

MASTER EXHIBIT SERIES

HAITI

**PERSONS AFFILIATED WITH
PEASANT GROUPS OR GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS**

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All the sources of information contained in this document are identified and are publicly available. Master Exhibit prepared by Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services, Harvard Immigration & Refugee Program, in cooperation with Church World Service, Documentation Exchange, Florida Rural Legal Services, Haitian Refugee Center, National Immigration Project, National Lawyers Guild.

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DISCLAIMER

The July 27, 1990 Regulations, "Aliens and Nationality: Asylum and Withholding of Deportation Procedures," mandated the creation of a new corps of Asylum Officers to provide an initial, nonadversarial adjudication of asylum claims. Asylum Officers use asylum law, interviews with asylum applicants, and relevant information on country conditions to determine the merits of individual claims for asylum.

The Resource Information Center was created to assist Asylum Officers domestically, and Immigration Officers determining refugee status overseas, by collecting and disseminating credible and objective information on human rights conditions. As specified in the Regulations (8 CFR 208.12), such information may be obtained from the Department of Justice, the Department of State, and "other credible sources, such as international organizations, private voluntary organizations, or academic institutions."

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GROUPS AT RISK¹: PERSONS AFFILIATED WITH PEASANT GROUPS OR GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS

Item Citation/Description

- I. American Immigration Lawyers Association, The AILA Human Rights Delegation Report on Haiti, March, 1993, pp. 5-8, 11-12, Executive Summary

Summarizes arrests, killings and torture of peasants by the army and other armed groups in many areas including the Central Plateau, the Northwest, Tiponet, Gonaives and St. Marc.

- II. John Cummings, Acting Director - INS Office of International Affairs, "Memorandum to INS Asylum and Refugee Divisions, Re: Considerations when Adjudicating Haitian Refugee/Asylee Applications," 9 March 1993.

"The purpose of this paper is to provide additional guidance to INS officers to assist them in the adjudication of Haitian refugee and asylum applications...

3. Potential targets of violence and threats of violence...

A. Individuals who support, supported, or who are imputed to support or have supported the exiled President, Jean Bertrand Aristide... [i]ndividuals, particularly in the countryside, who are identified as being pro-Aristide. Credible reports indicate that violence, including arrest and detention, has been directed at persons for possessing or circulating pictures of President Aristide...

B. Rural development and community organizations ... Military violence has been aimed at rural development or peasant organizations, neighborhood and community organizations, and literacy, pro-democracy, and women's groups. This violence has thwarted the ability of many groups to meet openly or to meet at all. Leaders and members of these organizations have been hunted down and arrested, tortured, or killed by soldiers and section chiefs...

Leaders and members of potential targets...

Although those in leadership or prominent positions are possibly at greater risk due to their greater visibility, lack of prominence does not remove the possibility of being at risk. This is true especially considering the fact that Haitian society is organized into small communities."

- III. Americas Watch/National Coalition of Haitian Refugees, People: The Destruction of Civil Society in Haiti (New York: Americas Watch/NCHR, February 1993), pp. 1-32.

Based on eyewitness accounts and over 250 interviews conducted in the summer of 1992, this report describes violent repression of particular peasant organizations, development projects, community and popular organizations.

- IV. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #174, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 14 January 1993, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

The peasant group Tet Kole protested the ambush, arrest and severe beating of one of their members by a local section chief.

- V. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #172, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 7 January 1993, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

Three organizers of democratic groups were among 21 people arrested by the section chief in the northeastern town of Mont Organize. Many others later fled to the Dominican Republic because the section chief, Jacques Malheur, stated that those arrests were only the beginning. Section chiefs in other rural areas were reported to be continuing extortion and repression, mostly over land disputes.

- VI. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #171, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 21 December 1992, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

In Bainet, the KONAKOM regional coordinator was beaten and arrested on the street for informing other KONAKOM members of military repression.

- VII. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #169, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 14 December 1992, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

A member of the Tete-A-Cheval farmers group was arrested in Petit-Goave. He was hospitalized after release because he was urinating blood, and later died.

- VIII. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #167, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 7 December 1992, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

Corpse of Jacques Derenoncourt found. Derenoncourt was a founding member of KONAKOM. He was previously abducted and was found shot in the back of the neck. Secretary General of KONAKOM warns others of death squads operating in country.

In Artibonite, attache fired at supporters of a peasant involved in a land dispute with another who had paid local soldiers for the land. One man was killed, his father was savagely beaten and arrested for protesting the killing.

- IX. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #166, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 5 December 1992, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

In Carrefour-Feuilles, more than 30 young people who participate in the coordination of popular groups were arrested. A journalist who broadcast this news was arrested and later released. In Provinces, reports announce the arrest of Jacques Derenoncourt of the KONAKOM, along with one other member. Two other KONAKOM members had been abducted earlier. One was found dead and the other was still missing.

- X. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #164, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 26 November 1992, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

Several members of a farmers group fled for fear of reprisals after a fellow member was arrested and held without food. The victim was arrested for carrying a bench, supposedly proof that he was planning to organize a meeting.

- XI. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #159, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 9 November 1992, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

A member of "Lascahobas," the Central Plateau's Movement of Young Peasants, was arrested by soldiers.

- XII. Pax Christi USA, Global Exchange, Leadership Conference of Women Religious, Washington Office on Haiti, and Witness for Peace, A Dream Deferred; Human Rights in Haiti (March/April

1992), pp, 1-17

Contains many interviews by one of the first delegations to visit Haiti following the September 1991 coup. The report concludes that church groups, literacy programs, popular media, and peasant cooperatives all have become targets of the Haitian military. The delegation found military violence and repression to be most severe in rural areas.

- XIII. Amnesty International, Urgent Action, Haiti, 'Cadet Antoine,' 19 February 1992, "EXTRA 17/92."

Reports arrest of technician with Papaye Peasant Movement (MPP).

- XIV. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #66, reprinted by Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 16 February 1992, translated by RIC staff

Reports there were approximately 2,000 documented arbitrary arrests between October 1991 and January 1992. Soldiers also expelled peasants from their land with no warning.

- XV. Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, Peasants' Movement of Papeye (New York: Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 12 February 1992).

Summarizes reports of human rights abuses in the countryside between December 12 -30, 1991. Recounts widespread repression, noting that peasant groups and their members are consistent targets. Tontons Macoutes often harass people in order to seize their land after forcing them to flee. Soldiers stop and search all those leaving or coming into the Central Plateau region.

- XVI. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #65, reprinted by Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 10 February 1992, translated by RIC staff

Reports continuing violations of human rights in the countryside.

- XVII. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #64, reprinted by Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 6 February 1992, translated by RIC staff.

In one rural area, locals who tried to arrest a "chef de section" for extortion were stopped by military reinforcements who then burned several peasant houses.

- XVIII. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #62, reprinted by Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 29 January 1992, translated by RIC staff.

Reports from countryside list several incidents of persecution against agricultural improvement groups.

- XIX. Amnesty International, Haiti: The Human Rights Tragedy, Human Rights Violations. Since the (London: Amnesty International, January 1992), "AMR 36/03/92.", 15-21

Documents violence and human rights violations directed against members of grassroots organizations.

- XX. Mike Levy, Amnesty International Haiti coordinator, "Memorandum to Mr. John D. Evans, Director, RIC," 9 January 1992

Mr. Levy observes that section chiefs "are given virtually unlimited authority to rule over the local hamlets and rural areas of Haiti. They were military officials, appointed by the military, answerable to the sub-district commander and above. There are some 567 according to one report...Their decisions are rarely challenged by the local barracks, which will generally provide

the backup for the chief as he requests...Although some of them are humane, the vast majority were not only corrupt, but carried out systematic persecution of political opponents and others in an arbitrary way which helped create the climate of fear. Their decisions were enforced by their 'adjoints' who are volunteers who receive benefits from the chief, who are armed and capable of great brutality...The chiefs generally led the campaigns of repression against local peasant organizations and were ferocious in acting against them, even invading a church or riding up on horseback, dismounting, hiding in the grass and stalking then carrying out a massacre of a youth organization."

- XXI. Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, Summary of the Human Rights Situation in Haiti, (New York: Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 8 December 1991)

Reports army attacks on the Peasants Movement of Papeye ("PMP"). Details atrocities in Gonaives, Cap Haitien, Cite Soleil, Petite Riviere and other locales.

- XXII. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #41, reprinted by Amnesty International, 1 December 1991, translated by Mike Levy, AIUSA Haiti coordinator

Includes reports of arrests of members of peasant organizations "Tel Kole," "ADETAP" (Agricultural Workers of Petit Trou de Nippes), and MOJE.

- XXIII. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #40, reprinted by Amnesty International, 29 November 1991, translated by Mike coordinator

Among other incidents, leaders and members of peasant organizations were harassed in Ravine Normand [Cayes Jacmel].

- XXIV. United States District Court, Southern District of Florida, Case 91-2653-CIV-Atkins, "Deposition of William G. O'Neill, Deputy Director of the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights", 29 November 1991

Relates incidents in Thomonde, Verrettes and other regions where Tontons Macoutes reestablished dominance and make extortionist demands. Anyone, especially those with goods or property, may be subject to persecution. Members of church groups, peasant movements, and anyone thought to have been pro-Aristide are identified as special targets.

- XXV. Amnesty International, Urgent Action, Haiti, "Lutece Marius plus 10 others" 22 October 1991, "UA 351/91."

Reports arrests of peasants in Artibonite and expresses fear that they will be tortured.

- XXVI. Americas Watch, National Coalition for Haitian Refugees, Caribbean Rights, and International Commission of Jurists, Reverting to Despotism: Human Rights in Haiti (March 1990), pp. 69-73

Excerpted from a longer piece, this report documents human rights abuses in rural areas of Haiti under the rule of section chiefs.

ⁱ The term "Group At Risk" is used rather than "persecution" because the latter is a legal conclusion.