

PEACE FOR VIEQUES: THE ROLE OF TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVIST NETWORKS IN
INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Historically, the discipline of international relations has been dominated by theories that allocate the greatest measure of agency on the international stage to nation-states. Nation-states have traditionally been conceived as rational actors pursuing self-interested goals, either through the confrontational frameworks defined by realism or the cooperative ones promulgated by liberalism. The process of globalization, however, is reshaping our traditional notions of power and agency in the realm of international politics. Whereas nation-states were once the only significant actor on the international stage, they must now share the stage with other types of actors that challenge traditional understandings of actors and the interests they pursue. Actors and forces that previously had only minor roles to play in international politics are now increasingly important. Such is the case with transnational activist networks. This thesis is concerned with the potential for agency transnational activ-

ist networks have in the realm of international negotiations. How can transnational activist networks influence international negotiations?

This thesis argues that transnational activist networks can influence both the domestic and international levels of weak-strong international negotiations through political mobilization strategies, the most important being the effective use of framing, which can constrain or expand the domestic win-sets of both parties and move the zone of agreement closer to activists' goals. The potential for influence of transnational activist would depend on the level of vulnerability of strong actors to the negotiation alternatives presented by the political mobilization of the networks, which is facilitated by the degree of openness of the strong actor's political system. Furthermore, this thesis argues that transnational activist networks can not only influence the outcomes of negotiations, but trigger them as well. Robert Putnam's two-level game metaphor for international negotiations will be used as an analytical framework for testing these propositions.

In order to explore these arguments, this thesis will use the process of social action and negotiation that led to the United States Navy's withdrawal from Vieques, Puerto Rico, as a case study. From the 1940s to May 2003, the U.S. Navy maintained a significant presence on the island municipality of Vieques, Puerto Rico. Throughout this period, activists tried to either ameliorate the perceived ill effects of

the Navy's presence or achieve its departure. They were unsuccessful until April 1999, when the accidental death of a civilian security guard caused by wayward Navy bombs triggered a widespread call for the Navy's withdrawal. After four years of negotiations between the U.S. and Puerto Rican governments, the Navy left Vieques on May 1, 2003.

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Chapter I. INTRODUCTION: TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVIST NETWORKS AND INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS

Historically, the discipline of international relations has been dominated by theories that allocate the greatest measure of agency on the international stage to nation-states. Nation-states have traditionally been conceived as rational actors pursuing self-interested goals, either through the confrontational frameworks defined by realism or the cooperative ones promulgated by liberalism. The process of globalization, however, is reshaping our traditional notions of power and agency in the realm of international politics. Whereas nation-states were once the only significant actor on the international stage, they must now share the stage with other types of actors that challenge traditional understandings of actors and the interests they pursue. Actors and forces that previously had only minor roles to play in international politics are now increasingly important. Such is the case with transnational activist networks, whose expansion and growing influence in recent years has been facilitated by the rapid expansion and decreasing costs of information and communication technologies.

While increasingly acknowledged, the roles of transnational activist networks in international negotiations are still not fully understood. This thesis is concerned with the potential for agency transnational activist networks have in the realm of inter-

national negotiations. How can transnational activist networks influence international negotiations?

It is the contention of this thesis that transnational activist networks can influence both the domestic and international levels of weak-strong international negotiations through political mobilization strategies, the most important being the effective use of framing, which can constrain or expand the domestic win-sets of both parties and move the zone of agreement closer to activists' goals. The potential for influence of transnational activist would depend on the level of vulnerability of strong actors to the negotiation alternatives presented by the political mobilization of the networks, which is facilitated by the degree of openness of the strong actor's political system. Furthermore, this thesis argues that transnational activist networks can not only influence the outcomes of negotiations, but trigger them as well. Robert Putnam's two-level game metaphor for international negotiations will be used as an analytical framework for testing these propositions. The underlying conditions that would allow this hypothesis to be true would be an international regime in which the concept of state sovereignty is being redefined and the world is increasingly interdependent, thereby facilitating the formation of transnational networks and expanding their potential for agency. A better understanding of the potential role of transnational activist networks in international negotiations would allow researchers to construct more accu-

rate theories and observations that reflect more accurately the current era of globalization, particularly in the realm of international negotiations.

In order to clarify the causal relationships claimed by this thesis, there are certain variables that must be conceptualized and operationalized:

Transnational Activist Network – a coalition of organizations and actors characterized by voluntary, reciprocal and horizontal patterns of communication and exchange working towards a common political goal.

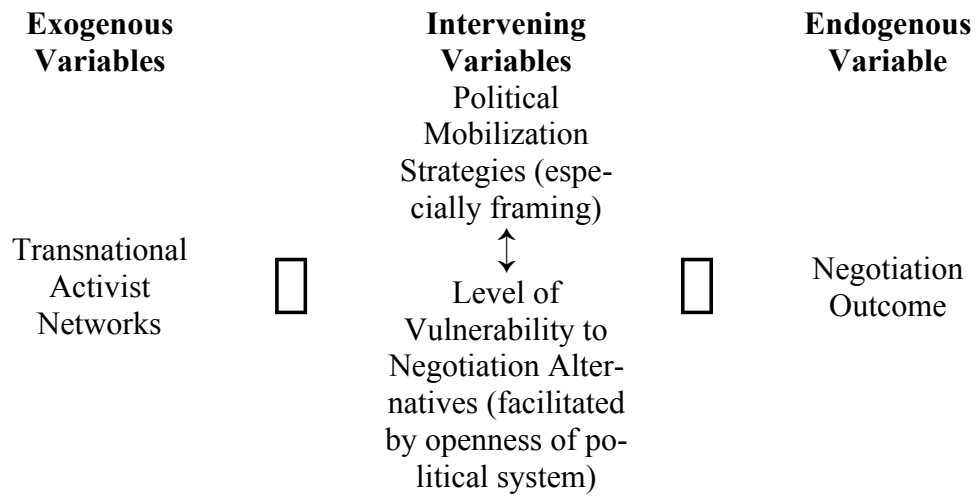
Political Mobilization Strategies – strategies that further the political goal shared throughout the network by seeking to reconstitute identities, interests and institutions of nation-states. For the purposes of this thesis, the most important of these strategies is the effective use of frames, which can be successfully deployed through such tactics as information politics, direct lobbying, symbolic politics, technocratic tactics, among others.

Vulnerability – the level of sensitivity to political mobilization and the negotiation alternatives it provides. This vulnerability is facilitated by the degree of openness of the strong actor's political system.

Negotiation Outcome – the final results of a negotiation process. The attributes of this variable are two: a *gain* means that the weak actor has accomplished a negotiation goal; a *loss* means the weak actor has failed to accomplish a negotiation goal.

The flowchart below demonstrates the causal relationship between the variables operationalized above:

Figure 1: Flowchart of Variables



From these variables it can be inferred that during a negotiation, the disadvantaged party will seek to build coalitions with transnational activist networks in order to gain leverage. With these coalitions in place, transnational activist networks deploy a variety of political mobilization strategies that seek to influence the different levels of the two-level game in coordination with the disadvantaged party. The higher the level of vulnerability, the more effective the strategies of political mobilization should be. These interventions can produce favorable negotiation outcomes for the disadvantaged party.

THEORETICAL APPROACH

Due to the very nature of transnational activist networks, their potential influence on international negotiations cannot be fully explained by traditional theories of international relations and negotiations alone. Instead, this thesis uses an interdisciplinary approach to underpin its theoretical claims. This chapter provides a literature review that traces the interdisciplinary nature of these theoretical groundings. Among the theoretical approaches used in this thesis are literature on international relations, recent scholarship on transnational activist networks and social movements, literature on globalization, culture and identities, and theories of international negotiations.

Recent critiques of traditional conceptions of power and agency in international relations are used to create a theoretical space in which transnational activist networks can have greater influence. Literature on transnational activist networks, particularly by Kathryn Sikkink and Margaret Keck, are used to explain the nature and purposes of these networks, as well as the strategies they deploy to achieve their goals. Literature on globalization and identity help explain what binds these networks together and how globalization has contributed to their growth. Finally, Robert Putnam's "two-level" game theory of international negotiations serves as an analytical framework to speculate on the potential influence of activist networks in negotiations, while scholarship on weak-strong negotiations is used to address particular negotiation tactics.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to explore the potential impact of transnational networks and actors in international negotiations, this thesis will use the process of social action and negotiation that led to the United States Navy's departure from Vieques, Puerto Rico, as a case study. From the early 1940s to May 2003, the U.S. Navy maintained a significant presence on the island municipality of Vieques, Puerto Rico. Vieques was the site of the Atlantic Fleet Weapons Training Facility (AFWTF). Throughout this period, activists had tried to either ameliorate the perceived ill effects of the Navy's presence or effect its departure altogether. They were largely unsuccessful until April 1999, when the accidental death of a civilian security guard caused by a couple of wayward Navy bombs triggered a widespread call for the Navy's withdrawal. After four years of negotiations between the U.S. and Puerto Rican governments, the Navy left Vieques on May 1, 2003. This thesis will argue that the formation of a transnational activist network around the issue of Vieques triggered the negotiation process, constrained the domestic win-set in Puerto Rico, expanded the domestic win-set in the U.S., and brought the zone of agreement closer to their goals.

The case study method is a widely used research method in international politics and negotiations, and is the most appropriate one for this thesis. Specifically, Vieques is a *disciplined interpretative case study*, to which well-known theories of inter-

national negotiations will be applied, thereby sharpening the existing theories and contributing additional insights to them.

Vieques is a good case study for a number of reasons. First, there is a historical power asymmetry between the U.S. and Puerto Rico, in which the U.S. is the stronger actor while Puerto Rico is the weaker one, that would seem to predetermine virtually any negotiation between the two governments on this issue. Second, past efforts by *viequenses* and the Puerto Rican government to resolve the Vieques issue, in which transnational networks were not nearly as intensely involved, have failed. Third, the American political system is characterized by a high degree of openness, with multiple access points for transnational activists to deploy strategies of political mobilization.¹

Several types of evidence have been collected for use in this thesis, including but not limited to: newspaper and magazine articles, official documents from the Puerto Rican and U.S. governments, scholarly works on the history of the Puerto Rico-U.S. relationship, scholarly works on the history of the Vieques issue, content from Web sites of transnational activist groups and other similar sources. Additionally, one “elite” or “specialized” interview was conducted with a prominent activist. Gathering a rich historical record from a wide variety of sources allows for a thorough historical

¹ The most recent installment of Foreign Policy’s “Globalization Index” ranks the United States 7th. The degree of “globalization” of a nation can be a good indicator of its degree of openness. “Measuring Globalization: Economic Reversals, Forward Momentum,” *Foreign Policy*, March/April 2004, 54-69.

analysis of the Vieques negotiation, for inferences to be drawn and rigorous conclusions to be reached.

Specifically, the public record, in the form of news items, books, web sites and official documents, has served to document the power asymmetry embedded in the Vieques study, the presence of transnational activist networks throughout the negotiations process, the strategies activist used to further their goals, and the negotiation outcomes. The elite interview has provided further insight into the coordination among activists, their shared values, their strategies and the purposes behind them, and the impact these activists had in the deliberations of government actors.

PLAN OF STUDY

After providing an introduction to the topic at hand in this chapter, Chapter II provides a literature review and situates this thesis within the existing literature. Chapter III provides a historical overview of U.S.-Puerto Rico relations, particularly on the issue of Vieques. Chapter IV introduces empirical evidence to demonstrate the existence of coalitions between transnational activists and local Vieques activists, and documents the strategies of political mobilization used by these coalitions. Chapter V will introduce further evidence to demonstrate how this political mobilization shaped the domestic win-sets on both sides of the negotiation and moved the zone of agreement closer to activists' goals, as well as provide a detailed analysis of these negotia-

tions through the prism of the two-level game metaphor. Finally, Chapter VI will develop some conclusions based on the empirical chapters and suggest further lines of inquiry.

Chapter II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to substantiate the premise that transnational activist networks can influence both the domestic and international levels of weak-strong international negotiations through the use of political mobilization strategies, which can constrain or expand the domestic win-sets of both parties and move the zone of agreement closer to activists' goals, we must first establish a theoretical space that makes this scenario plausible. Such a theoretical space must be rooted in the nature of the current international order. This requires us to look at changing scholarly views on the nature of international order.

NATURE OF THE CURRENT INTERNATIONAL ORDER

Historically, theories of international order have privileged the nation-state as the most important international actor. The role of transnational actors, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or national Diasporas has been relegated to secondary status. As Andrew Moravcsik tells us, theories of international order have usually concentrated on two levels, or units of analysis: international (or systemic) and domestic. His critique centers on systemic theories, both "realist" and "liberal," and their inability to account for the effects of domestic influence on international relations. "Thus the question facing international relations theorists today is not *whether* to combine domestic and international explanations into a theory of "double-edged" diplo-

macy, but *how* best to do so.”² Though it is important to theorize more effectively the relationship between domestic and international politics, Moravcsik’s critique fails to point out another weakness of systemic theories that has become more evident in our current era of globalization: their inability to account for, or even significantly acknowledge, the role of transnational actors in the current international order.

Other theorists, such as James Rosenau and J.P. Singh, present a more inclusive picture of our contemporary international order that recognizes greater possibilities of agency for non-state actors such as transnational activist networks. Rosenau describes this order as a “bifurcated system in which actors in the state-centric world compete, cooperate, interact, or otherwise coexist with counterparts in a multicentric world comprised of a vast array of diverse transnational, national, and subnational actors.”³ Rosenau’s conception of the international order does not rule out the relative preponderance of states as international actors. Rather, it provides us with a more holistic model in which a multitude of actors, both national and transnational, affect each other’s behaviors and actions. Singh further develops this conception of the current world order through his introduction of the term “meta-power.” “Meta-power,” according to Singh, “refers to how networks reconfigure, constitute, or reconstitute iden-

² Andrew Moravcsik, “Introduction: Integrating International and Domestic Theories of International Bargaining,” in *Double-Edged Diplomacy: International Bargaining and Domestic Politics*, eds. Peter Evans et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). 9.

³ James Rosenau, “The Relocation of Authority in a Shrinking World,” *Comparative Politics* 4, No. 3 (1992) : 256.

tities, interests, and institutions.”⁴ Singh proposes this concept as an alternative to traditional instrumental and structural notions of power.

Within the specific context of international weak-strong negotiations, Singh makes a similar point when he speaks of “diffusion of power.” Singh notes that

Diffusion of power scenarios center around dynamic environments in which power resources and abilities, rather than being hierarchically affixed across all issue areas, change from one issue area to another given complex mixes of coalitional partners, issue-linkages and bargaining alternatives, among other things.⁵

For Singh, diffusion of power means that “the exercise of power at the global level is not constrained to ones set of actors (states) around the salient issue of security.”⁶ This concept is contrasted with the “distribution of power” scenario, which implies a hierarchical distribution of resources and abilities simultaneously across many issue areas that always result in outcomes favorable to those at the top of the hierarchy.”⁷ The lack of a hierarchical distribution of power presented in this conception of

⁴ J. P. Singh, “Introduction: Information Technologies and the Changing Scope of Global Power and Governance,” in *Information Technologies and Global Politics: The Changing Scope of Power and Governance*, eds. James Rosenau and J.P. Singh (Albany, NY: SUNY, 2002) 13.

⁵ J. P. Singh, “Weak Powers and Globalism: The Impact of Plurality on Weak-Strong Negotiations in the International Economy,” *International Negotiations* 5 no. 3 (2000) : 451.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

the international negotiation environment not only opens greater possibilities of agency for weak powers, but opens new possibilities of agency for transnational actors as well.

TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVIST NETWORKS

Having established a more pluralistic conception of the international order in which agency is not circumscribed to nation-states, it is now necessary to establish why these networks come about and what binds them together. Why would transnational activist networks necessarily intervene in international weak-strong negotiations on the side of weak actors? Research suggests that these networks are predominantly *principled-issue networks*, defined by Kathryn Sikkink as “driven primarily by shared values or principled ideas – ideas about what is right and wrong – rather than shared causal or instrumental goals.”⁸ This being the case, they side with weaker actors in the face of the state, which is driven by other considerations. As Margaret Keck and Sikkink put it,

It is no accident that so many advocacy networks address claims of about rights in their campaigns. Governments are the primary “guarantors” of rights, but also their primary violators. When a government violates or refuses to recognize rights, individuals and domestic groups often have no recourse with do-

⁸ Kathryn Sikkink, “Human Rights, Principled-Issue Networks, and Sovereignty in Latin America,” *International Organization* 47 no. 3 (1993) : 412.

mestic political or judicial arenas. They may seek international connections finally to express their concerns and even protect their rights.⁹

Thus, just as the critiques by Moravcsik, Rosenau and Singh challenge the prevalent state-centric view of international politics, so Sikkink's conception of what motivates transnational activist networks challenge the traditional view of international actors as always pursuing security-centered interests. The rise of transnational activist networks therefore suggests not just a change in the repertoire of actors on the international stage, but the increasing importance of previously irrelevant motivations for action.

THE ROLE OF IDENTITY

Sikkink's definition of a principled-issue network suggests that these networks coalesce around commonly constructed identities. Her definition brings to mind Manuel Castells' definitions of the concept of identity. "Identity is people's source of meaning and experience."¹⁰ Stating that, from a sociological perspective, all identities are constructed, he further defines identity, in reference to social actors, as "the process of construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute, or related set of cultural

⁹ Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, "Transnational Activist Networks," in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, 6th ed., eds. Robert Art and Robert Jervis (New York, NY: Longman, 2003) 558.

¹⁰ Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity* (Malden, MA: Blackwell 1997) 7.

attributes, that is/are given priority over other sources of meaning.”¹¹ Since the concept of values must necessarily be part of any definition of culture, a connection can be made between Sikkink’s reference to values as a binding agent of principled-issue networks and Castells’ concept of identity. Furthermore, the use of the word “culture” in Castells’ definition need not restrict us to ethnic or nationalist notions of culture and values. Castells talks, for example, of the formation of a creation of a “biological identity, a culture of the human species as a component of nature”¹² within the environmental movement, which possesses one of the most extensive transnational activist networks in the world. We can therefore speak of value-based “transnational cultures” as coalescing agents around which transnational activist networks congregate.

Value-based identities, however, are not the only type of identities around which transnational activist networks might coalesce. Another important type is national identity. Like any other sort of identity, national identity is constructed. Benedict Anderson refers to the nation as an “imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign”¹³ In his definition of contemporary nationalism, however, Castells decouples nationalism from territoriality.

First, contemporary nationalism may or may not be oriented toward the construction of a sovereign nation-state, and thus nations are, historically, and

¹¹ Ibid., 6.

¹² Ibid., 127.

analytically, entities independent from the state. Secondly, nations and nation-states are not historically limited to the modern nation-state as constituted in Europe in the two hundred years following the French Revolution.¹⁴

Castells' deterritorialized definition of national identity suggests that nationalism can have a transnational dimension. With his idea of 'scapes,' Arjun Appadurai provides us with a framework that allows us to understand how national identity can have such a dimension. Appadurai refers to five 'scapes' that can help us make sense of the global cultural flow: *ethnoscapes*, *mediascapes*, *ideoscapes*, *technoscapes*, and *financescapes*. It is the first four types of 'scapes' that concern us here. *Ethnoscapes* refer to "the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live" which are "an essential feature of the world and appear to affect the politics of (and between) nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree." *Mediascapes* refer both to the "distribution of the electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information" and "to the images of the world created by these media." *Technoscapes* refer to the "configuration, also ever fluid, of technology and the fact that technology, both high and low, both mechanical and informational, now moves at high speeds across various kinds of previously impervious boundaries." Finally, *ideoscapes* refers to the "concatenations of images, but they are often directly political and frequently have to do

¹³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (New York: Verso, 1991) 6.

with the ideologies of states and the counterideologies of movements explicitly oriented to capture state power or a piece of it.”¹⁵

This framework is useful to help us discern how national identity can be nurtured when decoupled from the “homeland.” The increased mobility that characterizes our era (ethnoscapes) helps maintain ties with the imagined national homeland. The increased flows of technology (technoscapes) also aid this to maintain this contact. The increased flow of media images (mediascapes) nurture national identity and identification with the imagined homeland. The increased flow of political ideas (ideoscapes) nurtures political action based on national identity. Appadurai’s idea of ‘scapes’ not only helps how the commonly constructed identities that bind transnational activist networks come about; it also helps us understand how these networks have grown and spread during the current era of globalization. The idea of ‘scapes’ also fleshes out the concept of “meta-power” mentioned above by providing a framework through which identities are reconstituted.

¹⁴ Castells 30. In his most recent work, Anderson has acknowledged this phenomenon as well.

¹⁵ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996) 33-36.

THE TWO-LEVEL GAME

The analytical framework to be used in this proposed thesis is the metaphor of the two-level game in international negotiations, as originally posited by Robert Putnam:

At the national level, domestic groups pursue their interests by pressuring their governments to adopt favorable policies, and politicians seek power by constructing coalitions among those groups. At the international level, national governments seek to maximize their own ability to satisfy domestic pressures, while minimizing the adverse consequences of foreign developments.¹⁶

In a world where transnational actors and networks can reach across borders and boundaries and influence policy alternatives, it is conceivable that transnational activist networks could reconstitute the domestic win-sets of both actors and bring their zone of agreement closer to activists' goals. Putnam defines a "win-set" as "the set of all possible Level I agreements that would "win" – that is, gain the necessary majority among the constituents – when simply voted up or down."¹⁷

How can transnational activist networks affect the size of these domestic win-sets? They can do so by calling on a wide array of tactics of political mobilization, as identified by Keck and Sikkink, which include:

¹⁶ Robert Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," *International Organization* 42 no. 3, (summer 1988) : 434.

¹⁷ Putnam 437.

(1) *information politics*, or the ability to quickly and credibly generate politically usable information and move it to where it will have the most impact; (2) *symbolic politics*, or the ability to call upon symbols, actions, or stories that make sense of a situation for an audience that is frequently far away; (3) *leverage politics*, of the ability to call upon powerful actors to affect a situation where the weaker members of a network are unlikely to have influence; and (4) *accountability politics*, or the effort to hold powerful actors toe their previously stated policies of principles.¹⁸

There is a high degree of correlation between social movements theory, which underpins Keck and Sikkink's arguments, and negotiation theory.¹⁹ For example, the concept of "frames" in social movement theory correlates with the tactic of agenda setting in international negotiations. For a particular issue, "network members actively seek ways to bring issues to the public agenda by framing them in innovative ways and by seeking hospitable venues."²⁰ Such a practice is essentially agenda-setting, for effective framing can serve to spark negotiations and determine their agenda. While discussing the negotiation of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) at the World Trade Organization (WTO), John Odell and Su-

¹⁸ Keck and Sikkink 2003, 559.

¹⁹ It should be noted that there are many more negotiations strategies than the ones mentioned in this thesis. However, the ones mentioned here are particularly relevant to the Vieques case.

²⁰ Keck and Sikkink 1998, 17

san Sell highlight why the use of framing by developing countries during the negotiation was so effective. They argue that actors make decisions using “bounded rationality,” which reflects their lack of total information about an issue and their necessary reliance on mental shortcuts to make sense of it. The more compelling the mental shortcut or frame, the more successful it is as a tool for political mobilization and agenda-setting.²¹

We can also draw a correlation between Keck and Sikkink’s definition of leverage politics, as defined above, and the negotiation tactic of coalition-building. Singh (2001) tells us that diffusion of power scenarios allow weaker powers to participate in coalitions that help them offset weaknesses that would probably predetermine negotiation outcomes under distribution of power scenarios. Such a conception of the usefulness of coalition-building in the realm of negotiations correlates with the potential for transnational activist networks to offset power asymmetries posited by this thesis.

Another negotiation tactic that correlates with the strategies of political mobilization outlined above is the use of technocratic and legalistic strategies. We can make a connection between Keck and Sikkink’s conception of information politics and Singh’s description of technocratic and legalistic tactics. “Negotiations are now becoming inherently biased toward persuasion. The type of persuasion most likely to

²¹ John Odell and Susan Sell, “Reframing the Issue: The WTO Coalition on Intellectual Property and Public Health, 1991,” *Conference on Developing Countries and the Trade Negotiation Process*,

effect an accommodating response from the other actor is usually one that is based on knowledge and effected by a technically competent negotiating team.”²² Both information politics and technocratic/legalistic tactics rely heavily on the timely delivery of accurate and reliable information that leads to persuasion of the target actor.

Finally, there is the negotiation tactic of direct lobbying. The very process of globalization, with its increased flows of people and information, facilitates the use of direct lobbying as a negotiation tactic. It is this very same phenomenon of increased global flows that gives transnational activist networks their current relevance in the international arena. While discussing direct lobbying, Singh tells us that “transnational alliances may also weaken the ability of powerful actors while enhancing the ability of those from developing countries,” a conception we can extend to weak actors in general.²³ It is not a stretch to envision how all the political mobilization strategies outlined by Keck and Sikkink might be useful in direct lobbying campaigns. In the end, the reconstitution of domestic win-sets affected by political mobilization amounts to a manifestation of meta-power: a reconstitution of identities and institutions,

The effectiveness of these strategies is especially dependent on one of the intervening variables express above: vulnerability. The more vulnerable the strong actor

UNCTAD, 6-7 November 2003, Geneva, 2003.

²² Singh, “Weak Powers,” 475.

²³ Ibid., 476.

is to the introduction of negotiation alternatives, the more susceptible it should be to these strategies of political mobilization. The American political system, for example, should theoretically be more vulnerable because of its openness and relatively transparent structure that provides multiple points of access to it.

Other theorists have used the two-level game framework as a point of departure to hypothesize on how transnational can affect international negotiations. In their study of separate human rights negotiations between the U.S. government and the military regimes of Guatemala and Argentina between 1973 and 1981, Lisa Martin and Kathryn Sikkink point to “transnational cross-border lobbying by international and domestic human rights organizations” as one of the key explanatory factors for Argentina’s decision to improve its human rights record.²⁴ While this case study points in the direction of a greater role for transnational activist networks in the realm of international negotiations, it falls short of the more central role this thesis seeks to establish for this sort of actor. Transnational action by international and domestic activists was crucial in the outcome of these negotiations, but they were not the instigating factor; the Carter Administration’s determination to make human rights a cornerstone of American foreign policy was. This thesis will claim that transnational activist networks, through the implementation of various types of civil action and using the tactics

outlined above, can transcend the role of contributors to the negotiation process to become the primary instigators of these negotiations and affect negotiation outcomes beneficial to weak actors.

CONCLUSION

Thus this literature review establishes some theoretical grounds from which to begin empirical research. It has established the underlying conditions of the international world order, chief among them the potential for agency of transnational networks, which are necessary for the main premise of this thesis to be true. It has established the theoretical basis of the claims made in this thesis' premise about the role of commonly constructed identities in the formation of coalitions among transnational actors and networks. Finally, it has laid out a theoretical framework, based on the two-level game, through which transnational activist networks could affect international weak-strong negotiations on behalf of weak actors through strategies of political mobilization. The following empirical chapters will present evidence of how this theoretical framework can be applied to the negotiations that led to the U.S. Navy's departure from Vieques.

²⁴ Lisa Martin and Kathryn Sikkink, "U.S. Policy and Human Rights in Argentina and Guatemala, 1973-1981," in *Double-Edged Diplomacy: International Bargaining and Domestic Politics*, eds. Peter Evans et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993) 333.

Chapter III. AN OVERVIEW OF U.S.–PUERTO RICO RELATIONS AND THE VIEQUES CASE BEFORE 1999

“The powerful do what they can and the weak suffer what they must.”

– Thucydides

Thucydides’ assessment of the nature of international relations accurately describes many aspects of the relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. This relationship is a classic example of the distribution of power scenario described in the introductory chapter. On the part of the U.S., the relationship has been dominated by the traditional considerations that characterize a distribution of power scenario, among which security has been the most important. This chapter will show how, since the beginning of the relationship, Puerto Rico has been an important strategic military asset for the U.S. As for Puerto Rico, the asymmetry of power embedded in its relationship with the U.S., in which Puerto Rico is the weak power by traditional standards, has largely predetermined the outcomes of negotiations between the two parties, particularly in the political sphere.

The case of Vieques must be understood within the context of the U.S.–Puerto Rico relationship. Thus, for the purposes of context, this chapter will provide a short overview of the U.S.–Puerto Rico relationship, as well as an overview of the history of the U.S. Navy’s presence in Vieques until April 19, 1999. The date is crucial, for it is

the day when David Sanes, a civilian security guard at the Atlantic Fleet Training Facility in Vieques, was killed while on duty by two 500-pound live bombs that missed their target by one mile.²⁵ This incident served as a catalyst for the resurgence of the campaign to persuade the U.S. government to withdraw the Navy from Vieques. The chapter will establish the power asymmetry between the U.S. and Puerto Rico, particularly as it relates to Vieques. It will also chronicle previous unsuccessful efforts by the people of Vieques to evict the Navy from the island, which did not have the benefit of extensive and dense transnational activist networks on their side. The argument put forth in this chapter is that, in the absence of these networks as a counterbalance to the power asymmetry, the traditional distribution of power scenario prevailed and the efforts to evict the Navy from Vieques failed. But before discussing the nature of U.S. – Puerto Rico relations, we must first look at how Puerto Rico evolved as a strategic asset on the international arena before coming under American rule.

PUERTO RICO UNDER SPANISH RULE

The role of traditional security considerations in the destinies of Puerto Rico, and by extension of Vieques, did not begin under American rule. In fact, since Christopher Columbus landed in Puerto Rico in 1493 and claimed it in the name of

²⁵ Katherine McCaffrey, *Military Power and Popular Protest: The U.S. Navy in Vieques, Puerto Rico* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2002) 147.

Spain, the island has been an important strategic outpost coveted by most Western powers. Historian Arturo Morales Carrión puts it this way:

As the Spanish empire in the New World grew, and faced rivals and foes, Puerto Rico's strategic location overshadowed its economic significance. For the growing empire, Puerto Rico was to become a Caribbean "Christian Rhodes," a bulwark ready to repel intruders and infidels into the new Spanish *Mare Nostrum*; and, as the crown officials stated, "the strongest foothold of Spain in America."²⁶

After establishing a foothold in the New World, Spain sought to turn its colonial empire into a commercial one. Pope Alexander VI's 1493 papal bull declaring that the Catholic Kings and their descendants were to have "exclusive jurisdiction, authority and absolute rights over the discovered lands and those still to be discovered" strengthened this aspiration.²⁷ The Pope's decree upset the balance of power between the great powers of Europe, for it effectively handed Spain a monopoly on commercial exploitation of the newly discovered territories and the trade this exploitation could generate. Resentful of the pope's declaration and wary of Spain's rising fortunes, the other European powers, particularly France and England, resolved to gain footholds in the New World as well. To this end they sponsored attacks on Spanish colonies (in-

²⁶ Arturo Morales Carrión, *Puerto Rico: A Political and Cultural History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1983) 8.

cluding Puerto Rico) by renowned pirates such as Boudewijn Hendriksz of Holland, Sir Francis Drake of England and the Earl of Cumberland, another Englishman who successfully occupied San Juan for 65 days before being driven out by disease and harassment from the population.²⁸ It is worth noting that Vieques suffered a similar onslaught. As far as the eighteenth century there were English attempts to occupy Vieques and extricate it from Puerto Rico's orbit.²⁹

Because of its location and its status as the first port of call for Spanish vessels sailing to the New World, Puerto Rico was regarded by all the major European powers as "the key to the Indies."³⁰ Realizing its strategic importance, the Spanish Crown gave orders as early 1522 to bolster the island's defenses. This led to the gradual militarization of San Juan, the island's capital city. San Juan's first fortified building was *La Fortaleza* (The Fortress), which was completed in 1540 and doubled as (and remains to this day) the governor's mansion. But since the capital's defense could be left to one fortress, another structure, called *El Morro*, was erected between 1540 and 1570 with walls rising 140 feet above sea level and 18 to 25 feet thick walls.³¹ As attacks on the island multiplied, even these imposing structures proved unsatisfactory for

²⁷ Ibid., 9.

²⁸ Federico Picó, *Historia General de Puerto Rico* (Río Piedras, Puerto Rico: Ediciones Huracán, 2000) 85-92.

²⁹ Ibid., 18.

³⁰ Morales Carrión 10.

the defense of the island. Between 1632 an old plan to wall the city of San Juan was revived by Governor Enrique Enríquez de Sotomayor and approved by King Philip IV. Work on this plan continued throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries until it was finished in 1783. By the end, the city's defenses comprised an elaborate network of walls, gates, bridges and forts such as *San Cristóbal*, *El Boquerón* and *San Elena*, among others. Originally these forts were poorly garrisoned and their soldiers poorly compensated, but as Puerto Rico's strategic importance grew, so did the quantity and quality of soldiers assigned to them, as well as their remuneration.³² Before long Puerto Rico came to be regarded as a *presidio*, meaning "a place whose strategic location demanded skillful fortification, a strong garrison, and the needed artillery."³³ Eventually military considerations would come to dominate life in San Juan, differentiating it from the rest of the island. As one historian puts it, "In San Juan considerations of military type would overshadow the activities of the neighbors, to the point that to this day, what the generality of *sanjuaneros* know about its history in the first three centuries is the military aspect."³⁴ Thus Puerto Rico's strategic importance as a vital military outpost of the Spanish empire was firmly established. Security consid-

³¹ "National Park Service – San Juan," March 2002, *U.S. Department of the Interior*, available from <http://www.nps.gov/saju/indexfinal.htm>; Internet; accessed 17 February 2002.

³² Morales Carrión 12-14, 22-24.

³³ *Ibid.*, 12.

³⁴ Picó 84.

erations would outweigh all others in Spain's relationship with the island. Or put more bluntly, "Puerto Rico developed instead as a military colony. Spanish colonial policy inhibited the island's economic development."³⁵ This pattern would persist under American colonial rule.

The emphasis on security concerns was even more pronounced in Vieques, which Spain did not even bother to settle until the nineteenth century, focusing instead on keeping the island off British hands. The English, who regarded Vieques as "the best of all the Virgins, if not better than them altogether," sent colonizers repeatedly to attempt to settle the island, only to be rebuffed by Spanish forces sent from Puerto Rico to repel them and destroy their settlements.³⁶ Spain's principal interest was to keep Vieques away from foreign powers that could then use the island as a launching pad for an invasion of Puerto Rico. Vieques was not successfully colonized by Spain until 1829 (a 1815 attempt was rebuffed by English settlers) and its requisite fort was built in 1843, laying the foundation for the Vieques community we know today.³⁷

As with the rest of its New World possessions, Spain kept Puerto Rico on a very short leash. For centuries the Crown, through the Council of Indies, ruled on all legislative, executive, judicial, military, commercial and even ecclesiastical matters.³⁸

³⁵ McCaffrey 18.

³⁶ Quoted in *ibid.*, 19.

³⁷ McCaffrey 18-20.

³⁸ Formed in 1524, the Council of Indies assumed executive, legislative, administrative and judicial responsibilities for Spain's New World possessions. For nearly two centuries it acted as a policy

Because of the enormous delays in communication prevalent in those days, the Governor of Puerto Rico, who since 1580 also carried the military title of Captain General (commensurate with the islands status of *presidio*), could do pretty much as he pleased. As centuries passed, demands by the local population for greater control of their own affairs grew, but their colonial status instead made them hostage of the political mood swings of the metropolis. These mood swings were especially acute during the nineteenth century; between 1833 and 1892 alone Spain had seventy-five different governments. These changes in the metropolis resulted in the repeated granting and subsequent retraction of rights for Puerto Ricans, such as freedom of the press, the formation of political parties, universal male suffrage and representation in the Spanish legislative bodies. Representative government was severely restricted within the island as well. There was no local legislature in Puerto Rico until the end of the 1800s and representation of the natives (*criollos*) in local government was restricted to the wealthy. The lack of political rights radicalized sectors of the population, some of which began agitating for complete independence of Spain. The most dramatic expression of this

advisory body to the monarch, issued legislation in his name, corresponded with officials in the New World, selected high ranking administrators, served as appellate court in major civil cases and conducted judicial reviews (similar to impeachments) of officials. See: Michael Meyer, *The Oxford History of Mexico* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 119-120.

sentiment was an unsuccessful uprising occurred on September 23, 1868 in the town of Lares and known as the *Grito de Lares* (the Yell of Lares).³⁹

The revolution in Cuba, increasing demands of autonomy in Puerto Rico and pressure from the U.S. to take steps that would secure peace in the Caribbean (which would protect American sugar interests) forced Spain to finally grant Puerto Rico a truly autonomous government on November 25, 1897.⁴⁰ This government was the most advanced of its kind in the entire colonial Caribbean, its most outstanding feature being that the relationship between the metropolis and the island could not be amended without the request or consent of the newly created Puerto Rican parliament.⁴¹ These reforms, however, would amount to little: as a consequence of the Spanish-American War, U.S. troops invaded Puerto Rico in 1898.

PUERTO RICO UNDER AMERICAN RULE

While Spain only realized the vital importance of Puerto Rico and Vieques as vital strategic assets after acquiring them, the United States realized their im-

³⁹ Organized from abroad by prominent independence leader Dr. Ramón Emeterio Betances, the revolt was originally set for the 29th but the date was advanced after authorities got wind of the plot. On that night, several hundred men took over the town of Lares, declared Puerto Rico's independence and set up a provisional government. Authorities quickly put down the rebellion, but it has since become a historic event that feeds Puerto Rican nationalism and is frequently used by separatists as a rallying cry against American colonialism. Ironically, one of the leaders of the rebellion, Mateo Bruckman, was an American expatriate. See: Morales Carrión 111-112, Picó 177-180.

⁴⁰ José Trías Monge, *Puerto Rico: The Trials of the Oldest Colony in the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997) 5-15.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Trías Monge offers a very detailed chronology of the Spanish changes of governments in the nineteenth century and their (mostly negative) effects in Puerto Rico.

portance long before arriving at their shores. American interest in the Caribbean pre-dates even the Declaration of Independence; at one time, for example, Benjamin Franklin advised the British to invade Cuba. The five presidents after George Washington actively considered acquiring Cuba, and John Quincy Adams thought America's possession of Cuba was only a matter of time.⁴² As the doctrine of Manifest Destiny took hold in America during the nineteenth century and it sought to expand and protect its trade empire, the U.S. government was determined to obtain possessions in the Caribbean.⁴³ The main strategic purpose of this was to successfully implement the naval theories of Captain Alfred T. Mahan, who greatly influenced Henry Cabot Lodge and Theodore Roosevelt. Cap. Mahan believed that the key to national greatness was naval power. The U.S. needed a great fleet and naval stations to support it. Mahan believed the U.S. needed a canal across the Isthmus of Panama and complete control over both the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean near Hawaii.⁴⁴ Given what we know of Spain's strategic regard for Puerto Rico, it is not hard to deduce the importance it had in Mahan's designs.

⁴² Trías Monge, 21-23.

⁴³ "Manifest Destiny" refers to the widespread belief in nineteenth-century America that, because of the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race and American civilization, as well as the will of Providence, the U.S. had the right to expand throughout the continent and, in the case of possessions such as the Philippines and Puerto Rico, to civilize their inhabitants. See: Johannsen, Robert, et al. *Manifest Destiny And Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism* Ed. Sam W. Haynes & Christopher Morris (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 1998) 7-9. See also Trías Monge 23-27 for specific examples of this doctrine in relation to overseas possessions, particularly Puerto Rico.

⁴⁴ Trías Monge 23, Morales Carrión 135.

Shortly after the sinking of the Maine off the coasts of Cuba, the Spanish–American War erupted on April 26, 1898. Four months later, the U.S. had soundly defeated its overmatched enemy, forcing Spain to grant independence to Cuba and cede the Philippines and Puerto Rico to the victor. The official peace treaty was signed in Paris on December 10, 1898.⁴⁵

The American invasion of Puerto Rico on July 25, 1898 was met with virtually no resistance. On the contrary, the sudden power vacuum caused by the invasion allowed the population to express its dissatisfaction with Spanish rule; bands of *criollo* vigilantes roamed the towns in search of personal and collective revenge for the repression they had suffered under Spanish representatives and their local supporters.⁴⁶ There was also hope that the arrival of the Americans would bring about more liberty and improved economic conditions. This hope was fed by General Nelson A. Miles' declaration made in Ponce on July 28, which read in part,

We have not come to make war upon the people of a country that for centuries has been oppressed, but, on the contrary, to bring you protection, not only to yourselves but to your property, to promote your prosperity, and to bestow upon you the immunities and blessings of the liberal institutions of our governments....This is not a war of devastation but one to give to all within the

⁴⁵ Trías Monge 21-24.

⁴⁶ Picó 228-229.

control of [the United States'] military and naval forces the advantages and blessings of enlightened civilization.⁴⁷

Puerto Rican political leaders and elites expected that after a brief period of military occupation and government, the island would soon return to civilian control and shortly afterwards, its political future would be clearly defined either through greater autonomy, statehood or an unlikely and largely unwanted independence. Instead the island remained under military rule for two years, a time during which local industry languished due to the political limbo created by the change of sovereignty.⁴⁸ After 1900, civilian governors were appointed by the President of the United States, while the Congress retained broad control to legislate as it pleased with regards to the island using its powers under the Territorial Clause of the Constitution.⁴⁹ As for its political status, Puerto Rico was kept once again in limbo. The motivations behind this limbo were twofold. First, there was truly a belief among American officials that Puerto Ricans were not yet ready to govern themselves and needed to learn the art of self-governance from their American tutors. A Senate report issued in 1900 neatly summarized these sentiments:

⁴⁷ Morales Carrión 132.

⁴⁸ Picó 230-231.

⁴⁹ Article IV, Section 3 of the U.S. Constitution reads in part: "The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States, or of any particular state."

If the territory should be inhabited by a people of wholly different character, illiterate, and unacquainted with our institutions, and incapable of exercising the rights and privileges guaranteed by the Constitution to the States of the Union, it would be competent for Congress to withhold from such people the operation of the Constitution and the laws of the United States, and, continuing to hold the territory as a mere possession of the United States to govern the people thereof as their situation and the necessities of the case may require.⁵⁰

Second, a lack of political definition allowed for better control of Puerto Rico and Vieques as strategic assets. Statehood might put too many inhibitions on what the government could do with its new possession, while independence, or even greater autonomy, could jeopardize American sovereignty over the islands. Thus, the metropolis consistently rebuffed repeated pleas from the local leadership for increased self-government. Disagreements with American officials were taken as evidence of the lack of ability of the locals to govern themselves.

As part of official colonial policy, a campaign of “Americanization” was undertaken; schoolchildren were forced to recite the Pledge of Allegiance (which they did not understand), teachers were forced to teach all their subjects in English even though

⁵⁰ Quoted in Trías Monge 41.

they could barely speak the language themselves, and Spanish legal codes that had been in place for centuries were replaced by American state codes.⁵¹

The Americanization campaign, along with economic distress caused by the monopolization of arable land by American absentee sugar cane plantation owners and exacerbated by the Great Depression, stirred anti-American feelings and radicalized a sector of the population, mostly congregated under the banner of the Nationalist Party, that demanded independence and was willing to resort to violence to achieve it. These sectors of the population were systematically repressed during the 1930s and 1950s by federal and local authorities.⁵² Concerned about the possibility of continued social unrest in a possession that was an important strategic asset, the U.S. government allied itself with moderate political elements in Puerto Rico to improve economic conditions and enact limited political reforms. In 1948 Puerto Ricans were allowed to elect their own governor and in 1952 they were allowed to enact their own constitution that established the current status of Commonwealth (*Estado Libre Asociado* or “Free Associated State in Spanish) and allowed for greater self government on strictly local matters. This constitution altered in no way the relationship between the U.S. and Puerto Rico; the Congress still retained complete power over the island and even amended the Puerto Rican constitution before submitting it for approval to islanders, who could not

⁵¹ McCaffrey 24, Picó 254-255.

amend it again.⁵³ Thus the pattern of power asymmetry characteristic of U.S.–Puerto Rico relations was firmly entrenched. Puerto Ricans were given control strictly over internal affairs while the U.S Constitution trumped the local one, all federal laws applied to Puerto Rico and the Congress retained sovereignty over the island. While there was a greater degree of local government, the relationship remained essentially colonial.⁵⁴ Fifty-two years after the establishment of Commonwealth this asymmetry has only increased. Sixty percent of Puerto Rican families live below the poverty line and depend from some kind of federal assistance.⁵⁵ Though leading social indicators such as mortality rates have improved, economic indicators could be said to have remained essentially stagnant. For example, in 1947 unemployment stood at 11 percent; in November 2003 it was 13 percent.⁵⁶ Unofficial unemployment is suspected to be

⁵² For a fuller account of the repression perpetrated against independence advocates, see: Ivonne Acosta, *La Mordaza: Puerto Rico 1948-1957* (Río Piedras, PR: Editorial Edil, 1987).

⁵³ For a detailed account of the evolution of Commonwealth status and how the U.S. – Puerto Rico relationship remained essentially unaltered by it, see Trías Monge 107-118.

⁵⁴ The case of Puerto Rico has been before the United Nations' decolonization committee since the 1950s and is still not considered resolved. See: "Draft Resolution Introduced In Decolonization Committee Calling On United States To Expedite Self-Determination Process For Puerto Rico," *United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization*, 21 June 2001 [Web site]; available from <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2001/gacol3052.doc.htm>; Internet; accessed 23 April 2004.

⁵⁵ Trías Monge 1-2.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 2, "Table 3. Civilian Labor Force And Unemployment By State And Selected Areas, Seasonally Adjusted," *Bureau of Labor Statistics*, Jan. 27 2004 [Web site], available at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/laus.t03.htm>; Internet; accessed 19 February 2004.

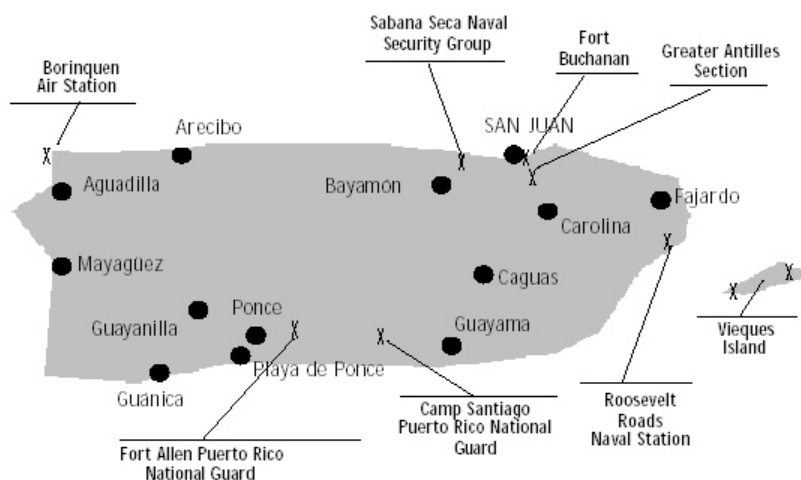
much higher.⁵⁷ More importantly, as Puerto Rico's strategic importance grew, so did the American military presence on the island. In 1998 there were 25 U.S. military installations in Puerto Rico, occupying 13 percent, (approximately 410 square miles) of the land (see Figure 2).⁵⁸ This power asymmetry, under a traditional distribution of power scenario, would seem to define Puerto Rico as a weak international actor and predetermine the outcome of virtually any negotiation between the U.S. and Puerto Rico.⁵⁹ This power asymmetry would also have consequences for the island of Vieques and its inhabitants.

⁵⁷ Prominent pro-independence leader Rubén Berríos Martínez estimated real unemployment in 1982 to be 30%. See: Rubén Berríos Martínez, *La Independencia de Puerto Rico: Razón y Lucha* (San Juan, PR: Editorial Línea, 1983) 71.

⁵⁸ "The U.S. Military and Puerto Rico," *American Friends Service Committee/National Youth & Militarism Program*, June 2000 [Web site]; available from <http://webarchive.afsc.org/youthmil/html/news/june00/puerto.htm>; Internet; accessed 19 February 2004.

⁵⁹ Some might dispute the status of Puerto Rico as an international actor because of its colonial relationship with the United States. In fact, Puerto Rico has a firmly established identity in the international community. Puerto Rico participates in the Olympic Games as a distinct jurisdiction. It participates as an associate member or observer in multiple international organizations. Latin American heads of state attend the governor's inauguration every four years as they would they for heads of state of independent nations.

Figure 2: Map of U.S. Military Installations in Puerto Rico and Vieques⁶⁰



VIEQUES UNDER AMERICAN RULE

The ill effects on Vieques of the American invasion of Puerto Rico were felt almost immediately. On the morning of May 10, 1898, San Juan residents awoke to the sound of cannon fire; the city was being bombarded by the U.S. Navy. That same morning, a Navy vessel *Yale* blockaded the island of Vieques; the blockade lasted for four months and Vieques was finally invaded on September 10. *Viequesenses* of the time had experienced so much hunger during the blockade that they fully expected the invaders to be “bloodthirsty, criminals, murderers and cannibals.”⁶¹

⁶⁰ Eva Hille & Isa Gölker, *Military Presence in Puerto Rico*, 1 March 2004 [Web site]; available from <http://www.gymnasium.garching.de/projekt/intel/puertorico/mil.htm>; Internet; accessed 3 February 2004. Figure shows locations of major clusters of military installations, not individual military facilities.

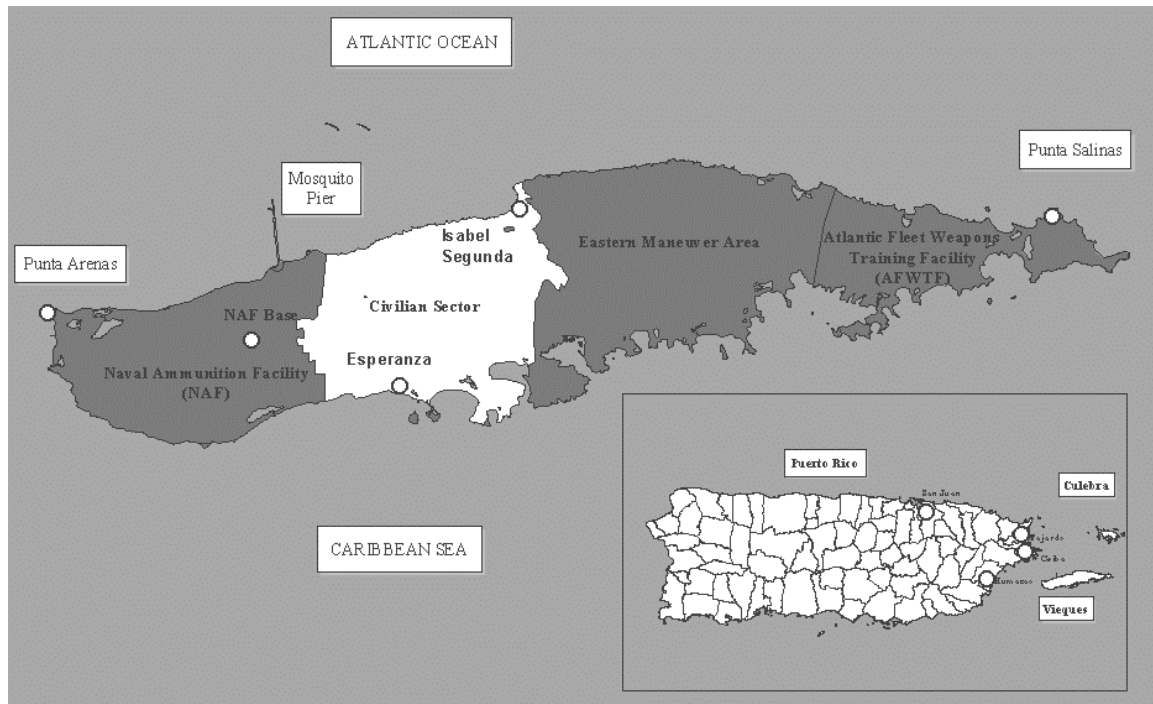
⁶¹ Arturo Meléndez López, *La Batalla De Vieques* (Río Piedras, PR, 1989: Editorial Edil) 15-16.

As war with Germany and its allies loomed large during the late 1930s, Congress accelerated plans to enlarge U.S. military presence in Puerto Rican soil by appropriating \$30 million for the construction of air and naval bases, whose main purpose would be the defense of the Panama Canal. To this end, the U.S. military expropriated large tracts of land across Puerto Rico, including 21,020 acres of land in Vieques in order to build a naval base that would rival Pearl Harbor. Thousands of *viequenses*, most of whom had no deeds for their houses or the land they lived in, were forcibly removed from their homes. Because of its colonial situation and the correlating lack of leverage, the insular government could do little for its citizens in Vieques. Economic conditions were still precarious in Vieques and there was hope that construction of the new base would provide sorely needed jobs and reinvigorate the local economy. Many Viequenses found jobs working for the military and construction of the base brought a brief period of economic bonanza. But construction was halted as swiftly as it had begun when war broke out in the Pacific and the U.S. decided to scale back plans for the base, lest they have another Pearl Harbor in the Atlantic. Since the military expropriations had effectively killed the sugar cane industry, the halt on construction of the base dealt a severe blow to Vieques' economy.⁶² Subsequent expropriations by the Navy left residents with only one third of the island to live on. Figure 3 shows the land dis-

⁶² McCaffrey 29-32, Meléndez López 47-75.

tribution at the peak of the Navy's presence in Vieques in 2000. The red areas were occupied by the Navy, the white sector in the middle by civilians.

Figure 3: Land Distribution on the Island of Vieques, 2000.⁶³



The expropriations, and threats of more to come, had a depressing effect on the island's economy. In 1955 the Puerto Rican government devised a plan to revive Vieques' economy through tourism, community development and industry. The centerpiece of the plan was a multimillion-dollar resort that the Woolnor Corporation was

⁶³ César Ayala, "Vieques, Puerto Rico: Las Expropiaciones de La Marina de Guerra en la Década de 1940," *University of California-Los Angeles*. [Web site]; available from <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/ayala/Vieques/images/vieques2000.gif>; Internet; accessed 3 February 2004.

committed to build. The Navy was bluntly antagonistic to the plan. Not only did it not allow its military airport to be used for civilian use (something common in other jurisdictions), but also it refused to guarantee that the lands used for the resort would not be expropriated in the future. Faced with the prospect of expropriation, Woolnor backed out of the deal.⁶⁴ Once again, the underlying asymmetry of power in the U.S.–Puerto Rico relationship prevented local officials from effectively intervening on behalf of their citizens.

Indeed, the Navy always saw the Vieques population as an impediment to its national security mission, especially during the tense years of the Cold War. During the 1960s, the Navy drafted a plan called the *Vieques-Culebra Plan* or *V-C Plan* (Culebra is another island that is part of Puerto Rican territory). The plan called for the resettlement of all inhabitants of Vieques and Culebra elsewhere so that the Navy could use the islands as it saw fit. As part of the depopulation of Vieques, even the dead would be resettled; their bodies would be dug up and buried somewhere else. Only Governor Luis Muñoz Marín's personal appeals to President Kennedy, with whom he had a close friendship, spared Vieques from the Navy's plans.⁶⁵

Tensions between the Navy and the people of Vieques came to a head in 1976 when Taso Zenón, a Vieques fisherman with a history of defiance towards the Navy,

⁶⁴ McCaffrey 37-38.

⁶⁵ Néstor Duprey Salgado, *Crónica De Una Guerra Anunciada* (San Juan, PR: 2002) 43-71

organized the *Vieques Fishermen Association*, which battled the Navy in the courts, through the electoral system and through civil disobedience. The fishermen invaded restricted waters and paralyzed the military exercises for a brief period of time, in what came to be known as The Fishermen's War. The leaders of the fishermen's association were jailed for six months, but their struggle moved Governor Carlos Romero Barceló to sue the Navy for ecological damage caused by the bombing. The suit ended in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Puerto Rican government and the Navy. The MOU, also known as the *Fortín* Accord, bound the Navy to "be a good neighbor, bring jobs to Vieques, plant trees, protect wildlife and fragile ecosystems, reduce bombing noise, and ensure safe practices for weapons training."⁶⁶ Years later, however, it was clear that the Navy had not kept its end of the bargain in any way.⁶⁷ But the Fishermen's War served as a catalyst for the building of solidarity networks, both in Vieques and in Puerto Rico. Organizations like the Crusade to Rescue Vieques, the National Committee in Defense of Vieques and the Vieques Solidarity Network (a stateside organization) were formed to support the Vieques struggle. These organizations provided local activists with access to a wider audience and with con-

⁶⁶ Lisa Mullenneaux, *¡Ni Una Bomba Más!: Vieques vs. U.S. Navy* (New York: Pennington Press, 2000) 38-39.

⁶⁷ Juan M. García Passalacqua and Angel Collado Swartz, "Historia de un Pueblo-Símbolo," in *Victoria de un Pueblo: Crónica del Grito de Vieques*, ed. Edgardo Pérez Viera (San Juan, PR: Editorial Cultural, 2002) 26-28.

crete help for the dissemination of information about their cause.⁶⁸ Yet while the seeds for activist networks were planted during this period, they were not successful in their ultimate goal: the end of military maneuvers and the departure of the U.S. Navy from Vieques.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has historicized the relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States by tracing the origins of this relationship and its underlying motivations. Through a survey of this relationship a clear pattern of power asymmetry emerges. From a distribution of power standpoint, Puerto Rico is clearly the weak actor and the U.S. the strong one. This asymmetry has been hardest on Vieques because, due to its lack of leverage, the Puerto Rican government has not been able to intervene effectively on Vieques' behalf.

Faced with their government's inability to improve their lot, the people of Vieques decided to take matters into their own hands. They formed activist networks at home, in Puerto Rico and the U.S.; they attempted different tactics of political mobilization, including civil disobedience; they even managed some short-lived success. But they were ultimately unsuccessful in their ultimate goals. Why was this?

Several key factors that were present during 1999 and beyond were not in place during the 1970s and 80s. Keck and Sikkink tell us that the new relevance of transna-

⁶⁸ McCaffrey 78-87.

tional activist networks is due in part to the proliferation of transnational non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well as information and communication technologies (ICTs) that facilitate the transfer of information accurately and quickly.⁶⁹ During the initial stirrings of activism in Vieques these two factors had not reached the point of saturation we know today. For example, in 1953 only 33 human rights NGOs existed; in 1973 there were 41 and in 1983, 79; by 1993 the number had reached 168.⁷⁰ Tools such as personal computers, fax machines and the Internet were not available at the time. It was therefore harder for coalitions to form between transnational and local activists. In other words, the network was not dense enough for the strategies of political mobilization to have anything but a limited impact. Because transnational networks did not form, the power asymmetry remained basically intact during negotiations. This is why the Navy found it so easy to renege on its promises after the Memorandum of Understanding was signed; there was little incentive for the Navy not to cheat. The international situation also made the U.S. less vulnerable to political mobilization by Vieques activists. During the Cold War, national security considerations overrode virtually all others in the shaping of foreign policy, especially in the case of Puerto Rico. This left little space for other considerations to be leveraged against U.S. policy towards Vieques. Finally, the Hispanic community, which would become a

⁶⁹ Keck and Sikkink 1-37.

⁷⁰ Keck and Sikkink 11.

major domestic constituency in the United States and a strong advocate of the Navy's departure from Vieques, had not yet acquired the kind of political clout it now has. Even if dense and extensive transnational networks had been formed on behalf of Vieques and had attempted to mobilize Hispanic on behalf of their cause, this constituency did not have the clout at the time to affect the process the way it did post-1999.

By the time David Sanes met his untimely death, the international situation would be much different. In the next chapter we will analyze how Sanes' death served as a catalyst for the formation of a transnational activist network that eventually achieved its ultimate goal: to evict the U.S. Navy from then island of Vieques.

Chapter IV. TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVIST NETWORKS, POLITICAL MOBILIZATION AND THE FRAMING OF VIEQUES

The previous chapter outlined the multiple conditions that prevented pre-1999 campaigns to persuade the U.S. Navy to abandon Vieques from succeeding. It historicized the power asymmetry embedded in the U.S.-Puerto Rico relationship and its effect on efforts to secure the Navy's withdrawal from Vieques. Chapter III also chronicled the internal divisions amongst Vieques activists, how these divisions limited support for their cause in the main island and the Puerto Rican community in the U.S., and how they allowed the Navy to frame anti-Navy activism as the work of "radicals" and "communists." Finally, we specified the underlying conditions, such as the state of information and communication technologies (ICTs), the limited number of international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the embryonic state of Puerto Rican and Hispanic political clout, which discouraged the formation of a pro-Vieques transnational activist network. By 1999, however, many of these conditions were noticeably altered, thereby leading to changes in the situations of Vieques.

This chapter will provide a brief chronicle of the events occurred after April 19, 1999, the date of David Sanes' tragic death during a naval exercise gone wrong. It will continue the historical narrative begun in the previous chapter while providing an empirical analysis of the circumstances that led to the formation of a transnational activist

network around the issue of Vieques. This will include analyses of the frames used by activists to further their cause, the strategies of political mobilization utilized during the campaign and the actors involved in it. Chapter V will in turn analyze how the political mobilization effected by activists influenced the domestic win-sets in Puerto Rico and the U.S., thereby altering the negotiation alternatives on both sides in favor of activists' goals.

THE POST-COLD WAR CONTEXT

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Vieques residents and activists had some reason to be optimistic about a possible departure from Vieques by the Navy. The geopolitical situation that had long been the military's justification for its presence in Vieques had changed dramatically since the late 1980s. After the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, the U.S. military significantly curtailed its military capabilities at home and abroad. According to GlobalSecurity.Org, from 1989 to 1997, the Department of Defense (DoD) reduced total active duty military end strength by 32 percent, while by 1997 the DoD had already reduced its overseas base structure by almost 60 percent, including the closure of 960 overseas structures.⁷¹ Among these facilities was the bombing range at Kaho'olawe, the smallest of Hawaii's eight major islands, which was used by the Pacific Fleet from 1950 to 1990. As it did for Vieques, the Navy claimed Kaho'olawe

was essential to its combat readiness.⁷² Despite this claim, when it was decided the base would close, the Navy simply moved its Pacific Fleet training to California's San Clemente Island.⁷³ This precedent undermined the Navy's latter claim that Vieques was essential for combat readiness, thus undermining the national security frame it constantly used to justify its presence on the island.

One of the most persistent irritants of the Cold War (and a continual rationale for American military presence in Puerto Rico, particularly in Vieques) was the Soviet Union's close ties to Cuba, particularly after the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. This irritant all but disappeared between 1990 and 1993, when the Soviet Union (and after December 1991, the Russian Federation) gradually withdrew its economic subsidies and military personnel from the island, forcing the Cubans to curtail their military activities in Africa and across Latin America.⁷⁴ Overall, the post-Cold War scenario deprived the Navy and its supporters, both in the U.S. and in Puerto Rico of its more powerful frame for its presence in Vieques: national security. It also opened a space for new constituencies and frames to emerge that favored the Navy's withdrawal.

⁷¹ John Pike, "Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)," *GlobalSecurity.org*, 29 February 2004 [Web site]; available from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/brac.htm>; accessed 3 March 2004.

⁷² Almícar Antonio Barreto, *Vieques, the Navy, and Puerto Rican Politics* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2002) 40.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ "Cuba," *Commanding Heights*, PBS [Web site]; available from http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/commandingheights/lo/countries/cu/cu_overview.html; Internet; accessed 3 March 2004.

The end of the Cold War coincided with the zenith of Puerto Rican cultural nationalism on the island and the mainland.⁷⁵ Since the inception of the Commonwealth in 1952, cultural nationalism had been exulted by the ruling *Partido Popular Democrático* (Popular Democratic Party – PPD) and its associated elites as a way of simultaneously deflating pro-independence momentum while creating a cultural dike against statehood.⁷⁶ By the 1990s cultural nationalism had become the ruling ideology for the Puerto Rican nation, which Jorge Duany argues has become a transnational nation, a “nation on the move.” The constant flow of people, goods and information between the island and major Puerto Rican enclaves like New York City, Chicago and Hartford has created a deterritorialized nation that nevertheless retains a strong identity. The transnational nature of the Puerto Rican nation has precluded the development of a traditional political nationalism, but it has not diminished the sense of cultural nationalism amongst Puerto Ricans.⁷⁷ This cultural nationalism played a role in the eventual resolution of the Vieques conflict. As this form of nationalism matured, the Navy’s perceived indifference towards the concerns of the people of Vieques became more intolerable. As Barreto puts it,

⁷⁵ Puerto Rican scholar Jorge Duany differentiates between cultural nationalism, which is “based on the assertion of the moral and spiritual autonomy of each people,” and political nationalism, which is “based on the doctrine that every people should have its own sovereign national government.” See: Jorge Duany, *The Puerto Rican Nation on the Move: Identities on the Island and in the United States*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002) 5.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 281-285.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

For years local fishermen, environmentalists, and independence activists warned the military that such a calamity [the death of David Sanes] was not only possible but also likely. As infuriating as the death of itself was the military's frigid indifference to it. Puerto Rico was soaked in a new wave of nationalist fervor, but this nationalism was not a call for independence from the United States. It was an act of "self empowerment."⁷⁸

It was in this context of a new geopolitical situation, the curtailment of American military expenditures and presence around the world, and a growing cultural nationalist sentiment within the Puerto Rican transnational nation that the Vieques situation would eventually come to a head.

RENEWED ACTIVISM AND NAVY ENTRENCHMENT

After a lull in pro-Vieques activism during the 1980s brought about by disillusionment over the failure of the Fortín Accord, interest in the Vieques case began to reemerge during the 1990s.⁷⁹ In late October 1993, a Navy jet accidentally dropped five five-hundred-pound bombs six miles off-course, near the buffer zone between the military and civilian zones.⁸⁰ A week later, thirty protesters picketed outside Camp

⁷⁸ Barreto 37.

⁷⁹ As was described in Chapter II, the Fortín Accord (also known as the Memorandum of Understanding) bound the Navy to be a good neighbor, bring jobs to Vieques, plant trees, protect wildlife and fragile ecosystems, reduce bombing noise, and ensure safe practices for weapons training. In exchange, the Puerto Rican government would drop its environmental lawsuits against the Navy. The Navy did not live up to its end of the deal.

⁸⁰ McCaffrey 124.

García (the largest Navy installation in Vieques), carrying placards and chanting anti-military slogans.⁸¹ A year earlier, a smaller group of protesters had gathered at the same place to denounce the use of napalm on the target range the previous year.⁸² Momentum for a broad anti-Navy movement was slowly building, but first activists would have to address the divisions that had plagued earlier efforts and had precluded the movement from gathering broader support at home and abroad.

Though the end of the Cold War undermined its most powerful frame for justifying its presence in Vieques, the Navy maintained its position regarding the island. In 1994, Carlos Romero Barceló, then the Puerto Rican non-voting delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives, introduced a H.R. 3831, a bill to return to the municipality of Vieques a portion of the lands used by the Navy to store munitions.⁸³ The Navy firmly opposed this bill. Through its representative, Admiral Ernest Christensen, it argued that the changing geopolitical situation had created an even greater need for the Navy's training facilities in the island, as deployments to Haiti, Bosnia, the Persian Gulf and other hotspots allegedly proved.⁸⁴ During his testimony before the House

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Congress, House, *Vieques Lands Transfer Act of 1994*, 103rd Cong., 2nd sess., H.R. 3831, *Congressional Record*, Vol. 140, Page H410.

⁸⁴ Congress, Senate, U.S. House Insular and International Affairs Subcommittee of the House Committee on Natural Resources, *Vieques Lands Transfer Act of 1994*, 103rd Cong., 2nd sess., 4 October 1994.

Insular and International Affairs Subcommittee, Admiral Christensen, perhaps trying to emphasize Vieques' paramount importance to the Navy, said the following:

I believe that the issue here today is rather the western part of the island, which comprises somewhere between 7,600 and 8,000 acres, and whether the ammunition which is stored on the western side is worth more than the municipality of Vieques to this Nation than to the Nation in its national defense. It is my firm conviction it is worth more to the United States Nation and to the national defense.⁸⁵

Despite this remark and what it revealed about the Navy's attitude towards Vieques and its population, the bill never made it out of committee.

Though the failure of H.R. 3831 was a setback for the Vieques cause, activists continued to reemerge throughout the 1990s, consciously trying to avoid the mistakes that had hindered their efforts in the past. In 1993, a group of longtime Vieques activists formed the *Comité Pro Rescate y Desarrollo de Vieques* (Committee Pro Rescue and Development of Vieques – CPRDV), and organization dedicated to recovering the entire island for its residents and to implementing a model of sustainable economic development.⁸⁶ What distinguished this group from prior organizations was its pragma-

⁸⁵ Quoted in McCaffrey 137.

⁸⁶ For documents about the sustainable development plan, see "Guías Para el Desarrollo Sostenible de Vieques," *Comité Pro Rescate y Desarrollo de Vieques* [Web site]; available from <http://www.prorescatevieques.org/guias.htm>; Internet; accessed 3 March 2004.

tism. Though the core of the organization was composed of *independentistas* (advocates of independence) and other sorts of leftists, the group sought to build bridges to more moderate individuals and constituencies in order to deflect charges during previous campaigns that these were led by communists and anti-American leftists.⁸⁷ For example, at the founding meeting of the organization, the committee drew in people who had not experience with earlier activist campaigns and did not subscribe to any separatist ideology. The committee also brought Dr. Rafael Rivera Castaño, a retired epidemiologist, who became a prominent, moderate face for the organization.⁸⁸ This early effort by the CPRDV to reach across the traditional political divides of Puerto Rican society would set the tone for the post-April 1999 campaign, during which the vast majority of the organizations involved went to great lengths to maintain unity.

Another facet of the CPRDV's pragmatism was the development of an alternative vision for the future after the Navy's departure. Mario Martínez, one of the founders of the Committee, put it thusly:

More than anything you have to work with concrete issues. We can't be very idealistic. And we have to establish alternatives. We [in the Crusade] didn't establish alternatives. We have to establish alternatives to what we want if the navy leaves. What are we going to do with this land? Why do we want the

⁸⁷ McCaffrey 126.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

navy to go? We want them out just to get rid of them, or because we plan to develop the economy. This is important.⁸⁹

The CPRDV's first actions confirmed the pragmatic and moderate image it wished to convey. The Committee collected signatures for a petition to Secretary of Defense Les Aspin to close the military installations in Vieques. The petition was ignored until the errant bomb incident of October 1993, after which it served to help convince the mayor of Vieques to sponsor a resolution calling for a halt to the bombing and a return of the land to *viequenses* hands. A similar resolution was approved in Puerto Rico and sent to Capitol Hill, prompting Romero Barceló to propose his land return bill.⁹⁰

FIGHTING THE RELOCATABLE OVER-THE-HORIZON RADAR: A PRELUDE

As pro-Vieques activism gathered momentum in the early '90s, the U.S. Navy asserted a variation of its traditional national security frame for remaining in Vieques: the war on drugs.

In the spring of 1994, the Navy announced it had chosen Vieques as the site of a new anti-drug trafficking project: a \$10 million Relocatable Over-The-Horizon Radar (ROTHR) transmitter.⁹¹ A product of the Cold War era, the ROTHR system “was originally designed to provide tactical warning to battle group commanders of air and

⁸⁹ Quoted in McCaffrey 127.

⁹⁰ Mullenneaux 39, Barreto 35, McCaffrey 126.

surface threats at an extended range allowing time for responsive engagement.”⁹² The system would now be modified to intersect drug-smuggling aircraft, and it would consist of three parts: the Vieques transmitter, a receiver located in the town of Lajas, Puerto Rico, and an Operations Control Center in Norfolk, Virginia.⁹³ Due to the wave of drug trafficking and violence Puerto Rico was experiencing at the time, pro-statehood governor Pedro Roselló hailed it as an important contribution to his administration’s anti-drug efforts.⁹⁴

The communities of Lajas and Vieques, however, did not share the governor’s enthusiasm for the ROTHHR project. Their gravest reservations had to do with health concerns and economic development. *Viequenses* had long suspected that the Navy’s presence was to blame for various health problems affecting the population. They were particularly concerned about the unusually high cancer rate in the island, which in 1993 was estimated by the Puerto Rican Department of Health to be 27 percent higher than in Puerto Rico.⁹⁵ There was also concern amongst members of the community that the radar’s aesthetic appearance would blight an area they hoped could be used for

⁹¹ Mullenneaux 39.

⁹² “AN/TPS-71 ROTHHR (Relocatable Over-the-Horizon Radar),” *Federation of American Scientists* [Web site]; available from <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/usa/airdef/an-tps-71.htm>; Internet; accessed 5 March 2004.

⁹³ McCaffrey 138.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

ecotourism.⁹⁶ In addition, many *viequenses* suspected the Navy was using the radar as a subterfuge to entrench its presence on the island.⁹⁷

Together with an environmental group called *Misión Industrial* (Industrial Mission), the CPRDV engaged in a vigorous effort of information politics, educating the Vieques population about the potential health hazards of the ROTH. Opposition to the radar brought about unprecedented unity amongst the population of Vieques. Perhaps the best example of this unity is the fact that the Vieques Conservation and Historic Trust (VCHT), an environmental organization composed mostly of wealthy American seasonal residents who were staunch allies of the Navy, joined the CPRDV-led opposition to the ROTH project.⁹⁸ Framing the ROTH controversy as being primarily about potential cancer risks, diminished economic opportunities and environmental blight (and its concomitant effects of depressed property values) allowed opponents of the radar to mobilize a larger coalition that could not easily be cast as “anti-American” or “communist.”

Soon after, residents of Lajas formed an organization called the *Frente Unido Pro Defensa del Valle de Lajas* (United Front for the Defense of the Lajas Valley –

⁹⁵ Iván Román, “Study: Vieques' Cancer Rates Higher Than Puerto Rico's,” *Orlando Sentinel*, May 10, 2003 [Web site]; available from <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/2003/vol7n22/StudyVQCancer-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 5 March 2004.

⁹⁶ McCaffrey 139.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, Mullenneaux 39.

FUPDVL). This organization framed its opposition to the radar in similar terms, citing economic concerns and potential health risks as the main reasons of its opposition to the radar.⁹⁹ The Front's message was also peppered with cultural nationalist language, as can be seen in this passage from its Web site:

Due to the arrogant and unilateral way in which the Navy has expressed that it would impose this project, without considering the opinion of the Puerto Rican people, we hold that [the project] constitutes an abuse towards our people and a clear conflict with our democratic system of government.¹⁰⁰

Eventually the CPRDV and the Front joined in fighting the establishment of the ROTHHR, staging rallies and other types of demonstrations together, including one of the largest anti-military rallies in Puerto Rican history. Their efforts were only half successful: the ROTHHR receiver was relocated from Lajas to a military installation in neighboring Juana Díaz, but the transmitter was built in Vieques as planned.¹⁰¹

In retrospect, the campaign to prevent the construction of the ROTHHR can be seen as a prelude of the post-1999 Vieques campaign. During the ROTHHR controversy, activists proved their ability to piece together a diverse coalition of actors that

⁹⁸ McCaffrey 140-141, Mullenneaux 40.

⁹⁹ "We "ROTHR" Not: Puerto Rico Sin Radar Es Un Mejor Lugar," *Frente Unido Pro Defensa del Valle de Lajas* [Web site]; available from <http://premium.caribe.net/~frente1/abr96.htm>; Internet; accessed 6 March 2004.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

bridged traditional cleavages in Puerto Rican society, particularly the reliably toxic divisions of partisan politics and political status preference. Vieques activists also proved skillful at identifying common interests with activists from the big island and forging coalitions with them. The frames utilized by activists, such as fears of cancer and the curtailment of economic opportunity, allowed actors within the coalition to voice their opposition to the radar in a safe, politically moderate environment without fear of being labeled “anti-American.” The Navy’s attitude, perhaps best exemplified by the comments of a spokesperson to the effect that “Puerto Rico is a territory of the U.S. and the Pentagon decided it is the best location to raise the radar” only fanned the flames of cultural nationalism and helped unite the anti-radar coalition even further.¹⁰² Thus, despite the anti-ROTHR campaign’s failure to prevent the construction of the radar, it laid a foundation for the kind of activism that would eventually prove successful in Vieques.

THE PRO-VIEQUES TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVIST NETWORK

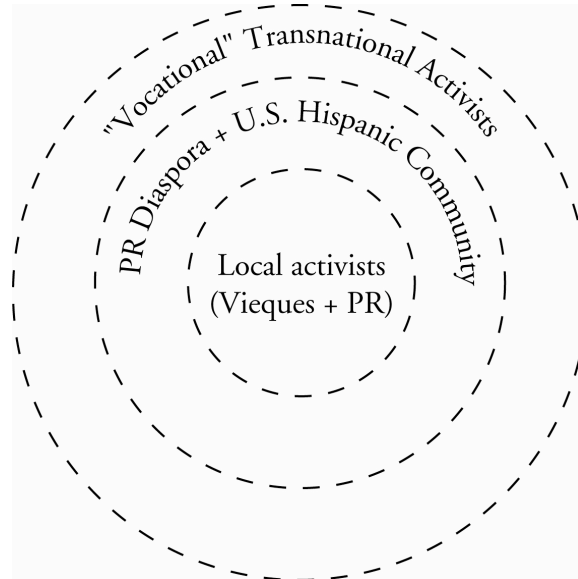
The transnational activist network that emerged around the issue of Vieques was composed of three levels: local activists, the Puerto Rican diaspora and the U.S. Hispanic community, and long-standing transnational activists, which are termed here

¹⁰¹ McCaffrey 144.

¹⁰² Quoted in McCaffrey 144.

“vocational.”¹⁰³ The relationship between these levels of activists is expressed in the graphic below.

Figure 4: Illustration of the Pro-Vieques Transnational Activist Network



The inner circle represents the coalition forged between *viequense* and Puerto Rican activists, the origins of which can be traced back to the Fishermen’s War and matured during the ROTHF campaign. This coalition provided both the factual information that would become vital to the campaigns success, such as information about the health, safety and environmental risks the Navy’s activities carried for the Vieques

¹⁰³ This thesis uses the term “vocational” to define “full time” transnational activists who involve themselves in various campaigns out of a moral sense of right and wrong and are not primarily moved by national, cultural or ethnic identities.

population. They also provided the network with the most compelling frames of the campaign, such as “Peace for Vieques,” which would help enlarge the network and thus disseminate these frames even further. Perhaps more importantly, they provided some of the most dramatic symbols of the campaign. For example, Alberto de Jesús (also known as “Tito Kayak”), a well known Puerto Rican environmental activist, climbed onto the top deck of the Statue of Liberty along with five others and unfurled the Puerto Rican and Vieques flags on the statue, as well as two gigantic banners reading “Vieques” and “Peace.” He was sentenced to one year in jail for his actions.¹⁰⁴ The most dramatic symbol, however, was the occupation of the bombing range and the mass arrests this action provoked.

The middle circle represents the coalition forged between the Puerto Rican diaspora in the U.S. and the Hispanic community in general. This political alliance already existed and was activated on behalf of the Vieques campaign. It provided the power to mobilize Hispanic constituencies within the U.S. on behalf of the Vieques cause. Their mobilization was based on cultural and ethnic identities. The Puerto Rican diaspora, being an integral part of the Puerto Rican nation and having reached political maturity in the U.S., rallied to the Vieques cause. Various Hispanic communi-

¹⁰⁴ “Vieques Update,” *Fellowship of Reconciliation* [Web site]; available from <http://www.forusa.org/Programs/puertorico/archives/ViequesUpdate0202-A.html>; Internet; accessed 5 March 2004.

ties in the U.S. rallied to the Vieques cause as well out of a sense of solidarity under a shared macro-cultural identity.

The outer circle represents the multiple, religious, environmental, antimilitary, civil rights and human rights organizations that joined the Vieques campaign. These “vocational” transnational activists mobilized public opinion to put pressure on the U.S. government to withdraw the Navy from Vieques. This is significant because, as Peter Trumbore has argued, public opinion can influence the outcome of international negotiations under certain conditions.¹⁰⁵ They also brought to bear significant amounts of media coverage due to the high public profile of some of the most prominent activists.

In the figure above, the dashed lines that form the circles are meant to represent the porous nature of this relationship. Different levels of activism influenced each other throughout the campaign. The order of the circles is meant to convey the progression of the activism from local to transnational as well as the centrality of local activists in their role as providers of information and symbolic power; it is not meant to convey a rigid hierarchical structure for the campaign. The formation of the different layers of the network is described below.

¹⁰⁵ Peter Trumbore, “Public Opinion as a Domestic Constraint in International Negotiations: Two Level Games in the Anglo-Irish Peace Process,” *International Studies Quarterly* 42, no. 3 (September 1998), 545-565.

LOCAL ACTIVISTS: “I’M STAYING UNTIL THE NAVY LEAVES”

On April 19, 1999, David Sanes Rodríguez, 35, was standing outside Observation Post 1 (OP1) of the live-fire range located on the eastern tip of Vieques. As he performed his duties as a security guard, patrolling the range for possible intruders, the pilot of a FA-18C Hornet accidentally dropped two Mark-82 500-pound bombs a mile and a half off target. The bombs exploded 35 feet and 55 feet from where Sanes was standing, knocking him unconscious. Four civilians inside OP1 were injured. Sanes was not so lucky; he bled to death from his injuries.¹⁰⁶

The death of Sanes, one of seventeen children and a native of Barrio La Mina, Vieques, proved to be for *viequenses* and Puerto Ricans alike the straw that broke the camel’s back.¹⁰⁷ According to Flavio Cumpiano, the CPRDV’s representative in Washington, DC, there are several reasons why Sanes’ death proved to be such a turning point:

First, David Sanes is a *viequense*, he died but there where four others that were injured. The reports that the Navy wanted to sweep it under the rug, they didn’t want to make the other four survivors available for interviews, so it was just all part of the whole cover-up and lying that the Navy has been accused of in Vieques. It was also the insensitivity of the Navy toward the death, and I think it was just, you know, it gained attention in Puerto Rico because it is the death of

¹⁰⁶ Mullenneaux 13-14, McCaffrey 147.

someone and there had been similar incidents and close calls in Vieques and people I think just got tired of it.¹⁰⁸

This assessment of the role Sanes' death as a social catalyst deserves attention. Cumpiano mentions before all else the fact that Sanes was a *viequense*, thereby alluding to the strong sense of regional identity that had emerged on the island as a response to the Navy's presence. Cumpiano's remarks about the Navy's response to the tragedy suggest that it played to previously held notions of the Navy as an institution. Finally, there is the dramatic aspect of the tragedy. It is much easier to focus attention on an actual death than on the potential for accidents or the high incidence of cancer that the Navy's presence supposedly caused. In short, there was a powerful symbolic value in the death of David Sanes. Activists immediately grasped this value and began to harness it for the benefit of their cause.

A few days after Sanes' death, hundreds attended a memorial in his honor at a local Catholic church. Afterwards, the CPRDV led a group of fishermen, anti-Navy activists and members of the Sanes family members to the military lands in order to erect a twelve-foot cross in Sanes' honor. What was supposed to be a quiet religious ceremony quickly took an unexpected turn. Alberto de Jesús, also known as "Tito Kayak," a self-proclaimed environmental "warrior" legendary for his pro-environment

¹⁰⁷ Barreto 41.

stunts, gave an impassioned speech, after which he declared his intention to stay in the bombing range.¹⁰⁹ De Jesús expressed his intentions quite succinctly: “I’m staying until the Navy leaves.”¹¹⁰ Other activists, at first leery of such confrontational tactics, left De Jesús alone the first night, but came back the next, with more activists soon to follow.¹¹¹ De Jesús’ act of activist entrepreneurship sparked one of the most important components of the Vieques campaign: the acts of civil disobedience through the illegal occupation of the Navy bombing range.

The civil disobedience campaign experienced a surge when the president of the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP), Rubén Berríos Martínez, announced that he and other members of his party would set up camp at the bombing range.¹¹² Berríos, a veteran of previous civil disobedience campaigns, brought with him a proven party organization, resources, international contacts and, most importantly, a priceless amount of free media that shone a spotlight on the Vieques cause. Throughout the Vieques campaign, Berríos and the PIP would remain vital nodes in the transnational activist network that formed around the cause. Soon other organizations representing a diverse sampling of Puerto Rican society set up disobedience camps in the bombing range. By

¹⁰⁸ Flavio Cumpiano, interview by author, digital recording, Washington, DC, 9 March 2004.

¹⁰⁹ McCaffrey 147-148.

¹¹⁰ Mullenneaux 42.

¹¹¹ McCaffrey 148.

late February 2000, there were fourteen distinct civil disobedience camps.¹¹³ The chart below details the camps in operation by this time:

Table 1: Civil Disobedience Camps – February 2000¹¹⁴

Name of Camp	Type of Organization
Cayo la Yayí	Héctor Olivieri, <i>viequense</i>
Diócesis de Caguas	Catholic Church
Estudiantes Universidad de PR	University Students
Congreso Nacional Hostosiano	Pro-independence organization
Viequenses en el Exilio	Exiled <i>viequenses</i>
Federación de Maestros de PR	Teachers Union
Unions	Labor movement
Religiosos	Religious camp
Puerto Rico Independence Party	Pro-independence organization
Todo Puerto Rico con Vieques	Vieques solidarity group
Monte David	1 st camp / fishermen
Mapepe	“Don Carlos,” <i>viequense</i>
Campamento Paz y Justicia	CPRDV

The civil disobedience camps became the central hub of the transnational network that emerged around the issue of Vieques. Says McCaffrey,

The encampments halted naval bombing exercises and military maneuvers on Vieques Island for over a year. Moreover, they kept Vieques in the spotlight of the international media. They provided a concrete way for people to become

¹¹² Angel José De León, “Rumbo a Vieques Berríos,” *El Mundo*, 30 April 1999 [Web site]; http://www.independencia.net/viequesBerr_mundo.html; Internet; accessed 6 March 2004.

¹¹³ Paul Jeffrey, “Protest Camps Grow on Vieques,” *National Catholic Reporter*, 10 March 2000 [Web site]; available from <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol4n11/ProtestsGrow-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 6 March 2004.

involved in Vieques' struggle. The encampments elicited a complex network of support, maintained by thousands of people from Vieques, Puerto Rico and the United States.¹¹⁵

Local activists supported the activities of the trespassers through various types of political mobilization, such as marches, rallies and vigils. On February 21, 2000, religious leaders organized a march to protest Gov. Roselló's decision to accept the resumption of naval maneuvers in Vieques. Between eighty-thousand and one hundred and fifty-thousand people attended the rally, one of the biggest political demonstrations in the island's history. A contemporary account of the march described it this way:

Carrying banners bearing the portrait of Jesus and reading, "We Want Peace," along with red, white and blue Puerto Rican flags, the protesters staged a silent march along a one-mile stretch of San Juan's Las Americas Expressway, cordoned off by hundreds of police officers.¹¹⁶

Religious leaders framed the march as a way to seek peace for Vieques, a frame that appealed to different sections of the population beyond partisan lines or their feelings about the Puerto Rico-U.S. relationship. When asked about complaints from pro-

¹¹⁴ Adapter from Jorge Rodríguez Beruff, "Vieques y la Construcción de un Poder Civil en Puerto Rico," *Red Betances* [Web site]; http://www.redbetances.com/forocivil/html/vieques_poder_civil.html; Internet; accessed 6 March 2004.

¹¹⁵ McCaffrey 152.

statehood politicians that the religious leaders sponsoring the march were “separatists,” Marta Figueroa, a 52-year-old woman from the town of Juncos, insisted that “I’m here because it’s important to keep the peace in Vieques, and there doesn’t have to be any other reason.” Modesto Santiago Alvarado, a 72-year-old veteran of Korea and Vietnam, spoke in similar terms: “Even though we’re veterans and have done our service, I want to tell the president of the United States that we want peace for Vieques.”¹¹⁷

Meanwhile, the trespassers successfully halted naval exercises on the bombing range from April, 1999 until May, 2000. On May 4th, 2000, 300 federal agents descended on the bombing range and arrested over 200 demonstrators, who presented no resistance.¹¹⁸ The arrests were featured prominently in the local, U.S. and international media. The cycle would repeat itself many more times between 2000 and 2003. Trespassers, some prominent, some not, would enter the bombing range, be arrested by federal law enforcement, arraigned, tried, convicted and sentenced in federal court to serve terms some judged to be excessive.¹¹⁹ Supporters would rally in front of federal

¹¹⁶ “Tens Of Thousands March In Puerto Rico To Protest Vieques Accord; Religious Leaders Oppose Navy Training Plans,” *Associated Press*, 22 Feb. 2000 [Web site]; available from <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol4n08/March-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 7 March 2004.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Don Bohning, “Vieques Protesters Evicted; U.S. Agents Remove Demonstrators from Bombing Range Off Puerto Rico,” *Miami Herald*, 5 May 2000 [Web site]; <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol4n18/ProtEvicted-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 7 March 2004.

¹¹⁹ Karen Matthews, “Governors Decry ‘Excessive’ Sentences For Vieques Protesters,” *Associated Press*, 24 May 2001 [Web site]; available from <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/2001/vol5n21/Media1-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 7 March 2004.

jails in Puerto Rico and receive those convicted as heroes when they were released. Substantial press coverage would surround these events, adding to the public's support in Puerto Rico, the U.S. and around the world for the Vieques cause.¹²⁰ Civil disobedience provided strong symbolic value that activists and citizens around the world could understand and to which they could relate.

Another political mobilization tactic in which local activists heavily engaged was information politics. As Cumpiano states:

What April 1999 did with the hearings and the field studies...the people knew, and the first step was to get the information out, which the Navy had tried to hide, or the central government didn't really share what they knew. And then after that it wasn't that hard, once you have the information as to what's going on, to translate that into action.¹²¹

The CPRDV (Cumpiano's organization) engaged heavily in information politics. For example, CPRDV members established two Internet discussion groups through Yahoo! Groups, totaling 1,972 members as of March, 2004.¹²² More than 700

¹²⁰ Consider the following numbers as evidence of the substantial press coverage: a LexisNexis search for this thesis, using the keywords "Vieques" and "Navy," yielded 891 major U.S. newspaper articles, 71 magazine and journal articles, over one thousand television transcripts, over one-thousand wire reports, 233 stories in the European press, ninety two in the Asian press and thirty in the Middle East/African press.

¹²¹ Cumpiano 2004.

¹²² "bieke_pr," *CPRDV* [Web site]; http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bieke_pr/; Internet; accessed 8 March 2004; "ViequesLibre," *CPRDV* [Web site]; <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/viequeslibre/>; Internet; accessed 8 March 2004.

messages were sent to group members through these groups, containing information about the allegedly harmful effects of the Navy's presence in Vieques, as well as press releases about pro-Vieques activities in Puerto Rico and the U.S., and the latest developments from the civil disobedience encampments.¹²³ The CPRDV also disseminated information through press conferences and forums, and engaged in direct lobbying, focusing its attention on the White House through a letter-writing campaign. Because the final decision on Vieques was in the president's hands, CPRDV members, including Cumpiano, deemed the White House a worthy focus of attention was by.¹²⁴

The local activists' efforts had put public opinion in Vieques and Puerto Rico firmly on their side. In November 1999, support in Puerto Rico for the Navy's departure stood at fifty-six percent; by May 2000, seventy percent of Puerto Ricans wanted the Navy to leave Vieques.¹²⁵ *Viequense* public opinion was even more unified; a poll conducted in June 2000 revealed eighty-eight percent of Vieques residents wanted the

¹²³ In addition to the groups created by CPRDV, other Yahoo! groups were formed to support the Vieques cause, while existing groups incorporated the Vieques cause into their communities. A search of Yahoo! groups that either directly or indirectly supported the Vieques cause, including the two CPRDV groups, yielded twenty-one groups with a membership of approximately 4,300.

¹²⁴ Cumpiano 2004.

¹²⁵ "Poll Suggests Lukewarm Support for Ending Navy Presence; 56% Want Navy To Leave," *Associated Press*, 19 Nov. 1999 [Web site]; available from <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol3n48/ClintonClose-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 8 March 2004; Juan Gonzalez, "Vieques Libre," *Altnet.org* [Web site]; available from <http://www.altnet.org/story.html?StoryID=1011>; Internet; accessed 8 March 2004.

Navy to leave the island.¹²⁶ By realizing the symbolic power of David Sanes' death and harnessing it, creating dramatic symbolism of their own through acts of civil disobedience, choosing frames with wide appeal and disseminating information about their cause, pro-Vieques activists mobilized public opinion effectively and constrained the bargaining positions that Puerto Rican political leaders could take when bargaining with the United States. A more detailed analysis of this aspect of the negotiation appears in the next chapter.

THE PUERTO RICAN DIASPORA AND THE U.S. HISPANIC COMMUNITY

As has been noted above, the Puerto Rican nation today can be best characterized using Duany's phrase: a nation on the move. "The Puerto Rican nation is no longer restricted to the Island but instead is constituted by two distinct yet closely intertwined fragments: that of Puerto Rico itself and that of the diasporic communities settled in the continental United States."¹²⁷ This being the case, prominent members of the Puerto Rican diaspora became involved in the Vieques struggle soon after David Sanes' death and remained active throughout the struggle. All three U.S. Representatives of Puerto Rican descent were arrested during the Vieques campaign: Nydia Velázquez (D-NY) and Luis Gutiérrez (D-IL) were detained during the May 2000 fed-

¹²⁶ Proviana Colon Diaz, "Caguas Diocese Poll: 88.5% Of Vieques Wants Navy Out Now," *PuertoRicoWOW News Service* [Web site]; available from <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol4n26/VQHeads-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 8 March 2004.

¹²⁷ Duany 5.

eral raid on the civil disobedience camps;¹²⁸ José Serrano (D-NY) was detained that same day inside White House grounds while protesting the arrests in Vieques.¹²⁹ Cumpiano highlights the importance of Puerto Rican diaspora leaders in the pro-Vieques campaign; leaders like Bronx Borough Assemblyman José Rivera, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1199 President Dennis Rivera, Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrión and others provided what he refers to as “political muscle,” putting political pressure on state and federal officials to support the Navy’s withdrawal from Vieques.¹³⁰

The Puerto Rican diaspora was part of a larger coalition of American Hispanics who became involved in the Vieques campaign. In fact, support for the Vieques cause was widespread within the Hispanic community. When U.S. senators threatened to close down the Roosevelt Roads Naval Base unless Puerto Rico acquiesced on Vieques, the Hispanic Coalition for Puerto Rico Self-Determination, a group composed of national Hispanic organizations like the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the American G.I. Forum, the National Association of Hispanic Publications, the National Hispanic Policy Forum and the Hispanic National Bar Association, came to the defense of Vieques and Puerto

¹²⁸ Chris Hawley, “Vieques Protesters Arrested,” *Associated Press* [Web site]; available from <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol4n17/ProtesArrested-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 9 March 2004.

¹²⁹ Leonor Mulero, “Serrano Protesta y Lo Arrestan,” *El Nuevo Día*, 5 May 2000 [Web site]; <http://www.adendi.com>; Internet; accessed 10 March 2004.

Rico. In a statement, Rick Dovalina, President of LULAC, said, "U.S. Hispanics deplore the manner in which Puerto Rico has been threatened with economic reprisals by some Republican senators. This is no way to be treating people who have served valiantly in the defense of our country."¹³¹ This same statement by the Coalition suggest an underlying element of ethnic and cultural solidarity in the Hispanic community's support for the Vieques campaign when it states that "any disparagement or censure of the American citizens of Puerto Rico will be treated by Hispanic Americans as an insult to us all."¹³² Meanwhile, members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus lobbied both their fellow members as well as the White House to support the Navy's exit.¹³³ In a letter addressed to President Bush and dated October 16, 2002, the CHC asked the president to, among other things, to commit to a timetable for the Navy's withdrawal from Vieques. One of the last lines of the letter read: "Hispanics throughout the United States are following this issue very closely."¹³⁴ The growing political clout of

¹³⁰ Cumpiano 2004.

¹³¹ "Hispanics Warn Congress: Stop Threats to Puerto Rico Over Vieques," *The Puerto Rico Herald*, 26 January 2000 [Web site]; available from <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol4n04/HispWarnCongress-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 10 March 2004.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Robert Becker, "Vieques Flexes Potent Political Muscle," *The Puerto Rico Herald*, 13 July 2001 [Web site]; <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/2001/vol5n28/PRR528-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 10 March 2004.

¹³⁴ "Congressional Hispanic Caucus Members Demand Action from Bush on Vieques," *Yorkshire Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament* [Web site]; available from <http://cndyorks.gn.apc.org/caab/articles/vieques175.htm>; Internet; accessed 10 March 2004.

the Hispanic community and its influence in the Vieques negotiations will be discussed in the following chapter.

“VOCATIONAL” TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVISTS

According to Cumpiano, these vocational transnational activists were “key” to the success of the campaign:

You have public political figures, religious and political figures like Rev. Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, who spent time in jail in Puerto Rico. Actors like Edwards James Olmos, you have renowned figures like Robert Kennedy, Jr. These are people whose participation and involvement raises the issue beyond Puerto Rico to all the U.S. and even beyond the U.S. You had the Dalai Lama send a letter in favor of getting the Navy out. You had Nobel Peace Prize winners like Rigoberta Menchú and Oscar Arias. You had rallies and marches for peace in Vieques all over the world...Canada, Italy...and certainly that put pressure on the U.S. government.¹³⁵

Because of the frames local activists had adopted for the Vieques cause, which emphasized the health and environmental effects of the Navy’s presence on the island as well as issues of human rights and quality of life issue (“Peace for Vieques”), the campaign had broad appeal for transnational activists of many different stripes. Because of the alleged use of depleted uranium in Navy munitions fired in Vieques, envi-

ronmental activists concerned about depleted uranium supported the campaign, linking it to the use of such munitions in Kosovo.¹³⁶ Religious organizations, mobilized by their ties to religious groups in Puerto Rico as well as the “peace” frame, provided much of the pro-Vieques transnational activism. A variety of religious groups such as the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, the Christian Peacemaker Teams, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the National Council of Churches and others amplified the pleas for peace from local Vieques activists. In a letter sent to President Clinton on May 2, 2000, emphasized the peaceful nature of the protests occurring on the beaches of Vieques.¹³⁷

The mass arrests of trespassers at the bombing range brought about support from civil and human rights organizations concerned about alleged abuses committed by federal authorities. Amnesty International sent observers to the island to investigate allegations that military police used excessive force against activists,¹³⁸ while the ACLU filed a lawsuit against the Navy “behalf of peaceful crowds protesting the

¹³⁵ Cumpiano 2004.

¹³⁶ Toby Eglund, “Depleted Uranium: The Vieques-Kosovo Connection,” *The Gully*, 12 Feb. 2001 [Web site]; http://www.thegully.com/essays/puertorico/010212depleted_uranium.html; Internet; accessed 10 March 2004.

¹³⁷ “NCC Emphasizes Peaceful Nature of Vieques Protests, Presses Clinton for an Immediate End to War Exercises There,” *National Council of Churches*, 2 May 2000 [Web site]; available from <http://www.wfn.org/2000/05/msg00016.html>; Internet; accessed 11 March 2004.

¹³⁸ “Puerto Rico: Amnesty International Sends Observer to Vieques,” *Amnesty International*, 9 May 2001 [Web site]; <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/ENGAMR47f0012001>; Internet; accessed 11 March 2004.

United States Navy's bombing exercises on Vieques Island who were repeatedly assaulted with tear gas and rubber bullets by Naval personnel in riot gear.”¹³⁹ The intervention of these groups in the campaign not only highlighted the treatment of activists by the government, but shone a light on the larger Vieques campaign, thereby building public support for the campaign’s objectives. The role of this mobilization of public opinion both in the U.S. and abroad in the Vieques negotiations will be examined in greater detail in the following chapter.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have sought to describe the transnational activists network that coalesced around the issues of Vieques. Here we have documented how local activists consciously sought to avoid mistakes that had impaired the formation of a strong and broad pro-Vieques coalition in the past. By adhering to a moderate political agenda that avoided the most divisive issues in Puerto Rican politics such as the U.S.-Puerto Rico relationship, while highlighting pragmatic concerns like health and economic development, local activists were able to put enlarge their network in Vieques and Puerto Rico. The failed ROTHF campaign allowed activists to strengthen this network, and the experience gained during this campaign would prove useful for the future. The

¹³⁹ “Navy Violated Free Speech Rights of Vieques Protesters, ACLU Charges in Lawsuit,” *American Civil Liberties Union*, 18 June 2001, <http://www.aclu.org/FreeSpeech/FreeSpeech.cfm?ID=7320&c=86>.

formation of a strong local activist network would prove vital to the success of the Vieques campaign in the future.

This chapter has also provided an analysis of the components of the transnational activist network that coalesced around the issue of Vieques. This analysis privileges the role of the local activists because of the crucial components it provided to the larger network. Local activists provided the bulk of the information used by activists in general to advocate in favor of Vieques; they provided much of the symbols and images that became synonymous with the campaign; they crafted compelling frames that other activists reproduced; and by influencing public opinion in Vieques and Puerto Rico, they constrained the negotiation alternatives of the Puerto Rican government. Notwithstanding the privileged role of local activists in this analysis, the Puerto Rican diaspora, the Hispanic community and vocational activists played crucial roles as well. Puerto Ricans and Hispanics in the United States brought to bear considerable political influence on behalf of the Vieques cause, while vocational activists amplified the campaign's message and influence public opinion in the U.S. and around the world. The following chapter will provide an analysis of how the different types of activists influenced the various levels of the Vieques negotiation by applying the two-level game metaphor to this case.

Chapter V. A TWO-LEVEL GAME ANALYSIS OF THE VIEQUES NEGOTIATIONS

The U.S. Navy maintained a significant presence in Vieques from 1941 to 2003. During that period of time, local and Puerto Rican activists made numerous attempts to either ameliorate the perceived harm caused by the Navy's presence, or to affect the Navy's departure from the island. With few exceptions, these attempts were largely unsuccessful. Yet in 2003, after facing a lengthy period of pro-Vieques activism begun in 1999, the U.S. Navy left Vieques.

Why did this happen? Theories of international relations that privilege distribution of power scenarios would have predicted that, due to the power asymmetry embedded in the political relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States, the U.S. government would not be susceptible to pressure from Puerto Rico to withdraw the Navy from Vieques. Yet the outcome of the Vieques negotiations proved to be much closer to Puerto Rican interests than to original American interests. A distribution of power scenario cannot, by itself, explain this outcome.

The argument of this thesis is that a transnational activist network coalesced around the issue of Vieques, triggered a negotiation process between the U.S. and Puerto Rico and affected the outcome of this negotiation on behalf of the weaker actor (Puerto Rico and, specifically, Vieques) through strategies of political mobilization,

which altered the domestic win-sets at both sides of the negotiation and brought the zone of agreement closer to Puerto Rican goals. The effectiveness of these strategies was commensurate with the level of vulnerability of the United States government to these strategies due to the openness of the American political system. This chapter substantiates this argument by analyzing the Vieques negotiation, using Robert Putnam's two-level game metaphor as an analytical framework. It would be useful at this point to reiterate the basic premise of Putnam's metaphor:

At the national level, domestic groups pursue their interests by pressuring their governments to adopt favorable policies, and politicians seek power by constructing coalitions among those groups. At the international level, national governments seek to maximize their own ability to satisfy domestic pressures, while minimizing the adverse consequences of foreign developments.¹⁴⁰

There are two main factors that contributed to the outcome of the negotiation. First, the broad-based coalition of *viequenses* and Puerto Ricans (island and U.S. mainland alike) forged at Level II (the domestic level) constrained the win-set for Puerto Rican negotiators at Level I (the international level). Second, the emergence of a transnational activist network on behalf of Vieques at Level II eventually enlarged the U.S. government's win-set at Level I enough so that it overlapped with the small Puerto Rican win-set. During negotiations under President Clinton, intense lobbying

by mainland Puerto Ricans, Hispanics and vocational transnational activists convinced Clinton to consider withdrawing the Navy from Vieques as an alternative. During negotiations under President Bush, his desire to make political inroads with the Hispanic population allowed him to promise the Navy's withdrawal without suffering significant political damage from his pro-Navy constituencies. Throughout these two periods, transnational activists consistently deployed an effective use of framing, bolstered by political mobilization tactics such as information politics, technocratic and legalistic tactics and direct lobbying. The two factors outlined here are analyzed in greater detail below.

THE CLINTON-ROSSELLÓ ACCORD

NEGOTIATIONS UNDER GOV. ROSSELLÓ

As narrated in Chapter IV, the death of David Sanes triggered a widespread reaction in Vieques and Puerto Rico. This reaction prompted pro-statehood governor Pedro Rosselló to appoint a Special Commission on Vieques, chaired by Secretary of State Norma Burgos and composed of representatives from the three major political parties (the pro-statehood New Progressive Party, the pro-commonwealth Popular Democratic Party and the Puerto Rican Independence Party), the mayor of San Juan and future pro-commonwealth governor Sila Calderón, pro-statehood Vieques mayor

¹⁴⁰ Putnam 434.

Manuela Santiago, representatives of civic organizations such as the Vieques Fishermen's Association and others, and the Archbishop of San Juan.¹⁴¹

Considering the reluctance of most political sectors in the past to directly criticize the U.S. government and the Navy, the report produced by the commission was remarkable for its willingness to do just that. After holding forty-five days of hearings, it placed the blame for the situation in Vieques squarely on the Navy's shoulders. The report charged the Navy with causing the economic stagnation prevalent in Vieques, threatening the survival of endangered species and archeological sites, and with violating the fundamental rights of *viequenses* to the enjoyment of life, liberty, property and the pursuit of happiness as enshrined in the U.S. and Puerto Rican constitutions and international law. Among other things, it called for the immediate cessation of all military activity on the island of Vieques, while simultaneously dismissing the Navy's contention that Vieques was unique and irreplaceable as a training facility. Finally, the commission called for a government working group that would present the Puerto Rican government's position to U.S. public opinion, the White House, Congress and other forums, and for this group to identify and form alliances with groups sympathetic

¹⁴¹ The legitimacy of the Special Commission was bolstered by the inclusion of parties and organizations with different points of view regarding the U.S.-Puerto Rico relationship and American military presence in Vieques and Puerto Rico. The PNP, a pro-statehood party, has traditionally been the staunchest supporter of American military presence in Puerto Rico. The PPD has traditionally been supportive as well, but is less closely associated with the military. The PIP has consistently advocated the demilitarization of the island. The positions of civic organizations on these issues vary, but the

to the government's position.¹⁴² The commission's recommendations were remarkably similar to the demands made by local activists such as the CPRDV.¹⁴³ Governor Rosselló adopted the commission's recommendations as Puerto Rican government's official policy.¹⁴⁴ Since the commission's creation was a direct result of the political mobilization achieved by activists, the adoption of the commission's report by Rosselló was a victory for activists seeking to constrain the Puerto Rican domestic win-set and trigger negotiations for the Navy's withdrawal from Vieques.

During his handling of the Vieques situation, Rosselló faced competing pressures that were at times difficult to reconcile. His party's statehood proposal had recently lost a political status plebiscite in which "none of the above" defeated three other alternatives with fifty percent of the vote.¹⁴⁵ Heading into the 2000 election, Rosselló and his party were also weakened by allegations of corruption, including the

Catholic Church, which has increasingly become infused with cultural nationalism, could be expected to at least favor the Navy's withdrawal from Vieques.

¹⁴² "Resumen Ejecutivo," *Comisión Especial de Vieques para Estudiar la Situación Existente en la Isla Municipio con Relación a las Actividades de la Marina de los Estados Unidos*, (San Juan, Puerto Rico, 1999).

¹⁴³ "Declaration of Ultimatum of the People of Vieques to the United States Navy," *Comité Pro Rescate y Desarrollo de Vieques*, 31 July 1999 [Web site]; available from <http://www.viequeslibre.addr.com/ultimatum.htm>; Internet; accessed 2 April 2004.

¹⁴⁴ Chris Hawley, "Rosselló Calls on U.S. Navy to Leave Bombing Range," *Associated Press*, 1 July 1999 [Web site]; available from <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol3n28/APLeaveVieques-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 3 April 2004.

¹⁴⁵ "Consulta de Resultados: Plebiscito de Status del 13 de Diciembre de 1998," *Comisión Estatal de Elecciones de Puerto Rico*, 13 December 1998 [Web site]; <http://www.ceepur.net/cgi-bin/eventos.pl?evento=1998>; Internet; accessed 3 April 2004.

embezzlement of federal funds.¹⁴⁶ Another incentive was the cultural nationalism that permeated the pro-Vieques campaign in Puerto Rico. Historically, the PNP has been closely associated with the military.¹⁴⁷ Yet due to the widespread adoption of cultural nationalism in Puerto Rico, the PNP has been careful to project support for Puerto Rican cultural identity while advocating statehood.¹⁴⁸ Given the widespread support in Puerto Rico for the Vieques cause and the cultural nationalist overtones of this support, Rosselló had powerful incentives to support a hard line on the issue.

Other pressures, however, would come to influence Rosselló's negotiating position later in the game. Rosselló faced pressure from a faction of conservative statehood advocates within his party who, fearful of sending Washington an anti-American message, did not want the Navy to leave Vieques. This raised the specter of division within his own party in the 2000 elections, as well as potential obstacles for statehood in the future. Furthermore, there were rumors that Rosselló, an early supporter of Al Gore's presidential candidacy, was being considered for a cabinet post in the event of a Gore victory.¹⁴⁹ This being the case, he had incentives to take a more conciliatory position during negotiations. In all, Vieques presented both political opportunities and perils for Rosselló.

¹⁴⁶ Christopher H. Schmitt, "A Wave of Scandals in Puerto Rico," *Business Week Online*, 27 November 2000 [Web site]; available from http://www.businessweek.com/2000/00_48/b3709132.htm; Internet; accessed 4 April 2004.

¹⁴⁷ Barreto 47.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 49.

Given the broad support in Puerto Rico for the immediate cessation of military exercises in Vieques and the Navy's departure, Rosselló initially followed the Special Commission's hard line. During congressional hearings, he used one of the pro-Vieques campaign's slogans, "not one more bomb," and declared that "Any bombing of Vieques is unacceptable to us."¹⁵⁰ He also charged the Navy with blocking negotiations between his government and the White House regarding the future of Vieques.¹⁵¹ As time passed, however, Rosselló moderated his position, declaring his willingness to support the Pentagon's limited use of Vieques if the Clinton Administration abandoned it as a bombing range and ceded the property to the commonwealth.¹⁵²

On February 1, 2000, Puerto Ricans found a surprising development in their morning headlines. The White House and Rosselló's government had quietly negotiated an accord that they hoped would end the Vieques standoff. The agreement included \$90 million in federal aid in exchange for Rosselló's retraction of his "not one more bomb" statement.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 47.

¹⁵⁰ Tamara Lytle, "Not One More Bomb" – Rosselló," *The Orlando Sentinel*, 20 October 1999 [Web site]; <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol3n43/NoMoreBombs-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 4 April 2004.

¹⁵¹ "Rosselló: U.S. Navy Impeding Vieques Bombing Range Talks," *The Orlando Sentinel*, 9 January 2000 [Web site]; <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol4n02/NavyImpeding-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 4 April 2004.

¹⁵² Carol Rosenberg, "Rosselló Willing To Deal On Vieques," *The Miami Herald*, 23 October 1999 [Web site]; <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol3n44/RosselloWilling-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 4 April 2004.

In exchange for \$40 million up front, Puerto Rican officials agreed to let the Navy conduct exercises this spring with "dummy" bombs containing no explosives. But at a date still to be determined--sometime between this August and February 2002--the people of Vieques will vote in a referendum on whether to permit the Navy to resume using live ammunition. If the voters say yes, the people of Vieques will get an additional \$50 million in aid, for a total of \$90 million. If they vote "no," the Navy must clean up its practice range and halt all training by May 1, 2003.¹⁵³

The announcement of the accord brought with it an unprecedented event: a personal appeal by President Clinton to the people of Vieques via television. In a message taped in the White House's Map Room, Clinton asked *viequenses* to support the deal and referred to Vieques by its moniker, *la Isla Nena* (the Baby Island).¹⁵⁴

The accord was harshly criticized by a broad cross-section of Level II constituencies. A February 2000 survey showed that *viequenses* overwhelmingly believed the accord protected the Navy (93 percent), that it violated the governor's promise of "not one more bomb" (82 percent), and that the protestors should remain on their island

¹⁵³ Roberto Suro, "Navy Bombing Range Deal Reached: Puerto Rico Negotiates Aid And A Vote On Vieques' Future," *The Washington Post*, 1 February 2000 [Web site] available from <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol4n04/ViequesPact-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 5 April 2004.

¹⁵⁴ "Transcript of Clinton Remarks To The People Of Puerto Rico Concerning Navy Training on Vieques," *U.S. Newswire*, 1 February 2000 [Web site]; available from <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol4n05/PresTranscript-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 4 April 2004.

municipality (79 percent).¹⁵⁵ The PIP, the PPD and liberal PNP leaders like Norma Burgos also criticized the accord.¹⁵⁶ The biggest demonstration of repudiation for the accord came on February 21, when a non-partisan march called by religious leaders drew between eighty five thousand and one hundred thousand demonstrators (a significant number in an island with a population of 3.9 million). The organizers drew on the frames that had been effective thus far in keeping the pro-Vieques network together and public opinion on their side. Since the accord did not require a formal ratification procedure in Puerto Rico (such as a referendum or a legislative vote), the widespread repudiation of the accord by activists, *viequenses* and Puerto Rican public opinion amounted to a *de facto* failure of ratification and an involuntary defection by the Rosselló Administration due to its inability to deliver support at Level II for the agreement reached at Level I. By mobilizing public opinion against the Clinton-Rosselló agreement, activists had once again been successful in constraining the Puerto Rican domestic win-set, causing an involuntary defection for the Rosselló administration.

With the evidence available it is not possible to determine with certitude the reasons for Rosselló's acceptance of the accord. Perhaps he thought it was truly the

¹⁵⁵ Barreto 61.

¹⁵⁶ Delia Lizardi Ortíz, "Los Sentimientos Son Hechos," in *Victoria de un Pueblo: Crónica del Grito de Vieques*, ed. Edgardo Pérez Viera (San Juan, PR: Editorial Cultural, 2002) 91.

best deal Puerto Rico could hope for and decided to take it. Perhaps he was trying to shore up his base in anticipation of the 2000 election (in which he chose not to run). Perhaps, also with an eye towards the election, he decided to make a deal and try to remove the issue from the table while claiming credit for its resolution and removing it off the table. Finally, rumors circulated at the time that Rosselló had moderated his position on Vieques in exchange for a side payment in the form of a promise from the White House to press Congress for action on the political status question.¹⁵⁷ Regardless of his reasons for reaching the accord with Clinton, it is clear that Rosselló either underestimated the attachment of his Level II constituencies to the goals stated by activists and the Special Commission, or overestimated his ability to garner support for his Level I agreement. While discussing the role of the chief negotiator, Putnam says that “even if a proposed deal lies within his Level II win-set, that deal is unlikely to be struck if he opposes it.”¹⁵⁸ In the case of the Clinton-Rosselló accord, the reverse is true: the chief negotiator, perhaps due to his own policy preferences, struck a deal that was not, overall, acceptable to his Level II constituencies.

Despite the failure of ratification of the Clinton-Rosselló accord, this agreement yielded gains for activists and their supporters. It inserted the alternative of the Navy’s full withdrawal from Vieques, an option that had never been seriously considered be-

¹⁵⁷ Barreto 61.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 457.

fore. It also elicited a tacit acknowledgement from the President of the United States of the effects of the Navy's presence on Vieques: "we have not always been good neighbors on Vieques."¹⁵⁹ Finally, it triggered the gradual devolution of certain Vieques lands to Puerto Rico, a gain congruent with the CPRDV's pragmatic approach.

NEGOTIATIONS UNDER PRESIDENT CLINTON

Though President Clinton's Level II win-set was larger than Rosselló's, it did not sufficiently overlap with Puerto Rico's for both sides to reach a ratifiable agreement. Clinton faced two competing constituencies at Level II. On one side there was a transnational activist network composed of the Puerto Rican diaspora, Hispanics and left-wing activists (environmentalists, civil and human rights advocates, etc.). On the other, there was the Navy itself (which doubled as party to the negotiation at times) and pro-military constituencies, which were particularly strong in Congress. Though pressure from pro-Vieques activists provided Clinton with incentives to consider the Navy's complete withdrawal as an alternative, politically he was not strong enough to completely overcome objections by pro-Navy constituencies.

As support for the Vieques cause grew in Puerto Rico and the U.S., civil and human rights advocates gravitated towards the campaign. In August 1999, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr., traveled to Vieques to provide "moral reinforcement" to the cause. He framed the issue as a "moral test" for the president. "If (Clinton) passed the moral test

¹⁵⁹ "Transcript of Clinton Remarks" 2000.

he had with Kosovo, he can pass this one as well.”¹⁶⁰ It is not unreasonable to think that moral appeals from Jackson, a close friend who supported Clinton during the Lewinsky scandal, might have held some sway in Clinton’s decision-making process. Indeed, there is evidence in the public record that suggests Clinton might have been swayed by moral arguments. In a private letter to his national security advisor, which was later leaked to the press, Clinton wrote: “This is wrong. I think they don’t want us there. That’s the main point. The Navy can find a way to work around it.”¹⁶¹ It is not clear, however, whether Clinton’s personal policy preferences were significantly ahead of his Level II win-set.

Moral arguments aside, Clinton had significant incentives to strike a deal that would satisfy mainland Puerto Rican and Hispanic constituencies. Hispanics are an increasingly important component of the Democratic Party’s coalition, one that they must assiduously court if they are to form a governing majority in the near future.¹⁶² In 1996, for example, seventy percent of Hispanics voted for Clinton.¹⁶³ Some of the largest concentrations of Hispanics can be found in four of the states decided in the

¹⁶⁰ “Jesse Jackson Protests U.S. Ordnance Training in Puerto Rico,” *CNN*, 13 August 1999 [Web site]; <http://www.cnn.com/US/9908/13/puerto.rico.navy/>; Internet; accessed 6 April 2004.

¹⁶¹ Elizabeth Becker, “Presidential Panel Backs Firing Exercises in Vieques,” *The New York Times*, 19 October 1999 [Web site] <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol3n43/NYTPanelBacksExercises-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 5 April 2004.

¹⁶² John B. Judis and Ruy Texera, *The Emerging Democratic Majority* (New York: A Lisa Drew Book, 2002) 57-59.

2000 election by a difference of five percent or less between the votes cast for George W. Bush and those cast for Al Gore and Ralph Nader combined: Arizona, Florida, Colorado and New Mexico.¹⁶⁴ There are also large concentrations of Hispanics in states that constitute the bedrock of the Democratic electoral map, such as New York and California.¹⁶⁵ Perhaps more importantly, Hispanics are the fastest-growing minority group, both in absolute numbers and as a percentage of the population; their voter turnout is growing as well. As Chapter IV illustrated, Hispanics had made the Vieques cause their own and lobbied Clinton heavily on its behalf. It is therefore reasonable to say that, during his negotiations with the Puerto Rican government, he was looking to please this important Level II constituency. The Puerto Rican constituency in New York was particularly influential during Clinton's tenure as chief negotiator. Rumors persist to this day that Clinton negotiated the Vieques issue with an eye towards helping his wife Hillary Clinton with her U.S. Senate campaign in New York, for which she would need the support of the Puerto Rican community, particularly in New York

¹⁶³ "Economy Contributed To Clinton's Victory," *CNN*, 5 November 1996 [Web site]; <http://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/1996/news/9611/06/exitpoll2/exitpoll2.shtml>; Internet; accessed 1 April 2004.

¹⁶⁴ *U.S. Census 2000* 3; "President Results Summary For All States," *CNN*, 6 January 2001 [Web site]; <http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2000/results/>; Internet; accessed 4 April 2004.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

City.¹⁶⁶

There was a limit, however, to how far Clinton could go in trying to please this constituency. Since the beginning of his presidency, Clinton was vulnerable to attacks from pro-military constituencies, mostly due to his support for the right of homosexuals to serve in the military and to his military record (or lack thereof). According to McCaffrey, “Clinton’s failure to back a popular demand of civil society is indicative of his administration’s inability to exert civilian control over the military.”¹⁶⁷ While McCaffrey’s analysis is rather simplistic, the two-level game metaphor affords us a more nuanced view of this Level II constraint Clinton faced. Clinton’s accord was met with considerable skepticism in Congress, particularly in the Senate, where pro-military stalwarts like John Warner (R-VA) and James Inhofe (R-OK) argued for the Navy’s continued presence in Vieques for the sake of national security.¹⁶⁸ Clinton was able to strike a ratifiable deal because his proposal did not arouse the level of intensity of the issue among pro-military constituencies to the point that their reaction could de-

¹⁶⁶ Barreto 47, “Murkowski: Senate To Consider Bill Endangering Vieques Plan,” *Dow Jones International Press*, 21 February 2000 [Web site]; <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol4n08/MurkowskiVieqPlan-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 4 April 2004.

¹⁶⁷ McCaffrey 14.

¹⁶⁸ Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services and the Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support, *Vieques and the Future of the Atlantic Fleet Weapons Training Facility*, 106th Cong., 1st sess., 22 September and 19 October 1999.

rail ratification.¹⁶⁹ In the end, however, Clinton's weakness in relation to his pro-military constituencies did not allow his Level II win-set to overlap sufficiently with its Puerto Rican counterpart, thereby discouraging a deal that could be ratified at both domestic tables. This would change after the 2000 election, when two different chief negotiators would take charge.

BUSH-CALDERÓN: AN ENHANCED ZONE OF AGREEMENT

NEGOTIATIONS UNDER CALDERÓN

Puerto Ricans made history on November 7, 2000, when for the first time they elected a woman, San Juan Mayor Sila Calderón (PPD), as their governor. While the issue of government corruption dominated the campaign, Vieques also played a role in Calderón's victory over PNP President Carlos Pesquera and PIP President Rubén Ber-ríos.¹⁷⁰ Initially, Calderón took a moderate posture on Vieques, adopting the Special Commission's hard line and rejecting the Clinton-Rosselló accord but vacillating on her support for the acts of civil disobedience occurring in Vieques. Still, because of her party's longstanding support for cultural (if not political) nationalism, Calderón had enough credibility to use Vieques as a political weapon. During the gubernatorial debates, Calderón challenged Pesquera's assertion that the Vieques issue had been

¹⁶⁹ As in Puerto Rico, the Clinton-Rosselló accord did not need formal ratification in the U.S. Its ratification would be measured in the court of public opinion and in certain appropriations votes in Congress.

solved by the Clinton-Rosselló accord. “How is it possible that this government could be so insensitive as to tell the people that the Vieques issue is solved?”¹⁷¹ Calderón took a harder line, promising to reopen negotiations with the U.S.¹⁷² Calderón’s effective use of the Vieques issue allowed her to hold on to her political base while attracting enough moderates to win the election.¹⁷³ Because of the political mobilization deployed by activists, the Vieques cause had become a salient issue in the gubernatorial election and the electorate favored a candidate with a harder line on the issue.

Due to her party’s association with both cultural nationalism and a pragmatic approach to U.S.-Puerto Rico relations (i.e., the defense of cultural identity while maintaining a relationship with the U.S.), Calderón was a better fit as chief negotiator for the prevailing win-set than Rosselló. As the previous chapter demonstrates, most supporters of the Navy’s withdrawal from Vieques did not want the Puerto Rico-U.S. relationship radically altered; this was the case for Calderón as well. This meant that Calderón could negotiate without looking over her shoulder at Level II for constituencies that, due to their long-term goals regarding Puerto Rico’s political status, worried

¹⁷⁰ Though Berríos had much more credibility on Vieques and enjoyed high approval ratings, PIP candidates traditionally garner between three and five percent of the vote (Berríos won five percent).

¹⁷¹ Iván Román, “Feisty Governor’s Debate Erupts in San Juan,” *The Orlando Sentinel*, 19 October, 2000 [Web site]; <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol4n42/Media-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 31 March 2004.

¹⁷² Proviana Colon Diaz, “Calderon: I Will “Renegotiate” Vieques Directives,” *PuertoRico-WOW News Service*, 8 November 2000 [Web site]; <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol4n45/Media-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 31 March 2004.

about the detrimental effect of the Vieques issue on their cause. Calderón could adopt the Special Commission's hard line with fewer reservations than Rosselló.

Calderón's negotiation strategy was much less structured than Rosselló. At no point between her inauguration and the Navy's exit in May 2003 was a new accord formally negotiated. Rather, her efforts consisted of ad hoc efforts aimed at pressuring the Navy, the Secretary of Defense and President Bush in order to achieve two objectives: to ensure an immediate Navy withdrawal, and to ensure compliance by the Navy with any agreement. Fear of non-compliance had long permeated pro-Vieques Level II constituencies' perceptions in Puerto Rico and the U.S. As one activist put it, "The Navy's foremost attribute throughout all of these years has been to lie and at least here no one believes a word they say."¹⁷⁴ The emergence of new administrations in the U.S. and Puerto Rico meant a change in tactics on the Puerto Rican side. Because of her political background, Calderón could afford to be relatively more confrontational towards the Navy. At the same time, because she wasn't as closely identified with the Democratic Party as her predecessor, Calderón could more easily build alliances with mainland Republicans in order to influence the new president, as will be shown below. Calderón's tactics included direct lobbying, coalition-building with transnational activists and mainland politicians, legalistic tactics, and others.

¹⁷³ Barreto 66.

Calderón's first attempt at speeding the Navy's withdrawal actually involved the Clinton Administration. Soon after her election but before taking office, Calderón and her counterparts in the opposition parties, as well as religious and civic leaders, sent a joint letter to President Clinton demanding the immediate withdrawal of the Navy.¹⁷⁵ She also enlisted the help of Puerto Rican politicians from New York to lobby the president and New York's Senator-elect Hillary Clinton. Through this lobbying campaign, Calderón hoped to convince Clinton to sign an executive order to withdraw the Navy from Vieques. Clinton left office on January 21, 2001, without signing the order. Thus the decision was passed on to Clinton's successor, George W. Bush.

Frustrated by the attitudes of the new Secretaries of Defense and of the Navy, the Calderón Administration's next attempt at hastening the Navy's departure was to take it to court. The Puerto Rican government sued the Navy for violating a local environmental noise regulation. The law had been specifically designed to enable the government to sue the Navy; Calderón signed the law minutes before taking the Navy to

¹⁷⁴ Barreto 48.

¹⁷⁵ "All Three Parties Ask Clinton To Order Navy Out Of Vieques," *Associated Press*, 13 November 2000 [Web site]; <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/vol4n46/Media-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 3 March 2004.

court.¹⁷⁶ Transnational activists bolstered these legalistic tactics with lawsuits of their own. The Waterkeeper Alliance, an environmental group headed by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., and the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund (PRLDEF, a mainland organization) filed a federal lawsuit against the Navy for environmental damage. Kennedy also spent a month in jail for acts of civil disobedience in Vieques.¹⁷⁷ Such actions not only compounded the Navy's legal woes, but drew attention to and amplified media coverage of the Vieques cause.

Next, Calderón enlisted the help of select Republicans to bolster her direct lobbying campaign. Her most prominent ally was Republican New York Governor George Pataki, whom she endorsed for reelection. Pataki visited Vieques, then lobbied Bush hard on its behalf.¹⁷⁸ Calderón also hired Charlie Black, a Republican strategist and longtime ally of the Bush family, as her principal lobbyist in Washington.¹⁷⁹ The lobbying campaign worked: on June 14, 2001, President Bush announced his decision to definitively withdraw the Navy from Vieques by May 1, 2003.

Despite Bush's decision, Calderón deployed a form of political mobilization of

¹⁷⁶ Ivan Roman, "Puerto Rico Sues Navy," *Associated Press*, April 25, 2001 [Web site]; <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/2001/vol5n17/Media1-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 1 April 2004.

¹⁷⁷ "U.S. Navy Leaves Vieques," *Waterkeeper Alliance*, 2 May, 2003 [Web site]; <http://www.waterkeeper.org/mainarticledetails.aspx?articleid=123>; Internet; accessed 4 April 2004.

¹⁷⁸ "Governor Pataki Announces Historic Visit to Vieques," *Office of the Governor, New York State*, 1 April 2001 [Web site] http://www.state.ny.us/governor/press/year01/april1_66_01.htm; Internet; accessed 5 April 2004.

shame through the electoral process. As noted above, the Clinton-Rosselló deal called for a referendum on the Navy's status. Bush's initial position was to endorse the accord. The referendum, however, did not include what was known to be the choice of the vast majority of *viequenses*: the immediate cessation of naval exercises and departure of the Navy. The Navy set the referendum for November 6, 2001., Calderón sought to preempt the binding referendum with a local, non-binding referendum that included the option missing in the Clinton-Rosselló accord. Though Bush preempted the native referendum by announcing his decision, the vote went ahead as planned. The results were conclusive: over sixty eight percent of Vieques residents voted for "the immediate and permanent termination of the military practices and bombings of the Navy in Vieques. The exit of the Navy from Vieques, the cleaning and return of viequense lands to its citizens."¹⁸⁰ The result was interpreted by many sectors of public opinion as a victory for activists and an embarrassment for the Bush Administration.¹⁸¹ Due to the Navy's lack of credibility, local and transnational activists continued to mobilize after Bush's decision, in order to make the president's promise was

¹⁷⁹ Tamara Lytle, "Congress Jeers Bush on Vieques, Vows Fight," *The Orlando Sentinel*, 15 June 2001 [Web site]; <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/2001/vol5n24/BushAnnoncesHalt-en.shtml#Anchor5>; Internet; accessed 1 April 2004.

¹⁸⁰ "Jul-29-2001 Vieques Referendum Canvass: Summary of Final Results," *Comisión Estatal de Elecciones de Puerto Rico*, 30 July 2001 [Web site] <http://www.ccepur.net/consulta2001/escrutinio/summary.html>; Internet; accessed 4 April 2004.

kept.

NEGOTIATIONS UNDER BUSH

George W. Bush brought to Level I a win-set similar to Clinton's, but with important differences. For example, Bush did not have to worry about serious attempts by military constituencies in Congress to block an agreement reached by Bush at Level I. To be sure, these (mostly Republican) constituencies were not happy with Bush's decision on Vieques.¹⁸² But in the end, Bush could reasonably expect that his fellow Republicans would not challenge him on this issue as they would Clinton. Bush could also feel relatively confident on his hold on the military vote. "The military is largely presumed to be heavily Republican, with some estimates counting as many as 80 percent of the 1.2 million active duty personnel."¹⁸³

While Bush had little incentive to narrow his Level I alternatives in order to satisfy his base, he had plenty of political incentives to enlarge his win-set to attract Hispanic voters. In 2000, despite a concerted effort by his campaign to court Hispanic voters, Bush only did five points better among Hispanics than his Republican prede-

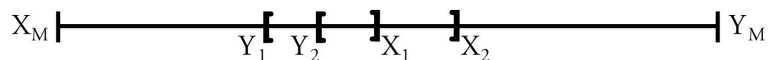
¹⁸¹ Juan Gonzalez, "Cries are Falling on Deaf Ears: Puerto Ricans Vote on Vieques; Bush Remains Quiet," *New York Daily News*, 31 July 2001 [Web site]; <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/2001/vol5n32/CriesDeafEars-en.shtml>; Internet; accessed 3 April 2004.

¹⁸² Lytle 2001.

¹⁸³ "Military Vote in Florida Could Cement Bush Victory," *Newsmax.com*, 9 November 2000 [Web site]; <http://www.newsmax.com/archives/articles/2000/11/8/173448.shtml>; Internet; accessed 2 April 2004.

cessor, Bob Dole, did in 1996.¹⁸⁴ Karl Rove, the president's principal political adviser, understood where political growth lay and advised Bush accordingly. This made Bush susceptible to lobbying from the Hispanic and Puerto Rican components of the pro-Vieques transnational activist network. There is no evidence that suggests Bush was vulnerable to pressures from environmental groups of civil and human rights advocates. Since these groups are not part of Bush's natural political constituency, this should come as no surprise. The diagram below illustrates the win-sets and zone of agreement involved in the Vieques negotiations.

Figure 5: Win-sets and Zone of Agreement of Vieques Negotiations



X_M = The maximum ratifiable outcome in Puerto Rico (immediate withdrawal of the Navy from Puerto Rico, among other things).

Y_M = The maximum ratifiable outcome in the United States (the Navy remains in Vieques indefinitely).

X_1 = The minimum ratifiable outcome in Puerto Rico (definitive withdrawal of the Navy from Puerto Rico in less than five years).

Y_1 = The minimum ratifiable outcome in the United States (eventual withdrawal of the Navy from Vieques).

X_2 = Agreement between President Clinton and Governor Rosselló (not ratified by Puerto Rican public opinion).

Y_2 = President Bush's decision to withdraw the Navy in 2003.

¹⁸⁴ Julie Mason, "Democratic Pollster Says Bush's Hispanic Support Stagnant," *The Houston Chronicle*, 12 March, 2004 [Web site]; <http://www.chron.com/cs/CDA/ssistory.mpl/politics/2445553>;

CONCLUSION

This chapter has used Robert Putnam's two-level game metaphor to analyze the negotiations between Puerto Rico and the United States that led to the Navy's withdrawal from Vieques. The coalition forged between local and transnational activists, through effective political mobilization tactics, particularly effective framing bolstered by such tactics as information politics, marches and civil disobedience, constrained the Puerto Rican win-set in favor of their goals. The small Puerto Rican win-set constrained the alternatives for agreements that could be ratified by Puerto Rican public opinion. This chapter has also outlined how, due to transnational activist mobilization in the form of effective framing, information politics, technocratic and legalistic tactics and direct lobbying, the American win-set was significantly expanded, moving the zone of agreement closer to activists' goals. Finally, it has described how the policy preferences of the heads of government and the political coalitions they represented affected their ability to strike a ratifiable deal. Rosselló's political coalition prevented him from reaching an agreement that could be ratified in Puerto Rico (what influence his personal policy preferences had in his decision is not clear from the evidence). Calderón's political coalition, on the other hand, increased her ability to reach a deal that could be ratified at Level II. Clinton's win-set was significantly larger than Puerto

Internet; accessed 30 March 2004.

Rico's, but not large enough to overlap sufficiently with it. Because Bush did not suffer from the domestic limitations that afflicted Clinton, his win-set overlapped sufficiently with Puerto Rico's for a ratifiable agreement to come about.

Chapter VI. THE ROLE OF TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVIST NETWORKS IN INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS

Our current era of globalization has altered substantially the relationships between different actors on the international stage. Because of the increased flow of information and communication technologies, goods, services, capital and migration, actors that previously had limited access to the international system have begun to make their presence felt. Among the actors with greater salience on the international stage are transnational activists networks, which usually seek to influence international outcomes on behalf of traditionally weak actors.¹⁸⁵ This thesis has sought to shed light on how these networks influence outcomes at the so-called systemic level of international relations. Since so many of these outcomes come about as a result of negotiations, the realm of international negotiations is good starting point in seeking to understand the role of transnational activism in international relations. Hence it is appropriate at this point to reiterate the original research question of this thesis: how can transnational activist networks influence the outcomes of weak-strong international negotiations on behalf of the weak?

The principal argument put forth in this thesis is that transnational activist networks can influence both the domestic and international levels of weak-strong international negotiations through the use of political mobilization strategies. As a corollary,

the potential for influence of transnational activist on international negotiations would depend on the level of vulnerability of actors to leverage exerted on them by the networks. What does the evidence put forth in this thesis say about the abovementioned argument?

A careful analysis of the evidence put forth in the preceding empirical chapters indicates that the basic premise of this thesis is correct. Transnational activist networks can, in fact, affect the outcomes of weak-strong international negotiations in the manners outlined above. This overarching conclusion will be examined in greater detail later in the theoretical conclusion section of this chapter. Regarding the Vieques case study, this chapter puts forth some empirical conclusions based on the evidence presented in previous chapters. It also draws some additional theoretical conclusions suggested by said evidence. Additionally, this chapter will suggest some issues for further scholarly inquiry. Finally, some general recommendations are made regarding the applicability of this research to the practice of transnational activism.

SUMMARY OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

PRO- VIEQUES ACTIVISM BEFORE 1999

The first set of empirical findings deals with the prior efforts by activists to persuade the U.S. government to withdraw the Navy from Vieques. The evidence ana-

¹⁸⁵ Keck and Sikkink, "Activists Beyond Borders," 1998.

lyzed suggests several interrelated reasons for the lack of success of these efforts. First, the historical period from the 1940s to the late 1980s was not fertile ground for the goals of pro-Vieques activists. The Cold War raged during these years and national security constituencies dominated and narrowed the American win-set considerably, precluding an agreement favorable to activists' goals. This factor was complemented by the power asymmetry embedded in the U.S.-Puerto Rico political relationship, which many observers see as colonial.¹⁸⁶ The structural imbalance embedded in this relationship limited the alternatives available to Puerto Ricans and *viequenses* on this issue. In the absence of other factors that would come into play in the 1990s, Puerto Rico was, vis-à-vis the U.S., a weak actor. Vieques, sometimes referred to as “the colony of a colony,” was even weaker.¹⁸⁷

This thesis asserts that the formation of a transnational activist network around the issue of Vieques was a crucial element in the outcome of the negotiations that led to the Navy's withdrawal. The evidence reviewed in this thesis demonstrates that, before the 1990s, conditions were not yet ripe for the formation of a transnational activist network to coalesce around the Vieques cause. For example, during the period in question, the Hispanic community, which became a critical node in the pro-Vieques network, had not yet attained the political clout it now enjoys. Similarly, the Puerto

¹⁸⁶ Trías Monge 1997.

¹⁸⁷ McCaffrey 10.

Rican diaspora, a vital component of the pro-Vieques network, had not yet reached political maturity in the United States. Information and communication technologies had not yet developed to the point where local activists could transmit instant, accurate and crucial information worldwide, and develop relationships with transnational activists on behalf of their cause.

Activists' lack of success can also be attributed partly to their own advocacy shortfalls. The evidence analyzed in Chapters III and IV points to several factors involved in this finding. Too often, local pro-Vieques activists adopted frames that alienated segments of the populations in Vieques and Puerto Rico. Metal shortcuts that emphasized anti-Americanism or anti-military sentiments and linked the anti-Navy struggle with Puerto Rico's political status (particularly to the struggle for independence) pushed away potential allies who had more moderate views and pragmatic concerns. Furthermore, local activists too often allowed themselves to be divided by rigid ideological postures and inflexible tactical positions. These cleavages within the local pro-Vieques movement precluded the formation of a wider, more moderate local network that could garner broad public support. The importance of a strong local activist network to the formation of a transnational movement is discussed later in this chapter.

PRO-VIEQUES ACTIVISM AFTER APRIL 1999

The second set of empirical findings deals with the period of pro-Vieques activism occurred between April 1999 and May 2003. Findings regarding the period between 1993 and 1999 are included in this section because the characteristics of this period are more closely related to post-1999 activism than to the era described above. This period culminated in the withdrawal of the U.S. Navy from Vieques, an outcome much closer to the Puerto Rican Level II win-set than to both long-standing U.S. policy and its maximum ratifiable outcome during negotiations. What differentiated this period from the one described above, making this outcome possible?

First, a historical survey of this period reveals that the geopolitical situation had changed dramatically. By this time, the Cold War had ended, a fact that significantly weakened the national security frames deployed by pro-Navy constituencies both in the U.S. and in Puerto Rico. Such appeals had previously held significant sway in Puerto Rico and even in Vieques, partly due to the high percentage of Puerto Ricans who serve in the U.S. military. By the time the post-April 1999 period was at its zenith, these appeals hardly moved public opinion in Puerto Rico or Vieques. The post-Cold War era of globalization also created an international environment characterized by a “diffusion of power” scenario in which encounters on the international stage between

strong and weak actors were not necessarily predetermined on behalf of the strong and weak actors could affect gains through negotiations.¹⁸⁸

Conditions for the development of a transnational activist network around the issue of Vieques were also greatly improved. As was stated in Chapter III, the number of transnational human rights organizations increased fivefold between 1953 and 1993.¹⁸⁹ Innovations in the field of information and communication technologies, such as the arrival of personal computers, fax machines, the Internet and inexpensive telephone access facilitated communication and cooperation amongst like-minded transnational activists. Meanwhile, both the Puerto Rican diapora and the general Hispanic community had gained significant political clout and both major U.S. political parties increasingly sought their support. As was demonstrated in Chapter IV, these constituencies adopted the Vieques cause as their own.

There is sufficient evidence to conclude that local activists significantly altered the way they advocated on behalf of the Navy's withdrawal from Vieques. Whereas in the pre-1999 period activists often alienated support from moderate constituencies at home, in the post-1999 period they built consensus and largely avoided ideological and tactical rigidities. By mostly eschewing the divisive questions of Puerto Rico's relationship with the U.S. in favor of pragmatic frames like health, economic development,

¹⁸⁸ Singh, "Weak Powers and Globalism," 2000.

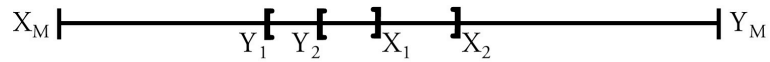
¹⁸⁹ Keck and Sikkink, "Activists Beyond Borders," 17.

quality of life and peace, local activists were able to rally public opinion in Vieques and Puerto Rico to their cause. This in turn constrained the domestic win-set in Puerto Rico, keeping it much closer to activists' goals. A strong local network would prove to be crucial in the formation of a pro-Vieques transnational activist network.

Ample evidence demonstrates that a transnational activist network coalesced around the issue of Vieques. An analysis of this evidence yields three distinct, yet deeply interdependent components of this network: local activists (*viequenses* and island Puerto Ricans), the Puerto Rican diaspora and the larger U.S. Hispanic community, and "vocational" transnational activists as defined in Chapter IV. The relationship between these three components was fluid and they influenced each other throughout the campaign. However, the central component of the network was the local component. Local activists provided a significant amount of the information that the transnational network disseminated on behalf of the cause. They also provided much of the symbolism, primarily in the form of acts of civil disobedience, which characterized the campaign. Perhaps more importantly, they provided the frames that, disseminated and amplified by other components of the network, mobilized key constituencies and altered the domestic win-sets on both sides of the Vieques two-level game.

Herein lies the key to the success of the pro-Vieques campaign. Through effective framing and tactics of political mobilization such as rallies, marches, civil disobedience, direct lobbying, legal actions and many others, the pro-Vieques transnational activist network successfully altered the domestic win-sets of both sides of the Vieques negotiation. By highlighting the health, economic, ecological, human rights and quality of life dimensions of the Vieques issue, activists rallied Puerto Rican public opinion to their cause and moved the Puerto Rican win-set closer to their goals. These same strategies, combined with the successful mobilization of cultural nationalism within the Puerto Rican transnational nation (Duany's "nation on the move") and ethno-cultural affinity with the Hispanic community in the U.S. created a domestic pro-Vieques constituency in the mainland. This in turn provided alternatives to the pro-Navy constituencies that had traditionally dominated the U.S. domestic win-set. American chief negotiators now had incentives to strike a deal that was closer to the highly constrained Puerto Rican win-set. The result: an enlarged win-set on the U.S. domestic table and a zone of agreement closer to Puerto Rican (and activists') alternatives. It would be useful at this point to reiterate the negotiation analysis presented in the previous chapter in graphic form:

Figure 6: Win-sets and Zone of Agreement of Vieques Negotiations



X_M = The maximum ratifiable outcome in Puerto Rico (immediate withdrawal of the Navy from Puerto Rico, among other things).

Y_M = The maximum ratifiable outcome in the United States (the Navy remains in Vieques indefinitely).

X_1 = The minimum ratifiable outcome in Puerto Rico (definitive withdrawal of the Navy from Puerto Rico in less than five years).

Y_1 = The minimum ratifiable outcome in the United States (eventual withdrawal of the Navy from Vieques).

X_2 = Agreement between President Clinton and Governor Rosselló (not ratified by Puerto Rican public opinion).

Y_2 = President Bush's decision to withdraw the Navy in 2003.

It can also be concluded, albeit tentatively, that the high level of vulnerability to influence embedded in the American system was a factor in the eventual success of the political mobilization strategies deployed by activists on behalf of the weak actors of this negotiation. Throughout the process, activists availed themselves of a myriad access points to the American system. They took their case to the media; lobbied the chief negotiator directly through letter-writing campaigns and even face-to-face meetings; lobbied Congress through members who were sympathetic to the cause; enlisted support from elected officials such as Gov. Pataki of New York; initiated numerous legal actions; and so on.

As originally posited, the argument states that transnational activist networks can influence both the domestic and international levels of international negotiations. The evidence collected, however, does leave questions as to whether in the case of Vieques, transnational activists directly influenced the policy preferences of Level I negotiators. To be sure, the chief negotiators on both sides responded to the shifts in their domestic win-sets. But it is not clear from the evidence that activists changed the policy preferences of the chief negotiators. While there is some evidence that activists might have influenced the policy preferences of President Clinton, there is not enough more research is needed on this area in general.

THEORETICAL CONCLUSIONS

The empirical findings outlined above strongly suggest that the arguments posited by this thesis are correct. Transnational activist networks can, in fact, affect the outcomes of weak-strong international negotiations through strategies of political mobilization. The preponderance of evidence is most conclusive at the domestic level of negotiations. It is clear is that influence on the international level can come about through alterations to the domestic win-sets and the zone of agreement brought about by political mobilization.

The aforementioned findings also indicate that a healthy dose of pragmatism is key to the successful formation of an effective transnational activist network. As is

asserted above, these networks can influence international negotiations in at least one way: by mobilizing public opinion and key constituencies at the domestic level and altering the win-sets of both domestic tables, thereby bringing the zone of agreement closer to activists' policy alternatives. In the case of Vieques, this involved constricting the domestic win-set in Puerto Rico while enlarging it in the United States, which brought the zone of agreement closer to the maximum Puerto Rican ratifiable agreement. Whatever the equation might be in other cases, the empirical findings indicate that effective political mobilization requires a relatively unified activist network. In the case of Vieques, the network subscribed to one overarching goal (immediate withdrawal of the Navy), largely agreed on tactical matters (peaceful civil disobedience and similar actions) and adopted a relatively unified set of frames (Peace for Vieques, Not One More Bomb, etc.) that conveyed a unified message to constituencies amenable to persuasion. The evidence examined here suggests that activists can achieve the level of unity outlined above through pragmatism and compromise. A willingness to compromise on tactical and ideological matters, to craft frames and political mobilization strategies that appeal to target constituencies can go a long way towards achieving the necessary changes in domestic win-sets that could result in negotiation outcomes close to the network's goals.

Finally, there is the corollary to the main hypothesis: the success of the strate-

gies of political mobilization depends on the level of vulnerability to influence of the strong actor. From the evidence examined, a strong inference can be made that the more vulnerable the strong actor is to influence, the more effective the political mobilization would be. In the case of Vieques, a correlation can be made between the openness of the American political system and the level of success activists achieved in enlarging the American domestic win-set, bringing the zone of agreement close to their goals.

It would be useful at this point to situate this thesis within the context of current literature on transnational activism and international negotiations. The theoretical conclusions outlined above suggest larger implications for the role of transnational activists networks on the international stage. Scholars have addressed the potential influence of transnational activism on international negotiations, such as with referencing their influence on public opinion through lobbying or effective framing of issues.¹⁹⁰ Useful as this work has been, it has not specified what exactly transnational activist networks do that influence the outcomes of negotiations. This thesis takes a step in that direction by positing that these networks can affect the outcomes of international negotiations by mobilizing key constituencies at the domestic level of the strong actor, thereby enlarging its Level II win-set and moving the zone of agreement closer to the weak actor's maximum ratifiable agreement. Since an increasing number of weak-

strong interactions on the international stage take place within a negotiations context, understanding how transnational activist networks can influence negotiations could make coalitions between these networks and weak actors more effective. This should result in a greater proportion of favorable outcomes for weak actors.

This thesis also adds to scholarship on the composition of transnational activist networks and their motivations. Keck and Sikkink emphasize the role of values and principle in the composition of these networks.¹⁹¹ This thesis, however, suggests that ethnic, cultural and national identities can also play a large role in the composition and motivations behind the network's actions, and that these identities need not exclude value-based identities. These identities can be mobilized as a complement to value-based identities during a campaign on behalf of a weak actor. How can we reconcile theoretically the blend of identities borne out by the empirical evidence collected here?

Castells' work on identity is helpful in this regard. He makes a distinction between three types of identity-building: legitimizing identity, resistance identity and project identity.¹⁹² It is the last type that concerns us here. Project identities emerge "when social actors...build a new identity that redefines their position in society and,

¹⁹⁰ Martin and Sikkink 1993, Odell and Sell 2003.

¹⁹¹ Keck and Sikkink 1998.

¹⁹² Castells 8.

by doing so, seek the transformation of overall social structure.”¹⁹³ There is a close relationship between resistance identities and contemporary nationalism. “Because contemporary nationalism is more reactive than proactive, it tends to be more cultural than political, and thus more oriented toward the defense of an already institutionalized culture than toward the construction or defense of a state.”¹⁹⁴ The defensive nature of contemporary cultural nationalism suggests that it often finds itself in the position of the weaker actor. Since vocational transnational activists are drawn to act on behalf of weak actors due to their value-based identities, it is therefore possible for a transnational activist network to emerge that is mobilized simultaneously by both types of identities. The success of this mobilization, however, would depend on the strategic approach adopted by activists, including their effective deployment of frames that can bridge these identities, as was the case in Vieques.

LIMITATIONS ON RESEARCH AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Before reviewing some suggestions for further inquiry, a caveat is in order. Research for this thesis involved several limitations. The Vieques case produced a voluminous historical record that could not be reviewed in its totality during the time span allocated for this research. Hence, a more comprehensive review of the historical record might have shed additional light on some of the outstanding questions discussed

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 31.

below. Another constraint on this research was the lack of access to high-level government officials who might have provided additional insights into the negotiation process. Several attempts were made to secure interviews with individuals involved in the process were unsuccessful. Despite these limitations, the research conducted enabled the development of reliable conclusions that have been discussed above.

Several conclusions, both empirical and theoretical, have been drawn from the evidence presented throughout this thesis and its analysis. Nevertheless, several questions arise from this analysis that merit further study.

Perhaps chief among them is the part of this thesis' main argument that remains unsettled after empirical research: how can transnational activist networks directly influence Level I of an international negotiation? The evidence put forth in this thesis indicates that the alteration of domestic win-sets can provide chief negotiators with alternatives previously unavailable to them. However, it remains unclear whether transnational activists can directly influence the policy preferences of chief negotiators, and if so, how. Since, according to Putnam, chief negotiator can veto an agreement even though it might lie within a mutual zone of agreement, it would be useful to understand whether transnational activists can directly influence Level I.¹⁹⁵ This would provide us with a better understanding of the complexities of two-level game negotiations involving transnational activists.

Having analyzed the role of transnational activism in bilateral negotiations, the next logical step would be multilateral negotiations. A fair share of international negotiations today are not bilateral, but multilateral; trade negotiations are the most obvious example of this. This analysis of the bilateral Vieques negotiations yielded a fair amount of complexities. It is therefore reasonable to assume that it would be even more difficult to ascertain the potential for transnational activists to influence multilateral negotiations as complicated as, for example, a WTO trade round. If determining which constituencies to target in order to alter domestic win-sets and move zones of agreement proves complicated at the bilateral level, how much more complicated must it be at the multilateral level? How much more complicated must it be to hit upon compelling frames that can mobilize domestic constituencies on behalf of weak actors? Given the increasingly multilateral nature of international negotiations, this is an area worthy of study.

Though this thesis has looked at the potential of transnational activists to influence negotiations on behalf of the weak, it would be worthwhile to explore whether similar conclusions could be reached for a mirror version of this argument: how can transnational activist networks affect the outcomes of weak-strong negotiations on behalf of *strong* actors? Since transnational activists tend to intervene on behalf of weak

¹⁹⁵ Putnam 1988.

actors, case studies that could flesh out such an argument should be rare. Even in the negotiations surrounding human rights violations in Argentina and Guatemala, for example, where the goals of the United States and transnational activists coincided, activists were ultimately working on behalf of weak actors, i.e., the victims of human rights violations. Nevertheless, should a case study arise where a transnational activist network truly seems to be intervening on behalf of a strong actor, it would be useful to submit such a case to the same sort of analysis applied here to the Vieques case.¹⁹⁶

Another worthwhile area of inquiry would be the very nature of transnational activists networks. Keck and Sikkink argue that these networks are principally driven to action by principles or ideas about what is right and wrong.¹⁹⁷ Yet the Vieques activist network contained a healthy dose of adherents who were motivated by a deep sense of cultural nationalism or ethno-cultural affinity. This was especially true of the Puerto Rican diaspora in the United States. Thus the composition of the Vieques network suggests that the theoretical composition of transnational activist networks might need to be revised, and perhaps expanded to include network actors motivated primarily by cultural or ethnic solidarity. The increasingly important role of national diasporas should also be the focus of further study.

¹⁹⁶ Martin and Sikkink 1993.

¹⁹⁷ Keck and Sikkink, "Activists Beyond Borders," 1998.

COUNTER-ARGUMENTS

Any well-crafted argument must by necessity be able to hold water in the face of reasonable counter-arguments. This section considers some of these counter-arguments and answers them in light of the main arguments asserted in this thesis.

The first counter-argument deals with the changed geopolitical situation due to the end of the Cold War. Some might be tempted to argue that the U.S. withdrew the Navy from Vieques because the changed geopolitical situation simply did not require its presence on that island anymore. There are several with problems with this argument. First, it does not explain why it took the Navy nearly fifteen years after the fall of the Berlin Wall to leave Vieques. It also does not explain why the Vieques naval facility was never included in the rounds of base closings. Furthermore, had the changed geopolitical situation been the determinant factor in the Navy's departure, it should have been expected that the U.S. would have been much less reluctant to leave. Clearly, it was political mobilization, not geopolitics, that brought about the Navy's withdrawal. Changed geopolitics did weaken the Navy's main frame for its presence in Vieques, but by itself this factor did not bring about the final outcome of the negotiation.

A second argument could be that U.S. domestic politics alone can explain the Vieques outcome. Under this argument, the increase in the U.S. Hispanic population's political clout, and its commitment to the Vieques issue, explains the U.S. govern-

ment's decision to withdraw the Navy from Vieques. It is easy to see how this argument might seem persuasive. After all, some of the largest concentrations of Hispanics can be found in so-called 'swing states' such as Arizona, Florida, Colorado and New Mexico.¹⁹⁸ This argument, however, neglects the fact that Hispanics would most likely not have mobilized around the issue of Vieques in the first place had it not been for the transnational activist network that coalesced around this issue. It also neglects the role of 'vocational' activists during the campaign, who amplified the media coverage and the reach of the main frames of the campaign, thereby helping to reconstitute the domestic win-set in the U.S.

In sum, these counter-arguments fail to explain the final outcome of the Vieques negotiations. Perhaps the most definitive rebuttal to them is that, without the political mobilization outlined in this thesis, the negotiations would not have taken place in the first instance. It was this mobilization that triggered the negotiations process. Without this factor, the negotiations, and their final outcome, would not have taken place.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PRACTICE OF TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVISM

The research put forth by this thesis suggests several recommendations that can be made for the practice of transnational activism. Chief among them is the need for pragmatism, consensus-building and flexibility when developing a transnational activ-

¹⁹⁸ *U.S. Census 2000*; "President Results," 6 January 2001.

ist network. As this thesis has shown, these qualities were key to the development of a broad-based network that in turn was able to garner widespread support across both domestic levels of the negotiation. Activists must negotiate their ideological and tactical differences, and attempt to put forth alternatives that appeal to key constituencies that will be needed to alter the domestic win-sets and the eventual zone of agreement. Deep divisions within the activist network could result in an unintended enlargement of the weak actor's win-set, which could lead to a zone of agreement that is further from the maximum ratifiable outcome of the weak party. In the case of Vieques, activists were able to downplay ideological and tactical differences while offering a moderate set of frames for the Vieques issue that large segments of Puerto Rican society and key constituencies in the U.S. could support.

Activists must also calibrate their choice of frames and other strategies of political mobilization with an eye towards both domestic tables of the two-level game. What might be appealing to one table might not be appealing to the other. Activists must identify key constituencies at both tables and target them in order to alter the win-sets at both tables and eventually produce a zone of agreement that reflects the weak actor's interests as much as possible. During the Vieques campaign, local activists and the Puerto Rican diaspora sought alliances with other Hispanic constituencies, as well as religious, human rights and environmental groups that could provide President Clinton

with incentives to strike an agreement closer to the Puerto Rican win-set. When Bush and Calderón took office, the newly elected Puerto Rican governor focused her energies on Republican politicians who could effectively lobby Bush on her behalf.

Finally, activists should not become overly disillusioned by failed campaigns. Even these so-called failures can prove valuable to activists in subsequent iterations of the two-level game. As the Vieques case demonstrates, activists were repeatedly stymied in their attempts to affect the Navy's withdrawal from Vieques. Yet each iteration of the game provided activists with valuable lessons that were then applied to subsequent campaigns. For example, the campaign to prevent the construction of the Relocatable Over-The-Horizon Radar was on balance unsuccessful, it provided activists with an opportunity to build networks and "test-drive" frames and political mobilization strategies that would yield better results during the post-April 1999 Vieques negotiation.

This thesis offers a small building block in an edifice of research that espouses a greater potential for agency for non-state actors in the international stage, particularly for actors such as transnational activist networks, which are not motivated by traditional notions of security of "national interests." It seeks to bolster the notion that interactions between traditionally weak and strong actors are not predetermined by distribution of power scenarios. Weak actors, in partnership with transnational activist

networks, have a greater potential to affect the outcomes of their interactions with stronger actors. In our current era of globalization, the strong are not destined to do as they want and the weak are not condemned to suffer what they must.

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