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HAITI'S CONTINUING CHALLENGE TO U.S. POLICY MAKERS

INTRODUCTION

Will Haiti join Cuba and Nicaragua by becoming the next communist regime in the hemisphere? This is a question that should be bothering United States policy makers. An answer is becoming increasingly urgent as Haiti appears ever more politically unstable. Some experts even predict yet another Haitian coup early this year. This would not be good news for Washington. Political instability in Haiti could threaten U.S. interests. Because of its proximity to the U.S. (only 750 miles southeast of Miami), to important Caribbean sea lanes, and to communist Cuba, Haiti is very strategically located.

Haiti is burdened by a pair of dismal distinctions: it is one of the few remaining military dictatorships in Latin America and is one of this hemisphere's poorest countries. Its annual per capita income of \$370 dollars tops only Nicaragua. To make matters worse, Haiti also is one of Latin America's most violent countries, with dozens of political murders monthly. Because of the political, economic, and social chaos, Haiti is a likely candidate for leftist revolutionary activity, supported by Cuba and possibly Nicaragua. Indeed, in August 1959, just months after Fidel Castro took power in Cuba, a small force of Cuban revolutionaries tried to invade Haiti. U.S. forces were dispatched to repel them.

Escaping to the U.S. At the very least, increased instability and chaos in Haiti could again escalate the flow of Haitian "boat people" to the southern shores of Florida. This occurred last March and April, forcing the U.S. Coast Guard to return 2,359 Haitians to the capital city of Port-au-Prince. Since 1981, an estimated 19,525 Haitians have been apprehended off the Florida coast.¹

1 Julia Preston, "Haitian Refugee Stream Grows," *The Washington Post*, April 30, 1989, p. A30.

Since the ouster of long-time Haitian dictator Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier in February 1986, Haiti has suffered through a series of coups and countercoups. Just last April, several Haitian Army units tried to topple the U.S.-backed government of President Prosper Avril. Though the week-long coup ultimately failed, dozens were killed and injured, and hundreds were arrested or deported.

Drug Haven. Haiti also is increasingly threatened by international narcotics trafficking. It is widely believed that Colombia's dominant drug syndicate, the Medellin Cartel, has penetrated various levels of the Haitian government, and that senior Haitian military officers play a significant role transshipping drugs to the U.S. Example: Colonel Jean Claude Paul, once one of Haiti's most powerful military figures and important political players until his assassination in November 1988, was facing a U.S. grand jury indictment on narcotics smuggling charges.

Despite these problems, Haiti's future holds some promise. Avril has been giving Haiti what is probably its best government in decades. He was ushered into power on September 17, 1988, on the heels of a revolt by non-commissioned officers of the

HAITI

Official Name — Republic of Haiti.

Area — 10,714 square miles, about the size of Maryland.

Population — approximately 6 million.

Capital — Port-au-Prince (estimated population 1 million).

Ethnic groups — 95% Black African descent; 5% mulatto and European descent.

Religion — 80% Roman Catholic; 10% Protestant; 10% Voodoo practices.

Language — French (official), Creole (majority).

Work force — About 3 million: Agriculture - 75%, Industry and Commerce - 18%, Services - 7%.

Natural resource — Bauxite.

Agriculture products — Coffee, sugarcane, rice, corn, sorghum, mangoes.

GNP per capita (1987) — \$370.

Infant mortality rate — 124/1,000. Life expectancy - 54 years.

Adult literacy rate — 23%.

External debt — \$33 million.

U.S. trade with Haiti:

Imports from Haiti (1988) — \$399 million.

Exports to Haiti (1988) — \$479 million.

Haitian trade with the world:

Total exports (1988) — \$428 million.

Total imports (1988) — \$ 849 million.

Heritage DataChart

Source: Background Notes, U.S. Dept. of State, Bur. of Public Affairs, April 1987; World Development Report, London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1989; U.S. Dept. of Commerce.

Palace Guard, backed by hundreds of rank and file soldiers, against the dictatorial government of Lieutenant General Henri Namphy. Since Duvalier's 1986 ouster, Namphy had been the country's real political and military power. Namphy's reputed ties to the dreaded *Tonton Macoutes* secret police of the Duvalier family, drug traffickers, and former Duvalier cronies, are believed to have angered the moderate elements of the Haitian military. As a result of their revolt, Namphy was forced into exile and the Haitian leadership purged. ~~Avril then proclaimed his commitment to establishing democracy.~~ This has won him Washington's tentative backing and financial support, which now totals some \$42 million per year.

While the U.S. alone cannot save Haiti, the Bush Administration can help the Avril government move toward political and economic freedom. And now, with reports mounting of a possible coup attempt against Avril, Washington has a direct interest in ensuring that Haiti becomes more stable. To protect U.S. security interests in the Caribbean Basin, encourage the development of democracy, and help strengthen U.S.-Haitian ties, Washington should:

◆ ◆ **Encourage the Haitian military to fulfill its promises of democratic reforms and of its withdrawal from politics. The Bush Administration should press Avril to honor his pledge to hold elections this year.**

◆ ◆ **Assist those Haitian institutions and organizations that support democratic and free market values.** The National Endowment for Democracy (NED), a U.S. agency created by the Reagan Administration and Congress to nurture democratic movements around the globe, should identify and financially assist political parties, business groups, trade associations, schools, and independent media outlets dedicated to democracy and political pluralism.

◆ ◆ **Use economic assistance as an incentive for democratic reform and improved human rights conditions.**

◆ ◆ **Assist in creating a free and independent judicial and law enforcement system in Haiti.** The U.S. Justice Department could train Haiti's lawyers, legal associations, and Justice Ministry officials. The U.S. also could help Haiti establish an independent police force by providing law enforcement training and material assistance, as it does to Colombia, El Salvador, Peru, and other countries.

◆ ◆ **Explore possibilities of expanding U.S. military training and sales for Haiti's armed forces to encourage democracy within the Haitian military and enhance Haiti's capabilities to combat terrorism.**

◆ ◆ **Work with Haiti to combat narcotics trafficking.** Cooperation so far has been good, but can be improved. The U.S. could give Haiti's anti-drug forces such equipment as patrol boats, off-road vehicles, and radar to help capture drug traffickers.

◆ ◆ **Expand the current \$42 million U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) programs in Haiti.** AID should concentrate on improv-

ing Haiti's agriculture, the small business sectors of the economy, and its education and health service systems.

THE RECORD OF U.S.-HAITIAN RELATIONS

Since its earliest days as a fledgling republic in the early 19th century, Haiti's political and economic history predictably has been closely linked with the U.S. But Haiti has been a key U.S. foreign policy concern only twice in its history: first in 1915, when the U.S. intervened militarily to protect U.S. citizens and property and to prevent an anticipated European invasion; and second during the 1986 collapse of the Duvalier regime, when the Reagan Administration pressured Baby Doc to flee Haiti.²

The U.S. Occupation and its Aftermath

The U.S. feared in the early 1900s that European influence in the Caribbean was on the rise and that this would threaten U.S. security. The outbreak of World War I intensified this concern. Because of the substantial German economic investment in Haiti, the U.S. was worried that Haitian ports would be used by the Kaiser's submarines. A substantial number of Americans lived or owned property in Haiti, and this too heightened Washington's concern about stability in the tiny Caribbean nation.

The U.S., however, did not become overly alarmed until widespread political and economic disorder broke out in Haiti in 1915. When that nation's leader, General Vilbrun Guillaume Sam, was murdered on July 28, 1915, Washington decided to act. Woodrow Wilson dispatched 350 U.S. troops to Port-au-Prince that same day, to occupy Haiti and restore order. They and other U.S. troops stayed until 1934. In this period, U.S. Marine Corps administrators restored internal order, introduced constitutional and legislative reforms, built schools and roads, improved health care, and introduced telephone and telegraph services.³

Yet the U.S. presence did not spur democracy or greater economic development. Most of the U.S.-introduced reforms were quickly discarded after the Yankees left. Indeed, the Marines' departure largely was the result of growing Haitian hostility toward the American presence and massive anti-U.S. demonstrations.

The Duvalier Years

After the U.S. withdrawal, Haitian politics returned to its pre-1915 authoritarian norm. Between 1934 and 1957, Haiti was controlled by a succession of dictatorial governments. During this period, the Haitian military also became increasingly politicized, either ruling directly or backing up civilian strongmen by force. Post-1934 Haiti was characterized by human rights abuses, political turmoil, and corruption.

2 Georges Fauriol, "The Duvaliers and Haiti," *Orbis*, Fall, 1988, p. 587.

3 Robert I. Rotberg, "Haiti's Past Mortgages its Future," *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1988, p. 103.

Following a year of political upheaval that witnessed six governments holding power, Francois Duvalier, a wealthy physician, was elected president in 1957. Washington hoped that Duvalier would break with the past, possibly bringing democracy to Haiti. This, however, was not to be the case. Instead, "Papa Doc," as he was commonly called, dissolved the Haitian legislature in 1958 and six years later grandly proclaimed himself President-for-Life.

Political Terror. Under Duvalier's tough rule, opposition groups were repressed, political activity tightly controlled and the economy strangled. The situation became so bad that Haitians began fleeing; at least a half-million did so. Dozens of newspapers were shut, and tens of thousands of political opponents were killed with thousands more imprisoned. During this period, several rebellions against the government were attempted by opposition members and disloyal military personnel, all of which failed. Papa Doc created the *Volontaires de la Securite Nationale* (VSN), the secret police force known popularly as the *Tonton Macoutes* (Bogeymen). The practice of voodoo, meanwhile, increasingly became mixed with political terror to be used against Duvalier's opponents. Indeed, voodoo traditionally has been used by Haitian authorities to intimidate and control the people. By the end of Papa Doc's 14-year reign, the *Tonton Macoutes* had grown to at least 10,000, larger than Haiti's 7,000-man regular armed forces. In addition, the *Tonton Macoutes* could call on an informal support structure of thousands for localized intimidation and common thievery.

The year before Duvalier's death in 1971, at age 64, he changed the Haitian constitution to give him unrestricted power to designate his own successor. He chose his 19-year-old son Jean-Claude (called Baby Doc). A rigged referendum in 1971 approved his accession to the leadership by a margin so lopsided that even Chicago machine politicians would blush: 2,391,916 to 0.⁴

Nevertheless, Washington initially felt that Baby Doc might offer a "window of opportunity" to promote greater political and economic stability.

Minor Reforms. Baby Doc pledged to launch an "economic and political revolution" in Haiti to attract increased international economic assistance. His first several years in power saw gradual economic and social liberalization. He ended the *Tonton Macoutes'* monopoly of effective power, for example, by creating the U.S.-trained "Leopards" counterinsurgency unit and by integrating some senior *Macoute* members into the army. He also introduced such minor democratic and economic reforms as allowing for elections and the return of exiles by making international aid programs more effective.

These policies brought increased economic assistance from Canada, Western Europe, and such international lending institutions as the World Bank. Washington also tried to guide Haiti toward democracy and economic prosperity. U.S. economic assistance was expanded from the approximately \$20 million annually in the early 1970s to \$50 million by 1984. U.S. military

4 Fauriol, *op. cit.*, pp. 590-591.

sales increased from an average of \$300,000 per year to a level of \$3.2 million in the same period.

Arranging A Transition. Nevertheless, Baby Doc's regime began to unravel by 1981, because of mounting corruption, political repression, and economic mismanagement. What tipped the balance against Baby Doc was the July 1985 referendum to make him President-for-Life. After the vote tally, his government announced that 99.9 percent of the electorate had voted in his favor. This clear manipulation of the polls triggered street demonstrations and protests in Port-au-Prince. The summer and fall of 1985 saw the killing of foreign priests and numerous Haitian opposition members. Riots erupted in the coastal city of Goinaives in November 1985. This sparked a nationwide anti-government movement which the Haitian armed forces and *Tonton Macoutes* tried to suppress by arresting scores of opposition leaders and closing such media installations as Radio Soleil, the Catholic Church's radio station.

Washington suspended Haiti's \$56 million in financial assistance on January 29, 1986, and over the next several days the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince told Duvalier that a political transition had to be arranged. Edward Seaga, Jamaica's Prime Minister and the Reagan Administration's closest Caribbean ally, was encouraged by Washington to press Baby Doc to leave.⁵ Finally, on February 7, 1986, after almost 30 years of Duvalier family rule, Baby Doc, his family, key aides, and millions of dollars surely stolen from the national treasury fled Haiti on a U.S. Air Force C-141 cargo plane for exile in France.⁶

Post-Duvalier Haiti

An interim military-civilian government called the National Council of Government (CNG) was established in Port-au-Prince immediately upon Baby Doc's departure from Haiti. At its helm was Lieutenant General Henri Namphy, a 54-year-old career Army officer and former army chief of staff. His goal, he said, was to restore full democracy in Haiti within two years. The U.S. cautiously endorsed what he was trying to do and restored U.S. aid to Haiti, raising it to \$102 million for 1987, more than double the 1985 figure. Haiti also received significant assistance from other Western democracies such as Venezuela and France. Namphy, however, had been hand-picked by Baby Doc and was clearly associated with the *Tonton Macoutes*.

Democracy did not take hold. The CNG set November 29, 1987, as the day for national elections. As they approached, widespread violence broke out between suspected *Tonton Macoutes* and military groups on the one side, and civilians on the other, taking 100 lives. Elections were suspended by Namphy in the wake of bloodshed in the early hours of balloting.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 602

6 See *The Washington Times*, Sept. 19, 1988, p. A-7.

Independent Haitians and foreign observers such as the international press and human rights groups believed that Namphy, members of the armed forces, and the *Tonton Macoutes* had orchestrated the chaos to cancel the elections.⁷

Successive Coups. The U.S. was bitterly disappointed over Namphy's actions. It had contributed approximately \$8 million of the \$10 million cost for the doomed 1987 elections. To express its disapproval, Washington suspended \$70 million of the remaining 1987 aid package, though allowing some humanitarian and anti-drug aid to continue.⁸

Namphy reset the elections for January 17, 1988. In a vote widely seen as fraudulent, Leslie Manigat, an exiled 57-year-old political science professor, was elected the new Haitian president. He was viewed as a puppet of Namphy. But when Manigat attempted to remove Namphy as head of the armed forces, Manigat and his cabinet were ousted by the military on June 19. This action was condemned by the U.S. the following day. Less than three months later, on September 17, Namphy himself was toppled by a group of non-commissioned officers and elements of the Palace Guard. The new government announced the following day that Brigadier General Prosper Avril, himself a former Duvalier and Namphy ally, was Haiti's new leader.

OBSTACLES TO DEMOCRACY FACING TODAY'S HAITI

Haiti is faced with myriad political, military, economic, and social problems that hamper democracy's development. These include a history of military rule, severe poverty, corruption, and lack of such independent institutions as political parties, economic interest groups, business organizations, labor unions, and trade associations, all of which are indispensable for creating political pluralism.

Political and Military Problems

For most of its modern history, Haiti's leaders have relied on rubber-stamp elections, rigged referendums, and political repression as a means of governing and controlling the country. Since Avril's coup in September 1988, however, limited but encouraging political signs of reform have emerged, prompting the Bush Administration to propose to Congress that Haiti receive \$42 million in new economic assistance for this year.⁹

In 1989, Washington was scheduled to provide Haiti with approximately \$39 million in foreign aid.

7 "The More Things Change...Human Rights in Haiti," *Americas Watch*, February, 1989 pp. 104-113.

8 E.A. Wayne, "Control Flows From Avril's Grasp," *The Christian Science Monitor*, February 3, 1989, p. 7.

9 "U.S. Plans to Renew Haiti Development Aid," *The Washington Times*, April 27, 1989, p. 2.

Laudable Goals. Avril stated in Port-au-Prince on September 29, 1988, that his goal was to establish "an irreversible democracy" in Haiti and to "enter history as the one who saved his country from anarchy and dictatorship."¹⁰

He has taken some steps toward this. Between September 1988 and March 1989, he dismissed approximately 150 corrupt and anti-democratic military officers; purged scores of former Duvalier and Namphy associates and individuals, such as Major General William Regala, Namphy's Defense Minister, and individuals identified with the Tonton Macoutes; pledged to defend human rights and civil liberties; arrested dozens of suspected drug traffickers; and promised democratic elections .

What clouds Avril's recent record as a democratic reformer are his years of trusted service as a Duvalier advisor. The 7,000-man armed forces, Avril's principal base for control, has been weakened by growing rank and file unrest, caused by internal military power struggles. As many as 20 percent of the officer corps have been dismissed because of suspected disloyalty, involvement in the drug trade, and such human rights abuses as the mistreatment of prisoners and armed attacks on politicians.¹¹

It is this that prompts the rumors of pending coups.

Despite winning cautious support from some Haitians and U.S. officials, like U.S. Ambassador to Haiti Allan R. Adams, Jr., and other State Department officials, Avril and his military leaders are still viewed with some suspicion in Washington as democratic reformers. After fifteen months in power, Avril has yet to move toward free elections or to demonstrate how he plans to yield power to civilian control. Furthermore, he has taken few if any measures to quell the recent waves of paramilitary political violence and banditry once again spreading throughout the country.

Economic and Social Obstacles

Haiti is the second poorest of the Western Hemisphere's 35 nations, with a 1988 gross domestic product (GDP) of only \$2.1 billion and a per capita annual income of \$370 for its six million inhabitants. It is ahead only of Nicaragua, which has a GDP per capita annual income of about \$300.¹² Haiti's economy compares poorly with a per capita income of \$800 for the Dominican Republic, which is a middle-income economy, ranking 20th in the Western Hemisphere.¹³

The Haitian economy grew a meager 0.5 percent from 1985 to 1987. Because of political turmoil, social unrest, and the suspension of over half of the

10 Joseph B. Treaster, "Haitian Vows Irreversible Democracy," *The New York Times*, September 30, 1988, p. A3.

11 *Ibid.*

12 B.J. Cutler, "Ortega's Poverty Plunge," *The Washington Times*, June 30, 1989, p. F1.

13 See "The World Fact Book," The Central Intelligence Agency, 1988, pp. 65 and 101.

U.S., World Bank, and International Monetary Fund (IMF) aid over the past two years, the Haitian economy continued to stagnate in 1988. Despite the proposed partial restoration of U.S. and multilateral financial assistance, however, experts believe that the Haitian economy did not grow in 1989.

Haiti has limited natural resources and lacks reliable roads, proper sanitation, potable water, modern communications, and an adequate power supply.¹⁴ Its few fertile regions are heavily populated, with an average density of 560 people per square mile and with most farming being done on small subsistence plots.

Fostering the Private Sector. The Avril government has stated repeatedly that it recognizes that the private sector must play a key role in Haiti's long-term economic development. Haiti also has abundance of low-cost workers, who have been found by U.S. businesses to be easily trained in such manufacturing assembly operations as textiles, electronics, and sporting goods.¹⁵ Through such U.S. programs as the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI), a Reagan Administration plan to spur Caribbean economic growth by opening up U.S. markets to regional goods, Haiti has profited from increased exports to the U.S. Since 1983, when Haiti became a beneficiary country of the CBI, some 75 percent of Haitian exports have been sold to the U.S. annually, while 60 percent of its imports are U.S. manufactured.

In 1982, Haiti exported \$326 million worth of goods to the U.S., while importing \$299 million in American products. Two years later, after the CBI took effect, the figures were \$395 million and \$419 million, respectively. Haiti's exports to the U.S. in 1988 totalled \$399 million, while its U.S. imports were worth \$479 million.¹⁶

Malnutrition and Disease. Haiti also has mounting social problems that aggravate its political economic stability. For example, the literacy rate is approximately 23 percent, and infant mortality rate is 124 per 1,000. This compares to 15 per 1,000 in Costa Rica, a more prosperous Caribbean Basin country. The average life expectancy of Haitians is only 54 years, compared to 66 in Costa Rica.¹⁷

Only about 13 percent of the population has access to potable water; malnutrition and such infectious disease as AIDS and tuberculosis are widespread. The unemployment rate in Haiti is 49.1 percent while inflation in 1989 stood at 40 percent.

14 U.S. Department of State, "1988 Investment Climate Statement for Haiti," April 25, 1988, p.1.

15 "Foreign Economic Trends and their Implications for the United States," U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Washington, D.C., May 1989, p. 13.

16 International Monetary Fund, Direction of Trade, Statistics Yearbook, Washington, D.C., 1989, p. 413.

17 For more information see U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Background Notes, "Haiti," April 1987.

HAITI AND U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS

Haiti is located on the Western third of the island of Hispaniola in the Caribbean Sea, between Cuba and Puerto Rico. The Dominican Republic comprises the eastern two-thirds of the island. Haiti is strategically important to Washington because of its proximity to the U.S. and the sea lanes in the Caribbean Basin. Over the maritime routes surrounding Haiti pass oil and other raw materials going to and from the U.S. and moving through the Panama Canal. Approximately 1.1 billion tons of cargo transit these sea lanes annually, with about half originating in the U.S.

These sea lanes also are critical for U.S. combat and military support shipping, particularly during international crises. The region would assume strategic importance, for example, were war to erupt in Europe or Latin America. A strong anti-American military presence in Haiti during such a time might severely hinder Washington's ability to resupply its forces and those of its allies. An anti-U.S. Haiti could be used by the Soviet Union, Cuba, or any other power hostile to Washington for baring maritime forces, eavesdropping on U.S. communication, and even for attacking the U.S. Navy.

Political Turmoil

Growing political instability in Haiti threatens U.S. security interests for several reasons. First, it could lead to a dramatic escalation in the number of refugees fleeing Haiti for the U.S. At least 500,000 Haitians fled to the U.S., Canada, and the Dominion Republic during the height of Papa Doc's terror in the mid-1960s. Second, it could provide opportunities for Cuban-backed revolutionaries and leftist opposition groups to undermine the Haitian government. These include the Conference of Haitian Workers (CATH); The United Democratic Committee (KID); and the pro-Cuban Unified Party of Haitian Communists (PUCH), the Haitian communist party. Finally, Haitian political instability could undermine U.S. sponsored anti-narcotics operations in Haiti. Colombia's drug cartels increasingly are using Haiti as a transshipment point for drugs flowing to Europe and the U.S. In 1989, for example, Haitian authorities seized 2.5 metric tons of cocaine, up from 1.38 metric tons for 1988.¹⁸

Haitian political and military forces have been unable to bring stability to the country since Baby Doc's downfall in 1986. Two successful coups have been carried out since his departure; one which overthrew the elected government of Leslie Manigat in June of 1988, and a second which ousted Lieutenant General Henri Namphy in September of that year. Today, political stability continues to remain illusory, largely because of internal corruption and because the Avril regime is being besieged by radical forces from the left and right. Radical forces on the left are led by the PUCH, while on the right they are dominated by extremist elements in the military.

¹⁸ International Narcotics Control Report, U.S. Department of State, March 1989, p. 133.

Cuba is only about 100 miles from Haiti. Cuban Communist dictator Fidel Castro hosts several military camps that train leftists from all over the globe in subversion, guerrilla warfare, urban terrorism, and Marxist-Leninist doctrine. Haitians, along with Chileans, Hondurans, and Salvadorans, now are believed to be training at camps in Pinar del Rio Province and Guanabo, both east of Havana, according to U.S. intelligence sources. Since the 1960s, Cuba also has been broadcasting Creole-language radio broadcasts at Haiti, encouraging leftist subversion.

Narcotics Traffic

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agents are currently in Haiti attempting to impede the flood of drugs and Colombian Medellin Cartel drug traffickers pouring into that country.

Washington currently provides approximately \$500,000 a year in anti-narcotics assistance to Haiti. Avril, so far, seems to have put this assistance to good use, with his stepped-up anti-drug efforts being applauded by the U.S. Haiti may become a more attractive site for Colombia's leading narcotics syndicate now that the drug-running regime of General Manuel Antonio Noriega has been expelled from Panama. In the past, the lure of illegal narcotics has even penetrated upper levels of the Haitian government. Colonel Jean Claude Paul, one of Haiti's most powerful figures, had been facing a drug-related indictment in the U.S. His wife also had previously been arrested in Miami on cocaine charges. It was believed that Paul conspired with the Colombian drug cartels to help raise money to buy more weapons for his already powerful 800-man Dessalines Battalion, a semi-private army made up of former *Tonton Macoutes* members.¹⁹

Short on Resources. Even though U.S. economic assistance was suspended temporarily in 1988, a symbolic level of anti-narcotics aid remained in the pipeline because of the threat posed by the narcotics trade to U.S. security. After Avril seized power last September, he immediately pledged to punish corruption and wage a war against the "Colombian drug pipeline" that runs through Haiti. His anti-drug forces, however, are short on resources: they only have two jeeps, five radios, and are desperately undermanned.

The flow of refugees and illegal immigrants from Haiti to the U.S. seems related directly to Haiti's severe economic and political problems. Up to 1,500 Haitian "boat people" arrived in the U.S. each year in the early 1980s, with thousands more being turned back. Today, it is estimated that as many as 100,000 Haitians a year would head for Miami if they were not blocked by the U.S. Coast Guard.²⁰

19 Charles McCoy, "Cocaine Trade Snares Haitian Strongman," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 15, 1988 p. 30.

20 Preston, *op. cit.*

U.S. POLICY TOWARD HAITI

In formulating its Haitian policy, the Bush Administration's primary objective should be to encourage and assist the Avril government's democratic reforms. Democracy would bring political stability to Haiti. Without the stability, Haiti could threaten U.S. security interests in the Caribbean Basin. To assist Haitian democratic development, Washington should:

◆ ◆ **Encourage the Haitian military to initiate democratic reforms and withdraw from politics.**

Avril has pledged a return to civilian democracy. He announced in September that local and regional elections would be held this April, legislative elections in July and August, and that a civilian president would be elected as soon as October. The Bush administration should send a high-ranking team to Port-au-Prince, possibly consisting of Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger and Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Bernard Aronson to press Avril to honor this election timetable. A careful and gradual democratization process of first local and then national elections should be supported and encouraged. The Avril government also should receive diplomatic and military assistance if threatened by such non-democratic forces as paramilitary or extreme leftist groups opposed to the electoral process. Already, leaders of Haiti's communist party are saying that a change in government should not come as the result of elections.

◆ ◆ **Assist those Haitian institutions and organizations that support democratic and free market values.**

The U.S. National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID), and other U.S. government agencies should identify and assist Haitian institutions supporting expanded political and economic freedom, such as political parties, private business groups, trade associations, educational institutions, and independent media outlets. Specific examples include the Movement for the Installation of Democracy in Haiti (MIDH); the Haitian Institute for Research and Development (IHRAD); the Haitian-American Chamber of Commerce; and PROMINEX, a Haitian business institute which provides loans to small businesses. America's NED and AID should give these organizations resources, financial assistance, and such training as seminars on political democracy, party organization, judicial values, free-market economics and long-term institution development. At least half of Washington's \$42 million in assistance should be used in these areas.

◆ ◆ **Use economic assistance as incentive for democratic reform and greater respect for human rights.**

Washington should continue reinstating gradually government-to-government economic aid to Haiti as an incentive for democratic and economic reform, and improved human rights. The Bush Administration has requested approximately \$42 million of economic and military assistance for the Avril government this year. Washington is providing this assistance incrementally

as an incentive for elections this year and human rights improvements. U.S. aid should be used not only to assist Avril's 1990 election timetable, but also for training police and military forces, and to provide credits for the growth of the private economy.

◆ ◆ Assist in creating a free and independent judicial and law enforcement system in Haiti.

An independent, effective, and objective judicial system is fundamentally important to the growth of democracy. The U.S. Justice Department and the American Bar Association can provide legal expertise to Haiti's lawyers, bar associations, and Justice Ministry on how such institutions should operate in a democratic society. Washington should encourage the Avril government to create a judicial system independent of the executive branch and fully separate from the military. To help combat the crime and criminal violence in Haiti, the U.S. should help establish a Haitian police force completely independent of the armed forces. Police training and material assistance should be offered to help professionalize and modernize Haiti's law enforcement.

◆ ◆ Explore possibilities of expanding U.S. military cooperation with Haiti's armed forces to encourage democracy within the Haitian military and enhance Haiti's capabilities to combat terrorism.

The Bush Administration has requested that roughly \$400,000 in military assistance be provided to Haiti this year. This assistance is primarily granted through the International Military Educational and Training (IMET) program. It is administered by the Pentagon and provides technical training and contact between U.S. and foreign military personnel. U.S. training and assistance should focus on anti-terrorism, narcotics, and riot control. The level of U.S. military assistance should be conditional on democratic reforms and an improved human rights record. Through contact with the U.S. military, democratic values can be fostered and reinforced in the Haitian armed forces.

◆ ◆ Work closely with Haiti to combat narcotics trafficking.

The Latin American drug network, directed by Colombia's Medellin cartel, has spread to Haiti. No cocaine, however, was seized aboard Haitian vessels in Miami in 1989, as compared to 7,000 pounds in 1988. The indications are that the Avril government's stepped-up anti-narcotics efforts are beginning to have an impact.

The U.S. Department of State certified last August that "the government of Haiti has stepped up its campaign to prevent narcotics traffickers from using Haiti as a transshipment point in 1989, despite [Haiti's] political instability. [Moreover], cooperation with the U.S. has been good, with the Haitian government allowing U.S. government law enforcement vessels to pursue drug smugglers into Haitian waters." An agreement was signed between the Bush Administration and the Avril government on April 25, 1989, that will facilitate such "hot pursuit" procedures for the U.S. Coast Guard inside Haitian waters by improving communications and cooperation between the

U.S. Coast Guard and Haitian military. Haitian anti-narcotics officials also have been attending training courses in the U.S. to improve their drug interdiction capabilities.²¹

The Bush Administration should provide the Avril government with the resources, information, and training to continue upgrading these anti-drug efforts. Currently, Washington provides \$500,000 for Haiti's narcotics control. This amount should be doubled in 1991 to reward Haiti's strong efforts and to help combat the growing regional drug threat. Such assistance should include patrol boats, off-road vehicles, radar equipment, communications equipment, computers, and helicopters.

◆ ◆ **Expand U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) programs in Haiti.**

AID should focus on developing Haiti's agriculture, promoting small businesses, and improving education and health service systems. To improve Haiti's fledgling agriculture system, AID should provide the Haitian government with such badly needed agriculture equipment and resources as seeds, irrigation systems and fertilizers. AID also should help Haiti with its mounting deforestation crises to help stop topsoil erosion. To stimulate the growth of small businesses, AID should continue providing loans and credit guarantees to Haitian entrepreneurs to promote business development. This assistance, however, should be linked to free-market reforms and improved human rights conditions. Increased resources can be used for such things as management training and building construction materials. To improve Haiti's education system, AID and the U.S. Department of Education should offer Haiti text books, computers, and teacher training, and help the Avril government build needed schools. This will cost about approximately \$2 million a year.

CONCLUSION

Haiti's new government, led by Brigadier General Prosper Avril, may have brought Haiti to a turning point in its long and violent history. With pledges of democratic reform, greater respect for human rights conditions, and economic liberalization, Avril has convinced many observers that he is serious about reform. Yet Haiti faces many obstacles in achieving democracy. Haiti's powerful armed forces, violent paramilitary factions, and extreme leftist groups could impede democratic development. Its lack of modern, independent judicial and political institutions, and extreme poverty, also will make it difficult for democracy to take root.

Ending the Plague. Stability in Haiti is no small matter to the U.S. If Avril fails to democratize Haiti and improve living conditions, leftist revolutionary

21 "International Narcotics Control Report," U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C. August 1989, p. 53.

turmoil, sponsored by neighboring Cuba, could increase in Haiti. The U.S. could be faced with the emergence of another anti-American regime in the Western Hemisphere. At the very least, Haiti would continue to be plagued by military coups and paramilitary violence.

Road to Recovery. The Bush Administration can encourage Avril to deliver on his pledges for political and economic reforms. The U.S. should urge the Haitian military to withdraw from politics; send U.S. aid only as political and economic reforms advance; press for improved human rights conditions; expand bilateral security cooperation to combat drug trafficking and terrorism; improve Haiti's judicial and law enforcement capabilities; and expand U.S. AID activities in Haiti. Without such assistance, Haiti almost certainly will continue along its path of dictatorships, violence, and poverty.

The U.S. should make it clear to the Avril government that continued military rule is in neither country's interest and that measures must soon be initiated with the specific aim of installing civilian democracy. Through the expansion of political and economic freedom, stability will be fostered in Haiti and U.S. security interests will be promoted. In turn, U.S.-Haitian relations will improve, thereby, aiding Haiti's road to recovery.

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