

C-Span Roundtable
400 N. Capitol St. NW #650
Wash, D.C. 20001

[REDACTED]
Coral Gables, Fla. 33114-4251
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Attached is an article about an organization of the United States Government that has stopped working for the American people and is only working toward it's own expansion. The only reason this group exists is that NOAA "management" doesn't have the political "guts" to disband this organization. The NOAA Corps is so top heavy that it has Two Star Admirals (two) and four One Star Admirals for four hundred employees.

Currently, a portion of this organization, the Aircraft Operations Center (AOC), is planning to take over an airfield that the Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) determined should be closed. The runway at MacDill AFB is scheduled to be closed on April 1, 1994, saving the tax payer 10 million dollars a year. Although this closing was voted on by congress and signed by the president, DOD has found another federal agency to "front" for them in running the airfield. An organization with fourteen planes can hardly justify running a 10 million dollar airfield, but, DOD will be paying for the field "under the table". This move has been condemned by both the GAO (GAO/GGD-93-41) and the Inspector Generals office (IRM-5904). The Director of AOC, RADM Admiral Moran, is currently being investigated by the IG's criminal office for fraud and misuse of Government funds.

During October 1992, Sect. Cheney approved the move of NOAA's (part of DOC) aircraft to MacDill, AFB and assured NOAA rights to the runway after March, 1994, when the runway was to be closed. But, he directed the land would have to go to a "local-use authority."

Giving NOAA the Airfield would violate the base closure commission's purpose: saving taxpayer dollars by getting property out of government hands, as stated by Major Tom LaRock, an Air Force spokesman at the Pentagon. "That would be just a shell game, giving it from one federal agency to another," LaRock said.

Well, the shell game is about to happen. DOC is about to receive the airfield from DOD and DOD will pass DOC about 10 million a year to run the airfield. I believe this is not only a devious act but an illegal one. Please investigate this shell game and stop the transfer of these assets.

P.S. We haven't seen or heard
any response from CSPAN since
our 3-25-94 letter.
However we all still have
hope for your exposure/advocacy...

Please Help - Here's more Late Breaking News
on this Civilian Rear Admiral & his NOAA Corps -
[REDACTED]

Sincerely,
[REDACTED]

MacDill solution pledged

Gibbons, Young indicate Congress will act if Pentagon doesn't in airstrip dispute.

By STEVE HUETTEL and JOHN STEBBINS
Tribune Staff Writers

TAMPA — The fight over money to keep airplanes flying at MacDill Air Force Base is headed for the highest levels of the Pentagon.

And if the military's top generals and civilians can't sort it out, Florida members of Congress said Thursday, they will in next year's defense budget.

"Someone is going to have to tell the Air Force or some other branch that they'll have to pick up the tab for MacDill," said U.S. Rep. Sam Gibbons, D-Tampa. "There is a problem. But it's a problem that's going to be solved."



Gibbons

The U.S. Commerce Department pledged to take the airfield, which had been ordered closed by the federal base closing commission in 1991.

As of Oct. 1, the agency is scheduled to operate the runways for its scientific testing aircraft and planes supporting military units remaining at the south Tampa base.

But the Air Force and a MacDill headquarters each insist that the other pick up the military's share — roughly 90 percent — of the \$7 million annual cost.

Commerce officials threaten to walk away from the deal without the cash. Base boosters say that could endanger MacDill and its 7,000 jobs when the base closing commission reopens for business in 1995.

The odd relationship between MacDill and two headquarters on base is at the heart of the problem.

U.S. Special Operations Command and U.S. Central Command report to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a panel of the top-ranking officers of each branch of the military.

The headquarters rely on the Air Force for everything from police and fire protection to legal advice and medical care. But they have no authority how the service spends money at MacDill.

MacDill problem Pentagon's to solve

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Only the Pentagon's top brass can settle disputes like the runway lap.

"It looks like we're going to be [involved] in the next week or so," Lt. Col. Larry Icenogle, a spokesman for the Joint Chiefs, said Thursday. "Stay tuned, more to follow."

Gibbons said he plans to pressure the Pentagon's top civilians.

He requested time with Defense Secretary William Perry and Air Force Secretary Sheila Widnall to discuss the issue.

Congress will handle the problem if the Pentagon doesn't, pledged U.S. Rep. C.W. Bill Young. The Indian Rocks Beach Republican has a big say on the military budget from his seat on the defense appropriations subcommittee.

"The quickest way would be to have some folks from the Pentagon come to the subcommittee and explain what the problem is and how to solve it," he said Thursday. "I expect we will do that fairly soon."

When the 1991 Base Closure and Realignment Commission voted to close the airfield and move MacDill's F-16 fighters, the loudest objections came from Special Operations Command.

The headquarters directs elite commando units and couldn't operate out of Tampa International Airport, its generals argued.

Once the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) — a part of the Commerce Department — agreed to move its 5 aircraft from Miami and operate

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Lt. Col. LARRY ICENOGLA
a Pentagon spokesman

a joint-use airfield, the command's problems seemed to be over.

But the language of last year's base closing commission decision approving the transfer left room for different interpretations.

The panel recognized that MacDill units needed use of an airfield. NOAA and Special Operations brass assumed that meant the Air Force would pay, just like it pays for other support services.

Instead, the Air Force contends its obligation ends at MacDill's gate, said Col. Charles Ohlinger, commander of the base's 6th Air Base Wing. On Oct. 1, the airfield isn't part of MacDill any more.

NOAA officials said they first learned of the Air Force position last month as a proposal for bids to operate the airfield was released. The bids are now on hold.

"Someone needs to impress on the Air Force that if they keep horsing around, we'll leave," said Robert Fagin, NOAA's director of administration.