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# When will the Dust Settle?
# Haiti, Canada and the Legacy of Jean-Bertrand Aristide

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# ABSTRACT

Canada has assisted the country of Haiti with its transition to democracy that began with the election of Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1990. Like the former president who has ardent supporters and passionate critics, Canada's role in Haiti has its proponents and opponents as well. These critics claim that Canada has been unduly biased against Aristide and his supporters throughout the past two decades and believe that Canada played a lead role in the planning and execution of the 2004 coup that sent Aristide into exile for a second time. Even though these criticisms of Canada's role in Haiti exist, the reality is that Canada has had a positive impact on Haiti's transition to democracy in the past twenty years. Canada's involvement in Haiti during these turbulent times included development aid and military and police support.

While the majority of the allegations against Canada are unsupported, Canada's critics have made a reasonable argument regarding the issue of human rights abuses that occurred during the transitional government from 2004 to 2006. Documented evidence seems to support the claim that the Haitian National Police and UN forces violated human rights, either directly or through inaction. This criticism, by extension, can be levelled against Canada who contributed both military forces and police officers to the UN mission during that time and filled the position of Police Commissioner twice.

Consequently, while Canada has definitely played a meaningful role in Haiti's transition to democracy, Canada must acknowledge that some justified criticism of its past actions does exist. In order to deter any future criticism, Canada should attempt to be as transparent as possible about its intentions and actions with respect to Haiti.

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# INTRODUCTION

Haiti has been described as a country "with unrealised potential that is constrained by endemic conflict, economic challenges and governance problems that have plagued it for decades."[1] When researching the topic of Haiti and its recent political history, the subject of Aristide is very prevalent. What is interesting to note is that there are those who support the former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide and see him as the messiah of Haiti, an almost saint-like figure who struggles to fight for the poor and disadvantaged. Then there are those who see Aristide in a less than complimentary light. They see Aristide as a political figure who may have started off as a benevolent leader, but who has transformed himself into a power hungry and corrupt politician who has used violence to advance his cause.

Equally interesting are the opposing opinions on the role that Canada has played in Haiti during the past two decades. According to the main-stream Western media and the Government of Canada itself, Canada has played a positive role in the tiny Caribbean nation and has been an instrument of good in the development of the poorest nation in the western hemisphere. An opposing view comes from various academic and diaspora groups that believe that a more sinister role was played by Canada in Haiti, including participation in the over-throw of Aristide in 2004.

Why are there such opposing views? How can the actions of Canadians in Haiti be seen in such diametrically opposite ways? The deeds that Canada has accomplished in Haiti have created a situation, rightly or wrongly, where Canada is seen by some as being

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[1] Aleisha Arnusch, *Cycle of Conflict and Intervention in Haiti (1992 – 2001)*, (Ottawa: Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, September 2006), 1. http://www.peaceoperations.org/_CMS/Files/2006_11_28_Haiti_Backgrounder.pdf; Internet; accessed 21 April 2009.

unduly biased against the groups loyal to the deposed former president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The question that needs to be addressed concerning the relationship between Haiti and Canada is one that addresses this notion that Canada is unduly biased in its dealings with Haiti. Has this perceived bias influenced Canada's involvement in Haiti or is the question of bias not relevant, given the assumption that all outside parties to an intrastate conflict will be seen as biased regardless of how they conduct themselves.

Even though there are critics of Canada's role in Haiti, especially when discussing Canada's relationship with the former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide and his supporters, the reality is that Canada has had a positive impact on Haiti's transition to democracy in the past twenty years. This paper will argue that even though Canada's past actions have been judged by some to be unfairly biased against segments of the Haitian population; those actions have not prevented Canada from playing a meaningful role in Haiti.

In order to set the scene and allow for comparisons and lessons to be drawn from the past, the history of Haiti will be introduced in the first chapter, while the second chapter will focus specifically on Aristide and the transition to democracy. The Third chapter will discuss the perceptions of bias in international engagements and the reasons why they exist, and ultimately why they do not matter. With the theory and the background introduced and discussed, the fourth chapter will focus on Canada's role in Haiti in the past two decades, while Chapter Five will explore the opposing view that Canada is actually hurting the people of Haiti and not helping them. Chapter six will discuss the specific issue of human rights abuses and Chapter seven will further discuss the issues raised in the previous chapters concentrating on Haiti's history and how past

actions within Haiti have influenced the current drive towards democracy? This final chapter will address potential actions that Canada must accomplish to be seen as successful in Haiti, including any actions that Canada will have to take to counter the perceived bias that exists.

# CHAPTER ONE – THE HISTORY OF HAITI

An examination of Haiti's history reveals that democracy has not been a significant aspect of governance within the tiny Caribbean nation and in fact, powerful dictatorial leaders are the norm. The military has consistently played a major role in the selection and removal of presidents throughout the history of Haiti, which has also been plagued by foreign interference and political violence since the republic was created in 1804.

## Hispaniola

The Republic of Haiti occupies one third of the island of Hispaniola, which it shares with the Dominican Republic and covers a land mass of approximately 27,750 sq km. The island lies approximately 960 km southeast of Florida and is situated between Cuba and Jamaica on the west and Puerto Rico on the east. The large tracts of forest that existed when Columbus discovered the island in 1492 have been systematically removed for farmland and fuel.[2]

Haiti's climate is characterised as tropical, but in the regions where the mountains interrupt the prevailing trade winds, the climate is semiarid. Haiti lies in the hurricane belt, and while most hurricanes track to the north or south of the island, several have passed over the country in the past century causing widespread damage.[3] The 2008 hurricane season saw Fay, Gustav, Hanna and Ike strike the country resulting in

[2] Thomas E. Weil, J. Black, H. Blutstein, K. Johnston, D. McMorris and F. Munson, *Area Handbook for Haiti*. (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), 5.

[3] Ibid., 12-13.

approximately 800 dead and the country facing additional hardship caused by the destruction of nearly 60% of that year's harvest.[4]

The population of Haiti was estimated at approximately 8.9 million in 2008, with over 40 percent of the population being under the age of 14. Blacks make up 95 percent of the population with the other 5 percent shared between whites and mulattoes. The primary religion is Roman Catholicism; however Voodoo is practiced by approximately 50 percent of the population.[5]

## The Colony of Saint-Domingue

While the Republic of Haiti was founded in 1804 when the African slaves in the tiny French colony of Saint-Domingue revolted against their masters, the actual modern history of Haiti dates back to 1492 and the discovery of the island of Hispaniola by Christopher Columbus. Columbus first landed on the island at Môle Saint-Nicolas, just west of present day Cap-Haïtien.[6] The first settlement established by Columbus in 1492 was destroyed by the indigenous Taino, but his second settlement established the following year persevered and became the first Spanish colony in the New World. The Spanish called their new colony Santo Domingo.[7]

Santo Domingo would become the gateway to the New World and agriculture would become the driving force behind its economy, sustained by a labour force

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[4] Rory Carroll, "We are going to disappear one day", guardian.co.uk, 8 November 2008, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/nov/08/haiti-hurricanes; Internet; accessed 31 March 2009.

[5] CIA, "The World Fact Book – Haiti," https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/print/ha.html; Internet; accessed 28 January 2009.

[6] Philippe R. Girard, *Paradise Lost – Haiti's Tumultuous Journey from Pearl of the Caribbean to Third World Hot Spot*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 14.

[7] Helen Chapin Metz, ed., *Dominican Republic and Haiti Country Studies*. 3rd ed. (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 200), 264.

composed of African slaves.[8] The first French settlers choose the western side of Hispaniola to settle since the Spanish presence was very light and the hunting was very good. The settlers eventually turned away from hunting and towards the more prosperous trade of raiding the Spanish ships that passed between Cuba and Hispaniola on their way back to Spain. This harassment of Spanish ships continued until the 1697 Treaty of Ryswick turned over authority for the western third of Hispaniola to France, who named their new colony Saint-Domingue.[9]

Numerous French citizens came to Saint-Domingue in the 1720s to farm coffee or sugar and then return to France with their profits. Sugar became the main commodity and by 1789 Saint-Domingue became the wealthiest colony in the Western Hemisphere, creating more wealth than the United States or British North America. However, this wealth was generated by slaves and Saint-Domingue became the dominant slave-importing colony in the West Indies.[10] At the peak of agricultural production in 1790, it is estimated that there were 500,000 slaves in Saint-Domingue.[11]

The first slave rebellion occurred in 1790 but was unsuccessful. It was followed by the second rebellion in 1791 which was initiated by a voodoo ceremony. By the time the rebellion had ended, 10,000 slaves and 1,000 whites had died, and 1,200 coffee plantations and 200 sugar plantations were destroyed. The political situation in Saint-Domingue was very complex with divisions created along racial, wealth, and political

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[8] Ibid., 259.

[9] Girard, *Paradise Lost* …, 18.

[10] Metz et al, *Dominican Republic and Haiti* …, 267.

[11] Girard, *Paradise Lost* …, 20.

lines.[12] The British and the Spanish took advantage of this infighting and attacked the colony. Black rebel leaders Jean-François and George Biassou worked with the Spanish to take the northern area of the French colony while Toussaint Louverture pushed through to Gonaïves. In 1794 Louverture switched sides and joined the French and his defection was instrumental in turning the tide of the war. Two years later he rescued the primary French colonial authority on the island from a mulatto-led uprising and in return he was appointed the Lieutenant Governor of Saint-Domingue and was eventually named chief of all French forces. Louverture used his position to attempt to expel the French and mulattoes. He defeated Rigaud's forces in the "War of the Castes" in 1800 and by May 1800 Louverture controlled the entire island. [13]

In October 1801, Napoleon, unhappy with the situation in Saint-Domingue, ordered his forces to retake the island. Louverture was arrested in June 1802 and died one year later in a French prison.[14] Following his arrest, Louverture's lieutenants regrouped to oppose the French who had reneged on their promise to grant Louverture his freedom. Fighting continued for another year and in November 1803, the French general Rochambeau left the island and personally surrendered to the British in Jamaica, leaving the colony to the rebels. The war of independence was over. [15]

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[12] Ibid., 30.

[13] Metz et al, *Dominican Republic and Haiti …*, 270.

[14] Ibid., 271.

[15] Ibid., 272.

## The Republic of Haiti

On 1 January 1804 a new nation was born and it was called Haiti, taken from the original native name for the island, Hayiti. Its flag would be red and blue; based on the French tricolour, but without the white.[16] The nation was born out of rebellion and had thrown off the chains of its colonial master; however the nation was not born into prosperity. The population had been significantly reduced due to the fighting and the majority of plantation workers did not wish to return to the places where they had worked as slaves. The population was generally uneducated and unskilled. The surrounding states were all slave-owning and consequently were hostile to the new republic. [17]

The first leader of Haiti was Jean-Jacque Dessalines. His life as a slave had been brutal and as a consequence he hated all whites and mulattoes. He began the tradition of using the military to enforce the authority of the country's leader. He used the military to force the plantation labourers back to work and re-established the plantation system. Life for ordinary blacks did not improve. Dessalines crowned himself Emperor Jacques I in 1804, however his rule was short lived as he was assassinated on 17 October 1806. The first years of the new state of Haiti saw racial tensions between blacks and mulattoes increase and after the death of Dessalines, the political arrangement changed with the selection of a black president, Henry Christophe, and a mulatto head of the legislature, Alexandre Pétion.[18]

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[16] Girard, *Paradise Lost* …, 55.

[17] Metz et al, *Dominican Republic and Haiti* …, 272.

[18] Ibid., 273.

This political arrangement did not work and eventually the country was split into two with Christophe ruling in the north and Pétion ruling in the south and west. When Pétion died in 1818, the Senate named General Jean-Pierre Boyer as his successor. Christophe sought to reunite the country after Pétion's death but was unsuccessful. He suffered a stroke in 1820 after which he lost control of the military and subsequently committed suicide. Boyer took advantage of the situation and managed to reunite the country, however the economy was in poor state and his attempt to use the plantation system to revive it failed. Fearing another invasion Boyer attacked the Spanish colony of Santo Domingo and in doing so ended slavery on the island of Hispaniola. In 1825 in an attempt to garner international recognition for Haiti, Boyer agreed to compensate France for her losses and pay a 150 million franc indemnity. England followed France's lead and opened diplomatic relations with Haiti the following year. Even though the indemnity was reduced to 60 million francs in 1838, the payments had a severe impact on Haiti's finances and resulted in French domination of the Haitian economy.[19]

Boyer's presidency was noted for the increased divisions between mulattoes and blacks, with the former finding work in government while the latter finding work in the army. In 1843 Boyer was overthrown after 25 years in power, in a revolution that also saw the declaration of independence of Santo Domingo.[20]

Between 1843 and 1915 there were twenty-two presidents; thirteen were deposed by coups, one was executed, one was assassinated, five died in office, one resigned and

[19] Ibid., 275-276.

[20] Ibid., 276.

only one left office after serving his full term.[21] A highlight of this period was the rule of Fabre Nicholas Geffrard (1859 – 1867) who obtained recognition from the United States, healed a rift with the Roman Catholic Church, produced a new constitution and promoted education, including the establishment of a medical school. However, by 1915 the economy had become stale, the average annual salary was $20 U.S. and over 90% of the population were illiterate. Tropical diseases were ubiquitous and life expectancy was low. [22]

## The U.S. Occupation of Haiti

A year after the outbreak of World War I in Europe, President Woodrow Wilson authorised the landing of U.S. Marines on Haitian soil. Wilson's administration demanded regional stability in the Caribbean and Latin America and the political instability in Haiti was a direct challenge to that policy. In addition to the fear that political instability would endanger American financial interests in Haiti, there was the threat of German expansion in the region which added to an American desire for increased involvement in the Caribbean. [23] On 28 July 1915, U.S. Marines landed in Haiti to stabilise the government after the Haitian president was assassinated by a crowd of Haitians who forcefully removed him from his sanctuary in the French legation.[24] The Americans staged the election of a puppet president and forced the signing of a treaty that

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[21] Figures compiled from information listed at: TravellingHaiti.com, "History of Haiti," http://www.travelinghaiti.com/history_of_haiti/haitian_presidents.asp; Internet; accessed 31 March 2009, and the presidential histories of Tiresias Augustin, Simon Sam and Nissage Saget contained at Haitian Media, http://www.haitianmedia.com/; Internet; accessed 31 March 2009.

[22] Metz et al, *Dominican Republic and Haiti* …, 279.

[23] David Healy, "The U.S. Occupation of Haiti, 1915–1934," in *Haitian Frustrations – Dilemmas for U.S. Policy*, ed. Georges A. Fauriol, 36–45 (Washington: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995), 37.

[24] Ibid., 38.

would legally allow for direct U.S. involvement in the country.[25] During this time the U.S. Marines ran the country. They dissolved the government when it opposed them and they introduced a new constitution and new laws. The most controversial change being the constitutional article which allowed whites to own property in Haiti. The U.S. Marines tried to improve the living conditions of the Haitian people. They improved the infrastructure, including upgrades to the sanitation and water systems, and they tried to improve the health care system by importing U.S. physicians, opening hospitals, clinics and medical schools. They also tried to modernise the methods of farming and the military and police organisations.[26] Unfortunately for Haiti, the U.S. Marines favoured the mulattoes over the blacks, which led to increased racial tensions. The newly formed Garde, the predecessor to the army, was used to apprehend Haitians opposed to the occupation. Rebel groups were active early in the occupation, but after the deaths of their leaders, the armed resistance ended in 1920.[27]

Between the end of the U.S. occupation in 1934 and the election of François Duvalier in 1957 there were eight presidents. Sténio Vincent who was elected in 1930 continued on as president until 1941 and left office after completing his term. However the next seven presidents were either overthrown or ruled provisionally for only several months at a time.[28]

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[25] Ibid., 39.

[26] Metz et al, *Dominican Republic and Haiti* …, 281.

[27] Ibid., 282.

[28] Lescot (1941-46), Estimé (1946-50), and Magloire (1950-56) were overthrown. Lavaud was chairman of the military government (1946 and 1950). Pierre-Louis (1956-57), Sylvain (1957) and Fignolé (1957) were provisional leaders. Information obtained from TravellingHaiti.com and Bob Corbett,"Haiti: List of Heads of State, Presidents and Leaders," http://www.websteruniv.edu/~corbetre/haiti/ misctopic /leftover /headstate.htm; Internet; accessed 1 April 2009.

## The Duvalier Era

In 1957 François Duvalier, known as "Papa Doc," played on anti-Western and pro-Voodoo feelings to win the election for president.[29] Within months of being elected he began to destroy all potential opposition and centralised political power with himself. In 1961 he extended his presidency and in 1964 he changed the constitution which allowed him to become president for life. He was a ruthless dictator who killed and imprisoned political opponents. He created a Presidential Guard, separate from the Army, for his own protection. He also created the *Volontaires de la Sécurité Nationale* (VSN), better know as the *makout*, which reported directly to the president and used terror and blackmail to support him. In an attempt to destroy all opposition to his power, Duvalier nationalised the Catholic Church, closed the military academy, since he saw it as a seed of opposition, and frequently changed the military leadership. Papa Doc Duvalier died peacefully in 1971.[30]

Jean-Claude Duvalier succeeded his father as president, however the younger Duvalier, known as "Bébé Doc," was not particularly interested in politics, which allowed hardliners within the government to run the country. His government was rife with corruption and the *makout* preyed on the people of Haiti.[31] By the 1980s the economy had bottomed out and Haiti fell to the bottom of the list of under-developed nations. In 1986, after immense international and domestic pressure, Duvalier and his

[29] Metz et al, *Dominican Republic and Haiti* …, 283.

[30] Ibid., 289-290.

[31] Ibid., 292.

family fled into exile with the assistance of the United States, taking their wealth with them.[32]

The following years were characterised by political uncertainty, with open military involvement in the government, a rescheduled national election and several coups. Eventually an interim president, Ertha Trouillot, was selected from the Supreme Court. She remained in power until the presidential elections that took place on 16 December 1990 that saw the election of the young priest, Jean-Bertrand Aristide.[33]

A democratic tradition had not been established in Haiti by 1990. Elitism, military involvement, and foreign interference dominated the political landscape of the impoverished Caribbean nation. Even though the country remained extremely poor, and psychologically scarred due to the Duvalier Era, the December 1990 elections promised something better with the victory of Aristide.

[32] Girard, *Paradise Lost* …, 106.

[33] Metz et al, *Dominican Republic and Haiti* …, 300.

# CHAPTER TWO – ARISTIDE AND HAITI (1990 to Present)

The political climate into which Jean-Bertrand Aristide was born was the stormy dictatorships of the Duvalier era. His entrance into politics several decades later was though the grassroots anti-Duvalier movement and the political environment was not based on an established democratic tradition, but on militarily supported dictators. Could Aristide lead the Haitian people to salvation as Toussaint Louverture had done some 200 years earlier? Or would the political climate remain unchanged and the tradition of one-man rule and political violence that started with Haiti's first ruler, Jean-Jacque Dessalines, continue?

## Jean-Bertrand Aristide

Jean-Bertrand Aristide was born to peasant parents in southern Haiti in 1953, but moved to Port-au-Prince at the age of five to attend school. He was educated by the Salesian Brothers, a Catholic Order, and in 1966 attended their seminary in Cap-Haïtien. After leaving the seminary in 1974, he went to work as a novitiate in the Dominican Republic. He continued his studies in Haiti, Canada, Greece, Israel and Italy and was ordained in 1982.[34] After spending several years in Canada living among the large Haitian diaspora, Aristide received a Masters of Arts in Biblical Theology from the University of Montreal in 1985.[35] That same year Aristide returned to Haiti and he delved into the struggle to end Duvalierism. As a result of his political activities Aristide

[34] Alex Dupuy, *Haiti in the New World Order* (Boulder, CO: WestviewPress, 1997), 72.

[35] University of South Africa, "Former Haitian President graduates at UNISA," http://www.unisa.ac.za/Default.asp?Cmd=ViewNewsItem&NewsID=971&Cmd=GetNav&NavID=6; Internet; accessed 1 April 2009.

made enemies within the ruling class. A mass being conducted by Aristide at St. Jean Bosco church in 1988 was interrupted by armed thugs and the church was burned down. Thirteen people were killed and 17 others injured, however Aristide escaped. In that same year he was removed from the Salesian Order for "incitement of hatred and violence, glorifying class struggle, and profanation of the liturgy."[36] Aristide defended himself against the accusations by both Church and State by proclaiming that the poor of Haiti had the right to protect themselves against a state that was brutally oppressing them and that it was in fact the powerful and wealthy elites who had created the class war and not the poor majority.[37]

In the December 1990 election, Jean-Bertrand Aristide ran under the *Front National pour le Changement et la Democratie* (FNCD) banner and defeated the preferred candidate of the United States, Marc Bazin, in a presidential election that was monitored by the U.N., the Organisation of American States (OAS), and an independent observer team from the U.S., led by former President Jimmy Carter.[38] The UN election observation mission included participation from Canada.[39] In addition to providing election observers, Canada also contributed paper for the election ballots.[40] Even though the campaign was filled with violence, the actual election went smoothly and was deemed

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[36] Metz et al, *Dominican Republic and Haiti* …, 301.

[37] Alex Dupuy, *Haiti in the New* …, 75.

[38] Henry F. Carey, "Electoral Observation and Democratization in Haiti," in *Electoral Observation and Democratic Transitions in Latin America*, ed. Kevin J. Middlebrook, 141-166 (San Diego: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, 1998), n.p.; http://www.haitipolicy.org/archives/Archives/1998/carey.htm#N_15_; Internet; accessed 2 April 2009.

[39] Alex Diceanu, "Canadian foreign policy in Haiti," *Ploughshares Monitor* (22 December 2005); http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Canadian+foreign+policy+in+Haiti.-a0140446227; Internet; accessed 2 April 2009.

[40] Jimmy Carter, "Haiti's Election Needs Help," *The New York Times*, 1 October 1990; available from http://www.cartercenter.org/news/documents/doc1379.html; Internet; accessed 2 April 2009.

to be fair by the international observers. Aristide won over 65% of the vote on a platform to replace Duvalierism and elitism with a fair and democratic Haiti. [41]

Even before Aristide was sworn into office a coup occurred and the interim president was imprisoned. Haitians protested and after two days of violence the coup leader was arrested and President Ertha Pascal-Trouillot was returned to office. In the seven weeks between the election and the inauguration over 100 people were killed in street violence, but on 7 February 1991, Aristide was sworn into office and took over the reins of Haiti.[42]

One of Aristide's first orders of business as President was to reorganise the army and set up a functioning government. Senior members of the Army were retired or reassigned and junior members were promoted. Ironically, one of the newly promoted colonels, Raoul Cédras, would lead the coup against him later in that same year. Since no political party had won a majority in the National Assembly, Aristide selected his friend, René Préval, to be the Prime Minister. To fill his cabinet, other friends and supporters, often educated and progressive, were selected. He created the *Organisation Politique Lavalas* (OPL) which had popular support from both the urban and rural poor.[43] Along with his Prime Minister, Aristide began to implement his election promises to reform both the military and the economy. Given the presidential powers granted to him by the 1987 Constitution, Aristide moved forward with his plan for Haiti even though he did not have the support of the National Assembly. A war against corruption within the government was started, as was a war on the drug trade, civil service reform was

[41] Metz et al, *Dominican Republic and Haiti* …, 300.

[42] Ibid., 301.

[43] Ibid., 302.

proposed and a literacy campaign commenced. He developed concepts to improve revenue for the state, promote tourism and encourage private sector investment.[44]

However, Aristide was plagued by difficulties almost immediately after taking office. He did not control the National Assembly, and there was resistance to his reforms from the elites who feared the empowerment of the lower social classes. When his followers committed acts of violence against those who opposed him, Aristide did not condemn the acts and it has been suggested that this acceptance of political violence resulted in lower levels of American support for Aristide than he otherwise would have received.[45] Former army and *makout* members plotted against the government as a result of the changes being instituted, while Aristide's supporters complained that the reforms were not being implemented fast enough. After a speech at the United Nations where Aristide declared that "democracy has won for good," he returned to Haiti and, fearing that a coup would remove him from power, he denounced the elites and the *makout*. He distressed civil libertarians when "he urged the people to give the elites what they deserved, a burning tire around their necks."[46] What would become known as the "Père Lebrun"[47] speech, given two days before the coup, is often cited as one of the reasons that the coup occurred. However this is often debated with the counterargument

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[44] John R. Ballard, *Upholding Democracy – The United States Military Campaign in Haiti 1994–1997* (Westport CT: Praeger Publishers, 1998), 48.

[45] Margaret Daly Hayes and RAdm Gary F. Wheatley, *Interagency and Political-Military Dimensions of Peace Operations: Hait – A Case Study*. (Washington, DC: National Defence University Press, 1996), ch.2, p.1.

[46] Metz et al, *Dominican Republic and Haiti* …, 303.

[47] The act of killing by placing a burning tire around a person's neck is referred to in Haiti as *Père Lebrun*, after a tire commercial in which the salesman, Père Lebrun, places a tire around his neck. See Robert Fatton Jr., "The Rise, Fall and Resurrection of President Aristide," in *Haiti Renewed: political and economic prospects*, ed. Robert Rotberg, 136–155 (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), 151.

being that the coup leaders would have needed more than two days to plan, thus negating the argument that the speech was a catalyst for the coup.[48]

## The First Coup

Soldiers attacked Aristide's residence on 29 September 1991 and even though Aristide escaped the initial attack, he was captured the following day when he attempted to enter the presidential palace. After a short interment in the Army Headquarters, Aristide was forced into exile, first to Venezuela and then to the United States.[49] It has been suggested that the elite, who have traditionally enjoyed economic dominance in Haiti and influence with the dictatorial governments, were threatened by the development of democracy and the election of a populist president.[50] The coup targeted Aristide's supporters and over 1,500 people were killed in the first days of the coup. Resistance to the coup continued, which was met with increasing levels of violence including murders, torture and disappearances. International reaction was immediate and called for an end to the coup.[51] The OAS supported Aristide and worked to negotiate his return. They instituted a voluntary trade embargo against the regime and while the UN was also supportive of Aristide, but it would take until June 1993 until the UN passed a resolution mandating an embargo of petroleum and military arms and ordering the financial assets of the ruling Junta froze.[52]

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[48] Alex Dupuy, *Haiti in the New* …, 132.

[49] Girard, *Paradise Lost* …, 123.

[50] Aleisha Arnusch, "Cycle of Conflcit …," 6.

[51] Metz et al, *Dominican Republic and Haiti* …, 304.

[52] Hayes and Wheatley, *Interagency* …, ch.2, p.1.

The Junta appointed a civilian government and reversed many of the reforms instituted by Aristide. They attempted to justify their coup by highlighting the pro-violence speeches, such as the "Père Lebrun" speech, made by Aristide. The Catholic Church in Haiti also spoke out saying that the return of Aristide would not necessarily mean a return to democracy. The Junta's propaganda, supported by the Church, resulted in a weakening of international support for Aristide.[53] While this political dialogue was ongoing, the Haitian people suffered under the weight of the oppressive Junta and the trade sanctions. Many Haitians attempted to flee across the border to the Dominican Republic or across the sea to the United States. The U.S. returned the majority of the fleeing Haitians back to Haiti.[54]

The threat of sanctions resulting from the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 841 on 16 June 1993 led to the Governor's Island Accord between Cédras and Aristide. The accord, signed in New York on 3 July 1993, called for the return of Aristide, an orderly transition of power, the deployment of a UN force, the separation of police and army, amnesty for the coup leaders and the suspension of trade sanctions. Aristide would later claim that he was forced to sign the agreement or risk losing international support.[55]

The Accord called for a UN military and police force of 1267 personnel to assist in the transition through the training of the Haitian army and police and the construction of infrastructure. In October 1993, the advance party, consisting of American and

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[53] Metz et al, *Dominican Republic and Haiti* …, 304.

[54] Ibid., 305.

[55] Lieutenant Colonel James Helis, "Haiti: A Study in Canadian-American Cooperation in the Western Hemisphere" (Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania: U.S. Army War College Strategy Research Project, 2000), 8.

Canadian military personnel on the USS Harlan County, was prevented from docking by violent pro-regime crowds in Port-au-Prince. This occurred one week after 18 U.S. servicemen were killed in Somalia and the pullback was interpreted within Haiti as a lessening of resolve on the part of the Americans and her allies. After the failed docking of the USS Harlan County, violence within Haiti increased dramatically and UN sanctions were imposed.[56] It was at this time that the *Front Révolutionnaire pour l'Avancement et Progrès d'Haïti* (FRAPH) became active. FRAPH was a civilian "youth organisation" that supported the Junta. In addition to torturing and killing Aristide supporters, it took credit for the protests that prevented the docking of the USS Harlan County. [57] Emmanuel Constant, one of the leaders of FRAPH, was also a paid CIA informant at the time of the USS Harlan County incident, supporting claims that elements of the U.S. government were providing support to the Cédras regime.[58]

International pressure continued and on 5 May 1994 the UN Security Council passed a resolution which called for the resignation of the Junta and implemented a global trade embargo and travel restrictions.[59] The Junta showed no signs of giving up power and countered U.S. pressure by airing videos of the 1915 U.S. invasion. A state of emergency was declared and a curfew was imposed with soldiers patrolling the streets.[60] The U.S. favoured a peaceful transition of power, but began planning for an invasion of Haiti. The U.S. military conducted training exercises in South Florida, and at sea off the coast of Haiti. Puerto Rico was used to train elements of a multinational force that

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[56] Hayes and Wheatley, *Interagency* …, ch.2, p.1.

[57] Girard, *Paradise Lost* …, 140.

[58] Ibid., 142.

[59] Hayes and Wheatley, *Interagency* …, ch.2, p.2.

[60] Metz et al, *Dominican Republic and Haiti* …, 305.

starting coming together in July 1994. On 30 July 1994 the last commercial airliner departed Haiti and the country was cut off from the world. On the following day the UN Security Council authorised a multinational force to intervene in Haiti and restore Aristide as President using "all necessary means." It would take the threat of a full-scale U.S.-led invasion and last-minute negotiations between the Junta and former President Jimmy Carter, former chair of the Joint Chiefs Colin Powell, and Senator Sam Nunn to bring about a peaceful end to the coup and the restoration of Aristide as president.[61]

## The Return of Aristide

Aristide returned to Haiti on 15 October 1994. He was the first exiled Haitian president to be returned to power, but his country was suffering from the effects of the trade sanctions, was noticeably poorer, and was for all intents and purposes controlled by foreign troops. He was even at odds with his Prime Minister, Smarck Michel, who did not share Aristide's political views, but was appointed to appease his foreign backers.[62]

There was a lot that Aristide needed to do to improve Haiti, but he had only 15 months left in his presidential term. He announced a detailed recovery plan that involved public works projects to alleviate the unemployment problem, while at the same time he tried to streamline the public service. He disbanded the Army and replaced it with a new police force that worked for the Ministry of Justice and Public Security. The UN force, that replaced the U.S.-led multinational force, provided basic security and assisted in the

[61] Hayes and Wheatley, *Interagency* …, ch.2, p.2.

[62] Girard, *Paradise Lost* …, 157.

training of the new police force. Aristide also started to reform the judiciary and improve the prison system.[63]

## A Democratic Transition of Power

After several delays, municipal and parliamentary elections were held in June 1995. The elections were boycotted by three political parties and voter turnout was low. Due to election fraud a rerun was held in August and the *Lavalas* party was the only party that did well. The other parties wanted the elections declared void. The constitution prevented Aristide from holding office for two consecutive terms, so he supported René Préval for president running on the OPL ticket. However, several weeks before the November 1995 elections, Aristide removed his support from Préval which resulted in some of his supporters also abandoning Préval on election day. Voter turnout was 30 percent and Préval won the election with 80 percent of the vote. The transition of power between Aristide and Préval on 7 February 1996 was historic in the fact that it was the first time in Haitian history that a democratically elected president assumed power from another elected president.[64]

Préval assumed power with the United Nations Mission in Haiti drawing down and being eventually replaced in July 1996 by a much lighter UN Support Mission in Haiti, and then by an even lighter UN Transition Mission in Haiti in August 1997. Préval's first order of business was ensuring that the newly formed Haitian National Police (HNP) assume full responsibility for security from the diminishing UN forces and developed programs to address the economic and social problems plaguing Haiti. An

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[63] Metz et al, *Dominican Republic and Haiti* …, 308.

[64] Ibid., 309.

important program enabled at this time was an agriculture reform package focusing on the Artibonite Valley, which is the traditional breadbasket region of Haiti.[65]

In January 1997 Aristide formally registered a new political party called *Fanmi Lavalas* (FL). This new party revolved around Aristide and members of OPL either moved to the new party, or stayed with the existing party which changed its name to the *Organisation de Peuple en Lutte*, retaining the popular OPL acronym. The remainder of Préval's term can be described as dysfunctional politics at its best, with one contested senatorial election, the dissolution of parliament, and Préval ruling by decree until the 2000 parliamentary elections.[66] With a non-functioning government and economic progress and police reforms stalling, foreign investment in Haiti did not replace development aid as expected.[67] Unfortunately the only new business to develop in Haiti in the late 1990s was the cocaine trade. By 1999, an estimated 14 percent of all cocaine shipped to the U.S. came via Haiti.[68]

## Aristide Re-elected to Power

In the 2000 legislative elections there were two main blocks, the first being FL and the second being its opposition, which consisted of parties representing the elites, business groups, intellectuals and members of the middle class. Even OPL ran candidates against Aristide's FL. The international community, and in particular representatives from the OAS and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), were present

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[65] Ibid., 420.

[66] Ibid., 421-422.

[67] Girard, *Paradise Lost* …, 175.

[68] Ibid., 177.

in Haiti to oversee the legislative elections. FL won 72 of the 83 legislature seats and 18 of the 19 senate seats up for election. While the elections were originally declared to be free and fair and the results accepted by the international community, demands from the opposition led the OAS to reconsider its decision. It declared that 10 of the senate seats should have gone to a second-round since the mandated majority of 50 percent plus one vote was not met. Préval refused to follow the recommendation of the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) and consequently ruled that the senate election results would stand. After the president of the CEP fled to the U.S. amid fears for his safety and three other members of the council were replaced, the CEP ruled in favour of Préval and the election results stood.

The opposition parties realising that they could not defeat the populist FL individually, combined to form the Democratic Convergence (CD). Ironically the CD included many Haitians who had originally supported Aristide during his first presidency, but now found that his policies, and those of his party, were incompatible with their vision of Haiti. The newly formed CD protested the legislative election results and when their demands were not met, they boycotted the November presidential elections in which Aristide won, allegedly with an overwhelming majority.[69]

The CEP declared a voter turnout rate of 60 percent. This is in stark contrast to some international journalists and diplomats who believed the turnout rate was much lower at 10 percent. Unlike the legislative elections, only CARICOM sent election observers to Haiti for the presidential elections. The CD declared that the election was

[69] Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL), "Haiti After the 2000 Elections: Searching for Solutions to a Political Crisis," (Ottawa: June 2001); http://www.focal.ca/pdf/haiti_pp.pdf; Internet; accessed 14 March 2009; 6.

not legitimate given the poor turnout rate and demanded that Aristide not be allowed to assume the presidency. In protest, they formed a parallel government to oppose the official government of the newly elected Aristide.[70]

While the U.S. government under President Clinton was prepared to allow Aristide some time to undertake political reforms in Haiti, the Bush administration which came to power in January 2001 was not. The new administration stated that it wanted the issues surrounding the May 2000 legislative elections resolved before it would support Haiti and its new government.[71] The 3rd Summit of the Americas, held in Quebec City, also pressed the Aristide government to work with opposition leaders to make democracy work in Haiti. Aristide's attendance at the Summit did not grant his government the international legitimacy that he was hoping for. The message of political cooperation delivered in Quebec City was reinforced at the OAS General Assembly, held in San José in June 2001, where the politicians in Haiti were told to seek a solution to the current impasse.[72]

Aristide's presidential term was noted for government corruption, bribery, and policy decisions that while beneficial to Aristide and his supporters, were not beneficial to the Haitian people in general. The drug trade continued to flourish and it has been suggested that government leaders were complicit in allowing the drug cartels freedom of movement within the country.[73] On the anniversary of Toussaint Louverture's death on 7 April 2003, Aristide demanded that the French government reimburse Haitians for the

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[70] Ibid., 6.

[71] Ibid., 7.

[72] Ibid., 9.

[73] Girard, *Paradise Lost* …, 190.

restitution paid in the 1800s. Aristide argued that the current economic problems were not a result of his policies and leadership, but were directly related to the indemnity paid to France in return for diplomatic recognition in 1825. Aristide calculated the current value of the indemnity at $21 billion, which was immediately rejected by France. Undeterred, Aristide continued his rhetoric about past foreign interventions and presented an illusion of what Haiti could be with the monies owed to it.[74]

Unfortunately for Haitians, the poor economy was not their only problem as the "political gang culture" was fully functioning, with armed youths, referred to as *chimeres* by Aristide's opponents, supporting the president.[75] The *chimeres* were generally associated with acts of intimidation against people who did not support Aristide or his FL party. It is alleged that gangs of *chimeres* were responsible for murders, beatings and kidnappings.[76] The work of these gangs was done in the name of Aristide, but these groups insisted that they did not work directly for him. This allowed Aristide to distance himself from the violent activities of the armed gangs; however it is claimed that some *chimeres* were given jobs with the government in return for services rendered.[77]

## The Second Coup

*The Group of 184*, an umbrella opposition group comprised of 184 groups, which was formed after the 2000 elections, continued their active opposition to Aristide. In

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[74] Ibid., 192.

[75] Marika Lynch, "Violent pro-government gangs still prevalent in Haiti's politics," *The Miama Herald*, 5 June 2003, n.p.; available from http://latinamericanstudies.org/haiti/haiti-chimere.htm; Internet; accessed 6 April 2009.

[76] Angela Boatright, "Haiti: Violence, fesar in wake of Aristide ouster," Task Force on Latin America & the Caribbean (April 2004); http://www.forusa.org/programs/tflac/Haitireport604.html; Internet; accessed 6 April 2009.

[77] Lynch, "Violent …", n.p.

addition to financially supporting the *Group of 184*, the U.S. also publically called into question Aristide's ability to lead Haiti and called on him to act in the best interests of his country.[78] Throughout the later stages of his presidency, as opposition groups became more vocal, Aristide started to lose the popular support that brought him to power through policies and decisions that alienated him from his supporters.

Former members of the disbanded army formed the nucleus of the rebel force that helped to push Aristide from power.[79] This rebel force, having been trained and outfitted in the Dominican Republic, easily outgunned his loyal *chimeres*. Even some of his own *chimeres* turned against him, including the Gonaïves based "Cannibal Army" which marched against Aristide after their leader was assassinated; allegedly on order from the president.[80] On 29 February 2004, Jean-Bertrand Aristide was once again removed from office as rebel forces marched on Port-au-Prince.

The circumstances surrounding Aristides's removal in 2004 have been the topic of much debate. The two main opinions are that he left voluntarily to avoid continued bloodshed in Haiti or that he was kidnapped by the U.S. military and forced to leave the country. The roles played by France, the U.S. and Canada in this de facto coup are often questioned and Canada's role will be examined in further detail in Chapter 4.

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[78] Robert Fatton Jr., "The Fall of Aristide and Haiti's Current Predicament," in *Haiti Renewed: political and economic prospects*, ed. Robert Rotberg, 15–24 (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), 20.

[79] Ibid., 22.

[80] Ibid., 21.

One reported account given by Aristide's helicopter pilot, Frantz Gabriel,[81] gives an insight into the events that unfolded during the early morning of 29 February 2004. Gabriel was the only witness present, having been telephoned and asked to come to Aristide's home by one of the Haitian security guards who thought there might be "something happening."[82] Gabriel arrived at Aristide's home at 3:30 am, and shortly afterwards Luis Moreno, an aide to the U.S. Ambassador to Haiti, arrived accompanied by two U.S. soldiers whom Gabriel believed were American Special Forces. According to Gabriel, Moreno told Aristide, "Mr. President, I'm from the U.S. embassy … I'm the one that has to announce to you that you've got to go." [83] Moreno then escorted Aristide and his wife to a waiting U.S. government SUV. As Gabriel walked to the SUV he noticed that the compound was surrounded by U.S. soldiers. The SUV, accompanied by ten other U.S. Embassy vehicles, left the compound and drove to the airport where Aristide was escorted onto a white Airbus, with no markings except an American flag painted on the tail. Gabriel joined the Aristides on the plane, accompanied by approximately 30 U.S. soldiers and Aristide's security team provided by the Steel Foundation, a U.S. security firm. The Steel members were accompanied by their families. The thought that entered Gabriel's mind at this point was that the President of Haiti had just been kidnapped by the U.S. government. It was obvious to Gabriel that Aristide had been forced from his home and that he did not know where he was going. To reinforce this opinion, Gabriel recalled that during the flight one of the U.S. soldiers used

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[81] Gabriel had served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam as a sergeant in the 11th Cavalry Black Horse Division and piloted the only government helicopter used by the Haitian government. See Randall Robinson, *An Unbroken Agony*, (New York: BasicCivitas Books, 2007), 96.

[82] Ibid., 198.

[83] Ibid., 200.

the PA system to inform the passengers that "we don't have an official invitation yet for President Aristide. It seems like nobody wants him."[84] Eventually the plane would land in the Central African Republic where only Aristide, his wife and Gabriel left the plane.[85]

This account is obviously in contradiction to U.S. statements made at the time that strongly rejected any notion that Aristide had been kidnapped. In fact, the U.S. claimed that Aristide had asked for their help in leaving Haiti.[86]

While some confusion remains, what is uncontested is that Aristide signed a letter of resignation in order to prevent the deaths of thousands of Haitians, and that he left the country on a U.S. plane, escorted by U.S. personnel that ended up in the Central African Republic. Once in exile, he continued to influence the activities of his FL supporters, including both parliamentarians and the *chimeres*, who remained in Haiti.[87]

## The Transitional Government

Immediately following the coup, a transitional government was set up. A UN-authorised Multinational Interim Force (MIF) consisting of American, Canadian, Chilean and French troops entered Haiti to maintain order in the capital and assist in establishing and supporting the transitional government.[88] The MIF had a 90 day mandate and Canada's contribution, called Op HALO, consisted of an infantry company, six

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[84] Ibid., 202.

[85] Ibid., 203.

[86] Peter Hallward, "Did He Jump or Was He Pushed? Aristide and the 2004 Coup in Haiti," Haiti Analysis, 7 December 2007, n.p.; http://haitianalysis.com/2007/12/7/did-he-jump-or-was-he-pushed-article-and-the-2004-coup-in-haiti; Internet; accessed 16 April 2009.

[87] Girard, *Paradise Lost …*, 196.

[88] United States Southern Command, "Situation Report for Media: Multinational Interim Force – Haiti," 19 March 2004; available from http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2004/03/mil-040319-southcom01.pdf; Internet; accessed 8 April 2009.

helicopters, and a command and support element. The Canadian contribution was approximately 500 in total.[89] The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was established on 30 April 2004 and assumed responsibility from the MIF on 1 June 2004.[90] The Canadian troops assigned to the MIF would remain with MINUSTAH until July when Op HALO ended.[91]

After the installation of the transitional government there was a purge of Aristide supporters from public posts since the government argued that the jobs were actually no-show jobs used by Aristide to buy the support of the *chimeres.* Thousands of people lost their jobs with the majority of them being inhabitants of the Port-au-Prince slums. This in turn contributed to the gang problems in the slums as the newly unemployed turned to violence to support their families.[92]

In the initial years of the MINUSTAH mandate, the security situation in Haiti was generally improving with the exception of Port-au-Prince, where gangs controlled the slums. The gang problem was especially bad in pro-Aristide areas such as Cité Soleil. The gangs' influence prevented the HNP from operating in the gang controlled areas and

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[89] Department of National Defence, "OP HALO: Canadian Forces Commitment in Haiti," 17 August 2004; http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/news-nouvelles/view-news-afficher-nouvelles-eng.asp?id=1378; Internet; accessed 8 April 2009.

[90] United Nations, "Haiti – MINUSTAH – Background;" http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/minustah/background.html; Internet; accessed 19 April 2009.

[91] Department of National Defence, "OP HALO …"

[92] Letta Taylor, "No law, no order," *Newsday.com*, 1 January 2009, http://www.newsday.com/news/nationworld/world/ny-wosun014571055jan01,0,7483853.story; Internet; accessed 6 April 2009.

after Jordanian peacekeepers were killed, members of that contingent refused to dismount from their vehicles while on patrol.[93]

A UN operation on 6 July 2005 targeted the gang leader Dred Wilme and resulted in the death of Wilme and five of his associates. Unfortunately, the operation also resulted in civilian casualties and was used as propaganda by those opposed to the UN force. Pro-Aristide groups described the operation as a massacre and claimed that the UN was responsible for between 50 and 70 civilian deaths. Other local human rights organizations estimated that the UN was responsible for between six and 10 deaths. The UN human rights office in Port-au-Prince was unable to conduct an investigation into the 6 July raid since the safety of their personnel could not be guaranteed due to the poor security situation.[94]

## The Government of René Préval

In March 2006 René Préval was elected president with 51 percent of the vote, in what has been described as relatively stable and peaceful elections, returning the country to a democratically elected leadership after two years of transitional government. The party which supported Préval was the newly formed *Fwon Lespwa* (Front for Hope)

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[93] Walter Dorn, "Intelligence-led Peacekeeping: The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), 2006 – 2007," (Unpublished Paper, Canadian Forces College, Toronto, Draft Version dated 28 March 2008), 3.

[94] United States Embassy Port au Prince, *Human rights Groups Dispute Civilian Casualty Numbers from July 6 MINUSTAH Raid*, Port au Prince: File 001919, Unclassified version, 262051Z JUL 05, available from http://www.cod.edu/people/faculty/yearman/cite_soleil/Port_au_Prince_001919_26July2005.pdf; Internet; accessed 8 April 2009.

party, which was an alliance of several existing parties and grassroots movements.[95] Legislative and local elections followed in December 2006 and April 2007.

With the support of the newly elected president, the UN returned to the slums in December 2006 to counter the gang threat. This time they were much better prepared and they conducted their operations in the early morning to reduce the possibility of civilian casualties and to take advantage of the UN force's night vision capability.[96] By July 2007, the UN, working with the Haitian government, had arrested over 800 gang members and had taken control of the slums.[97] Crime rates within Haiti began to fall, with kidnappings falling by nearly 70 percent after the MINUSTAH operations in the Port-au-Prince slums had been completed.

In May 2008, UN officials in Haiti described Port-au-Prince as "no more dangerous than any big city" and stated that the belief that Haiti was a violent place was "a big myth."[98] Compared to other Caribbean nations, the 2007 murder rate in Haiti was over 8 times less than that of Jamaica (5.6 per 100,000 compared to 49 per 100,000) and much less than the Caribbean average of 30 murders per 100,000 people.[99] By

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[95] Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, *Country Fact Sheet – Haiti* (Ottawa: Canada Communications Group, June 2007); ; http://www2.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/research/ndp/ref/index_e.htm?docid=345&cid=0&sec=CH01&disclaimer=show; Internet; accessed 21 April 2009.

[96] Dorn, "Intelligence-led …," 5.

[97] Ibid., 7.

[98] Reed Lindsay, "Haiti's violent image is an outdated myth, insist UN peacekeepers," *guardian.co.uk*, 11 May 2008, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/may/11/unitednations; Internet; accessed 24 March 2009.

[99] Reed Lindsay, "Haiti's violent image …"

comparison, the 2007 murder rate in Canada was 1.8 per 100,000 while the US murder rate was 5.7 per 100,000.[100]

The senate elections scheduled for May 2008 were postponed and finally took place on 19 April 2009.[101] Early results seem to indicate that voter turnout was extremely low. FL members boycotted the elections as promised and isolated cases of violence forced the closure of several polling stations in the Central Department, however Port-au-Prince was reported to be relatively quiet on election day.[102] The electoral delay has resulted in the Haitian Senate operating with only 18 of a possible 30 members. The CEP, installed in December 2007, has stated that a lack of financial resources and inadequate electoral laws have prevented them from holding the elections as originally planned.[103] The CEP did not allow any candidates from Aristide's FL party to be included in the election, which the International Crisis Group sees as a mistake as the *Lavalas* supporters continue to make up one of the largest political groups in the country and their demonstrations could lead to political instability.[104]

Even though there has been great progress in the past several years, the two major outstanding issues facing the Préval government are security sector reform and poverty

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[100] CBC News, "Snapshot: Crime in Canada 2007," CBCNews.ca, 17 July 2008, http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2008/07/17/f-crime-2008.html; Internet; accessed 8 April 2009.

[101] Go-Jamaica Regional News, "Haiti elections near," Go-Jamaica, 25 March 2009; http://www.go-jamaica.com/news/read_article.php?id=7480; Internet; accessed 7 April 2009.

[102] Jonathan Katz, "Few turn out in Haiti for delayed Senate election," *Rogers Yahoo News*, 19 April 2009, http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20090420/ap_on_re_la_am_ca/cb_haiti_elections; Internet; accessed 20 April 2009.

[103] United States Department of State, *2008 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Haiti*, 25 February 2009; available from http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/49a8f185b4.html; Internet; accessed 13 March 2009.

[104] International Crisis Group, *Haiti 2009: Stability at Risk*, Latin America and Caribbean Briefing N°19, 3 March 2009; available from http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/49ae38d62.html; Internet; accessed 13 March 2009, 6.

reduction. In August and September 2008, four hurricanes hit the island of Hispaniola and caused the deaths of over 800 Haitians and affected nearly one million others. These natural disasters contributed to the already poor state of the country, damaged infrastructure and worsened the food shortages already experienced in the country. These natural disasters and food shortages have hindered progress on both of these initiatives.[105] In addition, the current composition of the legislature and the numerically weakened Senate do not fully support the initiatives of Préval and his latest Prime Minister, Michèle Pierre-Louis. This has resulted in a political stalemate on certain issues including the current budget which as of 13 March 2009 was being blocked by both the legislature and the Senate, both of whom wish to see changes before it is approved.[106]

## The Cycle Continues

While there was an expectation of change with the election of Aristide in 1990, the reality showed that history continues to repeat itself in Haiti. As such, military coups and international interventions remained the norm in Haitian politics during the 1990s and the first half of the current decade. Despite the success of MINUSTAH since the 2006 elections, the presidency of Préval continues to have problems. Haitians view the UN intervention in differing ways and consequently some willingly accept outside help while others see only colonial meddling.

Unfortunately, Aristide did not unite the people of Haiti and move towards a political environment free of violence, instead he seemed to be constrained by history and suffered the same fate as many Haitian rulers before him. Setting Aristide apart from the

[105] Ibid., 1,2.

[106] Ibid., 6.

Haitian rulers of the past was the fact that he was removed from office not once, but twice, under the threat of violence.

# CHAPTER THREE - CONFLICTS AND BIAS

## Introduction

An analysis of Haiti's past may result in a conclusion that until just recently, with the election of Préval in 2006 and the subsequent effective MINUSTAH operations in Port-au-Prince, Haiti was caught in a never ending cycle of violence which could be easily described as an asymmetric conflict. Asymmetric conflicts are usually characterised as long-term ongoing conflicts betweens elements of a society that see violence as means to victory. Since the conflict takes place over extended periods of time, there are artificial breaks in the cycle which appears as a resolution to the conflict, but which are in reality just temporary suppressions with the conflict returning once the situation has changed. The first presidency of Préval could be characterised as one of these artificial breaks, as Haitians waited for the return of Aristide. The real question is whether or not a peaceful resolution with both sides claiming partial victory is even possible, or does one side need to triumph and the other side lose in other for the conflict to be resolved.[107] This is a question that must be resolved, especially when faced with the demands by FL supporters that Préval should allow Aristide to return to Haiti. Can both Aristide and his opponents claim partial victory or does one side need to triumph? The ongoing multidimensional political struggle between blacks and mullatoes and between the rich businessmen and the impoverished poor majority has been constant throughout all of Haiti's history.

[107] C.R. Mitchell, "Classifying Conflicts: Asymmetry and Resolution," *ANNALS, AAPSS*, 518 (November 1991): 24; http://www.jstor.org; Internet; accessed 15 February 2009.

The influence and intervention of the French, the Americans, and more recently the United Nations, has also been constant throughout the political history of Haiti. How the UN is viewed in such an environment generally depends on the experiences and political loyalties of the person expressing the opinion. Given this, there will be those who support the presence of the UN, while there will be those who see it as just another occupying force, such as the 1915–1934 U.S. Marines.

## A Theory of Intrastate Conflicts related to Haiti

The structural foundations of intrastate conflicts are much more complex then those between states and consequently are much more difficult to resolve. Specifically within Latin America there are states with an imbalance between security forces, the judiciary, and the parliament which have resulted in large societal and economic inequalities. While there may not be a direct link between these inequalities and violent conflict, the presence of these societal and economic inequalities does contribute to the overall conditions that manifest in an armed conflict. The goal within an intrastate conflict should be to develop a peaceful and sustainable democratic environment. There must be a proper balance between military and civilian authorities, while ensuring that economic and societal reforms are facilitated so that elements of society are not tempted to take up arms to fight for their cause or to ensure that their voices are heard. [108]

In the specific case of Haiti, where the Army was disbanded in the mid-1990s, the state security instrument is the Haitian National Police (HNP). Canada has been involved

[108] Stephen Baranyi, "Interview with Stephen Baranyi, Principal Researcher, Conflict Prevention for the North-South Institute," (Ottawa: Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, 3 April 2008), n.p.; http://www.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/discussions/latin_america-amerique_latine/video/baranyi.aspx?lang=eng; Internet; accessed 13 March 2009.

with the international community in a project to reform the police into a legitimate, credible force that serves both the elites and the poor. While the professionalization of the police force is a positive endeavour, Baranyi believes that Canada should also be supporting the Haitian people through a constructive public debate involving all Haitians on the "right way to go about building an effective police force." [109] For the process to be effective, the Haitian people must take ownership of the problems and be a part of the solutions. Recent Haitian history has shown us that international intervention will also ultimately fail if Haitians do not accept responsibility for their future since the United Nations will eventually leave Haiti and Haitians must be ready for that day.

Thus it can be argued that while Haiti is not currently in the mist of a civil war, nor has there been one in the past twenty years, there have definitely been opposing forces at play in internal Haitian affairs during these two decades which have manifested themselves in at least three armed coups: Trouillot in 1990 and Aristide in 1991 and 2004. These opposing forces are active both within the country, and without in the large international communities, such as the diaspora in Montreal. The forces currently at play in Haiti can be simplistically categorised as pro-Aristide and anti-Aristide. Fully understanding that this is an oversimplification of what is arguably a very complex society, it does allow for a starting point to analyse the conflict and therefore discuss Canada's involvement in Haiti and the polarising opinions that exist around the roles played by Canada, the United States and France.

[109] Ibid., n.p.

## Why Bias Exists in Asymmetric Conflicts?

In Höglund and Svensson's research into the question of third party neutrality in intrastate conflicts they state that even when a third-party organisation attempts to remain neutral while conducting peace support operations, they routinely get accused of being biased by one side or the other.[110] They argue that when a conflict is asymmetrical "it is particularly difficult for mediators and monitors to uphold a perception of neutrality." External organisations can either decide to treat both sides as equals, the strategy of even-handedness, or can decide to assist the weaker party with an aim to balance out the sides, the strategy of equalization. The strategy employed by the third party is irrelevant to the perception of neutrality and consequently it does not matter which is chosen since the third party will be "damned if they do, and damn if they don't."[111] If they support the weaker side, they will be accused of bias by the stronger and if they aim to balance out their support, they will be accused by the weaker side of being biased towards the stronger.

During the UN operations in Port-au-Prince after the ouster of Aristide in 2004, the UN was accused of being "anti-Aristide" since they sided with the provisional government and stood by as the HNP committed human rights abuses.[112] The pro-Aristide movement obviously saw themselves as the weaker side in the conflict after 29

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[110] Kristine Höglund and Isak Svensson, "'Damned if You Do, and Damned if You Don't': Nordic Involvement and Images of Third Party Neutrality in Sri Lanka." *International Negotiation* 13, Iss 3 (2008): 342; http://www.proquest.com; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

[111] Ibid., 342.

[112] Tim Pelzer, "UN troops in Haiti aid repression, critics charge," *People's Weekly Newspaper*, 27 August 2005; available from http://www.pww.org/article/articleview/7599/1/283; Internet; accessed 14 April 2009.

February 2004 and viewed the UN, but especially the U.S., France and Canada, as being unfairly biased against them.

## Asymmetric Conflicts – Haiti

Internal conflicts by their very nature are asymmetrical and are generally multidimensional and not easily classified as a strong side versus a weak side.[113] One of the major differences in an asymmetric conflict where one side is the government while the other side is a non-governmental entity is their legal status.[114] The government has the power to rule the people, to enact legislation, and to represent the country on the international stage, while the non-government entity may not even have international recognition. A third party, such as a peacekeeper or aid worker, will find it difficult to treat both sides as equals. This strategy will often fail since the government does not wish to see their opponent as an equal, while an insurgent group or marginalised political movement will attempt to obtain recognition.[115] This summarises nicely the situation in Haiti during the transitional government between 2004 and 2006 where the internationally recognised, although not elected government, was fighting the pro-Aristide forces in Port-au-Prince for control of the slums. In the absence of a national military, the HNP, supported by the UN, fought against the *chimeres* and pro-Aristide gangs.

This leads to the second major difference, which is one of military or policing capabilities. The government will have the authority, and usually the means, to organise

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[113] Höglund and Svensson, "Damned if You Do…," 343.

[114] Mitchell, "Classifying Conflicts …," 30.

[115] Ibid., 31.

an armed security force to carry out their will, while the opposition may or may not have a capability that can resist the government's police or army.

A third major difference deals with "levels of access" and involves interactions on both the domestic and international stages and the ability to conduct information operations. The ability of the non-government side to get items on the political agenda is generally limited by their lack of access within the political process.[116] While this is true to an extent in Haiti, with the FL being restricted from participating in the recent Senate elections,[117] the pro-Aristide movement effectively uses the Internet to present their side of the story to the world. This opposing viewpoint is discussed further in Chapter Five.

The fourth and final major difference to be discussed is that of "Intraparty Cohesion." It can be assumed that the governing political party has an advantage over the opposition parties that are vying for increased political power. The incumbent party has the authority of the state behind it and can influence the state and its apparatus, such as the police, to harass or out-right ban political demonstrations or political organisations, or restrict opposition candidates from running in elections, which will make it much harder for the opposition to organise and gain support. The possibility of several different opposition groups working, not only against the government, but against each other also has a destabilising effect on their movement towards political power.[118] This aspect can be seen in a positive manner with the formation of the Democratic Convergence after the victory of Aristide in 2000 as the numerous opposition groups banded together to form a

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[116] Ibid., 31.

[117] Jonathan Katz, "UN tells Aristide party to fight in Haiti election," *Foxnews.com*, 14 March 2009, http://www.foxnews.com/wires/2009Mar14/0,4670,CBHaitiUNElections,00.html; Internet; accessed 14 April 2009.

[118] Mitchell, "Classifying Conflicts …," 33.

united opposition. The negative side to this can be seen with the 1997 split of the original OPL into Aristide's FL party and the renamed *Organisation de Peuple en Lutte* causing division within the pro-Aristide camp during Préval's first presidency. While the CEP's decision to disqualify all FL candidates in the recent Senate elections is an example of an opposition party being disadvantaged by a government-run organisation.

When examining a situation between government and non-government parties, these differences, taken as a whole, will influence how the different parties will act. Consequently, these four major differences can be analysed to determine how these same parties can be influenced by a third-party.[119] An understanding of how these groups will act and how they can be influenced will be beneficial to an outside group that is attempting to remain unbiased in its approach to the conflict.

## Forms of Bias

There are two accepted forms of bias; source-bias and content-bias. Source-bias refers to a third party that has an existing history with at least one of the groups while content-bias refers to a third party that purposefully chooses to side with one of the groups. Third party groups that wish to remain neutral must guard against actions or statements that could be interpreted as favouring one group over the other and therefore leading to the perception of a content-bias.[120]

France and the United States have an existing history with Haiti that predates the Aristide era and that arguably results in a source-bias that will affect the manner in which their intentions towards Haiti are perceived. The way in which the United Nations and

[119] Höglund and Svensson, "Damned if You …", 344.

[120] Ibid., 345.

Canada are viewed by pro-Aristide supporters seems to be a content-bias, based on the roles they have played in Haiti in the past twenty years. The following chapter will investigate these roles further.

The current conflict between pro-Aristide forces and their opponents can be described as an asymmetric conflict where these two opposing forces are vying for control of Haiti. Both sides have used democratic processes and also violent armed action to further their goals, and they both view the role of outsiders, such as the UN, the U.S. or Canada, in different ways. The success of Canada's contribution to Haiti may depend on its ability to fully understand the conflict, to acknowledge the perceived status of Canada in the eyes of the participants, and to promote the idea that Canada is an encouraging neighbour. An encouraging neighbour that is not seen as unduly biased against the law-abiding, peaceful citizens of Haiti; rich or poor.

# CHAPTER FOUR – CANADA AND HAITI

## Introduction

Official diplomatic relations between Haiti and Canada date back to 1954. However, the relationship between Canada and Haiti is much deeper than just a diplomatic one, it is a relationship primarily built on the sizable Haitian community that lives in Canada. Over the years Canadian development workers and missionaries, primarily working in the healthcare and education sectors, have served in Haiti. Recently Canada has joined members of the international community in playing a role in post-Aristide Haiti and has been instrumental in the efforts to re-establish security within the country. For two consecutive terms ending in August 2006, a Canadian has served as the UN Police Commissioner for MINUSTAH.[121] Thus the primary ties between Canada and Haiti can be summarised as the large Haitian diaspora in Canada, development aid, military and police assistance, and diplomatic relations. But is it that simple?

## The Montréal Diaspora

The relationship between Canada and Haiti is strongly influenced by the Haitian diaspora in Canada, of which over 90 percent live in the province of Quebec. Quebec and Haiti share a common past as former French colonies and this history has set the foundation for their relationship. While immigration to Canada and specifically to Quebec from Haiti has occurred since the early 20th Century, it was during the Duvalier regime in the 1960s that significant numbers of Haitians sought refuge in Canada. The

[121] Embassy of Canada to Haiti, "Canada – Haiti Relations," http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/haiti/bilateral_relations_bilaterales/canada_haiti.aspx?menu_id=7&menu=L; Internet; accessed 13 March 2009.

province of Quebec was in the midst of their Quiet Revolution and the atmosphere allowed for the easy integration of Haitians into Quebec society. This influx of Haitians also sparked the interest of French-Canadian NGOs to work in Haiti. The current Haitian diaspora is very involved in Canadian politics and it attempts to influence the government on their policies towards Haiti.[122]

## A Personal Connection – Canada's Governor General

One of the most recognisable figures to emerge from the Haitian diaspora in Canada was the CBC journalist Michaëlle Jean, who on 27 September 2005 was installed as the 27th Governor General of Canada. This was notable for the fact that Jean was not only the first black Governor General of Canada, but also that she was a Haitian immigrant whose family had fled the tyranny of the Duvalier regime in order to find a better life in Canada.[123] Her personal coat of arms draws from her past with symbols depicting Haiti's struggle for freedom and peace, and from her adopted home with symbols illustrating Canada's natural riches.[124]

One of her first official duties as Governor General was to return to the country of her birth, to represent Canada at the inauguration ceremony for René Préval on 14 May 2006. Upon her arrival she told the receptive crowd at the airport that Canada will help Haiti on its road to recovery, but that it will take time for changes to occur. Speaking to

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[122] Council on Hemispheric Affairs, "Canada's Aid to Haiti: Commendable, or Making Amends for a Discredited Anti-Aristide Strategy?" http://www.coha.org/NEW_PRESS_RELEASES/New_Press_Releases_2006/COHA%20Report/COHA_Report_06.04_Canada_Haiti.htm; Internet; accessed 10 March 2009.

[123] *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, *2009*, s.v. "Jean, Michaëlle," http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1090734/Michaelle-Jean; Internet; accessed 15 April 2009.

[124] Governor General of Canada, "Personal Coat of Arms of the Governor General," http://www.gg.ca/heraldry/emb/03/index_e.asp; Internet; accessed 15 April 2009.

reporters during her visit she said that she hopes that Canadians will see Haiti for what it really is, and realise that the Cite Soleil slum is not representative of all of Haiti.[125]

Jean returned to Haiti in January 2009 for a working visit. Her visits took her to the areas hit by the hurricanes in 2008 and she saw first hand the devastation to the region. During her visit, she attended the opening of a police station, whose restoration was funded by Canada's Global Peace and Security Fund, and visited several humanitarian aid projects which were sponsored by Canada.[126]

## Development Aid and Military Costs

Canada has had a development presence in Haiti for over 30 years, which has been characterised as one that embodies human solidarity and has kept alive the hope of a better life for Haitians.[127] Between 1994 and 2000 the average annual Canadian Official Developmental Assistance (ODA) contribution to Haiti was $37.8 million. ODA was channelled through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). In 2001 developmental aid to Haiti dropped to $27.2 million and in 2002 it dropped even further to $18.6 million.[128] However, by 2005 ODA had risen to $99.0 million and Canada

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[125] Phil Carpenter and Liz Thompson, "Message of Hope, promise of help," *The Gazette*, 14 May 2006; available from http://www.rocksandtrees.ca/haiti/2006-05-14-gghaiti.html; Internet; accessed 15 April 2009.

[126] Governor General of Canada, "Working visit to Haiti," http://www.gg.ca/gg/sv/haiti_e.asp; Internet; accessed 14 April 2009.

[127] Canadian International Development Agency, *Corporate Evaluation of the Canadian Cooperation Program in Haiti (1994 – 2002) : Summary Report* (Ottawa: May 2003), 18; http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/acdicida.nsf/En/EMA-218132051-PJ5?OpenDocument; Internet; accessed 21 April 2009.

[128] Ibid., 20.

announced that it would continue to place a high priority on Haiti and committed $555 million over the five year period from 2006 to 2011.[129]

The decrease in development aid to Haiti in 2001 corresponds to a decrease in total ODA net disbursements as a percentage of Gross National Income (GNI) in that year. In 2001, the ODA share of GNI was at its lowest point in the past two decades.[130] Consequently, the decrease in development aid to Haiti in 2001 can not be solely attributed to the change in leadership of Haiti, but must be viewed as a part of Canada's total development aid budget, which was at its lowest amount in 2001.

Canada's contributions to Haiti in the past two decades have not been limited to development aid. The Canadian Forces have deployed to Haiti on several occasions to assist the country by providing security and humanitarian assistance. Since 1996, Canada's military missions to Haiti have cost the government approximately $400 million.[131] The incremental cost for these missions, which deducts normal operating costs, was approximately $152 million. This is a more realistic method for calculating the actual cost of the missions since it only includes the additional expenses charged to the Government.[132]

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[129] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Development Assistance Committee Peer Review – Canada*, (Paris: OECD, 2007), 90.

[130] Ibid., 74.

[131] This is the full cost of the missions and includes operating costs such as salaries and equipment depreciation which would have occurred regardless of the missions.

[132] The full and incremental costs of Canadian Forces missions to Haiti were obtained from the online versions of the *Department of National Defence, Reports on Plans and Priorities*, (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Service Canada) for the years 1996/97 through 2007/08. They are available from: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, "Estimates Publications for the Government of Canada and Other Supporting Documents," http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/est-pre/estime.asp; Internet; accessed 15 April 2009.

## Canada's Participation in Haiti after the First Aristide Coup

In 1989 the Canadian government took an interest in Haiti as it attempted to transition to democracy. At the time of the 1991 Cédras coup, the foreign policies of Canada and the United States concerning Haiti were remarkably similar. The main difference of opinion concerned the use of military force to remove Cédras and his ruling Junta from power. The U.S. supported the concept of an invasion to restore democracy to Haiti whereas Canada opposed the idea and declined a U.S. offer to participate in the planned military action. However, Canada fully supported the idea of, and participated in, a follow-on United Nations-led mission.[133]

At that time another difference in the positions of the Canadian and American governments was the amount of support given to Aristide. The United States was firmly dedicated to the restoration of democracy in Haiti, but not necessarily with Aristide as president, whereas Canada fully supported the return of Aristide to power. This small difference in policy allowed Canada to take the lead at the Organisation of American States (OAS), who also supported the return of Aristide, in its dealings with Haiti. Canada also benefited in its relationship with Haiti by being the only other *La Francophonie* member in the OAS.

The Haitian community in Montreal played a large part in ensuring that the question of Haiti remained at the forefront of Canadian politics during Aristide's exile in the early 1990s. Over 50,000 Haitians lived in Montreal in 1991 and the majority of

[133] Helis, "Haiti: A Study in Canadian-American …," 1.

these were supporters of Aristide. Immediately following the coup there were daily protests in Montreal that put pressure on the government to remain engaged.[134]

The Carter agreement was signed on 18 September 1994 and resulted in the planned invasion of Haiti by American forces being rapidly replaced by a permissive landing of Multinational Forces (MNF) lead by the U.S. military. Canada was asked by the U.S. to participate in the MNF but declined, using its commitment to the Balkans as the primary excuse. However Canada did commit to participate in the follow-on UN force, the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH). While Canada would not contribute forces to an invasion force, Prime Minister Chrétien and his cabinet members did publically support the U.S. and called on the military rulers of Haiti to step down peacefully. The issue of Canada's participation in the 1993 U.S.-led mission to Somalia and the ongoing investigation into the torture and murder of a Somali teenager by Canadian Forces personnel greatly influenced public opinion at the time on the use of the Canadian military in the U.S.-led mission to Haiti. At a time when the Canadian military was under the microscope, Prime Minister Chrétien walked the fine line of supporting the return of Aristide to power without endangering his popular support at home. However, Canada did not wait for the deployment of UNMIH to assist in the transition of power to Aristide and deployed the RCMP training team within a week of the arrival of the MNF. Aristide returned to Haiti within a month and on 15 October 1994 assumed power. The MNF, under the command of the U.S., set the conditions for the arrival of the UN force and turned over control of the peacekeeping mission on 31 March 1995. Canada contributed 600 military personnel, including the force Chief of Staff, and 100 police

[134] Ibid., 4.

monitors, including a senior RCMP officer who was the head of UNMIH's civilian police component.[135]

In December 1995, elections were held and René Préval was elected president. He immediately requested an extension to the UNMIH mission since he required the presence of UN troops to maintain security in the country and he needed the UN police trainers to continue to train the Haitian National Police (HNP).[136]

The future of the UN mission was uncertain with the anticipated withdrawal of U.S. forces and a pledge from China that it would block any extension to the mandate of UNMIH. The official reason presented by the Chinese was the financial state of the UN and the fact that the UN lacked the resources to extend the mission, however it was believed that Haiti's relationship with Taiwan played a part in the Chinese position.[137] Eventually China agreed to a 4 month extension, but limited the contingent size to 1200. When Canada offered to assume command of the mission from the U.S. and to provide troops at no cost to the UN, the UN included in the resolution wording that allowed Canada, and other nations, to contribute self-funded troops above the UN troop cap, thus allowing for a UN force larger than the Chinese mandated 1200. This compromise allowed the mission to be extended and Canada's lead allowed for a strengthening of Canada-U.S. relations since the U.S. needed a political win in Haiti without the continued presence of a large number of American troops. Canada's decision to take command of

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[135] Ibid., 16-17.

[136] Ibid., 17.

[137] Larry Minear, "Humanitarian Action and Peacekeeping Operations," (Background paper for the UNITAR/IPS/NIRA Singapore Conference, 24 February 1997); available from http://www.jha.ac/articles/a018.htm; Internet; accessed 15 April 2009.

UNMIH also advanced her position within the Organisation of American States (OAS).[138]

In addition to Canada's desire to remain engaged in international affairs and promote human rights and democracy in the world, there was still the issue of domestic politics to content with. The Haitian diaspora was primarily situated in the province of Quebec and the Liberal Party needed to retain political power in Quebec to fend off attempts at separatism and the emergence of the national separatist party, the Bloc Quebecois. The government wanted to show Quebecers that a united Canada could play a constructive role in the future of Haiti, a francophone nation.[139] When Canada assumed command of the UN force in March 1996, the primary contribution was infantry from the francophone Royal 22nd Regiment, based in Valcartier, Quebec. Throughout the remainder of the mission Canada continued to contribute military forces at no cost to the UN and after the military operation had closed out, continued to provide police advisors through to the end of that mission in March 2000.[140]

An assessment of Canada's developmental assistance in the period immediately after the return of Aristide in 1994 up until 2002 conducted by CIDA concluded that while Canadian investment did not produce a noticeably visible Canadian result, it definitely resulted in poverty reduction and in the strengthening of a number of local organisations. Given that the projects supported were generally minor in nature and there

[138] Helis, "Haiti: A Study in Canadian-American …," 18.

[139] Minear, "Humanitarian Action …"

[140] Helis, "Haiti: A Study in Canadian-American …," 20.

were no secondary or tertiary results achieved, this methodology of aid disbursement "prevented investments from achieving maximum efficiency and effectiveness."[141]

The question posed by the evaluation was whether or not the Canadian cooperation in Haiti during the period 1994 to 2002 resulted in the "achievement of sustainable development results in reducing poverty, addressing basic human needs, and building public institutions and civil society." [142] The report considered that the situation in Haiti during the reporting period was very difficult. It emphasised the division between rich and poor, the unstable government, the weak public institutions, and the violence resulting from the poor security situation.[143] The report noted that the 450 programs identified were scattered throughout the country and throughout different development sectors. Consequently, while Canada's development aid assisted in enhancing the lives of ordinary Haitians, the resources invested did not produce any large signature Canadian projects and it was recognised that the methodology used to disburse aid should change to ensure lasting long-term results from Canadian projects. [144]

## Canada's Participation in Haiti after the Second Aristide Coup

On 29 February 2004 the UN Security Council passed resolution 1529 (2004) authorising a Multinational Interim Force (MIF) to enter Haiti and assist the country immediately following the coup. The MIF had a 90 day mandate and Canada's contribution, called Op HALO, consisted of a company of infantry, six helicopters, and a

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[141] Canadian International Development Agency, *Corporate Evaluation* …, 8.

[142] Ibid., 5.

[143] Ibid., 6.

[144] Ibid., 7.

command and support element. The Canadian contribution was approximately 500 in total and remained in Haiti during the transition from the MIF to the UN Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). Canada's military contribution departed Haiti in July 1994 as Op HALO closed out. [145] Op HAMLET was the CF mission that replaced Op HALO, and after the departure of the infantry and helicopter units, all that remained were three Canadian Forces personnel filling senior positions in the MINUSTAH headquarters, which included the headquarters Chief of Staff.[146] This number would eventually increase to four officers.

Canada's police participation in MINUSTAH has been ongoing since the mission's inception in 2004 and consists of approximately 100 armed police. Their primary tasks include monitoring, advising and training of the HNP.[147] The ongoing police training programs are effective and have resulted in an increase in the number of HNP police officers with their number now at 9,247. Another 483 cadets are currently undergoing training with an expected graduation set for mid 2009.[148]

The hurricanes of 2008 have added to the problems created by high youth unemployment and poverty and there continues to be widespread concern regarding the trafficking of weapons and drugs in Haiti. These factors contribute to the possibility for politically motivated crimes resulting from the Senate elections held on 19 April 2009

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[145] Department of National Defence, "OP HALO: Canadian Forces Commitment in Haiti."

[146] Department of National Defence, "Details/Information for CF Operation HAMLET," http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/od-bdo/di-ri-eng.asp?IntlOpId=117&CdnOpId=140; Internet; accessed 15 April 2009.

[147] Royal Canadian Mounted Police, "Current Missions," http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/po-mp/missions-curr-cour-eng.htm#haiti; Internet; accessed 15 April 2009.

[148] United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti* S/2009/129 (New York: United Nations, 6 March 2009), 7; available from http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/49ba20462.html; Internet; accessed 13 March 2009.

and the presidential elections scheduled for 2010. Unfortunately the HNP are not yet able to assume responsibility for security in Haiti and the MINUSTAH troops and formed police units must continue to provide security for the nation. The cooperation between the HNP and MINUSTAH has resulted in the reduction in crime, especially during the later stages of 2008 with a number of kidnapping rings dismantled.[149]

As at 26 February 2009, MINUSTAH had 102 military staff officers with 4 from Canada, 4 from the US, and 2 from France and 6930 military troops with none contributed by Canada, the US, or France. Of the 17 troop contributing nations, Brazil is the largest contributor at 1282 which includes the Force Commander. The policing arm of MINUSTAH had a strength of 2,021 officers contributed by 43 nations. 887 were individual police officers coming from various nations and included 94 from Canada, 44 from the US, and 58 from France and 1134 were police officers arriving as formed police units.[150] While Canada's policing contribution has remained relatively stable throughout the life of the mission, Canada's other international military commitments have resulted in only a token presence of military staff officers in the headquarters.

Canada's light military presence does not indicate a shift away from Haiti. Canadian politician have remained engaged on the issue of Haiti since 2004. In a December 2005 speech to the *Montreal Conference with the Haitian Diaspora*, Prime Minister Paul Martin stated that Canada would continue to support Haiti for the long-term and welcomed the attendees' contribution for the betterment of Haiti. The Prime

[149] Ibid., 6.

[150] Ibid., 21-22.

Minister also stressed that for the country to move forward, all Haitian political parties should be involved in the political process, including the *Fanmi Lavalas* Party.[151]

In a March 2007 speech by the then Foreign Affairs Minister, the Honourable Peter Mackay, he stated that Canada, and especially Atlantic Canada, has had a long and enduring relationship with the Caribbean. For the past two centuries Canada has exported fish and lumber to the region and has received fruit, spice and rum in return. Canada's interests in the Caribbean are not limited to trade and finances, but include the shared responsibility "to help other members of our community when they are having difficulties." [152] Mackay stated that "Haiti is at a critical moment in its history. My government is proud to be working with hemispheric partners and the OAS to help Haiti break from the destabilizing impact of violence and poverty." [153]

Later than same year, the Honourable David Emerson, while in the position of Minister for International trade stated that Canada is committed to "effective and accountable governance structures" and to "sharing security responsibilities in support of freedom, security and prosperity in the Americas." Canada is committed "to help Haiti break the destabilizing cycle of violence and poverty."[154]

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[151] Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL), "Final Report: Conférence de Montréal avec la Diaspora haïtienne," English Summary Translation (Ottawa: 14 January 2005); http://www.focal.ca/pdf/Rapport%20Final%20Haïti_e.pdf; Internet; accessed 14 March 2009.

[152] Peter Mackay, "Notes For An Address By The Honourable Peter Mackay, Minister Of Foreign Affairs And Minister Of The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, To A Special Session Of The Permanent Council Of The Organization Of American States," (Speech Notes, Washington DC, 2 March 2007) http://w01.international.gc.ca/minpub/Publication.aspx?isRedirect=True&publication_id=384928&Language=E&docnumber=2007/8; Internet; accessed 13 March 2009.

[153] Ibid.

[154] David L. Emerson, "Notes for an address by the Honourable David L. Emerson, Minister of International Trade, to the Council of the Americas," (Speech Notes, Washington DC, 2 May 2007) http://w01.international.gc.ca/minpub/Publication.aspx?isRedirect=True&publication_id=385101&Language=E&docnumber=2007/19; Internet; accessed 13 March 2009.

Canada continues to live up to its promise to help end the cycle of poverty and in September 2008 sent HMCS St. John's to Haiti on a World Food Programme mission to assist Haitians after the country was hit by four devastating hurricanes. During their 13 day mission, HMCS St. John's "delivered more that 450 metric tons of rice, corn-soya, bottled water, water purification tablets and other relief supplies."[155]

## Canada's Current Commitment to Haiti

The Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (FAITC) website outlines Canada's current whole-of-government participation in Haiti and gives the reasons behind Canada's involvement with the small Caribbean nation.[156] The whole-of-government approach is coordinated by FAITC and the management of the funding from the Foreign Affairs Global Peace and Security Fund is accomplished by the Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START). Haiti has been deemed a priority country by Canada and receives the second largest amount of funding and attention behind Afghanistan. The majority of Canada's assistance program is delivered by CIDA and strives to assist the Haitian people in their goal of building a better life through the reinforcement of democratic governance and by improving access to basic everyday services. According to CIDA, "Canada's priorities in Haiti are to: strengthen good

[155] Department of National Defence, *News Release – HMCS St. John's heading home upon completion of WFP humanitarian operation in Haiti* (Ottawa: CEFCOM, 26 September 2008).

[156] Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, "Whole-of-government team," http://geo.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/geo/reconstructing-reconstruire-haiti-pan-gouv_gov-en.aspx; Internet; accessed 15 April 009.

governance; help build an open, responsible government; fight corruption; and restore the rule of law."[157]

The assistance provided by Canada is not only provided by CIDA and FAITC; but as discussed, contributions are also made by the Department of National Defence and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). To round off the whole-of-government approach to assistance, Corrections Services Canada also participates in programs developed to assist in the reform of Haiti's judicial and correctional systems.[158]

Canada, working with the UN, has completed several projects in the Southern Province in support of the HNP. Fourteen police stations were refurbished and equipment including computers, radios and investigation kits were provided to 21 police stations. Cars and motorcycles were also delivered to the police force. This work is assisting with the reforms to the HNP, which will lead to a professional police force and will "substantially increase the capacity of HNP officers to carry out police functions critical to the development of the country." [159]

In order to ensure that funding was available for the Senate elections, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Haitian government, the CEP, and the international contributors. The majority of the funding came from the United Nations while the other contributors were Canada, the U.S., the E.U. and Brazil. The cost

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[157] Canadian International Development Agency, "Haiti" http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/haiti-e; Internet; accessed 15 April 2009.

[158] Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, "Whole-of-government team."

[159] United Nations Development Programme, "UN-Canada Partnership strengthens Haitian police force," http://content.undp.org/go/newsroom/2009/january/rnovation-des-commissariats-dhati.en?categoryID=1678279&lang=en; Internet; accessed 13 March 2009.

of the senatorial elections is estimated at $20 million with $5.5 million being contributed by the government of Haiti.[160]

## Summary of Canada's Commitment to Haiti

Thus it can be seen that Canada has played an active role in Haiti since the early 1990s. Canada supported President Aristide during his first presidency, contributed to the UN mission that assisted Haiti on the road to recovery after Aristide's return from exile in 1994 and once again contributed forces to the UN mission in 2004. Canada has allocated development aid to Haiti throughout the past two decades, making Haiti a priority country in 2005 with the announcement of guaranteed funding until 2011 totalling $555 million. Military and police personnel were offered up for UN missions, including the self-funded forces that were offered up in 1995 to assist in working around the Chinese objections to the mission extension.

The role that Canada has played in Haiti can easily be described as positive neighbourly support. However, some people see a darker side to Canada's involvement and wish to see Canada leave Haiti for good. This opposing view will be examined next.

[160] Radio Kiskeya, "Signature de l'accord de financement des élections avec les bailleurs de fonds internationaux," 24 January 2009; http://radiokiskeya.com/spip.php?article5622; Internet; accessed 13 March 2009.

# CHAPTER FIVE – THE OPPOSING VIEW

## Introduction

If one looks at a snapshot of Haiti's history from 1990 until 2006, we definitely see a country that could be characterised as being in the midst of an asymmetric conflict. That conflict being one between the political parties supported by the foreign-backed elite, with the support of ex-military personnel, and Jean-Bertrand Aristide and his *Fanmi Lavalas* (FL) party, supported by the poor majority. Assuming that this asymmetric conflict existed and given that in this same time period there were two armed coups that each led to the removal of Aristide from power, one can easily understand why there are two opposing views of Aristide's leadership, as well as two opposing views of Canada's role in Haiti.

In a June 2005 interview conducted by Canadian journalist Naomi Klein, Aristide confirmed his belief that Canada was a part of the coup when he stated:

> The coup, or the kidnapping, was led by the United States, France and Canada. These three countries were on the front lines by sending their soldiers to Haiti before February 29, by having their soldiers either at the airport or at my residence or around the palace or in the capital to make sure that they succeeded in kidnapping me, leading [to] the coup.[161]

In addition to statements by Aristide, the level of developmental aid contributions, the amount of military support and statements made by Canadian politicians can all be interpreted to support the opposing opinion. It is also beneficial to look at the perceptions that Haitians had of the UN in the post-2004 era when Canada contributed military and

[161] Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Interviewed by Naomi Klein, 20 June 2005, quoted in rabble.ca, "Aristide: on the record about Canada and Haiti," 23 June 2005; http://www.rabble.ca/news/aristide-record-about-canada-and-haiti; Internet; accessed 22 January 2009.

police forces to MINUSTAH. Finally, the role that CIDA played in Haiti and their policy of supporting grassroots NGOs compared to funnelling aid monies directly through the government can lead to suggestions that Canada was not supportive of, or trusting of the government. Critics of Canada's role in Haiti have accused Canada's development agency of supporting anti-Aristide NGOs in the period leading up to the second coup, and by doing so, contributed to the destabilization of the elected government.[162]

## The Opposing View expressed through the Internet

When the Internet is used as a research tool, it can be easily understood why there is an opinion that Canada is negatively biased against the supporters of Aristide and why some critics believe that Canada has no business being in Haiti. A simple Google search that lists the terms "Canada" and "Haiti" results in web pages that are either supportive of Canada's involvement in Haiti, such as the Canadian Embassy in Haiti website or a National Post article about Canada renewing its commitment to Haiti, or they hold the opposite view, with titles such as "Canada out of Haiti!" and "Canada in Haiti. Who Engineered the Overthrow of Democracy?" When the top 100 results are examined, 26 seem to view Canada's participation in Haiti in a positive light, however 14 of those are Government of Canada websites, while 43 seem to view Canada's involvement as negative. 21 sites are neutral in their opinion of Canada's involvement and 10 sites were not relevant to the question, dealing with subjects such as Wyclef Jean music or soccer

[162] For allegations of CIDA's role in destabilising Haiti and encouraging regime change in 2004 see: Coalition to Oppose the Arms Trade, "Putting the Aid in Aiding and Abetting: CIDA's Agents of Regime Change in Haiti's 2004 coup," *Press for Conversion Issue* #63 (May 2008); http://coat.ncf.ca/our_magazine/links/62/62.htm; Internet; accessed 25 March 2009.

matches.[163] Thus, when Government of Canada websites are removed from the analysis, those sites with a negative opinion of Canada's involvement in Haiti outnumber positive and neutral sites 43 to 33.

One can see from the numerous Internet websites that there seems to be an opposition to Canadian involvement in Haiti and while it is difficult to judge the popular support that these sites have, their existence shows that Canada does have vocal critics of its role in Haiti. Of the numerous websites on the Internet that present an opinion on the current situation in Haiti, *margueritelaurent.com* is one such website that calls for an end to the UN occupation in Haiti. *Margueritelaurent.com* also wants the current U.S. government to "investigate the role of US in the 2004 coup d'état where US Special forces forcibly exiled President Jean Bertrand Aristide."[164] Another website which is highly critical of Canadian involvement in Haiti is the *Coalition to Oppose the Arms Trade* which published "A Very Canadian Coup d'état in Haiti - The Top 10 Ways that Canada's Government Helped the 2004 Coup and its Reign of Terror" in its March 2007 issue of *Press for Conversion.*[165] It is pretty obvious where the *Canada-Haiti Action Network (CHAN)* website "Canada out of Haiti" stands on the issue of Canada's role in Haiti as they detail on their web pages the role that Canada played in the 2004 coup.[166] The primary CHAN website is located at *canadahaitiaction.ca* and is a repository for

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[163] Google Inc., "Canada Haiti - Google Search," http://www.google.com/search?q=Canada+Haiti&btnG=Search; Internet; accessed 14 April 2009.

[164] margueritelaurent.com, http://www.margueritelaurent.com/index.html#JBAforce; Internet; accessed 24 March 2009.

[165] Coalition to Oppose the Arms Trade, "A Very Canadian Coup d'état in Haiti," *Press for Conversion* Issue #60 (March 2007); http://coat.ncf.ca/our_magazine/links/60/60.htm; Internet; accessed 24 March 2009.

[166] Canada-Haiti Action Network, "Canada out of Haiti," http://outofhaiti.ca; Internet; accessed 24 March 2009.

news items relating to Haiti and generally has a negative spin on Canada's contribution to Haiti. On 24 March 2009, the website included a story about Haiti requesting that Canadian aid monies be funnelled through the government and not be given directly to NGOs.[167] Another story commented on a recent UN report on Haiti that acknowledges that the UN has failed in areas such as poverty reduction and development.[168] Both stories were reported in a negative fashion, but since they had links to the original articles, a comparison was conducted which confirmed CHAN's bias.[169] Another website with pro-Aristide leanings is "Third World Traveler." On its *Haiti Page* it has links to articles such as "Enemy Ally - The Demonization of Jean-Bertrand Aristide" and "The U.S.-Haiti Connection – Rich Companies, Poor Workers" to name a few. While the U.S. bears the brunt of the criticism from "Third World Traveler," there is an entire section dedicated to "Canada, France, U.N. & Haiti" with articles outlining Canada's role in the 2004 coup.[170]

## Critiques and Counter-Critiques

One would generally expect that clarity on a given subject would eventually come as one acquires more and more knowledge on it. With that clarity it is hoped would come an understanding of the reasoning behind the various opinions and points of view. Unfortunately, with the case of Haiti, Aristide and Canada's involvement in the

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[167] Joanna Smith, "Haiti seeking direct financial assistance from Canada," *thestar.com*, 18 March 2009, http://www.thestar.com/News/World/article/603972; Internet; accessed 24 March 2009.

[168] United Nations, "Haiti: UN Council mission reports strides in security, worrisome poverty," UN News Centre, 19 March 2009, http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30240&Cr=&Cr1=; Internet; accessed 24 March 2009.

[169] Canada Haiti Action, http://canadahaitiaction.ca; Internet; accessed 24 March 2009.

[170] Third World Traveler, "Haiti Page," http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Haiti/Haiti.html; Internet; accessed 24 March 2009.

Caribbean nation, the waters of the "flood" just get muddier as the wealth of information is uncovered.

To illustrate this point, Peter Hallward[171] recently published a book called *Damming the Flood: Haiti, Aristide, and the Politics of Containment*. In his book, Hallward examines the differences in the response by the international community to the two departures of Aristide, first in 1991 and then again in 2004.[172] He states that Aristide was overthrown in 1991 since he posed a threat to the "comfortable ruling class" and argues that it was this same reason that led to his departure in 2004. While the reasons behind his departure may have been the same, in 1991 the international community supported Aristide, whereas by 2004 that support had vanished.[173]

This book has taken a place of importance in the Haiti – Canada debate, especially amongst the left-of-center activists who see the book as:

> the first accurate and comprehensive analysis of recent Haitian history … [which] analyses the role of foreign powers, including Canada, in the overthrow of Aristide and the other institutions of elected government in Haiti in February, 2004.[174]

Positive reviews of the book have come from mainly left-wing commentators such as Slavoj Zizek writing for the *New Statesman* who stated that the book was

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[171] Peter Hallward is a professor of Modern European Philosophy at the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy, Middlesex University, United Kingdom. His research interests are recent and contemporary French philosophy, contemporary critical theory, political philosophy and contemporary politics, and post-colonial theory to name a few. He has published four books, contributed chapters to four others and written numerous journal articles. See Middlesex University, "Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy," http://www.mdx.ac.uk/www/CRMEP/staff/PeterHallward.htm; Internet; accessed 9 March 2009.

[172] Peter Hallward, *Damming the Flood. Haiti, Aristide, and the politics of containment* (London: Verso, 2007), xxiv.

[173] Ibid., xxx.

[174] Canada Haiti Action, "Read Peter Hallward's 'Damming the Flood'," http://canadahaitiaction.ca/?page_id=26; Internet; accessed 16 April 2009.

outstanding.[175] It has received numerous recommendations including that "it ought to be required reading for every historian of the Americas and for every student of political science."[176]

However, Hallward has his critics, and one of the most vocal is Michael Deibert. Deibert is a journalist and author who wrote *Notes from the Last Testament: The Struggle for Haiti* and considers himself to be a well-read and well-traveled social activist.[177] At first glance, his review of Hallward's book, published on his blog in March 2008, seems rather unbiased in its approach, even if it is rather uncomplimentary to both Hallward and his opinions. He concludes that Hallward wrote the book, not as a rigorous piece of academic work, but rather as a piece of propaganda that tries to paint the former president in a positive light, by omitting facts that might tarnish the reputation of Aristide.[178]

The objectivity of Deibert is brought into question when Diana Barahona's article on the way the international press covered the story of Haiti and Aristide's second removal from office is read. It is obvious from the introductory paragraphs that she believes that the 2004 coup was supported by Canada, the U.S. and France and one can therefore assume that she is in the pro-Aristide camp. Her article examines the reporting of Michael Deibert, as an example of an international journalist who reports "on foreign

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[175] Slavoj Zizek, "Democracy versus the people," *New Statesman* (14 August 2008): 48, http://www.newstatesman.com/books/2008/08/haiti-aristide-lavalas; Internet; accessed 16 April 2009.

[176] Tracy Kidder, quoted in Canada Haiti Action, "Read Peter Hallward's 'Damming the Flood'," http://canadahaitiaction.ca/?page_id=26; Internet; accessed 16 April 2009.

[177] Michael Deibert, "Blogger homepage for Michael Deibert – Writer," http://michaeldeibert.blogspot.com/; Internet; accessed 16 April 2009.

[178] Michael Deibert, "A Review of Peter Hallward's Damming the Flood: Haiti, Aristide and the Politics of Containment," http://michaeldeibert.blogspot.com/2008/03/review-of-peter-hallwards-damming-flood.html; Internet; accessed 22 January 2009.

affairs from the view point of the State Department."[179] Barahona cites examples of Deibert's articles that he wrote as a special correspondent for Newsday and the Miami Sun-Sentinel during the lead up to and immediately after the 2004 coup. She uses the articles to support her belief that the media prepared its stories on Haiti in early 2004 in a way that at the very least confused the reader, and at the most supported the ouster of Aristide. Barahona states that every overthrow of a government needs a background story that gives the justification for why its removal is necessary. According to Barahona the background story in 2004 was one of a leader who had lost the popular support of the people. This story was repeated in the press, by journalists such as Deibert, which made Aristide look like a corrupt power hungry dictator that needed to be removed from office for the sake of the Haitian people. The main criticism of Deibert, and by extension the main stream international press, is that the reporting is not balanced. The narrative is reported without attempting to investigate the story further, or subject the opposing forces to the same level of critique.[180] The outcome of the article, if one believes Barahona, is that Deibert is not an unbiased reporter, but is very much aligned with the mainstream press which has bought into the American State Department view of Haiti. Consequently, in Barahona's opinion, Deibert is biased against Aristide and therefore his written work, including the critique of *Damming the Flood* will express that bias.

This simple example of critique and counter-critique of one book is indicative of the information available about Aristide, Haiti and Canada. With the wealth of information available and the abundance of opinion on the subject, it becomes very

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[179] Diana Barahona, "How to Turn a Priest into a Cannibal," Counterpunch, (4 February 2007) [journal on-line]: available from http://www.counterpunch.org/barahona02032007.html; Internet; accessed 16 April 2009.

[180] Ibid.

difficult to sort fact from fiction. The assumption being therefore that the truth lies somewhere in the middle of the two sides of the argument. The story about Aristide, for example, would probably not have had any traction in the press if there was not some proof that elements of his government were corrupt.

## Opposing views or incorrect assumptions?

When an incident is viewed from a position of incomplete knowledge, assumptions need to be made to fill in those gaps. Depending on the assumptions made, the story can be reported in very different ways. An example of this can be drawn from the arrival of U.S. forces in Haiti on 19 September 1994. On their first day in Haiti, U.S. soldiers in Port-au-Prince witnessed the Haitian police beat local Haitians and did not intervene. A witness to this situation could easily have interpreted the actions of the U.S. Army as assisting with, or at the very least allowing this illegal violence to occur. In reality, the rules of engagement (ROE) issued to the soldiers of 10th Mountain Division instructed them not to interfere with the Haitian National Police and consequently they were unable to act to prevent the beatings.[181] At the same time, the U.S. Marines in the Cap-Haïtien region took a more liberal view of their ROEs that resulted in a firefight with the Haitian army on 24 September 1994. A comparison of these two events would have further confused observers of the U.S.'s actions in Haiti.[182]

One can also take examples from the period leading up to the second coup in 2004. In a Toronto Star article written immediately after the 2004 departure of Aristide, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Bill Graham, stated that

[181] Hayes and Wheatley, Interagency and Political-Military …, Ch.2 p.3.

[182] Ibid., Ch.2 p 6.

> "Once the United States and France said they would not go in as long as Aristide was there, we had to decide would we go in on the invitation of Aristide to prop up the Aristide regime … Our judgment was we couldn't do that." [183]

Graham's comments have been interpreted by some that Canada's decision not to send troops to support Aristide was evidence that Canada supported the coup.[184] However a more realistic interpretation of the comments could be that Canada did not have the readily available military forces to unilaterally support the Haitian government, once the United States and France stated they would not send forces to provide security until after Aristide left.[185] The article clearly states that Graham believed that Aristide stepped down from office and left the country voluntarily.[186]

One of the primary pieces of evidence used by those supporting the theory that Canada played a role in the military coup that removed Aristide from power in 2004 was the presence of Canadian troops in Haiti during the coup. David Pugliese in an article that he wrote three days after the departure of Aristide, states that Canadian Forces Joint Task Force 2 (JTF2) personnel were present in Haiti as of 24 February 2004 to assist the Department of Foreign Affairs with planning to provide protection for the Canadian Embassy staff. Pugliese reported that there were over 1000 Canadians in Haiti at the time of the rebel uprising and the government was facing the possibility that an evacuation

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[183] Mary Gordon, "Haiti stability essential, Martin Says," *Toronto Star*, 4 March 2004, A6; www.proquest.com; Internet; accessed 16 April 2009.

[184] Stuart Neatby, "Canada's hidden Role in Haiti," Shunpiking Online Vol 2 no 6 (April 2005) [journal on-line]; available from www.shunpiking.com/o10206/0206-nl-sn-canhaiti.htm; Internet; accessed 7 January 2009.

[185] This is obviously in reference to the multinational peacekeeping force, and not the U.S. military personnel who escorted Aristide from Haiti on the night of 29 February 2004.

[186] Gordon, "Haiti stability essential …", A6.

may have been necessary. [187] Critics of Canada's role in Haiti claim that the JTF2 soldiers were in Haiti to secure the airport, allowing U.S. forces to kidnap Aristide and force him to leave the country on a U.S. plane. [188] While it is undoubtedly true that Canadian Forces members were present at the airport on the night of 29 February 2004, it is highly unlikely that their reason for being in Haiti was to help the U.S. Special Forces with the abduction of Aristide. However, given that JTF2 missions are classified, it will be difficult to confirm their role that night.

Thus it can be seen that the critics of Canada's role in Haiti have consistently interpreted situations, political speeches and news articles, in ways that support their claims, without offering real proof that Canada played a role in the planning and abduction of Aristide. Is there any verifiable proof that these critics offer to support their claims?

## The Pro-Aristide Opinion

Critics claim that the role that Canada played in the lead-up to the February 2004 departure of Aristide was one of regime change and that "the Canadian government [was] taking a lead role in the continuation of the 200-year history of colonial plunder in Haiti."[189] A March 2003 Michel Vastel article in *L'Actualité* reported on a meeting hosted by Canadian MP Denis Paradis, Secretary of State of Canada for Latin America, Africa and La Francophonie. The meeting was held to discuss the future of Haiti with the OAS, European Economic Commission and La Francophonie and included

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[187] David Pugliese, "Elite JTF2 commandos are well aware of Haiti's dangers," *Ottawa Citizen*, 27 February 2004, A3; http://proquest.com; Internet; accessed 28 January 2009.

[188] Stuart Neatby, "Canada's hidden Role …"

[189] Ibid.

representatives from Canada, the U.S., France, and El Salvador. Vastel reported that the group did not want to wait until the 2005 elections for regime change and actually wished to have the issue resolved before the 200th anniversary of the Haitian Republic on 1 January 2004. The UN policy of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) was discussed and Paradis is quoted as saying that he did not wish to become like Romeo Dallaire, with the same results of inaction as occurred in Rwanda. Paradis is also quoted as saying that if Canadians treated their animals like the Haitian authorities treated their citizens, they would go to prison.[190] The Vastel article is used to show that Canadian politicians played a role in the propaganda campaign that attempted to show that Aristide was unfit to run Haiti in the lead-up to the coup.[191] To further the critics' claim of Canadian involvement, CIDA is accused of supporting the removal of Aristide through the allocation of development funding to anti-Aristide organizations, such as the Democratic Convergence, in order to destabilize the government.[192]

In Yves Engler and Anthony Fenton's book, *Canada in Haiti – Waging War on the Poor Majority*, they argue that Canada was complicit in the illegal removal of Aristide from office and that the former president did not leave of his own accord, but was kidnapped.[193] Aristide from his exile in South Africa stated that:

> The United States, France, Canada and so many others should do something to repair, if they can, what they did. Because what they did is a

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[190] Michel Vastel, "Haïti mise en tutelle par l'ONU?; Il faut renverser Aristide. Et ce n'est pas l'opposition haïtienne qui le réclame, mais une coalition de pays rassemblée à l'initiative du Canada!" *L'Actualité* Vol. 28, Iss. 4 (15 March 2003): 14-15; http://www.proquest.com; Internet; accessed 16 April 2009.

[191] Stuart Neatby, "Canada's hidden …"

[192] Ibid.

[193] Yves Engler and Anthony Fenton, *Canada in Haiti – Waging War on the Poor Majority*, (Vancouver: RED Publishing, 2005), 19.

> crime. The same way slavery is a crime against humanity, the same way what they're doing against the Haitian people, it's also a crime. [194]

In order to prove their theory that Canada played a role in the 2004 coup, Anthony Fenton and Dru Oja Jay requested official government documents pertinent to Canada's involvement in Haiti using the Access to Information (ATI) Act.[195] Fenton and Jay interpreted one of the memos written by Canada's then Ambassador to Haiti, Kenneth Cook, to claim that Cook suggested that the R2P doctrine be considered in order to intervene in Haiti. The pertinent section of Cook's memo states:

> The situation we face is not only one of a struggle for power, it involves a humanitarian crisis and the potential to permanently change the course of Haitian history. President Aristide is clearly a serious aggravating factor in the current crisis and unless he gives dramatic early signs that he is implementing the CARICOM road map then the OAS, CARICOM and possibly UN will have to consider the options including whether a case can be made for the duty to protect.[196]

In the heavily censored memos that they received, they also interpreted some of Ambassador Cook's comments to suggest that he supported the idea that former Haitian military personnel could resolve the crisis if properly led. [197] This is contrary to public statements made at the time by Canadian government representatives who stated that

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[194] Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Interviewed by Amy Goodman, May 2005, quoted in Yves Engler and Anthony Fenton, *Canada in Haiti – Waging War on the Poor Majority*, (Vancouver: RED Publishing, 2005), 20.

[195] Anthony Fenton and Dru Oja Jay, "Declassifying Canada in Haiti: Part I," *The Dominion*, Issue 36 (7 April 2006) [journal on-line]; available from http://www.dominionpaper.ca/foreign_policy/2006/04/07/declassify.html; Internet; accessed 16 April 2009.

[196] Kenneth Cook, *Meeting with US Ambassador* (Memo sent to the Privy Council Office and Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 11 February 2004) quoted in Anthony Fenton and Dru Oja Jay, "Declassifying Canada in Haiti: Part I," *The Dominion*, Issue 36 (7 April 2006) [journal on-line]; available from http://www.dominionpaper.ca/foreign_policy/2006/04/07/declassify.html; Internet; accessed 16 April 2009.

[197] Anthony Fenton and Dru Oja Jay, "Declassifying Canada in Haiti: Part II," *The Dominion*, Issue 36 (9 April 2006) [journal on-line]; available from http://www.dominionpaper.ca/foreign_policy/2006/04/09/declassify.html; Internet; accessed 22 January 2009.

Canada supported the Aristide government and was seeking a peaceful solution that involved a power-sharing arrangement with the opposition.[198]

Fenton and Jay claim that further examination of Cook's intent and Canada's position on Haiti immediately prior to and during the coup were stifled when the documents requested during the period 20 February to 15 March 2004 were omitted, without explanation, from the ATI return. They claim that the military intervention after the coup did not "avert a crisis" but "became the backdrop for a major escalation of atrocities, with thousands killed [and] hundreds jailed for their political views.[199]

In a 15 May 2006 interview for CBC's current affairs radio programme "The Current," former Aristide Defence Minister and current Lavalas activist, Patrick Elie, had the following to say about Canada's role in Haiti between 2004 and 2006:

> Oh yes, yes, by, you know first of all, by being part of that regime change that happened in February 2004, I think that was a disastrous decision, that has set us back many years, and also by supporting the de facto government, I think that Canada's involvement has been disastrous. Now that might change now, and that's what we hope, that Canada will again be our friend rather than try and dictate to us which way we should go and who we should have as President.[200]

During the same programme, CBC reporter Stephen Puddicombe commented:

> Well it's interesting. If you talk to the well off people, the people with money up on the hill, in places like Petionville and what have you, Canada is a fantastic country, we do amazing work here. But if you go down into the slums and you talk to people in front of the Parliament yesterday, Canada's not so good. They see them as, well we trained the Haitian National Police force and this is the same police force that has gone into

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[198] Anthony Fenton and Dru Oja Jay, "Declassifying Canada in Haiti: Part I."

[199] Anthony Fenton and Dru Oja Jay, "Declassifying Canada in Haiti: Part II."

[200] Patrick Elie, Interviewed by Anna Maria Tremonte, CBC's radio programme "The Current," 15 May 2006; available from http://www.cbc.ca/thecurrent/2006/200605/20060515.html; Internet; accessed 16 April 2009.

> the slums and, according to the people there, has killed indiscriminately over the past two years. So we're not doing so good and a lot of the projects that are done here are done for the rich people, and they make money off of them and it looks good and everyone smiles for the cameras, but the poor people are still poor and they have no influence in Parliament, and they're not so happy with it.[201]

Thus it can be seen that the opinion of Canada's role in Haiti varies greatly among the people of Haiti as well. The wealthy Haitians have an appreciation for Canada's involvement and have benefited from Canadian aid, whereas the poor residents of Port-au-Prince's slums have a less complimentary view. They associate Canada with the HNP, whom the RCMP have trained, and consequently regard Canadian involvement as not benefitting them. This leads to the other main criticism of Canadian involvement in Haiti, that of human rights abuses.

[201] Stephen Puddicombe, Report for CBC's radio programme "The Current," 15 May 2006; available from http://www.cbc.ca/thecurrent/2006/200605/20060515.html; Internet; accessed 16 April 2009.

# CHAPTER SIX – HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

## Introduction

The one area of study, apart from the 2004 departure of Aristide, which has polarised opinions on Canada's role in Haiti, deals with alleged human rights violations. In 2005, critics of Canada's involvement in Haiti argued that Canada was indirectly responsible for the violence attributed to the Haitian National Police (HNP), since a Canadian was in charge of the UN police mission at that time. The argument put forward is that given Canada's leadership role in the training and mentoring of the police, Canada must assume some blame for the illegal activities committed by the HNP. The argument is taken further with criticism that both the UN and Canada have failed to acknowledge the wide-spread human rights abuses and killings that occurred in Haiti at the hands of the HNP.[202] While the situation has dramatically changed for the better since the election of Préval in 2006, abuses under the transitional government and the apparent inability of the UN to control that violence has been documented.

## After the 2004 Coup: An assessment of Human Rights Abuses

In an assessment of MINUSTAH's conduct in Haiti published by the *Harvard Law School Student Advocates for Human Rights* in March 2005, their report clearly states that UN forces were responsible for the deaths and injuries of innocent civilians. These casualties generally occurred on raids into impoverished areas such as Port-au-

[202] Stuart Neatby, "Canada's hidden Role …"

Prince's Martissant slum.[203] In addition, they reported that even though MINUSTAH had the capability to conduct investigations into human rights violations, they rarely did so and therefore were in violation of their UN mandate.[204]

Another investigation into human rights abuses in Haiti was conducted by the *Center for the Study of Human Rights* at Miami University in November 2004. The report states that because the UN military forces patrolled the streets of Haiti's poorest neighborhoods in their white Armored Personnel Carriers, they remained distant from the local inhabitants since they could not speak Creole.[205] While an inability to hold a conversation between a UN peacekeeper and a poor Haitian is unfortunate and it does not allow for the development of relationships and trust, this language barrier translates into confusion when joint HNP-UN operations are conducted and the two forces can not communicate effectively during their mission.[206] On 18 November 2004, the investigators viewed the aftermath of a joint HNP-UN operation into Bel Air, one of Haiti's most notorious slums, and interviewed several residents who claimed that they had been shot at by UN forces and the HNP. The residents of Bel Air believed that if the injured went to the hospital for treatment they would be taken away by the police and so they stayed at home, even if they had been shot. In addition, the ambulance service

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[203] Harvard Law Student Advocates for Human Rights, *Keeping the Peace in Haiti* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Law School Human Rights Program, March 2005), 27; http://www.law.harvard.edu/programs/hrp/documents/haitireport.pdf; Internet; accessed 10 March 2009.

[204] Ibid., 31.

[205] Ibid., 30.

[206] Ibid., 30. Interestingly, the report makes no mention of either UN Civilian Police or UN military forces using translators or interpreters. There is passing reference to UN Civilian Police detachments being formed from the same country so that communication within the two to four man detachments is not an issue.

operated by the Haitian Red Cross would not enter the poorer neighborhoods to attend to the injured due to the extremely poor security situation.[207]

A study published in the British medical journal *The Lancet* detailed human rights abuses in Port-au-Prince between 29 February 2004 and December 2005. The study interviewed 5720 residents of Port-au-Prince, selected at random, and included all of the sections of the city.[208] The results show that while criminals were identified as the most common perpetrators of human rights violations, officers of the HNP were the next most recognizable group responsible for murders and sexual assaults. UN forces were identified largely for threats of death, physical violence and sexual assault, but were not actually accused of committing sexual assaults or murder.[209] The study recommended that the HNP needed to be retrained given that one in eight rapes were committed by police officers and the UN forces, especially the Brazilian and Jordanian contingents, needed retraining due to the high number of threats of death or bodily harm attributed to them.[210] The study confirmed the allegations that human rights abuses were occurring in Port-au-Prince during the transitional government period and that the HNP and UN were partially to blame.

Not reported in the study, but released afterwards were allegations that Canadian Forces peacekeepers were responsible for making death threats during raids in order to obtain information on the location of Aristide supporters. There were also allegations that

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[207] Ibid., 33-35.

[208] Athena Kolbe and Royce Hutson, "Human rights abuse and other criminal violations in Port-au-Prince, Haiti: a random survey of households," *Lancet* 368, no.9538 (2 September 2006), 867; http://www.ebscohost.com; Internet; accessed 17 April 2009.

[209] Ibid., 869.

[210] Ibid., 872.

some off-duty, drunk Canadian soldiers made sexual advances towards Haitian women outside their camp. These incidents were investigated by the Canadian Forces, but since the allegations were made anonymously, they could not be confirmed.[211]

## 2004 – 2006: An assessment of Human Rights Abuses

In March 2006, three first year University of Miami law students from the *Center for the Study of Human Rights* conducted a follow-up investigation in Haiti. Mance, Smith and Yagerman visited Haiti in order to research the investigations of human rights violations that occurred during the transitional government between 2004 and 2006.[212] They noted that many of the Haitians they spoke with were confused about the role of the UN in Haiti. The Haitians interviewed for the report in early 2006 stated that they were frustrated with MINUSTAH and saw them as a force that was "merely a static presence rather than an active organization making progress toward stabilizing the country." [213] Their report concentrated on the role MINUSTAH played concerning the reporting of human rights abuses within Haiti.

The *Association of University Students Working for a Lawful Haiti* (AUMOHD) is a human rights organization working in Haiti that offers legal assistance to persons that they believe have been illegally arrested or have suffered human rights abuses. When the president of AUMOHD, Evel Fanfan, was interviewed for the report, he claimed that he

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[211] The Record, "British journal stands behind study finding human rights abuses in Haiti," 10 February 2007, A6; http://ebscohost.com; Internet; accessed 17 April 2009.

[212] Anna Mance, Quinn Smith, and Rebecca Yagerman, "Haiti Human Rights Investigation," (Maimi: Center for the Study of Human Rights, University of Miami School of Law, 16 March 2006),1, http://www.law.miami.edu/cfshr/pdf/CSHR_Report_0311-162006.pdf; Internet; accessed 10 March 2009.

[213] Ibid., 10.

was representing 70 clients and that many of them were arrested by MINUSTAH forces without warrants or probable cause. [214]

In March 2006, General Adounante was the commander of the UN military police unit that investigated incidents in which the UN was allegedly involved. Adounante claimed that Haitians routinely alleged that they were injured by MINUSTAH forces in order to claim compensation. Thierry Fagart, who was the chief of the Human Rights Division of MINUSTAH, believed that approximately 70 percent of claims against the UN were false.[215] Fagart stated that while MINUSTAH does not have the authority to arrest Haitians unless they were involved in acts of violence against UN personnel, MINUSTAH forces have worked alongside and cooperated with the HNP in making arrests. [216]

Mance et al believe that, as of March 2006, the UN had been "largely unsuccessful in curtailing the violence and oppression in Haiti." They believed that this stemmed from a failure on behalf of MINUSTAH to fully engage the human rights NGOs in Haiti. [217]

## 2006 – 2007: Changes under Préval

With the election of Préval in 2006, the situation in Haiti began to improve. As discussed in Chapter Two, the UN changed the way it conducted operations and had considerable success in the slums of Port-au-Prince during the period between December

[214] Ibid., 15.

[215] Ibid., 13.

[216] Ibid., 14,15.

[217] Ibid., 20,21.

2006 and March 2007.[218] Unlike operations in 2005 where the UN was accused of numerous human rights violations, including the alleged massacre on 6 July 2005, the operations in late 2006 and early 2007 did not result in any serious allegations of human rights abuses.[219]

## 2008: The Current Situation

A U.S. State Department report on human rights in Haiti released in February 2009 reported that there are still numerous examples of human rights violations in Haiti. It reported that some of the crimes were committed by the HNP, but surprisingly there were no politically motivated killings reported in 2008. [220] This is obviously a major change from previous years when political killings were committed both by and against Aristide's supporters. The report states that while the Haitian government unfortunately does not have the resources to adequately investigate the allegations against the HNP, the majority of the human rights violations are attributed to the criminal gangs. The crimes committed by these gangs, primarily in the slums of the cities, include murder, kidnapping, torture and rape. The inability of the HNP to adequately police some areas, investigate crimes and make arrests, has resulted in the emergence of vigilante justice and in some rural areas where police presence is virtually absent, vigilante justice included "shootings, beatings, and lynchings." The trafficking of narcotics is another area where criminal gangs, and former and current members of the HNP, continue to participate

[218] Dorn, "Intelligence …", 4.

[219] Ibid., 7.

[220] United States Department of State, *2008 Country Reports* …, n.p.

actively. It is also alleged that these former and current police officers are responsible for kidnappings and murders related to the drug-trade. [221]

In the months that followed the coup that forced Aristide into exile, when Haiti was governed by the transitional government, there seems to be sufficiently documented evidence to support the claim that the HNP and the UN were responsible for some human rights abuses. The fact that the UN was unable to fully investigate the allegations due to the poor security environment shows a lack of commitment on the part of the UN to live up to its mandate. This situation changed for the better with the election of Préval and the renewed UN emphasis to clean up the slums of Port-au-Prince in 2006. The operations in late 2006 and early 2007 showed that the UN could enforce the rule of law in Port-au-Prince and support the government in bettering the security environment without committing human rights violations. While the HNP continues to have some problems with human rights violations, the majority of the problems seem to originate with the criminal gangs.

While the critics of Canada's involvement in Haiti may have been justified to denounce Canada's role during 2004 and 2005 based on the allegations of human rights abuses by the UN and the HNP, the current situation is much different now and those same criticisms no longer apply.

[221] Ibid., n.p.

# CHAPTER SEVEN – DISCUSSION

## Introduction

As can be seen from the turbulent history of Haiti, the country has been influenced either directly or indirectly by foreign interests since it declared its independence in 1804. The general characteristic of Haitian politics is that of a dictator president and the transfer of power between leaders has generally been violent. It is only in the past two decades that Haitians have seen some peaceful transfers of power between elected presidents. In 2006 *The Economist* stated that Haiti was economically worse off compared to the Haiti of 1955 and that approximately two-thirds of Haiti's inhabitants lived below the poverty line.[222]

Due to its constant state of poverty and its history of dictatorships, Haitian society is ill prepared for the challenges of democracy. The history of democracy in Haiti is relatively short and memories of the dictatorship era still exist. One of the legacies of the dictatorship era is the vacuum within Haitian society of a well-educated and trained population who can assume administrative roles within the government and society as a whole. The act of holding elections and declaring oneself a democracy does not mean that Haiti is fully democratic. Changes are required, not just from within Haiti as the country adjusts to democracy, but the international community must also change in the way it deals with Haiti. If democracy is to succeed in Haiti, then the international community must change its attitude in how it deals with a democratically elected Haitian

[222] Economist, "An uphill struggle." *Economist* 379, no. 8483 (24 June 2006): 46; http://www.ebscohost.com; Internet; accessed 14 March 2009.

government.[223] Préval's 2006 election was a good step forward in furthering the democratic tradition within Haiti. The conduct of his government will either lead Haitians further down the path of democracy, united as one people, or see them slide back into the recurring cycle of political uncertainty which has generally characterised the past twenty years.

It would be unfortunate for Haiti to fall back into the asymmetric conflict that has characterised its past, with the wealthy elite on one side opposed by the poor majority on the other. The future for Haiti must include a political system that is all-inclusive, one that recognises all of its citizens, so that certain elements of Haitian society do not feel that the only way for their voice to be heard is through violence.

## The Relationship between Canada and Haiti

When looking at the relationship between Canada and Haiti, one could loosely connect the dots of the evidence supporting the claim that Canada actively participated in the overthrow of Aristide in February 2004, and come to the conclusion the Canada did in fact participate in the coup that forced Aristide into exile. What seems to be a more plausible explanation is that when the Americans decided to act to remove Aristide from power, they did so without Canadian involvement; even though Canada had been involved in discussions surrounding the future of Haiti, including the possibility of a Haiti without Aristide. Paul Martin, Prime Minister at the time, would admit later that he had no knowledge of the circumstances that happened on the morning of 29 February

[223] Danièle Magloire, Transcript of "Interview with Danièle Magloire, Coordinator of Rights & Democracy in Haiti" (Ottawa: Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, 4 April 2008); http://www.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/video/haiti/magloire. aspx?lang=eng; Internet; accessed 10 March 2009.

2004.[224] While the evidence of Canadian interference in Haiti is weak, the involvement of the U.S. and France in Haiti can be traced back to the origins of Haiti itself and its proclamation as a slave-free state. Paul Knox comments in his book review of Hallward's *Damming the Flood* that:

> Aristide's overthrow can be seen as the latest chapter in a story that began 200 years ago, when Haiti's slaves seized freedom from France and founded the world's first black-majority republic. They were never forgiven for challenging the world order of the day, and it is hardly coincidence that their descendents inhabit the poorest country in the Americas.[225]

It is hardly surprising, given their country's history, that some Haitians and their supporters, see the continuous involvement of foreign powers as benefiting the rich, but not supporting the country as a whole. The bad memories of French involvement and U.S. occupation can easily be transferred to Canada and the other "white" countries, and even the UN, who have come to help Haiti. When this happens, they too become viewed as meddling foreigners supporting the rich. These opinions were solidified during the first half of this decade, especially during the rule of the transitional government, and it is only with the victory of Préval and the progress that has been made in the past two years, that success stories in Haiti might finally start being attributed to those previously though of as meddling, such as Canada.

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[224] Paul Knox, "Haiti's Fallible Hero," a review of *Damming the Flood: Haiti, Aristide and the Politics of Containment*, by Peter Hallward, *Literary Review of Canada*, (January/February 2009): 13; http://lrc.reviewcanada.ca/index.php?page=haiti-s-fallible-hero; Internet; accessed 14 April 2009.

[225] Ibid.

## Internal Politics

J. Michael Dash sees parallels between the original Haitian elite that agreed to pay France an indemnity to ensure recognition of the newly formed state and the economic elites that exist in Haiti today. Both groups exploited the population and the natural resources for their own wealth. The elites were the state and "the state neglected the peasantry and the peasantry had no leverage against the state."[226] He notes that there is an ongoing transformation of the class of elites, where the groups may change, but their goals remain the same. The "Francophile urban elite" have been replaced by an "entrepreneurial elite … notoriously insatiable in their desire to consume the scarce resources of an impoverished society." [227]

Dash claims that the rhetoric about election irregularities and corruption from the political opposition in 2004 has more to do with power, than the restoration of democracy. Similarly, the attempts by Aristide to continue governing are also deemed to be an all-consuming desire for power resulting in a "winner-take-all mentality" that leaves no room for compromise between the two sides. [228]

The comparisons between past and present continue with Duvalier's *macoutes* replaced by Aristide's *chimeres*. The emergence of these armed pro-Aristide gangs was inevitable argues Dash, since within Haiti there is a culture of retribution that demanded that those who worked with the military regime that overthrew Aristide in 1991 be punished. Consequently, as soon as these groups could obtain arms to protect

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[226] J. Michael Dash, "The Disappearing Island: Haiti, History, and the Hemisphere" (CERLAC Colloquia Paper Series, York University, 2004), 8.

[227] Ibid., 8.

[228] Ibid., 8.

themselves, either defensively or offensively, they did so and most likely with the approval of Aristide. [229]

If a South African style truth and reconciliation process was setup in Haiti after the first coup, then it is possible that the cycle of violence could have been ended. However, even though plans were made, there never was a process put into place and so the issues surrounding the deaths and killings in the early 1990s were never resolved. After completing a human rights mission to Haiti after Aristide's return in 1994, Dash noted that "the dust in Haiti refuses to settle." [230]

## Where Haiti goes from here

Even though there has been great progress in the past two years, the dust has still not settled and the underlying currents within Haitian society do not seem to have changed that much either. The current situation which remains fragile, with widespread poverty and high youth unemployment, was further aggravated by the natural disasters that occurred in autumn 2008. The CEP's decision to ban Aristide's FL candidates from the 19 April 2009 senate elections could also contribute to instability in the country. Unfortunately, this situation means that Haiti is still vulnerable to civil unrest, including politically motivated violence and gang related activities.[231]

The other impediment to progress in Haiti is the continuing corruption within the government. Consequently, Canada has announced that it will continue to bypass the

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[229] Ibid., 18.

[230] Ibid., 18.

[231] Steven Edwards, "Canada wants better monitoring, but remains committed to Haiti," *Calgary Herald On-line Edition*, 5 April 2009; available from http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/Canada+wants+better+monitoring+remains+committed+Haiti; Internet; accessed 16 April 2009.

Government of Haiti and allocate development funds directly to NGOs and UN organizations. The Haitian government however would rather have direct control of the development aid, so that it can provide better services to its population, have better oversight of the ongoing projects, and be better prepared for the 2009 hurricane season.[232]

## Where Canada goes from here

One of the projects that CIDA is currently funding is a long-term project to establish a national police college in Haiti that will be operated by the private sector. The college will train senior police officers and the use of a private-contractor was justified since the project needs a long-term, multi-year commitment and police officers assigned to MINUSTAH are usually generalists that rotate through the mission frequently. This project will complement, and not replace, the current RCMP contribution to MINUSTAH.[233]

Canada will have to ensure that the gains that have been made within the UN and HNP continue, and that all human rights abuses alleged to have occurred by government and UN forces are investigated. Transparency should be the mechanism used to counter the critics of Canadian and UN involvement in Haiti, to prove to the world that Haiti will be a better place because of foreign assistance and not in spite of it.

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[232] Joanna Smith, "Haiti not ready for financial aid, Ottawa says," *thestar.com*, 15 April 2009; available from http://www.thestar.com/News/Canada/article/618715; Internet; accessed 16 April 2009.

[233] Andrew Mayeda, "Ottawa opens bids for Haitian police training," *National Post On-line Edition*, 10 Januray 2009; available from http://www.nationalpost.com/news/story.html?id=1164066; Internet; accessed 16 April 2009.

# CONCLUSION

In the past twenty years Haiti has seen the emergence of the *Fanmi Lavalas*, the political movement of Jean-Bertrand Aristide. What started out as a loose grassroots movement of disparate groups organised to counter Duvalierism, grew into a full-fledged political party. As the movement moved forward, first as the *Organisation Politique Lavalas* and then as the *Fanmi Lavalas*, it started to lose followers who became disenchanted with the direction that Aristide and the FL were taking. Aristide easily won the presidential elections in 1990, but less than a year after becoming president he was overthrown in a coup. History would repeat itself in 2000 as Aristide would once again win the presidency and then once again be overthrown in a coup, this time in early 2004. The international responses to these two incidents were like night and day. The coup in 1991 caused an international outcry of support for the deposed president and foreign countries rallied to Aristide's aid, whereas the coup in 2004 was orchestrated by some of those same countries and there was very little international outcry.

Canada's involvement in Haiti during these turbulent times was primarily the contribution of development aid and military and police assistance. Canada has continuously contributed development aid to Haiti during the past two decades, albeit at varying levels, and has contributed military forces and police personnel to the United Nations authorised missions in both 1994 and 2004.

Just as Aristide has his supporters and his critics, Canadian involvement in Haiti also has its supporters and critics. The critics of Canada's involvement in Haiti argue that Canada was instrumental in the overthrow of Aristide in 2004. They group Canada in with the United States and France as the historical enemies of a free and democratic

Haiti. They have used ambiguous situations and their interpretation of political speeches to further their case that Canada was involved in the planning and execution of the coup. With the exception of Aristide's statements, given in interviews several months after he was forced from Haiti, these critics have presented no solid evidence that ties Canada to the actions on the morning of 29 February 2004 when the Americans flew Aristide to the Central African Republic. Even the first hand account of Aristide's departure given by Aristide's pilot, Gabriel, fails to mention a Canadian presence at the airport or even suggest a Canadian hand in the operation.

Where their criticism does have some merit is with the issue of human rights abuses during the transitional government from 2004 to 2006. Documented evidence does seem to support the claim that the HNP and UN violated human rights, either directly or through inaction. This criticism, by extension, can be levelled against the Canadian government since Canada contributed military forces to MINUSTAH in 2004 and has contributed police offices throughout the history of the mission, including filling the position of Police Commissioner twice. Unfortunately the critics of Canada's role in Haiti have failed to notice the success that Haiti and the UN have had since the election of Préval in 2006. The allegations of human rights abuses against the UN have dropped considerably since 2006, and while there are still some issues with the HNP, the force continues to be modernised and there are plans for a senior officers' Police Academy.

Haiti is still a fragile state in need of international aid and assistance. The government of Haiti must strive to act in an open and democratic fashion, inclusive of all political parties. The recurring pattern of using violence to affect political change must be relegated to Haiti's history as it moves forward as a democratic society.

Consequently, while there continues to be a debate on Canada's past actions in Haiti, and whether or not Canada was unduly biased against Aristide, the more important debate should be on how Canada can continue to contribute to Haiti, to ensure that the country does not falter on its journey to becoming a stable, safe, and democratic society.

So even though there are critics of Canada's role in Haiti, especially when referring to Canada's relationship with former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide and his followers, the reality is that Canada has had a positive impact on Haiti's transition to democracy in the past twenty years. However, Canada must acknowledge that some justified criticism of its past actions does exist and therefore, in order to deter any future criticism, Canada should attempt to be as transparent as possible about its intentions and actions with respect to Aristide and Haiti.

All dust must eventually settle.

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