





DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
COMMANDER,  
U.S. FLEET FORCES COMMAND  
1562 MITSCHER AVE, SUITE 250  
NORFOLK, VA 23551-2487

22 July 2005

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi  
Chairman, Defense Base Closure and  
Realignment Commission  
2521 South Clark Street  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

Recent correspondence to you, and associated media reports, have characterized certain information pertaining to Naval Submarine Base New London as having been provided by me. Since erroneous conclusions might be drawn from that characterization, I thought it was important for me to convey to you what my role was in the Department of the Navy's BRAC 2005 process, and my position on the proposed closure of SUBASE New London.

The process established by the Secretary of the Navy for the BRAC 2005 was designed to be an equitable, analytical process based upon certified data and comprehensive analysis evaluated by senior leadership. As detailed in the SECNAV Note governing the process, the entity charged with developing recommendations regarding closure and realignment of DON military installations was the Infrastructure Evaluation Group (IEG). As the Vice Chief of Naval Operations, I was the Co-Chair of the IEG from September 9, 2004 to 17 March 2005, when I departed to assume duties as the Commander, Fleet Forces Command. Accordingly, I chaired the IEG during the period in which most of the major DON recommendations were being developed, analyzed and approved by the Secretary.

The IEG was specifically charged with ensuring that factors of concern to the Navy and Marine Corps operational commanders were considered in any recommendations that affected DON installations. We accomplished that in various ways: the membership of the IEG included representation from Fleet Forces Command, data calls requested input on operational impacts, the views of major commands were sought, and briefings specifically noted issues and concerns identified during the analysis. Most, if not all, of the concerns raised were addressed within the process. By so doing, the Secretary of the Navy's process sought to ensure that the senior leadership who ultimately had to forward recommendations to the Secretary of Defense had the full view from their staff about the benefits and risks of any recommendation.

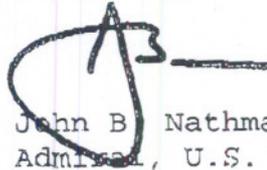
FAX NO. : 7578365887

FROM : COMFLTFORCOM

The analysis of SUBASE New London for closure occurred while I was the Co-Chair of the IEG. Concerns expressed by Fleet Forces Command about potential impacts due to changes in ways of doing business were fully discussed at deliberative meetings and were identified to the Chief of Naval Operations and the Secretary of the Navy when this recommendation was briefed to them. While this closure will be difficult, particularly because of our long history in Connecticut, I was convinced then - and remain so today - that it is the right decision for the Navy. Not only will the savings contribute to the recapitalization of the Navy, we will also be able to build right-sized facilities that support the submarine fleet in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Vice Admiral Cosgriff, my Deputy, was the Fleet Forces Command representative on the IEG during the scenario development and analysis process. If you would like to discuss with him the details of the Fleet Forces Command input provided and how that input was addressed, I encourage you to call him. I too, of course, would be happy to discuss any issues regarding any Navy BRAC recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "John B. Nathman", with a horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

John B. Nathman  
Admiral, U.S. Navy