

At the beginning of February, however, Métayer, Winter Etienne and the fugitive from justice, Jean Tatoune had declared that they had enough weapons and ammunition to fight for two years.

The new prime minister, Latortue, said he considers this arms hand over a symbolic gesture by the leaders of the front and that there remains much to be done in the area of disarmament.

The ministers of the interior and justice, Hérard Abraham and Bernard Gousse, respectively, said that the information available on the members of the front will be examined scrupulously with a view to learning whether or not they can be integrated into the Haitian National police.

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Two individuals close to the opposition political Platform were very seriously injured Saturday evening by soldiers from the Multinational Force in the Canapé-Vert district

Port-au-Prince, March 22, 2004 -(AHP)- Two individuals were very serious injured by gunshots Saturday evening in the Canapé-Vert district of Port-au-Prince by American soldiers from the international force that has been deployed in Haiti since the departure of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide on February 29.

One of the victims, Louis René Balmyr, known as Babal, a regular participant in demonstrations by the political platform that was formerly in the opposition, was struck by at least seven bullets as soldiers opened fire on his vehicle, a white Toyota Land cruiser which was riddled with bullets.

Mr. Balmyr is in serious condition at a hospital in the capital.

A passenger in the vehicle, a man named Marcel, was struck in the buttocks by a bullet.

According to some witnesses, the two men hesitated to stop during a search operation carried out near the building housing the administrative offices of the national telephone company (Téléco).

Other witnesses indicated that the occupants of the vehicle, which they say was traveling at a fairly high speed, did not understand in time the gesture made by the soldiers, in light of the fact that there was no electricity.

According to a police source, the soldiers reportedly had been provided in advance with details about the vehicle.

For his part, Louis René Balmyr reportedly said to a friend that he was driving home his friend Marcel when a hail of bullets struck his car right outside the neighborhood mini-market.

According to some reports, Mr. Balmyr was driving to buy medicine when the incident took place. Other reports state that he was returning from a meeting.

Balmyr was also reportedly handcuffed before being taken to a hospital by a police patrol some 20 minutes after the incident.

The vehicles blood-stained interior was still at the scene of the incident Sunday morning. The incident took place Saturday evening at approximately 10 PM.

The Téléco building was also struck by gunshots, particularly at the upper floors.

For the past several weeks, the residents of Port-au-Prince hurry home as soon as night falls due to the increase in insecurity.

Some people have complained that often they do not understand the instructions given by the foreign soldiers due to language problems.

At the beginning of this month, a taxi driver was killed in the Port-au-Prince industrial zone because he had passed through a roadblock after foreign soldiers had ordered him to stop. Unfortunately he did not speak any English.

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**The U.S. Ambassador to Haiti, James Foley, declared Monday that it is not possible to organize elections at this time in Haiti because, he said, the country is in ruins. According to the American diplomat, the government authorities need to focus on the establishment of a credible electoral council in Haiti to prepare for the holding of good elections.

According to several reports that were communicated previously, the team of Latortue is to remain in place for two years.

For such cases, the Haitian constitution requires elections to be held within 90 days at the latest, beginning from the date when President Aristide departed, February 29, under circumstances which continue to raise many questions.

** School activities resumed timidly this Monday in the Haitian capital. Several parents remained reticent about sending their children to school in light of the problems of insecurity that prevail in the country.

** Armed thugs shot and wounded several people this Monday at the Sogé X-press located at Monseigneur Guilloux Street during a robbery targeting that business. The thugs made off with all the money in the bank's tills.

** An individual was shot dead Sunday night in Gonaïves by armed thugs. The incident occurred as the attackers broke through the enclosure of a pre-school facility in the city to commit a burglary. The victim is closely associated with the owner of the pre-school.

** The Grand-Goâve police commissioner is currently in the custody of men armed with firearms and machetes who say they wish to provide security for the local population.

The men are led by "Ti Nèné". He was previously at the head of the armed opposition group that took over the Grand-Goâve police station in early February.

The police, assisted by members of the population, had succeeded in re-taking control of the police station.

The police station is once again without police officers since the departure of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

