

WASHINGTON OFFICE ON **HAITI**110 Maryland Avenue NE - Suite 310 202-543-7095
Washington, DC 20002 FAX 202-547-9382**PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES TO U.S.-LED MILITARY INTERVENTION IN HAITI**

Support for legitimate government; asylum for Haitian refugees; stronger non-military pressures; cutting of all U.S. ties to the Haitian military.

Based on a ten-year history of closely monitoring events in Haiti and U.S. foreign policy, the Washington Office on Haiti strongly opposes military intervention as a solution to the current political crisis. However, our position on intervention is fundamentally opposite to that articulated by several members of Congress and by the Haitian military they appear to support.

It is erroneous to think of the crisis in Haiti solely as a "Haitian problem" as it is so often described by the mainstream press and some U.S. policy makers. In actuality, the political disaster in Haiti and the exodus of great numbers of Haitians risking their lives on the high seas are a result of the historical role of the United States in Haiti and, more recently, of a deeply flawed U.S. policy toward that country.

The U.S. military did intervene in Haiti in 1915. A 19-year occupation ensued, culminating in the establishment and training of a powerful Haitian military which polices and oppresses its own people. A key contributing factor to the current crisis is the continuing close connection and influence that the United States maintains with the Haitian military, the empowerment of the military junta through direct or indirect U.S. funding, and an inconsistent, damaging policy.

The course of U.S. foreign policy has, in fact, constituted a war against the poor in Latin America and the Caribbean and has served to undermine democratic processes, not only in Haiti, but throughout the hemisphere. This policy must be changed to one that fosters fairness, growth, and stability for all members of society.

We are convinced that any U.S.-led military intervention in Haiti will be motivated more by U.S. domestic politics and U.S. interests than by the goal of protecting the rights of Haitian people or supporting democracy. Such a move will no doubt crush the democratic grassroots movement and wipe out the supporters of the legitimate democratic government.

We believe that the present military junta will only be replaced and "retrained," leaving the United States in control once again. The new batch of Haitian military officers, backed up by the business elite, will go on to repress the grassroots and democratic movements.

We fear that those Haitians who have diligently worked for democracy and human rights under great risk in recent years will continue to be killed or forced into exile. In effect, Haiti will continue to be a nation under siege.

We who support freedom and democracy in Haiti call for:

1. **Unconditional support of the legitimate, democratically-elected government.** Officially stated, U.S. policy supports President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's return to Haiti. However, attempts to restore the legitimate government to Haiti have been thwarted and subverted by key U.S. officials. Reports that painted Aristide as mentally unstable, admittedly fabricated by the Central Intelligence Agency, and propaganda regarding his human rights record put forth by conservative forces in the U.S., have served as powerful props for those who wield the weapons in Haiti. Clinton spokespersons now suggest that "democratic solutions" might not involve Aristide even though he was elected in a landslide victory in Haiti's first free and fair elections. Any "democratic solution" that does not include the will of the people will be deemed undemocratic, and absolutely unacceptable to the majority of Haitians.
2. **Asylum for Haitian refugees.** In recent weeks it has been widely stated that U.S. commitment to resolve the crisis in Haiti is merely part of the administration's attempt to prevent Haitian refugees from reaching our shores. Exploitation of the Haitian people in the interest of partisan politics is unacceptable. The Haitians are now hidden away, isolated in overcrowded, understaffed camps -- 15,000 in the naval base on Guantanamo alone -- and have not yet been granted genuine protection under the law. Detention masked as safe haven flies in the face of both national and international standards. Those fleeing, in many ways victims of U.S. foreign policy, should be afforded temporary protected status and the opportunity to seek political asylum.
3. **Immediate, continuous imposition of the strongest non-military pressures at the disposal of the U.S. government. to force the military to step down.** The United States flouted the trade embargo declared by the Organization of American States. Stricter measures recently implemented are "too little too late." People are dying daily at the hands of a military trained and supported by the U.S. and emboldened by a heedless and divisive policy driven by powerful allies on Capitol Hill. Restoring democracy to Haiti also means discontinuing attempts to alter the composition of Aristide's government by pushing for amnesty and including military leaders and other antidemocratic forces in the name of "reconciliation."
4. **Severance of U.S. ties to the Haitian military.** Since being created and trained by the U.S. in 1915, the Haitian army has had only one enemy, the Haitian poor. Continuous contact and negotiations between the Haitian military and U.S. officials, coupled with an ambiguous policy, have only served to encourage their actions, prolong the crisis and deepen the suffering in Haiti. Policy makers should investigate and end CIA funding of the Haitian military. Further, those U.S. citizens, lawyers, lobbyists, consultants, and journalists who serve the interests of the Haitian military should be exposed and denounced by U.S. officials.

Note: As this flyer was being designed, it became clear that U.S. military forces will invade Haiti soon. Regardless of what happens, Sept. 30 will still be the day to focus on getting our message to the Administration. Call or fax us for updated information if necessary.

September 30, 1994

National Phone-in and Fax-in to the White House

Tel: 202-456-1414

Fax: 202-456-2461



Military invasion or occupation will not bring democracy or justice to the people of Haiti.

Support the peaceful return of President Aristide.

September 30, 1994 marks the 3rd anniversary of the military coup d'etat that overthrew the legitimate president of Haiti, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Since the coup, more than 5000 people have died in Haiti and hundreds of thousands more have been forced into hiding or exile by the brutal military regime.

While often saying the right words about Haiti, the Clinton administration has not been able to implement a policy that can ease the suffering of the Haitian people and bring about progressive change. Military intervention and occupation follows an old pattern of violent response to a crisis that could have been solved nonviolently.

Voices for Haiti, a coalition of groups supporting the return of democracy in Haiti, has organized a national call-in and fax-in to President Clinton and/or his special envoy William Gray to voice our concerns about U.S. policy in Haiti. Genuine support for the people of Haiti means:

- ◆ Giving Haitian refugees temporary protected status in the U.S.
- ◆ No amnesty for human rights violators.
- ◆ A full term for President Aristide that starts when he returns.
- ◆ Ending support for structures in Haiti that perpetuate poverty and injustice.

Clergy and Laity Concerned, Inc.

340 Mead Road, Decatur, GA 30030

404/377-1983

Fax 404/377-5367


Clergy and Laity Concerned, Inc.

340 Mead Road, Decatur, Georgia 30030

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Sept. 16, 1994

TO: CALC Chapter and Affiliate contacts
Haiti contacts

FROM: Leslie Withers, Acting Director

RE: Haiti update

All indications are that a U.S. military invasion of Haiti will begin soon -- if not before you receive this mailing. We hope the enclosed will help you in responding to President Clinton and the events of the coming weeks.

Sept. 30 marks the third anniversary of the coup that overthrew the government of Pres. Aristide, and groups around the country are planning demonstrations and prayer vigils. The precise focus may change, but the date is a useful rallying point.

As you know, we agreed at the National Assembly to join the coalition, *Voices for Haiti: Campaign for a Just U.S. Policy*. Much of the material we're passing on is either directly from them or modified from their materials. Enclosed:

- ◆ Statement following President Clinton's address
- ◆ a flyer for a phone-in/ fax-in to the White House on Sept. 30 (on back of this page)
- ◆ information about activities planned for Sept. 30
- ◆ a suggestion for a signature ad campaign
- ◆ Statement by Conference of Haitian Religious People on the murder of Father Jean-Marie Vincent
- ◆ a very helpful memo from the Washington Office on Haiti about why U.S. military intervention into Haiti would not solve problems there, and what the alternatives are

Also note that the letter from *Voices for Haiti* has information about how you can reach them if you have questions. And they'd like you to let them know if you have an activity planned for Sept. 30. (Please let us know also!)

David Stiddem, with Worcester CALC, will be sending you periodic updates on Haiti in coming months.

29 Years and Still concerned about the giant triplets: **Racism, Materialism, and Militarism**

Signature Ad Campaign

We have a suggestion for action: Imagine that on the morning of September 30 readers in small towns and cities across the United States open their newspapers and see advertisements, signed by their fellow citizens, supporting the legitimate government of Haiti and demanding fair treatment of Haitian refugees. People of good will are thereby expressing their dissatisfaction with the Clinton administration's refusal to take a strong stand against continued terror and repression in Haiti and making an attempt to counter the disinformation and silence of the mainstream press.

Signature ads make good organizing tools. The whole process involves an active audience. Inviting friends, relatives, colleagues and everyone you know to read the text of the ad can open up discussion of the issues. Signers are expected to contribute at least a small amount of money to cover the cost of your ad. You will expand your grassroots base as you make a public, visual statement on the local level.

You may have used this tool before and know how it works in your area. If not, the following are suggested steps:

- Contact your local newspaper, get prices for different size ads, and find out exactly what they need as copy. Some papers will type the names from your lists; others may want you to type them.
- Make copies of the enclosed ad to use for soliciting signatures. Estimate how many signers you might be able to attract and decide how much money you need to ask people to contribute.
- Circulate the copies wherever you can, at church, work, programs, gatherings, to collect signatures and money.
- Let us know what you need for your newspaper. We will send you camera-ready copy of the picture and text, by overnight mail if necessary. We'll need a day or two to get the picture made.
- Also let us know if it would be helpful to have signatures of national religious and community leaders for your local ad. We're willing to circulate the ad on the national level.

We've consulted and debated on the text, keeping in mind that the target date for publication of the ad would be September 30, and it's hard to know at this point what might be happening then. Sanctions may be tightened, the DR border may be closed, the coup leaders may be gone, preparations for invasion may have intensified, an occupation may have begun--or perhaps nothing will have changed. Our basic demand is for full restoration of the legitimate government, recognizing that the popular movement in Haiti is quite capable of creating a more equitable and just society. What we object to is continued destructive U.S. intervention. If you would like the text changed for your local organizing purposes, please call. It's easy to do.

Statement by Conference of Haitian Religious People

On the night of August 28th, 1994, Father Jean-Marie Vincent, a Catholic priest of the Congregation of Montfortain Preists, was assassinated as he entered his home in the Turgeau neighborhood of Port-au-Prince. Witnesses say that gunmen waiting in a jeep shot Father Vincent repeatedly with automatic weapons.

Father Vincent, 49 years old at the time of his death, was a highly respected religious leader, founder of a successful literacy program, close friend and collaborator of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and director of the Haitian Foundation for Economic Development. He helped found the peasant movement called "Tet Ansanm" in northwestern Haiti and was an active member of the Catholic church's "ti legliz" (Christian base community) movement. Twice Father Vincent escaped death: in 1986 when he was accosted by a group of land owners in Jean-Rabel because of his work with peasants on land reform programs and in 1987 in Freycineau where he, President Aristide, and two other priests were ambushed and attacked.

Father Vincent was a dynamic, enthusiastic friend of the Haitian poor. The Conference of Haitian Religious People, which represents about 1400 priests, nuns, and brothers living and working in communities across Haiti, issued the following statement after his murder:

Last night a gang of heavily armed thugs sent by powerful forces assassinated Father Jean-Marie Vincent while he was coming home around 8 p.m.

That Sunday, ever since 7 p.m., a car that was full of heavily armed people had been waiting in front of the gate of the Montfortain fathers. They were waiting . . . and that is how, when Father Jean-Marie came into the gate, right then and there they assassinated him with bullets.

In spite of the fact that no telephone calls were made, everybody was shocked to see how quickly the police, a justice of the peace, police from "Anti-gang" headquarters and an ambulance arrived in order to fulfill all the necessary procedures.

After that, they took the body to the morgue at the General Hospital, taking Vincent's car with them, in spite of protests from fathers in his order. We are reporting these events because we want everybody to know how things really happened, so that the truth is not twisted.

Ever since the coup d'etat of Sept. 30, the Haitian people have become weary of counting cadavers. Too much blood has spilled in front of us. The thugs are circulating freely. They have big arms, they have protection. As in all the cases we have already registered, there has never been anyone found guilty nor any justice rendered. The country must return to constitutional order in order to lock up all of these free-wheeling criminals that are all over the country, so that the people of God can catch their breaths.

The de facto authorities, the Haitian army, everyone who is part of the disorder and anarchy in the country, haven't you seen too much blood spilled already? Can't you go into your conscience in order to give the country a break? The international community, the UN, the OAS, aren't you tired of seeing so many cadavers in the country of Haiti, enough to make you stop with your delaying tactics and wheeling and dealing?

We say to the Montfortain fathers, the family of Jean-Marie, courage! The blood of Jean-Marie, as the blood of all other brothers and sisters, is not going to spill in vain. God is not sleeping the way they think he is. His justice will reign, no matter what.



Clergy and Laity Concerned, Inc.

340 Mead Road, Decatur, Georgia 30030

404/ 377-1983

Fax 404/ 377-5367

Statement on Haiti Following President Clinton's Address

We are outraged and saddened that the United States is once again responding with the threat of military force to a crisis that could have been resolved nonviolently. A United States military invasion cannot restore democracy to Haiti and can only result in further hardship and suffering in that already devastated country.

For three years, President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and supporters of democracy in Haiti have advocated policies that would have peacefully restored the elected government, ousted by the bloody political coup of Sept. 30, 1991. Instead of applying consistent diplomatic, economic and political pressure to remove the thugs who terrorize an unarmed population, President Clinton, like President Bush before him, offered one half-hearted and botched policy after another.

We believe this invasion has more to do with U.S. domestic politics and foreign policy failures than with genuine support for democracy and social change in Haiti. We join Haitian advocates for democracy in questioning U.S. motives, given our nation's past coddling of Haiti's military and the tiny, wealthy elite who support it. We recall that the Haitian military which ousted President Aristide and terrorized the population is a legacy of the last U.S. invasion of Haiti in 1915.

The people of Haiti are paying dearly for our failed policy. In the critical days ahead the U.S. and international presence must focus on ending the violence – not escalating it. The Haitian civilian population must be protected from military conflict in every instance. Armed action must be replaced with a strong, nonviolent international presence at once.

Toward a Just U.S. Policy in Haiti

The United States must provide unwavering and effective support for the Haitian people, as they struggle to replace misery, oppression and grinding poverty with democracy, justice and prosperity for all Haitians. The restoration of democracy, respect for human rights, and a freely functioning civilian society are foundations for desperately needed development in Haiti. U.S. policy must include:

1. **The immediate return of the elected government of Haiti, with full constitutional powers.** President Aristide must serve a full presidential term after his return, with the right to choose the people he thinks will best be able to serve in his administration.
2. **Respect for Haitian Sovereignty.** The mandate of U.S. and international presence in Haiti must respect the will of the Haitian people and the constitutional government. U.S. troops or other internationals must not take political power into their own hands.
3. **Support for human rights.** An adequate number of human rights monitors must be deployed throughout Haiti immediately. The international community must support the constitutional government in bringing those responsible for human rights violations to

29 Years and Still concerned about the giant triplets: **Racism, Materialism, and Militarism**

justice. Pressure to grant amnesty as a step toward "reconciliation" must cease. No democratic society can be built on immunity for crimes against the population.

4. **An end to U.S. support of illegitimate and undemocratic forces in Haiti.** The U.S. must end all links, overt and covert, to Haiti's repressive military and security forces and the individuals who lead them. The U.S. must support the constitutional government as it continues to transform corrupt and unjust structures: separating the police from the military, bringing both under civilian control, purging human rights violators from the military and police, dismantling the repressive section-chief system.
5. **Support for long-term development.** The U.S. must offer long-term support for the reconstruction of Haiti. U.S.A.I.D. programs in Haiti must be revamped to support, rather than oppose the democratically elected government's mandate to bring about desperately-needed social change. U.S. aid should be given only after consultation with the legitimate government and Haitian grass-roots organizations. To strengthen the fledgling civilian society in Haiti, community based, indigenous organizations must be given preference in the distribution of aid.

Failure of U.S. Policy to Support Change in Haiti

Although the Clinton Administration has said it supports the legally elected government of President Aristide, its policies have often undermined efforts to restore democracy. Before the coup, General Cedras and other coup leaders were paid CIA informants.

After the coup, the Pentagon continued to train Haitian troops in the U.S. The U.S. pressed for a general amnesty for human rights violators and pushed a power-sharing arrangement between the military and Aristide that would have overturned the results of Haiti's election. The U.S. also resisted imposing tougher sanctions, granting exemptions to U.S. assembly plants operating in Haiti, letting the Jan. 15, 1994 deadline for imposing sanctions pass, and ignoring leaks in the embargo through the Dominican Republic.

U.S. support for human rights in Haiti has been weak, with U.S. officials accusing Aristide supporters and human rights groups of fabricating human rights abuses. Instead of allowing victims of Haiti's repression to seek sanctuary in the U.S., the Clinton Administration carried out a harsh and discriminatory policy of repatriation and internment, while using radio broadcasts to urge Haitians not to flee the country.

Time for a change

Clergy and Laity Concerned calls on people of faith, and on all U.S. citizens to stand with us in committing ourselves to provide people-to-people support to Haiti during the difficult times ahead. The future of democracy in Haiti depends on the organization and action of the Haitian people, not on interventions by foreign powers.

Clergy and Laity Concerned (CALC) is a multiracial, interfaith organization working for justice and peace. Founded in 1965 to coordinate religious opposition to the War in Viet Nam, CALC brings moral, ethical and religious values to bear on issues of human rights, racial justice, militarism, and economic justice.

9/16/94



VOICES FOR HAITI

Campaign For A Just U.S. Policy

PO Box 57438 Washington DC 20036 (202) 338-8353

September 1, 1994

Dear Friend,

Voices for Haiti now has a full-time staff person, Jenny Russell, whose most recent work experience was with the U.S./Nicaragua Friendship Office. This summer she also organized a shantytown demonstration in Washington for the 50 Years Is Enough campaign, to symbolize the results of IMF/World Bank control of the global economy. And we have moved into a permanent office, a sublet from the SHARE Foundation. We'll keep our P.O. box and voicemail number, listed above. Jenny will check for messages and call you back, or you can try her at our new direct lines:

202-319-5544/phone and 202-319-6090/fax

We're happy to welcome Jenny, and we want to recognize and thank the part-time temporary staff person who did yeoman service during the summer months, Christian Peacemaker Corps member Cole Arendt.

We continue to work to get our message out:

- Alerte Belance came to Washington for several days of press work and lobbying, arranged as a joint effort by the Quixote Center and Voices for Haiti.
- In a followup to our action alert calling for a focus on the media, Judith Kelly of the Witness for Peace Haiti Task Force contacted National Catholic Reporter and the Christian Science Monitor; as a result, their reporters are interested in running stories on repression both in Haiti and against Haitians in the U.S. Judith was also interviewed by Spanish press for programs to be aired in Latin America and Spain. *Please send us any op-ed pieces, letters to the editor, or other local press reports.*
- The regular weekly vigil at the White House focused this week on the murder of Fr. Jean-Marie Vincent. Bishop Tom Gumbleton, one of the participants in the Voices for Haiti emergency delegation, came from Detroit to lead the prayer service and talk to the press.

As September 30 approaches, Haiti support groups around the country lament that soon we must mark the third anniversary of the brutal coup that overthrew President Aristide. We plan demonstrations, vigils, forums, programs, days of prayer, phone-ins, letter writing campaigns. We know the United States government holds the key to the restoration of democracy and could open the door if it had the political will to do so. We desperately want our voices to be heard and have an effect; we want to stimulate an outcry from the grassroots that cannot be ignored, and we use all the methods we can think of to involve others in the struggle for justice in Haiti.

Endorsers as of June 20, 1994

American Friends Service Committee
Beyond Borders
Church of the Brethren
The Development GAP
Ecumenical Project on Central America and the Caribbean
MADRE
Maryknoll Society Justice and Peace Office
Oxfam America
Pax Christi USA
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
Washington Office on Haiti
Witness for Peace
Bay Area Haitian-American Council, CA
Chicago Coalition for Democracy in Haiti
Chicago Metropolitan Sanctuary Alliance
Delaware County Pledge of Resistance, PA
8th Day Center for Justice
Chicago, IL
Haiti Communications Project
Boston, MA
Haitian Ministry Commission,
Diocese of Richmond, VA
Haitian Resettlement
Committee, Syracuse, NY
Michigan Committee for a Democratic Haiti
Pax Christi Florida
Pax Christi New Jersey
St. Joseph Peace & Justice
Office, Diocese of Kansas City
Sisters Immaculate Heart
of Mary, Monroe, MI
St. Louis Voices for Haiti
St. Michael's Pax Christi
Memphis, TN
Sisters Immaculate Heart of
Mary, Monroe, MI
University Baptist Church
Seattle, WA

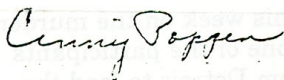
- In **Chicago**, the Coalition for Democracy in Haiti plans a special action with a civil disobedience component at their weekly Wednesday noon vigil on September 28 at the INS building.
- Congregations in the **Bay Area** will hold an interfaith service on September 30; several churches will publicly declare sanctuary for Haitian refugees and renew their commitments of solidarity with the Haitian people. Alerte Balance will speak during the service.
- Southside Presbyterian Church in **Tucson** (one of the first sanctuary congregations) will hold an interfaith service on September 30.
- Initial plans in **Washington, DC**, include an interfaith service on September 29, featuring religious leaders as participants and ending with a candlelight procession to the White House .
- **Detroit** activists will conduct an all-day teach-in at Wayne State University to commemorate the coup.

Be sure to tell us your plans for the 30th as soon as they're solidified, and send copies of any material you're producing that we can share with others. We'll send out another mailing in the next couple of weeks.

Enclosures:

- Our suggestion for a signature ad campaign
- Statement of the Conference of Haitian Religious People on the murder of Fr. Jean Marie Vincent
- Signature ad
- Statement from the Washington Office on Haiti on alternatives to military intervention
- Fact sheet on the USAID Human Rights Fund from the Washington Office on Haiti

In solidarity,



Cissy Poppen
for the Voices for Haiti Working Group