. Jernigan, head of a San Antonio task force that has prepared for this BRAC round, called on commissioners to reverse a Pentagon proposal to move Brook's School of Aerospace Medicine to Wright-Patterson AFB in Ohio.

He also contended it makes no sense to move the Air Force Institute of Operational Health at Brooks and its directed-energy research facilities.

The operational health office, which took soil samples in Iraq after the first Gulf War, does drug testing for the Air Force and helps the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention gather samples for new flu vaccines. The

directed-energy lab has been involved in developing nonlethal weapons systems.

"There are many companies that can partner very easily with what they do, and that's very different from Dayton," Jernigan said in an interview. "They don't have the biomedical community we have here."

Doug Williams, a retired Air Force colonel, told the panel that a Pentagon recommendation to move Lackland AFB's Cryptologic Systems Group is a mistake.

He noted the National Security Agency has "formally expressed concerns" about the recommendation, which he said would hamper U.S. intelligence operations.

Texarkana boosters fear that the Pentagon's call to close Red River and the Lone Star Ammunition Depot, eliminating 4,500 jobs, would triple the city's unemployment rate and undermine the Army's war on terrorism.

Sen. Mark Pryor, D-Ark., said Red River has capabilities critical to fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq, including the Army's only rubber product manufacturing plant. Hutchison reminded the panel that Red River survived the 1995 BRAC because of the need for extra production capacity in times of crisis.

Retired Adms. Paul Ryan and Al Konetzni warned that Ingleside's closure would endanger the Navy's minesweeper program and possibly jeopardize the heavily industrialized Gulf Coast, where 7,000 tankers sail annually.

They said Ingleside is the coast's sole deep-water port and can handle any ship in the fleet. Konetzni, a former chief of the Pacific sub fleet, said eight of the nation's top 10 ports in terms of tonnage are in the gulf.

Former Corpus Christi Mayor Loyd Neal said the base costs \$27 million a year to run, adding, "That's approximately the cost of one tanker of oil that enters the Gulf of Mexico."

Commission Chairman Anthony Principi and members Sue Ellen Turner, Tom Hill and Lloyd W. "Fig" Newton sat quietly throughout the proceedings, rarely asking questions. They all laughed, though, when Hutchison tossed yellow Red River T-shirts to them, an act that drew the crowd to its feet.

"This work force has the biggest heart in all of America," she said. "They're doing a great job. They will answer the call whenever and whatever it is."

Red River machinist leader Marty Warren, one of hundreds who drove seven hours from Texarkana, didn't know if his presence helped, but he still showed the colors and cheered his team, saying, "I know we had to come. We had to do it."

BRAC Commission Hears Bliss' Case Post's space ideal for air school's training, officials say

El Paso Times (El Paso, TX)

Chris Roberts

July 12, 2005

SAN ANTONIO -- If military value is the only consideration, Fort Bliss should be able to keep its Patriot missile training center, El Paso and state officials said Monday after a presentation to commission members evaluating a proposed national military realignment.

The Pentagon recommended moving the Air Defense Artillery Center and School from Fort Bliss to Fort Sill, Okla., in the Base Realignment and Closure list that was released in May. Communities, in regional public hearings across the country, have been asking the independent BRAC Commission to make changes to the plan.

The El Paso contingent that attended Monday's hearing in San Antonio argued that even the shortest-range air-defense missiles couldn't be fired at Fort Sill because the post lacks adequate training space. Fort Bliss, they said, has vast training spaces and can accommodate more soldiers.

"In spite of the strong case under the BRAC criteria that shows that Fort Bliss is the Number One rated facility in the country ... there's always the concern that this is a political process," said U.S. Rep. Silvestre Reyes, D-El Paso. "The Department of Defense recommendation flies in the face of all the facts."

However, retired Maj. Gen. Toney Stricklin, a former Fort Sill commander, said during Oklahoma's presentation that live-fire opportunities are not necessary for the school to accomplish its missions.

"I know a thing or two about training at Fort Sill and what can or cannot be done on those ... ranges," Stricklin said. "The training ranges and controlled air space will support the mission."

The four Base Realignment and Closure Commission members who attended Monday's hearing didn't comment during the presentations by the El Paso and Oklahoma delegations. But in a news conference afterward, a commissioner said they would weigh all the information received during the meeting.

"Both are attached to their communities," said retired Army Gen. James T. Hill, a native of El Paso. "The Army wants to put the school at Fort Sill. We'll take the information given to us by Fort Bliss and take it under consideration."

Final approval for the base realignment proposal, which must be approved by President Bush, won't happen until the end of this year or early next year. The changes would take place over a six-year period.

Under the Pentagon's proposals, Fort Bliss would almost double in size in coming years, with a net gain of 11,500 soldiers.

That net gain could be even higher if the commission were to reverse the recommendation to move the air defense school and approximately 4,500 soldiers to Fort Sill.

The El Paso delegation made its presentation in the morning, which started with an expression of enthusiasm for the Pentagon recommendation that the Fort Bliss population be boosted by a net 11,500 soldiers. "Our top priority is to welcome these troops," Reyes said.

Reyes also spoke to an admonition in the Pentagon's BRAC list that the city may need to find new sources of drinking water. "We have ensured sufficient water for the coming century and beyond," he said.

Schools will have enough space for children of the new soldiers and housing starts identified by three El Paso developers will more than handle the proposed increases at Fort Bliss, he said.

"About 70 percent of these new units will be in the Northeast part of El Paso with easy access to Fort Bliss," Reyes said.

Parts of the BRAC report related to Fort Bliss was based on "erroneous and sometimes incomplete data," said Bob Cook, interim director of the Regional El Paso Development Corp.

And although the Pentagon list assumed a vertical limit on Fort Bliss' air space, Cook said, it extends from "mud to space."

Assumptions on air quality were based on 2003 data, he said. Since that time the El Paso area has come into federal attainment for ozone and is petitioning to be removed from the non-attainment list for carbon monoxide after consistently meeting the requirements in recent years. He said there are questions about monitoring technology used to collect data on particulates that need to be worked out before attainment can be determined.

"We have no challenges to receiving these new missions from an air-quality standpoint," Cook said.

The BRAC list also ranked El Paso below Lawton, Okla., where Fort Sill is located, for employment opportunities.

However, that ranking only looked at the rate of job growth, which is higher in Lawton, and the average unemployment rate, which is lower in Lawton, Cook said. The formula failed to account for the fact that El Paso's work force is seven times larger, he said, which means there are more than three times as many jobs available.

It was retired Maj. Gen. James P. Maloney, a former Fort Bliss commander, who made the case for size.

Using a map with the boundaries of the two posts superimposed, Maloney told commissioners that Fort Bliss is 12 times the size of Fort Sill. He said the training space at Fort Bliss would allow soldiers to train exactly as they will be asked to fight, which Army doctrine considers desirable.

Stricklin, the former Fort Sill commander, said in Oklahoma's afternoon presentation that the map showed only relative size and not military value.

Part of the rationale for moving the air defense school was so that it would be in the same location as the artillery school at Fort Sill, allowing creation of a "Net Fires Center" and making room for other heavy brigades at Fort Bliss.

Fort Bliss, combined with White Sands Missile Range, has more than 4 million acres, Maloney said, which is about the size of Connecticut. Fort Bliss alone, at 1.1 million acres, has space for three divisions in addition to the current garrison, he said.

Maloney said Fort Bliss' vast training areas and ample room for more troops make it the ideal location for the Net Fires Center, which would involve moving Fort Sill's artillery school to Fort Bliss.

"Fort Bliss has plenty of capacity," he said.

Maloney said the smallest of the air defense weapons, a Stinger missile, can't be fired at Fort Sill. He said between 140 and 220 of those

missiles are fired each year at Fort Bliss. Traveling from Fort Sill to Fort Bliss to fire the missiles would require a 1,200-mile round trip, he added.

"The ranges at Fort Sill do not accommodate any (air defense) missiles," Maloney said, adding that there are about 23 Patriot live firings each year. And he said that weapons under development have even longer ranges.

Maloney said space limitations at Fort Sill also would make it impossible to conduct maneuvers that, according to Army doctrine, require a minimum of 20 kilometers between units.

"Fort Sill may not accommodate the firing of all weapons systems," Stricklin said, "however, the Pershing II was developed at Fort Sill and trained at Fort Sill, but never fired at Fort Sill."

Stricklin said other air defense systems have been developed at Fort Sill without live firing at the post. "These successful systems have all proven that local live fire is not a necessity," he said.

He said the only soldier who gets the opportunity to fire a Patriot missile is the honor graduate. "This is a demonstration, not training," he said.

Both of Texas' U.S. senators, Republicans John Cornyn and Kay Bailey Hutchison, said the El Paso presentation was "compelling."

"Fort Sill cannot replicate the ability to train," Cornyn said. "I think El Paso made a great argument."

Hutchison said the El Paso delegation "showed that Fort Sill can't compete in what the Army is trying to do."

Ellington Shake-Up Rebutted Area delegation points to the need for keeping F-16s to protect against terrorist attacks

Houston Chronicle (Houston, TX)
John W. Gonzalez

July 12, 2005

SAN ANTONIO - A Pentagon plan to remove jet fighters from Ellington Field is based on a flawed analysis that ignores the site's crucial role in regional anti-terrorism defenses, Houston-area officials said Monday.

Testifying before the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, U.S. House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, R-Sugar Land, Houston Mayor Bill White and others pleaded for reversal of the Defense Department's recommendation to retire the 15 F-16 jets of the Texas Air National Guard's 147th Fighter Wing.

"A mistake has been made and we are appealing to this commission to fix it," DeLay said.

"Such a massive population and geographic area simply cannot be defended without adequate military assets and those assets need a home along the Gulf Coast. And that home should remain Ellington Field — despite the Pentagon's incomplete estimate of Ellington's strategic value."

Ellington Field Task Force Chairman John Cook said a projected loss of 556 jobs would be significant, but "this is not an economic development issue. It is a national security issue of the highest magnitude, which just happens to be based in the heart of Houston."

Cook and DeLay said Houston is the only U.S. city with all nine terrorist target types identified by the FBI, including petrochemical and refining plants, port facilities, medical centers, the space center, a nuclear power plant and the area's dense population.

"This makes Houston the single most terrorist target-rich metropolitan area in the U.S. We respectfully challenge the recommendation to eliminate the primary source of protection for these terrorist targets. It just doesn't make sense," Cook said.

Without the aircraft, Houston area targets would be vulnerable to "anything from a Piper Cub to a foreign chartered (Boeing) 747 to hijacked

corporate jets. None of our other homeland security, law enforcement or other Air Force resources can replace the 147th at Ellington Field to protect our national assets," Cook said.

The unit's former commander, retired Col. Rob Parr, said a recent visit to the field by commission members and staff increased their appreciation for its usefulness, but he said the conclusion needs further review and must be overturned.

"The very fact that the Air Force let this premature recommendation slide under the radar screen and into the BRAC process is, in itself, indicative of a flawed process," Parr said.

He said the Pentagon "deviated substantially from its own guidelines and its own law in arriving at this recommendation." Among other things, "homeland defense considerations were not factored into 'military value,' " a key criterion, Parr added.

Further, he said "this recommendation does not save money," another main objective. Rather than a projected \$3.6 million savings, a \$33.1 million outlay could result over several years, he said.

But it was the homeland security factor — and the vulnerability of port and refining facilities — that was reiterated by Ellington advocates, including Harris County Commissioner Sylvia Garcia and White.

"More importantly, we need to make sure we can protect our people," Garcia said.

"There's no dispute that the homeland security significance of this complex was not taken into account," White said. "I cannot put police officers in military aircraft or arm them with surface-to-air missiles. We need the 147th."

The appeals were made to four members of the nine-member commission, including Chairman Anthony Principi, who must submit their findings to President Bush by Sept. 8.

Only one commissioner — retired Air Force Gen. Lloyd W. "Fig" Newton — posed questions to the Houston delegation. He asked what other weapons systems were needed in the area.

"Obviously air-to-surface, air-to-maritime (missiles) would be a very important addition to the 147th repertoire," Parr said. "They're trained to deploy those. They simply need the rules of engagement worked out between the various services and Coast Guard."

Newton later told reporters that Houston's emphasis on homeland security concerns wasn't unique. In the 14 regional hearings already held around the United States, the same issue was raised in other areas, he said. Monday's hearing was the only one scheduled in Texas.

"We've heard this in many, many other places — on the East Coast, for instance, up in Maine and Boston and that area. We've heard that a lot, with reference to the movement of assets and military forces from that part of the country," Newton said.

Houston, which gave an information-packed, 30-minute presentation to commissioners, was one of eight Texas communities whose leaders provided sworn testimony about the Pentagon's cost-cutting suggestions. Gov. Rick Perry and Texas' U.S. senators, Kay Bailey Hutchison and John Cornyn, were on hand for the entire seven-hour proceeding.

The Pentagon plans would benefit installations in San Antonio, El Paso and Abilene, but they drew harsh criticism from representatives of Texarkana, Corpus Christi, Killeen and Wichita Falls.

Most of the complaining communities cited outdated or flawed data, but one commissioner, retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Sue E. Turner, said, "We are still in the information gathering stage. When claims like that are made to us, we simply take them back to our analysts and they dig a little deeper."

Commissioners and state officials said they were pleased by the turnout of at least 5,000 people, including a large contingent from Northeast Texas and Arkansas hoping to reverse plans to close the Red River Army Depot and Lone Star Ammunition Plant. Backers of Naval Station Ingleside and its Mine Warfare Center of Excellence, likewise slated for closure, also turned out in force.

Stratford Offers A Base-Closure Story Without A Happy Ending Army Engine Plant Closed In '97, Taking 1,400 Jobs

New London Day (New London, CT)
Matt Apuzzo
July 11, 2005

Stratford--There was a time when the shelves at the South Main Package Store were filled with spirits for the Army machinists to take home after work. The price tags are still there, clinging to empty shelf space.

These days, Alice Connolly doesn't stock much in her family business: Six liters of vodka, a few scattered bottles and boxes of table wine, a half-full cooler of beer.

It's been that way since 1997, when the Base Closure and Realignment Commission closed the Stratford Army Engine Plant across the street, wiping out 1,400 jobs.

The Pentagon's Office of Economic Assistance publishes a guide to recovering from base closure and highlights a number of success stories in which new industry blossoms.

"You know what you can do with those brochures?" said Janice Paige, a convenience store owner down the road from the plan. "Rip 'em up and throw 'em away."

Stratford is not a success story.

And for officials fighting to keep their bases open this year, Stratford represents their biggest fears.

“We're not going to be sold a bill of goods by people who want to tell a happy story,” said U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-3rd District, who was among a team of representatives that traveled to Boston last week trying to save Groton's submarine base and its more than 8,000 jobs. “There hasn't been a job yet created in Stratford as a result of that shutdown.”

The Pentagon's base closure plans would result in a net loss of 29,005 military and civilian jobs nationwide. And while defense officials stand ready with economic aid and assistance, local leaders in towns hit hardest by the recommendations are concerned.

“It doesn't take much to understand what \$350 million in payroll means,” said Portsmouth City Manager John Bohenko, whose city lies just over the border from Kittery, Maine, where the Naval shipyard stands to be closed. “And it could affect the local hardware store, the local diner, the hospitality industry. It's one of those things that has a macro impact.”

Dozens of congressional and state leaders from around the country have gone before the BRAC commissioners over the past several days and pleaded their case. More are scheduled to do so before the commissioners issue their recommendations to President Bush this fall.

BRAC spokesman C. James Schaefer said officials who are counting on their economic outlook to win over the commission shouldn't be too optimistic.

“They have to realize the commission is going to put a priority on military value first and foremost,” Schaefer said.

Paige doesn't think that's fair. Her Stratford neighborhood built itself around the factory where tank engines were built for years. She hopes the town successfully redevelops the massive factory but notes that it's been 10 years since the BRAC decision and the Army still hasn't turned over the property to the town.

About 28 percent of abandoned military property has not been turned over to local

officials for redevelopment, according to a Government Accountability Office report this year, leaving 49,000 acres unused nationwide.

The biggest obstacle to transferring property is environmental cleanup, according to the GAO. The military is obligated to clean the property, though squabbling about how much cleanup to expect is common. Thirty-four bases closed since 1988 are on the Superfund list of worst toxic waste sites, and none is completely cleaned yet.

Groton's submarine base is among at least seven facilities proposed for closure that are polluted and the Pentagon has estimated it will cost more than \$700 million to clean them. Otis Air National Guard Base in Massachusetts and the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard are among the polluted bases.

Mark Barnhart, former Stratford town manager, said he got all the development booklets and advice from the Pentagon when the engine plant was being closed.

“They certainly have had instances where they've bandied about where things have worked well,” Barnhart said. “It's a little harder to turn an older industrial brownfield into something positive.”

BRAC commissioner visits targeted bases in Reno, Hawthorne

The Associated Press State & Local Wire
(Hawthorne, NV)

Brendan Riley

July 12, 2005

Several hundred residents turned out Monday to urge a federal commission to take a huge ammunition depot - this small town's largest employer - off a list of military bases facing possible closure.

They cheered, whistled and applauded as speaker after speaker urged Philip Coyle, a member of the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission, to recommend against shutting down the depot that has operated here for 75 years.

Coyle was the first of three members of the seven-member panel expected to tour the 147,230-acre Army Ammunition Depot in advance of the panel's report to Congress and President Bush on Sept. 8.

Earlier, state and military leaders made pitches to reverse proposed changes at the Nevada Air National Guard Base in Reno where the Defense Department has proposed removing C-130 transport planes and basing them in Little Rock, Ark.

The Pentagon says the government also would avoid duplication and save money by moving the Hawthorne depot's storage and recycling functions to the Tooele Army Depot in Utah.

"It appears the Department of Defense is going for the kill this time around," Mineral County Commission Chairman Richard Bryant told Coyle, arguing that base closure would devastate the area's economy, force the school district to default on bonds, "and the list goes on."

"This would virtually cut the heart out of Hawthorne. ... It's just plain wrong," said Bernie Curtis, representing the El Capitan hotel-casino, the second largest employer in Hawthorne with about 150 workers. The depot has 565 employees.

Shelley Hartmann, director of Mineral County's economic development authority, said the total job loss including depot and related area positions would be about 1,200 - about two-thirds of all jobs in the county.

"It doesn't add up," said a tearful Debbie Sitton, a depot employee who along with several other speakers spoke of the strong support for the depot in a town that features sculptures made from bomb casings, defused projectiles marking the entrance to the cemetery, an ordnance museum and school athletic teams nicknamed the "Rockets."

Most of the people who crowded into a high school gym wore pink, orange or green T-shirts saying "No BRAC, no ghost town, no way."

Banners and signs around town said, "You can't BRAC America's patriotic home" and "550 employees do count."

After the meeting, Coyle said he couldn't say whether he'd vote to keep the depot open - but learned that many of the DOD statistics used to justify the closure recommendation may be "astonishingly" flawed.

Statistics provided by Day & Zimmermann, which operates the depot under contract from the Army, put closure costs at \$1.46 billion. The DOD had figured the cost at about \$383 million.

The depot, 130 miles south of Reno, sprawls over 230 square miles, with about 2,500 bunkers filled with 300,000 tons of munitions. The base also has a large plant capable of safely taking apart munitions.

In Reno, Guard commanders said they were pleased with their briefing Monday morning with Coyle, the former assistant U.S. defense secretary under President Clinton.

Col. Jon Proehl, commander of the Nevada Air Guard's 152nd Airlift Wing based next to the Reno Tahoe-International Airport, said Coyle responded favorably to concerns about the state's ability to live up to its homeland security responsibilities without the transport planes.

"My feeling is he has a real sensitivity to the economics, the economic impact and our recruiting base," Proehl said.

"All the issues we thought that would resonate, I had a good feeling that they did that today," he told KKO Radio in Reno.

The Pentagon's plan would leave the Air National Guard with only one set of C-130s west of the Rockies, based in the Los Angeles area, Proehl said.

"A lot of people don't agree with putting all your assets in one nest," he said.

"The feeling I got from the briefing is he has heard from many communities along the same

lines, that the Air Force may have overreached and they may need to look at their methodology," he said.

Gov. Kenny Guinn said the Pentagon's recommendations were based on "inaccurate and misleading data" that created the false impression that the changes would improve national defense and have a little negative impact on Nevada.

"The reality is that this realignment would exact a heavy toll on our state, weakening Nevada's Homeland Security efforts and disaster preparedness (and) debilitate the surrounding Hawthorne economy," Guinn said in a statement from Carson City.

Arsenal employees refuse to bail out until they learn about jobs

The Associated Press State & Local Wire
(Davenport, IA)
July 11, 2005

Most of the 2,000 workers who could lose their jobs at the Rock Island Arsenal if a planned military reorganization occurs have chosen to stay put until a final decision is made.

Two months after the Defense Department announced plans to transfer nearly a third of the jobs off Arsenal Island, the work force has remained quite steady.

A survey of the agencies that would be transferred off Arsenal Island if the recommendations are upheld shows that only 19 people have taken other jobs or retired since the May 13 Pentagon announcement.

It was not clear how many of those changes are due to the uncertainty prompted by the announcement. Only two have been confirmed a direct result of the proposal.

"I don't think there's any panic," said Tom Esparza, president of the American Federation of Government Employees, Local 15. "I think people are holding their breath, watching this very closely.

The Defense Department recommendations still must be reviewed by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission and approved by President Bush and Congress. It likely will be late this year before a final decision comes. It could take up to six years to implement the changes.

The Defense Department has proposed moving the Tank-automotive and Armaments Command, or TACOM, Defense Finance and Accounting Service, Civilian Human Resource Agency and the northwest office of the Installation Management Agency off the island. That would affect about 2,000 people.

About 6,500 people work on the island. The Defense Department also has proposed moving the 1st U.S. Army headquarters from Fort Gillem, Ga., to the Arsenal. That would bring in about 400 new people, meaning a net loss of about 1,600 jobs.

In the immediate aftermath of the Pentagon's announcement, there were reports of workers exploring job opportunities by making calls to local businesses. But Becky Montgomery, a spokeswoman for TACOM, called the number of departures fairly common for a two-month time frame.

"There are so many people on the installation, people move around all the time," she said.

One of the reasons for the steady reaction is that there have been a lot of changes at the installation, which has downsized considerably since the end of the Cold War.

"We've gone through numerous reductions in force over many, many years," said Roger Kromphardt, a counselor for the arsenal's employee assistance program.

Union officials say a lot of employees are weighing their options at this point, even if they are not acting just yet. Those might include job swaps, applying for openings at other agencies on the island or taking retirement.

The last option could prove to be a popular one. Thirty-five percent of the 1,130-person TACOM work force is eligible to retire with full benefits in four years. If only 20 percent of the work force, a figure that has been cited often, were to move, that could mean hundreds of federal workers retiring over the next few years.

Snyder says LRAFB needs advocates to keep boost in place

The Associated Press State & Local Wire (Little Rock, AR)
July 11, 2005

The protests from cities whose C-130 bases are slated for reductions need a counterpoint by Little Rock Air Force Base to keep base closure officials from changing the plan to increase staffing at the base at Jacksonville, U.S. Rep. Vic Snyder said.

Snyder, a Democrat who represents the 2nd District in central Arkansas, said base supporters need to make their case for how the Defense Department is on the right track with its plan to add nearly 4,000 positions at LRAFB.

Snyder made his comments as Fort Smith and Texarkana were fighting the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which planned to slash bases in those communities.

Central Arkansas officials have fought for years to solidify LRAFB as a key C-130 training base, and the consolidation that is planned would greatly enhance the base.

"What we want to do is make our case and provide some balance to those places that don't want to close and don't want to see their C-130s move to Little Rock," Snyder said..

"Those 3,800 jobs are coming from somewhere. So all those bases are going to (the commission) and saying, 'Don't close us. We want to keep our jobs.' If they are all successful, then no jobs come to Little Rock."

As an example, Snyder pointed out the eight C-130s that are to move from the Niagara Falls,

N.Y., Air Reserve Station to Little Rock. Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., has publicly opposed the change.

Army National Guard changing unit missions

The Associated Press State & Local Wire (Sioux Falls, SD)

Carson Walker

July 11, 2005

The South Dakota Army National Guard plans major staff and mission changes in its units in 31 towns and cities across the state over the next three years.

The Guard will move some units to other towns, start new units and disband others.

The transformation is designed to better meet the demands of a changing national military strategy, said Maj. Gen. Michael Gorman, adjutant general.

"Currently the United States Army is organizing to be better able to fight terrorism," he said Monday in a telephone conference call with reporters. "As the Army changes, so must the National Guard."

Most of the changes will take place from October 2007 and September 2008, Gorman said.

"This is a major change for South Dakota," he said. "But our bottom line with this entire thing is our future potential for the people of South Dakota and this nation."

Though those changes will mean different duties for some members, the total number of slots available for soldiers will stay at 3,400, Gorman said. The blueprint may need to be tweaked, but the overall plan likely will remain the same, he said.

Gorman said the recommendations have been a year in the works and are not related to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. That panel has recommended closing Ellsworth Air

Force Base and adding personnel and planes at the Sioux Falls Regional Airport.

The goal is have a National Guard that's able to respond to missions around the world and help South Dakotans during emergencies, Gov. Mike Rounds said in a news release.

"These changes will give the Guard better flexibility to respond to any mission it is asked to do, whether it be local natural disasters, homeland security, or the global war on terror," he said.

The Guard will continue to have a presence in 30 towns and cities, but will move out of Elk Point, Gorman said.

"We have a very substandard facility down there that we lease that's not working out very well for us," he said. "And we have not been there long."

Gorman said changes include:

- Having military police officers in Sioux Falls, as well as in Custer and Rapid City. There will also be a public affairs presence in Sioux Falls, in addition to Rapid City.

- A new signal company in Aberdeen will provide communications to help in wartime and with homeland security.

- More engineers and related earth-moving and construction equipment in the eastern part of the state.

- Water purification specialists will be located in the more populated southeast part of South Dakota.

- More opportunities for female Guard members because fewer jobs will be combat related.

"We think we can get more females to join in those areas. It's just that we haven't had those opportunities," Gorman said.

The adjustments won't come without pain, he said.

Units slated to be disbanded include the 109th Engineer Group in Rapid City, which just returned from Afghanistan, the 109th Engineer Battalion in Sturgis, and the 147th Field Artillery Brigade and 1st Battalion of the 147th in Sioux Falls.

"There's a few things here that are going to happen that most of us don't like," Gorman said.

Much of the focus is to be where the 17- to 25-year-olds live, he said.

"We took into consideration demographics to figure out how many soldiers each community will support," Gorman said.

Nationally, the Guard is having a tough time meeting its recruiting goals.

The transformation shouldn't affect future military call-ups, Gorman said.

"The biggest thing we have going with our soldiers is what happens with the war in Iraq and Afghanistan," he said.

Hawthorne greets BRAC official warily Residents tell commissioner why depot should stay open

Reno Gazette-Journal (Reno, NV)

Steve Timko

July 11, 2005

HAWTHORNE — With a crowd of about 600 lending cheers and applause, 17 speakers made intellectual and emotional arguments Monday to save the Hawthorne Army Depot from the Pentagon's chopping block.

Philip Coyle, one of nine federal Base Closure and Realignment Commission members, traveled to Hawthorne to tour the base, targeted in May for closure as its storage and recycling responsibilities are moved to the Tooele Army Depot in Utah.

Coyle also sat through about a half hour of testimony from community members in the Mineral High School gymnasium. Afterwards,

he told the press that it's too soon to say whether the depot will be spared.

"I won't vote today and I can't tell you how other commissioners would vote," Coyle said.

He conceded there were errors in the information about the Hawthorne Army Depot released by the Pentagon. It estimated civilian job loss at about 199 when it's closer to about 550, Coyle said. But it also said there were 74 military personnel at the depot when in fact there's only one, the depot commander, he said.

If the depot closes, the Mineral County School District will default on its school bonds, warned Ken Chase, chairman of the school district Board of Trustees, and Richard Bryant of the Mineral County Commission.

The school district would lose about 65 percent of its students, Chase said, while poverty would increase but the money to combat it would radically decline.

Bryant listed other problems, such as Hawthorne losing more than half of its jobs, the county having to close its library, parks, museum and youth programs, closing of the hospital and losing physicians and dentists.

Bryant wondered how many communities in the United States would give the military a welcome like Hawthorne, where the Pentagon is currently going through a process to withdraw 142,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management land and 10,000 acres of private land.

"What other installation can withdraw 152,000 acres to expand its mission and receive the blessing of the community?" Bryant said.

Laurie A. Thom, chairwoman of the Walker River Paiute Tribe, said about 6 percent of the depot employees are American Indian. Closing the depot would increase unemployment among tribal members from 67 percent to about 76 percent, Thom said.

Depot employee Debbie Sitton presented a chart that questioned money savings when the cost of

depot cleanup is calculated. She said the Department of Defense has cited poor transportation out of Hawthorne as a problem, but still expects to quickly move materials from Hawthorne to Tooele.

Closing the base would destroy the small town that many came to love, she said.

"My kids are safe walking to the park, to the store or to their friends," Sitton said, her voice cracking with emotion. "This is quality of life and could only happen in a small town. I'm here by choice."

After the meeting, Rita Crist, a lifelong Hawthorne resident, said she hoped the visit by Coyle and more visits by other BRAC commissioners would show the depot was worth saving.

"They can see this area is dry, which is great for ammunition," said Crist, an ammunition project manager. "In the beginning, it was doubtful we were going to get a site visit. Now, we may have three site visits, which is fantastic."

Crist was one of hundreds who showed up in orange, lime green or pink T-shirts printed with "No BRAC No ghost town No way."

Julie Moss, another T-shirt-wearing depot employee, said the community is pulling together to fight the closure just as it does when someone in the community has cancer or loses a home to fire.

"You have to come together in a small town. The town's survival requires it," Moss said.

Hawthorne's attitude, Moss said, has "changed from pure anger that the (Department of Defense) information was wrong to frustration and now to resolve."

Opinions/ Editorials

Armed Services Chairman Warner Blasts Rumsfeld's BRAC Folly
Executive Intelligence Review

Carl Osgood
July 11, 2005

The growing weight of evidence after 13 public regional hearings conducted by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC), suggests that in its plan to close 33 major bases, Donald Rumsfeld's Pentagon willfully—or incompetently—ignored the BRAC law in favor of its own agenda. This should not surprise qualified, honest observers of the George W. Bush Administration and its Secretary of Defense. This is the same gang that brought us the disastrous war in Iraq in March of 2003, claiming that it would be a "cakewalk," and that Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction had to be eliminated immediately. To this day, Rumsfeld angrily denounces anyone who characterizes the war as a "quagmire," despite the fact that the Administration appears to have no plan for solving the problem that it has created in Iraq.

Senate Armed Services Committee chairman John Warner (R-Va.), a leading author of the May 23 bipartisan Senate agreement that stopped Vice President Dick Cheney's "nuclear option," and who sees himself as a defender of the American military, is charging that the Pentagon's BRAC recommendations "deviate substantially" from the criteria established in the law. In testimony to the BRAC Commission in Arlington, Va. on July 7, Warner emphasized that he himself had written the BRAC legislation, and therefore is intimately familiar with the intent of Congress, and has been involved in the BRAC process for 17 years. Warner quoted Benjamin Franklin's remark after the 1789 Constitutional Convention: "We have given you a republic, if you can keep it." He denounced the way the Pentagon made its determinations, and said that he is prepared to take the issue to Federal court, having already written a 37-page legal brief.

Warner stood out in a phalanx of a dozen Senators and Congressmen—most of them Republicans—who mobilized thousands of citizens to Boston, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and Arlington on June 6-8, to fight the Rumsfeld Pentagon's shocking moves to shut

down some of the most important military/economic and medical logistical bases in America's history as a nation.

Warner called the commission's attention to a Nov. 15, 2002 policy memorandum, in which Rumsfeld directed the Pentagon's internal BRAC teams to "produce BRAC recommendations that will advance transformation, combat effectiveness, and the efficient use of taxpayers' money." Military transformation is not one of the goals specified in the law. In fact, the Pentagon's own "Red Team" advised, on March 22, 2005, that "since transformation is not one of the final selection criteria, transformational justifications have no legal basis and should be removed." By that time, of course, the train had already left the station, as military transformation had been one of the guiding forces behind the entire process for more than two years.

Pentagon Gags an Admiral

The Boston regional BRAC hearing, on July 6, provided more evidence that the Pentagon is pursuing its own agenda, including apparently using the BRAC process to shrink the Navy's submarine fleet, by restricting the infrastructure available to support it. The most dramatic moment in Boston came, however, when Sen. Judd Gregg (R-N.H.) told the commissioners that one witness scheduled to testify on behalf of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Rear Admiral William Klemm, had been blocked from appearing by the Pentagon. Klemm, who retired as Deputy Commander for Logistics, Maintenance, and Industrial Operations of the Naval Sea Systems Command, a couple of months ago, had been the chairman of the subgroup within the Pentagon's Industrial Joint Cross Service Group (IJCSG) that decided that the Portsmouth shipyard should be closed. Gregg said that Klemm's testimony would have been "devastating to the Navy case, because of his expertise and because of the fact that his points went to all the criteria ... and, refuted, basically, the Navy position on all these criteria points, and showed substantial deviation [from the criteria]."

Klemm's prepared statement did become available, however, two days later, when it was posted on the website of the Portsmouth Herald newspaper. Although not commenting on his involvement in the BRAC process, Klemm warned that Portsmouth's closure would eliminate surge capacity in the Navy shipyards, because of the loss of skilled workers. He also described how Portsmouth is the lead shipyard in the improvement of submarine maintenance processes, improvements which are then propagated to the Navy's other three shipyards. These improvements are, in part, a product of the culture of the workforce. "That culture cannot be exported or replicated, it is imbedded in the generations of people who work at this facility. Therefore, the loss of Portsmouth Naval Shipyard equates to an irreplaceable loss of the culture and skill sets of innovation and efficiency."

Klemm further warned that the Navy's three remaining shipyards—in Norfolk, Va., Puget Sound, Wash., and Pearl Harbor—do not have the capacity or the resources needed to perform submarine maintenance activities within the prescribed periods of the service lives of the submarines in the fleet. "Faced with the inability to accomplish this work, the Navy will have to keep submarines pierside in non-operational status until skilled artisans and drydocks become available or schedule them for inactivation." He warned that this will result in a reduction of the size of the submarine fleet "through a backlog of maintenance actions over the next five years."

Klemm, in fact, had warned of the problems inherent on closing Portsmouth, during the BRAC process itself. According to the minutes of the Nov. 18, 2004 meeting of the IJCSG, Klemm said that calculations had determined that closing Portsmouth would leave 1.4 million labor hours of workload that could not be absorbed by the other three shipyards. He stated that these calculations, based on the 2005 20-year force structure plan, "preclude the closure of Portsmouth, unless its three drydocks are replicated at another shipyard."

The chairman of the IJCSG, Michael Wynn, then-Acting Undersecretary of Defense for

Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, asked Klemm's subgroup to perform additional analysis to see if it was possible to replicate Portsmouth's workload at other shipyards, before making a final decision on the merits of closing it. But there is no evidence that the additional analysis was ever completed and submitted to the IJCSG; nor that the Pentagon ever figured out how to include Portsmouth's efficiency in its "military value calculations," an issue that Klemm raised in another IJCSG meeting on Jan. 6, 2005. Yet, the IJCSG decided to close Portsmouth, without any proposal to replicate its three drydocks at the remaining shipyards. Thus, it will be the "justifying" plan to cut the Navy's nuclear submarine fleet in the future.

Asked by reporters why Klemm was not allowed to testify in Boston, Senator Gregg reported that the Navy invoked internal rules, but suggested, only half in jest, that "if you were a conspiracy theorist you might conclude that maybe they thought his case was so strong that they didn't want him to testify."

Retired Vice Adm. Albert Konetzni, who commanded the submarine force for the Pacific Fleet before he retired, issued his own warning that the Pentagon was seeking to reduce the submarine force by restricting its budget and its infrastructure, which includes the proposed closure of Submarine Base New London, in Connecticut. He charged that recent studies, that show the submarine fleet dropping to 37-41 boats by the 2020s, are budget-driven. "I think it's inappropriate for the national defense of this nation, to delete the infrastructure of our great submarine force, prior to truly understanding the national security requirements," Konetzni said. He warned that shutting down that infrastructure "will make sure that this force is minimal, and is minimized as an instrument of national defense."

'New England De-Militarized'

In the case of New London, that infrastructure includes the Submarine School where every submariner in the Navy is trained, and supporting institutions that do research, operational, and doctrinal development— institutional capabilities that, like the workforce

culture at Portsmouth, would be difficult, if not impossible, to replicate elsewhere.

Warner is not the only member of the Senate challenging the Pentagon's BRAC process. Sen. Chris Dodd (D-Conn.), following Connecticut's presentation on the New London submarine base, charged that the entire process is fundamentally unfair. He noted that if Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee chairman Susan Collins (R-Me.), and ranking Democrat Joe Lieberman (Conn.) had not had subpoena power, many of the documents used by opponents of the BRAC would not have been available for the hearing. Like Klemm and other witnesses, Dodd protested that the BRAC commission is being asked to make a policy decision on the future size of the submarine fleet, which should be made by the Bush Administration with the participation of Congress. Dodd said that decisions about force structure "ought to be a national debate."

Another aspect of the unfairness of the Pentagon's determinations is the total impact on New England. With the closures of the Portsmouth shipyard and the New London submarine base, and the realignment of the Brunswick, Me. Naval Air Station, the Naval presence in New England would be reduced, as Lieberman noted, to "a naval air station with no planes and a naval station [Newport, R.I.] with no ships. The region's only remaining commissioned Naval ships would be two museums: the venerable USS Constitution, moored in Boston, and the world's first nuclear submarine, the USS Nautilus. Lieberman, Dodd and Rep. Rob Simmons (R-Conn.), whose district includes New London, all warned that such a demilitarization of New England will disconnect the civilian population from the military, with consequent negative effects on recruitment and retention.

Additional Notes