



DONALD M. LIONETTI

Lieutenant General, United States Army (Retired)
4517 West Rosemere Road, Tampa, Florida 33609

June 30, 2005

Secretary Anthony J. Principi
Chairman
2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Mr. Secretary:

My purpose in writing is to highlight my concern with the specific BRAC proposal that would relocate the Fort Bliss US Army Air Defense School and its supporting training brigade to Fort Sill, and to suggest, most respectfully, that the commission reject this specific initiative.

As a career air defense artillery officer, a former deputy commander (1986-88) and a former commanding general (1989-91) of Fort Bliss, I feel qualified to speak to the intolerable consequences should this initiative be executed. The enormity of Fort Bliss' existing ranges and training areas, with mature infrastructure and supporting instrumentation essential to the development of air and missile defense technology, and the training of soldiers in this unforgiving science, is not replicable at Fort Sill. Indeed, the constrained training areas there will not accommodate more than one Patriot battalion, and the ranges are not sufficiently large to permit even the firing of the short range Stinger missile.

Air Defense Artillery is relevant and critically important to future military operations across the entire spectrum of conflict. From its operational role of providing umbrella coverage over deployed soldiers to the more strategic contribution of sheltering capitals and strategic assets of countries willing to host the presence of US or coalition forces, missile defense capabilities contribute to the options available to the National Command Authority. The United States has made a major investment in the Patriot force which proved itself so effective against tactical ballistic missiles in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and has committed to multi-billion dollar programs for future systems such as the tri-national MEADS program, THAAD, and even to our national Ground Based Mid-Course Strategic Missile Defense initiative. BRAC must not destroy the ADA School capabilities and infrastructure by trying to squeeze them into inadequate vacant space at Fort Sill.

Forced co-location does not improve coordination between the fire support community and the air and missile defense world. While both technologies contribute as pillars of missile defense, the overlaps are minimal and certainly ought not to drive this BRAC decision. Effective networked fires do not require a "Netfires Center" and, indeed, will never be realized if our air and missile defense infrastructure is crippled by forcing an unneeded geographical marriage. Moreover, such an

undertaking would disrupt focus for years, and dilute connectivity with other joint (US Air Force) and combined (Coalition) partners in developing and executing effective air and missile defenses. I am in favor of and am a strong advocate for the BRAC process. I am delighted that Fort Bliss has been recognized as a national treasure. With abundant real estate, enormous ranges and training areas, solid high technology infrastructure, and the support of the wonderful city of El Paso, it does not surprise me that Fort Bliss has been selected to host the 1st Armored Division returning from Germany. I applaud this initiative, and predict the division will flourish at Bliss. During my tenure there, we hosted the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment with great success.

Notwithstanding, there is no shortage of space on Fort Bliss, Biggs Army Airfield and on the ranges and training areas to the north. Rather than shoe-horning the school and its brigade into Fort Sill, instead spend the MCA that would be used to convert or construct facilities there on facilities at Fort Bliss that would accommodate retention of the ADA School and its supporting brigade. There's no reason why the 1st Armored Division and the ADA School couldn't co-exist at Fort Bliss. The use by both parties of ranges and training areas is a matter of scheduling. Indeed, even if the ADA moves to Sill, the ranges at Bliss would still have to be used by the air defense community as there are no other instrumented ranges able to accommodate Patriot and follow-on missile systems in development. Moreover, the German Air Defense School is physically located at Bliss, and Japanese Air Defense forces come to Fort Bliss annually to fire Patriot missiles.

I fully recognize the enormity of the BRAC task before you, Mr. Secretary and I hate to whine about one small aspect of the overall realignment strategy. But, having been close to this dimension of US Army Air and Missile Defense, I feel compelled to point out what I believe to be a major error in the DOD proposal that could have disastrous consequences in future conflict.

Very best wishes, sir, in concluding this critically important body of work for our nation.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald M. Lionetti". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "L".

Donald M. Lionetti



RECEIVED

Major General Donald R. Infante, USA (Ret.)
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30 June 2005

Secretary Anthony J. Principi
Chairman
2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 S. Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Secretary,

While you were the Secretary of Veteran Affairs, it was my honor to introduce you as our guest of honor and speaker at our May 2001 Armed Services YMCA Congressional Luncheon. As the Chairman Emeritus of the National Board of Directors, first let me thank you for your continuing support of the ASYMCA. Your support has helped the ASYMCA in 2004 serve over 750,000 Service members and their families. The ASYMCA remains the preeminent organization dedicated to enriching the quality of life for our young military and their families.

At our Congressional Luncheon, your talk was straight from the heart and you left the impression of one who truly cares about doing what is best for our service personnel and our armed forces. Your appointment by our President to lead the BRAC Commission was an outstanding selection. I have confidence that you will do what is best for our great Nation.

My purpose in writing you directly is my concern over the recommendation of the Department of Defense to move the Army Air Defense School and Center and an Air Defense Artillery Brigade from Fort Bliss, TX to Fort Sill, OK. First of all, let me assure you that I am not in the employ of the City of El Paso or any other group seeking to protect Fort Bliss from any cuts or realignment. My concern is that the move will not "...improve training effectiveness and functional efficiencies..." as stated by DOD. There may be other valid larger objectives for this move. However, as the Commanding General of Fort Bliss from 1985 to 1989, and with a 44 year career in Air Defense Artillery, I unequivocally state that the recommended move will instead result in substantially reduced training effectiveness and functional efficiencies of not only our Air Defense forces but our total joint force. Three primary reasons for this readiness and war fighting reduction:

- Training as We Fight. The Air Defense forces support the ground forces of our Army and USMC by providing, along with the USAF, protection against both air and missile attack and controlling the airspace over the battlefield. Fort Bliss is one of the few bases that has the training facilities to support joint and combined

air land battle exercises with our ground forces and our Air Force. To not train in peacetime as we fight with these joint and combined forces would result in a substantially less ready total force. Fort Sill's limited facilities will not permit the combined and joint training and major exercises that now are routine at Fort Bliss. To base the air defense school and force that is an integral part of these exercises over 650 miles from their training ground is both cost ineffective and a waste of manpower.

- Functional and Mission Disparity. The objective after moving the Air Defense School to Fort Sill is to form a "Net Fires Center" by combining elements of both our air defense and artillery forces. The air defense forces attack and destroy air targets using integrated sensor data from both space and other joint forces. The artillery forces attack and destroy ground targets using organic sensors and battlefield intelligence. There is little synergy between the two forces due to functional and mission disparity. Compared to the Fort Bliss air and missile defense infrastructure in place, the proposed "Net Fires Center" is illogical from a war fighting perspective.
- Soldier and Leader Training of the Air Defense Force. Fort Bliss was selected as the home for Army Air Defense forces by the DOD leadership in the early 1950's due to the availability of firing ranges to support long distance missile engagements. Since that time, the complexity of air defense engagements, now primarily against enemy missiles, has increased as have engagement ranges. Also, the DOD has heavily invested in system training simulators and radar technical trainers to provide highly trained war fighters at minimum expense. To believe that over a half century of complex and highly technical training infrastructure can be easily relocated and done so at a reasonable cost is unrealistic and foolhardy. The concomitant negative impact on the training readiness of our air defense force soldiers and leaders is immeasurable.

Mr. Secretary, I recognize the difficulties the Commission faces in making these extraordinary and difficult decisions and I also know that there are many factors; political, economic and military that bear on those decisions. However, I felt that I should point out to you personally some of the admittedly parochial military aspects of this issue. Having been in the air defense artillery business, both in the Service and in the civilian sector for my entire professional career, the rationale provided by DOD for their recommendation flunks the common sense test. In summary, as I stated above, the move of the Army Air Defense School and associated forces from Fort Bliss to Fort Sill, makes neither force readiness nor cost effectiveness sense. I ask that you conduct an in-depth review of this proposal. I firmly believe the facts will support leaving the Air Defense School and its associated forces at Fort Bliss. I wish you all the best in your important endeavors and you have my prayers for success.

With High Regard,

