

Protesters claim to invade Navy range on Vieques island

By the Associated Press
INTERNATIONAL
 VIEQUES, Puerto Rico—As dum- my bombs fell again on Vieques island, the U.S. Navy and its opponents waged a battle of perception amid the war games: Protesters insisted dozens of activists have invaded the firing range and the Navy said no one was in harm’s way.

Protest leader Ismael Guadalupe said about 30 people, including his 25-year-old son, remained on the range during Monday’s start of the latest round of training on what the Navy calls its “crown jewel.”

“They are there to serve as human shields to try and stop the bombing,” he said, charging the exercises pose “a threat to human life.” But Navy spokeswoman Lt. Cmdr. Katherine Goode said security patrols had found no protesters.

The wife of the Rev. Jesse Jackson and at least 16 others were arrested for trespassing Monday as protesters ig-

ap news capsules

nored President Bush’s announcement last week that the Navy would with- draw from Vieques in two years.

On Monday, Navy fighter jets roared over the Puerto Rican island and dropped 25-pound inert bombs in the first day of what could be one of the last exercises here. But protesters are sticking to their slogan “No una bomba mas!” - Not one more bomb! — demanding an immediate with- drawal.

MOSCOW — Russian President Vladimir Putin said he and President Bush reached a “very high level” of trust during their weekend summit, but warned that Russia would strengthen its nuclear arsenal if the United States developed missile defenses that under- mined key security treaties.

In a 2 1/2-hour interview Monday

night with American reporters in the wood-paneled Kremlin library, Putin said Bush was a “very attentive lis- tener” during the meeting in Slo- venia. Putin said he was pleased America no longer considered Rus- sia an enemy.

Putin revealed publicly for the first time that he had passed on a message from Chinese President Jiang Zemin to Bush saying his country was ready to put the April downing of a U.S. recon- naissance plane by the Chinese mili- tary behind them.

The Russian leader dismissed U.S. concerns that countries such as North Korea could pose a security threat, saying Pyongyang’s missile technol- ogy was based on antiquated German and Soviet technology. Putin cited re- ligious extremists as a real threat, in- cluding the Taliban, who have im-

posed harsh Islamic rule in Afghanis- tan.

He also insisted that Bush’s pro- posed missile defense shield would never work.

NATIONAL

NEW YORK — As ceremonial purple and black bunting was draped around the doors of two fire halls, in- vestigators sifted through the scorched remains of a suburban hardware store where a fiery explosion killed three firefighters.

The store had recently been in- spected for safety hazards and had never been cited for violations but a number of potentially explosive mate- rials were stored in the basement of the Long Island General Supply Co., the site of Sunday’s blast.

The business had permits to store paint thinners and lacquers and did not need a permit to store 1-pound cylin- ders of propane because businesses are allowed to have up to 156 such cylin- ders, Fire Commissioner Thomas Von

Essen said Monday.

But propane must be stored above ground, and Von Essen said boxes of the 1-pound cylinders were found in the store basement. The business will likely be fined.

Von Essen added that “we have no reason to believe at this point that that was the cause of the explosion or that it exacerbated the explosion.”

He said any of the materials for which the store had permits could have caused the blast, which occurred about 30 minutes after the fire began.

GOLDEN, Colo. — Two therapists received the minimum prison term for their roles in the suffocation of a 10-year-old girl who died while wrapped in blankets during a “rebirthing” ses- sion.

Connell Watkins, 54, and Julie Ponder, 40, were sentenced to 16 years Monday in the death of Can- dace Newmaker. They could have faced the maximum of 48 years be-

hind bars.

“I failed Candace and I failed her mother,” Watkins told Judge Jane Tidball. “It’s been over a year now that I have been experiencing the dark night of my soul.”

The girl was covered in blankets and pillows meant to simulate the womb and was encouraged to push her way out during the April 2000 session. Therapists hoped she would emerge “reborn” to bond with her adoptive mother.

A videotape of the 70-minute therapy session was shown to the jury. Four adults leaned on Candace with pillows, applying several hun- dred pounds of pressure. A coroner concluded she died from asphyxia- tion.

The girl had been diagnosed with attachment disorder, in which children resist forming loving relationships and are violent and unmanageable.

Colorado has since outlawed the New Age form of therapy.



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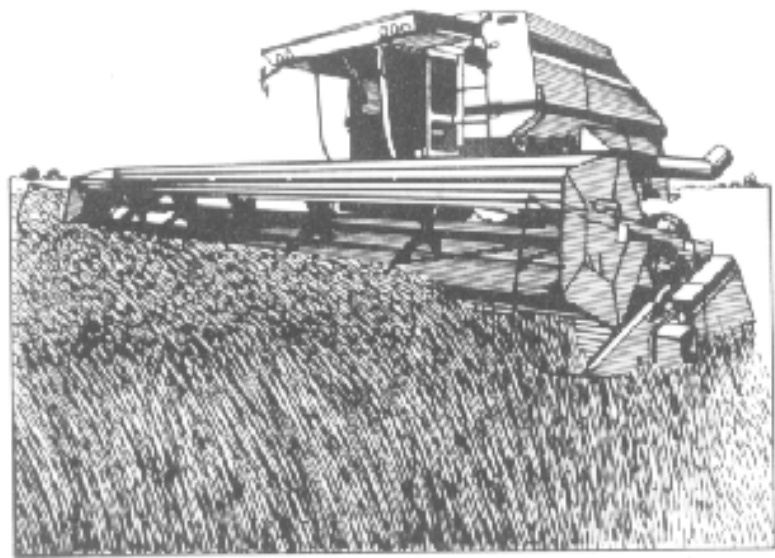
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