

## Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

# EARLY



# BIRD

June 23, 2005

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### **Department of Defense Releases**

#### **Lowry Redevelopment Assists Denver's Economic Renaissance**

American Forces Press Service

Gerry J. Gilmore

June 21, 2005

DENVER – When Lowry Air Force Base, Colo., was selected to be shuttered as part of the 1991 Base Realignment and Closure Act, many recession-battered Denver residents thought the end had come to the "Mile High" city.

Residents enjoy a park in a housing development located on the former Lowry Air Force Base in Denver. Residential and commercial redevelopment at Lowry has created 3,000 new homes and apartments for 6,500 residents since the 1,800-acre military installation was closed in 1994 under the 1991 Base Realignment and Closure Act. Myriad amenities and closeness to Denver makes it the most prestigious residential community in the area. Photo by Gerry J. Gilmore

Lowry, a military training installation with a 50-year history, was providing 7,000 much-needed jobs for Denver-area residents when it was closed in 1994, recalled Thomas O. Markham, executive director of the Lowry Redevelopment

Authority that was formed by the cities of Denver and Aurora, Colo., to oversee redevelopment of the former base.

At that time, Denver's tax base was eroding as residents were fleeing the city for greener suburban pastures, Markham noted, and the announcement of Lowry's closure just added to the area's malaise. The base had straddled the Denver-Aurora municipal line, with about 89 percent of Lowry located in Denver.

Today, after weathering yet another downturn after the 1999-2000 dot-com and telecommunications busts, Denver is enjoying an economic renaissance, Markham said, thanks to residential and commercial redevelopment at Lowry and other city land-reuse projects that have enticed thousands of former suburbanites to move back to the city.

Since 1994, residential and commercial redevelopment on the 1,800 acres of the former base has provided 3,000 homes for 6,500 new residents while creating about 6,000 jobs, Markham said, noting that Lowry redevelopment has generated a gross economic benefit of \$4 billion for the Denver metropolitan area.

"There is life after (BRAC) closure," asserted Markham, who also is president of "An Association of Defense Communities," a group that assists localities affected by BRAC. Other ongoing Denver-area redevelopment at the former Fitzsimons Army Medical Center, which was closed in 1999, and at the former Stapleton International Airport also have helped reenergize the Denver region's economy, Markham said.

Redevelopment projects at Lowry, Fitzsimons and Stapleton "really provided the economic engines of construction and jobs," Markham said, noting they helped the Denver area regain vitality after experiencing punishing recessions and urban deterioration.

Yet, while Markham described the Lowry redevelopment project as "hugely successful," he also noted that the process was strewn with "major challenges."

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Once a military installation is given final approval for closure under BRAC, the affected civilian community doesn't "have any choice but to gather around and try to make the best of it," Markham pointed out.

Therefore, he said, it's important that the public and private sectors of BRAC-impacted communities quickly arrive at consensus on how to redevelop former federal land.

"That is really important, because there's cooperation that's needed throughout," he said.

Hilarie Portell, the public relations and marketing director for the Lowry Redevelopment Authority, concurred with Markham, noting that Denver and Aurora government and business officials provided equal representation on the land-use planning boards.

"The planning process was very collaborative," she said.

Two community colleges now call the former Air Force base home, Portell said. And, with its schools, parks and other amenities, including close proximity to downtown, Lowry today has the priciest residential zip code, 80230, in the Denver metropolitan area, she noted.

While the development boasts apartments and condominiums priced for modest wage earners, Portell noted, the Lowry community also has homes costing \$1 million.

"The construction at Lowry, as well as the redevelopment of the Fitzsimons Army Medical Center, really helped keep the (Denver) metro economy afloat while we were getting through the recession," Portell pointed out.

### **National News Articles**

#### **Hunter, Bartlett Might Press To Keep New London Base Open**

National Journal's CongressDailyAM  
Megan Scully

Two Republican leaders on the House Armed Services Committee might press the independent base-closure commission to recommend keeping open the New London Submarine Base in Connecticut, and in the process make their case to grow the Navy's underwater fleet beyond the numbers expected in the future.

Armed Services Chairman Hunter and Projection Forces Subcommittee Chairman Roscoe Bartlett, R-Md., both believe the Navy needs more submarines than the 40 planned for the future, and perhaps even more than the 55 currently in the force.

By closing the massive New London facility, considered the birthplace of the sub fleet, the Navy would make it difficult to alter its current and future plans and grow the undersea force beyond projected numbers.

"If the premise used for closing New London as I understand it is correct -- a 40-ship Navy -- I oppose it," Bartlett told CongressDaily Wednesday.

The Navy, however, has said it has too much submarine infrastructure for a fleet that has been cut dramatically over the last decade. Pentagon officials are crunching the exact numbers the Navy needs for its overall future fleet in a series of studies, including the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review.

But closing and cleaning up the base, which houses nuclear material, will be a lengthy and expensive process. Once it closes, the military would have no option to change its mind. "When this is gone, it's gone," Bartlett said.

Under the Pentagon's recommendations, New London's 16 submarines would move to Kings Bay Submarine Base in Georgia and southern Virginia's Norfolk Naval Station.

Hunter, who unsuccessfully appealed to Rumsfeld earlier this year to pass over New London in the base-closure round, said he

disagrees with the Pentagon's plans for a smaller sub force.

"The submarine is a high-leverage platform [with a] fairly low level of manning," he said in a recent interview. "Any nation with a good sub force has enormous leverage in the seas."

But so far, neither lawmaker has directly lobbied the Base Closure and Realignment Commission on the benefits of the New London Base. The clock is ticking on the commission, which must submit its own list of recommendations to the White House by Sept. 8.

Hunter said he plans soon to submit a letter to commissioners similar to the one he sent to Rumsfeld earlier this year, stating that New London's unique position near the General Dynamics Electric Boat submarine facility makes it a key national asset.

Meanwhile, Bartlett said he is uncertain how a lawmaker from outside an affected district can get involved in the BRAC process.

"I don't know if they entertain unsolicited input," Bartlett said. "I'm not sure what the rules of engagement are."

BRAC commissioners encourage letters and other communication from just about anyone -- from military spouses to members of Congress -- as part of the overall process, sources said.

In fact, advice from lawmakers who do not have a vested interest in a base closure would get the attention of -- and be weighed heavily by -- the commission, said a BRAC consultant.

The recommendation of Hunter, might help sway the commission to keep New London open, said Rep. Rob Simmons, R-Conn., whose district includes New London. "He's chairman of the Armed Services Committee, a Vietnam vet, and a person who spent 20 years doing military stuff. That should carry a lot of weight."

## **Ohio, New York May Suffer Under Consolidation Of Pentagon Accounting**

The Hill  
Roxana Tiron  
June 22, 2005

More than a month after the Pentagon announced its recommendations for base realignment and closure (BRAC), many states have been rallying to save their military bases. But a couple of states are now putting up a fight to keep their not-as-glamorous defense accounting offices from closing.

Cleveland is home to one of the largest Defense Finance and Accounting Service operations (DFAS) in the country. The site, however, is slated for realignment — a move that could lead to the loss of more than 1,000 jobs in a city that the Census Bureau deemed the poorest big city in the United States in the fall of last year.

An additional 5,000 jobs would be lost nationwide as the Pentagon plans to close 20 small accounting offices and consolidate all payroll and accounting functions in three centers: Columbus, Indianapolis and Denver, argued Steven LaTourette (R-Ohio). For example, California is slated to shutter four DFAS centers and centers in New York, Florida, Kentucky, Maine, Missouri and South Carolina would also be closed.

"The entire DFAS process has to be reversed," said LaTourette. "The loss of jobs would be devastating."

The economic disruption in areas that are losing mostly civilian jobs is going to be high, said a lobbyist who is working on behalf of several states. "They buy houses, and they go to the schools," he said. However, the 1,013 civilian jobs that the DFAS center in Cleveland would lose are slated as DoD-civilian, which means that those people should be offered alternative employment within the Pentagon's system, said Daniel Else, a defense specialist at the Congressional Research Service.

"The economic impact on the area seems to be pretty darn small," Else said, adding that it would be one-tenth of 1 percent. "If they talk

about significant impact on local economy, they will have to prove it.”

LaTourette is joined in his criticism by another Republican, Rep. Sherwood Boehlert from New York, and Ohio Democrats Dennis Kucinich and Stephanie Tubbs Jones. Rome, N.Y., is slated to lose up to 382 jobs with the planned closing of the DFAS center there.

The bipartisan team also has support from the House Armed Services Committee chairman, Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.), according to Boehlert.

“I have unlimited faith in the BRAC Commission process,” which analyzes the Pentagon’s list and comes up with its own recommendations, Boehlert said at a press briefing Thursday. Commission member Lloyd Newton, a retired Air Force general, is scheduled for a site visit in Rome on June 22, Boehlert said.

Meanwhile, House lawmakers have been struggling to get accurate information from the Pentagon’s BRAC decisionmakers. It took repeated e-mails to the Department of Defense and up to seven days to receive a response to questions, said LaTourette. Representatives in states that will lose their DFAS centers “can’t rely on [Pentagon’s] information given on DFAS,” he said.

Ohio and New York’s fight is the common reaction of communities that find themselves on the BRAC list. “I have yet to find a community that does not want to reverse the [Pentagon’s] decisions,” said Chris Hellman, an analyst with the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation. Hellman worked on the Hill in the early 1990s for then-Rep. Tom Foglietta (D-Pa.), who had a DFAS center in his district that was closed.

The communities may have very little chance to get off the chopping block, Hellman said. The Pentagon has been reducing and consolidating the DFAS centers for years, he said.

“This is a trend that we have seen with DFAS over the last decade, and this is an opportunity to continue the trend,” Hellman said. He argued that the military would have closed a lot more in the past 10 years had Congress not put on the breaks.

“With electronic communications it is something you can easily consolidate” and, with a military that increasingly wants to become paperless, “there is not a geographical imperative that says it will have to be done in a specific spot,” Hellman added.

There are 12 military pay functions in the Pentagon’s countrywide accounting system: active-duty pay, reserve pay and retired pay for each of the four services. Cleveland handles eight of the 12 pay functions. LaTourette said that Indianapolis is likely to absorb most military payroll functions, but the facility there cannot handle an additional 3,500 workers.

Officials do not expect a large number of workers to transfer to the three consolidated offices, which could mean that new people would have to be trained and larger facilities built, LaTourette argued. Indianapolis currently specializes in active-duty pay.

“It is risky and foolish to move so many military pay functions to a center that is not trained to do them,” he said. “Our soldiers, reservists and retirees better cross their fingers and hope they continue to get paid on time.”

The Defense Department was able to move its centers around and consolidate them in the past without disrupting the pay flow, said Else, and the military should be able to do that again.

To shutter the Cleveland DFAS will cost the Pentagon nearly \$29 million and no savings will be seen for several years, LaTourette argued. Meanwhile, the Defense Department spent \$173 million in previous years to bring the smaller centers up to par. It will cost about \$159 million to close them.

On June 27, both Ohio and New York will have a chance to make their cases in a hearing in front of the BRAC Commission.

### **Pawlenty: National Guard commits to replacement mission at Duluth**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
Frederic Frommer  
June 22, 2005

The head of the Air National Guard is committed to finding a new mission for Duluth's 148th Fighter Wing in the wake of calls to shelve its jets, Gov. Tim Pawlenty and senior members of the state's congressional delegation said.

Pawlenty met Wednesday with Lt. Gen. Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, along with Minnesota Sens. Norm Coleman and Mark Dayton, and Rep. Jim Oberstar.

"Our goal from the meeting was to get a commitment from (military officials) that if and when the F-16s at the Duluth Air Base are retired, that there would be a follow-on mission that would make up for the lost jobs and positions," Pawlenty told reporters.

Last month, the Pentagon proposed shelving the base's F-16 fighter jets by the end of 2007.

Pawlenty said that Blum has agreed to find a mission that would approximate the number of jobs at the base. About 400 of the wing's 1,100 members work at the base full time.

A spokesman for the National Guard, Lt. Col. Mike Milord, would only say that Blum has agreed to work with governors and military officials "to identify emerging and expanded missions which could best leverage the strength of the Air National Guard."

Dayton, D-Minn., said that Pentagon officials "expressed what we all took as a repeated and irrevocable commitment ... to do their utmost to find a new mission, a future mission for the men and women of the 148th in Duluth."

"I am cautiously optimistic, far more optimistic than I was going into the meeting," he added.

Coleman, R-Minn., said he came away with a commitment from Pentagon officials as well.

"Although I remain troubled by the BRAC report's decision to retire Duluth's 15 fighter jets," he said, "the strategic location and historical success of this base require that we focus on developing a clear mission for the future."

David Ross, president and CEO of the Duluth Chamber of Commerce, said, "We're delighted that this meeting took place, and we're reassured with the feedback that came out of that meeting."

On July 6, Blum will hold another meeting to discuss the future missions of the 148th and other bases in similar situations.

Pawlenty said that Blum will let Minnesota and other states know what kinds of missions are needed and solicit proposals from governors on how to meet those missions in the states.

"He invited us to study the list of new missions that will be needed, and to make our position known to him so he can take that into consideration," the governor said.

New potential missions include unmanned aviation vehicles and future fighter aircraft.

"We want to pick something that is long-term," Pawlenty said. "Now the burden is on us to work with the congressional delegation and our military leaders in Minnesota to make that ask and that request to General Blum."

On Thursday, Pawlenty, Dayton and Coleman will attend a federal Base Closing and Realignment Commission hearing in Grand Forks, N.D. The Pentagon has proposed realigning the Grand Forks Air Force Base, taking away its air tanker mission and more than 80 percent of its military personnel. The Minnesotans will be there to advocate for both states' military installations.

## Gov. Pataki Visits Griffiss Tech Park, Calls On BRAC to Protect Jobs

US Fed News

June 22, 2005

Gov. George E. Pataki today visited the Griffiss Technology Park in Rome, N.Y., home to the Air Force Research Laboratories and the Defense Financial and Accounting Services, to attend a community briefing and working lunch at the facility. During his visit he called on the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) to reconsider the Pentagon's suggestion to close the Defense Finance and Accounting Service offices in Rome.

"While we are pleased that Rome Labs was not on the Pentagon's list of recommendations for closure, we know that this facility continues to make vital contributions to our national defense and homeland security, here in New York and nationally," Governor Pataki said. "It is clear that even after investing tens of millions of dollars to upgrade the facility, the Pentagon still does not fully recognize its tremendous value and the critical role it plays in protecting our nation. I came here today to listen to the community's concerns and let everyone know that we will continue to fight for every job at Rome Labs, every job at the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, and for every job in the Mohawk Valley."

The Air Force Information Directorate at Rome is the highest rated Air Force research facility in the nation. The Information Directorate's mission is vital to military decision-makers in the field. The engineers, computer scientists, mathematicians, physicists and all support personnel who serve at AFRL provide the military with the information needed to conduct successful operations around the world - they help keep our fighting men and women safe in the theater of battle, and give all of us a crucial advantage in the ongoing War on Terror.

In May, Defense Finance and Accounting Service located at Rome Labs was placed on the BRAC list of recommendations for closure. The

closure would affect 382 civilian jobs in a facility that has a \$21 million economic impact on the region. In addition, Rome Labs has positions that BRAC is recommending be eliminated.

"While I understand that the mission of BRAC is to achieve savings and consolidate services, I would encourage the Commission to look at the potential of Central New York and the Mohawk Valley and its importance to our national defense," Governor Pataki said. "I urge the Commission to consider all that this site has to offer our Nation and request the Commission consider Griffiss as a site to consolidate -- rather than moving -- these vital national assets."

The primary mission of Rome Lab is to advance information science and technologies for the Air Force command, control, communications and intelligence communities. The Lab is instrumental in developing high tech equipment for the American war fighter. Its technologies are instrumental in the war on terror and the war in Iraq.

The Lab also has been a key catalyst for attracting new, good paying high-tech jobs to the Mohawk Valley. In August of 2004, Empire Aero Center and Israel Aircraft Industries officially dedicated the company's aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul facility at the Griffiss Business and Technology Park. The company currently employs approximately 175 people and is on track to create 500 jobs by 2007.

In April 2004, Governor Pataki attended the dedication of the newly constructed Lab Directorate, an unprecedented joint effort between the United States Air Force and the State of New York.

In 1995 Rome Lab was placed on the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) list as the federal government looked for further cutbacks at military facilities. Due to coordinated efforts among state officials, the Congressional delegation and local officials, the Lab was removed from the list and retained as a stand alone facility.

Immediately following the 1995 BRAC victory, state and local officials began looking at ways to strengthen the lab as an important part of the ongoing redevelopment at the Griffiss Business and Technology Park. The new directorate was a result of these efforts.

Since 1995 Rome Lab has transformed from a facility focused on sensors to one focusing on Information Assurance and Information Dominance technology, key tenets in transformational technology that directly supports the Global War on Terror. The Laboratory's new consolidated research space allows for collaboration between the technical staff and includes advanced, secure facilities for classified research.

Rome Lab is the premier C4ISR Laboratory. C4ISR stands for Command, Control, Communication, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance. The Lab's employment is currently at 820 with over 600 contract employees on site. It has an annual economic impact of \$212 million to the Utica / Rome MSA.

**Delegation Seeks BRAC Meeting members of Congress send appeal to commissioners who missed sub base visit**  
New London Day (New London, CT)

Robert A. Hamilton  
June 23, 2005

Four members of the state's congressional delegation have requested a meeting with the five base-closure commissioners who did not visit Groton this month, hoping to convince them that the Pentagon's recommendation to close the Naval Submarine Base in Groton is flawed.

In a letter, U.S. Sens. Christopher J. Dodd and Joseph I. Lieberman, both D-Conn., and U.S. Reps. Rob Simmons, R-2nd District, and John B. Larson, D-1st District, note that the delegation had previously requested that all members of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission visit the submarine

base before a July 6 public hearing in Boston, but that now appears unlikely.

“The delegation hopes to have an opportunity to make our case directly to each commissioner — particularly the commissioners who did not tour Sub Base New London and will not be in Boston for the July 6 hearing,” Dodd said. “It's important that each commissioner has a full understanding of the Pentagon's flawed decision as well as the base's vital importance to our national security.”

“They're really under the gun, so we know they're not going to make it up to Connecticut,” said Todd Mitchell, Simmons' chief of staff. “We're just making sure we get some private, quality time with the remaining five commission members.”

Copies of the letter were sent to Commissioners James V. Hansen, James T. Hill, Samuel K. Skinner, Sue E. Turner and Harold W. Gehman Jr.

“Given the time constraints under which you are operating, we understand that you may not have the ability to tour Submarine Base New London before the July 6 regional hearing,” the letter states. “However, we hope that we can meet with you as well as the other Commissioners who did not visit the Base.”

The chairman, Anthony J. Principi, and members James H. Bilbray, Philip E. Coyle III and Lloyd W. Newton visited Groton May 31 and June 1, when they toured the base and met with local save-the-base forces.

Under the Pentagon's proposal, Groton's submarines and most of its industrial infrastructure would be split between Naval Station Norfolk, Va., and the Kings Bay (Ga.) Naval Submarine Base.

The letter acknowledges that the Defense Department and the commission face a difficult task, having to review an enormous amount of data to come up with ways to save money, but that the base closure process is supposed to be



guided by two overarching principles: military value and cost effectiveness.

“To that end, we strongly believe that closing Submarine Base New London would be a disservice to both our military preparedness and the American taxpayer,” the letter states.

### **Local News Articles**

#### **911th Base Argues Against Closing Rendell hopeful plea was heard**

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pittsburgh, PA)  
Jack Kelly  
June 22, 2005

Retired Air Force Gen. Lloyd "Fig" Newton yesterday said he was impressed with what he learned during his visit to the 911th Military Airlift Wing, but he wouldn't say whether he planned to tell his colleagues on the base closing commission that the Pentagon had made a mistake when it put the 911th on its hit list last month.

But Gov. Ed Rendell, at least, was optimistic. Rendell said briefings given Newton by the 911th base commander and a community task force had made an impact.

The 911th, an Air Force Reserve unit, has been in Moon since 1942 and has flown the C-130 airlifter since 1980. It is one of 33 major installations the U.S. Defense Department recommended closing in its May 13 announcement.

The Air Force estimates closing the base would eliminate 44 military and 278 civilian jobs, at a cost to the local economy of about \$93.6 million a year.

The nine-member Base Realignment and Closure Commission is studying the recommendations, and will make its report to President Bush Sept. 8. The president can accept or reject its recommendations, but cannot amend them.

If Bush accepts them, Congress will then have 45 days in which it can veto, but not change, the

recommendations. If Congress takes no action, the recommendations automatically become law.

Before making its recommendations, commission members will make site visits to bases that have been recommended for closing, as Newton did yesterday.

There also will be regional hearings at which states affected by the proposed base closings will be given the opportunity to make their cases before the full commission. Pennsylvania will get its shot at a hearing July 8 in Baltimore.

In four previous rounds of base closings, only about 10 percent of the Pentagon's recommendations have been overturned by the commission, almost always because the Pentagon was found to have made errors of fact in selecting the bases it wanted to close.

Rendell and area lawmakers say the Pentagon made a whopping error when it said the 911th has only enough ramp space to park 10 C-130s. There actually is space for 16 to 18.

"That's why it's important for us to come and visit a facility," Newton said. "I saw that there is land available here. There is ramp space available here."

Supporters say the Pentagon also erred in using old data to estimate the economic impact of the base closing on the region and in failing to take into account that recruiters, who have office space for free at the 911th, would have to rent office space Downtown if the base closed, Rendell said.

The governor said he also was encouraged because Newton told him the commission planned to put more emphasis than the Pentagon did on the base closings' impact to local economies.

Under the Pentagon's plan, the C-130s at the 911th would be moved to Pope Air Force Base in eastern North Carolina. But Newton expressed doubt that many of the reservists who fly and maintain those planes would be willing to relocate with them.

The commission members will make their decisions based on "the data," not on politics, Newton promised a crowd of about 150 who attended the rally for the 911th at Pittsburgh International Airport.

"It seemed like he had a positive attitude and was impressed with this area," said Rich Sestric, 66, an Army Special Forces veteran.

The data assembled by the task force makes a powerful case for keeping the 911th open, Rendell said.

### **Pa. Political Leaders Plan Willow Grove Strategy**

Philadelphia Inquirer (Philadelphia, PA)  
Chris Mondics, Inquirer Washington Bureau  
June 23, 2005

WASHINGTON - Faced with the proposed closure of Willow Grove Naval Air Station, Pennsylvania political leaders gathered yesterday on Capitol Hill, where they crafted arguments in favor of the base and vowed to keep pressure on military planners who will decide its fate.

The 45-minute meeting in the office of Sen. Arlen Specter (R., Pa.) focused on what participants said were flaws in the initial Pentagon finding that military units at the Willow Grove base did not have the capacity for expansion. Gov. Rendell said Willow Grove was well-situated to serve the military's growing reliance on National Guard troops, since Pennsylvania supplies a disproportionate share of them.

"We are going to prepare for this to the nth degree," Rendell said at a news conference after the meeting. "Pennsylvania has the most active Guard troops in the nation and to close Willow Grove would be a great mistake. We need to build upon our forces at Willow Grove."

The Pentagon recommended closing the Willow Grove base May 13, placing almost 1,200 military and civilian jobs in doubt. Nationwide,

the Pentagon recommended closing 30 major military bases, including Fort Monmouth in New Jersey. Overall, Pennsylvania would have a net loss of 1,878 jobs under the plan, while New Jersey could lose 3,760 jobs.

Those recommendations are now before the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC), an independent panel chosen by Congress and the President, which must submit a final list of bases to be closed by Sept. 8.

Each base has a local constituency, and politicians from every affected region will be lobbying hard. Historically, only a small percentage of bases recommended for closing survive the cut.

Specter and Rendell were joined by other lawmakers who said the Willow Grove base is a critical link in the nation's defense system.

Moreover, Rep. Curt Weldon (R., Pa.) said it was a fallacy to suggest, as have some developers and others, that closing the base would open up its 1,000-plus acres for commercial development.

He said that if the military closed the base, it would likely hold on to the land.

"I am a supporter of the BRAC process, but it must be based on facts," Weldon said. However, the Pentagon's recommendation rested on what Weldon called "a distortion of the facts."

Specter said it was important for officials to pressure the Pentagon to release all the documents leading to its recommendation. Experience has shown that the Pentagon has withheld information that would contradict its base-closing proposals, he said.

### **Fort Carson could get 4th Infantry Division headquarters, more troops**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire (Fort Hood, TX)  
June 23, 2005

The 4th Infantry Division's headquarters could begin moving to Fort Carson, Colo., by late next year if Fort Hood loses the unit as proposed by the Pentagon, an Army official said Wednesday.

Army Secretary Francis Harvey confirmed the potential move during a visit to Fort Hood. He wouldn't say how Fort Hood's troop strength would change, but said the post would end up with five brigades after the proposed shift.

"The numbers are important, but we are concentrating more on spaces than faces," Harvey said.

While the 4th Infantry headquarters would move back to Fort Carson, the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, a regiment of about 4,800 soldiers, would move to Fort Hood. Harvey said the post would also gain some support brigades.

The announcement was a surprise to officials at Fort Carson, said Lt. Col. David Johnson, the post's public affairs officer.

Fort Carson has been planning to house at least 25,000 soldiers by the end of the decade. Johnson said the surprise was in the details of which units could move.

A timeline for the possible changes hasn't been released but that the moves should begin when the division returns from Iraq late next year, Harvey said.

The 4th Infantry was headquartered at Fort Carson from 1970 until 1996.

Many soldiers now assigned to Fort Carson are expected to stay as some get renamed as part of the 4th Infantry Division, said Col. Joe Curtin, an Army spokesman at the Pentagon.

"In some ways the soldiers will just wind up putting on a different patch," he said.

Fort Carson will grow by about 3,600 soldiers when the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, previously stationed in South Korea, arrives at the post after its tour in Iraq.

U.S. Rep. John Carter, R-Texas, said that with the current transformation to a modular Army, the loss of a headquarters is not as much of a blow.

"We need to start thinking in terms of brigades, not divisions," he said. "We will potentially be the post with the most brigades."

Two base realignment commissioners visited Fort Hood on Wednesday at Carter's request. The visit was not connected to Harvey's stop.

"We will take the data that's provided to us and analyze it," commissioner James T. Hill said during a news conference at the Killeen-Fort Hood Regional Airport.

The base closure and realignment commission has until Sept. 8 to make its recommendations to President Bush.

### **Officials say Pentagon disregarded key details on base closings**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Imperial, PA)  
Allison Schlesinger  
June 23, 2005

The Defense Department overlooked important information when it decided to close the 911th Airlift Wing and the Willow Grove Naval Air Station, and those disregarded details could be enough to save the military installations, elected officials said.

U.S. Sens. Rick Santorum and Arlen Specter, Gov. Ed Rendell and other elected officials met Wednesday in Washington to discuss retired Air Force Gen. Lloyd W. Newton's tour of the 911th on Tuesday and their game plan as they try to prevent the closings of 13 military installations in Pennsylvania.

"We're not making any concessions," Specter said Wednesday. "We think we have a very, very strong case for total retention. We think that on the basis of national defense and homeland security."

In May, a Pentagon panel trying to streamline the nation's military recommended closing or realigning installations such as the 911th, Willow Grove near Philadelphia, the Army's Charles E. Kelly Support Facility in Oakdale and the Army's 99th Regional Readiness Command in Coraopolis.

The Defense Department also made mistakes when considering the military value of Willow Grove, a National Guard facility, Rendell said Wednesday.

Pennsylvania has the most active National Guard population in the country. To close Willow Grove when the military is having difficulty recruiting soldiers would be a mistake, said U.S. Rep. Curt Weldon, R-Pa.

"When you lose Willow Grove, you lose that visible presence of the military," Weldon said.

Newton, a member of the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission, toured the 911th on Tuesday and was shown a 53-acre unused tarmac that civic and business leaders said could be used to expand the base.

The Defense Department justified the closing of the base by saying land constraints prevent it from housing more than 10 C-130 aircraft.

Members of the Pittsburgh-Base Realignment and Closure Task Force, or Pit-BRAC, and other defenders of the 911th argue the base owns and leases enough land to house 13 aircraft and has a land agreement with the Pittsburgh International Airport that would allow it to house another seven C-130s.

Newton acknowledged that seeing the available land around the 911th will have an impact as the commission considers revising the Pentagon's closing recommendations.

But Newton stressed that no decision has been made regarding any base.

The BRAC commission will make recommendations to President Bush by September.

Before then, Pennsylvania officials will have another opportunity to defend the bases with a presentation before the commission on July 8 in Baltimore.

**United stance: Rep. Stephanie Herseth, D-S.D. Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., and Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D.,** are sworn in before testifying at a Base Realignment and Closure Commission hearing on Tuesday in Rapid City.

Aberdeen American News (Aberdeen, SD)  
June 22, 2005

Longtime friends have become rivals in the process of saving military bases.

Ellsworth: Delegation touts base's past record, future adaptability

Closure Commission to remove Ellsworth from the list before it submits its recommendations to President Bush in early September.

The Pentagon wants to consolidate the B-1 fleet at Dyess Air Force Base in Texas, where the other half of the bombers are currently located. During the Cold War, Ellsworth played a key role in the all-out effort to defeat the Soviet Union by maintaining underground missiles and the B-1. Since the missiles were removed in the early 1990s, Ellsworth's only mission has been to fly the B-1 bombers.

The crowd at Tuesday's hearing waved small U.S. flags and sang patriotic songs before the meeting opened.

At the closely scripted hearing, the governor, South Dakota's congressional delegation and local leaders repeatedly emphasized the danger of placing all the B-1s at a single base.

They also said Ellsworth should be saved because its buildings and other facilities are in top-notch shape after \$140 million was spent to upgrade them in recent years.

The base has the advantage of uncluttered air space, is located only 7 minutes from a training range where South Dakota, Montana and Wyoming meet, and could be used to operate unmanned planes and other new weapons under development, they said.

The main criteria for deciding which bases to close involve military value and efficiency, but the economic impact on a region also can be considered.

Ellsworth has an annual economic impact of \$278 million in the region, and its closure would eliminate 4,500 military personnel, 5,600 dependents and another 1,000 civilian jobs, said South Dakota School of Mines and Technology professor Sid Goss. Another 1,700 jobs that depend on Ellsworth also could be lost, he said.

If the base closes, about 10,000 people, or 9 percent of the two-county area around Rapid City, might leave the area, Goss said. The base is South Dakota's second largest employer, he said.

"Commissioners, the impact of the closure of Ellsworth Air Force Base on this community, state and region will be significant and long-lasting," the professor said.

Members of the local task force working to save Ellsworth said they were hampered by the delay in information used by the Pentagon in developing its recommendations. Detailed information was only received last weekend.

But Pat McElgunn of the Rapid City Chamber of Commerce, a retired Air Force colonel who previously served at Ellsworth, said officials believe the Defense Department based its recommendations on some inaccurate information. The base would be valuable for many military uses in the years to come, he said.

Jim McKeon, also a retired colonel and former Ellsworth commander, said the Pentagon deviated from some of its criteria in recommending that the base be shut down.

He and others noted that Ellsworth has a good rating in terms of how many of its planes are ready for missions.

The congressional delegation stressed the dangers of having all the bombers at one base, where they could be disabled by a terrorist strike or tornado.

"We fully understand that one of purposes of this BRAC round is to save money. But we should not do so at the expense of our nation's security," said Sen. John Thune, R-S.D.

Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., said the B-1 bombers have done a good job in recent wars, including the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. The money allocated by Congress in recent years has left the base in good physical shape, he said.

Rep. Stephanie Herseth, D-S.D., said Ellsworth should be saved because it has facilities that would allow it to accept new missions operating newly developed planes and other weapons.

Commission member Samuel Skinner, a former chief of staff to President George H.W. Bush and former transportation secretary, said the commission will keep politics out of its decisions. The panel's recommendations will be based on military values, he said.

Skinner said he wants to learn more about the Air Force readiness reports, an area where Ellsworth has scored high. And he said the commission will consider whether placing all the B-1s at one base would create a security risk.

Commissioners have held earlier hearings at other bases recommended for closure, but Skinner said the Rapid City hearing featured testimony that most precisely challenged the information used by the Pentagon in making its recommendations.

After the commission makes its recommendations to President Bush in early September, he has until Sept. 23 to accept or reject the commission report in its entirety.

If Bush rejects the report, the commission has until Oct. 20 to submit new recommendations. Bush then must accept or reject the complete report. If he accepts it, the recommendations become final within 45 legislative days unless entirely rejected by Congress.

**Ellsworth supporters: Dozens of motorcycles lead the motorcade for the Base Realignment and Closure Commission through streets lined with people in Rapid City**

Aberdeen American News (Aberdeen, SD)  
June 22, 2005

Ellsworth supporters: Dozens of motorcycles lead the motorcade for the Base Realignment and Closure Commission through streets lined with people in Rapid City.

Area residents boosted Ellsworth Air Force Base on Tuesday as members of the Pentagon's Base Realignment and

Closure Commission toured the base and prepared to hear from the state's leaders why it should be taken off the panel's closure list. (

Rapid City boosts air base to BRAC members

From citizens to companies, Ellsworth supporters make themselves heard  
Chet Brokaw  
Associated Press Writer

Area residents boosted Ellsworth Air Force Base Tuesday as members of the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure Commission toured the base before listening to state leaders lobby to have it taken off the panel's closure list.

Hills Materials Co., a construction firm, parked some of its cement mixers and other vehicles downtown and along the road to Ellsworth. They contained banners saying, "Save Ellsworth. Our 300 families depend on it."

Outside the center before the hearing, a couple dozen disabled people who work at Ellsworth

held signs and waved flags on the street to show their support for keeping the base open.

Stacy Morman of Rapid City, a staff member at the Black Hills Workshop, said the agency's clients would have a tough time finding other places to work if Ellsworth closed.

Her 7-year-old daughter, Kayla, sat on a blanket and waved a sign supporting B-1 bombers. The Pentagon wants to move Ellsworth's B-1 fleet to an Air Force base in Texas.

Morman said she brought her daughter because it's a historic event.

"We're all out here to support the jobs and our city," Morman said. "You were either there for when you saved it or you were there when we tried."

Bill and June Southard of Rapid City sat on lawn chairs near the street. Mrs. Southard said the community would suffer if the base closes and that she hopes the commission will listen to what the community and its leaders have to say.

"We're saying a few prayers that they will," she said.

**Supporters line the highway leading to Grand Forks base**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Grand Forks, ND)  
June 22, 2005

The highway leading to the Grand Forks Air Force Base was lined Wednesday with flags, buses, construction cranes, a high school band and cheerleaders, to greet members of a federal base closing and realignment panel and show support for the base.

The supporters lined U.S. 2 for a 14-mile stretch between the city of Grand Forks and the base. Three members of the federal commission were touring the base in preparation for a public hearing Thursday.

As the group approached the base gate, hundreds of balloons were released, and commissioners' motorcade passed under fire hoses shooting streams of red, white and blue water.

The commissioners came to Grand Forks for a hearing Thursday to discuss the future of the nearby Air Force base, Fargo's Air National Guard base and the Air Guard base in Duluth, Minn.

Under Pentagon plans, the Grand Forks base would lose its KC-135 air refueling tankers and most of its 2,900 active duty airmen within the next few years. It would join the Fargo Guard base in a new mission involving unmanned aerial vehicles. The Guard's 119th Fighter Wing would lose its fighter planes.

State officials are trying to persuade the federal commission to keep the tanker mission in Grand Forks and keep a flying mission for the 119th in Fargo. Area business leaders wanted to show how much the base means to them.

"All of this is everybody just working together, a community working together," said Jo Ann Renfrow, who organized the support rallies.

The members of the federal base closing and realignment panel conducting the Grand Forks hearing are Philip Coyle, a former assistant secretary of defense from California; Samuel Skinner of Illinois, a former chief of staff to President George H.W. Bush; and James Bilbray, a former Democratic congressman from Nevada.

### **Pryor will push Arkansas military bases at base-closings hearing**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire (Little Rock, AR)

Annie Bergman

June 22, 2005

U.S. Sen. Mark Pryor said Wednesday he will emphasize the importance of military installations in Arkansas and Texas at a hearing before members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission next month.

Pryor, D-Ark., said in a teleconference with news reporters that commissioners should hear about the military value of each base and how the proposed cutbacks and closures will affect Arkansans.

Anthony Principi, BRAC chairman, and at least two other commissioners planned to hold a regional hearing in San Antonio on July 11. The commission is reviewing the Defense Department's proposed military cuts before final recommendations are presented to President Bush in September.

Under the Pentagon's proposals, the 188th Fighter Wing at Fort Smith would lose more than two-thirds of its military personnel and civilians worker, although the Little Rock Air Force Base in Jacksonville would gain nearly 4,000 jobs.

The Pine Bluff Arsenal escaped any proposed cuts and also was recognized for its role as an ammunitions development and training center.

In Texas, Lone Star Army Ammunition Plant and Red River Army Depot at Texarkana, where Arkansans hold about 500 of the 2,500 jobs at the installation, have been recommended for closure.

"I look forward to making the case for the Arkansas installations and even the two that are right outside Arkansas," Pryor said. "I continue to push that not just Red River and Lone Star and not just Fort Smith, but Little Rock Air Force Base and Pine Bluff have time before the commission."

At a Washington meeting with Principi on Tuesday, Pryor requested that Principi or another BRAC commissioner visit the 188th Fighter Wing in Fort Smith. Sen. Blanche Lincoln, D-Ark., also attended the meeting and plans to attend the hearing in July, as well.

"Hopefully, we'll get a good site visit to Fort Smith. We know the more time they spend at the facility they'll realize how important it is to the nation's security," he said.

Also in the teleconference, Pryor said the Senate's passing of climate change measures Tuesday that he and Sen. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., proposed will probably be the only climate change provision that will pass the Senate this year. Pryor said their proposal, though not a final solution, would be an important first step in addressing the threat of global warming.

### **BRAC member gets look at military office targeted for closing**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Rome, NY)  
William Kates  
June 22, 2005

A commissioner from the government's base-closure panel said Wednesday that he's now "heard the rest of the story" after touring the Defense Finance Accounting Service center here, which the Pentagon has targeted for closure as part of its ongoing plan to shrink the military.

Although retired Air Force Gen. Lloyd Newton wouldn't offer any assurances, he told local leaders he heard "some very key data" that he had not been aware of.

Newton spent five hours Wednesday at the former Griffiss Air Force Base, which is now a business and technology park. He spent most of that time touring the DFAS office, where 380 workers face losing their jobs if the Pentagon's recommendations are carried out by the Base Realignment and Closure commission.

Newton also toured the nearby Air Force Lab, where 137 jobs are designated for transfer through the shift of sensors work to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio.

Newton called his visit "very productive" and said was leaving with "a better feel" for how both military agencies handled their mission and the resources they possess, noting he was "particularly impressed with the quality of performance."

He said there now was additional information for the commission to consider before it decided on whether to endorse the Pentagon's recommendations or not.

After his tour, Newton met briefly with a group of state and local leaders, including Gov. George Pataki.

Pataki said local leaders had made a "tremendous case" to not only keep both facilities intact, but to even expand them.

The Rome DFAS office handles more than \$29 billion worth of accounting functions annually for the Army. It also has handled much of the accounting involving the war in Iraq, including the seizure of assets there, officials said.

The Pentagon wants to consolidate more than 20 DFAS centers around the country into three megacenters to be located in Columbus, Ohio; Denver and Indianapolis.

Steve DiMeo, executive director of Mohawk Valley EDGE, a development organization that has guided the former air base's transition into a business park, told Newton that plan was "a high risk proposition."

Instead of shuttering the Rome DFAS office, DiMeo urged the commission to expand its mission.

DiMeo said the Pentagon based its recommendations about both Rome facilities on erroneous and incomplete information. For instance, he said, the Pentagon apparently did not know that the DFAS building is owned by the Air Force and leased to DFAS at no cost.

DiMeo also said the cost of moving the sensor directorate would cost as much as three times the \$16 million estimated by the Pentagon because military officials did not account for the cost of moving the facility's radar towers.

He also said the Pentagon did not do an analysis on whether the radar would work as well in a more urbanized, frequency-congested area such as Dayton, where Wright-Patterson is located.



In selecting which bases should be closed or realigned, BRAC commissioners must first consider their military value, then may consider cost savings and the economic effect of closing the bases.

In the past, about 85 percent of the Pentagon's recommendations have gone forward.

The Pentagon also recommended closing the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, a move that would eliminate 2,936 full and part-time jobs. The commission will hold a regional public hearing in Buffalo on Monday to consider the proposed closings and realignments in New York and Ohio. Rome officials plan to attend that hearing.

The BRAC commission must present its revised version of the list to President Bush by Sept. 8. Congress ultimately must approve the final list, expected to save the Pentagon nearly \$50 billion. Nationwide, the Pentagon has proposed closing about 180 military facilities

New York lost two major bases in the last BRAC cuts ten years ago, when Griffiss Air Force Base and Plattsburgh Air Force Base were closed. The closing of Griffiss cost the Rome area 4,500 military and civilian jobs.

### **Commissioners impressed with Grand Forks base**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Grand Forks, ND)

Dale Wetzel  
June 22, 2005

Greeted by cheers, banners, chants and streams of red, white and blue water, three members of a military review commission who will help decide the future of this Air Force base spent about four hours visiting it.

The commissioners, who were preparing for a public hearing on Pentagon recommendations to transfer the base's tanker aircraft, said they were impressed by the installation, and the ardent public backing for it. The hearing was scheduled

for Thursday at the University of North Dakota's Chester Fritz Auditorium.

"Support of a facility like this is very important, and it clearly showed," said one commissioner, Samuel Skinner, a former U.S. transportation secretary. "If you didn't see that, it would be a negative. And if you see it at this level, it certainly has got to be a positive."

Skinner, James Bilbray and Philip Coyle are part of the nine-member Base Realignment and Closure Commission, an independent panel that will submit recommendations to President Bush on whether to close or overhaul dozens of military installations.

Gov. John Hoeven, Rep. Earl Pomeroy and Sen. Kent Conrad accompanied the group Wednesday.

"They asked very detailed questions, very probing questions," Conrad said of the commissioners. "They're on the key issues about the evaluation of this base. They're right into the nitty-gritty of military value of this installation."

The commission is reviewing Pentagon recommendations to move the Grand Forks base's 50 KC-135 tanker planes to five other bases, and transfer most of its 2,800 military personnel elsewhere. The Pentagon has also suggested retiring the 22 F-16 fighter planes that are part of the North Dakota Air National Guard's 119th Fighter Wing, which is based in Fargo.

The Air Force has said it is considering Grand Forks as a potential base for a squadron of unmanned Predator flying drones, which would be operated by Air National Guard pilots in Fargo. The Predator is used for surveillance and reconnaissance, and is capable of firing missiles.

North Dakota officials hope to coax the base commission into recommending that Grand Forks retain its tanker planes, while taking on additional duties as a Predator base.

Fresh from a Tuesday hearing in Rapid City, S.D., on the Pentagon's recommendation to close

Ellsworth Air Force Base, the commissioners were greeted Wednesday morning by a line of vehicles parked along U.S. Highway 2. The highway is the route from Grand Forks to the Air Force base, about 14 miles west of the city.

The procession, which included cranes, heavy construction equipment and semitrailer trucks, moved alongside the eastbound lanes of U.S. 2 later Wednesday, anticipating the commissioners' departure to travel back to Grand Forks.

Dozens flew American flags, and several displayed signs and banners proclaiming their support for the base. Banners draped from a nearby bridge overpass read: "We Support Our Military."

Pomeroy quoted Coyle as saying the Grand Forks base "set the record for the most miles lined with cheering participants."

Tony Smith of Grand Forks parked his sugar beet trailer on the highway shoulder, acknowledging the honks and waves of passing motorists. A former Air Force helicopter mechanic, the 55-year-old Smith said he spent four years at the base, from 1970 to 1974.

"We need to keep this base. I think it's right for the country," Smith said. "It's kind of boring to just sit here, but I think it's worth it."

Further west, a group of 15 employees of Lunseth Plumbing & Heating, which has offices in Grand Forks and Grafton, observed the passing traffic. Two cranes and several other vehicles belonging to the business were nearby, flying American flags.

Jack Counts of Grand Forks, a 24-year-old plumber for Lunseth, said the Grand Forks base provides work for local contractors. The Pentagon has estimated its recommended changes would mean the loss of almost 5,000 jobs in northeastern North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota, a decrease of more than 7 percent.

"If a bunch of people move out, we might not have a job any more," Counts said.

Refreshment carriers scurried along the highway, a welcome sight as the afternoon temperature approached 90 degrees. Chris Hunt, an employee of J&G Landscaping Inc. of Emerado, drove a four-wheeled ATV with new coolers strapped to the front and back, each full of ice, bottled water and soft drinks.

"It's a good time, but it's warmer than the dickens," Hunt said.

Other employees of the company, which does landscaping work on the base's grounds, were camped outside the main gate, holding banners and carrying signs. Jill Eken, 22, held a sign reading: "Homeland Security Starts at Home."

Emerado's volunteer fire department put on a water display outside the base's gates, shooting red, white and blue water from their hoses.

The nine commissioners, all appointed by President Bush, will make recommendations to the president later. Bilbray is an attorney and former Democratic congressman from Nevada, while Coyle, a defense consultant, is a former assistant secretary of defense, and assistant secretary in the Department of Energy.

As they boarded a University of North Dakota bus to leave, the nearby crowd cheered and chanted: "G-F-A-F-B. This is what you mean to me. Friends. Freedom. Family."

Coyle said earlier that the commission's base visits were a necessary supplement to the voluminous information provided by the Pentagon.

**Brace for BRAC;  
Organizers hope 1,000 or more turn out near  
base**

Grand Forks Herald (Grand Forks, ND)  
Stephen J. Lee  
June 22, 2005

The plan, says Jo Ann

Renfrow, is to have 1,000 or more people lining the road outside Grand Forks Air Force Base beginning early this morning until after noon to greet three of the people who will do much to decide the fate of the base.

"We want them to be there no later than 8, and before that if they can," said Renfrow, an Emerado, N.D., business owner who is ramrodding the regional rally to show how much the base means to rural communities surrounding it.

The members of the Base Realignment and Closure panel - Philip Coyle, former assistant secretary of defense from California; Samuel Skinner of Illinois, former chief of staff to President George H.W. Bush; and James Bilbray, former Democratic congressman from Nevada - will be driven from their Grand Forks hotel to the base, arriving about 8:30 a.m., according to the itinerary released by Sen. Kent Conrad, D-N.D.

The trio flew into Grand Forks International Airport about 7 p.m. Tuesday in a government aircraft after a hearing in Rapid City, S.D., on the proposed closing of Ellsworth Air Force Base. More than 7,000 people attended the hearing and rally in Rapid City on Tuesday, according to The Associated Press.

Grand Forks is worried about its base being downsized, not closed.

The Pentagon announced last month it plans to transfer out from the Grand Forks base its 48 or so KC-135 air refueling tankers, and 2,200 of the 2,900 active duty airmen within the next few years. Meanwhile, a new mission of unmanned aerial vehicles will be sited at the base.

Conrad and other local community boosters of the base, led by John Marshall, who has headed the base retention effort for more than a decade, still hope to convince the BRAC panel to edit the Pentagon's plans and keep the tankers at Grand Forks.

A hearing Thursday morning in UND's Chester Fritz Auditorium will give local base supporters a formal setting to pitch their case. The odds are against any significant changes to the Pentagon's plans to close and downsize dozens of military bases in the next five years to save about \$50 billion.

Show of force

But today, Renfrow hopes to have hundreds if not thousands of people lining the roadway from U.S. Highway 2 to the base's east entrance. The idea is to impress the BRAC commissioners.

"We want them to stay until at least 2:30," she said. "They should bring umbrellas to stay out of the sun, and wear red, white and blue."

Free hot dogs, bottled water and soft drinks - all donated by area businesses - will be handed out by volunteers.

Portable toilets will be set up nearby.

Dietrich Bus Service in Grand Forks is sending 50 buses, and rural school districts are sending their buses, all to show the importance of the base to the school districts, Renfrow said. "We will have close to 100 school buses."

More than 500 employees of local contractors, many of them who do business at the base, will line their trucks and other equipment along Highway 2. Renfrow's J & G Landscaping is one of them.

The Larimore, N.D., ambulance crew will be on hand. Officers from the North Dakota Highway Patrol and the Grand Forks County Sheriff's Department will slow and guide traffic, Renfrow said.

"All of this is everybody just working together, a community working together," Renfrow said.

Show and tell

As senior senator from North Dakota, Conrad is official host for the three BRAC commissioners while they tour the base this morning.

Conrad, Rep. Earl Pomeroy, D-N.D., and Gov. John Hoeven will take part in private briefings given to the BRAC commissioners by Air Force leaders, including Col. William Bender, base commander, and then a tour of the facility.

The idea is to show them the base's infrastructure and equipment and explain the mission of the 319th Air Refueling Wing, said Capt. Michael Meredith, public affairs spokesman for the base. The base is in the middle of a couple of multimillion-dollar improvements: redoing the runways for about \$28 million and building \$300 million worth of new housing.

Tonight, tomorrow

The visit's timing is fortuitous: The Grand Forks base is being awarded the Abeline Trophy at a presentation at 7:15 p.m. today in the Hilton Garden Inn on 42nd Avenue, west of UND. The award is given annually by the Military Affairs Committee and the Air Mobility Command in Abilene, Texas, to a civilian community demonstrating "outstanding support for a nearby Air Mobility Command unit," organizers said in a news release.

The public is invited; a social begins at 6:30 p.m., and the presentation will be made at 7:15 p.m.

The hearing on the missions and fates of both the Grand Forks Air Force Base and the Air National Guard facility in Fargo will begin at 8:30 a.m. Thursday in Chester Fritz Auditorium on University Avenue.

Diane Blair, of the East Grand Forks Chamber of Commerce, urges people to show up by 7:30 a.m. Thursday to line University Avenue from 42nd Street to the Fritz, again to impress the BRAC panelists with the community's support for the base.

The doors of the Fritz open at 7 a.m. Thursday, and the public - at least the first 2,400 members of the public - are welcome to attend the hearing.

Blair said speakers will be set up outside for any overflow crowd. The hearing is scheduled to begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 10:50 a.m.

### **Lawmakers Fear Texas Communities Won't Be Able To Beat The BRAC Clock**

San Antonio Express-News (San Antonio, TX)

Gary Martin

June 22, 2005

WASHINGTON -- Texas lawmakers voiced concern Tuesday that communities won't have enough time during next month's hearing in San Antonio to convince the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission to save installations in the Lone Star State.

Texas and Arkansas have been allotted just four hours at the July 11 hearing to show the Pentagon deviated from the selection criteria in making its recommendations.

San Antonio has 15 minutes to make its case for Brooks City-Base, which is targeted for closure, and Lackland AFB, which would lose a medical hospital and an intelligence mission to realignment.

"Give us a little time," said Rep. Charlie Gonzalez, D-San Antonio. "Fifteen minutes doesn't seem adequate."

The lawmakers spoke out as BRAC Chairman Anthony Principi announced he'd attend the hearing at the Convention Center, along with three other commissioners.

"The overall impact on Texas is enormous and the chairman's presence indicates his interest in hearing the facts on which the commission must base its decision," said Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas.

Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, said he was encouraged by the fact Principi will attend the hearing.

A BRAC spokeswoman, Megan Riffle, downplayed Principi's attendance, saying it was

based on his availability rather than the priority of Texas military installations.

The chairman is expected to attend several regional hearings as the commissioners spread out to cover more ground, she said.

The commission has until Sept. 8 to review the Pentagon list and prepare a final roster of bases for closure.

That list goes to the president for his approval or rejection.

The amount of time given to each state at regional hearings is determined by criteria that includes the number of jobs lost and other factors.

A request by Hutchison for more time at the San Antonio hearing was denied.

According to the base closure commission, the senior senator determines the time allotted each community.

Under a plan devised by Hutchison, Texarkana officials will have 55 minutes to defend Red River Army Depot and the Lone Star Ammunition Plant.

Coastal Bend leaders have 45 minutes to make the case for the Ingleside Naval Station, Corpus Christi Naval Air Station and the Corpus Christi Army Depot.

"What can you explain in 45 minutes when you are talking about billions of dollars of equipment and soldiers lives?" asked Rep. Solomon Ortiz, D-Corpus Christi.

El Paso, Houston, Wichita Falls, Temple and Abilene each will have 30 minutes or less.

"It's never enough time," said Chris Paulitz, a Hutchison spokesman. "Everyone in this process should be unhappy. Anyone who is satisfied about the time we have to fight for these bases would be way too complacent."

Under the formula, Arkansas gets 30 minutes, part of which will be used to defend the Texarkana installations.

San Antonio leaders said they'd be hard-pressed to cram all the details about Brooks and Lackland into a 15-minute presentation.

"Obviously, you can't get into any level of detail," said retired Brig. Gen. John Jernigan, who heads a San Antonio military missions task force.

"The only thing we will be able to do is get the ideas on the table," Jernigan said.

San Antonio wants to use its time to reinforce the Pentagon's plan to build a regional medical center at Brooke Army Medical Center.

They also will contend the regional center would be enhanced by keeping the School of Aerospace Medicine at Brooks and locating other Brooks research missions at local installations.

"We wish we had more time, but if this is the time that is allotted, the San Antonio delegation is going to come together," said Rep. Henry Cuellar, D-Laredo, whose district includes South San Antonio. "I feel very confident we will make the presentation."

City leaders also will argue that the Cryptologic Systems Group at Lackland AFB should remain intact, not splintered under realignment, and at the San Antonio base if possible.

The cryptologic group accounts for 700 intelligence jobs. Its clients include the National Security Agency, which recently announced a major relocation to San Antonio.

Despite the lack of time at the hearing, Gonzalez said it wouldn't be San Antonio's sole opportunity to make its case.

He said commissioners also would conduct site visits of each base targeted for closure.

"There is a lot going on behind the scenes," he said.

### **BRAC visitors prompt community cleanup**

The Macon Telegraph (Macon, GA)  
Marsha Priest  
June 22, 2005

The 21st Century Partnership has announced that a staff member of the Base Realignment and Closure is scheduled to visit Warner Robins and Robins Air Force Base on June 29 and is coordinating a community clean-up between now and then.

County and municipal governments are scheduling grass cuttings and clean-up operations on the days immediately preceding the visit so that Watson Boulevard, Russell Parkway and Highway 247 look neat and well tended.

"The community will probably not be directly involved in the visit, but it's important to present our best possible appearance to this visitor," says Warner Robins Area Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Frank Feild. "Chamber members are being asked to look closely at their businesses and make a special effort to clean up before June 29."

One of those special efforts is to remove advertising signs along the right-of-way that have been pushed into the ground and to encourage businesses to stop the practice altogether because of violating city code.

"We're delighted to see our local community pride demonstrated by businesses whose facilities present a neat and appealing appearance," says Beautification Chairman of Keep Warner Robins Beautiful and past Chamber of Commerce Chairman Jack Steed. "However, some businesses need to give a little more attention to mowing of grass along parking lots and curbs. Sometimes this need stands out especially when neighboring businesses take care of doing this. Properly maintained facilities enhance business while projecting an impression

of permanence. This is very important to the BRAC visitors because we don't want to give the impression that we're here only as long as Robins is here. That thinking needs to go away. Immediate attention needs to be given to the multiple signs along the city property easement on Watson and Russell. All those signs are distracting and give the impression that the business has an uncaring attitude and leaves a negative impression on our visitors".

In addition to the clean-up, Flint Energies, the Ad Mobile and others are developing billboards and other displays that demonstrate the city's support of Robins Air Force Base and our military community.

"We're asking business owners in Warner Robins to add messages to their marquees such as "Support Our Troops", "Pray for our Troops", EDIMGIAFAD, or "We offer Military Discounts," says Feild.

Keep Warner Robins Beautiful chairman Jim Cheshire agrees that "Clean-up efforts are ongoing for all of our citizens and visitors and are a community wide responsibility year round."

One of the major programs that the city offers is the Adopt-A-Road/Park through KWRB. "Within the past 12 months 325 volunteers removed over three tons of litter from 27 miles of adopted roadways and 14 parks," says Cheshire.

"The guidelines endorsed by Keep Georgia Beautiful are great suggestions for keeping Warner Robins the wonderful place it is to live," says Debra Jones Executive Director of Keep Warner Robins Beautiful. Those include recycling, donating unwanted items, buying items that have been recycled, putting trash in its place and not on the highways, keeping truckloads covered, buying only what you need, planting native trees and vegetation, erasing graffiti from the neighborhood, teaching your children to love the earth, joining friends in annual clean-ups, conserving water, preserving greenspaces, picking up litter, properly recycling motor oil, making new friends by joining a

carpool, and joining the community in its conservation efforts.

"One of the best ways we can demonstrate that Every Day in Middle Georgia REALLY is Armed Forces Appreciation Day is to maintain a clean and litter free community and to conspicuously place announcements of support for our troops," says Steed.

### **Rapid City defends base 10,000 say Ellsworth is vital to S.D. and the nation**

Omaha World-Herald (Omaha, NE)  
Henry J. Cordes  
June 22, 2005

RAPID CITY, S.D. -- Hundreds of flag-waving residents lined the streets Tuesday, and nearly 10,000 filled the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center -- all with the same simple message: Save Our Base.

Supporters of Ellsworth Air Force Base got their chance to lobby a federal panel to remove the 4,000-airman base from the Pentagon's closure list and save the nearly \$ 300 million that it pumps on the Black Hills economy annually.

Waving flags and holding signs, area residents and South Dakota elected officials came to the defense of the B-1 bomber base, seeking to make the case that Ellsworth not only has strong local support but is vital to the nation's defenses.

"Ellsworth is a first-class base with a critical mission in our war on terror, both now and in the future," said U.S. Sen. John Thune, R-S.D. "As a nation, we simply cannot afford to lose it."

Three members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission were in Rapid City as part of a tour of the 33 major bases the Pentagon has targeted in the latest round of military base closures, known in military parlance as BRAC.

The base-closing process is an important one to the nation's defenses, BRAC Commissioner Samuel Skinner said. While U.S. defense resources are vast, he said, they are not unlimited. Every dollar spent on an obsolete or

redundant base is a dollar that could better be spent supporting soldiers in the field.

The commissioners spent the morning touring the base. They then headed to the local civic center for a three-hour hearing.

State and local officials spent weeks gearing up for the hearing. That included ads rallying local citizens to show their support for the base. Many employers gave their workers the day off so they could attend.

"Be there for your community," Gov. Mike Rounds urged in one frequently aired radio spot. "Be there for your country."

In their well-scripted and organized presentation, local officials presented their case for preserving the base. The theme was "Ellsworth AFB: Good sense. Sound Security."

Supporters faced a tough task. All the flag-waving aside, they had to show that the Pentagon violated its own base-closure criteria in the decision to close Ellsworth.

Under the Pentagon proposal, the B-1 bomber wing at Ellsworth would be combined with one at Dyess Air Force Base in Texas.

Ellsworth defenders -- including two retired generals -- questioned consolidating all B-1s at a single base with a single runway, which would make them unnecessarily vulnerable to attack or a natural disaster.

"We should never forget about the short-sightedness we had as a nation before Pearl Harbor," Thune said. "The Pentagon's proposal would create the possibility that a single terrorist attack could wipe out our entire B-1 fleet, or all B-1 pilots."

Defenders also noted that of the three Air Force bases in the north-central United States -- Ellsworth and bases in Minot and Grand Forks, N.D. -- the South Dakota base scored highest in six of eight rating criteria. Ellsworth's B-1s have scored higher in military readiness than those at Dyess.

Ellsworth supporters said the base should be retained and considered for additional missions, including the growing fleet of unmanned aerial vehicles.

The base-closing process will move quickly. Hearings will be wrapped up next month, and by September the commission forwards its recommendations to President Bush. Bush and Congress by the end of this year will have the chance to approve or reject the proposal, with no opportunity to amend it.

**S. Dakota goes all-out to persuade base panel;  
Leaders and residents use precise arguments and displays of spirit to try to save their Air Force base**

Portland Press Herald (Portland, ME)  
Bart Jansen  
June 22, 2005

More than 125 motorcycles roared past the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center on Tuesday, escorting federal commissioners who will decide whether to close Ellsworth Air Force Base. Lights flashed atop a half-dozen police cars. Horns honked and sirens wailed. Inside the arena, residents nearly filled the 7,100 seats to hear former military officials, business leaders and members of Congress describe why the base should remain open. They leaped to their feet, waving a sea of flags and applauding the commissioners like rock stars.

"I think it's important to keep the base open," said Tom Greene of Rapid City, who wore a red cap from the Marine Corps, in which he served as an infantry captain in Korea. "I feel very strongly about it."

Three of the nine members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission held the two-hour hearing, giving community advocates a chance to pick apart Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's recommendation to close the base in order to save an estimated \$1.8 billion over the next 20 years. If Ellsworth closes, its B-1B

bombers would be sent to Dyess Air Force Base in Texas.

In 15 days, Mainers will get their chance to persuade commissioners to preserve the state's bases at a hearing in Boston. Under the Pentagon's plan, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery would close with the loss of 4,510 jobs, Brunswick Naval Air Station would ship its planes to Florida and lose 2,420 jobs and the Defense Finance Accounting Service in Limestone would close with a loss of 361 jobs.

In all, Rumsfeld aims to close 33 major bases, along with scores of smaller ones, and reduce 29 others to save \$48 billion over 20 years. BRAC commissioners must review those recommendations and create a final list by Sept. 8 that President Bush and Congress can accept or reject, but not change.

South Dakota was the third-biggest loser of jobs per capita behind Alaska and Maine. In pure numbers, the states that would lose the most jobs are Connecticut, Maine, Alaska and South Dakota.

This week, full-page ads in the Rapid City Journal outlined arguments for the base beneath images of flags and bald eagles. Shop marquees shouted support for the base and the 3,852 jobs that contribute \$278 million a year to the state's economy.

The South Dakota hearing was nationally televised by C-Span and filmed by 18 cameras from a variety of local and national stations.

The politics are noteworthy because Republican Sen. John Thune defeated then-Democratic Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle as both campaigned on the promise of keeping Ellsworth open.

On Tuesday morning, Thune was pictured on the front page of the Rapid City Journal with Commissioner Philip Coyle. Local hosts held a dinner Monday at Mount Rushmore for Coyle and Commissioner James Bilbray, although the commissioners insisted on paying for their own food.



Commissioner Samuel Skinner, a former commerce secretary, joined Coyle, a former assistant defense secretary, and Bilbray, a former U.S. representative from Nevada, at the hearing.

"People say we have a mountain to climb," Gov. Mike Rounds said in reference to both the closure fight and Mount Rushmore. "In this state, that doesn't scare us."

Local advocates filmed two videos for the commission. The first, highlighting the state's quality of life, emphasized the open airspace and community support.

The other video featured retired Air Force Gen. John Michael Loh, a former commander of the Air Combat Command, who criticized the recommendation to close the base. He argued that consolidating all 67 B-1 bombers at a single base would hurt training because there would be too many crews to train and because it would be an enticing target for enemies.

"It's a recipe for unmanageable chaos," Loh said.

Other retired military officials and all three members of the congressional delegation - Thune and Democratic Sen. Tim Johnson and Rep. Stephanie Herseth - also testified.

"We simply cannot afford the risk," Thune said as a slide appeared on the big screens of a tornado that came within 1,000 feet of a Kansas Air Force runway. "The Air Force is good, but they can't control the weather."

Commissioners commended the community on several fronts.

"You've obviously got great spirit here," Skinner said. "This one (hearing) was the one most precisely challenging the information on which the decisions were made."

Bilbray said the number of bases removed from Rumsfeld's list might be higher this year than the historic 15 percent or so. He voiced a concern that bases such as Ellsworth have hundreds of

millions of dollars worth of construction that would be abandoned.

But Skinner said all communities make arguments about the economic devastation they would suffer, mentioning Maine and Connecticut by name.

The day had a festive spirit throughout, with an enormous U.S. flag hanging from two cranes in the parking lot.

The motorcycle escort offered local flavor because the nearby city of Sturgis hosts about 500,000 each August for a motorcycle rally. Everywhere, people spoke with great pride about the base and their personal connections to it.

Lillian Tobacco lives 100 miles away on the Pine Ridge reservation as part of the Oglala Lakota Nation. Tobacco, the mother of three children who served in the Marines, Air Force and Army, brought a hand-painted sign to the hearing to support the base.

"I feel safe," she said of having the base nearby.

Her daughter, Iva Good Voice Flute, who served in the Air Force from 1991 to 1995, argued that the base's importance stretches beyond its boundaries and local jobs. "It gives a sense of security and safety," she said.

A common theme of the comments was the desirability of living in South Dakota.

"They kind of joke when they're sent here," said Dick Kahler of Rapid City, who served as an usher in a bright yellow windbreaker. "They say, 'Where?' But a lot will come back here to live."

### **If BRAC plan holds up, look to S.C. recovery**

Norwich Bulletin (Norwich, CT)  
June 23, 2005

Having been honored at lunch Wednesday as Norwich Native Son, U.S. Coast Guard Rear Adm. Robert J. Papp Jr. came by to chat with the Norwich Bulletin's editorial board.

Papp's experience during his 30 years as a Coast Guard officer is extensive and impressive; he's traveled the United States and the world. That he commands the Ninth Coast Guard District -- the Great Lakes -- attests to his experience and leadership.

But one important aspect of the admiral's career doesn't appear on his resume: He was in Charleston, S.C., when the Charleston Naval Station was ordered closed in the Base Realignment and Closure round of 1993.

Ninety ships were assigned to the 1,800-acre base. Fully 22,000 military and civilian personnel were assigned there. Charleston had been in use more than 100 years.

Sens. Strom Thurmond and Fritz Hollings were known to be friends of the military and each enjoyed healthy seniority in the Senate.

Closing Charleston just wouldn't happen, thought local folks. There were at least a half dozen smaller naval bases that would get the ax, so the conventional thinking went.

The conventional thinking was dead wrong. Charleston closed, and folks fell into a funk.

But not for long. They accepted the inevitable and set about dealing with it.

Today, the former Charleston Naval Station is home to a maritime-storage-container maker, a commercial shipyard, a state department office, a Coast Guard school, a Navy training command, and it's an international port.

Charleston got knocked for a loop, picked itself up off the canvas and went to work.

Every effort should be made to save the U.S. Navy Submarine Base at Groton. But if it does close, we can look to the example of Charleston, S.C., for what to do next.

## **Red tape could swallow Fort Monroe**

### **Private development at the base would face a slew of bureaucracy and uncertainty**

Daily Press (Hampton Roads, VA)

Terry Scanlon

June 23, 2005

DENVER -- Converting Fort Monroe into a private development could prove to be a bureaucratic nightmare.

If the base closes, potential legal hurdles would await the city of Hampton as it navigates state and federal regulations on transferring the property, cleaning the land, and building within the rules of historic and environmental regulations.

"It's probably one of the most complex issues you'll ever deal with as a local government," said Keith Cannady, a chief planner with Hampton who attended a conference in Denver recently about converting military bases to private development.

The conference was dominated by private consulting firms that specialize in various aspects of that, including planning, engineering, environmental cleanup and insurance on the cost of the cleanup.

"I'm not going to lie to you, this can be hard," Aimee Houghton told a group of local government officials. Since previous rounds of base closings, Houghton has converted from an environmental interest group to a private consulting firm.

The Defense Department has targeted Fort Monroe and 32 other bases around the country for closure as it tries to make the military a more efficient and flexible fighting machine.

If the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, President Bush and Congress approve the move - considered likely - converting the base to private use would begin with the creation of a "local redevelopment authority."

Hampton City Manager Jesse Wallace said that even as the city continued lobbying to save the

base - and its more than 3,000 jobs - city officials had begun preparing to create such an authority.

Private firms overwhelmingly recommend trying to get an "early transfer" of the property from the military, so work can begin even before troops leave.

At Fort Monroe, a little-known clause in the property deeds could mean that most of the land would automatically transfer to state control once the military vacates the stretch of land known as Old Point Comfort.

At least, that's the position of city and state officials.

It's not clear whether the Army agrees.

"We're trying to work that out right now," said Joseph Whitaker, deputy assistant secretary of the Army for installations and environment.

John Walker - a representative of Weston Solutions, a firm that specializes in working on military bases - said the key to limiting delays and bureaucratic red tape was finding ways to settle the differences out of court.

"Find ways to negotiate to get to closure quickly," Walker advised a group of local officials during the conferences. "Cooperation gets money from (the Defense Department) early."

After the land transfer is resolved, the group in charge of the redevelopment can expect to spend countless hours determining the extent of pollution on the base, cleaning it up and drafting a development plan acceptable to environmental and historic-area regulators.

Other cities that have dealt with base closures have hired throngs of consultants - lawyers, environmental specialists, planners and insurance agents.

Insurance companies not only cover the risk of people being injured while clearing the land of unexploded ordnance but reduce the risk of a

cost overrun on the cleanup, which can be wildly unpredictable.

"You will inevitably find contamination that you knew nothing about - that nobody knew anything about," Houghton said.

Hampton will soon learn that "clean" is a relative term for a former military base.

The military will provide money for removing or neutralizing pollution only as much as needed for the future use of the property.

For example, if a day care center is planned on the former base, the land would be thoroughly checked for explosives.

But if it were designated to be a nature preserve, much less effort would be put into finding old bombs.

"If you say, 'They made it dirty. We want them to clean it up to the way it was when they got it,' " Walker said, "you can forget it."

Consultants caution local officials and residents to be patient. It could take the Army six years to leave the base. And it could take several years after that before the land is ready for development.

And at each step along the way, not only will local politicians and residents want to have a say in the process, so will a slew of regulators.

"You're going to have to talk to some people time and time and time again," Houghton said.

"The greatest skill you're going to have to develop is tenaciousness."

### *Opinions/ Editorials*

#### **When Johnny Comes Home**

Boston Globe (Boston, MA)

Nancy Sherman

June 20, 2005

The news of military base closures throughout the country has brought an outcry from those

who work at the bases and from communities that depend economically on their presence. But in the case of military hospital closings, such as Walter Reed Army Medical Center in the nation's capital, what few have commented on is just what goes on inside those hospital corridors -- more precisely, what goes on inside the mind of the soldier who returns from war having left behind an arm or leg -- or perhaps more -- in Iraq. The paradox of war is that those who are most fit are at risk of becoming the most physically damaged.

Military bodies have long been thought of as war machines. They are part of military armament and, to a large degree, public investments. Boot camp is a way of molding that body through tough physical and mental discipline. The overweight grunt drops pounds and turns adipose into muscle; those who already have well-muscled bodies forge even bigger armor.

The investment is public not just because our tax dollars go to making warrior bodies. It is public because the classic warrior/athlete body has become a model for many Americans who themselves have had no direct military experience and little appetite for it. Consider the proliferation of fitness programs with military sounding names-- "Fitness Corps," "The Sergeant's Program," "Basic Training," and "The Fitness Force," to cite just a few in my neighborhood. These are civilian boot camp that can help chisel a military body without the sacrifice of military service.

Yet as public and time-honored as the investment in military bodies is, the loss of a military body remains harrowingly private. As a society, we still do not know how to welcome home the wounded warrior -- how to express deep appreciation and respect at the same time as profound grief. In the mind of the individual soldier, coping with physical loss is complicated by the fact that warriors are trained to be stoic. They are trained to "suck it up," "to tough it out," in military training, in war, and in loss.

The stoic culture in the military is not just the popularized version. In military academies, such

as the US Naval Academy (where I was the Distinguished Chair in Ethics for two years), students typically read Epictetus, the first century Stoic from whom Marcus Aurelius took his inspiration. Epictetus urges his readers to face all deprivations, especially physical ones, as opportunities to show strength. We are to be like "invincible athletes." Still, our bodies are "indifferents," by which Epictetus means that they don't count toward happiness. They are outside happiness because they are outside our full control.

It is easy to see Stoicism's appeal within the military. To be in the military is by definition to give up a certain amount of agency. To reclaim it back by narrowing the perimeter of what is within one's own dominion is, in a way, liberating. Hence the Army's tendency to focus on the individual in its recruitment campaigns from "Be All that You Can Be" to today's "An Army of One." These slogans soften the notion of a modern military as a monolithic corps and emphasize instead individual courage and heroism. They neglect to mention, however, their corollaries -- personal sacrifice and psychological trauma.

Those who come back from war bear personal scars. Inside the corridors of hospitals like Walter Reed are men and women who have lost limbs in mortar attacks; others have lost their eyes to shrapnel from car bombs in Baghdad. But for every soldier who comes back physically injured there is one who has returned emotionally shattered. Some walk the perimeter of the hospital grounds, as if still on watch; others relive their injuries in recurring nightmares. Each has learned that a warrior's mind and body are not bulletproof.

As an enlightened public, we need to work hard to remove the stigma that many in the military still harbor about seeking psychological help for war trauma. And we need to ensure not only that the Veterans Administration, but the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Reserves have adequate resources to treat those who suffer from war trauma. Current studies from Walter Reed Army Institute of Research indicate that 17 percent of those returning from Iraq and

Afghanistan show signs of post-traumatic stress disorder. Experts predict that the numbers will swell three and four years after deployments end. It is likely to be worse for those engaged in fighting up close with insurgents. With base and hospital closures, will the Department of Defense have the resources for treatment?

On the battlefield itself, military leaders must find collective time to grieve and teach their men and women that proper grieving can strengthen, not weaken moral fiber and troop solidarity. Shakespeare's archetypal Stoic warrior, Coriolanus, got it right, when he described the challenge, "It is no little thing to make mine eyes to sweat compassion." This is a lesson doctors and therapists at military hospitals know well. It is a lesson all military leaders need to take to heart.

Nancy Sherman, a professor of philosophy at Georgetown University, is the author of the forthcoming book "Stoic Warriors."

### **Base cuts make area vulnerable**

The Columbian (Vancouver, WA)

Tom Koenninger

June 22, 2005

Could two jet fighters and a third on standby defend Western Europe England, France and Germany against terrorist attacks?

Impossible. That's why 146 jet fighter planes are assigned the task. But the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) recommends two fighters and a spare as the defense force for the Pacific Northwest and Western Canada. BRAC proposes reassigning 15 F-15 "Eagle" jet fighters from the Air National Guard base on the south side of Portland International Airport to New Jersey and Louisiana.

It would relocate eight KC-135R refueling tankers to Kansas and Oklahoma.

Military officers and elected officials testified Friday against the recommendations at a hearing in Portland conducted by BRAC commission members. Col. Brad Applegate of Vancouver,

commander of the 142nd Fighter Wing, the one directly affected by proposed cutbacks, was among those speaking. Others included Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski and Oregon members of Congress.

The base is in Portland, but the issue is very local. The wing has 1,024 people assigned, including 613 drill-status Air Guard members. The 939th Refueling Wing has nearly 900 reservists. Applegate estimated 35 percent of the Air Guard members are Southwest Washington residents. Nearly 600 would lose their military positions.

The weakened defense structure became clear during an interview with Col. Bruce W. Prunk, president-elect of the 850-member Oregon National Guard Association, and Lt. Col. (ret.) Kyle Hook of Portland. Hook, who retired last year, flew F-15s at Portland and was an instructor in F-15s at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Ore.

On paper, it appears Oregon has two jet fighter bases: Portland and at Klamath Falls, just inside the Oregon border with California. "Klamath Falls is a schoolhouse," said Hook. That's where pilots are trained to fly F-15 fighters. It is not a base for defense missions.

The two also pointed out the misperception that McChord Air Force Base at Tacoma has jet fighters. It is a site for heavy transport planes.

Help will be too far away

If BRAC recommendations are followed, the nearest jet fighter bases would be Mountain Home AFB, in southeast Idaho, and in Fresno, Calif.

The Guard Association has compiled information indicating the Northwest would be more vulnerable to attack than it was prior to 9/11. Col. Prunk and Lt. Col. (ret.) Hook said the Northwest is the only part of the country where air defense has been weakened. Air defense in other regions remains the same or stronger. What happened to Homeland Security standards?

F-15 jet fighters, said Hook, have the capability to lock in on a cruise missile and shoot it down better than newer jet fighter models. But two fighters can't do the job. Without tanker refueling planes, the fighters would have only minutes to respond to an attack in the Seattle area. Targets? Aside from civilian populations, destruction of Columbia River vehicle bridges, hydropower dams and the mainline railroad bridge would create havoc. Add Seattle's Boeing aircraft plants and Bill Gates' MicroSoft complex. The threat is real. A picture of the Space Needle has surfaced among terrorist documents. Commandeered civilian aircraft also pose a threat.

Washington state, which fared well in base reduction review, has expressed alarm at the Portland cutbacks in a letter to the BRAC commission. It is from Sens. Marie Cantwell, Patty Murray and Congressmen Brian Baird and Norm Dix. Baird, D-Vancouver, noted, in a separate statement: "Proposed cuts to the Portland Air National Guard pose a significant threat to the security of both the Portland-Vancouver area and entire Northwest." He said he will oppose them.

Vancouver Mayor Royce Pollard, a retired Army officer, believes the proposed cutbacks, based on information he studied, would leave this area open and vulnerable to attack.

Reversing BRAC is tough. Only about 15 percent of the recommendations are changed. Recommendations will go to President Bush and Congress on Sept. 8. That's when this area will learn the size of its protective force. How safe do you feel?

### **Additional Notes**