Haiti: A History of Tyranny and Resistance

The following overview of Haitian history strings together a series of slightly edited quotations from various sources selected by Press for Conversion! editor, Richard Sanders.

Haiti’s history is a history of foreign exploitation and domestic class struggle, of gut-wrenching violence and debilitating corruption; above all, however, Haiti’s history is a history of resistance.1

1492: Genocide and Slavery

Spain used the island of Hispaniola as a base to establish their domination of the so-called New World. Haiti’s indigenous Arawak population suffered near-extinction. The Catholic priest, Bartolome de Las Casas, wrote that by his arrival there in 1508 “over three million had perished from war, slavery and the mines.” This genocide can be attributed to disease, acts of slaughter, unrelenting forced labour, harsh punishments for disobedience to slavery and the putting down of resistance.

By the 1540s, very few Arawaks survived.2 The African slave trade began in Haiti, initiated by Christopher Columbus’s son in 1505. In 1519, Haiti had its first, large-scale slave revolt. It was finally put down in the 1530s.3

By 1600, Spain had vacated the western third of the island. French pirates later used it as a point from which to harass English and Spanish ships. In 1697, Spain ceded the western third of Hispaniola to France. St. Domingue, as it was then known, was “the pearl of the Antilles”—one of the richest colonies in the French empire, producing 40% of the sugar and 60% of the coffee consumed in Europe by the 1780s. It produced more than all of Britain’s West Indian colonies, combined. During the 1700s, about 790,000 African slaves were imported to work on Haitian plantations (accounting for a third of the entire Atlantic slave trade between 1783 and 1791).2

1791–1803: Revolution

Between 1679 and 1778, Haitian slaves organized seven major conspiracies.4 Following the 1789 French revolution and a slave revolt in 1791, Britain invaded St. Domingue attempting to stop the rebellion’s spread to its Caribbean colonies.5 Upper and Lower Canada, as well as the Maritimes, provided not only the lion’s share of the resources and many of the desperately needed soldiers for this conflict but also many of the commanding officers. In every way imaginable, Canada was an essential part of Britain’s plan to smash the Caribbean’s fight for liberty.6

France abolished slavery on the island in 1793 and freed slaves throughout its empire the next year. In 1802, Napoleon sent a large force to reestablish slavery.7 France’s 70 warships and 25,000 troops8 were supported by the U.S. which contributed the then-immense sum of $400,000.8 Haitians defeated Napoleon’s navy and won independence in 1803.1 U.S. President Jefferson refused to recognize Haiti.9

Haiti’s independence marked the beginning of the end of the transatlantic slave trade. For slave nations such as the U.S., the Haitian revolution was a wake-up call. Suddenly there was a new potential down-side to importing massive numbers of African slaves to be overseen by white masters. By politically undermining the slave trade, Haitians also undermined the foundation of Europe’s economy. Needless to say, newly-independent Haiti was politically isolated and friendless in the world community.1

1825: Debt Slavery Begins

In 1825, the French threatened to re-conquer Haiti and enslave its population again unless Haiti paid reparations to France for the property that they “stole” during the revolution. (Much of that property was their own formerly enslaved bodies.) So, under this threat, Haiti agreed to France’s demands, and thrust themselves into a crippling quagmire of endless debt and institutional poverty that exists to this day.1

The Haitian government was able to pay the first instalment of 30 million francs only by closing down every school in the country.

By the late 19th century, payments on this extortionate debt “consumed as much as 80% of Haiti’s national budget.”8

In 1862, U.S. President Abraham Lincoln finally recognized Haiti. In 1888, the U.S. began its habit of intervention when U.S. forces responded to the Haitian authorities’ seizure of a U.S. ship that had landed illegally. In 1891, U.S. troops landed “to protect American lives and property ... when Negro laborers got out of control.”9

1915–1934: US Occupation

U.S. President Woodrow Wilson deployed Marines to Haiti in 1914 and 1915 to “maintain order” in a time of “chronic and threatened insurrection.”9

The U.S. invasion and 20-year occupation left deep scars on Haiti and created the military, an institution that dominated Haiti’s political life long after the occupation. According to Wilson, the occupation’s goals were to “pacify” peasants, control customs houses and diminish European influence in Haiti. Noam Chomsky describes the mission’s many “successes”: “[T]he acceleration of Haiti’s eco-
BACKGROUND
nomic, military and political central-
ization, its economic dependence and
sharp class divisions, the vicious ex-
loitation of the peasantry, the inter-
conflicts much intensified by the
extreme racism of occupying forces,
and perhaps worst of all, the estab-
ishment of 'an army to fight the peo-
ple.'" ("Democracy Enhancement

Other achievements included
reinstating virtual slavery, dissolving
the National Assembly and imposing a
U.S.-designed constitution allowing
foreign ownership of land.9

1934-1956:
Coups and more Coups
In 1934, FDR ended the occupation by
turning the government over to a clique
that footed the country.9 The U.S.-
groomed leadership grew increasingly
dictatorial, eliminating the opposition.
Pres. Stenio Vincent, elected in 1930,
decided to remain beyond his second
term, but was forced out in 1939. Presi-
dent Lescot, elected in 1941, was over-
thrown in 1946 by the military. The man
who replaced him was forced out of of-
office by a military junta in 1950.10

Haiti’s first debt payment
(which had begun in 1825) was made
in 1947 to the U.S., which had ‘bought’
Haiti’s debt to France (Engler and
Fenton, Canada in Haiti: Waging War
on the Poor Majority, 2005).8

1956-1986:
“Papa Doc” and “Baby Doc”
In 1956, Francois “Papa Doc” Duvalier
staged a military coup10 and passed leg-
islation declaring himself “President for
Life.” He established an irregular
armed force of venal henchmen, the
Tonton Macoutes, to dispatch his rivals
and help control the population through
intimidation and terror.10

Haiti then endured decades of
immiseration under the brutal, U.S.-
backed kleptocracy. “Papa Doc” (1956-
1971) was succeeded by his grotesque
son, Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” (1971-
1986), who inherited his father’s thiev-
ing propensities together with the mur-
derous apparatus of his dictatorship.8

About 50,000 Haitians were
killed by the military and the death
squads during the Duvalier period.
The Duvaliers were anointed by

the real papa, the U.S., which had long
been training and arming Haiti’s mil-
tary. Most U.S. military aid to Haiti was
covertly channeled through Israel, thus
sparking the U.S. embarrassing ques-
tions about supporting this brutal re-
gime. After a popular uprising that led
to the collapse of Baby Doc’s regime,
the U.S. resumed open assistance.11

1986-1990:
Duvalierism Continues
While Haiti’s wretched rabble cele-
brated the end of Duvalierism, the U.S.
was occupied in preserving it under new
names.5 Haitians thus endured a period
of “Duvalierism without Duvalier,”
punctuated by coup d’états, voting-day
massacres and military governments.5

On the day after “Baby Doc’s”
departure in 1986, U.S. military cargo
planes were disgorging small arms and
ammunition in Haiti—apparently to en-
sure that successors to the Tontons
Macoutes were equipped to deal with
any possible outbreak of democracy in
a form unpalatable to the CIA.

Within three weeks, the U.S. an-
nounced it was providing Haiti with
$26.6 million in economic and military
aid, and in April it was reported that
“Another $4 million is being sought
to provide the Haitian Army with
trucks, training and communications
gear to allow it to move around the
country and maintain order.”

Maintaining order in Haiti trans-
lates to domestic repression and con-
trol. In the 21 months between Duval-
ier’s abdication and the elections in
1987, the Haitian government was re-
ponsible for more civilian deaths than
“Baby Doc” had managed in 15 years.
The CIA was meanwhile arrang-
ing for the release from prison, and safe
exile abroad, of two of its Duvalier-era
contacts, both notorious police chiefs.
This saved them from possible death
sentences for murder and torture.

Haiti’s main trade union leader
declared that Washington was under-
mining the left before the elections.
U.S. aid agencies, he said, were encour-
aging people to reject the entire left as
“communist,” although the country
clearly had a fundamental need for re-
formers and sweeping changes.11

Following the abortive election
in which “the army and paramilitaries
stopped the voting by firing at voting
centers, killing at least 34 people,”
Leslie François Manigat ascended to
the presidency, but was overthrown four
months later in a military coup.8

1990-1991:
Aristide’s “Flash Flood”
In the December 1990 elections, a di-
verse array of grassroots organizations
called Lavalas (Creole for “flash
flood”) swept Jean-Bertrand Aristide
into the presidency. The rich in Haiti
and the U.S. government had expected
their candidate, former World Bank
economist Marc Bazin, to win easily
and were stunned by the victory of
Aristide, an advocate for the poor.3

Aristide, a slender, soft-spoken
priest whose life’s work had been min-
istering to the poor, won with an over-
whelming 67% of the vote.8 Seven
months with him as president yielded a
virtual halt in human rights violations,
a reduction in “boat people” fleeing
Haiti, a successful anti-corruption cam-
paign and a higher minimum wage.3

The Duvalier Dictators: “Papa Doc” and son, “Baby Doc”
FRAPH was CIA-funded and organized. Constant, the FRAPH death-squad leader, said coup leader, Gen. Raoul Cedras was on the CIA payroll before and during the coup. “Toto” Constant, the FRAPH death-squad leader, said FRAPH was CIA-funded and organized.

In 1991, when it was clear Aristide intended to fulfil his campaign promises, he was overthrown, after seven months in office, by a CIA-backed coup. The coup followed a familiar script: the elite organized and financed the operation while military and death squads did the dirty work. They were brutal with Lavalas. Massacres, assassinations, rapes and beatings were commonplace. The army, aided by a paramilitary organization (Front Révolutionnaire pour l’Avancement et le Progrès Haïtiens—FRAPH), killed 5,000 people between 1991 and 1994.

The U.S. government was deeply implicated. Coup leader, General Raoul Cedras, and other top Haitian military figures, were on the CIA payroll before and during the coup. According to its leader Emmanuel “Toto” Constant, FRAPH was organized and funded by the CIA as a “counterweight” to Lavalas. (Anthony Arnove, “Interview with Allan Nairn,” Z, June 1995.)

However, the fascistic gangsters of the military and FRAPH were an embarrassment to their U.S. masters. Openly involved in drug-trafficking, they continued the Duvalier régime’s work in CIA-protected, cocaine-transshipments between Colombia and Miami. Moreover, they unleashed an appalling campaign of violence. While thousands of civilians were murdered, most of them Lavalas activists,

“Some 300,000 people became internal refugees, ‘thousands more fled across the border to the Dominican Republic, and more than 60,000 took to the high seas.’” (Dina Parks, National Coalition for Haitian Rights, to U.S. Senate Judiciary Ctee., Oct. 1, 2002).

1994-2000: Taming the Priest
In 1994, President Bill Clinton sent 20,000 troops to Haiti to reinstall Aristide. Aristide was returned to office after a prolonged U.S. campaign of media vilification and bullying by U.S. diplomats, who made it clear he would have to implement, not his own policies, but those of his defeated rival, the World-Bank’s, Marc Bazin.

Aristide’s return exacted a heavy price in terms of justice and democracy: amnesty for the military, “broadening” of the government to include those who supported the coup, implementing Bazin’s “structural adjustment” plan and an end to Aristide’s five-year term, thus treating his three years in exile as time in office.

Yet Aristide was no political pushover. In September 1995, he: “dismissed his prime minister for preparing to sell the state-owned flour and cement mills without...any of the progressive terms the IMF had promised to honour” (Peter Hallward, “Option Zero in Haiti,” New Left Review, May/June 2004.) And, before the end of his truncated term, Aristide disbanded the murderous army. This was probably his greatest contribution to democracy in Haiti.

However, the globalizing institutions of the so-called ‘Washington Consensus’ went to work—among them the World Bank, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the National Endowment for Democracy, and a host of U.S.-funded NGOs and ‘civil society’ groups. Their goal was to “impose a neoliberal economic agenda, to undermine grassroots democracy, to create political stability conducive to a good business climate and to bring Haiti into the new world order appended to the U.S. as a source of markets and cheap labor” (Jane Regan, Covert Action Quarterly).
BACKGROUND

the OAS reversed its assessment claiming that the counting method used for eight of the Senate seats was “flawed.”

OAS aspersions were the rallying point for the opposition and their imperialist allies to overturn the government. Disparate strands of the opposition—such as “left” dissidents formerly linked with Lavalas, along with business leaders, ex-Duvalierists and other elements of the right—united in 2000 under the Convergence Democratique and said they would boycott upcoming presidential elections. This was an empty gesture. Over 50% of the electorate turned out to deliver Aristide the presidency with 92% of the votes.³

After 2000, the U.S. imposed an embargo on aid and loans.³

In July 2001, former military and death squad members, led by former police chief Guy Philippe, mounted attacks against police stations along the Haiti-Dominican Republic (DR) border, killing at least five police. Philippe had received U.S. military training in Ecuador during the 1991-1994 coup, and was incorporated into the Haitian National Police (HNP) in 1995. His tenure there was marked by reports of summary executions by police under his command and accusations of drug trafficking. In 2000, he fled to the DR after he and fellow police chiefs were discovered plotting a coup against Préval’s government.

Philippe, and FRAPH second-in-command Louis Jodel Chamblain, led attacks against Haiti’s Presidential Palace in 2001 and a Haitian hydroelectric dam in 2003. These and numerous other attacks from the DR, left dozens of police and FL members dead.

A retired DR general, Nobel Espejo, said 20,000 M-16s sent by the U.S. in 2003 were never received by DR. However, new M-16s were used by Philippe’s rebel force (in 2004).

The DR government did nothing to halt the attacks and ignored repeated, extradition requests from Haitian authorities for human rights abusers in the DR. These Haitian rebels were discreetly integrated into the DR army and trained at a base close to the Haitian border. The U.S. embassy in the DR was aware of their presence and helped to train and arm them.³

Aristide launched a lawsuit against France, attempting to recover the “debt” that Haiti began paying in 1825. Adjusted for inflation, it totalled $21 billion. On January 1, 2004, in celebrating Haiti’s bicentennial, Aristide boldly told a jubilant crowd that this money, rightfully the property of the Haitian people, would lift the hemisphere’s poorest country out of the poverty it has known since 1825.¹²

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Achievements of Aristide’s Lavalas Government

Health Care
• Health clinics, hospitals and dispensaries were renovated and built.
• Medical services were improved and added. Health care workers, including doctors, were greatly increased.
• A larger percentage of government spending was on health care than during any previous government.
• A meaningful AIDS prevention and treatment program was started.
• A new medical school provided free education to hundreds of students.
• Infant mortality declined from 125 to 110 per 1000. Underweight births declined from 28% to 19%.

Education
• 20% of the budget went to education.
• School enrolment rose from 68% to 72% (2001-2004).
• 195 new primary schools and 104 new public high schools were built.
• School books, uniforms subsidized.
• Lunch programs served 700,000 hot meals a day to children.
• National literacy campaign printed 2 million manuals, trained thousands of literacy workers, taught 100,000 to read (2001-2003), reduced illiteracy from 85% to 55% (1996-2003), opened 20,000 adult-literacy centers.

Justice and Human Rights
• The government opened a school for magistrates which graduated 100 new judges and prosecutors (1996-2003).
• Courthouses and police stations were constructed and refurbished.
• A child protection unit was created.
• Laws were passed prohibiting corporal punishment of children, child domestic service and human trafficking.
• The U.S.-trained, Haitian military was disbanded. This removed the main instrument of repression and dozens of coups, and resulted in unprecedented freedom of speech, assembly and personal safety.
• A National Commission for Truth and Justice was created to report crimes of the 1991-1994 coup period.
• Former soldiers and paramilitaries were convicted in fair trials.
• Those arrested had formal hearings before judges, usually within 2 days.
The Coup-Installed Regime and its Reign of Terror

By Richard Sanders

2004: Regime Change

In early February 2004, a small, rebel force of “thugs,” that was “directed, operated, equipped, financed and organized” by U.S. intelligence services, entered Haiti from the Dominican Republic. Most were former members of Haiti’s military (disbanded by Aristide in 1995) and the FRAPH death squads that tortured and assassinated thousands of Aristide supporters during the CIA-sponsored, military coup regime of 1991-1994.

Led by former military and police chief, Guy Philippe, and two leaders of FRAPH, Emmanuel Constant and Jodel Chamblain, their strategy was to “attack cities, drive out the police, burn police stations and… swiftly withdraw.”

But, as Aristide later explained: “They couldn’t take the [capital] city, and that’s why their masters decided…to create the illusion that much of the country was under their control…. There was no great insurrection:

One day after the 2004 coup, Chamblain thanked the U.S., Canada and France “for allowing us to get rid of Aristide.” (Globe & Mail, March 2, 2004.)

Jodel Chamblain, co-founder of the CIA’s FRAPH death squads posing at a pro-U.S. rally, 1994 (left) and while helping lead rebel attacks, 2004 (right).

Political Gains

• Haiti’s independent electoral commission oversaw the 1996 and 2000 presidential elections and three parliamentary and local elections.
• In 2000, 29,500 candidates ran for 7,500 posts. Four million registered for the election and 50% voted.
• For the first time, women served as Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Finance and Chief of Police.
• Aristide created a cabinet-level Ministry of Women’s Affairs.
• There was unprecedented freedom to organize, speak out and assemble.
• The Haitian constitution was printed in Creole and widely distributed, so Haitians learned their rights which, for the first time, they really had.

Economic Gains

• The minimum wage was raised in 1995 and doubled in 2003.
• A land reform program distributed land to 1500 peasant families.
• The government provided tools, credit, technical assistance, fertilizers and heavy equipment to farmers.
• Irrigation systems were repaired bringing water to 7000 farmers.
• The government distributed tens of thousands of Creole pigs. This reversed a 1980, U.S. extermination policy that prevented competition with U.S. farmers, and cost Haitians hundreds of millions of dollars.
• Unpaid tax/utility bills were collected from the wealthy, creating revenues for health care and education.
• 30,000 fishermen got aid and training to build boats. Lakes were stocked and 50 new lakes were created.
• Hundreds of community stores were created to sell food at a discount. This forced wealthy elites to drop prices.
• By 2003, malnutrition dropped from 63% to 51%. (Many community kitchens were opened to provide low-cost meals to communities in need.)
• More than 1000 low-cost housing units built (2002-2003). Low-interest loans enabled workers to buy them.
• Carpentry programs, sewing workshops and agricultural cooperatives were set up (1994) to aid the return of 100,000 who fled the 1991 coup.

There was a small group of soldiers, heavily armed, able to overwhelm some police stations [and] kill some policemen. The police had run out of ammunition, and were no match for the rebels’ M16s.”

They also freed about 3000 prisoners, including convicted rapists, murderers and fellow FRAPH members and military men imprisoned by Aristide’s government for serious human rights abuses. Given weapons, some of these convicts swelled the rebel’s ranks.

The following timeline outlines how rebel attacks were used as a pretext by the U.S., Canada and France to overthrow Haiti’s elected government.

Feb. 5: Rebels begin attacks on northern cities and move towards capital.
Feb. 7: 100,000 rallied to demand that Aristide’s government be allowed to finish its five-year mandate.
Feb. 11: Canadian government memos reveal plans to use “Responsibility to Protect” to justify regime change. Memos also “indicate speculation about working with members of Haiti’s former military.”

Feb. 20: U.S. Ambassador James Foley, told Aristide that he must accept a U.S./Canada/France plan to install a new prime minister and cabinet.
Feb. 21: Aristide accepted the demand, but his opponents did not. They did not want him to remain as president until his mandate ended in 2006.
Feb. 23: U.S. Marines arrive in Haiti, supposedly to protect the embassy.
Feb. 26: Canadian Commandos arrived in Haiti. Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham and U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell publicly support rebel demands that Aristide resign.
Feb. 29: U.S. Marines and embassy officials came to Aristide’s home at 3 a.m. Aristide says they told him that rebels and U.S. troops were ready to “open fire on Port-au-Prince. Right then, the Americans precisely stated that they will kill thousands of people and it will be a bloodbath…. This was no bluff…. we were under an illegal foreign occupation which was ready to drop bodies on the ground.”

U.S. diplomat Luis Moreno told Aristide that the U.S. would do nothing to stop the rebels who were poised to kill him. Aristide was taken at gunpoint to the airport (which Canadian Forces had “secured”) and was flown to the Central African Republic.
Aristide also explained that: “On Feb. 29, a shipment of police munitions—that we had bought from South Africa, perfectly legally—was due to arrive in Port-au-Prince. This decided the matter.... If the police were restored to something like their full operational capacity, then the rebels stood no chance at all.”

**Interviewer:** So at that point the Americans had no option but to go in and get you themselves?  

**Aristide:** That’s right. They knew that in a few hours, they would lose their opportunity.... They grabbed their chance...and bundled us onto a plane in the middle of the night.”

A few hours later, in a brief ceremony attended by U.S. Ambassador Foley, Haiti’s Chief Justice, Boniface Alexandre, was made president. This was illegal because it was not approved by Haiti’s elected parliament as is required by their 1987 constitution. To protect this unconstitutional regime, Alexandre asked the UN Security Council to send armed forces. It quickly authorized a “Multinational Interim Force,” and the U.S., Canada France and Chile sent troops.

**Mar. 4:** A “Tripartite Council” was chosen by Haiti’s new regime, the anti-Aristide group “Democratic Platform” and “the international community.”

**Mar. 5:** The “Tripartite Council” handpicked a seven-member “Council of Wise Men,” to represent Haiti’s elite and their foreign backers.

**Mar. 9:** The “Council of Wise Men” selected Haiti’s Prime Minister, Gerard Latortue, an international business consultant based in Miami, Florida, who had lived outside Haiti for decades.

**Mid-March:** Latortue picked the “Interim Government’s” thirteen cabinet ministers. Anyone who had worked for Aristide’s duly-elected government was “automatically disqualified.”

**2004-2006:**  

**A Human Rights Disaster**  

In its first month, the puppet regime “summarily cut off” all “funding and other support” to “literacy programs, food and shelter programs, and orphanages.” In April, Latortue dropped the government’s law suit against France for $21-billion in reparations for the “debt” Haiti had paid for French losses during Haiti’s 1791-1803 revolution. 

Several unlawful killings, allegedly by police officers:

- Numerous reported incidents of ill-treatment, sometimes amounting to torture in police custody.
- Numerous reports of arbitrary and illegal arrests
- Defenders of workers’ rights faced intimidation, harassment and death threats from police

A report in The Lancet, a prestigious British medical journal, stated that “kidnappings and extrajudicial detentions, physical assaults, death threats, physical threats and threats of sexual violence were...common.” Researchers estimated there had been 8000 murders in the capital region, during the coup regime’s 22-months. Of these, 21.7% were committed by “police and other government security forces,” 13% by the “demobilized army” and 13% by “armed anti-Lavalas groups.” “Lavalas members or partisans” were not accused of any murders.

The study also found that 35,000 women had been victimised by “sexual assault.” While “officers from the Haitian National Police accounted for 13.8% and armed anti-Lavalas groups accounted for 10.6% of identified perpetrators of sexual assault,” “Lavalas members or partisans” were, once again, not responsible.

This study also estimated that there had been 13,000 “government detentions or arrests” in the capital region during the coup-installed regime.

The report’s authors soon received death threats, “a package wrapped to look like a bomb,” and “a dead rat in the mail.” And, their work came under immediate fire by AP, the Guardian, Globe and Mail and Toronto Star. Although these media ignored the congruence of data in other reports, they gave credence to government assurances that their “peacekeeping” mission in Haiti as a wonderful success.

The following timeline is but a
sampling of human rights abuses committed against poor supporters of President Aristide’s government by police, right-wing death squads and UN troops (MINUSTAH) during the coup regime:

2004

Mar. 7: The State Morgue in Port-au-Prince, “dumped” 800 corpses into a mass grave. Many “had their hands tied behind their backs, had black bags over their heads, and had been shot.”

Mar. 28: The State Morgue buried another 200 bodies. 31

May 18: When 30,000 to 60,000 Fanmi Lavalas supporters marched peacefully in the capital, police fired into the crowd killing at least nine. U.S. Marines (“peacekeepers”) stood by with heavy artillery and threatened to arrest a photographer. 32

Sept. 30: Police shot at unarmed, pro-democracy protesters in the capital. 33

Oct. 15: The General Hospital disposed of 600+ corpses stockpiled during two-weeks of police/death squad raids into pro-Lavalas slums. 34

Dec. 1: Police and prison guards kill 107 inmates (many illegally detained). 35

2005

Feb. 28: “Police opened fire on peaceful protesters, killing two...and scattering an estimated 2,000 people.... Peacekeepers, whose orders are to support the police, stood by.” 36 After leaving the rally, 27 protesters were killed by police and associated “men-in-black.” 37

Mar. 24: “Police opened fire during a street march in Haiti’s capital to demand the return of...President Aristide ....At least one person was killed.” 38

April 27: Nine were killed by police who used “indiscriminate violence...to disperse and repress demonstrators.” 39

May 18: After a Flag Day rally, unarmed prodemocracy protesters were killed by death squads.

June 3-4: While police torched 15 homes in a pro-Lavalas slum and then execute 54 people, UN troops in tanks stood by and gave cover to the police. 40

June 29: UN troops killed unarmed bystanders during a large military operation in a pro-Lavalas slum. 41

July 6: “About 400 UN troops with 41 armored vehicles and helicopters, and several dozen Haitian police, conducted a raid in Cite Soleil.” Doctors Without Borders said: “We received 27 people wounded by gunshots. Three quarters were children and women.” 42

More than 60 were killed. 43

Aug. 7-8: Death squads, accompanied by police, used machetes to kill at least 19 women. Many of them were Lavalas community leaders. In addition, the State Hospital’s morgue received 40 other people, killed by bullets. 44

Aug. 10: “Police vehicles led dozens of hooligans armed with guns, machetes, axes and clubs” into a pro-Lavalas slum. “More than 12 people were hacked to death...or riddled with police bullets,” including a pregnant girl. 45

Aug. 20: More than 12 police vehicles surrounded a soccer stadium with 6000 people attending a U.S. funded game to promote peace. Police in black masks with assault rifles, and machete-wielding thugs, burst in, ordered people to the ground and fired into the crowd. Some victims were handcuffed and shot in the head, others were hacked to death or murdered as they tried to escape. UN soldiers stood by watching the massacre, in which 30 were killed. 46

Nov. 8: When UN troops with tanks and helicopters raided a pro-Lavalas slum, they wounded 15 and killed two. 47

2006-2007

Despite the victory of René Préval in the 2006 presidential election (see pages 35-40), the human rights disaster in Haiti is far from over. In December 2006 and January 2007, UN troops massacred numerous innocent civilians in a pro-Lavalas slum. (See page 34.)

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