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number 32

## *Haiti's Turmoil*

POLITICS AND POLICY  
UNDER ARISTIDE  
AND CLINTON

ROBERT I. ROTBERG

## THE WORLD PEACE FOUNDATION

The World Peace Foundation was created in 1910 by the imagination and fortune of Edwin Ginn, the Boston publisher, to encourage international peace and cooperation. The Foundation seeks to advance the cause of world peace through study, analysis, and the advocacy of wise action. As an operating, not a grant-giving foundation, it provides financial support only for projects which it has initiated itself.

Edwin Ginn shared the hope of many of his contemporaries that permanent peace could be achieved. That dream was denied by the outbreak of World War I, but the Foundation has continued ever since to attempt to overcome obstacles to international peace and cooperation, drawing for its funding on the endowment bequeathed by the founder. In its early years, the Foundation focused its attention on building the peacekeeping capacity of the League of Nations, and then on the development of world order through the United Nations. The Foundation established and nurtured the premier scholarly journal in its field, *International Organization*.

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# **HAITI'S TURMOIL:**

**POLITICS AND POLICY UNDER**

**ARISTIDE AND CLINTON**

**ROBERT I. ROTBERG**

**WORLD PEACE FOUNDATION  
WPF PROGRAM ON INTRASTATE CONFLICT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION,  
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## Introduction

Haiti is small, poor, and badly governed. That has been the lot of Haitians from 1804 to 1990, despite an emperor, a clutch of dictators, the despotic rule of the Duvalier family, an American occupation, and a few well-meaning democratic rulers. For nearly two centuries, Haitians have been waiting for leaders who favor the national over narrow personal interest, who seek a sustained improvement in the national condition, and who put the needs and claims of ordinary Haitians first.

Throughout this long wait for deliverance, Haiti has remained the least favored country in the Western Hemisphere, with stunted educational and health attainments, low per capita GDPs, limited export earnings, bad roads and communications systems, massive erosion and deforestation, population overcrowding, and, in contemporary times, the scourge of AIDS and corrosively high levels of narco-trafficking. Military or autocratic rule has long been the norm; neglect of rural Haiti and of the capital's slums and slum-dwellers has been the prevailing governmental pattern. By comparison with people elsewhere on the shared island of Hispaniola, or with the lot of the Haitians who have managed to escape to the nearby United States or Canada, those stuck at home are battered, afflicted, largely lacking hope, and mired in the political and economic squalor of nearly 200 years of misfortune. Haiti's seven million people have rarely known prosperity, good education, suitable health care, or freedom from political extortion. The most backward country in the Americas has long been encased in its own misery.

This pattern appeared to break in 1990 when President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a

radical priest, came to power with enthusiastic popular backing. He was the vaunted herald of a major new departure from Haitian politics as usually conceived and practiced. Heightened expectations were widespread of a wholly new kind of political performance and of strikingly transformed relations between the government and the governed. Aristide's social consciousness had been well articulated, as was his forthright critique of the errors of his many forebears. He promised to create a new Haitian political and social ethic; to uplift his people through good governance and improved economic performance; to combat crime, narcotics, and poverty; and to remove the sense of powerlessness that had long conditioned Haitian national behavior.

Because Aristide and his program seemed to embody Haiti's salvation, the country's neighbors, the Organization of American States, the U.S., Canada, France, and others all wanted him and it to succeed. So did the Haitians who gave him two-thirds of the popular vote in 1990, and felt empowered and emboldened by his striking victory. But there were others in Haiti who saw Aristide as a threat. Businessmen, smugglers, and top officers in the army—all of the elements who had profited from the chaos and disorder that had followed Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier's flight from power in 1986—rightly viewed Aristide and his popular mandate as a severe threat. Soon, in 1991, the army staged a coup, Aristide escaped to Venezuela and the U.S., and the generals and colonels under Brig.-Gen. Raoul Cedras consolidated their rule, defied the OAS and the U.S., and proceeded to recreate the standard Haitian mode of harsh and neglectful governance.

It was business as usual. Narco-trafficking accelerated, with Haiti's landing strips and airspace providing a perfect trans-

shipment pad for Colombian cocaine and other illicit substances. Other forms of smuggling occurred, too, especially after the U.S. and the OAS froze Haiti's assets abroad and imposed an embargo on Haitian imports and exports in order to persuade Haiti's ruling junta to negotiate Aristide's return to power. Instead, for three testy years, the junta defied the U.S., the OAS, and the UN, profiting substantially from the flow of goods despite shortages of petroleum products and consumer items, and rolling electricity failures.

During this Cedras-dominated era of Haitian politics, Aristide maintained a high profile in exile, lobbying the U.S. Congress, the governments of the Caribbean basin and the hemisphere, and the UN, and taking his case to the American, Canadian, and French peoples. Although some observers and bureaucrats were skeptical about his character and aims, and the administration of President George H. W. Bush was decidedly ambivalent, few others outside of Haiti questioned his legitimacy. With thousands of poor Haitians in leaky boats fleeing their country toward the Bahamas and Florida, President Clinton's administration accepted the justice of Aristide's cause and deployed a combination of diplomatic and coercive means to force the junta from power. There were a number of important negotiating meetings between the contending parties under U.S. and UN auspices, including several near-successes in Washington and New York in 1992 and 1993. A high point came in mid-1993, when a deal was brokered to let Aristide return as president by October, together with a UN-sponsored peacekeeping detachment, an end to the embargo, and promises of substantial assistance. But that agreement collapsed in recriminations when the junta rebuffed the landing of a small detachment of American and Canadian troops, and repulsed the ousted

priest's return. Aristide could not be restored to the presidency so long as Cedras and his fellow generals insisted on immunity from prosecution and a continued role of power in a resumed democracy. How to create sufficient incentives or punishments to remove the junta thus preoccupied the frustrated and increasingly perturbed leaders of the Western Hemisphere, and the relevant international bodies, throughout the remainder of 1993 and the first half of 1994. Even a naval blockade, and the attempted imposition of a total boycott, hardly moved the leaders of the junta.

Ultimately, President Clinton's administration realized that Haiti could not be put back on a democratic path without employing coercive force. The second invasion of Haiti (the first was in 1915) took place in September 1994. Twenty-two thousand U.S. troops were about to occupy the country when former President Carter, General Colin Powell, and Sen. Sam Nunn presented the realities of a massive and imminent intervention to Cedras.<sup>1</sup> The junta members and families, madly negotiating under duress, left Haiti for exile. U.S. soldiers disarmed the Haitian gendarmerie, reconstructed schools, hospitals, and communications facilities, and, together with a UN team, trained a new police force. Aristide returned to the presidential palace, and, in a fragile partnership with the U.S. and the UN, began to restore Haiti to its interrupted democratic pursuits.

Those who were helping, Haiti, especially the Americans, never relished the enduring and interminable nature of nation building. Haiti had no experience of democracy, democratic values, tolerance, and even-handedness. It lacked the notion of a commonweal. The rule of law had always been observed in the breach. The poor had long been deprived of a voice, and abused. State-provided sanitation, health, and educational



facilities had always been rudimentary. The notion that a newly focused and dedicated Haitian police force (Aristide abolished the army when he returned to office in 1994) could be trained sufficiently within two years was illusory. Likewise, the assertion that the Haitian body politic could be reconfigured quickly was equally erroneous. But that was the Clinton administration's policy; the bulk of the American troops were withdrawn within weeks after the intervention. More problematically, U.S. Special Forces were removed from Haiti in 1995 despite their successful tenure as rural technical advisors and skilled builders. More than 1000 UN peacekeepers departed in early 1998. A small police monitoring team remained throughout the rest of that year and 1999. A handful of U.S. military engineers, doctors, and nurses also left at the end of the same year.

The U.S. also compelled Aristide, who accomplished very little in the seventeen months remaining in his lapsed presidential term (1994–1996), to obey the Haitian constitution's one-term limits and stand aside. René Préval, Aristide's close associate and hand-picked successor, easily won the presidential poll of 1995. At first, Préval seemed equal to the task of guiding Haiti after Aristide, and under his watchful eye. But Préval's inability to hold fully free and fair legislative assembly elections and his refusal to privatize the state's large patronage-filled industries angered leading donors, especially the U.S., and discouraged local businessmen. Narcotrafficking was as pernicious as ever. The donors began to withhold promised funds, worsening Haiti's emerging economic malaise. Much of Préval's presidency, to 2001, was ineffective. Relations between the governing Lavalas [avalanche] Family Party of Aristide and the opposition deteriorated. A discouraged group of erstwhile Aristide and Préval supporters broke away and established

a second Lavalas party. The indigenous business community also turned from Préval. There was a period in 1999 when Préval tried to rule by decree, in defiance of the country's cantankerous parliament. The press described Haitian politics as "chaos."

In these circumstances of economic and political stalemate, bitterly contested parliamentary elections in early 2000, continued macroeconomic weaknesses, and incipient authoritarianism, Aristide easily won a presidential election in late 2000 over token opposition, and resumed office in 2001.

Haiti under Aristide (II) has continued to suffer. With most outside assistance postponed, Aristide stubborn and truculent, and growing enmity between intellectual and corporate elites and the government, it is no wonder that Haiti has floundered. In late 2002, student protests against Aristide's rule accelerated, opposing voices became much louder, especially in Cap Haïtien, Petit Goave, and Gonaïves, and political and social accomplishments remained few. To his opponents and outsiders, and despite his continued popularity among slum-dwellers and Haiti's poor, Aristide was widely regarded as remote, authoritarian, and possibly corrupt. He had done little to combat drug smuggling, reduce crime, curtail thugs in his party's pay, raise low living standards, work with the opposition to reduce the country's atmosphere of siege, improve education or health, and modernize Haiti. He had kept Haitian class conflict alive by preaching fervently in Kreyol (Creole) against the oppressing elites and his opponents. In early 2003, Haiti's political immaturity and general air of insecurity were reminiscent of the days after Baby Doc. The radical, charismatic priest had become a comfortable autocrat, and the best interests of the bulk of the Haitian people had once

again largely been subverted by the ambitions and power lust of a coterie of leaders.

My own acquaintance with Haiti began in 1968, when the Twentieth Century Fund, now the Century Fund, persuaded me to analyze the Haitian problem in depth. President Kennedy had considered intervening there against François (Papa Doc) Duvalier, Haiti's most malevolent dictator, and under Kennedy Haiti had nearly experienced its own "Bay of Pigs" adventure. The Fund wanted me to find out why Haiti had become such a wild and uncontrollable despotism despite a nineteen-year American occupation, close commercial ties to the U.S., and Duvalier's training at the University of Michigan School of Public Health. How had long-suffering Haiti become so lamentably poor and ill-governed? What could/should the U.S. do?

I visited Haiti frequently, undertaking research from 1968 to 1970, interviewed Duvalier and several of his henchmen, and attempted to examine the underlying as well as the proximate reasons for Haiti's endemic state of near failure. *Haiti: The Politics of Squalor* appeared (Boston, 1971), followed by a chapter on "Vodun and the Politics of Haiti," and two subsequent articles in *Foreign Affairs* and *Foreign Policy*.<sup>2</sup> Later, I included the Haitian case in courses on Caribbean politics and the Novel and Politics, both at M.I.T. Occasional lectures throughout the 1970s and early 1980s at the Centre for Multiracial Studies, University of the West Indies (Cave Hill), also focused on the Haitian dilemma.

My concern for Haiti and Haitians was deep and enduring, and parallel to that for and about Africa, when I began writing opinion pieces to help inform the American public, and policy makers about possible choices in Haiti. Those articles, from 1981 to 1997, appeared predominantly in the *Boston Globe*,

*Christian Science Monitor*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Miami Herald*, and *Washington Post*. Critical of U.S. policy when it chose to befriend evil Haitian regimes, the opinion articles were also critical of U.S. policymakers when they were unforgivably slow in ousting Cedras and his ilk. At first supportive of Aristide, his and Préval's shift away from the national interest brought criticism of their weaknesses and inabilities, both in the opinion pieces that follow, and in an edited volume—*Haiti Renewed: Political and Economic Prospects* (Washington, D.C., 1997)—that included chapters by distinguished contributors on the country's difficult historical legacy, political culture, economic failures, and the rise and fall of Aristide. Two additional chapters outlined how Haiti could reconstruct itself economically, another discussed strengthening the rule of law, and a third analyzed educational potentials. My own contribution was called "Haiti's Last Best Chance."

Many of the twenty-two commentaries reprinted in this new publication elaborate on that same theme: the road to progress in Haiti was clear, if only leadership of the kind initially promised by Aristide could be found, strengthened, supported, and assisted appropriately.

In 2002 and 2003, as in the early 1980s and 1990s, poor, huddled Haitians were seeking freedom and economic opportunity in the U.S. by fleeing their despotic land in leaky skiffs and sailboats. Via the Bahamas, or directly, they hoped to land near Miami and join their relatives and former countrymen in the quest for a better life. The first of these opinion articles in 1981 criticized the Reagan administration for choosing dubious friends of questionable virtue, especially the Duvalier regime.<sup>3</sup> A coast guard cutter had been stationed off the north shore of Haiti to help Duvalier keep his people from leaving. Hai-

tians were voting with their feet against a government “every bit as neglectful and corrupt as Cuba’s may be doctrinaire.” Haiti, I said, was in a state of grinding despair perpetuated by the Duvaliers in their own interest. If the U.S. were determined to bar Haitian boat people (and not Cubans), it was preferable that it intervened to improve conditions within Haiti. Surely, the opinion article suggested, the U.S. should insist on being permitted to meddle effectively at least in the northern part of Haiti. “By undertaking and controlling agricultural and village improvement schemes, helping Haitians to upgrade and market their coffee, and building and maintaining a modest rural infrastructure...the U.S. could contribute to the uplifting of its poorest neighbors,” and simultaneously stanch the urge to emigrate. Blocking their ability to exit merely plunged the poor back into the hopelessness that they had long known. Doing so was hardly in the U.S. self-interest. Nor could it “make America proud.”

After the U.S. finally tired of Duvalier, and there were disturbances in Port-au-Prince, Baby Doc fled to France. Writing soon after, in early 1986, I said that Haiti’s future was still clouded and desperate.<sup>4</sup> Baby Doc, corrupt and inept, had left Haiti far poorer than his father had found it. Only with Western assistance could Haiti prosper and remain free from renewed cruelty. Even so, democracy could not easily be implanted in soil “so previously impervious to tolerance and justice.” Haiti signally lacked a political culture receptive to participatory democracy, the rule of law, or political freedoms—indeed, to the main building blocks of most modern political systems. From 1804, only two or three of thirty presidents had been chosen in a free election. Even rule by American Marines from 1915 to 1934 had not erased illiter-

acy, social antagonism, class conflict, distrust, fear, greed, and intolerance—the Haitian inheritance from more than a century of instability, military coups, elite avarice, and more. Thereafter, the decades of Duvalier, father and son, robbed Haiti of “what little democratic and developmental momentum” emerged from the post World War II order and the Cold War. Although a mere 700 miles from Miami, Haiti was still tragically poor and illiterate, with low life expectancies, little food availability, severe rural overcrowding, and massive physical and socio-economic hardships.

To prevent the rise of a new Duvalier, massive U.S. and OAS funds were required to reconstruct the governmental apparatus, enlarge educational and economic opportunity, and prevent the new military junta from ruling harshly. “With gentle and persistent U.S. nudging,” I wrote, Haiti might conceivably at last become a twentieth century democracy. That was a grand hope, but it would take significant assistance, concerted U.S. interest, and a strong political will.

A year later, Haitians endorsed a new constitution that repudiated the Duvalier dictatorship.<sup>5</sup> Nominally, it curbed the powers of its military rulers, and barred soldiers from running for political office. A critical presidential election was scheduled for late 1987. In the months leading up to that poll, there would be a wild contest between left- and right-leaning candidates, and the generals might once again interfere, whatever the constitution said. The U.S., I said, so far was a force for good. It had been re-training the army and providing economic growth aid. I urged Washington to resist the temptation to favor one or another contender. Steady economic help would be essential, along with deft and decisive influence.

Although Leslie Manigat, a French-trained socialist, won the 1987 contest, military officers ended his reign six months later. General Henri Namphy, who had followed Baby Doc, removed Manigat, and was then ousted later in 1988 by General Prosper Avril.<sup>6</sup> Haiti was once again prey to greedy generals; without a robust national democratic value system and, given inherited traditions of cynical authoritarianism, the transition to good governance was not going to be easy or swift. Haitians had long endured a zero-sum political existence. Because the historical precedents were so limited, the struggle to modernize Haiti would remain difficult. Haitians, I reminded readers, were “gentle, clever, industrious people, accustomed to making the most of very little.” Yet, they had always lacked decent and forward-looking leaders. Although Haiti was hardly ripe for democracy, the U.S. could gain some needed political and economic leverage, and counter drug smugglers, by selling petroleum products to Haiti at concessionary rates and by purchasing Haitian coffee for higher than world prices. Those direct economic carrots would be more productive than threatening the sticks of aid denial.

Was there any hope for Haiti? Based on the past, I suggested in 1988, there was very little. But if a new generation of political leaders arose that was wiser and more far-seeing than its hapless, cruel, and greedy predecessors, than “perhaps a new Haiti” could indeed arise “from the bitter ashes of the Duvaliers and their military heirs.” Aristide represented that new beginning. After the country’s first fully free election of 1990, which gave the breakaway charismatic Catholic priest a striking majority of the popular vote, there was exhilaration. Overwhelmingly and impressively, from the fetid slums of the capital to the lofty upper-class enclaves high

in the hills, and from Jacmel in the south to Cap Haïtien in the north, three million Haitians (of a population of about seven million) firmly put an X under Aristide’s photograph. Many polls stayed open by flashlight and counting was done in the full view of American and other foreign observers. Haiti seemed to have turned a major national corner. “If Haiti, the least favored nation of the Western Hemisphere” provided proper indication, “democracy’s heartbeat” was strong even where it had long lay dormant and oft been denied. To build on this vast outpouring of local determination, Aristide would need urgent public support from President George H. W. Bush and the U.S. Congress.

Although by the time I wrote, Aristide had not enunciated much of a political or economic program, he had vast popular support in the slums of Port-au-Prince, in the middle class sections of Cap Haïtien, and throughout much of the country’s rural center and north.<sup>7</sup> He had never held political office, but he had outspokenly opposed Baby Doc and the military rulers who followed. Now he needed to forge a successful alliance between his populists and suspicious mainstream Haitians (who had won the majority of the seats in the national legislature). He needed to demonstrate a commitment to the country’s constitution, and particularly to the provision for a power-sharing relationship between himself as president and a prime minister who would be elected by parliament. The rhetoric of revolution should be replaced by support for renovation. Otherwise, much needed foreign investment would stay away, and so would donors. If Aristide exercised a decisive national rather than a sectarian leadership, Haiti could rewrite its past, and begin to prosper and grow.

As far as the Haitian army and the nation’s wealthier classes were concerned,

however, the new president posed a considerable threat.<sup>8</sup> He attempted to bring the army under democratic, presidential control. He made commercial life uncertain for businessmen. He interfered with the links between soldiers and drug smugglers. His rhetoric alarmed many, especially his heated praise of vigilante and mob violence. Worryingly, he began recruiting a special presidential guard. He was hardly a voice of moderation, tolerance, or democracy. Even so, he did not openly abuse his high office. “The great vote-getter,” I subsequently decided, “turned out to have no feel for politics, no appreciation of the importance of developing coalitions between classes and interest groups, and no more than a rudimentary understanding of Haiti’s economic predicament.”<sup>9</sup> By September, 1991, the generals had had enough, and ousted Aristide. As a riposte, the OAS, the UN, and the U.S. imposed economic sanctions against the usurping junta, and assumed that the resulting international boycott of Haiti’s commerce would soon bring the generals to heel. If not, I said, using the Marines was a conclusive option.

Sanctions hit the Haitian poor hard. But the ruling elites hardly noticed. They were able to profit by smuggling petroleum products and other consumables across the Dominican Republic’s porous border. Several European and Latin American countries also evaded the boycott, providing Haiti with imports and purchasing its coffee. By mid-1992, the policy of sanctions had failed in Haiti as it had earlier failed in Panama. Aristide was unrestored to his presidency and 30,000 Haitians had put to sea in flimsy boats. President George H. W. Bush had turned them away from U.S. shores, compounding misery at home with inhumanity abroad.<sup>10</sup>

From a policy viewpoint, Washington had four options:

- To do nothing and hope for the best;
- To tighten the economic screws, knowing that doing so had not compelled the ruling junta to obey and restore democracy, and that every twist of the screw would force more Haitians to risk their lives at sea;
- To attempt to broker an impossible deal whereby Aristide would renounce his claim to the presidency in exchange for new elections;
- To persuade the junta to bring Aristide back, together with a transitional administration controlled by the OAS or the UN.

I suggested that the people of Haiti would welcome an externally-monitored democratic rule just as much as the people of Grenada had welcomed U.S. troops and enforced regime change in 1983. Indeed, securing Haiti militarily would not be hard. The Haitian army was weak and unpopular. I urged action by the U.S. and the OAS. Washington could ill afford to do nothing. It was past time to give democracy a chance in Haiti.

Six months later, William J. Clinton became president. Among his early decisions (reversing a campaign pledge) was to maintain the Bush administration’s unconscionable blockade of Haitian boat people (as opposed to those fleeing Cuba). Yet, he and his colleagues knew that the larger Haitian problem could not be allowed to fester. Although there had been many negotiations involving Aristide, the junta, and American, OAS, and UN diplomats, either one or the other Haitian side had balked. Aristide refused to grant blanket amnesties; the generals were interested only in their own survival and the rents that they could collect from narco-traffickers and Haitian illicit commerce generally. “If the United States really hopes to

make a meaningful difference we must help Haitians take their country back from warlords and gangsters.”<sup>11</sup>

How to do so was the immensely difficult question. Upon assuming office in 1993, Clinton thought that his negotiators were close to a breakthrough, with both the generals and Aristide agreeing to a compromise. The UN believed that it had the outlines of a deal in 1992 and 1993, and confidently expected that human rights monitors would soon oversee Haiti's return to democracy. The carrots of stepped-up aid and preferential treatment for Haitian manufacturers, and the stick of tighter sanctions, had supposedly strengthened the hands of the negotiating teams. So had Clinton's freezing of the American bank accounts of leading Haitians. He had also barred the entry into the U.S. of those same Haitians and their families. But the junta resisted all entreaties and derided the boycott.

It was time for force.<sup>12</sup> As few as 5000 troops would be adequate to deliver the Haitians from oppression and restore Aristide and legitimate rule in Haiti. The poorly-trained and lightly armed 7000-man Haitian army would be no match, I wrote, for a multinational force supported by U.S. ships and aircraft. Haitians would resist no more than Somalis in 1991 or Grenadans in 1983.<sup>13</sup> A UN-occupying force would experience an easy time. Its much more difficult task would be to propel Haiti back on the road to home rule and democracy. I envisaged an intervening period of tutelage, with Aristide in charge, but advised by UN officials.<sup>14</sup>

The Clinton administration needed to be tough. First, it was the business of the U.S. to oust Haiti's military junta because of an inescapable moral imperative: The world's only major power had a responsibility to combat the world's most outrageous violators

of human rights and restore democrats to power, everywhere. Second, Haiti lay well within the U.S. sphere of influence. Third, the world's dominant power should not allow itself to be humbled by a “rent-a-crowd” clutch of warlords and other “pop-up despots.” Haiti's future, but also the peace of the world, was at stake.

The “rent-a-crowd” allusion was to the rowdy mob of hired thugs who had halted the landing of U.S. troops in Port-au-Prince from the *USS Harlan County* in October, 1993. The decision to back off followed President Clinton's ill-advised decision to remove U.S. troops from Somalia, after the Black Hawk Down debacle in June.

Yet, Haiti was a prospective pushover. The junta had no popular backing. Only Aristide was legitimate. The generals would be unable to mount a guerrilla assault on any intervening force. A battalion of Marines, with appropriate sea and air cover, could do the job of lancing the Haitian military carbuncle. First, the renewed Clinton blockade should be allowed to compel the generals to compromise. If they did not, which was likely, then Clinton should issue a clear ultimatum, I argued, and mobilize the Marines. The ultimatum should demand the immediate ouster of the junta and the retirement of the existing military and police commands.

The Marines could overcome any local resistance rapidly. But then the hard part would follow. “Just as Washington failed to follow up on its success...in Somalia,” I declared, “so it must not bungle the transition ...in Haiti.”<sup>15</sup> Because Haiti had never known any sustained period of democracy, the police, military, civil authority, and justice training missions that must accompany the Marines should be prepared to stay for several years, at least, together with a detachment of Marine peace enforcers.

When the Marines arrived in late 1994 they were not alone. President Clinton directed an overwhelming U.S. force of 22,000 paratroopers, soldiers, and airmen to remove Cedras and his associates, a task ultimately achieved by brinkmanship diplomacy. Aristide, surrounded by UN, OAS, and American civilian and military advisors, was shortly restored to the presidency. By the time that Clinton visited Port-au-Prince in early 1995, only 2,400 U.S. and 3,000 UN soldiers remained as peacekeepers and the UN was assuming control of the civil mission and the various training detachments.

Aristide had been bold. He had retired most of the old army's high command and emasculated the Haitian military's accustomed ability to interfere in the country's politics. But for the remainder of his presidential term, Aristide needed to focus foremost on economic growth, and second on organizing fair legislative and municipal elections midway through 1995.

Economic reconstruction would be very difficult to achieve. Haiti, with an annual GDP per capita of about \$250, ranked among the twenty-five poorest nations in the world. Inflation was rushing along at 30 percent a year. Seventy percent of Haitians were unemployed. Agricultural exports had fallen, because of sanctions, and manufacturing for export was greatly diminished from its high point in the 1980s. Despite Congressional antagonism in the Newt Gingrich era, sustained U.S. help was imperative. In the absence of slow-to-arrive foreign investment, U.S. appropriations for Haiti should be viewed as a critical substitute and as a down-payment on democracy in the Caribbean. U.S. aid would also provide relief for Florida—the destination of impoverished Haitian refugees. At home in Haiti, too, economic reform was crucial, especially the privatization of the state-owned tobacco and cement monopolies. Flour mills, the ports and airports,

and the telephone and electricity operations could also be removed from state ownership.<sup>16</sup>

By late 1995, it was evident that Aristide was squandering the goodwill with which he had re-entered the presidency. The mid-year elections were a disaster, with several re-runs having been necessary. More seriously, Aristide was refusing to re-build and strengthen the political institutions that were required to sustain an emerging democracy. Instead, he was doing what Haitian leaders had always done—attempting to create an imperial presidency. The judiciary was still chaotically untrained and the newly recruited police disorganized. Arrests were arbitrary and trials capricious.

Essential was the renewal of the mandate of the U.S. and UN's security forces beyond early 1996, the nurturing by outsiders of an impartial administrative machine, stepped-up international technical assistance, guidance to Aristide on electoral transparency, and the continued training of judges, prosecutors, and police.<sup>17</sup> Basics like the translation of Haitian laws from French into Kreyol were necessary. The encouragement and sponsorship of a free press was another critical building block of democracy. The tenure of an existing truth commission had to be extended.

Haiti's communications and power networks were almost nonexistent. More foreign-sponsored road construction and the stringing of telephone lines were fundamental if Haiti were ever to emerge from its two-century long economic slumber. All of Haiti had less generating capacity than a U.S. town of 20,000; the provision of power was basic for growth. So were fundamentals like clean water and sanitation, both of which had long been available only in selected urban areas. In the mid-1990s, only 1.5 percent of the Haitian population had access to piped water.

Unfortunately, even though Aristide agreed to give way to Préval, his chosen successor, in early 1996, he refused during the remainder of his first term, throughout Préval's five-year presidency, and well into his own second term, to reform either the political organization or the economic basis of Haitian society.<sup>18</sup> He promised to privatize, and generally to open up Haiti's closed economy, but never did so. He promised to loosen executive controls on the legislature and the judiciary, but never managed to follow through. Aristide, it seemed, was as determined as all of his predecessors to retain strong executive prerogatives. He brooked no interference from the U.S. or other outsiders, and none from critical Haitians. As his authoritarian tendencies became more pronounced, first under Préval and later when he had resumed the presidency, Aristide lost the support of critical donors, especially the U.S., and disappointed many of the Haitians who had been so enthusiastic and hopeful at the beginning of the decade. The great promise of 1990, resumed in 1994, was unfulfilled as early as 1995.

By 1997, Haiti's last best chance to sustain its fledgling democracy had ebbed away.<sup>19</sup> Aristide had successfully prevented Préval from opening up the Haitian economy to world trade. Inefficient state-owned industries still remained in the hands of hand-picked bureaucratic clients. Aristide, it was suspected, did not understand market economics and feared the loss of patronage that would follow a successful series of privatizations. Donors, however, wanted the government to sell off its monopolies in order to reduce official subsidies, increase efficiency, encourage foreign investment, and stimulate local commercial activity. But the national interest in a place like Haiti, as in so many impoverished, badly governed, developing

nations, often comes second to the zero-sum interests of a ruler, a ruling oligarchy, or a ruling clan.

The new Haiti appeared more and more to mirror the old. The new Haiti increasingly disappointed its people, especially the voters in their millions who had so endorsed Aristide. It disappointed those outsiders who had helped to restore Aristide to power, and had expected far better returns for their investment in Haitian democracy. By the late 1990s, and well into the first years of the new century, Haiti's turn to good governance had still not been realized. A democratic, developing Haiti, run by leaders of integrity who cared for the common man and woman, was as distant as ever. The once so promising priest had become no more than another Haitian despot. Even well into Aristide's second term, it remained unclear how, and under whose leadership, Haiti was ever to emerge as a fledgling democracy capable of improving the lives of its troubled and long suffering citizens.



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> For a participant's report on how Cedras and company were forced out, see Robert Pastor, "Restoring Democracy to Haiti" in Dana Francis (ed.) *Mediating Deadly Conflict: Lessons from Afghanistan, Burundi, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Haiti, Israel/Palestine, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Sri Lanka* (Cambridge, MA, 1998), 6–20.

<sup>2</sup> "Vodun" appeared in Martin L. Kilson and Robert I. Rotberg (eds.), *The African Diaspora: Interpretive Essays* (Cambridge, MA, 1976), 342–365. "Haiti's Past Mortgages Its Future," appeared in *Foreign Affairs*, LXVII (1988), 93–109. "Was Intervening in Haiti a Mistake? Clinton was Right," appeared in *Foreign Policy*, CVI (spring 1996), 135–141.

<sup>3</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, 21 October 1981.

<sup>4</sup> *Miami Herald*, 9 February 1986.

<sup>5</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, 15 April 1987.

<sup>6</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 1 October 1988; *Christian Science Monitor*, 24 October 1988, *Philadelphia Enquirer*, 16 September 1990.

<sup>7</sup> *Washington Post*, 20 December 1990; *Christian Science Monitor*, 3 January 1991.

<sup>8</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, 17 October 1991.

<sup>9</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, 21 January 1992.

<sup>10</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, 19 June 1992.

<sup>11</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, 28 January 1993.

<sup>12</sup> *Miami Herald*, 24 January 1993.

<sup>13</sup> See Robert I. Rotberg, "Grenada: U.S. Losses Far Exceeded Gains," *Boston Globe*, 28 November 1983.

<sup>14</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, 14 June 1993.

<sup>15</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, 29 October 1993; *Boston Globe*, 29 December 1993.

<sup>16</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, 29 March 1995.

<sup>17</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, 5 October 1995.

<sup>18</sup> *Boston Globe*, 12 November 1995; *Christian Science Monitor*, 6 December 1995.

<sup>19</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, 22 April 1997.



## Haiti: Opinion Articles

*The following opinion pieces comment upon the vicissitudes of modern Haitian politics and economics and U.S.-Haitian policies. They are reprinted as originally published, except for minor typographical corrections and lexical changes for consistency.*

- **A Better Way to Handle the Haitian Problem**, *Christian Science Monitor* (21 October 1981)
- **Haiti's Future: Still Desperate**, *The Miami Herald* (9 February 1986)
- **Haiti Needs Decisive U.S. Backing**, *Christian Science Monitor* (15 April 1987)
- **Haiti's People Still in Bondage**, *Los Angeles Times* (1 October 1988)
- **What's Needed to Bring Change in Haiti**, *Christian Science Monitor* (24 October 1988)
- **Papa Doc's Ghost Still Haunts Haiti**, *Philadelphia Enquirer* (16 September 1990)
- **Haiti's First Freely Elected Leader: He Deserves a Chance to Succeed—and the Chance to Live**, *Washington Post* (20 December 1990)
- **Haiti's Remarkable Exercise in Democracy**, *Christian Science Monitor* (3 January 1991)
- **Help Restore Haiti's Democracy**, *Christian Science Monitor* (17 October 1991)
- **Hope for Haiti Rests On Haiti Helping Itself**, *Christian Science Monitor* (21 January 1992)
- **Can Democracy Work in the Third World?**, *The Miami Herald* (14 June 1992)
- **What It Will Take to Help Haiti**, *Christian Science Monitor* (19 June 1992)
- **Clinton's Task in Haiti: a Last-Ditch Effort at Compromise**, *The Miami Herald* (24 January 1993)
- **Clinton's Challenge In Helping Haiti**, *Christian Science Monitor* (28 January 1993)
- **Booting Out Haiti's Bad Guys**, *Christian Science Monitor* (14 June 1993)
- **U.S. Needs to Take Control of Haiti Disaster**, *Christian Science Monitor* (29 October 1993)
- **What Now in Haiti?**, *Boston Globe* (29 December 1993)
- **Slow, Steady Progress in Haiti**, *Christian Science Monitor* (29 March 1995)
- **Haiti's Needs Extend Far Beyond Next March**, *Christian Science Monitor* (5 October 1995)
- **Haiti's Fragile Future**, *Boston Globe* (12 November 1995)
- **Democracy's Chances in Haiti**, *Christian Science Monitor* (6 December 1995)
- **Haiti, After Rebound, Again at Risk**, *Christian Science Monitor* (22 April 1997)

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**A Better Way to Handle the Haitian Problem**

*Christian Science Monitor* (21 October 1981)

Does the United States really want to be known by the misalliances that it makes in the third world? In Africa, in Latin America, and now in the Caribbean the U.S. has deliberately chosen partners at best of questionable virtue. Certainly, the cossetting of Haiti, the newest of its friends, demonstrates how determinedly President Reagan's administration ignores the caution and humanistic guidelines of its four predecessors.

The Coast Guard cutter USS Hamilton, now on patrol off the northern coast of Haiti, is more than a symbol. It provides graphic evidence of U.S. willingness to cooperate with one of the least democratic and least caring regimes in the Western Hemisphere.

The presence of the Hamilton is intended to help the Haitian government keep its people at home. For decades hungry, illiterate Haitians have pledged their savings to the captains of rickety skiffs and set sail across the comparatively calm waters separating Haiti from Florida. Unlike middle class, literate, economically ambitious Cubans fleeing Fidel Castro's harsh Marxist government, the Haitians are poor, untutored except in the local Creole, and without skills.

They are fleeing a government every bit as neglectful and corrupt as Cuba's may be doctrinaire. Yet illegal immigration is a problem for the United States. Poor blacks are conceivably harder to assimilate, especially in Florida, than Latinos. They also lack political sophistication, making it difficult if not impossible for them to claim the status of political refugees.

Turning back the Haitians at sea, and the visible presence of the Hamilton, will doubtless act as a deterrent. Haitians will seek their fortunes elsewhere, in the neighboring Dominican Republic (where they were massacred 40 years ago) or in Jamaica. But they can hope for little at home. Haiti is the least well-endowed country in the Western Hemisphere. Nearly every indicator places poor Haiti at the bottom of the per capita scale: In income (\$265 per head), consumption of electricity, road miles, drinkable water supplies, hospital beds, schools, and so on, Haiti's rank is last. Literacy in French (Creole is essentially unwritten) is about 5 percent. Arable land is limited to an acre per family on average. The rural areas are intensely crowded, much of the country's 10,700 square miles (the size of Maryland) being so hopelessly eroded, irredeemably arid, or ruggedly mountainous that farmers must scratch a bare living from only a third of the country. Jean-Claude Duvalier, Haiti's baby-faced president for life, is now a married man of 29. His government is less predatory than that of François Duvalier, his father, the Papa Doc of "The Comedians" who appointed Jean-Claude as his successor a few months before his death in 1971.

But to say that Haiti is less predatory now is to contrast the total terror of the 1960s with the steady cruelties of the present Haitian government. A constant, linking the regimes of father and son, is the Haitian government's refusal or inability to supply essential social services to its people. Other constants are omnipresent corruption, intimidation, and the absence of any kind of general participation in the governing process.

Haiti is a model of grinding squalor, a state of existence which Haitian rulers perpetuate in their own interest.

It is no wonder that Haitians seek opportunity in North America. Many, legally and illegally, have found employment and hope in Boston, New York, Montreal, and Miami. The new wave of would-be immigrants is conceivably even more needy. Certainly the Hamilton can keep them away. The Coast Guard can board the little boats and tow them back to Haiti. Then, like the Vietnamese, the Haitians may try again, another way. Or they may be—nothing is certain in Haiti—further victimized by their own government or its friends. Surely there is a better way to handle this particular immigration problem.

The U.S. can help the Haitians improve conditions at home. Admittedly, it has tried to do so before, and most assistance was then purloined or squandered by Haitian officials. But if the U.S. patrols the Haitian coasts with Haitian sanction, surely it should insist upon being permitted to meddle effectively in at least the northern part of the country.

By undertaking and controlling agricultural and village improvement schemes, helping the Haitians to upgrade and market their coffee, and building and maintaining a modest rural infrastructure over a few years, the U.S. could contribute to the uplifting of its poorest neighbors, and at the same time to a dampening of the desire to migrate.

Simply to block emigration and to plunge the poor back into the hopelessness that they have known is not in the U.S. self-interest. Nor can it make America proud.

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### **Haiti's Future: Still Desperate**

*The Miami Herald* (9 February 1986)

Baby Doc's flight from Haiti has ended 28 years of Duvalierist tyranny, but Haiti's future still remains clouded and desperate. The poorest, least literate, most downtrodden state in the Western Hemisphere, Haiti has known few good times, little democracy and hardly any joy. Only with an injection of U.S. and Western assistance of an appropriate kind can Haiti hope to prosper and remain free from renewed governmental cruelty. Even then, the mass of its people may not benefit.

Governments of Haiti have traditionally enriched themselves, not their subjects. In this respect the Duvaliers, like the Somozas of Nicaragua, were a family autocracy bent on improving the lot of a tiny elite rather than developing the country as a whole. The challenge of Haiti's new government will be to break the mold of the past by establishing a foundation for meaningful political participation and choice.

Yet democracy cannot easily be implanted in soil so previously impervious to tolerance and justice. Indeed, Haiti knew no stability in government until the U.S. Marines occupied the country in 1915. Earlier, in the 72 years after 1843, the country knew 22 successive regimes, only one of which completed its term without interruption. Fourteen were ended by revolt, three presidents were killed in office, one resigned, one was blown up at his desk, another may have been poisoned and still another was pulled apart by an urban mob.

The American occupation was not characterized by tutelage in democracy. It had re-established order, cleansed the economy and provided stability without in any way removing the ills of former times. Poverty, ignorance, illiteracy, social antagonism, class conflict, suspicion, distrust, fear, greed and intolerance were still the Haitian inheritance.

Four regimes of Presidents Stenio Vincent, Elie Lescot, Dumarsais Estime and Paul Magloire followed the Americans and preceded that of Papa Doc Duvalier, the most rapacious of all of Haiti's leaders. During the time of these four presidents, Haiti changed little, although under American prodding their governments tried to be chaste and not overly harsh.

Because the decades of Duvalier robbed Haiti of what little democratic and developmental momentum had emerged from World War II and increasing outside attention and aid, today's rulers in the post-Duvalier era will have great difficulty in lifting Haiti out of its perennial malaise.

Although 600 miles from Florida, Haiti has been bypassed by the modern world. Much of the country's hinterland is isolated from its cities, internal communications remain excessively difficult and life in general, especially in rural Haiti, has proved remarkably resistant to change. Governments, even those of the Duvaliers, have rarely penetrated beyond the towns.

Haiti is still tragically poor by world and hemispheric standards, as the emigration to Florida of so many thousands of Haitians by any means available so amply demonstrated. On a per capita basis, Haiti's 6 million people enjoy an income that is estimated about \$380 per year. The country has the least growth, the fewest telephones and radio receivers, the smallest newspaper circulation, the least electricity usage and the fewest houses with piped water in the Western Hemisphere. Average life expectancy is about 40 years.

Haiti exports coffee but most of its peasants grow yams and run one or two pigs on a half acre or less. Soils throughout the country are thin and exhausted. Most of the country's forests of old have been cut down for charcoal. As a result, the abundant rains erode the landscape and make the main rivers run brown with silt.

Haiti ranks lowest among all Caribbean and Central American countries in average food availability per capita. It exceeds only Honduras on the scale of livestock production in the hemisphere. Moreover, Haiti has suddenly declined in agricultural growth per capita, largely because its population increase has always outstripped the ability of a shrinking soil base to grow crops. Haiti's rural area is the most densely populated in the hemisphere and, next to Java, in the world.

This is a catalog of woe that constrains the activities of even the most well-meaning successors to Duvalier. Yet the new ruling group must also contend with illiteracy. Only 10 percent of Haiti's entire population can read Creole, the national language, and far fewer are capable of working in French, Haiti's international language of communication.

Illiteracy reflects Haiti's educational deficiencies. Schooling, in theory accessible to all Haitians, has in practice been limited since the early 19th Century to members of the urban elite and the families of relatively advanced rural peasants. Teachers disdain rustic

surroundings and rarely teach in the country schools of a nation that is still overwhelmingly rural. Textbooks and other equipment are rare, and the curriculum is outmoded.

Politics in Haiti must continue to reflect these national physical and socio-economic hardships. Moreover, three decades of dictatorship will have eroded democratic instincts, such as there were, and demoralized Haiti's once vital sense of self-reliance. Then, too, there is the longstanding, deeply ingrained distrust of most Haitians of other Haitians. To persuade Haitians to cooperate or to concert their efforts toward some mutually desirable end, has always been difficult and unrewarding.

The central element in one of Haiti's most powerful novels of rural life is the struggle to bring together feuding village families in order to irrigate their fields mutually. The hero looks forward to the time when peasants will "no longer act like mad dogs to other peasants." But the hero is murdered by another peasant, and—as in real Haitian life—bitterness remains.

As Haiti recovers from its decades of misrule, the successors to Duvalier will require patience and assistance from the United States and other Western countries. If a new form of Duvalierism is not to arise, funds and technical assistance will be needed for a massive program of economic, educational and governmental reconstruction. Most of all, however, the junta that now rules must be encouraged to limit the grasp of its own power. With gentle and persistent U.S. nudging, Haiti might conceivably at last become a 20th Century democracy. But the likelihood of its doing so will hardly be helped by the legacy of Duvalierist autocracy. Baby Doc leaves the country poorer than his father found it. The new junta will thus find it difficult—even with the best of intentions—to begin providing a better and more hopeful life for Haiti's oppressed, but still vital, people.

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### **Haiti Needs Decisive U.S. Backing**

*Christian Science Monitor* (15 April 1987)

Haiti is a special case. No other country in the Western Hemisphere is so battered by decades of misrule, so poor and needy, and so determined to rule itself well. Haiti's efforts deserve steady and generous U.S. support.

Late last month, in the words of Leslie Manigat, a contender for the country's presidency, Haiti "crossed the key bridge which opens the road to democracy." The people of Haiti overwhelmingly endorsed a new constitution which decisively repudiated the legacy of almost 30 years of harsh dictatorship.

Fifteen months ago street mobs and U.S. embassy officials ousted Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier, the tiny Caribbean nation's young president-for-life. He had succeeded his father, François (Papa Doc) Duvalier, a brutal authoritarian, in 1971. The elder Duvalier, a physician trained at the University of Michigan, had held sole power since 1958.

Father and son ruled with assistance of a paramilitary goon squad called the tonton macoutes. Random, capricious violence was their pleasure and their means of ensuring the predatory rule of the Duvaliers. Although the younger Duvalier inflicted less violence

than his father upon the cowed people of Haiti, his regime was brazenly corrupt. Jean-Claude Duvalier's cronies and his wife's family amassed illegal millions.

Haiti has had little experience in popular political participation. Since 1804 only two or three of its 30 presidents have been chosen in a fair election. Haiti's new Constitution is thus a radical blueprint that transfers real power to the people.

Haiti's illiteracy rate is about 85 percent, the highest in the Western Hemisphere and one of the highest in the world. Infant mortality rates are also tragically high. Good roads are few and electricity consumption low. The country's annual per capita income is about \$380. A high birthrate and limited arable land combine to make Haiti, with a population of 6 million crowded into a mountainous country the size of Maryland, one of the most densely populated countries on the globe.

Despite these and other problems, the Constitution idealistically confirms the rights of free education, decent housing, and a fair wage. These constitutional goals may be unrealizable immediately. They may also serve as a magnet for continued popular unrest of the kind that eventually forced Jean-Claude Duvalier and his family to flee.

Of more immediate consequence, Haiti's new Constitution curbs the powers of the provisional government led by Lt. Gen. Henri Namphy. For the first time in Haiti's history, the armed forces are split into distinct military and police detachments, the army is subjected to civilian courts, and soldiers are barred from running for political office.

Haiti's presidential poll is scheduled for November. But the provisional government is denied any role in organizing those elections. The Constitution ends the provisional government's ability to rule by decree and compels it to govern from now on only in accord with the new Constitution. Whether Lt. Gen. Namphy and his military colleagues will accept such political shackles is a critical question for the near future.

The United States has been assisting the new Haiti economically and helping to retrain the army. No other foreign country has so much influence. For once, the U.S. is seen largely as a force for good. But the next six months, leading up to Haiti's presidential election, could try Washington's patience.

Haiti's presidential campaign will be a free-for-all. Mr. Manigat, a French-trained political scientist, will lean leftward and arouse a strong anti-imperialist, pro-socialist popular swell. Crypto-Duvalierists will abound. Namphy may back a candidate, Grégoire Eugène, a lawyer long opposed to the Duvaliers, may carry the banner of the moderates. The U.S. ought to resist the temptation, however discreetly, to back a favored contender. On the other hand, Lt. Gen. Namphy and his colleagues may need to be encouraged to accept diminished power.

Above all, during the difficult months of political maneuvering, only steady economic aid from the U.S. will permit Haiti to focus squarely on keeping the presidential campaign democratic. Without such deft and decisive backing, the Haitian experiment could turn sour, and the hemisphere's most fragile, popularly organized country be plunged back into some form of dictatorial misery.



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**Haiti's People Still in Bondage***Los Angeles Times* (1 October 1988)

Conceived in harsh slavery, born of revolution and nurtured in decades of hostility, Haiti knew turbulence and corruption before it experienced order. It has never known effective two-party competition, with honest elections or benevolent government.

The problems of modern Haiti have a long lineage. In the 18th century the French-owned plantations of sugar and coffee prospered. By the 1770s Haiti had eclipsed other French colonies of the Caribbean in wealth. Sugar exports were greater than those of any other territory in the world. Haiti's soils were fertile, extensive and well irrigated, its plantations well managed. About 30,000 whites, and 27,000 free mulattoes and blacks, enjoyed comfort, culture and privilege. The 500,000 slaves who worked the plantations, however, were ferociously abused.

In 1790 and 1791, rioting slaves became a great mob run amok. Before long rural Haiti was dominated by roaming slave bands. Everywhere there was devastation; even Port-au-Prince was razed. By 1798 the revolution had succeeded both in establishing the freedom of the slaves and—decisively for the development of modern Haiti—in destroying the country's profitable agricultural base.

Jean-Jacques Dessalines, who succeeded Toussaint L'Ouverture as free Haiti's first ruler in 1804, accentuated the decay of France's former sugar isle by unleashing a wild wave of despotism and terror. Instead of conserving the few oases of learning, middle-level bureaucracy and technocracy available within the country, Dessalines systematically extirpated whites and oppressed mulattoes, confiscating their land and, on several occasions, massacring large numbers for sport.

Haiti came to govern itself in the absence of any heritage of representative democracy or any experience of consensus. It was unable to reestablish the intensive agriculture of the country because indigo, cotton and sugar all required large-scale capital investment.

Under President Jean-Pierre Boyer (1820–1843), Haiti irrevocably became a land of black, Creole-speaking, largely illiterate small-holders divorced from the mulatto-dominated towns.

Impersonal abstractions like the notion of nationhood and the common good attracted few loyalties; there were no means of communicating the needs of the state and no funds with which to extend its apparatus to those outside the elite cliques that dominated it. The presidency was equated with a license to plunder, and nearly all the elite's energies were devoted to the acquisition and retention of that license. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, only the army maintained a semblance of institutional coherence and continued to play an influential national role.

Because of its poverty, isolation, endemic corruption and administrative inefficiency, Haitian governments after Boyer became more and more unstable and short-lived. From 1843 to 1915 there were 22 presidents, most of whom came to power by force of arms and coups.

The United States intervened in July, 1915. It pacified, administered, introduced new methods of solving old problems, provided an array of technological improvements, built decent roads and introduced proper telephone and telegraphic services, refurbished hospitals and schools, tried to upgrade living standards and, like colonial powers in Africa, attempted to impose its own cultural ideas on Haitian society.

Yet by the time the occupation ended in 1934, the Americans had not broadened the base of political participation.

The fall of President Paul Magloire in late 1956 marked the end of a century of politics manipulated by shifting arrangements of interlocking cliques. For eight months, while Haiti looked for a new political direction, turmoil and chaos racked the republic as it had in those terrible months before the American occupation. It was from this bloody cataclysm that François "Papa Doc" Duvalier and his family machine emerged victorious.

Duvalier, a public health physician, had studied at the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan. His manner was reassuring and he appeared (especially to the U.S. Embassy) to represent an authentic, popular break with mulatto domination.

Duvalier, however, was motivated by a lust for power that would be satisfied only when everything in Haiti budged according to his will, which was not socially oriented. Potential dissidents were removed and opposition of any kind stilled. Duvalier's dictatorship was henceforth marked by unbridled bullying of defenseless Haitians throughout the republic, and by the elevation of torture and brutality to astounding levels.

The three decades of Duvalierism, father and son, robbed Haiti of what little democratic and developmental momentum remained after World War II. Reminiscent as their reigns were of the harshest phases of despotism during the 19th century, it is hardly a wonder that the structure of the state and the character of politics changed little under Lt. Gen. Henri Namphy's junta from 1986 to early 1988, nor after he wrested power from civilian President Leslie Manigat last June. The ouster of Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier had brought renewed personal freedom and inaugurated a welcome diminution of the capital's climate of terror. But the junta's first phase was hardly popular; its rule was arbitrary, if less vicious and less capricious than that of the Duvaliers.

Namphy's successor, Lt. Gen. Prosper Avril, has a hard and frankly, almost impossible task. Without the backing of a robust national democratic value system and given inherited traditions of cynical misrule, it is unlikely that the transition from authoritarianism to good government can be either easy or quick. Haitians have long endured a zero-sum existence. One is either on top or on the bottom; no group or clique shares with others.

Future democrats and dictators may want to change Haiti in a fundamental political sense. But because the human and historical material is so fragile, no positive remolding of Haiti can be predicted with confidence.

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**What's Needed to Bring Change in Haiti***Christian Science Monitor* (24 October 1988)

Haiti's misery splashes across our newspapers. In the 2 years since the dictatorial rule of the Duvalier family was ended by vigorous popular protest and deft United States pressure, coups, canceled and fake elections, and executive-initiated terror has prevented the establishment of any active form of participatory democracy.

Gen. Prosper Avril, who ousted Gen. Henri Namphy in September, leads a mixed military-civilian government with strong ties to ousted Duvalierists. His talks with opposition politicians could lead, however, to another attempt at an honest national election. The U.S. must find effective ways to prod him in that direction.

Admittedly, Haiti is hardly ripe for democracy. Nothing in its history, geopolitics, or demography boosts confidence in the creation of a bold, new Haiti without internal conflict between haves and other haves and between all the haves and the have-nots.

Haiti is incredibly overpopulated. About 2,000 people attempt to till each arable square mile. Haiti is small—10,700 square miles, no larger than Maryland. As its forests have been stripped for charcoal, consequent brutal erosion has destroyed agricultural land and led to the steady desertification of a country that was among the richest sources of colonial profit in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Per capita GNP is about \$300, the lowest in the hemisphere.

After failed elections, coups, and little attention to economic growth by the regime of Gen. Henri Namphy, Haiti is rapidly running out of cash. The United States may gain leverage not by resuming its aid (cut off in 1987), but by promising to sell petroleum products at concessionary prices and by guaranteeing a higher-than-world price for Haitian coffee. It should do so, however, only after Haiti agrees to hold free elections and a new government is established without military interference.

Only Haitians who have lived in North America (where about 2 million now reside) or Europe have experience with democracy, elections, sharing power, a free press, and a tolerant military. Most Haitians have experienced only governments that prey on the people, live off corruption and extortion, and concern themselves little with affairs beyond Port-au-Prince, the capital, and a few towns. Several of General Namphy's colleagues were thought to be involved in smuggling for profit, and in drug running.

In exchange for any fresh economic assistance and political support, the U.S. should attempt the "impossible"—curbing the use of Haiti by Colombian and other drug cartels as a transshipment point.

Haitians are gentle, clever, industrious people, accustomed to making the most of very little. Yet they have always lacked decent leaders. After the bitter Haitian revolution of 1790–1804, when valiant ex-slaves fought Napoleon's regiments and won, there was a gradual national descent into virtual purgatory.

Haiti came to self-government absent any heritage of representative democracy or any experience of consensus. It was unable to reestablish the intensive agriculture of the country because indigo, cotton, and sugar required large-scale capital investment. Under

President Jean-Pierre Boyer (1820–43), Haiti irrevocably became a land of largely illiterate, black, Creole-speaking smallholders divorced from the mulatto-dominated towns. The needs of the state were never communicated, and no funds existed to extend its apparatus to those outside the elite cliques that dominated it. The presidency was equated with a license to plunder, and nearly all the elite's energies were devoted to the retention of that license. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, only the Army maintained a semblance of institutional coherence.

Because of their isolation, endemic corruption, and inefficiency, Haitian governments after Boyer became more and more unstable and short-lived. From 1843 to 1915 there were 22 presidents, most of whom came to power by force of arms and coup d'état.

The U.S. intervened in July 1915. It pacified, administered, and introduced new methods of solving old problems. Decent roads were built and proper telephone and telegraphic services introduced. Hospitals and schools were refurbished. Americans tried to upgrade living standards and attempted to impose their own cultural ideas on Haitian society.

Yet by the time the U.S. occupation ended in 1934, the base of political participation had not been broadened. The ruling cliques still operated.

The fall of President Paul Magloire in late 1956 ended the century-long manipulation of Haitian politics by shifting arrangements of interlocking cliques. For eight months, while Haiti looked for a new political direction, turmoil and chaos racked the republic. From this bloody cataclysm emerged François (Papa Doc) Duvalier and his family machine.

Mr. Duvalier, a public health physician, had studied at the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan. To the U.S. Embassy, he appeared to represent an authentic break with mulatto domination.

Duvalier, however, was motivated by a lust for power that would be satisfied only when everything in Haiti moved at his will. Potential dissidents were removed and opposition of any kind stilled. Duvalier's dictatorship was marked by unbridled bullying of defenseless Haitians. Torture and brutality reached astounding levels.

Is there hope for Haiti? Based on the past, very little. But if Haitians can shake off the zero-sum mentality that has guided their rulers for more than a century, and if the U.S. can use its influence with surgical precision in the ways suggested, and if the new generation of national leaders is wiser and more far-seeing than their predecessors, then, yes, perhaps a new Haiti can arise from the bitter ashes of the Duvaliers and their military heirs.

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**Papa Doc's Ghost Still Haunts Haiti**  
*Philadelphia Enquirer* (16 September 1990)

Stability still eludes Haiti, the most fragile and impoverished nation in the Western hemisphere. Despite the gentle backing of the United States, prospects for a peaceful and effective election later this fall are particularly dim. So is the hope that Haiti can begin to experience democracy.

The long family dictatorship of François “Papa Doc” Duvalier and his son Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier came to an end in 1986, when civilians took to the streets. A succession of military rulers, distorted or interrupted elections and the five-month presidency of Leslie Manigat have still not erased the bitter legacy of Duvalierism.

Violence still stalks the streets of Port-au-Prince, the country's capital. The tonton macoutes, a secretive paramilitary organization created by Papa Doc, continues to spread fear. In 1987, the macoutes fostered a massacre inside a polling station and thus helped cancel a presidential election that would have given power to democrats. A few months ago they killed a civilian member of the ruling Council of State and a leading trade unionist, probably to warn those who were beginning to plan new elections.

Old-line Duvalierists, including some of those who gave orders to the macoutes and kept the populace in line for the dictators, have recently returned home despite warrants for their arrest. The government of acting President Ertha Pascal-Trouillot has seemed powerless to prevent the perceived resumption of power by leading Duvalierists. Her ability to prepare for and preside over a transition to lasting democratic rule has been damaged, probably irreparably.

Haiti has hardly ever known democracy or experienced peaceful growth and development. Its seven million people are crowded into a rumpled and eroded nation the size of Maryland.

Civil war, insurrections and general mayhem were the rule during the first part of this century, too. Between 1908 and 1915, for example, Haiti was ruled by seven presidents, one of whom was blown up in his palace and another of whom was torn limb from limb by an enraged mob.

Even after the American occupation from 1915 to 1934, democracy hardly flourished. A mulatto elite at first ruled, with backing from the United States. Then there was an era of strong military control, a brief period of comparative chaos and the rise of the Duvaliers.

Especially under Papa Doc, to 1971, Haiti became known for random terror and capricious dictatorial control. He cowed the once dominant Roman Catholic Church, marshaled vodun, or voodoo, practitioners behind him and thumbed his nose at the United States.

Haiti remained mired in its long-standing poverty, the deepest in the Americas. Its educational system decayed, and about 90 percent of the population continued illiterate. Keeping Haiti weak and underdeveloped suited the Duvaliers, who themselves gained great wealth.

Today's Haiti suffers from that legacy. It continues to suffer despite the experience and learning of the thousands of democratically minded Haitians who lived abroad during the worst years of the Duvalier period. The struggle of these democrats and their 11 political parties continues against the macoutes and the many Duvalier henchmen who have recently surfaced in Port-au-Prince.

Whether President Pascal-Trouillot, a caretaker who has seemed weak before the threat of the Duvalierists, can manage to declare and then run an election is one key question. There have been calls by the democrats for supervision of the elections by the United Nations or the Organization of American States, but to ensure a successful transition after the elections would also mean a period of outside oversight and foreign police or troops.

Since Haiti has never known more than a few months of tolerant, democratic civilian rule, and since the suspension of United States and other foreign aid has so far brought about little change, it is hard to be confident about either the short- or long- term prospects for national stability.

Despite the 11 political parties, the Duvalierists still seek to cling to power, and thus to its spoils. Unless Pascal-Trouillot manages to summon the United Nations or some other outside body, Haiti may well remain violently divided between democrats and Duvalierists.

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**Haiti's First Freely Elected Leader:  
He Deserves a Chance to Succeed—and the Chance to Live**  
*Washington Post* (20 December 1990)

With the free election Sunday of a populist president, the long-oppressed people of Haiti, this hemisphere's poorest country, have overwhelmingly chosen a leader capable of delivering them into democracy.

But Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide will need to play his local political hand adroitly. If he is successfully to hold back the shadows of Haiti's despotic past, he will also require urgent public support from President Bush and Congress.

For 186 years Haiti has waited in vain, through monarchies, desperate presidencies, a failed American occupation and decades of dictatorship for a leader who believed in his country and its people. Since early 1986, when protesting crowds ousted dictator Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier, Haiti has floundered, and the United States has dithered as ex-Duvalierists and the corrupt Haitian army successfully used violence to intimidate incipient democrats and to abort elections.

Father Aristide is a breakaway charismatic Catholic priest without government experience. He has not enunciated a specific economic program. People chose him over 10 comparatively bourgeois candidates because of his outspoken and uncompromising opposition to the old ways.

In the election, Father Aristide's weaknesses were his palpable strengths. In the slums of Port-au-Prince, in the middle-class areas of Cap Haïtien, in many rural areas of the

north and center and even in the distant southwest, Haitians gave hardly any votes to good men with experience and party backing.

Winning is easier than governing. Now Father Aristide will need to forge a successful alliance between his own populism and his mainstream opponents, who are expected to control the legislature. Throughout the campaign too, Father Aristide expressed vigorous anti-American sentiments. Yet he now requires unstinting backing from the United States.

Father Aristide needs to demonstrate publicly his commitment to the country's new constitution, which enshrines a power-sharing relationship between the president and a prime minister elected by the legislature. Previous Haitian presidents have ignored their constitutions and ruled by fiat.

He needs to forsake the rhetoric of revolution for the tougher discourse of renovation. If not, desperately needed investment, both private and public, will stay away. Nor will Congress or the World and Inter-American banks provide the technical and material assistance required.

The youthful new president will need to balance his and his followers' desire for retribution against the death-dealing Duvalierists, especially the tonton macoutes, or private militia, against Haiti's need for stability.

Haitians have an understandable pent-up demand for destroying the bad guys of their recent past. The army, however, behaved impeccably during the electoral campaign. Without the support of its officer corps, which was counseled by the staff of the U.S. Embassy, there would have been no honest vote on Sunday.

Now there is a basis on which Father Aristide can work with the army leadership. He needs their support for his person as well as for what he represents and what Haitians want. Yet in recent years some in the army have profited from drug dealing, and Father Aristide promised to destroy those who dealt in drugs.

There are real fears that the ex-macoutes and the army will find Father Aristide too much of a threat and will arrange his assassination. Or the United States could fail to appreciate his full significance as Haiti's hope and could deny him the kinds of backing that would keep his enemies at bay.

Despite his inexperience, Father Aristide now has what no other Haitian leader has ever had—the undoubted, freely expressed support of the people. With U.S., Caribbean and Latin American backing, he could turn the most deprived country in the Western Hemisphere into a more promising and more stable place.

Moreover, for the future of democracy in this hemisphere, Haiti's ability to produce a meticulously free election should be rewarded.

This election showed what a public and international commitment to democracy could achieve despite enormous logistical and communications obstacles. The role of a determined provisional government was critical. So were the actions of U.S. Ambassador Alvin Adams and his staff. A final ingredient was the presence of nearly 1,000 international observers from the United Nations, the Organization of American States and a host of private groups.

Father Aristide not only merits, he cannot succeed without the support of all those who want to give Haiti a chance.

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**Haiti's Remarkable Exercise in Democracy***Christian Science Monitor* (3 January 1991)

Democracy is alive and well when even impoverished and inexperienced developing countries can hold free and fair elections. That is the upbeat conclusion after Haiti's amazingly successful poll in December.

For 186 years, since the end of its first slave revolution, Haitians have endured despotic indigenous rule. After the end of the U.S. occupation, from 1915 to 1932, there were controlled elections. Finally, in 1957, a limited but reasonably honest election brought François (Papa Doc) Duvalier to power.

That was the end of even incipient governmental tolerance and economic growth in Haiti. Under Papa Doc and, after 1971, Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier, Haitians experienced outright terror.

Protesting mobs forced Baby Doc into exile in early 1986 and, until earlier this year, Haiti endured rule by a succession of corrupt military juntas and a president installed by the army after a limited poll. There was a critical aborted election in 1987, too.

Few Haitians and fewer outsiders expected anything better this year. But the great mass of Haitians, more than 3 million registered voters out of a population roughly estimated at 7 million, were determined both to cast ballots and to anoint a visionary president.

Overwhelmingly, from the slums of Port-au-Prince, the capital, to the salubrious middle-class enclave of Kenscoff, and from Jacmel in the south to Cap Haïtien in the north, Haitians firmly put an X underneath the photograph of the Rev. Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Charismatic and boldly anti-Duvalierist, he represented a clear break with the oppressive past.

With equal and compelling clarity, Haitians who were supposed to be mired in past misery displayed an extraordinary determination to conduct an election which would be viewed both inside and outside the country as fully legitimate.

When the polls opened at 6 a.m. on Dec. 16 in Cap Haïtien, for example, a majority of the several hundred polling places in the center of the country's second city lacked ballots, ballot boxes, ink (into which voters dipped a thumb, to prevent fraud), tally sheets, and, sometimes, even tables and chairs. But local, only recently trained officials improvised while long and patient lines formed outside.

By mid-morning most of the polling booths were functioning. Registration cards were laboriously checked against computerized and handwritten lists. Poll workers handed out four lengthy paper ballots and ushered mostly illiterate voters behind improvised cardboard screens.

The sanctity and secrecy of the vote was scrupulously observed. With patience, those who had marked their ballots (taking about three minutes each) were shown how to fold them to fit into the color-coded boxes.

By late-afternoon, the lines had largely diminished, and it had become clear to foreign observers that city-dwellers as well as rural Haitians were expressing their prefer-



ences without hindrance from the army, and without any pressure from the 11 contesting political parties. No goons had intimidated anyone, and no poll-worker had influenced voters.

As darkness covered the country, many polls stayed open by flashlight until about 8 p.m. to permit the very last stragglers to take part.

But there was still an opportunity to steal the election. In other nations, or in Haiti at other times, the army or paramilitary thugs like the Duvalierist tonton macoutes might have been expected to interfere with the counting or spirit away the ballot boxes.

In fact, in polling station after polling station in Cap Haïtien (and throughout the country), ballot boxes were emptied in full view of international and local observers (including the press), and tallied meticulously by hand.

Many Cap Haïtien officials refused to begin their counts until international observers, whom they had come to know during the day, were present to watch the process.

Father Aristide's massive appeal was quickly apparent. Nevertheless, as each paper ballot was retrieved from the box it was read, held up to be verified by the local and foreign observers, and then registered. No vote, anywhere, could have been more thorough.

The complete tallies at the local level could have been denied or distorted at the regional or national level, but even if the army or the ex-Duvalierists were tempted, too many people were watching, and too many Haitians—from individual voters on up—had put themselves squarely on the line.

If Haiti, the least favored nation of the Western Hemisphere, is any indication, democracy's heartbeat is strong even where it has long been dormant or denied.

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### **Help Restore Haiti's Democracy**

*Christian Science Monitor* (17 October 1991)

Sending United States Marines to restore the Rev. Jean-Bertrand Aristide to Haiti's presidency is a final option. For now, tightening the noose of economic sanctions as mandated by the Organization of American States, the United Nations General Assembly, and President Bush is the most appropriate approach.

The Western Hemisphere's overriding concern must continue to be the nurturing of democracy in Haiti. Late last year, in Haiti's first-ever fully free and popular election, Rev. Aristide won an overwhelming mandate, receiving 67 percent of the votes cast.

After nearly three decades of dictatorial rule by François (Papa Doc) and Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier, and nearly five years of corrupt and stuttering military rule, the wildly acclaimed victory by Aristide's radical forces signaled the beginning of Haiti's modern renaissance. With solid Western backing, particularly from the U.S. and France, Haiti had its best chance in modern times to begin developing itself economically and politically.

Haiti is the poorest and, by most indicators, the most backward country in the Americas. Its 6 million inhabitants have rarely known prosperity, good education, suitable health care, or freedom from political extortion. Aristide's accession to power early this year

brought new hope and, among the underprivileged in the slums of Port-au-Prince or in the countryside, a sense of exhilaration.

But, as far as the Army and the wealthier classes in Haiti were concerned, Aristide overreached himself. He exerted a measure of new control over the Army and curtailed many of its perquisites. He made commercial life more uncertain for businessmen. Unfortunately, too, in speeches he enjoyed rabble-rousing more than persuading, and even praised vigilante rule and some aspects of mob violence. He was less a voice of tolerance than a threatening voice of mass rule.

Despite these seemingly anti-democratic tendencies, and some alleged attacks on ex-Duvalierists, Aristide did not openly abuse his high office. But merchants and the Army suspected dictatorial tendencies, particularly after he began recruiting and training his own special guard.

Prompted by Aristide's supposedly inflammatory rhetoric, his continued antagonism to the old ruling groups, and the formation of the new guard, the Army ousted him in late September and sent him into exile.

In the manner of pre-World War I Haiti, too, the Army physically held the country's new parliament hostage until its members voted to annul Aristide's election and install Chief Justice Joseph Nerette as acting president.

Between 1908 and 1915, Haiti had seven presidents and about 20 uprisings and attempted insurrections. One president and about 300 members of his guard were blown up in the palace. Another was poisoned. A general formed an Army and marched on the capital from the north, precipitating an eight-month-long civil war. There were massacres and counter-massacres. The U.S. marines intervened and ruled Haiti from 1915 to 1934.

The current leaders of Haiti's Army claim that they are not really ruling, and want new elections. But Haiti's democratic experiment will surely die if Aristide, its rightful leader, is not restored.

Given that democracy took so long to come to Haiti, and that its real seeds were planted so laboriously, the leaders of the Western Hemisphere must continue to back him and it, and to ensure that sanctions work. Intervention can only be a last resort.

Given Haiti's dependence on the export of assembled piece goods, like baseballs and textiles, and imports of petroleum from some of its neighbors and the U.S., economic sanctions should soon bite.

The military junta that may be ruling will not easily know how to circumvent those sanctions. But President Bush will want to make sure that none of Haiti's immediate neighbors continue to trade, and that France, Canada, and Venezuela do the same.

Equally, when Aristide returns to power, those who assisted his return must find the means to influence and improve the worrying way in which he governs. Aristide's revolutionary zeal needs to be, and can be, channeled into effective national, rather than personal, forms of leadership.

Then he can continue to preside over the flowering of Haiti's new participatory government and to use his enormous popularity to bring a measure of real prosperity to the country. This must be the goal of the United States.

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**Hope for Haiti Rests on Haiti Helping Itself**

*Christian Science Monitor* (21 January 1992)

Hemispheric sanctions have edged Haiti back toward democracy. But will this enforced experiment work?

This month Haiti's estranged parliament, and presumably its military junta, agreed to permit President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to return from exile in Venezuela. In exchange for a resumption of the presidency, he in turn promised to accept René Theodore, a nominee of the Haitian Senate, as the country's prime minister.

Since the Rev. Aristide was ousted by the military in September because of his autocratic tendencies, violent rhetoric, and antagonism to middle-class capitalism, parliament and its armed supporters presumably are now prepared to have their elected president back, but only if his powers are restrained and someone like Mr. Theodore effectively runs the country.

Although Theodore ironically leads Haiti's tiny and inconsequential unified Communist Party, he is a strong critic of Aristide and his appointment seems like a healthy solution to the country's political conundrum.

Aristide, a young, militant Catholic priest, was the overwhelming favorite of the Haitian people when they went to the polls in late 1990.

The United States and the Organization of American States (OAS) welcomed the results of Haiti's first full free balloting for president.

To have permitted a local junta, ratified by parliament, to annul Aristide's popular mandate would have posed a dangerous precedent for and within the hemisphere.

So the OAS, the U.S., and most of Haiti's neighbors imposed an economic boycott on the poorest nation in the hemisphere. It quickly brought the country's already faltering economy to its knees, and led to protracted negotiations, brokered by the OAS, between Aristide and the Haitian parliament.

The U.S. and the OAS want popular democratic rule to continue, and the results of the 1990 election to be sustained. They are quite determined to keep Haiti, and the rest of the nations of the hemisphere, on a democratic track.

But they do not necessarily want Aristide to return to his old ways of personal rule. So the new compromise, providing it works and despite the moderate Theodore's communist affiliations, may provide a reasonable method of sanctifying the popular mandate of 1990 while simultaneously strengthening the possibility of good government.

"Possibility" is the key modifier. Haiti has never known indigenous good government. Aristide, a radical populist who used fiery language to rouse slum-dwellers to violence, never tried very hard to use his mandate to reconstruct a nation plundered outrageously during nearly three decades of dictatorial misrule by the Duvaliers—father François (Papa Doc) and son Jean-Claude (Baby Doc)—and five years of military control by a collection of petty despots.

Aristide ignored parliament almost as disdainfully as his predecessors did. He ignored the business classes. And he attempted to ignore and undercut the military. His performance in office belied the great promise of his electoral victory.

But he might have avoided being ousted from office, and then having that ouster ratified by parliament, if he had begun developing Haiti both politically and economically.

The great vote-getter turned out to have no feel for politics, no appreciation of the importance of developing coalitions between classes and interest groups, and no more than a rudimentary understanding of Haiti's desperate economic predicament.

Aristide appropriately attacked the old ruling classes, their corruption, and their avaricious tendencies. But then, like so many Haitian rulers before him, he acted as they did. His brief presidency seemed to Haitian democrats every bit as threatening to the dream of Haitian progress as the regimes of earlier despots.

Putative Prime Minister Theodore's program, and the full extent of his mandate, are unknown. As in so many poor countries, his anointing resulted from a compromise between shadowy power-brokers who represented military, business, and foreign influences.

Whether he and Aristide can fashion a workable plan for Haiti's future must remain a question. If they cannot, the last best chance for democracy in Haiti will have failed, and all Haitians and all Americans will be the poorer for that failure.

Fortunately, there remains an important role for the U.S. and the OAS. Once electoral continuity is established, the embargo can be lifted.

Even more critically, the U.S. and the nations of the Americas can provide clear incentives for democratic development. Aiding Haiti is inexpensive, for dollars stretch very far. Backing projects that result in forward-looking economic and political restructuring makes good sense.

We must help Haiti help itself.

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### **Can Democracy Work in the Third World?**

*The Miami Herald* (14 June 1992)

Democracy is triumphant. The collapse of communism has everywhere (minus China, Cuba and Vietnam) been followed by the rise of political parties, contested elections, legislative conflicts, new interest groups and participation in decision-making by ordinary people.

Yet democracy, by its very nature, travels no better than delicate wines, and the successful creation of enduring democracies in the Third World will be difficult and daunting. There is no single method, no prescription. Further, with the end of the Cold War, funding has been reduced for the support of democracy in the Third World.

Where national economies are inherently weak because of limited natural resources, heavy dependence on imports, mismanagement or intolerable burdens of debt, the democratic experiment is always questionable.

Sometimes running an impoverished country democratically proves too much of a strain, particularly when a government finds it impossible to satisfy competing interest groups, ethnic backers, extended families or newly emboldened middle classes. If such a country also is constrained by conditions set by the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank, beleaguered governments often find that they have too few benefits to share with their citizens.

More than anything else, however, democratic traditions are difficult to start in the Third World largely because there are no traditions of "live and let live." It is almost impossible, in other words, to expect democratic developments where there is no democratic political culture. That is, without a shared value system that understands the importance of due process, fairness, loyal opposition, balances of power, judicial integrity and many of the other undergirdings of democracy, implanting democratic rule, with or without parliaments or presidents, houses of lords or senates, bills of rights and some form of judicial review, is almost impossible.

High rates of literacy are essential for democratic success, and not all of the countries of the Third World can claim literacy rates of more than 60 percent. Indeed, nations like Haiti, Yemen, Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Mozambique are profoundly illiterate, with functional reading and writing rates of 10 percent or less.

Democracy is also correlated with lower rather than higher rates of population increase, with lower rates of infant mortality, with better than average roads and communications, with high rates of urbanization and with more rather than less exposure to the modern world.

Haiti, a mere 700 miles from Miami, represents an extreme example of the difficulties of introducing lasting democracy into a land with hardly any experience of the shared values that are basic to popular, participatory governance.

Haiti's history cannot easily support a democratic edifice, however cleverly constructed. Conceived in harsh slavery, born of revolution and nurtured in decades of hostility, Haiti knew long periods of turbulence and corruption before it experienced even the slimmest semblance of order. It has never known periods of effective two-party competition, regular and honest elections or governmental benevolence.

After Haitians broke the bonds of slavery in the 18th Century, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, free Haiti's first ruler, unleashed a wild wave of despotism and terror. Extirpating the learned classes, he plunged much of Haiti into economic as well as political decay.

Haiti thus came to govern itself in the absence of any heritage of representative democracy. Dessalines' many successors, even the comparatively tolerant Jean-Pierre Boyer (1820-43), were authoritarian. The Haitian presidency became equated with a license to plunder, and the energies of a succession of elites were devoted to the acquisition and retention of that license. Throughout the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries, only the army maintained a semblance of institutional coherence.

Between 1843 and 1915 Haiti knew 22 presidents, most of whom came to power by force. Fourteen were ousted by revolts after brief incumbencies, three died naturally in

office, one resigned, one was poisoned, one was blown up in his palace and another was pulled apart by an urban mob. Haiti was ruled until 1915; it was never governed.

Even the American occupation, from 1915 to 1934, helped little. Indeed, it perpetuated the atmosphere of arbitrary authoritarianism to which Haitians had become accustomed.

The U.S. Marines who ruled Haiti during that period favored mulatto elites, and helped them continue to rule until first Gen. Paul Magloire, a black Haitian trained by the Marines, and then François "Papa Doc" Duvalier, an American-trained physician, gained power.

The fall of Magloire in late 1956 marked the end of the century-long manipulation of Haitian politics by shifting arrangements of interlocking cliques. When Duvalier came to power in 1958 he made sure that there were no cliques except his family-dominated one, that despotism and terror would again motivate Haiti, and that any lingering democratic sentimentalities would be removed from the Haitian consciousness.

Anything that might have been called a normal political process was brutally destroyed. Duvalier took predation on his own people to the extreme. The state tobacco monopoly, all other enterprises, tourism and ordinary taxation fed personal coffers more than those of the state.

This form of obsessive misrule was continued from 1971, when Papa Doc died, to 1986 under Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier, his son. Since then and until the overwhelming free election of the Rev. Jean-Bertrand Aristide in late 1990, Haiti knew the corrupt rule of military juntas, as it does now. Skimming taxes has been replaced by profits from drug running.

The particular history of Haiti cannot be generalized across the Third World. Colonial rule and imported institutions of government might even have helped Haiti, as it clearly did in Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia and a few other African countries. Botswana has known uninterrupted, tolerant, democratic rule with contested elections, several competing parties and an absence of repression since independence from Britain in 1966.

Zimbabwe, Zambia, Senegal, the Gambia, Nigeria periodically and a few French-speaking countries in Africa either have had for some years or have recently acquired democratic experience. In each case determined leadership has managed to overcome the indigenous lack of a political culture, ethnic tensions, fissiparous tendencies and the preferences of ruling elites to want to continue to plunder the masses.

In Cameroon, in Zaire, in the Congo, in the Ivory Coast, popular movements have demanded democracy, including free elections. Later this year there will be elections in Angola, Ghana and Nigeria, and perhaps in Ethiopia.

Whether or not democracy can prevail, however, remains a critical question in the Third World, as it does in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Without shared democratic values, without prospects for prosperity beyond the government and its bureaucracy (some of the real spoils of office come through patronage), without increasing literacy and stable or declining population increases and without good systems of communications, democracy often fails to thrive.

Botswana is relatively homogeneous, with no competing language groups, and a successful economy. But with all of its advantages Botswana has succeeded primarily because its first and second presidents decided not to build up personality cults, avoided enriching themselves psychologically as well as financially and put the welfare of the people and the state ahead of their own privileges.

Now democracy is established firmly in Botswana. For a country as different from Botswana in every way as Haiti to succeed, its leaders would have to inaugurate a tradition of participation, tolerance and official restraint. Only then will the seeds of incipient democracy begin to grow.

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**What It Will Take to Help Haiti**  
*Christian Science Monitor* (19 June 1992)

Haiti is being destroyed. Washington's Haitian policy, well-intentioned but fatally flawed, is adrift. So is the approach to Haiti of the Organization of American States (OAS). A bold, new initiative is imperative.

Eight months after a narrowly focused military oligarchy ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Haiti has decayed economically and politically. Meanwhile, an American-OAS boycott has further depressed Haiti, compelling more than 30,000 Haitians to put to sea in flimsy boats.

Washington's use of economic sanctions to compel the Haitian military junta to restore democracy and President Aristide has backfired badly. What failed in Panama has failed in Haiti, the Western hemisphere's poorest and weakest country, because European countries have evaded our boycott and because drug-smuggling profits have continued to enrich the junta.

President Bush's newest policy regarding refugees is also unworkable and has evoked a storm of protest everywhere.

Washington and the OAS now have four realistic options:

1. To do nothing new, and to hope for the best down the home stretch of a presidential election. To do nothing is exactly what the junta wants, and what Aristide fears most.
2. To tighten the economic screws, knowing that sanctions alone have not yet compelled the junta to restore democracy, and knowing too that every twist of the screw will force more Haitians to risk their lives at sea.
3. To broker an improbable deal whereby Aristide renounces his claim on the presidency, and the junta agrees to restart the Haitian democratic merry-go-round by holding new (and fair) elections. But who would believe the generals?
4. To persuade the junta (using new and tighter sanctions or the threat of intervention) to bring Aristide back and to hold new elections under OAS or United Nations auspices, with a multinational military group overseeing the first year of renewed democratic rule. Only then could necessary long-term economic and political change commence. Just as the people of Grenada welcomed United States troops in 1983, the people of Haiti would welcome an OAS or UN force.

Securing Haiti would be comparatively easy. Its Army is long-estranged from combat, logistically and strategically weak, and unpopular. But then what? The interveners would have to give Aristide firm and enduring advice (a potentially difficult proposition).

The choices are not exciting. But neither the U.S. nor the OAS can afford to do nothing. That is particularly so because the innocent, ordinary downtrodden Haitians are prepared to risk their lives by the thousands in order to sit sodden in a tent on the edge of Cuba, for the faint chance of gaining entry to the U.S..

They are fleeing repression. But they are primarily being attracted by the possibility, however slim and however unfounded, of economic betterment.

If the OAS intervenes, is it prepared to impose a regency and to reconstruct another nation in a way that has rarely been accomplished in modern times? Haiti, like Bosnia, is desperate. It is time to act to save democracy.

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### **Clinton's Task in Haiti: a Last-Ditch Effort at Compromise**

*The Miami Herald* (24 January 1993)

Haitian politics is an interminable morass. Although President Bill Clinton's decision to maintain the Bush policy of blocking Haitian emigration to the United States reverses the position he took during his campaign, it buys time for one last effort to reconcile the irreconcilable forces that heretofore have controlled Haiti's destiny.

No one's interests would be well served by a renewed exodus of Haitian boat people. Many Haitians would die at sea, and most who made it to America's once hospitable shores would be interned.

Nor would an exodus resolve Haiti's political conundrum. President Clinton's formidable task is to encourage progressive politics in a country that since 1804 has never known more than a few months of democracy. As a result, Haiti has no tradition of political give and take, no value system enshrining tolerance or dissent.

President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was the overwhelmingly popular favorite when he was fairly elected in 1990. But his personal radicalism and his belief in a kind of communalistic empowerment of the masses threatened the established military, the police and significant elements of the business elite. Haiti has been run for decades, if not two centuries, as a series of tightly controlled franchises.

Because of President Aristide's ideas as well as because of the belief among Haiti's business classes that he was cruel and potentially corrupt, the military overthrow of his regime in late 1991 was popular among the oligarchs.

The subsequent economic boycott of Haiti by the Organization of American States (OAS) and United States attempted to undo the coup. The boycott was an appropriate response, but it did not work. European nations did not support the trade embargo, and Haiti has continued to receive such vital commodities as oil. The junta's livelihood was largely unaffected; the drug trade continued and the leaders of the junta took their cut. Those who suffered from it were ordinary Haitians.



The embargo only accomplished the further decay of Haiti's already imperiled economy, the grinding to a halt of commerce in Port-au-Prince and other Haitian cities, and the shipping of Haitians to sea in small boats.

Because the ruling junta was and is interested only in its own survival, not in the welfare of Haitians, every time the Bush administration and President Aristide agreed to a deal, however reasonable, the junta rejected it. Likewise, President Aristide refused to accept a nominal presidential return or amnesty for the men of the junta.

President Clinton believes that he had the beginnings of a workable compromise. Indeed, President Aristide may finally agree to a resumption of his presidency without insisting on a return to Haiti and may offer some kind of amnesty to the military. The junta and Aristide's men may jointly agree on a new prime minister acceptable to both factions.

A new government and, in time, new elections may help. Most of all, it may be possible for the United States and the OAS to lift the boycott in exchange for the Haitian junta's acceptance of a bevy of United Nations human rights monitors.

Only when Haiti's economy begins to function productively will the threat of a renewed exodus end. Until then, the Coast Guard cordon, albeit of questionable legality and unconscionable morality, will contain the outflux. Active processing of asylum requests within Haiti may provide a temporary, cynical, policy palliative.

If the United States really hopes to make a meaningful difference we must help Haitians reclaim their country and their economy from local warlords and gangsters. Improved prosperity for most Haitians will come from reforestation and irrigation as well as preferential treatment for Haitian coffee, sugar and sisal, and for baseballs and other piece goods finished in Haiti with inexpensive labor.

At the same time we can help reform the Haitian military and encourage whoever governs to think less of immediate spoils and more of the medium-term good. We will have to provide workable incentives.

Only the Clinton administration and the thousands of prosperous Haitians living in the United States can help Haiti out of its political slough. We need to be tough and clear as well as imaginative and non-doctrinaire. If we fail, the only alternative—and President Clinton's last resort—is a full-scale military intervention.

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### **Clinton's Challenge In Helping Haiti**

*Christian Science Monitor* (28 January 1993)

Even President Clinton cannot easily craft a winning policy in Haiti. His attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable was noble, but it only bought time.

The ruling Haitian military junta agreed before Inauguration Day to cooperate with Mr. Clinton and the United Nations. It promised to admit 500 UN human rights observers but reneged.

Clinton's inaugural celebrations were bedeviled by fears of a renewed exodus of boat people from Haiti, by an interim political compromise that came unstuck, and by fears that there might be no good answer to the Haitian dilemma short of another interven-

tion. Clinton's hard task is to encourage progressive politics in a country that has never known more than a few months of democracy since its independence in 1804. There is no tradition of political give and take, no value system enshrining tolerance or dissent. President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was the overwhelming popular favorite when he was elected fairly in 1990. His radicalism and belief in a kind of communalistic empowerment of the masses threatened the positions of the military, the police, and significant elements of the business elite. Haiti had been run for decades, if not two centuries, as a series of tightly controlled syndicates.

Because of President Aristide's ideas and the belief that he was cruel and potentially corrupt, the military overthrow of his regime in late 1991 was popular among Haiti's business classes. The subsequent Organization of American States (OAS) and United States boycott was meant to undo the coup, but all it accomplished was the further decay of an already imperiled economy, halting commerce and shipping Haitians to sea in small boats.

The renewed building of small boats is Clinton's immediate worry. No one wants Haitians to flee, yet die at sea. Nor is Clinton as ready as he should be to receive Haitians in the U.S. as openly as Cubans. Given his campaign statements, his recent embrace of pragmatism appears as cynical and inhumane as it does sensible.

The 1991 boycott was an appropriate response to the coup. But it did not work. The ruling junta was and is interested in survival, not in the welfare of Haitians. Its livelihood was largely unaffected; the drug trade continued and leaders of the junta took their percentage. Every time the Bush administration cut a deal with Aristide, the junta refused to accept it, however reasonable. Aristide also refused to accept a nominal presidential return or an amnesty for the men of the junta.

Clinton believed two weeks ago that he had the beginnings of a compromise. Aristide may still be agreeing to a resumption of his presidency without insisting on returning physically to Haiti. He appeared to offer some kind of amnesty to the military. The junta and Aristide's men may jointly accept a new prime minister.

A new government may help. It may be possible for the U.S. and the OAS to lift the boycott in exchange for the junta's final acceptance of UN human rights monitors. Only when Haiti begins to function well economically will the threat of a renewed exodus be ended. The Coast Guard cordon, questionable and unconscionable, will contain it. Active processing of asylum requests within Haiti may provide a temporary policy palliative.

If the U.S. wants to make a difference, it must help Haitians reclaim their country and economy from local warlords and gangsters. Improved prosperity will come from reforestation, irrigation, special prices for coffee, sugar, and sisal, and special tariffs for baseballs and other piece goods finished in Haiti with inexpensive labor. We can also train the military and encourage whoever governs to think less of immediate spoils and more of the medium-term good. We must provide workable incentives.

Only the Clinton administration and the thousands of prosperous Haitians living in the U.S. can help Haiti out of its political slough. We need to be tough and clear as well as imaginative and nondoctrinaire. The only remaining alternative is a full-scale military intervention—Clinton's last resort.

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**Booting Out Haiti's Bad Guys**  
*Christian Science Monitor* (14 June 1993)

President Clinton promised two black congressmen from Texas that he would tighten sanctions against Haiti only if they voted in favor of his budget. But will tougher sanctions restore democracy in Haiti?

Until late last month, the United Nations confidently believed that the military junta, which overthrew freely-elected Haitian President Jean-Bertrande Aristide in 1991 could be persuaded to step aside, restore the elected president, and approve the arrival of 500 lightly-armed UN human rights monitors.

The UN negotiators threatened stepped-up sanctions, a tight embargo on imports of refined petroleum products, and increased economic misery—plus the carrot of an end to existing sanctions and \$100 million of new aid. The people of Haiti are in such desperate economic straits that the offer could hardly have been refused. But it was. In desperation, Mr. Clinton has frozen the American bank accounts of 83 leading Haitians, barred them and their families from entry into the United States, and indicated that a petroleum embargo might be next.

The military rulers of the country have been little affected by sanctions. Nor will Clinton's latest initiative bother them much. The smuggling of contraband, drug running, skimming of humanitarian aid, and oppression have lined the pockets of the officers as well as members of the commercial class.

Tighter sanctions will squeeze the poor even more dramatically. But the junta and the elite reckon that they will still be able to make a living from whatever economic activity continues, especially smuggling. The junta and the elite fear President Aristide's return, and they want no human rights monitors who could exert a countervailing authority or some contrary legitimacy. Yet Clinton and the UN are together determined to restore democracy to embattled Haiti. The arrival of a small, well-armed force of blue berets, preferably drawn from French-speaking countries, could be the surgical instrument.

A force of about 5,000 could be adequate. Haitians would welcome deliverance from oppression, especially if Aristide returned at the same time to provide legitimacy and at least nominal authority.

The poorly-trained and lightly-armed Haitian army/police would be no match even for a comparatively small multinational force supported by U.S. ships and aircraft. The occupying force would need to secure no more than key points in Port-au-Prince and a few outlying cities. If the Haitian officer corps were confined along with renegade soldiers, the occupying force would face no greater problems than the U.S. discovered during its first few months in Somalia.

A UN-occupying force would therefore have a comparatively easy time. Its hard task would be to set Haiti back on a very gradual road to complete home rule and democracy. An intervening period of tutelage, with Aristide in charge but advised by UN officials, would help.

Because Haiti has never known democracy, and because the values of participation, tolerance, dissent, justice, and sharing have never been central to Haitian public or private life, the transfer of democratic principles will be exceedingly difficult.

Returning Aristide to power will be much easier than creating a state in which he and his successors could govern honestly and without brutality. But tougher sanctions and generous aid will not do the job on their own.

If Haitians are to enjoy basic human needs and rights, and if they are to begin to make something of their own country, the UN and the U.S. must recognize and then live up to an enduring responsibility.

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### **U.S. Needs to Take Control of Haiti Disaster**

*Christian Science Monitor* (29 October 1993)

Haiti should be another Grenada. President Clinton's blockade and other sanctions may work. If not, the Haitian people would welcome American intervention. A battalion of marines, with appropriate air and sea cover, could do the job. Allowing thugs to deter American and United Nations peacekeepers was a mistake. So was the aborted attempt to return President Jean-Bertrand Aristide without some enforcing mechanism.

After the debacle in Somalia and its legislative fallout in Washington, the renegade ruling junta in Haiti thought it could scare the Clinton administration and Congress into backing off. And so it did, jeopardizing the UN and other peacemakers on the ground. But the junta has no popular support. Moreover, the guerrilla potential of the followers of Lt. Gen. Raoul Cedras and Col. Joseph Michel François is far less than that of Gen. Mohamed Farah Aideed and other warlord factions in Somalia. Nor would Haiti's ragtag 7,000-man army, with its scattered and badly-maintained vehicles, prove even a moment's match for the Marines.

Just as the mass of Grenada's people cheered the forcible removal of their oppressors, so most Haitians would be excited finally to be rid of those who now hold their country hostage. After all, Mr. Aristide won a massive two-thirds of the popular vote in the 1990 election; few doubt that he still has overwhelming support.

But is it the business of the United States to oust the junta? Yes; first, there is a moral imperative. The world's only major power has a responsibility to combat the world's most outrageous violators of human rights and restore democrats to power, even though it can't redress every wrong. Haiti, less than 1,000 miles from Miami, lies well within the U.S. hemispheric zone of influence. Second, and more compelling: If the world's only major power allows itself to be humbled by rent-a-crowd demonstrations, warlords, drug-enriched junta leaders, and other pop-up despots, the peace of the world will deteriorate.

If the blockade of Haiti produces no results, a clear ultimatum ought to be followed, if necessary, by the mobilization of the Marines. The ultimatum itself should demand the immediate exodus of all the junta leaders, as promised at Governor's Island, New York, in July, and the dissolution of both Haiti's military and police commands. Absent the junta leadership, the so-called attaches or latter-day tonton macoutes would prove little threat to

peace. Likewise, the anti-Aristide and anti-U.S. demonstrators would falter for lack of paymasters.

The hardest part of this prescription is what happens a day or two after the Marines land and eliminate the opposition. Just as Washington failed to follow up on success last winter and spring in Somalia, so it must not bungle the transition from junta to restored democracy in Haiti.

Haiti has never known any sustained democratic period. Thus, in addition to the police, military, justice system, and civil authority training teams that were to have prepared for Aristide's return, the U.S. (together with the UN and the Organization of American States) must not flinch from a year or two of peace enforcement. Some marines or other armed military personnel must be prepared to stay, to keep the junta from reasserting itself.

The response to those in Congress and elsewhere who fear becoming embroiled in third-world messes that never resolve themselves is: An American retreat in the face of antidemocratic attacks that have absolutely no ideological basis would harm the peace of the world and destroy our own pretensions to global power.

Congress ought to understand that if the Haiti and Somalia situations are handled right (in the latter case, the U.S. should help the UN develop an indigenous Somali government), then America will be called upon to intervene in significantly fewer countries. And the downtrodden and oppressed of the troubled world might enjoy more freedom from fear and hunger.

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### **What Now in Haiti?**

*Boston Globe* (29 December 1993)

Can Haiti's democratic humpty-dumpty be put together again? Stiff sanctions have not succeeded. Meanwhile the poor become poorer and the rich suffer little, and a boat exodus will probably resume. Are there any options left?

The available alternatives for removing the soldiers who control Haiti in the face of world obloquy are poor: even tighter sanctions, including a cutoff of Haitian access to air travel; rewarding the junta's collective exit by reopening its seized bank accounts abroad; and military intervention.

The narcojunta that has ruled in Port-au-Prince since late 1991 promised to leave but will not. The United States, the United Nations and the Organization of American States all want the junta out and President Jean-Bertrand Aristide restored to power, at least nominally.

In 1990, two-thirds of the Haitian electorate voted enthusiastically for Aristide. There is no reason to think a free vote would produce a different result in 1994. For most Haitians, economically the most impoverished people in the Western Hemisphere, Aristide's ascendance represented a sharp, dramatic break with their country's oppressive, dictatorial tradition.

Aristide is a fiery populist. He promised to respond to the wishes of the masses, oust Haiti's merchant and military castes and begin national economic development.

Because he seemed likely to deprive the leaders of Haiti's military establishment—and their wealthy backers and allies—of handsome profits from smuggling and narcotics transfers, Aristide was exiled in 1991. The narcojunta defies Washington and New York for the same reasons.

It will relinquish power only if its illicit monopolies remain untouched and Aristide's freedom to govern democratically is somehow curtailed. Naturally, Aristide rejects those notions, just as he battled last month against his prime minister's attempt to broker a least-of-all-evils compromise.

Sanctions thus far have not succeeded in forcing the junta out, because Haiti's border with the Dominican Republic is porous and because the leaders of the junta care little if Haiti is devastated economically and its people made even hungrier and more diseased than usual.

As President François (Papa Doc) Duvalier said in 1959 at the beginning of his vicious dictatorship: "Our governments never cared about the national inheritance and never attempted to stop social griefs. The country is split into exploiters and exploited."

Depriving elite Haitians of an easy exit by air to Miami, Caracas or Santo Domingo would add to the pressure, but perhaps not sufficiently. Persuading the anti-Aristide government of the Dominican Republic to tighten the cross-border noose would be even more effective, if very difficult.

But petroleum stockpiles inside Haiti may already be too large for this method to have a salutary result.

Providing sufficient incentives for the leaders of the junta to leave Haiti willingly might prove controversial as well as immoral. The precedents would not be good, either.

Aristide and many Haitians abhor the thought of a forcible intervention. Yet only a surgical lancing of the Haitian military carbuncle has a reasonable chance of breaking the army's hold and, simultaneously, of restoring the democratic initiative. An intervention could also bring to an end the massive suffering of the Haitian people.

Clearly a UN or OAS-sponsored intervention would be preferable to an assault by U.S. troops. However, it would be impossible to mount a multilateral attack secretly in a manner that would enhance its chances for success.

Fortunately, Haiti's ragtag army of 7,000 would be no match for a reasonably sized, reasonably equipped outside force with good communications. Indeed, more than token resistance would be unlikely once the leaders of the narcojunta were captured. Nor would guerrilla resistance be likely.

If a small multilateral peacekeeping force remained while a new police and army were trained and democratic procedures reintroduced the danger of another interruption of democracy would be minimized. Indeed, any military intervention would be pointless if there were no commitment to support democracy, with peacekeepers and training for a minimum of two years.

Washing our collective hands of Haiti is not a viable option. The people of Haiti deserve better, and they deserve multilateral and American' support in their struggle to be

democratic and to better themselves economically. If stricter sanctions fail to succeed and if jawboning from Washington continues to accomplish nothing, then a humanitarian intervention might be the only plausible alternative.

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### **Slow, Steady Progress in Haiti**

*Christian Science Monitor* (29 March 1995)

Haiti is using well its last best chance to recover from decades of dictatorship. When President Clinton visits Port-au-Prince March 31 he will find a country climbing gradually out of the mire of authoritarian abuse.

October's United States invasion of Haiti, brokered and modulated as it was by President Carter's mediating mission, enabled Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to resume governing in comparative peace. As U.S. control of the now-reduced military peacekeeping force is transferred March 31 to the United Nations, it is essential that Mr. Aristide continue to be supported by 2,400 American and 3,000 Pakistani and other UN troops.

Despite the fears of Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman Jesse Helms (R) of North Carolina and others, restoring Aristide to power by the threat of force, and helping to maintain his legitimacy, has been a noble enterprise.

President Aristide has been bold. By retiring most of his Army's high command and reducing the number of soldiers drastically, he has broken the tradition of military interference in Haitian society. With Canadian and American assistance, he is training a police force (on the Costa Rican model). Presumably, he will want to train a border patrol, too, and perhaps an antismuggling unit.

By sidelining the thoroughly corrupt Army, and by refusing to create his own group of armed enforcers (whatever they might be called), Aristide has sent powerful signals throughout Haiti: Participatory democracy may have a chance to develop roots.

Soldiers have abused Haitian civilians and interfered mightily in politics since the birth of the republic in 1804. The narco-terror of Haiti's military juntas was no aberration. By coupling a drastic downsizing of the Army with the beginnings of good government, Aristide has set Haiti on a new and promising course. To continue the progress, Aristide and his associates will need to revive the shattered economy, with UN backing to maintain stability, and organize fair legislative and municipal elections in June. Then, with the new parliament in office, he must prepare for his own succession at the end of the year.

The first task is proving almost impossible. Renewed foreign investment has been attracted only slowly to Haiti. Foreign aid for reconstruction of the infrastructure has helped. So have the expenditures of the U.S. and UN forces. Private foundations have also begun to inject cash into the economy. But much more is needed. Despite the antagonism of the leaders of the 104th Congress, Haiti deserves sustained United States help. It should be seen as an investment for Haiti, for democracy in the Caribbean, and, cynically, for Florida and other likely destinations of impoverished Haitian refugees.

Whether the newly trained police force will be able to reduce crime in Haiti remains to be seen. Whether United States troops will continue to perform as well under United Nations command also remains to be seen. That they do so, and that the demilitarization of Haiti succeeds, is in the interests of all who wish to see Haiti climb out of its authoritarian past.

Thus far, Aristide is firmly determined to leave office on time, despite his forcibly interrupted term in office, and despite the fact that the reconstruction of Haiti will take many years and needs the kind of skillful leadership he has demonstrated. Many among his supporters will wish to amend the Constitution, as was done in Argentina to permit President Carlos Saul Menem to stay in office. But it is much more important for the course of democracy in Haiti for Aristide to step down early next year, as planned.

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### **Haiti's Needs Extend Far Beyond Next March**

*Christian Science Monitor* (5 October 1995)

Haiti's successful democratic transition remains at risk. As the flawed conduct of the legislative elections of June, August, and September indicated, too few institutions and checks and balances exist to give all Haitians an equal stake in their country's political evolution.

President Jean-Bertrand Aristide is immensely popular, but his year-old American-restored rule has not yet created the institutions that could support the flowering of democracy. The national infrastructure is being rebuilt. The economy remains weak, and the country very poor. Seventy percent of all Haitians are unemployed. There is no independent press.

Observance of the rule of law, essential for confidence in a new democracy, cannot be assumed until judges are trained and the judicial system developed. Arrests remain arbitrary, and examinations and trials are still conducted haphazardly. The United Nations is instructing a 5,000-person police force, but only half of that number have received their four-month basic training. Recruiting continues, and leaders of the force doubt it will be ready to replace the UN/U.S. security contingent in less than a year.

Yet that contingent is due to leave Haiti in March, according to orders from Washington. Moreover, Haiti's presidential elections are scheduled for late November and President Aristide is constitutionally obliged to relinquish his office in early February.

Making good the transition from one wildly popular elected president to a legitimate successor is thus critical if Haiti's nascent democracy is to survive and overcome the national legacy of dictatorship, military interference, coups, and widespread human rights abuses.

But there are many formidable obstacles. Given the ways that Aristide's appointees manipulated and mismanaged the legislative electoral process, how can legitimacy and transparency of the presidential electoral process be ensured? An impartial administrative machine is essential. International technical assistance, helpful to Haiti during the



1990 presidential balloting, is a priority. So are meaningful conversations about the conduct of elections among the followers of Aristide and their opponents.

Given the inexperience of the new Haitian police (the Army has been abolished), and the potential threat of violence during the electoral period and for months after Aristide steps down, renewing the mandate of the UN security force for six additional months beyond March is also essential.

Training new judges will be continued, conceivably at an accelerated pace. Meanwhile, the laws of Haiti urgently need to be translated into Creole, the language of the people. The mandate of the national Truth Commission, intended to expire at the end of 1995, should be extended so that Haitians feel confident in the identification of their past oppressors.

Existing newspapers are tied to political patrons. There is no independent, objective source of news and comment, despite the efforts of individuals inside and outside government. Possibly, Haitians living in the United States will want to invest in the kind of newspaper that will support democracy, not just individuals or parties.

Roads are being built with World Bank and InterAmerican Bank funds, but it will be years before rural farmers are linked effectively to Port-au-Prince, the country's capital and chief market. Telephone and other communication systems are rudimentary; so is the provision of electricity. Haiti has less generating capacity than that needed to supply as few as 20,000 U.S. homes. Likewise, the provision of potable water and sanitation lags behind all other countries of the Western Hemisphere

Haiti's annual per capita gross domestic product is estimated at less than \$250, ranking it among the poorest 25 nations in the world. Inflation of about 30 percent a year is eroding what little purchasing power there is, so macroeconomic stabilization is also essential. Fundamental to per capita income growth will be the encouragement of tourism and export-oriented manufacturing, plus a revival of agricultural exports like coffee. New roads will help. So will the employment opportunities already created by the UN, the U.S., and other donors. But Aristide and his successor also need to reduce Haiti's traditional interference in large sectors of the economy. Privatization, a dirty word among sectors of the Haitian government, needs to be reconsidered in order to jump-start the country's desperately weak economy. Many services, like schooling and health care, could be contracted out, too.

Long-term, further efforts at population planning will also be critical. Haiti is among the most densely populated places in the world, if arable land alone is considered. Its 7 million inhabitants have no more than 1,000 square miles (a tenth of the land area of Maryland) on which to sustain themselves. Erosion, a major and growing problem, has reduced Haiti's available arable land by half in 30 years.

Setting Haiti effectively on the road to sustained democracy is a massive task. Fortunately, for another half year Haiti possesses President Aristide's charismatic leadership, backed by an international security force. Haiti, Washington, and the UN need to make the most of what little time is left to secure a legitimate succession and conditions conducive to continued democracy.

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**Haiti's Fragile Future***Boston Globe* (12 November 1995)

Haiti's tentative democratic transition is again greatly threatened. President Jean-Bertrand Aristide has promised to step down in February, when his term ends, but does he really mean it?

René Préal, the only serious candidate in the Dec. 17 presidential elections, appears to be Aristide's handpicked successor, but is he more than a front? Aristide promises to remain engaged closely in politics.

Security is also an issue. The Multinational Force of U.S. and UN troops is scheduled to depart three weeks after Aristide steps down and well-before the new 5,000-person Haitian police force will be fully trained and ready to hold off antidemocratic elements within the government or the ousted military junta. Reasonably, Aristide also wants the multinational force to disarm his enemies, which it refuses to do. Haiti remains an endangered country and its democracy fragile.

Haitians cannot "eat democracy." Another issue is the Aristide government's failure to restart the engines of growth. Prime Minister Smarck Michel indeed resigned in October because Aristide was opposed to loosening state control over innumerable enterprises and is opposed to privatization and hostile to a market economy. Without growth with equity, Haiti's fledgling democratic transition will soon fail.

For all of these reasons, it is both essential that Aristide obey the Haitian Constitution and relinquish the presidency, and that Préal, once elected, proves capable of ruling independently and democratically but with Aristide's full support. Preyed upon by dictators and juntas and mired in poverty because of its past, Haiti's last best chance to succeed is now. The upcoming governmental transition constitutes a critical watershed.

Admittedly, Aristide's time in office has been too abbreviated and his presidential articulations erratic. After nearly 200 years of military and civilian dictatorship, despotism and systematic misrule, in 1990 Aristide was elected president by 67 percent of the national vote.

That election was Haiti's first ever full and free contest. Aristide, a charismatic priestly opponent of the 28-year dictatorship of François (Papa Doc) Duvalier and his son Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier, decided to stand for president a mere six weeks before the balloting.

After seven months in office, an army junta pushed Aristide from the presidency, and began smuggling drugs with intensity. Three years later, the threat of a United States-led intervention pushed the junta from office. Aristide has since had only slightly more than a year—too little time—to lead the country and implant democracy securely.

Many Haitians, particularly the members of Aristide's Lavalas political movement, which swept this year's legislative elections, and the members of his Cabinet, want Aristide to continue in office. Yet a provision of the Haitian Constitution limiting presidents, to a single term and Aristide's promise to President Clinton that he would honor that provision bar a continuation in office.

Clearly Aristide continues to be overwhelmingly popular among the Haitian masses. Préval's election is assured because he rides Aristide's coattails and because he, a former prime minister, and Aristide are "like brothers." The other 13 presidential candidates are regarded as nonentities.

Aristide has reiterated his intention to step down, but hesitantly and ambiguously. He has said little publicly about Préval. Nor has Préval exuded confidence that, if elected, he would effectively succeed Aristide and be able to grasp the difficult nettle of Haiti's political and economic future. He has enunciated no program for national uplift.

Haiti's political equilibrium thus remains unbalanced. So long as it does, the weakest economy in the Western Hemisphere and one of the weakest in the world cannot move forward. Nor can proper attention be paid to the country's enormous educational, medical, and ecological deficits. Haiti remains overwhelmingly illiterate and diseased. Its life expectancy rates are among the lowest in the world. Its arable areas are shrinking rapidly as its precious topsoils are washed steadily into the sea.

Haitians are once again taking to the high seas in leaky boats because the great hopes of the Aristide restoration are being dissipated. The United States and other donors must continue to help, but Aristide must respect the constitution and use his remaining months in office to lead effectively. He alone can take the political risks that will be too great for Préval. Moreover only Aristide can ask the multinational force to remain after March 1 in order to secure Haiti's political future.

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### **Democracy's Chances in Haiti**

*Christian Science Monitor* (6 December 1995)

What happens after Haiti's presidential election Dec. 17 is less important than the election itself. Can Haiti sustain its new democracy? Can the new president and government fend off coups and a return of military dictatorship?

Despotism has always triumphed in Haiti. It is the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere and one of the least-favored in the world. Its people are overwhelmingly illiterate and diseased, inadequately served by roads and communications, and have been abused by a commercial elite in cahoots with soldiers.

Democracy is still largely untested in the bitter Haitian crucible. There is no tradition of popular participatory rule, no heritage of the rule of law, and little experience with a market economy. Nothing in Haiti's recent past provides comfort that a corner has been turned.

President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, elected overwhelmingly in 1990 in Haiti's first free and full democratic election, was ousted by a military junta in 1991 and restored to power by United States might in 1994. Obeying the Haitian Constitution, he is stepping down on Feb. 7 at the end of his first term.

By relinquishing his office, albeit under pressure from Washington, Aristide's act reinforces the rule of law and helps support the forces of democracy. So will the transfer of power by ballot from Aristide to his successor. René Préval, prime minister under Aris-

tide in 1991 and Aristide's hand-picked successor, is almost certain to win. He and Aristide are "like brothers," so continuity of populist approach and policy should be assured. (There are 13 other presidential candidates, only two of whom stand a chance.)

In 1990, populism, led by Aristide and his Lavalas movement, ousted the dark hand of elite control. The business elites had profited from and worked closely with the family dictatorship of François and Jean-Claude Duvalier (1958–86) and the military juntas that followed. In 1991, the elite struck back against Aristide's erratic populism. Préval's election will maintain the ascendancy of popular rule and, if he can remain in office for five years, Aristide can run again in 2000, keeping the tide of populism going until at least 2006.

Arrayed against these worthy populist plans are certain realities. First, Aristide, Préval, and populism owe their security to a 6,000-person UN Multinational Force (including 3,000 Americans), scheduled to leave Haiti by March 1, 1996, three weeks after Préval's presumed accession.

Departure is predicated on the assumption, now known to be false, that a 5,000-man Haitian police force will have been trained sufficiently to maintain order and protect democracy. Unfortunately, the training has been slow. They won't be ready to take over March 1. Haitian democracy's only hope is to persuade President Clinton to leave U.S. troops in place for at least six months after March.

Second, distrusting capitalism, Aristide has been loath to open up the Haitian economy. Privatization of state-controlled enterprises has been slow, job growth almost nonexistent. Nor has the moneyed elite benefited. Aristide's (and Préval's) followers can't consume democracy. Aristide and Préval need to embrace market reforms if democracy is to stand a chance.

Third, to implant democracy into the infertile soil of Haiti, Aristide and Préval need to support the rule of law. They should appoint judges of quality and ensure their independence. They need to pay greater heed to the newly elected legislature.

Fourth, Aristide and Préval must speak more like democrats than like crowd-pleasing autocrats. Both should support what there is of a free press and condemn vendettas against their opponents.

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### **Haiti, After Rebound, Again at Risk**

*Christian Science Monitor* (22 April 1997)

Haiti's last best chance to sustain its fledgling democracy is ebbing away.

Wrangling between former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and current President René Préval is not helping. Nor is the prospect of an imminent withdrawal of the United Nations security force.

Dictators, soldiers, and political strongmen ran Haiti most of the time from independence in 1804 through 1990, including the rapacious rule of François ("Papa Doc") and Jean-Claude ("Baby Doc") Duvalier from 1957 to 1986.

*Dismantling State Firms*

Popular government is thus new to Haiti, but Mr. Aristide's ecstatic victory in the 1990 elections was overwhelming. His restoration by United States troops in 1994 for the remainder of his five-year-term led to a year and a half of partial reform. Mr. Préval, handpicked by Aristide, has continued down the democratic path established by his predecessor.

But there are crucial differences. Préval seeks to open up the Haitian economy to world trade. He wants to end protectionism and understands that competition will help Haiti grow. To do so, he needs to dismantle decades of state control of the inefficient telephone and electricity monopolies, and sell off state-owned flour mills, cement plants, ports, and airports—an approach opposed by both the Haitian elite and workers.

*Aristide Patronage Loss?*

The World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and other donors have promised substantial restructuring loans and grants if and when Préval privatizes. Populists should support Préval. But Aristide, the supreme populist, either does not understand market economics or fears the loss of executive direction and patronage that could come from privatization.

There have been orchestrated protest demonstrations against the presumed forfeiture of government jobs, too. Because of that major policy disagreement, and probably because Aristide has begun to plan for a second presidency beginning in 2001, he is trying to block Préval's most critical initiatives.

Aristide's followers broke away recently from the once dominant Aristide-Préval political machine to form a new Lavalas ("the flood that overcomes") Party loyal to Aristide. In the recent local government elections, Lavalas-Aristide candidates won more seats than Lavalas-Préval candidates, but the overall turnout was very low.

If these conflicts within the democratic camp were not enough, Préval's Haiti is enduring an upsurge in crime and political violence than cannot but be exacerbated by the declared departure of the 1,300-person Canadian-led United Nations force at the end of July. His own, newly trained police force is regarded as weak and unable to cope with the deteriorating security situation.

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has said that the UN mission will end in July, whatever the consequences. Yet Préval cannot do without some outside security assistance. The United Nations security force withdrawal risks sacrificing the UN's and the U.S.'s substantial investment in order and political stability in Haiti.

*Biggest Need: Growth*

Préval has been trying to jumpstart the engine of economic growth, despite the security crisis and despite opposition from Aristide and his followers. Without rapid rates of growth, the economy will continue to stagnate, and Haiti's hard-won democracy will be at risk.

Haiti remains the poorest and least industrialized nation in the Western Hemisphere. Two-thirds of its 7 million citizens live below the national poverty level. In 1996, Haitian gross domestic product per capita was about \$250, approximately the level of Africa's impoverished Malawi, about one-quarter the gross domestic product of neighboring Dominican Republic, and half that of Honduras, the second weakest economy in the hemisphere.

*Poorest Neighbor—By Far*

Seventy percent of Haiti's population is rural and dependent almost entirely on subsistence or cash cropping. Agriculture contributes only about 30 percent to gross domestic product. Haiti has been a net importer of food, especially rice, since the 1980s. Préval wants to boost Haiti's rice harvest and remove state controls to do so. That is one of his battles with Aristide.

Haiti's poverty is demonstrated statistically by its low life expectancy (57 years), high infant mortality rate (84 per 1,000), high ratio of people to physicians (1:11,000), and high incidence of malnutritional diseases. AIDS is widespread, as are measles, meningitis, rabies, and anthrax. Only 1.5 percent of the population has access to piped water. Electric power is short, even in the capital, as are telephones.

Haiti also has a critical shortage of human capital—hence the need for continued United Nations and United States attention. Illiteracy is severe: Recent estimates range from 50 to 85 percent. Only about 50 percent of eligible Haitians go to school, the lowest rate in the hemisphere.

The Préval government thus has much to do. If René Préval and his cohorts can survive Aristide's opposition, and that of former Duvalierists, and if they can make the country more secure—a tall order in light of the United Nations pullout—then the chance of democracy being sustained is at least reasonable.

But if the growth of domestic production continues to falter, privatization slows or collapses, and new jobs remain scarce, Haiti will have squandered its best opportunity to emerge from centuries of grim inertia.

Haiti deserves better, particularly from the United States, Canada, France, and its Caribbean neighbors.

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