

The following research memorandum was authored by Rebecca Brezenoff, a Research Fellow with the Washington-based Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA). This timely and pertinent article investigates the issues and delves into the history of naval operations on the island of Vieques:

Washington now finds itself embroiled in a sticky problem on the little-known Puerto Rican Island of Vieques, the site of one of its more perplexing public relations nightmares. Recent tragic events resulting from the military's continuing use of most of the heavily inhabited but relatively small island as a live-weapons storage and training facility present the Clinton Administration with a growing need to reevaluate its policies there. The increasingly militant demonstrations now being staged in Puerto Rico against the Vieques facility and the unity of the Puerto Rican population on the issue suggest that the problem will not go away, but requires some hard decisions now.

The island-municipality, located just off Puerto Rico's southeastern coast, once again emerged into the national news following its latest fatal accident in April, when two Marine fighter jets on a night training run over Vieques missed their mark by a mile and dropped bombs near an observation post, killing a civilian security guard and injuring four other people. Certainly not the first serious incident to have afflicted the training facility, it is one that is likely to remain in the headlines as it prompts heated debate among citizen groups and government leaders, both here and in Puerto Rico. For decades, civilians on the island have suffered the effects of friendly fire. This time, a propitious moment may be at hand for the Pentagon to review its options and have the wisdom to dismantle the base.

The Navy's primary argument in favor of Vieques' continued use has been the unparalleled importance of the live-ammunition training grounds for military readiness. The facility has been used by U.S. military personnel since 1941, when the Navy expropriated more than two-thirds of the 51-square-mile island for weapons storage and for ordnance training, involving bombings, shellings, and mock invasions.

Vieques' usefulness is indisputable. But the Navy is not the island's only tenant; a permanent community of 9,300 inhabitants occupies one-third of it. It would be disingenuous to argue that the naval presence is not detrimental to the lives and livelihoods of the local population. Far from it. This week, the Navy admitted, after years of denials, to dropping 24 napalm bombs on Vieques in 1993. In February of this year, depleted uranium (believed to be linked to Gulf War Syndrome) was illegally discharged by Marine jets during a training exercise. On an island plagued by a cancer rate significantly higher than that of Puerto Rico, the firing of radioactive shells—only a fifth of which were actually recovered during “cleanup”—has not inspired confidence in the Navy's pledge of enhanced attention to safety. Nor is the local populace reassured by current plans to install a powerful anti-drug trafficking radar system, whose electromagnetic waves would be capable of reaching the mainland of South America.

Faced with encroaching environmental damage, stunted economic development due to declines in the fishing and tourism industries, crushing unemployment, the constant pounding of heavy artillery and the drone of low-flying aircraft, damage to building caused by vibrations from war games, and the ongoing danger of bombing accidents from ships and planes, Viequenses have been both figuratively and literally raked by all

branches of the military. And not just the U.S. military. The participation of foreign armed forces as well as commercial entities has been solicited—even via advertisements on the Navy's website—for a price. The fees collected in 1998 alone amounted to \$80 million, but the increased bombing volume further strained the island's economy and worsened living conditions.

For all the Navy's purported efforts to be a good neighbor to the Viequenses, its words and deeds are today viewed with mistrust. Assurances that the accidentally discharged depleted uranium and the electromagnetic frequencies of the powerful anti-drug trafficking radar pose no threat to human health are dismissed as inaccurate, if not deliberately misleading. Shortly after the mid-May announcement that the Navy would be returning a portion of its land on Vieques to civilian jurisdiction, a fisherman found a 12-foot torpedo near the island's main town. Even the U.S. panel recently established to conduct a thorough study of the Navy's presence on Vieques is seen by skeptics as weighted toward the armed forces—only one of its four members comes from a civilian background. The unfortunate combination of military mistakes and miscalculations, together with questionable judgments and belated admissions, has created for the U.S. authorities a situation as ominous as the unexploded bombs and missiles that often appear on the beaches of Vieques. With the integrity of the inquiry already called into question, Washington will face the difficult task of defending any decision that falls short of completely phasing out the facility.

Short of the forced relocation of over 9,000 people, no modification to the current program can adequately safeguard the residents of Vieques, whereas locating a viable substitute—an unoccupied island—and installing a new training facility, while difficult and costly, remains feasible. The Pentagon has had to reject plans for bases in other locations for such reasons as proximity to population centers and the periodic presence of federally protected migratory birds. Regardless of the recommendations due in August from the commission to examine future military use of the island, the White House cannot allow itself to give any less consideration to Vieques' population. Continued live-ordnance target practice on a heavily inhabited island is indefensible, and it is time for the 60-year practice to end.

HAPPY RETIREMENT TO PATRICK KEOHANE

HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 27, 1999

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to note the passing of an era in the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Mr. Patrick Keohane will retire August 31 as warden of the Federal Medical Center in Springfield, Missouri. That will mark the end a period of over 30 years in which Warden Keohane or one of his two brothers has been a warden somewhere at a federal prison in the United States. It is reportedly the longest period of similar service of any family in federal prison history.

The Keohane family association with the federal prison system goes back even further to Patrick's father Tom who retired as a senior lieutenant after 31 years of service with the Bureau of Prisons. Tom and his wife Nora raised ten children—six boys and four girls—

in Springfield, Missouri. Pat and four of his five brothers served in the military.

It is only fitting that Pat is retiring while warden of the Federal Medical Center in Springfield, because it was in Springfield that he began his civilian career in criminal justice as a member of the Springfield Police Department in 1964. It was only 2 years after beginning work for the Federal Prison System in 1967 as a correctional officer that he was transferred to the Springfield facility in 1969. While there, he completed his degree in law enforcement and corrections in 1974 at Drury College.

Pat Keohane has served with distinction in federal prison facilities in Indiana, Wisconsin, Florida, Pennsylvania, New York, Kansas, and Illinois. He was promoted to warden in 1985 and since then has led facilities in Pennsylvania, Indiana, and California, returning to Springfield, Missouri in 1996.

As I mentioned earlier, service for the Keohanes in the Federal Prison System is a family thing. Two of his older brothers each retired with 27 years of service. In fact, they are the only family in the Nation in which three brothers served as wardens in the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and the only one where two brothers, both served as wardens of the same Federal institution at different times—and they accomplished that on two separate occasions.

Besides his family distinctions, Pat Keohane, has received numerous honors and recognitions, including the 1994 Warden of the Year award from the North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents and the U.S. Attorney General's Award for Distinguished Service from Attorney General Janet Reno.

He is being honored later this week at dinner in his hometown in the Seventh District of Missouri. I know that my colleagues in the House join with me in expressing their appreciation for a lifetime of outstanding service to the citizens of these great United States and best wishes for a very happy future to Warden Patrick W. Keohane of Springfield, Missouri.

NATO'S OBLIGATION TO THE SERBS

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 27, 1999

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, in the Boston Globe for today, Tuesday, July 27, there is an excellent editorial occasioned by the terrible murder of 14 Serb farmers in Kosovo. As the editorial notes, NATO—with the United States as a lead member—has an absolute obligation to do everything humanly possible to apprehend the murderers of these men, and of course an even greater obligation to do everything humanly possible to prevent any recurrence of this sort of outrage.

I believe that the military action in which America took the lead against Serbia was morally justified by the need to prevent the continued systematic oppression of the Albania population of Kosovo. But exactly the same moral considerations demand that we do a better job than we have of protecting the Serbian people left in Kosovo.

The Boston Globe editorial is a forceful, lucid and morally compelling statement and I ask that it be printed here.

NATO'S OBLIGATION TO THE SERBS

Precisely because NATO's justification for intervention in Kosovo was humanitarian, the NATO allies must not allow Friday's gruesome slaughter of 14 Serb peasants in Kosovo to go unpunished. A war for humanitarian motives contradicts its own purpose if it leaves one group of noncombatants unprotected.

The Serb demagogue Slobodan Milosevic understood immediately the political implications of the murders. The next day he said the slaughter of Serbs in a province that NATO still recognizes as an integral part of Serbia proves that there is a need for Yugoslav soldiers and Milosevics special police to return to Kosovo.

Such a return of Milosevic's ethnic cleansers would, of course, vitiate NATO's military triumph. Milosevic can have no illusions about the possibility that his killers and rapists will be allowed any time soon to return to Kosovo. But his political point is well taken. If Serb civilians can be massacred at will in Kosovo, then NATO's propaganda is negated and the allies' war against Milosevic can be described as a naked power grab—an effort to steal a Serb province from its rightful owners.

To prove this was not NATO's war aim, the allies keeping the peace in Kosovo and the UN bureaucrats managing the province's rehabilitation must act quickly and decisively.

Although Hashim Thaci, the Kosovo Liberation Army's self-appointed prime minister, has said members of his provisional government "strongly condemn this act," the KLA must be encouraged to take a public role in locating the killers of the 14 Serbs. At the same time, the NATO countries must send to Kosovo the full complement of peacekeepers they promised. At present, only 60 percent of the 32,000 have arrived.

The revenge killings also illustrate the need for rapid dispatch of 3,000 more international police. Only 170, a small fraction of those committed, are yet serving in Kosovo. If the NATO allies allow Serbs to be murdered and expelled from Kosovo, they will lose in peacetime the war they thought they won from the air.

IN MEMORY OF WILLIAM WILSON STERRETT

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 27, 1999

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that William Wilson Sterrett, of Independence, Missouri, passed away on June 20, 1999.

Born June 15, 1909, in Slater, Missouri, Mr. Sterrett was the son of the late Joseph B. and Elizabeth Galdwell Sterrett. He married Rachel W. Finch on December 19, 1936, in Washington, DC.

Mr. Sterrett was a 1926 graduate of Slater Higher School and a 1930 graduate of Missouri Valley College in Marshall. He attended the University of Missouri-Columbia for two years and graduated from George Washington, University Law School in 1935. He served as Deputy Circuit Clerk of Saline County from 1932-1934. He passed the Bar in December 1934 and practiced law in Saline County for 53 years at Sterrett Law Office. He was secretary to Congressman William Nelson in Washington, DC, from 1934-40. He was with the General Accounting Office in Wash-

ington, DC, for two years, the War Production board for a year, and the Air Transport Command for two years. He returned to Slater in 1946 where he served as city attorney from 1946-1981.

Mr. Sterrett was active in the community. He served as chairman of the Saline County Red Cross and on the Slater Public School board from 1948-52. He was a member, deacon, trustee, elder and Sunday school teacher at the Slater Presbyterian Church. He was president of the Saline County Bar Association from 1983-91 and vice president from 1991-93. He was a longtime member of the Slater Rotary club where he was a past president and the club's first Paul Harris Fellow in 1995. He was a United States Army/Air Corps veteran of World War II and a member of the American Legion Post #78 in Slater. He was a Boy Scout Counselor since 1950 and received the Missouri Valley College Outstanding Alumnus Award in 1996. He served on the board of directors at the State Bank of Slater for 53 years.

Mr. Speaker, I know the Members of the House will join me in extending heartfelt condolences to his wife, Rachel; his two sons, Joseph and James; and his three grandchildren.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. GEORGE R. NETHERCUTT, JR.

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 1999

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2561) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes:

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Chairman, in my previous statement in support of H.R. 2561, I addressed the much needed funds for KC-135 tanker aircraft that this bill provides. It is my hope that the Air Force will look at locating these reengined National Guard aircraft consistent with ongoing total force initiatives to maximize Guard and Active efficiencies through enhanced integration and commonality of equipment.

I am also supportive of the quality of life initiatives contained in this legislation. We have provided for significant increases in spare parts, \$453 million over the request, equipment repair, \$279 million over the request, and real property maintenance, \$854 million over the request. We also provide an additional \$88 million for soldier support equipment, such as cold weather clothing and initial issue equipment. Spare parts, well-maintained facilities and quality equipment is as important to a soldier's morale as a pay raise, and this bill meets both requirements.

As Chairman of the Diabetes Caucus, I am pleased that the bill also supports a continuing project with the Joslin Diabetes Center, which serves to enhance the lives of military personnel and their dependents. The partnership with Joslin will reduce human suffering and health care costs associated with diabetes for DOD personnel and VA beneficiaries, using strengths in the areas of research, detection, prevention and managed care protocols.

This legislation will meet critical modernization and quality of life needs and deserves the support of all members.

IN MEMORY OF THE LATE BETTY LOU STEVENSON

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 27, 1999

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor the memory of Betty Lou Stevenson by submitting the following article from the Fullerton Observer, honoring her "life of inspiration", for the RECORD.

[From the Fullerton Observer, Issue Number 322, July 1999]

BETTY LOU STEVENSON—A LIFE OF INSPIRATION

"Service Above Self" best summarizes the extraordinary life of Betty Lou Stevenson. Over 300 community members attended her memorial at St. Andrews Episcopal Church in Fullerton on June 7, 1999 to honor her enormous contributions and positive, energetic spirit. She was very proud of her Scottish heritage and a bagpiper performed at her memorial service. Those in attendance also learned some of the following about this remarkable lady.

Betty Lou was born in Portland, Oregon. Her father being a construction engineer, the family moved on average of once a year, meaning Betty Lou was perpetually the "new student" in school. She learned to "go with the flow" and be comfortable in almost any social situation. Betty Lou attended the University of Oregon from 1937-40, where as President of her Chi Omega sorority and of the Heads of Houses she was listed in Who's Who in America Universities and Colleges (1939-40). Upon graduating from college, Betty Lou and her family moved to Fullerton. The town has never been the same.

Many of Betty Lou's accomplishments occurred while acting in the capacity of single parent to her two sons after her 19-year marriage ended in divorce. While holding down her full-time teaching positions, donating hours of volunteer time and being a single mother she somehow managed to attend night school classes at Whittier College ultimately earning her Master's degree.

Betty Lou Stevenson loved teaching. During her 35 years as a 7th grade math teacher a minimum of 5,000 students passed through her classes and achieved success. Irving Wright, Betty Lou's principal at Wilshire Jr. High, spoke for most of those who knew her when he stated that he admired her tremendously and considered her a wonderful lady. In addition to teaching math at both Wilshire and Nicholas Junior Highs, Betty Lou worked on the yearly Christmas program. Her tireless devotion to her students, school and fellow staff, earned her recognition from the school board for "Distinguished Service to the Fullerton School District."

In 1972 Betty Lou became President of the Fullerton Elementary Teachers Association (FETA). The only walkout in the history of the Fullerton School District occurred the following year. A key factor in the resolution of the negotiations impasse was her participation and leadership.

Volunteering was an essential part of Betty Lou's life. She was a charter member and supporter of the Heritage House at the Fullerton Arboretum spending many a Sunday as a docent, sharing her love of Victorian history with visitors. During the week