

## Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

# EARLY



# BIRD

August 9, 2005

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### **Governor, delegates make pitch to BRAC commission**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire (Monterey, CA)

Kim Curtis

August 8, 2005

Instead of a pointed plea to save a military facility in Denver, Colorado's governor led a delegation making its pitch to the Base Realignment and Closure commission for expansion.

The commission that's reviewing the Pentagon's plan for restructuring U.S. military bases last month added the Defense Finance Accounting Services, Buckley Annex, to its list of installations being considered for closure or downsizing.

That unexpected news came shortly after Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld's May announcement that about 1,500 jobs would be added to the facility as Defense and Accounting Service functions were consolidated from other installations across the country.

Commissioner Harold Gehman said Monday that Buckley was added to the list so BRAC could evaluate the more than two dozen facilities across the country with similar functions.

He suggested the DoD's recommendation was a good one because the facility is secure, it can be expanded and it already supports a "world-class work force."

"I think everybody felt good about the response from the commission, both during the testimony and afterward when we intermingled with them," said Sen. Wayne Allard, R-Colo. "But you don't know until you have the final vote."

The military pay processing center employs about 1,700 people who earn an average of \$41,000 a year.

Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce President Joe Blake said the largest pay system in the world was a bargain for the government as workers provide about \$150 million a year in wages and purchasing while the facility costs just \$1.2 million to operate.

"I truly believe it's in the national interest to keep this facility open," argued Gov. Bill Owens. "If you're considering a place to merge or co-locate, Colorado might be that place. ... We're hoping not just to protect this facility ... but that you'll choose to allow us to increase the size of the facility that we have."

Also on the chopping block was the Air Reserve Personnel Center in Aurora, Colo. which processes call-up paperwork. Its 1,600 jobs are expected to be relocated to Randolph Air Force Base in Texas.

Statewide, Colorado stands to gain more than 8,200 jobs with shifts in the 4th Infantry Division that will move at least two brigades and headquarters from Fort Hood, Texas, to Fort Carson outside Colorado Springs.

### **Alaska delegation makes plea for Galena**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Monterey, CA)

Kim Curtis

August 8, 2005

Admitting they "don't have the money for advertising" or "thousands of people to stage demonstrations," a tribal leader from the small Interior community of Galena gave a passionate plea to keep the Forward Operating Location open.

Dean Westlake of the Louden Tribal Council and City Manager Marvin Yoder had just a half-hour to try to persuade members of the Base Realignment Commission not to withdraw the U.S. Air Force from the town of 700, about 275 miles west of Fairbanks.

Westlake and Yoder both cited the town's close relationship with military. Galena served as a staging area for fighter jets and its location was key during the Cold War as it's the only paved airstrip for 93 million square acres.

"We want to make sure the commission understands the distances we're talking about are huge," Yoder said.

The Air Force uses Galena to land jets when necessary and estimates it spends \$10.4 million to \$11.3 million a year to maintain Galena facilities.

The Air Force helps pay for maintenance of the state-owned runway. It also maintains several buildings through a contract with a subsidiary of

the Prince William Sound regional Native corporation Chugach Alaska, which employs about 44 people in Galena.

The closure of the site would mean the loss of about 100 jobs, Yoder said.

Commissioners questioned the delegation about their relevance post-Cold War.

"The threat has moved. We certainly understand that," Yoder said.

The BRAC Commission on July 19 unanimously decided to add Galena to the proposed closure and realignment list that the Defense Department released on May 13.

Two commissioners, Phil Coyle and James Bilbray, recently visited Galena.

The commission's recommendations are due to President Bush by Sept. 8. If Bush accepts the list, as he has said he will, it will go before Congress.

### **Martinez, Crenshaw tour USS Kennedy, Jacksonville-area bases**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Mayport, FL)  
Ron Word  
August 8, 2005

U.S. Sen. Mel Martinez and U.S. Rep. Ander Crenshaw said Monday they want to save the USS John F. Kennedy and renovate the Mayport Naval Station to house nuclear aircraft carriers.

The Republicans toured the naval station and planned a Tuesday visit to Cecil Commerce Center, which the city is offering back to the Navy in hopes the 23,000-acre base might reopen.

"The future of Mayport is clearly nuclear," Crenshaw said. "Seeing Mayport first hand, it is truly a national treasure."

Martinez echoed his comments.

"We are very committed to Mayport being a nuclear capable base and keeping the Kennedy here as long as possible," Martinez said.

The aging Kennedy, with a crew of about 5,000 sailors and air crews, was saved from decommissioning this year by a proposal pushed by Crenshaw, Martinez and Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., requiring the Navy to keep 12 aircraft carriers. The Pentagon wanted to decommission the Kennedy to save \$1.2 billion over six years.

But the politicians acknowledge that the Big John, one of two non-nuclear carriers, will be gone soon, possibly by next year, leaving Mayport without a carrier and lacking the capability of supporting nuclear aircraft carriers.

"From a national defense standpoint, it is important to have as many carriers as you can," Crenshaw said.

U.S. Sen. John Warner, R-Va., chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, agreed to the plan to keep the Navy fleet at 12 carriers. But Warner he did not go along with a House bill pushed by Crenshaw to make Mayport nuclear capable because it could require one of the Virginia carriers to move to Mayport.

In the current round of Base Realignment and Closure recommendations, Mayport is scheduled to gain several ships and about 410 employees. Nearby Jacksonville Naval Air Station will receive 2,025 jobs as P-3 Orion patrol planes relocate to Jacksonville Naval Air Station from Brunswick, Maine.

At a recent hearing in New Orleans, Gov. Jeb Bush called on the commission to put more resources into Florida, which he called "the most military friendly state in the country."

Bush also pushed to make Mayport nuclear-ready.

The lawmakers also discussed a proposal to reopen Cecil Field Naval Air Station, on the far west side of Jacksonville.

In a surprise move, Jacksonville Mayor John Peyton urged the BRAC commission to reopen Cecil Field, which the Navy closed in 1999. The city made the move because the commission voted to add Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia to its list to consider cutting or closing. Oceana is home to 233 fighter planes and more than 11,000 personnel.

"It is a unique facility," Martinez said. "The facts are clear. It was a first-class facility in the 80s and 90s and it can be in the future."

Since the Navy handed over the sprawling base when it departed in 1999, aerospace giants including Boeing, Embraer and Northrop Grumman have moved in. The base also served as the hub for privately chartered aircraft during the Super Bowl in February.

The city has demolished most of the old military buildings on the base.

### **Daniels, Lugar to make pitches for Army finance center**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Indianapolis, IN)  
Mike Smith  
August 8, 2005

Gov. Mitch Daniels and Sen. Dick Lugar will be among an Indiana delegation that makes a pitch in Washington on Wednesday for having up to 3,500 jobs added at a defense finance center in Indianapolis.

"This is our last shot" at making a case for the jobs, John Clark, the governor's senior adviser on economic growth, said Monday.

An initial base realignment plan announced by the Pentagon in May was hailed by state and local officials as a windfall for Indiana, even though more than 600 job cuts were recommended for the Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center in southern Indiana.

Indiana would gain about 2,200 jobs overall under the initial plan, mostly because of a proposed expansion of the Army's Defense

Finance and Accounting Service center located at the former Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis. It would gain about 3,500 jobs as 26 accounting centers were consolidated to three locations in Indianapolis, Colorado and Ohio.

About 3,000 accountants, contractors and other staff work at the 1.6 million-square-foot center, the largest U.S. military office building after the Pentagon.

But last month, the nine-member Base Realignment and Closure Commission added the center to its list of installations under review. U.S. Rep. Steve LaTourette, R-Ohio, has said the building did not have enough room for 3,500 extra workers.

Two members of the commission toured the center last week and gave it a positive review, but they were noncommittal on how well it was stacking up against other finance service sites. Wednesday's hearing before the commission is to take public testimony on installations added for review.

The fact that Daniels will be among those testifying underscores the administration's support for new center jobs, Clark said. Lugar plans to speak first, followed by Daniels, Rep. Dan Burton, R-Ind., Rep. Julia Carson, D-Ind., and Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson.

Clark called the facility the "crown jewel" of finance centers, and said it was "ready, willing and able" to accommodate a major expansion.

State and local officials hope a \$123 million renovation completed two years ago will help win new jobs. Clark said a final pitch for preventing job cuts at Crane would be made to the secretary of the Navy after the hearing.

Clark said the commission plans to issue its final recommendations on Sept. 8, although they will be subject to approval by Congress and President Bush. A recent statement by Bush made the panel's ultimate recommendations even more important, Clark said.

"He had the right to tweak it, but said he would accept them," Clark said.

Lugar spokesman Andy Fisher said the Republican senator's message on Wednesday would be the same as he gave to commission Chairman Anthony Principi three weeks ago: "That Indianapolis is an outstanding place to expand the finance facility because of the infrastructure that is there, the cost of operations and the skill of the work force."

### **Picnic planned to support Portsmouth Naval Shipyard**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Portsmouth, NH)  
August 8, 2005

Portsmouth Naval Shipyard supporters will hold a picnic Saturday as a show of support for keeping the base open.

The federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission is expected to decide the week of Aug. 22 whether to remove the nuclear submarine repair facility in Kittery, Maine, from the base closure list or leave it on the list it sends to President Bush.

Supporters hope the event, billed as an old fashioned New England family picnic, will show the importance of the base to Maine and New Hampshire families.

The Save Our Shipyard Task Force is sponsoring the event from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Pease International Tradeport. Participants have been asked to bring cold lunches, rather than grills or other cooking gear.

The free event will feature entertainment including musical performances by several shipyard workers and a "Maximum Velocity Bike Show," featuring BMX stunt riders.

Those attending are encouraged to wear their yellow "Save Our Shipyard" T-shirts.

The picnic is one of a series of community events staged by shipyard workers and their

supporters since the Defense Department recommended the 205-year-old yard's closure on May 13.

Nearly 8,000 shipyard supporters lined the streets on June 1 to welcome four members of the commission who came to tour the yard.

On July 6, the sea of yellow T-shirts hit the road, with thousands descending upon the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center for a commission hearing.

Most recently, a few thousand shipyard supporters rallied on Walker Street on July 26 to greet two more commissioners who came to tour the yard.

### **W.Va. delegation asks BRAC to expand 130th Airlift Wing**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Charleston, WV)  
August 8, 2005

West Virginia's congressional delegation has asked the Base Realignment and Closure Commission to consider expanding the state Air National Guard's 130th Airlift Wing instead of stripping the unit of its planes.

Sens. Robert C. Byrd and Jay Rockefeller, both D-W.Va., and Reps. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., Alan Mollohan, D-W.Va., and Nick Rahall, D-W.Va., made their proposal in a letter sent Friday to BRAC Chairman Anthony Principi. The lawmakers released the letter on Monday.

They cited the commission's decision in July to add Pope Air Force Base in North Carolina to a list of military bases nationwide that the Department of Defense wants to realign or close. The DOD wants to transfer the Charleston-based 130th Airlift Wing's eight C-130 planes to Pope.

"If Pope Air Force Base is closed, the C-130 aircraft currently based there could be relocated to the 130th Airlift Wing and other Air National Guard installations," the lawmakers wrote.

The lawmakers cited the 130th's reputation for being one of the best-run in the country. While other units are having trouble meeting staffing goals, the 130th is operating above 100 percent strength.

They also said expanding the unit would improve the National Guard's ability to perform homeland security missions.

"The West Virginia National Guard is unique in that it has two highly trained units that focus specifically on executing rapid response to the use of weapons of mass destruction," the lawmakers wrote.

The commission plans to hold another hearing this week on the Pentagon's proposals. A vote is expected later this month, the lawmakers said.

### **Perry offers Navy incentive to move Va. jet base to Texas**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Corpus Christi, TX)  
Lynn Brezosky  
August 8, 2005

Gov. Rick Perry on Monday offered a \$365 million incentive package to the Pentagon to create a Navy Master Jet Base in the South Texas Coastal Bend region.

The jet base is now at Naval Air Station Oceana in Virginia Beach, Va., and is among those that the Base Closing and Realignment Commission has recommended for closure.

Oceana, with a military and civilian staff of nearly 17,000, is home to about 140 F/A-18 Hornets and Super Hornets and about 50 F-14 Tomcats.

Perry made the offer in a letter to BRAC chairman Anthony Principi, who plans to meet with state officials later this week.

Principi has said the commission will study alternative sites to Oceana, where development has left residents complaining about disruptive jet traffic.

At a news conference, Perry touted the coastal bend region's available land, unencumbered air space, climate and community support.

The incentive package includes \$50 million from the Texas Enterprise Fund, the building of a rail spur from Union Pacific's main rail line to Naval Station Ingleside, and \$100 million worth of transportation improvement projects on and around Naval Air Station Kingsville. The package also includes a \$200 million low-income loan to community leaders to help build related facilities.

"This \$365 million investment is a win-win for Texas and the U.S. Armed Forces," Perry said.

Principi has asked whether the Pentagon had considered relocating the Master Jet Base to Moody Air Force Base in Georgia.

### **Officials plead case for Lowry Colo. politicians tout finance office to base-closure panel**

Denver Post (Denver, CO)  
Mark P. Couch  
August 9, 2005

Monterey, Calif. - A high-powered delegation of Colorado politicians pleaded Monday with a military base-closing commission to spare a finance center still housed at the former Lowry Air Force Base in Denver.

Colorado Gov. Bill Owens, the state's two U.S. senators and the president of the Denver City Council argued that the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission should leave the 1,250-person center open.

"We're hoping not just to protect the facility," Owens said. "We're hoping that you'll choose to allow us to increase the size of the facility we have."

The nine-member commission set its sights on the Denver office of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in July, when it unanimously rejected a Pentagon

recommendation to keep the office open. The office is called the Buckley Annex because it operates under the supervision of Buckley Air Force Base in Aurora.

The commission's vote did not mean that the office will close, but rather that it will take a closer look at the operation. And that unnerved many of Colorado's top politicians.

With about a week's notice, Republican U.S. Sen. Wayne Allard summoned his fellow elected officials - Republicans and Democrats - to make the case for Denver at Monday's base-closing commission meeting in California.

Denver City Council President Rosemary Rodriguez, a Democrat, said she was speaking on behalf of Denver and Aurora when she noted that the community has endured two major base closings - Lowry in 1994 and the Fitzsimons Army Medical Center in 1999.

"Our sacrifice to this process has exceeded most American communities," Rodriguez said.

Democratic U.S. Sen. Ken Salazar noted that the Pentagon's

### **Environmental cleanup of Fort Monroe could tally \$1 billion**

#### **A group studying the possible redevelopment of the Army post foresees legal and costly challenges.**

Daily Press (Hampton Roads, VA)

Terry Scanlon

August 9 2005

HAMPTON -- The group created by the City Council to guide redevelopment at Fort Monroe if the base closes learned Monday that the process could be costly and contentious.

Cleaning up unexploded weapons could cost as much as \$1 billion.

Taking care of the more than 140 buildings could cost \$14 million each year.

Disputes over who gets part of the land could wind up in court.

All of those present hurdles for the city's new Federal Areas Development Authority as it tries to blunt the economic blow if the Civil War-era fort closes as part of the massive military restructuring known as Base Realignment and Closure - or BRAC.

"Our huge concern is the ability to replace the economic viability that Fort Monroe provides now as quickly possible," board member John Ishon said Monday after the group's third meeting.

Fort Monroe is not only one of the city's largest employers, it also holds a special place in the history of the community: as a safe haven for slaves during the Civil War, a prison for Jefferson Davis after the war, and an anchor in coastal defense during the two world wars.

In recent years, the Army has used the 100-plus acres for little more than a huge museum and as office space for the Army brass who develop long-range plans. Still, the base employs more than 3,000 military and civilian workers. It contributes about \$300 million each year to the Hampton Roads economy. And it accounts for about 7 percent of the city's economy.

Earlier this year, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld recommended closing the base and moving most of its operations 20 miles north on Interstate 64 to Fort Eustis. The Hampton group is preparing for the worst, but waiting to take any action until a final decision is made.

On Sept. 8, the nine-member BRAC Commission is expected to announce whether to go along with Rumsfeld's recommendation to close Fort Monroe. After that, President Bush and Congress decide whether to give final approval to the plan, although neither has the authority to strike individual bases from the list.

Brian D. DeProfio, an assistant to Hampton's city manager, is spearheading the effort to keep the base open, while also beginning to plan for life after the Army. If Fort Monroe closes, he

said, the city will draft a broad conceptual plan for the base as quickly possible to help determine how much of the environmental cleanup will be paid for by the military.

The Defense Department will clean the land more thoroughly if the city plans to build new homes than it would if commercial or industrial businesses moved to the base. At a minimum, the cleanup would cost \$200 million, DeProfio said. If the Army agrees to completely clear the base of munitions, the cost could hit \$1 billion, he said

In addition, 83 residential buildings, 55 administrative buildings, a historic moat and other structures would be protected from demolition under guidelines that safeguard historic buildings.

And, the military and the state could end up in court as they decide how much of the base automatically reverts to the state after the base closes and how much the Army can sell or give to others.

### **BRAC hears Californians' argument**

Dayton Daily News (Dayton, OH)

Timothy R. Gaffney

August 9, 2005

MONTEREY, CALIF. | Monterey City Manager Fred Meurer on Monday argued against privatizing or relocating either the two military schools located here or the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Relocating or privatizing any of the schools, as the independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission is considering, wouldn't save money and would disrupt vital military missions, Meurer said. He also said Monterey isn't gunning for AFIT.

"Monterey has no desire to recruit another community's mission," he said in a BRAC Commission hearing here.

The commission voted last month to consider whether to privatize the schools or consolidate

AFIT with the Naval Postgraduate School and the Defense Language Institute, both in Monterey. On Monday it held a regional hearing here to consider several possible closings and realignments that would affect California, including the schools. It heard from several congressional, state and local officials who forcefully defended the Monterey schools.

Dayton-area officials are scheduled to testify about AFIT Wednesday at a hearing in Washington, D.C.

Monterey's arguments to preserve NPS and DLI closely mirror Dayton-area arguments in support of AFIT — mainly, that military calculations showing cost savings are flawed, and that uprooting or contracting out the schools would disrupt their missions at a time when they're urgently needed in the war on international terrorism.

The city didn't dwell on the economic impact of losing the schools, and Commissioner Philip Coyle later hinted it was the right approach.

"I think they emphasized the right things," he said after the hearing.

In testimony that included a letter from California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and videotaped testimony from California's two U.S. senators, the theme was the unique capabilities of the schools and the lack of economic benefit from realigning them.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., said it would cost "anywhere from \$130 million to privatize, and hundreds of millions of dollars to move them completely to Ohio. And many of the faculty would not move, so you would lose a great deal of your human capital as well."

Meurer took the issue a step farther in his testimony by using the same logic to argue against moving AFIT.

"AFIT would suffer mission disruption if moved," and trying to re-establish either school at the other's location would involve steep up-front costs, he said. Instead of trying to roll any

of the institutions into the others, he suggested focusing on finding ways to make them work better.

For example, he said the Air Force and Navy have developed an informal Joint Oversight Group to share and avoid duplicating the resources of AFIT and NPS. Each school provides graduate-level education for its service officers as well as from other services and friendly foreign countries.

The notion seemed to intrigue Commissioner Harold Gehman, a retired Navy admiral. He asked Meurer if he thought a possible realignment might be to beef up the joint group, which he described as currently an "ad hoc" body.

"There probably could be more effort and more officialdom associated with it," Meurer said.

Monday's hearing found Monterey yet again defending the military schools it hosts.

"This snake keeps coming back to life," Leon Panetta, a former Clinton administration advisor who co-chairs California's Council on Base Support and Retention, said outside the hearing.

Monterey successfully defended the Navy school in the 1993 BRAC round.

"We have to re-educate everyone as to what these (educational) missions are about. These schools are absolutely vital to our national security," said U.S. Rep. Sam Farr, D-Calif., who also testified in the hearing.

BRAC Commissioner James H. Bilbray offered Monterey hope.

"I can't say what the commission is going to do, but I really feel that in the long run it'll be fine for Monterey," he said.

AFIT supporters hope the same will be true for it, but they're following the BRAC process closely.

John P. Nauseef, chief executive officer of the Dayton Development Coalition, flew to Monterey to watch the hearing and huddle with California officials in preparation for Wednesday's hearing, where Dayton's AFIT defenders will testify.

Outside the hearing, he also sought to assure Monterey officials that Dayton isn't trying to make a bid for the schools here, although AFIT supporters are expected to submit data on the cost of moving them to Ohio.

"We were specifically asked by Commissioner (Samuel) Skinner to provide our views" on moving NPS and DLI to Wright-Patterson, Nauseef. "Only in that context are we going to provide information."

Skinner asked for the information at a community hearing last Tuesday at Stebbins High School after he and fellow commissioner Lloyd "Fig" Newton toured the AFIT campus.

### **Perry making \$365 million offer for base incentives for U.S. include \$50 million from state job fund**

The Dallas Morning News (Dallas, TX)  
Dave Michaels  
August 9, 2005

AUSTIN – Gov. Rick Perry is offering \$365 million, including \$50 million from his job-creation fund, to the federal government to lure a naval air base to Texas' Coastal Bend area.

The project would be the largest incentive package ever awarded to a single entity to create jobs in Texas. It could save two Texas bases, Naval Air Station Ingleside and Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, which the U.S. Department of Defense has been advised to close or downsize.

[DallasNews.com/extra](http://DallasNews.com/extra)

Read the governor's letter (.pdf)  
Previous grants from the Enterprise Fund have gone to private businesses and some universities,

but this would be the first offered to the federal government.

"The governor believes it is not only appropriate but necessary for the state to play a vital role in trying to keep these military bases not only open in Texas, but expanding," said Robert Black, a spokesman for Mr. Perry.

Mr. Perry is hoping to draw employees and equipment from Naval Air Station Oceana in Virginia, which the U.S. Base Realignment and Closure Commission has recommended closing. Oceana, the Navy's largest East Coast air base, employs about 12,000 military and civilian personnel.

Texas would face competition from other states, including Florida, where Gov. Jeb Bush has lobbied the commission to move Oceana's personnel and planes to Cecil Field in Jacksonville. Florida has estimated that preparing Cecil Field, which closed in 1999, to resume naval training flights would cost about \$240 million.

But in a letter to the commission, Mr. Perry promoted several advantages of relocating to Texas. The Coastal Bend bases do not face encroaching development like the kind that encumbers pilot training at Oceana in Virginia Beach, Mr. Perry noted.

And, Mr. Perry wrote, Naval Air Station Corpus Christi offers proximity to an enormous amount of airspace reserved for airborne military exercises above the Gulf of Mexico.

"The real value of the Corpus Christi site is the airspace," said state Sen. Eliot Shapleigh, chairman of a Senate panel on base closings.

"Practically the only place in the country with restricted airspace in large amounts is this little sliver in the Gulf of Mexico."

Mr. Shapleigh, an El Paso Democrat, said he did not know enough about the governor's offer of \$50 million in Enterprise Fund money to judge the proposal. Mr. Shapleigh has generally opposed the Enterprise Fund, saying the money would be better spent on public education.

In May, lawmakers approved about \$180 million to replenish the Enterprise Fund, which was created in 2003 with \$295 million. Its single largest grant so far, \$50 million, went to the Texas Institute for Genomic Medicine at Texas A&M University facilities in Houston and College Station.

Mr. Perry also announced \$50 million for the University of Texas at Dallas as part of a job-creation deal with Texas Instruments. In exchange, TI pledged to build a new chip plant and hire 1,000 more people.

In December, Countrywide Financial Corp. announced that it will create 7,500 jobs in Richardson with the help of a \$20 million grant from the Enterprise Fund.

The U.S. Base Realignment and Closure Commission, set up to analyze the federal government's list of recommended closures, said it has received incentive offers from other states for Oceana. However, the federal government considers "military value" to be of paramount concern.

Robert McCreary, a spokesman for the commission, said it has not had time to review Mr. Perry's proposal.

The incentives are "part of it, but military value trumps everything," Mr. McCreary said.

### **Are Pope Savings Real?**

Fayetteville Observer (Fayetteville, NC)  
Henry Cuningham  
August 9, 2005

The Pentagon says its proposal to turn Pope Air Force Base over to the Army will save \$2.5 billion over 20 years. Skeptics say that's fuzzy math.

Gov. Mike Easley and retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Paul Dordal say there are hidden costs in the Pope proposal. David M. Walker, the comptroller general of the United States,

questions whether the taxpayers will see the savings the Pentagon has promised in its overall base closure plan.

Rep. Mike McIntyre and other North Carolina officials will talk about Pope and its strategic role to five of nine BRAC commissioners Wednesday on Capitol Hill. The commission is expected to begin voting on proposals Aug. 24.

The Defense Department wants to replace Pope's active-duty C-130 cargo airplane wing with a unit made up of active-duty and reserve forces. Pope would cease to be a separate base, instead falling under the control of Fort Bragg.

The Pope proposal is just one item on a much longer list of recommended base realignments and closings, what officials call the BRAC process.

The Pentagon "can't afford not to do BRAC," Michael Wynne told the Base Closure and Realignment Commission on July 18 on Capitol Hill. Wynne is undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics and chairman of the Infrastructure Steering Group.

"We have got to come up with the resources in order to make this department more efficient, because the budget that we're currently espousing cannot continue to grow at the level that it has, and therefore, we need to get ahead of that curve," Wynne said.

North Carolina's governor, who wants to keep the active-duty wing at Pope, disagrees with the Pentagon.

"We don't see a savings in dollars because we are just shifting dollars from the Air Force over to the Army," Easley said on Aug. 2 in Fayetteville after a meeting with two BRAC commissioners.

The Pentagon in its May 13 proposal estimated a "one-time cost" of \$218 million to carry out recommendations on Pope Air Force Base. Those include sending Pope's Vietnam War-era C-130s to Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas and giving Pope newer airplanes from

the Air National Guard in West Virginia and the Air Force Reserve in Pittsburgh.

"The net of all costs and savings to the department during the implementation period is a savings of \$652.5 million," the proposal said. "Annual recurring savings to the department after implementation are \$197 million, with an immediate payback expected."

Dordal, who has worked with the Cumberland County Business Council in its effort to preserve Pope and the C-130 wing, questions the savings if the Army has to train people and equip itself to do jobs for which the Army has little or no equivalent.

"I'm not saying that the Army can't operate Pope as an Air Force base," Dordal said. "But then you get into roles and missions. Is it smart for them to have to spend all that time and effort to get to the level of operations that currently exists, which is what's going to be necessary?"

Army troops and cargo are loaded onto Air Force airplanes at Pope Air Force Base's Green Ramp for training and deployments. The first 82nd Airborne Division troops are supposed to be airborne within 18 hours when there's an emergency.

"The mission doesn't decrease or go away, so you have to maintain it at that same level," Dordal said.

David M. Walker, the comptroller general of the United States, questioned the Pentagon's savings estimates in his testimony to the BRAC commission on July 18 in Washington.

The Pentagon says its 2005 BRAC recommendations, if adopted, would save \$50 billion over 20 years, but the taxpayers would have to spend an estimated \$24 billion to close and realign bases. That figures does not include environmental cleanup and assistance to communities that lost bases, Walker said.

Walker is the head of the U.S. Government Accountability Office, or GAO, a legislative branch agency charged with providing

nonpartisan reviews of government issues and operations.

Walker says 47 percent of the claimed savings are based on the salaries of military personnel. But the military plans to reassign those same people to other bases, where they will still be getting paid.

"This could create a false sense of savings," Walker said. "Very importantly, the simple fact of the matter is, unless you end up reducing overall head count or the average compensation levels for the applicable positions, there are no net dollar savings for military personnel that can be applied elsewhere."

The GAO also has other cautions in a report on the 2005 BRAC recommendations.

"Sizeable savings are also projected from efficiency measures and other actions related to a variety of recommendations, but underlying assumptions have not been validated and may be difficult to track and achieve over time."

But Walker told the commissioners that the United States needs to cut costs.

"The budget crunch is coming," he said. "We need to take a number of steps to rationalize and reposition the federal government for the 21st century. This is one of several in the Defense Department. The sooner we do it, the better."

### **Opinions/ Editorials**

#### **Base-closing decisions ride on dubious data**

The Monterey County Herald (Monterey, CA)  
August 8, 2005

A decision on whether to close, merge or move Monterey's military installations shouldn't be made in haste, but that's how the process seems to be progressing.

At a three-hour hearing in Monterey today, members of the Base Realignment and Closure commission will listen to speakers weigh in on

the Defense Language Institute and the Naval Postgraduate School, as well as bases in San Diego, Colorado and Alaska.

Commissioners probably won't learn much that they didn't already know during Monterey's share of the hearing. But there are questions about whether they are getting a full, accurate assessment outside the hearing. NPS and DLI weren't even on the proposed closure/realignment list until three weeks ago. Just a week ago, one of the commission members asked for a cost analysis of moving NPS to Dayton, Ohio, where it would be merged with the Air Force Institute of Technology.

Gathering such data shouldn't be difficult, given the federal government's reach and resources. But the BRAC commission has just two weeks until it starts voting on a final list of closure and consolidation recommendations to send to President Bush. And it is dealing with a lot more than Monterey: More than 190 actions involving more than 900 bases are on the table as commissioners try to find ways to cut costs while keeping the military strong.

The battle playing out in Monterey is being duplicated around the country, as communities try to keep their bases off the final list.

Complicating the decision-making when it comes to the fates of Monterey schools are questions about whether the cost analysis done so far is based on accurate data. In short, some of the federal analysis doesn't square with the analysis done locally. That's not necessarily surprising, since local officials are trying to make the best case for keeping the schools here. But some of the numbers have been stunningly far apart.

For example, the Monterey city manager's office calculated that new construction in Dayton for classrooms and labs would cost \$522 million if NPS moved there. The federal government, in previously looking at moving NPS to the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., cited a \$33 million construction figure.

In another case, the city concluded that if the Navy were to turn to private universities to provide the education now offered at NPS, the additional cost would be \$142.4 million. The federal Government Accountability Office, on the other hand, said it would result in a \$90 million savings.

It's no secret that the cost of living is cheaper in Dayton -- or many other places -- than in Monterey. But before commissioners can make well-informed decisions, the analysis has to go much deeper than that. They need to be sure that we're comparing apples to apples and not, as someone in the process said, apples to cats.

From the numbers that have been circulating, it looks like we're not there yet.

### **Additional Notes**