



WASHINGTON UPDATE



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“SMALLER FORCES NEED FEWER BASES. It’s as simple as that.” With those words Defense Secretary Dick Cheney on April 12 made public his long-awaited base realignment and closure (BRAC) list. Cheney’s recommendations include closing 31 major and 12 minor domestic U.S. defense facilities and reducing or realigning forces at 28 others. Total costs to implement the proposal are estimated at \$5.7 billion between fiscal years 1992 and 1997. Total savings for that time period are estimated at \$6.5 billion; recurring savings, beginning in FY98, will total about \$1.7 billion annually.

Here, by service, are the numbers of military and civilian positions that would be eliminated should Cheney’s list be approved in its entirety:

	<u>Military</u>	<u>Civilian</u>
Army (7 bases)	28,085	11,477
Navy (9 bases)	39,301	14,182
Air Force (14 bases)	40,576	13,613
Marine Corps (1 base)	<u>4,105</u>	<u>348</u>
Total	112,067	39,620

SEVEN ARMY POSTS TO CLOSE, TEN TO BE REALIGNED if Defense Secretary Dick Cheney’s domestic base closing recommendations survive the complex approval process intact. Army installations slated for closure include Fort McClellan, AL; Fort Chaffee, AR; Sacramento Army Depot, CA; Fort Ord, CA; Fort Benjamin Harrison, IN; Fort Devens, MA; and Fort Dix, NJ. Recommended for realignment or reduction are: Fort Polk, LA; Harry Diamond Laboratory, Adelphi, MD; Aviation Systems Command-Troop Support Command, St. Louis, MO; Rock Island Arsenal, IL; Fort Detrick, MD; Fort Monmouth, NJ; Letterkenny Army Depot, PA; Army Research Institute, Alexandria, VA; White Sands Missile Range, NM; and Fort Belvoir, VA. Fourteen other Army installations stand to gain personnel as a result of the closure/realignment actions.

HOUSE APPROVES 1992 BUDGET that cuts Army end strength by 49,800. In the bill that now goes to the Senate, the House directed the Army to reduce its active duty strength from 710,000 to 660,200 by the end of FY 1992. Other Army highlights:

- 4.2 percent pay increase;
- Family separation pay increase from \$60 to \$75;
- Imminent danger pay increase from \$110 to \$150;
- \$90 million for 62 new M1A2 Abrams tanks;
- \$225 million for M1-to-M1A2 upgrade;
- \$400.8 million for armored systems R&D;
- \$155 million for upgrading 662 Bradley infantry fighting vehicles;
- \$82.8 million for upgrading AH-64 Apache attack helicopter;
- \$200 million for 36 new OH-58D Kiowa scout helicopters;
- \$549.5 million for Light Helicopter R&D.

DOD CIVILIAN HIRING FREEZE WILL CONTINUE — with some exceptions — at least until Sep. 30, the end of FY91, says Deputy Defense Secretary Donald Atwood. The freeze, part of a department-wide military and civilian drawdown, has been renewed several times since its inception in January 1990. While the policy applies to most hiring actions funded by the 1991 defense budget, exceptions include:

- The hiring of two civilians from outside DoD for every five positions vacated;
- The hiring of civilians who are essential to:
 - health, safety or security;
 - internship, work-study, exchange or 1991 graduate hiring objectives;
 - implementation of the 1989 Defense Management Review;
 - national drug-control strategy;
 - operations in the Persian Gulf.

MAJOR ARMY MOVES EXPECTED if the base closure/realignment actions are implemented as recommended. Relocation highlights include:

- 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized) from Fort Polk, LA to Fort Hood, TX;
- 7th Infantry Division (Light) from Fort Ord, CA to Fort Lewis, WA;
- Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) from Fort Chaffee, AR to Fort Polk;
- 1st (“Tiger”) Brigade from 2d Armored Division at Fort Hood to 1st Cavalry Division, also at Fort Hood (2d AD colors to be sent to 2d AD (Forward) in Germany);
- 199th Separate Motorized Brigade (of the inactivated 9th Division) from Fort Lewis to Fort Polk;
- U.S. Army Chemical and Military Police schools from Fort McClellan, AL to Fort Leonard Wood, MO, where they will combine with the Engineer School to form the Maneuver Support Warfighting Center;
- Army Recruiting Command from Fort Sheridan, IL to Fort Knox, KY;
- Soldier Support Center, Adjutant General School and Finance School from Fort Benjamin Harrison, IN to Fort Jackson, SC to form the Soldier Support Warfighting Center.

ATWOOD UNFREEZES MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, but some limitations remain. Deputy Defense Secretary Donald J. Atwood announced that the 14-month-old freeze, involving some \$6.7 billion in military construction projects, would end April 16. All contracts, however, must be consistent with force structure plans, and some will still require Atwood’s approval at least through Sep. 1991. These include construction at bases in Europe, Japan, Korea and the Washington, D.C., area, as well as those on the 1988 and the new 1991 base closing lists. All other projects require the approval of individual service secretaries or their designated representatives.

SENATORS SEEK CAUTIOUS DRAWDOWN, concerned about the impact on service members of rapid reductions in active-duty personnel strength. Sen. John McCain (R-AZ), among others, has suggested that such reductions may be unfair, particularly to minority members, and that ordering the services to make the cuts may have been a mistake.

To slow the drawdown would require either increased military spending, which would break the budget agreement, or reallocation of defense dollars from weapons programs — a move McCain is willing to support.

Sen. John Glenn (D-OH), while cognizant of the potential hardships resulting from the drawdown, disagrees with McCain’s position. Glenn is convinced that the services are doing everything possible to minimize the impact, and that the “safety net” benefits package enacted by Congress will sufficiently compensate involuntarily-separated service members.

MORE AIR- AND SEA-LIFT ARE VITAL to the smaller, more deployable Army now taking shape to meet new U.S. military strategy. A Senate hearing on the future of U.S. military forces recently heard Army Chief of Staff Gen. Carl E. Vuono emphasize the need for C-17 transport planes and more fast sea-lift ships to execute a strategy based on a global force-projection capability. Had the C-17 been available for Operation Desert Storm, he said, we would have been able to transport forces much faster and more efficiently than was possible with the older C-141 transport.

Citing lessons learned from Operation Desert Storm, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Fred Elam said the Army must be able to move two armored divisions from the U.S. to anywhere in the world in 30 days.

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ARMY FACES A TEN-YEAR TANK GAP, says Assistant Army Secretary Stephen Conner. The Army acquisition chief recently warned senators that big cuts in procurement spending (down 64 percent since 1985) and delays in the Armored Systems Modernization program could create a ten-year gap in which no tanks would be built in the United States. With the decision not to buy additional tanks now, only the 62 M1A2s the Army plans to make for its own use and whatever tanks are ordered for foreign orders stand between the tank industry and total shutdown by 1995. This would deal a fatal blow to the U.S. tank-building industrial base.

In a move that would keep the tank line open through 2002, the House Armed Services Committee (in its FY92 defense budget) has directed the Army to upgrade M1 tanks to M1A2 configurations "as soon as possible." The committee approved \$225 million for the upgrade, and \$64.4 million for added R&D on M1A2.

BOEING-SIKORSKY TEAM CHOSEN to build the Light Helicopter, the Army's next scout/attack helicopter. The Army announced April 5 that the Boeing-Sikorsky "First Team" has been selected to proceed with the light helicopter development program. At the same time the Army announced that the light helicopter would be named the RAH-66 Comanche. Development and production is estimated to be worth some \$34 billion.

Comanche has been labelled the Army's top priority acquisition by Stephen Conner, the Army Acquisition Executive. It will be a lightweight, twin-engine, advanced technology helicopter designed primarily to perform armed reconnaissance missions. It will also have air combat capabilities and perform attack missions in support of light forces.

LAST INF MISSILE DESTROYED at Longhorn Army Ammunition Plant, Karnack, TX. Destruction of a Pershing missile, the last U.S. missile covered under terms of the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty), took place May 6 amid commemorative ceremonies complete with media coverage.

SULLIVAN TO BE ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF when Gen. Carl E. Vuono retires at the end of June. With congressional confirmation, Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan will assume his new office just in time to oversee the Army drawdown he has helped to design.

In 30-plus years, Gen. Sullivan has commanded soldiers at every level from platoon to division, including command of both the 1st Brigade, 3d Armored Division in Germany and the 1st Infantry Division (Mechanized), Fort Riley, KS. He has also served as NATO's Deputy Chief of Staff for Support, as Deputy Commandant of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, KS, and as Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans in the Pentagon.

FIRST ARMY UNIT LEAVES EUROPE almost unnoticed. On Feb. 5 the 5th Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 8th Infantry Division (Mechanized) became the first U.S. Army unit to officially withdraw from Europe under a U.S.-Soviet troop-reduction treaty. In a history-making ceremony held in Mainz, Germany, the 5/8th formally ended 45 years on the front lines of the Cold War. By March 1 the battalion's soldiers had all been redeployed to other units in Germany, the U.S. and Saudi Arabia.

OSD INCREASES FY91 END STRENGTHS under authority contained in the supplemental appropriations for Desert Storm. Deputy Secretary of Defense Donald J. Atwood, Jr. released the services from the 1991 end-strength requirements set by last year's defense budget, giving the military departments a leeway of about one percent. For the Army, this means that the programmed end strength of 702,170 can be exceeded by some 7,800 soldiers. The new authority is for 710,000 active Army troops by the end of FY91.

Army strength increased to 744,000 soldiers during the first quarter of 1991 as a result of stop-loss policies instituted during Desert Shield. When it became apparent that it would exceed budgeted end strength for FY91 by at least 15,000 soldiers, the Army sought relief from the original limit.

AUSA'S DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS, COL Erik G. Johnson, Jr., USA Ret., recently addressed a joint congressional hearing of the Committees on Veterans' Affairs. Citing access to health care as the number one concern of retired soldiers and their families, COL Johnson reiterated AUSA's earlier recommendation that the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Department of Defense explore the possibilities of cost savings and improved health care delivery through shared resources, mutual support and integration of planning and operations at the local level.

COL Johnson also told the committee that AUSA, while pleased with congressional recognition of the need for an increase in the Montgomery GI Bill basic benefit levels, views the approved raise as inadequate and strongly advocates additional increases.

SEPARATION PAY FOR ENLISTED soldiers forced out of the service involuntarily may be resolved in the next month or so. Such payments were first authorized in the Defense Authorization Bill passed last November. However, the rules of eligibility are still to be approved by the Defense Secretary.

The end of the stop-loss policy and the beginning of the mandated drawdown have given a new urgency to the overdue eligibility rules. Since the bill was passed, as many as 500 enlisted members have been separated involuntarily without separation pay because the services have no authority to begin payments under the new system. Most will qualify under the new rules, and the services plan to pay them retroactive to Nov. 6, 1990, once the rules are approved. Separation pay for officers continues, but those who were underpaid due to the previous law's \$30,000 cap on payments will receive their full entitlement when the new rules are in place.

Under the new system, payments will continue to be computed by multiplying one-tenth of a service member's annual basic pay by years of service. The \$30,000 payment cap contained in the former law will no longer apply, but service members will be required to sign a three-year obligation to serve in the Ready Reserve.

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GULF VETERANS' BENEFITS BILL signed by President Bush on April 6 includes \$400 million in personnel benefits and \$255 million in veterans' assistance through 1995. Among its provisions:

- Increases imminent danger pay from \$110 to \$150 a month; *
- Increases family separation pay from \$60 to \$75 a month; *
- Doubles the death gratuity from \$3,000 to \$6,000;
- Doubles Servicemen's Group Life Insurance coverage from \$50,000 to \$100,000;
- Delays until Oct. 1, 1991, scheduled increases in CHAMPUS deductibles where sponsor served in the Persian Gulf;
- Increases monthly GI Bill payments from \$300 a month to \$350 for three-year enlistments;
- Gives mobilized reservists:
 - eligibility for VA home loans if mobilized for 90 days or more;
 - eligibility to receive BAQ;
 - deferment on repayment of student loans;
 - financial aid for farmers or ranchers;
 - specialty pay for health care professionals.

* Until 180 days after president declares end of war.

ILW'S MOST RECENT EDUCATIONAL PUBLICATIONS include:

- Army Equipment Systems Performance in Operation Desert Storm (Background Brief #34), providing descriptions and characteristics of selected Army equipment systems and their operational performance during the Persian Gulf War;

- The Army Budget for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993: An Analysis, a Fact Sheet which examines the various Army programs.

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