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# Anchors Aweigh in Culebra

Two restrained cheers for the United States Navy for agreeing to phase out its activities on Culebra rather than buying up more of the tiny Caribbean island as a target area for guided missiles and glide bombs. The third cheer will be delivered with greater enthusiasm when the Navy makes good its pledge to find an alternate target zone and clears out of Culebra completely, leaving its 726 residents in peace and unaccustomed quiet.

The Navy moved into Culebra in a major way during World War II, resettling hundreds of its families on St. Croix to get space for a target area. For the last two years Culebrans have suffered an increasing din from shelling, bombing and low-flying jets. Their movements were hampered by Navy security and maneuvers, their

development plans frustrated by Navy hopes of buying all of Culebra and resettling its residents elsewhere.

At that point, however, the mouse finally roared, invoking its status as a municipality of Puerto Rico. Under Puerto Rico's Constitution it could be dissolved only by vote of its residents; but a survey showed 95 per cent opposed to the Navy's expansion and 75 per cent in favor of complete Navy withdrawal.

Under a compromise signed by Secretary of the Navy Chafee in San Juan, the Navy will now give up much of its control of the island and continue to use a northwest area for gunnery practice only until it can find "feasible alternatives." Now the world's most powerful Navy can but add to its lustre if it manages in the near future to find an alternative target area and makes a graceful retreat from Culebra.