

## Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

# EARLY



# BIRD

August 3, 2005

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**England's Nomination For Deputy Secretary Of Defense Placed On Hold Over BRAC**

Defense Daily

George Cahlink and John Robinson

August 3, 2005

Frustrated with the Pentagon's proposal to close the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, Sen. Olympia Snowe (R-Maine) placed a hold Friday on the president's nomination of Navy Secretary Gordon England to become Deputy Secretary of Defense, according to Pentagon and congressional sources.

A Snowe spokesman citing Senate tradition, which allows senators to place anonymous holds on nominees for executive branch posts,

declined to confirm or deny that she had taken that action.

England currently serves as Navy secretary and has been acting deputy defense secretary since the spring when his Paul Wolfowitz left DoD to head the World Bank.

Congressional and Pentagon sources said Snowe's move was a surprise and came after the Senate Armed Services Committee had forwarded England's nomination to the full Senate for a final vote.

Sen. John Warner (R-Va.), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC), apparently was furious with Snowe and spent 30 minutes with her Friday trying to convince her to lift the hold, so the Senate could approve England before its August recess.

"Senate Warner believes that particularly during wartime it is critical that DoD have a full-time deputy in place," said Senate Armed Services Committee spokesman John Ulyot.

Snowe has long been an opponent of the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process because of its potential to close the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, which employs thousands of civilian workers. In May, DoD recommended closing the shipyard, along with sharply downsizing Naval Air Station in Brunswick, Maine, and shuttering a Defense Finance and Accounting Service facility in Limestone, Maine.

An independent BRAC commission is now reviewing the list and will deliver final recommendations to the President and Congress in early September.

Lawmakers, including Snowe, have expressed frustration with delays by England and other top Pentagon officials in providing detailed information about base-closing decisions. The data was released in June, but only after subpoenas were threatened against England and other DoD leaders.

England has enjoyed bipartisan support for the Pentagon's number two job, but his nomination had been held up since the spring over conflict-of-interest concerns over \$280,000 in pensions he was slated to collect from his former employers, Lockheed Martin [LMT] and General Dynamics [GD]. Those firms have billions of dollars in defense weapons contracts that he'd hold huge sway over as the deputy secretary.

Warner has tried for the past two months to resolve the issue by finding an insurance company to insure England's pension against any decisions England would make at DoD. Those efforts proved fruitless, but Warner and other committee members ultimately decided that having a permanent deputy secretary in place was more important than their ethics concerns.

On Monday, Warner called on President Bush to use his recess appointment authority to give England the job, but there was no public mention that a hold had been placed on his nomination. The White House has not responded to that request.

Warner also asked for a recess appointment for Eric Edelman to become deputy undersecretary of defense for policy. Congressional sources say Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.), ranking minority member on the SASC placed a hold on Edelman's nomination on Friday, as well.

Levin had threatened a hold if the Pentagon did not provide lawmakers with key documents related to intelligence used in the Iraqi war by former Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Douglas Feith.

Meanwhile, Peter Flory, acting assistant secretary of defense for international security, received a recess appointment yesterday to take the job permanently. His nomination had been on hold for several months.

**Bush Says He'll Approve BRAC, Vows To Work With Congress On Immigration**  
San Antonio Express-News

Gary Martin  
August 2, 2005

WASHINGTON — President Bush said Monday he will work with congressional leaders this fall to pass an immigration reform bill that includes a guest-worker program and measures to tighten security along the U.S.-Mexico border.

"I think we can get immigration reform done," Bush told Texas newspaper reporters during a White House interview in the Roosevelt Room.

The president also said he will accept the final recommendations of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, which is reviewing Pentagon proposals to close or adjust the missions of hundreds of U.S. military installations.

"In order for the process to be nonpolitical, it's very important to make it clear that the decision of BRAC will stand, as far as I am concerned," Bush said.

Bush made the comments during a wide-ranging interview as he prepared to leave for a monthlong vacation at his 1,600-acre Prairie Chapel Ranch near Crawford.

In a flurry of activity on his last day in Washington, Bush invoked constitutional authority to bypass the Senate and make a recess appointment of John Bolton to be ambassador of the United Nations.

Bush defended his decision and said it would not poison the atmosphere with the Senate.

"First of all, the majority of senators would have voted for his confirmation," Bush said. "Bolton's standing in the world depends upon my confidence in Bolton. I've got a lot of confidence in Bolton."

The president also defended political strategist Karl Rove, whose name has surfaced in a 19-month investigation by special prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald, who is trying to determine who leaked a CIA operative's name to the media

Rove and other White House officials have been identified as talking to reporters about the agent.

"Karl has my complete confidence. He is a valuable member of my team, and when Mr. Fitzgerald completes his investigation we will all know the facts," Bush said.

The Senate is considering two immigration reform bills that would add thousands of new border patrol agents, create tamper-proof identification cards and build new holding cells to house undocumented immigrants.

Both bills include guest-worker provisions, but they differ substantially.

Legislation filed by Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, and Sen. Jon Kyl, R-Ariz., would allow guest workers to work for two years in the United States, then force them to return to their home country for a year, a cycle that could be repeated three times.

That bill does not offer a new avenue to citizenship.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Sen. Ted Kennedy, D-Mass., introduced legislation that would call for undocumented immigrants to pay a fine and back taxes but allow them to apply for guest-worker status and, eventually, citizenship.

Bush has not endorsed either proposal but said he will work with lawmakers to craft legislation to address the complex problems surrounding immigration reform.

"Our first step was to find out exactly what was on the minds of the bills' sponsors," Bush said. "We've got our opinions on a variety of subjects and we will try to work it out this fall with the members of the Senate."

After that, Bush said he will work with House leaders, and reiterated House Speaker Dennis Hastert's assertion that an immigration reform bill can be passed this year.

However, he said, "This should not be an amnesty program. If a person wants to become a citizen, he has to get in line. In other words, you cannot leapfrog an already existing line.

"If Congress is interested in enhancing, or making it easier for someone to become a citizen, the way to do that is to increase the number of people under different country quotas."

Concerning the president's pledge to accept the BRAC recommendations, the panel is scheduled to vote later this month on the Pentagon's proposals. It must submit its recommendations to Bush by Sept. 8 and to Congress by Sept. 23.

"I'm going to accept their recommendations, as presented to me," Bush said.

The Pentagon has proposed closing 33 major installations, including four in Texas, to save \$48.8 billion over the next 20 years. Hundreds of other facilities would be realigned.

Texas installations slated for closure are Brooks City-Base in San Antonio, Naval Station Ingleside and the Lone Star Ammunition Plant and Red River Army Depot, both in Texarkana.

Among installations facing realignments are Lackland AFB in San Antonio, Sheppard AFB at Wichita Falls and Corpus Christi Naval Air Station.

Bush also expressed confidence that the Senate will move quickly to confirm John Roberts to the Supreme Court.

"John Roberts is going to be on the Supreme Court, hopefully, in an expeditious manner," he said.

Bush's schedule this week includes a speech Wednesday in Grapevine to the American Legislative Exchange Council, a conservative-leaning group made up of Republican and Democratic lawmakers and business officials.

On Thursday, Colombian President Alvaro Uribe is to meet with Bush at the ranch. The

Bush administration is supporting Uribe's efforts to combat violence by leftist guerillas tied to the narcotics trade and by right-wing paramilitary groups.

One thing Bush said he will not do during his visit home is get involved in the looming gubernatorial primary battle between Gov. Rick Perry and Carole Keeton Strayhorn, whose son is White House spokesman Scott McClellan.

"I held a high position in Texas at one time in my life and I have made it clear to all parties that I am not going to get involved in the race," Bush said. "They are both friends."

### **Hill Briefs**

Congress Daily  
August 2, 2005

The Base Closure and Realignment Commission will wrap up its site visits and hearings on individual bases next week, ending three months of cross-country travel to dozens of installations recommended for closure. Over the next several weeks, commissioners and staff will review documents and meeting minutes before marking up their own recommendations.

"While we continue to receive written data throughout the remainder of the process, it is critical that our review and analysis team is allowed the necessary time to thoroughly read, evaluate and incorporate the data that has, to date, been provided," Anthony Principi, the panel's chairman, said in a statement.

Commissioners are in North Carolina and Ohio today and will travel to Indiana Wednesday. On Thursday, the commission will hold a public hearing on Capitol Hill on the possible closure of Oceana Naval Air Station, one of eight recommendations the commission last month added to the list for consideration. Next week, commissioners will spend most of their time visiting other installations they voted to add to the list.

They also will meet with Air Force and Air National Guard leaders Aug. 11 on Capitol Hill

to resolve lingering issues surrounding the Pentagon's recommendation to take all aircraft from several Air National Guard bases. The commission's recommendations are due to the White House by Sept. 8.

### **Veterans want to save commissaries from chopping block**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
Ramesh Santanam  
August 3, 2005

Keith Cramer has been patronizing a suburban Pittsburgh commissary for the past 35 years to stock up on groceries and household items. But the 73-year-old's routine might soon change if the commissary and post exchange at the Army's Charles E. Kelly Support Facility close as part of the new round of base closings.

"I'd have to go to Carlisle (Pa.) or Dayton (Ohio). The cost of gasoline and the distance prohibits that," said Cramer, sitting on the back fender of his pickup truck.

Commissaries function as regular grocery stores, "except we're not here to make money," said Ray Pelletier, Kelly Commissary administrator.

The Department of Defense wants to save billions by streamlining operations, which includes shutting down commissaries. Opponents insist their closure would harm tens of thousands of military personnel, especially retirees, who rely on them.

"It's quite a benefit to veterans to be able to buy food cheaply," said Harry Johnston, an 81-year-old veteran loading his minivan with groceries. "If you take that away, it's going to cost us more."

If the Kelly facility closes, Johnston and Cramer said it would be too costly to drive to either of the two closest commissaries - 220 miles west at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, and 150 miles east in Carlisle.

Local and state officials want the Pentagon to keep the 26,650-square-foot Kelly commissary

and post exchange open or build a new one on vacant land about 10 miles away in Moon Township.

It is one of 270 U.S. military commissaries worldwide. Last fiscal year, they generated \$5.2 billion in sales in more than 94 million transactions, according to Cherie Huntington, spokeswoman for the Defense Commissary Agency East in Little Creek, Va.

The Kelly Commissary's sales totaled \$7.2 million last fiscal year, she said. The commissary at Fort Belvoir, Va., generated the most sales - \$87 million; Camp Kure's, near Hiroshima, Japan, brought in the least, \$100,000.

Agency officials did not know how many commissaries are slated to be closed. They referred questions to the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission; officials there did not immediately return phone calls Tuesday afternoon.

Commissaries are part of the defense department. Most employees are federal civil service workers, Huntington said. The agency's Marketing Business Unit buys most of the products and sets prices in agreement with vendors.

Shoppers do not pay sales tax, but a 5 percent surcharge to pay for renovations and construction of commissaries, Huntington said.

Active duty and reserve forces - serving or retired - and their families can buy everything from trash bags to meat and produce at discounted prices.

At the Kelly Commissary, about 10 miles southwest of Pittsburgh, a dozen eggs cost 66 cents; a gallon of whole milk, \$2.19.

At a suburban supermarket about 12 miles away, eggs were 99 cents a dozen, and a gallon of whole milk was selling for \$3.14.

Those who want to save commissaries from the defense department's chopping block say retirees would be most harmed.

About 69,000 people shop at the Kelly Commissary annually, Pelletier said. Most customers, some of whom travel more than 100 miles, are retirees or reservists.

Nationwide, military retirees find themselves in similar predicaments.

More than 30,000 retirees and dependents use services at the Fort Monmouth, N.J., base; about 2,700 use the medical clinic at Ellsworth Air Force Base in Rapid City, S.D., and 80,000 to 100,000 military retirees in the Phoenix area depend on services at Luke Air Force Base in Glendale.

"The people they're shafting are the World War II and Korean War veterans because they're on fixed incomes," Bill Premro said.

"Why would they close something that helps a lot of people and the economy?" asked the 56-year-old Washington, Pa., veteran.

### **Local News Articles**

#### **Base gets no help from top admiral**

Norwich Bulletin (Norwich, CT)

Ray Hackett

August 2, 2005

NEW LONDON-- A change at the top leadership post in the U.S. Navy has not changed the department's position on closing the Groton submarine base.

In a meeting with Connecticut's congressional delegation last week, newly named Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael G. Mullen reiterated the Navy's position the Groton facility was no longer needed and should be included on the 2005 base realignment and closure list.

Mullen replaced retired CNO Adm. Vern Clark, assuming the position of the top uniformed officer in the Department of the Navy.

"We had a chance to make our point to the new CNO who supports the position of his predecessor," U.S. Sen. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., said Monday, "a position that we don't like."

Lieberman, U.S. Sen. Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn., and U.S. Rep. Rob Simmons, R-2nd District, met with Mullen last week as part of the delegation's ongoing effort to reverse the Pentagon recommendation to close the Groton facility. The three lawmakers briefed members of the Subbase Realignment Coalition Monday in New London.

"It was a good meeting with Adm. Mullen," Dodd said after the coalition meeting. "He listened to us, so I would say it was productive in the sense that we all know where both sides are coming from."

It was important, also, because it provided a clear understanding of the battle the state still faces in reversing the Pentagon recommendation to close the Groton facility, and the work that needs to be done as time begins to run out. The independent Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission will begin its deliberations on a final base closing list Aug. 23.

"It's halftime and the score is tied," Simmons said in summing up the state's position. "But we're up against a real superpower, the Department of Defense. They've had two years to put this plan into place. We've had two months to fight it. And the DoD will come out fighting hard."

Monday's coalition meeting was upbeat, the first meeting since BRAC Commissioner Sue Ellen Turner's visit to Groton last week. She was the fifth BRAC commissioner to tour the base. Coalition and congressional members are also buoyed by the recent show of support of eight retired Navy admirals, including three former CNOs, who have publicly criticized the Pentagon recommendation to close Groton.

"I'm far more optimistic than I was on May 13," Coalition Chairman John Markowicz said after

Monday's meeting, "but I'm not ready to predict any odds."

Markowicz, several coalition members, congressional staff members and state Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Gina McCarthy will meet with BRAC Commission staff today in Washington. It will be the last face-to-face meeting with staff members before the commission begins its deliberations.

The focus of today's meeting will be to brief the commission staff on the supplemental background data submitted two weeks ago. In particular are the state's calculations on environmental cleanup costs if the base were to close. The Pentagon estimated the cost at \$29 million. DEP is suggesting it would cost more than \$125 million.

The primary focus over the next three weeks, however, will be aimed directly at the nine commissioners. It will take five votes to remove the base from the closure list.

"We're leaving no stone unturned," Dodd said. "We've heard some very positive comments being made by the commissioners in recent weeks. But the nicest comment that can be made is an aye when the vote is taken to remove the base from the list."

### **BRAC Wants Data On Moving School To AFIT**

Dayton Daily News (Dayton, OH)  
Timothy R. Gaffney  
August 3, 2005

RIVERSIDE -- A member of the independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission Tuesday asked local leaders to analyze the potential cost of moving a military school from California to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Commissioner Samuel Skinner made the request after the Dayton Development Coalition presented an analysis stating it would cost rather than save the Defense Department money to merge the Air Force Institute of Technology

with the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey.

"You've done a very detailed analysis of what it would cost if all these people go west. I'd like also to know what it would cost if NPS came east," Skinner said near the end of a half-hour meeting with community leaders at Stebbins High School.

AFIT supporters took Skinner's request as a hopeful sign the commissioners haven't already made up their minds to relocate AFIT, a move that would take away about 500 jobs, 1,000 students and a chunk of the Dayton area's intellectual capital.

"It shows the commission is thinking through all kinds of possibilities," said J.P. Nauseef, chairman and CEO of the Dayton Development Coalition.

The coalition is a nonprofit group of business leaders that supports local military installations in the BRAC process.

The meeting followed an afternoon tour of the AFIT campus on Wright-Patterson by Skinner and commissioner Lloyd "Fig" Newton, a retired Air Force general.

The tour resulted from the commission's vote last month to consider merging the schools.

Sens. Mike DeWine and George Voinovich, Gov. Bob Taft and U.S. Reps John Boehner, Dave Hobson and Mike Turner tagged along on the tour.

County and local officials, business leaders and university presidents met them at Stebbins for the meeting. A crowd of roughly 400 people wore T-shirts, waved signs and chanted "Save AFIT" as the entourage drove up with a police escort. The Stebbins High School Marching Band played.

"We've had a long, long history with Wright-Patterson. It's vital to the community, and we support it," said Bill Thornton, president and CEO of Miami Valley Hospital. Thornton rode

to the rally on one of two buses that carried about 50 hospital employees.

In a letter to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, BRAC Chairman Anthony Principi asked whether the Pentagon had considered merging AFIT with the Navy school and the Defense Language Institute, both in Monterey.

The commission then voted to consider merging the schools but left open the question of where it might occur.

In Tuesday's meeting, coalition members presented facts contending it would actually cost \$7 million more per year to move to Monterey, in part because of higher living costs in California.

The coalition also asserted the move would deprive AFIT students the chance to study close to major Air Force organizations and laboratories, especially the Air Force Research Laboratory.

"Our bottom line is, we believe Ohio and the Dayton region are exactly the right place for AFIT," said John Nowak, head of the coalition's BRAC committee.

The sudden threat to AFIT has partly overshadowed other BRAC issues facing the area.

One is a recommendation that would move more than 2,000 information technology jobs — possibly more than 4,000, according to the coalition — from Wright-Patterson to Hanscom Air Force Base in Boston, Mass.

But participants were careful to not raise the Hanscom issue on Tuesday.

"This trip (by the BRAC commissioners) was not about Hanscom. It was about AFIT," Turner said. Raising other issues might have "undermined" efforts to defend AFIT, he said.

But the rally did include scores of people who donned bright yellow T-shirts bearing the slogan "Save Dayton DFAS" — the Defense Finance

and Accounting Service station in Kettering, which the Pentagon has recommended closing.

Prior to touring AFIT, the commissioners spent Tuesday morning at the DFAS center in Columbus, one of three locations where the Pentagon wants to consolidate all the DFAS activities.

The Kettering station would close, eliminating 425 jobs.

"We support AFIT, but we also support DFAS, and we feel we're getting a little buried in the publicity," said Kettering Mayor Marilou Smith.

Kettering is recovering from the 1996 closure of the Defense Electronics Supply Center as a result of a previous BRAC. The closure cost Kettering income tax revenues from 2,300 federal jobs.

With room to add 600 jobs at the Kettering station, consolidating its work elsewhere "doesn't make sense," Smith said.

### **BRAC Members Keep Pope Options Open**

Fayetteville Observer (Fayetteville, NC)  
Henry Cuningham, Military Editor  
August 3, 2005

Two members of the federal base closure commission praised the relationship between the Army and Air Force at Pope Air Force Base after a visit Tuesday. But they left the options for the base's future open.

"We feel that the military capability represented at Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base is a unique and exquisite military capability - unique in the world," said retired Navy Adm. Harold Gehman. "The commission is extraordinarily sensitive that we not do anything that would in any way be detrimental to that very, very special mission."

The Pentagon has recommended turning Pope over to the Army. Under the proposal, the 43rd Airlift Wing would depart Pope and airlift

operations - including training with paratroopers - would be turned over to a squadron of active-duty personnel and reservists.

State and local officials want the airlift wing to stay. They say removing the wing would damage the relationship praised by Gehman.

The officials - Gov. Mike Easley, Fayetteville Mayor Marshall Pitts Jr. and John Henley, chairman of the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners - said they believe arguments to keep an airlift wing at Pope are making an impression on the Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

Henley, who attended the closed-door meeting, said Gehman and retired Army Gen. James T. Hill asked few questions and listened attentively to presentations from the state and the Cumberland County Business Council.

Paul Dordal, a retired Air Force brigadier general, told the commissioners the Army cannot operate an airfield to Air Force standards.

He compared the current Pope proposal to the "Air Force trying to take over operations of an aircraft carrier."

Hill stressed that the base closure commission does not want to affect "the incredible mission that Bragg and Pope serve for this country and, indeed, the free world."

The base closure process is supposed to examine joint operations. Hill said the operations at Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force base have been a model for joint efforts for years.

"But jointness is not always good. It can hurt efficiency," Hill said.

Gehman left open the possibility of changes.

"Don't confuse headquarters and flag poles with jointness," Gehman said. He said other command arrangements or plane-basing options could meet national defense needs.

Last month, an analyst for the base closure commission that suggested the commission consider whether Pope needs permanently based airplanes at all. Many of the planes used now to ferry paratroopers for training come from other Air Force bases.

Second visit

Tuesday's visit to Pope was Gehman's second as a BRAC commissioner and Hill's first.

Gehman said the commission realizes Fort Bragg's airborne and special operations forces depend on the Air Force. The commission wanted "to make sure that those links are not broken" and that the Pentagon's recommendation "passed the common-sense test," Gehman said.

The commission, which is the only body that can change the Pentagon's recommendations, will hold a public hearing on Aug. 10 in Washington, D.C. Pope is on the agenda.

Deliberations on the entire base closure package start Aug. 24, probably in Arlington, Va.

Staff writer Don Worthington contributed to this report.

### **Riley Could Face BRAC Members**

Montgomery Advertiser (Montgomery, AL)  
William F. West  
August 2, 2005

Gov. Bob Riley wants to look members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission in their eyes and tell them that an Air Force technology service shouldn't be moved from the Capital City to Massachusetts.

"In fact, he called me at 7:30 this morning asking me BRAC questions," said Jim Walker, Riley's liaison on military issues. "This is pretty fluid. I'm telling you what we're planning."

Walker said he wants to arrange a Riley meeting with the commissioners within two weeks.

The Defense Department, in a May 13 report, recommended Headquarters Operations and Sustainment Systems Group (OSSG) be relocated from Gunter Annex of Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base to Hanscom Air Force Base near Boston.

Montgomery could lose more than \$750 million in economic impact and potentially 3,200 jobs.

"It's going to hurt this community big time," said Doug Isaacson of Montgomery, who served as a tanker pilot in the Air Force and is a Vietnam veteran.

Isaacson said while there is much talk in Montgomery about the new \$1 billion Hyundai automotive plant at Hope Hull, OSSG provides both white-collar and high-tech jobs.

Isaacson said he believes "politics" by U.S. Sens. Ted Kennedy and John Kerry, both Democrats from Massachusetts, is what is really behind the proposal to move OSSG from Gunter to Hanscom.

Montgomery and state leaders and Alabama's congressional delegation made a presentation to a partial panel of BRAC commissioners on June 30 in Atlanta and are continuing to counter with intense lobbying.

They have been pointing out what they believe are major errors and flaws in the Defense Department's review of the Gunter location and arguing that there is no military value in the move.

Walker said Riley spoke on the phone with BRAC Commission Chairman Anthony Principi and BRAC Commissioner Jim Bilbray. "They're hearing from Alabama," Walker said.

The BRAC commission issued a statement saying Friday would be the last day to visit military installations and host community meetings for posts initially recommended for shutdowns or reconfigurations.

BRAC Commissioner Hal Gehman toured Maxwell-Gunter on May 26 and also met with

Riley, U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Mobile, and Montgomery Mayor Bobby Bright.

The commission is facing a Sept. 8 deadline to submit a report to President Bush.

The staff of U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Tuscaloosa, has been in contact with commissioners, and phoning Principi is on the senator's to do list, said the senator's spokeswoman, Virginia Davis.

Sessions has phoned all but one commissioner, said the senator's spokesman, Mike Brumas.

U.S. Rep. Mike Rogers, R-Saks, engaged in blunt yet respectful phone conversations with at least a couple of commissioners, said his chief of staff, Rob Jesmer.

"We're going to keep on hustling," Jesmer said.

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Detroit Free Press  
August 2, 2005

U.S. Defense Department Reassignment

Selfridge To Lose Wing

Air Force refuelers will transfer by '09 under Pentagon plan

By John Masson, Free Press Staff Writer

Orca, meet Moby Dick. Moby Dick, meet Orca.

Watching two giant airplanes coming together for an aerial refueling mission is like watching a couple of whales doing a slow-motion tango.

The movements of the aircraft, flying just 20 feet apart at 350 m.p.h. over the Ohio Valley last week, seemed stately.

But the crew of the KC135 Stratotanker, based at Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Harrison Township, said things aren't always what they

seem aboard a plane that can weigh more than 320,000 pounds at takeoff.

"Take some turbulence, add in the nighttime, and it can get pretty sporty up here," said Master Sgt. John English of Richmond, a Stratotanker refueling boom operator.

English, like other highly skilled reservists of Selfridge's 927th Air Refueling Wing, could be forced to learn some new tricks if the current round of military base closings and realignments runs its course.

As things now stand, the unit's KC135s are slated to be transferred from the Air Force Reserve to the Michigan Air National Guard by 2009.

English and the other members of the tanker's crew -- pilot Lt. Col. William Jenne, copilot Maj. Patrick Reed and boom operators English and Master Sgt. Johnny White -- have plenty of experience at coaxing the Stratotanker's retractable refueling boom into the waiting maws of aircraft ranging from massive B52 bombers to feisty F16 fighters.

White of Clay Township lay flat on his face on a special couch, facing the tail of the tanker. With his hands on a pair of joysticks, he looked like an overgrown kid playing a video game. Inches in front of his face were windows looking down, 26,000 feet to the Ohio River.

A bulbous C17 transport plane lumbered into view, practically filling the glass. White worked the joysticks to guide the boom over the C17's windshield. When he got the boom close enough, he extended its telescoping lower portion until it made contact with the other airplane.

Once the boom was in the C17's fuel receptacle, it locked in place and the fuel began flowing.

"We'll be loading 10,000 pounds of fuel," White said. At a rate of as much as 6,800 pounds per minute, that's "more gas in a minute than a car would use in a year," he said.

Some of the 927th Air Refueling Wing's eight tankers -- which bear nicknames like Phantom Phueler, High Octane and Hockeytown Express -- are scheduled to deploy to Turkey this fall to help fight the war against terror, according to wing spokesman Eric Brian. Many of the unit's 1,000 or so members will be going, too.

But after the unit returns, Brian said, the Base Realignment and Closure process makes its future uncertain. If the Pentagon plan announced in May doesn't change, the tankers -- each of which is at least 40 years old -- will stay at Selfridge, but will be transferred by 2009 to the 127th Wing of the Michigan Air National Guard.

The Air Guard planes now at Selfridge -- F16 fighters and C130 cargo planes -- will fly off to other bases to be replaced by a group of 18 A10 Warthogs, 15 of which are now based in Battle Creek, Brian said.

And by sometime in 2009, the wing's personnel will be reassigned to MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa. Some may be able to transfer to the Air Guard or elsewhere in the Air Force Reserve.

Others will commute to drills in Florida, where an Air Force refueling wing will benefit from the experience of the 927th.

### **Admiral allowed to speak in defense of shipyard**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Portsmouth, NH)

August 3, 2005

A retired Navy rear admiral who was forbidden by the Department of Defense from testifying about the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard finally got his chance, saying that it shouldn't be closed unless the Navy is prepared to build three new dry docks somewhere else.

The Department of Defense cited a conflict of interest, claiming that William Klemm, the former deputy commander for logistics, maintenance and industrial operations for Naval

Sea Systems Command, was involved in the base-closure process and couldn't testify.

That angered U.S. Sen. Judd Gregg, who 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 of the criteria," and refuted the Navy's position.

Klemm was not allowed to testify at the July 6 Base Realignment and Closure Commission hearings in Boston. He ended up testifying on July 19.

"The point is you can have as many people as you want, but you can't do the work unless you have the dry docks to do the work in," Klemm was quoted in saying in a transcript of his testimony located on the BRAC Web site. "You can surge (move materials and manpower around) or pay overtime as much as you want, but if you don't have the dry docks, the boats don't get fixed."

Klemm described how the Portsmouth base in Kittery, Maine, is the lead shipyard in the improvement of submarine maintenance processes, improvements that are then extended to the Navy's other three shipyards. These improvements are, in part, a product of the culture of the work force, he said.

"That culture cannot be exported or replicated, it is imbedded in the generations of people who work at this facility," Klemm testified.

"Therefore, the loss of Portsmouth Naval Shipyard equates to an irreplaceable loss of the culture and skill sets of innovation and efficiency."

Klemm also said that the Navy's three remaining shipyards - Norfolk, Va., Puget Sound, Wash., and Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, don't have the capacity nor the resources needed to perform submarine maintenance activities within the prescribed periods of the service lives of the submarines in the fleet.

He said the Navy "will have to keep submarines pier-side in non-operational status until skilled

artisans and dry docks 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."

The commission will forward its final recommendations on hundreds of military installations nationwide to the president by Sept. 8. The president has until Sept. 23 to accept or reject the recommendations in their entirety.

If accepted, Congress has 45 legislative days to reject the recommendations in their entirety or they become binding.

### **Communities rally to save military installations**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Dayton, OH)  
James Hannah  
August 2, 2005

Communities trying to save their military installations from being closed, moved or downsized are hoping to play on the emotion of the decision-makers. Rallies with cheering, flag-carrying supporters greet base-closing commissioners when they come to town.

"No one believes that a rally or a public display of concern will be persuasive on its own, but it's part of the campaign," said Michael Gessel of the Dayton Development Coalition.

Two members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission attended a rally at a local high school Tuesday after they finished touring the Air Force Institute of Technology.

Many in the crowd of about 250 people wore T-shirts emblazoned with the words "Dayton Supports Its Military."

"If they think no one in the Dayton community cares one way or the other, that it makes it easier for them to make a negative decision," said Christine Close, a 59-year-old hospital worker from suburban Centerville.

Commissioner Samuel Skinner said public support is important, and he saluted the crowd for standing out in the hot sun.

"We certainly saw them," he said.

The institute, which has 500 employees and more than 900 students, is the Air Force's graduate school of engineering and management. It was added to the commission's list last month, with commissioners trying to decide whether to merge the institute with two other schools in California.

Also added to the list was the Defense Finance Accounting Services office in Columbus. The office has 2,067 employees who make payments to military contractors and vendors, provide accounting services for defense agencies and process travel payments for Pentagon employees.

In May, about 450 people showed up for a rally for DFAS, and 30 seats were allotted for the public Tuesday during an availability with the two commissioners who toured the installation. Afterward, Skinner said it is highly unlikely that the facility will be closed.

In Dayton, Commissioner Lloyd Newton applauded the presentation by the institute and local officials.

"Clearly, we have a very impressive facility here," Newton said. "We also were extremely, extremely impressed with the quality of the instructors and the faculty of AFIT."

Residents of communities around the country are showing up in force when the commissioners arrive to tour threatened installations.

On Monday, about 300 people from Wichita Falls, Texas, lined the route from the airport to Sheppard Air Force Base when a commissioner arrived to tour the base. Many supporters carried signs supporting the base - which is threatened with cuts - and one man showed up despite a broken leg and morning heat that climbed into the 90s.

Last week, hundreds of people showed up when a commissioner toured W.K. Kellogg Airport Air Guard Station in Battle Creek, Mich. Many wore T-shirts that showed their support for keeping the base open. Others carried small American flags or handmade signs. Two A-10 Thunderbolt fighters even did a fly-by.

Gessel said the commission will ultimately decide whether to close, move or downsize an installation based on objective data. But he said if the data is mixed or flawed, the decision becomes more subjective. And he said members of previous commissions have admitted they were touched by community support.

"If the facts are not with you, the case is insurmountable," Gessel said. "But if the facts are with you, you need to make sure the members of the commission are listening. We really don't know in the end what will make the most complete persuasive case, so we are doing everything we can."

Gessel said large public displays also can sway votes in Congress, which will ultimately decide whether to accept or reject the commission's base-closing recommendations in their entirety.

### **Concord, Calif., plans for naval weapons station closure**

Contra Costa Times (Contra Costa, CA)  
Ryan Huff  
August 2, 2005

If the inland portion of the Concord Naval Weapons Station closes later this year, massive home developments and office buildings will not sprout up overnight.

While Concord officials envision adding 33,000 residents and preserving about half the land for open space, the public could have considerable influence on what goes where through a citizen advisory committee.

In its first extensive meeting on the topic, the City Council tonight will lay out plans on how the planning and building process would work over the next three decades.

The 5,170 acres on the east edge of town represents one of the region's largest chunks of suburban land primed for development. And the city would like to see construction start within the next five years.

"All of us are a little bit in awe of the responsibilities we face for the city and region in how to plan this," said Jim Forsberg, the city's director of planning and economic development.

"We need to be visionary and very careful how we go about this because we're shaping the future for generations to come."

Before detailed planning can take place, the base first must close. A federal commission, President Bush and Congress are expected to approve its shuttering later this year as part of a base closure and realignment process.

If that happens, the Navy will likely name the Concord City Council as the local redevelopment authority -- allowing it to zone the land and plan for its future use.

Concord intends to form a 30-person citizens' advisory committee as early as next year that would report to the City Council. Its members would include nearby residents, environmentalists and business leaders.

"The goal is to have a broad-based group so it's not just a five-member City Council deciding what will happen," Forsberg said.

The Navy generally favors selling valuable excess land through a public auction, where a developer can buy the property and take responsibility for remaining environmental cleanup, according to a city staff report.

Toxic cleanup may be one of the larger hurdles because a 530-acre area that used to store munitions is contaminated with arsenic and possibly petroleum hydrocarbons, according to the Navy.

A skeleton crew of about 60 firefighters and security guards maintain the inland portion of

the base, which has been essentially mothballed since 1999.

While those jobs would be lost, the Navy said the employees would likely pick up work at the base's Suisun Bay port, which is not recommended for closure.

### **Politicians Come To Oceana's Defense**

Daily Press (Newport News, VA)

Jim Hodges

August 2, 2005

Virginia's governor and senators try to keep the Virginia Beach naval air station from being closed.

Sen. John Warner was a salesman who had gone through his pitch, and he decided it was time to ask for the order.

Or, more properly, to tell the Base Realignment and Closing Commission to leave Oceana Naval Air Station alone.

"We asked them to come down ... to put boots on the ground," he began, gesturing at the four members of the commission behind him Monday at the Virginia Aquarium.

Sen. Warner, Gov. Mark R. Warner and Sen. George Allen had joined local politicians, BRAC commission chairman Anthony Principi and members Samuel Skinner, retired Gen. James Hill and retired Adm. Harold Gehman in a military show-and-tell at Oceana to extol the virtues of the base, which was added to the Defense Department's closure list July 19.

"I just sat there and listened quietly while they had a first-class opportunity to cross-examine the Navy," said Warner, who is chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. "(The Navy has) been studying alternatives for years ... and at the moment there's no plan, no concept, no vision of where we could go for (a master jet base) on the East Coast. ... No place where you've got the air space, where you've got the ranges, where you've got all the other very important elements."

He paused, then looked back again.

"Isn't that right?" he asked the commissioners.

The four men looked abashed at his brazenness while laughter filled the room.

Skinner, who voted to put Oceana on the BRAC list to open the encroachment situation to scrutiny, agreed. "(The Navy doesn't) believe that there's a valid alternative," he said.

The commission's representatives spent much of Monday morning huddled with the Navy and taking a brief helicopter trip to see real estate development around the base. They then listened to Navy brass tell them that while adjustments must be made in flight paths to account for the houses and businesses close to takeoff and landing paths, Oceana is accomplishing its mission of providing F/A-18 Hornets and Super Hornets for aircraft carriers and training their pilots.

"The issue of encroachment is not unique to Oceana," Allen said. "It's everywhere. And let's assume you do have a few problems, and it's 90 percent, 95 percent of what you want."

He raised his voice to be heard over the noise of a Navy jet streaking over the building.

"To build another master jet base ... that would be about \$1.5 billion," Allen said. "Now, why would you want to spend \$1.5 billion to get something that's slightly better?"

While Sens. Allen and Warner talked about what is, Gov. Warner added an idea that could be. His notion is to sweeten Oceana's position by offering an auxiliary landing field on Virginia soil to replace a proposed facility in Washington County, N.C., that is tied up in federal court on environmental issues.

"While we continue to stand in support of the ... location in North Carolina ... Virginia stands prepared with alternatives," Gov. Warner said.

He declined to say what they are.

Gov. Warner and Allen agreed that Virginia Beach has been given a message in the proceedings of the past two weeks. The word is that without local reform, an effort will be made to move from Oceana.

Mayor Meyera Oberndorf said she will present a resolution to the Virginia Beach City Council tonight that will outline the steps needed to accommodate Oceana. The council has a history of allowing developers to build over the Navy's objections.

"I think it's fair to call it a shot across the bow," the governor said. "I'm not sure the commission was aware of the proactive steps the city and state have made."

But he added: "The Navy said loud and clear today that there is no better location than Oceana. What was clear is that there is no potential site. ... They didn't indicate there was anything on the drawing board."

### **Opinions/ Editorials**

#### **Closing AFIT would not be in Air Force's best interests**

Dayton Daily News (Dayton, OH)

Jan Muczyk

August 2, 2005

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission should

keep Hippocrates' first principle in mind when it makes decisions, especially regarding the Air Force Institute of Technology, where I am a professor emeritus. The likelihood of doing harm is increased when decision-makers adopt the "bookkeeper" mentality: "know the cost of everything and the value of nothing."

Threatening AFIT with closure every five or six years makes it difficult to recruit and retain outstanding faculty and to sustain complex research programs, thereby compromising this invaluable resource.

Just about everyone recognizes that appropriate education is one of the most effective force multipliers. Increasingly, it is being recognized that focused education is the most appropriate form. Corporate colleges, universities or institutes increased from 400 to more than 1,000 between 1988 and 1995 alone.

Focused education provides the ability to tackle subjects of immediate relevance in a direct manner. Moreover, it is a more effective vehicle for creating the kind of culture that reinforces organizational objectives. Last, focused education produces focused research.

The Air Force and the Navy have among the best corporate universities in the Air Force Institute of Technology and the Naval Post Graduate School. The U.S. Army avails itself of both.

The option of sending officers to civilian universities has substantial costs. Officers will receive a generic education; the military will have to pay civilian universities large sums for focused research; and officers will be deprived of the benefits of an appropriate culture.

Consolidating AFIT with the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif., makes little sense, since the laboratories that are so instrumental to supporting technical, focused education and research are at Wright-Patterson. In addition, it is less expensive to do business in Dayton.

Co-locating NPS with AFIT makes more sense, especially if the Patuxent Naval Air Station in Maryland, where the Navy does some of the things that the Air Force performs at Wright-Patterson, is made a satellite campus.

If AFIT is closed, the Air Force will never get it back. The BRAC commission should weigh the value of AFIT and NPS and make the smart decision.

### **Additional Notes**