

# The Hypocrisy of the US' Proxy War with Russia. Puerto Rico's Stance on the Issue of Sovereignty

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*In 1898, the US took control of Puerto Rico, Guam, Cuba, and the Philippines under the Treaty of Paris. Since then, the US has held Puerto Rico hostage as a colony. The premise for the US's involvement in the war between Ukraine and Russia is that Ukraine deserves "sovereignty" and "self-determination". This must only apply to European nations, as our people have gone without sovereignty and self-determination under US rule for 125 years and counting.*

Instead, the US is using Puerto Rico to fight in their proxy war with Russia by using our lands as testing grounds for Ukrainian [pilots](#) and sending Puerto Rican soldiers across the world like they have done since the Foraker Act was passed in 1917.

As previously mentioned, the Foraker Act imposed US citizenship on Puerto Ricans so that they would be able to be drafted in World War I. During World War II, the US government [conducted experiments](#) with mustard gas and other chemicals on thousands of Black, Japanese, and Puerto Rican US soldiers. According to the Department of Defense's website, about [190,700 Puerto Ricans](#) have served in US wars since World War I. The US has continuously taken advantage of the poor economic situation that our our people have been forced to endure as a result of capitalism and colonization.

The US has used the smaller islands of Puerto Rico, Vieques and Culebra, as military testing sites - displacing the native population and poisoning the land and water. The military was ousted from Culebra in the 1970s and from Vieques in 2004, however, the US is able to use these lands without consent from the Puerto Rican people, which brings us to today. Our land is now being used to train Ukrainian pilots learning to fly F-16 Falcon jets, a process that likely [won't be finished for years](#). According to the article by [La Claridad](#), the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Government of Puerto Rico and the US Navy stipulates that the United States "reserves the right to reuse the base's facilities when

it deems it necessary/or pertinent.” The airport runway of the old base is one of the longest and widest in the Caribbean, where any type of US military aircraft can be landed. The US has always used Puerto Rico, both the land and the people as a means of dominating the Caribbean and regions abroad.

As previously mentioned, the premise for entering this war was to supposedly help Ukraine fight for sovereignty and self-determination. The reality is that the US is in a cold war with both Russia and China and therefore it will do anything to maintain some sense of power as a multipolar world emerges. If the US really cared about sovereignty and self-determination, why hasn't it released Puerto Rico? Why is it funding the Israeli military? Why has it funded coups in Latin America and the Caribbean time and time again? The US wishes to maintain their image here in this country and abroad by positioning themselves as the “good guys”, but instead it [funds right-wing groups in Ukraine](#). The US only supports sovereignty and self-determination if it benefits themselves.

When thinking about Vieques and Culebra and the environmental damage that has been done to the land, water, and people - we have to recognize that the climate crisis, capitalism, and the US military go hand in hand. The US has spent [\\$76 billion on the war in Ukraine](#) thus far and has spent [\\$816.7 billion on the military budget this past year](#). The US military is the biggest polluter in the world and until it is abolished, the climate will continue to decline especially in the Global South, including Puerto Rico. The US war machine would rather maintain global hegemony and allow the ruling class to gain more and more wealth, rather than save the planet which we all inhabit. It is past time for the US military to be rendered obsolete and it is past time that the money spent on war that is destroying the earth and its people go to funding social programs like housing, healthcare, and more.

The Diaspora Pa'lante Collective denounces the proxy war with Russia and all wars across the world that the US has been involved in and continues to agitate. We demand the closure of all US military bases. Until Puerto Rico is liberated from the US and is able to become its own sovereignty nation, nowhere in the Caribbean and Latin America can be free as the US will continue to use our lands and people as a means of furthering their imperialist agenda across the world.

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*The Diaspora Pa'lante Collective is a group of Boricuas and allies from across Turtle Island who are committed to fighting for the complete liberation of Borikén by any means necessary for the land and for our people.*

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