

## BRAC 2005 AND THE CURRENT STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

BY

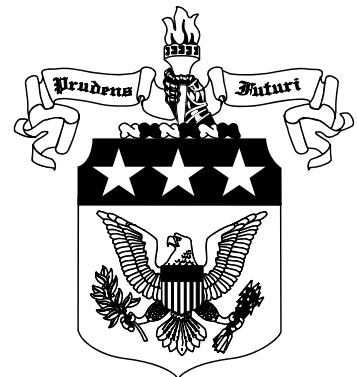
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# USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

## BRAC 2005 AND THE CURRENT STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

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Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld first asked Congress to consider authorizing another round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) in testimony before the House Appropriations Committee in July 2001. Previous BRAC rounds had focused almost exclusively on cost savings via the elimination of excess real property. BRAC 2005 was conceived by Mr Rumsfeld as a vehicle to support Defense transformation and the re-basing of significant US troops from overseas bases to bases in the United States as well as to conserve resources. However, the strategic environment and challenges facing the United States have continued to change and develop since the original BRAC 2005 recommendations were formed beginning in mid-2001. The war on terror continues with no end in sight to our ongoing involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Congress approved an increase of 65,000 Soldiers in the active duty end strength of the Army. BRAC 2005 implementation costs continue to rise, surpassing estimated costs in some cases. Can the BRAC process be adjusted or improved to allow for needed changes? One thing is for sure, BRAC 2005 directives are in the full execution stage with completion mandated not later than September 2011.



## BRAC 2005 AND THE CURRENT STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) has proven to be a dynamic, complicated and political process. Historically, realizing cost savings and efficiencies were always a fundamental goal for each of the previous rounds of the base closure processes commonly referred to as BRAC.<sup>1</sup> BRAC 2005 is the most recent iteration of the Congressionally authorized process used to identify and evaluate United States military bases for closure and realignment in order to achieve a “more efficient and effective base structure, increase operational readiness, and provide support to our forces”.<sup>2</sup> This round of BRAC began in the summer of 2001 when Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld began lobbying Congress to authorize another round of base closings during testimony before the House Appropriations Committee.<sup>3</sup> On December 28, 2001 the Congress passed and the President signed Public Law 107-107, the Fiscal Year 2002 Defense Authorization Bill.<sup>4</sup> This law authorized a round of the BRAC process to occur in the year 2005. The implementation of this law is ongoing today; however, many things have changed since the Department of Defense began exploring a new round of base closures in early 2001. Are the recommendations of the 2005 BRAC Commission and those accepted for implementation by Congress and President Bush still sound? Do they still make sense? This paper will shed some light on these questions and identify some potential changes and adjustments to the BRAC process; however, one thing is for certain, BRAC 2005 implementation funding and actions are speeding ahead each and every day as the September 15, 2011 implementation deadline continues to approach.<sup>5</sup>

## History of Base Closings

Closing unneeded military bases in the United States was not always as complicated as it is now. After World War II the Army simply abandoned unneeded bases and installations. This method of base closure proved both simple and efficient. The onset of the Korean War acted to control and end these post World War II era base closings due to the increased training and activity required to support the Korean theater. Eventually the Korean War entered its armistice phase and the Cold War continued on to dominate the world and political landscapes and drive the United States military and defense strategies of the time.<sup>6</sup>

As the United States entered the decade of the 1960's, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara embarked on his own program of domestic base closures. The focus of McNamara's efforts were the large and numerous strategic bomber bases in an effort to solidify the shifting national strategy for nuclear deterrence from reliance on long range bombers to long range missiles. This strategy was effective in addressing the Air Force's natural tendency to oppose the diminution of the strategic bomber mission and their resultant tactic of protecting their operating bases as a method of resisting the Secretary of Defense. Since the Air Force was resisting the policy shift from strategic bombers to missiles, the Secretary of Defense simply started closing down various strategic bomber bases as a response to this Air Force resistance. Interestingly enough, it was also during this time period that the first case of "politics" with respect to base closures occurred. When Air Force bases within President Johnson's political rival Senator Barry Goldwater's home state of Arizona were identified for closure by Secretary McNamara, a political firestorm erupted with Senator Goldwater accusing President Johnson and his administration of intentionally punishing the people

of Arizona by closing bases in the state as a form of political retribution. Secretary McNamara ended up closing more than 60 installations across the United States during his tenure as the Secretary of Defense. This large amount of closures and their political and economic impacts drove Congress to take action to counteract this broad and unilateral assertion of executive power. Congress passed a bill in 1965 and although it merely required Congressional notification of impending base closures, President Johnson promptly vetoed it. Throughout the remainder of the Johnson administration and into the Nixon and Ford administrations, base closures remained exclusively and completely the province of the executive branch.<sup>7</sup>

During the mid 1970s Congress again tried to control base closings by passing another law that required Congressional notification of base closures but President Ford vetoed it just as President Johnson had done. By 1976 Congress was fed up with this string of unbridled base closures and began crafting a new law that was inserted into the annual military construction bill.<sup>8</sup> This bill required that Congress be notified of any base closure that impacted more than 250 federal civilian employees, specifically required an environmental impact statement be done prior to any base being closed, and further stipulated that all of the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) would apply to all base closures. The act further stated that base closures should only be undertaken to achieve improved security, military efficiency and effectiveness rather than for political reasons. This law, known as the O'Neill-Cohen Bill, was passed with veto proof majorities in both houses of Congress. President Carter then reluctantly approved the bill and it became a part of Title 10 United States Code (10 USC Section 2687) in 1977. Specifically linking base closures directly to

NEPA, to include the resultant requirement for an environmental impact statement, was a simple yet brilliant Congressional strategy for effectively preventing the executive branch from closing bases as a unilateral action. Congress additionally inserted specific language in several other large bills at the time that prevented the closure of Camp Pendleton, California, the Naval Academy dairy farm in Maryland and many other smaller installations. The combination of Congressional obstruction and legislated application of federal environmental law to base closures effectively ended all base closures from 1977 through 1988 when the first of the BRAC series of closings were undertaken.<sup>9</sup> Lawrence Korb, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower, Installations, and Logistics in 1985 assessed the situation like this in testimony to Congress,

Now that is fine if Congress in its wisdom decides that bases should be kept open for economic reasons or for the benefit of the local community. That is fine. But then don't turn around and say that we are inefficient and open us up to charges that we don't know what we are doing, that we have a bunch of bumblers over here wasting the taxpayers' money. You can't have it both ways.<sup>10</sup>

Congress had finally crafted a viable and effective way to prevent base closures from continuing to happen as unilateral executive branch decisions.

President Reagan took office in 1981 and promptly began his defense build-up. Consequently, the closing of military bases was not a priority in the early years of his administration. In fact, the Reagan defense build-up in the early 1980s had the net effect of shielding from the political landscape the impacts and reality that base closures had been effectively halted by the 1977 law. In the late 1980s reduced defense budgets drove the effort to conserve funds and achieve new efficiencies within the Department of Defense.<sup>11</sup> Defense budget retrenchment, when combined with more than a decade

of having no viable base closure process, acted to bring the issue to the forefront in both Congress and the Department of Defense. The desire for cost savings and the realization in both the Department of Defense and in Congress that excess base infrastructure existed throughout the Department of Defense finally prompted Congress to take action. In 1988 Congress acted to install a process for allowing base closures to proceed in an orderly fashion by passing the first BRAC law.<sup>12</sup>

### The BRAC Process Is Born

The 1988 BRAC law marked the change from what had been strictly an executive branch process that Congress endeavored to influence into a commission process founded in law. Congress developed the BRAC process to institute a system that would allow base closures to be proposed and implemented with some measure of reason and fairness, rather than for political purposes or in any other random perhaps even haphazard way. The closing of any military base inevitably results in a “de-distribution” of federal funds. “De-distribution” in this case is referring to the allocation of federal money away from any closing installation’s home state and district. The Congress has historically had difficulty with any decision resulting in the “de-distribution” of federal funds. Congress finally realized that they were politically incapable of closing excess military installations and so crafted the BRAC commission process as the new structure under which base closings would once again be allowed.<sup>13</sup>

That first round of BRAC closures founded on the 1988 law resulted in a total of 21 bases being closed from among the several Department of Defense services.<sup>14</sup> Congress evaluated the process and operations of that first base closing commission and updated the law to mandate more openness throughout the process. Congress

also decided to direct the composition of the commission and apportioned the power to appoint BRAC commission members among themselves and the President. It was this revised act that was passed in 1990 that became the foundation for the BRAC closure rounds conducted in 1991, 1993, and 1995.<sup>15</sup> The primary purpose of all these BRAC rounds was the saving of money through the elimination of unneeded and excess installations, associated infrastructure, and the resultant costs required to maintain and operate those excess installations. The 1991 – 1995 BRAC resulted in some 77 bases being closed across the Department as broken out in Figure 1.<sup>16</sup>

**BRAC 1991- 1995 BASE CLOSINGS BY SERVICE<sup>17</sup>**

| <u>Service</u> | <u>1991</u> | <u>1993</u> | <u>1995</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Army           | 5           | 1           | 11          | <b>17</b>    |
| Navy/USMC      | 10          | 20          | 5           | <b>35</b>    |
| Air Force      | 13          | 6           | 3           | <b>22</b>    |
| DLA            | 0           | 1           | 2           | <b>3</b>     |
| Totals         | <b>28</b>   | <b>28</b>   | <b>21</b>   | <b>77</b>    |

Figure 1.

Just as Congress modified the law after the 1988 experience, subsequent rounds of BRAC each resulted in iterative changes to the base closure process.<sup>18</sup> These iterative changes consisted mainly of minor refinements that did not impact on the overall BRAC process. The basic process can still be summarized like this: First Congress passes the law authorizing a round of BRAC closures. Then the Secretary of Defense must certify that there is excess base infrastructure and that potential closures

would result in net cost savings within six years in what is known as a Section 2912 Report for Congress. The Secretary of Defense then proceeds to develop an initial list of recommended base closures. This initial Defense Department list acts as the starting point for the BRAC Commission. Although the BRAC Commission is not bound by the initial list from the Department of Defense, they must have justification to either add an installation to the list or remove an installation from the Department's initial list. The Commission holds public hearings on all proposed closings and based on all information gathered it evaluates the list, makes judgments and determinations, and then makes final recommendations to the President and to Congress who must either accept or reject the BRAC Commission list as a whole and in its' entirety. The President may return the list back to the Commission with his objections, but in the end he must approve the list sent to him from the Commission or the process is halted. If the President approves the list he then forwards it to Congress who can only vote to stop the complete list. The genius of the BRAC process is the fact that both the President and the Congress must either accept or reject the entire list, neither is allowed to add or remove individual installations. The President acts to continue the BRAC process while Congress may only act to halt it.<sup>19</sup> It is the all or nothing component of the BRAC process in particular, that coupled with the open and public BRAC Commission process, has resulted in an effective and fair process for closing excess military bases over the past nineteen years.

The selection criteria used to evaluate and consider bases for closure is critical. The Department of Defense proposes the official selection criteria and it becomes a part of the public record. The overriding selection criteria for BRAC actions has historically

been economic efficiencies – or simply, to save money. This was true with the first BRAC in 1988 and has remained a driving force in all subsequent rounds of BRAC. Military value has always been an important criteria acting to balance the strict dollar saving or economic payback criteria.<sup>20</sup> Military value is a rating assigned based upon the attributes and ability of the installation to support the ongoing training, activities, and missions occurring at that location.<sup>21</sup> The BRAC 1995 definition used for military value consisted of the four criteria listed below:

**BRAC 1995 Definition of Military Value<sup>22</sup>**

1. The current and future mission requirements and the impact of operational readiness of the Department of Defense's total force.
2. The availability and condition of land facilities and associated airspace at both the existing and potential receiving locations.
3. The ability to accommodate contingency, mobilization, and future total force requirements at both the existing and potential locations.
4. The cost and manpower implications.

In addition to military value, the cost and economic impacts of proposed closures are an important element of the closure criteria. These impacts are evaluated using the Cost of Base Closure (COBRA) model.<sup>23</sup> This model was developed by Department of Defense to generate and compare the costs and savings related to each potential base closure action. The COBRA model assesses all the cash flows projected out for twenty years, including both savings and costs, related to each installation under consideration for closure, and then provides a net present value figure while also calculating the related payback period in years.<sup>24</sup> The COBRA model results determine if any particular proposed base closing is economically viable, how much money will be saved, and how long it will take to achieve those savings. The economic impacts on

communities which surround bases under consideration is also a part of the selection criteria and includes such as factors as the local employment rates, status of the housing market, and other infrastructure and local economic considerations. Environmental impacts of pending actions are also included as an element in the selection criteria and include such items as the cost of restoration, waste management and environmental compliance.<sup>25</sup> All of these approved closure criteria are then applied by the Department of Defense via the various armed services to generate their initial base closure list and by the BRAC Commission when conducting their evaluation and constructing their final report. The closure criteria approved for BRAC 2005 includes the addition of the importance of joint operations, training and warfighting when defining military value. Other than that addition, the final selection criteria used for BRAC 2005 does not vary significantly from the 1995 version or any of the other versions approved for use in the previous rounds of BRAC.<sup>26</sup>

While the overall importance of the approved closure criteria cannot be overlooked, the Secretary of Defense's role in the process is considerable. The BRAC law mandates that the Secretary of Defense submit a Section 2912 report to Congress that certifies the need to conduct a round of BRAC closures by validating the existence of excess infrastructure based upon the missions and overall size of United States forces. In order to make this certification, the Secretary in consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, is required to analyze projected force levels in future years to determine if excess infrastructure exists based upon those projected force levels.<sup>27</sup> And further, whether there would be any annual net savings within six years after the start of the closure process. The Section 2912 report is extremely important

since for base closure action to go forward the Secretary of Defense must conclude both that excess infrastructure exists based on projected force levels and that potential closures will result in a net financial savings within six years.<sup>28</sup> In earlier BRAC rounds the Department of Defense role was focused more on the formulation and approval of the official closure criteria, while the various military departments were left to determine what if any bases would be included on the initial closure list.

The Department of Defense's conceived base closure criteria has changed very little over the years. Each of the military departments within the Department of Defense built BRAC offices at their level to conduct the analysis that resulted in recommended base closures and realignments based upon the approved closure criteria. Then the Department of Defense and the Secretary would approve the three military services' lists and submit them to the Commission. The Commission's role is then to review and approve the list. They do this by close examination of the recommended list and the data upon which it is based. The Commission examines the Department of Defense analysis for correctness and adherence to the given closure criteria. Should the Commission determine that a recommended action deviates from the closure criteria, the Commission may vote to change that recommendation. The Commission, with proper justification, may either delete installations from or add installations to the Department of Defense's proposed list.<sup>29</sup> In the process of their duties, the Commission holds many public hearings and visits all bases under consideration for closure action. The Commission then finalizes its' report and sends it back through the Secretary of Defense, the President, and to the Congress for their final consideration.

## 2005 BRAC Process and Results

Prior to the ongoing 2005 BRAC action, the last round of BRAC was in 1995. Two of President Clinton's Secretaries of Defense, William Perry and William Cohen, attempted to get Congress to authorize an additional round of closings in the late 1990's; however, the lingering negative economic impacts on local communities around the nation due to the 1991-1995 rounds of BRAC caused Congress to forgo authorizing another round of BRAC in the late 1990s. The result was that the 1988 BRAC law expired without authorization for another round of closings. The expiration of this law defaulted base closing procedures to the 1977 act designed and passed by Congress specifically to prevent base closures from occurring whatsoever.<sup>30</sup> In 2001, the new Bush administration craved the fiscal savings that a new round of closures would bring to a shrinking Defense Department budget. Donald Rumsfeld first informed Congress of his BRAC intentions during Congressional testimony in July 2001, "We are going to come at you" he said, warning Congress that a failure to reduce excess infrastructure would send the wrong message as the military was struggling to achieve savings due to the budget decrease within the pending defense bill for fiscal year 2002. The Bush administration reached a compromise with Congress in 2001 for a 2005 BRAC round of closures. The 2001 BRAC legislation was based on the previous BRAC laws, retaining its basic structure, but was modified by adding an additional Commission member.<sup>31</sup> The official selection criteria remained essentially unchanged from BRAC 1995 with its focus on military value, return on investment (cost savings), and local economic and environmental impacts.<sup>32</sup> Congress ended up making further amendments to the 2005 BRAC authorization law passed in 2001 in both 2004 and 2005, but only to formally adapt the official base closing criteria and to make other minor changes to the law.<sup>33</sup>

Secretary Rumsfeld began ramping up the 2005 BRAC process in Department of Defense almost immediately after the law was enacted. He had very specific outcomes in mind as evidenced by his 15 November 2002 memorandum with the subject identified as "Transformation through Base Realignment and Closure."<sup>34</sup> This important memorandum to senior Defense Department officials was the first step in the Department's internal program to establish organization, determine processes, and frame the initial policy for the 2005 round of base closures.<sup>35</sup> For the first time the BRAC process would be intentionally used to facilitate transformation. Although his memo was effective in framing and organizing the BRAC 2005 process within the Department, it was short on detail with respect to the definition of transformation. Certainly it meant that the results of BRAC 2005 must support the military departments' needs as they transform - in the Army for instance to a brigade centric force. The Secretary also mentioned the need for the BRAC process to consider and account for our overseas basing requirements since moving troops currently stationed abroad to CONUS would increase homeland infrastructure requirements.<sup>36</sup> Secretary Rumsfeld also intended to reap savings with an increased emphasis on Joint Cross Service Groups to force the services to gain efficiencies through rationalization and joint use of installations and facilities. There were a total of seven of these groups to include: Education and Training, Headquarters and Support, Industrial, Intelligence, Medical, Supply and Storage, and Technical.<sup>37</sup> The Department of Defense used these Joint Cross Service Groups quite effectively to force the subordinate military departments into making joint basing and training decisions that they otherwise would not have chosen to make. Secretary Rumsfeld also attempted to use BRAC 2005 to support his global

restationing initiative so that fewer troops with families would be stationed overseas. Supporting fewer families overseas meshed well with the Army's new brigade centric force and allowed for most US forces to be permanently based in the United States and rotate as complete units overseas for short unaccompanied training deployments without family members. Secretary Rumsfeld certainly exercised more control over the BRAC process than in any previous round of BRAC. His control of the process within the Department of Defense would lead directly to many of the significant results of BRAC 2005.

The results of BRAC 2005 were considered surprising by many based on the significant amount of joint basing and training that was built into many of the results. Figure 2 lists the gross number of base closures for BRAC 2005 by military department.

**BRAC 2005 BASE CLOSINGS BY SERVICE<sup>38</sup>**

| <u>Service</u> | <u>2005</u> |
|----------------|-------------|
| Army           | 12          |
| Navy/USMC      | 5           |
| Air Force      | 5           |
| DLA            | 0           |
| Totals         | <b>22</b>   |

Figure 2.

Many significant BRAC 2005 outcomes were a direct result of the emphasis on joint basing and training. Joint basing is when one service is directed to manage and operate another service's installation. There were a total of 12 major joint service installation consolidations directed in BRAC 2005. This was a direct result of the desire

to gain efficiencies in installation management across service boundaries through joint basing. An example of this is the Langley Air Force Base and Fort Eustis combination. The consolidation of Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Bethesda Naval Hospital is another example of joint basing, but with the additional component of cross service mission consolidation.<sup>39</sup> Implementation of joint training was also a focus of BRAC 2005 with the formation of the Culinary Arts Center of Excellence at Fort Lee, Virginia.<sup>40</sup> Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine food service training will be conducted in one training institution at Fort Lee as a result of this decision. Another of example of this joint training trend was the Commission's recommendation to form the Joint Center for Consolidated Transportation Management Training also at Fort Lee, Virginia.<sup>41</sup> This center will consolidate specialized transportation management training at Fort Lee by directing that similar Air Force training currently conducted at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas be moved to Fort Lee. The Commission also approved recommendations that directed how individual services would manage and conduct service specific training with the "Training Center of Excellence" concept. The Commission approved the recommendation that formed the Combat Service Support Center of Excellence at Fort Lee, Virginia. This significant finding requires that the Army's Ordnance Center and School at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland and the Transportation Center and School at Fort Eustis, Virginia be relocated to Fort Lee.<sup>42</sup> This same concept also forced the Army to consolidate many other of its' training base headquarters and organizations to include the armor and infantry branch schools at Fort Benning, Georgia and the air defense and field artillery branch schools at Fort Sill, Oklahoma with the power and authority of the BRAC law. Returning units and troops stationed overseas to

posts within the United States was another significant result of BRAC 2005. The large BRAC driven growth at Fort Bliss, Texas, with the return of the 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division from Germany, is an example of this dynamic.<sup>43</sup> The many other results of BRAC 2005 were remarkable, if not in the total number of closures, but in the magnitude of the bases identified for closure.

In summary, Donald Rumsfeld centrally controlled the BRAC 2005 process within the Department of Defense. He mandated results that were founded on joint and cross service consolidation as well as consolidations within the individual services. He intended to leverage additional savings via the returning of large numbers of US service member families from overseas bases to US domestic bases.<sup>44</sup> BRAC 2005 as a vehicle for implementing and realizing many of these changes was a very effective strategy. It indeed forced many actions by the military departments that they might not have otherwise taken. The final impacts and results of BRAC 2005 remain undetermined at this time since implementation is ongoing. The outcomes will gradually develop as we continue along the implementation time line to the September 2011 suspense for completion.

#### What Has Changed Since BRAC 2005 Decisions Were Made

As the BRAC 2005 implementation process is ongoing and continues, the rest of the world also continues to change and develop. Many initial Department of Defense decisions that the BRAC Commission accepted were made in late 2001 and early 2002. Who could have known that the United States would still be at war in both Iraq and Afghanistan, with ongoing and significant troop deployments in both places with no end in sight. The Department of Defense, Congress and the American public have

observed the flaws in our outpatient treatment and support of combat wounded veterans. This brings increasing scrutiny on both the military medical care system and the veterans and disability compensation processes. The costs to close Walter Reed Army Medical Center and rebuild it continue to rocket beyond the cost estimates used by the BRAC 2005 Commission to justify its closure<sup>45</sup>. The administration and the Congress have also recently decided to increase the size of the Army by some 65,000 Soldiers over the next four years. Even though the force will grow significantly over the next four years and the potential for stationing additional troops being returned from overseas bases is likely, bases located in the continental United States will continue to be closed based on BRAC 2005 mandates. The increase in Army end strength and continuing cost growth to close and replace Walter Reed combine to create a situation where certain BRAC 2005 decisions should be looked at again and re-validated prior to execution. However, I believe the likelihood of that happening is remote given the political foundation and overall strength of the BRAC process once it has been completed.

Another factor to consider is the Quadrennial Defense Review process. The Quadrennial Defense Review is the fundamental document that reviews national military strategy and therefore determines such fundamentally important concepts such as force levels and capabilities, overseas versus continental United States basing, emerging and needed tactics, techniques and procedures. The Quadrennial Defense Review further assesses each military service's various roles and missions and makes assessments of jointness and overall unity of effort within the Department of Defense. All of these important factors combine to make their consideration as a part of the BRAC process

not only desirable but mandatory if the BRAC process is to stay true to one of its most important closure criteria - military value. The last completed Quadrennial Defense review was conducted throughout 2005 and not completed until 6 February 2006.<sup>46</sup> This was well after the Department of Defense had evaluated and finalized all of the decisions that made up their BRAC 2005 initial recommendations. The 2001 QDR was considered during the BRAC 2005 decision processes, but the 2001 QDR was essentially complete prior to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks which acted to diminish its overall value in the post 9/11 world<sup>47</sup>. All of these developing situations can and will have an impact on not only BRAC 2005 decisions but also any future decision point on whether and when to conduct potential future rounds of BRAC.

### Conclusions

The BRAC process is an effective way to deal with the difficult issue of closing excess military bases. It has developed into an open and public process through the wisdom and experience gained by Congress and previous Presidents' realization that it could not be accomplished fairly and rationally via the normal Congressional committee and national legislative process. Secretary Rumsfeld's use of the BRAC process to harvest additional fiscal savings and efficiencies was a good decision at the time. Specifically, his use of the process to force the military services to implement joint basing and joint training initiatives was brilliant and effective. It harkens back directly to Secretary McNamara's use of closing strategic bomber bases in the 1960s to make the Air Force support the national strategic shift from bombers to missiles as our primary method of nuclear deterrent. The United States as whole will benefit from the

rationalization of both installation management and training programs within the Department of Defense that simply would not have happened but for BRAC.

The timing of BRAC is also very important and future rounds should be synchronized with the Quadrennial Defense Review. The link between BRAC 2005 and the Quadrennial Defense Review could have been improved and formalized so that BRAC rounds are analyzed with the most current and relevant QDR possible. One way to do that would be to conduct a Section 2912 process at the same time and with the same data as the QDR. Both products would be presented to Congress for their review and potential action in authorizing future BRAC rounds. Formalizing the relationship of the QDR and the Section 2912 report would provide the Secretary of Defense, the President and the Congress the most current data on strategic missions and trends, force size, and existing base inventories with which to determine if and when future BRAC rounds are needed. This will also allow decisions on future BRAC rounds to be made on a more predictable or even scheduled basis.

All in all, the BRAC process has proven to be a rational, fair, and effective procedure. It is also a procedure specifically designed to defeat any effort to reverse individual outcomes. I have concluded the first best way to change a flawed but approved BRAC decision, is to authorize a new round of BRAC. Where despite its name, a new BRAC Commission in consultation with the Department of Defense and Congress, could consider actions that would negate previous BRAC decisions based on new and changed situations – like the Army's growing end strength and re-emerging need for increased military medical capacity in Washington DC. As we continue our march into the 21<sup>st</sup> century we will continue to require the benefits of financial savings

and optimal use of all resources. This makes it a certainty that Congress will authorize future rounds of BRAC. Hopefully, the process will take into account not only what we have learned in the past, but through careful and synchronized analysis, all that we anticipate in the future.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> David S. Sorenson, *Military Base Closure* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2007), 17.

<sup>2</sup> *The United States Department of Defense BRAC Home Page: Frequently Asked Questions*, available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/brac/faqs001.html>; Internet; accessed 8 December 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Sorenson, 76.

<sup>4</sup> *The FY 2002 Defense Authorization Act*, Public Law 107-107, Title 30, Section 2913, passed on 28 Dec 2001; available from <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d107:SN01438:@@L&summ2=m&>; Internet; assessed 12 January 2008.

<sup>5</sup> *The United States Department of Defense BRAC Home Page*, available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/brac/>; Internet; accessed 8 December 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Sorenson, 13-14.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-17.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>13</sup> Lilly J. Goren, *The Politics of Military Base Closings: Not in My District* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2003), 1-2.

<sup>14</sup> Sorenson, 175.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 176-178.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>20</sup> Goren, 77.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Base Closure and Realignment Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, March 1995), 3-2; available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/brac/docs/1995dod.pdf>; Internet; accessed 8 December 2007.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Sorenson, 33.

<sup>25</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Base Closure and Realignment Report*, 3-2.

<sup>26</sup> *The United States Department of Defense BRAC Home Page: 2005 Process*, available from [http://www.defenselink.mil/brac/docs/criteria\\_final\\_jan4\\_05.pdf](http://www.defenselink.mil/brac/docs/criteria_final_jan4_05.pdf); Internet; accessed 8 December 2007.

<sup>27</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Report Required by Section 2912 of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990, as amended through the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, March 2004), 3-4.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>29</sup> Sorenson, 38.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 76-78.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission: Report to the President*, Vol. 2 (Arlington: U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, 2005), Appendix E-1-E-3; linked from <http://www.brac.gov/docs/final/Volume2BRACReport.pdf>; Internet; accessed 8 December 2007.

<sup>33</sup> *2005 BRAC Selection Criteria Act*, HR 4246, 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 28 April 2004, available from [http://thomas.loc.gov/home/gpoxmlc108/h4246\\_ih.xml](http://thomas.loc.gov/home/gpoxmlc108/h4246_ih.xml); Internet; assessed 12 January 2008.

<sup>34</sup> U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, "Transformation through Base Realignment and Closure," memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments, Washington, D.C., 15 November 2002.

<sup>35</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, "BRAC PowerPoint Brief," 10 May 2005, linked from *The United States Department of Defense BRAC Home Page* at "BRAC Briefings and Slides," available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/brac/pdf/WalkaroundBrief10May05.pdf>; Internet; accessed 8 December 2007.

<sup>36</sup> Rumsfeld.

<sup>37</sup> Sorenson, 89.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 179.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 104-105.

<sup>40</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission: Report to the President*, Vol. 1 (Arlington: U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, 2005), 182; linked from <http://www.brac.gov/docs/final/Volume1BRACReport.pdf>; Internet; accessed 8 December 2007.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 180.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>44</sup> Sorenson, 103.

<sup>45</sup> Steve Vogel, "Military Hospitals Meet New Realities," *The Washington Post*, 11 February 2008, sec. B, p. 1.

<sup>46</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 6 February 2006), 1; available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/QDR20060203.pdf>; Internet; accessed 12 January 2008.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., v.

