

HAITI NEWS ROUNDUP: JULY 11 – 17, 2005

Aristide in Exile

By Naomi Klein

The Nation

Thursday 14 July 2005

When United Nations troops kill residents of the Haitian slum Cité Soleil, friends and family often place photographs of exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide on their bodies. The photographs silently insist that there is a method to the madness raging in Port-au-Prince. Poor Haitians are being slaughtered not for being "violent," as we so often hear, but for being militant; for daring to demand the return of their elected president.

It was only ten years ago that President Clinton celebrated Aristide's return to power as "the triumph of freedom over fear." So what changed? Corruption? Violence? Fraud? Aristide is certainly no saint. But even if the worst of the allegations are true, they pale next to the rap sheets of the convicted killers, drug smugglers and arms traders who ousted Aristide and continue to enjoy free rein, with full support from the Bush Administration and the UN. Turning Haiti over to this underworld gang out of concern for Aristide's lack of "good governance" is like escaping an annoying date by accepting a lift home from Charles Manson.

A few weeks ago I visited Aristide in Pretoria, South Africa, where he lives in forced exile. I asked him what was really behind his dramatic falling-out with Washington. He offered an explanation rarely heard in discussions of Haitian politics - actually, he offered three: "privatization, privatization and privatization." The dispute dates back to a series of meetings in early 1994, a pivotal moment in Haiti's history that Aristide has rarely discussed. Haitians were living under the barbaric rule of Raoul Cédras, who overthrew Aristide in a 1991 US-backed coup. Aristide was in Washington and despite popular calls for his return, there was no way he could face down the junta without military back-up. Increasingly embarrassed by Cédras's abuses, the Clinton Administration offered Aristide a deal: US troops would take him back to Haiti - but only after he agreed to a sweeping economic program with the stated goal to "substantially transform the nature of the Haitian state."

Aristide agreed to pay the debts accumulated under the kleptocratic Duvalier dictatorships, slash the civil service, open up Haiti to "free trade" and cut import tariffs on rice and corn in half. It was a lousy deal but, Aristide says, he had little choice. "I was out of my country and my country was the poorest in the Western hemisphere, so what kind of power did I have at that time?"

But Washington's negotiators made one demand that Aristide could not accept: the immediate sell-off of Haiti's state-owned enterprises, including phones and electricity. Aristide argued that unregulated privatization would transform state monopolies into private oligarchies, increasing the riches of Haiti's elite and stripping the poor of their national wealth. He says the proposal simply didn't add up: "Being honest means saying two plus two equals four. They wanted us to sing two plus two equals five."

Aristide proposed a compromise: Rather than sell off the firms outright, he would "democratize" them. He defined this as writing antitrust legislation, insuring that proceeds from the sales were

redistributed to the poor and allowing workers to become shareholders. Washington backed down, and the final text of the agreement - accepted by the United States and by a meeting of donor nations in Paris - called for the "democratization" of state companies.

But when Aristide began to implement the plan, it turned out that the financiers in Washington thought his democratization talk was just public relations. When Aristide announced that no sales could take place until Parliament had approved the new laws, Washington cried foul. Aristide says he realized then that what was being attempted was an "economic coup." "The hidden agenda was to tie my hands once I was back and make me give for nothing all the state public enterprises." He threatened to arrest anyone who went ahead with privatizations. "Washington was very angry at me. They said I didn't respect my word, when they were the ones who didn't respect our common economic policy."

Aristide's relationship with Washington has been deteriorating ever since: While more than \$500 million in promised loans and aid were cut off, starving his government, USAID poured millions into the coffers of opposition groups, culminating ultimately in the February 2004 armed coup.

And the war continues. On June 23 Roger Noriega, assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs, called on UN troops to take a more "proactive role" in going after armed pro-Aristide gangs. In practice, this has meant a wave of Falluja-like collective punishment inflicted on neighborhoods known for supporting Aristide. On July 6, for instance, 300 UN troops stormed Cité Soleil, blocking off exits and firing from armored vehicles. The UN admits that five were killed, but residents put the number of dead at no fewer than twenty. Reuters correspondent Joseph Guylor Delva says he "saw seven bodies in one house alone, including two babies and one older woman in her 60s." Ali Besnaci, head of Médecins Sans Frontières in Haiti, confirmed that on the day of the siege twenty-seven people came to the MSF clinic with gunshot wounds, three-quarters of them women and children.

Yet despite these attacks, Haitians are still on the streets - rejecting the planned sham elections, opposing privatization and holding up photographs of their president. And just as Washington's experts could not fathom the possibility that Aristide would reject their advice a decade ago, today they cannot accept that his poor supporters could be acting of their own accord - surely Aristide must be controlling them through some mysterious voodoo arts. "We believe that his people are receiving instructions directly from his voice and indirectly through his acolytes that communicate with him personally in South Africa," Noriega said.

Aristide claims no such powers. "The people are bright, the people are intelligent, the people are courageous," he says. They know that two plus two does not equal five.

Naomi Klein is the author of *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies* (Picador) and, most recently, *Fences and Windows: Dispatches from the Front Lines of the Globalization Debate* (Picador).

New York Haitian Community to Protest UN Massacre in Cité Soleil
International Action Center
July 15, 2005

Haitians and their supporters will demonstrate in front of United Nations headquarters at Ralph Bunche Park at 42nd Street and 1st Avenue in Manhattan on Saturday, July 16, 2005 from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. to protest the July 6 massacre by UN troops of over 60 Haitians in the capital's shanty town of Cité Soleil. The demonstrators will also be calling for an end to the UN's military occupation of Haiti and the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was kidnapped from his home by U.S. soldiers on Feb. 29, 2004 and sent into exile.

“Some 300 UN troops with helicopters attacked the population of Cité Soleil in the dead of night last Wednesday and carried out the bloodiest massacre in Haiti since the coup 16 months ago,” said Jacques Dossous of the Lavalas Family party, one of the organizations calling the demonstration. “Mothers, infant children and old people were killed in their homes. We lay the responsibility for these deaths on UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's doorstep.”

The groups sponsoring the demonstration also includes Ajoupa, the Association of Haitian Teachers, Fanm Lakay, Haiti Action Committee, Haitian High School Students, Haitian Initiative for Democracy, Haïti Progrès, Komite Chalo Jaklen, Koze an Fanmi, the National Popular Party (PPN), Patizan Jezikri, Radyo Pa Nou, and Vwa Lakou Lakay.

Since last September, human rights organizations say that the U.S.-installed government of de facto Prime Minister Gérard Latortue has killed thousands, illegally jailed hundreds more and driven the vast majority into unprecedented poverty, all with the UN's collaboration.

“The foreign military occupation of Haiti must end immediately,” said Berthony Dupont of the Haiti Support Network, another demonstration sponsor. “The UN, under Washington's direction, is trying to repress the resistance of the Haitian people, but their bullets and tear-gas are just like gasoline on a fire.”

UN troops also carried out an assault on the slum of Belair on June 29, killing nine civilians. The demonstration is part of nationwide actions – from San Francisco to Miami – which are protesting the July 6 massacre and the UN occupation of Haiti in general.

“We want an end to the massacres and we reject the sham elections that Washington, the UN and the de facto government are trying to organize this fall,” said Jan Estefèn of KAKOLA.

North American organizations such as the ANSWER Coalition and the International Action Center (IAC) are also supporting the demonstrations.

Contact: Jacques Dossous, 917-337-6702
Kim Ives, 718-434-8100
Jan Estefèn, 718-629-4050

Coalition against the US/UN Occupation of Haiti

P.O. Box 100614,
Vandever Station,
Brooklyn, NY 11210

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International Action Center
39 West 14th Street, Room 206
New York, NY 10011
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U.N. troops accused in deaths of Haiti residents

15 Jul 2005

Reuters

By Joseph Guyler Delva

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, July 14 (Reuters) - Opposition groups and residents of two Port-au-Prince slums say dozens of innocent people were killed during anti-gang raids by U.N troops and Haitian police last week, but U.N. and police officials denied the accusations.

The Lawyers Committee for Individual Rights, a group known as CARLI and regarded as one of the most independent rights groups operating in Haiti, said U.N. peacekeepers and Haitian police killed unarmed residents, including children and elders, in the slums of Bel-Air and Cite Soleil, strongholds of supporters of ousted president Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

"We have credible information that U.N. troops, accompanied by Haitian police, killed an undetermined number of unarmed residents of Cite Soleil, including several babies and women," Renan Hedouville, the head of CARLI, told Reuters this week.

An assistant to Brazilian General Augusto Heleno, commander of the U.N. force, called the accusations unfounded.

"We have no information about any killing of unarmed civilians, ladies or babies by our forces," Brazilian marine Commander Alfredo Taranto said.

"Our action was directed against the armed gangs and only against the armed gangs," said Taranto. Haitian police officials also denied the accusations.

On July 6, about 400 U.N. troops with 41 armored vehicles and helicopters, and several dozen Haitian police officers, conducted a raid in Cite Soleil, Haiti's largest slum, to root out gunmen. The slum harbors a number of gangs, many of them loyal to Aristide.

"The foreign soldiers came with helicopters and their war machines and started shooting on everything that moved. They killed 40 people who carried no weapons," said Rene Momplaisir, a spokesman for a pro-Aristide grass-roots movement in Cite Soleil.

Aid agency Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) said it treated more than two dozen people that day, including a pregnant woman who survived surgery but lost her baby.

'WOUNDED BY GUNSHOTS'

"We received 27 people wounded by gunshots on July 6. Three quarters were children and women," said Ali Besnaci, the head of the MSF mission in Haiti. "We had not received so many wounded in one day for a long time."

A U.N. military spokesman, Col. Elouafi Boulbars, said U.N. troops killed five "criminals" during the operation. But after those bodies were taken away, a Reuters TV crew filmed seven other bodies of

people killed during the operation, including those of two one-year-old baby boys and a woman in her 60s.

All seven were killed in a house in the Bois-Neuf area of Cite Soleil, a territory controlled by one of Haiti's most wanted gang leaders, Emmanuel "Dread" Wilme. He is believed to have been killed during the raid, but U.N. and Haitian officials could not confirm his death.

Dread Wilme's lieutenants and several hundred of his supporters last Saturday took part in what they called a funeral ceremony for Wilme. But they refused to allow reporters to verify whether there was a body in the buried coffin.

Residents said the number of people killed in that area on July 6 ranged from 25 to 40.

"I counted 18 bodies, but a friend of mine who lives on the other side of Bois-Neuf told me he saw seven bodies. He, too, almost got killed," said Bernard Desrosier, 24, a resident of Cite Soleil. "It is a real massacre."

The same day, residents in another slum, Bel-Air, blamed Haitian police officers wearing black uniforms for the killing of 12 people.

At least 18 other people were reported killed last Friday in similar circumstances in the same slum. A Reuters correspondent saw several of the bodies.

"It is absolute necessary that the security forces neutralize criminals, but nothing can justify the murders of innocent people as it is occurring now in those poor areas," said Hedouville.

U.N. peacekeepers were sent to stabilize the troubled Caribbean country after Aristide was forced into exile in February 2004 by a bloody rebellion and under pressure from the United States and France to quit.

The U.N. mission, now numbering 6,207 soldiers and 1,437 civilian police, has been criticized for failing to curb violence and disarm both criminal gangs and former members of Haiti's disbanded army who participated in the rebellion.

The Haiti Action Committee, a San Francisco-based activist group, condemned what it called a "massacre" in Cite Soleil. The group said at least 23 people were killed.

BRAZIL'S LULA WARNS NO DEMOCRACY IN HAITI IF AID NOT STEPPED UP
The Toqueville Connection
Friday, 15 July 2005

PARIS, July 15 (AFP) - Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva called Friday for aid to Haiti to be increased despite the Brazilian-led UN peacekeeping mission being unable to ensure security in the strife-torn Caribbean nation.

"No democracy can live in the absolute misery such as that which pervades Haiti," Lula warned at a joint news conference with his French counterpart Jacques Chirac.

He said "we need the aid from the richest countries, so we cannot only organize elections but also consolidate the political development in the country."

The security situation has remained precarious in Haiti since the February 2004 ouster of Jean Bertrand Aristide as president, despite the presence of the Brazilian-led UN force of some 6,200 troops and 1,300 police officers.

Parts of the capital Port-au-Prince remain in the hands of gangs and crime is rampant.

Last month Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorim called for stepped up aid as he said the situation in Haiti could not be solved "only by resorting to force".

France, however, has regularly voiced its position that international aid workers cannot deploy until the security situation has been improved.

Chirac called for France and Brazil to undertake "common action" on Haiti and the UN mission to the country.

Haiti is due to hold local elections on October 9 and legislative and presidential elections on November 13 and December 18.

A FREE FILM FESTIVAL IN SOUTHERN HAITI ENCHANTS THOUSANDS IN A COUNTRY GRIPPED BY DESPAIR.

BY CARA BUCKLEY

Sat, Jul. 16, 2005

Miami Herald

JACMEL, Haiti - One moonless inky night this week, 4,000 Haitians gathered along their town's waterfront, sat down and spent the next three hours lost in a large window of light.

A giant outdoor movie screen flickered before them, transporting them into other people's lives and to faraway places they'd never otherwise see.

Haiti might be in its darkest, most anarchic hour, with murderous gangs besieging its capital and its economy in shreds, but in this peaceful seaside city, a cultural awakening is under way. Every day this week, films from Haiti and the world have been screened around the city as part of a wildly ambitious international film festival that has already achieved its founders' most basic aim: to infuse a stricken people with hope.

The Jacmel International Film Festival, which began July 9 and ends today, was different from most festivals of its kind. Films were shown three times daily in makeshift theaters, their crumbling walls patched with plywood, and at nighttime on a 18-by-25-foot screen on the city's wharf. Every screening was free, and without exception, packed by locals.

The incongruity between this movie festival in Jacmel and the horrors two hours north in Port-au-Prince, where a Haitian journalist's mutilated body was found Thursday, was lost on no one.

"There's always a looming sense of disaster from Port-au-Prince, and at some points, some members of our team were questioning whether we should do this," said David Belle, 33, one of the festival's founders. "But I felt it was more important than ever."

Belle, an American filmmaker who was romanced by Haiti 13 years ago, dreamed up the idea of hosting a festival here with a Jacmel native, Patrick Boucard, 49, in 2003.

Boucard is from a prominent Jacmel family that still owns some of the largest buildings in town. After hopscotching around the United States in his youth, Boucard returned home with his wife, Kate, two years ago to open an arts center by the sea.

"I love this area, and I love the people, and I want to expand the horizons of Haitians," Boucard said. "In a selfish way, I'm preserving my environment."

AN OASIS

If Port-au-Prince, with its kidnappings and bloodthirstiness, is Haiti at its most hellish, Jacmel is its oasis. The city is impoverished but beautiful in its near ruin, lined with grand, decrepit French colonial buildings that give it the feel of a lost New Orleans. Whenever Port-au-Prince descended into chaos, as

it has again now, Jacmel kept its peace, largely because its people closely watch newcomers and manage to keep any probable troublemakers out.

Boucard's art center offers training to self-taught artists, but Boucard and Belle yearned to bring the world to Jacmel. Fifty percent of Haitians are illiterate; few can afford televisions, and even fewer can afford the luxury of a movie. Anyway, few theaters are operating.

For the first film festival, held in July 2004, Boucard and Belle scraped together \$120,000 and corralled 85 Haitian documentaries, shorts and feature films. They convinced American companies to rent them equipment and rigged up a screen at the town's crossroads.

Half the town showed up for opening night, but the next day, the festival's smaller venues were curiously vacant. After some sleuthing, Belle discovered locals couldn't fathom entering a private venue without paying. "They didn't know what a film festival was," Belle said. So he visited key people in each neighborhood to invite one and all. From then on, the screenings overflowed, and after the festival ended, locals dogged Belle and Boucard, asking when the festival was coming back.

It nearly didn't. As Port-au-Prince's violence spun out of control, Belle and Boucard worried about visitors' safety and feared that the thousands of locals gathered for the nightly film would provide an easy target should the capital's gang warfare bleed out. But Jacmel had opened its tiny airport, which meant outsiders could avoid the often perilous road from Port-au-Prince to town. In April, as Haiti's prospects plummeted, the pair decided the festival was a go.

Help poured in. After some persuading, such major studios as HBO, Dreamworks and Lions Gate lent the festival major releases -- among them *Hotel Rwanda* and *The Motorcycle Diaries* -- for free. Friends threw fundraisers and showed up in Jacmel to work without pay. A young local theater group dubbed a dozen movies in Creole, recorded in a hastily erected sound room. Fat donations came from the French and Spanish embassies, Haiti's Ministry of Culture and Crowing Rooster Arts, which Belle runs with filmmaker Katharine Kean, who also owns Tap Tap Restaurant in South Beach.

In the end, the festival offered 100 films from 30 countries and, at least in the daytime, couldn't match local demand.

"We cannot travel; we don't have the passports or money or visas to get to those places," said Fenton Stevenson, 27, a festivalgoer from Jacmel. "This way, these places come to us."

Directors from the Caribbean, South Africa and New York flew in to host free filmmaking and acting workshops that immediately ran out of space. Others, though, stayed away, fearing for their safety. By late this week, security guards were installed at the smaller daytime venues, because too many people were trying to shoehorn themselves in. Near bedlam ensued outside a jammed screening of *Sometimes in April*, a film about Rwanda by the Haitian filmmaker Raoul Peck.

SOME RISKS

"This is very new for Haiti, and I am surprised they had the guts to do it," said Peck, who hosted a filmmaking workshop. "It's like a giant public school. It's another kind of food."

But with every advance comes risk. One of co-founder Belle's greatest fears is that after bringing the world to Jacmel and teaching its youth to make films and project their realities on screen, people here will feel even more trapped and limited by their country's deepening failures.

Yet for one young Haitian at least, the festival offered sorely needed, if temporary, liberation: It lifted him out of the beleaguered Haiti of now into the Haiti that could be.

"There are young people here who are full of hope, and every day, at every moment of their lives, they think about what's to come for Haiti," said Jean Auguste, 22, a student who drank in the festival workshops.

"This helps to forget their daily life problems and helps them imagine what they can do tomorrow, for their families and their country," Auguste said.

Haitians launch advocacy center

The leaders put aside past differences and open an office in Pine Hills to assist the community.

By Víctor Manuel Ramos | Sentinel Staff Writer

July 16, 2005

Orlando Sentinel

The traumatic events of Haitian politics tend to have a ripple effect in Orlando's émigré community.

Five years ago, though, professionals and entrepreneurs from the Caribbean nation vowed to put their Central Florida community before the island's divisive, partisan politics.

And this week they delivered on that promise by opening a new Pine Hills advocacy center.

"We are all together now, and [former President Jean-Bertrand] Aristide is no longer an issue," said Roger Verret, an entrepreneur who owns an Orlando-based money transfer business.

Now a board member of the new group, he was among dozens who mingled Thursday at the First Haitian Community Center's launch party.

The organization is housed in a modest storefront at 1259 N. Pine Hills Road but has an ambitious goal. It seeks to unite the Haitian community that largely resides in west Orlando. It also plans to attack adult illiteracy, help children excel in school and become a resource center for all things Haitian. The 2000 census counted more than 17,000 Haitian immigrants in Central Florida.

Center officials said they received their first \$5,000 grant as part of Gov. Jeb Bush's literacy initiative. Board members are donating money to pay the center's rent of about \$850 a month.

"We are putting our hearts in this," said Nancy Dufresne Charles, a board member. "The community needs a voice."

Chairman Jean Robert Belabre said the group is determined to start right away, kicking off its adult-literacy program, signing up volunteers to offer after-school tutoring and becoming a voice for Haitian exiles. Also, the group started a hurricane relief fund for Haiti, with a \$1,500 donation from the Heads of Caribbean Organizations, a coalition of community groups.

Jackson Narcelin, an immigration attorney and board member, noted, "The Haitian community needs this more than ever. So many Haitians are displaced. Our kids get ridiculed in school because they don't know the language. . . . That's the reason why we are here."

Haitian journalist kidnapped, tortured, killed

Thu Jul 14, 2005

By Joseph Guyler Delva

Reuters

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (Reuters) - The body of a Haitian journalist abducted last weekend was found on Thursday. in the latest of a series of kidnappings for ransom that have shaken the troubled Caribbean nation.

Jacques Roche, in his early 40s, had been tortured and shot several times, apparently with a small-caliber weapon. He had been burned, his arms were broken and tied behind his back and his body was covered with blood.

Roche, the first journalist abducted in the kidnapping wave, was snatched at gunpoint on Sunday. His body was found in the capital, Port-au-Prince.

Police say more than 450 people have been kidnapped since March.

Most kidnap victims have been released after a ransom was paid. Roche was the fourth known to have died.

Roche was a poet and the culture and society section chief at Le Matin newspaper, as well as a sports commentator at Radio Ibo in Port-au-Prince.

Chenald Augustin, a colleague of Roche in the Le Matin newsroom, said the killing may have been connected to the ransom demand or could have been politically motivated.

"They (the kidnapers) demanded \$250,000, but after a lot of negotiation, they revised the amount downwards to \$10,000," said Augustin. "His relatives and friends had collected \$10,000 that was sent to the kidnapers. Then they said they were waiting for the \$240,000 remaining."

Roche hosted a TV show on civil society issues for the Group of 184, a coalition of prominent business, religious and civic groups that played a prominent role in the ouster of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in February 2004.

"Those who called to negotiate told us that Jacques was a member of the 184. When we told them he was just a journalist doing his job, they insisted, saying that he should have known his affiliation with that group could have consequences," said Augustin.

"It is not clear whether they kidnapped him because of his role in 184 group's TV program; maybe they have learned about it afterwards," Augustin said.

In April 2000, Haiti's leading radio commentator and journalist, Jean Dominique, was shot to death outside his radio station. Botched efforts to bring his killers to justice have become an enduring symbol of Haiti's political turmoil and the frailty of its justice system.

UN mission to Haiti condemns murder of journalist as attack on society

UN News Centre

15 July 2005 –

The United Nations mission in Haiti has condemned the “brutal and vile” murder of a journalist in Port-au-Prince, the capital, as a crime against society at large and pledged its full support for efforts to track down the assassins.

“Assassination and kidnapping are always cowardly and abominable crimes,” UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) said of the murder of Jacques Roche, who worked for the newspaper Le Matin and Radio IBO.

“The murder of a journalist is also an attack on freedom of expression and a crime against the whole of society,” it added in a statement. “MINUSTAH will not tolerate any attack against freedom the press, an essential element in any democratic society.”

The UN peacekeeping mission has been stationed in the impoverished Caribbean nation for more than a year since unrest forced President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to leave the country.

More than 300 UN peacekeepers yesterday raided the Bel Air quarter of Port-au-Prince to establish a permanent 40-man control post in an abandoned building that was regularly occupied by gangs. No hostile action occurred during the operation which MINUSTAH said was “on the contrary, welcomed by residents.”

It was the latest of a series of anti-gang raids in the Haitian capital in which several gang members have been killed or wounded.

ActionAid International Shocked, Saddened by Journalist's Murder

15 Jul 2005 21:12:00 GMT

Source: NGO latest

AlertNet

Sandy Krawitz

ActionAid - USA

Website: <http://www.actionaidusa.org>

Port-au-Prince, Haiti- The nonprofit relief organization, ActionAid International expresses shock and sorrow over the torture and death of Haitian journalist, Jacques Roche.

Mr. Roche has been a close friend of ActionAid since his 2001 pro-bono collaboration on the prevalence of child slave labor within the Dominican Republic. In addition, Roche led an influential civil society campaign against the implantation of free trade zones in Maribaroux, a fertile agricultural plain upon which many rural planters depend for sustenance.

Roche, the host of a local television show, was found bound and murdered within the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince yesterday. Authorities report his mutilated body, which was shot several times, showed marked signs of torture.

According to the Associated Press, prior to his murder, Roche's captors had demanded \$250,000 US in ransom money for his return. Roche's tragic death marks yet another instance of growing violence within the region, which is experiencing an average of six kidnappings a day, as well as daily barrages of unprovoked gunfire.

Says Jean-Claude Fignole of ActionAid International Haiti, "the increase in our nation's kidnapping rate is nothing short of remarkable. The accompanying, very dramatic, spike of rape, torture and mutilation has left Haitian society feeling absolutely defenseless. Our home region has become akin to a blood bath, and we don't foresee it getting better any time soon. Unfortunately, the message we as Haitians are getting from Mr. Roche's murder is clear: be silent, or be silenced."

Haiti gets \$5 million from IDB
July 15, 2005
Science Daily

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, July 15 (UPI) -- The Inter-American Development Bank announced Friday it was giving Haiti a \$5 million loan for a flood early warning system.

Haiti is often hard hit by hurricanes every year causing numerous deaths. Earlier this week Hurricane Dennis, which tore through the Caribbean before striking the U.S. mainland, killed at least 40 people.

Haitian officials said that an estimated 15,000 people were left homeless by the hurricane.

"Large-scale disasters are one part of the problem," said IDB project team leader Caroline Clarke. "The flood early warning program will empower local communities and national authorities to take action. Saving lives will be the first measure of success."

In September 2004, some 2,000 people died after Haiti was ravaged by heavy rains and flooding. And in May of the same year, more than 3,000 people died in flooding in the south, near Haiti's shared border with the Dominican Republic.

Haiti: Britain suspends mission
Science Daily
July 13, 2005

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, July 13 (UPI) -- The British diplomatic mission suspended its operation in Haiti temporarily, citing increasing violence in the Caribbean nation.

"Incidences of violence and kidnapping for ransom, specifically targeting foreigners, are in the increase," read a mission statement explaining the decision.

Haiti was plunged into violence last year when armed rebels began taking over the country calling for the immediate resignation of then-President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

After weeks of fighting, Aristide left the country. However, the violence has continued, leaving hundreds of people dead.

Brazil's Lula asks for help with Haiti
Science Daily
July 14, 2005

RIO DE JANEIRO, July 14 (UPI) -- Brazil's president made a public appeal for the free world to provide Haiti with economic assistance so the U.N. mission there does not fail.

Brazil leads the 7,500-troop U.N. peacekeeping mission in Haiti.

The forces however have encountered difficulties trying to bring security and stability to the troubled Caribbean nation, where supporters of former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide clash with peacekeepers.

Hundreds of armed Aristide supporters have been killed in recent months.

The former president left the country last year as armed rebels were taking over Haiti calling for his resignation.

Haiti is scheduled to have elections later this year.

U.N. "Massacre" Caught on Tape
C. L. Cook
PEJ News
July 15th, 2005

The United Nations says the military offensive mounted against Cite Soleil was necessary to stop "gang" violence. They've admitted to killing five people, "bandits" resisting the onslaught that included tanks, helicopters and troops.

They came before dawn to this depressed slum, a political stronghold of ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and his Lavalas party, looking for Dread Wilme, political activist/notorious gang leader, depending on whose story you listen to. But, the U.N.'s credibility has come into question in the wake of the attack.

U.N. Casualty declarations, and the nature of the raid, are both belied by video taken on the scene and aired by Democracy Now! The video, recorded by a resident was given to a labour and trade delegation sponsored by the San Francisco Labor Council visiting Port-au-Prince. Now they, and other human rights organizations are charging the U.N. with committing a massacre.

More than seven thousand U.N. "peacekeepers" are currently deployed in Haiti, sent in to ostensibly reorganize the western hemisphere's poorest nation following the U.S. engineered coup d'etat that removed the democratically elected government of former priest, Jean-Bertrand Aristide in February of last year.

Aristide was spirited out of the country under the threat of death by U.S. military personnel and transported to the Central African Republic (CAR). Aristide, currently living in exile in South Africa, has charged the U.S. kidnapped him to serve the interests of Haiti's elite and international business. The coup effectively put an end to peace and reconciliation efforts in the country following decades of despotic rule by U.S.- sponsored father and son dictators, Papa Doc and Baby Doc Duvalier.

Thousands have been killed, imprisoned, and disappeared in the eighteen months since the fall of the legitimate government, though little is known of the situation in North America. The press has been slow to come to the story, perhaps because the coup was sponsored by both the United States and Canada. France too has played a large role in the ouster.

For its part, the U.N. is not commenting on the raid, further than denying a massacre occurred.

Chris Cook hosts Gorilla Radio, broad/webcast from the University of Victoria, Canada. He also serves as a contributing editor at PEJ.org. You can check out the GR Blog [here](#).

Growing Evidence of a Massacre by UN Occupation Forces in Port-au-Prince Neighborhood of Cite Soleil

Summary of Findings of the US Labor and Human Rights Delegation to Haiti

by San Francisco Labor Council

July 14, 2005

margueritelaurent.com

Final Delegation Report on UN Massacre

Background Information:

The San Francisco Labor Council sent a small delegation of US trade unionists and human rights workers to participate in the National Congress of the Confederation of Haitian Workers, held in Port-au-Prince July 1st and 2nd, as well as to investigate the labor and human rights conditions in Haiti. Toward the end of our mission, on July 6th, we received an eyewitness report from local Haitian human rights workers that UN military forces had carried out a massacre in one of Port-au-Prince's poorest neighborhoods, Cite Soleil. We extended our trip to investigate the report.

Extending up from the capital's port, Cite Soleil is a vast ghetto -- reminiscent of the "townships" in South Africa under apartheid -- of tin shacks, unpaved roads, open sewage streams, lack of stable electricity and plumbing, as well as widespread malnutrition, illiteracy, and disease. It is also a community of political resistance, consisting of thousands of people -- young and old -- who provide part of the militant base in Port-au-Prince of Lavalas, Haiti's majority political party. Many residents of Cite Soleil emphatically told us they will accept nothing less than the restoration of the democratically elected government of President Aristide.

Since the coup on February 29th, 2004 that toppled the Aristide government, the people of Cite Soleil and other popular neighborhoods in the capital have been the target of systematic repression -- including extrajudicial executions -- by the Haitian National Police. Armed networks established by young adults in Cite Soleil -- labeled "gangs" by the authorities -- have attempted to provide security for a community facing almost daily incursions and shootings at the hands of the National Police. The community networks also provide vital social services such as education and food for the population.

The UN Mission in Haiti -- MINUSTAH -- has insisted that these networks turn in their arms, but has not shown the capability or willingness to rein in the police units that have been terrorizing the population of Cite Soleil. The grass-roots networks have refused to disarm under the prevailing conditions, and have clashed with both police and UN military forces on multiple occasions.

Investigation Methodology:

Our delegation, joined by Haitian human rights workers, carried out the following steps to investigate the massacre allegation:

- 1) We viewed film footage taken by a Haitian who was on the scene when the UN operation was occurring on July 6th and we also took down his eye witness testimony.

2) We visited Cite Soleil on July 7th, the day after the UN military operation there, conducted interviews with many community members, videotaped these interviews, and also videotaped physical damage to people's homes and neighborhood infrastructure, as well as corpses still on the scene.

3) We carried out an interview the following day, July 8th, with the military high command of MINUSTAH, Lt. General Augusto Heleno and Colonel Morneau regarding the operation.

4) We paid a return visit to Cite Soleil on July 9th during the community funeral service for a community leader slain during the operation, gathered more information from community members, filmed more infrastructure damage, and interviewed the Cite Soleil Red Cross staff.

5) We interviewed the staff at Medecins Sans Frontieres, the primary hospital in Port-au-Prince that serves the people of Cite Soleil. [Unlike other hospitals, it does not charge a fee for service.] The staff at Medicins Sans Frontieres discussed the number of Cite Soleil residents treated on July 6th, the nature of their wounds and treatment, and the comparison of this day to other recent days.

In sharing our findings, we will not use the name of the Haitian human rights workers or anyone currently living in Cite Soleil for their protection.

Investigation Findings:

Our delegation uncovered extensive evidence that indicates there was indeed a massacre conducted by UN military forces in Cite Soleil on the morning of July 6th. We will first present the official version of events, as rendered by the military command staff of MINUSTAH and a MINUSTAH spokesperson. We will then proceed to share the evidence we gathered that contradicts their version of events.

According to Lt. General Augusto Heleno and Colonel Morneau, a little more than 300 UN troops, led by a Jordanian contingent, surrounded Cite Soleil at approximately 3 AM on July 6th. They also surrounded the community with 18-20 Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs), which appear to be like tanks, mounted with a cannon, but do not have tank treads. MINUSTAH military spokesperson Colonel Eloifi Boulbars stated that the number of APCs involved in the operation was 41, as reported by the Haitian media.

Heleno and Morneau denied that the APCs used cannons in the operation. They stated that one helicopter was used, flying above the community at 3000 feet, for observation purposes only. They stated that this helicopter did not fire ammunition down into the community. They did not mention if grenades or tear gas were used. The number of troops and APCs had effectively choked off ways into and out of Cite Soleil by the time the operation began to unfold.

In our interview, Heleno and Morneau reported that the purpose of the operation was to capture Dread Wilme, a leader of one of Cite Soleil's armed community networks and viewed as a "gang" leader by the UN occupation forces. They acknowledged the UN forces surrounded the community and attempted to launch a surprise assault by a smaller contingent of 10-15 UN soldiers, but that "gang" members fired on them first, provoking a firefight. They claimed that the UN soldiers "never fire first"

in their operations. They claimed that the UN forces launched the operation into the community at approximately 5:30 AM.

Both Heleno and Morneau said they did not know of any civilian casualties, nor had they received reports of such casualties from the Red Cross. According to Boulbars, again as reported in the Haitian media, "numerous bandits were killed during the operation, including five in the house of Dread Wilme." He stated to the media that bodies were not recovered because soldiers had other things to do. No UN soldiers were killed during the operation. Morneau suggested to us in our interview that the corpses still in the community after the operation could have been people killed by "gang" members and then falsely blamed on the UN forces. He suggested that ballistics tests be conducted on these bodies.

Lt. General Augusto Heleno defended the operation, asking the human rights delegation why they only seemed to care about the rights of the "outlaws" and not those of the "legal forces" in the country.

According to the eyewitness account from a Haitian (who shall remain anonymous for this report) who was present in Cite Soleil during the operation and who did get some film footage of the operation as it unfolded, a very different picture emerges. Like the official UN account, he reported that UN forces surrounded Cite Soleil, as stated by UN military command staff, sealing off the alleys with tanks [APCs] and troops. He reported that UN forces concentrated on the Cite Soleil districts of Boisneuf and Project Drouillard. He further reported that not one, but two helicopters flew overhead.

From this point on, his account diverges considerably from the official UN account. He reported that at 4:30 AM, UN forces launched the offensive, shooting into houses, shacks, a church, and a school with machine guns, APC cannons, and tear gas. The eyewitness reported that when people fled to escape the tear gas, UN troops gunned them down from the back.

UN forces shot out electric transformers in the neighborhood. People were killed in their homes and also just outside of their homes, on the way to work. According to this account, one man named Leon Cherry, age 46, was shot and killed on his way to work for a flower company. Another man, Mones Belizaire, was shot as he got ready to go to work in a local sweatshop and subsequently died from a stomach infection. A woman who was a street vendor was shot in the head and killed instantly. One man was shot in his ribs while he was trying to brush his teeth.

Another man was shot in the jaw as he left his house to try and get some money for his wife's medical costs; he endured a slow death. Yet another man named Mira was shot and killed while urinating in his home. A mother, Sonia Romelus, and her two young children were killed in their home, reportedly by UN fire after UN forces lobbed a 83-CC gas grenade into their home.

The video footage taken by this eyewitness during the operation shows many of these killings while they were occurring. While it does not show images of the UN troops as they were firing into the community, one can view at least 10 unarmed people either in the process of being killed or who were already killed. Many were killed by headshots, such as 31-year-old Leonce Chery moments after a gun shot ripped off his jaw. Chery was clearly unarmed. There are audible machine gun blasts occurring in the background. The video footage also depicts the bodies of Sonia Romelus and her two young

children, lying in blood on the floor of their home. Apparently, Sonia was killed by the same bullet that passed through the body of her one-year old infant son Nelson.

She was reportedly holding him as the UN opened fire. Next to their two bodies is that of her four-old son Stanley Romelus who was killed by a shot to the head. The video footage shows a weeping Fredi Romelus, recounting how UN troops lobbed a red smoke grenade into his house and then opened fire killing his wife and two children. "They surrounded our house this morning and I ran thinking my wife and the children were behind me. They couldn't get out and the blan [UN] fired into the house." The video also shows the grenade canister, apparently left in the house.

The eyewitness source claimed that the operation was primarily conducted by UN forces, with the Haitian National Police this time taking a back seat.

In summing up his testimony, the source claims to have personally viewed 20 people killed by UN forces during and after the operation, in addition to five people killed who were buried by their families and yet another five people from the community who have been missing since the operation was launched.

When our delegation, joined by other Haitian human rights workers, entered Cite Soleil the day after the operation, in the afternoon of July 7th, we gathered extensive evidence that corroborated his testimony and further indicated that the people being killed in the video footage were, in fact, killed by UN forces. The team gathered testimony from many members of the community, young and old, men, women, and youth.

Community residents said UN forces had reduced the entrances and exits into and out of the ghetto by blocking a street with a large shipping container. Our delegation filmed this blocked entrance. Immediately prior to the UN military operation on July 6th in Cite Soleil, there were scarcely more than two functioning pathways into and out of the community.

Community members spoke of how they had been surrounded by tanks [APCs] and troops that sealed off exits from the neighborhoods and then proceeded to assault the civilian population. Reportedly, the assault involved at least one, if not more, helicopters firing down into the neighborhood. The community allowed the Labor/Human Rights Delegation to film the evidence of the massacre, showing the homes -- in some cases made of tin and cardboard -- that had been riddled by bullets, and what appear to be APC cannon fire and helicopter ammunition, as well as showing the team some of the corpses still on the scene, including a mother and her two children and one man whose jaw had been blown off.

The team also filmed a church and a school that had been riddled by ammunition. Allegedly, a preacher was among the victims killed. Some community members allowed the team to interview them, but not to film their faces for fear of their lives. People were traumatized and, in the cases of loved ones of victims, hysterical. One woman spoke of how her husband was shot and killed during the operation, leaving her stranded alone to fend for three children.

Community members also guided us to two electrical transformers in the neighborhood that had been destroyed, claiming that UN troops had shot them and caused a blackout in the course of the operation.

Multiple community residents indicated that they had counted at least 23 bodies of people killed by the UN forces. Community members claimed that UN forces had taken away some of the bodies. Some community estimates range even higher.

The team returned to Cite Soleil two days later, on July 9th, during the community funeral ceremony for Dread Wilme in order to continue the investigation. Hundreds of people from the community -- woman and men, children and adults -- turned out for the funeral, held in a street. Armed young adults attempted to provide "security" during the ceremony. While they seemed to elicit no fear from the general population, the UN military forces did. Twice during the ceremony, a rumor traveled through the crowd that UN military forces, represented by several APCs in the near distance, were moving on the ceremony. People fled in terror, in a virtual stampede and then regrouped when they realized that such an operation was not occurring.

During the ceremony, the team interviewed a Reuters reporter who claimed to have filmed bullet holes in roofs in Cite Soleil, which he concluded were caused by machine gun fire from a helicopter assault during the operation. Our team subsequently filmed what appear to be gun shot holes in the roof of a community school and the roof of a nearby building. The Reuters reporter also reported that, while he was not present during the UN operation, he personally filmed seven dead bodies a day or two later. In the early afternoon of July 9, the team left the ceremony and interviewed a staff member of the Cite Soleil Red Cross. She informed the team that the local Red Cross was not present during the UN operation, but that the Red Cross had transported approximately 15 people to a local hospital two days later on Friday July 8th. She did not know of how many, if any, people were killed during the operation. Additionally, she reported that about one week prior to the "operation", UN military forces had detained her, the President of the local Red Cross, and at least one other local Red Cross member and taken them to the local UN compound for interrogation. She described the detention as intimidating.

After the interview with the local Red Cross, the team left Cite Soleil and interviewed the staff at the Medecins Sans Frontieres Hospital in downtown Port-au-Prince. This is one of the few, if not the only hospitals in Port-au-Prince where people from Cite Soleil can go because it provides free health care unlike other hospitals which charge a service fee. The staff at Medecins Sans Frontieres shared with the team their hospital registry records detailing the number of patients from Cite Soleil that the hospital admitted and treated on July 6th. Starting at approximately 11 AM, the hospital received a total of 26 wounded people from Cite Soleil who were reportedly transported to the facility by Red Cross "tap taps" (local minivans). Of these 26, 20 were women and children and 6 were men. Half of the total number were seriously wounded by abdominal gun shot wounds and were routed into major surgery. One pregnant woman lost her baby. Other victims seem to be in recovery, according to the hospital staff.

All reported that they had been wounded by UN military forces during the operation and some spoke of their homes being destroyed. This number of 26 stands in contrast to the hospital's records of Cite Soleil residents admitted on other days when the figures are much lower, such as 2 people on July 7th and none on July 8th. One Haitian human rights worker present during the meeting with the hospital staff speculated that the number of men from Cite Soleil who were admitted to the hospital was low because many men would fear being arrested by the authorities while in the hospital.

In addition, a Red Cross staff member stated that on Friday, July 8th, the local Red Cross transported 15 victims from the UN operation to a local hospital.

Putting all this evidence together, it is clear that there were substantial civilian casualties from the UN operation that were transported by the local Red Cross and by perhaps other means, to be treated in a local hospital.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the evidence of a massacre by UN military forces in Cite Soleil is substantial and compelling. The eyewitness account of the operation, and the film footage shot by Haitian human rights workers who were on the scene during the operation; the extensive videotaped testimony by community members themselves on July 7th, coupled with tangible, physical damage to their homes and infrastructure; the bodies still on the scene that we have on video; the intense fear of the UN military forces evidenced by hundreds of residents of Cite Soleil; the statements by the local Red Cross; and finally the registry records of the relevant hospital -- all of these pieces of evidence indicate that UN military forces in Haiti today are not engaged in the work of "peacekeeping" as much as they are in the business of repression.

Clearly, further investigation is required to determine the exact number of victims from the operation, their identities, and the reasons for their deaths. One can only wonder why UN forces in Haiti have not, apparently, contacted the relevant hospital or dispatched their own human rights team into Cite Soleil in order to assess the true "collateral damage" resulting from this and other armed incursions by the UN military forces.

Contact: Seth Donnelly ph:650-814-8495 sethdonnelly2000@yahoo.com

U.N. troops accused in deaths of Haiti residents

15 Jul 2005

Reuters

By Joseph Guylor Delva

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, July 14 (Reuters) - Opposition groups and residents of two Port-au-Prince slums say dozens of innocent people were killed during anti-gang raids by U.N troops and Haitian police last week, but U.N. and police officials denied the accusations.

The Lawyers Committee for Individual Rights, a group known as CARLI and regarded as one of the most independent rights groups operating in Haiti, said U.N. peacekeepers and Haitian police killed unarmed residents, including children and elders, in the slums of Bel-Air and Cite Soleil, strongholds of supporters of ousted president Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

"We have credible information that U.N. troops, accompanied by Haitian police, killed an undetermined number of unarmed residents of Cite Soleil, including several babies and women," Renan Hedouville, the head of CARLI, told Reuters this week.

An assistant to Brazilian General Augusto Heleno, commander of the U.N. force, called the accusations unfounded.

"We have no information about any killing of unarmed civilians, ladies or babies by our forces," Brazilian marine Commander Alfredo Taranto said.

"Our action was directed against the armed gangs and only against the armed gangs," said Taranto. Haitian police officials also denied the accusations.

On July 6, about 400 U.N. troops with 41 armored vehicles and helicopters, and several dozen Haitian police officers, conducted a raid in Cite Soleil, Haiti's largest slum, to root out gunmen. The slum harbors a number of gangs, many of them loyal to Aristide.

"The foreign soldiers came with helicopters and their war machines and started shooting on everything that moved. They killed 40 people who carried no weapons," said Rene Momplaisir, a spokesman for a pro-Aristide grass-roots movement in Cite Soleil.

Aid agency Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) said it treated more than two dozen people that day, including a pregnant woman who survived surgery but lost her baby.

'WOUNDED BY GUNSHOTS'

"We received 27 people wounded by gunshots on July 6. Three quarters were children and women," said Ali Besnaci, the head of the MSF mission in Haiti. "We had not received so many wounded in one day for a long time."

A U.N. military spokesman, Col. Elouafi Boulbars, said U.N. troops killed five "criminals" during the operation. But after those bodies were taken away, a Reuters TV crew filmed seven other bodies of

people killed during the operation, including those of two one-year-old baby boys and a woman in her 60s.

All seven were killed in a house in the Bois-Neuf area of Cite Soleil, a territory controlled by one of Haiti's most wanted gang leaders, Emmanuel "Dread" Wilme. He is believed to have been killed during the raid, but U.N. and Haitian officials could not confirm his death.

Dread Wilme's lieutenants and several hundred of his supporters last Saturday took part in what they called a funeral ceremony for Wilme. But they refused to allow reporters to verify whether there was a body in the buried coffin.

Residents said the number of people killed in that area on July 6 ranged from 25 to 40.

"I counted 18 bodies, but a friend of mine who lives on the other side of Bois-Neuf told me he saw seven bodies. He, too, almost got killed," said Bernard Desrosier, 24, a resident of Cite Soleil. "It is a real massacre."

The same day, residents in another slum, Bel-Air, blamed Haitian police officers wearing black uniforms for the killing of 12 people.

At least 18 other people were reported killed last Friday in similar circumstances in the same slum. A Reuters correspondent saw several of the bodies.

"It is absolute necessary that the security forces neutralize criminals, but nothing can justify the murders of innocent people as it is occurring now in those poor areas," said Hedouville.

U.N. peacekeepers were sent to stabilize the troubled Caribbean country after Aristide was forced into exile in February 2004 by a bloody rebellion and under pressure from the United States and France to quit.

The U.N. mission, now numbering 6,207 soldiers and 1,437 civilian police, has been criticized for failing to curb violence and disarm both criminal gangs and former members of Haiti's disbanded army who participated in the rebellion.

The Haiti Action Committee, a San Francisco-based activist group, condemned what it called a "massacre" in Cite Soleil. The group said at least 23 people were killed.

Ex-law official in Haiti gets 15 years

Jul. 14, 2005

BY JAY WEAVER

Miami Herald

A former top Haitian National Police commander was sentenced to almost 15 years in prison Wednesday in a major federal narcotics probe that is still zeroing in on deposed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide more than a year after his government's fall.

Ex-National Police commander Rudy Therassan, convicted on cocaine and money-laundering conspiracy charges, had about five years shaved off his sentence because he is providing inside information to prosecutors on Haitian and Colombian traffickers who bribed him and others to move their drug shipments through the island.

Therassan, 40, also must forfeit \$1.8 million in assets he purchased with tainted drug money, including two houses in Palm Beach County.

Former National Police director Jean Nesly Lucien, 44, was also sentenced Wednesday to almost five years on a money-laundering conspiracy charge and must forfeit \$180,000. He is not cooperating with authorities.

The 3-year-old probe has snared at least 14 drug smugglers, including ex-Haitian law enforcement officers, a former Haitian senator, a fired American Airlines employee and Aristide's former chief of presidential palace security. He has pleaded guilty and is cooperating with investigators.

Therassan is expected to be a witness in the first case going to trial. It focuses on the prosecution of one of Haiti's biggest cocaine-smuggling suspects, Serge Edouard. It is set to begin Monday.

NO SMOKING GUN

Despite the far-reaching probe, no evidence has been presented so far in Miami federal court that implicates Aristide, who has lived in exile in South Africa since his ouster in February 2004. But a high-profile convicted Haitian trafficker called him a "drug lord" during his sentencing that same month in a Miami federal court.

FOLLOWING THE MONEY

The U.S. Attorney's Office and the Drug Enforcement Administration are trying to confirm whether Aristide personally profited from the loads of cocaine that passed through his country. They are poring over bank accounts from Panama to South Florida to Canada to Europe.

Therassan was the ringleader among corrupt Haitian law enforcement officials accused of shaking down millions of dollars from Colombian traffickers to provide protection for their cocaine shipments, according to prosecutors Lynn Kirkpatrick and David Weinstein.

MORE TRIALS TO COME

The Haitian police officials helped the traffickers unload tons of cocaine from planes allowed to land on National Route 9, a major highway near the airport and capital. Two officials -- Evintz Brillant, ex-Haitian anti-drug chief, and Romaine Lestin, former Port-au-Prince airport police commander -- face trial in September.

Before his ouster, U.S. officials had long complained that Aristide was at least turning a blind eye to traffickers who used Haiti to move Colombian cocaine to U.S. streets.

Under U.S. pressure, the Aristide government expelled four prominent drugsmuggling suspects to the United States between June and October 2003.

Among them: Beaudoin "Jacques" Ketant, who had avoided deportation earlier because Haitian law enforcement and the judiciary were easily corrupted.

At his sentencing last year, he admitted to moving more than 30 tons of cocaine between Colombia and the United States over 12 years. He was sentenced to 27 years in prison and hit with \$30 million in fines and forfeitures.

'NARCO-COUNTRY'

In an outburst during his sentencing, Ketant said Aristide "controlled the drug trade in Haiti" and turned it into a "narco-country." He has told investigators that he paid Aristide and the head of his palace security, Oriel Jean, up to \$500,000 a month to let him land small planes loaded with cocaine on National Route 9.

Ketant also claimed to have made massive payoffs to Aristide's political party and to one of his social-work foundations.

Miami attorney Ira Kurzban, former general counsel to the Haitian government and an advisor to Aristide, has characterized Ketant's accusations as "political assassinations."

5,000 in Haiti protest UN massacre in Cite Soleil
Kevin Pina interviews Georges Honorat
Haiti
Flashpoints Radio July 14, 2005

Kevin Pina: From Berkely California this is Kevin Pina on Flashpoints radio here on Pacifica. With me now direct from Port au Prince is Georges Honorat, a Haitian journalist who works with Haiti-Progres. Georges we're hearing today about a large demonstration in Cite Soleil. Of course we know Cite Soleil was the site of an alleged massacre by United Nations forces a few days ago, last week on July 6th. Georges what do you know now about what's going on in Cite Soleil?

Georges Honorat: Ok, two days ago the Lavalas base in Cite Soleil announced a big demonstration...as you said, to protest the massacre of Wednesday, July 6th organized by the MINUSTAH and the [Haitian] National Police, where a minimum of fifty people died among them children and women. And since one or two o'clock this morning MINUSTAH, the soldiers of MINUSTAH from their tanks in Cite Soleil, mainly in Cite Boston, that is part of Cite Soleil. They fired upon peoples houses where - we don't have the names yet - but three children died, nine years old, five years old and four years old.

Pina: You're saying at one o'clock this morning the United Nations forces, who are also called MINUSTAH, opened fire on Cite Soleil again?

Honorat: Yes, since midnight I would say, midnight, one o'clock and they were firing on Cite Boston...and they killed three children...we can't find their names yet but we will. They also fired upon the church, Notre Dame Immacules, and the front door made of steel blew up. And certainly they attacked the people to intimidate them in order [to get them] not to participate in the demonstrations. But the people threw bottles and rocks at the MINUSTAH so they had to drive back and the people cut [off] the roads so the tanks could not enter Cite Soleil. Finally, the demonstration started around 10:30 A.M. and they were like five thousand strong and protesting against, asking for the illegal government to leave the country so that President Aristide could return and finish his mandate and organize free fair and democratic elections. The demonstration finished in peace around 12:45 P.M.

Pina: People here are asking me and they're having a hard time understanding it; after the horrible brutal killings that the United Nations performed on July 6th ...and again as you said they killed children in the early hours today, how on earth can more than 5,000 people get out and demonstrate again? Obviously it's terrible repression, what is motivating people to risk their lives and take to the streets in those numbers, to continue demonstrating?

Honorat: Yes, that's a good question Kevin, and I think that the people in Haiti finally see that they don't have any choice but to fight. I would say that the three elections that the people tried to vote their leaders in, in 1987 the Macoutes backed up by the CIA and the old army they killed thousands of people, mainly in Port au Prince and so that we didn't have those elections. In 1990 the masses voted the President Jean Bertrand Aristide and after seven months, September 1991 and there was a coup d'etat. And again Aristide returned in 2000 where the people choose him again and in 2004, February 29th, the United States, France and Canada, they organized a kidnapping and they sent President Aristide away. The people say now, 'what's going on?' They [the MINUSTAH] want to kill them, and the elite, mainly the group, they call themselves, 184, backed by the United States and now by

MINUSTAH, the United Nations, probably want to finish with the Haitian masses, so that's probably what motivates them so they will continue the fight until victory.

Pina: Thank you Georges, that was Georges Honorat who writes for Haiti-Progres, you can check his stuff out it comes out every Wednesday, published in New York in three languages, Creole French English. Georges thank you again for being on Flashpoints...

Honorat: Thank you Kevin.

Throwing Gasoline on Haiti's Fires
IRC Americas Program Commentary
By Brian Concannon Jr. | July 14, 2005

Americas Program, International Relations Center (IRC) americas.irc-online.org

On June 23, the U.S. State Department briefed members of Congress on its plan to distribute thousands of handguns to the Haitian National Police, continuing a program that sent 2,657 weapons to Haiti for the police last year, despite an embargo.

Haiti's citizens, especially the poor majority, are suffering under an epidemic of armed violence. Kidnappings and gun battles, between gangs, police and UN Peacekeepers have replaced the daily and nightly routine in downtown Port-au-Prince and many neighborhoods. In some areas, residents cannot leave for days, and spend nights praying that the bullets outside do not come through their thin walls. Almost everyone in the capitol alters their patterns of work, school, travel or sleep, to avoid being shot or kidnapped.

Arming police to help them fight crime may seem like a sensible approach to the insecurity. But although many Haitian National Police (HNP) officers are fighting crime- at great personal risk- the force as a whole is a cause of the violence, not a solution.

The day of the Congressional briefing, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights issued a press release decrying the killing of innocent civilians during police fights with gangs. On April 27, Amnesty International denounced a police attack on a demonstration that killed five. In March the UN Peacekeepers started placing themselves between police and demonstrators because police had fired on a peaceful protest, in front of the UN and the media, on February 28. Amnesty's report noted that the "repression of this peaceful demonstration is not an isolated case," and denounced several police killings that have never been investigated.

For the past sixteen months, documentation of police abuses has stacked up like the bodies in Port-au-Prince's morgue. Human rights investigations have shown over and over that police routinely execute people suspected of supporting Haiti's ousted elected government, or being involved in crime, or simply being adolescent males from the wrong neighborhood.

This is not the work of a few rogue police officers, but a concerted policy from the top down. Police leadership encourages the violence by failing to discipline the perpetrators or even investigate abuses. The police actively cover up the crimes by routinely denying reports from journalists, human rights groups and the UN that the killings even happened. When confronted with bodies, they claim that everyone killed was a "bandit."

Police officials have also integrated hundreds of members of Haiti's former army into the ranks, often into leadership positions, bypassing the rules for recruitment and promotion. Many of these former soldiers are themselves involved in killing and kidnapping, but they also sell or give weapons to their former comrades, who have illegally reconstituted the army.

Police officials also encourage irresponsible and illegal shooting by failing to control ammunition. In most countries, as in Haiti under the democratic governments, police officers are required to file a report each time they fire their weapons. Now firearms-discharge reports are no longer required. Some officers report criticism from supervisors for not shooting enough--going through ammunition too slowly indicates the officer is "soft on crime," or on political dissidents.

Most police stations, especially in urban areas, have a corps of attaches, men outside of the formal police hierarchy who do the killing that the regular units do not want to do. They are out of uniform, but obvious to any visitor.

The State Department acknowledges that the police force is involved in killings, but insists that guns will only be given to properly vetted and supervised officers, and that they will be accounted for. But experience provides little reason to believe that an undisciplined force will become disciplined by getting more guns. The HNP will not provide adequate supervision, because its whole structure--from the former soldiers to the attaches to the "see-no-evil" top brass--is designed to avoid the kind of accountability that control of weapons requires.

Discipline is unlikely to arrive from outside either. The UN Security Council did strengthen the UN Peacekeepers' authority over the police in June, but the increase was slight. Moreover, over the sixteen months that the UN and U.S. Marines have been watching over the HNP, the force has become less accountable, not more.

The UN did announce investigations following some of the worst police massacres, including one in the Fort National neighborhood in October and a prison massacre in December. But no report has been released for either incident. If the foreign police and soldiers did not stop the HNP from misusing the guns they have now, it is hard to see how they will effectively monitor several thousand more weapons.

The House of Representatives realized that sending the Haitian police force more weapons is like dousing a fire with gasoline. Its response to the State Department plan was an amendment to a spending bill blocking the weapons transfer. The amendment made so much sense that it was passed only five days after the State Department briefing, and by a voice vote, meaning there was so little opposition that it was not worth counting the votes. The amendment's sponsor, Rep. Barbara Lee, declared that the HNP "are intimidating, murdering, and executing the poor and political opposition with weapons transferred free of charge from the United States to the Government of Haiti, and this is simply unacceptable."

It is now up to the Senate to show the same common sense by passing the House's amendment and making it official policy that fueling Haiti's killings is "simply unacceptable."

Brian Concannon Jr. directs the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti, www.ijdh.org and is a regular contributor to the IRC Americas Program www.americaspolicy.org. This article was originally published in the Boston Haitian Reporter.

Storm Toll Reaches 40 in Haiti, 16 in Cuba

By AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

July 13, 2005

New York Times

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, July 12 (Agence France-Presse) - The official death toll from last week's hurricane rose significantly on Tuesday, with at least 40 reported dead in Haiti, 16 in Cuba, and more expected.

The storm lashed Haiti on Thursday and went on to sweep across Cuba, hitting the United States on Sunday.

One man was also killed in Jamaica.

The degree of destruction in Haiti, the poorest nation in the Americas, became known on Tuesday when the civil protection agency said 40 people had been confirmed dead, with at least 16 missing.

It was the first hurricane of the season in the Atlantic but brought immediate devastation.

A spokesman for Haiti's civil protection agency, Jeffe Delorges, said 23 bodies had been found in the southwestern town of Grand-Goâve. Most were killed when a bridge collapsed. Ten people were killed in the Grande Anse region, also in the southwest, along with five in the southeast and two in the southern city of Cayes.

The agency estimated that 15,000 people were without homes or means to feed themselves, with hundreds of houses completely destroyed. It said there had been widespread flooding and damage to plantations.

President Fidel Castro of Cuba said in a televised address late Monday that the toll from the storm had climbed to 16 from 11 on the island. He also said the hurricane had destroyed or damaged 120,000 homes and caused more than \$1.4 billion in damage.

Hurricane Emily again strengthens to category 4
Caribbean Net News
Saturday, July 16, 2005

MIAMI, USA: According to the National Hurricane Center in Miami, at 11 pm EDT Friday the center of Hurricane Emily was located near latitude 15.1 north, longitude 74.2 west or about 265 miles southeast of Kingston Jamaica and about 545 miles east-southeast of Grand Cayman.

Emily is moving toward the west-northwest near 18 mph and this motion is expected to continue during the next 24 hours. On this track, the center of Emily will be passing not far to the south of Jamaica on Saturday.

Data from a United States Air Force reconnaissance aircraft indicate that maximum sustained winds have increased and are now near 135 mph, with higher gusts. Emily is now a dangerous category four hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson scale. Some fluctuations in strength are common in major hurricanes and can be expected during the next 24 hours.

Hurricane force winds extend outward up to 45 miles from the center and tropical storm force winds extend outward up to 140 miles.

Emily may produce rainfall accumulations of 5 to 8 inches over Jamaica with maximum amounts of 15 inches over mountainous terrain. Rainfall totals of 5 to 8 inches are possible over the Cayman Islands with lesser amounts of 3 to 6 inches over portions of Hispaniola and eastern Cuba. These rains could produce life-threatening flash floods and mud slides.

A hurricane warning remains in effect for Jamaica and for all of the Cayman Islands. A hurricane warning means that hurricane conditions are expected within the warning area within the next 24 hours. Preparations to protect life and property should be rushed to completion.

A tropical storm warning is also in effect for portions of the southern coast of the Dominican Republic from Punta Salinas westward to the Dominican Republic/Haiti border and for the entire southwestern peninsula of Haiti from the Dominican Republic/Haiti border to Port-au-Prince.

Interests elsewhere in the central and western Caribbean should monitor the progress of Emily.

For storm information specific to your area...including possible inland watches and warnings, please monitor products issued by your local weather office.

Haiti handles hurricane damage
United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)
Date: 13 Jul 2005

Port-au-Prince, 13 July 2005 - Despite the extensive damage wreaked by Hurricane Dennis last weekend, Haiti's emergency response will not require extra humanitarian resources, according to a UN assessment mission.

The mission, which focused on the worst-hit coastal areas of the southern peninsula, estimates that Hurricane Dennis affected 15,000 people in total, destroying more than 600 houses and damaging over 1,000 properties.

Haitian authorities have also confirmed that the fierce storm claimed 20 lives.

However, according to the assessment, the scale of damage is less than that caused by tropical storm Jeanne last September and Haiti's recovery will be possible with existing resources.

HAVOC

Haiti is still picking up the pieces from tropical storm Jeanne last September.

WFP's Haiti operation, launched in the wake of last year's emergency, is currently targeting 550,000 people.

The so-called "recovery" projects provide food aid to the weakest and poorest, including young children, pregnant women and people living with HIV/Aids and tuberculosis.

The smaller "relief" component allows WFP to provide food quickly in the case of natural disasters or civil strife.

In addition to this operation, WFP is also running a school feeding programme in Haiti that benefits some 290,000 primary school children.

Haiti: the facts

Haiti is the poorest country in the western hemisphere and one of the poorest and most disadvantaged countries in the developing world.

76 percent of the total population live on less than US\$2 per day while 55 percent live on less than US\$1 per day.

Chronic malnutrition is widespread among the most vulnerable, with severe or moderate stunting affecting 42 percent of children under 5. Easily preventable maladies like malnutrition and diarrhoea kill 28 percent and 20 percent of children age 0–5, respectively.

Infant mortality per 1,000 live births is 79 and life expectancy at birth is only 49.4 years.

HIV/AIDS directly affects about 4 percent of the population, the highest infection rate in the region.

2.4 million Haitians cannot afford the minimum 2,240 daily calories recommended by WHO for a normal, healthy life.

For more information please contact:

Anne Poulsen

WFP/Haiti

Cell: +509 550 8694

Presidents asks international community to help Haiti

Carolina Pimentel

Reporter - Agência Brasil

July 13, 2005

Paris (France) - President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva appealed to the international community to help in the process of rebuilding Haiti. Lula was addressing an audience of students and faculty members at the University of the Sorbonne in Paris. According to the President, the Haitian population must be provided a basis for renewed hope.

Six thousand troops, under Brazilian command, compose the United Nations (UN) peace force in Haiti. The International Fund for the Reconstruction of Haiti was set up in July of last year, and it was estimated that US\$ 1 billion would be collected from donor countries, but the money has yet to reach Haiti.

Lula also asked for attention to be given to the African continent. "It is time for all of us to make a sacrifice to give Africa a chance to develop," he said. The President also called for the reform of the UN. "Being democratic means believing that everyone has the right to be an actor. And the arguments of the strongest are not always the strongest arguments."

Germany, Brazil, India, and Japan, which comprise the so-called G-4, propose the creation of six more permanent seats on the UN Security Council: two of them to be filled by African countries (still unspecified) and the remainder by the members of the G-4. The group also suggests raising the number of temporary seats from 10 to 14 and wants more egalitarian representation, including developed and developing countries.

Translation: David Silberstein

13/07/2005

UN mission official in Haiti praises Government-donor cooperation on projects
UN News Centre
13 July 2005

Two Goodwill Ambassadors for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), international football stars Ronaldo and Zinédine Zidane of Real Madrid, have raised \$120,000 for humanitarian projects in a Haitian shanty town, the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) said.

The UN Resident Coordinator in Haiti, Adama Guindo, who is also the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) in the Caribbean country, and Prime Minister Gérard Latortue signed an agreement yesterday to use the funds for education, health care and sanitation in Cité Soleil, the sprawling, impoverished seaside district in Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, MINUSTAH said.

UNDP helped to organize the second "Match against Poverty – Ronaldo and friends vs. Zidane and friends" last December in Madrid, Spain, with part of the proceeds going to Haiti and the rest to some African countries.

Meanwhile, marking the first anniversary of the Interim Cooperative Framework for Haiti, known as CCI, MINUSTAH deputy chief Mr. Guindo addressed members of the Haitian Government, representatives of the international community and journalists.

He lauded the cooperation between the Government and donor countries during CCI's first year and praised the Government for its efforts to make its processes more transparent.

Mr. Latortue said CCI's achievements included "nearly 200 schools rehabilitated (and) a total of 300 kilometres of road repaired or newly constructed," projects which had created thousands of jobs.

Solo: The Importance Of Haiti – Camille Chalmers

Friday, 15 July 2005, 11:39 am

Opinion: Toni Solo

The Importance Of Haiti - Radio Mundo Real Interviews Camille Chalmers

translated with an introduction by Toni Solo

".... a white middle-class westerner believes it is his human prerogative not only to manage the non-white world, but also to own it, just because, by definition "it" is not quite as human as "we" are."

- Edward Said. [1] London mourns its dead with the attention the victims rightly deserve. But around the world other bereaved and grieving people note that their dead, murdered by infantry, armour and bombers under the orders of George Bush and Tony Blair, seem insignificant, unworthy of notice. In Iraq, the occupiers disdain even to count the civilians they murder.

United Nations allies of the United States copy the US and UK example in Haiti. On July 6th, the day before the London attacks, heavily armed forces of the UN mission in Haiti (Minustah) rampaged through poor districts of the capital Port-au-Prince shooting at random. Foreign observers report that in the course of their action UN forces murdered as many as fifty civilians.[2]

Haiti is emblematic of what the United States and its allies have in store for weaker countries given half a chance.[3] Like Iraq, Haiti is occupied by the US and its cronies many of whose forces are little better than mercenaries. Its economy is in ruins with few signs of improvement. Much trumpeted "aid" has failed to appear. A corrupt puppet government, totally dependent on US and allied support, holds temporary power pending makeshift elections without legitimacy or credibility.[4] Death squads protected by the occupying troops terrorise the population.[5] Thousands of people are unjustly imprisoned.[6]

This interview with Camille Chalmers by Radio Mundo Real[7] puts some context around United Nations aggression against Haiti's people in the period following the United States' coup against the elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide:-

"Radio Mundo Real interviewed economist Camille Chalmers, Economics Professor at the University of Haiti and one of the most critical voices of the process of military intervention.

Scoop Independent News

July 14, 2005

RMR. One of the arguments of Uruguayan soldiers who travelled in the last few days to join MINUSTAH was that they were motivated by the pay they were earning from the mission. Taking into account the basically economic crisis that Haiti is undergoing what do you make of their comments?

CC. It seems to me at once very significant and very paradoxical, because Minustah has been in Haiti for over a year but this has meant no meaningful advance with regard to the objectives defined in UN Security Council Resolution 1542. From a security point of view we are worse off than before the military intervention.

Furthermore, we have a transitional government that has failed in every way and a UN mission that cannot contribute to a resolution of the problem, because Haiti's problem is not fundamentally a

military problem. 85 per cent of Minustah is made up of military, while many of the tasks they perform are of civilian security, a job for the police.

This military force has a great deal of equipment and is using economic resources that could be extremely useful in the struggle against poverty, for social schemes or education and health programs. Minustah spends US\$25 million a month, a figure which could be used on many other things given the current situation of Haiti's people.

RMR: What then would be the real interests and objectives behind this military intervention?

CC: It is clear that the military intervention is not directed at stability or security problems in Haiti. Nor is it directed at the serious economic problems we face. The military intervention is a function of the objective of imperial domination and recolonization of the American continent pursued by the United States. To understand this process it is important to take into account the failure of the Free Trade Area of the Americas initiative and the importance for the Bush administration of having a strong presence in the Caribbean.

Minustah is a new experiment, given that it is made up from Latin American military forces which could be interpreted as solidarity-based intervention, but in fact achieves the objectives of empire. In Haiti, one sees clearly that one of the current priorities of the United States is the privatization of the main State businesses, and the World Bank has plans to accelerate this process. Minustah's presence obscures this situation and facilitates control of the national economy by United States multinationals.

RMR: What happened to the promised injection of financial aid that was agreed last year for the country's institutional rebuilding?

CC: Up to now what we have are many promises. For example in July 2004 there was talk of US\$1.4 billion pending, that never arrived. Recently in the Cayenne conference, new promises were made, but we see that they are never kept. International interventions to relaunch our battered economy do not exist. Apparently, the powers are hoping to get the election results before sending cooperation funds. It is obvious that the delay in the disbursements demonstrates the limitations of the intervention and how little it has to do with the needs of the people of Haiti.

RMR: An international mission led by Adolfo Perez Esquivel and Nora Cortiñas recently visited Haiti and concluded that here "the future of all the peoples of the South is at stake". What do you think?

CC: I believe it is absolutely the case, because we are facing an "economic war" where the United States is trying to impose its dominion on the continent. Since it couldn't make the FTAA work, it has managed to complete various bilateral free trade agreements, which seems to be its new strategy.

It seems to me that the severe economic crisis affecting the United States explains its anxiety to speed up the process of controlling its backyard, namely the Latin American market. President Bush put it clearly to the US Congress when he sought the ratification of the trade agreements with the Central American countries. For Washington, conquering new markets for its products is urgent and for that it needs to destroy other countries' national production by using several mechanisms.

This year the World Trade negotiations are at a decisive point, because agreements are in hand on trade in services, with advances on free trade agreements and also on bilateral investment treaties, all these benefit above all else US multinationals and permit them to control our human, natural and genetic resources.

RMR: How do you explain that the governments of Brazil and Uruguay have decided to send military contingents to join Minustah?

CC: It seems a very serious mistake to us and we think these governments are being manipulated and being led to believe in the creation of a multinational Latin American force that supposedly will open up a multilateral line of action to confront the unilateralism of the Bush administration, something that the Haiti experience shows to be an illusion since this military intervention is part of plans for imperial domination.

It is urgent that Latin America develops its own strategy of cooperation based on solidarity, beyond imperial dogmas and free market policies. It's important that there should be self-criticism, above all on the part of progressive or left wing governments and that they implement policies in accord with our real needs.

RMR: What historical factors have changed Haiti from a country in the vanguard of independence struggles to one at the tail end of development?

CC: One is dealing with a very long process with many factors coming into play. From the start of the 19th Century our country went through an interesting process of international reconstruction but in a very difficult context. The main powers of that epoch did not want the liberation of the slaves who lived in Haiti to be imitated elsewhere. For that reason, France demanded a huge indemnity to recompense the slave and plantation owners. That represented a huge financial haemorrhage which generated debt with serious consequences that lasted a long time. For a long time, almost 60 per cent of public revenue was allocated to pay that debt.

Another severe blow that we suffered was the military invasion of the United States in 1915, an event that began the systematic deterioration of Haiti as a State and its institutional destruction, part of which was the formation of armed forces totally controlled under the orders of the United States. This whole situation contributed to the loss of sovereignty and we are now coming up to completing 90 years under the control of the State Department of the United States.

RMR: What has been the situation more recently?

CC: One of the main causes of the economic collapse we are living through is the imposition of structural adjustment plans by the United States and the International Monetary Fund since the 1980s. From a trade point of view, Haiti is now the most open country in the whole continent and this has brought dramatic consequences for the economy of rural workers and their families.

In the 1970s Haiti was self-sufficient in cereals, but now we depend greatly on the United States market and we are buying US\$200 million worth of rice each year while our own rice production

only meets 18% of our local market. Despite these dreadful consequences, the provisional government's policies have sharpened the logic of opening up to trade.

RMR: What is the way out of this situation?

CC: To get out of this crisis it seems to me necessary to go back to basics and return to the ideas we had before the 1915 invasion so as to define a national project capable of meeting the challenges of the 21st Century. This project should be sustained by solidarity-based assistance and integration with Caribbean countries and the rest of Latin America.

The Haitian people has defined itself as solidarity based, from its contributions to Simon Bolivar and the struggles for independence to its support for the independence of the United States itself. This vocation of solidarity continues and it ought to be met with solidarity from the other Latin American countries, but not through military intervention.

RMR: Finally, what alternatives are there for the popular movement faced with the upcoming elections in October and November?

CC: Unfortunately, the picture is pretty obscure, firstly because there are technical delays that lead one to believe it will be hard for the elections to meet the planned timetable. On the other hand the climate of insecurity makes us think participation in the elections will be very limited which will mean elected representatives will have very limited legitimacy, insufficient to undertake reforms and substantial changes.

The electoral process will be completely controlled by Minustah, the Organization of American States and the United States. The national body assigned by the Constitution to coordinate elections is being completely displaced by outside agents. The perception we have in Haiti on the elections is totally negative, because they seem in reality other people's elections, not those of the Haitian people.

Progressive forces are debating all this and we expect in a few days time to define a consensual position on the elections."

Men For Missions Continue to “Saturate” Haiti With the Gospel Message
The ChristianPost
Friday, Oct. 17, 2003

Haiti – Men For Missions, the laymen’s arm of OMS, move closer to meeting their goals in “Operation Saturation,” that would ensure all Haitians access to the Gospel through radio broadcasts.

The "Every Creature Crusade (ECC)" committee met with the ministry leader to see which of the areas where Operation Saturation has done radio distribution are most ready for an ECC team to enter and minister. Some do not have an evangelical church in the area, and they need wisdom as they place their next team.

Nonetheless, ECC reports that people are responding to the Gospel. According to staff members, 13 baptisms were held this month, eight at Gaudin, and five at Bayeux, the first baptism for this ECC work that began in February.

The next phase of the project comes with the necessary approvals for expanding the ministry of Radio 4VEH, as well as the financial backing for day-to-day operations.

The next partner station is to be on the Southern peninsula, where 4VEH now reaches only the area around the shore. The building is up, and now they're waiting for the container with the studio equipment to arrive by ship from the U.S.

Men For Missions asks believers to pray for Haiti, where ongoing unrest, economic problems, and other social stresses daily scathe the people.

Missionary's pet project lives on
By MIKE KROKOS
The Herald Bulletin
Anderson, Indiana
Former co-workers collect peanut butter to send to Haiti

There were hundreds of jars of Skippy, Jif, Meijer, Kroger and other brands.

They lined shelves, were in boxes on the floor and took up an impressive amount of space in a storage area at Community Hospital in Anderson.

In layman's terms, the 902 pounds of peanut butter collected spoke volumes about how much the staff at Community loved the late Gretchen Zachary and her family's missionary work in Haiti.

And her former hospital colleagues said the peanut butter drive recently held was a fitting tribute to a woman known for her selfless giving to others.

"She was the most giving, loving, caring person. She had a wonderful smile and a special warmth about her," said Judy Dobbins, a registered nurse and the hospital's nursing administrative representative, of 58-year-old Zachary, who died June 1.

Like Dobbins, Joanne Amick knew Zachary from her time spent working as a pediatric nurse at Community, which spanned from October 1992 to December 1993.

"She was always smiling. She wanted nothing more than to help people," said Dobbins, who is clinical manager of the hospital's pediatric unit. "She was the eternal optimist."

That disposition worked wonders in Haiti, where Gretchen, her husband Davis and other family members served poverty-stricken areas. The family felt called to work in Haiti in 1994 and has been there ever since, Dobbins said.

One challenge the missionaries faced was dealing with kwashiorkor, known as "kwash," a syndrome that is the result of a severe protein deficiency and very prevalent in Haitian children, Dobbins said. If it is not treated it leads to renal failure and death, she said.

The Zacharys found a way to treat the illness. The solution? Peanut butter, which provides Haitians with the protein their bodies desperately need,

Dobbins said.

"We've known ever since Gretchen went to Haiti that peanut butter can save lives," Amick said. "They were able to see them go from death's doorstep to a healthier life." Just last year, hospital employees collected 545 pounds for the mission efforts.

But when it came to lifestyle, peanut butter wasn't the only thing the Haitian people appreciated from afar.

“They also love bouillon cubes. They use it to flavor their rice, beans and other food,”

Dobbins said. “The people are thrilled to get a bouillon cube.”

And it didn’t end there, she added. The missionaries said “they could use anything we could give them.”

When Zachary died unexpectedly after returning home to Anderson with her husband to replenish their clinical supplies, the Community family was devastated, Dobbins said.

But in their pain and anguish, they realized a peanut butter

drive would be an appropriate way to honor Gretchen’s memory and continue her mission work in Haiti, Dobbins said.

“I think that everybody who knew Gretchen’s story just wanted to pitch in and help,” Dobbins said.

Amick agreed.

“As a missionary, I’ll remember her endless giving, selflessness and sacrifice,” Amick said.

“She was the kindest person I’ve ever met in my life,” Dobbins said.

“In my mind, I’m always to remember her,” Dobbins added. “She’s my hero.”

Judge's comments racist, Haitian lawyers contend

Fri, Jul. 15, 2005

The Haitian Lawyers Association has joined others in complaining about comments Broward County Judge Leonard Feiner made last month about the courthouse custodial staff.

BY BRIDGET CAREY

Miami Herald

The Haitian Lawyers Association is demanding an apology from a county judge for what it calls "insensitive and openly racist" comments the judge made last month about the courthouse custodial staff.

Lisa Metellus-Hood, the association's president, sent a letter Thursday to the Judicial Qualifications Commission, supporting formal complaints against Judge Leonard Feiner that were filed by the Broward County Public Defender's Office.

Two weeks ago, the Fort Lauderdale branch of the NAACP also filed a complaint with the JQC about what Feiner said in court.

While court was in session in June, Feiner complained that his desk was left in disarray. His telephone had been moved. His microphone was out of place. Someone had messed with his University of Florida memorabilia. Paper clips were strewn about.

He halted the proceedings and called for someone to summon the courthouse custodial supervisor, Nadine Coke, to the bench.

"They may live in -- in hovels where they -- where they live, but they don't have to leave places they work looking like a dump," he said to Coke.

Coke asked for Feiner to repeat himself, and Feiner responded, "I said people that -- that they hire may live in hovels, but they don't have to leave courtrooms and the places they work looking like a slum."

Feiner's lawyer Ed McGhee said Feiner was not targeting any race and was simply upset that his desk was in a mess when the rest of the courtroom was in perfect order.

The Haitian Lawyers Association supported an earlier formal complaint from the Broward Public Defender's Office, which criticized Feiner over the comments.

Metellus-Hood said Feiner's comments were racist because many members of the night custodial staff are Haitian Americans.

But McGhee said groups like the lawyers association are the racist ones for assuming he was speaking of Haitians when he was complaining.

"It's pretty disappointing," Metellus-Hood said, referring to having a public figure speak that way in court. She said she wants Feiner to apologize to the Haitian community, and wants him to be publicly reprimanded. She also wants him to attend sensitivity training.

Metellus-Hood said association members also didn't like the way Feiner called Coke to the bench. "It was not tactfully done," Metellus-Hood said. "I'm sure it was embarrassing to the supervisor."

Jayne Cassidy, the county's chief assistant public defender, said calling Coke to his bench to publicly embarrass her while court was in session was an abuse of his judicial power.

"He had no authority over her," Cassidy said of Coke.

McGhee disagrees.

"They're grasping at straws to make it sensational," McGhee said. "How else would you report something to housekeeping? How else could you get them to see what was done?"

No matter what the JQC decides, Cassidy said, she hopes it is a wake-up call for judges that "they're not going to get away with inappropriate activity like they have in the past."

Haitians refused entry into Dominica
by Paul Charles
Caribbean Net News Dominica Correspondent
Friday, July 15, 2005

ROSEAU, Dominica: Dominican immigration officials refused entry to 27 Haitians on Wednesday, saying they intended to use the country as a transshipment point to neighbouring islands.

Police spokesman, inspector David Andrew, said the two groups of Haitians, 18 and 9 respectively, arrived at the Melville Hall Airport in the north east of the island without documents to support their travel to Guadeloupe and St Thomas.

"When they were interviewed by immigration officials they all expressed that their intention was to go to St Thomas and Guadeloupe. None of them had in their possession visa entry for those countries," he disclosed.

Andrew said the two groups had arrived here on chartered flights from the Dominican Republic, which shares an island with Haiti.

Dominica's attorney general Ian Douglas said efforts were being stepped up to curb the transshipment of Haitians and Dominican Republic nationals from the island following complaints from French, Dutch and US authorities.

According to David, thousands of Haitians and Dominican Republic nationals migrated to Dominica over the last nine months.

The police said an average of 30 Haitians arrive here daily despite the imposition of a US\$400 bond on them last October.

Assistant superintendent Cyril Carrette said the surprisingly heavy influx of immigrants have put a "serious strain" on the resources on the local police and the social services.

Delay elections in Haiti , says Brooklyn advocate
Sunday 17th July, 2005
Big News Network.com

Citing a lack of security, the slow pace of voter registration and the need for participation of the Haitian diaspora in the democratic process, Michele Adolphe, likely candidate for Brooklyn's 42nd Assembly district, has called on the Bush administration and the United Nations to help postpone Haiti's municipal and presidential balloting scheduled for October and November.

"There is a serious sense of fear, despair and skepticism among Haitians about events in Haiti" said Adolphe whose Brooklyn district she hopes to represent has the largest population of Haitians immigrants outside of Haiti. "The Bush administration and the United Nations need to proceed with care and caution." said Adolphe.

Adolphe is calling for a six month election delay to allow more time to restore a sense of order, completion of voter registration and to arrange for Haitians in the U.S. to vote. "If we are going to restore trust among Haitians in the electoral process, allowing the Haitian diaspora to participate in the balloting will go a long way" said Adolphe.

According to Adolphe there is broad community support for allowing Haitians to cast their ballot in the U.S. "If it was good enough for Iraqis why not for Haitians?" she asked referring to the recent Iraq elections when the Bush administration arranged for Iraqis in the United States to vote. Adding "democracy is better served with a delayed election with broad participation than a timely one where the majority of the voting public fails to participate," she added.

Council: Bar Aristide Party From Election

By LEONARDO ALDRIDGE

Associated Press Writer

July 16, 2005, 8:04 PM EDT

AP World News

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti -- A U.S.-backed advisory council that oversees Haiti's interim government recommended Saturday that ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's political party be barred from upcoming elections, accusing the party of encouraging violence.

The seven-member Council of Sages, which picked the interim government, accused Aristide's Lavalas Family Party of promoting violence, including the slaying of a well-known Haitian journalist whose body was found with signs of torture Monday.

"Political groups who identify themselves with the Lavalas Family Party, and particularly with Mr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, continue to promote and tolerate violence," the council said.

The council urged the interim government to "make the bold political and beneficial decision to disqualify the Lavalas Family Party from the electoral process."

But Haiti's Provisional Electoral Council indicated that all political parties would be welcome in the October and November elections.

"The election is for all political parties of Haiti," said electoral council spokesman Rosemond Pradel.

Lavalas is Haiti's most organized political force, with much of its support coming from sprawling slums in Port-au-Prince. Aristide was ousted in a bloody, three-week rebellion in February 2004.

Lavalas party members, who have said they will boycott the elections unless Aristide returned from exile in South Africa, have denied involvement in violence that has killed more than 700 people in the capital of Port-au-Prince since September.

U.N. peacekeepers have intensified offensives against armed pro- and anti- Aristide gangs, who dominate parts of the capital's slums.

Lavalas leader Rev. Gerard Jean-Juste, a Roman Catholic priest who is considering running for president, said the interim government feared Aristide supporters would win the elections.

"They are scared of us," Jean-Juste said. "They are afraid we are going to win."

Jean-Juste, whose sermons electrify worshippers who have urged him to run for president, said he would consider doing so if his party asked.

"I will consider it, but it is not my intention to run for president," the priest said.

