

MASTER EXHIBIT SERIES

HAITI

**GROUPS AT RISK: CLERGY, RELIGIOUS WORKERS AND OTHERS ASSOCIATED WITH TI
LEGLIZ MOVEMENT AND OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS**

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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: CLERGY, RELIGIOUS WORKERS AND OTHERS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LEGLIZ MOVEMENT AND OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Item Citation/Description

- I. American Immigration Lawyers Association, The AILA Human Rights Delegation Report on Haiti, March, 1993, pp. 1-8, 10-11, 18, Executive Summary

Reports several threats against and arrests and detentions of priests and nuns accused of being Aristide supporters in the Central plains, Hinche, Gonaives, Cap Haitien, Les Cayes and Acul du Nord. Also reports intrusion into churches by military and disruption of services, including threats, arrests and beatings of worshippers.

- 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...Grassroots liberation theology organizations in the countryside remain a strong base of support for President Aristide. These groups and their leaders have been particular targets of the army...Grassroots liberation theology organizations in the countryside remain a strong base of support for President Aristide. These groups and their leaders have been particular targets of the army...Individuals, 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...

F. Members of the clergy and religious workers...

Priests and nuns, especially those suspected of being supporters of Aristide or who are active in peasant organizations, community development, or monitoring human rights, have been threatened, arrested and beaten.

Protestant churches and groups that have become strongly identified with social activism and development have also been attacked...

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, Silencing a People: The Destruction of Civil Society in Haiti, (New York: Americas Watch/NCHR, February 1993), pp. 57-66

Eyewitness accounts confirming specific instances of harassment, arrest, and torture of religious

workers. Details abuses in many different locales, commonly involving soldiers or section chiefs accusing people of being Aristide subversives. Reports that no proof of Aristide connection is needed before torturing commences.

- IV. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #175, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 18 January 1993, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

In Hinche, a clergyman was forced into hiding by threats of military authorities who accused him of working for Aristide.

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

Soldiers tried to arrest a priest in Petit Trou, accusing him of boycotting recent elections which the populace generally considered fraudulent. In Hinche, soldiers arrested a priest for having letters relating to the Haitian crisis.

- VI. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #173, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 11 January 1993, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

Worshippers in Acul-du-Nord were beaten by soldiers and a priest received death threats which forced him into hiding. Soldiers also molested worshippers during a mass at the Cathedral in Jeremie. Priests and an altar boy were among those hospitalized.

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

Reports attacks on a church and a priests. Also reports arrest of another priest.

- VIII. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #167, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 7 December 1993, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

In Gonaives, the army surrounded a church during a mass commemorating students who were killed under the Duvalier regime.

- IX. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #166, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 5 December 1993, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

In Jean Rabel, a U.S. seminarian was arrested for criticizing the government, and was later released.

- X. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #163, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 23 November 1993, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

Aquin Parish Church was the target of heavy gunfire after parish officials refused to perform a mass commemorating Armed Forces Day.

- XI. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #158, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 5 November 1993, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

In Artibonite, a pastoral agent of the local church and his family were arrested for possession of pro-Aristide tracts.

- XII. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #155, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 26 October 1993, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

In Paloma, more than fifty young people, members of a religious group, were arrested during a prayer meeting and accused of praying for the return of Aristide.

- XIII. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #154, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 22 October 1993, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

A section chief tried to arrest a man who was taking part in a religious ceremony. The congregation members protested. This resulted in the burning of approximately 40 homes in the town and the ransacking of a community school for money and supplies by the authorities.

- XIV. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #153, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 19 October 1993, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

In Port-au-Prince, Pastor Prophet was killed in his house by armed men after refusing to give them his money. Police attacked a group praying at a statue of the Virgin Mary at the university hospital. One person was beaten and arrested.

- XV. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #152, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 15 October 1993, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

The Haitian Episcopal Conference denounces acts of intimidation against Mgr. Willy Romelus. Religious workers at Hospital Francois de Salle are dismissed.

- XVI. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #150, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 8 October 1993, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA

Letter from Haitian laity to the Pope urges Church leaders to speak out because "priests, religious workers and laity are persecuted and repressed everywhere."

- XVII. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin #148, reprinted by Haiti Communications Project, 1 October 1993, translated by the Haiti Communications Project, Boston, MA.

Soldiers stopped the ear of a priest in the Artibonite region. They searched all his personal belongings, spit on him, and threatened to kill him because he allegedly has been preaching violence.

- XVIII. Amnesty International, Urgent Action, Haiti, 'Monsignor Willy Romulus, Father Alfred Doreseant,' 29 September 1992, "UA 301/92."

Discusses recent death threats and other instances of intimidation by members of the security forces against Monsignor Willy Romulus, bishop of Jeremie. Reports Father Alfred Doreseant was beaten by members of armed forces for carrying leaflets supporting Aristide.

- XIX. "4th Haitian Priest Is Arrested in a Week," Boston Globe, 6 August 1992, p. 12

Describes arrests for either 'unspecified charges' or for 'subversive activities' as the "latest in a series of actions aimed at church leaders "

- XX. Amnesty International, HAITI: Human Rights Held To Ransom (New York: Amnesty International, August 1992), "AMP,. 36/41/92,' pp. 6, 17, 36-38

Reports widespread lawlessness and concludes that human rights abuse is part of daily life for most Haitians. Details beatings and arbitrary arrests of clergy members of religious organizations.

- XXI. Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, Haiti: A Human Rights Nightmare, (New York: Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, August 1992) pp. 12- 19

This report documents the targeting of the church and church official in the Artibonite Valley, attacks on religious figures in Les Cayes, and general repression of church activities. The report concludes that, since the coup, the military has sought to use this type of repression of the church in order to crush peasant opposition to military control.

- XXII. Amnesty International, Urgent Action, Haiti, "Denis Verdier, Sony Decost, Jean-Baptiste Casseus, Marcel Bussels" 4 June 1992, "UA 186/92.'

Reports a total of six church related arrests in Les Cayes, South Department, and Cap-Haitien, North Department. Expresses concern for torture of detained individuals.

- XXIII. Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, Press advisory, U.S. Lawyers Find Widespread Repression and Systematic Human Rights Abuses During 10-Day Fact-Finding Mission in Haiti 19 May 1992

10-day fact-finding mission confirmed persecution of church groups. Reports that basic freedoms are curtailed and routine arbitrary arrests, detention and mistreatment of prisoners.

- XXIV. Amnesty International, Urgent Action, Haiti, "Father Jean-Yvon Massacre,' 18 February 1992, "EXTRA15/92."

Reports the arrest of a priest who criticized the government over the radio.

- XXV. Amnesty International, Urgent Action, Haiti, 'Father Marcel Bousset, Father Yvon Joseph,' 6 February 1992, 'EXTRA 13/92.'

Reports threats and harassment of priests in the Cap-Haitien area who are involved in adult education and grassroots development.

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

Demonstrations in Port-au-Prince were severely repressed. Reports from Jeremie, Anse d'Anault, Cap-Haitien, Ranquitte, and Margot (Bourne) where priests and prayer groups were harassed.

- XXVII. Amnesty International, Haiti: The Human Rights Tragedy: Human rights Violations Since the Coup (London, UK: Amnesty International, January 1992), "AMR 36/03/92,' pp. 12-15

Describes Haitians harassed and arrested simply for being members of targeted religious congregations. Any church groups thought to either sympathize with Aristide or to advocate on behalf of the poor are likely targets. Soldiers fire guns into crowded churches during services, and routinely arrest nuns and priests.

- XXVIII. Americas Watch/National Coalition for Haitian Refugees/Physicians for Human Rights, Return To The Darkest Days: Human Rights in Haiti Since the Coup, (New York: Americas Watch/NCHR, 30 December 1991), p. 13

Describes the intimidation and harassment of at least fourteen nuns and priests associated with the Ti Legliz movement. The church in Desarmes, long a gathering place for peasant organization, has been declared off limits by the military for meetings and mass. A few days after the Americas Watch delegation left Haiti, three young men who worked for Willy Romelus, the Bishop of Jeremie, were arrested by soldiers at the Bishopric. On December 14, the car and personal belongings of Bishop Emmanuel Constant of Gonaives were searched three times by soldiers

ostensibly looking for weapons.

- XXIX. Inter-American Foundation, The Current Political Crisis in Haiti as It is Affecting Grassroots Groups, (13 December 1991)

The report describes a 'blanket of violence' drawn over the countryside. Persons involved with the church or other organizational activities are in the greatest danger.

- XXX. 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 clergy and church groups such as CARITAS.

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

Two priests became fugitives following threats after a sermon condemning the coup.

- XXXII. United States District Court, Southern District of Florida: Case No. 91-2653-CIV-Atkins, "Declaration of Jocelyn McCalla," Executive Director, National Coalition of Haitian Refugees, 29 November 1991. .. 101-109

Expert testimony identifies religious leaders as among groups at risk of persecution by the military. McCalla is doubtful that the rights of repatriated Haitians will be respected.

- XXXIII. The Haiti Commission, On the Dominican/Haitian Frontier: A Report From the Haiti Commission, November 28, 1991

Reports on interviews of members of the Ti Legliz who had been forced to flee the locality of Cerca Cabajal in which "they described the repression that had forced them to flee."

"'Since the coup d'etat of September 30,' said Miradel Jean, 42, a former church employee in Cerca Cavajal, 'we know that everybody, especially those working with the church, have undergone much persecution by the Haitian military.'"

- XXXIV. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin, reprinted by Amnesty International, 13 November 1991, translated by Mike Levy, AIUSA Haiti coordinator

Police raided St. Gerard's church where a memorial mass for victims of the coup had been held.

- XXXV. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin, reprinted by Amnesty International, 11 November 1991, translated by Mike Levy, AIUSA Haiti coordinator

In Jeremie, soldiers surrounded the cathedral during a service. Bulletin concludes that repression against the Catholic church is becoming more focused everywhere.

- XXXVI. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy- Bulletin, reprinted by Amnesty International, 10 November 1991, translated by Mike Levy, AIUSA Haiti coordinator

In Port-au-Prince, plainclothesmen surrounded the Cathedral in the Bel Air district, and several people were shot dead.

- XXXVII. Haiti: Resistance & Democracy Bulletin, reprinted by Amnesty International, 9 November 1991, translated by Mike Levy, AIUSA Haiti coordinator. 125-127

Recounts three separate incidents of authorities harassing and intimidating priests.

XXXVIII. Douglas W. Payne, Freedom House, 'Haiti: The Politics of the Spirit,' Freedom Review, Vol. 22, No. 3: 1991, pp. 4-12

Succinct description of methods of psychological domination, including coopting of churches, developed to maintain social control. Notes repression of churches that try to resist.

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