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10 August 2005

The Honorable Philip Coyle
Commissioner
2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

BRAC Commission

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Received

Dear Sir:

As a retired person with 50 years of federal service at Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) including time spent as a materials tester, director of programs, and resources management administrator, I am writing to express my thoughts regarding the movement of the Ordnance Museum to Fort Lee. While I understand and fully support the movement of the Ordnance Center and School, I do not support the move to include the Museum.

The Ordnance Museum was established in 1919 to exhibit and preserve captured enemy materiel and various items of US ordnance that were tested at APG. Many of these items serve as a reservoir of information for the systematic study of various types of equipment, which in many cases is valuable, and an important part of programs in the design and development of new weapons.

During World War II Col. G. B. Garrett, the museum creator, toured the battlefields of North Africa and Europe and designated items to be shipped to APG for evaluation by the Ordnance Research and Development Center, which later became the APG Development and Proof Services.

The progression of the German Panzer tanks, the famous Tiger tank, and the behemoth Panther tanks were studied in depth by US Ordnance personnel. The German 88 and other artillery also proved to be sources of valuable information. At that time, the Ordnance Museum was an integral part of ongoing materiel development efforts. During the Cold War USSR items of equipment, such as the T-34 tank were secured and shipped to APG for similar evaluation by development and testing personnel.

The main reason that the Ordnance Museum was later reassigned from the RDT&E mission to the Ordnance School was to facilitate the utilization of military personnel in the repair and maintenance of the equipment, many pieces of which are not under cover but are subject to deterioration by the out-of-doors elements.

The original home of the museum at APG was Building 314, which itself was a bit of a museum having been used in France by the American Expeditionary Forces during World War I. It was disassembled and shipped to APG for use as a machine shop. It became the home of the museum, which remained there until 1967 when the building was demolished. At that time the Ordnance Museum was moved to its present location, but without any physical structure. This point leads to the fact that funds for the current facility, constructed in 1971, were raised from private donation under the leadership of a group of retired Ordnance generals and several local businessmen. Recently, there has been a campaign to solicit donations for construction of additional enclosures to protect the many valuable exhibits that are subject to deterioration by the elements. Movement of the Museum to Fort Lee is contra indicated, as the move constitutes an affront and ingratitude towards local civic endeavors.

In reviewing the Army BRAC Report, I was unable to ascertain any analyses regarding the costs to move the artifacts to Fort Lee. Unique items, costly to be moved, include the T-12 bomb, the German Anzio Annie railroad gun mount and tube, the Little David Mortar and the 164 ton, 16 inch coast defense naval gun. In addition, APG has existing rehabilitation facilities that would cost \$2 million to duplicate, plus the need for 1.5 million sq ft of covered space.

One might rationalize that this planned museum move has fallen prey to the overall DOD efforts to centralize so many related functions and objectives that the museum course of action has been swept up and incorporated with the Fort Lee consolidation without appropriate and thorough review. Since the Ordnance Museum is a focal point for the study and evaluation of foreign materiel intelligence, it should be co-located with the proposed APG assemblage of all the other research, development, engineering, testing and evaluation activities. If you find evidence that this is true; I suggest that your course of action is clear; recommend that this proposed museum move be disapproved. In addition, you may find that the DOD on second thought may totally agree to delete the proposed move.

You and other members of the commission are to be commended for your great service in this most critical effort to improve the operations of the Defense Department. Thank you for your consideration of my comments and suggested course of action.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Johnson, CGFM
Management Consultant

cc: R. Gary Dinsick, Army Team Leader, BRAC Commission Staff
Dean Rhody, Army Senior Analyst, BRAC Commission Staff