

Savings: 1996-2001: None

Annual: None

Return on Investment: None

FINAL ACTION: Remain Open

Secretary of Defense Recommendation

Realign Fort Hamilton. Dispose of all family housing. Retain minimum essential land and facilities for existing Army units and activities. Relocate all Army Reserve units from Caven Point, New Jersey, to Fort Hamilton.

Secretary of Defense Justification

Fort Hamilton is low in military value compared to the other command and control/administrative support installations. The post has limited capacity for additional growth or military development. No new or additional missions are planned.

This proposal reduces the size of Fort Hamilton by about one-third to support necessary military missions in the most cost effective manner. The New York Area Command, which includes protocol support to the United Nations, will remain at Fort Hamilton. Another installation will assume the area support currently provided to the New York area.

The Armed Forces Reserve Center at Caven Point was built in 1941. Its sole mission is to support reserve component units. The buildings on the 35-acre parcel are in poor condition. Relocating to Fort Hamilton will allow the Army Reserve to eliminate operating expenses in excess of \$100 thousand per year.

Community Concerns

The community argues adoption of the DoD recommendation would close family housing, force military families onto the economy, and yield only minor cost savings to the government. They also maintain the combined military entitlements of Basic Allowance for Quarters (BAQ) and Variable Housing Allowance (VHA) are \$200-\$500 per month less than the cost of area rentals. Further the availability of local rentals is very low. Access to the tight rental market is further compounded by culturally cohesive neighborhoods, where long-term residency is the norm. The community asked the Commission to give the recent military housing privatization initiative a chance to mature through the legislative process and reject the DoD recommendation to close Fort Hamilton's family housing. The community believes Fort Hamilton is

a highly cost efficient installation providing vital services to military elements and retirees in the New York area. The Army has a historic presence in New York City dating back to the Revolution. Adoption of the DoD recommendation would effectively terminate the last active Army facility in the New York City area.

Commission Findings

The Commission found the age and condition of housing is generally comparable to the local market, even though a significant backlog of unfunded maintenance exists. The Commission noted local housing is expensive, and vacancies are limited due to culturally cohesive neighborhoods where long term residency is normal. Rentals comparable to family housing would exceed military quarters entitlements by \$200-\$500 per month. The Commission found adoption of the DoD recommendation would result in shifting an unwarranted cost burden onto a family housing population composed of relatively junior enlisted military families (currently 37.5 percent E-5 and below).

Commission Recommendation

The Commission finds the Secretary of Defense deviated substantially from final criteria 1, 4, and 5. Therefore, the Commission recommends the following: Fort Hamilton will remain open. Army Reserve units at Caven Point, New Jersey will remain in place. The Commission finds this recommendation is consistent with the force-structure plan and final criteria.

Fort Totten, New York

Category: Command and Control

Mission: As a sub-post of Fort Hamilton and part of the New York Area Command, provides support to active duty and retired personnel within the local area; serves as host to Headquarters, 77th U.S. Army Reserve Command

One-time Cost: \$1.0 million

Savings: 1996-2001: \$1.5 million

Annual: \$0.7 million

Return on Investment: 1999 (Immediate)

FINAL ACTION: Close

Secretary of Defense Recommendation

Close Fort Totten, except an enclave for the U. S. Army Reserve. Dispose of family housing.

Secretary of Defense Justification

Fort Totten, a sub-installation of Fort Hamilton, provides administrative and logistical support to Army Reserve units in the New York City metropolitan area.

Fort Totten is low in military value compared to other command and control/administrative support installations. The post has limited capacity for growth or further military development.

Fort Totten is home to the Ernie Pyle U.S. Army Reserve Center, the largest in the country. Realignment of the Center to nearby Fort Hamilton is not possible since Fort Hamilton has little available space. Therefore, the Army decided to retain this facility as a reserve enclave.

Community Concerns

The community believes Fort Totten constitutes a highly cost-effective operation. Costs associated with programs, facilities, and military services provided to active and reserve armed forces members would increase substantially if they were drawn from the local economy. While quarters are early 1960s standards approaching the end of their useful life span, they are commensurate with units available in the local area. All local rentals are expensive and difficult to find. Most rentals require three months advance rent, a security deposit and a broker's fee for start-up costs. Combined military entitlements for Basic Allowance for Quarters (BAQ) and Variable Housing Allowance (VHA) are \$200-\$500 per month less than the cost of area rentals. In addition, there are very few local rentals available. Access to the tight rental market is further compounded by culturally cohesive neighborhoods, where long-term residency is the norm. The community also notes that Old Fort Totten, an unofficial historic site and museum, has an historic legacy and artifacts dating back to the Revolutionary War. Any potential development at Fort Totten would pose a threat to historic preservation.

Commission Findings

The Commission found the DoD recommendation to close Fort Totten pertains primarily to family housing. The Ernie Pyle Reserve Center and 77th Army Reserve Command are not at issue in the recommendation.

The Commission acknowledged family housing had a significant backlog of deferred maintenance

requirements. At least 24 units were inactive due to unsatisfied rehabilitation needs, and occupied units contained limited amenities. The Commission also noted the area around Fort Totten was an upscale community where rentals are expensive, and vacancies are limited. By Commission cost estimates, moving Fort Totten's military families on the economy would result in a total out-of-pocket expense of \$0.5 million to family housing members. Alternatively, the draft Army plan to rehabilitate quarters at the Navy's Mitchell Field, Long Island housing area is financially unattractive. The Commission found, however, a sufficient number of vacant quarters exist at Fort Hamilton to satisfy Fort Totten's military family housing requirements. The Commission found acceptance of the DoD recommendation would result in a reduction of excess infrastructure.

Commission Recommendation

The Commission finds the Secretary of Defense did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and final criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the following: close Fort Totten, except an enclave for the U.S. Army Reserve. Dispose of family housing.

Seneca Army Depot, New York

Category: Ammunition Storage Installations
Mission: Receive, store, issue, maintain and demilitarize conventional munitions; receive, store, and issue general supplies, including hazardous materials and prepositioned reserve stocks

One-time Cost: \$29.9 million

Savings: 1996-2001: \$12.9 million

Annual: \$19.3 million

Return on Investment: 1999 (Immediate)

FINAL ACTION: Close

Secretary of Defense Recommendation

Close Seneca Army Depot, except an enclave to store hazardous material and ores.

Secretary of Defense Justification

This recommendation is supported by the Army's long range operational assessment. The Army has adopted a "tiered" ammunition depot concept to reduce infrastructure, eliminate static non-required ammunition stocks, decrease manpower requirements, increase efficiencies and permit the Army to manage a smaller stockpile. The tiered depot