

## BRAC Commission Members Appointed *BENS Defends BRAC in Press Interviews*

The next round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) took another step forward March 15 with President Bush's nomination of the nine BRAC commissioners who will review the Pentagon's suggested list of base closures and realignments and report their recommendations to the president in September. Former Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi was nominated as commission chairman. Mississippi Sen. Trent Lott had placed a hold on all BRAC nominations, potentially derailing the process. But while Congress was away, President Bush exercised his recess appointment powers, bypassing the Senate and installing the commissioners until the next Congress meets in 2007. By then, however, their task will be complete. A full list of nominees and more details are at our BRAC 2005 webpage.

As BRAC heats up, communities around the nation are asking questions about the process – and getting their answers from BENS. Ever since helping to create the process in the 1980s, BENS has been known as a “go to” authority on base closure. In recent weeks, journalists from across the country and news services Scripps-Howard, Knight Ridder and Media General have turned to BENS for expert insights. Staff member Ken Beeks participated in a live radio discussion on BRAC on North Carolina's WJNC 1240/WTKF 107.3. As always, BENS remains a strong voice for BRAC as a needed tool in getting the most for our defense dollars and transforming the military for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### [BENS Works: Business Sense for National Security](#)

**A May Day Not to Miss** – Details continue to fall into place for the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual BENS Washington Forum and the Eisenhower Award dinner honoring FedEx CEO, President and Chairman Fred Smith on May 19 in Washington, D.C. This year's Forum – which will focus on the transformation of America's military, intelligence services and foreign policy – will feature remarks from United States Joint Forces Commander Admiral Ed Giambastiani, Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Thomas Collins, and Deputy National Intelligence Director-designate Lt. General Michael Hayden among others. The Forum will be held in the Grand Ballroom of the Renaissance Washington Hotel. More information about additional speakers and a detailed speaking schedule will follow shortly.

The Eisenhower Award Dinner honoring Fred Smith – which will be held in the spectacular Great Hall of the National Building Museum – will be an evening to remember. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist of Tennessee, Washington Redskins owner Daniel Snyder and Air Force Gen. John Handy will give personal tributes as we celebrate Smith's achievements as an exemplary leader and business visionary. If you are interested in attending, contact Jennie Moonis at (202) 296-2125 or [JMoonis@bens.org](mailto:JMoonis@bens.org). We hope to see you there.

**CTR Goes Global** – In February, Indiana Sen. Richard Lugar introduced a bill that would allow Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) funds to be spent outside the former Soviet Union to help combat the threat of global WMD. Additionally, the legislation would permanently remove restrictions on CTR waived by the White House on an annual basis. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice expressed support for the legislation during her confirmation hearing and President Bush is a strong supporter of CTR's goals. BENS supports Lugar's legislation as a way to improve CTR's ability to reduce the threat of WMD at a cost of roughly one-tenth of one percent of the defense budget.

**BENS if by Land, BENS if by Sea!** – Through our innovative Business Forces around the country, BENS is already helping defend the American homeland against terrorist attack. Now BENS has been asked to help protect against attacks by sea. At the request of the Coast Guard, BENS and the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) will assess and offer recommendations to the president's National Maritime Security Strategy. Over the next two months, BENS-CSIS working groups will convene in Long Beach, California and New York City to identify ways to strengthen security of the nation's ports and waterways. If you are interested in participating, please contact Kiersten Todt Coon at (202) 296-2125 or [KTodtcoon@bens.org](mailto:KTodtcoon@bens.org).

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## Business Force News

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**A Golden Opportunity** – Already operational in four states, the Business Force is expanding into the Golden State. BENS is pleased to welcome Peter Ohtaki as director of the Bay Area Business Force, based in San Francisco and covering northern California. Most recently, Peter was a co-founder and CFO of NetTV, a technology company that provides large-screen digital displays to educational institutions and commercial markets. Peter also has experience in investment banking and assisted taking Cisco Systems public in 1990. Peter holds a B.A. in Economics from Harvard University and an M.B.A. from Stanford University. Welcome aboard, Peter!

**BENS Goes Hollywood** – Last month, BENS was invited to meet with the Homeland Security Advisory Council (HSAC) in Los Angeles to help them expand the scope of their public-private partnership. Started in 2002, HSAC is a group of 60 local leaders from business, government and academic circles with a desire to strengthen homeland security in southern California. The HSAC membership looks a lot like the Business Force membership BENS has built in New Jersey and Georgia, and is currently building in Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa and the San Francisco Bay Area. Be sure to check this space for more details in the coming months.

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## EVENT HIGHLIGHTS AND BENS DEVELOPMENTS

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**“We Can Make a Real Difference”** – Calling the Business Force a model for the public-private collaborations required in the post-Sept. 11 world, Marsha Evans, President and CEO of the American Red Cross and a retired Navy rear admiral, called for greater cooperation between the two organizations. “I see tremendous potential in an expanded BENS/Red Cross partnership,” Evans told BENS members and guests at a March 22 breakfast meeting in Washington, D.C. BENS is currently exploring a national partnership with the Red Cross to improve the business community’s response to major emergencies. She also praised the Business Force for its online database of business resources.

**Thinking the Unthinkable** – Unless the international community takes decisive action, it’s only a matter of time before terrorists detonate a nuclear weapon in a city – possibly an American city. That was the dire warning delivered by Dr. Graham Allison, Director of the Belfer Center at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government during a March 15 breakfast meeting with BENS members and guests in New York City. A former Asst. Secretary of Defense and author of the new book, “Nuclear Terrorism: The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe,” Allison argued that nonproliferation efforts should be guided by the “Three No’s:” no loose nukes, no new nuclear states and no new nuclear weapons.

**Sweet Home Alabama** – Atlanta-area BENS members got a first-hand look at America’s defense against terrorism, including terrorism aimed at the nation’s food supply, during a March 16 visit to the Department of Homeland Security’s Center for Domestic Preparedness in Anniston, Alabama. The BENS delegation watched training designed to help first responders deter, prepare and respond to uses of weapons of mass destruction, with a particular close up of biological weapons response training.

**Inside Leavenworth** – Have you ever imagined what it’s like to operate one of the military’s unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), used to pursue al Qaeda and Taliban forces in Afghanistan? Kansas City BENS members found out during a March 16 visit to Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. In addition to the UAV, base commander Lt. Gen. Scott Wallace gave members a look at the Stryker, the Army’s armored combat vehicle and an urban combat individual trainer – a video game-like device that puts users in combat-like scenarios.

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## Upcoming Events

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- **NJBF Private Sector Roundtable**, analyzing impact of TOPOFF 3 terrorism exercise scenario on business decisions, April 14, Jersey City, New Jersey. Contact Hank Straub at (609) 777-3999 or HStraub@bens.org.
- **Policy Committee Meeting** in New York City, April 21.
- **BENS Policy Briefing**, April 21, Noon, The Harvard Club, New York City. Contact Bob McClure at (866) 475-2085 or BMcClure@bens.org.
- Luncheon with **Dr. Julie Gerberding**, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Four Seasons hotel, April 27, Atlanta, Ga. Contact Aimee Yrlas at (404) 220-1268 or AYrlas@bens.org.
- Breakfast with **Major General Scott Gration**, Director of Strategy and Policy for U.S. European Command, May 11, New York City. Contact Bob McClure at (866) 475-2085 or BMcClure@bens.org.
- **BENS Annual Washington Forum and Eisenhower Award Dinner** honoring FedEx chairman, president and CEO **Fred Smith**, May 19, Washington D.C. Contact Jennie Moonis at (202) 296-2125 or JMoonis@bens.org.