

Casa Pueblo says "no" to pipeline

INTER NEWS SERVICE

"The gas pipeline will not go through Adjuntas," declared environmentalist and Casa Pueblo civic organization president Alexis Massol, Tuesday, during a press conference.

Massol is a fervent opponent of Gov. Fortuño's plan *Vía Verde* (Green Way). One of its goals is establishing a gas pipeline running from Guayanilla to Arecibo and then to the Metropolitan area.

The press conference ended with an impromptu march to the Adjuntas public plaza, alongside consultants, scientists, professors, environmental and community leaders and students. They decided to program an even bigger march Sept. 19 in the town of the "Sleeping Giant."

"The Church is against the pipeline and we've made a call to Adjuntas and Puerto Rico to put a stop to it. We're trying to move forward in an organized process harmonizing church, community, culture and political parties to triumph over this machine. Up to now, I can safely say



Courtesy

we're right on track," said Massol.

The community leader was applauded every time he repeated, "That's what the government calls a Green Project!" when he questioned the environmental virtues of a pipeline that will cost around \$350

million.

Casa Pueblo opposed the pipeline saying that the environmental benefits will not justify its construction because a series of forests, communities, gas stations and fish life found in the pipeline's tracks will be affected. They also debated that the price of fossil fuels is not static and is subject to change.

The activists recommended that instead of the pipeline, the government should adopt a transitional plan of renewable energy based on solar and wind energy in places where the environment and communities won't be affected.

Concerning solar energy, they proposed installing photovoltaic panels on the roofs of homes, factories and buildings in hopes of increasing energy efficiency.

Several groups are opposing the pipeline including Arecibo Mayor Lemuel Soto and Adjuntas Mayor Jaime Barlucea as well as Ponce Municipal Legislature President Roberto González Rosa while it has been backed by Yauco Mayor Abel Nazario and the Bayamón and Barceloneta Municipal Legislatures.