

HAITI NEWS ROUNDUP: NOVEMBER 4 – 11, 2005

Man to be deported following sentence

November 11, 2005

BY Francine Sawyer

The New Bern Sun Journal

A New Bern man was sentenced to a year in federal prison, and when his sentence is served, he will be deported to his native country of Haiti.

Lucien Germain, 42, of the 2000 block of College Street, was sentenced this week in U.S. District Court in Greenville on a charge of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

New Bern police began an investigation of Germain after hearing complaints from residents.

"They complained that Germain was operating an illegal liquor house, selling controlled substances and gambling at his College Street house," said Chris Stansbury, New Bern police spokesman.

Stansbury said that neighbors complained that the illegal activities were happening at all hours of the night and was a constant menace to the neighborhood.

Police increased patrols of the area and put the house under surveillance for a month to monitor activity.

When a shooting occurred on Oct. 31, 2004, behind Germain's house, New Bern police major case unit detectives got a search warrant for the house.

Stansbury said police found a number of drugs and a gun inside.

"It was determined that his gun was not involved in the shooting, but Germain was a convicted felon in possession of a firearm," Stansbury said.

Stansbury said Germain was turned over to federal authorities under Project Safe Neighborhoods, which began in 2004. The program, aimed at reducing gun violence, makes turning over convicted felons with guns over to federal prosecutors easier and faster.

Stansbury said Germain has a criminal history including drug and robbery charges in New Bern and drug charges in Florida.

Trip to Haiti inspired store's unique selection

By Evelyn Longa

The News-Press, Bonita Springs, FL

November 09, 2005

The Lady from Haiti art boutique has a good vibe along with colorful artwork. The story behind the store is a touching tale of adventure and love. Store owner/queen Melody Bales recently shared with me how it all came about and revealed the identity of the "lady" from Haiti.

Bales' story begins almost 20 years ago on the island of St. Thomas, where she saw an 8 x 10-inch painting of the sky and sea melding together in shades of blue. The image was of Haiti, and Bales decided she had to go see that beautiful scenery in person. The young adventurer headed out to Haiti to meet her destiny.

Once in Haiti, Bales found a job teaching special education to children. She told me she was not sure she would stay in Haiti long enough to fulfill the nine-month contract with the school.

"The poverty broke my heart," said Bales. "It was everywhere I looked."

But she stayed. After a time, she opened her own business as a swimming instructor. She made plans to leave Haiti and sold her car. But she stayed. Bales says she sold three cars that way, thinking she was leaving Haiti and then changing her mind.

Now of course, she realizes why she stayed. Her fate in Haiti included the adoption of daughter Rachel. Once the adoption was finalized, Bales returned to the United States with Rachel.

A new adventure began. To support her family, Bales opened a business selling Haitian artwork. She began sales out of her '98 Regency car and opened a couple of more permanent stores.

Eleven years ago, she opened her store on Fifth Avenue just as the area was being revitalized. Bales named the store the Lady from Haiti for her daughter Rachel, who is now 13.

Today, the Lady from Haiti is a fun place to shop. There's nothing stuffy about this art boutique with sand on the floor and island music in the background. Beautiful artwork from Haiti abounds here, and many pieces are made specifically for the store.

In addition to paintings and steel-drum art, the store sells artwork by contemporary Haitian artist, Claude Dambreville. His artwork is highly collectible with a "more subtle and sophisticated style, not as wild and jungly" as other Haitian artwork, Bales said. The store sells funky jewelry made from exotic materials like African trade beads, wood and glass beads. Smaller papier mache and metal pieces add to the colorful confusion.

The Lady from Haiti is having a "buy one and get the second one at 50 percent off" sale on some items. A special promotion offers an enamel flip-flop necklace with purchases over \$40.

Evening on Fifth

Join the merriment at Evening on Fifth taking place Thursday from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Live music will be performed all over the avenue featuring Joe Marino and All the King's Men, Blue Moon trio, The Yuen duo of David and Elaine, the Marco Island Strummers, Showmen, SOS, the Consecutones, the O'Hare School of Irish Dance, Shell and Mooney, Manny Touron and the Salvation Army Kids. Also performing will be magician Doc Brooks.

Haiti election body bars US citizens from ballot

Fri Nov 11, 2005

Reuters

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (Reuters) - Haiti's electoral agency on Friday threw two Haitian-born U.S. citizens out of the race for the country's presidency, ignoring a Supreme Court decision that one of them should be allowed to run.

ADVERTISEMENT

The troubled Caribbean country's electoral council excluded Dumarsais Simeus, a Texas-based multimillionaire, and Samir Mourra from a list of authorized candidates for the election, originally due to take place November 20 but now seen as unlikely until mid-December at the earliest.

Thirty-five candidates were allowed to run in the first presidential ballot since former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted in February 2004 after a monthlong armed revolt and under U.S. and French pressure to quit. Once a champion of democracy in Haiti, Aristide faced accusations of increasing despotism and corruption.

Haiti, the poorest country in the Americas, has continued to be scarred by criminal and political violence since Aristide fled, despite the presence of more than 7,000 Brazilian-led U.N. peacekeepers and international police.

The decision by the electoral council to exclude Simeus and Mourra came after a panel appointed by the interim authorities recommended they be barred because of their U.S. citizenship. The electoral council also excluded a third candidate, Jose Nicholas, but gave no reason.

Last month, the Supreme Court ordered the electoral council to put Simeus' name on the final list of approved presidential candidates.

The electoral council has said no one holding a foreign passport can run for president. Both Simeus and Mourra say they have never renounced their Haitian citizenship and have protested attempts to keep them out of the race.

Haiti: Two Killed, Fifteen Wounded During UN Assault in Cite Soleil

By Anthony Fenton,

NarcoSphere, Narco News

Fri Nov 11th, 2005

Mainstream news of recent UN aggression in Haiti's slums has gone from UNderreported to UNreported. The lone report thus far seems to be that by Dave Welsh, interviewed by Flashpoints radio on Thursday, November 10th. Welsh also discusses some of his recent experiences in Haiti while he (and others, part of an International Tribunal on Haiti) investigated UN involvement in reported massacres. The entire transcribed interview is posted [HERE](#), with excerpts below.

Disturbingly, I recall several conversations with MINUSTAH officials in Haiti a few weeks ago, wherein they referred to Cite Soleil as the only neighborhood that had not yet been sufficiently 'pacified.' To carry this pacification through to its inevitable conclusion, I was told that an extra battalion of Jordanian (750) soldiers were being brought in to Cite Soleil ("like a boot") for just this purpose.

Many high-level military strategy meetings take place prior to these sorts of operations, involving MINUSTAH, UNPOL, Haitian police, and, evidently, members of Haiti's private sector. Leaked documents show the intricate planning that goes into these invasions into Haiti's populist slums, premised on hunting down "gang leaders" or "bandits," such as Dread Wilme.

The following comes from notes taken (the note taker must remain anonymous) during one of the MINUSTAH meetings on Cite Soleil this past Spring, where coup supporter, sweatshop owner, and U.S. citizen with reported links to death squads, Andy Apaid, Jr. figured prominently:

"Andre Apaid, of the Group of 184, pointed out that Cite Soleil had now as an extension the Cite Militaire (Pele) area, of which the leader called "Ti Blan" (a nickname, literally translateable as "Small Light-Skinned Person," is linked to Dred Wilme. He explained that for two weeks, it had been impossible to pass through this zone. The cars are stolen there, and a driver was already killed. Mr. Apaid thus asked to extend the interventions of the MINUSTAH to this zone...Andre Apaid spoke again to indicate that according to certain information, violence which is currently unfolding in Cite Soleil will soon (at the beginning of June) be decentralized towards the other departments (geographic sub-divisions) in order to create panic and to destabilize the electoral process. He thus recommended that actions be very quickly taken."

And here's Dave Welsh on Flashpoints, Thursday, November 10th:

"I was on the phone with a Haitian human rights worker yesterday (Wednesday, November 10th) and Tuesday, and he told us that there were three attacks that took place on Tuesday (November 9th). One was at midnight at two in the morning, the second was at seven in the morning, and the third was at four in the afternoon. And these attacks were with tanks, with cannons mounted on them, and when I say they are tanks, they are armored personnel carriers, except they don't have treads, so they are just like tanks otherwise. And they had helicopters also firing. The toll, according to this human rights worker was fifteen wounded and two dead. There was a young woman of twenty-three, who was killed, and a man in his early forties was killed, and fifteen were wounded."

"Then at nine o'clock, three people were arrested; this is in the Cite Soleil neighborhood, which is actually a city within a city; it has about 300,000 people who live there; there are thirty-four different neighborhoods in Cite Soleil, and the tanks were active in a number of them. There were two different tanks from Peru shooting in the direction of Bellecour that is the Peruvian contingent that is a part of the so-called "peacekeeping" force in Port au Prince. There was another tank in the Boston neighborhood and another tank firing in the direction of Pele. The cannons from these tanks were issuing projectiles which, when they hit the ground, would explode and anybody who was around there might very well get hit by shrapnel or explosive. The Red Cross came in after these attacks in a pickup carrying a Red Cross flag on it and a siren, and picked up the wounded and took them to St. Catherines hospital, where the Doctors Without Borders have set up shop. And there was one man who had bullets in the head, at the time he wasn't yet dead, and they took him there; I don't know if he was the one that was killed or not. So, it's a continuing assault on the poor neighborhoods. They come in there, people are being hit in their house, because a lot of these houses they are very flimsy, they are like shanties, they are made of cardboard and tin and sometimes cement blocks. Some are hit in their house, some are hit on their way to work; some are coming home from work. So it is an assault on the civilian population; it is basically almost a genocidal assault."

Helping in Haiti

Children's International Lifeline brings food, education and gifts to the poor.

By DAWN FRASIEUR

South Bend Tribune Correspondent

November 10, 2005

Arnold Lemke holds a Haitian child being helped by Children's International Lifeline.

Photos provided

Children in Haiti are growing up in poverty worse than anywhere else in the Western Hemisphere.

"Love Bundles" gathered in the United States are carried on the backs of donkeys to villages in the mountains of Haiti.

BUCHANAN -- If there's one thing Arnold Lemke knows, it's that one person can make a difference.

Lemke has had the chance to change the lives of hundreds of destitute Haitian children.

It has taken passion and compassion, a clear focus and the help of a lot of friends, old and new, who share the same vision.

In 1983, Lemke was a Buchanan photographer on the verge of retirement. That's when he first visited Haiti at the invitation of his minister.

He saw the dismal existence of the children in this poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, so he and his wife took some time to decide what they could do to make a difference.

Ultimately, they gave up their Florida retirement home -- in fact, the whole idea of a leisurely retirement -- and began a Buchanan-based, ecumenical ministry, Children's International Lifeline.

By 1987, it was well under way.

Since then, hundreds of volunteers have helped Lifeline build a school, begin an extensive feeding program (800 to 1,000 children a day at four locations) and develop a "Love Bundle" program that brings joy into the lives of some of the world's poorest children during the holiday season.

Lifeline also pays for teachers at two (soon to be three) mountain schools too far away to participate in the food program.

Haiti has very few public schools.

"The government just doesn't have the money," he said. "If it weren't for the missionaries, about 85 percent of the children would have no education at all."

As for the Love Bundle program, he said, "For the majority of the Haitian children, this is the only time of the year when they receive a present."

This year's goal is 5,000 bundles, though that will not provide enough even for the villages in which the ministry is established.

Lifeline volunteers are always hopeful of reaching the group's record of 9,000 bundles.

Some volunteers go over and above in their commitment.

One airline stewardess got to know Lemke on a flight and now gathers 100 to 150 bundles from friends and co-workers in her home state of Florida.

Love bundles consist of a large towel (24 by 44 inches) filled with school and household supplies, clothing and toys, pinned together with large safety pins and placed in a plastic Wal-Mart bag.

The bundle should also include a jar of peanut butter (and no other food), as well as the \$5 required for shipping the gift to Haiti.

Appropriate gifts range from T-shirts and underwear to sewing kits and shampoo, calculators and pencil sharpeners to small dolls and transistor radios (with batteries).

Popular favorites include jacks, yo-yos, wide-tooth combs, toy cars, jump ropes, watches, sunglasses, flashlights, hair bows and ribbons, and deflated soccer balls (with pumps).

The bundles should not include money, addresses, used clothing, breakables or any violent toys.

Lemke just returned last week from one of his regular trips to Haiti, enthusiastic about yet another area of the Lifeline's work.

"We're in the process of building a medical clinic and four more classrooms on our property," he said.

"I'm dealing with a Haitian builder, and though he does a good job, they're not used to building to our standards, so I feel like I need to stay on top of the project."

The walls are now up and a couple of months from now a group of volunteers will head down to Haiti to complete the job.

"I have 11 Amish friends from Fort Wayne who will come to put the roof on, something they've done once before for us," he said.

It was when the Lemkes were installing cabinets in their kitchen that they met a group of Amish craftsmen.

"They were very excited about the work I was doing and said to me, 'We do everything in our own circle, and we want to reach out and get involved in something. We build barns and houses; this is perfect for us.'"

They insisted, however, that they take a boat -- none had ever flown before.

When Lemke said that was impossible, they pointed out that it's against Amish teaching for them to have their pictures taken, even for passports.

"They talked to their leaders, though, and received permission to do it," he said.

Unfortunately, that was just before the 9/11 attacks, and the group "backed out" at the time so many people were fearful of air travel.

A few months later, they called and were ready to go.

"I flew with them; it was the only way they would go," said Lemke.

"At first, they were white-knuckled. One would open an eye and quickly shut it, then another would do the same. But by the time we landed in Chicago to transfer, they were veteran fliers!"

That first building project was perfect.

"They're just quality workmen," he said. "I sat back and watched them, and it was like that roof just exploded in front of my eyes."

According to Lemke, Haiti is the second- or third-poorest country in the world and has an 85 percent unemployment rate.

"The calculation is that every working Haitian supports 12 people," he said, adding that "If it weren't for relatives that have gone to the U.S. to work and send back money on a regular basis, these people would be starving in the streets."

Child sponsorships are also available through Lifeline for \$20 each month.

"That amount will feed a child for a month and pay for them to go to school, if there is one nearby," he said.

Sponsored children are also de-wormed once a year.

More information on either program may be obtained at (269) 695-2300. Bundles may be delivered to 16106 Brookwood Drive in Buchanan.

UN Forces in Haiti Kill More Civilians as Sham Elections Near
Infoshop News
Friday, November 11 2005

Flashpoints: The paltry coverage of the situation in Haiti these days mainly consists of speculation and U.S. response to the upcoming elections, which many people in Haiti believe will be a total and complete sham. Meanwhile, vicious attacks on Haitians continue unabated by the United Nations forces and the death squads.

Thursday, November 10, 2005

<http://www.flashpoints.net>

Flashpoints Radio's Nora Barrows-Friedman interviews Dave Welsh, Haiti Action Committee

Flashpoints: The paltry coverage of the situation in Haiti these days mainly consists of speculation and U.S. response to the upcoming elections, which many people in Haiti believe will be a total and complete sham. Meanwhile, vicious attacks on Haitians continue unabated by the United Nations forces and the death squads. Two days ago the Cite Soleil neighborhood in Port au Prince was attacked by the UN forces. Joining us to talk about this is Dave Welsh. Welsh, an activist with the Haiti Action Committee, just returned from a fact-finding delegation [to] Haiti. Dave Welsh, welcome back to Flashpoints.

Welsh: It's good to be here.

Flashpoints: First of all, tell us what happened in Cite Soleil two days ago, talk about these attacks by the UN so-called "peacekeeping" forces.

Welsh: I was on the phone with a Haitian human rights worker yesterday (Wednesday, November 10th) and Tuesday, and he told us that there were three attacks that took place on Tuesday (November 9th). One was at midnight at two in the morning, the second was at seven in the morning, and the third was at four in the afternoon. And these attacks were with tanks, with cannons mounted on them, and when I say they are tanks, they are armored personnel carriers, except they don't have treads, so they are just like tanks otherwise. And they had helicopters also firing. The toll, according to this human rights worker was fifteen wounded and two dead. There was a young woman of twenty-three, who was killed, and a man in his early forties was killed, and fifteen were wounded.

Then at nine o'clock, three people were arrested; this is in the Cite Soleil neighborhood, which is actually a city within a city; it has about 300,000 people who live there; there are thirty-four different neighborhoods in Cite Soleil, and the tanks were active in a number of them. There were two different tanks from Peru shooting in the direction of Bellecour that is the Peruvian contingent that is a part of the so-called "peacekeeping" force in Port au Prince. There was another tank in the Boston neighborhood and another tank firing in the direction of Pele. The cannons from these tanks were issuing projectiles which, when they hit the ground, would explode and anybody who was around there might very well get hit by shrapnel or explosive. The Red Cross came in after these attacks in a pickup carrying a Red Cross flag on it and a siren, and picked up the wounded and took them to St. Catherine's hospital, where the Doctors Without Borders have set up shop. And there was one man who had bullets in the head, at the time he wasn't yet dead, and they took him there; I don't know if he was the one that was killed or not. So, it's a continuing assault on the poor neighborhoods. They come in there, people

are being hit in their house, because a lot of these houses they are very flimsy, they are like shanties, they are made of cardboard and tin and sometimes cement blocks. Some are hit in their house, some are hit on their way to work; some are coming home from work. So it is an assault on the civilian population; it is basically almost a genocidal assault.

Flashpoints: Dave, of course this is all being whitewashed in the media, and you can hardly find a news report on this attack and ones similar to it. They are so focused right now on these sham elections. What is your assessment of how this bait and switch is playing out in Haiti?

Welsh: Well, I don't have on the ground information about the election; I just know that when we were there recently with the International Tribunal on Haiti - there was a Commission of Inquiry which was established by the Tribunal, and it was headed by Ramsey Clark and I and some other people were on it - we went down there together and witnessed testimony about the massacre on July 6th - the big massacre in Cite Soleil as well as other massacres in Bel Air and other popular neighborhoods. And while we were there we were told 'how can you have an elections,' this what the grassroots activists told us, 'how can you have an election when they are going to the neighborhoods where the people live, shooting them up, and killing people, when the Lavalas Party leadership is in jail, when the head of the Lavalas Party is in exile in South Africa, President Aristide, how can you have elections?'

President Aristide just issued a statement saying that at the time in the eighties when the anti-Apartheid movement was coming on strong but it was still very far from where it was in 1994, at that time Nelson Mandela, [along with] a lot of the other leadership was in jail, and their position was 'how could we participate in elections?' Aristide's idea was how, in a situation like that, could the African Congress participate in elections when their leaders were being killed, when their people were being killed, when popular neighborhoods were being destroyed by the South African authorities at the time? So he basically drew an analogy. Today, he said, under these conditions, how can we have free and fair elections?

Flashpoints: As you mentioned, you were in Haiti to investigate new evidence of that July 6th massacre. Remind us of the background of this day. What happened? Who carried it out? And the new evidence you uncovered.

Welsh: Well, it was the United Nations troops; there are about 7,800 UN troops in Haiti, and it's under the command of a Brazilian general. They did relieve the General who was responsible for the July 6th massacre with another Brazilian general who, if anything, has a worse record. At that time, in the middle of the night, most of these attacks have taken place in the middle of the night although increasingly they are brazenly doing it in daytime too. These tanks and helicopters went in there shooting... Let me just give you a couple of examples of witnesses that we interviewed. There was a woman in her fifties said that at three A.M. everybody in the neighborhood woke up because... the UN troops were shooting; helicopters and tanks were shooting... She and her family ran from the bullets, and her pregnant daughter - because the bullets were entering their house, so they ran to try to escape - and the pregnant daughter got a bullet in the forehead and her two grown sons were shot in the back.

A lot of these people testified to us that the male bodies were being pulled into the tanks, but they were letting the female bodies and the children's bodies stay there, and there was a lot of speculation that they were trying to do a line up of dead people, of dead men, to make sure that they got Dread Wilme,

who was the community leader who they assassinated on that night. In fact, the houses where these people live were along the road and it's a densely populated urban slum, so it's not as if you have roads that vehicles can go on. It's almost like a bidonville, is what it's called in France, it is a shantytown, very similar to the bidonvilles that were established in the Parisian suburbs that are exploding right now that were established during and after the Algerian war for Independence. And some of the tactics that they were using then in the bidonvilles of Paris they are using today in Haiti. The home of Dread Wilme was in the middle of this area which is not accessible by road and they broke down the houses, like this woman's house was broken down by a tank, and they broke through these houses and then they went through in the direction of Dread Wilme's house. They wanted to get the body and establish that he was in fact dead. They also dropped explosives on his house, so I guess they were trying to get him one way or the other.

Now, the people of the neighborhood describe Dread Wilme as a protector, as someone, if you needed a little money, so you could pay to get your children's uniforms or books so they could go to school; you could go to Wilme and he would try to help you out...So he was acting as an unofficial, people's government official in there, in this neighborhood, but for the United Nations and the coup regime which is running things in Haiti, and the National Police, they describe him as a "bandit." In fact they put wanted posters all over with his name on it and names of other popular leaders, as well as actual criminals, and put them up, basically encouraging people to turn them in. So the difference between the way they describe Dread Wilme as a bandit, that's what the United Nations general who was in charge of - this (Brazilian general), who was in charge of this operation - said 'We got him, we got the bandit, we're very pleased with the operation.' And about fifty people were killed in that operation. There was a mass grave; the bodies were rotting, the people took the bodies and dragged them to a makeshift mass grave, because there was too much disease and smell.

What we're going to do is – there's already been one session of the Tribunal, which was held in Washington, D.C., and they took testimony, there's going to be more testimony taken in Boston and we're going to present what we learned from these different witnesses, and this is going to become part of the record. Already three commanders, people with command authority over these massacres, have been convicted, and a number of other people have been indicted, and one of the people convicted is the Brazilian General (Heleno Ribero) that was in charge on July 6th, and the intention is to take these to the International Criminal Court in The Hague, and do a human rights prosecution. There's going to be two more sessions of the Tribunal in Miami and New York, and then when it's completed, then the case is going to be made to the International Criminal Court. This is happening live; this is happening practically every day, there's some incident with the police or the UN shooting up this neighborhood so what we were investigating happening earlier in the year, is still going on, still going on with the encouragement and support of the United States government, the French government, the Canadian government, and Kofi Annan of the United Nations.

Flashpoints: For more information you can visit <http://www.haitiaction.net>.

Maria's story: The rape of Haiti
by Maria as told to Lyn Duff
San Francisco Bay View
November 9, 2005

A rape survivor (not Maria) waits outside the national penitentiary for news of her husband, who was arrested by police as a suspected Lavalas militant when he went to them to report the attack.

Photo: Lyn Duff

My name is Maria, and I'm a survivor of rape from the neighborhood of Martissant in Port-au-Prince. Right now I'm working with other women who have been victimized during this period of insecurity that began with the departure of President Aristide in 2004.

The situation the past year has been extraordinary. The repression against women has been taken to a new level, one that we did not experience in the last coup of 1991-1994. Twelve years ago, when the former military was in power, rape was used to terrorize. But today, today it is a whole different story. Today it is more horrible than anyone could have imagined.

During the last coup, a group of armed men would enter a woman's house and, after raping her, they would leave. Today they enter a woman's house and force her to have sex without her consent, but they just don't stop at that. Now they humiliate her by forcing her to eat feces or they force her children to have sex with their family members.

Last week we had a case of a young woman, maybe 14 or 15 years old, who was raped in the zone of La Saline. After they violated her, the men spit on her vagina and the girl vomited. One man put a gun to her head. He forced her to eat her own vomit and then raped her again with a piece of wood.

Now when a woman is raped, the former military or the police, or whoever is repressing her, these armed men steal from her house and then, to top it off, they burn her house down too. If her husband or children or parents try to stop the rape, they are liable to be attacked or killed themselves.

Yesterday I spoke with a young mother of four children who was raped and when her husband intervened he was assassinated in front of the family. This is happening not only to the women from Martissant, but to women from all of the popular neighborhoods: Bel Air, Cite Soleil, La Saline and Delmas 2.

Sometimes the victims are targeted for political reasons and when the armed men come to her home looking for her husband, they take him away to be killed and then rape her and her children. But more often we are finding women are violated just because they live in the popular zones, the poor neighborhoods, and in those neighborhoods everyone is assumed to be Lavalas.

So when we see this situation, we are obliged to ask: Why are so many women and girls in the popular zones being violated? What do those who repress us want to get by violating these women?

The goal of the rapist is not to win with the elections or win in the monopoly game of world politics. His goal is not to have a real victory because he knows that that majority of Haitians don't support his regime so he would never legitimately win an election.

No, his goal is to defeat the Haitian people's morale. He wants to occupy our minds so that every second we are terrified by the thought that we could be the next victim, and then we are so busy moving from one zone to the next to escape repression that we have no time left to fight our enemy.

The goal of the rapist is not to take sex. The goal of the rapist is political. He wants to kill the memory of a different Haiti – he wants to kill the part of us that holds on to the demand that we had a few years ago for dignity.

The rapist does this by being invisible. He attacks at night or during the day – you don't know when to expect him. He wears a mask and carries a gun. Even if you recognize his voice or if he is a police officer and does not bother to cover his face, you know that the person who is raping you is the very person who is charged with protecting you. So you know that you have nowhere to complain.

The goal of the rapist is to take over your mind so that you begin to believe his lie: That it is your fault you are being violated. The lie is that you are repressed because of who you are and if you would stop being a person from the popular zones, a person who has no money and no dignity, then you would not be violated. But you cannot change who you are.

It's the fact that you are alive and breathe air that offends him. Eventually, you are so worn down by this war in your head that you begin to believe the lie and you hate yourself for being from the popular zones. You stop being able to remember who your enemy is. And that is when the rapist wins.

This war is between two ideas. One idea is that every one has dignity and is a child of God – that every person is somebody and has worth and deserves respect. The other is that the Haitian people cannot think for themselves, they should be controlled and repressed because the people from the popular zones are those who voted for Aristide and he is responsible for the small problems of the wealthy.

This is very important for us to share with foreigners because they need to know the situation of the women from the popular zones. And when a woman tells her story and hears that the foreigner is on her side, she remembers that being violated is not her fault.

Maria is a mother and an advocate for rape survivors in Port-au-Prince. She told her story to Lyn Duff, LynDuff@aol.com, during an interview for Pacifica Radio's Flashpoints on KPFA FM. It was translated by Jeremy Boukman.

Brain drain 'not a problem'

11/9/05.

by TONY BEST

The Nation Newspaper, Barbados

BARBADOS' TOP DIPLOMAT in Canada, Glyne Murray, isn't worried that Barbados would suffer from a brain-drain problem, something Jamaica, Guyana and Haiti are grappling with.

According to a recent World Bank report and a study by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), eight out of ten Jamaicans and Haitians with college or university degrees now live outside of their respective nations, while Guyana has seen an exodus of about 89 per cent of those highly skilled people.

But Murray, High Commissioner in Ottawa, said: "I do not believe you would see any brain drain because Barbadians come and go, back and forth between Barbados and other parts of the world.

"They make their contributions and then they return in one form or another to Barbados. Barbados certainly has not suffered because of this, otherwise we could not have been ranked so highly consistently over the years by various measurements internationally. Therefore, I do not think Barbados as a country has anything to fear because of this."

Clearly, Barbadians "have good reason to want to live and stay" in their birthplace and help develop it even more, the former Government Senator said.

Murray added: "We have been growing systematically over the years, providing opportunities for persons, making the country a highly desirable place in which to live and work. It ranks virtually against (almost) any other country in the world. Certainly the push factors for leaving Barbados are different from those which obtain in some other countries in the Caribbean and elsewhere in the world."

In addition, the attractions which Canada had for Barbados, "the push" factors that would encourage Barbadians to head to Canada "would be different for Barbadians" when compared with people from many of Barbados' neighbours.

Hence, a mass exodus of qualified Barbadians to Canada or the United States was "unlikely, as we have seen elsewhere", he said.

In its report, the World Bank stated that many Caribbean and Central American States were being hard hit by the brain drain.

"The report reveals the brain drain is massive in small and poor countries," said Maurice Schiff, World Bank economist and co-editor of the report. "While over 50 per cent of college graduates leave countries in Central America and the Caribbean, in some of them the figure is as high as 80 per cent."

An OECD study indicated that Barbados was losing less than 50 per cent of its college educated people.

L. Alan Winters, director of the bank's Development Research Group, said that while the mobility of highly-skilled workers could offer many benefits, including remittances, the consequences of the brain drain could be serious for many developing countries.

Remittances to CARICOM countries, including Haiti, are expected to surpass the US\$4 billion mark this year, with Jamaica and Haiti receiving at least US\$3.5 billion of that amount.

Guyana receives almost US\$200 million and Trinidad and Tobago about US\$100 million. Remittances to Barbados were said to range between US\$50 and 100 million.

What makes a scandal scandalous?

The media and Pierre Pettigrew's apartment on rue Aristide Bruant

by Dru Oja Jay

The Dominion

November 8, 2005

Pierre Pettigrew is presented with the University of Miami report on human rights violations by Canadian-trained police in Haiti in February. In June, Pettigrew called the report "absolutely propaganda, which is absolutely not interesting". photo: Dru Oja Jay Foreign Minister Pierre Pettigrew has been under fire in the press in recent months for his alleged misuse of taxpayer dollars. The allegations, which include spending too much time in Paris and bringing his chauffeur on overseas trips, are apparently serious enough that one report cited "whispers from within government that he will be shuffled out of the job".

While expense reports make for gripping reading material, what is perhaps more interesting about the recent "scandals" that have plagued Pettigrew's office is that they present an opportunity to examine what the media consider to be career-ending missteps. Conversely, it allows us to take note of what is, according to the media, not scandalous at all.

How do the media decide what is and isn't scandalous? This question is not easy to answer, but an examination of the resulting reporting renders a sense of the priorities of Canadian journalism.

On September 4, the Ottawa Citizen published a 1200 word examination of Pettigrew's propensity for spending time in Paris penned by Glen McGregor. A reporter was sent to Pettigrew's apartment in the district of Montmartre, finding it occupied by a timber industry lobbyist and former Pettigrew staffer. The report ended by speculating that Pettigrew might soon be spirited away to a diplomatic post, to be replaced by Stéphane Dion.

A week later, Pettigrew was under fire for taking his chauffeur Bruno Labonté on trips to Europe and South America at a cost to taxpayers of \$10,000. This merited a front page article in the Globe and Mail and an interview on CTV's Canada AM, among others.

On September 20, Maclean's continued the narrative with a report by Louise Elliott and Paul Wells. They wrote that Pettigrew, once "the Federal Liberals' fair-haired boy, hand-picked for cabinet," had become "the most harshly criticized member of the government". Pettigrew's various missteps were subjected to a fine-grained examination in the remainder of the article.

The journalistic resources dedicated to examining Pettigrew's recent movements--sending a reporter to Paris, interviewing dozens of unnamed government sources, and combing through expense reports--indicates something beyond your run-of-the-mill journalistic tenacity.

Such close examination of a top-level cabinet minister is not random. It likely represents a political fight or realignment inside the Liberal party--the ostensive source of the "whispers" cited under the Globe's page A1 headline.

While charges of slacking off in Paris while occupying a key cabinet post and misusing taxpayer funds to take staff members on expensive excursions are serious, seriousness of charges alone is not enough

to spur such a spirited inquiry into the minutiae of a minister's comings and goings. Further motivation is needed.

In a case where a minister's responsibilities seemed to be directly compromised, however, one might imagine that the press would not need further motivation.

What if, for example, Pettigrew had denied knowledge of reports that police trained and vetted by the RCMP under the auspices of his department had slaughtered unarmed peaceful protesters? What if Pettigrew had dismissed a fifty page human rights report as propaganda? For example.

Surely a lack of basic knowledge about a project he was responsible for is at best a symptom of incompetence, and an outright lie at worst. Surely a denial of knowledge of facts that had been reported by Reuters, the Associated Press, and even the CBC would set off a few warning bells among Canada's watchdogs of democracy. And one might further think that incompetence that affects the very substance of policy in matters of life and death would be treated more gravely than a few questionable trips abroad.

In fact, warning bells didn't go off, the substance wasn't treated with gravity, and as the reader has undoubtedly guessed, the situation is not at all hypothetical.

At a June 20th press conference in Montréal, the Dominion asked Pettigrew if Canada bore any responsibility for multiple instances where the Haitian National Police--trained, vetted, and ultimately accountable to the RCMP--had shot and killed unarmed, peaceful protesters who were demanding the return of Jean Bertrand Aristide - the elected president who was removed in a military coup financed and led by the US, Canada and France.

Pettigrew responded: "I think the Haitian police are doing their very best in extremely difficult circumstances, and obviously, obviously, Canada would never condone any activity [which] would not respect the rule of law."

The Dominion followed up, asking about reports of police violence in the Associated Press and Reuters. Pettigrew responded: "if they did, I have not heard of that." He followed up by blasting the human rights report conducted by a team from the University of Miami--which concluded that a massive campaign of political repression was being undertaken by the Canadian-trained Haitian Police--saying, "I absolutely think that it is propaganda which is absolutely not interesting."

The last comment alone merits a followup, or at least a mention, as it represents significant contesting of well established facts. But Pettigrew's ignorance of news reports verges on the unbelievable.

A few samples. The Miami Herald, March 1: "Haitian police opened fire on peaceful protesters Monday, killing two..." Associated Press, April 7: "Police fired on protesters demanding the release of detainees... killing at least five demonstrators." Reuters, June 5: "As many as 25 people were killed in police raids..." Reports cited "witnesses and UN officials". Amazingly, the top UN official, Juan Valdez, was standing next to Pettigrew as he claimed ignorance of what the UN had confirmed.

The room was full of journalists, but not a single report in the newspapers or broadcast reports of the press conference mentioned Pettigrew's claims.

There could conceivably be an explanation for Pettigrew's claims, however unlikely that might be. But the total lack of interest among the press for finding out what that explanation is--or if it exists--suggests that when it comes to lying and incompetent behaviour, some scandals are more worthy than others.

Individual indiscretions and misappropriation of funds are worthy of attention--especially when they are on the losing end of a political infight--but when it comes to the effects of policy, incompetence or lying are not considered career-threatening acts.

If this wasn't the case, journalists investigating Pettigrew's apartment in Paris might have noticed the irony in the name of its location: on rue Aristide Bruant.

Hispaniola: Unlikely spot for luxury

By Anne Kalosh

International Herald Tribune

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2005

Merengue dance music, the slugger Sammy Sosa, Oscar de la Renta, Davidoff cigars. The Dominican Republic is known for many things, but luxury real estate is not among them.

At least not until now, if a French developer, Pierre Schnebelen, is successful.

Tapped by President Charles de Gaulle in the 1960s to help transform the French Alps into a ski destination, Schnebelen now dreams of creating what he calls "the North American Costa Smeralda."

Along the country's northwest coast, near the border with Haiti, Schnebelen has acquired thousands of acres of waterfront property for Costa BayanA, three residential developments to be linked by high-speed hydrofoils. The plans call for more than 13,000 properties, ranging from clusters of condominiums to seven-bedroom estates, as well as 900 marina slips, 260 super-yacht hangars, six golf courses, nine hotels, 28 boutique inns and three cruise ship piers.

"Costa BayanA will change the country," Schnebelen said. "If we are successful in our plans, we should be known around the planet."

Schnebelen, who has completed more than 40 major destination resorts, often speaks in hyperbole. But it is no exaggeration that Costa BayanA could have a huge effect on the Dominican Republic.

The project enjoys the support of President Leonel Fernández of the Dominican Republic, with whom Schnebelen has met more times than he can count. Tourism is a cornerstone of the country's economic policy, as is improving foreign investment and reducing the 19 percent unemployment rate. When it is complete, Costa BayanA is expected to produce 100,000 jobs.

Construction already has begun on the initial phase of AtlanticA, the first of the three resorts, and is to be finished in December 2006.

AtlanticA will spill across the cays and coves of Luperon Bay, a large natural harbor known as a "hurricane hole" because it is used to shelter boats during storms. Here are white sand beaches, cliffs, mangroves and rolling hills, all within a short distance of Puerto Plata, the country's second busiest international airport.

More than 3,000 residential units are planned at AtlanticA, along with restaurants, shops, clubs, spas and several beach clubs. Activities will include deep-sea fishing, snorkeling, diving, kayaking, tennis and polo. And there will be a private airstrip with hangars for small jets.

Yachting will be the focus at AtlanticA, with ample marinas, super yacht hangars and repair facilities. However, that could present a marketing challenge as the Dominican Republic is not known as a cruising ground, even though it is situated between Florida and prime sailing destinations like the British Virgin Islands.

"The perception of a Third World country is still there. To most Americans, it's not prestigious to say, 'We went to Hispaniola for our vacation,'" said Rupert Connor, president of Luxury Yacht Group in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, a company that sells, charters, manages and crews yachts.

But with a worldwide boom in super yachts of 100 feet, or 30 meters, or longer, the shortage of dock space may work in the project's favor. "You could put a marina in the most hostile place and it would fill up," Connor said.

At Costa BayanA, a slip will cost about \$2,000 per foot, or \$200,000 for a 100-foot yacht. "Sounds cheap," Connor said, noting that one of his clients recently paid more than \$2.5 million for a 180-foot slip in the Bahamas.

And Costa BayanA's super-yacht capacity is designed to exceed that of current yachting centers, like Fort Lauderdale. "A marina that takes 260 super yachts is phenomenal," Connor noted. "That's one of the biggest marinas in the world."

Golf will be another feature. An Arnold Palmer-designed course will have seven holes on the ocean and the rest in the hills. The second course is to be designed by Jim Fazio and Schnebelen said he was in advanced talks with another major brand for the third.

AtlanticA's most lavish addresses will be the 44 oceanfront private homes, to range from 4,639 square feet, or 430 square meters, with five bedrooms on a 22,155-square-foot lot to 7,750 square feet with seven bedrooms on a 73,588-square-foot lot. Prices in Ocean Estates are \$2.44 million to \$5.27 million.

The least expensive properties will be one-bedroom condominiums in Harbor Village, priced at \$306,000 for 969 square feet. The 240 condos will include three-bedroom units as large as 2,820 square feet, priced at \$786,000.

In planning the development, Schnebelen is emphasizing what he calls "spontaneous animation." That means creating a village atmosphere with people in the streets to make the resort "full of life, full of energy, full of activities."

That's where Costa BayanA's three cruise ship berths will play a part, delivering short-term visitors. Asked if the berths would hold potential for the cruise industry, the itinerary planner for Holland America Line, Simon Douwes, said, "Indeed, great potential."

Stretching across more than 9,000 acres, or 375 hectares, Costa BayanA's second resort, OceanA, promises big stretches of beachfront land. About 7,700 homes are planned here, along with four hotels, a trio of golf courses and two village centers.

The third and smallest resort, BayanA, is 62 acres and will offer a marina, townhomes with their own yacht slips and a convention center.

The entire project is expected to generate more than \$10 billion in residential sales. Sales efforts are targeting individuals with a household income of at least \$300,000 and a net worth of \$5 million. Foreigners buying for the first time in the Dominican Republic are entitled to a 10-year tax exemption at AtlanticA and a 20-year exemption at OceanA.

The second phase of sales for AtlanticA is scheduled to begin in the spring, with a target of \$100 million. The initial effort, in late 2004, raised \$95 million in sales and options, but the contracts are being confirmed after a change in the development's sales team. Formerly represented by Resorts of the World in Miami, Costa BayanA has created its own sales firm based in Santo Domingo, with a branch to open in New York by year's end.

Henri Hebrard, an economist in the Dominican Republic, called Costa BayanA "a pharaonic project, because it is so huge." As a result, growth has to be step by step, he said, pointing to the similar gradual development of Cap Cana, a mega-resort on the east coast.

Costa BayanA's residential focus sets it apart from Cap Cana, and from the venerable Casa de Campo on the southern shore, Schnebelen said, adding, "We want to make it a permanent or semi-permanent resort where people will spend six to nine months of the year."

Schnebelen was a co-developer at Cap Cana, but he left in 2002 because, he said, "the project was not mine."

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Schnebelen said he settled on the Dominican Republic for his latest endeavor because it is "one of the most tourist-friendly countries in the world" and "the spread between the construction costs and the market price is among the largest existing anywhere." He also added: "The ultimate reason is that it's 30 degrees" Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit) "year-round. You can enjoy your boat year-round, which is definitely not the case in Boston or Monaco."

His marketing strategy hinges on joint ventures with internationally known brands. In addition to his golf partners, Schnebelen is approaching all the international hotel brands that are considering the Dominican Republic - "from Fairmont to Conrad."

The hotel inventory now consists of 59,000 rooms, and three million tourists visit annually, said Enrique de Marchena, president of the country's Hotel and Restaurant Association. "The new trend is the development of mega-resorts," he noted, pointing also to Cap Cana and Westin Roco Ki Beach & Golf Resort. As he sees it "the beauty of these mega-projects" is their potential to draw upscale visitors.

Until now, the country has focused on "value-oriented travelers," said Scott Berman, a partner in the Hospitality and Leisure Advisory Group for PricewaterhouseCoopers in Miami. Referring to Costa BayanA, he said, "It is trying very hard with projects such as this to rid itself of that reputation."

And, if it is realized, Schnebelen's dream will "jumpstart the Dominican Republic's ability to lure luxury-oriented travelers," he said.

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Strumming up support for Haiti
Published November 11, 2005
South Florida Sun Sentinel

The Fort Lauderdale nightclub China White hosts a fund-raiser tonight for construction of an orphanage in Haiti. Leading the effort is a South Floridian named Aaron Jackson, dubbed "Saint Aaron" in a recent New Times article about his work helping to get medical treatment and shelter to parentless children in Haiti's capital city, Port-au-Prince.

It's exhausting work, given the state of our Caribbean neighbor, and South Florida certainly has its hands full with Wilma cleanup. But Jackson's example has inspired a group of big-hearted locals to step up with additional help. As with many poor countries, even a few dollars go a long way in Haiti toward basic lifesaving aid. Jackson travels there often while leading a scrupulously low-cost life back here -- he lives in a shelter -- to keep his expenses to an absolute minimum and every dollar he can set aside flowing toward his goals.

Jackson will be a guest at tonight's benefit, and several performers will provide music, percussion, dance and visuals: Teri Catlin, Billy Vazquez, Jerrod's Door, Beth Forry, Tequesta Street, Uncommon Ground with Tamie Gordon and Beverly McLellan, Ronit Gaenosar and Jude Papaloko & Loray Mistik. Singer-raconteur and man-of-the-cosmos Keith Martin Forman is your master of ceremonies.

The event, dubbed 11/11 Wake Up Call, runs from 7 p.m. to midnight at the club, 109 SW Second Ave., in Fort Lauderdale's Himmarshee Village. Admission is \$25 at the door, which gets you two free drinks, all the live entertainment and that good feeling that goes with doing something useful. Call 954-522-7101.

Food for thought

Daughter of late folk singer Harry Chapin (Cat's in the Cradle), singer-songwriter Jen Chapin plays a benefit show of her own on Thursday, just down the road from China White at the Broward Center's Amaturio Theater, 201 SW Fifth Ave., Fort Lauderdale. A portion of the proceeds go to the Florida-based Cooperative Feeding Program and to the national organization founded by her father, World Hunger Year. Showtime is 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$24.50, with student and teacher discount tickets available for \$19.50, at the box office. Call Ticketmaster (561-966-3309, 954-523-3309, 305-358-5885) or the box office, 954-462-0222.

Chapin also performs 7 p.m. Wednesday at Stuart's Lyric Theatre, 59 SW Flagler Ave. Tickets are \$27.50 via 772-286-7827.

Born to rock

To celebrate (and promote) the release of Bruce Springsteen's Born to Run: 30th Anniversary, a screening of the box set's DVD material takes place on 7 p.m. Monday at South Beach Stadium 18, 1120 Lincoln Road Mall, Miami Beach. The 90-minute film includes a making-of documentary on Springsteen's 1975 rock masterpiece and footage of a performance from that same year by Springsteen and his E Street Band at London's Hammersmith Odeon.

Any remaining seats after the exchange process from Springsteen's canceled concert at the BankAtlantic Center go on sale at noon today via Ticketmaster for his show 7 p.m. Nov. 19 at Hard Rock Live, 1 Seminole Way, Hollywood. Tickets are \$57.25 and \$77.25 ... The Dutch trance DJ Tiësto has rescheduled an October bash scrubbed by Wilma to Jan. 12 at Hard Rock Live. Tickets for the makeup date are \$32.50 and \$67.50 through Ticketmaster and the box office, 954-797-5531.

Sean Piccoli can be reached at spiccoli@sun-sentinel.com or 954-356-4832.

**New Legal Complaints Target U.S., Brazilian Governments for Recent Massacres in Haiti;
Human Rights Attorneys Call for Action by the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights
US Newswire press release
11/11/2005**

To: Assignment Desk, Daybook Editor
Contact: Seth Donnelly, 650-814-8495
News Advisory:

WHAT: A coalition of human rights attorneys, elected officials, and academics will convene a press conference to address the wave of recent massacres in Haiti and the culpability of the U.S. and Brazilian governments in these atrocities. According to the coalition, the massacres have been perpetrated by U.S.-financed and armed security forces under the supervision of U.N. "peacekeeping" troops led by Brazil. The human rights attorneys at the press conference will file lawsuits that morning against the U.S. and Brazil before the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights. Video and eyewitness evidence will be presented.

WHEN: Tuesday, Nov. 15 at 11 a.m.

WHERE: On the steps of the headquarters of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 1889 F St., N.W. in Washington DC.

WHO:

-- Rep. Barbara Lee, U.S. Congress

-- Gilda Sharrod-Ali, national co-chair, National Conference of Black Lawyers

-- Lionel Jean-Baptiste, Esq., National Conference of Black Lawyers, elected official from Evanston, Ill.

-- Kasey Corbit, Esq., National Lawyers Guild

-- Thomas Griffin, Esq., author of "Haiti: Human Rights Investigation: November 11 — 21, 2004," Center for the Study of Human Rights, Univ. of Miami School of Law

-- Pat Clark, executive director, Fellowship of Reconciliation

-- Shirley Pate, board member, Ecumenical Program on Central America and the Caribbean

Supporters of the lawsuits include noted historian Howard Zinn, MIT professor Noam Chomsky, and Medea Benjamin, founder of the anti-war group Code Pink.

WHY: The Human Rights Crisis in Haiti is of Epic Proportions

Over the past year-and-half, untold numbers of Haitians have been summarily executed or arbitrarily thrown in prison, tortured or driven into hiding. The political violence is widespread, systematic, and directed; the urban and rural poor suspected of being Aristide supporters are the primary targets. Perpetrators of this violence include the Haitian National Police and death squad elements working with the police, as well as U.N. "peace keeping" troops. The violence has continued unabated over this past summer. On July 6, 2005, UN troops carried out a massive assault on the poor community of Cite Soleil in Port-au-Prince, killing unarmed adults and children. In August, the Haitian police joined by "civilians" armed with machetes carried out massacres in three poor communities in Port-au-Prince, shooting and hacking to death civilians and reportedly targeting suspected Aristide supporters. The U.N. occupation troops failed to intervene and stop these massacres, despite their mandate to protect the civilian population. Press conference participants will explain why the U.S. and Brazil bear particular responsibility for this human rights crisis.

<http://www.usnewswire.com/>

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International Child Care: Highlights of work in Haiti and Dominican Republic

Source: International Child Care (Canada) Inc. (ICC)

10 Nov 2005

April 2005 - International Child Care (Canada) Spearheads Historic Bi-National TB Collaboration between Haiti and the Dominican Republic . ICC led a joint planning initiative designed to bring together public health leaders and donor representatives from both Haiti and the Dominican Republic. The goal of this initiative is to develop a multi-year plan for mounting a more integrated island-wide strategy. A Bi-National Technical Coordinating Group has been created under the leadership of Dr. John Yates (a Canadian and former International Executive Director of ICC). The WHO, PAHO and the Ministers of Health in both countries have agreed to contribute \$300K USD a year in support of this two-year project with the expectation that this initiative will pave the way for permanent on-going bi-national collaboration.

August 2005 - International Child Care (USA) Announces a \$3.5M USD Grace Children's Hospital (PAP, Haiti) Capital Campaign. Targeted for completion in 2011 to build out a state of the art hospital through the renovation and replacement of existing buildings

March - August 2005 - International Child Care (Canada/DR) partners with Crossroads DR, Fondation El Samaritano and Rotary on MEET (Mission Education Encounter Team) to the Dominican Republic. Over 50 students and teachers had opportunity to Go, See and Do! Through participation in community projects, working side by side with experienced, compassionate team leaders, participants had opportunity to learn about the Dominican culture and issues surrounding third-world development and service. Supplies and monetary donations raised by the teams exceeded \$50K

September 2005 - International Child Care (DR) launches CHD (Community Health Development) program training for a New Group of 38 Health Workers in 21 Communities in Santiago, Dominican Republic. In addition to the existing 26 health workers supporting over 1300 children under five years of age in the Santiago area, a start was made with a new group of health workers. Training was provided by Public Health in vaccination which was put to use immediately in support of the nation-wide government vaccination campaign. Follow-up training was provided in growth monitoring and nutritional counseling

September 2005 - International Child Care (Haiti) Awarded \$1M Grant from Center for Disease Control-Atlanta for fight against HIV/AIDS and TB. The grant is to strengthen and expand the National Capacity for the TB/HIV National Program by supporting the central TB unit of the Haitian Ministry of Health for improved TB/HIV integration. It is a 5 year grant for \$200K USD a year.

October 2005 - International Child Care (Haiti) Announces plans to build a new facility for the Eye Clinic at Grace Children's Hospital (PAP, Haiti). CBM (Christoffel Blind Mission) and ICC found a German Newspaper-the FAZ to fund this construction project that will begin in 2006. Value of the project is estimated to be \$350K USD.

Haiti: Insanity Takes Over, While the Selection Continues

by LUCSON PIERRE-CHARLES

Thursday, Nov. 10, 2005

San Francisco Bay Area Indymedia

According to the puppet administration and its supporters, there will be a so-called election in Haiti later this year to normalize the situation since the ouster of Jean-Bertrand Aristide in February 2004.

No official dates have been set yet. The Boniface/Latortue regime has been ruling the country like a jungle. They have no respect for any enlightened principles. Being emboldened by the continuing support of their masters is all that matters. Thanks to the technocratic revolution, the country has been transformed into a no man,s land.

If indeed the election were to go as planned, the technocrats have no concerns about the means as long as they have the assurance of the UN Security Council, the OAS and the United States that the new president will take office on February 7, 2006. No problem if polling stations are not installed in the poor neighborhoods and most rural areas. Afterwards, the slums only make 10% of the electorate, according to the electoral council. No problem if the so-called national ID cards are not available to all voters an official of the electoral body has recently confessed that voters might have to use the receipts if the cards are not ready. Thus, Haiti has become the only country where one can predict a miracle and where technocrats no longer pay attention to causes and effect but rely on fiction.

This is a fictitious administration. As a byproduct of unconstitutional maneuverings, all their actions must be measured and viewed against such a backdrop not through constitutional and legal lenses. They defy all logic and sanity. Where else would a so-called independent candidate petition the highest court on the land without a defending party whereas the court would rule in his favor without hearing the other side,s arguments? Where else can a government detain former administration officials without charges, wake them up at 4:00 o,clock in the morning and bring them to another jurisdiction in order to face charges for the first time? In what country could UN peacekeepers raid the slums at 3:00 AM, open fire and kill many while there is no major outcry and media coverage about it? Where else would the police, supported by the UN mission, enter a church during a funeral, arrest an assaulted priest while the assaulting mob goes free? The priest will be incarcerated and later charged for the murder of the person he was about to process the funeral! Welcome to the new Haiti.

While we are talking about fiction, in real life, people are being killed for no apparent reason. The rampant surge in violence has reached an unprecedented level. People,s living conditions are worsening day after day with no end in sight. Never before in the history of the country, have we

witnessed such a chaos. And according to the administration, the only way out of this mess is to proceed with the election, which has become the ultimate panacea for all Haiti,s troubles.

Who in their right mind would even dare to promote election in such a chaotic context? Who is going to participate in that charade where more than 60% of the people will be excluded? But the so-called election is not about the majority, it is about capturing the presidency for and by a minority, which is crying foul following the announcement of a Haitian-American entering the race.

There are currently 34 presidential candidates in the race the electoral body (CEP) has not issued an official list yet - but in reality the upcoming selection is between two U.S.-backed candidates: the representative of the Group 184, Charles Henri Baker and the Millionaire expatriate, Dumarsais Siméus who sits on the Florida Gov. Jeb Bush,s Haiti Task Force. All indications are leading to the latter as the most favorite. No longer interested in supporting the traditional and corrupted elite to run the country, the United States has decided to change course by supporting an inexperienced candidate who lacks local support. After all, the United States influence in the country,s internal affairs has a long history. When security arrangements for the President and other high officials are being contracted at the U.S. embassy, there is no need to argue about who is really in control.

Siméus candidacy has become a litmus test for the puppet regime, which is now under tremendous pressure from both its supporters. On the one hand, the United States is pushing for Siméus and on the other hand, the traditional elite are looking for ways to keep him out of the ballot. Such challenge can ruin the organization of the election and unless the technocratic regime drops its opposition to Siméus, it can be used as a pretext to finally put Haiti under total control of the UN where Siméus would likely be the top administrator. The backers of the current regime have been denying it for months but all indications are proving otherwise. The UN Security Council resolution that granted MINUSTAH complete control of the local police and the security apparatus is one step in that direction.

The situation in Haiti must be viewed in a broader context. We are now living in an Orwellian time. When your supporters are clamoring that election can be held even though in reality it is foolish - you have no choice but to follow. Otherwise, you will be history just like your predecessor. This is where we are now in Haiti. Nothing matters anymore. Nothing makes sense. Welcome to our newest wonderland, the land of insanity.

Lucson Pierre-Charles, a native of Haiti, now lives in Maryland. He can be reached at: lpierrecharles@yahoo.com

Bush taps ex-Tucsonan for Haiti envoy
The Tucson Citizen
Tuesday, November 8, 2005

Janet Ann Sanderson, a career Foreign Service employee who now lives in California, was ambassador to Algeria from 2000-2003.

The Arizona Republic Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON – A Tucson woman who has been a career member of the State Department's Foreign Service is to be nominated by President Bush to be the U.S. ambassador to Haiti, the White House announced yesterday.

Janet Ann Sanderson, 50, who lives in California but lists Tucson as her hometown, previously served as an ambassador to Algeria from 2000 to 2003. Her résumé includes extensive other experience in the Middle East including stints in Jordan, Kuwait and Cairo.

Sanderson most recently served as the "diplomat in residence" at the Career Center at the University of California-Berkeley, a job in which she gave lectures on foreign policy and helped recruit people interested in a career in diplomacy on behalf of the State Department.

An economist by education and training, Sanderson entered the Foreign Service in 1977, following graduation from the College of William and Mary.

She would succeed James Foley, who finished his tenure as ambassador to Haiti in August.

The announcement of Sanderson's nomination to the Haiti post comes as political instability continues to plague the island country, the Western Hemisphere's poorest nation.

Elections planned since a violent rebellion forced President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to flee the country in 2004 have been postponed twice to replace an interim government. Those elections are now set for mid-December.

Sanderson's father, John M. Sanderson Jr., still lives in Tucson and her brother, Michael, is a professor at the University of California-Davis. Family members did not return phone calls seeking comment last night.

Citizen Staff Writer Greg Marshall contributed to this article.

We sold out Haiti
Devon Dick
Tuesday | November 8, 2005
The Jamaica Gleaner

LAST WEEK, the installed 'government' of Haiti brought charges of financial improprieties against exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. However, Aristide's allegation that he was kidnapped by French and American troops has been allowed to die. No international investigation, and no one knows the truth or even cares. Our Prime Minister and leader of the Group of 77 and China did not raise his voice at the recent United Nations on behalf of Haiti. What a sellout.

Our PM started well in offering Aristide exile over the objections of the mighty United States of America and CARICOM has done well in not recognising this 'government' in Haiti. But more should have been done for the Haitian people with all the killings and human rights abuses.

ACTIVIST SCHOLAR

In the last week of October, Professor Hilary Beckles, principal of Cave Hill campus, placed Haiti on the table as he spoke at the University of Warwick on the 25th anniversary of the assassination of Walter Rodney, activist scholar. His topic was reparations. He told the audience that a couple weeks after Aristide made the first formal claim of billions of U.S. dollars for reparations at a conference in Montego Bay he was ousted! And then the present unelected 'government' promptly declared that the claim is null and void. Them sell out Haiti.

But did Aristide have a case? Beckles, who led the Barbadian delegation to the world conference in South Africa that discussed reparations and who spoke on behalf of the Caribbean delegation, reminded his audience that on the 21st anniversary of Haitian independence, the Haitian rulers asked for international recognition instead of the European embargo. France said that they would have to be compensated for the loss of their enslaved cargo and property. The Haitian leaders agreed, and paid billions of dollars to France with the last payment in 1925, some 97 years later. The Haitian people had to borrow money on the French money market to pay the debt! What a wicked act. It is similar to the situation with the planters in the West Indies being compensated £20 million by the British Government for the loss of the services of the enslaved while the Africans got nothing.

REPARATION PAYMENTS

In 1952, Germany paid US\$222 million for resettling 500,000 Jews who fled from Nazi-controlled countries. In 1990, Austria made payments to South Korea for acts committed during its invasion and occupation. In addition, Japan has made restitution of US\$1.2 billion to Japanese-Americans. So why cannot the Haitians be compensated?

In 2003, Dr. Veront Satchell, speaking at Churches Eman-cipation Lecture, challenged the Church to support the cause of reparations. Reparation starts with an apology and then financial settlement based on one group being unjustly enriched at the expense and to the detriment of another group.

Reparation is a desire for compensation to address the wrongs of slavery so that countries and people who have suffered and are still suffering from the consequences of slavery will enjoy freedom and develop along equal terms as all other ethnic groups. In the Bible, it would be akin to the doctrine of restitution. The Bible records that after chief tax collector, Zacchaeus, had met Jesus, he who had enriched himself at the expense of the poor decided to pay back four times the amount he cheated them. That is a form of reparation.

REAPING THE REWARDS

Most denominations benefited from slavery. Dr. Horace Russell in a journal claimed that the Baptist pioneer was a slave-holder. I recently realised that, in my book, *Rebellion to Riot*, I overstated the contribution of the church to education. The Anglicans, the most outstanding, with 83 educational institutions, got their money not from offerings but from the iniquitous taxation policy! The traditional churches appear reluctant to touch reparations because it would open a can of worms.

On Sunday, former Cabinet minister and Gleaner columnist, Arnold Bertram, said that the Church and civil society and he himself were silent when the garrisons of Tivoli, Arnett and Spanish Town were built. Now we are suffering the consequences.

Enlightened self-interest should tell us that a prosperous Haiti would be a good market for us and a 'sellout' Haiti will be disastrous for Jamaica and the region.

The Rev. Devon Dick is pastor of the Boulevard Baptist Church and author of '*Rebellion to Riot: the Church in Nation Building*'.

Police arrest Haitians in smuggling operation
Monday | November 7, 2005
The Jamaica Gleaner

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP):

POLICE ARRESTED two suspected major players in a weapons and drug smuggling operation between Jamaica and Haiti, police said Saturday.

Police arrested Neptie Lloyd Henry, 31, and his Haitian wife, Alie Petit Pad, 20, with 300 pounds (136 kilograms) of marijuana on Friday evening in Old Harbour Bay, St. Catherine.

Henry was a key figure in the smuggling of guns from Haiti to Jamaica, selling illegal drugs in exchange for the firearms, according to police. They are to appear in court tomorrow.

Authorities have been investigating a gun and drug smuggling ring involving Haitians and Jamaicans for several months, said Assistant Police Commissioner, Glenmore Hinds.

Hundreds of Haitians fled to Jamaica to escape fighting in their country between rebel forces and supporters of former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, ousted in February 2004.

Haitians Touring Illinois Soybean Industry
Illinois Ag Connection –
11/07/2005

A team of seven Haitians was touring Illinois last week to learn more about the value of including soy protein into school diets at home. They were traveling at the invitation of the World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (WISHH) and were accompanied by Alix Douyon, a WISHH consultant.

The seven government department heads met with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the Illinois Department of Agriculture and Archer Daniels Midland. They also toured the INTSOY pilot plant at the University of Illinois.

The visit also focused on a follow up of a pilot project that started two years ago in Haiti that now has yielded the first commercial sale of soy powders and textured vegetable protein to Haiti

Deaths spark policy debate
Haitians see flaws in U.S. immigration regulations
By Andrew Ryan
Staff Writer
South Florida Sun Sentinel
November 7 2005

While immigration officials were continuing an investigation Sunday into a suspected human-smuggling operation that left three women dead, local Haitian leaders said the tragedy could reignite the debate over immigration policy.

The women's bodies were discovered early Saturday morning. Five people who survived the voyage were taken into custody, and as many as four others may have fled, Broward Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Liz Calzadilla Fiallo said Saturday.

On Sunday, officials weren't talking about the identities of the dead women or revealing any more information about their trip to the United States.

"At this point we don't have any more information to release because it is an ongoing investigation," said Barbara Gonzalez, spokeswoman for the U.S. Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Ralph Latortue, Haiti's consul general in Miami, said he had not been briefed on the situation and declined to comment Sunday.

One of the surviving refugees is a 16-year-old boy who was headed to New Jersey and is at the Krome Detention Center in southwest Miami-Dade County, said Haitian activist Daniella Henry, who said she spoke to his family members.

Henry and other officials were concerned that family members in South Florida might be afraid to come forward and claim the bodies, for fear that doing so may jeopardize their own immigration status.

Lucie Tondreau of the Haitian American Grassroots Coalition, described U.S. immigration policy as being biased against Haitians.

"We have a double standard when it comes to Haitians," Tondreau said. "When Cubans come here they are welcome by the United States, but when Haitians come here, they are not welcome."

If a group of Cuban refugees make it to shore, U.S. immigration policy usually allows them to stay. Refugees from Haiti and other countries are usually deported unless they can convince a judge that they need political asylum.

Haitian activists said this incident makes it clear that policy needs to change.

"The political situation in Haiti is so bad right now that people are willing to risk their lives to find a safe haven," Tondreau said.

Henry added: "We only see three bodies. We don't know how many are under the water."

Andrew Ryan can be reached at aryan@sun-sentinel.com or 954-385-7922.

Child trafficking greatly concerns human rights groups

Radio Jamaica

Mon Nov 7, 2005

Monday two international human rights organizations condemned the illegal trading of children from Haiti to the Dominican Republic.

UNICEF's adviser for the region, Dr. Maria Jesus Conde, and Inter-American Commission on Human Rights Rapporteur, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, said an estimated 30,000 Haitian children were traded each year.

He said the children are taken through the Haitian-Dominican border to be used in the Dominican Republic as prostitutes and in other degrading occupations.

The officials ended a four day fact finding visit to Haiti over the weekend, noting that the situation had become a matter of concern for their organisations.

Mr. Pinheiro said the interim government could put several measures in place to address some of the children's human rights that have been ignored.

Relatives of migrants are sought
Miami Herald
November 7, 2005

Haitian Americans are appealing to listeners on WLQY-AM (1320) in Miami for relatives of more than a dozen Haitian immigrants who came ashore in North Broward on Saturday.

Three women died and one man was injured, possibly by a boat propeller, officials said.

Five were captured Saturday by federal immigration officials who believe they were brought to South Florida as part of a Haitian smuggling operation.

The injured man, 20, was treated at Broward General Medical Center and turned over on Sunday to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, said Barbara Gonzalez, a department spokeswoman.

A Broward Sheriff's Office deputy spotted people running from the water in Lauderdale-by-the-Sea before sunrise Saturday. About eight have not been found. The bodies of the three women floated ashore in Pompano Beach.

One survivor said they came ashore on a 19-foot sailboat, but investigators couldn't find such a boat.

-- DARRAN SIMON

Haitian cops arrested for civilian slaughter
Radio Jamaica
November 7, 2005

Monday Haitian authorities confirmed that 14 policemen, including two high ranking officers, had been arrested and detained over the weekend on charges they participated in the murder of soccer fans in a Port-au-Prince slum, more than two months ago.

A police contingent, aided by a group of civilians armed with machetes, killed at least 10 people who were attending a soccer game "for peace", during a raid conducted on August 20 in the violence-torn slum of Martissant.

The US Agency for International Development had sponsored the soccer match.

Official reports by the United Nations mission in Haiti and the national police have confirmed the involvement of the police officers.

Authorities said about 10 persons were either shot or hacked to death by machetes, but residents who witnessed the incident, claimed more than 20 people lost their lives during the attack.

They said the authorities had taken several bodies away immediately after the killing.

In recent months, the Haitian police have been accused of several massacres mainly in the strongholds of former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was removed from power under controversial circumstances in February last year.

Ballots instead of bullets?
BY MICHAEL DEIBERT
Newsday
November 6, 2005

When Jacques Roche's body was found on a road in Haiti's capital of Port-au-Prince in July -- his wrists handcuffed, his arms broken and the coup de grace having been administered with a bullet to the head -- one of that nation's best-known journalists had become only the most high-profile victim of a grinding march of violence that has claimed some 800 lives in the past year.

Roche, an editor at the newspaper *Le Matin*, had worked extensively to protest the brutal treatment of Haiti's peasants on the country's Maribahoux plain, who were evicted from some of the best farmland in the nation in 2002 to make way for a free-trade zone by the government of then-President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Following Aristide's ouster by formerly loyal street gangs and members of Haiti's disbanded military, Roche hosted a television program where members of political parties and civil society groups -- frequently including members of a civil coalition that helped drive Aristide from power -- would discuss the issues of the day. He was exactly the kind of well-meaning person, intent on furthering a peaceful civil society, that Haiti needs. Those needs will be further explored in presidential and legislative elections next month.

When accusations of blame for Roche's killing pointed to gangs from the capital's impoverished Bel Air district, a hotbed of support for the former president, and several defectors from Aristide's political party charged publicly that the former president is orchestrating the violence from exile in South Africa, a painful sense of the inevitable descended upon me.

When I had arrived in Haiti in 1997, I found a country midway through the presidency of Rene Preval, the only president in its history to serve out his full term in office and oversee the transfer of power to an elected successor. Given little respect by a recalcitrant parliamentary opposition, often treated with disdain by the international community and undermined by Aristide himself (who formed his Fanmi Lavalas political party the year I arrived), Preval looked moderate and progressive compared to what followed. The Preval administration worked well in tandem with international development organizations. Haiti began the process of integration into the regional Caribbean Community and Common Market, and huge strides were made in professionalizing a police force that had been merely another wing of repression during the tenure of Haiti's army, disbanded by Aristide in 1995.

All of that came to an end with Aristide's re-inauguration in 2001. The president, once a priest in a Port-au-Prince slum, had first been elected in 1990, only to be ousted in a coup seven months later. Returned by a force of international troops in 1994, Aristide seemed determined not to let history repeat itself. But he became a mirror of the dictators that many hoped his election would drive from office.

On my frequent visits to the capital's sprawling Cité Soleil district, where more than 250,000 people exist in conditions of deprivation and squalor that can only be described as criminal, I watched as

young men were armed by a now-politicized police force. Aristide had filled the force with cronies and some of the most notorious members of the military he had disbanded less than a decade earlier.

Helped to weapons and ammunition by individuals such as Hermione Leonard, then police director for the region around Haiti's capital, reporting to the president, these young men with names like Labanye (Banner), Kolobri (Hummingbird), Tupac and Billy -- who long had been excluded from Haiti's political process -- were given the honor of meeting with Aristide at Haiti's National Palace. They were promised that help would come to their community if they attacked opposition demonstrations.

I often asked why they would defend a government that seemed to have done so little. On the contrary, they often said, would any other government in Haiti have even acknowledged their existence, let alone invited them to the palace? But in darker moments, they would confess that they felt they would be killed by the police if they did not do the government's bidding.

With presidential and legislative elections now scheduled for mid-December following two postponements, the question of whether these gangs feel they have a stake in the process will determine how fairly voting in the capital will proceed. With the Lavalas movement split into two camps -- one backing Preval, who is running for re-election, and one backing former World Bank official Marc Bazin -- and thousands registering in Cité Soleil and Bel Air, the signs are guardedly hopeful.

Far from being the simple thugs they were often depicted as, these gunmen could have represented a youth movement to help turn the nation around. But their legions were blurred with those of hard-core criminals, and it was people like Jacques Roche who paid the price.

**As Guerillas Strike and UN Troops Kill Again:
Election Confusion Spreads
By Haiti Progress
Political Affairs Magazine
11-8-05**

Haiti's Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) had 43 parties and one independent presidential candidate draw "identification numbers" for their campaigns in a chaotic session at the Ritz Kinam II hotel in Pétionville on Oct. 31. The candidates and their representatives loudly protested and skirmished over how the CEP conducted the number lottery, a bad omen for how more complicated procedures like ballot distribution and vote counting will be received.

The numbers were drawn from a drum. Some of the results: former president René Préval's "Hope Platform" drew number one, the neo-Duvalierist "Great Center Right Front" of arch-reactionary Hubert Deronceray number two, the "Union for Haiti" of former putschist prime minister Marc Bazin number three, the "Front for National Reconstruction" of ex-"rebel" leader Guy Philippe number seven, the "Democratic Alliance" of ex-Port-au-Prince mayor Evans Paul number 10, and the Progressive National Democratic Assembly (RNDP) of former Army-puppet-president Leslie Manigat number 13. Independent presidential hopeful Charles Henri Baker, a former leader of the "Group of 184" opposition front, was assigned number 44.

Doubts, delays, and disorganization still dog the elections which the illegal government and occupation forces are trying to hold. De facto Prime Minister Gérard Latortue reiterated last week that his government would step down on Feb. 7, 2006. "When we say that we will hold elections, we will hold them," he declared on his Oct. 24 return from a donors conference in Brussels. "For those who think that the election will not take place, I am telling them once and for all, loudly and strongly, the elections will take place."

"I consider the Prime Minister's declaration as wishful thinking," responded CEP member Patrick Féquière. "I am still waiting for them to give us the resources necessary to carry out this task."

Latortue's regime announced a Commission to Guarantee the Elections last week. It will have 11 members: three from "civil society" (read bourgeoisie), three from the religious sector, and five representing political parties. Charged with watching for election problems, it will be assisted by the National Center for Election Observation.

A Citizenship Verification Commission, also illegally formed by the executive (which is not supposed to meddle in electoral affairs), is still collecting papers from candidates and has yet to issue its definitive electoral roster.

Meanwhile, Jean Dady Ostiné, alias Ti Kenley, was fatally shot in the throat by UN occupation troops in Petit Goâve on Oct. 26. According to a French police officer, a patrol of French UN policemen with a Haitian policeman encountered Ti Kenley on a motorcycle with two other men. When the policemen asked them to stop, Ti Kenley pulled out a 9 millimeter pistol and began shooting. The policemen returned fire, killing him. One of the other men was wounded in the foot.

Ti Kenley took part in anti-government demonstrations leading up to the Feb. 29, 2004 coup against President Aristide. Petit Goâve Police Chief Rosny Séméac called him a “notorious bandit” who had been actively sought by the police.

On Oct. 29, the Dessalinien Army of National Liberation (ADLN) put out a communique by Internet and leaflet claiming responsibility for an Oct. 19 midnight attack on the police headquarters in the northern town of Limbé, in which one policeman (a former soldier) was killed. According to radio press reports, the other policemen in the station escaped out a window. The guerillas captured one weapon and other materials. Over the past year, the ADLN, which claims to be fighting the coup and foreign military occupation, has attacked other police stations in the North in the towns like Gros Morne, Plaisance and Borgne.

Personnel Announcement
The White House, US Govt.
November 8, 2005

President George W. Bush today announced his intention to nominate one individual and appoint one individual to serve in his Administration:

The President intends to nominate Janet Ann Sanderson, of Arizona, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Haiti. Ambassador Sanderson, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, currently serves as a diplomat-in-residence at the University of California at Berkeley. She previously served as Ambassador to Algeria. Prior to that, she served as Deputy Chief of Mission in Amman, Jordan. She has also served as the Counselor for Economic Affairs in Cairo, Egypt and Amman, Jordan. Earlier in her career, Ambassador Sanderson served as an economic officer in Kuwait and Tel Aviv, Israel as well as a consular officer in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Ambassador Sanderson received her bachelor's degree from the College of William and Mary and her master's degree from the Naval War College. The President intends to appoint David Barrett Cohen, of California, to be the Representative of the United States of America on the Pacific Community, for a term of two years. # # #

Haiti election supervisors 'quit'
BBC News, Americas
November 8, 2005

The UN has voiced concerns about the Haitian government's delays. The members of a high-level committee set up to improve the organisation of the forthcoming elections in Haiti have resigned, local media reports say. The panel was set up by the interim prime minister, Gerard Latortue, because of concerns about the work of the Provisional Electoral Council.

But the head of the committee, Christian Rousseau, said that it had received no political support.

Poor organisation has resulted in the elections being delayed twice already.

Both the United Nations and the United States have voiced concerns about the postponements.

The polls are now planned for some time between 11-18 December under the UN supervision.

They will be the first since President Jean-Bertrand Aristide fled into exile in 2004.

'Free and fair'

Mr Rousseau, quoted by local media, said that the committee had not even officially existed because the decree setting it up had never been published in the state gazette.

The group included senior ministers and members of the Council of the Wise.

Last month, the UN Security Council called for free and fair elections in Haiti to take place as scheduled in December.

It issued a presidential statement increasing pressure on Haiti's administration.

An interim government was installed after Mr Aristide was forced into exile and UN peacekeepers were sent to the impoverished Caribbean country.

However, political and criminal violence and instability have continued.

S. Korea Reluctant to Dispatch Troops to Haiti

By Jung Sung-ki

Staff Reporter

The Korea Times

November 8, 2005

The United Nations has asked South Korea to send a company-sized infantry unit to Haiti to help the Caribbean country in disorder following a rebellion that led to the oust of its president last year, the Defense Ministry said Tuesday.

The government, however, notified the U.N. of its difficulty in dispatching troops, citing the lack of available forces to be sent to foreign countries, ministry officials said.

“The government asked the U.N. to understand Seoul’s situation under which it cannot dispatch additional troops abroad at this moment, as it has 3,250 soldiers in Iraq for humanitarian mission,” said Lt. Col. Kim Lag-jung at the ministry’s public affairs office.

South Korea’s Zaytun Unit has been stationed in the northern Iraqi town of Irbil since August last year to help rebuild the war-torn country.

The U.N. asked other countries, including Chile and Uruguay, for troop dispatch to Haiti, and Chile reportedly has given a positive response to the request, the officer said.

About 7,600 U.N. troops, including Brazilian forces, are currently deployed in Haiti, which has been beset by violence, such as shooting accidents, kidnapping and gang warfare, since President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was expelled following a rebellion in February 2004.

Meanwhile, the Zaytun Unit is expected to carry out both guard missions for a U.N. building and officials of the international organization starting next month on a temporary basis.

Mongolian troops were supposed to guard officials at the U.N. headquarters for aid to Iraq from next month, but the troop dispatch has been delayed due to internal problems, an official at the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said.

“The ministry is considering whether to take over the Mongolian troops’ role temporarily, but no decision has yet been made on the matter,” he said.

South Korea has been reluctant to conduct guard missions for U.N. buildings, citing its empowered mission of rehabilitation for the Middle East country. It also fears the unit’s involvement in other support missions could provoke terrorist attacks against it.

The current 3,250 South Korean troops represent the third largest contingent in Iraq after those of the United States and Britain. The U.S. keeps about 150,000 soldiers there and Britain about 8,500.

How a group of Yale students overturned U.S. Haiti policy
Ann Arbor native Goldstein's legal tale has new relevance
BY SONJA BRODIE
News Special writer
Ann Arbor News, MI
Monday, November 7, 2005

Legal cases can make dull reading, but not so Brandt Goldstein's "Storming the Court" (Scribner, \$26, 384 pages). The native Ann Arborite has written a page-turning account of how a group of Yale law students took the government to court over its treatment of Haitian refugees, both at Guantanamo Bay and on the high seas.

Goldstein was a third-year law student at Yale in 1992 when the idea for this lawsuit was first mooted. He personally knew many of the dedicated students and their leader, professor Harold Koh.

"Struggling to separate out my role as a writer from my role as a former student and friend was very difficult, but absolutely necessary because I had to write about them as human beings with flaws and feelings that we all have," says Goldstein.

It proved a very challenging book to write, with Goldstein working hard at it for six years, conducting hundreds of interviews and poring over court transcripts and depositions. He had to cover complex legal issues, White House policy, Haitian culture and the workings of the Supreme Court.

One of his biggest challenges, he says, was "finding a way to distill it and make it accessible to the general reader - I had a 1,000-page manuscript."

To help the book appeal to a wider audience, he chose to tell the story from different viewpoints, including those of the Haitian refugees.

"I consider this an entirely nonfictional account, written, however, in the form of a novel and inspired by works such 'A Civil Action' and 'In Cold Blood,' " Goldstein says.

"One of the things that helped here was the fact that a number of the people involved in the case were extremely intelligent, hyper-articulate and they had remarkable memories.

It was the defining year in their lives, he adds. "Many of them were willing to put in the time to talk endlessly about something."

One of the main characters is a Haitian democracy activist to whom Goldstein gives the pseudonym "Yvonne Pascal."

"I spent five years getting to know Yvonne Pascal," he says. "When she initially came into this country in the spring of 1993, she was a bit of a cause celebre, a bit of a media star because she had been such a high-profile figure in the camp,."

"After that, it was very tough for her, because she then all of a sudden found herself struggling on her own, apart from her children, apart from her husband, sick and not sure what came next. ...

"I think the last thing she wanted to do when I first showed up on her door was start revisiting things from 10 years ago that were very painful - talk about her torture in a prison cell, talk about her time in this camp. I had to commit many years to gaining her trust."

The court case proved life-changing for many of the people involved and Goldstein was no exception. "I sometimes felt that I had found my own Guantanamo when I was writing this book," he says.

Two years into writing the book, Guantanamo was being used as prison camp again, giving the decision in *Haitian Centers Council vs. Sale* a wider significance.

"When I started writing the book, I thought it would focus primarily on the relationship between law and politics and our legacy, this nation's legacy, as a haven for refugees. In line of what has happened since 9/11, I think it's a cautionary tale about how we use our legal base on Guantanamo," Goldstein says.

"As I stress when I talk about this thing to groups, this is not a Democratic or Republican issue because both the first Bush and Clinton were in this camp. Today, when it comes to how we're handling Guantanamo, it's Sen. John McCain, a Republican, who's pressing to outlaw inhumane treatment there," Goldstein says. "When he was challenged by one of the nine senators who voted against this - 'Sen. McCain, these people are terrorists' - his response was, 'It's not about them. It's about us. It's about what we stand for, what our Constitution stands for.' "

Goldstein expects to schedule an appearance at Nicola's Books before Christmas. You might also soon see "Storming the Court" as a movie - Warner Bros. has bought the film rights and screenwriter Michael Seitzman, who has just finished "North Country," is working on the project.

An American woman spellbound in Haiti

Key Biscayne author's story is personally interesting but lacks fresh insight and hard-hitting analysis.

BY JACQUELINE CHARLES

Miami Herald

November 6, 2005

MADAME DREAD: A Tale of Love, Vodou and Civil Strife in Haiti.

Kathie Klarreich. Nation. 368 pages. \$15.95 in paper.

Keeping up with Haiti's complex political landscape and cast of characters can be as nerve wracking as trying to get gas after a storm.

Still, with its tormented history and uncertain times, Haiti remains a land of opportunity for a select few: the perennial politicians waiting in line for their shot at the presidency, the lucky locals with cars and the gift of gab who can make a year's salary for a day's work and foreigners. Referred to as blan -- Creole for white -- they are almost immediately seduced by Haiti, romanticizing its prospects, unable to explain the attraction even after heartbreak.

In Madame Dread, Key Biscayne resident Kathie Klarreich chronicles her transformation from a thirtysomething visitor to permanent resident, from manager of a San Francisco-based handicraft store to a freelance Haiti-based journalist, from single Jewish woman to wife and mother possessed by Haiti and its Vodou spirits. "The spell that Haiti spread over me was not easy to define," she writes.

At its best, the book is a primer that provides helpful historical reference for readers looking for a political overview on the chaotic years following the 1986 fall of former dictator Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier.

Klarreich introduces former Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, years before he became the country's first democratically elected president and the 1991 military coup that forced his first exile from office.

Though politically charged, the book is careful not to offend, which means it lacks depth. It will disappoint longtime Haiti watchers hoping for fresh insight and hard-hitting analysis.

As someone who was on the scene -- and didn't get their news from the lobby bar, as she points out -- Klarreich was in a unique position to see various sides of the Haitian saga and analyze the shades of gray that so often mask the truth. Instead, however, she peppers readers with simplistic opinions about such unsavory characters as former coup strongman Raoul Cédras.

"I hated this man who pretended that he'd done what was best for the country when it was wallowing in misery."

Even Aristide, once hailed as the people's savior, escapes mostly unscathed, a missed opportunity on Klarreich's part to convey to readers the conflicting emotions Haitians feel about him.

Klarreich, whose failure to connect with Haitian women rings loudly, does provide an interesting insight into her relationship with Haitian men. If there is a metaphor that emerges for her bond with Haiti, it's her relationship with her husband, Jean Raymond, a struggling Haitian drummer with whom she has a son.

"Instinctually I knew this man would require a lifetime of emotional and physical energy," she writes.

Her description of Raymond as traditional and temperamental, is head on. Also the looming question of infidelity in their relationship -- "If he was interested, Jean Raymond was going to cheat on me regardless of whether or not I was in town" -- is something with which many women unfortunately can identify.

"That I had fallen in love with Jean Raymond in a way that I had never experienced with any other man was already a result, I knew, of Haiti, but I couldn't articulate just what had caused it or why," she writes. The culture clash is intriguing, but in the end Madame Dread leaves you wanting more.

Jacqueline Charles is a Herald staff writer who routinely writes about Haiti.

(Don't) Vote for Me
Amy Bracken
Inter Press Service News Agency
November 7, 2005

NEW YORK, Nov 7 (IPS) - Blasting from giant speakers in Brooklyn's Crystal Manor ballroom one recent evening was a new song in Haitian Creole: "Vote! Vote Bazin for change!"

But most of those gathered at this political rally will not vote for Marc Bazin or any of the other candidates running for president of Haiti this winter. U.S. citizens face a ban on dual nationality in Haiti's Constitution, and those U.S. residents unable or unwilling to return to Haiti to vote in person have no absentee ballot option.

Still, Bazin and other Haitian candidates are campaigning hard outside Haiti because they see Haitians living abroad as enormously influential. More than 80 percent of college-educated Haitians live overseas, and the vast majority of Haiti's annual income comes from Haitians abroad sending money back to friends and family.

With 35 candidates registered to run under a provisional government that took charge after the ouster of Jean-Bertrand Aristide almost two years ago, this will be the most hotly contested presidential election in Haitian history, and Haitians abroad are getting more attention than ever.

In Boston, three candidates recently participated in the first Haitian presidential debate overseas -- and one of the first ever in Haitian history. Since early October, at least eight candidates have already done the rounds in Boston, New York and Miami, where most of the U.S.'s half million Haiti-born residents live. Others have campaigned as far away as France.

The candidates are looking for both money and, indirectly, votes. Leslie Voltaire, Bazin's campaign manager and formerly Aristide's Minister of Haitians Living Abroad, said Haiti's entire middle class lives overseas, and he called Bazin's first U.S. tour "a way to tell [Haitians abroad] that they count, that we count on them, and to push them to get on the phone and tell their relatives to vote for Bazin."

It is also clear to Haitian politicians what will win over Haitians outside Haiti. A major issue arising at campaign rallies, fundraisers and debates in the U.S. is, ironically, the right to vote and dual citizenship.

Those attending the events are U.S. residents and citizens, but they speak Creole, stay in close touch with loved ones back home, and think obsessively about the state of their nation. Many, who fled Haiti's violence and grueling poverty, wait for the day they can safely return to their homeland.

In an effort to show his credentials as a representative of Haitians abroad, Bazin told the 90 or so New York audience members that he had lived in Washington for 18 years, working for the World Bank. "And so I'll say to you, Haitians abroad, Diaspora, with Bazin as president, you will have the right to vote," he said. "With Bazin as president, you will have dual nationality..." The audience silenced him with wild applause.

Meanwhile, back in Haiti, all registered candidates have been forced to prove their Haitian nationality before the Provisional Electoral Council by presenting their own birth certificates and those of their parents.

One presidential candidate not on tour in the U.S. is Texas multi-millionaire businessman Dumarsais Simeus, who was born into a peasant family in Haiti's Artibonite Valley but has spent 45 years outside Haiti.

A debate is raging over whether or not he has the right to run for president, with the electoral council claiming he does not, the Supreme Court claiming he does, the interim government challenging the ruling of the Supreme Court, and the population taking a variety of positions on the issue.

But candidates touring the U.S. have been clear on the issue: Simeus should be able to run. Bazin invoked Haiti's 1987 Constitution in asserting that all Haitians in exile have the right to return home -- even brutal dictators like Jean-Claude Duvalier, who currently lives in France -- but where it infringes on the rights of Haitians overseas, Bazin questioned whether the document should be honoured.

Calling it "painful" to see a man who means well being prevented from shooting for Haiti's top job, Bazin said, "The Constitution is clear, but should we stick to the Constitution or should we look toward some sort of political compromise?"

In its 201 years, Haiti's relationship with the developed world has been highly ambivalent, with great national pride belied by the humiliation of Haitians clamouring to get on boats to leave the country at all costs, and with a nation boasting the distinction of being the first free black republic on Earth while forced into total economic dependence on others.

Fittingly, enforcement of the ban on dual citizenship has been anything but consistent. Haiti's current interim Prime Minister Gerard Latortue was a resident of Boca Raton, Florida, when selected for the post, and he has said he plans to return there when his replacement is sworn in.

His predecessor, Yvon Neptune, had studied architecture in the U.S. and was popularly accused of being "American" -- a charge he denied.

Further complicating the situation, the electoral council birth certificate requirement for presidential candidates neither proves nor disproves that they have become citizens of other countries. Meanwhile, non-Haitians, including a Canadian and an African, have reported being able to register to vote in Haiti this year simply by proving residency.

According to the Constitution, one loses Haitian citizenship not only if he or she is naturalised in another country, but if they live outside the country for three years without "proper authorisation". To top it off, "Once Haitian nationality is lost, it cannot be recovered."

This harsh exclusion of foreign nationals has been challenged at home as well as abroad. Aristide, whose wife, Mildred Trouillot, is U.S.-born, supported a Constitutional amendment to allow dual citizenship. The amendment received support in Parliament, but the legislative body was dissolved before action could be taken to implement it.

Voltaire said the dual citizenship ban is supported only by an upper crust in Haiti jealous of those living abroad. "The problem is that we have an elite of five percent of the people controlling 50 percent or more of the resources, and who would not accept a lot of competition," he said.

Today, Haitian politicians show little fear of this elite, which has lost considerable electoral power in the last two decades. More than ever politicians acknowledge the dependence of Haitians in Haiti on Haitians abroad -- that is, between Haiti's nine geographic departments and Haiti's Diaspora, known as the 10th department.

Jean Claude Desgranges, Aristide's former cabinet chief and a supporter of Bazin, who splits his time between Haiti and Florida, declared in Creole to the Brooklyn crowd, "I'm of the 10th department, just like you. I'm a true Haitian, just like you... You are all living as Haitians and you are all going to die as Haitians."

Haitians at home and abroad are anxiously awaiting an announcement from the electoral council on the date of presidential and legislative elections, now only loosely scheduled for mid-December.

Already pushed back from November, the vote for president could be delayed again due to the debate over Simeus' right to run. (END/2005)

Send your comments to the editor

Digicel, Ericsson Building First-Rate GSM Network in Haiti
Digicel Press Release
November 7, 2005

Comprehensive Network Services and Quality Coverage Promised for Haitian Wireless Customers
PORT AU PRINCE, HAITI -- (MARKET WIRE) -- 11/07/2005 -- Digicel, the fastest growing mobile telecommunications operator in the Caribbean, announced it has chosen Ericsson as its exclusive infrastructure provider for a state-of-the-art GSM mobile network in Haiti. Earlier this year, Digicel was awarded a license to operate in Haiti, signifying the company's ongoing dedication and momentum in building a seamless pan-Caribbean wireless network.

As a country with approximately 400,000 phone lines, wired and wireless, serving a population of 8 million, Haiti offers a unique opportunity for Digicel to make a significant impact on the quality and standard of mobile telecommunications in the country.

As the world's leading GSM provider, Ericsson's technological expertise will allow Digicel to provide Haitian customers with new and innovative service offerings in the same way it has throughout the region. This system will provide Haitian subscribers access to a reliable and superior network as well as services such as mobile Internet (GPRS), per second billing and international roaming.

"We are pleased to bring our partnership with Ericsson to Haiti. It enables us to build industry leading infrastructure that will help drive telecommunications innovations and deliver dependable network coverage for customers," said Digicel Haiti CEO, Ghada Gebara. "As a country rich in culture with vibrant communities, Haiti offers a tremendous opportunity for us to help connect families and friends through a wide-range of GSM services and value offerings."

Since Digicel's flagship launch in 2001, Ericsson has been the company's preferred vendor and strategic partner in delivering comprehensive network coverage to customers throughout the Caribbean region. St. Lucia, St. Vincent & The Grenadines, Grenada, Aruba, Barbados, the Cayman Islands and Trinidad & Tobago include just some of the islands where Ericsson has been active in deploying Digicel network infrastructure.

"We are proud to bring our advanced technology offerings to Haiti and it is an honor to be a part of developing and deploying a start-of-the-art, intelligent GSM network which will transform the face of mobile telecommunications in Haiti," said Martin Bjork, Digicel Key Account Manager for Ericsson. "Our advanced solutions allow a wide range of services and offerings, which Digicel is known for and has helped them become the fastest growing mobile service provider in the Caribbean."

With its management team recently appointed, Digicel Haiti is poised to lead the mobile telecommunications market, offering competitive rates, enhanced customer service, as well as unbeatable coverage and a wide variety of products. Digicel's Haiti operation is lead by Ghada Gebara, chief executive officer; Bernard Yacoub, chief technology officer; and Issa Touma, chief financial officer.

With investments in the Caribbean exceeding well over \$US600 million, Digicel employs nearly 1,500 people and is focused on strengthening its footprint in the region.

ABOUT DIGICEL

Since its launch in 2001, Digicel has become the fastest growing wireless telecommunications operator in the Caribbean. In four years, Digicel has become renowned for competitive rates, unbeatable coverage, superior customer care, a wide variety of products and services, and state-of-the-art handsets. It is the largest GSM operator in the region.

By offering innovative wireless services and community support, Digicel has become a leading brand in the Caribbean and has placed the region at the cutting edge of wireless communications.

With the recent achievements of new licenses and acquisitions, Digicel is now well on its way to be offering services in the near future in over 15 Caribbean countries, covering a total population of 14 million people. Incorporated in Bermuda and currently operating in eight countries including Aruba, Barbados, Curaçao, The Cayman Islands, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Digicel looks forward to launching in Trinidad & Tobago and Haiti as well as entering into the markets of Bermuda, Anguilla, St Kitts & Nevis, Antigua & Barbuda and Dominica through its acquisition of Cingular Wireless' Caribbean and Bermuda operations. The acquisition also allows Digicel licenses in St Martin, Guadeloupe, Martinique and St Barths.

The company is the lead sponsor of Caribbean sports teams including the West Indies Cricket Team, Special Olympics teams across the Caribbean and is title sponsor of the Digicel Caribbean Football Union Cup, which involves over 30 Caribbean countries and is an important qualifier towards the CONCACAF Gold Cup.

Visit www.digicelgroup.com for more information on Digicel.

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Minnesota Mom Goes To Haiti To Rescue Daughters

Lisa Kiava

WCCO-TV, Minnesota

November 8, 2005

(WCCO) St. Paul It's tough to live in Haiti these days. The country is often in turmoil and, right now, the U.S. Government is recommending against travel there.

But one Minnesota mom went to Haiti, at great risk, to help rescue her daughters.

Michelle Kleinsasser is in the process of adopting two Haitian girls. While waiting for paperwork to be completed she learned their orphanage had been abandoned.

Her daughters were among 50 children left fending for themselves.

"You can see their bellies are so distended," said Kleinsasser, looking at pictures. "I'm sure a lot of it is the malnutrition and we know some of it is parasites and worms."

She said children were left with no clean water and little or nothing to eat for as much as a week.

Conditions were deplorable with widespread sickness and diarrhea.

She said she had trusted the orphanage. It was operated by an American woman who used her life savings to run the place. But then the money ran out.

"We paid money for her to process our adoptions and she used that money in other ways," Kleinsasser said.

E-mails were sent among all the American parents waiting to adopt. They agreed to take turns traveling to Haiti.

Kleinsasser arrived and discovered the violence in Haiti was also at the gates of the orphanage.

"Birth parents were showing up with weapons, stealing their kids over the walls," she said.

Kleinsasser and others helped relocate the children to other facilities. She said she's proud the parents pulled together to save them.

"Even if I would've seen all of this coming at the beginning, I still would've gone full-bore ahead because they're my kids," she said.

Kleinsasser said she hopes the orphanage operators will be prosecuted.

Sen. Norm Coleman's office is helping her overcome paperwork problems and Kleinsasser is hoping her daughters will arrive in Minnesota by Christmas.

Kleinsasser's adoption process was independent and she had to sell her North St. Paul home to help cover additional expenses. Experts said people using a reputable agency might avoid paying for paperwork and legal services twice if there are problems.

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Group of women kidnapped in Haiti returned safely
The Dominican Today
November 7, 2005

SANTO DOMINGO.- The Dominican consulate in Port au Prince, in coordination with a police contingent and members of the United Nations Mission for the Stabilization of Haiti (Ministah) yesterday released 13 Dominican women who were kidnapped in a brothel in the Haitian capital.

The women, brought last night to the country, by plane and in vehicles provided by the consulate, were taken to Haiti deceived by a network of traffickers which operates between Dominican Republic and Haiti, affirmed the consul Carlos Castilo.

He said that the women were taken to Haiti without passports at some point and were locked up in the brothel Chandelier, located in the Delmas boulevard, Port au Prince's main thoroughfare, which reaches some 8 kilometers including the exclusive Petionville sector.

Those that came by plane arrived shortly after 6:00 PM at Herrera airport and the rest arrived at midnight, traveling under protection of members of the consulate's security.

DR, Haiti's police to work jointly
Dominican Today
November 4, 2005

JIMANI.- Dominican and Haitian Police chiefs warned today that the border will not hinder persecution of felons, and both committed to work jointly so that the neither country's territory is used as refuge by violators of the law.

As a gesture to mark this understanding, Haitian Police chief Mario Andresol handed over to his homologue General Bernardo Santana Paez two Dominican subjects, one of them an ex-policeman, that had sought refuge in Port-au-Prince, after alleged involvement in a double-murder three years ago in Santo Domingo.

Also to be part of this effort, Dominican authorities promised to return 20 vehicles robbed in Haitian soil by a network of traffickers and thieves, and the Haitians will in turn return six vehicles to Dominican authorities, among them SUVs and pick up trucks.

The two Dominicans accused of the double crime and later escaped to Haiti are Manuel Garcia Figuereo, an ex-policeman who escaped from jail serving a 20-year sentence for murdering a female; the other was Jose Torres Minyetti, accused of killing a female at a hotel, in addition to allegedly robbing the National Institute for Price Control (INESPRE), according to authorities.

UN, OAS say 30,000 Haitian kids smuggled to Dom. Rep
07 Nov 2005

Reuters

New Kerala, India

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, Nov 6 : Around 30,000 Haitian children are illegally smuggled into the Dominican Republic every year to work as child prostitutes or be forced into other degrading occupations, UN and OAS officials said today.

In Haiti itself, children are recruited as gang members or are tortured, kidnapped, sexually and physically abused, abandoned and traded like chattel, the United Nations children's fund, UNICEF, and the Organization of American States' Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, said.

The UNICEF adviser for the region, Maria Jesus Conde, and The Inter-American Commission's rapporteur for children's rights, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, said after a four-day fact-finding tour to the Caribbean island shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic that they were extremely troubled by the fate of Haitian children.

"The delegation expresses its deep concern, following denunciations it has received about the trade of children and adolescents used for house works and sexual exploitation," Conde and Pinheiro said in a joint statement.

The two organizations also denounced what they said was the prolonged detention of children as young as 10 years old without charge by Haitian authorities.

Roiled by political instability and lawlessness, Haiti is the poorest country in the Americas. Most of its nearly 9 million people earn less than 2 dollars a day. Up to a million Haitian illegal immigrants are believed to be working in the factories, sugar plantations and cattle ranches of the far more prosperous Dominican Republic.

Despite the presence of more than 7,000 Brazilian-led UN peacekeepers and international police, the country has slipped deeper into chaos and violence since President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted in an armed revolt in February 2004.

Aristide, a former priest increasingly accused of corruption and despotism in recent years, is in exile in South Africa.

UNICEF and the OAS rapporteur noted that poverty and the almost complete absence of state authority in Haiti were to blame and called for the United Nations in particular to increase efforts at guaranteeing that even Haitians living in slums controlled by armed gangs have access to humanitarian assistance.

Other human rights groups estimate that up to 300,000 Haitian children are used as domestic servants in Haiti and many are subject to violence and sexual abuse.

Pinheiro said there were measures that could be taken to make sure the human rights of children were not ignored.

"Making sure every child is given a birth certificate is not a difficult task for the government," he said.

Haiti - U.S. wants no more delays
Election Date: November 13, 2005
November 13, 2005
Angus Reid Consultants Global Scan

At stake: President, National Assembly

Background

Haiti, presently Latin America's poorest country, was invaded by the United States in 1915 and governed by Americans until 1934. The Caribbean nation has endured several dictatorships, coups and civil rebellions ever since.

In 1957, the longest dictatorship in Haitian history began when François Duvalier was elected president with the support of the army. Duvalier—known as "Papa Doc"—was a physician and a voodoo practitioner who sought to vindicate Haiti's African origins. Re-elected in a fraudulent election in 1961, Duvalier amended the constitution and declared himself "president for life."

Duvalier changed the legislature from bicameral to unicameral, filling all the seats with his followers. The president also created the paramilitary army of the Tonton Macoutes to intimidate the opposition. A vicious circle of violence began under his regime, which by 1967 had claimed more than 2,000 lives and forced many Haitians into exile.

Duvalier's son—the 19-year-old Jean-Claude or "Baby Doc"—was proclaimed president after his father's death in 1971. The younger Duvalier eventually fled Haiti in 1986 under pressure from his opponents. He was succeeded by a military junta.

In 1990, internationally supervised elections resulted in the overwhelming victory of Jean Bertrand Aristide of Fanmi Lavalas (FL—Lavalas Party). Seven months later, the Roman-Catholic priest was ousted in a military coup led by Raoul Cedras.

In 1994, Aristide was reinstated with the backing of U.S. president Bill Clinton. His return was seen as a welcome event after years of violence and international embargoes.

General elections were held in 1995. Over 10,000 candidates ran for Senate and Chamber of Deputies seats, mayoral posts and local councils. The Lavalas Party dominated the polls and Aristide's close friend René Preval won the presidency in a ballot deemed by international observers as "chaotic." The resulting government was unstable, with Preval changing his prime minister in three occasions.

In 1996, Preval faced a new wave of political violence and demanded the extended presence of United Nations (UN) troops in the country.

In 2000, Aristide was elected president for a second time in an election considered a sham by both the opposition and the international community. Pressed by a violent armed uprising against him led by Guy Philippe and the rebel troops of the National Resistance Front for the Liberation of Haiti, Aristide fled the country on Feb. 29, 2004. He later claimed he was "kidnapped" by the U.S.

In March 2004, the U.S. supported a provisional government led by interim president Boniface Alexandre and interim prime minister Gérard Latortue, which remains in place today.

Despite the establishment of a new administration, violence remains a daily occurrence. Pro-Aristide gangs known as "Chimères" have engaged in battles with anti-Aristide groups. The Haitian police have been accused of human rights abuses, and former Aristide allies have been kept prisoners for months without a trial. Since June 2004, 7,000 Brazil-led UN peacekeepers have been stationed in Haiti.

2005 Presidential and National Assembly Elections

On Feb. 1, the Haitian interim election council called for local elections on Oct. 9; and presidential and parliamentary elections on Nov. 13. A second round will follow on Dec. 18, and the new head of state and lawmakers are expected to take office in January and February 2006.

More than 100 political parties have been registered, and 4 million people are eligible to vote. Canada, the U.S, Haiti, the UN and the European Union (EU) have pledged a total of \$38.5 million U.S. to fund the ballot.

On Mar. 21, two UN peacekeepers were killed in Haiti in the fight against rebel groups.

On Mar. 25, police and anti-Aristide street gangs opened fire against a pro-Aristide march in the capital, Port-Au-Prince. One person was killed.

On Apr. 10, Haitian police claimed to have killed rebel leader Rémissainthe Ravix, who supported Aristide's 2004 ousting.

On Apr. 11, the electoral agency said the polls could be delayed if the violence that has killed hundreds since September 2004 continues. On that same day, UN Security Council delegates visited Haiti. Officials said the presence of UN peacekeepers in Haiti might be extended to provide security after the elections.

On May 5, Aristide spoke from exile in South Africa, saying the upcoming elections are not legitimate with members of the Lavalas Party "in jail, exile and hiding." Aristide's former prime minister Yvon Neptune was said to be gravely ill. Neptune started a hunger strike on Apr. 17, after spending more than 10 months in jail without a trial.

On May 10, Haiti's Supreme Court overturned the convictions of 38 army and paramilitary leaders who were found guilty of killing Aristide supporters in 1994.

On Aug. 4, a report from the International Crisis Group (ICG) revealed that only 20 per cent of eligible voters have been registered. ICG senior vice-president Mark L Schneider declared, "Empty elections that produce a government with little legitimacy could drive Haiti into permanent failed state status, run by drug and criminal networks."

On Sept. 7, South African foreign minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma said Aristide would not return to his home country for the ballot, saying, "He does not want to give an excuse for people who want to destabilize (the ballot), and use him as an excuse."

By Sept. 15, at least 18 candidates had voiced their intention to seek the presidency. The contenders include former president Leslie Manigat, former Port-au-Prince mayor Evans Paul, former senator Paul Denis, former rebel leader Guy Philippe, former Duvalier minister Hubert Deronceray, Haitian-born American businessman Dumarsais Simeus, and Marc Bazin, who served as prime minister in the early 1990s.

The Provisional Electoral Council (PEC) barred Gerard Jean-Juste—a prominent Lavalas member—who is currently in prison and cannot register in person.

On Sept. 27, U.S. state secretary Condoleezza Rice praised the preparations in Haiti, saying, "It is very uplifting to visit this registration centre and to see voters lined up here to register to vote. It is a very impressive system that the Organization of American States (OAS) has helped the Haitian people put in place." Rice also urged every person in the country to take part in the ballot, saying, "Half a democracy is no democracy. And so women need to participate. They need to go to the polls, they need to vote in large numbers, because women can make a difference in any society."

On Oct. 11, interim prime minister Gérard Latortue declared to the BBC that the election could be postponed. According to international observers, there have been some difficulties in the production and distribution of identification cards.

On Oct. 18, U.S. state undersecretary Nicholas Burns urged Haiti to hold the ballot in the scheduled date, saying, "The message from my government to the Haitian government is that they need to work with much greater speed and much greater efficiency in organizing these elections. (...) Our sense is the elections can no longer be postponed."

The second round for the presidential and legislative ballot is supposed to take place in January 2006. The actual transfer of power must happen on Feb. 6, in accordance with the country's constitution.

Political Players

Acting president: Boniface Alexandre - FL

Prime minister: Gérard Latortue

The president is elected to a five-year term by popular vote. Elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide fled the country in February 2004. Alexandre heads a transitional administration.

Legislative Branch: The Assemblée Nationale (National Assembly) has two chambers. The Chambre des Députés (Chamber of Deputies) has 83 members, elected to a four-year term in single-seat constituencies. The Sénat (Senate) has 27 members, elected to a six-year term—one third renewed every two years—in single-seat constituencies.

Results of Last Election:

Chamber of Deputies - May 21, Jul. 30 and Nov. 26, 2000

Seats

Fanmi Lavalas
(FL—Lavalas Party)
73

Mouvement Chrétien pour Batir une
Nouvelle Haïti (Mochrena—Christian
Movement Fighting for a New Haiti)
3

Parti Louvri Baryé
(PLB—Open the Gate Party)
2

Espace de Concertacion
(EC—Space of Dialogue)
2

Koordinasyon Resistans Grandans
(Eskanp-Korega—Grandans
Resistance Coordination)
1

Organisation de Peuple en Lutte
(OPL—Organization of Struggling People)
1

Independent
1

Senate - May 21, Jul. 30 and Nov. 26, 2000

Seats

Fanmi Lavalas
(FL—Lavalas Party)
26

Parti Louvri Baryé
(PLB—Open the Gate Party)

Bodies of three Haitians wash ashore

Three women believed to be Haitian nationals were found dead along the shore of Pompano Beach. Others were captured after coming ashore Saturday in Lauderdale-by-the Sea.

BY DARRAN SIMON

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Miami Herald

November 6, 2005

The bodies of three women washed ashore on Pompano Beach Saturday morning, possibly victims of a Haitian migrant-smuggling operation, authorities said.

Shortly before the bodies were found, a Broward Sheriff's deputy spied about a dozen migrants running from the water in Lauderdale-by-the-Sea. Five of them were captured, and about eight others remain at large.

One of the survivors told investigators the group came ashore on a 19-foot sailboat, but a boat wasn't found, said Liz Calzadilla-Fiallo, a spokeswoman for the Broward Sheriff's Office.

Four are in custody with the U.S. Border Patrol, said Steve McDonald, a Border Patrol assistant chief.

The fifth -- a man who was injured, possibly by a boat propeller -- was taken to Broward General Medical Center. His condition was not immediately available.

"It is an active, ongoing human-smuggling investigation," said Barbara Gonzalez, a spokeswoman in Miami for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The bodies, all women, were found at three spots along a six-block stretch of sand on North Ocean Drive between 6 and 8 a.m. in Pompano Beach, said Calzadilla-Fiallo.

"We believe they are all Haitian nationals," Calzadilla-Fiallo said.

The first body was found at the Pompano Beach Fishing Pier and two other bodies were found further north along the beach, Calzadilla-Fiallo said.

Gregory Sattler, 43, had finished a ham, egg and cheese bagel and was preparing to go fishing when he discovered a body at the pier about 6 a.m.

He reached for his cellphone in his tackle box, dropped his coffee and dialed 911.

"I couldn't believe it," said Sattler of Pompano Beach. He said debris had been washing ashore constantly since Hurricane Wilma and he didn't know it was a body at first.

"I thought it was a log or something I could take home with me," he said.

An hour and a half later, Larry Davis' mother-in-law and her sister, both on vacation from Canada, woke him after discovering a second body face up a mile north from the pier.

Davis, whose family spent the night at their second home in the 500 block of North Ocean Drive in Pompano Beach because they didn't have electricity in Davie, contacted police.

"It was surreal," Davis, 44, said. ``That feeling of seeing something you don't want to believe and wanting to do more."

A third body was found 15 minutes later on the beach close to a time-share residence in the 600 block of North Ocean Drive, according to BSO.

"This is obviously a very tragic event," Gonzalez said. ``We discourage anyone attempting to come into this country by a boat."

The word of the deaths spread quickly to South Florida's Haitian community.

"The entire community is shocked by yet more news about people losing their lives in attempt to find a safe haven," said Haitian-American community activist Marleine Bastien, executive director of Haitian Women of Miami.

Bastien appealed Saturday on WLQY 1320 AM in Miami for relatives of the three dead women and the survivors to come forward for community support. Bastien said she will make another appeal today on Vwa, an hour-long radio show in Creole she co-hosts on WLQY.

Under the U.S. "wet foot/dry foot" policy, Cuban migrants who touch American soil are allowed to stay, while those stopped at sea are repatriated. Haitians and other nationalities are repatriated, whether they land on American soil or not.

Bastien said the tragedy shows that the policy should change because people risk their lives to make it ashore. Haitian refugees should also get an opportunity to plead their case, she argued.

"When we look at Haiti and Cuba right now, Haiti is a much more dangerous place. People are dying everyday," Bastien said. ``We may actually be sending people to their deaths."

3 bodies, possibly migrants', wash ashore

The bodies of the women, who might have been trying to migrate from Haiti, are found in Pompano Beach.

By Associated Press

St. Petersburg Times

November 6, 2005

POMPANO BEACH - The bodies of three women believed to be Haitian migrants washed ashore Saturday on a South Florida beach, authorities said.

The women may have attempted to illegally migrate to the United States with as many as 12 other people, authorities said. The women's bodies were found Saturday morning at three locations along an oceanfront road, said Broward Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Liz Calzadilla-Fiallo.

The women were in their 20s and 30s, and were fully dressed, Calzadilla-Fiallo said. No identification was found among their belongings, but they were thought to be from Haiti, she said.

The U.S. Coast Guard searched the waters near the coastline where the bodies were found, said Barbara Gonzalez, a spokeswoman with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Miami. No boat has been found.

A Broward deputy saw 10 to 12 people running from the water in Lauderdale-By-The-Sea around 5:50 a.m., Calzadilla-Fiallo said.

Five migrants were detained. Four were turned over to U.S. Border Patrol agents while the fifth, who had been injured, was taken to Broward General Medical Center for treatment, Calzadilla-Fiallo said.

Authorities were investigating whether the deaths and migrant arrivals were connected to a smuggling operation, said Steve McDonald, a spokesman for the U.S. Border Patrol in Pembroke Pines. He said the migrants in custody were Haitian nationals.

Border Patrol agents will interview the four migrants being detained in a Broward facility, McDonald said.

McDonald did not know whether any suspected smugglers were among the group. If investigators determine that the migrants were smuggled onto U.S. shores, those responsible could be prosecuted, he said.

"This is yet another tragic example that smugglers have no regard for the loss of human life," Gonzalez said. "Their only goal is to profit at the expense of others."

Autopsies will be performed on the women, Calzadilla-Fiallo said.

**Aristide stole millions, says Haiti
Independent Online
November 04 2005**

Miami - The Haitian interim government has accused former president Jean Bertrand Aristide of embezzling "millions of dollars" from public coffers and drug trafficking in a suit filed in a United States federal court in Miami, Florida.

The lawsuit, filed on Wednesday against the ex-president who is currently in exile in South Africa, said he looted the public treasury and laundered the illicit proceeds and diverted and stole revenues rightfully belonging to the Haitian national telephone company, according to court documents.

Aristide "looted, deceived and betrayed the Haitian people. He stole millions from the public treasury, thereby literally depriving the people of Haiti of the ability to feed themselves," the documents said.

Ira Kurzban, a lawyer for Aristide, immediately dismissed the move.

"It's a frivolous lawsuit brought by the Vichy government in Haiti," Kurzban said, adding it was part of a "disinformation campaign".

The lawsuit also alleges that part of the illicit money had been transferred to banks and businesses in the US, particularly in Florida, and that was the basis for its filing in Miami.

Haiti's interim Prime Minister Gerard Latortue said it was easier to bring the suit in US courts.

"We chose to bring the suit in the United States because the funds diverted by Mr Aristide went for the most part to that country," he said in Port-au-Prince.

The move comes a month before the first general elections scheduled in Haiti since Aristide fled the country in 2004, bowing to pressure from the United States, France and Canada as he faced an armed insurrection and large street protests. - Sapa-AFP

Haitian govt sues former President Aristide over missing cash

Fri Nov 4, 2005

By Joseph Guyler Delva

Reuters, South Africa

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (Reuters) - Haiti's interim government has filed a civil lawsuit accusing former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide of embezzling tens of millions of dollars of public funds and said on Thursday it would also pursue criminal prosecution.

Aristide's attorney called the accusations baseless and his allies branded the government's action a "political lynching."

The government accused Aristide of siphoning money from Haiti's treasury and state-owned phone company, Haiti Teleco, and laundering it through fictitious companies and charities Aristide founded.

"Aristide abused his power and deceived and betrayed the Haitian people by directing and participating in ongoing and fraudulent schemes," said the lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court in Miami on Wednesday.

The lawsuit said the U.S. court in Miami had jurisdiction because some transactions were made by wire transfer to bank accounts in Miami and elsewhere in the United States.

Aristide was driven out of impoverished Haiti during an armed revolt in February 2004 and is exiled in South Africa.

A U.S.-backed interim government headed by Prime Minister Gerard Latortue appointed two commissions, whose reports of corruption under Aristide form the basis of the lawsuit.

Aristide's attorney in Miami, Ira Kurzban, called the accusations false and the lawsuit frivolous.

"It's based on a highly irregular and questionable political report that was generated in Haiti by the phony government that's currently in power," Kurzban said.

He said it was unclear if Aristide would actually have to defend against the suit because he would first have to be served with documents and lawyers for the Haitian government would have to prove the U.S. court has jurisdiction.

The report from the Haiti's Financial Inquiry Central Unit, obtained on Thursday by Reuters, said Aristide and his administration misappropriated more than \$76 million, including funds from Teleco, between February 2001 and his ouster three years later.

POSSIBLE CRIMINAL CHARGES

The commission's general director, Jean Yves Noel, sent his report to an investigative judge for potential criminal proceedings against Aristide, jailed former Prime Minister Yvon Neptune, 17 other

members of Aristide's cabinet, and several enterprises, businessmen and private contractors who he said received money from the presidency.

"We are not saying that all those mentioned in the report are necessarily guilty of anything, such decision can only be made by a competent judge," Noel said.

Latortue said the report helped shed light on the extent of corruption under the deposed regime.

"Previously, the population ignored how corrupt the men and women were," Latortue said. "Now that their names are being published, I hope we are not going to see them in the government institutions in the future."

The report did not establish any evidence of personal enrichment by Aristide or his alleged accomplices, and did not say what the funds were used for or where the money went.

Haiti is trying to organize elections to choose a new government late this year or early next.

Thousands march in Haiti to support Preval
Associated Press
Thu, Nov. 03, 2005

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti - Demonstrators marched out of two Haitian slums and across the capital Thursday in support of former President Rene Preval's bid to regain the presidency in elections scheduled for next month.

Preval, who was president from 1995 to 2000 and is a one-time ally of ousted president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, is running as an independent without the backing of Aristide's party, Lavalas.

Marchers chanted Preval's name and called for the release of political prisoners and the return from exile of Aristide, who was forced out of the country in February 2004 after a violent rebellion.

The elections, which have been postponed twice as Haiti struggles to organize the balloting, are tentatively scheduled for mid-December. The country will choose a new president and legislators to replace the interim government imposed following Aristide's ouster.

JACMEL, HAITI

An adventure for the fun-loving, not the foolhardy

The seaside town of Jacmel offers adventure, revelry and escape in turbulent Haiti.

BY TRENTON DANIEL AND NICHOLAS SPANGLER

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Miami Herald

Sun, Nov. 06, 2005

JACMEL, Haiti - The 15-seat plane bounces in the sky, above the tin shacks on the patchy mountainsides. The early-evening rain pelts the windows. The runway, just minutes away, often resembles a petting zoo. But our Caribintair flight, no more than 11 minutes from Port-au-Prince, arrives without incident or animal traffic at our weekend destination: Jacmel, Haiti.

Haitian friends told us to postpone our recreational trip. Too many kidnappings; too many killings, they said. Newsroom colleagues waged bets on our well-being.

Once again, Haiti is deemed off-limits to tourists. The U.S. State Department returned the country to its advisory list of no-go zones for Americans after a recent surge in gang warfare and political violence; it's a list that includes Iraq, the West Bank, and Sudan. The authorities have been unable to contain the unrest after Aristide's ouster last year.

What were we thinking?

The August trip came at an opportune time: between the kidnapping spree of late spring and early summer and the preelection violence feared this fall. The daily crush of downtown Port-au-Prince returned, the hours between dawn and dusk once again buzzing with activity.

Besides, we were heading to Jacmel, a southern seaside town called the Ibiza of the Caribbean, the Riviera of Haiti -- at least according to the tour guides. From Port-au-Prince, it's a brief flight or a two-hour drive through a traffic-heavy suburb and then the mountains.

Even the Haitian government is trying to make Jacmel a full-blown tourist destination, which means giving the city 24-hour electricity. But few tourists have yet to find this bittersweet treat.

To be sure, Haiti's no place for the squeamish traveler. Yet it offers adventure and spontaneity in a dramatic setting riven with conflict but colored by culture. Jacmel, a city of 15,000, is something of a wonder: a Haiti not immune to poverty but largely spared from violence. Plus, there's a beach.

ARTISTS' HAVEN

Jacmel is known for its artisans, artists, and filmmakers, some from the U.S. and Europe. One prominent filmmaker, Jorgen Leth -- Denmark's honorary consul -- keeps a home in Jacmel.

Thousands of residents and even some tourists underscored the town's interest in cinema when they attended a film festival in July. Carnival in February, when revelers don papier-mché masks and devils in disguise dance in the crowded streets, is a popular time for tourists to visit.

After we land in Jacmel on a Friday evening, a slender man directs us to a sedan parked near the runway. Our driver, Jackson Bien-Aime, asks for \$20 for the 10-minute ride to town; we agree on \$10.

When we reach the oceanfront hotel recommended by a fellow passenger on our flight, Bien-Aime entertains us with a list of things to do in his hometown. We are there for a little more than 24 hours and want to meet people, check out a waterfall, escape. One-legged, Bien-Aime leans against his crutch, and the suggestions come in this order.

Vodou

Beach

Bassin Bleu, the waterfall outside Jacmel

Fort Ogé, an aging military fort

Market artisans

Cockfight

Hospital

"-- what?"

"You can go to the hospital to help, if you can," Bien-Aime said matter-of-factly.

Oh, of course.

We press him to continue, and he does.

Prostitutes

"-- and risk AIDS, right?"

"No, not if you wear a condom."

So we can volunteer in a hospital or hang out with good-time girls. We choose neither.

In a country where the idea of democracy sadly remains just that, the 32-room Cap LaMandou Hotel, which opened two years ago, is a most democratic institution. Each room enjoys a sweeping vista of a Caribbean inlet and, on the other side, the scrubby yet verdant mountainside.

LOTS OF MOONSHINE

After a complimentary breakfast of fresh juice, sugar-sweet coffee, bananas, and croissants on Saturday morning, we decide to venture downtown. Rides are offered -- for a price, of course.

In the hierarchy of getting around in status-obsessed Haiti -- with tt bf or SUV Land Crusier at the top and Tap-Tap pickup in the middle -- to be pied, or on foot, is decidedly at the bottom. It's certainly no place for blan, Creole for foreigners.

On foot it is. The idea is to ingest our surroundings, take in the dusty view blan typically see from behind the locked doors of a sturdy SUV.

Downtown Jacmel is much easier to navigate than the urban core of Port-au-Prince, as well as easier on the eye. The streets are less crowded, the threat of crime less palpable, and the colonial architecture fading but still intact.

During our stroll, we find a guide, Michel Jean, to take us to Bassin Bleu, the trio of quiet waterfalls about seven miles outside Jacmel. It's only reachable by horse or motorbike and it's too late in the day for a horseback excursion. Jean organizes the entire trip -- including three bikes and drivers -- for \$50, though miscellaneous fees add up.

We fuel the bikes and speed out of town. The traffic jams of Port-au-Prince and Miami are far away. We feel light. It seems inevitable we'll hit a snag, and soon we get what Haitians call a ti pwoblem, understatement for "little problem": The Grand Riviere, a river 50-feet-plus wide, must be crossed. Michel hadn't mentioned this obstacle.

Our drivers decide to push their livelihoods through the caramel-colored, rapid water. We strip to our boxers and struggle forward on foot through the waist-high water.

We reach shore and dry in the sun. But the bikes don't work. The oil mixed with the water and must be replaced.

A bottle of moonshine or clarin makes the rounds -- the stuff never seems far away. Nick sips at first, to be polite, and more later, because it felt so good to be polite: warm and generous, a rare elation.

Once the oil is changed, we get the bikes humming and we're off. Nearly naked toddlers inch to the dirt path's edge. They wave and we wave back. Nick says bonswa, or good evening.

When we arrive at the entrance to the Bassin Bleu trail, a rocky, winding slope, we pick up more guides and proceed on foot.

Wherever we are, the moonshine follows. This one is a rumored sex enabler with the taste of anisette. "For tonight," they said.

We slip into the water, which is cool and fresh. For about 30 minutes we jump off the falls.

It rains, and our drivers are eager to leave before a storm floods the road to Jacmel. As they push the speed of their bikes, Nick, flush with moonshine, sways and waves, flinging bonswas to passers-by.

We reach downtown Jacmel, sordid yet unscathed. Michel gets several musicians to play for us, and fetches Prestige beers.

We're properly intoxicated: Time to leave. So we hail a motorcycle taxi to get us to the hotel. Jackson Bien-Aime had phoned with details of a Vodou ceremony. The prospect is enticing, but sleep calls.

The next morning, as we wait for our flight, we're surrounded by a group of talkative missionaries. They wear Teva sandals and foot jewelry and they call California home. Blan like us, they're the closest thing to tourists.

South Okanagan stands in for Afghanistan, Haiti

By MARK BRETT

The Okanagan Sunday

November 6, 2005

PENTICTON -- While it may not look like a war zone, residents here and in Summerland had an opportunity to view first-hand some of the skills and practices of the "new military" this weekend

Starting Friday night, members of the British Columbia Dragoons -- the Okanagan Valley's army reserves -- were out in full force for an ambitious three days of tactical deployment, code-named Exercise Active Ghost. "The purpose of this exercise is to practise the very techniques that Canadian troops are using overseas, leaving behind outdated, Cold War concepts and adapting to working with and amongst local civilian populations," said Penticton's Capt. Rick Erland, who recently returned from an eight-month tour of duty in Afghanistan

"This is based on a medium- to high-threat environment, much like in Haiti and Afghanistan." As the regular force support officer, it is Erland's duty this weekend to ensure soldiers correctly practise the skills they need in similar situations

This marks the first time in 25 years the Dragoons, based in Kelowna but with a recently reactivated squadron in Penticton, have conducted a military exercise in the region

While participants have weapons, no live ammunition is being used or carried by the soldiers

The program is loosely based on current reconnaissance operations overseas where Canadian troops are stationed or have been sent on peacekeeping missions

Exercise participants were dispatched for observation work in two formats.

One is roving, with troops patrolling critical transportation routes in military vehicles. The other is static, with soldiers posted to key observation sites, including Campbell Mountain, Giant's Head and the a tunnel used by the former Kettle Valley Railway.

The nerve centre for the weekend exercises is located at the regiment's armoury at 1101 Main St., the new home of the Penticton squadron.

"When we're doing the surveillance, as Capt. Erland mentioned, the military is just one part of it. The role of the military is to try and provide a secure environment so that the other portions — the diplomatic and political science — can keep the government running," said Dragoons commanding officer Lt.-Col. Denis Cyr. "Stability in a country is both political and economic, and that's the idea of the military: to provide a secure environment."

While this type of military work is less dangerous than direct combat, it is not without its risks, as Erland learned in Afghanistan.

"What we're dealing with now is more of the enemy being mixed in as part of the population, with no real defined boundaries or lines between combatant and non-combatant," he said. "It's challenging and at times very stressful. Soldiers are naturally jittery, but you've got to get past that."

“Nothing happens by accident. They are a very patient enemy. There’s no cookie-cutter solution to any of that. It’s vigilance and training and, lot of times, luck as well.”

For 17-year-old Princess Margaret secondary school student Rene Michaud, who recently joined the Dragoons, this weekend was his first opportunity to experience exactly what he signed up for.

“It’s been good so far. I’ve been doing a lot of communications. I haven’t gotten out on patrol yet, but tonight is going to be that night,” Michaud said Saturday. “I got involved because it is interesting, and I plan to stick with it as long as I can.

“It’s a great opportunity. You learn plenty of things, and there are so many things you can’t do anywhere else. There’s no other career like it.”

Exercise Active Ghost wraps up around 1 p.m. today.