

## **BASE-CLOSURE NEWS IS GOOD, BAD IN UTAH**

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OGDEN -- A northern Utah committee created to save Hill Air Force Base and the Defense Depot Ogden from closing reported that while chances of Hill being closed are slim, things do not look as bright for the depot.

Mike Pavich, president of the Hill-DDO '95 committee told about 150 people gathered at Ogden's Union Station Thursday that chances are 95% to 100% that the Air Force base will remain open but chances of the defense depot staying open linger around 20%.

Pavich gave the prognostications a day after his group returned from San Francisco where it pleaded its case for leaving the facilities open to the Base Realignment and Closure Committee.

He did hold out some hope that DDO would not close right away and that "secret, creative solutions" being worked on might delay closure long enough to let attrition thin its 1,100-member work force. He declined to elaborate on any specifics of what those plans might be.

However, Pavich did suggest there was the possibility that some workers and functions could remain on the sprawling depot in the northern part of Weber County, but fall under control of Hill.

Ogden Mayor Glen Mecham said city officials and other interested parties are working on a "prudent contingency plan" that would go into effect if the closure of DDO becomes official.

The plan is designed to get the land and facilities under private ownership as soon as possible to lessen the economic blow the area would suffer.

President of the Ogden-Weber Chamber of Commerce and Hill-DDO member Scott Parkinson pointed out that it is doubtful privatizing the depot's facilities could match the \$34,000-a-year average wage now being paid to workers.

The Base Realignment and Closure Committee, an independent body appointed by the president with the consent of the U.S. Senate, is scheduled to hold final deliberations on the proposed base closures on June 22.

The list of bases and other facilities they recommend be closed will then be sent to Clinton around July 1.

Pavich says the president and Congress are expected to accept the recommendations of the closure committee.