



TO: BRAC 2005 Commissioners  
SUBJECT: BRAC 2005 Recommendation to close Fort Monmouth, NJ  
DATE: June 8, 2005

Honorable Commissioners:

Thank you very much for having Commissioner Principi and Commissioner Newton take the time and trouble to visit Fort Monmouth, NJ on Friday, June 3, 2005. I am confident that all of your site visits to various facilities thus far have been detailed and thorough. However, I am concerned that the Department of Defense (DoD) has not been forthcoming to the public with its' BRAC 2005 justification data, given that they have had years to construct their base closure and realignment arguments. Without allowing local communities a fair chance to evaluate and address the DoD's concerns in time for your visits to scheduled localities, including Fort Monmouth, the DoD appears to be acting to ensure its recommendations are "rubber-stamped" rather than fully assessed. As a result, I've taken the liberty of drafting a few points that I hope you find helpful in your evaluation of the DoD's flawed recommendation to close Fort Monmouth (see Attachment I).

In addition, I have attached published articles from the Baltimore Sun for your consideration. With the creation of a "Center of Excellence" at Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) under the BRAC 2005 recommendations, the DoD has substantially deviated from the evaluation criteria in its review of Fort Monmouth from the start. It appears that DoD decisions as they relate to APG are pre-ordained and have already been set in motion with development deals signed at APG (reference Opus Group's deal to build G.A.T.E. February 2005 provided as Attachment II).

The BRAC Commissioners have stated from the start that they intend to evaluate the arguments and not simply "rubber-stamp" the DoD's recommendations. As a concerned citizen, I hope that is truly the case because the appearance of a pre-determined outcome from the onset exists with the recommendation to close Fort Monmouth and move to APG.

In addition, information regarding the (in) ability of the Harford county area to absorb transfer of personnel has also been provided (as published in the Baltimore Sun, see Attachment III).

As a MBA degree holder and having worked for a decade in the finance and accounting field at a major financial services firm in New York City, I would ask you to review the GAO's concern in its May 2005 report regarding "Total Cost to Government." The 2005 BRAC Commission should consider whether cost or savings of proposed closures have taken into account "the effect of the proposed action on the costs of any other DoD activity or *any other federal agency*." (emphasis added) In showing any proposed future "savings" in the DoD line item of the federal budget, have other "costs" to be incurred by Departments of Highway and Transportation, Education, or Environment at the federal, state, or local government levels been factored? "Left-pocket, right-pocket" accounting

does NOT benefit the taxpayer and deviates from BRAC's stated objective of cost savings. ALL COSTS associated with the proposal to relocate Fort Monmouth to APG should be addressed, not simply DoD costs, in order to reflect any true savings in the budget that we may be achieving.

Finally, the DoD appears to have two minds about whether the people of Fort Monmouth would relocate to APG to continue the high caliber technology mission under the Army C4ISR umbrella. All publicly released numbers in their documents thus far assume complete transfer of personnel which would involve acceptance of infrastructure problems, (e.g., transportation, pollution, housing, schools, environmental quality) at the receiving site, APG. However, by Secretary Harvey's own admission in testimony before the Commissioners, only about 20 percent of personnel (on the optimistic end) likely will relocate to APG from Fort Monmouth. Therefore, irrespective of infrastructure problems at APG, you would need to be more concerned about the Army's true commitment to technological excellence in defense of the warfighter in Iraq or Afghanistan today. The soldiers require the technical support of 100 percent of Fort Monmouth's C4ISR personnel NOT simply 20 percent! **The government can attempt to entice federal employees with certain incentives to relocate. However, how will they entice the contractors who work for other firms to relocate?** The luxury of creating and developing from scratch a planned "center of excellence" does not exist during wartime when "the center" already exists in another location. The DoD's BRAC recommendation is not about creating a center of excellence; rather, it's about relocating what already exists, and to that end, developers have already been awarded projects. This does not appear to be a decision in line with the objectives of the BRAC process. It appears to be a decision that seeks "rubber-stamping" through the BRAC process.

Therefore, I sincerely hope that the BRAC Commissioners will diligently dissect the DoD's pre-ordained strategy and concur that closure of Fort Monmouth is NOT in the best interests of our soldiers.

I submit several attachments for your review and consideration.

Sincerely,

Concerned Citizen, NJ

Attachment I- "Key Points disputing BRAC 2005 Recommendation to Close Fort Monmouth"

Attachment II- "Massive Business Park Planned for APG" – Baltimore Sun, February 27, 2005/Opus Corporation documents on development deal inked with the DoD

Attachment III- Assorted Baltimore Sun articles addressing BRAC proposal to relocate Fort Monmouth to APG

**Key Points disputing BRAC 2005 Recommendation to Close Fort Monmouth**

**CONSOLIDATION OF RDA WITH T&E**

1. Currently, **the Army's RDA for C4ISR is *already done* at Fort Monmouth**, where C4ISR equipment used by warfighters for the past few decades and in our present conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, comes from.

Additionally, Government Developmental T&E (DT&E) for many C4ISR technologies is ***already being done*** at Fort Monmouth. For example:

1. Satellite Communications
    - a. Defense Satellite Communication System (DSCS)
    - b. MILSTAR
    - c. SPITFIRE
  2. Tactical Public Key Infrastructure (Tactical PKI)
  3. Crypto Modernization
  4. Information Assurance
  5. Wireless/Network Communications
  6. Tactical Internet
  7. Digital Integrated Laboratory
  8. Army Battle Command System (ABCS)
2. Further, the Army has established the Central Testing and Simulation Facility (CTSF) at Fort Hood TX as its Center for Interoperability Testing (e.g., DT&E functions) - reporting directly to the Army's G-6. Similarly, the Army has established the National Training Center at Fort Irwin CA, which performs numerous training as well as and testing functions (as evidenced by the Army Task Force XXI and numerous other exercises).

***Therefore, even a relocation of most of Fort Monmouth's business functions to Aberdeen Proving Grounds MD will not achieve the Army's stated objective of consolidating RDA with T&E. It will simply cause existing Army C4ISR RDA and a substantial amount T&E functions already being performed effectively to move unnecessarily from one place to another, while maintaining substantial existing Army C4ISR T&E functions at other installations such as Fort Hood, Fort Irwin and elsewhere.***

- a. Operational Test and Evaluation (OT&E) is traditionally performed with the user at the gaining organization/command. For example, OT&E often occurs with the 18<sup>th</sup> Airborne Corps/82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division at Fort Bragg NC, the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (4ID) at Fort Hood TX, and similarly for other gaining commands both within CONUS and OCONUS. **This is not likely to change**

**even if the proposed consolidation of RDAT&E for C4ISR at Aberdeen took place.**

- b. To gain the benefit of larger test facilities, many of Fort Monmouth's C4ISR projects utilize McGuire AFB, Fort Dix, and Lakehurst, which are in close proximity to Fort Monmouth (approximately 30 – 40 miles from Fort Monmouth), potentially more convenient than at a larger single facility such as Aberdeen Proving Grounds. For example:
    - i. C4ISR Communications On The Move
    - ii. Enroute Mission Planning and Rehearsal System
  - c. It is more conceivable to relocate the Sensors work being performed at Fort Belvoir to Fort Monmouth rather than to Aberdeen. This would enable consolidation of the C4ISR under a single roof – at Fort Monmouth. The facilities of Fort Monmouth already have the space to expand sufficiently to support the influx of professionals in the Sensors business area and consolidation/relocation of functions unrelated to C4ISR would further improve upon the available existing facilities. This would help yield the benefits of co-location that Secretary Harvey spoke of during his 18 May 2005 testimony before the BRAC commission.
  - d. **A large test facility such as Aberdeen would be more suitable for purposes other than C4ISR such as vehicular testing (ground and air). RDA as well as most T&E for C4ISR does not warrant such large facilities. The T&E not conducted at Fort Monmouth due to lack of sufficiently large facilities is already conducted in the vicinity at nearby Lakehurst (Navy) and McGuire (AF). As such, these other nearby facilities offer greater potential for Joint Service interaction – which relates strongly with Item #1 and #2 in category of “Military Value” within the BRAC 2005 criteria.**
3. Per the Army BRAC 2005 report Page 53, in the ranking of the Military Value of Installations (the primary BRAC evaluative criterion), Fort Monmouth is ranked 50 out of 97. **There are numerous installations ranked lower in terms of military value yet they are not recommended for closure.**
  4. Consider carefully that construction contracts with developers have been pursued and publicly announced at Aberdeen Proving Ground **in advance** of any acceptance from the BRAC Commissioners regarding the DoD's recommendations. This creates doubt regarding the integrity of the BRAC process and whether outcomes have been predetermined prior to the release of information and your deliberations. Foregone conclusions by the DoD which seek rubber-stamping will hopefully be challenged and rejected!

# 90-minute classes for high schools proposed

Starting in 2006, they would share a common schedule

By JOE MITCHELL  
STAFF WRITER

All high schools in Harford County but one would adopt a four-period school day under a plan to have them on the same schedule by fall of 2006.

The plan would radically rearrange the school day at Fabston and Edgewood high schools, where students attend seven 45-minute classes daily, and Bel Air and C. Milton Wright, where students attend five 60-minute classes.

Under the new plan, high school students countywide would attend four 90-minute classes per day. Some of the courses would meet daily for a semester, while others would meet every other day throughout the year. Harford Technical High School would not be affected.

The current system is "very haphazard," said David A. Volzath, Harford's chief of secondary education. "All schools are at different points of the curriculum."

Some teachers have spoken out against the longer classes, contending that the attention span of the average post-MTV-generation teenager gives out after an hour. They also say teachers would lose hours of planning time during the week under the new plan.

"I would move from [teaching] approximately 140 students a year to almost 170 students a year," said Brian Rheinhardt, an English teacher at C. Milton Wright.

"Nothing's been shown that it's best for the kids," added Keith D. Goodell, president of the county teachers union.

But teachers who support longer classes say there would be more time to delve into lessons and in-class projects such as science experiments.

A committee of [See Schools, 3c]

## A note to readers

Today, *The Sun* unveils important changes in the way we cover Harford County and the region.

*The Sun* will be publishing a new Harford section, with a new look, many new features and a new emphasis on community news.

The intensely local section will include:

- Feature stories about people, places and events in the county written and illustrated by our award-winning writers and photographers.

- A weekly look at Harford County's rich history, as well as a column of agricultural news.

- A compendium of opinions from readers on an issue in the news, called *Speak Out!*

- Redesigned, easier-to-read events calendars.

- Stories and photos on Harford County school sports, as well as a page devoted to local education news.

The new, very local section will appear in *The Sun* each Sunday. Previously, readers received a mix of local, regional and state news in the Harford section.

*The Sun* remains committed to providing the best coverage of Harford County seven days a week. The Maryland section, which Harford readers will receive seven days a week beginning today, has been redesigned to provide more breaking news from the county and elsewhere in the state.

The Maryland section will also include new features, such as a weekly traffic map to help commuters avoid trouble spots, and, Mondays, a "Maryland Journal" with colorful scenes and stories from around the state.

Tell us what you think: harford.letters@baltisun.com

# 'Massive' business park planned for APG

Project said to have potential for 10,000 new civilian jobs

By TED SHELBY  
STAFF WRITER

A Rockville company is proposing to develop a 300-acre business and technology park at Aberdeen Proving Ground that, when completed, could more than double the number of civilian jobs at the military installation, which is already the county's largest employer.

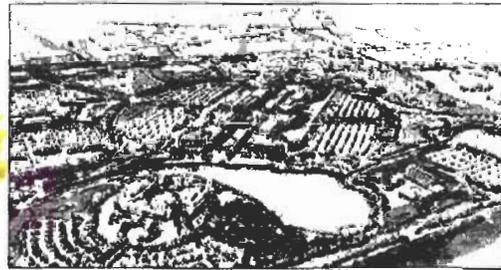
County Executive James M. Harkins described it as a "massive technology park" that has the potential of creating 10,000 jobs.

"It will be an economic development accelerator" that will benefit Harford County and the state, said Aris Melis-

aratos, the state's secretary of business and economic development. "It's like a godsend."

He said the project could stimulate development in Harford County the way the National Security Agency has along Route 32 near its base at Fort Meade. "It would also be a boon to APG as the Defense Department moves into its process of determining which military bases to close or resign to streamline its operations for wartime demands."

The developer, Opus East LLC, has laid out plans for a \$300 million technology park featuring more than 1 million square feet of office space, nearly that amount in structures designed for research and development work, and 800,000 square feet of laboratory space. Although the plan is still in the conceptual stage, the de- [See PG. 6c]



A rendering of Opus East's proposed Government and Technology Enterprise project depicts a campus-like setting of about a dozen buildings on 300 acres inside the Maryland Boulevard gate to Aberdeen Proving Ground.

## Business and technology park planned for 300 acres of APG

[APG, from Page 1c]

veloper is looking at a campus-like setting that could include more than a dozen buildings along with a 260- to 300-room hotel and conference center. The project is called Government and Technology Enterprise, or GATE.

It will provide federal agencies, government contractors and private companies the security that comes with being located on a military base behind a fence and guarded gate.

Jim Lee, president of Opus East, said the company expects to start construction later this year, most likely in the third quarter. It would take eight to 10 years to complete the project, he said.

Lee said the company is in the final phase of its business plan and is close to an agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers to start work.

Concerning prospective tenants, Lee said planners expect to see "a migration of companies and federal agencies that need higher security" than what they have at their present locations.

"This is a unique office park inside the gate of a military base," he said.

As an example of the type of tenants the park would be designed to house, Lee offers a news report saying that the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency is looking for a new headquarters site. The Bethesda-based agency does mapping and analysis of satellite photographs for the military. "It is going to create other opportunities," said J. Thomas Sadowski, Harford County's economic development director. "There could very well be spinoff companies" resulting from the kind of work that is expected in the park.

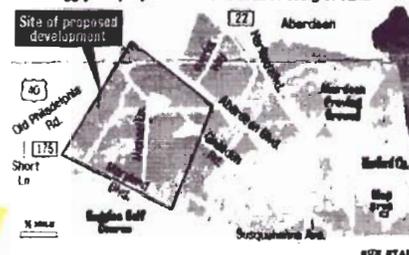
"It's the exact kind of economic development we need in this county," said William Secorro, president and chief executive of the Chamber of Commerce in Harford County.

"There could be a lot of good-paying professional and technology jobs."

Opus East is one of the five operating companies of The Opus Group, which is based in Minnetonka, Minn. The parent company is one of the nation's leading development companies.

It is currently constructing the Enterprise Business Park on

### Technology park proposed for Aberdeen Proving Ground



"It's the exact kind of economic development we need in this county."

William Secorro, president and chief executive of the Chamber of Commerce of Harford County

# 92-acre site in Perryman. The park is designed to house two huge distribution warehouses. A few other Opus projects completed in recent years include:

- Arundel Crossing, an eight-building, 2 million-square-foot business park in Odenton that was completed last year.

- Metro Place, a business park with more than 500,000 square feet in Merrifield, Va., near the intersection of the Capital Beltway and Interstate 68.

- The American Express Financial Advisors headquarters building in Minneapolis.

The GATE project at APG will be a little different from most of the company's other developments. The Army will remain in control of the property.

Under terms of the agreement between Opus and the Army, the company would enter into what Lee called an "enhanced-use" lease. Instead of paying rent on the property, the company will supply services to the Army such as snow removal, pulling a new roof on a building or constructing a new building.

The lease agreement allows the Army to keep the land, said George Mercer, a spokesman for APG, and to benefit from the value of the property.

"If an emergency comes up and we needed the land for something else, we could get it back," Mercer said. "The Army also remains the decision-maker on the use of the property. If a

company is not compatible with what we do here, we could say no."

The GATE project would be on land near the Maryland Boulevard entrance to the base that Mercer described it as a mostly wooded area with a pond and a picnic area. It was previously used for military training.

APG is strategically located to attract businesses from Baltimore, Washington, Northern Virginia, Philadelphia and New York, said Lee.

He said the technology park would also benefit from its proximity to three major airports, as well as the 8,000-foot runway at Phillips Army Field on the base; Interstate 95; and train service.

Asked if GATE would compete with the redevelopment of the former Bainbridge Naval Training Center in Port Deposit, Lee responded: "I don't think so. Bainbridge is designed to attract a different type of company."

Lee said the closeness of the two projects could breed business activity. "I would rather have good competition," he said. "If we were the only people up there, people would wonder why."

Civilians account for most jobs at APG, according to Mercer. He said there are about 7,700 civilian employees on base and 5,100 military personnel. Another 2,800 contractors work on base.

This was published almost 3 months before the release of BRAC. Recommended.

### THIS MONTH IN HARFORD COUNTY HISTORY

#### Town committee supports revolution

The Harford Town Committee met Feb. 22, 1775, and "came into the following Resolves - To Wit: We do acknowledge that the people of Boston, are now suffering in the Common Cause, and that we ought to contribute to their relief." It also "Resolved: That a

Committee be appointed to frame rules and orders for the more regular and quick dispatch of Business in this Committee." Ten rules were "entered and observed."

Rule 3 - That while one is speaking, no second person shall speak at the same time.

"Rule 10 - That any person making use of abusive language or casting out personal reflection be called to order by the Chairman."

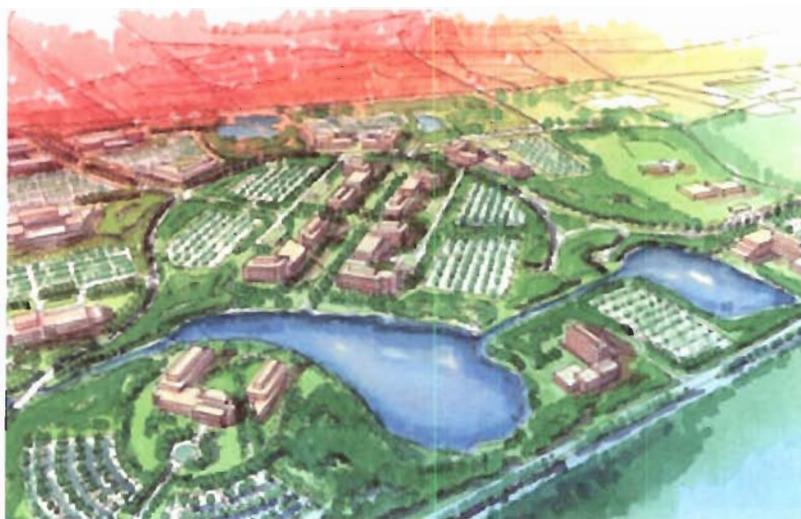
Source: History of Harford County by Walter W. Preston

Source: Baltimore Sun Harford Edition Local Section 1G  
February 27, 2005

Attachment II

p. 2/4

## THE G.A.T.E.



### Location

Aberdeen Proving Ground  
Aberdeen, Maryland  
(Baltimore)

### Site Size

200 acres

### Sq. Ft. Available

2-3 million

Opus East, L.L.C. in conjunction with Aberdeen Proving Ground is developing the Government and Technology Enterprise (G.A.T.E.), a state-of-the-art office, R&D and technology business park for both the government sector and non-government users.

Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) is a leading research, development and testing center for the U.S. Army and boasts some of the most sophisticated testing laboratories in the world. The G.A.T.E. will offer a synergistic environment for private firms, defense contractors and other **Army and DoD units working on advanced research activities** to complement the missions of APG and **help make it a "Center for Excellence."** Visit [The G.A.T.E](#) for additional information about this project.

For more information contact:

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[print page](#)



# The G.A.T.E. Government And Technology Enterprise

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, HARFORD COUNTY, MARYLAND

CREATIVE SOLUTIONS THAT WORK



Opus East, L.L.C., in conjunction with Aberdeen Proving Ground, is developing the Government and Technology Enterprise (G.A.T.E.), a state-of-the-art R&D and technology business park for both the government sector and non-government users.

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#### Benefits of the G.A.T.E. include:

- Over 2 million square feet **planned for office, laboratory and R&D facilities**. **Spring 2005** groundbreaking anticipated
- Significant cost advantages over other Northeast metropolitan markets
- Centralized Northeast location with easy access to I-95, Amtrak and MARC regional rail lines
- New hotel and conference center with a variety of meeting rooms and overnight accommodations
- The additional security of being within APG (some non-secured sites remain)
- Thoughtfully planned campus setting with an orientation toward sustainability and enhancement of natural woods and wetlands via walking trails and nature paths
- High quality of life and exceptional recreational activities

#### Additional Benefits to DOD and Federal Users:

- **Streamlined approval and lease process through EUL (more efficient alternative to MILCON)**
- Sites designed to meet updated DOD blast requirements
- Close proximity to Washington D.C.

## OPUS EAST, L.L.C.

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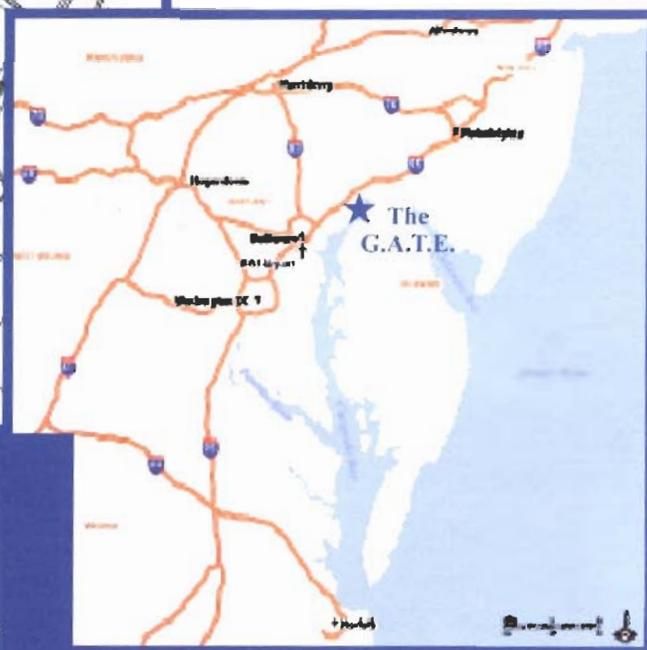
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# The G.A.T.E. Government And Technology Enterprise

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, HARFORD COUNTY, MARYLAND

CREATIVE SOLUTIONS THAT WORK



#### DISTANCES

|                     |           |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Washington DC       | 75 miles  |
| Philadelphia        | 75 miles  |
| Baltimore           | 36 miles  |
| BWI Airport         | 40 miles  |
| New York City       | 164 miles |
| Amtrak/MARC Station | 2 miles   |

**O**pus East is part of the Opus Group of Companies – a full-service real estate development firm offering vertically integrated services and expertise in all aspects of real estate development. Using the Design-Build approach, Opus offers clients flexibility, greater cost control, imaginative design, development know-how and sound financial practices, all with an emphasis on quality that exceeds clients' expectations while meeting schedule and budget requirements.

Opus is unique in the real estate industry and has pioneered a collaborative team approach. The Opus Team assembled for the G.A.T.E. is comprised of experts in construction, campus master planning and architecture, laboratory design, engineering and blast and environmental consulting. When you choose the G.A.T.E. for your next facility, you can be assured you have the most experienced team working together to deliver what is promised with attention to quality, cost and scope.

Developed by Opus East L.L.C.,

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Information contained herein has been obtained from the owner of the property, or from other sources that we deem to be reliable. We have no reason to doubt its accuracy, but we do not guarantee it.

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## **Military bringing 'boon' and bust to Md.**

**Impact: Moving jobs and people to the area will stress the fragile bay, counties and quality of life.**

**On the Bay: Tom Horton**

June 10, 2005

ON JUNE 3, on its front page, this paper - along with most others in the region - carried news that went to the heart of why we're not making good environmental progress.

None of the articles mentioned the environment. They proclaimed only good news: Consolidations in the military and national security will shift 10,000 jobs to Maryland.

**State officials are "spreading word of boon to local governments," the headline said.**

**"The possibility of more jobs is always good news," said a spokeswoman for Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr., who had lobbied Congress and the Bush administration long and hard to gain this plum.**

**What's wrong with this picture?**

First, it's important to note that **Maryland is not creating jobs, not putting unemployed citizens to work** or opening better positions for residents.

**This is an import of 10,000 people and their families, pure and simple. And while their presence absolutely will boost the consumption of goods and services within the state, it will just as surely take a bite out of our remaining, already-stressed natural world.**

**Consider Anne Arundel and Howard counties, which will bear the brunt of the "boon." Both have zoning well-documented as inadequate to protect forests, wetlands and farmland.**

**Consider also that the governor, so eager to attract more population, has underfunded open space preservation and given short shrift to stopping sprawl.**

**Consider also the traffic congestion, and the sediment and stormwater pollution from development that plagues our waterways.**

Consider the continuing struggle to bring back submerged grasses, crabs, yellow perch and oysters to Anne Arundel County tributaries of the Chesapeake.

Consider recent studies that show low levels of development considered environmentally

sensitive have more impact on water quality and wildlife than imagined.

Such is our blind allegiance to "economic growth" that we seldom ask whether it benefits the unemployed or creates new value for current citizens. And we don't include nature, quality of life or water quality in the equation when calculating growth's benefits.

Gross domestic product, for example, the overarching economic calculation of how the country's doing, climbs in value if a forest gets paved for a mall. But nothing is subtracted for the loss of that woodland for habitat, recreation and hunting, or for filtering pollution.

Indeed, during the past four decades, pursuit of economic growth has boosted the GDP to nearly \$10 trillion annually.

That five-fold increase in purported well-being (about the same percentage of people polled say they're happy now as before) has been mirrored by a six-fold increase in the number of threatened and endangered species (200 to 1,200).

We might have expected it. The first sentence of the landmark Endangered Species Act of 1973 reads: "Congress finds and declares that various species ... have been rendered extinct as a consequence of economic growth and development untempered by adequate concern and conservation."

We've comforted ourselves by assuming that by "tempering" the destructive side of economic growth, showing "adequate concern" and promoting "conservation," we could have it all - never-ending growth of our own species and a sustainable relationship with the natural world.

We can always do better, but the laws of physics, principles of ecology and common sense say we're talking fundamental conflict here. Meanwhile, the "growth is always good" mantra prevents rational discussion of alternatives.

Indeed, had Ehrlich been tabbed as reticent to pursue those 10,000 jobs, it would have damaged his re-election chances. No Democrat would have acted any differently.

I once asked Ehrlich whether he thought we could pursue, nationally and locally, policies to stabilize population without hurting the economy.

He thought for half a minute - more than most politicians I ask this question. "No, not with this economy," then-candidate Ehrlich said.

And that is really the point. Other economies are not only possible, but are beginning to get real discussion - to date mostly among wildlife and other environmental professionals who most clearly confront the results of the current system.

"As long as economic growth is the overriding national goal, the wildlife profession is an

exercise in futility," says Brian Czech, a wildlife biologist who is president of the nonprofit Center for the Advancement of the Steady State Economy.

Czech and others like University of Maryland economist Herman Daly have written compellingly of the virtues of a U.S. economy that eschewed limitless growth for a stable population with relatively stable consumption of goods and services. (Don't worry, you get to keep capitalism, democracy, even stock markets.)

Economic development would still be prized, but that's different from just adding jobs and people. Such a steady state economy would not guarantee a flourishing natural world, but at least we'd have a good shot at it.

Yes, this would be a big project. But we can start by stopping with fooling ourselves that 10,000 jobs moving here is an unalloyed "boon" - or even a thing worth pursuing.

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## Base realignment threatens to worsen ills linked to sprawl

*Lacking mass transit, workers will add to traffic*

BY TIMOTHY B. WHEELER

SUN STAFF

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 22, 2005

While officials in Maryland have publicly welcomed the prospect of gaining 6,600 federal jobs through the military base realignment proposed by the Pentagon, independent planners and activists say the move threatens to worsen the ills of suburban sprawl in the Greater Washington area, which includes Baltimore.

"This is a region that's already grappling with crushing traffic congestion and all of the associated problems, air pollution and other issues," said Don Chen, executive director of Smart Growth America, a national growth-management advocacy group based in Washington. "This would make it much more difficult for local governments to get control over those issues."

The Pentagon's proposal would move tens of thousands of jobs from the District of Columbia and its inner suburbs to outlying bases such as Fort Meade and Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland - to communities far less accessible by public transportation and already straining to cope with the growth they are experiencing.

Moreover, there is unlikely to be much federal aid to accompany the shifts. In previous base realignments, the Pentagon has given affected communities \$280 million in aid, and other federal agencies have provided \$3 billion. But the bulk of the aid in the past has gone into helping to clean up and redevelop bases that are closed.

The costs of accommodating base expansion are generally left to local and state government. In Maryland, the cost of expanded roads and mass transit alone could easily be tens of millions of dollars.

The nation's capital and its neighboring states have weathered base closings and expansions before, but this one is potentially more disruptive because many job shifts are being made to satisfy new Pentagon regulations requiring that military workplaces be set back from streets, with secure parking areas, to shield them from potential terrorist attacks.

More than 20,000 jobs are being moved out of the district and its inner suburbs - away from offices readily accessible by the Washington area's Metro rail network, which transports 700,000 riders every weekday.

It's clear that the number of military and civilian jobs beyond the Capital Beltway would grow, where workers are less able to commute by mass transit, said David Robertson, executive director of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, a regional planning agency.

"The federal government primarily is looking for what enhances the security of Department of Defense facilities and what's the most cost-effective solution for the federal taxpayer," Robertson said. "I don't think the BRAC [Base Realignment and Closure Commission] process considers other issues like affordable housing, air quality and transportation."

The Washington regional planning agency is racing to get a handle on the traffic shifts and other potential impacts of the base realignment so that local officials there can attempt to influence it before it's completed.

The regional planning counterpart for Baltimore apparently hasn't given the issue much thought yet.

"It's so fresh and new, we really haven't played that scenario out," said Harvey S. Bloom, transportation director for the **Baltimore Metropolitan Council**.

Dru Schmidt-Perkins, executive director of 1000 Friends of Maryland, a group that advocates development in and around cities to reduce traffic and the loss of open space, said: "What we've done is take those people who are largely on transit and move them to nontransit spots. That's not going the right direction."

Washington and Baltimore are already among the most traffic-clogged cities in the country. Capital-area residents had the third-longest commutes, and Baltimore the 17th-longest, in the latest survey by the Texas Transportation Institute. Both areas also suffer from unhealthy levels of ozone air pollution in summer, much of it from automobile emissions.

"It's one thing to close a base and try to find a way to reuse it, but it's another to reshuffle the employment and put it into places that aren't prepared to take it," said Arthur Nelson, associate director of Virginia Tech's Metropolitan Institute, a development research center in Alexandria.

One of those places is Fort Belvoir in Virginia, about 16 miles south of the district, which would receive 18,000 relocated workers under the Pentagon plan. With 24,000 already working there, the base is the largest employer in Fairfax County. Elected officials representing the county have said the roads serving the base are already inadequate.

The Metro rail system might be able to extend its Blue Line five to eight miles south from Springfield to serve Fort Belvoir, a transit agency spokeswoman said. But the projected cost, based on a study done a few years ago, was \$600 million to \$800 million.

In Maryland, James F. Ports Jr., deputy transportation secretary, said the state is working on plans for road widening and other upgrades to improve access to military bases.

Ports said state officials would work with local representatives to address the congestion

that might come from increased traffic at Fort Meade, which is projected to add 5,361 jobs, and Aberdeen, which is expected to gain 2,176 jobs.

**But transit is likely to be more limited at both bases.** Though Aberdeen and Fort Meade lie along Maryland's MARC commuter rail line from Perryville to Washington, the state-run service is straining to handle only a fraction of the riders Washington's Metro network does, according to Eugene Peterson, president of the Transit Riders League. Trains are crowded and breakdowns too frequent, he contends.

"You start adding a few more bodies to a service that's already taxed, and you've got a problem," said Peterson, **who predicted that the jobs shift would add to the region's traffic gridlock if MARC and other transit options are not beefed up to serve the bases.**

Gerrit Knaap, director of the National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education at the **University of Maryland, College Park**, said that **while the base realignment no doubt disrupts the plans local officials have made to manage their communities' growth**, it doesn't have to be disastrous.

"It just highlights the need for regional planning," Knaap said. "And the sooner we prepare ourselves to meet that need, the better off we're going to be."

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## Commute could realign with base closings

*Shifting by military could force workers to relocate*

BY MELISSA HARRIS

SUN STAFF

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Like many federal workers driving from the Baltimore suburbs into Washington every day, Marshall Hudson picks his poison - the Beltway, New York Avenue or Massachusetts Avenue - based on the 7:15 a.m. radio traffic report.

On a good day, he gets to the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency in an hour - a dream commute compared with the one he would have if the Pentagon closes his office in Bethesda and moves it to Fort Belvoir, Va., as part of a nationwide shuffling and consolidating of military resources.

The shake-up could bring thousands of new jobs to Maryland and shift thousands of others out of state.

That has civilian Defense Department workers fretting. Some say they'll be forced to buy new cars, adjust their work schedules or even move across the state line to make their lives easier.

Others say they'll retire to avoid the hassle.

Change is a concept foreign to many federal workers in the Baltimore-Washington region. The concentration of defense contractors, military bases and government offices within an hour of the Pentagon has allowed many employees to climb the pay scale without the rootlessness that accompanies military life.

The base realignment proposal outlined this month could disrupt that for many workers - and not just in Maryland.

The plan, the first round of base closings in a decade, is projected to save \$50 billion over 20 years. The Pentagon is recommending that 180 military installations nationwide be shut down, including 33 large bases. Hundreds of other installations would see staffing swell or shrink.

If Hudson's employer, which analyzes military satellite images, is relocated as recommended, he will have to leave his home in Bowie by 6 a.m. to avoid rush-hour congestion on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge crossing into Virginia.

### **New housing concerns**

He worries that he wouldn't be able to afford a house near Fort Belvoir, 16 miles south of Washington, as nice or as large as the one that he lives in now with his wife and their 2-year-old son.

"For a lot of my co-workers who already live in Virginia, it's going to mean a shorter commute, and they're thrilled," said Hudson, 38, who writes the internal newsletter for the agency.

"For those like me, who live in **Annapolis**, Bowie or Rockville," he said, "they're going to have to consider changing their lifestyle or moving."

Many workers, both civilian and military, are reluctant to accept the possibility that their jobs would move. The Base Realignment and Closure Commission - or BRAC - is reviewing the Pentagon's proposal, which won't be final until the commission, President Bush and Congress sign off on it this fall.

Meredith Leyva, author of *Married to the Military*, said that that approach is unwise. As Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld pointed out at a hearing last week, 85 percent of BRAC proposals become reality.

Leyva, a Navy wife who has moved seven times in eight years, recommends that people contact a real estate agent now if they live in an area where many are expected to leave. Base closings create "gluts" of homes on the market, and prices plummet.

Pentagon officials estimate that Maryland will gain about 6,600 jobs under the realignment proposal. Virginia faces a mixed picture: a net loss of about 1,600 jobs, despite the consolidation of other jobs at places such as Fort Belvoir.

### **'Busting at the seams'**

Stephanie D. Henderson isn't sure who's coming or going, but she knows that the proposal would further cramp her lifestyle. When she first moved to Woodbridge, Va., more than a decade ago, her trip to meetings of the Fort Belvoir Officers' Wives Club took only 15 minutes.

Every year, it seems to get worse, and she said she expects to schedule an hour's worth of travel time before each meeting once the newcomers arrive.

"We're basically busting at the seams here," said Henderson, whose husband works at the post for a defense contractor. "They're putting up the houses as fast as they can."

Lou Brune, 50, one of Hudson's co-workers, plans eventually to move from Gaithersburg to one of those new homes, but not until his two children, ages 9 and 11, graduate from high school.

"We just don't want to disrupt their education," he said.

Warren Field of the Army Test and Evaluation Center in Alexandria, Va., doesn't expect any disruptions. He said he would rather retire than move to Aberdeen Proving Ground in Harford County with his command, which tests soldiers' weapons and communications systems.

Three years ago, with his children grown, Field and his wife moved into a townhouse in Alexandria so that he could be a five-minute bus ride from his office and they could get rid of their second car.

He said he wouldn't give up that convenience or the skyrocketing value of his townhouse to move to Maryland.

### **Two years off**

His colleagues who don't have the option of retiring, Field said, don't have enough information right now to make decisions.

The move, if it happens at all, is at least two years off, and Field said he isn't confident the destination will be Aberdeen.

"I'm not going to go wherever," he said.

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## Harford expects good things of base decisions

*Pentagon's initial proposal entails gain of over 2,000 jobs at proving ground*

BY TED SHELSBY

SUN STAFF

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Aberdeen Proving Ground, the sprawling military base known as the engine that pulls Harford County's economy, is expected to have an even greater impact as it stands to gain new jobs and continue the transformation into the Army's prime technology center.

County officials struggled to restrain their enthusiasm Friday when the Pentagon announced a long-awaited base closure and realignment proposal that called for the APG work force to grow by more than 2,000.

"This is a great day for Aberdeen and all of Harford County," County Executive James M. Harkins said after receiving a telephone briefing from Col. John T. Wright, APG garrison commander.

Harkins said he was trying to temper his remarks so that it would not sound like he was gloating, "because our gains are a result on some other base's loss."

Wyett Colclasure, president of the Army Alliance, a nonprofit county business advocacy group that works to strengthen the proving ground's future, was surprised by the proposed gains.

Colclasure said he had been cautiously optimistic that APG would benefit from the review, which is intended to improve the military's efficiency. But he acknowledged that the installation fared better than he expected.

Additionally, Colclasure and Harkins were as excited about the types of jobs coming to APG as they were about the number.

"Obviously, we are very pleased that APG has been ratified as the Army's technology center," said Colclasure. "Most of the things coming here are high-technology concerns.

"We have always viewed APG as a technology center, and this is being reinforced by the other elements that are being transferred here."

Harkins described most of the jobs coming to the post as high-tech positions.

"These are the kind of jobs that usually pay good wages," he said.

Said Aberdeen Mayor Doug Wilson: "We're losing about 3,000 soldiers, but we are gaining about 5,300 civilians. That's my understanding."

"This is going to have a big economic impact on the town," he said. "The people coming in are going to be highly paid people with lots of disposable income. They are going to be

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looking for housing, dining at restaurants, and supporting most other businesses in town. It is going to be good for our town."

With about 15,400 military, civilian and contractor employees, APG is the county's largest employer. The proving ground stimulates more than \$1.8 billion a year in economic activity in the state each year, according to the state Department of Business and Economic Development.

That is about double the economic impact of the General Motors Corp. vehicle assembly plant in Southeast Baltimore during its heyday, when it operated two shifts a day and employees worked most weekends to meet consumer demand.

The proving ground generates \$831 million in employee compensation, or 27 percent of all the salaries and wages in Harford and Cecil counties.

**To boost APG's image in the minds of Pentagon officials, the state and the county have been improving transportation links with the military base. Upgrades are being made to the Edgewood train station and to roads leading into the post.**

costs?

Harkins noted that APG faces the threat of some losses, including the shift of the Ordnance Center and School to Fort Lee, Va.

George Mercer, a spokesman for the proving ground, said the Ordnance Center is where the Army trains its mechanical and maintenance soldiers to repair equipment, including motors, tanks and trucks.

"At any given time, they may have about 2,500 people on base," said Mercer. He said about 10,000 soldiers move through the school each year. "Some stay for six, eight or 10 weeks. Some for six months."

Said Harkins: "This was a very positive day," but he included a caution: "We are not out of the woods yet. These are just recommendations. The [base closure] process doesn't end until November."

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## County braces for growth amid military change

*Fort Meade a driving force for population, business; Owens sees a defense corridor; Officials consider effects on schools, infrastructure*

BY CHILDS WALKER

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Anne Arundel County officials said the announcement of 5,300 jobs at Fort Meade fits their belief that the western portion of the county will be a center for population and business growth over the next 20 years.

"It's reassuring to have this confirmation of what I was expecting," said County Executive Janet S. Owens.

The Pentagon announced Friday that Maryland would gain thousands of new jobs while losing just a handful of small installations under a massive proposed restructuring of the country's military bases.

In addition to the new jobs at Fort Meade, Harford County's Aberdeen Proving Ground would gain 2,100 jobs and the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda would add nearly 1,900.

In recent speeches, Owens has described Anne Arundel County as a center for the development of military technology. She believes a defense industry corridor is forming between the National Security Agency and Washington, and that the area could one day rival California's Silicon Valley.

Eight of the 10 leading defense contractors in the nation have offices in Anne Arundel. In 2003, the county opened the Chesapeake Innovation Center, a homeland security incubator that has drawn investments from heavyweight defense contractors such as Northrop Grumman Corp., Innovent Nokia and BearingPoint Inc.

In a statement on the base movement, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said the military must move from a Cold War mode to a more modern one. That was music to the ears of Owens, who said that with the military's focus shifting from masses of troops to intelligence and technology, the county can only benefit.

"The wars of the future will be in information and cyberspace," Owens said.

In presentations to various groups over the last year, county economic development director William Badger has said Fort Meade could soon resemble a small city, with expanded housing at the base and high-paying technology firms clustered around the perimeter.

He called Fort Meade "a huge driver of our economy."

"Having this much federal land close to Washington clearly benefits us," he said. "We think the momentum is clearly this way."

Badger said the county will have to expand roads and schools to accommodate new workers.

"But I think the county has certainly anticipated this growth," he said. "We'll manage through those issues."

County Planning Director Joseph W. Rutter Jr. said the area around Fort Meade is ready to accommodate more jobs.

"It's right in our planned growth area," he said, noting new housing planned for Odenton and the area around the **Arundel Mills Mall**.

Rutter said recent improvements to Route 32 have improved access to Fort Meade, and he said planned improvements to Route 175, an important connector road in the western part of the county, will also help.

The director added that he hopes some of the 5,300 new jobs will go to county residents who now commute to Washington but would rather work closer to home.

School planning officials said the effect on schools will be unclear until they learn whether new workers will relocate to the area and if so, when they would arrive.

Chuck Yocum, supervisor of student demographic planning for Anne Arundel public schools, said the school system developed a good working relationship with Fort Meade while planning for the Army's Residential Communities Initiative, which is expected to bring hundreds of military families to the base by 2008.

School officials are on track to redistrict the new Seven Oaks Elementary School and other nearby schools by 2007 to handle the influx.

County Councilwoman Pamela G. Beidle, a Democrat who represents the area around Fort Meade, said she was **happy to hear about new jobs but concerned about impact on roads, schools and housing.**

**"People complain about congestion on the roads and the cost of housing now, and when you think about 5,000 more jobs, it's almost scary," she said.**

Sun staff writer Liz F. Kay contributed to this article.

## Putting the squeeze on housing market

*Homes: New military jobs expected to come to the area are making a tight market even tighter.*

BY JAMIE SMITH HOPKINS

SUN STAFF

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The Baltimore area's unprecedented run-up in housing prices has been driven in part by Washington workers' quest for homes that are bargains compared with the nation's capital. Now Washington - courtesy of the Pentagon - is on track to add more fuel.

Military base closures and trims proposed nationwide could add 5,400 jobs to Fort Meade in Anne Arundel County and 2,200 jobs to Aberdeen Proving Ground in Harford County. All this in a region where home sale prices have already shot up more than 75 percent between 2000 and last month.

Because all the proposed APG jobs and most of the Fort Meade positions are for civilians or contractors, few of the newcomers would end up living on post. And they would largely be working in high-tech and professional fields, which means buying power significantly above that of a junior enlistee.

"Those who have [building] permits in hand are going to be ruling the world," said Laura Roskelly, a Realtor with Anne Arundel Properties who specializes in Fort Meade relocations.

The average sales price in Anne Arundel exceeded \$400,000 for the first time last month, according to data from Metropolitan Regional Information Systems Inc., a Rockville firm that tracks sales. Roskelly said it's hard to find a single-family house priced for less than that in communities convenient to Fort Meade.

"We're going to have this huge demand and not have the supply," said Councilwoman Pamela G. Beidle, a Linthicum resident who represents communities near Fort Meade.

She noted that the 5,400 new jobs don't take into account that the National Security Agency, which is at Fort Meade, projects hiring 1,500 people a year through 2009.

"We can't build more houses than our schools can support," she said. "I don't know what the answer is, other than that our young people aren't going to live here."

Bill Badger, president and chief executive of the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corp., said the county has long anticipated that Fort Meade would be a growth engine.

"We tried to incorporate that in our planning for infrastructure, including schools," he said. But he added: "This will put more pressure on the county as far as delivering on housing units."

Both military posts are big employers already. Fort Meade has about 39,000 jobs; APG jobs total nearly 17,000.

The new jobs at Fort Meade would be in military adjudication, defense information, communications networks and media. Just under 700 would be military, with the rest split between civilians and contractors. APG would lose 3,400 military jobs - its ordnance center and school is expected to move to Fort Lee, Va. - but gain 5,600 civilian and contractor jobs in highly specialized fields such as chemical and biological defense research.

The Pentagon last week recommended shutting roughly 180 military installations, cutting tens of thousands of jobs and reshuffling others. Maryland would gain more jobs than any state but Georgia. Fort Meade alone would add more jobs than all but a handful of U.S. installations.

Though the numbers could change by the time Congress approves a plan in the fall, few Pentagon recommendations have been altered in past restructurings.

Harford's housing market is significantly less expensive than Anne Arundel's - the average home sold for about \$265,000 last month, up 78 percent in five years - which is why Roskelly figures that some new Fort Meade workers, especially those in the military, will end up living a lot closer to APG.

Already, she said, military families are buying outside the county, from Bowie to Baltimore, in search of affordable prices. The average Fort Meade housing allowance is \$1,400 a month.

"Many people, they're coming from Georgia or South Carolina where they could own a mansion for \$350,000," said Roskelly, who served in the Army for four years. "There's extreme sticker shock."

Adrienne Earnshaw, a Realtor with Long & Foster Riverside at Water's Edge, just outside Aberdeen, is overjoyed at the thought of a double impact. She thinks base workers will be able to find something they can afford because there's a wide range of prices in the area, including older townhouses that cost about \$120,000. The APG employees she sees don't want to spend more than \$260,000.

"We have housing for everyone," she said.

Susan Stroud Parker, co-director of government affairs at the Home Builders Association of Maryland, said that's not true of new construction. What's being built in both counties is high-end and a lot is for buyers ages 55 and up, in part because crowded schools have restricted development, she said.

"I'm delighted because it's good for the local economy," she said of the new base jobs, "but I'm also concerned about where we're going to put these people."

Picerne Military Housing, a subsidiary of a Rhode Island real estate company, hopes a sizable portion will choose to live at Fort Meade. It's partnering with the Army to renovate the base's old housing and eventually replace the preponderance with new units; though it's had no trouble filling the new homes, the old ones are going begging for renters. The occupancy rate on post is about 70 percent.

To combat that, Picerne - which has already renovated the interiors of many of the homes - is working on curb appeal with new siding, fences, dormers and other exterior details. The housing also has been opened up to federal workers, military retirees and single soldiers.

"We have to be competitive with what's off post," said Picerne spokesman Bill Mulvey, who calls Fort Meade "the ultimate gated community."

There are just under 2,800 homes on base now, and plans call for an additional 380 within seven years. But that may change now that base employment looks likely to expand. The Army will soon study the market to see if there's enough affordable housing within driving distance of Fort Meade.

Loren Thompson, a defense analyst at Lexington Institute in Arlington, Va., thinks the potential downside of the new jobs is so outweighed by the upside that the Baltimore region ought to stop complaining about the impact on home prices. **These are the most coveted of all base jobs, he said, because such specialized positions pay well and tend to inspire high-tech spin-offs in the private sector.**

"This is a real windfall," he said. "If there's a negative here, it's only going to be noticeable during rush hour."