

DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE AND REALIGNMENT COMMISSION (BRAC)

FINAL DELIBERATIONS

Saturday, August 27, 2005

9:05 a.m.

Hyatt Regency Crystal City
2799 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, Virginia 22202

COMMISSIONERS:

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi, Chairman

The Honorable James H. Bilbray

Admiral Harold W. Gehman, Jr., USN (Ret.)

General James T. Hill, USA (Ret.)

General Lloyd W. Newton, USAF (Ret.)

CHAIRMAN:

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi

OPENING STATEMENT OF ANTHONY J. PRINCIPI, CHAIRMAN, DEFENSE
BASE CLOSURE & REALIGNMENT COMMISSION

Chairman Principi: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. The Base Closure and Realignment Commission hearing will come to order. And I want to thank our wonderful audience that are here today.

I will turn the mike over to our executive director, Charles Battaglia for any unfinished business to come before the Commission.

Mr. Battaglia: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think it would be fitting and proper today to start off by swearing in the entire staff. I would ask that we do that.

Ms. Sarkar: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Members of the BRAC Commission staff, please raise your right hand for me.

[Whereupon, the staff witnesses were sworn in.]

Ms. Sarkar: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Principi: I note the presence of a quorum. Five Commissioners are present for this morning's closing hearing.

Mr. Battaglia: Mr. Chairman, we still have several

items of unfinished business to complete here today. We -- there are several -- a couple of amendments are still being worked that are on their way to us here, but we have several at the desk with you here now, and I will revert back to you here, and to your attention in re -- for the disposal of those amendments, sir.

Chairman Principi: Commissioner Newton?

General Newton: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

That move was a great fighter-pilot move there just then.

[Laughter.]

General Newton: Mr. Chairman, on -- last evening, on motion 101, dash, 4(a), reference Niagara Falls Air National Guard Unit, we had an explanation, which we thought accomplished leaving the unit totally intact. The language appears to be not as clear as I would like to see it. And so, I'd like to have the language to say that the 107th wing will remain as an enclave at Niagara Falls. And that will still give them the opportunity to associate with the unit, with the 130 unit that is being -- that will remain there.

Chairman Principi: So, we'll vote on that?

General Newton: Yes, sir. I'd like to offer a motion that we make the 107th Air National Guard an enclave.

Mr. Bilbray: Mr. Chairman, a question for General Newton.

This is the -- it's a -- still the Niagara Fall Base, but this just an enclave within the base?

General Newton: That's correct.

Mr. Bilbray: Thank you.

General Newton: We still have C-130 unit that's on one side of the base, which will continue to have aircraft. This is a Air National Guard unit on the opposite side, with their 135s. The 135 -- KC-135 aircraft will go away.

Admiral Gehman: And, Mr. Chairman, since this does not change anything that we previously decided, I support this. And I -- it's just -- it's just clearer terminology of what we call the thing, and I --

General Newton: Indeed.

Admiral Gehman: -- support this.

Chairman Principi: Clarifying amendment. Thank you, Admiral. Thank you, Congressman Bilbray.

Is there a second?

Admiral Gehman: I second.

Chairman Principi: All in favor?

[A show of five hands.]

Chairman Principi: All opposed?

[No response.]

Ms. Sarkar: Mr. Chairman, the vote is five for, none opposed, on recusals. The motion is approved.

Thank you.

Chairman Principi: Thank you.

And I might just add, for the benefit of the people who watched or listened to our deliberations last evening with regard to the Air National Guard, I learned that perhaps the charts may not have been seen which showed the bed-down of the aircraft at the various installations. Those charts can be accessed on the BRAC Website, www.brac.gov, I believe, later today or tomorrow. So, it'll be very clear to everyone the actions that the Commission has taken with regard to the Air National Guard. Is that correct? They will be on the Website?

Mr. Cirillo: That's correct, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Principi: Thank you.

Mr. Battaglia?

Mr. Battaglia: Mr. Chairman, we have several motions that are before you now in your book in -- starting off with motion 60, dash, 4(a). And you'll have 64-4(b) and 66-4(b). And I bring those to your attention and -- for consideration here this morning, sir.

Chairman Principi: Which -- what's the first motion?

Mr. Battaglia: 60-4(a). It's in the green, and at

this point I'd like to refer to the Navy team leader here, Mr. Jim Hanna, for background on this.

Chairman Principi: Mr. Hanna?

Mr. Hanna: Sir, we wish to propose that we insert the language into the strike motion, "realign Naval Submarine Base New London by consolidating Navy Region Northeast, New London, Connecticut, with Navy Region Mid-Atlantic, Norfolk, Virginia," in the recommendations previously submitted by the Commission.

And the reason for that is that, in the realignment, which was totally separate and independent of the Submarine Base closure to allow the Navy to consolidate their regions, we allow that portion to continue. In the entire Navy region consolidation, instead of dual-hatting flag officers as regional commanders and operational commanders, it allows the commander of Navy infrastructure to have a standalone flag officer responsible for a region. The commanders of the installations will remain, as previously -- as they previously exist. This is the headquarters alignment.

The other portion is, is that when the motion was entered, not read -- when it was read, it stated that, "The Secretary of Defense substantially deviated from final criteria 1," as General Newton read it -- as the written

motion was submitted, it said, "final criteria 3, 4, and 5," in addition. And we'd recommend that we strike "3, 4, and 5." So, "substantial deviation for 1," because of the total force implications, those sorts of things, and then the realignment. That's the purpose of this amendment.

Chairman Principi: Very well.

Admiral Gehman, any discussion?

Admiral Gehman: Mr. Chairman, I think I should recuse myself from this, because it -- the New London/Norfolk business -- unless the --

General Newton: Mr. Chairman?

Chairman Principi: Yes, very well.

General Newton: Mr. Chairman?

Chairman Principi: Yes?

General Newton: Left side.

[Laughter.]

General Newton: Yes, sir.

Chairman Principi: General Newton?

General Newton: I've reviewed this amendment and recommendation to the previous amendment which we had. This does not -- as our analyst spoke -- this does not impact the other work which we did, reference to Sub Base. This really should proceed just as has been recommended here.

General Hill: And on the whole regionalization issue, I took a look at it because of my work down in Corpus Christi, and the Navy plan, as it works out, is a very good one for consolidation. And it'll be a much more effective organization as they regionalize their efforts.

Chairman Principi: Okay, thank you.

Counsel, do we have the proxies on this amendment?

Mr. Hague: In this case, Mr. Chairman, it's appropriate for Admiral Gehman to vote.

Chairman Principi: It is appropriate for Admiral --

Mr. Hague: It is.

Chairman Principi: -- Gehman to vote?

Mr. Hague: Yes, sir.

Chairman Principi: Okay. Well, thank you.

Is there a second?

General Newton: Second.

Chairman Principi: All in favor?

[A show of five hands.]

Chairman Principi: All opposed?

[No response.]

Ms. Sarkar: Mr. Chairman, the vote is unanimous. The motion is adopted.

Thank you.

Chairman Principi: Thank you.

Mr. Battaglia?

Mr. Battaglia: Mr. Chairman, I now refer you to motion 64-4(b), which directs the relocation of Headquarters Marine Forces Reserve for the Federal City Project, if constructed on or before September 30th, 2008. And I defer to Jim Hanna here for a description of that motion.

Chairman Principi: Mr. Hanna?

Mr. Hanna: Yes, sir. If you recall, we closed the east bank on -- or portion, and left the west-bank portion open, to consolidate Marine Corps Reserve support activities. For clarity's sake, we'd like to recommend that we explicitly say that the remaining tenants of the NSA be relocated, as DOD recommended. That's for clarity.

Chairman Principi: Okay. Any discussion?

[No response.]

Chairman Principi: Is there a second on motion 64, dash, 4(b)?

General Newton: Second.

Chairman Principi: Are there any recusals?

[No response.]

Chairman Principi: Hearing none, all in favor?

[A show of five hands.]

Chairman Principi: All opposed?

[No response.]

Ms. Sarkar: The vote, Mr. Chairman, are -- is unanimous. The motion is adopted.

Thank you.

Chairman Principi: Mr. Battaglia?

Mr. Battaglia: Mr. Chairman, I now direct your attention to motion 66-4(b), regarding the Marine Corps Support Activity, Kansas City, Missouri, and ask that -- Mr. Hanna also to comment on that, as well.

Chairman Principi: Mr. Hanna?

Mr. Hanna: Sir, what this one does, in conjunction with the previous one, is align properly the two elements. This is the organization in Kansas City that will fall in on the west-bank property for the federal enclave -- Federal City enclave in support of the Marine Corps Reserve Headquarters. This is written to clarify the language and ensure that they're properly aligned. And, again, all other tenants vacate the west-bank site.

Chairman Principi: Thank you.

Is there a second on motion 66-4(b)?

Mr. Bilbray: Second.

Chairman Principi: Thank you.

Are there any recusals?

[No response.]

Chairman Principi: All in favor of motion 66-4(b)?

[A show of five hands.]

Chairman Principi: All opposed?

[No response.]

Ms. Sarkar: Mr. Chairman, the vote is unanimous. The motion is adopted.

Thank you.

Chairman Principi: Thank you.

Mr. Battaglia?

Mr. Battaglia: Mr. Chairman, if you'll give me one moment here, there's one bit of business here I want to clarify before we move on. It'll take us about -- less than a minute.

Mr. Bilbray: Mr. Chairman, while they're doing that, I would -- I know that some of the staff will go back -- be going back to their agencies or where they were assigned from. And even though I know I'll be returning within the next couple of weeks, there may be some of them gone, and I would just like to express my gratitude to the help they've given me and, I know, the whole Commission staff. And if any of you ever need a recommendation or a reference, please put my name down. I'd be happy to sign that for you.

Chairman Principi: Thank you, Congressman.

Admiral Gehman: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. While we -- to give the staff a few seconds more here, I'll make my speech, too.

I also feel that, having served on several federal commissions in my time, I would like to say that the professionalism and the hard work and the energy and the diligence of this staff have, to me, been without equal, in my experience. This -- these Commissioners put this staff under extraordinary pressure, because we really did work hard to try and find the right answer. And we pressed very, very hard. We rarely accepted the first answer we got. We always wanted to go to the second and third level of detail, and it required, essentially, them to work seven days a week, frequently around the clock. And even though they worked hard, working hard is good, and it's nice, but it's an input, not an output. The output was high quality staff work which aided this Commission immeasurably. And I think it's -- to me, you have my gratitude and my admiration for what you did.

And I'd like to make one other point, which I think highlights and perhaps emphasizes the difficult place -- the position that we've placed this staff in. In previous BRAC rounds, the Department of Defense was getting smaller, and the job of the BRAC Commission was essentially to pick

and choose which parts of the infrastructure could be done away with, since the whole entity, the whole enterprise, was getting smaller. In this case, we were asked to pick and choose which parts of the enterprise should be done away with, when the enterprise is not getting smaller. It's a much more difficult task. It's much difficult -- more challenging intellectual task to try and find the right answer to that riddle. We worked very hard at it, but our staff worked twice as hard as we did. And, to all of you, you have my greatest admiration.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Principi: Thank you.

General Hill?

General Hill: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Newton and I were talking just a few minutes ago. Admiral Gehman, General Newton, and myself spent a lot of years in uniforms. We know something about team-building. We've watched teams come together. And this one came together faster and better than I have ever witnessed anything, from divergent backgrounds, from all over the parts of the government -- some from loans, some on different agencies, some on their first jobs -- under the able tutelage of Mr. Battaglia, whom I have enormous respect for. Enormous respect.

What you did -- I can only echo what Admiral Gehman said and what I know that General Newton will say today -- when I was talking, the other morning, about DFAS, I was talking about one person, but she was only representative of all of you. And, in every case, we turned -- everything we asked you to do, you did well. And there are no Type B personalities on the Commission, as y'all are all aware.

[Laughter.]

General Hill: And we appreciate your indulgence. Rumu kept saying last night that she -- we should have been indulging her, not her us.

So, I thank you very much. It's been a joy and a privilege.

Thank you.

Chairman Principi: General Newton?

General Newton: Mr. Chairman, I fully align myself with all of the comments that's been made by the staff -- I mean -- yes, about the staff. It is a world-class team, and I've just been proud to have the opportunity to be associated with it. And it's been led by a world-class leader of both the Chairman and the Executive Director.

Thank you.

Chairman Principi: Thank you. Thank you all.

Mr. Battaglia?

Mr. Battaglia: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to take just a couple of minutes here. And I really direct my remarks, not to the Commission, but to the staff.

In May of several -- only four months ago, I -- Bob Cook and I assembled a staff here, and we told them that the goalposts would be in sight. What we didn't tell them was that there was a mountain they had to climb here in between to get there, and they had to sprint up that mountain to get there. The amazing part is, I never needed a starting gun for you all. You all accepted the challenge with zeal, with dedication, with perseverance, and with compassion. And this goes for all the detailees, the direct-hires, the consultants, and our contractors personnel, folks at ANSER, here, headed by Chris Cole -- just did a fantastic job. You never lost sight of the facts that your mission would have an impact on public policy, on national security, and the lives of over thousands of Americans. And it's too hard for me, here, to name everyone here this morning who made a contribution. And I assure you, we will recognize you -- that at a later date here, in September. But I would be -- it would be an injustice if I didn't recognize at least my leadership team here, who just performed superbly -- David Hague, our general counsel, who just brought great leadership here to

this effort, Frank Cirillo, who served here on the last two BRACs here and headed up our review and analysis group, Bob Cook, who also served twice and just brought a terrific amount of background and leadership and was of great assistance to me informing this team here when we started in April, Christine Hill, Diane Carnevale, Jim Schaefer, Gary -- and my team leaders here, Gary Dinsick, Jim Hanna, Ken Small, Dave Van Saun, and Marty Heigh, have just been absolutely terrific. I'll just remind you all that our task is not finished at this point.

[Laughter.]

Mr. Battaglia: We still have a report to do. You all have the afternoon off.

[Laughter.]

Mr. Battaglia: For our Commissioners, speaking in behalf of the staff, I can only say that it's been honor -- an absolute honor -- to be associated with you. You brought, not only dedication and insight, but you brought leadership to a most complex BRAC, and we are, indeed, grateful to you.

Finally, to our leader and Chairman here, Tony Principi, my old friend, who pulled me from a mothball fleet to steer this ship.

[Laughter.]

Mr. Battaglia: We are, indeed, most grateful to you here for this leadership here. We couldn't have done it without that leadership.

Chairman Principi: Thank you very much.

Mr. Battaglia: Thank you very, very much.

Chairman Principi: Thank you very much.

[Standing ovation.]

Chairman Principi: Now, let me conclude with a few closing comments.

As the clock runs out on the Commission's deliberations and decision, I, too, want to take a moment to reflect on the decisions we reached over the past few days.

Some will keep a scorecard of base closures or realignments we approved or rejected, or the dollars we saved or expended. Those measures are important, but I really believe that we should look beyond these numbers. This Commission, you, the staff, played an integral and essential role in the arduous, but necessary, evolution of our Armed Forces. Change, as we know and have experienced over the few -- the past few days, is very, very difficult, and frequently painful. In the short run, human institutions just tend to avoid pain and defer difficulties. And those short-run inclinations tend to

produce long-term inertia, inertia that can paralyze institutions that must remain dynamic if they are to succeed and prosper -- if we're to win on the battlefield, in the case of the military.

I believe that Commissioners and the staff that supported us can take enormous pride in our role in balancing proposals to restructure military infrastructure against the human and painful impact of those proposals.

In fulfilling our responsibility to provide an independent assessment of the Department of Defense's adherence to the statutory BRAC selection criteria and the Defense force-structure plan, our approval of a host of closures and realignments, both major and minor, will enable the streamlining of all our military forces -- Active, National Guard, and Reserve -- as well as the extensive logistics, research and development, maintenance and repair infrastructure supporting them. Our actions support the creation of Centers of Excellence, consolidating activities with common goals or missions, a major theme of the Department's recommendations. We did not flinch when we determined that the Department's proposals are consistent with the BRAC selection criteria and the force-structure plan. Neither did we flinch when we determined that some proposals substantially deviated

from those criteria and structure. Major installations, like Portsmouth Navy Yard and Submarine Base New London, the Red River Army Depot, Ellsworth Air Force Base, will continue to contribute to our national defense, as will others. Nor did we hesitate to identify and respond to problems, like the effects of the encroachment at NAS Oceana that we felt the Secretary of Defense should have addressed, but he did not. Our report will list the installations we approved for closure or realignment and the Defense Department proposals we rejected or modified. Preliminary estimates, subject to revision, indicate that our recommendations will save about \$37 billion, if you include the military personnel cost avoidance, and approximately \$14 billion if you exclude those military personnel cost avoidances, compared to the \$49 billion originally claimed by DOD. Those numbers are important, but I believe they only tell part of the story.

Secretary Rumsfeld made it clear that, in addition to savings, transformation of our Armed Forces was an important goal of this BRAC round. Keeping in mind that co-location is not synonymous with integration, that transformation is not synonymous with jointness, and that the Secretary's recommendations won't move the ball across the goal line, I do believe that our decisions will help

move the ball down the field. I also believe that the BRAC process is a healthy and necessary one. As difficult as it may be, our nation should regularly examine our military infrastructure, because failing to do so will inevitably drag down our defense with a sea anchor of unneeded, perhaps, or poorly-sited installations for the 21st century.

For that reason, I recommend that the Congress provide regularly scheduled BRACs at perhaps five- or ten-year intervals. I also recommend that, after future BRACs begin their work, immediately after completion of the Defense Department's Quadrennial Defense Review, rather than just before. The members and the staff of this Commission performed at heroic levels to complete their work in a few months between May 13th and September 8th. While uncommon dedication is a common virtue in the men and women who serve our national defense, including this Commission and this staff, I also recommend that future Commissions not be required to depend upon the willingness of Commissioners and staff to set aside all personal life to work unending hours at an exhausting pace, but, rather, that future Commissions be given more time to complete their analysis and deliberations.

This Commission simply could not have completed its

work without the dedicated hard work of a large number of disparate, but equally committed, individuals and organizations. Our deliberations took place under the unobtrusive, but watchful, eyes of Arlington County Police Officers, Arlington County Sheriffs Deputies, Virginia State Troopers, and United States Marshals. There is an unsung, but essential, role in proceedings like ours, and we all, on this Commission, appreciate their unfailing professionalism.

While we had early problems obtaining accessible information from the Department of Defense, I would be remiss if I did not commend the Department and its leaders for correcting those problems and for the exemplary effectiveness of the data clearinghouse established to provide certified and responsive answers to our questions.

I also acknowledge the great many Members of Congress and the Committees they represent who contributed to the Commission's success. In their advocacy, they played an irreplaceable role in ensuring that the Commission had the benefit of all points of view. And, at all times, they were extremely gracious and understanding of our work. And they always welcomed us into their communities so that we could see firsthand the impact of our work.

And no Commission -- no Commission -- can succeed

without a capable and hardworking staff. And, as Admiral Gehman and all of my fellow Commissioners have said, this Commission has been blessed with a staff of vast competence and extraordinary, extraordinary dedication. Our staff includes men and women who set aside the pleasantries of -- pleasures of retirement and summer vacations to take up the long hours of high-stress work and seven-day workweeks. I know it, because I saw you working seven days a week. They combined extensive travel with an unqualified commitment to perfection unlike I have ever seen in my professional career. The report this Commission will soon submit to the President of the United States is a reflection of you, of your dedication, of your intellect, and of your commitment to make this process work.

We also have the benefit of the knowledge and experience of detailees from government agencies who also interrupted their careers to make this Commission a success. Much of our administrative support came from consulting and contractor employees who quickly adopted a commitment to our mission and a laser-like focus on our outcomes. Their work for us made it clear to me that, for them, their assignment was much more than just a job. The English language does not provide words adequate to express my gratitude and appreciation to all of the members of the

staff.

And I am especially grateful to my dear friend of many, many years, our executive director, Charles Battaglia. Long before Charlie was on the payroll, he was in my office over at Pfizer every day working day in and day out to ensure that when the Commissioners were confirmed, we had a staff up and running. Had he not dedicated himself and worked those days and those long hours without pay, I'm absolutely -- I know we would not be at this point, where we have completed our work in time to get a report to the President. He's an extraordinary human being. I'm proud to call him my friend, a man for whom I have the highest admiration.

Thank you, Charlie.

And to the members of our Commission, I wonder how many of you knew what you were getting into when you said yes to membership on this Commission. I know I didn't. All of you have successful and rewarding careers. None of you needed the stress, the travel, the overwhelming workload, the heart-wrenching decisions that came with title "Commissioner." And yet each of you responded to the Commission's challenge with the unquestioned integrity, the inexhaustible energy, and the bulldog-like tenacity it took to burrow into the Department's recommendations, formulate

and raise the tough questions needed to understand them,
and the judgment needed to reach fair and open decisions.

And while we are all strong-willed, and you all are very articulate individuals, you made it a personal, as well as a professional, pleasure to work with you. The men and women who defend our nation now, and those who will do so in the future, are in your debt. The families who bring our defense communities to life are in your debt. And the American people who fund our national defense are in your debt. But I will end by saying that I am in your debt.

Thank you for serving with me on this Commission.
Thank you for your service to this nation.

Thank you all.

This hearing's adjourned.

[Applause.]

[Whereupon, at 9:40 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]