

What will Haitian 'democracy' mean?

by Cynthia Rush

"I think the minute the last U.S. soldier leaves, the whole country falls back into the pit again." This statement, made by an American Army sergeant stationed in Haiti as part of the United States' 20,000-man occupation force, is one of the most accurate assessments of the situation in that country. A similar assessment has come from sources in the Dominican Republic, Haiti's neighbor sharing the island of Hispaniola, who told *EIR* that there is already a de facto state of civil war in the country.

The weapons buy-back program set up by the U.S. military in an effort to encourage disarmament has failed. Forces from the Lavalas movement which backs President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, reinstated by the United States on Oct. 15, are heavily armed. As Associated Press reported on Oct. 19, "The U.S. Army . . . is concerned about all the weapons that remain out there uncounted and unaccounted for."

The decapitation of Haiti's Army, Aristide's stated goal, is the other key factor contributing to this civil war scenario. Angered by their forced subservience to the U.S. military and by the international propaganda campaign portraying them as a "gang of thugs, rapists, and murderers," many officers and soldiers have "melted away" into the population, taking their weapons with them. There have been several unconfirmed reports that one Haitian lieutenant colonel, Claudel Josephat, is secretly organizing a resistance movement in the area of Cap-Haïtien. There's little doubt that the departure of U.S. troops, scheduled for sometime in 1996, could trigger a bloodbath—if it doesn't break out sooner.

In the days leading up to and after his return, Aristide repeatedly preached a message of "national reconciliation, peace, and justice," vowing "no to vengeance, no to violence." But contrary to the U.S. and European media reports which have blamed military and paramilitary forces for violence which erupted after U.S. occupation forces landed on Sept. 18, Dominican sources say it is *pro-Aristide forces* which are responsible for this. Mob looting of warehouses, trashing of police stations, and lynchings and beatings of alleged paramilitary agents or "attachés" which began once U.S. troops arrived, have only intensified since Oct. 15.

The agenda is disintegration

U.S. embassy spokesman Stan Schraeger described mob scenes which have occurred since Oct. 15 as the normal outcome of "returning power to the people." Hardly. The

Clinton administration may think they have Aristide on a tight leash, but there is little doubt as to his policy outlook or that of the British-run international oligarchy to which he answers. The destruction of Haiti's black people, whose numbers are deemed "excessive" by international bankers and eugenicists, in an orgy of bloodletting and jacobin rage will eradicate whatever vestiges of the nation-state remain in this impoverished nation.

President Clinton has avoided wedding himself to this genocidal policy. But by virtue of having ordered U.S. troops into Haiti to enforce Aristide's return, he has few options from which to choose. Some in his administration know, for example, that if Haiti is to have a chance to survive, the Army must remain a viable institution. Yet the Army is the target of Aristide's hordes, as well as of the Hollywood mafia which has spent years and a great deal of money to portray the Haitian military to the American public and Congress in the most negative, lying terms. Many of Aristide's closest followers, such as Catholic seminarian Sylvestre Pharius, state openly that "reconciliation is a good thing, but first there must be justice."

That concept of justice was seen in the Oct. 16 incident in which weapons were discovered in the car belonging to Gen. Jean-Claude Duperval, the interim head of the Army, who visited Aristide. Despite U.S. and government denials, rumors spread that Duperval had intended to assassinate Aristide and mobs took to the streets brandishing machetes and sticks shouting "destroy the Army . . . give us Duperval, we want to eat him." Gangs of youth set up impromptu roadblocks, searched cars, and called for dismantling the police and military. According to one international police monitor, the practice of hunting down *attachés* became more frequent after Oct. 16. He said that people were being picked arbitrarily from the crowd and chased, beaten, or killed.

The mob violence unleashed by Aristide's supporters is guaranteed to further bestialize a population already starved by an international embargo and U.N. sanctions. The looting of 1,000 food warehouses on which many Haitians depend for their only meal has increased desperation. U.N. agencies report that half of Haiti's preschool children suffer from malnutrition, and 500 children a day die from it. Yet in the city of Gonaïves, all but three or four of 300 warehouses were looted and shut down, leaving close to 118,000 people without food.

The economic plans outlined by Aristide and the Agency for International Development offer little hope for a solution to Haiti's economic catastrophe. Aristide and his advisers are committed to imposing the lunatic free-market policies demanded by the International Monetary Fund, privatizing the state sector, and throwing the starving unemployed into "temporary" make-work projects where they will earn pennies a day. As one wire service noted, priority in Aristide's program will be given to slowing "Haiti's high population growth rate."