

AHP News October 1st, 2004

English translation (Unofficial)

The Haitian Interim Prime Minister confirms that the police shot some Lavalas demonstrators and that many of them fell

Port-au-Prince, October 1st, 2004 (AHP)- Interim Prime Minister Gérard Latortue confirmed Tuesday night that policemen had indeed opened fire on Lavalas demonstrators during a march in Port-au-Prince to commemorate the 13th anniversary of the September 30, 1991 bloody coup d'état.

"We shot them, some of the them fell, other were injured, other ran away, Mr. Latortue was happy to say, as he answered the questions of group of journalists.

Gérard Latortue who tried to explain why the police had shot the demonstrators, declared that their march was not peaceful.

"They asked us permission to organize a peaceful demonstration. They made disorder. Then, we answered with strength", Latortue pointed out, doped by the journalists' encouraging questions. They tried to challenge the State's authority, "nou tire dèyè yo tou, genyen k tonbe tou oui" (we shot them too and some of them did fall, yes), the interim head of government declared as he accused them of shooting policemen.

Several officials at the interim government, including Minister of Justice Bernard Gousse, also declared Thursday that 3 policemen were killed in the Lavalas demonstration.

However, in a declaration made the same day on the air of a private radio station of the capital, Director of the Police Léon Charles had rather said that bandits had attacked a police patrol and that two policemen had been injured but that they were out of danger.

"The attack took place earlier this morning, close to the Jérémie wharf" (in the neighborhood La Saline), Mr. Charles pointed out. It is during that attack perpetrated a long time before the Lavalas demonstration, that these 3 policemen, whose names we don't have, could have been killed, a source close to the policemen who were killed pointed out. The injured policemen are presently at a hospital in the capital .

The interim prime minister claims that the situation is under control and said that he intended to forbid all Lavalas demonstrations.

AHP October 1st 2004 12:20 PM

A leader of the MONSA says he takes note of the fact that the interim government claims responsibility for the violent acts committed against Lavalas demonstrators

Port-au-Prince, October 1st, 2004 (AHP)- A leader of the National Movement to Save Haiti (MONSA), John Joël Joseph, informed Friday that two members of the organization, Maxo Casséus and Wilson Jean Bart alias Tupac, were shot and several others injured by armed individuals in Cité Soleil who were shooting a group of Lavalas supporters who were getting ready to join other demonstrators in Bel-Air.

John Joël Joseph took note of the fact that the interim government claimed responsibility through its prime minister for the violent acts committed by armed individuals who came from the Boston neighborhood which is sold, according to him, to the cause of the former platform of the opposition.

"We will remain mobilized until the departure of interim authorities and the reestablishment of a climate of peace in the country", he declared. He also rejected the declarations according to which the demonstrators had firearms during the September 30th demonstration. According to him, this is a clumsy way of trying to justify the massacre perpetrated against the demonstrators.

A 60-year-old lady, Piersine Adéma, was also shot dead this Friday by armed individuals in Soleil 9. According to her husband, Jean Claude Estein, Mrs. Adéma was killed by armed men from the Boston neighborhood.

AHP October 1st, 2004 3:50 PM

New rally of Lavalas activists to denounce the deadly violence of Thursday: they compare the fact that the prime minister claimed responsibility for the murders of Lavalas activist to a call to civil war

Port-au-Prince, October 1st, 2004 (AHP)- Lavalas activists organized this Friday a rally in the populist neighborhood of Bel-Air in Port-au-Prince to denounce the murder of several of their members during a demonstration violently repressed the day before.

Among the activists who "fell" under gunshots in this demonstration that was organized to commemorate the 13th anniversary of the 1991 military coup d'état, are two MONSA members, Maxo Casséus and Wilson Jean-Bart called Tupac. An old lady of over 60 years old named Piersine Adéma was killed this Friday in Cité Soleil.

A spokesperson of Lavalas activists, Jean Mary Samedi, declared that over 10 of them were killed in the demonstration.

The interim prime minister confirmed Thursday night that the "police had indeed shot the demonstrators and that several of them had fallen". Jean Mary Samedi declared that most activists who had "fallen" did so in populist neighborhoods, notably in Cité Soleil as they were going to join the demonstration.

Lavalas activists once again held the Latortue government responsible for all the violent acts seen during this demonstration that had gathered, he said, several thousands people. Jean Mary Samedi took the occasion to reject the provisional prime minister and his minister of justice's declarations in which they said that Lavalas activists were responsible of the death of three policemen on September 30th.

If policemen were killed, they must know the people responsible of their murder, he declared. Director of Police Léon Charles had pointed out that a police patrol had been attacked early Thursday morning by bandits in the neighborhood La Saline", a long time before the beginning of the Lavalas demonstration.

According to Jean-Marie Samedi, Mr. Latortue's declarations in which he was happy that demonstrators fell under gunshots by the police, is the equivalent of a call to civil war.

The neighborhood of Bel-air was barricaded this Friday. "It is to avoid that Fanmi Lavalas supporters continue to be victims" because the government has prepared a plan to massacre the poor in populist neighborhoods, Mr. Samedi pointed out.

Flamed tires barricades were also put up in several other neighborhoods of the capital, including Delmas 18 and Lassaline, while hails of bullets were heard all day long. Commercial banks downtown closed earlier than usual. Public transportation and commercial activities were also disturbed on Lassaline Boulevard, and Jean-Jacques Dessalines as well as on Rue Pavée, and in the neighborhood of Sans-Fil.