

# Battle for Barbers Point at hearing

## Inouye says hit list goes easy on Isles

By **Walter Wright**  
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Hawaii governments and groups battled over the bones of Barbers Point Naval Air Station yesterday even though it could be five years before the base is closed and sold.

The sprawling base on the shores of the Ewa Plain was the primary focus during a U.S. Senate hearing here on military land use in Hawaii.

But other citizens came to bellow about the Navy's Pacific Missile Range Facility at Barking Sands on Kauai, or to bark about Bellows Air Force Station in Waimanalo.

Business and labor leaders called the military the salvation of Hawaii. The Sierra Club said military missile testing here is a sin.

Sen. Daniel Inouye, D-Hawaii, who heads the Appropriations subcommittee on defense, which held the hearing, said the Islands would suffer a very soft blow in proposed cutbacks, compared to California, which stands to lose 300,000 jobs.

He predicted that no one will be fired as the military downsizes on Oahu and that the military will agree to help resolve disputes over use of Hawaiians'

lands and to share more of such facilities at Bellows soon.

But Inouye said he would fight to retain live fire and amphibious landing training areas here, without which major military missions might quickly pull up stakes, hitting Hawaii's economy hard.

The senator said he has asked the U.S. Base Closure Commission — which proposed the Barbers Point shut-down — to come to Hawaii soon to get firsthand views.

He said the General Accounting Office will complete a report to the commission on April 15, with the commission publishing its own report thereafter.

President Clinton must accept or reject the whole package by July 15, and Congress will take its yeas or nays 45 days later.

The Honolulu Chamber of Commerce, among others, defended the defense presence here as vital to the economy, while a Kauai minister prayed that "God forgive us all for the great wrongs we do to the land" in the name of militarism.

Gov. John Waihee called for consideration of a general aviation airport at Barbers Point, to avert a potentially deadly conflict between small planes and big airliners at Honolulu Airport.

Waihee also suggested that

federal facilities unwanted elsewhere be relocated at Barbers Point. These would include the Federal Aviation Administration's headquarters in Diamond Head, and antenna farms at

Lualualei and Bellows.

Honolulu Mayor Frank Fasi said the city would pay \$200 million for the base as a site for more housing, industry, public beaches and —

eventually — resorts along a pristine shoreline.

Fasi clashed with Waihee over the general aviation airport, saying building such a facility near the unexcelled shoreline there would make as much sense as building an airfield at the Ala Wai Golf Course next to Waikiki.

Fasi offered the military a package deal that would allow proceeds of the sale to stay in the military establishment in Hawaii: Instead of paying cash that would just revert to the U.S. Treasury, he said, the city would build the military 2,000 units of housing on other federal sites such as Ford Island.

Native Hawaiians from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Hawaiian Home Lands and a self-proclaimed Hawaiian "kingdom" suggested that surplus military lands like those at Barbers Point could be given to them as compensation for lands they said the

military is now using without authority or payment.

Legislators and other citizens from the area worried aloud about job losses from the proposed closing. They backed construction there of a 700-acre West Oahu campus for the University of Hawaii, together with housing and recreation areas.

Prosecutor Keith Kaneshiro weighed in with a proposal for a major minimum-security drug rehabilitation facility for some inmates from Hawaii's jam-packed state prison system.

Inouye doubted aloud that residents of the area would welcome such a facility.

State Sen. Brian Kanno, who represents communities around Barbers Point, said those employed or stationed now at the base "are our brothers and sisters and neighbors and friends" who draw wages from the base and spend them in local stores and patronize local businesses.

Any plan for Barbers Point, he said, must include job replacement.

State Sen. Randy Iwase, chairman of the Planning Land and Water Use Committee, said military land use on Oahu is critical because the 600-square-mile island houses nearly four-fifths of the state's population.

The base closure does threaten jobs initially, but creates opportunities for job creation as well as housing and recreation when the "second city" in Ewa adds 100,000 to 150,000 people to Oahu's population in the next 10 years, Iwase said.



**Kaneshiro**



**Kanno**

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