ABSTRACT

Title of dissertation: MILITARY BASE CLOSURE EFFECTS ON A COMMUNITY: THE CASE OF FORT RITCHIE ARMY GARRISON AND CASCADE, MARYLAND

Meridith Hill Thanner, Doctor of Philosophy, 2006

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Fort Ritchie Army Garrison in Cascade, Maryland, slated for closure as part of the 1995 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round, officially ceased military operations three years later on September 30, 1998. Despite the fact that Ritchie shut its gates more than seven years ago, a confluence of circumstances has prevented its reuse; the property remains the possession of the U.S. Army and the community has yet to benefit from reuse efforts. To understand how such base closings affect the local community (the place), as well as the character of the place, an ethnographic case study was undertaken. Interwoven with this understanding of place are individual stories of those affected by the closing and how they, based on their relationship to the place and the meanings they attach to it, responded to the closing and the ensuing reuse process. I conducted in-depth interviews, spent time in the community, reviewed archival records, and collected and analyzed demographic and economic data to quantify some of the social and economic impacts on the area over time, and conducted a post hoc Social Impact Assessment. By

employing concepts of place to understand how the community came to see itself in relation to the fort (Ritchie), and how residents came to value and use the fort, several predominant themes emerged. Specifically, I found that residents have a strong sense of place and place attachment, in spite of obvious imbalances of power between different segments of the community, which result in feelings of disenfranchisement by residents from the local political structure. Though this dissertation is the story of how one community has responded and adjusted to the loss of the military, lessons can be learned by other communities facing base closings, as well as by federal entities tasked with overseeing and facilitating the process.

MILITARY BASE CLOSURE EFFECTS ON A COMMUNITY: THE CASE OF FORT RITCHIE ARMY GARRISON AND CASCADE, MARYLAND

By

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This project would have been entirely impossible to conduct had it not been for the generosity and kindness of strangers. I initiated contacts with community members and others affiliated with Ritchie through a series of cold calls and letters – calls and letters which could very easily have been dismissed. But, if I knew then what I know now, I could have forgone many restless and anxious nights wondering how I would ever convince a few residents to speak me – let alone more than two dozen of them. The community members in and around Ritchie on the whole are the most gracious group of individuals I have come to know. Not only did they invite me into their homes (some on more than one occasion), but they also offered many hours of their time and many helpings of cakes, breads, and snacks. The identification of Ritchie as a place of study was quite serendipitous and proved quite a research treasure trove considering the current state of affairs – this too provided me with a group of people with whom to speak, who not only remember Ritchie, but who are still in the throws of trying to protect it. To the residents of Cascade and to all who loved Ritchie, I dedicate this dissertation to you.

Back on the home front, there are many others who must be acknowledged for their role in the development of this project. First and foremost, I must recognize the support and guidance of my advisor and mentor, Dr. Mady Wechsler Segal. It is because of her interest in and support of my work that this project came into being. Along with Mady, I must also recognize her colleague (and husband), Dr. David R. Segal, who first introduced me to Socy 869 and sparked my interest in military sociology and has stood with Mady as an additional source of encouragement and as a friend. Additionally, I

would like to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to my dissertation committee members who each in their own way provided great support to this project and helped give it its final form.

I must also recognize my mother, who has always been my biggest fan and seems happiest when she can share in my accomplishments; her enduring pride in me has given me the ability to take pride in myself. And last, but not least, I would like to recognize and thank my husband, Bryan, for allowing me to pursue my interests; no matter how far they took me from home and no matter how many hours I left him as the sole provider of our beautiful baby girl. His internal strength and level of comfort with himself has allowed him to support me in more ways than he knows, and for that, I am eternally grateful.

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

All roads lead to Fort Ritchie. For residents of the small, rural villages perched on the mountaintop plateau of Mt. Quirauk[1] this oft-repeated phrase has both literal and figurative meaning. Just south of the Mason-Dixon Line, nestled unassumingly in the shadow of the Mountain and surrounded by memories of a bygone era, Fort Ritchie Army Garrison lies at the crossroads of two states, four counties, and an unsure future. Just outside the main gates of Ritchie (as it is affectionately referred to by the locals) lie the villages of Cascade and Highfield, with Blue Ridge Summit just north in Pennsylvania, and the village of PenMar (which straddles both states) to the northwest. Ritchie has been a part of this rather remote area since the 1920s when it was founded as a training center for the Maryland National Guard – then named Camp Ritchie. From the beginning, and through the decades as the site changed hands between the state and federal governments, depending on the military needs of the U.S. Army, this place – Ritchie – has had an indescribable and indelible connection with those who lived, played, and worked within and just beyond its walls. The closing of Ritchie has impacted this small, mountaintop community in so many ways, not simply because this was a place that so many loved, but because this place, which in itself represents both the history and the future of the area, has been caught between countervailing forces that have left it and those connected to it – more than 7 years after the closing of its gates – in a perpetual period of transition.

How the community surrounding Fort Ritchie has been affected by the closing of the base, as well as how residents have been affected and have responded during this long

[1] Pronounced, "Key Rock."

transition from a military to a non-military community is the primary focus of this dissertation. To understand fully the impact of the closing of this base on the community, from the perspective of those actually affected – a kind of effort not yet undertaken in a community as part of the base realignment and closure process – entailed the simple task of spending time and talking with those people connected to Ritchie (thus taking an ethnographic approach). Recognizing that much reliance was placed on the recalling of memories from many years past, my data collection methods were triangulated by also reading through local newspaper archives (concentrating mostly on the period since February 1995, when it was announced that Ritchie was on the draft closure list) and published government reports related to the closure.[2] Additionally, I collected and reviewed demographic and economic data to quantify some of the social and economic impacts on the area over time, and to conduct a post hoc Social Impact Assessment.

From July through December 2005, I made more than a dozen trips to the community around Ritchie as well as to other areas in Maryland and Pennsylvania to conduct interviews with people in their home or at their place of employment. I also visited the area around Ritchie on occasions to access archived newspaper articles at the library in Waynesboro, Pennsylvania; to attend a HUD required community meeting; and to "just hang out with" the locals.

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[2] At this point, I must recognize and give a great deal of thanks to two very diligent and helpful community residents who not only created personal newspaper archives documenting the trials and tribulations of the area since the announcement of the closing of Ritchie, but provided copies of their collections to me to review. The former Post Historian also provided copies of several documents and artifacts that proved both interesting and useful. I would also like to recognize a very friendly library janitor, who, upon inquiring about my project and learning its intent, led me to an old newspaper collection on Ritchie (dating back to the 1980s) that he came across while cleaning out old files and had filed away in storage. The help of these particular individuals was not only serendipitous, but provided me with a vast amount of valuable data that I did not need to collect myself, thus saving me many weeks (if not months) of work searching through local newspaper and other document archives.

I first initiated contacts with individuals whom I determined to be key players or stakeholders in the story of Ritchie: representatives of the Army, of the Local Redevelopment Authority, of area businesses, and members of the Cascade Committee community group. I obtained contact information for these initial key players primarily from on-line sources and I initiated contact either by phone, letter of introduction, or e-mail. During the course of many of the interviews, the respondent often identified other individuals with whom I could speak and provided their contact information. Therefore, though I initially knew which informants with whom I wanted to speak – a very purposive approach – other individuals were identified through the use of a snowball sampling method.

I began with a general sense of topics I wanted to discuss with each respondent and always had a list of prepared questions related to how the respondent felt when he/she heard about the base closing; how the respondent and his/her family was affected by the closing; how he/she perceived the community as being affected by the closing and the reuse process; and whether he/she saw the closing as a positive, negative, or insignificant event. Even with these prepared questions, however, I let most interviewees tell me what was important to them and tried to let them speak as openly and uninterrupted as possible. In some cases informants were so entrenched in certain relevant issues (and felt that my project was an opportunity for them to have their voice heard) that I never even got as far as getting my list of prepared questions out of my bag.

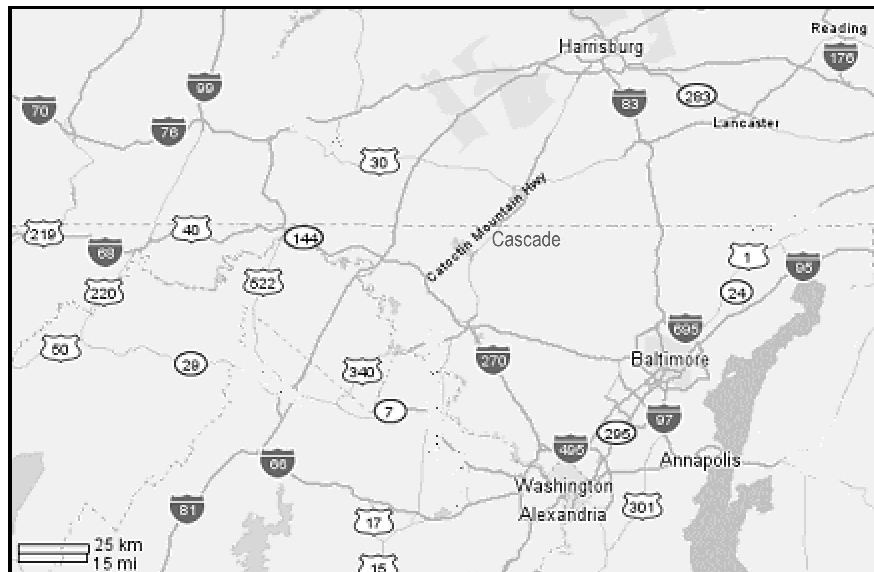
I let the interviewee take me where they might. By staying open and less structured provided the best chance of seeing the richness in the stories each person told. Furthermore, this approach allowed me to glean information on new issues and concerns

that I had not previously known or considered (thus, a rather grounded approach) and then could discuss with future respondents.

Over the five-month period of this project, twenty-four people associated with Ritchie, either in person, on the phone, or via e-mail agreed to be interviewed formally or engage in conversation; in total, I digitally recorded and transcribed thirty-one hours of residents' history with and memories of Ritchie and the changes in their lives since Ritchie closed. Other respondents provided information via e-mail messages and I saved and documented these as well.

The information gleaned from these individuals not only lays the foundation for the story that I tell, but provides context to the broader social and political events that have impacted this community as a result of the federal base realignment and closure process. This core group of informants is quoted throughout this dissertation, as are other individuals associated with the story who were not interviewed, but were referenced extensively in other sources (e.g., newspaper articles, Army publications, other federal documentation) and by those interviewed. For purposes of confidentiality and consistency, most of the individuals with whom I had personal contact as well as those closely affiliated with the story, but relayed only through information gathered by way of secondary sources, are listed by their role in the story rather than by name (e.g., Mr. Hide the local butcher is simply be referred to as the local butcher). These individuals, listed by their role, are briefly described in Table 2 on page 65). All other names, places, and events remain factual. For a point of reference, Figure 1 identifies the location of Fort Ritchie in relation to the Baltimore, Maryland and Washington, DC areas.

Figure 1. Fort Ritchie (Cascade, Maryland) in relation to Baltimore, Maryland and Washington, D.C.



My initial concern that it would be difficult to locate "long term" residents – those who lived in the area during the time Ritchie was active – was quickly allayed as I found that not only were many residents long term (often with generational roots in the area), but many civilians who worked for Ritchie chose to maintain their residence in the area after its closing. Still, it must be recognized that the people involved with this project are those who have stayed in the community. And while their stories contribute significantly to the understanding of the events that transpired in the wake of the closing of Ritchie, without the stories of those who moved from the area, the full tale will remain incomplete.

Throughout the time spent at Ritchie (whether it was with community residents; local business owners; Army representatives; members of the Local Redevelopment Authority; or County Commissioners), Ritchie's importance to those connected to it – both historically and contemporarily – was evident and appreciable. Further

understanding the reasons for why this place holds such importance in the lives of those around it, and how these feelings, in turn, affect the actions of community members is a secondary, though significant, concern of this dissertation.

Understanding Place

The concepts of place theory can help to understand how a place can give meaning and a sense of identity over time (Gans 2002; Gieryn 2000; Lobao 1993; Paulsen 2004), as well as understand how residents see themselves *in relation to* that place (Kemmis 1990) or as Lobao (1993:26) puts it: the "locality effect."[3] In particular, these concepts help to recognize how Fort Ritchie has been given meaning and a sense of identity by the community just outside its gates, and conversely, how it has given meaning and a sense of identity to the community.

Understanding how one particular *place* (for example, Ritchie) over time has shaped and has been shaped by various human action is important since "examining the ways that places process events and forces that come their way allows us to see how social action occurs in specified local contexts" (Paulsen 2004:257). Furthermore, the way "emplaced" social actors as *users* of social space (e.g., a neighborhood or community) *choose to use* this space not only determines what happens to that space, but in turn has effects on actors and future social actions (Gans 2002; Gieryn 2000). In

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[3] On a semantical note, when referring to a geographical area, researchers have used different reference terms (and often different definitions) when they seem to be speaking about the same concept – space, place, geography, and locale (though some have made a very good case for the definitional, and conceptual, distinction between space and place, e.g., Gieryn, 2000). For clarity, however, in this study, when describing the area of study (e.g., the area including and around Fort Ritchie military base), borrowing from Lobao (1993) and Paulsen (2004), I will employ the words "place" and "locality" interchangeably in reference to this geographic space. In particular, locality can be used as a conceptual unit of analysis that can inform our understanding of social relations since social action cannot be properly understood apart from the place in which it is embedded. And, localities can be seen as mediating "the various contingent conditions under which general social processes operate" (Lobao 1993:26).

particular, places can affect not only one's sense of self, but also one's sense of safety, and the types of interactions one has with others; "in short, the places where we spend our time affect the people we are and can become" (Hiss 1990:xi).

Incorporating the concepts of place (and the study of spatial relationships) is important as well, for "social relations are inextricably tied to a spatial context and cannot fully be understood without reference to this context" (Lobao 1993:11). Place is a structure that guides everyday action while simultaneously being made and remade based on these actions (Molotch, Freudenburg and Paulsen 2000); it turns space into something that is filled with meaning and serves as a source of identity (Friedland 1992). The incorporation of place into this study broadens our understanding not only of how the area itself affects and is affected by social interactions within, but also of how these social interactions tie into the larger regional, national, and global systems within which the locality is "nested" (Lobao 1993).

The concept of *place*, as an element in social life, helps shape how individuals identify themselves and their surroundings. A study sensitive to the concept of place can therefore provide a more robust understanding of impacts when disruptions within a place occur, as place is an entity with detectable and independent effects on social life (Werlen 1993). It is simultaneously outside and inside individuals: "We live our lives in place and have a sense of being part of place, but we also view place as something separate, something external" (Entrikin 1991:7).

A place is not only an area with physicality ("a compilation of things or objects at some particular spot in the universe" [Gieryn 2000:465]), it is also a place because it has identification by and meaning for people – a place is an area that is "interpreted, narrated,

perceived, felt, understood, and imagined" (Gieryn 2000:465), and is comprised of unique meanings and values. A *sense of place*, therefore, is derived from the ascribed qualities given to a place by individuals, qualities that are often historically contingent and shared and sustained by a diverse group of imageries and experiences (Boyer 1994). An ancillary concept is that of *place attachment*, or the emotional, sentimental bonds people have to particular places with the notion that the longer people have lived in a place, the more they will feel a greater attachment to it and the things that comprise that place (Elder et al. 1996). Other research on community attachment also suggests that feelings of place attachment increase with age, regardless of length of residence (Cuba and Hummon 1993). These feelings of attachment give meaning to how people identify themselves. Place attachment often occurs by endowing certain buildings or neighborhoods with emotional meaning and it "facilitates a sense of security and well-being, defines group boundaries, and stabilizes memories against the passage of time" (Gieryn 2000:481).

It is often a subtle set of qualities like meanings and patterns of social life that define for people this sense of place (Paulsen 2004). How the material and symbolic elements of place (including its geography, history, economy, culture) interact to influence local patterns of meaning and action is what gives a particular place its *character*; this is a concept differentiated from sense of place due to the emphasis on action as opposed to memory and feelings of attachment. These elements and their meanings set the tone of local life and encourage (or discourage) different patterns of social action. And, sociologically speaking, it is important to understand how place

character impacts, for example, the exercise of power or the distribution of resources (Paulsen 2004).

Sensitivity to place (sense of place, place attachment, and place character), for example, is achieved by taking into account the significance of particular buildings and the perceptions of the place generally by those who live there. Moreover, understanding how place intersects with social practices, norms, and values provides a more informed description of how individuals and communities identify themselves. Including the concept of place into an analysis such as this is important too because it can help to understand not only how the community under study was changed by a particular exogenous disruption (the closing of the base), but can help to inform how similar communities and their residents might respond. For sociological studies, a focus on place provides a fuller understanding of social life and the forces that help shape social interactions, the meanings people hold of these interactions, and subsequent action. This theme is an echo of Erikson's (1976) discussion of the impact of a disaster, the Buffalo Creek flood, on a local Appalachian community. In his ethnographic study of the response of residents to the flood and its aftermath, Erikson notes that singular events and tragedies, and the wounds which result, can only properly be understood in their local context: "In order to relate that part of the story…one should focus on the particularities of the locale, the history of the persons involved, and the contours of the event itself" (1976:246). In particular, Paulsen (2004:258, emphasis added) suggests three important lessons that can be learned by undertaking research from this perspective:

> We can see *first* how understandings of place orient locals toward [particular exogenous] events and forces in distinct ways, as places will differ in terms of what locals view as problems and opportunities. *Second*, we can learn how power works to affect locally specific responses, including who is included in decisions,

> how resources are mobilized, the role of organizations in social action, and the like. *Finally*, we can learn the distinct ways that this force connects to other elements within a place, for example, [how it] links to government, culture, immigration, or community organizations.

A recent study by Ramsay (1996) illustrates the points highlighted by Paulsen (2004). Ramsay conducted an historical case study of two different rural communities in Somerset County, MD – one that is predominantly agricultural (Princess Anne) and one that relies on the surrounding Chesapeake Bay waters for its subsistence (Crisfield) – to examine how each responded to economic change and disturbing exogenous events. As part of her methodology, Ramsay researched and recounted a 300-year history of Somerset County and conducted an intensive case study of each area of interest from 1986 to 1991. During this period, both areas experienced significant economic changes necessitating local political responses. In addition, she reviewed archival materials including current and archival newspaper articles, attended public and private meetings, and interviewed 48 residents including public officials and private citizens.

Employing a political economy approach, Ramsay analyzed how the social, economic, and political structures within each locale worked together to shape subsequent economic development and policies. By examining two areas experiencing similar levels of economic distress, she sought to identify what it was that led to varying economic and developmental policy responses by taking into account unique historical events and community specific cultures. In particular, Ramsay recognized that local economies are not independent structures, but rather are "enmeshed in the political, social, and moral life of particular places" (1996:9) and are also connected to larger regional, national, and global economic structures. In this light, she found that both case studies "illustrate that the way individuals perceive their interests and develop their

policy preferences is highly contingent upon the social and historical context of their lives" (1996:114). Ramsay also recognized the importance of examining local power relations: "local communities and the regimes that arise out of them powerfully shape economic opportunities and constraints for different groups according to the place of those groups in the social order" (1996:8). She found that different groups within the community developed their own views of the current economic situation and of the kinds of development and policy responses that should be put forth.

The use of place theory also guides the understanding of the relationships among individual meanings and action, the defining (and redefining) of community, and the reproduction of social structures within this designated place over time. Ancillary to this concept is another important, more quantitative concept, the concept of *use*. From the perspective of spatial sociology, Gans (2002) defines the concept of *use* broadly so that it includes "not only how individuals and organizations live and work in space, but what else they may do to and with it…use covers production and reproduction, buying and selling, speculation, allocation, distribution, competition, as well as control, exploitation, theft, and destruction of space. Indeed, use is about everything that emplaced humans do as space users" (Gans 2002:330). Investigating how social actors actually *use* their social space over time – and how this use changes in response to a particular exogenous event (a base closing) – will help to understand how residents have come to define and redefine the character of a particular place (Fort Ritchie) and their relationship to it. As a sociological study informed by context (place), it is also important to account for the influence not only of geographic location, but also the material form of place, and the meaning that place holds for local residents, thus following Gieryn's (2000:467) view

that "place is, at once, the buildings, streets, monuments, and open spaces assembled at a certain geographic spot *and* actors' interpretations, representations, and identifications." And, as highlighted in Falk's (2004) examination of one rural southern African American community and the connectedness of residents to the area, place is akin to what Durkheim (1982) called a social fact, something that is both external to and coercive upon individuals. As Falk found, and is relevant to the study at hand, place is seen "as a historically situated social construction, something constructed that acts back on us" (2004:198).

Understanding Place using Ethnography

"Ethnography is a participatory methodology" from which conclusions are built over time "in collaboration with the people with whom" one is studying (Agar 1996:16). Ethnography allows the researcher to learn about life from those who live it by getting directly involved with members of the group. It is "a special approach to understanding the human situation" (Agar 1996:65). Agar identifies three main keys to ethnographic research: (1) be a *participant observer*; (2) note the *rich points*; and (3) *assume coherence* on the part of those who produced the rich points. "*Participant observation* makes the research possible; *rich points* are the data you focus on; and *coherence* is the guiding assumption to start you off on the research that those rich points inspired" (Agar 1996:32).

The first component, participant observation, is a straightforward one: it is important to be in the place and among those of study and to encounter situations first hand. The next two components, relating to the identification of rich points, are a little

more intricate. When rich points, or special points of information, occur, they allow the ethnographer to learn a little bit about how the world works from the perspective of those living within. "When a rich point occurs, an ethnographer learns that his or her assumptions about how the world works, usually implicit and out of awareness, are inadequate to understand something that just happened. A gap, a distance between two worlds, has just surfaced in the details of human activity. Rich points, the words or actions that signal those gaps, are the raw material of ethnography, for it is this distance between two worlds of experience that is exactly the problem that ethnographic research is designed to locate and resolve" (Agar 1996:31). Rich points result from *strips*. "Strips are ethnographic data, strips of experience, be they segments of an interview or sequences of behavior encountered in participant observation or even passages in a novel or film or archival document" (Agar 1996:33). Strips result when the *frame* (or hypothesized frame – an expectation rather than a concrete prediction) applied by the researcher does not work and the existence of other frames are realized. With this, the original frames must be modified and new ones tested. This is thus a very iterative process that continues until new frames have been developed and the ethnographer is able to comprehend the strip.

The final component is the need to assume coherence on the part of those who produced the rich point. That is, the ethnographer must assume that the rich point is not the respondent's problem, but rather the researcher's problem, a problem that the researcher is not yet competent to understand. The researcher must assume that there is in fact a context in which the rich point does make sense. The job of the ethnographer,

therefore, is to identify a potential context, model it, and then test the model using the subsequent words and actions of the group (Agar 1996).

The next step is to figure out the frame that shows how it all fits together and take the frame forward into encounters and conversations to try it out. In this vein, the ethnographer must work to validate the frame (a.k.a schema, script), to modify it through use, and to use it to understand yet more rich points, thus enriching the content of the frame and learning more about its scope of application. The frame fills in the original distance between the researcher and the researched. "It lets you see and understand and act in ways that now make sense *from the villagers' point of view*" (Agar 1996:33). From here, the ethnographer must proceed through the analytical process of resolving the frame(s). This is the process (analytical process) of showing how larger frames are constructed and that show more general patterns of the ethnographer's understanding of the group's way of life. Essentially, this process, the main aspect of "doing ethnography," is dialectic, not linear (Agar 1996).

Finally, it is important to check the distributions one finds. Specifically, it is important not to generalize claims based on what a small sample of people do without having material which shows that in fact a larger like sample does the same thing. Agar (1996) suggests two ways to check distributions: (1) survey specific information, grounded theory style, that grows out of ethnographic work by talking to more people over a longer period of time; and (2) locate "precrunched" numbers about the people with whom you are working (e.g., Census data) and compare findings against these numbers. It is thus vitally important to employ multiple ethnographic methods. Research on a particular group, such as the community around Fort Ritchie, must analyze the

connections and patterns of local life not just of those within that group, but also the connections and patterns of local life of those within the group to the broader state and the world.

The use of the case study, that is, of one particular community or group, is in fact the staple of related community research (i.e., plant closing research, which is one line of research on which this study is modeled) (Gordus et al. 1981), and "historical inquiry has always been an important part of the sociological tradition" (Camp 1995:57; Skocpol 1984). Accordingly, I conducted a socioeconomic-historical review as the mode of inquiry of the Fort Ritchie area pre-, during-, and, most importantly, post-base closing. Through this type of inquiry, the lives of those touched by the event of interest aids in a greater understanding of the event itself. However, with the passage of time, recollections of events are affected by subsequent historical events (Camp 1995). As this study, similar to all case studies, addresses events ex post facto, I employed multiple historical methods of gathering information.

Literature Review: The Military and the Community

Although there have been four rounds of Base Realignments and Closures (BRAC), [as presented and discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2] research on the effects on local communities has been scant. Furthermore, studies (governmental and academic) that have examined effects are primarily econometric in nature and generally examine only very broad changes such as impacts on employment rates, fluctuations in tax revenues, etc. (e.g., Hooker and Knetter 2001; Krizan 1999). And while an extensive literature exists on the impacts on communities and workers following other similar

events such as plant closings (Camp 1995; Cottrell 1951; Gordus 1981; Hamilton 1990) and natural disasters (Erikson 1976), relatively little comparable literature exists on such impacts when a military base closes - despite the fact that the most recent rounds of base closings have been occurring since 1990 and more have been announced as part of the 2005 BRAC round (U.S. Department of Defense 2004).

Part of the Department of Defense's (DoD) response to the broader social structural changes that have occurred since the end of the Cold War, is the transformation of the armed forces from a large industrial-based military to a smaller technologically-based force. As part of this shift, large military bases built to accommodate the manpower and equipment needs of the World War II and Cold War eras are now seen as redundant and costly. The base realignment and closure process was reintroduced in the 1980s as a way to bring facility infrastructure in line with present day troop levels and operations – and to date, with more than two hundred base closures and realignments, numerous communities have been affected.

When a military base leaves an area, especially one that has served as a major community employer, disruptions within the community, particularly to societal institutions (social, economic, political) and interpersonal relationships (familial, social), are anticipated. With an understanding that communities are not monolithic entities, but rather, dynamic and multidimensional, it is also anticipated that the effects of, and response to, a base closure will vary (positively and negatively) within a community. However, the nature and extent of these disruptions and responses have not been examined in the literature.

The Geography of Military Bases: The Beginning of the Military-Community Relationship

The location of military bases around the United States is not accidental. Authorities at both the federal and local level have interests, economic and otherwise, in where military bases are housed. Specifically, "local boosters and such insider allies have been key to patterns of military base and military-industrial geography in the United States" (Lutz 2001:24). With the prospect of generating higher land prices, a larger tax base, and more jobs, local authorities have sought out and lured military projects to their area. Local authorities have sought these projects in part because of their geographical remoteness from large urban centers and their attendant depressed economy. But it was often their geographical remoteness – with open spaces to build and lower prices – that made them attractive to military planners (Lutz 2001); and planners were tasked with considering locations for a "large, rich, and geographically mobile military" during times of war preparation (Hooks 1994). Army bases, for example, though spread across the U.S., are often in remote locations, removed from metropolitan areas, which limits employment and career opportunities for residents – civilian and military-related alike – as noted by Harrell (2000).

This is most generally the case with the location of Army bases. Navy installations, in contrast, tend to be housed along the U.S. coastline and consequently near larger metropolitan areas, such as Norfolk, VA; Jacksonville, FL; San Diego, CA; and Honolulu, HI. During the World War I mobilization, the Navy expanded its logistic, supply, and transport control to major ports in the Northeast (Schaffer 1991). "Consequently, on the eve of World War II, ports that were also leading commercial

centers contained a disproportionate share of military bases" (Hooks 1994:752). While the subsequent World War II buildup expanded Navy installations to protect the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, the expansion of ground forces was even more notable. Given that this expansion was greater than prewar capacities, new bases were needed to house, train, and equip a growing military force (Hooks 1994). And sometimes the military selected locales that were so remote and rural that a real town did not exist prior to the opening of the base, as is the case of Patuxent River Naval Air Station in St. Mary's County, Maryland. As noted by Hicks and Raney (2003:358): "An entire town, Lexington Park, grew up around the base to provide the necessities and niceties of life to base personnel."

In light of this, it becomes clear that "regional processes are molded by the overlapping use of space by economic, military, and political actors" (Hooks 1994:750) and that the interplay among these actors has affected decisions about the placement of military installations, and the subsequent relationship between the military and its host community. Importantly, these distinct factors – economic, political, and military – play a role in regional growth and decline (Mann 1968), and with military expenditures in particular, "a major determinant of population shifts and political power" (Hicks and Raney 2003:353).

While military bases are disproportionately located in geographically remote or rural areas, military spending on research and the development of new weapons and technologies is concentrated in urban areas (Flora and Flora 1989). Communities that host new military technology firms – firms that dot across the urban centers of the U.S. as part of the rising "gunbelt" (that is, industries and firms devoted solely to the production of high-tech weaponry) – are greatly impacted by and dependent on large infusions of

government funding (Markusen et al. 1991). Conversely, comparably fewer dollars reach those communities around military bases in the form of payments for local civilian jobs and training.

The Impact of a Military Base on the Host Community

There are economic advantages of a military presence on its host community. The base helps to maintain high levels of employment and housing occupation since installations employ both soldiers and civilian workers who spend their dollars in the local economy (Booth 2000; Evans 1999; Lutz 2001). The area around military bases is also home to many retired base workers and veterans who stay in the area to utilize base facilities and services (Rodriguez and Krienke 1982). In fact, in a study commissioned by the state of North Carolina to assess the socioeconomic impact of the Department of Defense on the state, researchers identified that retirees (military and military civilian) collectively brought more than a million dollars into the local economy on an annual basis (Lutz 2001).

Military bases, particularly those further from metropolitan areas, are often one of, if not the, largest employers of civilian workers in the region. For example, in their review of the effect of Sheppard Air Force Base on the economy of the Wichita Falls, Texas standard metropolitan statistical area (SMSA), Rodriguez and Krienke (1982) found that Sheppard generated 30 percent of the gross income in the SMSA. Clayton (1970), in an older but noteworthy study, describes the impact of military spending on Southern California communities. He argues that while a link can be seen between military spending and substantial increases in manufacturing jobs, this spending also

caused suburban growth and highway development, altered the class structure [by requiring more highly skilled employees, see also Markusen and Yudken 1992], and led to a number of other problems such as "spreading slums, rising crime, highway congestion, and smog" (Clayton 1970:73). Despite the size of military installations and the thousands of service members and their families who transfer in and out each year (living both on post and off), few empirical studies have been conducted examining the impacts – positive and negative – of these bases on their host communities.

Moreover, studies are limited with respect to the impact of military presence on economic outcomes for different groups of workers, such as female workers (whether married to military personnel or not) and members of racial/ethnic minorities. Several recent notable exceptions include work by Cotter et al. (1997) and Cooney (2003). Cotter et al. found that the presence of a military base negatively impacts women's wages, and Cooney, in a study of women veterans, also found that military presence lowers their economic situation. In addition, Booth (2000) examined the negative economic consequences a large military presence generates within the community. Based on an analysis of the 1990 Public Use Microsample (PUMS) data, he found that women working around large military installations (especially wives of military men) experienced lower earnings and higher rates of unemployment than women working in non-military areas.

Booth et al. (2000) suggest several reasons for the detriment to women's labor market outcomes in areas with a high military presence. First, the military influences the racial and gender make-up of the community in that it employs a disproportionately high number of African Americans (20 percent of the active-duty force) and relatively few

women (15 percent of the active-duty force) compared to national civilian labor force averages (13.3 and 51 percent respectively) (U.S. Census 2005; Military Family Resource Center [MFRC] 2003). Therefore, "to the degree that the racial and gender composition of the local workforce influences labor market outcomes, a military base may be both an additive and interactive factor serving to further depress earnings and employment outcomes" (Booth et al. 2000:328). Second, women in the local labor market not affiliated with the military are disadvantaged since they are unable to access the internal labor market structure of the military – a structure that requires membership to receive benefits.

A third explanation for the finding is the fact that in most locales where the military base is dominant, ancillary jobs in the local community are primarily service related (Booth 2003; Booth et al. 2000). For both sexes, Booth (2000) found that this concentration of service-related jobs was the strongest predictor of lower than average earnings. These poorer paying jobs with limited benefits "are affected by the demographics and wages of personnel. In areas with large proportions of junior enlisted personnel, the sales and service work available is likely to require little experience and to offer low wages and few benefits" (Booth et al. 2000:329). Hertz and Charlton (1989), in their study of forty-four married Air Force couples, found that due to the semi-rural isolation of the base, wives who worked were largely limited to the surrounding fast-food chains and retail stores that paid only minimum wage. Additionally, Lutz (2001) reports an increase in the number of retail stores (and thus jobs) around Fort Bragg over time. She notes that in 1994, 31 percent of Cumberland County workers (the county that is

home to Fort Bragg) were in retail, compared with only 13 to 22 percent of workers in North Carolina's other large metropolitan areas.

Finally, Booth et al. (2000) introduce the idea of monopsony as a contributing factor, an economic concept that characterizes labor markets where only a few employers dominate, and, thus, relatively few positions are available. Specifically, "when labor markets are affected disproportionately by military bases, hence monopsonist, they will have an upward sloping supply of available workers. When the pool of workers exceeds the demand for labor, wages and other benefits are predictably driven down, and those most negatively affected are likely to be women and minorities" (Booth et al. 2000:329).

Moreover, as noted by Lutz (2001) in her ethnographic study of the impact of Fort Bragg on the growth of Fayetteville, North Carolina, areas surrounding military bases (bases which are disproportionately located in the South) have been affected by the loss of other large employers, such as textile firms, to less unionized or regulated countries. This increases the number of workers in the marketplace competing for fewer and fewer jobs; and fewer "good" jobs with a decent wage and adequate benefits. This increasing "reserve labor force" means fewer opportunities and lower returns to employment for women in the area in general, and military spouses in particular (Booth 2003; Booth et al. 2000; Lutz 2001:181). Specifically, Booth (2003:25) suggests that a military presence "may represent a contextual disadvantage for women in the paid labor force, regardless of whether they are in a military marriage." He notes as well the importance of *place* in examining worker wages – in this case, the local labor market – beyond human capital conditions. In particular, "workers with similar kinds of individual characteristics can and do experience different economic outcomes depending on the occupational sector

and/or the local labor market in which they work" (Booth 2003:29). This idea is also important due to the disproportionate location of U.S. military bases in the South and in rural areas – places that are generally poorer and offer fewer economic opportunities (see also Falk and Lyson 1993; Lobao 1993).

The Impact of a Military Base Closing on the Host Community

While the federal government is supportive of BRAC, local government and community reactions are not always as positive (Bischak 1996; Frye and Hellman 2001; Hill 2000). When a military base, often a decades-old structural and economic cornerstone of a community, closes, the community that hosted it is impacted in the short and long term on a number of economic fronts (Hill 2000; Kirshenberg 1998). Communities and local economies face job and tax revenue losses, reductions in personal and household incomes, decreased demand for housing, reductions in dollars spent by military personnel and their families in the local economy, and losses of recreational and other on-post services utilized by veterans living in the area (Booth 2000; Evans 1999). As the predominant public perception is that the presence of a military installation only brings economic advantages to the community, many "politicians and concerned constituents become active to prevent base closures in their region – to avoid the loss of economic resources perceived as vital to the local economy" (Booth 2000:2).

Another group of workers often left unaccounted for in the research are civilian workers who work either directly for the military on the base and/or for a defense contractor. In this "postmodern military era," in response to seeking more cost-effective methods of operation and greater reliance by the military on more technologically

complex weapons requiring technical experts, the military depends on civilian workers more than it has in the past (see Moskos, Williams, and Segal 2000). In fact, "both contractors and bases create employment multipliers, so that the number of jobs that *depend* on a particular facility is at least double the number it employs" (Accordino 2000:16, emphasis added). In other words, when a military base closes, not only are the civilians working on base affected, but so too are those working in a defense contract support role in the area, as well as those working for local retail and personal-service businesses that sell directly to base personnel or military contract workers.

Federal military installations do not pay local real property taxes, nor do the on-post commissary and exchanges pay sales taxes, and are thus not contributors to the local treasury. However, they do employ a significant number of local workers who support the municipality through employment, sales, and other tax revenues. When a military base is slated for closing, the DoD accepts that a substantial number of civilian workers will be displaced from the base itself and any supporting defense plants in the area and workers will be left without government support for this job dislocation. While there have been examples under "community economic adjustment" plans where the federal government has provided financial aid and technical assistance to military-dependent towns as they overcome problems associated with base closings or downsizing, the Department of Defense has not provided much in the way of assistance other than serving as a liaison between the communities and other federal agencies that might provide additional assistance (Dumas 1995).

While many communities have fought the closing of a military base, spending millions of dollars in the process, researchers and government officials have suggested

that, in fact, the closing of a military base can actually expand the community's economic base. Specifically, it is argued that when a military base closes, the land (often thousands of acres) can be redeveloped for private commercial use, thus providing an opportunity for increased civilian jobs, decreased unemployment rates, and higher personal incomes (DoD 1998; Frye and Hellman 2001; Hill 2000). For example, in a 1986 survey [with follow-ups from 1990-1996)], the Department of Defense Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) found that the number of civilian jobs created at former bases (138,138 jobs) exceeded the civilian employment lost when the bases closed (93,424 jobs) and thus stated that "the experience of communities affected by earlier base realignments clearly indicates that communities can successfully adjust to dislocations and base closures" (OEA 1996:6).

With careful planning on the part of local community leaders and financial and other assistance by the federal government (most particularly by the OEA), it has been reported that for some communities, a military base closure can in fact present an economic opportunity for revitalization (DoD 1995; Kiershenber 1998). Some research has suggested that within seven to ten years following a base closing, the host community might even be doing better economically than it had with the presence of the military base (Markusen and Brzoska 2000); this is especially so given the newly available opportunity cost of resources occupied by the base, principally land (Hooker and Knetter 2001). When operational, military bases often do not contribute to the local tax base. When a base closes, however, the land is often then available for redevelopment, which brings in real estate taxes.

While a number of reports and monographs have described how the closing of a military base can serve as an economic opportunity for the surrounding community, however, there has been limited supporting data presented, particularly data regarding specific changes in local job losses and gains, changes in personal and household incomes, and community unemployment levels.

Local Community Studies on the Impact of a Base Closing

Dardia et al. (1996) conducted a short-term study to examine the immediate economic impacts of base closings on the communities surrounding three of the largest California bases that were closed since 1988: George Air Force Base in San Bernadino County; Fort Ord in Monterey County; and Castle Air Force Base in Merced County. Specifically, they examined changes in population, employment, school enrollment, and housing following each of the base closings. Overall, their findings suggest that impacts are borne more at the individual worker or firm level rather than the community level and those effects were relatively localized and often offset by other economic factors. However, the communities under study were larger and more urban than many of the communities that face base closures. The authors suggest that the size of the community and the share of total employment accounted for by the base is a direct indicator of a community's vulnerability to the closure. Other factors cited as indicators of vulnerability included the size of the population of military dependents attending community schools and the number of military retirees in the area dependent on the base for goods and services.

Local governments either actually or potentially faced with a base closure have also conducted studies. One such study commissioned by the State of Arizona (The Maguire Company 2002) examined the statewide impact of military facilities and operations within Arizona. The study authors utilized the Minnesota based company IMPLAN Group Inc.'s IMPLAN Pro econometric model, which estimates direct, indirect, and induced impacts of specific economic activity. They found that "the economic and fiscal impacts of the State's military industry…are significant and represent a key component of the state's economy. Maintaining these operations, the jobs and economic output they support should be a priority of state and local government" (2002:xii). Another study by the Kentucky Commission on Military Affairs (2002) found that military activity in the Kentucky area has long been a major source of employment for Kentucky residents, of sales for Kentucky companies, and of tax revenues for state and local governments in Kentucky. "The military is now spending about $4 billion per year in Kentucky, through direct payrolls to soldiers and civilians, through retirement and veterans' benefits, and through contracts with companies around the state" (2002:executive summary). Finally, a study was conducted to analyze the economic impacts of military base activity in Florida, using the Regional Input-Output Modeling System (RIIMSII) distributed by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (Fishkind and Associates 1998). It found that "military spending and the defense industry is a significant source of high wage jobs for Floridians. The total economic impact of military base activity in Florida is $20 billion annually based on earnings and employment wages" (Fishkind and Associates 1998:executive summary).

Review of Comparable Community Experiences

While there are no studies currently in the literature of the nature presented in this dissertation, that is, an ethnographic study of a community and its members who have experienced the loss of a military base, lessons can be learned from reviewing the stories told by those who have experienced similar circumstances (i.e., displaced workers in communities which have lost major industrial centers). From these stories we can start to get a sense of the loss – economically, socially, psychologically – these workers and their communities have suffered, though we cannot fully translate their experiences to those in communities in which a military base has closed. From the review of the literature of the experiences of workers and communities that also have suffered major social and economic losses due to the closing of local industrial centers, a sense of the type and nature of the experiences of those who lived through such losses can be gleaned and can be used to start to understand the experiences of the community surrounding Fort Ritchie.

Plant Closures

There is a rich literature of case studies and oral histories conducted during the 1980s and 1990s in response to massive layoffs resulting from mill and plant closures across the nation; these industries not only employed tens of thousands of workers, but also were often the major employer in the region. While these closures occurred in all regions, some areas were disproportionately affected, particularly areas that were once the bastions of the industrial revolution such as Detroit, Pittsburgh, and Youngstown. In addition, other areas in West Virginia and Pennsylvania suffered great losses, economically and socially, in response to the decline of the coal industry and the closing

of coal mines beginning in the 1950s and 1960s (Dublin 1998). Researchers interested in the impacts of these significant closures that resulted in unprecedented numbers of unemployed began to study the effects (economic, social, psychological) of these closures on workers, their families, and their communities.

Perrucci et al. (1988) examined the impact of the closing of the RCA television cabinet-making factory in Indiana on the lives of the 800 workers who were displaced; this was a significant event in a town with a population of only 5,000 residents. Given the relatively small size of the town, these authors were able to trace the effects of the plant closure beyond the workers (both management and line workers) through various quantitative and qualitative methods. This is important given the "ripple effects" of major plant closures; these effects are felt beyond the worker when a plant closes, for example, by other industries and suppliers dependent on the plant, local service establishments, and social service agencies. With the closing of the RCA plant in 1982, local officials reported lower tax revenues, increased demand on social service agencies, and reductions in charitable contributions previously made by the company to local organizations. However, the authors did note that with the guidance of the local union, organized labor members and other community volunteers rallied to serve displaced workers through the establishment of Project Care, a board that educated itself on services and programs available to the workers and provided an outlet for workers and their families struggling to manage financial and other difficulties; services included links to job training and employment opportunities. Actions taken by community members (e.g., religious and political leaders) in support of displaced workers after a plant closes are vitally important, especially since workers themselves often respond complacently as

was found by Perucci et al. (1988). That is, due to the overwhelming nature of the closing of the plant, workers often respond by becoming passive agents, unable to see the value in working with other displaced workers as part of a collective group to resist the actions of management.

Perrucci et al. (1988) also described tactics, or responses, used by workers and communities to try to forestall plant closures when they are announced. Movements to forestall closures have included picketing, boycotting, attempted employee takeovers, various media campaigns, and even sabotage. However, more often than not, these campaigns have failed (Lynd 1982).

In their quasi-experimental study of actual and anticipated unemployment on the mental health of workers during large-scale General Motors plant shutdowns, Hamilton et al. (1990) worked with a theoretical model that assumes "that virtually everyone can suffer from troubled mental health at some point, but that certain personal resources can prevent or ameliorate the impact of poor environmental circumstances" (p.124). Specifically, they suggest that unemployment – a "serious stressor" – can lead to differing levels of vulnerability to subsequent mental health problems as a function of six important demographic factors (factors that are considered important in the sociological study of stress): education, prior income, race, gender, marital status, and age. Their findings also suggest that, in fact, unemployment is a stressor that leads to worse mental health (e.g., more somatic complaints, more depression, higher anxiety). Anticipation of unemployment, however, produces still worse mental health outcomes, ones that are much more subtle and which depend on the worker's demographic characteristics. Thus, effects on mental health begin with learning that unemployment is a possibility

(anticipation) and then worsen with the actual event – with these effects moderated by the indicated demographic characteristics. Finally, the authors present three conclusions about unemployment and mental health based on their research: "First, hard times hurt. Second, they do not hurt everyone equally. Third, demographic inequalities are of two distinct sorts: the chronic pain caused by being female and the acute pain caused by being black and uneducated when the plant shuts down" (Hamilton et al. 1990:136).

In response to several factors, including the end of the cold war and reduced demand for jobs based around weapons production, during the 1980s, the greater Pittsburgh region experienced a loss of more than 100,000 industrial jobs in total, with about 30,000 of those from the loss of steel jobs. Hathaway (1993) observed, however, during the course of his several year case study of the area that, despite these massive layoffs in the tens of thousands, there was very little resistance demonstrated on the part of workers. In fact, "dejected acceptance…typified the response of workers," not just in Pittsburgh, but also nationally (1993:Preface). Camp (1995), in his study of worker response to steel plant closings in Johnstown, PA and Youngstown, OH, also found that the typical worker response to a plant closing was complacency.

From his observations, Hathaway asks why it was that so few workers showed any overt signs of resistance, showed so little *voice*, to the losses they were so frequently suffering. To answer this question, he took an economic-political perspective and examined the few cases of worker resistance that did in fact exist (e.g., a case of workers who organized to prevent the destruction of a mill; a group of workers who forced the sheriff to stop foreclosure on the homes of laid-off workers).   From his review of these "deviant" cases of worker response, he suggests that the problem is best understood

within the context of the balance of power between industrial workers and corporate executive elites. He proposes that workers did not resist as a function of the forms of the economic decision-making processes used by corporate elites – forms which essentially discouraged workers from playing a role and that left them out of decision-making processes. Given this approach, Hathaway hypothesizes (and then confirms) the following:

> A reasonably coherent class of economic elites exists. These elites are using their power…to direct the transformation of the U.S. economy toward their own ends. As part of this process, they must limit the ability of outsiders [subordinate groups] to influence decision-making. One of the most effective ways to limit outsiders is to convince them that any attempt to influence decisions would be both illegitimate and futile. The consistent defeat of challengers tends to teach possible future challengers that they should not even bother to try. Quiescence is learned (Hathaway 1993:16).

His findings were confirmed by Camp who noticed, "while the dynamics of business decision-making remain largely outside of the public view, it does not appear that the social costs imposed on workers or their communities receive much consideration in many decisions" (1995:5). Moreover, he finds that, in general, worker input, if included at all, is done so after the fact, and that historically, any participation by workers in managerial decision-making processes have both been denied by management and not sought by labor.

Finally, at the conclusion of his case study, Hathaway asks a very poignant question. He questions how differently workers might have responded had workers and the community's interests been represented as important factors in the decision-making process from the beginning. This is a particularly important question to consider when examining the impact of military base closings on

communities and subsequent community response. While military and federal government officials involved in the closure process are not corporate elites with strictly capitalist intentions, the role they play in the eyes of the communities affected could be very similar. Especially considering the power they are seen to have, a power that Rothstein (1986:3) refers to as his first myth of the face of power, the public and institutional face: power is held “by the public decision makers and the institutions legally charged with making important public decisions.”

This is similar to Mills’ “power elite” model (1956; 2000) which promulgates the argument that power resides in the political, the economic, and the military domains of American society and that those in power shape and make decisions that have consequences on ordinary people. These ordinary people learn over time not to challenge, but rather adapt to these decisions. In the case of a military base closing, the local community is not only affected by the decisions made by those in the higher power elite circles that Mills describes, but also by the decisions of local power brokers. These locals may not be part of the national power elite structure, but they hold positions of power structurally above those in the populace and their decisions (political and economic) have consequences for the ordinary citizen in their district.

The power (or perceived power) these public decision makers have in shaping the closure process, including whether or not to involve particular citizen groups in the decision-making process, could impact worker and community response and, thus, long-term community viability. The balance of power and the

understanding of who is and is not involved in community decision-making can help inform us as to why some citizens responded, and how, and why others did not respond, to the military base closure. This is also an important aspect to consider in light of the efforts touted by the Department of Defense [and other federal agencies, e.g., Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA)] to include the needs and interests of each community affected by BRAC from the time of the announcement of a base closure – efforts, which, if in fact initiated, could positively impact community response and resilience (Camp 1995).

More than twenty-five years later, Russo and Linken (2003) examined the legacy of the plant closings in Youngstown, and found that the area has not recovered. The area remains one of the highest nationally in unemployment rates, poverty, house foreclosures, population declines, and bankruptcies. The authors note, however, that the experiences of the communities of Youngstown are not unique, and in fact, typify those of deindustrialized areas, which, as a result of plant closures, suffer multiple losses: "At first, there is the economic loss marked by unemployment, bankruptcies and foreclosures, arson, and declines in community services, and physical and emotional health. Closely associated with this is the loss of faith in institutions (business, unions, government, religious organizations, family) that failed to provide the economic and social protection they had seemed to promise…After deindustrialization, communities face the loss of self-esteem as population declines, efforts to attract reinvestment fail, and social and economic conditions decay" (Russo and Linken 2003:202).

Reiterating these assessments, May and Morrison (2003) argue that in response to the declining conditions around them, workers face other personal challenges as well, specifically, the challenge of rethinking and restructuring their personal identities. During the conduct of personal interviews with downsized workers from a high-tech manufacturing plant in rural North Carolina, workers expressed to the researchers feelings of hurt, anger, and resentment. Yet, the authors note, these workers also demonstrated a remarkable resilience in their ability to respond to their situation, while also reconfirming to themselves and others their value in and commitment to finding new work. Through the course of their narratives, workers begin to distinguish their identity away from that of their former employer and its executives, and reframe it in terms of their relationship with their families, ex co-workers, and community.

Mine Closures

Interested in the impacts of the decline of the anthracite coal industry on the northeastern Pennsylvania region (known as the anthracite region), Dublin (1998), through the retelling of the personal stories of affected workers, tells the story of the region's economic decline. He notes that this particular industry in the anthracite region at its peak during World War I employed more than 175,000 men and supported a population of nearly one million; seventy years later, however, only about 1,400 workers are employed in the mine industry in an area with a population of less than 5,000. Given this, Dublin states, "between those two points

in time lies a story of industrial decline, its human consequences, and the ways working people in the region responded to and shaped that history" (1998:1).

While his initial methodology relied exclusively on written sources (e.g., business and census records, letters, diaries, memoirs, and contemporary newspapers), Dublin found that though these sources "spoke to broader economic forces at work in the region, governmental efforts to address the regional economic crisis, and the perspectives of management and union leaders…these sources did not permit [him] to reconstruct how relatively ordinary residents in the region experienced economic decline" (1998:2). As a result, Dublin included oral histories of local residents in his design. An important insight that came from these interviews was that the local men and women in these declining coal mining communities were not merely passive objects acted upon by larger social and economic forces, but were "active agents in the broader story" (1998:4). These working-class men and women had values and beliefs, interpreted their situation, and actively made decisions in light of their current circumstances. Moreover, Dublin suggests that the way these residents perceived and understood the broader social and economic changes occurring around them and the subsequent choices they made "helped to shape these broader patterns" (1998:4). In particular, as active agents within society, these workers' responses and actions to their situation in turn influenced broader employment, commuting, and migration patterns of both workers and industries.

Through the course of conducting oral histories with long time residents of the area, several important themes emerged. For example, the residents were

intimately tied to the coal industry and most either worked in the mines themselves or had a relative who did. This close tie, however, also limited the seeking of other opportunities, particularly educational opportunities, since most families in the area were poor and relied on young sons to stay in the area and provide financial support by working at the mines. Another theme was that there were clear generational and gender differences in attitudes toward the closing of the mines. Dublin notes that many older workers recall their days in the mines with fondness as work in the mines provided a good wage, flexible hours, low supervision, and camaraderie with fellow workers. Conversely, as relayed in the following passage with a local resident (Ken Ansbach) who was a child when the mines closed in the 1950s, younger residents viewed the closing of the mines differently:

> When the mines went down, for me it was a relief, "cause I knew I wouldn't have to work there like my father." He was afraid of working underground – with good reason, given the number of deaths and serious injuries in the mines – and he knew that if he had started, the money would have kept him there: "For [our dads] it was their way of life. It was a nail in a coffin, really, because you got a good wage at the mines." Ken Ansbach felt lucky to have escaped (Dublin 1998:28).

Women, who were excluded from working in the mines (and often prohibited by their "old fashioned" husbands from working at all outside of the home), became important wage earners in the family when the mines closed, seeking work in area garment factories. As relayed by one local female resident, "a lot [of] people went to the factories to work after the mines closed down. Well, mostly the ladies. It was the ladies that kept the valley going" (Dublin 1998:29).

Another theme was that despite a strong work ethic among the men and women of the area (people who saw themselves as self-made and getting things

by “work and struggle”), many residents also relied heavily on the federal social welfare system for support at the time. And, yet, these same long time residents expressed disdain for newcomers to the area, particularly African Americans and Latinos, whom they saw as relying excessively on welfare.

Finally, Dublin describes an emergent theme relating to long time residents’ strong noneconomic familial and social ties to the region (e.g., ties to family, church, ethnic group, and community) and hesitation to migrate out despite financial hardships in response to limited employment opportunities that resulted from the closing of the mines. In particular, “the differences in the life circumstances of migrants and persisters are instructive as we reflect on the choices made in the face of dramatic economic change” (Dublin 1998:32).

In a review of deindustrialization and federal area redevelopment policies, Wilson (2003) shows that efforts by local residents of the anthracite coal region, particularly workers, union representatives, business owners and civic leaders, led to the development of proposals to revive declining economies. He describes how many local groups and individuals lobbied for federal assistance and ultimately “influenced the creation of national area redevelopment legislation” (Wilson 2003:184) and demanded a greater role by state and federal government in promoting economic development in local communities. This push was spurred by the fact that efforts by local civic and business leaders to attract new industries to the area with the use of financial incentives failed to stop rising unemployment rates and economic decline. In addition, in 1961, the Area Redevelopment Act (ARA) – which created a national program to aid distressed communities – was

passed by Congress and signed by President John F. Kennedy. The ARA was designed to assist communities with economic planning, to provide funding for public works projects, and to create employment and educational opportunities for local residents. However, Wilson comments that "the U.S. unwillingness or inability to exert greater control over industrial location and investment decisions, coupled with a strong reverence for private control over capital and the openness of the federal system, means that programs like the ARA will see limited success against the process and effects of deindustrialization" (2003:198).

An example of a community redevelopment project in the wake of the closing of the copper mines and then the smelter facility in Anaconda, Montana, and the loss of more than 2,500 jobs in the 1980s, is the $30 million Old Works Golf Course laid over the place "where smelters once belched and residents once threw their trash" (Curtis 2003:91). Twenty years after the Anaconda Copper Company closed its doors, city planners in Anaconda see the economic growth and vitality of their community resting on tourism and are gearing up to take a piece of the growing service economy, touting their main attraction: "The course rises like a Phoenix from the ashes of nineteenth century economy" (Ring 1997). The golf course, which has come to symbolize "the rebirth of the smelter city," also serves a vital environmental function as it is designed to contain the spread of heavy metals that remain below the surface of the one time smelter site, and to keep these dangerous materials from seeping into local water supplies and endangering residents and regional ecosystems (Curtis 2003:94).

Railroad Restructuring

A study of Caliente, New Mexico by Cottrell (1951) examines the impact on a one-industry community confronted with a radical shift in its economic and social structures due to the loss of a major employer. This community was disrupted by the changing of the railroad system from the use of steam to diesel engines, a change that reduced the importance of the Caliente depot to the railroad system and resulted in the loss of jobs of local residents who were employed either directly or indirectly for the railroad.

This "railroad community" in the depths of a desert canyon was created solely to service the railroad and thus, according to Cottrell, could serve as an "ideal type" community faced with this type of disruption where effects could be more easily observed. In examining the community, its residents, and their reactions to this shift, Cottrell noted: "Suddenly their life pattern was destroyed by the announcement that the railroad was moving its division point, and with it destroying the economic basis of Caliente's existence" (p. 359). And yet, these residents were simply expected - by the railroad, the government, and society - to accept their fate in the name of "progress," despite the high costs paid by residents in terms of "loss of income and in personal demoralization" (p. 361).

Cottrell observed that those residents who were more connected to the community (e.g., by residence, having children in local schools, business ownership, membership in community associations) suffered more than those without these particular ties. For example, "those who have raised children see friendships broken and neighborhoods disintegrated...those who built their personalities into the structure of the community

watch their work destroyed" (p. 361).

Cottrell's observations of the community and residents of Caliente provide important insights (both quantitative and qualitative) into how a community, solely dependent on a major employer, responds to the announcement of the loss, and subsequent loss, of that employer. Furthermore, he considers the loss felt from various perspectives, from the level of the individual resident and worker to the community as a whole to the railroad industry more broadly. In so doing, he stresses the importance that the impact of this type of disruption reverberates from the individual to the local community to the global society, and back again.

CHAPTER II. MILITARY BASE REALIGNMENTS AND CLOSURES (BRAC) – HISTORY, PROCESS, AND IMPACT

Base closures are neither new nor recent occurrences. In fact, they have followed each major U.S. war: "thousands of hastily erected Army camps closed after the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, World Wars I and II" (Sorenson 1998:15), and the Vietnam War. In earlier times, the closing of a base (either by removal or abandonment) often happened in a day, with scarcely a notice by, or impact on, the local community. Since the various military services did not become unified under the Secretary of Defense until 1947 with the passage of the National Security Act (and subsequent amendments), each service was responsible for making decisions, and carrying through, on maintaining or excising bases and other surplus materials as deemed necessary in order to work within its own budget constraints. When a base was determined to be no longer needed, the service simply vacated it, with possession transferred to the War Assets Administration, which would take responsibility for its disposal in accordance with set constraints and regulations established by Congress (Sorenson 1998).

Even during that time, there was an effort on the part of the government to keep the local economy as stable as possible during the transition period; there was a consensus among lawmakers and the executive to do this to avoid an economic situation similar to that following WWI that preceded the Great Depression. Priority for acquiring the property went to other government agencies (federal or state), veterans groups, and non-profit organizations (Goren 2003). Many surplus bases were acquired by universities to use as satellite campuses in response to increased enrollments by returning WWII veterans seeking higher education with the aid of the G.I. Bill. Additionally, excess base

housing was used to solve housing shortages as the economy worked to reabsorb soldiers back into their communities. Thus, during this era, closed bases were very quickly turned into civilian uses and the local community felt little if any economic hardship. Another reason why communities did not suffer economically with the loss was because "many of these bases had not been in place for all that long and thus had not become the economic backbone of many of these communities" (Goren 2003:36).

The United States military expanded greatly during the World War II and Korean War eras, both in terms of troop strength and number of installations (Sorenson 1998), and while a number of bases were closed following each conflict, many more surplus bases remained. During his administration, President Kennedy deemed the expanded defense base structure no longer necessary and he directed Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara to develop and implement a base closure program (BRAC Report 1995; Brownback 2004). The Department of Defense took the lead in establishing the selection criteria for base closures and realignments (whereby only some functions of the base would close or would be moved elsewhere) (Sorenson 1998), with little consultation from either the military departments or Congress. This was not a new policy, as the DoD, under directive 4165.20 (passed in 1958), was given authorization to dispose of "excess" properties as seen fit.

On the basis of "cost-effectiveness" studies ordered by McNamara – studies conducted by non-military entities and which factored together system requirements, performance, and cost – McNamara announced in March of 1961 his list of bases to be closed: seventy-three closures in total, thirty-seven of them stateside (Twight 1990). "Not only did McNamara not consult with the military (whom he expected to strongly

oppose the move), but he announced the decision to close bases right after the 1964 elections when Congress was not even in session" (Sorenson 1998:30). Though Congress was indignant and convened hearings held by a subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee, the DoD retained control over the next several years as to which bases were deemed surplus, and more than 90 bases were realigned or closed, with sixty major bases closed (BRAC Report 1995; Sorenson 1998; Twight 1990).

Congress was essentially outside of the DoD decision making process regarding which bases to close or realign, which only added to the sense (valid or not) in Congress "that the president and the Defense Department target the bases in districts and states of their political enemies" (Goren 2003:4). Given this, and the political and economic ramifications of the closures thus far, in 1965, the House Armed Services Committee amended the military construction authorization bill (Section 608) to insert Congress into any future base closure programs (and weigh in on defense policy) by requiring that the DoD report any future planned closures to Congress 30 days prior to any action (Goren 2003; Twight 1990); though they "could not prohibit base closures directly, they could make the process more difficult" (Sorenson 1998:30). After a compromise with the Senate Armed Services Committee (after the Senate voted to remove this provision – H.R. 8439), the new provision required the Secretary of Defense to provide a detailed report justifying any proposed closures and then wait 120 days before implementing any actions. Additionally, Congress stipulated that any closures could only be proposed between January 1 and April 30 of each year (Twight 1990), on the basis that this would provide them "an opportunity to hear the matter of a particular base closure at a time when it is considering the military construction authorization bill and to write restrictive

language in such legislation in the case it disapproved such a base closure" (Congressional Record 1965). President Lyndon B. Johnson, however, vetoed this legislation (H.R. 8439), and the DoD continued to close and realign bases without congressional oversight throughout the remainder of the 1960s (BRAC Report 1995).

Though Congress was unable to override President Johnson's veto, they instead substituted section 611; this required that the Secretary of Defense must delay the implementation of a base closure until 30 days following the submission of a report to the armed services committee justifying the proposed closures of bases with more than 250 civilian and military personnel (Twight 1990). "This was the beginning of the incremental process through which Congress became a major player in the base closure debate and started to take over some control of the mechanisms for base closures" (Goren 2003:40).

During the 1970s, economic and political pressures obligated Congress to try to intervene in the base realignment and closure process once again. This was also spurred by the announcement in 1973 by Secretary of Defense Elliot Richardson (under President Richard M. Nixon) of the intention, as part of the general drawdown of forces with the end of the Vietnam War, to close or realign 274 bases (a list seen as extremely partisan given the disproportionate number of closures located in Democratic New England areas) (Goren 2003; Twight 1990). Congress met this announcement with tremendous resistance, which led to actions intended to halt the base closure and realignment process as designed by the Department of Defense (Goren 2003; Twight 1990). There was one more round of closures in 1974-1975, but there were fewer outcries over these as the selected bases were seen as located more evenly across the country.

However, when the Department of Defense proposed in 1976 that 147 bases be closed or realigned, Congress was ready to oppose their actions (Twight 1990). During the 1976 session, Congress passed the O'Neill-Cohen Act, which, in Section 612 of the military construction bill (H.R. 12384), specifies that the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) must apply to any base closing. This measure required that the DoD notify Congress of any bases selected for closure, and then wait twelve months while the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) inspects the land recommended for closure and certifies that it meets federal environmental standards. President Gerald R. Ford initially vetoed this bill citing issues with the time delays imposed by Section 612. Though Congress was unable to override his veto, they revised the bill, changing the opposed section (from a one-year delay to a 60-day delay), though not altering any wording of substance since the NEPA requirements held, which would require at least a year in order to meet compliance measures (Twight 1990). This revised legislation (H.R. 14846, with a new Section 612) was signed by President Ford in September 1976, and specifically included the following provisions:

- Compliance by the DoD with national EPA requirements [i.e., the development of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS); this is a process that takes about one to two years to complete even before a final list is presented to Congress];
- Requirement of written notice from the DoD to Congress that a base is a candidate for closure (for a base employing 500 or more civilians) or realignment (which would result in a reduction in civilian personnel by 50 percent or at least 1,000 employees);
- Requirement of written justification from the DoD to Congress for the decisions made in developing the proposed list.

This legislation "was the principal instrument through which Congress changed its role in terms of base closings, and in some regards, in terms of military policymaking in general" (Goren 2003:45).

Initially, this legislation signed by President Ford was only to be in effect for one year. But, as part of approving the FY1978 Military Construction Authorization Act, on August 1, 1977, President Jimmy Carter made it permanent by approving Public Law 95-82 (codified as Title 10, United States Code, Section 2687), which institutionalized the process laid out in the new Section 612 (with slight modifications). The DoD was still required to notify Congress when it identified a base as a candidate for realignment or closure, though Congress exempted from this requirement the more than 4,000 bases that employed fewer than 300 civilian workers (Brownback 2004; Sorenson 1998).

Furthermore, as laid out in the earlier version of Section 612, the DoD was required to prepare studies for review by Congress examining the strategic, environmental (subject to the environmental evaluation requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act), and local economic impacts of such action, and to wait 60 days for a Congressional response. These, and other procedural requirements established in Section 2687 – in particular, the NEPA requirements (a process that alerted members of congress to the vulnerability to closure of bases in their district and give them enough time to “come to the rescue”) - combined with Congressional reluctance actually to close any installations, effectively halted the base closure process for over a decade (BRAC Report 1995; Goren 2003). Thus, following the passage of this legislation, the DoD could no longer simply close bases at its discretion – particularly “major” bases. For example, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown proposed closure lists in 1978 (85 closures) and 1979 (157 realignments) unsuccessfully. In light of these failures, the DoD did not propose any new closures between 1979 and 1985 (Twight 1990).

In the early 1980s, it became apparent that the process established for base closings and realignments was riddled with problems, "including excessive delays, vigorous congressional objections, extensive legislation, and repetitious environmental impact statements" (Goren 2003:48). In addition, due to mounting economic pressures and declining defense budgets[4] coupled with unchanging troop levels, the DoD recognized that more base realignments and closures were needed. In particular, with the end of the cold war and the continued lower military force requirements, readiness was threatened as the military struggled to pay enormous operating costs of unneeded property, facilities, and overhead (BRAC Report 1995; Bischak 1996; Goren 2003; Sorenson 1998). "An entire institution, the Department of Defense, along with a multibillion-dollar defense industry had to regroup, restructure, and adjust to post-Cold War realities" (Sorenson 1998:1), including defense budget reductions.

In response, Representative Richard Armey, Senator William Roth and others sponsored bills in 1987 and 1988 to "empower the Defense Secretary to expedite implementation of changes in the military base structure" (Twight 1990:249). After nearly two years, Congress approved a proposed amendment to the FY1988 Defense Authorization Bill that would create a commission (modeled after the Social Security Commission) to aid in the selection of base closures and realignments. Turning the decision making over to a commission, particularly given the political stakes associated with defense-policy issues, allowed the onus of closing bases to be taken off elected officials such that no one political person could be held accountable for the loss of a military base in his or her district.

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[4] During the 1970s, budgets consumed 25 cents of every federal dollar spent. This steadily declined through the 1980s to the point that only 13 cents of that same federal dollar was spent by the mid-1990s – a decline of nearly $100 billion from 1989-1996 in 1996 dollars (Sorenson 1998).

BRAC is an example of something most politicians do not like to do: "dedistributive" policy-making, where, rather than being able to "allocate and *distribute* federal dollars and jobs to constituents…[they are asked to] cut those funds or inflows of federal dollars" (Goren 2003:2). Accordingly, there has been an inherent difficulty in the decision making process regarding military base closures over the past several decades, and as noted by James M. Lindsey (a Congress scholar), all members of Congress have contributed to the stonewalling of this process. He contends that "[m]ilitary bases constitute one area of the defense budget where the parochial imperative clearly motivates Congressional behavior…members of Congress, be they Democrats or Republicans, hawks or doves, junior or veteran legislators, fight for military installations in their districts and states" and thus have "effectively suppressed the ability of the executive branch to close military bases regardless of military necessity or efficiency" (1990:180). It is for these reasons that the base closure process was designed in a way "to divorce politics from public-policy problems by turning them over to independent commissions" (Sorenson 1998:3).

Specifically, acknowledging that the requirement of conducting the NEPA EIS before Congress approved the list was a major roadblock to closing bases, under this new BRAC law, the NEPA provisions are still to be followed, but *after* the bases have been selected for closure and *before* the actual closure or realignment. By moving when these provisions are to be followed brings in the NEPA at a point where they can assist with environmental clean-up, especially on lands that will be turned over for civilian uses (DoD Act 1990; Goren 2003). Thus, with the passage of the BRAC bill in 1988, and with the support of President George Bush, Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci

chartered the Defense Secretary's Commission on Base Realignment and Closure on May 3, 1988 to recommend bases for realignment or closure in order to bring base structure in line with the declining force structure. In October 1988, Congress supported the formation of this Commission, passed the legislation granting relief from certain restrictive statutes (PL 100-526), and approved the list of recommended closures (Hix 2001). Sorenson (1998:3-15) comments that:

> The base closure commission process happened because Congress and the president made a serious effort to "rationalize" public decision making about resource allocation. Both Bush and Congress surrendered something that politicians rarely let go of – political power. In this case, political power was budget power. Budget power is about allocating resources, rewarding friends, coercing enemies, and increasing the chances for election or reelection. On its face, giving up such power seemed unthinkable; after all, military bases have long been seen as a case of "pork-barrel politics," representing direct pipelines into states and districts for federal money. Power is usually guarded jealously by those who have gained it, and to surrender it is highly unusual…But Congress, as an institution, seemed to recognize that there are times when the surrender of power is necessary to prevent policy paralysis.

Congress authorized the 1988 commission, conferred the statutory basis for the one-time approach by the DoD, provided relief from the certain statutory impediments to closures (such as a partial exemption from NEPA and delegated property disposal authority), and created an expedited process for Congressional review of BRAC recommendations. This law also established that the Commission was required to make recommendations to Congress and the Secretary of Defense on realignments and closures; lawmakers now had to accept or reject the list in its entirety, and were unable to alter it in any way. A timetable was also set with respect to the amount of time Congress had to respond to the DoD once presented with the list: Congress was given 45 days within which to garner enough support to pass a resolution rejecting the list (which the

President could then veto), and if no action was taken within that time frame, the list automatically was accepted and the DoD would initiate the closure/realignment process.

The 1988 BRAC Commission was a non-permanent, independent, bi-partisan commission comprised of 12 volunteer members. In an attempt to depoliticize the process as much as possible, while open hearings were held when receiving testimony from various DoD, military, and Congressional affairs officials, the Commission moved the evaluation and deliberation proceedings behind closed doors (Goren 2003; Twight 1990). This particular component of the 1988 Commission was changed in subsequent Commission meetings, where most proceedings were not held in secret. According to the Staff Director of the 1988 BRAC Commission, this was possible in subsequent rounds as well because later Commissions were given a longer period of time within which to work. The 1988 Commission, for example, though convened in May 1988, was not given Congressional authorization until October and was expected to present the final list of closures by December. Despite this truncated time frame, the Commission was committed to making the process by which bases were selected for closure as transparent as possible and documented exactly how each base was evaluated and rated (including an evaluation of each base using COBRA or the cost of base realignment computer model, which weighs the cost to close the base against the number of years until cost savings are recognized) (Bryan 2006).

During this first Commission, there was relatively little public involvement in the process. While five "public" hearings were held, all witnesses were experts on various topics (Commission Report 1988): "they were not members of community chambers of

commerce or the military or civilian staff who were employed on the various bases considered by the BRAC" (Goren 2003:71).

The members of the 1988 Commission did conduct 44 base site visits during the decision-making process to assess facilities and infrastructure, though these visits were very different from those conducted in later rounds. In this first round, Commissioners were met by those who might lose their jobs if the base were closed – an unpersuasive attempt by base personnel to pull at the heartstrings of commissioners and make them feel bad (Goren 2003). This was also unpersuasive because only about 16 percent of bases on the initial BRAC list were removed (Shores 1995). Also, unlike future rounds, these visits were not designed to be opportunities "for expensive public hearings and sophisticated analysis by the various communities as to why the particular base in question should be kept open" (Goren 2003:71).

This first BRAC Commission was tasked with developing its own list of recommended closures and realignments – based on evaluations conducted first by each of the military services – as opposed to evaluating a list that would, in later rounds, be compiled and submitted by the Secretary of Defense. This original process of allowing the Commission to compile the list of recommended base closures and alignments was seen as a vulnerability: the Commission "potentially could have been altering the national security of the United States by simply changing the wrong bases. And [the Commission] put it together in such a way that politically it [the list] was acceptable – it could have been unacceptable from a defense point of view, and yet still could have gotten through" (Winik 1998).

The Commission's charter, therefore, delineated nine criteria to be followed in order to determine "the best process, including necessary administrative changes, for identifying bases to be closed or realigned" (Pentagon 1988). Criteria were designed around a number of cost-savings factors with the preeminent factor listed as "military value of a base" (Commission Report 1988:6). The criteria, as outlined in the *Charter of the Defense Secretary's Commission on Base Closure and Realignment* (1988) are as follows:[5]

1. The current and future mission requirements and the impact on operational readiness of the military departments concerned.
2. The availability and condition of land and facilities at both the existing and potential receiving locations.
3. The potential to accommodate contingency, mobilization, and future force requirements at receiving locations.
4. The cost and manpower implications.
5. The extent and timing of potential cost savings, including whether the total cost savings realized from the closure or realignment of the base will, by the end of the 6-year period beginning with the date of the completion of the closure or realignment of the base, exceed the amount expended to close or realign the base.
6. The economic impact on the community in which the base to be closed or realigned is located.
7. The community support at the receiving locations.
8. The environmental impact.
9. The implementation process involved.

On December 29, 1988 the Defense Secretary's Commission on Base Realignment and Closure announced that it had presented its report to Secretary of Defense Carlucci. In this report, the Commission recommended the full closure of 86 bases, partial closure of 5 bases, and realignment (either an increase or decrease) of 54 bases (Commission Report 1988).

[5] These criteria remained essentially the same with the passage of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act (DBCR Act) of 1990, though some modifications were made (see Table 1 for a comparison of the criteria used by the 1988 Commission with those used by the subsequent three commissions).

This new approach was deemed successful and thus new legislation was introduced to refine the process even further (particularly by including a means for true public involvement in discussions, deliberations, and decision-making processes) (Goren 2003). This new law (PL 101-510, *The Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act (BCRA) of 1990*) codified the process by which DoD installations would be realigned or closed, and authorized the next three rounds of BRAC (Hix 2001). The eight-member Commission, serving staggered terms of one, two, and three years, in accordance with this new statutory provision, met again in 1991, 1993, and 1995 to make recommendations on base realignments and closures. During the last three rounds, members were nominated and appointed by the President in consultation with and confirmation by Congress, instead of by the Secretary of Defense (Goren 2003; Hix 2001).

Under this process, the Secretary of Defense made recommendations for closures and realignments for consideration by the independent commission. The Commission then reviewed the recommendations from the DoD and made their own recommendations to the President. The President then reviewed the Commission's recommendations and either sent the list back to the commission for additional review or forwarded the list, without changes, to the Congress. The recommendations of the Commission then went into effect unless otherwise disapproved by a joint resolution of the Congress.

The Act of 1990 also put specific requirements on the Secretary of Defense to (Hix 2001:12):

- Submit a 6-year force-structure plan with its budget submission in January 1991 (for fiscal year [FY] 92), January 1993 (for FY 94), and January 1995 (for FY 96). The plan was to be based on the national security threats during the 6-year period and was not to refer, either directly or indirectly, to candidate installations.

- Publish and transmit to Congress the criteria to be used in selecting bases for closure or realignment.
- Submit closure and realignment recommendations to Congress and to the Commission no later than April 15, 1991; March 15, 1993; and March 1, 1995.

In addition, the Commission, upon receiving the list, was required to hold public hearings and then transmit its recommendations to the President no later than July 1 of the same year; the President was to then transmit back to Congress his approval or disapproval of the list no later than July 15. Upon final approval by Congress, the Secretary of Defense was to initiate closures and realignments within 2 years and complete all actions within 6 years. In light of logistical and financial problems found associated with the clean up of contaminants, Congress attempted to address these problems in the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act (DBCR Act) of 1990 by stipulating that clean up must be completed within 6 years on bases expected to be transferred to non-federal or private entities. In the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), Congress requires the DoD to certify that "all remedial action necessary to protect human health and the environment" has been taken before the property can be transferred (Congressional Budget Office 1995:5).

In an effort to "replace politics with rational means tests," (Sorenson 1998:47) the Act of 1990 provided specific criteria for base decisions. The final criteria to be used by the DoD to make recommendations for the closure or realignment of military installations inside the U.S. under the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990, Public Law 101-510, as amended, 10 U.S.C. 2687 note, are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of BRAC Commission Criteria for Selecting Bases to Recommend for Closure or Realignment.

	1988 Commission Criteria	1993, 1995, 1998 Commission Criteria
Military Value	The current and future mission requirements and the impact on operational readiness of the military departments concerned.	The current and future mission capabilities and the impact on operational readiness of the DoD's total force, including the impact on joint warfighting, training, and readiness.
	The availability and condition of land and facilities at both the existing and potential receiving locations.	The availability and condition of land, facilities and associated airspace (including training areas suitable for maneuver by ground, naval, or air forces throughout a diversity of climate and terrain areas and staging areas for the use of the Armed Forces in homeland defense missions) at both existing and potential receiving locations.
	The potential to accommodate contingency, mobilization, and future force requirements at receiving locations.	The ability to accommodate contingency, mobilization, and future total force requirements at both existing and potential receiving locations to support operations and training.
	The cost and manpower implications.	The cost of operations and the manpower implications.
Return on Investment	The extent and timing of potential cost savings, including whether the total cost savings realized from the closure or realignment of the base will, by the end of the 6-year period beginning with the date of the completion of the closure or realignment of the base, exceed the amount expended to close or realign the base.	The extent and timing of potential costs and savings, including the number of years, beginning with the date of completion of the closure or realignment, for the savings to exceed the costs (discounted to present value).
Community Impacts	The economic impact on the community in which the base to be closed or realigned is located.	The economic impact on existing communities in the vicinity of military installations.
	The community support at the receiving locations.	The ability of both the existing and potential receiving communities' infrastructure to support forces, missions, and personnel.
	The environmental impact.	The environmental impact, including the impact of costs related to potential environmental restoration, waste management, and environmental compliance activities.
	The implementation process involved.	
	Source: 1988 Commission Charter	Source: BCRA 1990

Between 1988 and 1995, the BRAC commissions voted to close 330 military installations and realign 173, with the federal government spending billons of dollars cleaning up and closing bases all over the country (Sorenson 1998). With the end of the 1995 BRAC round, the fourth round of BRAC, the military landscape in the U.S. had been forever changed. Even after more than 200 BRAC closures (including 97 major closings: Army, 23; Navy, 42; Air Force, 29; and Defense Logistics Agency, 3) (Hix 2001) during these four rounds, former Secretary of Defense William Cohen stated that the DoD still had more infrastructure than needed to support the military forces. Since the end of the Cold War, while there has been a reduction in service members by 25%, fewer than 10% of bases have closed as of the end of the 1995 BRAC round (Sorenson 1998). While the goal by Congress in 1988 when it authorized four "odd-year rounds of base closures" was to eliminate one-third of military bases, only 21 percent had been closed over the four rounds (Sidoti 2005; Sorenson 1998).[6] Secretary Cohen touted that the past four rounds of BRAC will continue to generate a savings of $25 billion a year through the year 2003 and an estimated $5.6 billion each year thereafter. He stated, "BRAC is critical to the success of our defense strategy. Without BRAC, we will not have the resources needed to maintain high readiness and buy the next generation of equipment needed to ensure our dominance in future conflicts" (Secretary's Message on BRAC 1998).

In 2004, the DoD announced plans for a new round of closings in 2005. In this round, the Pentagon plans to close or consolidate approximately 425 facilities (or 25 percent of current base capacity), arguing that annual savings could be as high as $7

[6] In 1999, Congress did authorize an additional round of base closures and alignments for 2001 (Accordino 2000), though this did not come to pass.

billion. As in previous years, lawmakers with military installations in their jurisdictions resisted this round of base closings (Sidoti 2005). As discussed, BRAC is an example of dedistributive policy-making, something most politicians do not like to do (Goren 2003).

Changes in BRAC 1995 (Fort Ritchie Round)

Following the first three rounds of BRAC (1988, 1991, 1993), President Clinton requested recommendations from those involved to prepare better for the upcoming 1995 round. In particular, "lessons learned in previous rounds of base closures have shown that the traditional Federal property disposal process has not always met the economic recovery needs of the local community" (DoD 1995: Section 1-3). This Presidential initiative gave top priority to helping affected communities realize early reuse of base assets to spur economic recovery.

Based in part on these recommendations from the field, the Clinton Administration released a five-part plan (1993) in an effort to "provide for more rapid redevelopment and job creation in communities affected by base closure decisions" (DoD 1995: Section 1-3), as presented in the *DoD Base Reuse Implementation Manual* (1995). Congress then adopted this plan and passed the Base Communities Assistance Act of 1994 (Pub. L. 103-160, Title XXIX, Subtitle A), which focused on the following economic development issues:

- Jobs-centered property disposal that puts economic redevelopment first
    - Transfer property at low cost
    - Encourage interim leases
    - Emphasize the needs of the community with respect to personal property
- Expedited environmental cleanup
- Easy access to transition help for workers and communities
- Larger economic planning grants
- "Transition coordinators" assigned to every major base.

Interestingly, the base transition coordinator (BTC) position, a DoD representative, was used only during the 1995 round. In the most recent round (2005) the attendant roles and responsibilities will be assumed by civilian contract personnel, since the BTC position was seen as "too controversial" (per interview with the Fort Ritchie BTC).

The Army's BRAC Process in 1995

During the last three rounds of BRAC (1991, 1993, 1995), each branch of the military was given independence to conduct a detailed analysis and evaluate its installations over a two-year period to determine which ones should be recommended to the DoD for closure (Goren 2003; Hix 2001). RAND (Hix 2001) conducted a review of the Army's base realignment and closure process, specifically the process used by the Army to evaluate and select which installations it would recommend to the Secretary of Defense for either realignment or closure. Hix notes that in 1995 the Army used an installation evaluation process similar to that used in the previous two rounds (1991 and 1993) and is presented below; this methodology was cited as "generally sound and well documented" by the General Accounting Office (GAO 1995:72). The Army subjected only its most significant installations to this rigorous analysis (minor sites were evaluated less rigorously).

To conduct its analysis, the Army created an *ad hoc* staff organization - the Army Base Study Group (TABS Group) - positioned within the Office of the Chief of Staff (Hix 2001). After identifying the Army's most significant installations, the TABS group applied the above process (Hix 2001:17): First, the group assigned each installation into one of 13 categories based on mission: maneuvering, major training area, command and

control (Fort Ritchie's category), administrative support, training school, professional school, ammunition production, ammunition storage, commodity-oriented posts, depot, proving ground, medical facility, or industrial facility. Concurrently, the Army Stationing Strategy was conducted to produce "a description of the requirements for each category of installation within a six-year period, based on the current national security strategy and programmed force structure" (Hix 2001:17).

Next, the military value assessment was conducted to assess each installation's assets and requirements, "resulting in a reranking within each category that reflects the assessed future military value of each installation" (Hix 2001:17). The Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff further reviewed these new rankings and then developed a new list of installations to be examined. The TABS group then examined the new list of installations "based on the last four DoD criteria (cost and savings, economic impact, ability of communities to support, and environmental impact)" (Hix 2001:17). This process then resulted in the development of a final recommendation list that was submitted to the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff. Once this list was approved, it was forwarded to the Secretary of Defense.

During the 1995 round, the Army assessed 96 installations (all 75 that met the BRAC threshold for consideration of closure – employing 300 or more DoD civilian employees along with 21 smaller installations); of these, 94 were active component units and 2 were Army Reserve. Fort Ritchie was one of 4 recommended closures of Command and Control Installations, providing an estimated $12.4 million in annual savings (Hix 2001). In total, during this round, the Army recommended closing 14 installations and realigning 11 others; the

1995 BRAC Commission supported these recommendations, but recommended keeping open two of the Command and Control Installations (Selfridge Support Activity and the Melvin Price Support Center).

CHAPTER III. FORT RITCHIE

The Importance of Fort Ritchie as a Place to Study

Fort Ritchie was a small Army base, relative to most posts, comprising only 638 acres, with less than half of the area (310 acres) developed. In comparison, Fort Bragg and Fort Drum, for example, comprise 160,770 and 107,265 acres respectively. The remaining 328 acres of Fort Ritchie, which extend up the mountain toward the Appalachian Trail, is steep, rocky, heavily wooded, and full of unexploded ordnance (UXO) from the days when the mountainside was used for target practice and operational drills. Ritchie, and the community around it, are also geographically remote – more than 16 miles from the county seat in Hagerstown – and are accessible only by narrow, winding, two lane roads, which are often treacherous during the cold, winter months.

As introduced in Chapter 1, the remote location of a military post, particularly an Army post, is not unusual. Unlike other bases around the country, however, neither the community nor any local political agents pursued or lobbied for the location to be selected by the Department of Defense as a military installation. Ritchie nonetheless caught the attention first of the National Guard because of its "altitude, picturesque surroundings, topography, and accessibility by both road and rail" (Fries 1986) and then of Army planners because of its geographical remoteness, with open spaces to build and lower labor and supply costs of construction. Ritchie was thus identified as an ideal location to serve as the site for various military intelligence operations through the years, and this same logic was applied when selecting a permanent home for Camp David (the Presidential retreat), Site-R (the Underground Pentagon), and Site-C (a small facility atop

Quirauk Mountain that is part of the White House Microwave Communications Systems); all of which are located nearby.

For many years, the fort was the largest civilian employer in Washington County. It employed hundreds of area residents in a range of employment types from service jobs in the Post Exchange (PX) to contract work to Department of Army civilian positions. This fact, coupled with the geographically remote location of Ritchie, increased its impact on the small, remote community outside its gates while it was operational – and then when it closed – more so than would be expected had the base been located in or near a large metropolitan area. This condition is not unlike others around the country where military posts, especially Army posts, have closed or have been slated for closure in the upcoming 2005 BRAC round. Furthermore, the community around Ritchie has endured seven long and frustrating years surrounding the reuse of the property – a situation from which many lessons can be learned by communities big and small. Thus, on a small scale level, Ritchie and its community can serve as an example of what has happened before and what can be expected to happen again, given similar situations. This is particularly the case because a study to examine the nature and extent of the impacts of a base closing on the community, at the community level, and examined ethnographically, has yet to be undertaken.

Furthermore, the study of Ritchie and its surrounding community "on the mountain" provides insight into the role a place can play in helping to shape social behavior and action in daily life generally and in particular, when it is faced with exogenous forces – a role which is often left uninvestigated (Gieryn 2000). Specifically, by emphasizing place as the center of the analysis, not just as a backdrop, and by taking

into consideration three important elements of place, "location, material form, and meaningfulness" (Gieryn 2000:466), increased attention can be put on examining important sociological concerns including behavior, beliefs, institutions, the distribution of resources and power, and change (Gieryn 2000; Paulsen 2004). Explicating how certain qualities of a place shape the lives of local residents can help researchers and policymakers understand more fully how plans to alter that place might be received and responded to by the community.

Moreover, if communities and their residents (beyond those at the academic and federal levels) are able to understand the impacts – not just economically, but socially and psychologically as well – of the closing of a military base, often a cornerstone of the community, then they can help themselves transition better from a military to a non-military community. The findings of this research could therefore be of potential interest to both academics and practitioners interested in community action and welfare issues, as well as federal policy makers tasked with easing base closure transitions and aiding in the economic redevelopment of affected communities.

This case study of Ritchie and the community therefore further exemplifies the important relationship between people and places and how particular places give meaning to the lives people live. Moreover, this study highlights the important concepts of sense of place and place attachment and how, when a place – a place with so much meaning for so many people – is threatened, ties to a place can strengthen the ties between those trying to save it. To help tell the story of Ritchie, I spoke with those most closely connected to it. These individuals, listed by their roles, are briefly described in Table 2.

Table 2. List and description of community informants by role

ARMY/LRA/PMDC Representatives or Affiliates

1 BRAC Base Transition Coordinator (BTC); Area resident.[7]
2 BRAC Base Environmental Coordinator (BEC) (Civilian Army Employee); Area resident.
3 Executive Director of the PenMar Development Corporation (PMDC), the Local Reuse Authority (LRA) for Fort Ritchie Army Garrison.
4 Former Executive Director of the LRA; Former Executive Director of PMDC.*
5 Former Fort Ritchie Post Commander (referred to throughout as the "Lt. Col."; Former Executive Director of PMDC.*
6 Last Fort Ritchie Commander.*
7 Washington County Commissioner; PMDC Board Member.
8 Founder and CEO of Role Models America Inc. (RMA).*
9 Former Fort Ritchie MP Commander; American Legion member; Area resident.
10 Former Fort Ritchie Post Historian; Area resident.

Community/Area Residents and Activists

11 Community resident (previous); Community activist; Founder of the Cascade Committee and member of the Cascade Committee Steering Committee.
12 Community resident; Community activist; Member of the Cascade Committee Steering Committee; Co-Plaintiff in the "Local Lawsuit."
13 Community resident; Community activist; Member of the Cascade Committee Steering Committee; Co-Plaintiff in "Local Lawsuit."
14 Community resident; Member of the Cascade Committee Steering Committee.
15 Community resident; Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) member; Community activist; Member of the Cascade Committee Steering Committee.
16 Community resident; American Legion member.
17 Community resident; American Legion Post #239 charter member.
18 Area resident; American Legion member.
19 Community resident; Former Cascade Elementary School teacher.
20 Community resident; widow of Fort Ritchie Military Intelligence Training Center (MITC) graduate.
21 Community resident.*
22 Summer resident; Community activist.
23 Summer resident; Community activist.

Community Business Owners or Representatives

24 Executive Director of Camps Louise and Airy.
25 Director of Camp Louise.
26 Local barbershop owner; Area resident.
27 Local food mart owner; Community activist; Community resident.
28 Local food store owner; Community resident.
29 Local hardware store owner; Community activist; Community resident.

* I did not interview these individuals; Extensive information was presented on them either in secondary sources such as newspaper articles and LRA/PMDC and other government documents.

[7] I use the term "community resident" to refer to those individuals living just outside Ritchie's gates and the term "area resident" to refer to those individuals who live further away in Waynesboro, PA or other Pennsylvania towns located down the mountain. Throughout, I use the terms community resident, community member, and local interchangeably.

The History of Ritchie: From Farmland to Fort

The history of the fort has been documented through a number of sources, including historical fact sheets prepared by the Fort Ritchie Public Affairs Office prior to the base's closing (Fotheringham 1997), by private contractors in both the *Redevelopment Plan* (1997) (Sasaki 1997) and *Environmental Impact Statement* (LBG 2004), by the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) for presentations, and by various military affiliated organizations (e.g., the Military District of Washington). These various sources describe an area that has a rather unique and colorful past, and a past that continues to affect current and future uses of the site.

In the early 1900s, the land on which Fort Ritchie now sits was undeveloped woods and farmland, and was devoid of two of its most prominent features: Lake Royer and Lake Wastler, which accent the north end of the site. These manmade lakes were dug by Thaddeus Allen Wastler (in continuation of the work of his father-in-law Samuel T. Royer) as part of developing the land for use by the Buena Vista Ice Company of Pennsylvania (one of the southernmost ice companies in the country). Anticipating the expansion of the Western Maryland Railway, Buena Vista purchased 43 acres of land, excavated 20 acres to form a lake from which it could harvest natural ice, and eventually erected 11 icehouses and a railroad spur connecting the houses to the main line of the railroad. Two hundred and fifty pound ice blocks were harvested and stored up to three years in sawdust awaiting transport by railway boxcar to Baltimore, Washington D.C., and other points south. The ice company relied on the locals to help harvest the ice: "My grandfather used to wait to hear the whistle blow, for when the ice was frozen enough up on the lake, and then he would go and cut the ice," remembers a local resident, whose

great-grandfather's pig farm sat adjacent to the ice company and was then bought by the National Guard. With the expansion of the use of electrical refrigeration in the early 1920s, however, the demand for natural ice declined and the Buena Vista Ice Company closed down.

Even before the establishment of the ice company, in the days prior to the advent of air conditioning, wealthy industrialists had discovered that the mountain, with its cool breezes, offered an ideal escape from the sweltering heat of summer in the cities to the south. Wealthy families as well as whole embassy staffs would take refuge in the mountains during the summer months in both Maryland and across the Pennsylvania line in Blue Ridge Summit (many of these homes are still standing and are now under renovation). In the 1870s, Col. John Mifflin Hood, the president of the Western Maryland Railway, selected the community of PenMar (which straddles the states of Maryland and Pennsylvania and through which the Mason-Dixon Line runs, hence the name), as the site of PenMar Park. Serviced by the railway and newly built hotels and boarding houses, the area became one of the most popular resort areas in the East, boasting a roller coaster, movie theatre, carousel, and miniature train station. PenMar was also home to many Jewish families during the summer, with several kosher hotels built to accommodate the vacationing families of girls attending the nearby Jewish summer camp, Camp Louise. One community resident, now in her seventies, remembers when she and her family first came up to the area when she was a young girl. For health reasons, her parents sent her out of Baltimore during the summer up to Camp Louise. Her family, which was Jewish, liked the area, and in particular, PenMar. The following summer, they bought a summer home in Cascade, in which she and her husband still

reside during the summer. Following the closure of the ice company, resorts built up around the lakes and tons of sand was hauled in from nearby quarries to create beaches for bathing, boating, and tub racing. Accessible by the rail line, this area remained an ideal vacation destination for wealthy families for a number of years.

In 1926, under the direction of Retired Army Major General Milton A. Reckord (who sought a location for a National Training Center for the National Guard), 580 acres were purchased by the State of Maryland for $60,000 to use as a training ground for the 58th Brigade and the 1st and 5th Infantry Regiment units of the National Guard; the site was then named Camp Ritchie, after the then Governor Albert C. Ritchie (1920 – 1935) and Captain Robert F. Barrick was selected as the construction quartermaster. The acreage was then extended to 638 acres in a deal between Camp Ritchie and Camp Louise, the neighboring summer girls camp; in this deal, Ritchie contracted with Camp Louise to exchange land for water use rights to supplement Camp Louise's well water supply, a deal which lasts through 2029. Local residents were employed to help build Camp Ritchie (including mess halls, bath houses, kitchens, and administrative buildings), as recounted by local hardware store owner whose business, which has been in his wife's family for generations, supplied the wood and other materials to help build up the site. The garrison headquarters building was built to resemble the castle on the insignia of the Army Corps of Engineers, and is still referred to as the "Castle." The fort itself, which lies at the base of Quirauk Mountain, was used as a firing and training ground by the National Guard troops.

To centralize and improve intelligence training in preparation for U.S. involvement in World War II, from 1942 and until 1945, the federal government

activated the Camp as a War Department Military Intelligence Training Center (MITC). At this time, the federal government leased the Camp from the state of Maryland for $1.00 a year (Fort Ritchie Public Affairs Office 1976). On the grounds of Ritchie (the Albert C. had been dropped), the U.S. Army spared no expense to convert the camp into a year-round installation capable of housing 3,000 troops.

With an investment of $5 million, and the construction of 165 structures, many of which still stand, the Army created, among other things, a German village (though mostly building facades) and trained spies – citizens and non-citizens alike – in espionage, who were then dropped behind enemy lines. Training, made as realistic as possible, included instruction in enemy language, uniform, artillery, and strategy through the aid of mock Nazi rallies (called "passion plays") and the construction of Japanese bunkers (Fort Ritchie Public Affairs Office 1976). To help with training, equipment was continually sent to Ritchie as WWII progressed; "German, Japanese, and Italian war material, as captured" was shipped to the Fort (Britsch & Hugglestone 1987). In total, 20,000 students graduated from the MITC at Camp Ritchie.

This particular use of the Fort, though so many years ago, is highly salient in the memories of many older residents and recently has been brought to the attention of many others, both in the community and around the globe, with the release of *The Ritchie Boys* a film by German filmmaker Christian Bauer. As noted on the film's website: *"The Ritchie Boys" is the untold story of a group of young men who fled Nazi Germany and returned to Europe as soldiers in US-uniforms [sic]. They knew the psychology and the language of the enemy better than anybody else. In Camp Ritchie, Maryland, they were trained in intelligence and psychological warfare. Not always courageous, but*

determined, bright, and inventive they fought their own kind of war. They saved lives. They were victors, not victims.

In a 1998 newspaper interview, one soldier who served with the Composite School Unit of the MITC, now 77 years old, recounted his memories with the unit: “We had all the German, Italian, and Japanese uniforms and equipment. We dressed in those uniforms and soldiers heading into battle would watch. Sometimes we would be in the field, other times interrogating prisoners and sometimes we would be in the theatre introducing students to the German high command, including Hitler” (Newman 1998). Another local resident and retired civilian government employee, remembers that the Army used Italian prisoners of war as cooks in the mess halls at Ritchie during the days of the MITC. Noting the importance of this era, and the highlighting of the historical significance of Ritchie in Bauer’s film, in particular, the attention paid to the parade fields, the founders of the Cascade Committee (a community organization which will be discussed in more detail in later chapters) was successful in organizing a showing of the film on post in January 2005.

With the deactivation of the training center when the MITC moved to Fort Riley (Kansas) in 1946, part of the site was again used by the National Guard as a training station, with part of the site placed in caretaker status, and part used for the state’s chronic disease hospital between 1946 and 1950 (though the Army reacquired the site in 1948, no new military activities were initiated until the early 1950s). During this time, in the late 1940s, the Cascade American Legion (Post #239) first opened on the grounds of Ritchie. According to a community member and charter member of Post #239, the American Legion was given access to one of the old wooden buildings by the main

entrance. But in the 1950s, the Army told them that they had to move and their current building now sits just outside the gates.

Following WWII, in response to the detonation of a nuclear weapon by the Soviet Union in 1949, the construction of a command post that was survivable during a nuclear attack was ordered. Construction began for this underground command center, the Alternate Joint Communications Center (AJCC, also referred to as Site-R Raven Rock, named for the dome shaped mountain top in the Blue Ridge Mountains in Pennsylvania within which it is housed) and in 1953 it became operational. In 1949 (according to a 1971 interview between the Fort Ritchie Post Historian and Col. Reckord), the Army purchased Ritchie for $2.35 million, and officially changed the name to Fort Ritchie, thus designating it a Class I installation under the Army's jurisdiction. In 1985, Fort Ritchie was then designated as a U.S. Army Garrison (Britsch & Hugglestone 1987). Fort Ritchie became the above ground support base/facility for Site-R, Site-C (which is the radio communications outpost of Site-R), and Site-X (mission unknown). This remained the primary mission of the fort through 1997, when it became headquarters to the 7th Signal Command (the 1108th Signal Brigade; 1111th Signal Battalion), Information Systems Engineering Command (ISEC–CONUS), the Information Service Center (AISC), and the Defense Information Systems Agency – Western Hemisphere (DISA-WESTHAM).

While Site-R was being constructed, AJCC operations were conducted on the post. Locals helped construct Site-R, and though the government tried to keep these activities secret, the locals knew what was going on. One local resident remembers this time "when they took out that whole mountain, and they were trying to keep it hush-hush,

but if you went to any of the restaurants, everyone was discussing it." Her husband remembers too that during this time, despite the secretive nature of the work, he would sometimes see President Eisenhower walking around the post eating an ice cream. Another long time resident of PenMar also remembers that everything was supposed to be very secretive with the building of Site-R, but amusingly "they said you could look them up in the phone book."

As an interesting historical aside the former Fort Ritchie post historian (and author of the recently published *Mont Alto Sampler*[8]), shared with me many artifacts and stories about her time at Ritchie. She told of a time when she found some old maps kept by Captain Barrick, which showed some of the old street names around the post: Rose Greenhow, Belle Boyd, Nancy Hart, and Pauline Cushman. Upon further investigation, she discovered that the roads were in fact named for female spies (both Confederate and Union) from the Civil War – "This seemed so appropriate to use at the site of the Military Intelligence Training Center – and these [streets] were named by someone with a sense of history and a sense of humor," she regaled.

Fort Ritchie was selected for closure as part of the 1995 BRAC round. At the time of the official closure announcement in the fall of 1995, Ritchie was home to 846 troops (784 enlisted personnel and 62 officers), including Army, Air Force, and Navy personnel, and 705 DoD civilian employees. Of the Active Duty Force, 82% were male, with a median age was 29 years or younger. The majority of personnel were white (59.3%), with 33.7% African American, and 3.3% Hispanic. More than half (61.8%) were married, 44% had at least one dependent, and 98.9% had at least a high school

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[8] The *Mont Alto Sampler* presents the history of the town of Mont Alto, Pennsylvania, the iron furnace, and the early years of the Pennsylvania State Forest Academy, now known as Penn State Mont Alto.

diploma or greater (including 7.7% with a college degree and an additional 3.4% with a masters degree). The primary occupational specialties of the personnel included electronic repair (26.5%), functional support and administration (22%), and service and supply handlers (16.5%). The civilian force was 64.7% male, 92.1% white, 5% African American, and 1% Hispanic. The primary occupational categories for civilian employees were management (35.7%), technicians (16.3), and engineers (14.3%).[9]

The closure process initially schedule for 2001 was accelerated[10] and the base ceased operations on September 30, 1998, with the majority of its functions and personnel moved to Fort Detrick in Frederick, Maryland, approximately 25 miles south of Cascade. Others (about 6%, or 98 troops) were relocated to Fort Huachuca in Arizona, and those not relocated were phased out (111 military and 366 civilian jobs); these individuals were given the opportunity to seek new government employment through the Federal Priority Placement Program. Five hundred twenty seven military and 450 civilian jobs were transferred to either Ft. Detrick or to Letterkenny Army Depot in Pennsylvania. In addition to these numbers, contractors engaged in activities on the base employed 102 people and, of these, an estimated 54 persons were moved to Fort

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[9] I am grateful to Dr. Morris Peterson of the Army Research Institute (ARI) for facilitating the acquisition of the data on active duty and civilian personnel stationed at Fort Ritchie.

[10] As presented in Chapter 1, an important methodological step during the conduct of ethnography is the identification of rich points, or special points of information that when they occur, allow the ethnographer to learn a little bit about how the world works from the perspective of those living within. To provide insight to those specific instances that I deemed rich points, I will footnote with the simple phase, RICH POINT (and highlight the quote or phase), to help readers trace the evolution of the story as now told from my (the researcher's) perspective. This note is the first RICH POINT – "the process, however, was accelerated." This struck me as important since at the point I heard this, I already had a sense of the slow progress that had been made regarding the transition of the post from the Army to the LRA as well as the ability of the LRA to attract businesses to the post. Additionally, I later learned that it was the same individual – the former post commander turned Executive Director of the LRA – who decided to accelerate the closure process and who has been implicated in being one of those responsible for holding up the transfer of the deed of the base to the LRA and thus, the reuse process.

Detrick.[11] In total (military, civilian, and civilian contract), 1,704 jobs were lost from the area when the base closed.

The Ritchie-Community Connection

"The Fort was closely tied to the community," states a local business owner in Blue Ridge Summit, "it was the cultural center of this community."[12] This sentiment was shared as well by those on post. A 1986 newspaper interview with Post Commander Col. Carroll Fyffe reads: "Fort Ritchie is part of the community and the community is part of Fort Ritchie. 'Fort Ritchie has a good relationship with the surrounding communities. We have a mutual respect for each other and we help each other,' said Col. Carroll Fyffe" (North 1986: page obscured).

In this rather small community, throughout the years, Ritchie truly served as the proverbial town square, even though it was not accessible to all residents at all times. Depending on global military security issues of the day, there were times when the gates to Ritchie were highly secured, with limited access available to community residents; at other times, entrée required military identification or being signed in by someone with military identification, though for many community members this was not an issue; and then there were times when the gates were open and community members could freely walk the spacious grassy grounds of Ritchie – namely, the now historic parade fields.

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[11] Contractors included SSA, Goodwill Industries, Meridian, Morrison Enterprises, Hilton Environmental, AC&T, and Halifax. In total, these companies had yearly contracts worth $5,379,000, which paid $1,730,682 in annual salaries (Sasaki 1997).

[12] RICH POINT – "it was the cultural center of this community." When I first heard this I started to understand how important Ritchie was to the community, not just as an employer and source of revenue to local businesses, but as a social and entertainment outlet and place that encouraged interactions among residents that might not otherwise occur. And, in so doing, Ritchie was a place that contributed to the social well being of the community and served as a source of collective community identity.

This particular situation (as will be elaborated in the following sections) exemplifies how certain places and their physical structures (in this case, Ritchie's front gates) can deter or encourage activity by community members; when the gates were heavily secured, community activity on post was limited, when they were less secured, activity by community members increased. Moreover, how places such as Ritchie are *used* (e.g., as a place to walk, relax, play, gather) further serves to reproduce what that place is – Ritchie, in a very situated way, "was the cultural center" of the community.

Ritchie not only offered access to amenities and open spaces, but it did so in a setting that was often referred to as "one of the most unique and beautiful military installations in the country" (Cragg 1983). This example of narrative place construction, recounted formally as part of the description of Fort Ritchie in the *Guide to Military Installations,* reflects the accounts and descriptions provided by residents during informal conversations. The way people view Ritchie, especially the beauty and historical context that it adds to the community, is important because "places are brought into being in the mind as much as they are on the land" (Paulsen 2004:244) and this imagining is important for understanding how people see a place not only historically, but presently, as well as in the future.

Lush green grounds, sparkling blue lakes, and the backdrop of the Catoctin Mountain Range created an idyllic setting for work and play. Many military personnel stationed at Ritchie often chose the community as their retirement home. A former MP Commander on Ritchie, for example, chose the Waynesboro, Pennsylvania area in which to retire after serving at Ritchie: "I've been stationed a lot of places with the military and Fort Ritchie was probably the best place I was stationed; no place is as nice as Fort

Ritchie." While many people like the area just outside its gates, many retirees choose to live nearby to have access to the post amenities, but on the Pennsylvania side in Blue Ridge Summit or Waynesboro (6 miles down Route 16), because Pennsylvania, unlike Maryland, does not tax retirement income. With access to Ritchie, and such a beautiful area to live in up on the mountain, this "was like a retirement heaven for retired military officers," stated a local business owner.

Access to this open space was particularly important to the community, which not only lacks open areas to play baseball or soccer, but also lacks sidewalks and smooth roads to safely walk or ride bikes. While this day-to-day access was important, so too was the fact that Ritchie hosted special events and activities throughout the year to which community members were invited to attend. For example, everyone remembers the huge fireworks display put on by the post on the 4th of July – "it was the highlight of the summer," remembers many locals. Ritchie also hosted music concerts on the lawn of the General's house, flag ceremonies, special events for Armed Forces Day, an annual Special Olympics program, and, for several years, the Military tattoo. Another long time resident of the area, who is also a current Washington County Commissioner and member of the PenMar Development Corporation Board (PMDC),[13] remembers that when he was in high school the base would host teen nights on post. The post also ran several programs to benefit the community including a speakers bureau (where post personnel would be available to speak at local civic functions), an adopt-a-school program (through which the base offered employment to people attending a local school for the learning disabled), a summer hire program for local high school and college students to work on

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[13] As will be presented and described in later sections, the PenMar Development Corporation Board (PMDC) is the Local Reuse Authority (LRA) for Fort Ritchie; tasked with reuse implementation, PMDC is the successor to the initial LRA Executive Board tasked with reuse planning.

post in administrative and grounds positions, and a high school cooperative program that offered internships to students throughout the school year (North 1986). In all, remembers area resident and Fort Ritchie BEC, when Ritchie was active, "there was just a lot more vitality up here."[14] The activities and programs offered by Ritchie were not otherwise available in the community. Only Ritchie had the means and resources to host such activities, and the fact that they opened their gates so often and so readily exemplifies the close connection between the base and the community, a connection that continued even as the command of the base changed hands through the years.

As demonstrated through the preceding paragraphs, Ritchie was a place with a rather distinctive and active character – a requisite for employing a sociologically relevant concept, such as place character. In particular, as argued by Massey (1994:169), place character begins to emerge when, for example, one can conclude the sentence: "This is a place where people…." It is the active – not the static – qualities of a place that is important to identity. And, understanding how these qualities then impact action further enhances the sociological investigation. "The key is that these types of descriptions get us closer to understanding *how* [a place] is, as well as *what* [a place] is" (Paulsen 2004:245).

Just as the base offered services to the community, so too did the community give to the military and its members - "there was a lot of intermingling of community residents with military folks" remembers one area resident. And, furthers another a local resident, "the base was a self-contained community, they had everything they needed

[14] RICH POINT - when Ritchie was active, "there was just a lot more vitality up here." I found this point important because it speaks to how community members see the area (and how their sense of place has changed) now that Ritchie has closed and what they see as important effects of the closing on the community.

right inside the base, other than the school, so they didn't *have* to come off the base at all except to go to school, but they did." According to a Fort Ritchie Information Officer, "many soldiers based at Ritchie with their families depend[ed] on the local community for housing and shopping…[and] about 624 military families live[ed] off post with some 736 family members" (Fries 1986). Many military members and their families frequently came off post to shop in the local stores, use the local library in Blue Ridge Summit, worship at community churches, and dine in the local restaurants. And one restaurant, in particular, Rocky's, a pizza shop located just in front of the main gate, would do a very good business from the military personnel very late at night, at shift changes, remembers a former MP Commander at Ritchie: "Rocky's was a thriving business [in part] because of all the nighttime traffic…when shifts rolled from Site-R to Ritchie [around midnight], there was never anything open, but Rocky's would be open." Another local business in Blue Ridge Summit, a barbershop, did well too, since, even though there was a barber on post, their off post barbershop had better hours and provided a "style" to the military hair cut. Many soldiers and their families also chose to live in the community and would rent apartments that had been carved out of the big, old summer homes. Before the days when military families lived with their soldiers, locals provided boarding to the families, as was the case when soldiers trained at the MITC. One long time resident's family owned and operated a boarding house, The Point View Hotel; this is where she met her late husband, who was a graduating member of the 5th MITC Class in April of 1943.

The base also had a very special relationship with Camp Louise, the nearby summer Jewish girls camp. Ritchie and Camp Louis share a border and this allowed for easy access to the post by campers to go swimming – at the bottom of a long set of stairs

down the back end of the camp to a wooden dock area at the lakes, an area called the "crib" by campers, until the 1960s when the Camp got its own swimming pools. "The fort was always a good resource for us, we would take hikes down there," remembers former camper and now Camp Director. In addition, the camp had access to the on-post bowling alley, theatre, banquet facilities, and stage to put on shows. The base also provided the camp a ready supply of summer workers – from soldiers who would moonlight as security to the children of soldiers who would work in the kitchens and around camp; such workers are otherwise difficult to find from the local area – a situation the camp has found especially true now that their once steady stream of labor is gone.

Because Ritchie did not have a school on post, military families would take their children to and from the local elementary school, Cascade Elementary, located just outside and up the street from the main gate. There were never any problems between the "mountain kids"[15] and the "Fort Ritchie kids," remembers a local resident. Cascade Elementary received military funding and support for each military child it educated, and this influx of dollars subsequently helped the entire school community. A local resident and former teacher at Cascade Elementary when Ritchie was still open, remembers too that if ever there was a financial need that Washington County was unwilling or unable to provide, all that needed to be done was talk to the Provost Marshall's wife, who worked at the school, and she would help secure additional military funds to support the school, whether it was for supplies or activities. For example, when Ritchie switched over its computer system, she remembers that all the old computers were donated to Cascade

[15] RICH POINT – "mountain kids" versus other types of kids. It was from this comment that I began to get a sense of the way people around Ritchie (the folks on the mountain) were seen by others and in a sense saw themselves, which informs an understanding of the historical development of political disenfranchisement by those in and around Cascade from those in the political power seats in Hagerstown.

Elementary, and each teacher was given extra money each year from the military for supplies.

There always has been the feeling by locals that Ritchie and its soldiers were just part of the community, and this relationship with the community was established from the time the post was a National Guard site, with those associated with Ritchie opening the post up to residents. One resident remembers walking a mile up the mountain back in the 1920s to watch the free outdoor movies the Guard would put on for soldiers and community members during the summer training sessions. The Guard would also put on mock battles which area children would watch, and afterwards, would run around and collect the empty bullet casings to play with (not unlike another resident, now 85, who, as a teenager tended targets for the National Guardsman, remembers stories told by his grandmother of sitting on top of the mountain and looking down at the battles of Gettysburg). And yet another long time resident remembers similar experiences. As a child during WWII, he was allowed on post to see movies in the new post theatre: "I remember seeing 'war' movies on Saturday evenings. Admission was the same for the GI's; I believe 20 cents." Following maneuvers in the community by the GI's, firing rifles and machine guns with blanks, "kids would scour up the empty blank cartridges after they moved on. Occasionally, we would find a mock hand grenade or the little parachutes that were part of rifle-launched flares" [This resident wrote his memories for the summer edition of the *Maryland Cracker Barrel*, 1999]. Another summer resident also remembers, when, as a child, the soldiers would jog in formation through the streets while singing– "we knew all the Army songs." Other locals fondly remember Ritchie's

early morning reveille calls and the evening taps ceremony concluded by the lowering of the flag and the firing of the canon.

Even as time went on and the Army took control of the post and the thick brick walls were erected, community members still felt free to use the post's facilities, facilities and amenities which were not otherwise available for many miles down the mountain. For instance, community members were allowed to see movies on post; use the gymnasium; swim, fish and boat in the lakes; use the bowling alley; and play the 9-hole golf course - and these activities cost a great deal less on post than off (a round of golf remembers a former MP Commander only cost $4.00 and a game of bowling, 75¢). These benefits were extended even further to retirees (of which there are about 7,000 in the two-state, four-county area), who came to Ritchie to use the PX and commissary, both of which were brand new and in fact, were in the final stages of construction at the time of the closure announcement in 1995.

Ritchie also provided a place with large open spaces accessible to community members. This was important, recounts a local resident, "because we're an older community, we don't have sidewalks on our streets,[16] and that makes it difficult. We don't have a place to walk really; have you ever seen anyone walking down Military Road?" In addition, Ritchie provided a safe place for families simply to throw a ball around since there were large grassy areas surrounded by streets with slow speed limits. And, for this local resident, this also provided a place for his son to ride his bike, something he could not safely do along the streets outside the gate. As previously mentioned, investigating how social actors actually *use* their social space over time – and

[16] RICH POINT – "we don't have sidewalks on our streets." This statement speaks to how community members used the place of Ritchie and highlights the important role that the base played as a safe place to play, walk, and interact with others.

how this use changes in response to outside forces and the actions of others – helps to understand how residents come to define and redefine the character of a particular place and their relationship to it (see Gans 2002).

Given the remoteness of the community, Ritchie provided a law enforcement presence in the community, something that otherwise would not exist, since the area is far from local law enforcement stations and many residents bemoan that they "never see a police car up on the mountain." With a military presence, whether it was just having "green suits" out and about in the community, or having the MPs drive through the streets between Ritchie and Site-R, community residents felt safer and experienced very little crime. And though the MPs had no jurisdiction off-post, "we did serve as a deterrent," said a retired MP Commander, "people thought we could arrest because we had lights on our trucks."

But what members of the community seem to miss the most are the friendships they made with soldiers and their families and most especially, the diversity that the military added to their small, mostly white "mountain" community. [17] "Everyone got along, there were never any troubles" was a common sentiment shared by all residents, when asked about the inclusion of minorities – mostly African Americans and some Asians – into the communities of Cascade-Highfield, Blue Ridge Summit, and PenMar. "The base introduced our area to new cultures, new ethnic groups," said one local, "and there was never an issue of racism." In fact, she continues, "if it weren't for the military kids, we would have gone to an all-white school."

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[17] RICH POINT – "the diversity that the military added." This statement speaks to the fact that even though the area, historically (pre-Army) and presently (post-Army), is white, community members really appreciated and valued having people from other cultures and races as a part of their community; they valued what they and their children could learn from people from other places and they mourn the diversity that the military added.

Several community residents also recall that with the military kids (regardless of race) also came "some great athletes," and that since the military has left, all the high school sports teams have declined. Upon further examination, I found that this was in fact the case, at least with respect to the local high school's football and basketball teams. From a review of the season records of these teams as reported in the school's yearbook (dating back to 1989),[18] I found that in the years prior to the military moving out from Ritchie (1989-1995), the football team had a winning season each year up until 1995, when it had a 500 season. Overall, during this time period, the football team had 51 wins and 19 losses. In the years after the military left (1997 – 2002), the football team had four losing seasons and two 500 seasons, with only 17 wins and 43 losses. While not as dramatic, the basketball records show similar trends. In the years before, the team had a record of 77 wins and 78 losses; in the years after, it had only 44 wins and 69 losses.

While of course I am unable to determine how many, if any, military children played on these teams, it seems reasonable to assume that some did, particularly given the more active and athletic lifestyle to which military children are accustomed. Though not at all a scientific measure, this finding does at least speak to the accuracy of community residents' perceptions that the local teams have done more poorly since the military has moved out of the area.

The Maryland Army National Guard: From 638 to 19.3 Acres

As presented in Chapter 2, the 1995 Base Realignment and Closure Commission recommended, in part, that all military operations cease at Fort Ritchie except for those

[18] I was only able to review the yearbooks from 1989 through 2002 (though not 1996 which was missing), since it was only these years that comprised the local library's collection, which, according to representatives from the high school, was more complete then their collection.

conducted by the Maryland Army National Guard enclave. At one time in control of all 638 acres of Ritchie, the Guard unit now sits on 19.3 acres on the southeast side of the post, and is retained by the U.S. Army for use by the Maryland State National Guard. This site is used by the 629th Military Intelligence Battalion (Combat Electronic Warfare Intelligence), 29th Infantry Division (Light) (E Company, Long Range Surveillance Company); the 629th was reactivated and moved to the grounds of Ritchie in 1986. Part of the 29th Infantry Division, which is headquartered at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, the Division has units in Virginia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Connecticut. The 629th Military Intelligence Battalion provides combat intelligence and electronic warfare support to the 29th Infantry Division by performing intelligence analysis of ground surveillance, force protection, interrogation of prisoners of war, electronic surveillance, and electronic attack. The Long Range Surveillance (LRS) Company of the 629th is specially trained and equipped to collect Human Intelligence behind enemy lines (Aviation Brigade, 29th Infantry Division 2002). LRS teams are trained to infiltrate their targets by air, ground, or water – missions not unlike those of soldiers trained at Fort Ritchie's MITC during WWII.

Though the National Guard continues to have a presence in the community, interestingly, it does not seem that this presence is a significant one in the sense that it does not impact the lives of community members, either positively or negatively. Tucked away on the southeast side of Ritchie, the National Guard site is somewhat removed from the residential and business areas of Cascade-Highfield, Blue Ridge Summit, and PenMar, and at no times during any of the interviews conducted or in any of the archived news accounts read, did any issue with the National Guard unit emerge. As an

observation, it reminds one of the saying, “out of sight, out of mind” – which, given the mission of this highly specialized covert, intelligence unit, is probably just fine with them.

CHAPTER IV. THE TRANSITION – FEBRUARY 28, 1995 TO PRESENT

"Fort Ritchie may be shut" read the banner headline on Tuesday, February 28, 1995 in the *Daily Mail* newspaper published in Hagerstown, Maryland. News of the announcement that Fort Ritchie was on the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's recommended closure list spread quickly through the community around Fort Ritchie and in the surrounding Maryland and Pennsylvania areas of Hagerstown, Waynesboro, and Chambersburg. The area also experienced a second blow when it was announced that Letterkenny Army Depot, near Chambersburg (about 22 miles north of Ritchie), was also on the BRAC list slated for major realignment. Letterkenny, the largest employer in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, overhauls and maintains Army equipment and stores ammunition, and faced the loss of more than 2,400 jobs (military and civilian). The announcement of the recommendations by the BRAC commission in the winter of 1995, therefore, affected thousands of people (residents, employees, business owners, retirees, and countless others) just within a small, 22-mile area encompassing two states, Maryland and Pennsylvania, and four counties: Frederick and Washington counties in Maryland and Adams and Franklin counties in Pennsylvania.[19, 20]

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[19] For analytical purposes, this two state, four-county area would end up becoming defined as the Region of Influence (ROI). The ROI was defined by the U.S. Army as a way to evaluate the effects of the closure on various socioeconomic conditions and "was based on the general commuting area and shopping patterns of Fort Ritchie military and civilian personnel, the area served by local communications and advertising media, and the boundaries of regional shipping and wholesaling functions" (Department of the Army, Military District of Washington 1997).

[20] Throughout this chapter, the significant events related to the closing and transition period are presented in both chronological and substantive order. As an additional way of pulling all of these events together and presenting them in a clear and chronological order, Appendix I presents a timeline from 1995 (the date of the announcement that Fort Ritchie was being considered for closure under BRAC) through 2005 (the end of my field work). In addition to the events and the dates they occurred, I also indicate which key players are involved.

The Announcement: Community Member Feelings and Reactions

Reactions to the announcement that Ritchie – a place seen by locals as not only beautiful and special, but of real value given its mission to support Site-R and Site-C – was on the closure list ranged from surprise and shock to feelings of depression and devastation. One longtime Smithsburg, Maryland resident and current County Commissioner, remembers feeling surprised by the announcement for a number of reasons. He recalls that not only did Ritchie support Site-R and Site-C, which were very important functions, but these support services were slated to move to Fort Detrick, which, at the time, did not have the infrastructure or capacity to support such a move, so essentially all that was at Ritchie was closed and then rebuilt at Detrick. Further, the soldiers originally stationed at Ritchie to support Site-R a few miles away, were now moved to Detrick (26 miles south) and then bussed back up the mountain to work at Site-R. This gave him and others the impression of poor planning on the part of the military and unwise spending of tax dollars.

Moreover, he recounts, several millions had just been spent in the past three years upgrading a number of facilities on Ritchie including the new fire station (for which they just had the official ribbon cutting a week prior), commissary, and PX, and at the time of the announcement, as quoted by Ritchie officials: "there are currently about $14 million worth of improvement projects under way at Ritchie" (Talbert 1995). Other community members reiterated this feeling, as they too saw the announcement as "foolish" given the fort's connection with the Sites. The BEC, for example thought, "no way we are going to close. We're too close, we're part of the Pentagon infrastructure, the communications network – the Pentagon, Camp David, the world – no way this place is going to close, it's

the support platform for Camp David, the support platform for Site R, it's just too strategic an installation…HUH – well, we all know where that got us!"

Other residents remember experiencing more visceral emotions and express being in disbelief at the announcement. A local barbershop owner, remembers, "it was like just everything stopped… like someone had died, it was very traumatic...a lot of people were sad and depressed." Given its support function to the Sites, she continued, no one thought that Ritchie would close, and everyone figured that something would happen to turn it around. It was like people "got the wind knocked out of them," remembers a local storeowner. A retired MP Commander on post remembers, "we were all shocked. I remember sitting in here [in the American Legion] the night the BRAC list was going to come out and it was like a deafening silence in this place…the place was packed…and when they [Channel 25 Alive] made the announcement…spirits just went down big time…it was like we just got a dagger in our heart." The former post historian also recalls sadly, "when I heard, I was just sick – I loved Fort Ritchie." The local newspaper, the *Record Herald*, just one day after the announcement, also promulgated these feelings with headlines such as: "Impact called devastating" and "Shutdown would put squeeze on retirees" (March 1, 1995).

While the feelings and reactions to the announcement seemed fairly uniform among all residents, the response by residents was not. Some residents immediately took an active stance to fight the closure list, whereas others seemed immediately resigned to the fact that Ritchie would close and they could not do anything (and thus did not do anything) about it.

The Announcement: Community Member Responses

Taking Action – The Battle to Save the Base

Within one day of the announcement that Ritchie was on the BRAC closure list, a local resident and former Fort Ritchie Commander (from November 1982 – July 1984), announced the formation of FORMAC, the Fort Ritchie Military Affairs Committee. FORMAC, comprised of approximately fifty members representing local business, private, professional and political interests (including the Greater Hagerstown Committee Inc.), was formed to help fight the BRAC list and convince Commissioners that Ritchie should remain open. By day thirteen, FORMAC had already scheduled meetings with Beverly Byron (BRAC Committee 1993); members of Pennsylvania's Governor's BRAC PAC (which was established to fight the listed closures and realignments in Pennsylvania); and with the Department of the Army BRAC team leader. And, by March 17, FORMAC was already well under way in its preparations for the upcoming visit of BRAC Commissioner Al Cornella to Letterkenny and then to Ritchie. On this day, FORMAC held a press conference to present their strategy to keep Ritchie open with an outline emphasizing the military value and cost effectiveness of keeping the fort open. The group also implored local residents to show their support in person and financially. Among others, local storeowners in Cascade were in attendance at the press conference and they said they would advertise the upcoming rally scheduled during the Commissioner's visit, as well as contribute $500 to the effort (Lyon 1995).

On March 24, 1995, less than one month after the announcement, BRAC commissioner Al Cornella visited Letterkenny and Ritchie. FORMAC had successfully organized three community rallies, one in Waynesboro and two at Ritchie. The first was

the Waynesboro Community Rally at Waynesboro Square, which is en route from Letterkenny to Ritchie; the Waynesboro high school band played, the American Legion and VFW showed their support, and flags festooned the parking meters. Around the same time, the first Ritchie Community Rally was held at the flagpole on post. Then, in the late afternoon, the second rally began on the Ritchie parade field where community members held up home made signs, Cascade Elementary students stood out in the streets with posters, and a human chain was formed along the road from Route 16 to the gates of Ritchie. "We lined the streets up with our signs [homemade painted signs reading: *Support the Fort* and *Save Fort Ritchie*]…and this is a very small community, but hundreds of people lined the streets, it was wild, it was great…people tried to make a good showing," remembers a local resident.

On this same day, and again one week later, FORMAC met with Commissioner Cornella and then with Major General Fred A. Gordon, Commander of the Military District of Washington, to present their case that the numbers used by the Army in selecting Ritchie for closure were faulty. Specifically, a FORMAC representative, in comparing the DoD analysis used to select Ritchie for closing with numbers obtained directly from Fort Ritchie officials, was quoted as saying: "There are huge holes. There's a hole in the DoD (Department of Defense) financial analysis numbers big enough to drive a Mack truck through." For instance, the article continues, "the Department of Defense calculates the one time cost of closing Fort Ritchie to be more than $92.8 million, he said. 'They're claiming they're going to get that back in one year because of the savings on the closure.' But FORMAC estimates the one time cost of closure at more

than $123 million and figures it will take eight or more years to recoup that money" (Lyon 1995).

Then on May 4, 1995, the BRAC Mid-Atlantic Regional Hearing was held in Catonsville, Maryland. Unlike in past BRAC rounds, presentations made against proposed closures or realignments were made by States, and not by individual communities, although the state of Maryland delegation, which was allotted a total of 160 minutes (including a 30-minute public comment period), gave FORMAC 30 minutes to present on behalf of Fort Ritchie. Thus, while the policy change at the federal level could have potentially disenfranchised the community around Fort Ritchie (as was possibly the consequence in other small communities), the State of Maryland attempted to counter this occurrence by allowing FORMAC time to speak – to have a voice – just on behalf of Ritchie. In attendance were several busloads of community residents, organized by FORMAC, to show their support for Fort Ritchie to the Commission. Despite their best efforts, however, by July, when President Clinton approved the BRAC list, the membership of FORMAC realized that Ritchie would indeed close, and by October of that year, when Congress failed to disapprove the BRAC list sent by President Clinton, Fort Ritchie was *officially designated* for closure.

FORMAC representatives continued to express their disappointment and frustration with the BRAC process in the local papers through the summer of 1995, claiming that subsequent presentations on Fort Ritchie to BRAC commissioners by the DoD were unfairly made "without all the facts…[and, in particular, some presentations were] 'very cursory and did not raise the many issues we had raised'…that's the most disappointing aspect of the BRAC hearings" (Barnes 1995a). Following the decision,

FORMAC declared that it would refocus its efforts on future uses of the base. [However, as of June 1995, I found no additional newspaper coverage of FORMAC; thus, I presume that as a formal organization – formed to prevent the closure of Ritchie and having failed – FORMAC dissolved, though the members, on an individual level, may have joined the reuse efforts].

Others too cited the final decision to close Ritchie as unfair: the manager of the Cascade American Legion at the time, was quoted as saying that "the whole idea of closing Ritchie is repulsive…we were not represented very well during the hearing [and] a lot of people worked hard to try to save it, and it didn't do any good." Other Legion members were also quoted as saying that "there was nothing fair about the decision to close the base" (Barnes 1995b).

Not only did residents feel that the process was unfair, but also many felt that Ritchie's closure was more political than anything else. Because Maryland faced several base closures and realignments during the 1995 round (including Fort Holabird in Baltimore City and the two Naval Surface Warfare Centers in Annapolis and White Oak), some felt that efforts by Maryland political leaders and its Senators were focused on saving the sites in the more populous areas: "They gave this one up…it was a tradeoff," said a local business owner. Another local businessman elaborates by equating the BRAC process to a horse trade and that "we were given up in a trade...though I'm sure Barbara Mikulski would fight this [statement] tooth and nail, but she got facilities closer to Baltimore and in Southern Maryland through the first round of BRAC, she didn't get Fort Ritchie through BRAC." Moreover, he contends that Ritchie was given up too, not only because of its distance from Maryland metropolitan areas, but because of the fact

that Washington County, unlike the majority of the state, is Republican, and he says, jovially, that Maryland politicians probably looked at Fort Ritchie and thought, "those damn Republicans out in Washington County, all they did was give the Governor trouble." Another lifelong resident of Cascade also laments, "we didn't have someone willing to fight for us like other areas had...and all the people that needed to hear weren't listening." One resident, who shares her time between Cascade in the summers and a suburb of Washington in the winters, called Senator Paul Sarbanes when she first learned about Ritchie being on the closure list: "I told him that they should never close this base…and I told him that I knew why they would close Ritchie and keep Detrick open…more voters…and he said he couldn't do anything about it."

The very visible and active responses taken on the part of some in the community to the announcement exemplify the salience and meaning this place, Ritchie, and its character held for locals – created through a combination of "geography, history, economy, demography, politics, organizations, culture, and aesthetics" (Paulsen 2004:245). This character has not only formed the tone of daily life for those up on the mountain, but has ultimately shaped how some residents chose to take action when faced with the potentiality of the base closing. However, action was taken, and strong vocal dissent was voiced, primarily by those with a certain level of established power and community involvement; this is in stark contrast to the responses of many other residents, as described in the next section.

Staying Out of It – You Can't Fight City Hall

While a small core of individuals rallied to save the base, with broader support from the community during specific times (such as the visit by the BRAC Commissioner and the testimony in front of the BRAC Commission), the general sense is that far more people chose not to fight, either because they did not want to get involved or because they truly felt that it would not make a difference. The perception by many of the residents *up on the mountain* is that they are not only geographically removed, but politically removed as well – a perception that seems to be perpetuated by those sitting in the County seat. "There's been a stigma over this mountain…that if you live here, you're dumb, or you're kind of like a second class citizen, even one of our County Commissioners called [this area] the boondocks," recalls a local resident and member of the Cascade Committee.

She then states that people really did not fight the closing much since people here "felt quite powerless…the education level is fairly low in this area…so after years and years and years of being told you are stupid…you kind of get the sense that you can't achieve things that other people might be able to, so there's a certain hopelessness felt if up against the quote *government*." A local barbershop owner, recalls that she did not personally take action to try and fight the closure since she really felt "intimidated by it all." Another local, whose family owns a farm overlooking the Ritchie grounds, recalls, too, that following a public meeting, one County official actually referred to Cascade as being on the "fringe" of the county. It is perceptions such as these – from both those living on the mountain and off – that has led to the saying by some, including a local

resident and founder of the Cascade Committee, that Cascade is “so close to God, but so far from Hagerstown.”

Several lifelong residents also stated that they did not try and fight the closure because they did not want to get involved: “I just wanted to stay out of it” recalls a local resident. Though others may have wanted to get involved, did not think that it would matter: “I’ve lived here long enough to know you can’t fight City Hall,” stated one community member. Historically, these perceptions have a foundation in actions taken by the County Government that seemed to occur without the consideration of local residents. One community resident remembers, for example, when the county decided to install a sewage pumping station on a residential block without any notice and without calling for input by residents; “when things did happen up on the mountain, we were never notified, we would not find a notice in our doorway.” When she tried to encourage her neighbors to respond by saying, “you’re griping and you’re not being heard,” they would respond, “well, everything’s a done deal around here anyway.”

As presented, many residents on the mountain felt disenfranchised from the local government and disconnected from those in power, and it was for these reasons, not because they did not love Ritchie or because they were indifferent to whether or not the base closed, that many residents did not actively fight the closing process. This situation further exemplifies how important it is not to confuse silence with assent: “silence should not be conflated with approval of [a] project…as places vary in the degree to which vocal resistance is part of local political culture” (Paulsen 2004:257; see also Scott 1990).

The Fort "Closes with Pride": Memories of the Closing Ceremony

On Friday, July 17, 1998, with more than 4,000 people watching, the U.S. Army flag flown over Fort Ritchie was lowered for the last time, "rolled, cased, and taken off the parade field, symbolizing the inactivation of the U.S. Army Garrison" (Blizard 1998). In attendance, among other dignitaries, were Senator Sarbanes, Congressman Roscoe Bartlett, and special guest Lt. General (retired) Vernon A. Walters, who first came to Ritchie at the MITC as an interrogator, and then, after spending time in North Africa, returned as a trainer. A number of different bands and groups performed, including the Old Guard silent Drill Team, the Twilight Tattoo, the Soldiers Chorale, and the Fife and Drum Corps.

"It's an emotional day, I thought all the tears were gone three years ago. They aren't," one attendee remarked at the time (North 1998). Representatives of Camp Louise were invited to the closing ceremonies and the Executive Director remembers that it was "ever so impressive." But, he continues, "you had a mixed feeling about it because you looked and you saw the majesty and the pageantry of the military bands from so many different areas...and the precision marching, it was all so impressive, yet so sad, because you knew it was the last time." A local business owner also remembers "how very sad" she felt watching the closing ceremony. On September 30, 1998, Ritchie officially ceased military operations – "leaving a hole in the life of this small Washington County town" (Wheeler 1999).

Fort Closes to the Community as well

And with this action, came the closing of Ritchie's gates not only to the military, but to the community as well. In a September 26, 1998 *Record Herald* article 'Ritchie to close to general public' (author unknown), the post commander noted that "access to Fort Ritchie will be restricted…former government and non-government users of the installation should not attempt to use any of the facilities on the installation…[and, he continued] none of the former community support activities will be available for use, including the lakes, golf course and ball fields." He concluded by stating, "a closed installation can best be compared to private property, and persons not having authorized access are trespassing." Area residents remember that when the base closed, signs went up indicating that people without authorization should stay off the base. No longer was Ritchie an accessible and safe place for community residents to walk, play, or socialize. The meaning Ritchie held for community members (that is, their sense of the place) had now changed and it was now seen as an inaccessible, unwelcoming, and inactive place.

The Closure-Reuse Process: Progress and Delays

When Ritchie was officially selected for closure in the fall of 1995, the post commander at the time (to whom I will refer as the "Lt. Col.") thought that Ritchie could be used as a model for BRAC and the base closure process, according to the Base Transition Coordinator (BTC).[21] As such, though BRAC law states that bases have six years to cease operations, the Lt. Col. set the closing date for Ritchie three years sooner

[21] As outlined in the Department of Defense's *Community Guide to Base Reuse* (1995): the Base Transition Coordinator (BTC) is the local, on-site Federal point of contact who works as an ombudsman for the community. The BTC is a key contact, problem solver, and information source for the local community, especially in relation to environmental cleanup and property disposal.

to September 30, 1998. And while both the DoD and officials at Detrick, which was to receive most of Ritchie's personnel and functions, supported this decision, this decision apparently did not sit well with many of the federal civilian employees who worked on post, and who did not understand the Lt. Col.'s reasoning for hurrying the process. In particular, while many civilians were able to keep their jobs despite the closing, their jobs were transferred to Fort Detrick in Frederick, Maryland, 26 miles to the south. Given that most people chose to retain their residence, whether it was just outside the gates of Fort Ritchie or to the northwest in Waynesboro, they would now have a significantly longer commute to the new job location. For those who did choose to move closer to Detrick, this also hastened the time with which they had to find a new home, sell their old one, and move. Still others in the community, such as the business owners, saw the accelerated process as a positive since, as soon as the military left, they would not have to compete with the post, including the commissary and PX, for business.

The LRA, BCT, and RAB

According to the Base Closure Community Redevelopment and Homeless Assistance Act of 1994, upon the final selection of the base for closure, a local reuse organization (or LRA – Local Redevelopment Authority) must be created to identify community reuse needs and to conceive a redevelopment plan for consideration by the military, in coordination and cooperation with the Base Realignment and Closure Cleanup Team (BCT) and with the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB). "The LRA is expected to provide leadership and build consensus for base reuse [as it] will have sole

responsibility for planning reuse of the property and serve as the community's point of contact for all matters relating to the closure" (DoD 1995).

As there was no formal governing body at the community level (a role which often was assumed by the base commander and his deputies when Ritchie was active), this meant that an entity had to be created specific for this purpose. By October 1995, the Washington County Commission had assumed the role as the Executive Council for Fort Ritchie's LRA, and held its first meeting with the newly appointed BTC, the BEC, and a number of business and community people from both Washington County, Maryland and Franklin County, Pennsylvania, who were charged with leading reuse activities, with the County Commission authorized to have the final say on any developed plans. Also in attendance at this meeting were representatives from another newly formed group, the Fort Ritchie Reuse Committee, organized by the Executive Director of the Washington County Economic Development Commission.

Around this same time, the BRAC Cleanup Team comprised of the BEC on base, and representatives from the Federal Environmental Protection Agency and the Maryland Department of the Environment, began the process of certifying that Ritchie was environmentally safe for transfer to non-military use, by identifying and cleaning any unsafe environmental conditions that might pose a problem for redevelopment. Once the BCT was created, the BEC went into the community to solicit volunteers to serve on the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) – the board responsible for overseeing the Army's environmental cleanup process. The BEC, who sat as the chair of the RAB, successfully identified about thirteen people, representing community members, military members living on post, local business owners, residents from the surrounding affected area in

Pennsylvania, and a member of a Washington County environmental watchdog group. One area resident, who served as post historian in the early 1970s, chose to serve as a RAB member because she was concerned about what might happen with the artifacts she had collected and research she had conducted on Ritchie over the years; she thought that by serving on the RAB she might be able to assist with the preservation and conservation of these historical items. According to this RAB member, the principal at the time of the local school, Cascade Elementary, also chose to serve on the RAB as she was concerned about the fate of the school in the wake of the closure, particularly, since she knew that once the military left, military related funding for the school would end.

Another local resident also joined the RAB in 1997, seeing it as a way to stay informed about the closure process, given that he felt that the Executive Director of the LRA at the time was unresponsive to requests for information concerning the reuse of Ritchie and was very secretive.[22] When he joined the RAB he said, "I went presupposing, prejudiced, to assume that the Army would do dirty work, try and sweep things under the rug…in fact, I came away with the impression that they were doing a very standup job of getting it cleaned up to the standards that were appropriate for commercial reuse."

The job of the RAB to oversee the Army's environmental cleanup process to make sure that it was appropriate for the determined reuse plans for the property – in this case, commercial – was important, because, explained one member, "how much money you put into the cleanup and how you allocate that money depends critically on what you

[22] RICH POINT – "the LRA…was unresponsive…and was very secretive." This point was important to me because it not only speaks to how community members perceive part of the reuse process and their ability to participate, but, also seems counter to how the process was designed to be. Over time, this point became even more important as it fit with other statements on how, historically, people in the community have been left out of the political process.

plan to use the property for [e.g., residential or commercial use].” As an example (which will be discussed in more detail in the following sections), the cleanup (either removal or determination of adequate depth) of unexploded ordnances for commercial reuse does not require digging to the depths of six-feet down because below a certain point it is wasted effort. “If you are just going to pave everything over anyway and put office buildings over it,” he continues, “it really doesn’t matter if there is an unexploded bomb six-feet down because no one is ever going to touch it, it will never harm anyone. On the other hand, if you are going to put homes there, well then you do have to clean it to the six-foot standard because that’s below the frost line and it doesn’t move if it’s below that. And then, there are some areas you can agree to fence off and make a no-man’s land forever, and those only need to be cleaned down to the one-foot level.” The RAB met monthly for several years, and though there have not been any RAB meetings for a couple of years, the board is not, as yet, officially retired, stated the BEC.

By April 1996, a little more than a year after Ritchie had been targeted for closure, the BTC, announced that “a concept plan for the fort has been developed…[and this plan] calls for a technology park, residential and recreation areas, an industrial area, an educational and training site, and an area for multiple uses” (Giancoli 1996a). This plan had been developed with the input of various community groups, he said, with the assistance of seven executive committees under the authority of the LRA, which had been formed to “turn the concept into reality.” Additionally, he announced, a contractor experienced in redeveloping sites from government to civilian uses will be hired. At the time of this announcement, he also made another declaration: “Fort Ritchie has no serious environmental problems that may delay the closure and transition process.”

While the BTC was correct that there was very little chemical contamination of the environment that would delay the reuse or transfer, unbeknownst to him and to all involved in the process at the time, there was an environmental problem lurking just below the soil that would prove to be one of the main reasons in delaying the transition of Ritchie. Within a few short months, with the start of research in preparation of the *Archive Search Report* (which included the identification of the warfare materials used on Post during the past sixty years, 1936-1996, as well as all types of munitions used and all possible hidden disposal sites), the BTC would identify six areas around the post requiring further investigation.

By the fall of 1996, the Lt. Col., and the Director of the LRA Executive Council were presenting themselves as a unified front – as a model partnership for how the base closing should go in collaboration with the community, and they touted this during an October 1996 visit by U.S. Senator Paul Sarbanes, Maryland Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, Maryland U.S. Representative Roscoe Bartlett, and Waynesboro's state Representative Patrick Fleagle. The Lt. Col. and the Director of the LRA Executive Council highlighted Ritchie's "partnership for progress - the joint efforts of closing and redeveloping the installation" (Giancoli 1996b). This partnership, explained the LRA Director, "is for long-term economic development and has synchronized visions and goals" (Giancoli 1996b). The two men even co-presented on installation and community partnership at the Secretary of Defense/Army Community Conference held in early December 1996 (Spigler 1997). The only problem was that the "community" was conspicuously absent from this partnership.

A local businessman in Cascade was asked to serve on the LRA board, which consisted in total of fifteen members, but five of them, he states, "were just the puppies that they put on the board because they needed that 'local' look. I got put on the board for one reason – so they could say they had a local man on the board."[23] But, he said, this group of five were not real members of the board and were not allowed to sit in on the often closed sessions held by the board: "We would go in for the first ten minutes of the board meeting every month and hear the general information…then they went into closed session, and the five of us had to leave…and they said that the reason it was this way was because they needed to have local representation, but [having me sit in on the closed sessions] would be a conflict of interest, which was baloney." The lack of "locals" on the board continued and even two years later a news article (Ernde 1999) noted: "residents complained that PenMar's board [PMDC] doesn't have any members who live in nearby Cascade." As I introduced previously, this particular situation is a reflection of the historical trend of non-inclusion of those living on the mountain into county affairs, further exacerbating feelings of disenfranchisement, insignificant voice, and that "you can't fight city hall."

By January of 1997, the concept plan for potential reuse of Ritchie had been further developed with the aid of an outside contractor, Sasaki Associates (at a cost of just over $400,000 paid for by the LRA), who sought input into the plan from the County Commissioners, the LRA, and the general public through a series of public meetings and focus groups. At this time, more than 80 local residents attended an LRA public meeting held in the post theatre to present the plan developed by Sasaki. Sasaki presented three

[23] RICH POINT – we "were just the puppies that they put on the board because they needed that 'local' look." Again, this demonstrates how removed community members feel from the reuse efforts as well as the animosity felt toward those who are allowed to be a part of the decision making process.

commercial reuse alternatives including PenMar Village: Vacation Home Community; PenMar Campus: Conference and Training; and PenMar Technology Park: High-Tech Office. The *preferred alternative* presented in the plan was a commercial – not residential – one. As presented at this meeting, and eventually agreed upon by all parties – community members, the County Commissioners, and the LRA – the final plan was a combination of both the education/training/conference campus and the hi-tech office park. This plan was referred to, and eventually formally adopted as, *Lakeside Corporate Center at PenMar,* which would become the new name of Ritchie on October 1, 1998, following the last official day of military operations on post.

The information presented, based on Sasaki's analysis of the area and infrastructure became the *Fort Ritchie Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan* (1997), and in April of 1997, the Washington County Commissioners officially approved this plan to guide redevelopment of Ritchie. Per BRAC requirements, the plan was then submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for review and approval, which it gave in December of 1997.

Just a few months prior, the LRA was able to secure its first commercial tenant on the post, the International Masonry Institute (IMI), which is the training arm of the International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craft workers, based in Washington, D.C. Since the U.S. Army, Military District of Washington, owns Fort Ritchie, the LRA essentially serves as the landlord and caretaker of the post, with financial assistance provided by the Army, according to the BTC. The hope by IMI was that they could

purchase a part of the base to support a planned $40 million training facility that would add about 200 full-time jobs (Kirby 1999b).[24]

Another significant event occurring during this time was the retirement of the Lt. Col. as post commander and the appointment of a new Ccommander, who was assigned to Ritchie with the task of overseeing its closure a little over one year later. The new Commander, too, touted the accelerated pace at which Fort Ritchie was moving in terms of simultaneously working to close the base and redevelop the property, and while most posts close after six years and are then redeveloped, he cites, “we are so far ahead of any other example that it really is a success story” (Giancoli 1997).

The Camp Ritchie Historic District Agreements

In this same month (April 1997), the *Draft Design Review Guidelines for the Camp Ritchie Historic District* was also presented. This draft document was prepared for the LRA (by an outside consultant) pursuant to Stipulation VI of the *Draft Programmatic Agreement among the United States Army, Maryland State Historic Preservation Office, and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation* [this document was finalized later in the year with the assistance of a second outside consultant]. Specifically, per the final *Programmatic Agreement for the Closure and Disposal of Fort Ritchie*, Stipulation V (dated December 18, 1997), “The LRA will require property recipients to comply with the Design Guidelines to ensure that the overall architectural character and significant special relations of the historic property are taken into account when proposing new construction, or alterations, or additions to contributing elements within the Camp Ritchie

[24] After years of “frustrated expansion efforts” to purchase 26 acres at Fort Ritchie because of the delay in transfer of the base from the Army to the LRA, IMI announced in May 2005, that it will be moving at the end of its contract to a new national training center in Bowie, Maryland (Associated Press 2005c).

Historic District." Under the request of the LRA, an outside consultant was asked to "develop design guidelines for new construction and exterior rehabilitation of existing properties within the boundaries of the Camp Ritchie Historic District and a framework for implementation…[thus serving as a reflection of] the commitment of the LRA to retain and enhance the significant architectural characteristics of the historic Camp Ritchie complex while encouraging flexible adaptive reuse and compatible new construction" (Pickens 1997:1).

The Camp Ritchie Historic District – encompassing 126 acres on the northeast end of the post – includes 113 significant buildings, 6 structures, and 3 landscape features that are representative of the time the post was used by the National Guard and the by the U.S. Army during WWII. The buildings within the Historic District are mostly stone buildings built from locally quarried fieldstone, including the post headquarters (or the "Castle") and the kitchens/mess halls (the "finger buildings"), and temporary wooden buildings constructed during the time of training of WWII soldiers. While several elements predate the use of Ritchie by the National Guard, such as the lakes and the upper dam, their uses over the years have contributed significantly to the history of the post and thus have been included within the boundaries of the historic district (Fisher 1997).

The formal identification and codification of the historic area expands the narrative place construction of Ritchie as a beautiful – and historically significant – place worth preserving (see Tuan 1991). While these accounts were reproduced while Ritchie was still active, they continue to be reproduced through such media as federal documents, historical writings, and the newly released *The Ritchie Boys*. This reproduction and

articulation of how people see Ritchie (historically and currently) and form a local identity, also helps inform an understanding of collective action (as well as an appreciation of collective inaction).

The Creation of PenMar Development Corporation (PMDC)

In light of the turnover of County Commissioners with each new election cycle, to provide some stability to the LRA, and to remove politics as much as possible from the reuse process, Washington County sought to have a separate organization created with the assistance of the Maryland State Legislature, according to the current PenMar Development Corporation (PMDC) Executive Director. Accordingly, in the spring of 1997, state legislation was passed to create the PenMar Development Corporation, tasked with developing the fort, under the guidance of a fifteen-member board (with three ex officio members representing the Secretary of the Department of Business and Economic Development, the Maryland Economic Development Commission, and the Washington County Economic Development Commission). This public-private entity, organizationally, would be an arm of the Washington County Commission, and initially would receive financial support from the U.S. Army to help build up the new board's "war chest," with the ultimate goal of being financially self-sufficient with monies collected by rent paying tenants (e.g., through renting the former officer's quarters to local residents). For several years, the Army gave PMDC a total of more than $2.2 million to help pay their operating and maintenance costs (Butki 1999; Ernde 1999).

According to the BTC, at the time, Washington County was looking to fire their head of economic development, but instead, moved him out of the economic

development office and named him as the first Executive Director of PMDC. Within a few months, he was fired. The Army was not pleased with these initial actions by the County Commission as it felt that the board was not taking the reuse process seriously, given that their first decision involving PMDC included the installation of "a cast off who they then fired." The Army, according to the BTC, saw this as a sign that the County Commission was not interested in taking over the property in an expeditious way. Upon the departure of the first Executive Director, the former Executive Director of the LRA, was named Executive Director of the PMDC board.

One of the first accomplishments of the newly recognized PMDC board was the adoption of the *Fort Ritchie Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan*. Then, in June, the Secretary of Defense officially recognized PMDC as the Fort Ritchie LRA (successor to the initial LRA Executive Board tasked with reuse planning), which was tasked with reuse implementation. Specifically, as presented by the current Executive Director, the board is empowered by BRAC law through a resolution, and its principal objective is: "To identify, plan, and install a viable usage program which will provide jobs for those who have been displaced, foster an economy that will support local small businesses, and reduce the economic impact in the three-county, two-state area."

Interestingly, in July 1997, less than one month after retiring as post commander, the Lt. Col. was appointed Deputy Executive Director of PMDC,[25] and then, upon the retirement of the Executive Director in February of 1999, was himself named Executive Director. According to one community member and activist, given the Lt. Col.'s position

[25] RICH POINT – "less than one month after retiring as post commander, The Lt. Col.…was appointed Deputy Executive Director of PMDC." This struck me as an unprincipled allowance on the part of the U.S. Army, since having the former post commander take charge of the board responsible for civilian reuse of the base gives the appearance that the military is still in charge; a situation too which leaves the impression that community members are not welcome or able to assume such a role themselves.

with the Army, "the very fact that he was permitted to become the Executive Director of the Redevelopment Agency would not normally have been allowed, that fact alone was odd; he apparently sought and got a variance to the rules." This allowance by the DoD, however, may not have been the best strategic maneuver in the plan to move the redevelopment of Ritchie forward, and thus, not the most advantageous action for the community outside Ritchie's gates.

The Unearthing of Live UXOs: The Delay in Transfer Begins

At this same time, in the summer of 1997, while Ritchie was still an active post, two important environmentally related actions occurred. First, the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement* (EIS) was released. This document, prepared by the Army Corps of Engineers, presents an evaluation of alternative uses and use levels (low intensity reuse; low-medium intensity reuse; and medium intensity reuse) of the base based on alternative potential development intensity uses. In particular, in this document, the Army Corps of Engineers identifies and evaluates the:

> Anticipated direct and indirect adverse impacts of the primary action (disposal) and the secondary action (reuse) alternatives with respect to the following categories: Land Use; Climate; Air Quality; Noise; Geology, Soils, and Topography; Water Resources; Infrastructure; Hazardous and Toxic Substances; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Legacy Resources; Sociological Environment; Economic Development; Quality of Life; Installation Agreements; and Permit and Regulatory Authorizations (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1997:ES-3).

Of special importance is that this document evaluated land use alternatives with respect to the proposed *preferred alternative* presented in the then recently developed *Fort Ritchie Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan* (1997). The preferred reuse alternative

was deemed a low-medium intensity reuse alternative, which is defined by the "*developed portions* of the installation would be reused at higher intensities than existed under baseline conditions" (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1997:5-19, emphasis added); this land use alternative was not expected to cause any adverse impacts. This low-medium intensity alternative, as defined, reuses those areas on the post that are already developed, whereas the higher level of intensity, medium intensity reuse, relates to reuse of the entire installation, developed and undeveloped areas, at higher levels than previously existed.

The second, and probably more significant, event was the undertaking of the second stage of the archive search (with the first stage completed in September 1996 with the development of the ordnance *Archive Search Report*). This began with the BEC and his team putting shovels in the ground to collect and test random soil samples from around the post in areas that they thought were the former training and range areas. This sampling continued into the summer of 1998. "But this random sampling showed up forty some live rounds, which meant we've got a full blown clean up to do here[26]…and nobody was expecting this…and after we started to find a few live rounds, the people in the know started whispering, this is going to take a while." It was then decreed, "there will be a removal action at Ritchie prior to transfer." The area that was found to be particularly problematic, and a surprise to many, was the part of the base that contained, among other structures, the commissary, PX, the golf course, and officer housing (areas that had not been part of the target range). To figure out what happened, the contractors

[26] RICH POINT - "But this random sampling showed up forty some live rounds, which meant we've got a full blown clean up to do here." With this finding, the transition of Ritchie stalled. When the BEC said this to me, it became clear that perhaps the Army should not have allowed the Lt. Col. to accelerate the closure of the base until all of the environmental checks and tests had been conducted.

hired to identify and remove the ordnances went back to the archives and reviewed historical documents and examined overhead photography and discovered that "in the 1950s, when the Army purchased the property, they needed to build housing, they needed to build a commissary, they needed to build a PX, they needed fill dirt, so they went into the mountain and excavated the dirt from the mountain, brought it down and transplanted munitions across the base, without realizing that's what they were doing," according to the current Executive Director of PMDC. "So, what started out as a million dollar clean up has turned into a ten million dollar cleanup," he stated.

Further, according to the BEC, the Army previously had agreed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to follow protocols set for cleaning a base to a higher standard, as if it were a "dirty" site even though it is a relatively clean one (clean of chemical contamination that is) [thus following the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA)]. Following this process, then, requires the completion of a series of incremental steps to satisfy EPA protocol fully, and thus, is a very time consuming process: "every piece of the [environmental cleanup] process requires a document in a draft form, a review by the regulators, comments back, a rewrite, and in some cases, an advertisement to the general public for comments for 30 days, and then incorporating those comments, sometimes there are attorneys involved, and that can take another 90 days to get attorney comments…the whole process [turned out to be] more cumbersome than I could have dreamed." Therefore, among other things, the BEC is responsible for documenting for the regulatory community that the base – in whole or in part – is clean. The bottom line on environmental cleanup, including the UXO removal from as much as half the base property, has been about $20 million.

Frustrations and Accusations: Relations between the Army and PMDC and between PMDC and the Community

From the beginning, according to the BTC, there was fighting between the last Post Commander and the former post commander turned Deputy Executive Director (then Director) of PMDC, the Lt. Col. It got to the point that each said that they would only speak to the BTC, not to each other. But, then, with the closing of the base in September 1998, the last Post Commander was reassigned away from Ritchie, and as previously noted, the Lt. Col. assumed the position as Executive Director of PMDC in early 1999.

While many thought that the previous Executive Director of PMDC was "secretive," particularly when asked for information regarding the reuse process, according to a community activist, soon after the Lt. Col. arrived as Executive Director, "relations with the citizenry turned sour.[27] [He] believed he was still commander of the base and he acted that way and everyone else was a subordinate, including civilians, and he couldn't accept the idea that he was now working for a public agency, and really working for all of us…[and] secrecy became even tighter."

Moreover, the Lt. Col., according to a community activist and RAB member, took it upon himself to alter the reuse plans laid out in the *Fort Ritchie Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan,* and at the RAB meetings would present changes he had made, including changing areas designated for commercial use to residential use. These types of changes, not only altered a plan agreed upon by all parties (the Army, the LRA, and most importantly the community) [and up to this point "stuck with" by all, said the

[27] RICH POINT - "relations with the citizenry turned sour." This comment speaks to the growing frustration and divisiveness felt by those in the community toward those in the decision making seats. It also demonstrates how information was conspicuously kept from members of the community.

former Executive Director when interviewed upon his resignation (Newman 1999a)], but also altered the UXO cleanup process itself, since areas designated as residential were required to be cleaned to a higher standard (and greater depth) than areas designated either as commercial or a no man's land. Thus, according to a RAB member, the Lt. Col.'s actions inevitably delayed the completion of the UXO cleanup process, since PMDC and the Army had to formally come to an agreement on the type, extent, and projected cost of the clean up based on the RAB's recommendations as presented in a formal plan to the Department of the Army. As already presented to PMDC, the Army's plan "laid out a proposal [to PMDC] under which the ground would be painstakingly searched for unexploded grenades, mortar shells and munitions." As of May 1999, the Army anticipated cleanup to begin in the spring of 2000 and be completed in the spring of 2001. This, however, according to the Lt. Col., "may be too late…[as] there are several companies interested in the park, but [they] may not settle…because of the length of time it will take to clear out the unexploded ordnance" (Kirby 1999c).

The community activist and RAB member stated that PMDC changed the plan to have the whole base cleaned to residential standards, which is "a much higher and more difficult standard than the Army's preference of commercial use standards… [yet] without evidence that they have commercial tenants, PMDC is fixated on cleaning up sections of land to meet stricter residential standards" (Drastal 2000). Moreover, PMDC refused to discuss potential tenants interested in either commercial or residential development, and accusations began to swirl that PMDC now wanted to add the residential component because many of the board members were in real estate and banking and would profit by residential building at Ritchie.

Changing the plan to include larger portions of the base requiring cleanup to residential standards also delayed the process because the Army then required that PMDC submit a revised plan for review. Per the Army's point man for the transfer: "The Army must review and approve [the new plan] before a sale or transfer can be negotiated." PMDC then submitted its revised 20-year business plan (revised Economic Development Conveyance [EDC] plan) the week of June 24, 1999. The BTC, as quoted in a news article and during the course of the personal interview, stated "The Army [was and] is eager to get on with the process and wrap up negotiations" (Newman 1999b). However, the Lt. Col. told the RAB that the resubmitted plan outlined fencing off high UXO areas rather than fixing them so that he could spend extra money on cleaning other parts of the base to residential standards – thus, the resubmitted plan was not consistent with the Army plan because the Army wanted to clean the whole base of UXO's (whether to commercial or residential standards), not just clean some parts and fence off others. The BEC said the Army was concerned about "cherry-picking" only the clean sections of the post. However, as time went on and the Army became frustrated with the Lt. Col.'s "stalling," the Army conceded, "let's let them cherry pick us," said the BTC, and "the boys from the Pentagon came up and said [to the Lt. Col.] we'll give you just want you want." The Army then offered to deed all of the clean areas to PMDC (about 200 acres at the time) and retain the deed to the remaining acres until the Army had finished the cleaning process. The Lt. Col. said no, he said they wanted the whole base all at one time or nothing at all.

Moreover, when a base is slated, in part or in whole, to be cleaned to residential standards, these areas cannot be deeded to the LRA until they are fully cleaned, unlike

commercial parcels which can be deeded while still “dirty.” For example, the Army had similar cleanup issues at Letterkenny Army Depot in Pennsylvania, which was realigned during the 1995 BRAC round. In this case, the Army did deed the property while it was still dirty and then the LRA took responsibility for getting it cleaned with grant and other government monies, because their land was to be used only for commercial purposes. Thus, it seems that if the Lt. Col. had not altered the plan to require the entire base be cleaned to residential standards then PMDC could have taken possession of the base (see Robb 2000a).

Throughout 1999, there was a very contentious and public battle between the PMDC Executive Director (the Lt. Col.), Army officials (including the BTC), and community members (namely one vocal community activist and RAB member), which played out in the local newspapers, in regular articles and editorials. Each side accused the others of failing to fulfill their duties, whether it was the Lt. Col. accusing the Army of refusing to clean the post, thus delaying PMDC’s possession of the base, or the Army accusing PMDC of changing plans, thus, delaying their taking possession of the base. And others simply balked at the slow pace at which the Army and PMDC were moving altogether. A former County Commissioner who served on the PMDC board said, regarding the fact that the Army did not want to turn over the base until it is clean and is moving too slowly to clean it: “We’ve literally been held hostage by the Army on a base that the military and Congress wants turned over.” The Army rebutted that they needed to find and remove all UXO’s before they could turn over the deed to the property (Kirby 1999c).

In reaction to the lack of responsiveness by PMDC felt by community members, in March 2000, a group of community members met on their own at the American Legion Post "to discuss what's happening – and not happening – at Fort Ritchie" (*Record Herald* 2000). Citizens charged that they were not getting information from PMDC in a timely and complete manner, and not allowed to comment on Ritchie's future. From the approximately 100 people who attended, the meeting organizer (community activist and RAB member) also solicited signatures for a letter he planned to send to then Maryland Governor Parris Glendening stating that the "community members no longer believe PenMar Development Corp. (PMDC) is acting in the public's interest" (Newman 2000a).

According to the BTC, the Army also was not pleased with PMDC and the Lt. Col.'s new role with the board and apparently asked him on several occasions to leave meetings where a conflict of interest might arise given the subject matter, but the Lt. Col. always refused and "flaunted his actions" even more. The frustration felt by the Army and community can be noted in a series of articles that appeared over the course of several months in 1999 that quoted the Lt. Col. making contradictory statements. For example, in a May 5, 1999 article, he said he wanted the Army to turn over the property so that PMDC could clean it up per the needs of prospective tenants at Lakeside Corporate Center (though he refused to divulge this list) and because, PMDC is "not convinced the Army will be that flexible if they set the timetable" (Kirby 1999b). Then, in a June 24, 1999 article, the Lt. Col. was quoted as saying "we will not take the land until it is cleaned up…the amount of unexploded ordnance on the former base and how the army plans to dispose of it must be addressed" (Newman 1999b). And, then, in a July 7, 1999 article, he states, "if PenMar were given title to the land it could make sure any

weapons are removed" (Butki 1999). Additionally, at this point, PMDC had enlisted the aid of both Maryland Senators Sarbanes and Mikulski to urge the Army to turn over the post.

The Army was also quoted as saying that it could possibly transfer ownership of the base to PMDC as early as April 2000, with restrictions placed on the use of areas containing possible explosives until they are cleared. The Pentagon and Army were willing to work with PMDC and their request to revise the cleanup timeline, but, said the BTC, "Nothing's fast in the Army" (Wheeler 1999). Said one community member and activist, "the Army and the EPA may not be fast, but they are open, honest and have earned the trust of…community members… [while] PMDC and staff have eroded public trust by operating in secrecy" (Drastal 2000). Part of the community's concern stemmed from the "notable lack of public meetings," said another community resident; this sentiment was furthered by PMDC consistently and unapologetically holding closed session meetings,[28] at which only the PMDC board members were allowed. Furthermore, the community perceived a "veil of secrecy" over the negotiations PMDC was having around redevelopment. PMDC repeatedly said that it would not reveal any information, names or otherwise. But, as pointed out by a community member, PMDC is a public organization, yet it has shut the public out. When, for example, he asked for information, the response he got was "we can't tell you. It's a secret" (Kirby 2000a).

Many felt that because PMDC was a legislatively ordained entity, funded by taxpayer money, they should have been more open and transparent with the community regarding their decision-making processes and actions. Moreover, the fact that PMDC was not held accountable to anyone and that the Army did not intervene added to the

[28] RICH POINT - PMDC consistently and unapologetically holding closed session meetings.

frustration felt by many in the community. According to the BTC, on a number of occasions during "Impasse Meetings" between the Army and PMDC, the Army would threaten to take authority away from PMDC and would say "we'll just sell the base; we'll just auction the property to the highest bidder." But, he continued, this was an idle threat, and PMDC knew it, because even though the Army technically had the authority to do this, they did not want to face the bad publicity it would cause. However, today, given the current situation, this action might have been looked upon rather favorably.

At a May 4, 1999 community meeting (the first in a long while) intended as a platform for PMDC to update the public on efforts to reuse the base, many community members "expressed frustration over not being allowed to use the facilities on the base." And, apparently, after lobbying efforts by the Washington County Commissioners, the Army reversed its decision not to allow people to walk the grounds, though community members would now have to register at the base office and walk along a predetermined route. "The Army had shut off the base out of liability concerns…with only a six-member caretaker force to maintain the base, the 638 acres are mostly unsupervised," said the BTC (Kirby 1999a). He continued that, while people can come and stroll or walk their dogs, this could end if it is abused (e.g., vandalism), and local recreation teams still cannot use the base fields for practice. And with this action, Ritchie was once again opened up (though on a limited basis) to residents and they could now walk their dogs, stroll the sidewalks, and enjoy the beauty of the lakes.

Then in October of 1999, PMDC held the second of only two "public" meetings of the year held at Lakeside Hall on the grounds of Ritchie, and at which about 50 people attended (Ernde 1999). At this meeting the Lt. Col. said that the Army still had not made

a decision as to whether to deliver the property piecemeal. Furthermore, PMDC had "just received the Army's plan to clean up the ordnance [in response to PMDC's resubmitted plan in June]. The plan is four inches thick and very complex…we are going over it" (Newman 1999c). Regarding the delay in redeveloping Ritchie, the Lt. Col. "blamed both the Army and the ordnance problems…the Army – not PenMar – is letting the community down by failing to expedite the transfer procedure" (Newman 1999c). By March 2000, PMDC and the Army were still in negotiations over the terms and conditions of the cleanup and transfer.

Role Models America – Second Tenant and First Lawsuit

In March 2000, eighteen months after Ritchie shut its gates and five years after the initial announcement that Ritchie was on the 1995 BRAC closure list, it was announced that PMDC would receive its second tenant. However, according to the BTC, PMDC cannot take credit for this move, and in fact, it was the Army who brought this new tenant to Ritchie as a way to support PMDC. This announcement was not without controversy. Community members were certainly anxious to move forward with the reuse process and attract new business ventures to the area, as exemplified by a number of quotes by residents in the local papers at this time: "It is time to stop talking about unexploded ordnance and [ask] what is happening after four years and $2 million"; "It's time somebody gets something going…we don't see anything happening"; "I want action. We're not getting any action"; "When are we going to start recruiting businesses?" (Newman 1999c). Yet, when it was disclosed that the new tenant was Role Models America, Inc. (RMA), residents, at least initially, were not particularly pleased.

Apparently RMA approached PMDC in 1996 about establishing this school at Ritchie once the military moved out and at that time, PMDC "examined the proposal and promptly rejected it" since it seemed not to fit in with the mission of job creation and the original concept for education and training, which did not include high school programs; by 2000, however, because of restrictions on the use of the land due to the unexploded ordnances, PMDC was willing to reconsider (Kirby 2000b).

RMA leased approximately 250,000 square feet of several buildings on post (signing a $1 million a year lease, with a 4-year renewal option, with PMDC) with a $10 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. RMA was designed to provide an educational alternative for high school dropouts, without criminal records, who have demonstrated an aptitude to complete high school and progress onto college. The idea, as part of a national demonstration pilot program (called National Role Models Academy or "College Corps"), was to invite 535 students (a number equal to the number of congressional Senators and Representatives) to the JROTC (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps) preparatory magnet school to educate them in a military style setting. Along with the school and its students, PMDC boasted that approximately 175 jobs would be generated (Newman 2000b). Furthermore, the Lt. Col. noted that the school and its mission fit well with the PMDC redevelopment plan: "The plan targets attracting educational or training facilities, as well as high-tech firms."

Community members were initially angry because PMDC brought RMA to Ritchie without any involvement or input from the community: "PMDC announced this

as a done deal with no consultation with the community"[29] said one community activist. Following a community meeting several weeks later to present the school to the community, many community members came to see RMA as a worthwhile endeavor and one that did not bring the anticipated problems that were expected to come with the opening of a school for high school dropouts from the inner city (e.g., crime, noise, etc). One community member's initial apprehensions in particular were allayed and he then tried his best to reassure others that RMA was a good investment for the community.

However, for reasons not particularly clear, the Lt. Col. "started to harass" the head of RMA remembers a community member. In response, officials from RMA began to question "the honesty and integrity of the Lt. Col.," charging that the Lt. Col. removed some buildings and a maintenance agreement from the list verbally promised, but not in their lease and that the Lt. Col. rejected proposals from two other businesses (Jewell Industries and Echostar) interested in locating at Ritchie to partner with RMA (Newman 2000c). At a June 2000 closed session Washington County Commissioners meeting, Anderson called for the removal of the Lt. Col. as the head of PMDC, according to two people in attendance, citing, among other things, his lack of progress in attracting tenants to the base. In response, the head of RMA and the Lt. Col. were directed by the Commissioners "to work out their differences" (Robb 2000b). As time went on, frustrations from all sides were palpable, and as summed up in one columnist's article: "Well, another day, another reuse plan for Fort Diminishing Expectations, formerly known as Fort Ritchie" (Rowland 2000). Despite the acrimony between RMA and

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[29] RICH POINT - "PMDC announced this as a done deal with no consultation with the community." This serves as yet another example of the way in which PMDC and its leaders operate; community members are not included in the decision making process, but are simply informed when a decision has been made.

PMDC, RMA opened its doors to its first (and what would turn out to be its penultimate) cohort of students in the fall of 2000.

Then, just a few months later in February 2001, PMDC filed a lawsuit against RMA in Washington County Circuit Court charging that the school inappropriately (and without prior approval) installed two flagpoles in front of their headquarters building, and asked that the judge order the school to remove the flagpoles and refrain from installing additional ones. Part of the argument against RMA was the fact that the flagpoles might negatively affect efforts to have the Fort Ritchie Historic District recognized (as outlined in a February 27, 2001 letter of support by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development): "Because of the drive to place the former Army base on the National Register, signs, banners, and other items that might change the appearance of the installation are prohibited, according to PMDC." This particular move did not sit well with one community resident and RAB member, and he claimed that not only did PMDC's actions create a hostile climate for attracting new businesses to the area, but he questioned why the board was spending its time and money on "frivolous lawsuits against its own largest tenant instead of going out to find new tenants?"

Then in April 2001, PMDC filed a second motion against RMA seeking back rent. As a challenge to PMDC as a legal entity, RMA sent its rent check to the U.S. Army, which the Army would not accept since PMDC is the legal property manager; the rent check was thus overdue by the time it reached PMDC. In response to the original suit by PMDC, RMA filed a $20 million countersuit in May 2001 alleging, among other things, breach of contract, negligent misrepresentation, breach of covenant of good faith and fair dealing, and violation of Maryland's corporate requirements. Both motions (the

first to remove the flagpoles) were ruled on in June in favor of PMDC, with the court refusing to hear the countersuit. In a separate ruling a Washington County District Judge ordered RMA to pay $321,522 in back rent owed to PMDC. Attorneys for RMA immediately appealed and the cases moved to Circuit Court. Then, on July 23, 2001, RMA filed a Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief against the Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of the Department of Education in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. The District Court denied injunctive relief and RMA then filed an appeal in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia.

In June 2001 in response to RMA's allegations regarding PMDC's poor business practices, an investigation by the U.S. Army Audit Agency was undertaken. As a result, the Army decided to hold up the deed transfer, which had finally been agreed upon (via a Memorandum of Agreement [MOA] signed in November 2000) to have taken place on July 1, 2001 pending the outcome of the investigation, according to a Washington County Commissioner and member of the PMDC board. Additionally, at this time, the Army decided to stop providing PMDC $100,000 a month to maintain the fort and to put the maintenance contract out for bid; as of that time, the Army had already paid about $3 million to PMDC to maintain the base (Newman 2001b). Following the audit and additional negotiations, a revised MOA was then signed on August 24, 2001.

PMDC Leadership Changes – Though the "Veil of Secrecy" Continues

In February of 2002, the Lt. Col. stepped down as the Executive Director of PMDC. However, he was then offered a position on the Board of Directors, a move that did not sit well with community members. Aside from the controversy surrounding the

Lt. Col. regarding RMA and the lack of progress in redeveloping Ritchie, community residents of Cascade and Blue Ridge Summit, who had previously submitted applications to sit on the board, were told that there were no positions available. One local resident and founder of the Cascade Committee, stated, "three months [prior], I appealed to the Washington County Commissioners to appoint a Cascade area resident to the board, and as recently as two weeks before the Lt. Col.'s appointment, we were told there were no vacancies." A County Commissioner and member of the PMDC board even voted (though unsuccessfully) against the appointment of the Lt. Col. to the board indicating, "the community needs a voice" (Newman 2002).

With the Lt. Col.'s departure as Executive Director, a new Executive Director, a resident of Harford County, Maryland was named. Within three months, however, he resigned, though no one would comment publicly regarding his hasty departure. By October 2002, the current Executive Director was selected. Soon after he assumed his new post, the Lt. Col. was dismissed from the Board of Directors, though there is disagreement surrounding the exact reason and the exact person or persons responsible for this. Some say that the new Executive Director saw the Lt. Col. as a liability and had him removed, while others say that it was the efforts of the Cascade Committee (as presented and described in the following sections), with the assistance of some "community minded" County Commissioners that had him removed. Regardless, the Lt. Col., it seems, after many years amidst conflict and controversy, was finally rendered ineffectual. Even with the Lt. Col.'s departure, however, PMDC continued its pattern of closed session meetings.

RMA vs. PMDC – The Legal Battle Continues

RMA was then evicted in June 2002, and conveyance of the property still had not occurred as of early 2003. Then, following the filing of a suit by RMA against the Army after RMA learned that it might be able to use the property for free under a public (education) conveyance – for which it contended it was eligible, but did not receive proper notification – on February 4, 2003:

> The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia reversed the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia's order denying Role Models America injunctive relief, and remanded the matter with instructions to enter a permanent injunction against conveyance of the Fort Ritchie property until the Government remedies certain BRAC procedural errors. To date, this decision has prevented the Army from conveying the property at Fort Ritchie to PenMar under the anticipated economic development convenience (per *Lemon and Biser v. Secretary of the Army* court documents filed May 12, 2005).

Essentially, the Court's ruling states that back in May of 1996, when both the Department of Defense and the LRA were required to solicit proposals from public interest groups eligible and interested in using part of Ritchie, they failed to notify all interested parties. Thus, the DoD and PMDC reopened the process by which eligible and interested parties were offered the opportunity to take part of the base for free under a public benefit conveyance, rather than give all of the property to PMDC. This "procedural error" led the Court to order a permanent injunction on the conveyance of the property until such errors have been remedied (Drastal 2003).

In response, in October 2003, PMDC again advertised the property as surplus property available to "interested parties" (e.g., homeless organizations, educational institutions) eligible for a public benefit conveyance of the property, and indicated that any interested parties must apply with a federal sponsor. One faith-based organization

came forward, but upon learning of the magnitude of the financial investment needed to improve parts of Ritchie's infrastructure, it withdrew. Then "at the eleventh hour," according to the current PMDC Executive Director, RMA laid down their application on the desk of the Department of Education (DOE) on February 27, 2004. Since DOE was already being sued by RMA, they were very conscientious about looking through their application and in July 2004 said that RMA was not an adequate recipient for a public benefit conveyance. Then, in November 2004, the Army went back to the lower court and asked for the injunction to be lifted, since PMDC readvertised and no organization was found eligible.

The court, after nearly six months, in May 2005 ruled that while the actions taken by PMDC were correct, the appellate court indicated that certain procedures needed to be followed and to do this, PMDC was required to resubmit to HUD their application for review for use by organizations serving homeless populations. Once this is done and approved, the property can be transferred. In response, PMDC resubmitted its application in June 2005 to HUD, the Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD). But then, upon learning of the resubmission of the application to HUD, a couple of local citizens wrote letters to HUD expressing their concerns about the process and the fact that adequate public notice was not given (though according to the Executive Director of PMDC, "it had"). Community letters (written after receiving a tip from a "community minded" County Commissioner) also highlighted the issue of historic preservation, arguing that HUD's Office of Community and Planning Development "is not only responsible for implementing HUD's homeless assistance programs pursuant to the Base Closure Community Redevelopment and Homeless Assistance Act, but that it

must comply with both NEPA and NHPA [National Environmental Protection Act and National Historic Preservation Act]" (Community resident letter to Alphonso Jackson, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, July 21, 2005). In response to these letters of concern, HUD's Office of Community Planning and Development, in a letter to Executive Director of PMDC, dated August 22, 2005, requested that PMDC "make its application to HUD available to the public for review and copying and to subsequently hold a public hearing on the application." As discussed in a later section, this hearing did occur in September 2005.

Save our School: The Battle to Save Cascade Elementary Leads to the Creation of the Cascade Committee

When the military moved out, so too did its military children who attended the local elementary school, Cascade Elementary. Between 1990 and 2000, from the time the military was in the area to the time it was moved out, the population of children in total declined from 700 to 328, thus significantly reducing the number of children enrolled at the elementary school.[30] This number was not increased subsequently because PMDC had not drawn tenants to the base that drew families (and families with children) to the area. In January 2001, given the persistently low numbers (as well as the ongoing litigation between PMDC and RMA, thus stymieing the community's desire for economic and residential growth), the Washington County Board of Education released a draft report indicating that it was considering closing Cascade Elementary and busing the current students down the mountain to Smithsburg (Newman 2001a). At this time, a

[30] These data, and their source, will be detailed in Chapter 5.

news article was released indicating that Cascade Elementary was on the list of possible closures.

"I was furious," remembers one local resident and activist, "I hadn't heard a word about the possibility of them closing the school." With the military gone, the elementary school was the one institution that held the Cascade community together, and it was clear that something "had to fill the void left by the Army." In response, he organized several community members to fight the closing of the school, and the 'Save our School' Committee began. And it was during the "battle" (as he puts it) to save the school that he realized that the fate of the school was tied to what happens at Ritchie. In particular, the delay in transferring Ritchie to PMDC and the ability of PMDC to develop the property and bring in tenants was seen as detrimental to the fight in keeping Cascade Elementary open. The transfer was "the key to keeping Cascade Elementary open," added a local businessman and member of the Committee (Newman 2001c). In fact, the Lt. Col. and the PMDC board joined the Committee's efforts to keep the school open and try and force the Army to convey the property quickly, citing that the "neighborhood school is a critical economic development component in the comprehensive redevelopment plan…[and] a prerequisite of many potential tenants is the availability of an elementary school" (Newman 2001c). Then, on June 4, 2001, with 266 Cascade residents and area supporters in attendance, it was announced at the Washington County public hearing on school consolidation that the board of education had suspended closure efforts of Cascade Elementary.

Given the obvious nexus between the school and issues surrounding the reuse of Ritchie, the Save our School Committee soon evolved into the Cascade Committee – the

only independent civic organization at the time – "to reflect our concerns about the need for a properly developed Fort Ritchie to ensure the long term viability of Cascade Elementary, and to address quality of life issues in our mountaintop community," according to the founder of the Committee.

This evolution from the Save our School Committee to the Cascade Committee is an example of *goal succession* (Sills 1957), as analyzed in classic research. When an organization forms to meet an explicit goal – in this case, to save the local elementary school from being closed – and then meets that goal, a choice must be made between disbanding as an organization or taking on new goals to achieve. Sills (1957) demonstrates this shift in his review of the March of Dimes organization, which, after succeeding in its initial mission to eradicate childhood polio with the development of Salk's polio vaccine, chose to continue as an organization by taking on the new goal of combating all birth defects (see Blau and Scott 1962; Sills 1957). Similarly, those involved with the Save our School committee, upon successfully saving the local elementary school, chose to shift the organization's focus to address community issues more broadly, rather than disband.

The Cascade Committee, guided by its Steering Committee (comprised of a small group of the most active committee members), took up new challenges by addressing local and regional issues on behalf of the community, from potholes and snow removal, to local water and sewage problems, to the lack of adequate law enforcement in the area, and to opening up the Gymnasium sitting vacant on Ritchie for use by local children. In 2001, when one resident moved to Cascade, he noticed a lack of recreation areas. He reviewed the original *1997 Community Redevelopment Plan* and it stated that the gym

could be donated to the community. He then approached PMDC and he was told that the plan had changed. There was a new plan – the *resubmitted* plan to the Army – drafted in light of the residential standard clean up request and discovery of unexploded ordnances. Upon further inquiry to review the resubmitted plan, PMDC refused to provide a copy, forcing him to file one of many Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. "And sure enough," he said, "the plan had changed. PMDC informed the Army that they were going to demolish the gymnasium, but no one in the community knew this." On this issue, the Executive Director of PMDC was quoted as saying that PMDC does not have a role in providing services to the public, despite the fact that the "Department of Defense *Community Guide to Base Reuse* says that working with the community – and meeting some of its needs, finances permitting – is one role of such as redevelopment authority" (Maginnis 2003).

In his assessment as to why PMDC would not let the community use the gym, the BTC said, "if you bring the community in and you start something good and this catches on, you lose control of some of your property…[so to keep them out] they [PMDC] took the pipes out of the gym. So when the County Commissioners came up to inspect it and looked at the broken pipes, they said restoration would cost thousands of dollars. PenMar tried to create a situation where it was too expensive for the community to go further with the project…they became more despicable each year."

Through private and public donations, however, the community was able to raise $10,000 for renovations of the gym to get it up to code and ready for use. Moreover, upon joining with the Cascade Committee and soliciting support from others in the community and two "community minded" members of the PMDC board, after filing

many requests for information and appeals to county and state officials, and after attending many meetings, after two long years, the community was able to get the gym open for public use in the fall of 2003. Though the gym is now available, it is not open everyday all day for public use, and use of the facility must go through PMDC. At present, the gym is used regularly by a local youth sports organization that provides access to activities for youth in the region. Despite all of their efforts on the issue to prohibit access by the community to the gym, in February 2004, according to the founder of the Cascade Committee, at a strategic planning session, PMDC once again voted to adhere to the *1997 Comprehensive Plan*.

The Cascade Committee also worked to restore funding to the Blue Ridge Summit Library. In 2002, the founder of the Committee learned that following the closure of Ritchie, Washington County Commissioners voted to discontinue its support of the Pennsylvania library, even though hundreds of residents from Maryland were patrons, with more than 800 from Cascade alone. He then met with the County Commission and faced significant resistance; some rebutted that "if a Cascade resident wanted to check out a book let him or her go down to Smithsburg. I pointed out that it would be unfair for young kids to have to bike down the mountain to obtain a book. Clearly, this issue showed that there were and are County politicians who cared less about addressing the needs of the mountaintop community." With the help of one Commissioner, he was successful in his efforts to have funding restored to the library; however, this is not an automatic line item added each year and he must send a reminder requesting this every year.

The Cascade Committee would stay in touch with area residents via email to the approximate 870 individuals on the list serve (though the actual Committee membership was around 225), flyers, public meetings, and door-to-door visits to local residences and businesses by the founder of the Committee himself. They also began a website to try to lift the veil of secrecy so many felt that PMDC was hiding behind. "They [PMDC] wouldn't share their meeting minutes, they wouldn't share their [new] redevelopment plan. We had to request all of that under FOIA and it never should have been like that," recounts a local resident and member of the Cascade Committee Steering Committee. Members of the Cascade Committee worked very hard to acquire as many "public" documents as possible and when they did get them, they posted them all on their website. Another local resident and member of the Committee comments that the documents on the website were not freely and willingly provided by PMDC and that there were "a lot of FOIA requests" as well as copies of items provided by more "community minded" members of the PMDC board – all of which was "under protest by PMDC."

The last Cascade Committee annual community meeting occurred in 2004 "after a bruising but successful effort to kill legislation that would have ousted [a community minded County Commissioner] from the PMDC board" stated the founder of the Committee. According to one member of the Cascade Committee, PMDC tried, with the help of a Maryland House Representative, to introduce a bill that would have taken away this particular Commissioner's vote on the PenMar board since he was also a County Commissioner. Cascade Committee members went to Annapolis to petition, and based in part on their efforts, the bill did not pass. Since the founder of the Committee has

temporarily moved from Cascade to accept a job in another state,[31] an annual community meeting sponsored by the Cascade Committee has not been held. However, he continues to stay apprised of issues related to Fort Ritchie and keeps in touch with many residents on a regular basis. Additionally, despite his moving from the area, in January 2005, he, with the help of the Cascade Committee Steering Committee, was able to bring a showing of the *Ritchie Boys* to Cascade. In fact, they were able to show this movie on post and open it to all.

Cascade to COPTcade?

As stated, in February 2004, PMDC voted to adhere to the guidelines of the original *1997 Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan*, a plan created with input from the community and approved by the County Commissioners and the Army. This plan was designed to redevelop the property for use by commercial interests so as to replace the approximately 1,700 jobs lost (military, civilian, and contract) when Ritchie closed. The plan also included a small residential component that would be developed if the commercial interests on the property desired housing for its workers (the plan thus called for approximately 60 homes). The plan also included protections of the Camp Ritchie Historic District. To accomplish this, PMDC had contracted [circa 2001/2002] with a company to serve as the master developer, while PMDC would sell or lease parts of the property piece by piece. "This plan was great," remembers one resident, "they [the master developer] weren't going to take over the base, they weren't going to buy it, they

[31] Though he and his family moved out of the area his intention is to return to Cascade to reside, though he does not yet know when.

were just going to redevelop it. They were going to be master developers who were going to abide by the 1997 reuse plan."

However, though apparently having signed an exclusive contract with the Master Developer, by the summer of 2004, PMDC announced its plans to sell the entire base to another company - Corporate Offices Property Trust (COPT), a Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) based in Columbia, Maryland – a company described by the Executive Director of PMDC as having "very deep pockets." COPT provides office space, with the majority of its tenants in the defense field (with the Army Corps of Engineers as its biggest customer). The Executive Director's initial contact with COPT was in February 2004 and within a couple of months a sales agreement had been drawn up (though this cannot move forward until the injunction is lifted by the Courts allowing the Army to legally transfer the property to PMDC). COPT would then own the property and lease space. The Master Developer, upon hearing about this deal in a newspaper article, immediately withdrew from negotiations with PMDC.

"This came as a shock," remembers one community activist, "suddenly they announced that [instead of PenMar being the developer] they were going to sell the entire base to COPT." When another community member heard of the COPT plan, she thought, it was "dirty, stinky, underhanded, the community was told nothing." Of particular concern to many community members was that this announcement came without warning – an occurrence not unlike announcements made in the past by PMDC and its representatives (e.g., when PMDC announced the arrival of RMA as a "done deal") – and it was unclear what the intentions of COPT were and whether their plans were in line with the 1997 Plan. As they soon learned, the COPT plan in fact proposes a significantly

greater level of development of the property than was originally laid out. Specifically, as opposed to seeking commercial tenants that would replace the lost jobs, COPT is proposing to build office space to accommodate more than double the number (4,000 to 5,000 jobs). Also, as opposed to adding a residential component of about 60 homes, COPT is proposing to build ten times as many units (about 670). But, most importantly, COPT is proposing to build two office buildings right on top of the Camp Ritchie Historic District parade fields.

The sale price, too, is another point of contention among many community members. The plan is to sell the base for $5 million with the stipulation that COPT draw at least 1,400 new jobs to the area within 5 years; if it is unable to do this, then it will owe PMDC an additional $4 million. Any monies received for payment of the base is then to be reinvested in the base for infrastructure improvements. Remembering, however, that the Army paid over $2.3 million for the property in 1949, many residents feel that the community is not receiving a fair deal. One community member, figures that this sale price is about one-tenth of what it should be: "Using a 6% interest factor to get up to today's values," he says, Ritchie "should be worth about $40 million." Further, adds his wife, "land in the area is selling for about $50,000 to $100,000 an acre…multiply 638 acres [the area of the Fort] by $75,000 and you've got a value of over $47 million."

The sale price, apparently, was not based on an appraisal, but a "fairness opinion," according to an assessment by a Columbia-based firm against the legal advice of PMDC's attorneys, who recommended that PenMar seek an appraisal (Associated Press, 2004). The Executive Director said that he accepted the fairness opinion because "he didn't think the property's value could be determined because of its location – on a

mountaintop about 60 miles north of Washington – and its unusual characteristics." Many saw this as a negligent move on the part of PMDC and that board members were not fulfilling their fiduciary commitment to the community when choosing to select a fairness opinion over a real appraisal, said one community activist.

In response to PMDC's refusal to conduct an appraisal, a community-minded County Commissioner wrote to both U.S. Senators Mikulski and Sarbanes in April 2005 citing concerns that "it appears that critical provisions of the (sale) contract documents were altered after they were given to PenMar Development Corp. board of directors for approval, but before they were submitted to the developer [COPT] buying the property for signature...[further] the parts of the signed contract that…were altered dealt with a fairness opinion the PenMar board agreed to have completed on the sale" (Associated Press 2005a). In reply, the Maryland Attorney General's office agreed to review the planned sale of the fort to COPT. In August 2005, the State Attorney General's office found no fault with the method used to determine the sale price of Ritchie, citing that PMDC was not required to conduct an appraisal, particularly since PMDC is charged with creating jobs, not selling the base for the highest price. However, the State Attorney General did say that if the deal with COPT does not actualize, then PMDC should have the base appraised or sell it through a competitive bidding process (Associated Press 2005b). PMDC reiterated the response by the Attorney General by saying that the sale price is irrelevant because the board's mission is to bring jobs, not to sell the base to the highest bidder. Moreover, any money earned from the sale, plus the money put in by COPT, would be invested right back into the base.

COPT's plan is a mixed-use commercial residential plan, including garden apartments, town homes, and single-family homes, civilian businesses, and highly secured defense related businesses within a proposed 57-acre secured area, or Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility (SCIF). In addition, according to the Executive Director, COPT is planning to build not only office buildings, but also ball fields and tennis courts on top of the parade fields. COPT's plan is a 20-year plan and includes an investment of $225 million in infrastructure improvements over the next two decades. This, thus, would be the largest development ever in the history of Washington County. Many see it as a bad deal and one that PMDC is definitely getting the shaft on: "PenMar was clearly outmaneuvered and out-negotiated…[and they ended up] with a deal they have zero control over," laments one resident.

COPT went into the community and had outreach meetings, and from the perspective of the Executive Director of PMDC, the community seemed receptive and supportive. However, some community members said that they did not trust COPT, and that when they went to meetings, they were presented with what seemed like final plans, and were never asked for input; essentially, residents claim that they were told how things were going to be and if they wanted, they could review the planning documents. Additionally, members of the Cascade Committee met separately with COPT and felt as though they and their concerns "were blown off." In particular, they and others told COPT that the community, as part of the redevelopment, wanted a community center on the grounds of Ritchie, and in response, COPT representatives told them that they could have it – right on the parade fields, said a Cascade Committee member. The community was basically given a "no-win choice." A meeting was then held at which PMDC and

COPT presented their plans for the community center to be built on post and that it was to be run by a board consisting of 2 residents of Cascade, 2 members of COPT, and 2 members of PMDC (which essentially meant 4 members of COPT because over time, PMDC, as the LRA, will be phased out once the base is sold). After the meeting, one resident inquired about this obvious imbalance of representation. In response, a representative of COPT replied, "Well *we* know how to do things; *we* know how to run things." It was then, she remembers, that "the thought came into my head, this is no longer Cascade – it's COPTcade."

Members of the community also sat down with representatives of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and were told that while they have a good case concerning preservation of the Camp Ritchie Historic District (including the parade fields), SHPO cannot intervene until PMDC and then COPT own the property and submit a proposal to build on protected grounds. At that time, COPT will be required to apply to SHPO to get a variance, a request that SHPO can deny. Additionally, community members are also very concerned about the impact of such development on their small, mountaintop community, that would include added people, added homes, and added congestion, and thus, are calling for the conduct of a new Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which PMDC, COPT, and the Army refuse to undertake. Another part of the sales agreement, the sale of the water treatment system on post to COPT, also angers many community members. The water system apparently was supposed to be given to Washington County as laid out in the Economic Development Conveyance – a supposedly legally binding document – but one that community members see as negligently negated by the sales agreement drawn up between PMDC and COPT. At

present, since the Army still owns the base, not PMDC, PMDC cannot sell the base to COPT even though they have entered into and signed a sales agreement; the original sales agreement expired however, and in August 2005, this agreement was extended for 18 months.

The HUD Hearing

On September 22, 2005, in response to a request by HUD following the resubmission of PMDC's application, PMDC hosted a Community Meeting at Lakeside Hall, which approximately 70 community members attended. On the day of the meeting, the founder of the Cascade Committee had an editorial published in the local paper presenting "Things to consider about the Fort Ritchie Development Plan," and just prior to the meeting, members of the Cascade Committee distributed copies of this article to those in attendance. Among other things, he posed a poignant question to readers for consideration: "Why are the communities most heavily impacted by the base closure now being treated like outsiders with no right to address community needs in the redevelopment process – even before any of the property has been transferred to any other party?"

The purpose of the meeting, according to the Chair of the PMDC Board of Directors, "was to satisfy an order of the Judge in the RMA lawsuit *for the third time* to solicit notices of interest from homeless providers and other eligible parties pursuant to HUD regulations and the COPT plan [to be discussed in a later section] submitted to HUD" (the previous meetings were held on 8/11/2004 and 9/27/2004). Despite this declared purpose of the meeting, however, citizens, during the open comment segment,

used the meeting as an opportunity to voice their concerns about other issues (not necessarily related to HUD) pertaining to the proposed reuse of Ritchie. For example, some community members called for the conduct of a new Environmental Impact Study (EIS), and some called for the water system (including water rights and wells) to be turned over to Washington County (as agreed to in previously approved plans and requested by the Commissioners in a recent letter to PMDC) and not to be sold as part of the COPT sales agreement.

Additionally, others called for preservation of the parade fields. On this point, one resident concerned with preservation of the Camp Ritchie Historic district and who had been working with the Maryland National Trust, presented a letter to PMDC and COPT officials stating that the Trust felt that the COPT plan was in conflict with the signed Programmatic Agreement and that it “fails to preserve open space [and] fails to preserve historic sites” on the base. Still others were concerned with the general quality of life impacts that the COPT plan might bring. Yet others stood in favor of the COPT plan, citing that it’s time to “get something done,” and that it’s time “to stand up for our corner of the county.” Others also said, “we may not like COPT, but it’s all we’ve got.”

COPT representatives stated, among other things, that they intend to comply with historic preservation stipulations, they intend to comply with county regulations regarding changes to roads and utilities, and they intend to buy the water treatment system but then plan to spend the money to fix it up before turning it over to the County (thus possibly being eligible for an unearned tax break, as charged by some residents). As an aside, the previously contracted water usage rights between Camp Louise and the

State of Maryland, however, will remain in place through the end of their contract in the year 2029.

The "Local Lawsuit"

Examining how places and their residents process events informs how social action develops and occurs at the local level, in a local context (Paulsen 2004). Specifically, identifying the match (or mismatch) between a proposed project and the place – in this case, between COPT and Cascade – and how people react, elucidates how people characterize the place and how they have come to understand their role within that place.

In particular, after feeling as if they were not getting anywhere, two Cascade neighbors and members of the Cascade Committee filed a lawsuit *pro se* (representing themselves) in Federal District Court in DC on May 12, 2005, alongside the RMA suits – this suit has been condescendingly and dismissively referred to by some as the "local lawsuit." They filed the suit because they felt as if they were out of options and that no one was listening or caring that there were people in the community who were extremely concerned about the impact that the COPT plan would have on their little rural village. "We figured this was the only way to get anyone's attention," said one of the community member litigants. Moreover, continues his co-litigant, "[we] pursued the lawsuit because we no longer could put our trust in the County Commissioners to do anything – all have sat on their hands [except for one particularly "community minded" commissioner] and done absolutely nothing to fight for this community. And, our state officials don't seem interested. To them, Fort Ritchie is in the boondocks." Essentially, they both felt that if

COPT was “coming in with a brand new plan that proposes to bring twice as many employees and ten times as much housing, [they] need to do a new Environmental Impact Statement [EIS].”

Furthermore, with the proposed addition of so many employees and residences, there is a real concern of the impact increased traffic will have on the community. For this rural village with only one flashing yellow light outside the main gate of Ritchie, the addition of 4,000 plus workers and 600 plus households could overwhelm the capacity of the community’s narrow, winding, two lane feeder roads. Though many cite the fact that when the military was active, there was just as much traffic as might be expected to arrive with the build out of the COPT plan, the co-litigant in the lawsuit contests this. While many remember the “rush hours” from 7:00 to 8:00 in the morning and 4:00 to 5:00 in the evening when the civilian workers were arriving to and then leaving the base, this group of workers equaled just over 900 people; during these “rush hours,” the flashing light would become fully operational, and then revert back after each hour. While proponents of the COPT plan argue that the amount of traffic on a daily basis was significantly higher, she says that this is fallacious given the fact that neither the military members, nor their families drove much since they could walk everywhere they needed – on and off the post. “We have more issues caused by the trains stopping and blocking the roads,” she says, “then we ever did when the military was here.” Following are the main issues as laid out in the lawsuit filing regarding the COPT plan:

- It fails to retain Fort Ritchie assets for public ownership and use: The COPT plan proposes 100% private-sector ownership of all Fort Ritchie assets, whereas the community’s redevelopment plan called for certain assets such as water systems, recreational open space and public buildings to be donated for public use.

- It fails to retain significant recreational open space as it eliminates 80 acres of recreational open space that was provided for in the community's redevelopment plan.
- It fails to protect open space for historic and aesthetic reasons: The COPT plan proposes office building and parking lot construction on large parcels of open space, including the Parade Field in the heart of the Camp Ritchie Historic District, that are protected under the community's redevelopment plan.
- It proposes excessive commercial building density: The COPT plan more than doubles the total commercial building square footage build-out allowed under the community's redevelopment plan and far exceeds the floor-area ratio considered in the Environmental Impact Statement for Fort Ritchie.
- It proposes excessive commercial employment at the site: The COPT plan proposes an office park with over twice as many employees as called for under the community's plan.
- It proposes excessive residential housing: The COPT plan proposes more than a ten-fold increase in residential housing units and proposes to use 100 more acres of base property for residential housing than called for in the community's plan.
- It fails to implement the community's vision for property: The COPT plan does not "preserve the site's natural beauty and open space" as called for in the community's adopted redevelopment plan…and proposes [a] development scheme that is highly inappropriate for the rural mountaintop area where Fort Ritchie is located.

In their response to the suit, PMDC "essentially denied just about everything we alleged in our lawsuit," says one of the litigants. The Executive Director of PMDC counters that there is a fallacy in the community members' argument because he claims their points are based on "draft" documents, not final ones, regarding building within the Camp Ritchie Historic District. For example, the Executive Director says, whereas the draft states, "prohibited," the final states, "not recommended," with respect to building within the historic district. Since the filing of this suit, there have been a number of hearings, though no ruling has been issued as of the date of this writing. In the meantime, however, if the RMA injunction is lifted, the community members are ready with an emergency injunction request.

The Petition

The filing of the lawsuit by the Cascade neighbors was not supported by all in the community, and in particular, not by a group of local businessmen. According to one local businessman, the newspaper printed that the suit was "filed on behalf of the Cascade community"; though apparently the co-litigant who made this statement has since retracted it. At the same time, these businessmen were getting feedback from other community members in their stores, who were essentially asking "when is enough enough?" Subsequently, in an attempt to get other people's thoughts, three local businessmen, all long time residents and business owners in the area, drafted a petition that asked people to sign if they were ready to move forward with development and were tired of the lawsuits. They hung the petitions in a number of local stores and in total collected 754 signatures. They then delivered the petition and signatures to the County Commission. Their goal was to show the elected officials that "*this* is the general consensus of the community…the people filing the lawsuits are not representative of the community." Said one of the businessmen, "it probably won't do any good…but we just felt that it was time for someone to say something." Basically, said another, we are all tired with not moving forward.

Though there have been noticeable divides among different segments of the community and differences in opinion on how best to proceed, it seems fair to say that all would agree with that last comment. Ten years after Ritchie was slated for closure, it seems painfully clear that everyone in this small rural mountaintop village is very tired and wants desperately to move forward – though not at the expense of the community and not at the expense of Ritchie.

The Essence of the Rich Points

Throughout the previous chapters, I have highlighted those statements or events that for me were the rich points, that is, they were the data that, when presented, provided a moment of clarity with respect to how the story should be told. At times, however, this moment of clarity could be better described as a moment when I knew further questions needed to be asked or further research in secondary sources needed to be conducted. At other times, this moment truly was an "aha" moment – it was a point when I felt "ok, I've got it now." By sitting back and reflecting on these moments and their meaning not just to me but also to those who shared them, I was able to take in the essence of these rich points, these very critical pieces of information, and weave them together to present what seemed to be most meaningful.

Taken together, these rich points show a map, in a sense, of how I approached this project and what I found to be important, from listening with care to the stories told by those connected with Ritchie. However, what I have found to be important might be vastly different from what someone else, from a different perspective, background, age, race, and culture, would find to be important. I cannot claim that my subjectivity as a person (as a thirty-two year old white woman) and as a researcher did not influence how I saw the story of Ritchie unfold. However, I did try very hard to let the voices of those most intimate to the story come through, and thus, tell the story the way they saw it too – this is their story, not mine.

Upon reflecting on the rich points and their essence, the significance in these data is that this rural village community nestled atop the mountain has suffered, not only because of the closing of Ritchie, but also because of the transition (or lack thereof) that

has ensued. With the loss of Ritchie, the community has lost its cultural center (its town square) – a safe place for play and interaction. Furthermore, the tradition of secrecy by those in the power structure and the political disenfranchisement of those on the mountain from those in the county political seat have continued to play out through the years since Ritchie's closure. As will be discussed further in the next chapters, the story of Ritchie can only be told by understanding the connection between the community and Ritchie as a place – historically, in the present, and what is hoped for in the future. The rich points I have identified throughout helped me to see these connections and thus tell the story herein.

CHAPTER V. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACTS OF THE CLOSING OF FORT RITCHIE ON THE COMMUNITY

The literature on military base closures consists only of government and econometric reports assessing financial impacts of a base on an area and then estimates of impacts when a base closes. The predominant theme is that the closing itself is the primary point of concern, that is, the closing itself is seen as *the* significant event. While this act does have a direct and significant effect on the local community – as found in this case study – the focus on the closing assumes that the property will be turned over to the community and reused in a timely (relatively speaking) and profitable manner, thus compensating for the financial loss to the community due to the withdrawal of the military. This assumption, however, does not adequately acknowledge, and thus does not readily offer a means to address, the situation that follows a base closing when the property is not able to be handed over to the community in a timely manner (not necessarily the fault of the military) and thus, not able to be reused. In the case of the closing of Fort Ritchie, the impacts on the community – direct and indirect – stem far more from the fact that the transition period (usually touted by the federal government as taking less than seven years) has lasted more than ten years, with the future ownership and use of the property still unresolved.

Through undertaking an ethnographic study that included the collection of "data" from community members and others related to the closing and reuse process of Ritchie through the conduct of in-depth interviews, I am able to assess the personal and qualitative effects of a base closing on the local community. Furthermore, by reviewing local news articles over several decades, by reviewing related government and legal

documents, and by examining Census economic and population data on the area, I can assess quantitative impacts as well.

Post Hoc Social Impact Assessment

Social Impact Assessments are typically conducted prior to the implementation of policy; they serve as evaluations of policy alternatives with respect to their estimated consequences on a number of predetermined impact areas and are based on the synthesis of four main sources of information: "the literature, experts, project data, and direct experience" (Finsterbusch 1980:22). Though in this case study the policy has already been implemented (i.e., Fort Ritchie has been closed), the tenets of SIA can be instructive in determining what impact areas are important to study as well as how best to study them. Interestingly, SIA has its roots with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, which requires an environmental impact statement (EIS) to evaluate "impacts on the environment for all actions, funded or conducted by the federal government, which significantly affect the environment" (Finsterbusch 1980:14). As already presented in previous chapters, the conduct of the EIS is an important element required under BRAC law as part of the base closing process to assess the impacts of alternative uses of the base and their estimated consequences on the environment and the community (including impacts on other social units such as individuals and organizations).

When undertaking an SIA, the unit of analysis for assessing impacts must be predetermined (e.g., individuals; organizations; communities), as this guides the types of impacts examined. In this case study, the community around Ritchie is the unit of

analysis and is thus viewed "as a single social system which produces quality-of-life conditions for its members….[and can be assessed] effective or ineffective to the extent that [it is a] good place to live – that is, [it] provides for a high quality of life" (Finsterbusch 1980:25). Taking the community as the social unit, however, presupposes the existence of a "community government," which the community around Ritchie does not have. However, while the fort was still active, many in the community saw it as a "surrogate government" that planned community social events throughout the year and provided support to other local institutions, such as the community school and the American Legion. However, the military did not have any authority or control over those living outside its gates, as its legal jurisdiction pertained only to its property and its members.

When selecting the community as the unit of analysis and thus viewing it as a social system, it "can be examined in terms of inputs, structures, activities, and outputs…the outputs are quality-of-life conditions for individuals and families – housing; health care; education; employment; transportation; consumer goods and services; and social, political, cultural, religious, intellectual, and recreational opportunities" (Finsterbusch 1980:25). Specifically, when examining communities this way, it is important to highlight the impact of policies and projects with respect to their impact on "reducing or expanding inputs, altering structures, or increasing or decreasing activities" (Finsterbusch 1980:25).

Taking an SIA approach provides a quantitative framework with which to study the various impacts on the community around Ritchie when the military left; the addition

of ethnography further enriches the analysis by providing qualitative context to the numbers.

Inputs and Outputs: Impacts on the Community Before and After the Closing of Ritchie

When Fort Ritchie was active the installation included 252 buildings across 310 of a total of 638 acres of land, which supported, as of 1997, a population of 2,731, including 991 military personnel (of whom 386 resided off-post), 824 military family members residing on-post, and 916 civilian positions (Department of the Army 1995). On-post were 386 housing units in the family housing and approximately 110 units[32] in the barracks that housed the 605 on-post military personnel and their families.

Of those residing off-post, 13 percent resided in the community just outside the gates, with 27 percent residing in Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, six miles away (with the remaining 60 percent residing in areas further away from the post in Maryland and Pennsylvania). In fiscal year 1995, the budget for Fort Ritchie was approximately $34,299,900 (including more than $14 million in payroll and about $13 million in contracts) and given that "almost 80 percent of off-post military and civilians live within 20 to 25 miles of Fort Ritchie…a significant portion of both payrolls [was] likely spent in the regional economy" (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1997:4-62). Furthermore, as reported in the *Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan* (Sasaki 1997), when the base closed, there were 1,602 military and civilian employees (743 military and 859 civilian). Of the 743 military personnel, 557 lived on post, and it was estimated that this group spent

[32] The actual number of single housing units was unable to be ascertained, thus this number is an estimate calculated first subtracting the known number of family housing units on-post (n = 386) from the known number of military personnel residing on-post (n = 605). The difference is 219. Assuming that there are at minimum 2 soldiers per unit, the resulting approximate number of units calculated is 219/2, or 110.

approximately 20 percent of their disposable income within Washington County. Additionally, 60 percent of civilian personnel (n = 515) owned homes in the community and were seen as less likely to relocate to another area even once their job was moved. When Ritchie closed, therefore, a significant amount of money was taken out of the local economy. However, given the fact that when the military moved out, the majority of civilian workers were relocated to Fort Detrick and did not move their residence from the local area, their salaries (and thus, spending) stayed.

Comparing economic and population statistics from 1990, when the military was still active, to 2000, when the military had withdrawn, shows a number of quantitative impacts of the closing on the area. Data was gathered from the U.S. Census *Neighborhood Change Database (NCDB) – 1970-2000 Tract Data, Short Form Release* (developed by GeoLytics and The Urban Institute). This database contains nation-wide tract-level data from the 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000 decennial censuses, with variables and tract boundaries consistently defined across census years, thus allowing for comparisons over time for the exact same geographical area. This is particularly important since census tract boundaries change over time, as is the case with census tract 101 (the tract within which Fort Ritchie is located) where tract boundaries for this area changed from 1990 to 2000. The information presented in Table 3 is based on data from the census tract 101 geographic boundary in Washington County, Maryland. This is a rather small tract and includes Fort Ritchie, Cascade, and Highfield. It does not, however, include the small neighborhood of Blue Ridge Summit, Pennsylvania, which lies adjacent to, and is a part of what would be defined as the community around the base.

Nevertheless, the data provide a real sense of the quantitative changes that have occurred in the community.

Table 3. Socioeconomic changes in the community surrounding Fort Ritchie from 1990 to 2000 (Communities of Highfield, Cascade, and Ft. Ritchie) – Census Tract Level Data

		1990 N	**1990 % of total pop.**	**2000 N**	**2000 % of total pop.**	**% change (1990 N - 2000 N)**
Population Characteristics	Total population	**2469**	100	**1319**	100	-46.6
	White	1751	71	1222	93	-30.2
	African American	542	22	46	3	-91.5
	Female	1101	45	639	48	-42.0
	Male	1368	55	680	52	-50.3
	Adult	1769	72	991	75	-44.0
	Child (under 18)	700	28	328	25	-53.1
	Persons 65+	194	8	213	16	**9.8**
	Males in Armed Forces	483	20	32	2	-93.4
	Females in Armed Forces	57	2	0	0	-100.0
Educational Attainment	Adults with < high school	272	11	148	11	-45.6
	Adults with high school diploma, no college	473	19	311	24	-34.2
	Adults with some college, no degree	372	15	229	17	-38.4
	Adults with college, prof., or graduate degree	157	6	45	3	-71.3
Household Characteristics	Total households	686	28	538	41	-21.6
	Living in military quarters	297	12	0	0	-100.0
	Receiving public assistance	35	1	9	1	-74.3
	People in homes > 5 years	854	35	801	61	-6.2
	Mean household income, year 2000 $	41,837		46,794		**11.8**
Employment Characteristics	Employed civilians	768	31	614	47	-20.1
	Unemployed persons	64	3	21	2	-67.2
	Working in Washington Co.	830	34	183	14	-78.0
	Traveling < 25 mins. to work	867	35	326	25	-62.4
	Taveling 25-44 mins. to work	331	13	150	11	-54.7
	Traveling > 45 mins. to work	89	4	149	11	**67.4**
	Professional, technical	61	2	34	3	-44.3
	Exec., management, admin.	68	3	71	5	**4.4**
	Sales	81	3	64	5	-21.0
	Admin.support, clerical	128	5	112	8	-12.5
	Production, craft, repair	167	7	226	17	**35.3**
	Operator, assembly, transpo.	87	4	9	1	-89.7
	Non-farm labor	73	3	26	2	-64.4
	Service	92	4	51	4	-44.6
	Farming, forestry/fishing	11	0	0	0	-100.0

Table 4. From the Census 2000 on Highfield-Cascade, Census Designated Place (which was not a CDP in the 1990 Census)*

	N	**% Of Total Population**
Total Population	**1141**	
Median age (years)	35.7	
White	1123	98.4
African American	2	.2
Hispanic	7	.6
Civilian Veterans	114	13.9
In the Armed Forces	0	0
Government Workers	63	12.4
Families in poverty status	15	5.2
Householders who moved into home in 1990 or earlier	285	68

*Data presented in this table are from U.S. Census figures, which, in 2000, do not include statistics on those residing on Fort Ritchie.

The community experienced a steep decline in population from 1990 to 2000 from the time the Army was present to the time the base was closed (Table 3). For example, with the departure of military personnel and their families, the total population was reduced nearly 50 percent from 2,469 persons to 1,319. Most striking is the decline in the African American population (92 percent) from 542 to 46, resulting in a percentage that is significantly below the state average. Of the 46 African Americans in the area, most live in the rental housing on base, with only 2 African Americans residing in the Highfield-Cascade area (representing only 0.2 percent of the CDP population) (Table 4). Not only did the number of African Americans decline, but this decline reduced the diversity within the community. As presented in Chapter 4, many residents saw the diversity brought in by the military – different people from different places with different cultures – as very positive for the community, especially the children, as military and local children attended school together, intermingled, and became friends. For local adults as well as the children, the withdrawal of the military also meant the loss of good

friends; and though the community was used to the change of personnel every few years, the closing of the base stopped the entrée of new people and potentially new friends altogether.

Striking too is the decline in the population of children (53 percent decrease from 700 to 328) (Table 3); it is this particular decline that has hurt the local elementary school, Cascade Elementary. Cascade Elementary has a capacity of 468, yet according to Washington County Public School records, currently has only 140 students enrolled (thus operating at only 30 percent capacity). As discussed in Chapter 4, the loss of more than half of its population nearly resulted in the closing of the local school, one of the only remaining significant social organizations in the community. It can also be expected that with the loss of students, teachers and/or administrators were lost as well; though some of these teachers may have been spouses of military personnel and not local residents.

The school was also impacted with the loss of military children and thus the loss of funding provided directly to the school by the military on a per military dependent basis; the loss of federal dependent students equated to the loss of approximately $1,700 in Student Impact Aid to Washington County Schools per student (Giancoli 1995). The school also lost financial support provided by Ritchie in the form of direct funds and donations (e.g., computers). With the loss of population in general, and the loss of children, the neighboring Blue Ridge Summit library, as also discussed in Chapter 4, lost its funding by Washington County. With the perseverance of community members and assistance by more "community minded" Commissioners, however, this funding was subsequently restored, though it was not fully restored and must be requested every fiscal year.

Of course, military personnel numbers declined as well, though a small number of male military personnel remain as part of the support units to Site-R, Site-C, and Site-X. In the Highfield-Cascade area (Table 4), no members of the community currently serve in the armed forces, thus the 32 males shown in Table 3 as serving, all reside on the Fort Ritchie base. Living in the community, however, are approximately 114 civilian veterans (not including any veterans who may live in the housing available to the public on post). The number of total households declined by more than 20 percent as well, as expected, given the departure of the military and its personnel and dependents, and that no new enterprises have been established on post that would include an influx of new workers and their families into the community.

The population with advanced degrees also declined from 157 to 45 (74 percent) – not unexpected considering the nature of operations at Fort Ritchie (military intelligence) that required advanced degrees on the part of soldiers. The reported proportion of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher in 2000 is significantly below the state average. The average household income, however, from 1990 (adjusted to year 2000 dollars) to 2000, increased by 12 percent or a little over $5,000. This might be accounted for by the fact that 1990 figures took into account the income earned by soldiers working at Ritchie; income figures which are low relative to civilian earnings. This change in household income might also be accounted for given the recent interest by professionals (albeit a small group) in Washington and other areas south in purchasing and renovating the older summer homes/hotels in the area. As indicated by the local hardware store owner, in a number of instances, the wife will move to the area, while the husband will maintain a residence in the city during the work week and then commute up

to the mountain to work on the house on the weekends. This situation has helped some of the local businesses and contractors since the loss of the military, including the hardware store, which provides hardware and supplies to this new group of residents.

The loss of the military also seems to have altered employment and travel to work patterns. As presented earlier, when the military base closed, many civilians who worked for the base but lived in the area did not move their residence, but their place of work moved to Fort Detrick in Frederick, Maryland for example. This serves as an example of many residents' strong sense of place and attachment to the area and the feeling that the community "is home." This can help account for the 67 percent increase in the number of people who travel more than 45 minutes to work in 2000 as compared to in 1990. Still others may have to travel further now because their job at Ritchie was eliminated and they could not find comparable work closer. In 2000, there is also a noticeable increase in the number of people employed in production and craft. This is likely due to the leasing of part of the base's property to International Masonry Institute (IMI), the union's national training facility, which opened in 1997 and brought a number of new jobs to the area.

In a number of instances, as seen in the data from 1990 to 2000, the actual number reported in a category may have declined, but the proportion of the population represented increased. For example, the number of white residents decreased from 1,751 in 1990 to 1,222 in 2000, yet the proportion of the population this group represented increased from 71% to 93%. This same trend is seen, for example, with the number of households, the number of people in their homes for more than 5 years, and the number of civilian employed persons.

These noted trends are consistent with what would be expected to occur with the decline of a significant portion of the population – particularly a military personnel population – from an area. When the military moved out, personnel and their family members moved too, thus reducing the number of overall households in the community. Additionally, since the military is comprised of a very transient population, and one that is often rotated every three to four years, it is not surprising that the proportion of people in their homes for more than 5 years increased when the military left, particularly since many, if not most, community members have in fact been in their homes for a period of time significantly longer than 5 years. Finally, when the military moved, while the majority of military personnel moved out of the area as well, the civilian personnel employed at Ritchie did not, thus accounting for the increase in the proportion of civilians employed in the area from 1990 to 2000; additionally, the renting of part of the base facilities to the International Masonry Institute also increased the number of civilian employees in the area.

A particular negative impact cited by many residents in the community with the closing of the base is the increase in crime. When the military was active, though it did not have legal authority in the community, its presence still served as a deterrent to criminal activity and made residents generally feel safer and more secure. With the withdrawal of the military however, and particularly with the rental of former officer quarters (some of which are Section 8) to people from "down the mountain," community residents have noticed increases in graffiti, drugs, vandalism, property damage, and petty theft. And despite an increase in crime, there is still a lack of police presence by the county. A representative of the Washington County Sheriffs department did attend a

community meeting at one point to address the "rise in crime," yet many residents felt that this was an attempt simply to appease them without altering their actions – furthering the community's perception that those in power look at those on the mountain as "on the fringe of the county."

As a negative consequence, when the military left Ritchie, all of the activities and social events, especially events that drew community members together (such as the fireworks on the 4th of July and the lighting of the Christmas tree in front of Lakeside Hall) ceased. And since no other organization in the community has the resources to fill this gap, this has reduced the number of opportunities community members have to intermingle and connect with others on a somewhat regular basis. In addition, the initial loss of the use of Ritchie's open space was extremely disheartening to many in the community; while they have since gained access on a limited basis to walk a predetermined path, many no longer feel welcome on the grounds of what once was such a hospitable place and integral part of their community. Moreover, the act of the base closing and the subsequent actions of the LRA to restrict access to the property once the military left, led to a "loss of vitality" in the community and among its residents.

When Ritchie closed, there were impacts on other social institutions as well, namely a decline in the number of parishioners at the local churches, and in particular, one church that was popular with many military personnel and their families; even though there were services held on post, many military members enjoyed attending church with local community members. In addition, the loss of the military in the area impacted the roster of the local American Legion Post, with membership declining by about twenty-five percent as many members (including soldiers and auxiliary members

and Legionnaires who were civilian workers at Ritchie) switched to the American Legion post closer to their new employment at Fort Detrick.

At the time of the announcement in 1995 that Ritchie would close, there were a reported 7,000 retirees living in the area (Ernde 1995). As a group, they were affected by the loss of the amenities and services they were entitled to use on Ritchie and, thus, had to either pay more to use these same services in the local community or drive further to other military posts to which they had access (e.g., Fort Detrick). The general sense is that, while they were unhappy with the loss of use of services on Ritchie and did not like the fact that they had to drive further to receive military benefits, retirees, like most others affiliated with Ritchie, did not move from the area. Along with the obvious overwhelming feelings people had toward Ritchie, people also express a true "love" for the area around the base. "I love the area" was a common refrain when asked about living on the mountain. One County Commissioner, also noted "folks love the area so much. And when the jobs left, most folks did not, they kept their homes and simply traveled farther to work." This is shown too in the fact that compared to the state average people living in the Cascade-Highfield area have been in their current homes for a significantly longer period of time. Many people cite the peacefulness, the remoteness, the serenity, and the unassuming beauty of the area as reasons why they love living where they do, in addition to the fact that many families have been up "on the mountain" for generations. Simply put, for many, the mountain "is home." Alongside those residents who have lived in the area their whole lives are military retirees who served at Ritchie and upon retirement chose to settle in the area because they loved it so much when they were there.

Important Social Impacts

Aside from lost friendships and the loss of diversity in the community, the transition period has had particularly important positive and negative social effects on the community. Through the course of talking with residents, two main effects emerge. First, the fight to save Ritchie, as well as the subsequent battles fought to protect the remaining social institutions (the school and the library), brought community members together in a new way. With a common agenda – first to try to save the base and then to try to save the community more broadly – new social networks were formed, new residents to the area became integrated more quickly, and a cognizant recognition of the love of place – of Ritchie and the community – emerged.

The transition period, however, has been rather divisive within the community and has forced groups of people who were once on friendly terms to take sides regarding the planned reuse of Ritchie. The length of time of this whole process and the delays has frustrated and tired everyone. Many, like those in the business community, see the COPT plan as a good thing and a way to move forward – as the only thing that has really presented itself as a viable reuse option. Others, however, like those affiliated with the Cascade Committee and the "local lawsuit" are concerned that the COPT plan is too much for their little area and are prepared to fight to stop COPT's proposed plans, and especially, to protect the historic district, citing the negative impacts this new plan will have on their quality of life up on the mountain.

Another issue brought up by some who have been on the mountain their whole lives is the expressed disdain for the involvement in local affairs of people who are not

native to the area,[33] in particular, some of the members of the Cascade Committee who have been in the area less than ten years. Anger was also expressed toward the head of RMA, who also is not from the area, but has been allowed, through the ongoing filing of lawsuits, "to hold the community's future hostage," said a local businessman. The very active stance taken by the founding member of the Cascade Committee and several of its Steering Committee members regarding the reuse of Fort Ritchie, is similar to what Falk (2004) describes as the effect of the arrival of "newcomers" on local politics, based on his ethnographic study of a small southern rural community. As he suggests, and as is the case in the present study, to newcomers "most of whom have migrated from larger, ostensibly more sophisticated places, local politics probably appears a vestige from some bygone era, definitely small town and small time." Falk finds that newcomers, who may be "better educated and more used to arguing openly for what they want," begin to appear more at County meetings and eventually may run for political office themselves. Interestingly, when asked about the community and local politics, one Ritchie community "newcomer" likened the current situation to that found in a small southern town or coal mining town "where a handful of families [who have been on the mountain for generations]…attempts to control the life of the community." These feelings by both sides serve to add to the obvious divisiveness within the community – a divisiveness, unfortunately, which can only serve to hurt the community. Unable to present itself with one clear and focused voice, the community thus lessens its power to demand what it wants, and ultimately, to affect change.

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[33] RICH POINT – "disdain for the involvement in local affairs of people who are not native to the area." Through the course of the transition process, long time locals express disapproval of newer residents (or "newcomers, " individuals with different values and goals from "locals") coming in and trying to run things.

Impacts on Local Businesses

Around Ritchie, the neighborhoods of Highfield, Cascade, and PenMar are primarily residential with some small businesses, while Blue Ridge Summit is a mix of residential and small businesses. While no businesses closed as a direct result of the Fort closing, a number were hit harder than others. For example, within all the neighborhoods around Ritchie, there are what used to be either summer homes or hotels for the elite of Washington and Baltimore. Over the years, many of these old homes have been converted to apartment houses, and when Ritchie was active, mostly military personnel, either singles or families, who chose to live off-post, occupied these apartments. This cottage industry provided a nice, stable living for the landlords since the military reliably provided the subsidy (housing allowance) for the military personnel to pay rent. When Ritchie closed and the military moved out, the rental market declined as supply then far exceeded demand.

Another business, Rocky's, the pizza shop right outside the main gate also did not fare as well. And while Rocky's is still in business, the original owner sold it and moved back to Italy citing that since the closing of the base, business had declined to the point that it was not worth keeping the shop. In a 1999 interview printed in the *Maryland Cracker Barrel*, the former owner of Rocky's was quoted as saying, "The Fort hurt business when it closed…[and] I'm not the only one. All of the businesses in the area have felt the pinch." Other businesses too suffered as a result. A local storeowner and caterer said that his customer base was about 35 percent military, and when the military left, he had to find ways to make up for this loss. Another local store owner, also cited an approximate 20 percent hit when the military moved out. He too sought ways to

compensate. Both men, fortunately for their businesses, have been able to establish relationships with PMDC, by providing supplies and or services directly to the board or to the last tenant left on the post (IMI). The local barbershop also took a financial hit when the base closed, estimating that business declined by about 35 percent with the closing; like other businesses, the shop owners had to adapt to the situation in order to stay in business, for example, by extending their hours to accommodate civilian workers who now worked at Detrick and could no longer come in during the day, but rather in the evening on their way home.

One business, however, profited by the closing of the fort, Chocolate Park Liquors, located just down the street from the main gate of Ritchie. One of the reasons for this, cites the owner was the fact that Ritchie had three outlets on post for beer and liquor; when the military moved out, therefore, so too did the competition (Maryland Cracker Barrel 1999).

CHAPTER VI. CONCLUSION

My main aim with this dissertation was to learn how a local, and somewhat isolated, community responded when the military base (which was also the largest local employer) closed. In particular, I was interested in examining how the closing was perceived and interpreted by various local actors, ranging from local residents and business owners to military personnel and local political leaders. To do this, I wanted to spend time in this place – in the community around the base – with the people connected to it to understand what their lives had been like when the base was fully operational and what their lives were like as the base anticipated closing and then actually closed. Using an ethnographic case study approach, I spent months in and around the community to understand more fully the dynamics associated with this kind of forced social change.

I spent time with those associated with and affected by the closing of Ritchie, listening with care to their varied stories. By noting the rich points in their stories and reflecting on the essence of these rich pieces of data, and by identifying and further exploring the emerging themes, my hope was to weave their individual tales into a coherent and informative narrative. As previously discussed, it was these rich points that when presented during the course of conversations provided moments of clarity as to how the story unfolded. In particular, they proved to be turning points in the sense that they guided me to other important information that up to that time I had not considered seeking. Upon reflection of the essence of these discrete yet correlative rich points, I was able to see the meta rich point of the story. That is, upon reflection, I was able to fit these rich points together in a way that a coherent story emerged, and was then able to see it as

a whole beyond the individual tales that comprise it. The result of this reflection – the meta rich point – is presented in the next section.

To assist further with my analysis, I examined news articles, government and related policy documents, and census data. Employing the methodology I did, I was not restricted to narrowly using one approach. By gathering information from multiple sources I was able to develop a full understanding of the main event (the closing) and the events that followed. An approach such as the one I took has not yet appeared in the academic literature, at least not when studying military base closings. While Catherine Lutz (2001) has constructed the complex and compelling story of the community surrounding Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, North Carolina, the circumstance with which she was studying was quite different. In her case, the base was expanding, while in mine it was closing. However, her methods of investigation, including the importance of learning "through the lens of the experience of the people" (Lutz 2001:1), helped to guide my study.

After exploring all relevant theoretical approaches, I chose to employ place theory. While this choice had the limitation of being somewhat imprecise in its theoretical statements (and therefore could not be narrowly tested), it was, at the same time, beneficial because of its imprecision, allowing me considerable latitude in how I employed it. (Indeed, as Gieryn's conceptualization of place as "an unwindable spiral" suggests, in the most sociological way, not everything can be disaggregated into and understood best via a multivariate statistical scheme). For me, it was axiomatic that *place matters*. But, I wondered *what* about place matters and what was unique about this particular place of Ritchie. Moreover, I wondered what could be learned from analyzing

this place to advance both sociological theory and applied, practical matters related to other base closings.

In using place theory, I was guided as well by the desire to examine social relations, especially among those on and off the base. What I did not really anticipate was that power would be so central to how people behaved – with respect to one another and to the place itself. It became very clear early on in my research that those with power perceived things much differently from those without it. Although I knew well that base closings are highly political decisions, I did not fully grasp what this meant for the local communities most directly affected by them. In particular, while the decisions as to which bases to close are argued and decided in our nation's capital, those in the hinterland feel their consequences most heavily.

Assertions by C. Wright Mills (even though written more than fifty years ago) seem to grasp most powerfully this notion in his statement concerning the power elite: that power (actual and perceived) resides in the political, the economic, and the military domains of American society and that those in power shape and make decisions that have consequences on ordinary people. Notably, his arguments help to elucidate how power relations and the distribution of power and resources affect how people in a particular place respond when that place is taken away; regardless of whether that place is a military base, a factory, or a coal mine. Related to the notion of power is that of class (or group) interest and this study also highlights how group interests (whether social or economic) bring individuals together to preserve those interests regardless of the group's relative position in the formal political structure.

The concepts of sense of place and place attachment also emerged as predominant themes as well as the fact that one's sense of place differs based on personal and group interests. Furthermore, these concepts were accentuated by the fact that while all community members (regardless of class interest) expressed a true love and connection with Ritchie, this love and connection was just as strong or stronger for the community itself. When Ritchie closed and the future use of the site became uncertain, residents, often with generational ties to the mountain, never even considered moving away from "their home."

Further, this study exemplifies how the material and symbolic elements of a place – including its geography, history, economy, and culture – interact to influence local patterns of meaning and action. It is the understood character of this place that helps us appreciate the actions (or inactions) taken on the part of community residents from the time of the announcement of the closure forward. These various elements and their meanings set the tone of local life and encourage (or discourage) different patterns of social action (e.g., trying to fight the closure, taking on the government). And, in this case, the historical pattern of political disenfranchisement felt by those on the mountain (by those living in this remote and somewhat secluded geography) muted resident's initiatives to try to fight the base closing, despite the fact that they were extremely saddened by the prospect of losing such a distinctive and important place to the community. Their silence most certainly did not mean assent, though outsiders unfamiliar with the historical dynamics between those on and those off the mountain may have viewed their silence differently. Sociologically speaking, this understanding furthers an appreciation for how a place can impact, for example, the exercise of power

or the distribution of resources. As demonstrated through the course of this dissertation, the exercise of power was rather limited by those living on the mountain, particularly longer term residents, though the "newcomers," through their actions, have begun to alter this obvious imbalance of power.

Given the predominant sense by many on the mountain that they could not make a difference once the government made the decision to close Ritchie, akin to findings in other similar situations such as plant and mine closings (see for example Camp 1995; Hathaway 1993; Perrucci et al. 1988), residents around Ritchie showed little resistance, with some exemplifying "dejected acceptance" and "complacency." The power (or perceived power) public decision makers have in shaping the closure and reuse process, including whether or not to involve particular citizen groups in the decision making, also affected community response. The balance of power and the understanding of who was and who was not involved in community decision making – such as the lack of "locals" on the Local Reuse Authority Board (the initial board and then PMDC) – can help clarify why some citizens responded and how, and why others did not. The arrival of "newcomers" to the mountain seems to have started to shift this balance of power by engaging the LRA in public discourse, obtaining and disseminating "public documents," and, with the assistance of locals involved with the Cascade Committee, by filing a lawsuit. The impacts on this small rural community have been many and varied and have been differentially felt and responded to by different groups of residents – from those in the power seats, to those in the business community, to those concerned about the effects of over-development, and finally to those concerned about historic preservation.

The Meta Rich Point: Ritchie the Place and Implications for Meaning, Memory, and the Exercise of Power

Ritchie is a place both real and imagined. It is a place of the present built of brick and mortar, a place of the past conjured in the memory, and a place of the future which is yet to be determined – it is a remarkable "unwindable spiral of [geography,] material form and interpretive understandings [and] experiences," quite distinguishable from its overlookable backdrop (Gieryn 2000:471). These three defining features create an unwindable spiral in the sense that they are interconnected and irreducible (that is, one feature cannot be collapsed into another for analytical or explanatory purposes) (Gieryn 2006). The concept of the unwindable spiral is akin to Durkheim's conception of a social fact – something sui generis – something that is created by, yet external to, human activity, and which, can only be understood as a whole (a whole which is greater than the sum of its parts) (Durkheim 1982). This unwindable spiral of place – Ritchie – is at once a bounded geographical area, populated with buildings and structures and open spaces, and filled with special meaning by those around it. These meanings are interwoven with, yet unwindable from, its geography and material forms.

Ritchie is a place that was made by those around it through the attributions of meanings (the sense of place people have about it) given to it over time, meanings which are more or less "embedded in historically contingent and shared cultural understandings of the terrain" (Gieryn 2000:473). For example, as an active military post, Ritchie was a safe, beautiful, accessible place that encouraged interactions among community members and served as the proverbial town square. It served as the cultural center of the community, providing safe open spaces for community members to use on a daily basis

as well as hosting events open to the public on special occasions such as the 4th of July and Christmas. In this way, Ritchie, though not intentionally designed for this purpose, was a place that engaged community members in a way that they would otherwise not be brought together and have the opportunity to interact. Ritchie was part of the daily rhythm of life for many residents – either as a place of work, a place of recreation, or a place of interaction. It was thus part of the routine, the mundane, the profane. And it was through these mundane, everyday, taken-for-granted uses that Ritchie became a place – a literally socially constructed place that emerged from the social relations, and more importantly, social uses it encouraged and which were embedded in it.

Ritchie served as a unifying source of collective identity for the community; when asked where they lived, people often would not say in Cascade or Blue Ridge Summit, but rather would say, "around Fort Ritchie." The base, with all that it offered and all that it represented, contributed to the collective well being of the community. Following its closure, however, the meanings attached to the base changed and many began to see Ritchie as unsafe, wasting away, and inaccessible. When stripped of this important social institution, a place of collective good, the community was left with a collective sense of anomie.

Over time, it is also a place through which important social processes have worked, including collective action, power, and inequality. As part of the story of Ritchie, these social processes inform an understanding of how the community outside its gates reacted to the announcement of the closing and responded in the subsequent years of transition. Ritchie, thus, as a place of physical and interpretive realms, has mattered for the social processes and historical change in the local community; a community albeit

comprised of groups with different nested interests, whether economic development, continuation of the quality of life of the rural village, or historic preservation.

When Ritchie was placed on the initial BRAC closure list, it became a place where networks were formed and collective action took hold in an attempt by some in the community to try and fight the closure – with some meetings even held on post at Lakeside Hall. Thus, Ritchie then became the object of collective action as people rallied to save it: "Save the Fort," "Save Ritchie," became protest-rallying cries. The threat of the loss of Ritchie (the loss of place) evoked emotions in residents who felt connected and attached to it and whose sense of place and community identity was threatened (Fullilove 1996; Tuan 2004). This threat also highlighted divisions in the community between those who wanted to fight the closure and those who felt they had no power to affect change.

The decision to close Ritchie by those involved with the federal BRAC process meant that some entity at the local level had to assume responsibility for the reuse of the base. As there was no formal governing body at the community level (a role which often was assumed by the base commander and his deputies when Ritchie was active), this meant that an entity had to be created specific for this purpose. The Washington County Commission assumed this role and created the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA). This reuse authority, comprised primarily of area business leaders, was not representative of the community and was not democratically elected; all members were appointed by the County Commission. This initial step undertaken by the Commission reflected the way things were traditionally done in the county: without input or representation from local residents, particularly those up on the mountain outside Ritchie's gates.

Social and political inequalities were thus once again reified; that is, inequitable relationships, which have been created through social interactions over time, have come to be seen and thus treated as natural, absolute, and beyond the control of any one person (Ritzer 1992). This traditional divide between those in power occupying the political seats in Hagerstown 16 miles down the mountain and those up at Ritchie exemplifies Mills' (1956) power elite argument. While the LRA in Washington County, Maryland is not a national power and not part of the "power elite," it is nonetheless in a structural position above others in the populace and the Commission makes decisions and controls political and financial interests that have consequences for the population – a power, in this case, ordained and supported by the U.S. Military. The Commission too represents the interests of families who have been in the area for a long period of time and have interests and values different from those newer to the area and who challenge the power and status held by the local elite.

This situation regarding the reuse of Ritchie is analogous to what occurs in other communities facing transition as a result of the loss of a major institution. Hathaway (1993), for example, in his assessment of the decision making processes related to the transformation of Pittsburgh following the closure of the steel mills, finds that decisions were made by the privileged few who held positions of power within the major industrial corporations and financial institutions (sometimes aided by key politicians). These decisions, often made undemocratically and in private, were made strategically to benefit the goals of the elite group. Similar to that found between those in the community around Ritchie and those affiliated with the LRA: "This ideological sleight of hand prevents most of the public from even imaging that they have a right to influence the

decisions that shape the economic future of their communities. These well-established and reinforced cultural assumptions work to prevent and extend the hegemony of the economic elite over the day-to-day life of communities. This is an example of the third dimension of power – extremely effective, but because people accept it as 'the way things are' it is also almost entirely invisible" (Hathaway 1993:197). Despite the conspiratorial appearance of the actions of the elite, Hathaway cautions that most in an elite position make decisions based on the sincere belief that they are acting in a way that is of benefit to the community and that the promotion of progress is the best alternative for bettering the community's future.

When the military moved out and Ritchie officially closed, community members were not only physically kept off the base (initially anyway) but were also kept out of much of the reuse process. They were both spatially and symbolically separated from the decision making process. Locals were not invited to sit on the LRA or PMDC boards and they were not allowed access to information or documentation or decision making processes (not without resistance at least). These activities continued to reproduce (to reify) the power and privilege of those involved with the County Commission. PMDC also took up residence on post in the Castle – an impressive structure that served as the post headquarters – thus reinforcing the statement of who was now in charge and in power.

The reuse process of a place that once encouraged engagement of community members now created estrangement and further heightened divisions among the populace. While in some cases, segregation can encourage community solidarity (by bringing like minded people together), in this case, it led to further divisions between

members of the community with different interests. People took sides regarding the reuse of Ritchie based on their personal interests and motivations, whether it was economic development, community access to post facilities, or historic preservation. And while closing the base was not as devastating as predicted, the subsequent transition period has been fraught with frustration, conflict, and distress. Furthermore, because there are competing factions within the community – which means that the community is not speaking with one voice and thus unable most efficiently to effect change – the community has essentially become rudderless and without a clear direction during this transition period.

Despite this, residents on the whole (regardless of vested interests), especially longer term residents, continue to express not just their strong feelings for Ritchie and their community, but an actual love of the place. This finding is not unlike that discussed by Falk (2004) and others (e.g., McFeely 1994), where residents of a place (as rundown or flawed as it may seem to outsiders) are able to separate the place from the sometimes negative events that surround and involve it. How people are related to the place over time, how they are rooted in it, and how they remember it, is a much stronger source of identity and attachment. As Falk finds, the power of certain places for their residents is the creation of the feeling of simply being home, with memories good and bad, which cannot be taken away and which ground those people to that particular spot.

Over time, the meanings Ritchie held for those connected to it changed based on how they knew it before (how they remember it), how they see it presently, and what they hope it will become in the future. In this transitional battle, Ritchie simultaneously evokes memories and embodies history. People remember it as a place of historical

significance, where WWII spies trained, and as a place of good times and fun gatherings, memories that are stabilized by the attachments people have to it (see Logan & Molotch 1987). Ritchie has in a sense become a place of greater respect and reverence and has been elevated from the profane to the sacred. This is due, in part, to the ghost, to the memory, of Ritchie, which evokes an emotive response to those who walk its grounds. This happens because a place, like Ritchie, is constituted "in large measure by the ghosts" sensed to "inhabit and possess it" (Bell 1997:813). This process then, makes spaces into places and places personed; places are experienced through the social senses and the social meanings attached. And, "when we, through ghosts, make space place, we treat that spirited space with ritual care…we treat a place as a shrine" (Bell 1997:820); it becomes sacred, elevated above the profane.

The ghosts associated with such places have real consequences for social life, and in the case of Ritchie, affect how certain groups of people have chosen to respond to the most recent reuse efforts proposed by PMDC as part of the COPT plan. For example, some have chosen to fight the current plans (via a lawsuit) in order to preserve the rural and historic quality of the community (not to mention, protect their property from either possible eminent domain seizures by the County when the community roads will most likely have to be widened and from possible higher property taxes that often come with increased development). Still others have chosen to counter these measures with a petition of hundreds of signatures delivered to the County Commission in support of the development of Ritchie, development which promises to bring in a larger customer base for area businesses. Though these groups have different interests and motivations for their actions, both believe that their actions may be futile; those in the political seats in

Hagerstown continue to view them, on the whole, as "on the fringe" and without much influence in the political realm.

Ritchie too has different meanings attached to it by those who knew it when it was active and by those who have moved into the community since its closing (the newcomers). To this newcomer group, in particular, Ritchie has always been something more sacred, something of historical significance, and something worth saving for posterity. This group has economic ties that extend beyond the local community; their interests are focused more on the preservation of the quiet quality of life they bought into and not on economic development, as is the case with local business owners whose livelihood is dependent more so on the condition of the local economy.

This then elaborates the Marxian notion that what you see and what you value depends on where you stand in the social-political-economic strata (Marx 1859/1970; Ritzer 1992). Furthermore, individuals occupying similar social positions are likely to become involved in a common struggle when their social position is challenged. Thus, a class consciousness develops among persons of similar economic and social interests in order to preserve these interests (Marx 1859/1970). "Class" in this case is equated to group interest and not business/economic position in the bourgeoisie/proletariat sense. For example, while, for Marx, the factory was the classic locus for the categorization of classes – between those who own the means of production (the bourgeoisie) and those who do not (the proletariat) – in the current case, classes are constituted by those who are in a structural position of power to determine how Ritchie should be reused and those who are not. Different class interests therefore lead to confrontation between classes, and for Marx, this is central to understanding social and historical processes as relations

between people are shaped by their relative positions and unequal access to resources and power (Ritzer 1992).

While the local business group has strong connections to Ritchie, they also have strong connections to preserving their economic way of life and helping their community survive economically in the face of a changing economic market. It is not surprising therefore that a division has occurred between the "newcomers" and longer term residents with regards to supporting the COPT plan. This plan has been developed by what Gieryn calls professional place-makers, entrepreneurs more interested in the exchange/profit value of an area than its use value (which is often more the concern of community members). These place-makers have the ability and the means to recreate completely what once was – either by preserving parts of the old or completely remaking it into some place new altogether. Generally, these place-makers are from outside the community, unaware and often unconcerned with the attachments people have and the ghosts affiliated with certain sacred places; accordingly, without community input and representation, as in this case, the future of a place is often left to those with the deepest pockets and not those with the deepest attachments.

Lessons to be Learned

From this small case study, limited in scope as it is, there are still lessons that can be learned which are appropriate for policy makers, particularly in light of the fact that a new round of BRAC is currently underway. For example, though the general policy is to allow community leaders and stakeholders to direct reuse efforts as they deem appropriate, efforts that are often headed by political and business leaders, and with

limited oversight by the Department of Defense, this strategy precludes community resident involvement as well as a consideration of important community values – as was demonstrated by this case study. Those members of the affected region selected to serve on the LRA and then on the PMDC board were a rather monolithic group, representing business interests; conspicuously missing from the board's composition, initially and over time, were other community interests (e.g., which could have been represented by residents who actually lived in the community around Ritchie) to serve as a counterbalance. While residents did serve on the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB), the mission and intent of this board was not to assist with reuse efforts, *per se*, but rather to oversee the Army's environmental cleanup progress to prepare the property for transfer.

Furthermore, despite the fact that there were no "community" members on the LRA or PMDC, community members were offered opportunities – limited as they may have been – to have input into the community reuse plan – the *1997 Comprehensive Reuse Plan* – and it seems that all interested parties (PMDC and community members) were satisfied with the final document. However, this plan, which was approved by all necessary entities (including the U.S. Army and HUD) has been allowed to be altered to the point that the current plan (the COPT plan) calls for development which is significantly different from that originally proposed. It calls for development rather than preservation of the "historically protected" Camp Ritchie District (as protected by the *Programmatic Agreement*). This allowance has left many in the community feeling as though the Army has not assumed the anticipated leadership position that it should. Moreover, the fact that what seemed to be signed contracts and agreements are now being negated by new documents (e.g., the sale agreement between PMDC and COPT) leaves

many in the community feeling as though the Army has let them down. This led two residents, in particular, to file suit in an attempt to save and protect certain areas of Ritchie and the community that they thought already had been saved and protected in previously signed agreements with the Army.

One of the emerging themes from this study is that many in the community feel that the Department of Defense, and in the case of Ritchie, the Army, did not provide the guidance it should and did not take a strong enough stand when it was clear that actions of the leadership of the LRA appeared contradictory to what was in the best interest of the community. "I really blame our government for not taking a stand…this has been so frustrating, the finger pointing, and no one wanting to take responsibility," lamented one local business owner. A member of the County Commission and board member of PMDC, also indicated his surprise at the lack of involvement by the Army and the fact that there is not an obvious model or framework used by the Army when disposing of bases, even if only regarding the disposal of certain infrastructure elements, for example, "that certain infrastructure automatically goes to the county or the local jurisdiction." He said that the reuse of the base and the transition period has been a struggle: "The Army's position is that everything should be handled locally, but we really struggled at the local level because we really don't have the expertise." Also, the allowance granted the recently retired Commander of Ritchie to serve as the Executive Director of the LRA seems not only unprincipled, but clearly at odds with the notion of helping the community transition away from a military presence. While it is unclear whether this was unique to the case of Ritchie or whether this is (was) common practice, it does not seem in the best interest of the community. As the Department of Defense embarks on its

fifth round of base realignments and closures, lessons learned from the stories of Ritchie may help guide how much more and to what extent the military and other federal agencies involve themselves at the local level to assist with and oversee reuse efforts.

Additionally, one of the main reasons for the delay in reuse of the property has been the UXO cleanup over a significantly larger portion of the base than previously anticipated. While Ritchie may be a small base and an "insignificant one" in comparison to other Army facilities (as stressed by the Base Transition Coordinator), the identification of previously unbeknownst contamination should be a lesson to future rounds. In particular, given the delays that this has caused (and presumably could cause other closings in similar situations), the Army and the community may have been better served had the closing date not been set – and not set three years ahead of schedule – until the conclusion of the archival search for contaminated materials. In the current case, had the identification of UXOs been made prior to the start of the closing process (e.g., moving troops and functions), a more prudent decision may have been to keep Ritchie fully functioning until that time when the UXOs were cleaned (or at least a plan for clean up had been drafted). This would have significantly shortened the period of time between closure and reuse and lessened the period of hardship felt by those in the community.

Despite the potential lessons learned from this study, future research is most certainly warranted. A richer understanding of the BRAC process and its effects on local communities requires the expansion of this type of study beyond a single case to include a number of communities, both big and small, metropolitan and rural, in order to describe the effects, but also to compare them across sites as well. The inclusion of communities

that have experienced a military base expansion (e.g., mega bases) in addition to those that have suffered a military base closing would also enrich our understanding of the military-community relationship. Moreover, comparisons of these two types of communities, both experiencing change due to exogenous governmental actions regarding military forces, would further inform the decision making process of policy makers tasked with overseeing such transitions.

Future research is also needed to test if the findings from this case study are in fact generalizable or if they are truly unique to this one community at this one point in time. Especially informative would be longitudinal research that begins before a base closes and studies community residents' views throughout the process. Finally, future ethnographic and case study research with communities that have been affected by the withdrawal or expansion of a military presence would be greatly served by locating and speaking with residents who left the area as a result of the particular change, including non-military affiliated community residents, civilian and contract employees of the military, and military personnel and their families. As indicated in the introduction of this dissertation, without the inclusion of this group of community members – those who left the area – the full story of the impact on the community due to changes in military policy remains incomplete.

Regardless of future research undertakings, the inclusion of place as a conceptual focus as well as the incorporation of impacts felt by community members from their perspective is an important consideration. This dissertation demonstrates that place matters, not only in how people live their lives but also how they respond to an exogenous force, such as the closing of a military base. For those in and around Cascade,

the loss of a very important place, Ritchie, has not only mattered, but also has changed the future direction of their community – a direction, however, which, seven years later, remains uncertain.

APPENDIX I. TIMELINE OF EVENTS FROM FEBRUARY 1995 – DECEMBER 2005

Date	Key Players	Event
2/28/1995	Army/BRAC Commission	Fort Ritchie recommended for closure as part of the initial 1995 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) list.
2/28/1995	Community	FORMAC (Fort Ritchie Military Affairs Committee) formed by a former Fort Ritchie Commander with a group of about 50 area business, private, professional and political members to help fight the BRAC list. Greater Hagerstown, MD Committee also helping to save Ritchie.
3/13/1995	Community	FORMAC activities planned the week of March 13: • Meeting with Beverly Byron (Member of the 1993 BRAC Committee); • Meeting with Tom Ridge's PA BRAC PAC; • Meeting with the Department of the Army (DA) BRAC team leader.
3/17/1995	Community	FORMAC holds a press conference to present their strategy to keep Ritchie open emphasizing the military value and cost effectiveness of doing so; implored local residents to show support.
3/22/1995	Community	Organizational meeting held by FORMAC in final preparation for visit by BRAC commissioner Al Cornella.
3/24/1995	BRAC Commission/ Community	BRAC commissioner Al Cornella visits Letterkenney (PA) and Ritchie. Activities included: • 12:15 Waynesboro Community Rally [at Waynesboro Square, which is en route from Letterkenny to Ritchie]; Waynesboro high school band played, American Legion and VFW showed support; flags on parking meters; • 12:30 First Community Rally at Fort Ritchie flagpole; • 4:30 Second Community Rally on Ritchie parade field; people held up home made signs; Cascade Elementary students out with posters; human chain from Route 16 to fort.
3/24/1995	Community	Meeting between FORMAC and BRAC commissioner Al Cornella.
3/31/1995	Community	FORMAC met with Major General Fred A. Gordon, Commander of the Military District of Washington, to present the same information presented to BRAC commissioner Al Cornella.
5/4/1995	BRAC Commission	BRAC Mid-Atlantic Regional Hearing in Catonsville, MD – presentations by State (not community as was allowed in 1993) – Maryland allowed 130 minutes with 30 minutes for public comment (FORMAC given 30 minutes of that).
7/13/1995	U.S. President/BRAC Commission	President Clinton approved the BRAC list, which included the recommendation to close Ritchie.
7/28/1995	Washington County Commission/LRA	Washington County Commissioners applied to the Department of Defense for money to plan the reuse of Ritchie, including the development of the Local Reuse Authority (LRA) and the creation of a redevelopment plan.

Date	Key Players	Event
9/8/1995	U.S. Congress/ BRAC Commission	Congress fails to disapprove of the BRAC list sent by President Clinton – the Department of the Army starts the closure process.
9/8/1995 (circa)	Army	Base Commander decides to close the base 3 years ahead of schedule (Army allows for six years; Base Commander decided that the base would close on September 30, 1998).
9/22/1995	Army	The Department of the Army published notice in the Federal Register for plans to prepare Fort Ritchie's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
10/1995	Army	Fort Ritchie *officially designated* for closure.
10/20/1995	LRA	The Executive Council for Fort Ritchie's LRA held its first meeting (with Base Transition Coordinator and BRAC Environmental Coordinator present). The council was: • Appointed by the Washington County Commission, which served as the LRA; • Comprised of business and community people from Washington County, MD and Franklin County, PA; • Spearheaded the reuse activities, though the Washington County Commission (as the LRA) had final say.
Early 1996	Army/RAB	The Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) started, guided by Environmental Coordinator, with about 12-15 community members (retired in Fall of 2003, not officially deactivated, just hibernating).
4/16/1996	Army	BRAC Transition Coordinator quoted as saying: • "a concept plan for the fort has been developed…calls for a technology park, residential and recreation areas, an industrial area, an educational and training site, and an area for multiple uses." • "Fort Ritchie has no serious environmental problems that may delay the closure and transition process."
5/1996	Army/LRA	Public notices were published listing Fort Ritchie as surplus property.
9/19/1996	Army	Draft of the Archive Search Report underway (of the warfare materials used on Post during past sixty years, 1936-1996) as part of ensuring the post is safe for future reuse. During this intensive archival search of all types of munitions used and all possible hidden disposal sites, six areas were identified as requiring further investigation.
10/9/1996	Maryland Political Leaders	U.S. Sen. Sarbaines (MD) and Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend visited Ritchie – highlighted to them was Ritchie's partnership for progress, i.e., the joint efforts of closing and redeveloping the installation.
12/1996 (as reported on 1/9/1997)	Army/LRA	Post Commander and Director of the LRA Executive Council co-presented on Installation & Community Partnerships as an Army Community Conference.
1/4/1997 (circa)	LRA/Community	More than 80 local residents attended the LRA public meeting (Washington County Commissioners and LRA Executive Council) held in the Post theatre following a presentation by Sasaki, who presented 3 reuse alternatives: village, campus, or technology park.

Date	Key Players	Event
2/1997	LRA	International Masonry Institute (IMI) moves onto Ritchie – first company to lease property on post.
4/1/1997	LRA	Washington County Commissioners approves the *Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan* for reuse (based on input from Commissioners, LRA Executive Council, and general public). Plan cost between $400,00 - $428,000 to develop.
4/8/1997	State Legislature/LRA	State legislation passed to create the PenMar Development Corporation (PMDC) – a public-private entity tasked with developing the Fort (an arm of the Washington County Commissioners).
5/9/1997	PMDC	The newly recognized PMDC adopts the *Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan*.
5/22/1997	State Legislature	Maryland General Assembly officially created PMDC with a 15-member board of directors.
6/19/1997	DoD	Secretary of Defense officially recognized PMDC as the Fort Ritchie LRA (successor of the initial LRA which was tasked with reuse planning; this new LRA was tasked with reuse implementation).
7/1/1997 (circa)	Army	As the second stage of the archive search (begun with the paper search and reported out in 9/1996), Environmental Coordinator and team conducted random sampling of ground around post and found about 40 live rounds – not expected and meant that now a full blown clean up was needed.
12/15/1997	HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved the *Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan*.
12/18/1997	Army/PMDC	Army and PMDC signed the Programmatic Agreement stating that the *Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan* was the LRA Redevelopment Plan and agreeing to preserve historical areas.
2/24/1998	PMDC	PMDC asked Washington County Commissioners for $100,000 to help pay for the development of a $500,000 business plan for the reuse of Fort Ritchie (to build onto the recognized and approved Community Redevelopment Plan). To date, PMDC and its predecessor have spent $1.38 million [88% from feds; 11% from state; and 1% from county].
5/22/1998	Department of Army	DA announced that the FINAL EIS was ready and in it stated that Ritchie was unable to handle medium-high intensity reuse; the *Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan* calls for low-medium development intensity; thus, an acceptable reuse level.
7/17/1998	Army	Fort Ritchie Deactivation Ceremony.
9/30/1998	Army	Last day of operations at Fort Ritchie. Fort closed to public.
10/1/1998	PMDC	Property now known as Lakeside Corporate Park at PenMar (managed by PMDC).
1999 (circa April)	PMDC/Army	Penultimate Post Commander allowed a variance and named the Executive Director of PMDC.
5/4/1999	PMDC/ Community	PMDC holds community meeting (first in a while). It was announced that residents could again come onto the property of Ritchie, but on a limited basis.
5/1999	Army	Army announced expectations to begin UXO cleanup in Spring 2000 and complete by following year.

Date	Key Players	Event
5/1999	PMDC/ Army/ Community	Initiation of very public contentious debate between certain community activists, the Executive Director of PMDC, and representatives of the Army.
6/1999	PMDC	PMDC submitted the revised Economic Development Conveyance plan to DA.
10/1999	PMDC/ Community	PMDC holds another community meeting.
3/2000	Community	Community activist organized a community meeting at the American Legion to discuss what was and was not happening with Ritchie (about 100 in attendance).
3/2000	PMDC	PMDC announces that it will be bringing its second tenet onto post – Role Models of America, Inc. (RMA).
1/2001	Washington County School Board/ Community	School Board announces plans to close Cascade Elementary School – in response Community activists start the Save our School group.
2/2001	PMDC/RMA	First lawsuit filed by PMDC against RMA for the erection of two flagpoles.
4/2001	PMDC/RMA	Second lawsuit filed by PMDC against RMA for the collection of back rent.
5/2001	PMDC/RMA	RMA files a $20 million countersuit against PMDC.
6/2001	Washington County School Board/ Community	School board announces that it will keep Cascade Elementary School open. The Save our School group, having accomplished its very focused mission reorganized as the Cascade Committee to begin addressing broad community issues and needs.
6/2001	PMDC/RMA	Both suits filed by PMDC vs. RMA ruled in favor of PMDC.
6/2001	Army/PMDC	Army conducts an audit of PMDC (based on claims by RMA) and holds up the deed transfer of Ritchie to PMDC (which was scheduled for 7/2001 based on an 11/2000 MOU).
7/2001	PMDC/RMA	RMA filed a complaint for declaratory and injunctive relief, which was denied by the court and appealed by RMA.
8/24/2001	Army/PMDC	A revised MOU for deed transfer signed.
2/2002	PMDC	Former post commander named as Executive Director of PMDC resigns position and then assumes position as PMDC board member.
6/2002	PMDC/RMA	RMA evicted by PMDC.
6/2002	RMA/Army	RMA files suit against DA regarding the public benefit conveyance of the post.
10/2002	PMDC	Current Executive Director of PMDC hired (by the end of the year 2002, Former Executive Director turned board member removed board.
2/2003	Court	In response to RMA suit, court issued an injunction on the transfer of the base from DA to PMDC.
2003 (Fall)	Community	Community successful in getting the post gym reopened for public use.
10/2003	PMDC	PMDC readvertises the post as available to organizations eligible for a public benefit conveyance.
2/2004	PMDC	PMDC once again voted to adhere to the 1997 *Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan*.
2/27/2004	RMA	RMA filed an application with the Department of Education (DOE) as an organization eligible for a public benefit conveyance of property on Ritchie.
2004 (Summer)	PMDC/COPT	PMDC announces that it will sell the entire base to COPT.

Date	Key Players	Event
7/2004	RMA	Deemed by the DOE that RMA is not eligible for a public benefit conveyance of property on Ritchie.
11/2004	Army	DA returns to court requesting that the injunction be lifted.
4/2005	Community/ Concerned County Commissioner	Letters sent on behalf of citizens concerned about the use of a fairness appraisal rather than an actual appraisal of Ritchie for settlement of cost of base to COPT.
5/2005	Court	In response to DA request to lift the injunction, court ruled that the new (COPT) plan must be submitted to HUD for review.
5/12/2005	Community	Two Cascade Neighbors file suit against DA requesting, among other things, the conduct of a new EIS to be conducted in response to the COPT plan. Dubbed the "local lawsuit."
2005 (Summer)	Community	In response, area business leaders created a petition and collected signatures to show disagreement with the filing of the lawsuit "on behalf of the community."
6/2005	PMDC	PMDC submits plan to HUD.
8/2005	MD States Attorney	States Attorney deemed the fairness appraisal adequate.
9/22/2005	PMDC/Community	In response to federal requirements, PMDC holds a community meeting to discuss new submitted plan to HUD.
12/2005	RMA/Community/Army	RMA filed an amended complaint and appealed one of their cases, which was lost in DC District Court. The "local lawsuit" is still pending [In January 2006 the Army issued a determination that no supplemental EIS was required].

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