

## Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

# EARLY



# BIRD

May 20, 2005

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### **Department of Defense Releases**

#### **BRAC recommendations present beneficial results**

Air Force Print News  
Master Sgt. Mitch Gettle  
May 19, 2005

WASHINGTON -- Air Force Base Realignment and Closure recommendations provide an opportunity for the Air Force to effectively organize its total force into a more capable and efficient warfighting organization, transforming the Air Force to better meet future threats.

The co-chairman of the Air Force's Base Closure Executive Group said BRAC planning started about four years ago. Air Force leaders recognized an opportunity to review and organize its future total force in respect with the

Quadrennial Defense Review, BRAC, and projected retirement of legacy weapons systems.

"We viewed BRAC as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reset the force," said Maj. Gen. Gary W. Heckman, who also is the assistant deputy chief of staff for Air Force plans and programs. "Military value of an installation was the predominant focus of our decisions as we strove to achieve a better warfighting capability."

Decisions to close or realign were not easily made.

"Foremost we had to be totally impartial and treat each installation equally," he said. "Although this is a business decision, BRAC was personal as well. We have people and communities that are affected by our decisions and the choices were not easy."

The Air Force has a heritage of taking care of its people, through the good times and the bad, and will continue to do that through the BRAC implementation process, General Heckman said.

"We're the greatest Air Force on the planet because we have great people and great communities," he said. "We have programs within DOD and also national programs specifically geared for our Airman and civilians to assist with relocation and transition to new jobs whether they be on active duty or reserve component. There are also programs to assist communities as they deal with the changes that will come with BRAC."

The Future Total Force approach to BRAC was critical in the decision process to harness the value from current Air Force personnel and skills.

"It is essential that we find the right mix for active duty and the reserve component. We have to retain our Guard, Reserve and civilian partners as part of one team and cannot do this mission without them," General Heckman said. "Fact is, in our flying missions, we sustain the current (active duty and reserve component) manpower mix in our future total force."

The focus of the relocation of units and personnel under realignment was mainly driven by the reduction in weapons platforms and the ineffectiveness of current installation assignments to accommodate this smaller fleet of more effective aircraft.

"In order to use the smaller number of aircraft in the most combat effective way, we have to put them in the right sizes," he said. "When you do that you have to do it at fewer locations. This is important, not only for today but for tomorrow."

The executive group left organizational flexibility in the Air Force to capture a whole-team concept to meet state needs to the extent possible, and to adjust to changes in the fall consistent with QDR developments.

"Our return on investment will initially be \$1.8 billion," General Heckman said. "We intend to reinvest the freed-up Guard and Reserve manpower into emerging missions that will come up in the QDR."

If the BRAC recommendations are approved, the Air Force would save an estimated \$2.6 billion through 2011 and \$14.6 billion over the next 20 years.

### **BRAC panel to hear from affected communities**

Navy Times  
Gordon Trowbridge  
May 19, 2005

The independent panel reviewing the Pentagon's base-closing plans ended a week of hearings Thursday sounding mostly positive about the massive plan, but eager to hear rebuttals from dozens of affected communities.

"We're aware that we've only heard half the story," said retired Adm. Harold Gehman, one of nine members of the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

The panel, appointed by President Bush, must review the recommendations and forward their own proposals to the president by Sept. 8. Bush

can then accept the list in its entirety or ask for changes. Ultimately, the plan goes to Congress.

After Thursday's hearing, the panel released a schedule of 16 regional hearings in June and July. Commission members will visit between 60 and 65 installations before those hearings begin, Gehman said.

Commissioner Philip Coyle, an expert on defense technology issues, said he wants affected communities to weigh in on the most critical criteria in the law establishing the process: the military value of bases.

"We want to hear from people — we need to hear from them," Coyle said. "Do they think the Department of Defense determined military value correctly?"

The panel was scheduled on Thursday to receive thousands of pages of detailed Defense Department justifications and data, which commissioners said is crucial to their work. Pentagon officials said the documents were undergoing a security review.

Also complicating the panel's work is a tight deadline that gives the commission two months less time than previous base-closing rounds to analyze the biggest and most complicated list of proposals in 17 years of base-closing history.

Previous commissions have amended about 15 percent of the Pentagon's proposals, adding some bases to the closure list and rejecting others.

But a compressed timeline, a large and complicated proposal and legislation that requires seven of nine members to agree on any additions to the list make such changes less likely this time, said Christopher Hellman, an analyst with the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation in Washington.

"It's hard to see how much time they'll have to delve deeper [into the Pentagon's plan], let alone make additions," Hellman said.

Four commissioners said they will recuse themselves from part of the panel's deliberations to avoid potential conflicts of interest. Coyle, who briefly served on an advisory panel on California's response to base closings, and Gehman, who sat on a similar panel in Virginia, said they will not participate in decisions involving those states. Former congressman James Bilbray of Nevada and James Hansen of Utah recused themselves from issues affecting their home states.

## **Pentagon Recommends Medical Overhaul**

American Forces Press Service

Jim Garamone

May 19, 2005

Defense officials used the Base Realignment and Closure process to transform the way military medicine operates.

Medical facilities will become more joint, they will consolidate where patients reside and they will become state-of-the-art. "We want to rival Johns Hopkins or the Mayo Clinics," said Assistant Defense Secretary for Health Affairs Dr. William Winkenwerder Jr.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld delivered his recommendations to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission Friday. The medical recommendations are part of this process.

The recommendations mean changes to military medicine in the nation's capital and San Antonio, as well as changes in many other military health facilities in the U.S.

The major recommendation is to establish the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on the grounds of the National Naval Medical Center. It will also create a brand-new 165-bed community hospital at Fort Belvoir. If approved, this will cost around \$1 billion, said Air Force Surgeon General Dr. (Lt. Gen.) George Taylor, who headed the medical Base Realignment and Closure recommendations.

Army, Navy and Air Force medical personnel will staff both facilities. The current hospitals --

Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Bethesda -- are separated by just seven miles. They are the primary receiving hospitals for casualties from Iraq and Afghanistan. "We believe the best way to do this is to place the facility on the Bethesda campus," Taylor said.

In addition to housing the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, the Bethesda campus will keep the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. The National Institutes of Health is also right across Wisconsin Ave. from the Bethesda facility. "The facility is able to accommodate the in-patient activities at this location," Taylor said.

Part of this recommendation would close the Army's Walter Reed campus. Malcolm Grow Hospital at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., would close its in-patient facilities and become a large same-day surgery center.

"We know these types of joint medical facilities work," Taylor said. "We have two of them today: Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany has been staffed by Army and Air Force for more than 10 years. If you go to Balad Hospital in Balad [Iraq], it is Army and Air Force run."

Changes would take place in San Antonio also. The two big medical platforms there are Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston and the 59th Medical Wing's Wilford Hall Medical Center at Lackland Air Force Base. Plans call for medical care to center at Brooke. The jointly-staffed facility will become the San Antonio Regional Medical Center, a 425-bed center. At Lackland, the recommendations suggest building a world-class outpatient and ambulatory surgery center. The trauma center at Lackland will close and Brooke will expand to handle the need.

San Antonio also will become the hub for training enlisted medical technicians of all services. Currently, the Army trains at Sam Houston, but the Air Force trains medics at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, and sailors train at Great Lakes, Ill., San Diego, and Portsmouth, Va. "All enlisted specialty training would be done at Fort Sam Houston," Taylor

said. The approximate student load would be about 4,500.

Aerospace medicine research will move from Brooks City Base -- the one-time Brooks Air Force Base -- to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. The Navy's Aeromedical Research Lab will move from Pensacola, Fla., to Wright-Patterson also.

The recommendations create six new centers of excellence for biomedical research, and all are joint. Assets will come from Navy, Air Force and Army locations to these new centers. They are the Joint Center of Excellence in Battlefield Health and Trauma at the Brooke Regional Medical Center; the Joint Center of Excellence in Infectious Disease Research at the Forest Glen Complex in Maryland; the Joint Center of Excellence for Aerospace Medicine Research at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base; the Joint Center of Excellence in Regulated Medical Product Development and Acquisition at Fort Detrick; the Joint Center of Excellence in Biomedical Defense Research at Fort Detrick; and the Joint Center of Excellence in Chemical, Biological Defense Research, Development and Acquisition at Aberdeen Proving Ground.

Overall, the recommendations will cost \$2.4 billion to build new facilities and capabilities. Once in place, the services will save \$400 million per year, officials said.

The joint cross-service group, new in this round of Base Realignment and Closures, was able to make recommendations to the secretary. In past rounds, joint groups merely advised service leaders.

"It is my view that the group put together a very thoughtful, very comprehensive plan for improving military health care," Winkenwerder said. "It's a plan that allows us to invest in, and modernize key flagship facilities and at the same time, it will allow the military health system to be more efficient."

### **BRAC Recommendations Signify Changes Ahead for Marine Corps**

usmc.mil  
Maj. Nat Fahy  
May 19, 2005

WASHINGTON -- Months of rumors and nationwide speculation were finally put to rest when Secretary of Defense, Donald H. Rumsfeld formally submitted the Department of Defense's Base Realignment and Closure recommendations to the BRAC Commission here May 13.

Minutes after uniformed service members were televised distributing hard copies of the list to members of Congress, word of major closings spread rapidly.

In contrast to previous BRAC rounds in the mid-90s, the Marine Corps will not have an active base completely closed. However, it will see significant transformation across many types of installations and installation functions within both the reserve and active communities. Changes range from relocation of reserve units and functions to major realignments of supply, storage and industrial capacity functions, to becoming a "receiver site" for another service organization.

"The Marine Corps was strategically positioned fairly well in advance of the 2005 BRAC process," said Brig. Gen. Willie J. Williams, assistant deputy commandant for Installations and Logistics. "These recommendations will improve our organizational alignments, and help us achieve a more efficient base infrastructure. We look forward to working with the BRAC Commission in their further analysis of these recommendations, and ultimately implementing the decisions made by the president and the Congress."

If the recommendations are approved, nine Navy-Marine Corps reserve centers in California, Ohio, Wisconsin, Louisiana, Oklahoma, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Alabama will close. Two inspector-instructor sites in Rome, Ga., and West Trenton, N.J., will be shut down as well. In a move designed to further joint interoperability among the services, personnel operating out of these facilities will be

primarily reassigned to Armed Forces Reserve Centers located nearby in their respective states.

The Marine Corps Support Activity in Kansas City, Mo., will close and move its Mobility Command to Naval Air Station, Joint Reserve Base, New Orleans, but retain an enclave for the 9th Marine Corps District and the 24th Marine Regiment. Marine Forces Reserve Headquarters is scheduled to follow suit, moving out of its current location at the Naval Support Activity, New Orleans, also recommended for closure.

Four Marine Corps reserve aviation squadrons and other select aviation support units are recommended to make eventual moves from installations slated to close. Naval Air Station Atlanta will see its reserve Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 142 relocate to NAS Joint Reserve Base, Fort Worth, Texas. Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 773 will relocate to nearby Robins Air Force Base. The reserve Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 772 out of NAS Willow Grove, Pa., will eventually move to McGuire AFB, and HMLA-775, Detachment A, from Johnstown, Pa., will also be relocated to McGuire AFB.

To eliminate excess infrastructure and functional redundancy, brigades on three major bases are being consolidated under the central management of joint correctional facilities - one on each coast. Inmates and staff members aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., and MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., will be relocated to a mid-Atlantic Joint Regional Correctional Facility at the Naval Support Activity in Chesapeake, Va., while those aboard MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., will eventually relocate to a joint correctional facility at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif. Each of the bases closing their brigades will maintain at least some pre-trial confinement capability.

Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow in California will maintain its west coast presence to provide a close, responsive source for heavy depot maintenance support, while some of its selected commodity depot-level functions to be relocated to MCLB Albany, Ga. MCLB Albany

will expand to meet the additional support requirement.

Other notable recommendations involve the eventual consolidation of service investigative departments aboard MCB Quantico. The base will become the host installation for Counterintelligence Field Activity and Defense Security Service, Naval Criminal Investigative Service and the Army Criminal Investigation Command. Such a move is expected to warrant an influx of more than 3,000 additional personnel to the base.

"This will facilitate multi-service missions by creating a joint organizational and basing solution that will not only reduce waste but also maximize military effectiveness," said Col. James Lowe, base commander, in a recent press statement.

In testimony to the BRAC commission May 17, Secretary of the Navy Gordon England summed up his view of the recommendations, "As I look at the infrastructure footprint, I'm confident that it is more than sufficient to support the Navy and Marine Corps force structure."

The Department of Defense's recommendations are by no means final. The BRAC Commission will review the recommendations and forward their report to President Bush by Sept. 8. He must approve or reject them on an all-or-nothing basis. By Sept 23, the president must send his decision to Congress, which in turn has 45 legislative days to accept or reject the recommendations in their entirety. When that occurs, the recommendations then become law and must be implemented within 6 years.

### *National News Articles*

#### **Base Closure Panel Will Visit 16 Cities**

Associated Press  
Mary Clare Jalonick  
May 19, 2005

WASHINGTON -- The commission reviewing the Pentagon's recommended base closings will

travel to 16 cities this summer to hear from communities potentially affected.

Between June 7 and July 14, commissioners will hold hearings in Salt Lake City; St. Louis; Dallas; Atlanta; Boston; Los Angeles; Fairbanks, Alaska; Portland, Ore.; Rapid City, S.D.; Grand Forks, N.D.; Clovis, N.M.; Buffalo, N.Y.; Charlotte, N.C.; Baltimore; San Antonio and New Orleans.

The Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, appointed by President Bush, can change the Pentagon list before it is submitted to the White House and Congress this fall.

"The regional hearings will provide the primary means for communities to educate the commissioners and their staff on their disagreements with the DOD base recommendations," said former Veterans Affairs Secretary Anthony Principi, chairman of the commission.

Commissioner Lloyd Warren Newton, a retired Air Force general, will tour New Jersey's Fort Monmouth, members of the New Jersey delegation said Thursday.

The Pentagon tried to close Fort Monmouth in 1988 and 1993, but an intense lobbying effort by congressional, state and local officials kept the post open.

Members of the South Dakota delegation said Thursday that three commissioners -- former Democratic Rep. James H. Bilbray of Nevada, former Assistant Secretary of Defense Philip Coyle and former Transportation Secretary Samuel Skinner -- would visit Ellsworth Air Force Base in Rapid City on the same day as the South Dakota hearing.

Rep. Stephanie Herseth, D-S.D., said the Thursday announcement "gives us some lead time" to prepare for the visit and craft the best argument for saving Ellsworth, which the Pentagon recommended for closure.

"It's a matter of now really putting scrutiny on their data and analysis," she said.

North Dakota Sen. Byron Dorgan said his state would use the Grand Forks hearing to lobby for additional missions for Grand Forks Air Force base, which would lose its air tanker mission and most of its personnel.

"We would like to add some additional missions and minimize the impact," Dorgan said.

Gov. George Pataki of New York said Thursday that he would testify at the Buffalo hearing in an effort to spare Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station from closure.

"We fought successfully back in 1995 during the last BRAC round to save the Niagara Air Reserve Station from being closed, and we're going to fight hard to save it again," he said.

### **Chief Of National Guard Supports Realignment Process**

Associated Press

Joe Ruff

May 20, 2005

OMAHA, Neb. -- The chief of the National Guard Bureau said Thursday that he fully supports the Pentagon's base realignment and closure process but he doesn't want it to cloud important issues such as recruitment and retention.

Lt. Gen. Steven Blum told more than 50 adjutants general and staff at conference in Omaha that the realignment process known as BRAC is important. But, he said, the size of forces will be determined by how many people are recruited to do the work.

"Do not be distracted by this little cloud of gnats that has Washington spinning," Blum said. He said the number of people serving in the Guard will determine its resources.

The National Guard Bureau that Blum heads is a federal agency that divides missions and resources for the federal role of the state National Guard units, according to its Web site.

After his speech, Blum said the Pentagon's proposals will be studied by a special commission and that they could change. He also said governors should express their concerns about the realignments.

There is a dispute over whether the Pentagon has final say over closing Guard bases on federal land or whether governors have that right.

Blum said the issue is for lawyers and courts to decide.

### **Stevens doubts bill aimed at delaying military closures will pass**

Associated Press

Seth Linden

May 19, 2005

Washington, D.C. - An effort to delay military base closings in Alaska and other states may go nowhere.

Even though he signed on to the effort, Alaska Sen. Ted Stevens is still doubtful about a congressional measure to delay proposed military base closings and restructurings. Stevens and Sen. Lisa Murkowski are two co-sponsors of a Senate bill designed to allow postponement until more analysis is completed.

Stevens says the measure, while not impossible, is unlikely to pass.

"I said I think it would be very difficult to get that decided at this time, particularly in view of the House's reaction already and the fact that we lost the battle to delay (the base realignment and closure) before," Stevens said.

A spokesman for Sen. Murkowski says it's too early to know how the bill will fare, but says regardless, the bill draws attention to the base closing issue.

Meanwhile, the independent commission charged with deciding which bases will close and be revamped announced today that it will hold a hearing in Fairbanks on June 15.

### **Four BRAC members recuse themselves on state bases**

Congress Daily

May 19, 2005

Four members of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission announced Thursday that they would recuse themselves from decisions involving bases in states with which they are associated.

Retired Adm. Harold Gehman said he would exempt himself from decisions involving any Virginia base because he had served briefly as an unpaid adviser on BRAC to Virginia Democratic Gov. Mark Warner.

Phillip Coyle said he would not participate in substantial decisions involving California because he had played an advisory role for GOP Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Former Reps. James Bilbray, D-Nev., and James Hansen, R-Utah, recused themselves from deliberations involving the states they represented.

The announcements came as the commission ended four days of hearings on the Pentagon's base closing and realignment recommendations by announcing plans for holding about 16 regional hearings, beginning June 7 in Salt Lake City and St. Louis, and visiting approximately 65 affected bases.

After four days of hearing from Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and the officials who prepared and approved the sweeping list of 837 separate closures or realignments, several commissioners said they thought the Pentagon had done a good job making its decisions.

But Gehman, Coyle and retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Sue Turner said they needed to see the mountain of detailed data supporting those decisions. And they said they were looking forward to hearing the other side, from the representatives of the facilities slated for closure or reduction and the communities that would be affected.

"We want to hear from the people in the communities. We need to hear from them," Coyle said.

Although past commissions have added dozens of bases to the Pentagon's recommendations, Gehman indicated this panel would be less likely to do so. If during the public hearings the community officials challenge the Pentagon's decisions, "we would have to go back and compare the numbers" of military value between what the department said and what the community presented, Gehman said.

### **Maine, N.H. governors and congressional leaders talk strategy**

Associated Press  
Anne Saunders  
May 19, 2005

Maine and New Hampshire's governors and their respective congressional leaders spent an hour Thursday in a strategy session devoted to the fight to keep the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard open.

The strategy focuses on showing that the Defense Department used a flawed analysis in putting the shipyard on the list of proposed base closings nationwide. The Pentagon deviated from base-closing guidelines established by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, delegation members said in a prepared statement.

The delegation further said it is "growing increasingly impatient" with the Defense Department's delay in releasing the set of data it used to justify its recommendations, saying the department owes the affected communities an explanation for its reasoning in reaching its proposals.

Thursday's meeting in Washington was attended by the states' senators and U.S. representatives, and Maine Gov. John Baldacci. New Hampshire Gov. John Lynch listened in by telephone from Concord, N.H.

"We do not have the data that the Department of Defense relied on in putting the shipyard on the list but we do have reason to believe ... that the Department of Defense may have significantly understated the cost of closure," Lynch said after the meeting.

Lynch said cost was a factor in determining which bases should close. If the projected cost is incorrect, it provides another argument for removing the shipyard from the list, he said.

Decommissioning a nuclear facility and dealing with potential contamination issues would be costly, Lynch noted. If the federal figures are wrong, this could provide added ammunition in the fight to keep the shipyard open.

Lynch, Baldacci and the two states' congressional leaders also plan to divide responsibility for making the case for the importance of the base to national security.

Last week, the Pentagon proposed closing the shipyard. It also proposed closing the Defense Finance and Accounting Center in Limestone, and reducing the Brunswick Naval Air Station's mission and employment.

The combined effect could be a loss of nearly 12,000 direct and indirect jobs in Maine alone.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission will review the list before it makes final recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8. If Bush accepts the panel's list, it will go to Congress for final consideration before the end of the year.

"We are going to divide up the list of commissioners and each of us will be responsible for contacting a commissioner," Lynch said. "We don't know at this point exactly when the commissioners or a commissioner will visit the shipyard, but it could happen sometime in the next couple weeks."

In addition, congressional leaders will be trying to get hold of the Department of Defense analysis and supporting data.

Also on Thursday, Maine and New Hampshire's senators joined others from South Dakota, Arkansas and Mississippi — states where major facilities are in jeopardy — in introducing a bill to delay the base closings until the return of most troops from Iraq and the release of reports on the impact of closing bases.

Congressional efforts to halt the base closings are considered long shots. The president and congressional leaders all support closing bases.

"The Department of Defense seems to have thrown the idea of cost out the window because Portsmouth is the naval shipyard that does the work for the lowest cost and it gets the ships back out into the water sooner," Sununu said. "You just don't close the best performing shipyard first."

### **'Strike force' scrutinizing BRAC report**

Associated Press

Susan Haigh

May 19, 2005

HARTFORD — Gov. M. Jodi Rell's top commissioners Wednesday began poring over a federal report that recommends closing the Groton submarine base, hoping to find fault with the Pentagon's decision-making process.

The state's environmental commissioner, Gina McCarthy, is already questioning the government's \$23 million estimated price tag for cleaning up the base. McCarthy said that amount would not cover the remediation costs for an estimated 29 contaminated sites on the sprawling 300-acre property.

"It will be staggering to see how you can come up with a \$23 million figure," McCarthy said.

Rell has appointed the commissioners of nine state agencies to a new "strike force." The group held its first meeting Wednesday. Each agency will be charged with attacking a specific issue involved in the decision to close the base.

Four Connecticut military bases are on the Pentagon's list of proposed closures. Besides the

U.S. Naval Submarine Base in Groton, federal authorities are recommending closing the Sgt. Libby U.S. Army Reserve Center in New Haven, Turner U.S. Army Reserve Center in Fairfield and the U.S. Army Reserve Center Maintenance Support Facility in Middletown. The Bradley International Airport Air Guard Station would be realigned.

The proposed actions would affect nearly 8,600 Connecticut jobs, nearly all of them from the Groton base.

Brig. Gen. Thaddeus Martin, interim adjutant general of the Connecticut National Guard, said there is a good argument to be made in keeping the Bradley Guard station intact. He said it is the single largest facility on the East Coast that supports A-10 aircraft.

"We're very optimistic that when we get our hands on the specific data, we can identify the shortfall that was missed by the BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure Commission) committee and correct that error and roll back in with a force of 18 A-10s aircraft assigned to Bradley," Martin said.

Rell said her staff has still not received the data behind the Department of Defense's closure proposals. She said she expects her staff to look through that information with "a fine tooth comb."

In the meantime, she wants her strike force to look at the information used to promote other Navy bases in Virginia and Georgia and see if any data are incorrect.

Rell has also instructed the state Department of Labor to look at the impact of job losses from the base closures, including estimated unemployment compensation costs and the ability of displaced workers to find new jobs.

The Department of Transportation is examining whether the state needs to invest millions of dollars to make capital improvements to the New London port area, while the Connecticut Development Authority is looking into whether there is available funding to improve the base.

“We know closing the sub base is a mistake and there are some hopeful signs that people in high places in Washington feel the same way — but the BRAC Commission is going to make its decision on cold, hard facts,” Rell said. “The job of this strike force is to come up with those facts.”

The BRAC will hold public hearings before presenting its recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8.

### **House members fail in effort to derail base-closing commission**

Congress Daily  
Megan Scully  
May 19, 2005

Several House Armed Services Committee members Wednesday attempted to use the markup of the fiscal 2006 defense authorization bill to halt the work of the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission, to no avail.

The committee defeated an amendment offered by Rep. Jeb Bradley, R-N.H., to terminate the process. Bradley then introduced a subsequent amendment to delay base closings until the Pentagon completes several strategic reviews and forces deployed to Iraq return. It was defeated on a voice vote.

Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee Chairman Joel Hefley, R-Colo., who last year led the drive to delay the BRAC round by two years, indicated that now is not the right time to shutter bases around the country, but conceded that it is too late.

"This train has left the station," Hefley said. "I don't see any way to call it back."

Bradley's amendment measure was supported by Rep. Rob Simmons, R-Conn., whose district might lose up to 8,500 jobs if the commission agrees with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's recommendation to close the Naval Submarine Base New London.

Rep. Gene Taylor, D-Miss., a longtime opponent of base closings, likewise voiced support for Bradley's amendment. His district is home to Pascagoula Naval Station, also slated for closure.

Lawmakers also pushed for changes in Pentagon weapons-buying, a key piece of subcommittee markups.

During the full committee mark, members unanimously passed an amendment, introduced by Rep. Neil Abercrombie, D-Hawaii, that requires the Pentagon to study using "capital budgeting" approaches for major acquisition programs.

"We continue to use an acquisition system that would be worthy of a Dickens novel," Abercrombie said.

Used by many local and state governments, the capital budgeting approach to acquisition separates revenues and outlays for major programs from revenues and outlays from operating budgets.

It also provides budget authority to spread acquisition of a major asset over several years, rather than pay for everything in the first year of acquisition.

### **U.S. Navy Still Has Enough Bases**

United Press International  
May 19, 2005

WASHINGTON - The head of the U.S. Navy says he is "confident" recommended base closures are "more than sufficient to fully support the Navy force."

Gordon R. England, who also serves as acting deputy secretary of defense, told members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission the world, the country and the Navy have changed, American Forces Press Service. In response, England said, the Navy must adapt its infrastructure to better meet this new environment.

That involves transforming the military so it's ready to meet current and future threats and demands eliminating excess infrastructure and consolidating operations, England told the commission.

To support this effort, the Defense Department has recommended closing nine major Navy bases and 46 smaller installations and realigning eight major Navy bases, U.S. officials said.

The recommended changes were based on saving defense dollars so they can be invested where they're needed and developing bases to support military readiness for the future, Anne Davis, deputy assistant secretary of the Navy, told the committee members.

### **Principi's son born at base**

Gannett News Service  
Ledyard Ling  
May 19, 2005

WASHINGTON — The chairman of the panel that will review the Pentagon's plan to close 33 major U.S. bases, including Fort Monmouth, has a personal connection to the New Jersey Army base: His son was born there.

Anthony J. Principi's son, Anthony, was born in 1976 at an Army hospital on the base, which the Pentagon wants to close as part of a massive reorganization of its operations.

The hospital later became a veterans' clinic, which Principi dedicated two years ago when he was Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Principi was a law student at Seton Hall University and his wife was a Navy nurse at the time of their son's birth. She was eligible for military medical care so she had their baby at Paterson Hospital on the grounds of Fort Monmouth, he said.

Does that mean the head of the Base Realignment and Closure commission has a special affinity for the base?

"Is there a conflict of interest? No. I don't think so," he said with a laugh after Wednesday's hearing at which the fate of the fort came up. "But obviously, it's part of our history, and I'm very proud of the care he received at that time."

Principi said he wants to review the Pentagon's recommendations thoroughly.

"It's like all the other bases. We'll do a comprehensive review of the justification for the military's decision to close Fort Monmouth," he said.

### **National base closure panel still waiting for information**

**Members say they look forward to input from people in affected areas. July 14 session is set in Los Angeles.**

Copley News Service  
Otto Kreisher  
MAY 20, 2005

WASHINGTON -- After four days of hearing from the Pentagon officials who created the recommendations for base reductions, members of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission praised that selection process Thursday, but said they were looking forward to hearing from the affected communities.

"I think they've done a pretty good job," said retired Navy Adm. Harold Gehman, who filled in for chairman Anthony Principi at the final Washington hearing.

Two commissioners added after the hearing that they still have not seen the many thick volumes of data supporting the sweeping list of 837 closures or realignments.

### **Gaps in information**

"We're still waiting for a lot of the information, so there are gaps," said retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Sue Turner.

And they said they were looking forward to hearing the other side, from the representatives

of the facilities slated for closure of reductions and the communities that would be impacted.

"We want to hear from the people in the communities. We need to hear from them," said Phillip Coyle, the former director of operational testing and evaluation, who now lives in Los Angeles.

Asked if the commission might add any bases to the Pentagon's list for possible closure, Gehman said, "I think that would be an outcome of the public hearings with the communities." If a community representative "brings up a legitimate issue," and challenges the Defense Department numbers on military value, "we would have to go back and compare the numbers."

"As far as I know functionally, that is the only way a base facility that is not on the list could rise up," he said.

Under the law creating this commission, it would take votes from seven of the nine commissioners to add a base to the possible closure list. It takes only five votes to remove a facility.

As the panel prepared to start hearing the appeals of the impacted bases and communities, four commissioners announced they would exempt themselves from considering installations in states with which they are associated.

Gehman said he would recuse himself from decisions involving any Virginia base gaining or losing in the process because he had served briefly as an unpaid adviser on BRAC to Virginia Gov. Mark Warner.

Similarly, Coyle said he would not participate in substantial decisions involving California bases because he had played a similar unpaid advisory role for Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

And former congressmen James Billbray, D-Nev., and James Hansen, R-Utah, recused themselves from deliberations involving the states they had represented.

All four said they probably were not required to stand aside on the discussion of those bases but wanted to remove any indication of conflict of interest.

Gehman said commission members would hold 16 day-long regional hearings and at least two commissioners would visit 65 of the larger affected bases. Senior commission staff members would visit the smaller facilities on the list, he said.

The hearings begin with June 7 sessions in Salt Lake City and St. Louis and conclude with a July 14 hearing in Los Angeles.

#### More hearings possible

The commissioners and their aides also will be reviewing the Pentagon's data on which the recommendations were based and might hold additional hearings before they are required to make their report to President Bush on Sept. 8.

Even as the commission moved ahead on implementing the base closure recommendations, affected members of Congress still were trying to derail the process. The House Armed Services Committee rejected a proposed amendment to the defense authorization bill that would have stopped the process and 10 senators have introduced similar legislation.

### **The Pentagon Proposes Chesapeake Military Prison**

Norfolk Virginian-Pilot  
Claudia Assis and Kate Wiltrout  
May 20, 2005

CHESAPEAKE — The proposal to house a military prison at a little-known Navy installation near the North Carolina border caught city officials by surprise this week.

The sweeping Pentagon proposals released last week included a call for a consolidated brig at the Naval Support Activity Northwest Annex, off Ballhack Road in southern Chesapeake.

Local Navy officials are looking forward to the prospect of a modern, consolidated brig in Chesapeake, said Phil Garcia, a Navy spokesman.

“We’re going to support it, of course. We think it’s going to make best use of the taxpayer dollars, streamline capabilities and resources,” he said. “Everybody’s upbeat about it.”

But, anytime there’s a proposed prison, “that’s something that deserves careful scrutiny,” said City Councilman Pete Burkheimer. “It’s certainly something we ought to know about and ought to look at. We’ll follow with interest.”

Scattered homes flank the annex, but the area’s mostly rural landscape is at the heart of what many believe will be the last frontier in Chesapeake’s development. The military installation is also near the 4,000-acre Williams tract, one of the largest pieces of undeveloped land in Hampton Roads.

In its recommendations to close or realign military bases, the Defense Department has proposed creating five joint regional correctional facilities across the country.

The Chesapeake brig would replace military jails in Norfolk, Quantico, and Camp Lejeune, N.C.

The planned brig would have capacity for at least 250 inmates, Garcia said. It would house male and female prisoners who are serving up to five years and provide counseling and rehabilitation, he said.

The 3,600-acre annex employs 1,500 military members and civilians, and more than 600 people live on the base, Garcia said.

The annex has been a good neighbor, said David Thomas, a Chesapeake resident whose house is about two miles from the military installation.

Thomas, who is vice president of Citizens for the Preservation of Rural Chesapeake, said he

would be concerned about bright lights if a prison became part of the annex.

“From where I live I don’t see anything from the Northwest Annex currently. I can see St. Brides pretty distinctly,” Thomas said of St. Brides Correctional Center, which is about five miles from his home.

According to a 2004 traffic count for Ballahack Road near the annex, 3,600 vehicles a day on average traveled on the rural road. The portion of Ballahack by the annex has capacity to carry 8,800 vehicles a day.

The Defense Department’s recommendations won’t be finalized until late this year. Garcia said he expected discussions with representatives from Quantico and Camp Lejeune to start by the end of the year.

The idea of building a correctional facility at the Chesapeake annex isn’t new: A former commanding officer of the brig said last year there were preliminary plans to replace the Norfolk facility with one in Chesapeake, a project that would cost about \$14 million.

But constructing a larger, joint facility would likely be a costlier endeavor.

The Norfolk brig holds about 145 inmates with a staff of 130; the U.S. Marine Corps brig at Quantico can hold 120 prisoners and has a staff of 54, while the Lejeune jail employs 214 people and can hold 280 prisoners, according to base spokesmen.

The recommendation document contains few details on the consolidated jails, but does say that the construction might affect wetlands in the area.

### **Local News Articles**

#### **Officials excited about BRAC commission visit**

Clovis News Journal (Clovis, NM)

David Irvin

May 20, 2005

Eastern New Mexico residents will have the opportunity to square off face-to-face with Base Realignment and Closure commissioners in June.

On June 24, between one and three commissioners are scheduled to visit Clovis for a regional hearing, according to officials at the commission. The meeting is slated for 8:30 a.m., but the location is still tentative, according to officials at the BRAC Commission office.

The meeting is designed to gather input from the Clovis-Portales area community. The commissioners may visit Cannon during the trip, but a mandatory visit to the base could happen at another time, officials said.

“The hearings are a chance for the communities to state their cases,” said Robert McCreary, deputy director of communications for the commission. “This information needs to be factual (in nature).”

Cannon was one of two domestic Air Force bases recommended for closure on a list released May 13 by the Department of Defense.

Area community leaders vowed a fierce fight in the coming months to remove the base from the list.

Appointed by President Bush, the nine-member BRAC Commission can change the Pentagon list — it takes five votes to get off the list — before it is submitted to the White House and Congress in the fall.

In a joint press release, New Mexico’s congressional delegates expressed their excitement about the regional hearing.

Gov. Bill Richardson will attend the meeting, officials at his office said.

“I am extremely pleased that the BRAC Commission will be coming to Clovis for a hearing so they can see firsthand the level of community support to keep Cannon open,” Richardson said.

He said he will tell the Commission how important Cannon is to national defense and to the state.

Terry Moberly, who chairs the Committee of Fifty, a Clovis-area volunteer group that has supported Cannon for decades, said it is premature to say exactly what the community response will be at the hearing, but the city will “make its case.”

“We’re going to press the issues that we’ve talked about forever,” he said, referring to Cannon’s expansive overland training range and other attributes. “Exactly what is going to be said, and how it is going to be said, is a work in process.”

Sen. Domenici, R-N.M., called the meeting a “golden opportunity” for the people of New Mexico to come out and make their voices heard about the BRAC list.

“I strongly believe that Cannon receives some of the best community support of any base in the country, so we’re definitely relying on their help to work as a team to save the base,” he said.

According to McCreary, it is important the community come to the meeting prepared, and with hard facts. He said the commission will be operating under strict guidelines, with analysts working toward compiling the best information possible on each location.

Between June 7 and July 14, commissioners will hold hearings in 16 cities across the country.

“The regional hearings will provide the primary means for communities to educate the commissioners and their staff on their disagreements with the DoD base recommendations,” said former Veterans Affairs Secretary Anthony Principi, chairman of the commission.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

## **BRAC boon adding up**

The Free-Lance Staer (Fredericksburg, VA)  
Pamela Gould and Emily Battle  
May 20, 2005

The area around the Quantico Marine Corps Base could see another 2,108 jobs in retail, service and other industries as a result of the Pentagon's decision to move more than 3,000 people to the facility, according to an economic-impact report.

Local officials are still trying to get a handle on the impact of recommendations made as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process. But the economic impact part of the Pentagon report released last week says the area could see a net gain of 5,121 jobs with the shifting of military and civilian personnel and defense contractors to Quantico, and the corresponding "indirect" impact to other sectors of the work force.

Tim Baroody, Stafford County's economic development director, said a general formula he's seen hold true before estimates two new jobs are created in a community for every one new federal job.

"That is consistent with what the federal government has established for a long time," Baroody said yesterday.

The formula used to estimate the economic impact also projects a bigger hit from the net loss of 351 jobs at the naval base at Dahlgren. The economic-impact analysis predicts another 424 "indirect" jobs will be lost as a result of the cuts at the King George County facility.

What the BRAC report defines as indirect impact involves positions that are neither military, civilian nor contractor, but ones that have support roles. That would include businesses such as retailers, grocery stores and restaurants—ones that provide materials or services for the households of the base employees. It would also include nongovernment contractors that provide infrastructure and other support for bases.

Baroody said he is working with Fredericksburg Regional Chamber of Commerce officials to pin

down where the 3,013 people BRAC recommends being transferred to Quantico are living now. He believes the majority would not be moving into the area but said that's something county supervisors are eager to determine.

"We are certainly trying to get that for our board so they will understand the actual impact of 3,000 people moving to Quantico," Baroody said.

The BRAC report is currently under review by a federal panel, which must send a final list of proposals to President Bush by Sept. 8. The president has until Sept. 23 to accept or reject the full list and send it to Congress.

Implementing the changes is a process that would start within two years of congressional approval and be complete within six years.

King George officials are reserving comment on the recommendations until they've had time to learn more specifics, but they caution against reading too much too soon into the economic impact numbers.

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

What's not known is whether the 351 direct jobs the report states would move are held by King George residents, and whether other programs that could move to Dahlgren between now and when the BRAC movements start to take effect might change that initial job loss number.

For example, Congress is considering a defense spending bill right now that would bring Dahlgren a \$10 million Electromagnetic Research and Engineering Facility in the next fiscal year.

According to Dahlgren Commander Capt. Joseph McGettigan, that facility would consolidate a number of current laboratories and

programs that support the development of new electromagnetic weapons systems at Dahlgren.

Moves like this are not included in the BRAC analysis.

The economic impact analysis uses employment statistics for calendar year 2002. Quantico's impact is assessed as part of the area that stretches from Washington south to the Marine base. That puts employment for the region at 2.8 million and translates into a 0.2 percent increase for Quantico, which straddles the Stafford/Prince William county line.

The data for Dahlgren is based on employment of 14,171 people in King George County and a resulting 5.5 percent decrease resulting from the BRAC changes.

Local officials are also interested in finding out whether the Fredericksburg region will be getting any of the 22,802 positions being moved out of leased office space in Washington, Arlington and Alexandria.

When the indirect impact is factored in, that area is losing more than 39,000 jobs, according to the report's economic formula.

Baroody said he has heard from more than one source that the 22,802 jobs leaving leased space have already been accounted for in the report as relocations.

Stafford Supervisor Bob Gibbons is among the people clamoring for accurate information about which employees being transferred here already live in the area.

Like Baroody, Gibbons believes many people either fall in that category or will want to continue living where they are and simply commute south to work.

"I think we ought to stop suggesting (the 3,013) is the net gain of housing," Baroody said. "I think that's just a false assumption."

He added that the prospect of a southbound commute is increasingly popular for people in the Washington area.

"There is no question that folks are warming up to the thought that a reverse commute works in their favor," Baroody said.

"We're slowly, in essence, becoming an employment center," he said. "Obviously, I'd like to encourage more of that."

At Tuesday's Stafford Board of Supervisors meeting, Schools Superintendent Jean Murray told supervisors that the BRAC recommendations will impact school enrollment.

"We are looking at additional employment, and we anticipate it will bring not only workers but workers families' and children," she said. "This information has not been included in any of our projections."

Gibbons, who represents the Rock Hill District of northern Stafford, is consistently looking to attract business to the area around the Quantico base and said he's excited by the changes that are proposed.

"I'm so thrilled about Quantico," he said at Tuesday's meeting. "Quantico is one of the jewels of the defense industry now, and in four or five years it will be considered the law-enforcement capital of the world."

According to base spokesman Lt. Col. Rick Long, Quantico would become headquarters for criminal investigations for all military services and would be home to the Counterintelligence Field Activity and Defense Security Service. The base is already home to training facilities for the FBI and DEA and the FBI's forensic laboratory.

"We are so happy to get these types of jobs brought to Stafford," Gibbons said. "These are good jobs, high-paying jobs, and it's good, clean industry."

Baroody is excited about the prospect of 5,121 new jobs for the area and can envision many of

the 2,108 indirect positions resulting from local business owners increasing staff because of increased demand.

"All in all, I think it's very positive for Stafford County," he said.

### **Base closure commission to visit Grand Forks in June**

Associated Press (Bismark, ND)  
Mary Clare Jalonick  
May 20, 2005

WASHINGTON -- The base closings commission reviewing the Pentagon's recommendation to realign Grand Forks Air Force Base will come to North Dakota on June 23, commissioners said Thursday.

The state's two senators, along with Minnesota's two senators, had sent a letter to the commissioners Wednesday, asking that they visit the base.

Former Veterans Affairs Secretary Anthony Principi, chairman of the commission, said the hearings "will provide the primary means for communities to educate the commissioners and their staff on their disagreements with the DOD base recommendations."

Communities can "present to the commission how and why the DOD proposals are flawed or should be changed," Principi said.

Sens. Byron Dorgan and Kent Conrad and Rep. Earl Pomeroy, D-N.D., said they were pleased the commission is coming to the state so soon. The June hearing will be at 8:30 a.m. in Grand Forks, at a site to be determined.

The visit "can only reinforce the delegation's arguments for the military value of Grand Forks Air Force Base," Conrad said.

Under the Pentagon's plan, the Grand Forks base would lose its air tanker mission and more than 80 percent of its military personnel. Air Force officials have said the base could be in line for new homeland security missions, possibly as a

location for unmanned aerial vehicles, known as UAVs. Some types of UAVs could be used for surveillance or border patrol.

Dorgan said the delegation will highlight community support for the base, recent infrastructure improvements and the base's capacity for more missions as other bases are closed and realigned.

"We would like to add some additional missions and minimize the impact," Dorgan said.

Pomeroy said the meeting would be a good opportunity to talk to the commission in detail about the UAVs and what that mission may mean for Grand Forks.

The Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, appointed by President Bush, can change the Pentagon list before it is submitted to the White House and Congress this fall. In past years, about 85 percent of bases have remained on the list.

Between June 7 and July 14, commissioners also will hold hearings in Salt Lake City; St. Louis; Dallas; Atlanta; Boston; Los Angeles; Fairbanks, Alaska; Portland, Ore.; Rapid City, S.D.; Clovis, N.M.; Buffalo, N.Y.; Charlotte, N.C.; Baltimore; San Antonio and New Orleans.

Members of the South Dakota delegation said three commissioners -- former Democratic Rep. James H. Bilbray of Nevada, former Assistant Secretary of Defense Philip Coyle and former Transportation Secretary Samuel Skinner -- would visit Ellsworth Air Force Base in Rapid City on the same day as the South Dakota hearing.

Rep. Stephanie Herseth, D-S.D., said the Thursday announcement "gives us some lead time" to prepare for the visit and craft the best argument for saving Ellsworth, which the Pentagon recommended for closure.

### **Panel will hold hearing here on base closings**

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (St. Louis, MO)

Philip Dine  
May, 19 2005

WASHINGTON - St. Louis has scored an early hearing on base closings, with the Base Realignment and Closure Commission announcing Thursday that it will hold a public session June 7 in St. Louis.

But it won't be a hearing of the full commission, because June 7 is the only day the commission will be holding two hearings, with the other one set for Salt Lake City.

The selection of St. Louis as a site for one of the 16 regional hearings the commission will hold is nonetheless important because state officials and the congressional delegation plan to contest the Pentagon's decision to do away with the 131st Air National Guard Fighter Wing at Lambert Field. In his recommendations a week ago today, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld recommended that the wing's F-15 fighter jets be sent to Las Vegas and Atlantic City, N.J.

Sen. Christopher "Kit" Bond, R-Mo., had requested in a meeting Monday with commission Chairman Anthony Principi that St. Louis be one of the hearing sites.

"It is a chance for the community to form a united front and make sure every member of the commission understands fully the impact of this disastrous plan," Bond said.

A commission spokesman said the hearing schedule was set on the basis of travel and when information about various bases could be collected, not because of requests from affected states.

Missouri officials are also considering making a case for more than 2,000 defense jobs that would be lost by moving the Army Human Resources Command out

of Overland, but they have not decided yet how strongly to push that case. It is seen as a harder argument to make, because the jobs in St. Louis and two other leased locations around the country would be consolidated at a military facility in Kentucky, which could save money and improve security.

### **2010 Closing Projected for Walter Reed Commission Members Question Pentagon Plans to Move Thousands to Belvoir**

Washington Post (Washington DC)

Spencer S. Hsu

May 20, 2005

Walter Reed Army Medical Center will close about five years from now if the Pentagon's new round of base closings is approved, Defense Department officials said yesterday, adding that no new military activity is planned on the historic District campus.

Testifying before the nine-member Base Realignment and Closure Commission that is weighing the Pentagon's nationwide streamlining plan, officials said that Walter Reed's 113-acre site in Northwest Washington would be offered to other federal agencies or possibly to the District for reuse under applicable federal law.

D.C. and Northern Virginia leaders have mobilized against the Pentagon's recommendations, seeking to prevent the shift of tens of thousands of defense jobs from Washington area sites.

Their efforts earned some sympathetic questions yesterday from commissioners, who probed whether the disruption caused to workers and to the bases they would be sent to, such as Fort Belvoir in southeastern Fairfax County, would offset predicted savings and other efficiencies.

"We have to be sure that the potential gain from the move is worth the potential cost," said commission member Harold W. Gehman Jr., a retired Navy admiral and former commander of U.S. Joint Forces Command.

Gehman said that 60 to 75 percent of skilled technical workers in defense facilities typically leave their jobs if forced to relocate, "so it obviously is a loss of skill and continuity, and no one can predict in advance of moving a facility from one place to another how many people might move."

Gehman, who previously served as an unpaid adviser to a Virginia base closure study panel established by Gov. Mark R. Warner (D), has recused himself from discussions regarding the state. Three other commissioners who formerly served in Congress or on a California base closure study panel also have recused themselves from projects involving their home states.

Commissioner James T. Hill, a retired Army general and former commander of U.S. Southern Command, singled out traffic congestion around Fort Belvoir, which is slated to receive as many as 18,400 additional workers under the Pentagon's plan.

"I'm having a hard time understanding how 11,000 more people are absorbed into Belvoir and in the surrounding communities and into the traffic pattern out there," he said, using the figure initially released by the Pentagon and later revised by the post. "Did you all look at that?"

Army official Donald C. Tison said Pentagon analysts were assured by Army engineers that there is plenty of room on the post. As for the surrounding area, Tison said that he did not have specifics but that the Army has budgeted \$125 million for infrastructure improvements there. He also cited talks regarding light rail, commuter rail and Interstate 95 access through the Franconia-Springfield Parkway extension.

The surgeon general of the Air Force, Lt. Gen. George P. Taylor, addressed plans to close the Walter Reed hospital and expand the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda into a new facility called the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. The District would lose 5,630 jobs in the move.

The Pentagon also would build a 165-bed community hospital at Fort Belvoir to handle some of Walter Reed's functions.

Because of the complexity of medical construction, Taylor said, the project would be completed "in the 2010 timeframe."

At Walter Reed's current home between Rock Creek Park and Georgia Avenue NW, "no military activity will remain there, no sir. . . . The garrison is gone, the post closes," save for some affiliated housing nearby, Taylor said.

Under federal law, the property would be offered to other federal agencies. If deemed excess, the land would be offered to homeless assistance groups, then potentially to local authorities by negotiation or for sale for reuse.

A spokesman for Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.) said yesterday that military officials will brief her next week and that "an upscale residential neighborhood makes it necessary for her to focus on all options, from economic loss to the District to the future of the site itself."

**The Axe Falls**  
**Base closings, new defense regulations spark exodus of federal employees and office leases.**  
Stefan Cornibert  
Arlington Connection (Arlington, VA)  
May 19, 2005

An estimated 23,000 Defense Department employees in Arlington offices will be moved to other military installations throughout the United States, taking with them the revenue from about 2 million square feet of leased office space, U.S. Rep. Jim Moran (D-8) said Friday.

Following the release of the Department of Defense's Base Realignment and Closure Committee's (BRAC) list, Moran got word the offices, now subject to new security standards, are closing and there is little anyone can do about it.

"No matter how hard we try, it's unlikely we're going to effect any change," Moran said. "Our chances are remote."

Arlington, Moran said, will see the loss of the Defense Intelligence Systems Agency's (DISA) office on the Jefferson Davis Highway to Indianapolis along with that of the Missile Defense Agency's office at the Navy Annex Building to Alabama. Offices in Rosslyn, Crystal City — including one in the Crystal City II complex — and at Seven Corners will be lost to Fort Sam Houston in Texas. Army offices will relocate to Fort Belvoir — which will see a total of about 17,500 new personnel as defense agencies are moved — and to Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland. The Marine Corps will be sent to Quantico, and Air Force offices are slated to move to Andrew's Air Force Base.

"We're not sure that's really all of it," said Moran, whose aides were still going through the list of office closures during a press conference. "But, they're not shutting down the Office of Naval Research in Ballston. It's a safe bet that 95 percent of the offices are going to close."

The deadline for the removal of Department of Defense offices, Moran said, is 2011, but the relocations will begin soon.

Defense agencies account for more than 60 percent of leased office space in Arlington — about 140 buildings. The closures come with the enactment of Department of Defense security standards that require defense installations to be set back 140 feet from public streets. The intent, according to DOD, is to safeguard offices from terrorist bombing. The ripple effect for the county's real estate market, Moran said, could be severe, but Arlington can make a recovery.

"Over the short term, it's pretty clear that lease rates are going to drop," Moran said, singling out areas like Crystal City, Pentagon City and Rosslyn as those expected to feel the most impact. "If you're near a Metro station though, it will be a blip for a few years and then I think you'll make a come back."

Moran also criticized the new DOD regulations.

"We've got to fight these security standards," said Moran. "They are irrational."

In a Monday meeting of elected officials, real estate executives and community leaders, he pointed out that the way they are applied is inconsistent and the set back requirement — designed to protect against only one kind of attack, a truck bombing — would do little to prevent a major terrorist strike like 9-11. Arlington County Board Chairman Jay Fisette said Friday that because the Department of Defense has yet to announce how it intends to pay for the office realignments, there is hope when it comes to saving some of the county's leased offices from the chopping block.

"Since this is due over the next six years and there's still the question of dollars, I don't think we should just let this go," said Fisette. "There will be another administration at some point."

Moving defense employees to Fort Belvoir, Moran said, will cause a drastic change in traffic patterns as personnel commute southward to Fairfax County. Fort Belvoir, he added, has no Metro station, and many local leaders are calling for the creation of one with federal money.

"It seems in DOD's interest," Moran said. "In a perfect world, it would have been done 10 years ago. Metro, of course, is going to have to make that a priority. If they want DOD people to be able to reach the Pentagon in any reasonable amount of time, they are going to have to have it."

County Board member Barbara Favola said the Department of Defense will have to make Metro a part of its plans.

"I think it should be part of the deal," she said. "There should be a rational solution to this. It will just wreak havoc if they are going to move forward without it."

Route 1 will also require improvements to handle added capacity. Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Gerry Connolly said the relocations are catching his jurisdiction off guard when it comes to transportation near Fort Belvoir.

"We're in the middle of a \$35 million investment in that corridor, but none of that was in anticipation of this kind of seismic event," he said, adding that more emphasis should now be placed on completion of the Fairfax County Parkway. "This is completely overwhelming to us. We'll need assistance."

Fort Belvoir will see many DOD personnel who once commuted to the National Geo-Spatial Intelligence Agency in Reston now that its facility, Moran said, is slated to be moved. In Alexandria, Defense Department offices in the Hoffman building will be removed. A warehouse for the General Services Administration in Franconia will also be relocated. Moran added that an estimated 1,300 defense contractors will feel the impact of the DOD's new policies.

"The fact that most of these folks will not be relocated outside the Washington Metro area could mitigate some of this," he said.

The timing of the Defense Department's relocations is a bad one according to Stephen Fuller, an economist with George Mason University, who authored a report through the Northern Virginia Regional Committee on the subject.

"Arlington is the jurisdiction that's going to be most affected by this," Fuller said, adding that at the end of the current decade when the enforcement of the new standards is scheduled to be complete, Arlington's economy could be far weaker than it is now. The retirement of the "baby-boomer" generation and the cyclical machinations of the local economy, he said, are factors to consider.

"The timing is not particularly good for absorption," he said.

Fuller added that the effect of these changes are broader than anyone might realize, reaching into the retail and other sectors. "There's a ripple effect that will reach into other jurisdictions." For the commercial real estate market, he said, the impact will be the most serious.

"It's a major change in the office market," he said. "Crystal City is going to have a hard time filling its space as it did when the Patent and Trademark Office left and the Navy Agencies. That market is more restrictive than others. It's a major disruption."

Moran said a more detailed list of office closures will be available next week.

### **Fairfield's Army reserve center could be shut down**

Fairfield Minuteman (Fairfield, CT)  
Andy Hutchison

Fairfield's Turner U. S. Army Reserve Training Center, located on High Street, may end up being closed as part of the federal Department of Defense's recommendation to close or realign more than 60 military bases and training venues across the country.

A recommendation to close three Connecticut training centers, including Fairfield's, and to shut down Groton's Navy Submarine Base would mean Connecticut would lose 8,586 jobs.

About 17 jobs would be lost at the Fairfield training center, and First Selectman Kenneth Flatto is not happy about the idea of the area training center being taken away.

"My main concern is that it has been a great training facility to support our reserves in the region," Flatto said.

As part of the plan, the Bradley International Airport Air Guard would also be realigned.

Flatto says he has heard that states, including Connecticut, are targeted unfairly because of political agendas in Washington, with legislators protecting southern and southwestern states.

"I hope that's not the case, but that's what a number of elected officials have told me," Flatto says.

On the U.S. Department of Defense Web site Secretary of State Donald H. Rumsfeld

announced this past Friday, the department's recommendations to close or realign military facilities to better position U.S. forces to confront this century's threats. The recommendations would generate a net savings of nearly \$50 billion for the Department of Defense during the next two decades, according to a press release on the site.

The Connecticut impact, however, does not sit well with state officials.

"If this happens, it would be a major blow to job recovery in Connecticut," according to Pete Gioia, a Connecticut Business & Industry Association economist.

Flatto also has concerns about the statewide impact. The first selectman said he has been in touch with Congressman Christopher Shays' office, and plans to also discuss with Senator Chris Dodd's and Senator Joseph Lieberman's offices ways to prevent Connecticut from taking such a hard hit.

Rumsfeld forwarded the department's recommendations to the U.S. Department of Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission. The commission will seek comments from communities that would be affected by the closings.. Hearings began this week.

"I want to ensure that decisions are based upon the criteria set out in the law and the force-structure plan, and not because of some political consideration," commission Chairman Anthony Principi is quoted as saying on the United States Department of Defense Web site.

Principi added that the commission will judge the recommendations on more than military value, also considering economic and environmental impact on communities.

The commission will forward its report on the recommendations to President George W. Bush by Sept. 8. The president will then have until Sept. 23 to accept or reject the recommendation in its entirety, according to the Department of Defense Web site.

If accepted, Congress will have 45 legislative days to reject the recommendations in their entirety or they become binding. The Defense Department expects the process to be completed by the end of 2005.

### **Republican senators seek to postpone BRAC decision** **The fight to save bases has begun on Capitol Hill.**

San Antonio Business Journal (San Antonio, TX)  
May 19, 2005

A group of Republican U.S. senators have filed legislation that would postpone the Base Realignment and Closure process.

If successful, the bill would effectively make Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's BRAC recommendations null and void.

U.S. Sen. John Thune, R-S.D. authored the legislation. Sens. Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins, both R-Maine, are the original co-sponsors.

Specifically, the senators want to put the brakes on BRAC until after Rumsfeld completes a review of overseas bases and redeploys troops to U.S. installations, major combat units return home from the war in Iraq and the departments of Defense and Homeland Security complete a national security strategy.

"It makes no sense from either a military strategic and national security standpoint for our military bases and Department of Defense support offices to be closed or realigned at this juncture," Snowe and Collins said in a joint statement released Thursday.

"We are in the midst of a war, the Secretary of Defense is still in the process of determining the fate of returning units from overseas bases, and our national security needs are greater than ever," they added.

However, the senators object most to the economic loss base closures would have on jobs in their respective states.

In San Antonio, a delay in the base closure process could potentially stave off the loss of military operations at Brooks City-Base and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

It could also block a proposed realignment at Lackland Air Force Base and Wilford Hall Medical Center. Together, those losses would total 6,398 jobs.

However, a Department of Defense report indicates San Antonio would gain more than 9,500 jobs at Fort Sam Houston and Randolph Air Force Base under Rumsfeld's recommendations.

Rumsfeld has said that by closing 33 U.S. bases and realigning others, the U.S. government can expect to save \$49 billion over the next 20 years.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission is in the process of taking testimony on the secretary's list of recommendations. The commission has until September to forward a final list of proposed bases to the president and Congress.

**BRAC work not over, officials say**  
Goldsboro News- Argus (Goldsboro, NC)  
Turner Walston  
May 19, 2005

Even though Seymour Johnson Air Force Base got good news from the Department of Defense Friday, local officials say their work to make sure the base stays safe is not over.

"Right now, we're just kind of sitting tight," said Jimmie Edmundson, chairman of the Military Affairs Committee of the Wayne County Chamber of Commerce.

The Base Realignment and Closure commission will review the DOD's recommendations over the summer, hold public hearings across the country and present a final recommendation to

Congress in September. Until then, local officials say, the campaign to protect the base must go on.

"You always feel better when you get it officially," said Troy Pate, co-chairman of the state Advisory Commission on Military Affairs and the local chairman of the Seymour Support Council. "But this is the first step in a process, and there's three more things that have got to happen before we're home-free."

Those steps include the commission's review of the recommendations, President George Bush's approval of the list and the House and Senate's final OK.

"You have to monitor that intermediate window between the recommendations and when they send the actual list to the president," said Leigh McNairy, a special assistant for military issues for Gov. Mike Easley.

A lot can happen between now and then, McNairy said. During a round of base closings in 1993, squadrons of F/A-18 Hornet fighters were slated to move from Florida to the Marine Corps Air Station at Cherry Point. By the time the final vote was taken, the jets and their hundreds of support personnel were sent to Virginia, Georgia and South Carolina.

"That's evidence of how the process is fluid," McNairy said.

Defense officials said last week this round of base closings would save \$48.8 billion over 20 years by streamlining services and promoting cooperation across the military, while also shutting down bases deemed inefficient.

The Pentagon's recommendations include moving the Army Forces Command and the Headquarters U.S. Army Reserve Command to Fort Bragg, as well as adding a brigade to the Bragg-based 82nd Airborne Division. But the state would lose personnel at Pope Air Force Base and a Bragg-based Special Forces group.

In all, the state would lose 568 military positions and gain 307 civilian positions out of some

135,000 jobs directly related to the military. Seymour Johnson was the state's big winner, with 362 military and civilians gained at the Air Force base.

"We still feel good about it," Pate said, "But there's always a possibility that things can change, and we have to be aware of that. That's why we're monitoring things."

"We still have all of the plans in place that we had if we were on the re-alignment list, and we're just sitting on those," Edmundson said. "Hopefully, we'll never have to take them out of the box."

Adding the Army Forces Command to Fort Bragg would bring a four-star general to the base, something that adds to the military importance of an area, McNairy noted.

That move has already led to protest from Georgia officials. Fort McPherson outside Atlanta is the command's current home. It would close under the Pentagon's recommendations, with many of its personnel moving to Fort Bragg.

"We're prepared to go before the BRAC commission in regional hearings and make the case for why they made a mistake," said Fred Bryant of the Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee.

But even as efforts continue to save jobs and bases, officials in both states said they expect most of the recommendations to be approved. In previous rounds of base closings, commissions have changed only about 15 percent of what the Pentagon proposed.

Tom Salter, a former Army battalion commander who is chairman of a foundation to save McPherson, said the chance of saving the installations is "certainly an uphill battle."

"We will continue to challenge it," he said.

Still others hope to push forward changes as recommended. "I think the way that they've done this, there are a lot of things that are

intermingled," Edmundson said. "If you take a piece of the puzzle out, then it changes the whole puzzle."

## **Base closures will rip economy**

Village Soup (ME)

Victoria Wallack

AUGUSTA (May 19): The downsizing of the Brunswick Naval Air Station and closing of the shipyard in Kittery and defense accounting office in Limestone will have a ripple effect on the state's economy, with an estimated loss of 12,000 jobs and \$465 million in lost earnings.

Maine was the second hardest hit state in the nation — after Alaska — in terms of lost jobs per capita in the base closure list announced last Friday.

Despite those gloomy statistics, Gov. John Baldacci said Tuesday he remains confident and convinced the closures are not a done deal when it comes to Maine.

Baldacci said the state had four months to put on a full-court press to convince the Base Realignment and Closure Commission that the Pentagon used bad information when it recommended closing the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, removing the planes and half the staff from the Naval Air Station, and closing the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in Limestone.

"We have to work together and make this the most important thing we do," Baldacci said.

The governor said the base commission chairman, Anthony Principi, has "committed to coming to Maine personally." The state hopes to prove that it makes no sense as a defense strategy to shut down its facilities and that it's plain unfair.

"One of the strongest messages is it's disproportionate the hits that Maine is taking," Baldacci said. He said that 15 percent of the base closures have been overturned in the past.

According to numbers run by the State Planning Office, the closures mean a direct job loss of 5,797 from the facilities themselves, with another 6,192 jobs lost in the community, as a result of not having the base or as many people to serve. Those nearly 12,000 lost jobs equal \$465 million in lost earnings.

Even before one job is lost, the closure announcements will have an impact, predicted Rep. Sarah Lewin (R, Eliot). Eliot is home to shipyard employees.

“I think we’re going to see an effect of this immediately,” she said, predicting people would stop buying cars, major appliances or even expensive sneakers for their children. “It’s 230 jobs and \$15 million in payroll [for Eliot],” she said.

### **Plan to transfer air wing faulted**

Kansas City Star (Kansas City, MO)  
May 20, 2005

WASHINGTON — The BRAC attack will not go unchallenged in Missouri, but experts say any effort to undo the Pentagon’s restructuring plan is a long shot.

With the Pentagon’s Base Realignment and Closure plan, known as BRAC, set to cost Missouri more than 3,600 jobs, the state’s congressional delegation hopes to save positions as a presidential commission reviews the Pentagon’s plan in the coming months.

“This is the time when you approach the commission directly,” said Republican Sen. Jim Talent, a member of the Armed Services Committee. “You analyze the justifications the department is making, you find the weak points and you push. ... You can get installations off that list. You owe it to the people working there to try.”

But about 85 percent of the Pentagon’s recommendations were approved in past BRAC rounds. Also, members of Congress know the process was designed to be insulated from congressional pressure.

They also know that public opinion — and electoral reality — demands that they appear to do something.

“Part of it is posturing,” said Paul Taibl, policy director for Business Executives for National Security. “Part of it is the process. The process was designed to give members of Congress cover.”

The Missouri effort began with three strongly worded letters from the office of Sen. Kit Bond and signed by every member of the delegation and by Missouri Gov. Matt Blunt.

The letters — to President Bush, Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff and BRAC Commission Chairman Anthony Principi — decried the Pentagon’s decision to transfer out of state the St. Louis-based 131st Fighter Wing of the Missouri Air National Guard. The letters say the decision “would only further hinder our abilities to ensure the safety of Missourians and other residents of the Midwest.”

After Principi visited Bond’s office Monday, the commission scheduled a June 7 regional hearing in St. Louis to hear concerns about lost positions.

“This plan makes no sense at all, and this hearing is our chance to show why,” Bond said.

Loss of the fighter wing would cost only about 250 jobs, but it is the prospective Missouri closing for which the strongest argument of military necessity can be made, congressional aides say.

“They seem to almost not take into account the roles the Guard plays,” Bond said of the Pentagon. “There’s the national defense mission, there’s the stated mission, and there’s the homeland security mission.”

But trying to get the panel’s attention focused on Missouri won’t be easy. There are other states, such as Connecticut, Maine and South Dakota, that got hit much harder. There are 33 major

bases recommended for closing — none in Missouri.

“There are lots of members of Congress spitting bullets right now,” said Christopher Hellman, at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation.

Pentagon experts took two years to complete their effort. The commission has but four months to review it.

“It’s going to be hard for them to come up with any new and revealing data that the Pentagon hasn’t already looked at,” Taibl said.

If enough members of Congress are upset, that could mean enough support to delay or shut down the process. Many expect that will be attempted. Last year, an amendment to limit cuts to overseas bases and delay domestic shifts for two years failed in the Senate by just two votes.

## **Military Money Is To Flow To San Antonio**

San Antonio Express News (San Antonio, TX)  
Gary Martin  
May 20, 2005

WASHINGTON — The Air Force surgeon general said Thursday that the Pentagon would spend \$1 billion in San Antonio during the base closure process to create one of two proposed world-class regional medical centers.

Lt. Gen. George P. Taylor said recommendations to close nine hospitals nationwide includes \$2.4 billion to build supercenters for medical care under the Defense Department at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio and National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md.

Taylor told the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, commonly called BRAC, that the proposals "are large, far-reaching actions that cut across the entire DoD healthcare system."

The result would be two regional medical centers that would rival teaching hospitals like Baltimore's Johns Hopkins hospital and health care system, he said.

The new regional health centers would be patterned after joint-use medical facilities at Balad Air Base in Iraq and Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

The recommendations were issued last week by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld as part of a plan to close or realign 33 major U.S. military installations.

Those plans, details of which are incomplete, have been received with anxiety by military retirees and dependents who receive health care at military hospitals that would close, like Wilford Hall Medical Center in San Antonio.

Commissioner Sue Turner told Taylor that "people want to know more details about their personal circumstance."

"I hope there is something under way in the DoD to get that information out and help reduce the shock," Turner said.

The commission announced 16 regional hearings to hear from communities about the Pentagon's recommendations. A hearing is scheduled July 11 in San Antonio.

Taylor said outpatient care would continue unchanged, except in areas where hospitals were closing and the regional centers weren't being built.

In those cases, dependents and retirees would use civilian facilities and doctors covered under the military healthcare plan TRICARE.

Taylor said the Defense Department remains "very mindful of our great commitment to the over 9 million beneficiaries who depend on the military health care system for their care."

While TRICARE is the program for most dependents and retirees, Commissioner James

Bilbray said that in the past, many have pleaded not to be "thrown out of a military hospital."

In San Antonio, Taylor said the Pentagon plans to build a new out-patient center at Lackland AFB to serve troops, dependents and retirees.

He said building a new facility at the base is more cost-efficient and would allow the Air Force to "shutter the windows on the main building at Wilford Hall."

In addition, BAMC would become a 425-bed facility to handle inpatient care, and the trauma center at the hospital would be expanded to handle emergency cases now served by both military hospitals in San Antonio.

The cost of the construction at Lackland and BAMC would total \$1 billion, and would be completed in 2010.

Those costs also include consolidation of military combat medical schooling from all the service branches at Fort Sam Houston, creating a single Center for Medical Enlisted Training.

Taylor said the command structure at BAMC, tentatively renamed the San Antonio Regional Medical Center, would be determined later by the service branches.

The Pentagon plan to consolidate military medicine also includes leaving Brooks City-Base.

Aerospace medicine, training and research and development activities at the San Antonio site would be moved to Wright-Patterson AFB.

"This will allow the military to completely leave City-Base," Taylor told the panel.

The centrifuge at Brooks, a unique piece of equipment to study G-forces, also would move to Wright-Patterson, where a consolidation of medical and human systems research would be based.

Losing the Air Force as a tenant at Brooks in South San Antonio would mean a \$264 million

loss in payroll. But a number of missions, and about a third of the 2,700 jobs at the base, would remain in San Antonio at Lackland and Fort Sam Houston, city leaders said.

Brooks was targeted for closure in 1995, but was spared when the previous base closure commission closed Kelly AFB instead.

The loss of Brooks would end a 10-year experiment between the military and the city of San Antonio, which spent \$9 million to take over services and redevelop portions of the base.

"I wouldn't say that anything went wrong, it's just a new opportunity," Taylor said.

Taylor said San Antonio was poised to become a national center for biomedical science with the regional medical center and new training missions at Fort Sam Houston.

The scope of the medical training expansion at Fort Sam Houston, along with the construction of a regional medical center, caught San Antonio by surprise when the base closure list was announced last week.

"This is a huge, positive development that is going to have repercussions for our national stature of a biomedical center," said Joe Krier with the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce.

City leaders were in Washington this week to attend the base

### **Opinions/ Editorials**

#### **Absorbing the Pentagon's Shock**

Washington Post (Washington DC)

May 20, 2005

THE UPHEAVAL and dislocation implicit in the Pentagon's proposal to eliminate 180 military installations nationwide is a painful price to pay for a savings estimated at \$49 billion over two decades. Nonetheless, the process deserves support and will need it to withstand the parochial attacks already being mounted in Congress. If the last round of base closings, in

the 1990s, is a guide, most of the Pentagon's recommendations will survive and receive the president's endorsement.

Few if any counties in the United States would be hit as hard as Arlington. Most of the more than 20,000 jobs that would be eliminated in the close-in Virginia suburbs would be there, although about half of them would be transferred just eight or nine miles to the south, to the sprawling Army base at Fort Belvoir in Fairfax County. All told, the county could suffer the loss of tenants occupying some 4 million square feet of office space -- the equivalent of a building almost two-thirds the size of the Pentagon. The effects are not to be underestimated, and some will undoubtedly be costly. The proposed net shift of some 18,000 defense workers to Fort Belvoir -- where 24,000 people already work -- is a recipe for sprawl and congestion that could make Northern Virginians a decade from now pine for the good old days of 2005, when the Washington region's traffic was ranked only third-worst in the nation. Most of Arlington's job losses would come in Crystal City, where at least a third of the workers use Metro to commute to work. Moving many of those jobs to Fort Belvoir would force some employees back into their cars and onto the roads -- although others who live near Belvoir might enjoy a shorter commute. In recent years, Metro officials have had preliminary discussions about extending Metro, or some link between Metro and light rail, south to Fort Belvoir from Franconia-Springfield, a project whose cost could run to \$800 million; that idea should now be shifted to the front burner. At the least, the Pentagon should survey the workers who will be transferred to Fort Belvoir to determine their future commuting patterns.

The sting of such a disruption to the area's employment and traffic patterns could be soothed by unintended consequences that may not be immediately apparent. While the loss of thousands of jobs would probably hurt Crystal City in the short term, Arlington officials and real estate insiders say finding new tenants would not be difficult, and they are already speculating that the shift could provide the impetus to accelerate the neighborhood's badly

needed redevelopment. The area could be helped by an infusion of new tenants unrelated to the defense industry. In fact, the reinvention of Crystal City is already underway; PBS is relocating there, and attractive shops and restaurants have opened along a strip of redesigned Crystal Drive. Assuming the local economy keeps humming, it is conceivable that whatever the pain in the short term, the Pentagon's proposals could trigger a renaissance in a neighborhood that needs it.

### **Illinois military bases**

Chicago Tribune (Chicago, IL)  
May 19, 2005

Your recent editorial ("Defense as a jobs program," May 17) failed to mention what Gov. Blagojevich's main arguments to the Department of Defense (DOD) have been through more than two years of protecting Illinois' bases from closure: they are unique facilities whose missions cannot be duplicated, they have tremendous military value and they play critical roles in ensuring the safety and security of our country. He has led a coordinated effort with the Illinois Congressional Delegation, other elected officials and local leaders to make the compelling case to DOD why Illinois' military installations should not have been on its recently released closure and realignment list.

These efforts are working. Gov. Blagojevich supported and signed encroachment legislation and issued an executive order to protect Scott Air Force Base from outside development, which certainly was a factor in the Pentagon's decision to assign 12 new aircraft to Scott and add nearly 800 new positions. The Peoria Air National Guard Base would also expand by taking on additional aircraft.

But DOD wants to move the F-16 aircraft and crews from Springfield to Ft. Wayne, even though the Indiana base has a lower military value according to DOD's own numbers. The Pentagon talks about saving money, but relocating thousands of people out of the Rock Island Arsenal, where they are working effectively, might actually cost more than it

saves in both the near and long term. This is not to mention that many of the civilians working at the Arsenal will not want to move, and the Army will have to replace them with less experienced people {ndash} again hurting military value.

The Governor has already taken this message to Washington and to top Pentagon officials, and he will do the same with the BRAC Commission, which will analyze these recommendations and announce its own report in September.

Illinois' military bases are vital partners in keeping our nation and state secure, and the Governor has proven this fact time and time again. The Pentagon isn't perfect, which is why we must continue fighting its flawed reasoning.

Jack Lavin  
Director, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity  
Chicago

### **Force Rumsfeld to defend every new base closing**

Muskegon Chronicle (Muskegon, MI)  
May 19, 2005

One might have thought that four rounds of stateside military base closings -- in 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995 -- would have been enough for the Pentagon to achieve the efficiency and streamlining it needed.

But Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld wants more, having just proposed closing 33 major bases, including Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota, the Groton (Conn.) Submarine Base and America's oldest but still highly capable Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Maine. All of these facilities represent major parts within the strategic core of U.S. military power. For America's Secretary of Defense to recommend these bases closed without a whimper from the Joint Chiefs of Staff is just stunning.

So debate, as it should, will be intense over this latest list of proposed closures as they are

reviewed by the independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission before being presented to President Bush for approval in September.

Take Portsmouth, for example, an installation the Navy just cited as having "consistently and superbly performed their mission while establishing a phenomenal record of cost, schedule, quality and safety performance." Obviously Navy ships, from small frigates to nuclear-power aircraft carriers, are incredibly costly and complex, and must be maintained and upgraded in order to fill their mission reliably. Closing bases like Portsmouth narrows the list of experienced shipyards to a tenuous few. These are vital assets.

The Groton submarine base could serve as another example of how the nation's strategic defense stands in danger of being compromised for what appear to be dubious savings. Groton's irreplaceable workforce is considered so skilled that workers there, according to the New York Times, have been sent to other shipyards facing production problems.

Putting aside the effect on local economies, it's probably true that combining some functions can reduce duplication and make things work more effectively. All told, nearly 180 installations are slated for closing, many to be consolidated with others.

Yet, we have the nagging feeling that the defense secretary's whacking at the biggest and best of America's military installations isn't that they aren't needed. Mired in a costly war in Iraq, saddled with a daunting federal deficit, and chained to the insanely expensive mandate of producing a workable "Star Wars" nuclear defense shield, Rumsfeld is under enormous pressure to cut costs.

That opens him to criticism that he is being rash and short-sighted, although such complaints aren't new to him. Some is actually coming from members of the usually lockstep military, who are also challenging him on his plan to further downsize our Armed Forces -- something that may happen anyway because of the effect our adventure in Iraq is having on recruitment.

So it appears that "Rummy" has opened yet another can of worms. We are unconvinced of the need for such drastic cuts, for this is a man whose judgment we have regrettably come to doubt. In the coming weeks, he must be made to defend every closure he has proposed.

North Korea menace looms as never before

The world's proverbial "crazy relative in the attic" is North Korea. America's relationship with this isolated, brutal nation has never been more fragile -- and the situation has never been more dangerous.

With each week that passes, North Korea's government continues to lurch toward a nuclear confrontation with its immediate neighbor, democratic South Korea, and the United States, which its state-run media vilifies on a daily basis.

Thus far, for all the effort America has put into quelling the fires of Muslim insurgency and terrorism, it has left the handling of North Korea largely to China and others in the region. That "strategy," if it can be called by that name, isn't having the desired effect, to say the least. Talks broke off again yesterday.

If Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has the North Korean menace at the top of her agenda, she's hiding it well.

### **Base realignment, closing process about transformation, not re-election**

Fort Worth Star Telegram (Fort Worth, TX)

Jill Labbe

May 19, 2005

The next four months will prove whether politics can be minimized in the Base Realignment and Closure process.

If you're a betting person, put money on "no."

In the first hours after the Pentagon revealed its list of military facilities to be closed or realigned, lawmakers from states with bases

targeted for closure were in a 4-foot hover, sputtering outrage and calls to arms.

"I am sorely disappointed with this list, and I will fight like hell to change it," said Rep. Rush Holt, D-N.J., whose district includes part of Fort Monmouth.

"It simply makes no sense to close Otis (Air National Guard Base) in the post 9/11 world," said Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., of the Cape Cod facility.

"Today's decision... is nothing short of stunning, devastating and, above all, outrageous," Sen. Olympia J. Snowe, R-Maine, said about the possible closure of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

One does not repeat in polite company what the folks in New London, Conn., were saying after hearing that the submarine base there (with its 8,460 jobs) may be going away.

Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas was less dramatic in her phrasing as she assumed the genteel and measured tones that she's famous for, but her resolve to fight for Texas bases was clear.

"Regarding bases slated for major losses and closure, this recommendation list is a first step in the base realignment process and is by no means final," Hutchison's news release said. "Sen. (John) Cornyn and I are scheduling meetings with local officials on Sunday as the next step in making sure the final recommendations are in the best interest of our national security and local communities."

Nice of her to put national security first, but don't for one minute think that the greater good of the nation will take priority in the senator's efforts to keep Texas facilities from closing.

Pity the nine members of the BRAC Commission, who will be strong-armed by senators and representatives, military task force chairmen and rent-a-general lobbyists between now and Sept. 8, when they have to send their recommendations to President Bush.

A Navy friend once said the key to a successful career is to underpromise and overperform, but he thought that Donald Rumsfeld may have heard it the other way around when it came to the 2005 BRAC.

When the secretary of defense first talked about what he expected to accomplish in this round of BRAC, it was in terms of preparing a nation for 21st-century threats. Think differently, operate differently. Look for "jointness" of operations, how best to be agile and flexible in responding to threats while eliminating facilities that don't contribute to the lean, mean fighting machine that should be the U.S. armed forces.

By golly, he stood ready to trim 20 percent to 25 percent of the military's capacity.

On Friday, those numbers were scaled down -- way down -- to 5 percent or 10 percent excess.

Granted, Sept. 11, 2001, happened between the time that Congress approved this round of BRAC and Friday's announcement.

But that event should have strengthened the determination to construct a U.S. military better positioned and prepared to combat future threats. If facilities aren't being used when the country is engaged in two demanding conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, it's hard to imagine a scenario in which they would be necessary.

Of course, overall military transformation is impossible to gauge if it's only viewed through a BRAC lens. The Defense Department is in the midst of a Quadrennial Defense Review that will "inform," as they said in D.C., how the nation's military should be structured and equipped.

For the QDR, Rumsfeld's Pentagon is using a capabilities-based model (how will future enemies fight?) rather than a threat-based model (who will the enemy be and where will he be fighting from?).

The old threat-based model is what led the U.S. to having so many bases in Europe and Asia.

So how will Americans be able to tell whether this round of BRAC, coupled with the QDR, achieves "transformation"?

Say this round of BRAC shows big cuts in a particular support structure -- for the sake of argument only, let's pick submarines. If the QDR indicates a change in focus away from sea-based defenses and the 2007 budget removes funding for future submarine development and construction -- well, connect the dots. That would reflect a strategic transformation.

Let's just hope that our elected officials keep in mind that BRAC is supposed to be about military transformation -- maximizing the nation's forces and facilities to best position them to respond to future threats -- and not about garnering votes in the next re-election back home.

### **Craig Duehring 'Takes Five'**

Retired combat pilot defends base closings  
Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel (Milwaukee,  
May 20, 2005

A decorated combat pilot, Craig Duehring, 60, flew more than 800 missions during the Vietnam War and spent 28 years in the military before retiring as a colonel in the Air Force in 1996. He served on the George W. Bush/Dick Cheney transition team, and he's now the principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs. The Minnesota native earned the Lance P. Sijan Award, named after the Milwaukee man who earned the Medal of Honor during Vietnam, which is the Air Force's highest individual award for leadership in senior officers.

Duehring was in Milwaukee this week to speak to local National Guard members and reservists as well as their employers at several events as part of Armed Forces Week. He talked to Journal Sentinel reporter Meg Jones.

Q. Base closings have been in the news lately, and I'm sure you're aware that the 440th has been included on the base closings list. Is this a bittersweet visit to Milwaukee considering the unit may be shutting down?

A. Well, this visit was planned months ago to coincide with the events of Armed Forces Week. So it really doesn't have anything to do with the BRAC issue. It's coincidental. We've actually spoken very little about it. Unfortunately I can only address the process because that's all I know about.

Q. Considering the wars being fought in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as other hot spots around the globe such as Korea, why do officials want to close bases at a time when it seems like there's a need for more military facilities?

A. Of course we have to look at the longer term goals because the BRAC process covers a number of years. And I'm sure that this is in concert with existing plans for transformation anyway. Of course there are always dollar savings to be realized as a result of this.

Q. Why is the military relying more on the Reserves and National Guard?

A. Actually, there's many reasons for it. Years ago we decided to put more of our combat and our combat support capability into the National Guard and Reserve, and this made sense because a lot of our expertise is already there. You know our guards and reservists tend to be a little older than the active duty force and as a result they have more experience. So calling on them when we need them as we need them makes sense.

Q. With more Guard and reserves troops being mobilized for active duty, what kind of problems are facing the military in finding enough new recruits for the National Guard and Reserves?

A. One of the differences we have is that we simply did not have enough recruiters out in the field. We were concentrating so hard on the mission at hand that we weren't keeping up with our requirements. We have corrected that in trying to turn those numbers around. There are indications that that is making a difference now.

Q. The Army recently began offering 15-month active duty enlistments, the shortest enlistment ever. Do you think that will attract more people? Will that have an impact on the Reserves?

A. I'm sure that the Army is trying to offer enlistment options that meet the expectations of a broader number of people. If you limit the options to just one four-year enlistment, there are many people who perhaps are unable to participate. I think the Army is trying to appeal to a different group of folks. Right now I'm not aware of any attempt to continue this option into the Guard and Reserve. We'll just have to wait and see what happens.

### *Additional Notes*