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Haiti: An Agenda for Democracy  
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North America Project

WORLD POLICY INSTITUTE

# Haiti: An Agenda for Democracy

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February 1996

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66 Fifth Ave 9th floor, New York NY 10011

ISBN 0-911646-63-9

# Haiti: An Agenda for Democracy

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## INTRODUCTION

It has been almost a year and a half since the United States, acting under a U.N. mandate, restored the elected government of Haiti, which had been overthrown by the country's armed forces in 1991. In that time, the United Nations assumed responsibility for peacekeeping in Haiti. But with the February 7 inauguration of Haiti's newly elected president, René Prével, the United Nations has fulfilled its original mandate and is withdrawing its troops. Though it will maintain a diminished force consisting of 1,500 troops and 300 police trainers for another 6 months beyond the original cutoff date of February 29, the foreign presence in Haiti is winding down.<sup>1</sup>

Few knowledgeable observers believe Haiti is ready to go it alone, despite a series of important achievements since the restoration of democratic rule under President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in October 1994. The army that for three years snuffed out democratic rule and littered the streets with the corpses of its victims has been disbanded. Despite occasional acts of violence, some politically motivated, Haiti is experiencing an unusual degree of calm, and its inhabitants are enjoying unprecedented levels of personal security. The country has also undergone its first-ever peaceful transition from one civilian president to another, both of whom won office by overwhelming margins in elections generally regarded as free and fair.

Yet, because other essential problems remain unaddressed, Haiti continues to depend on foreign forces to guarantee domestic tranquility. As dramatized by the November 1995 assassination of newly elected legislator Jean Hubert Feuille, a member of the pro-Aristide Lavalas coalition, and again by the January 1996 shooting of another Lavalas coalition legislator, Ary Pierre-Paul Marsan, former paramilitaries remain armed and presumably ready to take advantage of a U.N. withdrawal to make a renewed bid for the power that has eluded them at the ballot box.<sup>2</sup>

Haiti shares a 171-mile border with the Dominican Republic, and that country's president and army collaborated with the military regime in Haiti, breaching the OAS and U.N. embargoes. President Joaquín Balaguer, who makes no secret of his distaste for black Haitians and for Aristide's Lavalas (Creole for flash flood) coalition, is providing refuge to former Haitian military officers. It is only prudent to suppose that some of these officers may be preparing to make a move against the government of Haiti following the withdrawal of the U.N. peacekeeping

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force and that these officers may have powerful Dominican accomplices. Policymakers have not paid enough attention to Haiti's broader security context, which necessarily encompasses the entire island of Hispaniola.

While much attention has been devoted to problems with the administration of elections in Haiti, analysts have overlooked a far more important problem: the failure to provide for adequate representation of minority viewpoints. No one questions the mandates of either President Aristide or President René Prével, both of whom won over two-thirds of the popular vote. The problem is that Haiti's winner-take-all electoral system underrepresents minority viewpoints, providing inadequate checks on abuse of majority rule. Given the importance of fostering reconciliation between the country's small upper and middle classes and its poor majority, this is a serious oversight.

Haiti also lacks a functioning judicial system. Many of its judges are holdovers from the period of dictatorship. Almost all are undertrained. Most courts lack electricity and telephones. Most judges do not own the legal texts essential to their work.<sup>3</sup> Even if Haiti's police were not so inexperienced, the country would still be missing the other essential precondition for maintaining social peace: an efficient and impartial system for determining guilt or innocence and setting commensurate sentences. Absent such a system, the development of which will require foreign assistance, Haitians will continue to resort to the vigilantism that so offends foreign sensibilities.

Complaints by foreign donors that President Aristide reneged on a pledge to privatize state-owned utilities also fail to take account of the bigger picture. For a government elected by the poor to carry out policies advocated by wealthy Haitians and foreigners is political suicide, unless such policies are accompanied by initiatives aimed at alleviating the worst effects of poverty. This suggests the need to complement privatization with development funds and policies aimed at improving the lot of the majority, and thereby at stabilizing democracy.

To adequately address these issues, however, it is important to first exorcise some of the ghosts of the past, ghosts that continue to haunt American perceptions of Haiti, and in so doing keep Americans from forming a clear image of their real national interests and of what needs to be done to head off a return to violence, instability, and mass emigration an outcome that would be in almost no one's interest, either in Haiti or in the United States.

### THE GHOSTS OF HISTORY

The United States has always had a difficult time dealing with Haiti. It still does. When Toussaint L'Ouverture led the slave revolt that culminated in Haitian independence from France in 1804, he sent a chill through the still-young American republic, one of whose foundations was African slavery. Fearing the Haitian example would cause a slave insurrection in the southern states, successive U.S. presidents maintained a 65-year embargo against the island nation. Only after the abolition of slavery was the embargo lifted.

Yet, just as the Civil War ended slavery but not discrimination in the United States, it had similar repercussions for U.S. policy toward Haiti. In 1915, President Woodrow Wilson, the self-proclaimed apostle of self-determination, ordered U.S. Marines to occupy Haiti. They were to remain there for 19 years, until withdrawn by President Franklin Roosevelt. During this period,

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the occupiers a large portion of whom were drawn from the southern states brought with them the racist and segregationist attitudes institutionalized by the Jim Crow legislation of the time. Preferential treatment of lighter-skinned Haitians accentuated divisions between blacks and mulattos. It also caused widespread resentment of white Americans by black Haitians and led to the armed rebellion of Charlemagne Peralte.

Racist attitudes were also expressed by two interrelated aspects of U.S. policy toward Haiti. One was a refusal to accept Haitians as capable of self-government. When the Haitian National Assembly refused to approve a new constitution prepared by the State Department in 1917, U.S. military commanders forced the Haitian president to dissolve the Parliament. Complementing this paternalistic attitude toward Haitian democracy was America's obsession with maintaining order in Haiti, which led to its role in forming the Haitian armed forces.<sup>4</sup>

Although official racism has all but vanished in the United States since the 1960s, unofficial racism seldom acknowledged as such persists in the attitudes of many citizens and government officials. The 1994 occupation of Haiti was prompted not so much by the overthrow of a legitimately elected government, or by reports of shocking violations of human rights by the Haitian army, as by the resulting wave of unwanted Haitian immigrants landing on Florida shores. Reinforcing the discomfort with Haitian immigration is the association of Haitians with poverty: Haitians are among the poorest people in the hemisphere.

These attitudes are reflected in American perceptions of Aristide, the political figure who has come to embody the hopes of Haiti's poor, black majority. Though elected to the presidency in 1990 with two-thirds of the vote, far more than any other leader in the hemisphere, it is commonplace to hear U.S. politicians describe Jean-Bertrand Aristide as not a true democrat.

The CIA went further, actively conspiring with Haitian military and paramilitary groups to keep President Aristide from serving out his term and, following the coup, to frustrate White House efforts to secure his return. Emmanuel Toto Constant, head of the paramilitary group FRAPH (Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti, whose acronym plays on the French verb, *frapper*, "to hit"), was on the CIA payroll until shortly before the U.S. invasion.

It was Constant, son of former dictator François "Papa Doc" Duvalier's military chief-of-staff, who stymied the Governors Island Accord, the first U.S.-brokered agreement to restore Aristide to the presidency, by orchestrating a dockside demonstration in Port-au-Prince that forced the USS Harlan County, which was carrying U.S. troops arriving to enforce the terms of the agreement, to turn back in October 1993. According to Constant, that action, which humiliated the United States, was carried out with the knowledge and implicit approval of the CIA, which did nothing to alert either President Bill Clinton or Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

The net impact of American prejudices toward Haiti has been ignorance of U.S. interests in Haiti. The obsession with Aristide, who in many ways symbolizes what white America finds uncomfortable about Haiti its blackness, its extreme poverty, its mix of liberation theology and voodoo is a serious distraction from America's real interests in ensuring stability and democracy. Regardless of what one thinks of Aristide, a good reality check is to consider the alternatives.

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### APPROACHES TO STABILITY

There are two possible approaches to building stability in Haiti. One is to create a police state. That has already been tried and ultimately failed. Should former soldiers and paramilitaries regroup following the departure of the U.N. peacekeeping force, Haiti may face yet another period of dictatorship and brutality, setting off a second mass exodus. Yet Americans are no more willing to receive Haitian immigrants now than they were two years ago.

The only alternative is to pursue universal disarmament. President Aristide's most significant achievement since his reinstatement has been to provide Haiti's impoverished majority with an unprecedented sense of personal security. This has been made possible by a combination of three factors.

First, Aristide, against the wishes of the U.S. government, carried out a de facto abolition of the armed forces by dismissing its senior officer corps and laying off all soldiers except the members of the military band.<sup>5</sup> With former military leaders in exile in Panama, Florida, and the Dominican Republic, and with FRAPH leader Emmanuel Constant in detention in the United States, paramilitary terrorist groups have been forced underground.

Second, the nationwide system of section chiefs and their attachés was dismantled. Section chiefs had been appointed by the army to keep tight control over residents in their respective districts. In return for loyalty, they were given powers of life and death over their charges and were entitled to extort money, goods, and land. They have been replaced by democratically elected mayors and municipal councils.

The third factor is the presence of foreign peacekeeping forces. This last element is now the weak link, since these forces are being withdrawn. Even if the United Nations maintains a reduced presence for several more months, Haiti's still-fragile democracy will find itself seriously exposed when the troops withdraw. There are two reasons for this. First, U.S. and U.N. forces have failed to disarm former soldiers and paramilitaries who are awaiting the foreigners' departure to retrieve hidden weapons and make another bid for power. And second, Haiti's new civilian national police force (the previous force was an extension of the army) is hardly ready to assume full policing duties, let alone provide an effective defense against well-armed paramilitaries. With only four months' training and .38 caliber revolvers, the police are unlikely to be much of a match for former soldiers armed with semiautomatic weapons.

In the face of U.S. and U.N. unwillingness to disarm former paramilitaries, President Aristide asked the U.S. government to at least return documents seized from the Haitian military during the takeover. These documents, the Haitian government believes, will help identify paramilitaries and locate their weapons caches, allowing disarmament to be carried out by Haitian police prior to the U.N. departure. Over objections from the Pentagon and the CIA, President Clinton agreed to return the documents to Haiti, with the names of U.S. agents blacked out.

For Haitian democracy to comfortably survive the withdrawal of foreign troops, the Clinton administration should pursue this decision by helping to identify former soldiers and paramilitaries who may pose a threat to stability and by uncovering their weapons caches. This

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need not compromise the security of any U.S. or other foreign troops, since Haitians themselves are eager to carry out the operations once supplied with the proper intelligence.

The ultimate goal should be full disarmament, which would make a resumption of Haiti's two-century-old cycle of violence far less likely. Nobel Peace Prize laureate and former Costa Rican president Oscar Arias has been vigorously campaigning for the formal abolition of the Haitian armed forces. President Aristide has already abolished the army de facto. President Préval should now take advantage of Lavalas's overwhelming majority in the National Assembly to pass a constitutional amendment abolishing the armed forces permanently. This would make Haiti the third country in the hemisphere, after Costa Rica and Panama, to do so, setting a hopeful trend for a region where armies have been little more than a scourge of civil society.

### THE CIA'S ROLE IN TERROR

To ensure the success of disarmament, however, the White House will have to go beyond its present willingness merely to hand over edited copies of the documents it seized from the Haitian military. Amid mounting evidence of a prolonged and possibly ongoing CIA effort to undermine democracy in Haiti in contravention of official U.S. policy, a full-scale investigation is an essential precondition for ensuring the ultimate success of Operation Restore Democracy, as the U.S. mission was titled, and for clearing the cloud of suspicion hanging over Washington's relations with Port-au-Prince.

In a segment aired on CBS's 60 Minutes on December 3, FRAPH leader Emmanuel Constant confirmed he had received \$700 a month in cash from the CIA station chief in Port-au-Prince. He said he was recruited shortly after the September 1991 military coup that sent President Aristide into exile, and he claimed he remained on the payroll until just before U.S. troops landed in Haiti in October 1994.<sup>6</sup>

According to Allan Nairn, who first broke the story of Constant's links to the CIA in *The Nation* in October 1994, the U.S. intelligence community's role in undermining democracy in Haiti may be far worse than anyone has heretofore imagined. From interviews with military and intelligence officials in the United States and Haiti, Nairn lays out a shocking tale of American complicity in fomenting terror.<sup>7</sup>

According to Constant, the group that became FRAPH was formed after the military coup in 1991 at the urging of the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency as a counterbalance to Aristide's Lavalas. In mid-1993, FRAPH began receiving shipments of thousands of weapons from Miami, including semi-automatic pistols, machine guns with collapsible stocks, and fragmentation grenades.<sup>8</sup> None of the shipments was intercepted by the U.S. Navy, which began at least nominally to enforce an embargo against Haiti in October 1993. The shipments, moreover, were routed through junta member Col. Michel François, who was himself, according to NBC News, on the CIA payroll. FRAPH used the weapons to terrorize President Aristide's unarmed Lavalas legions of supporters. It was 7,000 of us versus 7 million civilians, a former Haitian army officer told Nairn.<sup>9</sup>

CIA testimony gathered from other agents of the military government was used to undermine support for the president's policy in Congress. In closed testimony before a Senate committee,

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Brian Latell, the national intelligence officer for Latin America, stated that President Aristide was mentally unbalanced and had entered a Montreal clinic for treatment. Though refuted by a Miami Herald investigation, the charge formed the basis for Republican attacks on Aristide as unworthy of U.S. support.

The CIA built much of its case against Aristide with information supplied by Lynn Garrison, a shadowy former Canadian air force officer. Though obviously at the service of the Haitian junta Garrison slept in military headquarters and served as the generals' primary adviser on how to deal with Washington the CIA apparently saw no need to question his objectivity and verify his accusations. All of this begs a disturbing question: who was the CIA serving?

That question was raised again with the admission of Emmanuel Constant to the United States. When U.S. troops raided FRAPH headquarters in October 1994, they found bone-chilling photographs of mutilated bodies on the walls. Yet, when Haitian authorities summoned Constant for questioning about FRAPH's role in the murder of thousands of his fellow citizens, he slipped into the United States on a multiple-entry visa.<sup>10</sup> It was not until almost half a year later, after the case was widely publicized, that Immigration agents arrested Constant at the home of a relative in Queens, New York.<sup>11</sup>

Did the CIA help Constant enter the United States, in contravention of official policy? Underscoring that possibility is the CIA's long-term relationship with the Constant family, beginning with Gen. Gérard Constant, Emmanuel's father, who headed the army under former dictator François "Papa Doc" Duvalier. The agency, or some of its members, may have felt honor-bound to look after such a longtime ally, regardless of the accusations against him.

More questions are begged by the March 28, 1995, assassination of Mireille Durocher Bertin, a former spokeswoman for the military government who was organizing an opposition party. Among those arrested in the plot were two brothers, Patrick and Eddy Moise, who first made headlines in 1992, when they seized the Canadian embassy in Port-au-Prince. The Moises, self-styled Marxist supporters of Aristide, were taken into custody by a security unit infamous for murdering its captives. Instead of being executed, however, they were quickly released, suggesting they had taken part in a set-up organized by military authorities.<sup>12</sup> Coupled with FRAPH attacks on election offices, their reemergence just weeks before the June 1995 legislative elections suggests the possibility of a plot to discredit Aristide's fledgling democratic government.<sup>13</sup>

Such suspicions are reinforced by a consideration of motive: Aristide supporters have had nothing to gain and everything to lose from the murder of adversaries. Despite continuing economic hardship, Aristide has remained overwhelmingly popular. In this context, formation of an opposition party involving prominent partisans of the hated military regime is a boon to Aristide's Lavalas coalition, because it reminds Haitians of the most likely alternative should the present experiment in democracy fail. To die-hard supporters of the old order, on the other hand, Aristide's unassailable electoral strength would be reason enough to resort to sabotage.

In response to the Bertin assassination, President Aristide accepted an FBI offer to investigate hardly the mark of someone fearing exposure.<sup>14</sup> On the contrary, this suggests a suspicion that the CIA may still be working at cross-purposes with the rest of the Executive branch.

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Was the Bertin assassination the work of present or former CIA assets? Was junta publicist Lynn Garrison ever on the CIA payroll? Reports that the CIA may even now be maintaining ties with right-wing terrorists in Haiti make such questions of more than passing historical interest. According to Allan Nairn, CIA agents spread out throughout Haiti in the week following the U.S. occupation, asking Special Forces (Green Berets) to help them identify Haitians who could be recruited to work for the agency.<sup>15</sup> “Those placed or continued on the payroll include FRAPH leaders and attachés,” according to U.S. officials closely familiar with the operation.<sup>16</sup>

Based on interviews with FRAPH leader Emmanuel Constant and Gen. Dick Potter, who commands the U.S. Special Forces in Haiti, Nairn also concludes that senior U.S. officials have also intervened to free FRAPH leaders from jail after they have been arrested by Haitian authorities or by field-level U.S. troops.<sup>17</sup>

Further questions are raised by a Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel report that at least a dozen prominent members of the military government are now living in south Florida, where they candidly admit to be awaiting the departure of U.S. troops from Haiti. Among the exiles is Alix Cédras, brother and top adviser to Gen. Raoul Cédras; Maj. Gen. Jean-Claude Duperval, Cédras' successor as head of the army; and Lynn Garrison. Garrison, whose home and business are in Los Angeles, describes the apartment he rents on the southern outskirts of Miami as my little command post from which he remains in constant touch with collaborators in Haiti, south Florida, and Washington.<sup>18</sup>

With U.N. forces withdrawing from Haiti, any continuing covert operations by rogue elements in the CIA could tilt the still-delicate balance of power back into the hands of paramilitary extremists, who could overwhelm the country's inexperienced and lightly armed police force. Such an outcome would deliver a serious blow to U.S. prestige abroad, at a time when American credibility is essential to the success of the NATO peace mission in Bosnia.

To foreclose any such possibility, as well as to exorcise the ghosts of the past, President Clinton should order a full review of CIA ties with Haitian terrorist groups. Last March, following similar revelations of CIA links to murderous military officers in Guatemala, the president launched an internal review that led to dismissal of the Guatemala station chief and a former chief of covert operations in Latin America.<sup>19</sup> A similar investigation is long past due for Haiti, where the CIA has arguably acted at even greater cross-purposes with official U.S. policy.

### THE DEMOCRACY EQUATION

Restoration of the freely elected government of Haiti has solved only one part of the democratic equation majority rule. The other half of democracy is ensuring adequate representation of minorities and effective protection of their equal rights as persons and as citizens. This is an especially difficult and important task in Haiti, where there are strong social, economic, and political divides separating minorities from the majority.

With few exceptions, the only enduring, relatively stable Third World democracies have been parliamentary systems, headed by prime ministers instead of presidents. This stands to reason. Parliamentary systems place executive power in the hands of the legislature, usually forcing the

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dominant political force to engage in constant negotiation and compromise with the opposition. That in turn gives the opposition a stake in the institutional order, turning it into the loyal opposition, and thereby stabilizing the political system. India, Jamaica, and even South Africa have thus weathered severe political storms, but not so Chile, Nigeria, and the Dominican Republic, which have less flexible presidential systems.

Costa Rica is an exception, but one that helps to establish the rule. Costa Rica long ago chose to replace its army of soldiers with an army of schoolteachers and doctors. Without armed forces, its president, who cannot be reelected to a consecutive term, has little choice but to work with the opposition in the Legislative Assembly. Moreover, because the Assembly is elected by proportional representation, minorities are both represented and listened to. No one in Costa Rica fears that anyone will try to overthrow the democratic order.

Given the weight of tradition, it would be difficult, at least in the short term, for Haiti to make the transition from a presidential to a parliamentary system. Yet, following the time-tested example of Costa Rica, and the more recent example of South Africa, it could take a major step in this direction by adopting proportional representation.

The South African case is particularly enlightening, because Haiti and South Africa face similar social and political problems. In both cases, a recently empowered black majority must confront the challenge of overcoming deep-seated antagonisms of powerful minorities by moving them into a parliamentary setting of political give-and-take. In South Africa, the effort is succeeding; in Haiti, it is faltering.

The divergent outcomes have nothing to do with the seriousness of disputes among sectors of the two countries' populations. South Africa's divisions are arguably worse. Until recently, the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party were in a state of virtual warfare. In Haiti, on the other hand, many of the opposition parties that have become disaffected with the political system are led by former supporters of President Aristide.<sup>20</sup>

How could elections help reconcile enemies in South Africa yet drive a bigger wedge between former allies in Haiti? Because radically different systems of representation are being used. Haiti has a winner-take-all system. Only by winning a majority in any given district can a party win representation in the legislature. In South Africa, by contrast, parties win seats in proportion to their share of the vote, which ensures adequate representation of minorities.

The essential problem in both countries is that a single political party commands the allegiance of a substantial majority but is resented by powerful minorities. Under a winner-take-all system, Nelson Mandela's ANC would hold virtually every seat in the South African legislature, locking whites and Zulu nationalists out of the government. With proportional representation, the ANC still holds 252 of 400 seats in the National Assembly, but the National Party has 82 seats, and Inkatha has 43. This encourages the ANC to recognize a role for minorities. Former president F. W. De Klerk, for example, remains deputy president, and Zulus hold posts in the cabinet.

In Haiti, on the other hand, Aristide's Lavalas coalition governs alone. With majority support throughout the country, a winner-take-all system has given Lavalas an overwhelming majority in both houses of the National Assembly. That is why many of Haiti's minority parties boycotted

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not only the presidential election (which they would not stand a chance of winning, anyway), but parliamentary elections as well. If minorities are to be denied their due weight in the National Assembly, why should they legitimize one-party rule by Lavalas?

The fault lies not with Aristide, Préval, or Lavalas; they merely inherited Haiti's Constitution. Yet in the interest of promoting reconciliation, the president and his party should be encouraged to use their majority to amend the Constitution to provide for proportional representation. As a gesture of good will, they could then offer to hold new legislative elections, under rules that give the opposition a meaningful stake in democracy.

For proportional representation to work, it will also have to be paired with electoral reform. According to foreign observers, the June 1995 legislative elections were flawed by irregularities, including polling places that failed to open, beating and intimidation of opposition poll watchers, and charges of ballot tampering.<sup>21</sup> Most of the problems were resolved in make-up elections held in August and runoff elections held in September, but suspicions have lingered over the neutrality of the Electoral Commission, most of whose nine members are Aristide loyalists.

To eliminate any appearance of partiality, the Electoral Commission should be reconstituted with members whose independence is universally respected.

### **SOCIOECONOMIC KEYS TO SUCCESS**

Sharp socioeconomic divides tend to undermine democracy. That is because democracy is predicated on formal equality one person, one vote. Other voting systems, such as those at stockholders' meetings or the International Monetary Fund, are weighted to reflect the differences in the material holdings of participants.

In past centuries, property requirements were also routinely used as a condition for suffrage in the then-more-unequal societies of Great Britain and the United States. By the late twentieth century, however, that has become politically unthinkable anywhere but in the boardroom. In societies with relatively flatter distributions of wealth and income, such as western Europe, Japan, Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States, majoritarian middle classes make the discrepancy between economic inequality and political equality at least manageable, if not always comfortable.

Elsewhere, far more pronounced economic inequalities favor authoritarian governments, whose purpose is either revolutionary to redistribute resources among social classes or, more frequently, conservative to protect the position of a small but wealthy elite from impoverished majorities.

Short of building an advanced economy, which in Haiti is unthinkable for the foreseeable future, there is another option that has helped secure democracy in spite of poverty and inequality: to have the state provide for such basic needs as good education and health care. Costa Rica and the Indian state of Kerala have both successfully followed this option. With a tenth the per-capita income of the United States or Canada, Costa Rica has achieved comparable life expectancies and literacy levels. Kerala has performed similarly on the other side of the world.

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In both instances, a key to their success has been the elimination of internal repression, which is very costly, and reinvestment of the savings in education and health care. Neither entity is prosperous, but the citizens of both enjoy a relatively high quality of life in a setting of personal security and political tranquility.

This kind of sensibility needs to inform the debate over foreign economic assistance to Haiti. Since October 1994, foreign donors have been withholding more than \$100 million in credits including \$100 million from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank and \$4.6 million from the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) designated to support Haiti's shaky economy. Given the fact that Haiti's projected budget is \$350 million, the effect of such withholding is potentially crippling. At issue is Aristide's about-face on a promise to sign a letter of intent to privatize nine state-owned businesses, ranging from a cement plant and flour mill to the nation's telephone and electric utilities. That reversal led to the resignation of Prime Minister Smarck Michel and to suspension of the aid package.<sup>22</sup>

Ironically, Aristide's change of mind came about precisely because of the democratic process that was a prime goal of foreign intervention in the first place. Amid fears that privatization would create a series of private monopolies in the hands of Haitian elites that helped to back and finance the despised military regime, the idea quickly became unpopular with most Haitians.

Aristide, who presumably wants to keep open the possibility of running for another presidential term five years from now, does not want to be seen as a mere tool of the foreign powers who restored him to the presidency. By reducing the issue to Aristide's failure to keep a promise, AID and the international lending institutions are only reinforcing such perceptions among Haitians. That is both unfortunate and unnecessary.

There are sound arguments for the privatization that foreign donors are prescribing for Haiti: to promote more efficient use of resources, to limit opportunities for graft, and to forestall the development of statism. Yet, mindful of Haiti's socioeconomic realities, these donors should be making the package more politically attractive by adding several elements that should be included anyway. One is a public commitment not to do anything that would cause a further concentration of economic resources in the hands of domestic elites. This can be addressed in several possible ways. One would be to contract management of the enterprises to foreign firms with excellent records of efficiency and civic-mindedness. Another would be to turn over the enterprises to independent not-for-profit agencies or to joint public-private enterprises, which, like the U.S. Postal Service, would enjoy significant degrees of autonomy.

A second commitment should be to await timely action by the National Assembly on a bill to regulate monopolies in the public interest. None of the enterprises slated to be privatized faces any meaningful economic competition. It is a fundamental tenet of economic policy that monopolies should be regulated to prevent price-gouging and, in the particular case of utilities, to ensure some consideration of the greater public interest.

In the case of telecommunications, for example, only a small minority of Haitians can afford a telephone. Any sensible rate structure should therefore include a subsidy for the installation and maintenance of inexpensive public telephones in every community. Such a network would help address other necessities, such as the need to improve public security in outlying rural areas.

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The other necessary complement to privatization is an internationally supported program of investment in what the private sector sees as externalities public goods essential to economic development and to the general welfare, but whose dispersed benefits provide limited incentives for private investment. This includes investment in physical infrastructure, such as roads and ports, to help attract foreign manufacturers. It also includes human infrastructure, essential to the productivity of labor.

A program of training and supporting doctors, agronomists, and educators, perhaps funded jointly by the United Nations, Haiti, and the United States, would cost a fraction of the amount spent on military operations and would begin to make Haiti a more stable and inviting locale for foreign investment. It would also make the other reforms the United States seeks politically acceptable to the majority.

In tandem with demilitarization and a more inclusive parliament, there is every reason to believe that programs designed to address basic human needs would help Haiti turn a corner, leaving behind its history of violence, instability, and abject misery. True, the country would still remain poor, as it will under any imaginable scenario for the foreseeable future, but it would, in President Aristide's words, be able to achieve poverty with dignity.

### THE BROADER CONTEXT: HISPANIOLA

Haiti shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic, with which it has a long history of conflict. This underscores the need to see Haitian security in the wider context of Hispaniola. Even if Haitians can overcome domestic antagonisms, democracy will never be fully secure in Haiti until it is likewise secure in the Dominican Republic. Similarly, a commitment to demilitarize Haiti begs the question of demilitarizing Hispaniola.

Though nominally a democracy, the Dominican Republic has been ruled as virtually a personal fiefdom for 21 of the last 29 years by Joaquín Balaguer, who had served as presidential secretary to former dictator Rafael Trujillo.<sup>23</sup>

Underlying the crisis of democracy in the Dominican Republic are political and economic divisions typical of Latin America. Great disparities of wealth and income are reflected in the country's polarization between two major parties. The Social Christian Reformist Party (PRSC), until now led by Balaguer, is a conservative party allied to the business establishment and the army. Challenging the PRSC's hegemony is the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD), a social democratic party representing wage-earners and much of the urban middle class. Its perennial presidential candidate is Jos, Francisco Peña Gómez, a former mayor of Santo Domingo.

Peña Gómez is black in a country evenly divided among shades of black and white but that has never had a black president. Capitalizing on racial prejudice during the 1994 campaign, Balaguer falsely portrayed Peña Gómez as a Haitian with a secret plan to unite the neighboring republics. Until the U.S. invasion of Haiti, Balaguer made no secret of his distaste for President Aristide and of his tacit alliance with Haiti's military rulers, which led him to breach U.N. sanctions against Haiti.

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Balaguer is now retiring, and though there is reason to hope PRSC presidential candidate Jacinto Peynado will take a more moderate stand on Haiti, that is by no means a certainty.

Either way, attention will need to be drawn to the role of the armed forces in the Dominican Republic. The Dominican army has never in this century been called upon to defend the country's borders against a threat of invasion. With the disappearance of the Haitian army, it can no longer serve any conceivable national defense interest.

Without any genuine foreign threats to confront, the Dominican army has behaved as a largely unaccountable domestic police force, serving the interests of strongmen and contrabandists. More recently, the army helped to smuggle supplies to the military government in Haiti in defiance of U.N.-imposed economic sanctions. Far from behaving as adversaries, the armies of Haiti and the Dominican Republic have often been partners in repression of the inhabitants of Hispaniola.

That partnership may be continuing in a covert fashion. Many Haitian military officers have moved to the Dominican Republic. Most notable among them is former Port-au-Prince police chief Col. Michel François, a known CIA asset who took part in the transshipment of weapons from Miami to FRAPH. His brother Evans François, also on the CIA payroll, is reported to have handled the shipment of the weapons through Santo Domingo. So while former general Raoul Cédras remains banished in Panama and Emmanuel Constant faces deportation to Haiti, much of the CIA's old network, including its highest-ranking member, Michel François, remains at large on Hispaniola, possibly plotting a comeback.

On a visit to Santo Domingo in early December 1995, Haitian prime minister Claudette Werleigh asked the Dominican government to keep a close eye on the exiles amid unconfirmed reports that they are sending emissaries across the border to organize terrorist actions against the Haitian government. While little more than a nuisance for the time being, any such cross-border conspiracy could emerge as a serious threat to the Haitian government following departure of the U.N. peacekeeping force.

To fortify democracy and respect for human rights throughout Hispaniola, attention should therefore be focused on the advisability of abolishing the Dominican as well as the Haitian armies. Neither country needs more than a civilian police force, a branch of which could serve as border guards. As the de facto abolition of the Haitian army has already shown, the savings to the public treasuries in these impoverished countries would be substantial. Washington could provide further incentive by matching reductions in military aid with increases in aid for health, education, and essential infrastructures only to the extent that these countries disarm.

Since well before the emergence of the Cold War, it has been customary for the United States to address its security concerns in the hemisphere by arming what it saw as friendly forces to act as proxies for its interests. The primary legacies of the occupations earlier this century of Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua, and of similar interventions in Cuba and Panama, were armed forces that became bulwarks of dictatorship. Ironically, all have not only inflicted great suffering on their nations, but have ultimately contributed to major foreign policy headaches for the United States. Even so, Washington continues to stick by this failed policy. Until thwarted by President Aristide, it was U.S. policy to try to preserve the Haitian armed forces.

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With the Cold War over, it is time to try a different strategy, relying on the development of democracy and civil society instead of armed forces whose only *raison d'être* is to keep democracy in a straightjacket and the citizens of Latin America deprived of many of their most fundamental rights and liberties.

Because of Haiti and the Dominican Republic's small size, insular location, and proximity to the United States, and because such a measure would be popular with most of their inhabitants, Hispaniola offers an ideal proving ground for a new hemispheric policy premised on substituting the rule of law for the rule of the gun.

### NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> "Canadians to follow U.S. Forces in Haiti," *Miami Herald*, January 25, 1996, p. 16A.

<sup>2</sup> "Gunmen Wound Aristide Loyalist," *Miami Herald*, January 10, 1996, p. 6A.

<sup>3</sup> William G. O'Neill, *No Greater Priority: Judicial Reform in Haiti* (New York: National Coalition for Haitian Refugees, March 1995), p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Mark T. Kehoe, "A History of Hard Feelings," *Congressional Quarterly*, September 17, 1994, p. 2581.

<sup>5</sup> "Army Leaders Forced Out by Aristide," *New York Times*, February 22, 1995, p. A5.

<sup>6</sup> "Haitian Ex-Paramilitary Leader Confirms C.I.A. Relationship," *New York Times*, December 3, 1995, p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> Allan Nairn, "Haiti Under the Gun: How U.S. Intelligence Has Been Exercising Crowd Control," *The Nation*, January 8, 1996, pp. 11-15.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* p. 14.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> "Embarrassing Mystery of Missing Boss of Haitian Armed Gang: Notorious Haitian Was (inadvertently?) Let into the U.S.," *New York Times*, February 14, 1995, p. A5.

<sup>11</sup> "Haitian Fugitive in Killings Is Arrested in Queens," *New York Times*, May 13, 1995, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> "Haiti Murder Investigation: Avenues with Few Answers," *New York Times*, April 11, 1995, pp. A1, A6.

<sup>13</sup> "10 Hurt in Attack on Election Bureau," *Miami Herald*, April 20, 1995, p. A18.

<sup>14</sup> In a report presented at a hearing of the House International Relations Committee on January 4, 1996, the FBI said it had found no evidence to support accusations that members of the Aristide administration had been involved in the assassination.

<sup>15</sup> Although U.S. officers told their troops that FRAPH was a legitimate opposition party, classified cables from the American embassy to the Departments of Defense and State refer to FRAPH as a gang of "gun-carrying crazies," belying the official story. "Cables Show U.S. Deception on Violence in Haiti," *New York Times*, February 6, 1996, p. A3.

<sup>16</sup> Nairn, "Haiti under the Gun," p. 12.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> David Beard, "Watching Haiti from South Florida: Former Leaders Dream, Gloat During Their Exile in Style," *Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel*, December 3, 1995, p. 1A.

<sup>19</sup> "Breaking with Past, C.I.A. Plans to Discipline Officers Who Lied," *New York Times*, September 28, 1995, pp. A1, A7.

<sup>20</sup> "Election Campaign in Haiti Splits Allies," *New York Times*, June 23, 1995, p. A3.

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<sup>21</sup> “As Haitian Tally Proceeds, Allegations of Flaws Mount,” *New York Times*, June 27, 1995, p. A5.

<sup>22</sup> “Haiti’s Prime Minister Resigns after Disputes over Economy,” *New York Times*, October 14, 1995, p. 2, and “Privatization Moves Set Off Feud in Haiti’s Government,” *New York Times*, October 19, 1995, p. A7.

<sup>23</sup> Balaguer is the nephew of Trujillo’s second wife. Jan Knippers Black, *The Dominican Republic: Politics and Development in an Unsovereign State* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986), p. 42.