

Tab 21

Council On Hemispheric Affairs

MONITORING POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND DIPLOMATIC ISSUES AFFECTING THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Memorandum to the Press 05.12

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Wednesday, 2 February 2005

Haiti's Upcoming Elections: Fanmi Lavalas opts out unless Latortue halts State-sponsored Terrorism

- On 1 February 2005, nearly one year after the de-facto coup against Haiti's democratically elected president, Jean Bertrand Aristide, the AP reported that the Lavalas party will not participate in the local and municipal elections scheduled for October, or the legislative and presidential elections scheduled for November.
- Lavalas' decision to not participate is a direct result of the suppression carried out against party supporters by paramilitary factions and gang leaders who get their marching orders from the Latortue government. New evidence reveals interim Haitian Prime Minister Gerard Latortue's de-facto policy of restoring "Duvalierism without Duvalier."
- Since the first day Washington installed him in power, Latortue has taken a fiercely adversarial position towards Aristide's Fanmi Lavalas political party. By working with the anti-Aristide opposition to extinguish Lavalas, he repudiates his claim that he is for free, fair and open elections.
- Where did Latortue obtain the funds to buy off the ex-military, and how can U.S. and Canadian taxpayers know that the funds their governments donated to the Haitian Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) will not be used as payments for military renegades?
- The ex-military and former death squads are engaging in terrorist tactics similar to those that were used by Iraqi insurgents to keep the majority from the polls. But unlike the situation in Iraq, the anti-democracy forces in Haiti have the tacit backing of the

state.

Haiti's Latortue: Washington's Chief *Chimere* in Port-au-Prince

The Fanmi Lavalas party, which Aristide founded as the Lavalas movement against the U.S. backed Duvalier dictatorship, has decided not to participate in Haiti's upcoming elections. Its grave decision yesterday is understandable since, in contrast to Interim Prime Minister Gerard Latortue's declaration that in the upcoming elections, "this government will not act in favor of anybody or any political candidate [nor will it] work against any candidate who will run," evidence abounds of state-sponsored terror that has been launched against residents of pro-Aristide slums, such as Cite Soleil and Bel Air, by gangs and possibly the ex-military.

The Council on Hemispheric Affairs repeatedly has called attention to the Latortue government's brutal suppression and illegal imprisonment of Lavalas supporters. We already knew that, according to the Catholic Church's Justice and Peace Commission, there are an estimated 700 political prisoners languishing in Haitian jails, including former Prime Minister Yvon Neptune and former Minister of the Interior Jocelerme Privert. The interim government even had the audacity to imprison the country's most revered Catholic priest, Father Jean-Juste, though he was recently released. We also knew that hundreds of Haitians, mostly from Lavalas neighborhoods, have been killed since the coup. For these reasons and many others, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has refused to recognize the Latortue regime. But now, new evidence mounts in support of the claim that Latortue and his rogue justice minister, Bernard Gousse, are engaged in an all-out-war against Haiti's poor, who make up the vast majority of the population and who overwhelmingly support Aristide.

It's worse than we thought

The University of Miami School of Law's Center for the Study of Human Rights has recently published findings from the investigation it carried out in Haiti last November. The inquiry, led by attorney and former law enforcement official, Thomas M. Griffin, included interviews with government leaders, U.S. embassy personnel in Port-au-Prince, U.N. peacekeepers, political prisoners, human rights organizations, and both pro and anti-Aristide groups, among others (for the full report go to <http://www.law.miami.edu/news/368.html>).

In graphic detail, the document presents some of the strongest evidence yet against Latortue's mendacious claims that he is a neutral leader with no political agenda and that most of the violence is the fault of Lavalas-inspired groups and individuals. While it does not present any evidence that Latortue himself has directly ordered the almost systematic execution-style killings of pro-Aristide loyalists across the country, the report does paint a blood soaked picture of the interim prime minister as Washington's ultra right wing servitor and the behind-the-scenes architect of the ongoing suppression of the poor. It documents the Latortue government's complicity in summary executions in urban poor neighborhoods by anti-Lavalas gangs, which often work in conjunction with the Haitian National Police force (HNP) and possibly the ex-military (*Forces Armees d' Haiti*, or "FADH"). To date, we cannot say with certainty that the ex-military is the main culprit in the executions, though we do know that at least 197 ex-soldiers have been incorporated into the HNP. According to the

arms. They need a professional, depoliticized police force to maintain order, not an army that attacks its own people with impunity.”

Washington's Chimeres are back to Work

Unfortunately the UN peacekeeping force, MINUSTAH, seems determined to ignore this advice. It has rarely confronted gang leaders and has even performed the bidding of Latortue by aiding and abetting the HNP and rebel gangs in their raids against pro-Lavalas slums. MINUSTAH's lack of will has been manifest in the words of its commander, Brazilian General Augusto Heleno, who has said, in words that echo the UN's impotence in Rwanda, "I command a peacekeeping force, not an occupation force." Of course, one could retort, since there is no peace to keep, why not force an occupation upon the Haitian ex-military strongholds? But this is, surely, too much to ask, as MINUSTAH has virtually no control in the coastal slums or the countryside, which is run mainly by members of the ex-military and former death squad leaders.

Most of these brigands, such as the convicted FRAPH death squad leader Jodel Chamblain – recently acquitted of murder charges in a kangaroo court last August as a direct result of Justice Minister Gousse's intercession – flooded back into the country from the Dominican Republic and elsewhere following Aristide's ouster, or were broken out of prison during the coup by anti-Aristide partisans. Acting as the frontline of "Washington's *chimeres*," they are now chirpily back to their old business of making life miserable for the Haitian people. While comparisons to the situation in Iraq are irresistibly tempting, one crucial difference should be observed: in Iraq, at least the insurgent uprising against the majority, which really did want to have the election, does not have the support of the state. In Haiti, one could only wish such were the case.

This analysis was authored by COHA Senior Research Fellow, Seth R. DeLong, Ph.D.

February 2, 2005

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Tab 22

Tensions high in Haiti after police violence

ISN SECURITY WATCH (02/03/05) - Tensions remain high in Haiti after police opened fire on protesters in the capital of Port-Au-Prince on Monday, killing two people and wounding some 20 others.

The police opened fire when a 2'000-strong group of supporters of deposed president Jean-Bertrand Aristide marched towards the National Palace to observe the one-year anniversary of his ouster.

News agencies said the protestors advanced towards the government building waving portraits of Aristide and shouting slogans against US President George Bush. A police vehicle blocked the road and the policemen fired tear gas shells and then live ammunition into the crowd.

The protestors were accompanied by hundreds of UN peacekeeping troops deployed in Haiti.

"This looked to be peaceful, but for some reason, we are not sure why, the Haitian police arrived and decided to disband the demonstration," the Associated Press quoted Commander Carols Chugs Braga, a spokesman for the 7'400-member UN peacekeeping mission, as saying.

Some 280 people have died in protests in Haiti since September last year.

Last week, 28 people were killed in clashes in the slums of the capital. Some UN Peacekeepers were also wounded when they were fired upon last week.

Haiti has been gripped by political turmoil since last year. Aristide was forced to flee the country after a yearlong popular protest against his corrupt regime. The rebels, mostly former army soldiers who had been removed in 1995, overran most parts of Haiti and advanced towards the capital, forcing the president to leave. Aristide fled Haiti in a US aircraft.

He was replaced with a government that is believed to have the backing of the US administration. The US troops had arrived in Haiti a day after Aristide left the country, and then handed over the peacekeeping mission to the UN force in June last year. Almost immediately after landing in Africa, where he remains in exile, Aristide alleged that he had been kidnapped by US Marines and forced to resign in a US-led "coup d'etat".

A number of Aristide's confidantes are in prison, including former prime minister Yvonne Neptune and former interior minister Jocelerme Privert.

Tab 23

Emergency Forum on freedom of the press in Haiti: journalists are threatened

Port-au-Prince, February 3, 2005(AHP)- The Inter American Press Society (SIP) organized this Friday in Port-au-Prince an emergency forum on freedom of the press in Haiti.

It is the vice-president of the association, Rafael Molina, one of the directors of the Dominican newspaper El Nacional, who opened the works by denouncing the grave danger that hangs over the press in Haiti. SIP chairman Sergio Muñoz spoke in the same sense. He was very critical about the attitude of the regime in place in regards to the freedom of the press and he considered that the threats that hang on the Haitian press are very serious and that they are a great source of worry for the SIP.

This forum was organized at the time when protests of indignation come from everywhere after the murder of journalist Abdias Jean on January 14th while he was covering a police intervention at Village de Dieu, a popular district of the capital.

In parallel, correspondent of the Reuters Agency, Guyler C. Delva, has been receiving serious death threats for several days, and he was the target of a strong attack from the prime minister's press office after he published a dispatch. Two journalists from the newspaper Le Nouvelliste were severely beaten up on January 14th by armed individuals in the popular district of Bel-Air while on the same day, the police threatened a team of reporters from the private television station "Télé Guinen" and seized their camera and gave it back without the cassette.

This forum is organized while Radio and Teletimoun, owned by the Aristide Foundation for Democracy, have been closed down for 8 months, without any official explanation from the government. The only explanation given was from General Secretary of Reporters Without Borders, Robert Ménard, who arrived from Paris last June and was the first one to inform that these two media hadn't been closed down for political reasons, but for administrative reasons.

Speaking at the SIP forum, director of the Ecumenical Center of Human Rights Jean Claude Bajoux, also a member of a governmental commission in charge of giving compensation to supporters of the former opposition who reportedly suffered damage during the GNB anti-Aristide movement, considered that the press is not threatened under the interim government.

For his part, director of the newspaper " Le Nouvelliste " Max Chauvet said he recognizes that there are problems, but an emergency forum would have made more sense under the Lavalas government.

General Secretary of the Association of Haitian Journalists Guyler C. Delva declared that an emergency forum was justified. Every time a media or journalists denounced violations before, there were massive denunciations orchestrated and today, a great number of media a pressure groups don't say a word for unknown reasons, even when a journalist is murdered.

"This forum is a rare opportunity for journalists, professionals and ordinary citizens to talk about the problem of the freedom of press and expression and the running of the press in Haiti", the Reuters correspondent explained. He declared that the culture of intolerance is still obvious among many sectors of society and among governmental structures.

Mr. Delva call the media and the journalists to show solidarity in order to face the challenges to come. He recommended a responsible practice of the freedom of the press and the respect of professional ethic.

Tab 24

**Police and Jordanian troops raid Haitian slum filled with pro-Aristide followers; One person killed**

By AMY BRACKEN

Associated Press Writer

535 words

3 February 2005

04:54 pm

Associated Press Newswires

English

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PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) - Haitian **police** and U.N. peacekeepers raided a volatile slum and shot and killed at least one person in the seaside ghetto teeming with supporters of ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, witnesses said.

The raid on Cite Soleil came as authorities fight an increase in violence since Sept. 30, when Aristide loyalists intensified protests demanding his return from exile in South Africa. More than 250 people have been killed in shootouts involving politically affiliated street gangs, **police**, U.N. peacekeepers and protesters.

About 150 Jordanian troops in armored vehicles and 60 Haitian **police** rolled into the sprawling, trash-strewn slum before dawn and immediately came under fire, Jordanian military spokesman Mahmoud Gazalat said.

Residents differed, saying they stormed in and began firing into the air, breaking down doors and arresting several people.

The law enforcers shot and killed one resident, Bernice Ardan, when he opened the door of his shack upon hearing heavy gunfire, the residents said, apparently mistaking the 55-year-old unemployed father for a gunman.

Gazalat said he could only confirm that one civilian and one **police** officer were shot and injured in an exchange of fire. He said both were believed to be in stable condition.

He said the goal of the raid was to arrest gangsters, including pro-Aristide gang leader Emmanuel "Dread" Wilme. He said no arrests were made.

"We were all still in bed when the **police** and (U.N. soldiers) came in and we heard shooting from every direction," 40-year-old resident Florencia Paul said as wailing mourners gathered in front of Ardan's blood-spattered body. "We only have security problems here when the **police** and (U.N. soldiers) come in."

Later, about 200 residents took to the streets, condemning the operation and chanting: "We need Aristide!" Barefoot children followed along as a marching band playing homemade horns and drums snaked through the streets.

"It is only Aristide we recognize as our leader," said Jacques Andre Marie, 26, who said he was fired from his job at Port-au-Prince seaport after Aristide fled.

Police fired into the air to break up the crowd, witnesses said. Protesters hurled rocks, bottles and seashells until they withdrew. Other protesters fired guns into the air as Jordanian troops in armored cars passed.

U.N. peacekeepers were absent during most of the demonstration. Afterward, teenagers armed with rifles guarded the main entrance to Cite Soleil.

Tab 25



A year after start of rebellion that ousted Aristide, insecurity and poverty still bedevil Haiti

By PETER PRENGAMAN

Associated Press Writer

945 words

6 February 2005

05:35 pm

Associated Press Newswires

English

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PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) - Haiti's normally raucous carnival became an afterthought this time last year as a ragtag band of gangsters joined by ex-soldiers set off on a deadly march that led to the ouster of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

As the international community agonized over whether to intervene, fighting and looting destroyed an already weak infrastructure and those who could, fled.

Today, an interim government installed under the watch of a U.S. led-multinational force has called elections late this year, and 7,400 U.N. troops who replaced the Americans patrol the country.

"Last February, we were in a period of people burning down stores, you couldn't even go downtown," said David Bazile, secretary of public security. "Today, we are talking about carnival."

The way people are talking about carnival, however, provides a window into a deteriorating security situation that some fear could bring civil war.

Few revelers showed up as the annual pre-Lenten fete kicked off on Sunday, the anniversary of the rebellion that began in northwest Gonaives city.

"This is depressing," 39-year-old gardener Edward Leonel said of the low attendance. "With all the problems this year, I think most people just decided to stay home."

Hundreds of Haitian police and U.N. soldiers lined the two-mile parade route, which was shortened by half this year to avoid volatile areas such as the Aristide stronghold of Bel Air. No disturbances were reported Sunday evening.

The few people who did attend were treated to a parade of snake charmers with large boa constrictors coiled around their necks, young men snapping whips as they skipped through the streets and women in brightly colored traditional clothes marching in formation with large baskets atop their heads.

The men who forced out Haiti's first democratically elected president remain armed and may yet get their demand for the restoration of the disgraced army blamed for coups and the killings and maimings of thousands before Aristide disbanded it in 1995.

Not even they were celebrating Sunday: "We can't celebrate when we have so much work left to do," said one rebel leader, Remissainthe Ravix. "Aristide has left, but we still have many problems."

Since Aristide supporters intensified protests in September to demand his return from exile in South Africa, more than 250 people have been killed in shootouts involving street gangs, police, U.N. peacekeepers and protesters.

Gangs loyal to Aristide retain control of populous slums that are home to some of the hundreds of thousands who refuse to recognize the interim government of Prime Minister Gerard Latortue -- a technocrat brought home from years in exile in Florida to run the country -- as does the 14-nation Caribbean Community.

It has asked for an international investigation into Aristide's charges that the United States forced him out. U.S. officials say they did not help Aristide keep power because he was profiting from a still brisk business in cocaine smuggling -- charges Aristide denies.

Latortue, in turn, denies that his government is conducting a witchhunt that has scores of officials and supporters of Aristide's Lavalas Family party in overcrowded jails.

"They are not in jail because of being Lavalas members or supporters ... (but) because they broke the law," said police spokeswoman Gessy Coicou. Most arrests have been illegal and few people have been charged.

Lavalas says it will boycott the elections, which would further polarize the country.

Justice is as elusive as peace in Haiti. On Saturday, two bodies lay in the middle of a busy road. Police said the two men were bludgeoned by a crowd after they tried to steal a wallet.

"We cannot change the country without a change in the (corrupt) justice system," said Pierre Esperance of the National Coalition for Haitian Rights.

Others say disarmament is more urgent. U.N. officials are negotiating with the government on a plan to disarm all factions though the Brazilian commander in charge of peacekeepers, Lt. Gen. Augusto Heleno Ribeiro, has other priorities.

"The arms market is strong across the world, we cannot fight it," he said. "So we must show people we don't need arms. We must show them hope in terms of economic and social life."

His mission, and the cash-strapped interim government, was sidetracked for months by deadly floods in May and September that killed thousands and left more missing.

Business leaders say Latortue's government has balanced the budget and normalized foreign debt payments but created no new jobs for the two-thirds of the work force that is unemployed or scrape by on odd jobs.

"When you seen financial improvement (in fiscal management) but not business improvement, the situation can deteriorate and become dangerous," said Claude Beauboeuf, executive director of the Haitian Chamber of Commerce.

In July, several countries and international institutions promised Haiti more than US\$1 billion, but only about US\$200 million has been disbursed.

Philippe Armand, president of the American Chamber of Commerce of Haiti, was hopeful about opening a Florida chapter next month to help exiles set up business in their homeland.

"There is a better business climate now," he said, "a sense we're moving toward elections and will finally put the country back on its feet."

Ordinary Haitians don't agree.

"Either there has been no change since Aristide left, or things are worse," said Car Monique, a 35-year-old mother of five children who sells moonshine. "It seems like even more people are without jobs now."

(pp-maf/sj)

Tab 26

A journalist from an independent radio station has been injured by gunfire in Port-au-Prince: one of his colleagues sees a connection between this attack and recent accusations by officials of the interim government

Port-au-Prince, February 7, 2005 (AHP)- A journalist from *Mégastar*, an independent private radio station, was shot Friday evening in front of the station's studios on Réunion Street in Port-au-Prince.

Raoul Saint-Louis is co-host of the program "Point Final" (Full Stop) broadcast every evening by the station and considered to be very critical of the interim government, focusing on repeated allegations of corruption scandals, misappropriation of funds and waste.

Mr. Saint-Louis was shot in the arm. He was together with several colleagues when men riding in a vehicle began shooting at them.

A collaborator of Mr. Saint-Louis, Jean Myrtho Muraille, saw a connection between this attack and statements by government and police officials accusing Radio *Mégastar* on several occasions over the past few days of giving the poor people of the shantytowns, labeled "chimères", a chance to speak on the radio.

Mr. Muraille said he was shocked that this attack was perpetrated soon after Haitian National Police (PNH) spokesperson Gessy Cameau Coicou criticized the station for offering a microphone to people she called bandits.

" We continue to defend those who are the weakest, we continue to denounce the summary executions in the populist districts, and also to give access to the microphone to the disadvantaged", said Jean Myrtho Muraille, pointing out that the station is placing responsibility for the lives of its journalists and all its employees in the hands of the PNH spokesperson.

For his part, the secretary general of the AJH (Association of Haitian Journalists), Guyler C. Delva, who recently received death threats, considered that this attack was well planned, and is part of a strategy to silence the press.

The AJH official said he was also deeply concerned at these threats and official statements by members of the government such as Justice Minister Bernard Gousse and the PNH spokesperson, who have shown themselves to be hostile, he said, toward media organizations that give a voice to people who criticize the interim government.

This type of behavior only encourages assaults on freedom of the press, said Mr. Delva. He also denounced what he called the disturbing silence of the interim authorities over the the killing of journalist Abdias Jean and the attacks and aggressive behavior directed toward journalists from *Téléguinen* and the daily newspaper *Le Nouvelliste*.

Witnesses agree that Abdias Jean was executed as he was covering a large scale police raid in Village de Dieu, a populist district of the capital.

During a broadcast Saturday on Radio *Mégastar*, several speakers denounced the fact that some pressure groups reputed to be close to the interim government are more comfortable making broad abstract condemnations than criticizing very concrete anti-democratic acts.

AHP February 7, 2005 8:20 AM

Tab 27

International News

Haitians languish in squalor awaiting trial; Country's shattered legal system strands angry prisoners, MARINA JIMÉNEZ finds

MARINA JIMÉNEZ

1,677 words

7 February 2005

The Globe and Mail

A9

English

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PORT-AU-PRINCE -- Yvon Neptune, Haiti's former prime minister, ushers in his guests with a grand sweep of his hand.

"Please take a seat. This is the best I can offer you under the circumstances," he says, pointing to a concrete bench in his three- by two-metre jail cell at the National Penitentiary.

Mr. Neptune, who recently marked his 58th birthday in this squalid prison, puts on his reading glasses, settles into a plastic lawn chair and crosses his bare legs.

This is his first interview since he came out of hiding and gave himself up in June, four months after President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted in a rebellion led by former soldiers and armed thugs.

He is accused of providing weapons to Mr. Aristide's supporters, who allegedly used them to massacre opponents in the town of St. Marc as the rebellion was gathering steam. He denies the charge.

"It's clear I'm being held up here as an example," he complains. "My matter has not gone before a judge."

Neither have the cases of most of the penitentiary's 1,028 inmates. Only 12 have been convicted and sentenced, the rest are languishing in Haiti's shattered legal system.

According to some human-rights advocates, dozens of inmates have been arrested for nothing more than being partisans of Mr. Aristide — arrests that take place with the approval, if not the connivance, of the interim government that was installed under foreign tutelage after his departure.

It is nearly a year since Mr. Aristide fled into exile in South Africa. An election for a new government is supposed to take place in November, but there are few signs of reconciliation between those who opposed the Canadian-educated former priest and the supporters who agitate for his return.

Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch say police are quick to arrest members of Lavalas, Mr. Aristide's party, when they are suspected of violence or corruption, but have failed to act against the former military soldiers — some of whom are convicted criminals — who led the uprising against the ex-president.

"Neptune is being kept in jail as a symbol of all of Aristide's human-rights violations and excesses. He may or may not be guilty, but he is being denied due process," says Jean-Rony Morrisseau, a lawyer with the Committee of Lawyers for the Respect of Individual Liberty.

Mr. Morrisseau estimates that there are as many as 30 political prisoners in Haiti, including former interior minister Jocelerme Privert, who has the cell next door to Mr. Neptune; two Lavalas senators; a former police chief; and Gérard Jean-Juste, a populist priest who was held for several weeks in the prison until his recent release.

"Many face vague or impossible-to-prove charges such as public mischief or conspiracy against the state's safety," Mr. Morrisseau says.

"The judiciary hasn't been working for a long time in this country," he says. "What revolts me the most is not my being here, but the way other prisoners are treated. I see prisoners being beaten here, and most are just poor people from the slums."

By law, a Haitian who is arrested is supposed to be seen by a judge within 48 hours. In practice, this does not happen. Part of the reason is that several court buildings were looted and burned in last year's anti-Aristide uprising.

Yet investigating human-rights abuses is difficult in Haiti, where marronage — a Creole word meaning obscuring reality — is the modus operandi.

"Everything is cloaked in smoke and mirrors in Haiti. Virtually every story is wrapped in rhetoric and hyperbole," says David Beer, an RCMP chief superintendent acting as the UN mission's police commissioner.

Human-rights groups themselves vehemently disagree on the facts. Some say there are 700 political prisoners but cannot provide names; others say there are none at all. It is not clear that Lavalas-affiliated inmates in the overcrowded penitentiary are receiving worse treatment than the other prisoners.

The National Coalition for Haitians' Rights believes there have been no reprisals against Lavalas members.

"The ones in jail are accused criminals who happen to have been Aristide supporters," said Pierre Esperance, the coalition's director. For example, he said, Father Jean-Juste was jailed on suspicion of masterminding a campaign of attacks against police that was dubbed Operation Baghdad.

Leon Charles, chief of the Haitian National Police, says Father Jean-Juste and other Lavalas politicians were implicated in the recent violence through their association with gang leaders.

"We want to send the signal to the intellectual authors of the violence," he says. "This has prompted criticism."

He acknowledged that there may be something to the claims of Mr. Aristide's followers. "It's possible some police officers are taking advantage of the current political climate to execute personal vendettas," he said. The University of Miami's human-rights report even accuses the UN stabilization mission of collaborating with Haitian National Police as they target Mr. Aristide's supporters.

MINUSTAH denies this, and a spokesman says they plan to send peacekeepers into prisons to track the progress of cases against the dozens of poor, young males arrested in the slums during the pro-Aristide demonstrations.

"Until the justice system is up and running properly, it will be impossible to clarify whether there are political prisoners," Supt. Beer said.

Régis Charron, a Corrections Canada assistant warden who is working in Haiti with a UN program to reform the penitentiary system, said one thing is clear: The appalling circumstances that prisoners must endure can only lead to more violence and bloodshed.

Unless conditions improve both in the prison and in the judicial system, another riot could break out at any time, said Mr. Charron, whose predecessor resigned last year after Haitian authorities refused to accept recommendations to improve penitentiary conditions.

"It's impossible to leave human beings in subhuman conditions and think nothing will happen," he said.

Illustration

Document GLOB000020050624e127001hr

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Tab 28

Agence Haïtienne de Presse - AHP
February 8, 2005

Thousands of Fanmi Lavalas supporters demonstrate to mark the fourth anniversary of the second inauguration of Aristide as president: the police open fire

Port-au-Prince, February 8, 2005 (AHP)- Several thousand Fanmi Lavalas supporters demonstrated peacefully Monday in Port-au-Prince in observance of the fourth anniversary of the inauguration of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's second term.

The demonstrators called for the return of constitutional government, which was cut short, they said, with the forced departure of President Aristide on February 29, 2004.

They also denounced the summary executions and political persecutions directed against supporters of Mr. Aristide.

The demonstration was interrupted by a police patrol accompanied by individuals in civilian dress, known as attachés, who reportedly began shooting at the demonstrators, injuring several of them.

Soldiers from the United Nations mission who were following the demonstration then intervened, enabling the demonstrators to return to their base.

Reacting to these incidents, a spokesperson for the Lavalas activists, Samba Boukman, said that the interim government is making a mistake if it thinks that violence will persuade the activists to give up their deeply held beliefs.

"We are going to continue to struggle peacefully until constitutional government returns because Haitians have had enough of the violence and the poison of social exclusion and corruption", he said.

Tab 29

Human rights violations in Port-au-Prince

Compiled by Judy DaCruz, a human rights monitor who previously worked for the government-sponsored Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (International Lawyers' Office)

List of violations committed in the last 7 days in the neighborhoods of Bel Air and Koridor Bassia, allegedly by heavily armed police officers wearing black uniforms and balaclavas.

Killings

January 30: koridor Bassia

1. Wilken Bosse (17): he was reading outside his house where he was dragged out into the street and executed some distance away. He was taken away by the police and his body was found at the morgue;
2. Rodrigue Bonin (44): he was dragged out of his house and taken outside where he was shot twice in the head. He died on February 4. He was an artist (he used to paint Aristide's pictures on T-shirts and sold them downtown with his brother) but he also made several items (e.g. backpacks) for sale;
3. X: a young man who recently moved to the neighborhood and who lived next door to Rodrigue Bonin. He was dragged into the street and executed. His body was taken away by the police.

All 3 were killed during the same police operation.

February 4: Rue Sans Fils (Bel Air)

1. Jeff Joseph (14) was shot and killed on his way back to his home after visiting his grandmother. He was shot in the leg and minutes later was shot a second time and killed after he was heard crying for help.

February 5: Rue des Fontforts (Bel Air)

1. Steve Blemy (21): his hands were tied up behind his back and he was told to run. When he refused, he was pushed and shot in the leg. As he dragged himself away, he was shot in the head and killed. Witnesses allege that a police attaché called Gwo Nasson was among the police officers who killed Blemy.

February 6: Rue du Peuple (near Bel Air).

3 alleged thieves were shot by police in the early morning (2 am). They were brutally shot and left lying for dead on the street. Police came back later to pick up the bodies and on finding that one person was still alive, shot him dead. Their bodies have not been delivered to the morgue. The identities of these persons are unknown.

These killings seem to have been brutal. Bits and pieces of their brains and other organs were lying on the street where they were killed.

Wounded

January 30: Koridor Bassia

1. Wesner Pierre (18) was shot and wounded when he was urinating on top of his house. After refusing to go to hospital, he was taken away by MINUSTAH's personnel to receive treatment after his family was assured that only foreigners will treat him.

February 4: Rue Sans Fils (same area where Jeff Joseph was killed)

1. Lucien Leonard: was shot in the neck. He is refusing medical treatment at hospital for fear of being taken away by police.

February 2: Koridor Bassia

1. Pouchon (19) was shot and wounded. He is currently receiving treatment.

Houses burned:

January 18: at least 18 houses burned at Koridor Bassia and Mon St Michel;

January 25: at least 5 houses burned at Mon Marinèt;

February 5: one "room" burned and others partially destroyed at Rue des Cesars, Bel Air

Arrests:

January 30: Rue Tiremasse Prolongee (outside Koridor Bassia, during the same operation when killings took place): a witness described police officers in black uniforms taking away more than 15 young men. Their identities are unknown.

February 5: Rue des Pucelles

Claye Erard (22) was taken away by the police officers involved in the killing of Steve Blemy.

Many more arrests were made during police operations almost everyday during the last week. These arrests were conducted when the police were supposedly monitoring road cleaning operations in these neighborhoods.

Perpetrators

According to residents from these neighborhoods, these killings and other violations are being perpetrated by police together with attachés, wearing black uniforms. These attachés are allegedly former members of a group called "zero tolerance" from Poste Marchand. They used to operate under Aristide's regime. They have now changed sides and are acting as police informants and executioners. The most common names cited by residents are:

1. Maraige Laguerre (alias Elius);
2. Jean Yves Gerard (alias gwo Nasson);
3. Frantz Thomas (alias Fanfan);

4. Clermond Senghor (alias Periklèm).

Calls from Residents

All week, residents from these neighborhoods have been repeatedly calling on MINUSTAH to offer them protection. More than anger, there is a sense of despair. The continued shootings and killings as well as the burning of houses are causing people to be terrified and not knowing what to expect next. More significantly for peacekeeping, there is reason to expect that these acts of terror will in turn cause residents to organize themselves in groups of self-defense or to join those who have guns in order to protect themselves. More violence will then be inevitable.


Tab 30



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- ▣ News
 - ▣ Business
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 - ▣ Tourism
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 - ▣ Sports
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Inter-American Press Lobbies For Press Freedom

**Journalists
are being
assassinated.**

**And the
killers are
getting away
with murder.**

Hardbeatnews, NEW YORK, N.Y., Fri. Feb. 11, 2005: In the past three weeks, less than a dozen regional journalists claim to have faced some form of intimidation in the line of duty. Guyler Delva, secretary-general of the Haitian Journalists' Association and a Reuters correspondent, Four other Haitian journalists complained of intimidation while three photo journalists - two in the Dominican Republic and one in Trinidad, were arrested by police. Haitian radio reporter Abdias Jean was allegedly killed by police in the Village de Dieu sector of the capital Port-au-Prince on January 14. Police are reported to have beaten and shot him after he identified himself as a journalist while covering a police raid on the shantytown and their killing of several people there. In

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Guyana, independent television owner, C.N. Sharma, had his license yanked by police and other government authorities, who confiscated the TV station's transmitting equipment and closed its studios. And in St. Kitts, journalist Clive Bacchus is still awaiting the renewal of his work permit, which ran out on January 31, and forced him to quit his job as station manager at WIN FM. While the National newspaper editor in St. Maarten, Leonard Gildarie was arrested and repatriated to Guyana because he lacked work and residence permits. The recent incidents have left organizations like the Inter-American Press Association, the International Press Institute, Reporters Without Borders, the Association of Caribbean Media Worker and other local groups of journalists, outraged. This week, the Inter-American Press Association convened an Emergency Forum on Press Freedom in Haiti to focus on press freedom, particularly during the transition of democracy there. "Without freedom of the press there can be no democracy, and without democracy there can be no freedom of the press," stated IAPA second vice president, Rafael Molina, who opened the proceedings. The forum ended with legislators from the Dominican Republic announced they will amend a law placing restrictions on news media and individual journalists beginning February 27. Meanwhile the ACM and Guyana Press Association will convene a discussion on the current challenges to the free press in the region in Guyana on Friday, February 18. Now it's left to be seen whether the promises made this week by legislators will become reality. - Hardbeatnews.com



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Trinidad & Tobago 43rd Independence
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Tab 31

**Haiti police hunt rebel ex-soldiers, say no talks.**

By Joseph Guyler Delva

476 words

11 February 2005

05:19 pm

Reuters News

English

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PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, Feb 11 (Reuters) - Haitian police launched a hunt on Friday for rebel former soldiers accused of killing four police officers, and Haiti's interim authorities said they would crack down on the men they called bandits.

Police Chief Leon Charles said the police are looking for Remissainthe Ravix, the leader of the former soldiers. He ruled out negotiating with the group.

The announcement came one day after Haitian police, backed by about 150 U.N. troops, stormed the former soldiers' headquarters building in Petionville on the outskirts of the capital. The targets of the raid, whom Charles accused of stealing vehicles and police weapons, had left the compound.

The police arrested three people, confiscated several army uniforms and uncovered papers that appeared to be plans to attack the National Palace, a police spokeswoman said. Authorities were still analyzing the papers.

Police operations would extend to "other areas where those bandits have been calling the shots," Charles said.

"The police have decided to combat this situation, to attack and really hunt those who tarnish the noble military institution's image. They are nothing but bandits," said Charles, a former army lieutenant.

Former troops led the rebel force that pushed out President Jean-Bertrand Aristide a year ago and still control parts of Haiti, which has been plagued by political and gang violence that has killed more than 240 people since September.

Police last week arrested a former soldier who possessed a government-owned vehicle and a gun confiscated from a policeman, Charles said. He identified the man as a driver for Ravix.

In retaliation, the ex-soldiers kidnapped four policemen in Terre-Rouge, in the Haitian-Dominican border area where Ravix and a group of his men took refuge after clashing with Haitian authorities few months ago. U.N. troops negotiated the policemen's safe release last week.

But on Sunday, four police officers were killed in the residential Clercine neighborhood, not far from a base for U.N. peacekeepers who have been trying to stabilize Haiti since shortly after Aristide was driven out.

Police authorities have accused Ravix's men of killing the officers, which Ravix denied.

The time for a political settlement had passed, Charles said. "But we cannot wait anymore, we cannot sit idly by and let those guys kill policemen," he said. "We don't have to negotiate with those people."

Haiti's interim Prime Minister Gerard Latortue said his government would disarm all those who carry illegal weapons.

Ex-soldiers have demanded that the government reinstate the army, which Aristide disbanded in 1995, but interim authorities said that decision would be left to the next elected government. A presidential ballot is scheduled for November, with a new president due to take office in February 2006.

Document LBA0000020050211e12b00njb

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Tab 32

The General Director of CONATEL demands once again that Radio Solidarite change frequency: according to the General Director of the station it is political harassment

Port-au-Prince, February 14, 2005 - (AHP) - The General Director of the National Council for Telecommunications (CONATEL), Jean-Michel Boisrond, demands once again, the private radio station Radio Solidarite change it's frequency.

Mr. Boisrond had accepted to defer his requirements after they met last November at the request of the General Director for the station, Venel Remarais, at the offices of the radio and promised that he will not do anything to attempt to shut down Radio Solidarite.

Jean-Michel Boisrond had also represented that he understood the preoccupations of the station after numerous criticisms were raised against him, because of the suspicious nature of his request.

Mr. Remarais asserted that he made him understand at the time of that meeting that a possible change of frequency would cause serious harm to the radio show, given that it's been operating for six years on 107.5. The General Director of CONATEL came back with the issue in a letter dated on February 7th and sent to Radio Solidarite on February 14th.

"CONATEL grants you a delay until February 29th to make the change of the frequency 107.5 MHz to the new frequency 107.3 MHz," wrote Jean-Michel Boisrond.

Mr. Remarais did no say how he would proceed but characterized this demand by CONATEL as a form of political persecution.

Radio Solidarite is one of the six or seven radio stations and television stations that accept to let all the sectors of the society speak including the residents in the popular neighborhoods.

Mr. Remarais asserted that he cannot understand that they want to make such arrangements against a station that is very popular, which is listened to by all levels of society, while the authorities should be in need of such places to do civic education since they announced that elections are scheduled for this year.

"You have to understand that it smacks of a way to decrease the impact of the station at this crucial moment," added the CEO of the station.

Several medias are the subject of persecutions during these past weeks including Teleginen and Radio Megastar of which the journalists were attacked or injured.

A journalist-correspondent of a radio station in Florida, Abdias Jean, was killed on January 14th while he was reporting on a strong arm operation of the police force in Cite de Dieu, a popular neighborhood in the capital.

AHP, February 14, 2005 3:10 PM

Haiti (MIDH), Marc L. Bazin, declared on Monday that the elections announced for this year by the interim authorities are materially and technically possible but politically impossible.

Marc L. Bazin explained that the political ground has not been smoothly laid because, in fact, numerous key managerial staff members of Fanmi Lavalas continue to stagnate in prison and have not appeared before a judge.

He cited notably the cases of former Prime Minister Yvon Neptune and the militant Annette Auguste (So Ann).

"If you reproach them something, judge them, but if there is no charge held against them, release them," asserted Mr. Bazin who recalled that Yvon-Neptune had the choice between staying or leaving the country but he chose to stay.

He mentioned that it was Yvon Neptune who facilitated the transition adding that he was astonished that it was after that that they chose to incarcerate him.

The leader of MIDH otherwise denounced what he calls alliances against nature between the political leaders of the so-called left, and the bosses whose wealth comes from the exploitation of factory workers.

Mr. Bazin criticized the leaders of the left for having never raised a little finger against such abuses nor to call for an increase of the minimum salary and to lower taxes.

AHP February 14, 2005 10:55 AM

The president and secretary general of the CEP are being accused of soliciting 2.9 US dollars as allowances for risk and for civic education, without the backing of the other advisors

Port-au-Prince, February 14, 2005 - (AHP) - The president of the Temporary Electoral Council (CEP), Max Mathurin and the secretary general Rosemond Pradel are accused of having asked for 2.9 million US dollars in favor of the electoral institution without consulting beforehand with the other advisors.

The advisor, Patrick Fequiere, declared that he wasn't aware of this request until the time of a meeting between the CEP and the interim Prime Minister Gerard Latortue on February 5th.

This amount would be devoted to the organization of a campaign for civic education and to grant the election advisors "allowances for risk," stated Mr. Fequiere.

According to Patrick Fequiere, when Mr. Latortue raised the issue of the 2.9 million US dollars, the other advisors were completely taken aback, given that they were not aware of any allowances for risk being solicited on their behalf.

"It is at that time that the head of government found out that the election institution did not have anything to do in reality with this demand of 2.9 million US dollars," reported Mr. Fequiere.

Even the principal treasurer was not contacted on that matter, says Patrick Fequiere with indignation who says that he wrote the two other incriminated advisors so that they can give clarity on this matter.

He also accused these two advisers of hindering the CEP with a new scandal.

Mr. Fequiere otherwise criticized the government for receiving the letter of Rosemond Pradel and Max Mathurin despite legal flaws consisting therein, he said.

"If I were the prime minister, I would have reacted with rigor," he asserted.

The president of the Temporary Electoral Council (CEP), Max Mathurin threatened to apply the sanctions provided, he said, within the internal rules of the institution against the adviser Patrick Fequiere who he accuses of wanting to hinder the electoral process.

On his part, the head of MINUSTAH, Ambassador Juan Gabriel Valdes, saluted the efforts agreed to by the Haitians in order to sit down together at the same table to look forward to resolving the problems of their country.

These efforts encourage the international community to accompany the Haitians in their initiatives to develop the country, indicated Juan Gabriel Valdes, that remind us that a number of countries in crisis have already passed through this process.

Mr. Valdes said it encourages Haitians on the road to dialogue.

The representative of UNDP in Haiti, Adama Guindo, on his part said that the signing of this agreement constitutes the reflection of a consensus that starts to release itself among the Haitians in their quest for the solutions to the problems of Haiti.

According to Mr. Guindo, it is extremely important for the international community to accompany the efforts of the Haitians to move the country out of the impasse.

The president of the commission charged by the interim power to promote national dialogue, Micha Gaillard, reaffirmed that it is important to hold a national conference in the country to seek to resolve the problems.

Micha Gaillard also stated that this project must cover the periods before and after the elections.

On his part, the American Ambassador in Haiti, James B. Foley, connected the success of the upcoming elections with a sincere dialogue between all Haitians to define together, he said, their points of divergence."

According to James B. Foley, the organization of the upcoming elections is required passage for the Haitian people to be able to choose their leaders and permit the country to take the rails of development.

The executive secretary of the Group 184, Anthony Barbier, considered also that national dialogue is necessary for the success of the upcoming electoral campaign.

Anthony Barbier encouraged Haitians to take the road to save the country.

AHP February 14, 2005 2:05 PM

Samba Boukman says he fears for the lives of eight of his comrades arrested by MINUSTAH soldiers during an operation in Bel-Air

Port-au-Prince, February 14, 2005 - (AHP) - The spokesman for the militants of Lavalas of Bel-Air, Samba Boukman, denounced on Monday the arrests of February 10th, 2005 of eight of his comrades by MINUSTAH at the time of an operation in that zone.

Samba Boukman deplored that "foreign soldiers inflicted corporal punishment on some peaceful citizens who they arrested illegally, while they were going about their business."

He also denounced the fact that the parents of certain youth who were arrested were not able to find them either at the police station holding cells or inside the prisons.

Samba Boukman underlined that on several occasions many individuals who were arrested by the soldiers of the UN Forces and then handed over to the police, were later found at the morgue of the General Hospital.

He invited the High Command of MINUSTAH to assume their responsibilities to the fullest in the framework of these new arrests.

AHP February 14, 2005 12:50 PM

Tab 33

Newsday.com

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February 14, 2005

Quotes: 'The authorities don't even acknowledge violations are taking place and the majority of the press are simply ignoring what is going on.' - Judy Dacruz, a human rights lawyer in Haiti on apparent executions by police of government protesters (A08); People wont move around the country in day-to-day activities. They wont go shopping. They wont participate in elections in the same way. - David Beer, commissioner of the UN police force in Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti - Abdias Jean was eating lunch near his home in the seaside slum of God's Village last month when he spotted a group of police officers walking in his direction. Jean, a correspondent for a news program aired on a Miami radio station, ducked into a friend's house.

Ten days earlier, residents say, police executed a 17-year-old girl and an unarmed man during a raid in the same neighborhood. Jean was not taking any chances. But the black-clad officers had seen Jean and ordered him out of the house. They tied his wrists with his own belt, dragged him a block away and put a bullet through his head, witnesses said.

Jean's murder is one among a spate of summary executions in poor neighborhoods that witnesses say were committed by the police during raids ostensibly against criminals and armed groups opposed to the government. It is not clear whether Jean's murder was related to his journalistic work.

"The human rights situation in Haiti is critical right now," said Judy Dacruz, an independent human rights lawyer based in Port-au-Prince. "There has been a complicity of silence about these killings. The authorities don't even acknowledge

violations are taking place, and the majority of the press are simply ignoring what is going on."

Dacruz has documented 14 cases, including the murder of Jean, since October, in which witnesses said police officers summarily executed unarmed people. In three other cases, people who were taken into police custody either showed up dead or were never seen again.

Nearly one year since U.S. Marines escorted former President Jean- Bertrand Aristide from Haiti, some human rights observers say state- sponsored abuses have continued - or even escalated. Most of the abuses have taken place in poor parts of Port-au-Prince, where support for Aristide still runs strong and armed groups demanding his return defy the government and clash with police. While some of those executed were members of Aristide's Lavalas party, most appear to have had no political affiliation, other than the fact that they lived in a neighborhood sympathetic to Aristide.

Government and police officials have denied the police have committed summary executions. In some cases, they have speculated that former soldiers or pro-Lavalas armed gangs might be responsible, while in others they have claimed not to know about the murders but conceded police were in the area at the time.

"I guarantee the police are not involved in these kinds of actions," police spokesman Gessy Coicou said at a news conference last week. "Personally, I don't know Abdias Jean, I haven't heard of him and I haven't seen his name in any of the files I have. Many journalists have reported that there are many witnesses. I would advise them to file a complaint." (Jean's mother has indeed filed a formal complaint with the nation's chief prosecutor.)

Aristide himself was accused by rights groups and many in the international community of tolerating and perpetrating abuses, which was a factor in pushing

the Organization of American States to freeze millions of dollars in aid to his government.

In contrast, abuses under the government of Prime Minister Gerard Latortue have gotten scant censure from the United States, Canada and France, critics of Aristide that led an occupying force in Haiti after his ouster. Meanwhile, recent human rights violations have occurred despite the presence of 7,500 UN peacekeepers whose mandate includes training Haitian police as well as promoting and protecting human rights.

David Beer, commissioner of the 1,400 UN civilian police in Haiti, said part of the problem is that a wave of violence has forced peacekeepers to focus on fighting armed groups, some of them Aristide backers.

Beer formed a team of 24 UN civilian police officers last month to investigate summary executions allegedly committed by the Haitian police, as well as the killings of at least 10 prisoners in a crackdown at the national penitentiary on Dec. 1.

"It's worse than I would have expected," Beer said. "If the human rights situation isn't changing, and obviously changing, and the public has the confidence that it is changing, we can't have a secure and stable environment. People won't move around the country in day-to-day activities. They won't go shopping. They won't participate in elections in the same way."

The first round of presidential elections is set for Nov. 13.

Lavalas leaders have accused the government of a campaign of repression meant to stamp out support for Aristide and to dissuade the poor from voting. The government says it is battling illegal gangs that aim to destabilize the government.

In the slum of Bel Air, an Aristide stronghold, a man named Alfred, his eyes red and glazed, stared blankly at the cinder-block wall of his tiny home last week. His wife sat slumped in a white plastic chair. They declined to identify themselves further, fearing police reprisal. A week ago, their son Jeff, 14, left to buy bread a few blocks away. They heard gunfire - commonplace in Bel Air - and soon after, two of Jeff's aunts carried his blood-soaked body back to the house. One witness said a police officer had shot Jeff in the leg and then, when the boy collapsed and cried for help, shot him in the chest.

Nobody has come to investigate, and Jeff's parents say they will not file a complaint.

"We'll leave it to God to do justice," said his mother.

"I lifted him in my palm when he was a baby," said Jeff's aunt, "and now I bring him back to this house covered in blood. If we file a complaint, nothing will come of it. They won't take it seriously. They'll keep on killing us."

Tab 34

HAITI

The Miami Herald

Disbanded army reasserts itself, wins the support of many Haitians

15 February 2005

► **JOE MOZINGO**

PETIT GOAVE, Haiti - (KRT) - Behind crude stone barricades and loops of razor wire, the former soldiers stand guard at their posts, assault rifles loaded.

Inside the base, in the cool shade of a giant mango tree, a wiry drill sergeant leads some 100 men through morning exercises as others mill about in their fatigues.

So goes what might be considered a typical day for the Haitian army - if there were one.

Ten years ago, former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide disbanded the dreaded Armed Forces of Haiti - the perpetrators of numerous coups, including one against him, and some of the worst human rights abuses in the hemisphere.

Now, nearly a year after ex-soldiers led a revolt that ousted Aristide, they control much of the countryside and Haiti's second-largest city, Cap-Haitien, posing a serious challenge to U.N. peacekeepers trying to restore the rule of law.

They have no more legal authority than any of the other armed gangs that wreak havoc throughout Haiti. But unlike other groups, they wear

uniforms and brandish their weapons in public, with little repercussion to themselves.

Even in the capital, where the U.N. presence is strongest, they linger in front of the abandoned suburban hotel they turned into their base, openly armed with AK-47 knock-offs, M-1 and M-14 rifles, handguns and at least one grenade launcher.

They have clashed with police and allegedly kidnapped four officers recently in an attempt to extort the release of several of their own from prison. Three of the officers were subsequently handed over to peacekeepers, a U.N. source said.

While Aristide was widely praised for disbanding the armed forces, many Haitians have actually welcomed them back, saying they keep the peace - even as foreign diplomats fear they will disrupt elections scheduled for November.

Interim Prime Minister Gerard Latortue has treaded lightly on the issue.

After a standoff in December at Aristide's abandoned home, which ex-soldiers seized and occupied for two days, the government agreed to their demands for a decade of back pay - with no requirement that they give up their guns.

"Money first, disarmament later; it's crazy," said one senior Western diplomat here. "Where (is the government) even getting this money?"

The government began issuing checks last month and plans to make three \$1,000 payments to as many as 8,000 former soldiers.

The estimated \$24 million that the program could cost is a huge and curious expenditure in a poor country whose bank accounts were tapped dry by misspending and corruption.

If the soldiers don't give up their weapons, the 7,400 Brazilian-led U.N. peacekeepers said they would accomplish the task by force.

"We are ready to do the operation," said Brazilian Navy Cmdr. Carlos Chagas Braga, No. 2 in the U.N. force command. "We just want to make sure we have all the conditions to minimize civilian casualties."

"The former military is a very sensitive issue here in Haiti," he said.

Ten years of violence during the reign of Aristide's Lavalas party has dulled once widespread abhorrence of the military.

In December, a group of Sri Lankan peacekeepers based in Petit Goave tried to oust the ex-soldiers from the main police station. A mob of

supporters surrounded the Sri Lankans and began throwing rocks.

When the peacekeepers fired in the air to restore order, the ex-soldiers fired at them, wounding one in the arm. The U.N. force retreated to its base a mile away.

The ex-soldiers appear to be well armed. In 1995, shortly after Aristide was restored to power by U.S. troops following a coup four years before, he accused Washington of allowing the former soldiers to keep tens of thousands of heavy weapons in secret arsenals.

Aristide's detractors counter that he always had control of the weapons and distributed some of them to young loyalists in the slums, who went on to cause much of the violence in recent years.

The rebels who forced Aristide to resign Feb. 29, 2004, constituted an odd meeting of the two armed camps - former soldiers and slum dwellers from the city of Gonaives who had turned against Aristide. They claim they picked up thousands of weapons as police fled their posts during the revolt.

They now say the army is a valid entity under the Haitian Constitution and that Aristide's disbanding of it in 1995 was illegal.

"I'd rather die than leave this post," said self-proclaimed Commander in Chief Ravix Remissainthe recently, sitting in his Port-au-Prince office with two 9 mm pistols and an AK-47 knockoff laid across his desk.

Remissainthe is now a wanted man, charged with attacking public and private buildings after taking over Aristide's former home.

Justice Minister Bernard Gousse has said Remissainthe in fact was not even in the army when Aristide disbanded it - he had been fired for drug trafficking in 1993.

But to some Haitians, Remissainthe and his men are keeping the peace at a time when the thinly staffed Haitian National Police has yet to control many places.

"We love this country," Remissainthe said. "Our main objective is to make sure everyone can move about at their will and the tourists can come back."

He proposes that a new army would be professional and apolitical, not prone to the power grabs and massacres of the past. Latortue and Interior Minister Herard Abraham have said they favor reinstating the military.

Many of the ex-soldiers, as well as impostors who have joined them, now

act as if that has already happened.

In Petit Goave, 40 miles west of Port-au-Prince, they took over the police station last summer and repainted it as the "Headquarters of the Armed Forces of Haiti."

"If the new government doesn't decide to reinstate the army, they will have to come take us out of here," said Louites Isaac, 44. "Because we're staying."

The city of 50,000 has suffered extraordinary violence in the last few years, riven by pro- and anti-Aristide armed gangs and ordinary criminals alike.

Just last month, a man and a woman were found beheaded, and a mob shot to death two police officers and set their bodies on fire.

"We went into the area and made an investigation and arrested five people," said Wilso Felix, the former army soldier who now commands the base here.

When The Miami Herald visited last month, Felix's men conducted drills in the back courtyard, marching and running in place. Some of the old men looked on with nostalgic pride.

In the jail, a guard in an oversized riot helmet kept an eye on two prisoners locked in the barest of cells. One was accused of stealing three goats, another of taking a moped.

Residents say the ex-military's presence has helped to maintain order in recent months.

"The only people who keep the security is the army," said Madeline Anselen, 20. "But the government wants to put them out."

Anselen doesn't remember the army of old, the one that carried out an election day massacre in 1987 that killed 34, that ousted Aristide in 1991, that allegedly helped murder up to 50 people in Gonaives in 1994.

But that legacy does not die easily for those who suffered through it.

"They should get rid of them right away," said Desire Santanier, a welder who sells bed frames.

"They were the ones killing. They were the ones raping," said his friend, Roger Revolis, 58. "I'm old now, but I don't want them back. I don't want my children suffering all the things we suffered."

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Tab 35

Father Jean-Juste affirms that most of the countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean continue to recognize Jean-Bertrand Aristide as the constitutional president of Haiti

Port-au-Prince, February 15, 2005 (AHP) - The parish priest of St. Claire, Father Gerard Jean-Juste, declared on Tuesday that almost all of those responsible for countries in Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America continue to recognize Jean-Bertrand Aristide to be the constitutional president of Haiti.

Father Jean-Juste who came back from a tour in several countries reported that those responsible for those countries said that President Aristide must return to his post in Haiti in order to respect the democracy that was gained and the popular vote.

President Aristide was forced to leave the country on February 29, 2004 under the pressure of several foreign countries who maintained that they wanted to avoid bloodshed.

Father Jean-Juste who was incarcerated recently for political reasons announced that he is going to convince those who are stubborn to the necessity of returning to that reality, he said, adding that it is only a few countries such as the United States, Canada and France that are left to convince.

Moreover, Father Gerard Jean-Juste supported the idea of a national dialogue that is being talked up lately by different sectors.

He also estimated that certain conditions are essential for the full success of this dialogue.

He cited also the liberation of all the political prisoners of Fanmi Lavalas, the end to repression practiced in the popular neighborhoods against the militants of the party and the ending of the massive dismissals in the public administration.

The priest recalled that Fanmi Lavalas always preached national dialogue, as the only road to take to save the Haitian people.

AHP, February 15, 2005 2:45 PM

Heavy gunfire put an end to discussions being held Monday night in Petit-Goave between a delegation of the interim government and demobilized soldiers

Petit-Goave, February 15, 2005 - (AHP) - Heavy gunshots rang out Monday night in Petit-Goave in the direction of government officials' vehicles who came to negotiate with the demobilized soldiers who have taken control of the police station in that city since August 27, 2004.

The governmental delegation was in a public park in order to gather the revendications of the demobilized soldiers contrary to the announcement made the day before over the telephone by the former colonel on Thursday stating that the delegation was coming to bring them their checks.

AHP, February 15, 2005

Tab 36

Haitian journalist claims police punched him, threatened to kill him for allegedly supporting Aristide in broadcasts

By **PETER PRENGAMAN**

c The Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) - A Haitian radio journalist said Friday police punched him in the face and threatened to kill him after accusing him of supporting ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide on the air.

Makenson Remy, 29, said he was driving home after finishing his Friday afternoon shift at Radio Megastar's offices in the capital when a police truck carrying about eight officers began following him.

After stopping at a traffic light in the Nazon neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, Remy said police jumped out of the truck, surrounded his car and ordered him out.

He said the officers then slammed him on the hood of his car, punched him once in the face and threatened to kill him if he continued working for the radio station.

"They told me that I was supporting Aristide on the radio, and that if it had been at night they would have killed me," Mackenson told The Associated Press.

Police spokeswoman Gessy Coicou said she had no information about the alleged attack, which comes about three weeks after another Radio Megastar reporter, Raoul Saint-Louis, was shot in the hand after leaving work.

Saint-Louis has said he doesn't know who shot him.

In January, radio reporter Abdias Jean was shot to death while covering a police raid in a Port-au-Prince slum. Rights activists accused police of killing Jean after he witnessed them shoot two other people.

Police say they are investigating Jean's killing but have no suspects.

In its annual report, Paris-based Reporters Without Borders said security conditions had improved for journalists in Haiti after Aristide's ouster, but criticized the interim government for not investigating the slaying of two prominent journalists while Aristide was in power.

Aristide fled Haiti on Feb. 29 after a three-week rebellion.

More than 250 people have died in clashes in the capital since September, when Aristide supporters stepped up demands for his return from exile in South Africa.

(pp-sj)

Tab 37

Haiti-info.com
STATEMENT ON HAITI
18 février 2005
Caribbean Community Caricom
STATEMENT ON HAITI

Communique issued at the conclusion of the Meeting of the Tenth Special Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community

Statement issued by Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community at the conclusion of emergency session on the situation in Haiti

STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM) ON THE SITUATION IN HAITI

CARICOM moves to help end political unrest in Haiti

ADDRESS By THE MOST HONOURABLE P.J. PATTERSON, ON, PC, QC, MP
PRIME MINISTER OF JAMAICA

Twenty-Fourth Meeting Of The Conference Of Heads Of Government Of The Caribbean Community

Caricom Foreign Ministers Meet on Critical Foreign and Community Matters

Statement by Caricom heads of government on Haiti

Issued at the conclusion of the 16th Inter-Sessional Meeting of The Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community [in] Paramaribo, Surinam, 16-17 February 2005

The Caribbean Community (Caricom) remains gravely concerned by the overall situation in Haiti. Insecurity, volatility and political polarization combine with joblessness as stumbling blocks to progress.

The Community is particularly disturbed over the deteriorating human rights situation and the continuing violations of the principles laid down in the Caricom Charter of Civil Society.

Allegations of serious abuses at the hands of the police and illegally armed groups must be investigated. The indefinite detention of Lavalas leaders and activists can only be construed as arbitrary detention on the basis of political affiliation.

The continuing detention of former Prime Minister Yvon Neptune is a glaring example. These persons must either be charged and brought before the courts or released forthwith.

It is difficult to conceive of fair elections while the leaders and activists of a major political party remain in arbitrary detention.

The proliferation of illegally-armed groups and their activities constitute a major obstacle to stability. Disarmament and reintegration must be given priority attention to create a security environment conducive to open campaigning and credible elections.

Caricom is encouraged by the growing support in Haiti for a national dialogue for which the international community has committed its support.

A successful process, which promotes reconciliation and political inclusiveness, will have a considerable positive impact on the conduct of the electoral process and on the general political situation.

The Caribbean Community reaffirms its commitment to the welfare of the Haitian people and will continue its engagement for their benefit.

The Community has also consistently highlighted the importance of free and fair elections in returning Haiti to constitutional rule. The recent commencement of the electoral process, with the proclamation of the electoral decree and the adoption of an electoral calendar, permit Caricom to make good on its earlier promise to contribute to the United Nations' peacekeeping effort in Haiti.

Consequently, technical assistance for the electoral process, an essential element of the Caricom Assistance Programme for Haiti, will be forthcoming under the umbrella of the electoral unit of Minustah.

The Community will continue to collaborate with the donor community to find the swiftest and most effective way to make good on their pledges of financial assistance to Haiti in order to address the increasing hopelessness arising from economic stagnation.

To this end, the chief coordinator of the Caricom Task Force will attend the meeting on Haiti in Cayenne in mid-March.

The building of democracy in Haiti and improving the lot of the ordinary Haitian constitute a complex and long-term process to which the Caribbean Community has pledged its assistance.

Tab 38

**Gunmen take Haiti ex-prime minister from prison.**

By Joseph Guyler Delva

493 words

19 February 2005

07:35 pm

Reuters News

English

(c) 2005 Reuters Limited

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, Feb 19 (Reuters) - Gunmen stormed Haiti's main prison on Saturday and drove away with jailed former Prime Minister **Yvon Neptune** and other inmates linked to ousted ex-President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, witnesses said.

Neptune and former Interior Minister Jocelerme Privert appeared to have been taken out at gunpoint by the attackers, who sent poorly armed prison guards fleeing the National Penitentiary in Port-au-Prince, they said.

A police source speaking on condition of anonymity said up to 500 of the prison's 1,200 inmates may have escaped during the attack. One off-duty prison guard was killed.

"I saw three gunmen escorting Neptune and several other prisoners and force them to get into the back of a double-cab white pickup," said Jacques Dameus, who said he was in front of the prison at the time.

"When they arrived at the gate of the National Penitentiary, Neptune did not want to walk any further. One gunman raised his weapon and forced him to walk and get into the pickup," Dameus told Reuters.

Neither the police nor the interim government, which jailed Neptune and Privert on charges of violence, made any statement on the prison break.

But deputy public prosecutor Carvest Jean said afterward that neither Neptune nor Privert, who their supporters say are victims of political persecution against allies of Aristide, remained in the prison.

Residents of the area said the heavily armed gunmen arrived in three vehicles. They entered the prison shooting and guards fled.

Bullet casings littered the ground outside the prison later and bullet holes pockmarked the walls of nearby houses.

International police who are part of a 7,000-strong Brazilian-led U.N. force trying to keep the peace in the chaotic and impoverished Caribbean country arrived later and began interviewing witnesses.

Several witnesses mentioned the white pickup truck and said its license plate had been folded over to obscure its number.

A woman said some of the attackers wore T-shirts with "Haitian National Police" written on them while the rest were in casual clothes.

The guard who was killed, Omeus Guerrier, 25, was outside the jail at the time of the attack.

In addition to Neptune and Privert, who had been jailed for several months without being indicted, witnesses said the gunmen took away a former soldier named Anel Belzaire, who had been arrested after weapons were

Tab 39



Haiti's Top Political Prisoners Forced From Prison in Daylight Attack, Returned Next Day

By [Benjamin Melançon](#),

Posted on Sun Feb 20th, 2005 at 10:35:52 AM EST

In a daylight attack on the Haitian National Penitentiary in Port-au-Prince, men dressed in black and armed with assault rifles drove up and began firing into the air and at the prison, killing at least one guard, [Associated Press reported](#). Poorly armed prison guards fled, [reported Xinhau](#), the Chinese news agency. Hundreds of prisoners may have escaped after the attack, though the AP reported that dozens of police immediately swarmed around the prison, setting up roadblocks and searching cars.

Several witnesses said the gunmen took former Prime Minister Yvon Neptune and former Interior Minister Jocelerme Privert – held at the prison without charge or trial for many months – by force.

"I saw three gunmen escorting Neptune and several other prisoners," Jacques Dameus, who said he was in front of the prison at the time, [told Reuters](#). "When they arrived at the gate of the National Penitentiary, Neptune did not want to walk any further. One gunman raised his weapon and forced him to walk."

Neptune and Privert were later turned over to United Nations soldiers, a spokesman for the UN force in Haiti said, according to Xinhau. The UN promptly returned the two political prisoners to the coup government and to their cells in the National Penitentiary.

(This article was substantially revised Sunday at 6 p.m.)

Reuters, Associated Press, and Agence France Presse (AFP) all reported different, contradictory stories– all based on explanations from Haiti's coup government.

Police spokeswoman Gessy Coicou [told AP on Saturday](#) that authorities have no motive for the attack or suspects. Many motives and explanations have been offered since then.

In another article, AP writer Peter Prengaman [initially reported](#) that guards rushed the two jailed members of exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's administration to "a secret location when inmates began rioting." This claim, that prisoner riots prompted guards to move Neptune and Privert, was dropped in the later AP report.

Whoever took Neptune and Privert from their cells soon gave the two to the UN force, which (according to some reports) returned them to their imprisonment by the U.S.-installed post-coup government in Haiti. "They are now in the protective

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custody of the U.N.," spokesman Damian Onses-Cardona told the AP. "They have agreed to return to the prison."

Before the attack on the prison, media attention had been slowly turning to police killings of poor Haitians, continued paramilitary violence, and in particular the fraying of the alliance between the coup government and the paramilitaries—which may itself have been in part a result of the increasing media scrutiny.

Haitian government officials had accused paramilitary leader Remissainthe Ravix and his soldiers of killing four policemen. Last week, Ravix spoke to the media by cell phone. "I and my men have nothing to do with the killings," [<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N16201052.htm> Reuters reported him saying]. "The government is made up of traitors. They praised us when we took up weapons to get rid of Aristide. Now that they are in power, they want to get rid of us."

Already this focus has changed, led by Agence France Presse. In an article titled "Haiti drug gang causes mass prison break-out, former ministers recaptured" at TurkishPress.com, an unnamed AFP reporter quoted an unnamed government official alleging that the jailbreak, including of the two jailed former government ministers, was an attempt by drug traffickers to make money. In fact, the jail is filled not with convicted drug traffickers but people held with no charge who mostly come from the poor neighborhoods where Haiti's exiled elected president had most of his support. Despite the eyewitness testimony cited by other news sources, AFP uncritically passed on the new official line that Neptune and Privert "took advantage of the chaos to escape."

Opponents of the coup government, according to a source in Haiti, suggested that the government staged the attack to distract from its failed effort to find Ravix and to manufacture a reason for a further crackdown on supporters of Aristide's Lavalas movement.

Indeed, the fact that more than 300 prisoners escaped on their own initiative during the attack may have been an accident not intended by the attackers, who appeared focused on capturing the jailed ministers and also leaving with a former soldier named Anel Belzaire, Reuters reported. The government has not come up with a credible explanation for the mass break, and initially did not acknowledge it, yet was instantly there to stop it. Prisoner director Claude Theodate originally said he couldn't confirm if any inmates had fled, however, dozens of police immediately swarmed around the prison, setting up roadblocks and searching cars, reported the Associated Press.

Witnesses said the 3:30 pm the attack was very well-organized. "It was an operation mounted from both the inside and outside," a guard told AFP.

If Neptune and Privert were forced out of the prison by the well-armed attackers, as most news agencies are now reporting, this does not seem possible without the assistance of prison guards. The two ministers from the last elected government do not appear to have been allowed to speak for themselves yet.

No possible motive has been presented that would explain opponents of the coup government carrying out the attack, and then turning over the leaders they were springing, yet this explanation seems to be the one that increasingly will be presented by the commercial media. The AFP claim that drug traffickers trying to make money from the prison break is equally implausible. The only explanation

- Jean Friedsky
- Colleen Glynn
- Manuela Aldabe
- Mike D'Allaire
- Benjamin Melançon
- Teo Ballve
- Charlie Hardy
- Jennifer Whitney
- Laura del Castillo
- Erich Moncada
- Stan Gotlieb
- Romina Trincheri
- George Salzman
- Nancy Davies
- Alex Satanovsky
- Christopher Fee
- Marcel Miranda
- Nate Johnson
- Daniel Fleming
- Richard Eramian
- Ron Smith
- Pablo Mamani
- Claudia Espinoza
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- John F. Eden
- Andrei Tudor
- Richard Pilkington
- Nora Callahan
- Reber Boulton
- Andrew Stelzer
- Charles Faris
- Gurujiwan Khalsa
- Julia Steinberger
- Cynthia McKinney
- David Keating
- Fabio Mesquita
- Yasmin Khan
- Pablo Francischelli
- Baylen Linnekin
- Erik Siegrist
- Diego Mantilla
- Natalia Viana

that makes sense is that this is a diversion to help the government and the paramilitaries get on with suppressing the supporters of democracy, who refuse to go away or be silent.

For the clearest reports from the attack on the prison are that Neptune and Privert did not leave voluntarily. Three men told police that gunmen escorting a man they recognized as Neptune had forced them to hand over their car and had driven him away in it, Reuters reported.

"I saw Neptune with my own eyes," said Ketel Jacob, who was in the car. "He seemed to be taken by force."

Haiti's Top Political Prisoners Forced From Prison in Daylight Attack, Returned Next Day | 2 comments (2 topical, 0 hidden)

Display:

Who Was Behind the Prison Break in Haiti? (4.00 / 2) (#1)

by Benjamin Melançon on Mon Feb 21st, 2005 at 06:23:34 AM EST
(User Info) <http://www.melanconent.com/>

While it is always possible that pro-Aristide gangs attacked the Haitian National Penitentiary to free jailed members – presumably with the help of guards or even former military to pull it off – this remains an unlikely explanation given the facts known. Yet it is the most common explanation presented in media reports of the attack and jail break. Establishment press accounts that don't directly offer an explanation usually prominently mention the "re-capture" of Prime Minister Yvon Neptune and Interior Minister Jocelerme Privert – top officials of the overthrown elected government – and let the clear implication be that supporters of exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide undertook the attack to free these leaders.

Associated Press reporter Peter Prengaman, alone in the press, denies that any third party removed Neptune and Privert from the prison. Instead, he continues to report that guards secreted the two top political prisoners to a secure location during the attack. Prengaman cites unnamed authorities. In contemporaneous reports a government source even less credible than anonymous officials, police spokeswoman Gessy Coicou, repeats the escape-and-capture line. "Yvon Neptune and Jocelerme Privert have been apprehended," she told Agence France Press. In conflict with the escape claims, Reuters reporter Joseph Guyler Delva quoted eyewitnesses in front of the prison who reported seeing Prime Minister Neptune taken from the prison at gunpoint. The witnesses identified the kidnappers as the attackers, not guards, though Delva's Reuters version is at least conceivably reconcilable with Prengaman AP report.

Agence France Press has proved the worst of the wire services in covering this event. While none have provided coherent explanations, critical analysis, or key context, AFP has been malevolent in its misrepresentations. Each AFP article ends with a stock summary that lists year-old allegations against Aristide, including corruption and human rights violations, while mentioning none of the proven crimes of the pro-coup forces and presenting as mutual the constant, one-sided violence against people suspected of supporting the popular president. AFP repeats government allegations against Neptune and Privert without saying they have not been charged or faced with evidence despite being in jail since June and April, respectively.

- Amber Howard
- Justin Delacour
- Linda Langness
- Kevin Okabe
- Jeff Simpson
- Christopher Whalen
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3 Comments

Proof Again that Investigative Reporting Isn't Dying by George B. Sanchez

AFP consistently claims that the prison attack freed the two Lavalas leaders who were then re-captured. Details and explanations vary or are left out. A notable version was a Sunday article titled "Haiti drug gang causes mass prison break-out, former ministers recaptured." One of AFP's claims in this article, that Neptune and Privert were captured after calling embassies seeking asylum – and presumably failing to find it, the same libel made against Aristide when he was removed from the presidency at gunpoint one year ago – has already been refuted by Prengaman. Chilean ambassador to Haiti Marcel Young met with the two Saturday and said "they were only concerned about their security. Once that was arranged, they asked to go back to the prison." Prengaman, remember, reported that Neptune and Privert never left government custody. They certainly have not been able to communicate with supporters; Privert's wife Ginette has not seen nor heard from him. "I've been waiting three hours, and they still won't let me in," she told Prengaman outside the prison on Sunday.

Independent journalist Reed Lindsay, in an article published by the Washington Times, reported from Port-au-Prince, Haiti, details of the prison break not yet recorded by any of the wire services. The additional information casts further doubt on suggestions, tentatively made by UN and Haitian officials, that Aristide supporters launched the attack.

One senior police official said on the condition of anonymity that he suspected former soldiers were behind the prison break.

It is not clear how such a massive prison break could have taken place in broad daylight just three blocks from the national palace and police headquarters in downtown Port-au-Prince, where 125 U.N. riot police and dozens of Haitian police officers stand guard.

Nor is it clear how the handful of assailants – witnesses in front of the penitentiary said they saw only one vehicle and several gunmen – managed to get past about 40 prison guards and free nearly 500 of the more than 1,200 prisoners in the penitentiary – all before the police and U.N. troops arrived.

Marie-Yolene Gilles, an observer for the National Coalition for Haitian Rights, who had access to the penitentiary yesterday, said six hooded gunmen dressed in black entered the prison. One off-duty prison guard was shot and killed outside the penitentiary, but no guards inside were killed or injured by the assailants.

Prison authorities refused to allow a reporter to visit the penitentiary yesterday and Claude Theodat, the chief of Haiti's prison system, did not return phone calls.

In the strongly pro-Aristide neighborhood of Bel Air, one man who claimed to have escaped from the penitentiary said the prison guards opened the cells and told the prisoners to leave.

Marguerite Laurent, in a February 19 e-mail to the Haitian Lawyers Leadership Network information list in which she passed on the conflicting Reuters and AP reports of the attack on the prison, hinted her suspicions that the prison break serves the interests of U.S.-installed interim president Gerard Latortue and U.S. Ambassador James Foley.

Lately, it would seem whenever high ranking U.S. official visit Haiti – there are currently three former U.S. ambassadors who are in Haiti right now looking at feasibility of election and assessing "security concerns" for said U.S. elections in Haiti; or,

Congress Member to ICE:
Stop this Kind of
Outrageous Activity by
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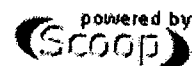
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Let us never lose our focus. It is NOT Haitian infighting that has brought Haiti to this precipice, this death trap. But said same US high ranking officials and their policies to destroy democracy in Haiti at any cost, with any Haitian life, so that their corporatocracy may rule Haiti through Washington puppets like Latortue or Bazin, or Apaid, et al.

They will invent ANY storyline to keep us from focussing on that truth. But we shall not be distracted. The conflicts manufactured into Haiti has cost us way too much blood.

While the failure of law enforcement represented by an armed attack on the prison and the continued freedom of the perpetrators ought to increase scrutiny of the coup government and United Nations forces supporting it, successfully branding the political opposition with the crime could greatly benefit both paramilitaries and the illegitimate government. It all depends on how the media coverage comes down. Right now it is still up in the air.

At stake is the world continuing to look into, at long last, extreme and continuing human rights abuses inflicted on the Haitian people by the U.S., France, Canada, and UN-supported government and by the paramilitaries. A recent investigation by the Center for the Study of Human Rights at the University of Miami law school provides graphic and often horrifying proof of the state-sanctioned violence mostly against the poor majority in Haiti. More specifically at stake are UN investigations into the possible massacre at the same Haitian National Penitentiary on December 1 and a string of summary executions carried out by Haitian police.

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Haiti's real security problem isn't the prison (4.00 / 1) (#2)
by Benjamin Melançon on Tue Feb 22nd, 2005 at 06:45:05 PM EST
(User Info) <http://www.melanconent.com/>

"... investigators .. observed a boy lying on his back, naked and exposed on a cot in the middle of the emergency room," the report states. "He was shivering in a pool of his own blood, eyes closed. When he moved, blood splashed onto the floor."

The boy, Ginel Valbraun, 12, said he had been shot by police. The report includes pictures of a gaping wound on his right thigh.

"Doctors refused to treat him because he had no money," the report states, adding that investigators paid to get the child medical attention. "Investigators last saw him on Nov. 21, still alive, but still naked and in a

Some in the media are not letting the prison attack shake their focus. While the Miami *Herald* editorializes that the daylight attack shows the need for a "significant presence of U.S. Marines and soldiers," their own metro columnist detailed what the most recent significant U.S. military presence — to manage the coup against Aristide's elected government and install the present government — has wrought. (The *Herald* requires free registration to view articles, visit BugMeNot to borrow a registration.)

The *Herald* editorial, aside from ignoring the possibility that the "why worry?" attack was in part an inside job and the fact that few of the "vicious and lawless" prisoners have been convicted of anything, put the big lie in the form of a question: "So what will it take for the United States to step up to the plate? Another wave of boat people?"

If Haitians were able to seek refuge anywhere, thousands would be there now. The U.S. shut its borders, intercepting boats and sending the desperate refugees back to continued suffering and worse, even during the devastating floods of several months back: when Haitians deserved refugee status not just for economic plight and political persecution, but environmental disaster as well.

The excerpt that introduced this comment comes from today's opinion column by Jim DeFede in the Miami *Herald*. The atrocities he quotes come, in turn, from a 51-page report by attorney and human rights investigator Thomas Griffin and University of Miami Law School Center for the Study of Human Rights director Irwin Stotzky.

DeFede interviewed Griffin for his column, which I quote from again below. Griffin let DeFede know he was angry that the Miami Herald, one of the few media outlets that covered his report -- released a month ago -- used his political alignment to try to discredit it.

"What is happening in Haiti is wrong, no matter what anyone's politics is," Griffin said.

And he is right.

The pictures, the words, the statements by those who are both for and against the return of Aristide speak for themselves in this report, which can be found at www.law.miami.edu/news/368.html.

The United Nations, which has several thousand troops in Haiti, has done little to end the violence and may actually be exacerbating it.

While Lavalas supporters are not entirely innocent, this report suggests, rather convincingly, that there is an ongoing campaign to use the police, along with hired street gangs and former soldiers, to hunt down and kill members of Lavalas, particularly in the city's slums.

"There is a feeling of a truly repressive war against the

poor," Griffin said.

The most powerful sections of the report are those that tell individual stories. Griffin followed the police on a raid in the Bel Air neighborhood on Nov. 18. When the police pulled out, Griffin found bodies littering the street, including that of a middle-age woman the police left to die.

(Thanks to [Marguerite Laurent](#) of the Haitian Lawyers Leadership Network for passing on DeFede's article in real time-- she just caught Reed Lindsay's [article on the prison break](#) in *Newsday* now.)

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[[Parent](#)]

[Haiti's Top Political Prisoners Forced From Prison in Daylight Attack, Returned Next Day](#) | 2 comments (2 topical, 0 hidden)

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Tab 40



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Haiti's Most Famous Political Prisoners Announce Hunger Strike

By Bill Quigley, Professor of Law, Loyola University
New Orleans. Bill is in Haiti as a volunteer attorney
with the Institute for
Justice and Democracy in Haiti, www.ijdh.org Contact
duprestars@yahoo.com Phone in Haiti 509.401.4822

Political prisoners Yvon Neptune, Haiti's former
Prime Minister, and Jocelerme Privert, former Minister
of the Interior, survived the
massive prison revolt at the National Penitentiary of
Haiti on February 19, 2005. The Saturday afternoon
revolt began with the firing of heavy automatic
weapons at the main gate of the prison and
the sudden disappearance of all the guards. In the
chaos one guard was killed and 490 of the 1250
prisoners left.

Ministers Neptune and Privert were forcibly taken out
of the prison by former military people concerned for
their safety. Once secure, they immediately called on
international authorities to guarantee them
a safe return to the prison. They were returned to
the penitentiary by the UN authorities within hours
of the end of the revolt.

Speaking from a cement cell with no running water, no
bathroom, and no electricity, Yvon Neptune and
Minister Privert vowed not to eat until the
injustice and insecurity of their confinement is
addressed. Privert has been in prison since April 2004
and Neptune since June 2004 and neither has a trial
date set.

Yvon Neptune said, "My life has been in real danger
since the elected President of our country was removed
in February of 2004. This is the third time my life
has been put in danger in prison. There was an
assassination plot against me in the fall confirmed by
the National Police. Then there was the prison
massacre on December 1, 2004, in which unknown numbers
of prisoners were killed. When the prison was
attacked this weekend, my life was again clearly and
seriously in danger. I could easily have been killed
by people inside or outside of the prison. Who is it
that keeps putting me in situations where I
might be killed?"

After Neptune and Privert returned to the prison by the UN, Haitian authorities wrongfully reported that the two men had been captured by national police, a charge Neptune said is a total lie and a story repudiated by the UN.

Neptune concluded by asking, "We have been patient for over eight months. We have given time for the government and the international community to act. Enough is enough."

Brian Concannon Jr.
Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti

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Tab 41

**U.N. Investigates Rape Claims in Haiti**

225 words

22 February 2005

08:31 pm

Associated Press Newswires

English

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PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) - The United Nations is investigating a woman's allegations that she was raped by three U.N. peacekeepers from Pakistan, a U.N. official said Tuesday. The men claim they paid to have sex.

The 23-year-old woman made the report to the police over the weekend, said Damian Onses-Cardona, a spokesman for the 7,400-member U.N. force.

The men, whose names were not released, said the woman was a prostitute and they paid to have sex with her, he said.

The latest rape allegations come as the United Nations investigates sexual abuse allegations in a handful of countries around the world, most notably in Congo.

The three Pakistanis were ordered to return from northern Gonaives, where the incident allegedly occurred, and remain in the capital of Port-au-Prince until the investigation is concluded this week, said Onses-Cardona, who declined to give more details.

Calls to police in Gonaives were not immediately returned.

U.N. peacekeepers replaced a U.S.-led force in June, four months after demobilized soldiers led a rebellion that sent President Jean-Bertrand Aristide into exile.

Some 250 Pakistani police officers are stationed in Gonaives and Port-au-Prince, where they patrol the streets and assist the 4,000-member Haitian police.

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Tab 42

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
(323) 757-8900

February 23, 2005

CONGRESSWOMAN WATERS URGES PRESIDENT BUSH TO PROTECT THE LIVES OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER YVON NEPTUNE AND FORMER INTERIOR MINISTER JOCELERME PRIVERT, OBTAIN THEIR RELEASE FROM PRISON IN HAITI AND OFFER THEM POLITICAL ASYLUM IN THE UNITED STATES

Washington, D.C. -- Today, Rep. Maxine Waters (CA-35) sent a letter to President Bush, urging him to take immediate action to protect the lives of Haiti's former Prime Minister Yvon Neptune and former Interior Minister Jocelerme Privert, obtain their release from prison in Haiti and offer them political asylum in the United States. Copies of the letter were sent to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Ambassador James Foley, the U.S. Ambassador to Haiti. The text of the letter follows:

I write to urge you to take immediate action to protect the lives of Haiti's former Prime Minister Yvon Neptune and former Interior Minister Jocelerme Privert, obtain their release from prison in Haiti and offer them political asylum. I am deeply concerned that their lives are in danger, and I am willing to accept personal responsibility for bringing Ministers Neptune and Privert to the United States.

Last Saturday, Prime Minister Neptune and Minister Privert survived a violent revolt at the National Penitentiary. According to reports, the revolt began with the firing of heavy automatic weapons at the main gate of the prison and the sudden disappearance of all the guards. In the ensuing chaos, one guard was killed and almost 500 prisoners left the prison. It remains unclear how such a massive prison break could have taken place in downtown Port-au-Prince just three blocks from the national palace and police headquarters. However, several witnesses claimed that the attackers appeared to be police officers.

During the revolt, Ministers Neptune and Privert were forcibly removed from the prison at gunpoint. They immediately called on United Nations authorities to guarantee them a safe return to the prison. They were returned to the prison by the United Nations authorities within hours after the end of the revolt.

I fear that Ministers Neptune and Privert will be killed if the United States does not intervene immediately to protect their lives. Saturday's prison revolt was not the first time the lives of these two former Haitian officials have been endangered since they were imprisoned without charge in spring of last year. Last November, according to press

reports, several Haitian police officers were involved in a plot to kill imprisoned Lavalas supporters, including Minister Neptune and Minister Privert. Furthermore, on December 1, there was a massacre in the National Penitentiary. I have recently been informed that Ministers Neptune and Privert have begun a hunger strike following Saturday's prison revolt and vowed not to eat until the injustice and insecurity of their confinement is addressed.

The United States has a unique opportunity to save the lives of former Prime Minister Neptune and former Interior Minister Privert, and I am making a desperate plea for their safety.

I implore you to intervene immediately to protect Prime Minister Neptune and Minister Privert, obtain their release from prison and offer them asylum in the United States. I would appreciate it if you would contact me as soon as possible to discuss the fate of these two individuals, and I look forward to your prompt response.

Tab 43

Rep. Waters' letter to Amb. Foley on behalf of Ron Voss and Visitation House
Rep. Waters' letter to Amb. Foley on behalf of Ministers Neptune and Privert

Rep. Waters' letter to Amb. Foley on behalf of Ron Voss and Visitation House

February 24, 2005
By Facsimile

Ambassador James Foley
U.S. Embassy in Haiti
Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Dear Ambassador Foley:

I write to express my concerns about the safety of Ron Voss, an American citizen who operates Visitation House, and individuals who are residents and guests of Visitation House, a compound in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, that provides medicine, nutrition, education and a sports facility for local residents and serves as a guest house for international delegations visiting Haiti.

Yesterday, I received disturbing reports that Visitation House was being surrounded by armed police officers. Several U.S. citizens, including Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of Detroit, Michigan; William Quigley, Professor of Law at Loyola University in New Orleans; David Robinson, Executive Director of Pax Christi USA; and Ron Voss were inside Visitation House at the time.

Ms. Kathleen Sengstock, my Legislative Assistant, contacted the U.S. Embassy and spoke with Douglas M. Griffiths, the Deputy Chief of Mission, to express my concern for the safety of Visitation House and its residents and guests. Mr. Griffiths informed Ms. Sengstock that the U.S. Embassy was monitoring the situation and that the Haitian National Police had arrested one individual at Visitation House who is an American citizen and subsequently left the premises. Mr. Griffiths also reported that Embassy officials had informed Haitian authorities that they expected the rights of the American citizen to be respected.

I have since learned that it was Ron Voss, who operates Visitation House, who was arrested, and that the police also had confiscated Ron Voss's computer and a camera belonging to David Robinson. Ron Voss was questioned for six hours and then released but was ordered to return to the police station today for further questioning.

I am deeply concerned about Ron Voss's safety, and I am also concerned that these events may be part of an effort on the part of the Haitian National Police to harass and intimidate the American individuals

2/24/2005

and delegations who operate and visit Visitation House.

I urge you to ensure that Ron Voss is released unconditionally and not subject to further harassment. I also urge you to take all necessary action to protect Visitation House and ensure the safety of the residents and guests of this facility. I am grateful for the Embassy's attention to this situation, and I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

Maxine Waters

Member of Congress

cc: President George W. Bush

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice

Douglas M. Griffiths, Deputy Chief of Mission

Rep. Waters' letter to Amb. Foley on behalf of Ministers Neptune and Privert

February 24, 2005

By Facsimile

Ambassador James Foley
U.S. Embassy in Haiti
Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Dear Ambassador Foley:

I recently learned that Haiti's former Prime Minister Yvon Neptune and former Interior Minister Jocelerme Privert are being transferred from the National Penitentiary in Port-au-Prince to a prison in St. Marc, north of Port-au-Prince.

I am deeply concerned about the safety of Ministers Neptune and Privert, as I explained in a letter I sent to President Bush yesterday, and I fear that they will be killed if the United States does not intervene immediately to protect their lives. I urge you to take action immediately to ensure their safety during this transfer and after their arrival in St. Marc. I appreciate the Embassy's attention to my request, and I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

Maxine Waters
Member of Congress
