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July 18, 2005

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi
Chairman
Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

BRAC Commission

JUL 19 2005

Received

Dear Chairman Principi:

I write to provide you with my input for your July 19 meeting during which the BRAC Commission will consider possible changes to the status of the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) and the Defense Language Institute (DLI), both in Monterey, California.

First, I would like to strongly endorse and defend Secretary Rumsfeld's decision to retain both DLI and NPS, to not close them, due to their high military value. NPS, as I am sure you are aware, scored the highest military value ranking among all institutions of professional military education.

But in addition, and in particular, I would like to address the issues of cost savings, jointness and military value that these institutions bring to our nation's military establishment and the security and defense of our country. Overall, I believe that the Commission's desire to explore a more formal consolidation between these institutions will result in a more streamlined - but stronger - professional military education program and further the goals of Secretary Rumsfeld's vision of transformation.

Cost Savings

I am aware of the sensitivity of cost as it relates to these educational institutes. I also know that both schools have made tremendous strides toward reducing costs and eliminating non-essential expenditures.

For example, under broad authority granted by Congress the DLI has contracted with the City of Monterey for many of its O&M activities. This has saved the DLI upwards of 49 percent of its base operating costs.

The same authority is available to the NPS but the Navy has never allowed NPS to utilize the authority fully. Significant savings could easily be achieved for NPS in its base operating costs if Navy were to employ this authority more broadly. Navy should be encouraged to do so.

Part of the disparate application of this authority to contract out for municipal services comes in part from different management approaches at the two bases. Bringing management under a single command - perhaps as part of the Commission's idea of consolidation - would eliminate the inefficiencies and further streamline costs. Whether the schools are merged into a single entity (like a National Defense Education and Research Center), or simply managed jointly by a single agent, I applaud the Commission's desire to seek cost efficiencies in the schools without eliminating or reducing their valuable missions.

Along that line, I urge the Commission not to be dazzled by projections of potential cost savings from closure of NPS. I have serious doubts that the initial costs savings projection at NPS reflects the full scope of NPS student enrollment, program load, or revenue from outside sources. For example, I am aware that the COBRA for NPS that shows a \$1.12 billion savings includes, as savings, those salaries that are reimbursable to the school. Such a savings is illusory at best and paints an inaccurate picture to the Commission of potential savings through a closure action. Similar questions surround the COBRA figures of number of students at the school and whether the revenue to the school from these students was included in the COBRA calculations, even if the courses they take are not required as part of the school's core curricula. I have no doubt that the COBRA numbers are correct insofar as representing the items they measure; but I feel there are questions enough about the bigger picture to ask and advise the Commission not to depend on them exclusively as a finite measure of the institution.

Jointness

As your letter of July 1 implies, there may be real opportunities in Monterey to achieve greater jointness between DLI and NPS. The synergy between the schools -- and between them and the neighboring higher ed community -- is deep and real. What is missing is a better way to harness that synergy and reinvest it in the operations of the schools. Just as the Army and Navy in Monterey collaborated on the first joint RCI project, there are many ways in which the installations could combine efforts at basic services, collaborate at synchronizing programs across curricula, and work more closely with the local institutions of higher education to enhance the military educational experience at reduced cost.

More important than increasing the experience at no extra cost is the value added to the military agenda as well as to the national and homeland security. The NPS and DLI already have proven their jointness in this regard -- between themselves and with other agencies -- and it should be expanded and exploited.

Besides training our Armed Forces in languages critical to military action, DLI also currently provides extensive language training to officials of the State Department, Foreign Service, and our intelligence agencies. It will serve as the lead in Secretary Rumsfeld's defense language initiative and, as such, this facility is planned to expand to accommodate increased numbers of students in the very near future. This interaction and jointness with other Federal agencies contributes tremendously to the United States' ability to prepare for its defense needs at home and abroad.

Likewise, the Naval Postgraduate School is already heavily intertwined in providing DOD and the other military services extensive postgraduate professional education. In addition, NPS importantly and meaningfully teaches domestic and international military personnel scores of programs that promote the very essence of American diplomacy, peace-keeping, civil-military affairs and nation-building around the world. The E-IMET programs are particularly central to this tenet of American military philosophy.

Besides its work for the DOD and State Department and agencies mentioned above, NPS has established deep relationships with the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security, developing for them crucial, strategic Masters programs in homeland security studies and preparedness. As our country grapples with the challenges of a post-9/11 world, the jointness exhibited by NPS with these other agencies goes a long way in securing our safety and well-being as part of the Global War on Terrorism.

Both DLI and NPS have shown their flexibility and ability to adapt, accommodate and respond to the needs of the military community and its partners in the world arena.

Military Value

The foremost criteria for this BRAC consideration is military value. Clearly, in its consideration of these two institutions, the Education and Training Joint Cross Service Group ranked both schools highly for military value. In fact, NPS was the highest rated among all facilities in the Professional Development Education Subgroup.

As you may recall, on May 17 Navy Secretary England testified in front of the Commission saying that, "...professional military education is hugely important to us... frankly, may be more important than a lot of the equipment and a lot of the other things we do...we are afraid to take the chance that the value we had built up in those institutions...we could not replicate that."

It is the specialized military content of their programs that makes DLI and NPS so unique and so non-replicable in the civilian world. It is also the location along the Monterey Bay, with its community of other local institutions of higher education, its extensive native foreign language resident speakers, and a local network of businesses and activities that have grown up specifically to service the military community that makes recreating these schools elsewhere cost prohibitive or unachievable. The intellectual capacity of the area feeds the schools; to separate the schools from that capacity would destroy them.

Especially important to note is that the services, both Army and Navy, found no cause to change the schools' contribution to the service. Indeed, the schools provide a critical service to the departments and I strongly advise that that should not change under any recommendation to modify the structure of these institutions. They must remain able to fulfill the mission of the departments without interruption or diminution.

Particularly, the Naval Postgraduate School is of tremendous military value to the Department of the Navy, and conducts education and research programs that are specially tailored to meet Navy and Marine Corps requirements. While there are promising opportunities to further strengthen

the ability of NPS to serve joint, interagency and combined requirements, any consideration of consolidating other education or training commands with NPS cannot come at the expense of the unique, academically excellent programs that NPS conducts for the Navy-Marine Corps team.

Transformation

In conclusion, the DLI and NPS are the exact institutions you want leading Secretary Rumsfeld's transformation effort. They have shown themselves to bring strong military value to the services. They have already established linkages and joint programs between themselves, with the local community and with numerous federal agencies and international institutions. They are flexible and adaptive enough to develop training programs for a highly demanding GWOT. These qualities could be enhanced, and costs reduced, by bringing the schools under a single administrative umbrella, or even combining the schools into a larger National Defense Education and Research Center.

There is no doubt in my mind that you and the Commission will see the value of retaining the DLI and NPS in Monterey. I also believe you will understand the increased value that could result from more formalized joint operations between the two. I look forward to your recommendations that will retain and enhance these schools for the benefit of the Army, the Navy and all of DOD and its services as well as the greater good of the United States.

Sincerely,



SAM FARR
Member of Congress

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Please be sure to visit my website at www.farr.house.gov.