

ganization," Kahn said. "Every effort must be made to communicate to the voters of Cleveland and the suburbs the vital importance of reform of their county government as the most basic and fundamental step to progress."

The alternative proposal was defeated by county voters last November. Officials of the Citizens League, and other groups, hope to get enough signatures to put the issue on the ballot, possibly this fall.

The proposal would create an elected administrative head of the county and expand the board of county commissioners from three to seven persons, who would serve as legislators.

Kahn is a graduate of Glenville High School. He received bachelor's and law degrees from Case Western Reserve University.

He is president of the board of the Jewish Convalescent and Rehabilitation Center of Cleveland and a trustee of the Council of Human Relations, Suburban Community Hospital, Fairmount Temple and the Jewish Community Federation.

He and his wife, Jean, live at 2985 West Belvoir Oval, Shaker Heights. They have two children, Mrs. Evelyn Safran and William H. Kahn.

CULEBRA

HON. SHIRLEY CHISHOLM

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 22, 1970

Mrs. CHISHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in order to express an overwhelming feeling of personal outrage and to focus attention upon a situation which is intolerable to those who must live through it and avoidable by those who perpetuate it. The island of Culebra is an inhabited part of Puerto Rico which is currently used by the Navy for extensive bombing and shelling practice. Recent testimony before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on real estate as well as a study by the Puerto Rican Civil Rights Commission, have chronicled the history of U.S. involvement, pointing consistently toward blatant naval insensitivity to the welfare and safety of the Culebran people.

HISTORY

Culebra is a 7,000-acre island, approximately 7 miles long and 3 miles wide lying slightly east of the Puerto Rican mainland. It is one of 76 municipalities of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Culebra's 726 inhabitants, all of whom are U.S. citizens, rely for subsistence almost exclusively on farming and fishing.

The initial involvement of the United States with Culebra began in 1901. At that time, and again in 1902, Executive orders were signed by President Theodore Roosevelt which provided that all public lands on Culebra were to be for the use of the U.S. Government under the jurisdiction of the Navy. Both of these Executive orders were reaffirmed in 1903. Six years later Roosevelt dedicated the cays and islets surrounding Culebra as national wildlife refuges, thus acknowledging the rare ecosystem of the island. By 1911 the residents of San Ildefonso had been evicted by the Navy and had formed the new town of Dewey

on the southern part of Culebra. Up until 1936, the U.S. Government had only intermittent contact with Culebra and few complaints from its citizenry. However, it was in that year that the Navy commenced aerial bombings and offshore attacks. On February 14, 1941, President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 8684 reaffirming the U.S. naval presence and expanding its jurisdiction to include the air space over the island and 3 miles of territorial waters surrounding Culebra. Accessibility to the area was declared to be at the exclusive discretion of the Navy. Severe penalties were established for those who violated naval restrictions.

Throughout the midfifties and into the early sixties, the Navy attempted to gain control of the entire island. They apparently were willing to resettle the Culebrans on neighboring islands in order to facilitate more freedom in their weaponry practice. However, these plans were abandoned when it was pointed out that Puerto Rico's Constitution provides that no municipality can be dissolved unless its citizens vote for dissolution by referendum—The Armed Services Journal, June 27, 1970, page 23.

In 1960, there was a noticeable change in the bombings and shellings—they became both more frequent and more intense. By 1969 weaponry practice averaged 9½ hours per day for 6 days of the week, as well as 3½ hours on Sundays—testimony of Thomas C. Jones, Jr., attorney for the Municipality of Culebra, before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Real Estate, June 10, 1970. Culebrans were forced to undergo 228 days of aerial rocket fire, 123 days of naval gunfire, and 114 days of strafing by jets—Wall Street Journal, June 10, 1970, page 1. Living in Culebra in 1970 is much like living in London during the German blitzkrieg. Furthermore, accelerated bombings have been planned for 1970. The Navy presently is ahead of its 1969 pace, having already made 17,860 runs to the target this year—Wall Street Journal, June 10, 1970, page 1.

As an added affront to the Culebran people, the Navy has, in recent years, given permission to Venezuela, Great Britain, Brazil, West Germany, the Netherlands, and Trinidad-Tobago to join with the United States in bombing Culebra.

At the present time, there is an acquisition request before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Real Estate. It seeks approval of a Navy intention to purchase 2,350 additional acres on Culebra for the purpose of expanded bombings and missile testings. It is this request which initially brought Culebra public attention.

The history of U.S. involvement in Culebra is consistently interspersed with a succession of accidents and near misses—notwithstanding contrary assertions and denials by the Navy. In 1935, for example, Alberto Pena Garcia, a 15-year-old schoolboy, was killed when he smashed a USMC grenade with a hammer—The Armed Forces Journal, May 23/26, 1970, page 30. Similar, albeit non-fatal, accidents occurred in 1914 and 1964. In 1946, nine Navy men were killed

in an accidental bombing because their office was painted the same color as the bombing target—The Armed Forces Journal, May 23/26, 1970, page 30.

More recently, there has been an increase in the number of near misses. Several 1,000-pound bombs reportedly landed within a few feet of Culebra's shore and remained there unexploded for several days while children played nearby—the Armed Forces Journal, June 6, 1970, page 19. On May 22 of this year, the Governor of Puerto Rico, the Honorable Louis A. Ferre, was fired upon without warning. Ironically, he was visiting Culebra to investigate complaints that naval bombings were dangerous. Richard D. Copaken, counsel for the municipality of Culebra, collected signed statements from lower level Navy personnel concerning this incident. In their statement, they conceded that the red warning flag had not been displayed and that bathers had been seen in the firing area earlier and may still have been there. In fact, three children were in the line of fire and testified to that effect at the June 10 hearings before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Real Estate. They further attested that during the firing they had seen a boat in the distance—Governor Ferre's.

On this past July 4, a day on which no military activity was scheduled, a Navy Phantom jet made three low passes 10 feet above the water on a fishing boat, dropping a bomb or firing a rocket on two of those passes. Mr. Jose Higuera, the owner of the boat, reported the incident to the Honorable Ramon Feliciano, mayor of Culebra. It is Mr. Higuera's opinion that the incident was done viciously by the Navy.

EFFECTS

As might be expected, the Navy's presence on Culebra has had tremendously detrimental effects—on the lives of the people, the economy of the island, and the ecology of the area.

The influence upon the human environment has been perhaps the most pernicious consequence of naval target practice. Through statements to their attorneys and in testimony before a House subcommittee, the people of Culebra have constantly emphasized the fear and apprehension which has resulted from the continual bombings of their homeland. They are subjected to the noise of supersonic booms, gunfire, rocket fire, and heavy air traffic. As a result, many Culebrans worry about the safety of their families. Thus Mercedes Morales Lopez told Culebra's lawyers:

There is much insecurity and danger for the children . . . I have certainly been afraid here, and so have the children, including the two-year old.

The naval attacks further manifest their inimical effects on the human environment in the operation of Culebran schools. Learning has been greatly hindered. Carmelo Feliciano, who has been a schoolteacher in Culebra for 13 years, testified at the recent Culebra hearings:

Teaching in Culebra is an extremely difficult job. The continuous flow of air traffic at low altitudes over the school, helicopters, jets and propeller planes, make an infernal

noise, creating a state of tension and anxiety and rendering virtually impossible to hold the attention of the students. . . . When bombs and shells are exploding, the school buildings tremble with every explosion. You can see fear in the children's eyes. They sit in school as if ready to run at a moment's notice. During the periods of heavy night bombing, students fall asleep in class. They look sleepless and the teachers there know why this is so. Bombing is carried out far past midnight every day and these kids are kept awake by the noise and the tremor caused by the bombs until early morning hours . . .

Due to all this noise caused by Navy aircraft and boats bombing and shelling, and also because they live in constant fear of losing their lives, the students' work at school is very poor. There has not been an honors graduate in Culebra in more than three years. Intelligence tests show a far below normal IQ for Culebran students. I have observed that many of these students have moved out and attend school in the main island of Puerto Rico and their grades are considerably higher at these other schools. The ones that return to Culebra fall back way below in their school work.

Furthermore, there are numerous reports of bomb-related property damage as well as complaints stemming from the inaccessibility of Culebra during its frequent attacks. However, the point need not be belabored. The consequences which result from naval bombardments are clearly deleterious in terms of Culebra's human environment.

A less apparent, yet perhaps equally destructive result of the bombings has been the erosion of a stable Culebran economy. The farmlands upon which the people depend for food have been pillaged by ship-to-shore bombings and aerial attacks. The fishing industry, long a principal support of Culebra, has been significantly harmed. Navy regulations prohibit fishing during bombings and thousands of fish have been found dead in the aftermath of weaponry practice. These harmful effects on the farmlands and fishing industry were recently observed firsthand by my district representative, Victor Robles.

The Commonwealth government has long been aware of Navy plans for expansion in Culebra. Cognizant of this, it has been reluctant to invest in the welfare of the Culebran people and has further damaged the economy of the island. Thus, Culebra's educational, health, and employment facilities are shamefully inadequate. Culebra's per capita income is only \$400—notably less than neighboring islands.—San Juan Star, June 6, 1970, page 3.

The ecosystem of Culebra and its adjoining cays and islets is in many ways unique. It provides important nesting grounds for various migratory oceanic birds, including the sooty tern, the nobby tern, and the laughing gull. In addition, the Bahama pintail, a rare and endangered species, can be—or used to be—found in the eastern part of Culebra. Navy shelling and bombing have greatly harmed these rare species. Several years ago, for instance, a bomb-related fire in an impact area destroyed 30 acres of nesting grounds—observed by Ricardo Cotte, the Department of the Interior's agent in Puerto Rico.

Moreover, the previously mentioned dead fish are contributing to a gradual pollution of Culebra waters. Its once beautiful cays have become sewers of dead fish. Thus, one of the most noxious, although less conspicuous, consequences of naval bombings is the snail-like, yet inevitable, transformation of the Culebran ecosystem. This ecological transformation will, in all probability, further adversely affect the lives of the people.

ALTERNATIVES

It seems evident that acceptable alternative sites to Culebra do exist but have not been adequately explored by the Navy. Representative JORGE CÓRDOVA, the resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico, has suggested several possibilities—among them, Mona, Monita, and Desecheo. Furthermore, should these sites prove unacceptable, it seemingly is possible to construct artificial islands or platforms exactly to Navy specifications—Armed Forces Journal, June 27, 1970.

The Navy has consistently denied that satisfactory alternative sites exist. However, they have not proffered any suggestions of their own. They are the logistical experts who best understand their own training needs and hence, should be actively involved in seeking and securing a more acceptable training site. Instead they have been content to merely refute those offered by nonexperts. The crucial question revolves around contingency plans. What would the Navy do if they were told by Congress that they could no longer use Culebra? One seriously doubts that the Roosevelt Roads complex would completely shut down. Somehow, it seems, acceptable alternative sites would suddenly appear.

DISCONTENT AND SUPPORT

In the last several months, the Culebran people have vehemently voiced their fundamental dissatisfaction with the current situation. They not only adamantly oppose the Navy's efforts to acquire additional land, but seek to end all bombing activities on their island. These firm convictions can be seen in a recent survey reported in the Armed Forces Journal—May 23/26, 1970, page 29. It found that of the 313 families that were interviewed, 304 wanted the Navy to cease its bombardments. The validity of this survey was recently tested by Thomas C. Jones, Jr., attorney for Covington and Burling. He purposely slanted his study in the Navy's favor, yet still found that 95 percent of those interviewed opposed the Navy's acquisition of additional land and that 75 percent opposed any weaponry testing on Culebra. Demonstrations supporting "Culebra for the Culebrans" have been held both on the Island and on the Puerto Rican mainland—most recently on July 18.

Outside of Culebra, support has been steadily gaining momentum. Puerto Ricans in the Commonwealth itself, as well as their elected representatives both in Puerto Rico and Washington, have been acting in conjunction with Puerto Rican organizations and leaders in New York City to return Culebra to its people. Thus it can be seen that discontent among the Culebran people is both widespread and

intense, and that support for their cause is pervasive. So far, however, this support has been ineffective. The bombings go on. That they do, seemingly is an indication of the position of Puerto Ricans within American society. It is ludicrous to think that such a situation could continue anywhere else in this country. The realities of power politics dictate that it could not. Thus Culebra continues to suffer, partly because its citizens are Puerto Ricans and hence, at a distinct political disadvantage.

I unequivocally support the Culebran people in their efforts to regain control of their island and I am fully committed to assisting them by any legitimate means possible. I offer my support and assistance, independent of any political benefits or liabilities the issue may have for me personally, and fully cognizant of Culebra's political implications within Puerto Rico. I support Culebra simply because the Culebrans are right and the Navy is wrong—because I believe, and have always believed, in the fundamental right of people to decide for themselves issues which greatly affect their own welfare.

In keeping with my support of the Culebran people, I have met, and will continue to meet, with representatives from the Puerto Rican community both in Washington and New York, as well as with other U.S. Senators and Representatives who have expressed an interest in Culebra. Our purpose has been to plan effective collective efforts aimed at saving Culebra. Further, I have written to Senator HENRY M. JACKSON in his capacity as chairman both of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee and the Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Construction. I have urged him to hold hearings to investigate whether or not the Navy should be permitted any future use of Culebra as a weaponry training site.

On July 18, 1970, I sent a representative from my New York office, one who is fluent in Spanish, to personally deliver a statement to the Honorable Luis Ferre, Governor of Puerto Rico. My letter to Governor Ferre reaffirmed my support for the Culebran people and pledged my continuing efforts on their behalf.

I strongly urge you, as colleagues in the House of Representatives and as people interested in fair play, to join with me in supporting the Culebran people. There is a fight for human rights. Reason urges your support; justice requires it.

AROUND THE WORLD FACTFINDING TOUR

HON. WILLIAM O. COWGER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 22, 1970

Mr. COWGER. Mr. Speaker, I recently returned from an around-the-world fact-finding tour which included Southeast Asia and the Middle East. I have just completed a report of this tour for my constituents in the Third Congressional District of Kentucky. I would also like