

VIVA VIEQUES LIBRE!



The people of Vieques have waged a David vs. Goliath struggle to stop the US Navy from bombing their homeland. In 1979, a flotilla of fishing boats blockaded an amphibious landing in Vieques. (Left) Since April 1999, fishermen, religious leaders, teachers and activists have occupied the bombing range to form a human shield against the bombs.

Photo courtesy of the ¡ViequesLibre! website.

NOT ONE MORE BOMB! NOT ONE MORE MINUTE!

In 1898, the U.S. military took over Puerto Rico, Hawai'i, Guam, the Philippines, American Samoa, and Cuba. In the 1940s the Navy expropriated 3/4 of the tiny island of Vieques off the coast of Puerto Rico for military use and relocated over 9,000 residents. Intense bombing and live-fire training have damaged the environment and continue to endanger the lives of the residents. Seventy-two percent of the Vieques' population live below poverty level. Unemployment is at 50%. Cancer rates are at least 28% higher than the rest of Puerto Rico.

On April 19, 1999, when Navy bombs killed civilian Navy employee David Sanes Rodriguez, all of Puerto Rico erupted in protest. Hundreds occupied the impact zone, forming a human shield to protect the island from the bombs. The people of Vieques want an end to the bombing, decontamination of the environment, a return of the land to the people, and economic support for sustainable economic development. Puerto Ricans have united like never before to support the people Vieques. In February, 2000 over 150,000 marched for peace in Vieques.

In January President Clinton issued a directive allowing the Navy to continue bombing until at least 2003. The directive offers \$50 million in aid if Vieques residents vote to allow live bombing to resume. The people of Vieques rejected this bribe. On May 4 Federal Marshals forcibly removed from the target area more than 200 non-violent protesters, including legislators, bishops, local fishermen, and students. This June, the Navy resumed bombing of Vieques despite the presence of protesters in the impact zone. Another 162 people were arrested for entering the restricted area. The people of Vieques have vowed to continue non-violent resistance until the Navy leaves. President Clinton can do the right thing and order a withdrawal of the Navy from Vieques. **Here's how you can help:**

1. **CONTACT: John Podesta**, White House Chief of Staff, Ph. 202-456-6797, Fx. 202-456-1907; **Maria Echaveste**, White House Deputy Chief of Staff, Ph. 202-456-6594, Fx. 202-456-6703; **Jeffrey Farrow**, Co-chair, White House Interagency Working Group on Puerto Rico, Ph. 202-456-5179, Fx. 202-482-2337. Ask them to URGE THE PRESIDENT TO ORDER THE NAVY OUT OF VIEQUES NOW.
2. **CALL THE WHITE HOUSE TODAY AND URGE THE PRESIDENT TO "ORDER THAT THE U.S. NAVY LEAVE VIEQUES NOW"**. WHITE HOUSE COMMENT LINE: (202) 456-1111, M-F, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM EST.
3. **SEND SUPPORT AND DONATIONS TO THE PEOPLE OF VIEQUES.** Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques, P.O. Box 1424, Vieques, Puerto Rico 00765. (787) 741-8651. E-mail: <bieke@coqui.net>. Or visit: www.viequeslibre.org
4. **GET INVOLVED IN LOCAL WORK FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE IN HAWAI'I AS WELL AS PUERTO RICO:** Contact the American Friends Service Committee - Hawai'i Area Program, 2426 O'ahu Avenue, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822. (808) 988-6266. E-mail: <kkajihiro@afsc.org>.