been insensitive to the economic development needs of the island. This insensitivity has real, tragic, human consequences. Over 70% of the residents are below the poverty line, a rate 14% above the rest of Puerto Rico, and unemployment is exceedingly high.

Carlos Ventura, a leader in the fishing community, vividly describes the very significant damage that the Navy's restrictions, operations, amphibious landings, mine sweeping, and live ammunition explosions have caused in the loss of fish, coral reef, and the destruction of natural fishing habitats—all of which has caused the deterioration of the fishing industry. For all these reasons, when you visit Vieques and talk of the Navy, you will hear voices of despair and distrust.

The risk of developing cancer is greater in Vieques than in any other municipality in Puerto Rico. The infant mortality rate is among the highest of any municipality. So when Dr. Luis Rivera Castano speaks of the presence of explosive components like RDX and Tetryl in the potable water reserves of Vieques, or of chemical compounds in the actual charges of the projectiles themselves, his reasoned voice is one of concern and alarm.

Then there were the passionate voices of the Alliance of Vieques Women, and of Alba Encarnacion, a school teacher, who spoke eloquently of their sleepless nights and of their anxiety and fear for their security, peace, and health. The voices of these mothers are the voices of Vieques children.

From that town meeting, I went on a Navy helicopter to a briefing at the observation post where security guard David Sarnes Rodriguez was killed and four others injured. That briefing focused on the need the Navy has to perform such training, but it did little to convince me that the devastating sights I saw of the leveling of hills and coconut plantations, and the blasting off the face of the Earth of lagoons and cays, was not an environmental injustice. Nor was I convinced of the fairness and balance of the Navy, with its constant denial of virtually all of the concerns and complaints voiced by the citizens of Vieques.

The lack of any real adherence to the Memorandum of Understanding of October 11, 1983, and the Navy's original denial of having fired 268 rounds of uranium depleted bullets, added to all of the previously mentioned denials, clearly gives the Navy a major credibility problem with the people of Vieques, the people of Puerto Rico, and I would add a growing number of Members of Congress, including myself.

While the report issued by the Navy yesterday continues to reaffirm its position, its recommendations begin to show that there is clearly some culpability and responsibility that even the Navy must admit.

The 9,311 American citizens who call Vieques home—squeezed between the ammunitions warehousing area and the firing range area—have suffered harmful and detrimental effects on the quality of their lives, creating an economic and social condition which rates below the rest of Puerto Rico's population.

If this were anywhere else, we would be talking about environmental racism.

The incidents listed in the Government of Puerto Rico's Special Commission report from 1993, 1995, 1997 and 1999, are all indicators of a greater tragedy waiting to happen.

I can tell you as a seven-year member of the International Relations' Western Hemisphere subcommittee that Caribbean and Latin American countries are watching and talking about how we act in response to the abuses of the people in Vieques. We cannot be examples of democracy and human rights abroad unless we observe them at home.

This is not a question of ill will toward the people of the United States. The people of Puerto Rico love America. They love it so much that thousands of their sons and daughters have worn the uniform of the U.S., served it voluntarily, and given their lives for its values since the first Puerto Rican battalion was created in 1900. We need to value them as U.S. citizens.

Living in Vieques should not take an act of courage. These 9,311 American citizens are entitled to go to their jobs and schools, attend church, and be able to achieve health and economic security, just like other American citizens can.

In conclusion, I believe we should demilitarize the island, decontaminate it, and devolve it so that its citizens can develop its economic potential, and achieve in Vieques the peace and security they deserve as American citizens.

ON THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMIA BOMBING IN ARGENTINA THE TERRORISTS BEHIND THIS VICIOUS ATTACK HAVE STILL NOT BEEN FOUND

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 16, 1999

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, five years ago this coming Sunday—on July 18, 1994—the Buenos Aires headquarters of the Asociacion Mutual Israelita Argentina (Argentine Jewish Mutual Association), known by its Spanish acronym AMIA, was bombed and destroyed by terrorists. In that vicious and cowardly attack against the Jewish community of Argentina, 86 individuals were killed and over 200 others were injured, many seriously. The victims included Argentinian Jews, but the majority were Argentinian citizens of other religious and ethnic backgrounds.

Mr. Speaker, law enforcement officials have conducted in investigation into this horrendous act of terrorism, but five years after that event progress has been very limited. Five men, including four former police officers, have been arrested in connection with the bombing, and they are expected to go on trial ''soon.'' These individuals, however, are believed to be participants, but not the real perpetrators behind this heinous act. United States intelligence and criminal investigators believe that the Iranian government was behind the attack. Little information has been made public about the results of the effort to identify and arrest the real criminals who carried out this attack, and progress on the investigation has been painfully slow.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this was not the only, or even first such incident in Argentina. On March 17, 1992, just two years before the AMIA bombing, the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires and a nearby school and other buildings were destroyed in a car bomb blast in which 29 innocent children, women and men lost their lives, and another 252 innocent bystanders were injured. These victims included employees of the Israeli embassy and their families, children from a Roman Catholic primary school, women and men in a nearby Roman Catholic church shelter, a Roman Catholic priest, and a number of others.

These unsolved crimes are a serious and sinister effort to intimidate the Jewish population of Argentina, as well as Jewish communities around the world, Mr. Speaker. The Argentine Jewish community numbers over 300,000 and is the largest Jewish community in Latin America. During the periods of military rule it was subject to severe anti-Semitism, and the community feels particularly vulnerable to assault from external radical Islamic groups and from indigenous far right extremists in Argentina.

Mr. Speaker, on this unfortunate fifth anniversary of the AMIA bombing I invite my colleagues to join me in extending our condolences to the families of these who lost their lives in this senseless act of terrorism. I also invite my colleagues to join me in denouncing this bigoted anti-Semitic action, and in urging the Argentine government to move more vigorously and with greater purpose to solve this tragic case. I also invite my colleagues to join me in extending our support and encouragement to the Jewish Community of Argentine. The American people support your struggle against racism and anti-Semitism, and we commend you for your commitment to human rights and the rule of law.

TRIBUTE TO MR. JAMES LEONARD FARMER

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 16, 1999

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today, to pay tribute to and to celebrate the life and legacy of James Leonard Farmer who passed away on Friday, July 9, 1999, at the age of 79. I would like to extend my deepest sympathy and regards to Brother Farmer's family and extended community.

James Leonard Farmer served our nation as the founder and national chairman of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) established in 1942. CORE is the third oldest and one of the ''Big Four'' civil rights organizations in America. A strong advocate and civil rights leader, Jim Farmer transformed America by fighting racial prejudice in the 1960's and continuously throughout his lifetime. As the founder of CORE, Mr. Farmer paved the way for the later civil rights movement by organizing the first ''Sit-ins'' and ''Freedom Rides'' throughout the South.

A devoted Christian, Jim Farmer had a strong and unwavering commitment to the cause of Christ. He always recognized the importance of overcoming social injustice, which stood as his life-long pursuit. His dedication to justice earned him national recognition as he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1998.

Mr. Speaker, today I am honored to join with all Americans in recognizing the achievements and life of James Leonard Farmer. I am truly honored to pay tribute to Farmer's distinguished life and am privileged to enter these words into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.