



City-by-city Report: Worldwide protests

**Huge march in Port au Prince!
60 actions in 50 cities denounce
the Feb. 29, 2004 coup in Haiti!**

**END the foreign military occupation!
FREE the political prisoners!
END THE EXILE of President Aristide!**

At least 50 cities on 4 continents -- in Africa, South America, the Caribbean, Europe and North America – participated in the February 29th International Day in Solidarity with the Haitian People, marking the 4th anniversary of the US-engineered, Leap-Year-Day coup d'état. From street protests and marches....to street theater and street murals....to vigils, film showings and public meetings....to shutting down a US Marines recruiting station for one day – each city found its own way to express solidarity with **Haiti's struggle for justice, democracy and self-determination**. Everywhere, new people are becoming involved, inspired by the resistance of the people in Haiti.

The heartbeat of it all was in Haiti, where tens of thousands surged wall-to-wall through the streets of the capital Feb. 29 to condemn the 2004 coup and continuing U.N. military occupation of Haiti, and call for the return of deposed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Great outpouring of humanity in Haiti

Port-au-Prince, Haiti – Here is a digest of press reports on the February 29th demonstrations. “Protesters jammed the streets of Haiti’s capital to mark the 4th anniversary of former President Aristide’s ouster, with thousands marching to the Presidential palace to demand his return from exile.” (AP) Demonstrators, led by activists from Aristide’s Lavalas Family Party, “loudly voiced their frustration and anger...that almost two years after the inauguration of a formally elected government on May 14, 2006, foreign troops still occupy Haiti, political prisoners still languish untried behind bars, putschists still hold key government posts, coup victims have received no justice or reparations, and Aristide remains in exile.” (Haiti Liberté)

“The Lavalas movement of former President Aristide simply will not quit,” reported the Haiti Information Project (HIP). People turned out in large numbers despite the UN forces playing “a heavy hand in attempting to discourage Haitians from

commemorating” the Feb. 29 coup. “In early February, Brazilian forces conducted several high profile raids that led to the mass incarceration of males between the ages of 15 and 30” in strongly Lavalas neighborhoods. One week before the demonstration, Brazilian UN troops detained well-known musician and grassroots activist Yvon ‘Zap Zap’ Antoine for 7 hours, and confiscated a photo of Aristide he was holding in his hand, HIP reported.

The 8-hour-long demonstration kicked off at 8 a.m. at the ruins of St. Jean Bosco, the burned-out church in the poor neighborhood of La Saline where Aristide, then a Catholic priest, used to preach during the 1980s. “There was a symbolic funeral with painted cardboard coffins bearing the names of the 2004 coup coordinators: the US, France, Canada, the United Nations, the Organization of American States,” Haiti Liberté reported. There was “a large contingent from the September 30th Foundation, [a human rights organization] headed by interim director Wilson Mesilien. The group wore T-shirts...emblazoned with the image of Lovinsky Pierre-Antoine, the foundation’s founder who was kidnapped on Aug. 12, 2007....They called on the government to investigate his disappearance,” the newspaper said.

The march moved from St. Jean Bosco following “an itinerary which took it to several symbolic places: the church Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Bel Air (where many demonstrations against the coup began)...the American and French embassies, and finally the National Palace. Delegations representing workers, peasants, lawyers, nurses and human rights groups all participated in this great outpouring of humanity. Feeder marches from neighborhoods like Cité Soleil and Carrefour joined the march en route,” the newspaper report continued.

“In front of the National Palace, the large crowd filled the Champs de Mars square. Standing in a pickup truck in the middle of a dense crowd, Annette ‘So An’ Auguste, a member of the Lavalas Family’s 5-member executive committee, read the party’s declaration: ‘On Feb. 29, 2004, the Haitian nation, in its vast majority, was a victim of one of the most terrifying political crimes in its history,’ she read. ‘President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was forcibly compelled to relinquish power and was driven into exile by military means...The worst is that the coup was orchestrated by the governments of three countries that call themselves friends of Haiti: the United States, France and Canada...’” Haiti Liberté reported. People in other parts of Haiti also organized activities to commemorate this day of infamy, and demand that Haiti’s sovereignty and democracy be respected.

Marchers chanted Aristide’s name at the National Palace, demanding his return to Haiti from exile. Marcher Jean-Michel Porfil, 32, told the Miami Herald: “The people are hungry. They don’t have work, but they protested because their President isn’t

here. We are asking for [Aristide] to be returned...He did a lot of beautiful things in Haiti; he built hospitals, schools.”

Haiti solidarity activities around the world

50 cities on 4 continents with 1 message: "Self-determination for the Haitian People!"

The 3rd International Day in Solidarity with Haiti was initiated by the Haiti Action Committee. Here is a city-by-city report. For the Call to Action & 7 demands visit: http://www.haitiaction.net/Events/2_29_8/2_29_8.html

Durban, South Africa - Abahlali baseMjondolo, the South African shack dwellers movement, hosted a screening of the new short film *What's Going on in Haiti?* at the Kennedy Road shack settlement on Feb. 29, followed by a discussion in English and isiZulu. Here are some of the responses:

S’bu Zikode: “As we are going to sleep today, most of us who have watched the video of the suffering of the people of Haiti, as strong as we are, can not enjoy the food that we are lucky to eat, not to mention our inner peace...as today the World enters the 3rd International Day in Solidarity with the Haitian People...I have tried to capture some of the comments in that deep discussion after the video show...”

Mazwi: “I do not see the people of Haiti. I see my sisters, my brothers, my mother and my father. I can not be silenced because this video is not seen in South Africa. I am sure it started slowly and softly, like how senior superintendent Glen Nayager of Sydenham South African police brutalizes Abahlali. It may be coming to us.”

Zodwa: “We are concerned as a Movement, can't we write letters to the Haitian government and secretary general of the UN and express our deepest concerns about this inhumanity? This is so painful that we can't keep quiet about it.”

Motha: “It sounds that this situation [in Haiti] will finally be coming to South Africa, but why is our country quiet about this? It is said that our own peace icons like Arch Bishop Desmond Tutu and others are not saying anything [about Haiti], the South African media does not say anything.”

System: “This is so touching. If we can hear direct from the Haitians, what form of support or help will they want from us. May be we should hear direct from them what is their constitution like, does it allow them to march or not, then we can assist and advise them on our own experience.”

Fanwell: “I think we should consider contacting the Haitian Embassy in South Africa and invite him/her to Abahlali meetings and have a discussion with him/her, so that we tell him or her how concerned Abahlali are with UN/US invasion of Haiti without the will of its citizens. Let us share this video with this embassy. It is

clear that the UN is controlled by the US. We should tackle this issue with the highest possible level, let us approach International Court of Justice and see how far we can go in support and defence of democracy in Haiti.”

Mafelubala: “We need to set up a mass prayer and mobilise our communities and pray in our individual space. This is so touching. We still believe to the Only God of the Universe that one day things will change.”

Mzi: “I feel so bad about this video, let us not see this pain as an isolated evidence of an attack against the poor. We do not know how it got started, may be it is the same battle that we are waging. I feel we should raise funds for them, each cent count to support them.”

S’bu Zikode: “Each member vows to write some solidarity message for the support of the oppressed, each member vows to take this picture and information to their churches to share it to all members of the church and ask every one to pray. Some will take it to their schools and those studying at the UKZN will do like wise. On the 21 March Abahlali vows to mourn the violation of Human Rights in Haiti as South Africa celebrates its Human Rights Day. The Movement will make the people of South Africa conscious about the slaughtering of the Haitians by UN/US forces.

“It is so disturbing having seen murdering of babies, young children and women in a war of this nature. The world is not doing enough to condemn the killing of innocents. Who gain out of this blood shed?...With all our hearts, love, strength, ears, eyes, prayer, we will do what ever we can to contribute to peace and justice to all who suffers the brute of injustices in Haiti...and elsewhere in the world. *Amandla* is still yours to overcome the evil oppression. We want to further salute those who are working hard taking pictures, information, sending the video over and keep the world informed.”

Montréal, Québec - Demonstration in downtown Montréal Feb. 29 in front of the Guy Favreau complex, a Canadian government building, called by Baz Fanmi Lavalas Montréal, which issued the following communiqué: “The objective of this demonstration is to remind the three kidnapping countries (the US, France and Canada) that the odious and dishonest act that they committed in Haiti four years ago, has never been accepted by the Haitian people, and will never be accepted by them. On February 29, 2004 the US, France and Canada kidnapped the democratically elected President of Haiti....The Feb. 29th demonstrations are an opportunity for all Haitians and friends of Haiti living in Canada to contribute to the resistance struggle of the people in Haiti against the foreign occupation.”

Berkeley, California – About 100 protesters shut down the Marine Recruiting Station in Berkeley for the entire day on Feb. 29, to "shine a light on the role of US Marines" in the 2004 invasion and occupation of Haiti. Demonstrators massed in front of the

recruitment center at 7:30 AM, and maintained a presence for most of the day. The media came out in force, including four TV stations, KCBS radio and San Francisco Chronicle.

Protesters chanted:

“They didn’t want the Marines Invasion,
They don’t want the U.N. Occupation,
What they want is Self-determination,
Let the Haitian People have their Say!
Let the Haitian People have their Way!”

A flyer for the protest, called by the Haiti Action Committee, stated: “Four years after the Feb. 29, 2004 US/French coup in Haiti...Four years after US Marines seized Haiti's capital and installed a US-appointed coup regime – Haiti is still under foreign military occupation, marked by rapes and wanton killings of the poor. Since the coup, Haiti faces growing hunger, unemployment and a spiraling cost of living. Haiti's jails are still filled with political prisoners and the poor -- while the coup plotters and paramilitary death squads enjoy impunity.”

Protesters passed out information about the US Marines' earlier invasion and 19-year occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934. They told how US Marines conducted a midnight raid on the home of grassroots leader and singer So' Anne in May 2004, two months after the coup. So' Anne had been a key organizer for the upcoming Flag Day demonstrations against the coup and occupation, and for the return of kidnapped President Aristide. The Marines used a plastic explosive grenade to blow off the lock on So' Anne's gate, decapitating her barking dog, and arrested So' Anne and some small children. So' Anne spent the next two years in prison. *** *See Fact Sheet on US Marines in Haiti below.*

Miami, Florida - The Haitian community and friends gathered Feb. 29 at Veye Yo in the heart of Miami's Little Haiti, for an evening rally in support of the demands of the popular movement in Haiti. They heard first-hand reports from comrades who had just flown in from Port au Prince, after marching with the huge throngs in the Haitian capital earlier in the day. Father Gérard Jean-Juste was quoted in the Miami Herald as saying Haitian President Préval “should be in touch” with Thabo Mbeki, the South African President, “and both work it out together to allow a safe return of Dr. Aristide” to Haiti from exile in South Africa. “That’s what we are looking for,” said the popular priest and community activist.

New York City – Activists braved bitter cold to picket the Consulate General of Haiti for four hours on Feb. 29, in support of the 7 demands of the international day of

action for Haiti. Protesters issued a “demand that the diplomats appointed by the 2004 coup regime, who are mostly still in their posts, be replaced immediately. These include first and foremost NY Consul General Félix Augustin and Ambassador to the US Raymond Joseph, who were both officers and founders of a certain 'Committee to Save the Country' which called on Colin Powell to militarily intervene to remove Aristide from power (which was in fact finally done), as well as Duly Brutus, Ambassador to the UN.” A press release stated: “We are calling for the firing of all the putschists and Macoutes who still run Haiti’s consulates and embassies around the world.” Sponsors: Fanmi Lavalas, Haiti Support Network, KAKOLA, International Action Center, Answer Coalition-NY, December 12th Movement.

New York City – A second New York City event was a screening of two DVDs documenting with live footage the various UN massacres of women, children and other civilians in Cité Soleil. The films sparked an intense discussion among those attending. Organizers have ordered more copies of the video for screenings in the New York area.

Santiago, Chile – Street artists painted a sprawling new street mural in Santiago on Feb. 29, in solidarity with the global day of action for Haiti. The mural depicts the masses of the Haitian people confronting the armed might of United Nations forces. UN soldiers are shown with skull-faces, and the US and Chilean flags are painted with skulls instead of stars. [Chile, along with Brazil and Argentina, supply important contingents of soldiers for the UN occupation of Haiti.] This marks the second year a new mural has appeared on the streets of Santiago, on the occasion of the International Day in Solidarity with the Haitian People. [To see the mural, go to www.haitisolidarity.net]

London, England - On Feb. 29 the Crossroads Women's Centre on Kentish Town Road had a packed house for a film showing as part of the global day of action, featuring the Kevin Pina film *Harvest of Hope*. The film, about the rise of the Lavalas movement leading up to the December 1990 elections that swept Jean-Bertrand Aristide into the presidency -- and the 1991-94 coup that followed -- is a primer for understanding the roots of the current crisis in Haiti. Also shown was a new short film *What's Going on in Haiti?*, about Haiti in 2007 under US/UN occupation. Preceded by a reception in honor of the Rosemary Nyerere, daughter of Tanzania’s first President Julius Nyerere. Sponsored by Global Women's Strike and Women of Colour in the Global Women's Strike. Info on weekly vigil for Lovinsky: +44 20 7482 2496.

London, England - Ongoing weekly vigil and fast for abducted Haitian human rights advocate Lovinsky Pierre-Antoine every Wednesday from 5 to 6 pm outside the Brazilian Embassy, 32 Green St., London W1 (near Marble Arch Tube), organized by

Global Women's Strike. [Brazil heads the UN military mission occupying Haiti.] The vigil on Feb. 27 was part of the 3rd international mobilization for Haiti.

Johannesburg, South Africa (Auckland Park) – Hear President Aristide speaking on the radio. On March 19, the radio station Channel Africa, affiliated with the South African Broadcasting Corporation, aired a previously taped, 30-minute program in English devoted to the situation in Haiti and the Feb. 29th International Day in Solidarity with the Haitian People. Included is an interview conducted in South Africa with exiled President Aristide. You can tune in to Tam Tam Express on the internet at <http://www.channelafrica.org/portal/site/channelafrica/menuitem.bc6b2b5d2d38a25ec0cc66415401aeb9/> Hold down 'control' button on your computer, then click on the link. Once on Tam Tam Express web page, click on 'listen' at the bottom of the page.

Atlanta, Georgia - Screening of the Nicolas Rossier film *Aristide and the Endless Revolution* Feb. 29 at Project South in Atlanta. Presented by Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, as part of the International Day in Solidarity with the Haitian People.

Roanoke, Virginia - Showing of a film about Haiti, March 1st in Roanoke, as part of the Feb. 29 global day of action.

Maputo, Mozambique – Lecture by Congolese historian Jacques Depelchin on the history of Haiti, March 7 at Politecnica University in Maputo (CREISPU), in solidarity with the global day of action for Haiti.

Moneta/Huddleston, Virginia - Evening Haiti film showing March 10, in solidarity with the global mobilization for Haiti.

Fremont, California - Teach-in about Haiti March 3rd in solidarity with the global day of action for Haiti. Presentations by the Haiti Action Committee.

Rochester, New York - The Rochester Committee on Latin America held its annual Rice & Beans Dinner for 150 people Feb. 29, "observing the 4th anniversary of the US-backed coup against President Aristide by writing our congresspersons to support immediately the House Resolution to cancel the Haitian debt."

Los Angeles, Calif. – Screening of the Kevin Pina film *Harvest of Hope*, March 1st at the Eastside Café in El Sereno. The film, about the rise of the Lavalas movement leading up to the 1990 elections that swept Jean-Bertrand Aristide into the presidency, and the 1991-94 coup that followed, is a primer for understanding the roots of the current crisis in Haiti. Also shown: a new short film *What's Going On in Haiti?*, about

Haiti in 2007 under US/UN occupation. Coordinated by Women of Color in the Global Women's Strike and Global Women's Strike. Co-sponsors CISPES, Answer-LA, and International Action Center.

Boston, Mass. – Members of United Steel Workers Local 8751 got a chance to see the new 16-minute film *What's Going On in Haiti?*, which describes Haiti in 2007 under US/UN occupation, as part of the global day of solidarity with Haiti. Their local supports the call for self-determination, justice and democracy in Haiti. A second Boston event took place March 1st at Boston's Cultural Café, when a speaker from the New England Human Rights Organization for Haiti gave an analysis of the 2004 coup in Haiti, in a forum sponsored by Workers World Party.

Toronto, Ontario – Mid-day demonstration and street theater outside the Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC) building Feb. 29, to protest media support for the US/French/Canadian coup in Haiti and current UN occupation. Sponsored by Toronto Haiti Action Committee “as part of a worldwide day of mobilization and solidarity with the Haitian people.” People in costumes (UN official, Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer, Canadian government official, etc.) sold ‘mud cookies’ to passersby over the lunch hour. [To stave off hunger in this time of high unemployment and spiraling cost of living in Haiti, some Haitians have been forced to resort to eating so-called ‘mud cookies’ made of mud, salt and oil.] “The poor majority in Haiti faces an unprecedented social and economic catastrophe that is steadily worsening,” said the committee's statement. “Basic human rights such as jobs, clean water, health care and education are unavailable and misery, poverty, hunger and diseases are on the rise. Haitian jails remain filled with political prisoners and pro-democracy activists, and the Haitian poor still face political persecution.

“Canada's assistance in Haiti to date has been to apply brute strength, superior firepower and a development program that dictates the best way to help the poor is to empower the rich,” the statement continued. “Despite the election...of René Préval, the reins of power are effectively in the hands of the foreign occupation forces.” Demonstrators condemned “Canada's criminal role in Haiti” and called for “an end to the destructive UN occupation.”

Jacksonville, Florida - Northern Florida Haitian community meeting screened the new DVD *What's Going On in Haiti?* as well as a video of the Haiti Workshop at the first United States Social Forum held in Atlanta, Georgia last July.

Macon, Georgia - Showing of the Nicolas Rossier film *Aristide and the Endless Revolution* at a church in Macon, in solidarity with the Feb. 29th global day of action.

Detroit, Michigan - Michigan Emergency Committee against War & Injustice (MECAWI) held a meeting in solidarity with Haiti Feb. 27th at their headquarters near Wayne State University.

Calgary, Alberta – Late afternoon picket line Feb. 29 at the Harry Hays federal building in downtown Calgary, for “an immediate end to the Canadian/US/UN occupation of Haiti and cancellation of the so-called Haitian debt,” in supporting “Haiti's sovereign right to self-determination.”

Palo Alto, California – A teach-in was held Feb. 28 for youth in the community, about the 2004 coup and the history of US intervention, invasions and occupation of Haiti, and the indomitable spirit of the Haitian people in fighting for democracy, self-determination, justice and freedom for their country.

Kigali, Rwanda - On Feb. 29 the radio station Contact One in Rwanda aired a special program in the French language devoted to the Feb. 29th International Day in Solidarity with the Haitian People.

Oakland, California - The Niebyl-Proctor Library hosted an afternoon film showing March 8, in solidarity with the global day of action for Haiti. It was a benefit for the Li'l Bobby Hutton Literacy Campaign, which is organized by the Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party. Featured was the film *Bitter Cane*, shot clandestinely in Haiti during the Duvalier era, and the new short film *What's Going On in Haiti?* about Haiti in 2007 under US/UN occupation. Representatives of Haiti Action Committee and the *Commemorator* newspaper led the discussion.

Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada – A well-attended showing of the film about the US/UN occupation, *Haiti: "We Must Kill the Bandits"* Feb. 29 at Algoma Community College. Filmmaker Kevin Pina was on hand to lead the discussion.

Pietermaritzburg, South Africa - Two university students who saw the new DVD *What's Going On in Haiti?* in Durban's Kennedy Road shack settlement on Feb. 29, took the DVD and arranged a showing at the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of KwaZulu/Natal on March 5th. The university students in the class then wrote the following 'Letter of solidarity and support for the people of Haiti' – “We are concerned by the violence perpetrated by US/UN forces against innocent civilians. We are shocked by the brutality and inhuman behaviour of the US/UN forces. We send our condolences to the affected families and to the entire community of Haiti. We condemn the killing of the children, women and men of Haiti by US/UN ‘peacekeeping’ forces. As parents, the brutality has touched our hearts and souls. We question the targeting of innocent children who are the future leaders of Haiti. We call on the South African government and all peace-loving nations to support and assist the Haitians to realise their democracy and sovereignty... We will be meeting on 20

March 2008 to learn more about the situation in Haiti and to plan further peace action to show our concern, support and solidarity.” - Signed by 14 students at the university.

Richmond, California - The mayor of Richmond, Gayle McLaughlin, dedicated her weekly 'Meet the Mayor' session on Feb. 29th to the people of Haiti, in conjunction with the international day in solidarity with Haiti. At the Richmond Library.

Notre Dame, Indiana - Caribbean Diasporas Film Series at the University of Notre Dame featured two films about Haiti on Feb. 28: *Legacy of the Spirits*, about Haitian immigrants' religious practices in New York, which inspire non-Haitians to join them, and *Haitian Song*, an intimate portrait of life in a small Haitian village. A second event took place following the films: a reflection and vigil for Haiti in the Great Hall of O'Shaughnessy on the Notre Dame campus, in solidarity with the Feb. 29 global day of action. Sponsored by the campus Haiti Working Group.

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada - The Canada Haiti Action Network (CHAN) organized three seminars in Winnipeg Feb. 28-29, in solidarity with the global day of action for Haiti, at both the University of Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba. Discussed were such topics as “Haiti today: Life worsens under UN occupation” and “Canada’s failed policy in Afghanistan and Haiti.” CHAN-Winnipeg raised three demands: “1) the end of foreign military occupation in Haiti; 2) return of President Aristide to the country; and 3) release of all political prisoners and of common prisoners illegally detained.”

Ottawa, Canada – “Four years later - Eyewitness Reports on Haiti Today” was the subject of a panel discussion Feb. 29 at the Haitian Community Centre of Ottawa, by three Canadian and Haitian Canadian journalists, as part of the global day of action.

Minneapolis, Minnesota – Late afternoon vigil Feb. 29 at the downtown Hennepin County Government Center Plaza, “to commemorate the shameful overthrowing of Haitian democracy in a coup against President Aristide and the Lavalas government.” A second Twin Cities event was a house meeting and screening of the Kevin Pina film, *Haiti: 'We Must Kill the Bandits'*, which tells the story of the US Marine invasions and occupations of Haiti, from 1915-34 and again in 2004, as well as the ongoing UN occupation of that country.

San Diego, California - Film showing of a new DVD *What's Going On in Haiti?* about Haiti in 2007 under US/UN Occupation, March 1st, at the San Diego International Action Center.

San Jose, California – Late afternoon speakout and leafleting Feb. 29 at Cesar Chavez Plaza, downtown San Jose, as people passing by on foot and in cars signaled

their support. Among the signs were 'US military kidnapped Aristide' and 'End foreign occupation of Haiti.'

North Minneapolis, Minn. – Eight-hour conference on the role of the African diaspora in the ongoing political and social ferment in the Americas, March 1st at Phyllis Wheatley Park Center in North Minneapolis, including discussion of the 2004 coup in Haiti and the Feb. 29th international day of solidarity.

Vancouver, Canada - Haiti Solidarity British Columbia sponsored a public meeting March 4th in Vancouver, on the situation four years after the coup and occupation of Haiti.

Joseph, Oregon - Late afternoon vigil for Haiti Feb. 29 in the small town of Joseph.

San Rafael, California – Late afternoon vigil and press conference at the Fourth Street Plaza, Courthouse Square Feb. 29th “to recognize the 4th anniversary of the military coup d’état in Haiti.” The Task Force on the Americas (formerly Marin Interfaith Task Force), sponsor of the vigil, issued this statement: “Thousands of Haitians were killed during the invasion, coup and subsequent occupation by US and UN forces which drove the democratically elected government of Jean-Bertrand Aristide from power....Aristide's policies did not go along with the privatization model that is offered poor countries in exchange for help with development loans. Aristide's plan for 'Poverty with Dignity' did not include the selling off of the resources which he believed belonged to the Haitian people. The coup heralded the return of the bad old days in Haiti where the lack of human rights and the control of Haiti's future are in the hands of a small number of wealthy elite, who have strong ties with the authors of the coup and the Duvalier dictatorships....” www.mitfamericas.org

Santa Cruz, California – 3-hour radio teach-in devoted to Haiti and the Feb. 29th global day of action, from 6-9 pm on March 8, on the “Free Our Minds” program on pirate radio station Free Radio Santa Cruz 101.1 FM.

Sonoma, California - A photo exhibit by Haitian news reporter and photographer Wadner Pierre March 3-7 at Sonoma State University, titled 'The Haitian Experience: A Struggle for Liberty.' The photos, he says, show the “consequences of the 2004 coup against the democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide”, including “the crimes that UN troops have done against the population of Haiti, particularly people living in the poorest districts like Cité Soleil or Bel Air....One love, one heart together let us fight for peace, justice and real democracy in the world.”

Pittsburgh, Penna. - Film showing of the new short film *What's Going on in Haiti*, about Haiti in 2007 under US/UN occupation, in a screening organized by the Workers' Fist organization.

San Francisco, California - Black History Month forum on 'The Struggle in Haiti' Feb. 29, sponsored by the Party for Socialism and Liberation.

Prince George, BC, Canada – A public meeting on Haiti since the 2004 coup was held Feb. 22 in Prince George, in solidarity with Haiti Solidarity Day.

Brooklyn, New York - Screening of the film *Bitter Cane*, shot clandestinely in Haiti during the Duvalier dictatorship, and the new short film *What's Going On in Haiti?*, about Haiti in 2007 under US/UN occupation, as part of Haiti Solidarity Day.

Philadelphia, Penna. – Special programming on Philadelphia's Radio Haiti Feb. 29. Morning and afternoon live broadcast of that day's street demonstrations in Haiti, followed by a 2-hour evening teach-in – the 1st hour on events leading to the 2004 coup and US role; the 2nd hour on the situation in Haiti in the 4 years since the coup.

Georgetown, Guyana - The Red Thread women's organization in this South American country issued the following statement:

“February 29, 2008 is the 3rd International Day in Solidarity with the People of Haiti. In 2006 and 2007, Red Thread helped organize events to mark the day, but this year, the mainly grassroots women who have joined us in these events in past years are battling the fear and rage and grief of the recent violence in Guyana.

“Nonetheless, in the midst of all our griefs, we ask Guyanese sisters and brothers to spare a few minutes to remember the women, children, youth and men of our sister CARICOM country, Haiti, today - four years since the February 29, 2004 coup that overthrew the democratically-elected government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

“The amazing people of Haiti, 200 years after they rose up and overthrew both slavery and colonial rule, are continuing to fight an endless revolution. Although Haiti has President Rene Preval, elected in 2006, it is still under foreign military occupation by the UN force that replaced US Marines in June 2004 - and Haitians are rising up in protest against the rapes of women and girls and the killings of poor women, children, youth and men that have marked this UN occupation.... DEFEND HAITI, WHICH IS CARIBBEAN, LIKE US.

“We will soon be showing a DVD on the present situation in Haiti in collaboration with the committee to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the British slave trade... Today we particularly call on Guyanese organizations to join the Global Women's Strike, which Red Thread coordinates in Guyana, in our campaign to release our dear brother and colleague, Lovinsky Pierre-Antoine, who was kidnapped on August 12, 2007. www.globalwomenstrike.net or Red Thread in Guyana: Tel: (592) 223 6354. To sign the petition visit: <http://www.petitiononline.com/august/petition.html>”

"Why we should always act in solidarity with the poor majority in Haiti" was the headline on flyers passed out by the Red Thread women's organization at last year's demonstration for Haiti in Georgetown. The flyer said: "Every time we hear news about Haiti we hear that it is the poorest country in the Caribbean, a country where there is always fighting. No one tells us why Haiti is poor and what the fighting is about. Here is the basic truth:

"The fighting in Haiti is part of a 200-year fight for freedom. The Haitian people were the first to abolish slavery. They won the first successful slave revolution in history, defeating France, Britain and Spain. Haiti also gave direct aid to other people fighting for their freedom. For example, it supplied Bolivar, the liberator of Venezuela and other South American countries, with ships and supplies to overthrow Spanish rule and helped train some of Bolivar's soldiers. All Haiti asked was that Bolivar fight to free the slaves in South America. The 2004 coup against elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was the latest action in the 200-year-old effort by the old and new colonial powers to defeat Haiti's struggle to be free.

"Haiti is poor because it has always been punished for fighting for freedom. This started when the colonial powers, furious about the Haitian people's victory over slavery, made them pay those who had owned and exploited them in order for their new government to get international recognition. Backed by the US, France forced Haiti to pay 150 million francs in gold as "reparations" to former plantation and slave owners, as well as for the costs of the war. It is estimated that French bankers and big business alone owe Haiti at least 21 billion US dollars for the forced debt it took Haiti 120 years to pay off.

"The old and new colonial powers have always been determined to defeat the Black people of Haiti...But the Haitian grassroots have never given up the fight against foreign powers and the local exploiters and dictators these powers support. The organization calling for the February 7, 2007 protests – Fondasyon Trant Septanm - is an example of their unbreakable spirit; it is an 11-year old organization of victims of the 1991 and 2004 coups in Haiti who have chosen the anniversary of the overthrow of one Haitian dictator, 'Baby Doc' Duvalier, to march to demand respect for Haiti's sovereignty. We picket in solidarity with them." [Photos of the 2007 Guyana demonstration at www.haitisolidarity.net]

Dublin, Ireland - Solidarity picket Feb. 29 in the cold and rain at the Brazilian Embassy, initiated by the Latin American Solidarity Centre, for the second year in a row. This focus was chosen because Brazil's military commands the 9,000-soldier United Nations military force still occupying Haiti.

At last year's Feb. 7th protest at the Brazilian Embassy, the Irish picketers passed out this leaflet: "On the 7th of February 1986 the Haitian people, after years of revolt against the rich and powerful, toppled one of the most brutal dictatorships that history has recorded, the one led by the Duvalier family. **Not only did they put an end to the US-backed reign of terror of the Duvaliers, but as well, the people were pushing forward a series of popular demands that were meant to radically change the face of Haiti: this was a truly revolutionary struggle. Today, Haiti is again under the yoke of oppression - this time under a UN military occupation called MINUSTAH, headed mostly by subservient Latin American governments, but engineered from the US and France, the main imperialist powers controlling Haitian affairs.** [The UN] took over after the kidnap and coup on President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 2004. **Don't let us have false illusions on the true nature of MINUSTAH: they are an occupation force that protects the sympathizers of the Duvaliers and other human rights violators. They are the only support for the corrupt Haitian elite....**So MINUSTAH have been efficient in fulfilling their role...to protect the privilege of the 3% of Haitians that control over 80% of the wealth of that country. End the UN and all foreign occupation of Haiti!" the leaflet said.

Washington, D.C. - The Latin America Solidarity Coalition (LASC) issued a statement endorsing "the call by the Haiti Action Committee for widespread actions in

the US and abroad on February 29, 2008, the fourth anniversary of the US-orchestrated, US Marine-led coup that overthrew the democratically elected government of President Jean Paul Aristide resulting in a continuing brutal occupation by a UN 'peacekeeping' force enforcing US government interests in Haiti while repressing democratic forces.

"The UN occupation force, known by its French acronym MINUSTAH, is shamefully commanded by Brazilian troops. The LASC supports progressive forces in Brazil which are demanding that their government not be a complicit enforcer of the US government's imperialist policies in Haiti. Brazilian activists are particularly angry that the Lula government would play a leadership role in the occupation of a sovereign country in this hemisphere. The LASC condemns the United Nations, Brazil, and the other countries which have provided troops for the military occupation of Haiti. Those troops allow the US war machine to enforce strategic goals over the Caribbean and Latin America while freeing US forces for the continued war against the people of Iraq and Afghanistan....

"Under UN occupation, conditions in Haiti continue to deteriorate: recent headlines exposed that 10% (110 men) of an entire Sri Lankan MINUSTAH unit were expelled for sexual exploitation of young Haitian women and girls in a food for sex, prostitution scandal. Recently the Associated Press exposed the shameful fact that 4 years into a US-sanctioned, UN -backed military occupation, Haiti's poor are now resorting to mud cookies for food. Documentary film maker Kevin Pina and others have documented several massacres by UN troops seeking 'bandits' in Haiti's vast slums. The LASC recognizes the 19th century use of the word 'bandits' as a label put on those who take up arms against US imperialism.

"MINUSTAH presides over an occupation that favors US government interests in collaboration with the wealthy elite of Haiti. A program of repression against Fanmi Lavalas, the political party founded by Aristide and supported by a strong majority of Haitians when they have the opportunity to vote democratically, is under way, evidenced by over 1,000 political prisoners still in prison, and in the kidnapping of human rights advocate Lovinsky Pierre-Antoine. Haitian activists liken Lovinsky's disappearance to operations of the old Tonton Macoute (Duvalier era death/terror squads)...

"MINUSTAH operates with an annual budget of \$500 million. Haiti's entire annual budget under Aristide was \$300 million. Yet despite leading the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, the elected democratic government of Aristide/Fanmi Lavalas undertook a progressive social agenda that gave schools, markets, health care, infrastructure, hope and progress to Haiti's poor while still being forced by the US and Europe to pay off the odious debts of Papa Doc's dictatorship. MINUSTAH

expenditures, in contrast, strengthen US hegemony over Haiti's affairs, bolster military/security forces, and finance monetary schemes and corruption that aim to destroy resistance to the occupation. Just to view the obscene new construction of a fancy new US Embassy and an enormous adjacent UN military encampment is to understand that this occupation intends to stay.

"The other side of the coin is that Haiti's poor successfully developed a ten-year experiment in democracy and social progress, and the LASC supports their continued democratic struggle for sovereignty and self-determination. They are not victims of history. They have a sophisticated understanding of Western powers and a long history of resistance to foreign occupation and slavery. The immediate situation for the grassroots movement is difficult, yet there is both organized and popular resistance and dedicated activists working under dire circumstances. If there were ever a moment when international solidarity was critical, this is it," the LASC statement concluded. <http://www.lasolidarity.org/haiti/statementFeb08.html>

***** Fact Sheet on US Marines in Haiti:** While the fight to oust US Marine recruiters from Berkeley has galvanized public opinion and sparked headlines, we in the U.S. hear little about the US Marines in Haiti, a nation of 6.5 million people of African heritage. Since 1914, US Marines have intervened repeatedly in Haiti to enforce US strategic goals in the region. February 29th, 2008 marks the 4th anniversary of the latest US intervention which overthrew Haiti's democratically-elected government. Consider these facts:

- 1914: US Marines seize 1/2 million dollars from Haiti's national bank, transferring the funds to the National City Bank in New York for "safekeeping."
- 1915-1934: US Marines invade Haiti and establish a 20,000 troop US occupation lasting 19 years which featured martial law, dissolution of the Haitian legislature, and transfer of the most fertile land to foreign ownership. Maj. General Smedley Butler, a high-ranking US Marine, said, "I spent 33 years...in active military service...as a high class muscle man for Big Business...I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in."
- 1958: US Marines return to Haiti to support US-backed Duvalier father-son dictatorship whose brutal rule, protected by the dreaded "Ton Ton Macoutes," dominated Haiti for 27 years, killed 30,000 people and crushed political opposition. The US spent \$3 million training "Papa Doc's" Haitian army officers, many at the infamous School of the Americas.
- 2004: US Marines invade Haiti as part of the overthrow of the elected democratic government of President Aristide and install a US-appointed coup regime later buttressed by UN troops. They occupy a medical school, kick out the teachers and students, and turn it into a Marine barracks.

Order new DVD *What's Going On in Haiti?*-16-min.DVD on Haiti in 2007 under US/UN Occupation. Live footage of Dec. 22, 2006 UN massacre in Cité Soleil, the massive Dec. 16 march against the Occupation that preceded it, and the July 6, 2005 UN massacre in Cité Soleil.

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Order pamphlets **We Will Not Forget: The Achievements of Lavalas in Haiti** and **The US War Against Haiti: Hidden from the Headlines** (requested donation \$1 each; contact HAC for bulk orders). action.haiti@gmail.com For Haiti news: www.haitisolidarity.net www.haitiaction.net

