



PHOTOS:
Excavations at Bas-
Carenage, where victims of
the Raboteau massacre are
being exhumed. The forensic
team assembled for this mis-
sion also worked with the
collaboration of OEA-UN
anthropologists.



HAITI

On December 17, 1994 Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide created the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate human rights violations committed during the military regime of General Raoul Cedras (1991-1994).

In 1995, the Human Rights Program of the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences (AAAS) in Washington D.C. organized and sponsored two forensic missions to Haiti to assist the work of the Truth Commission. Two EAAF members participated as part of a larger international delegation of experts.

Background

On September 19, 1994 a multinational force authorized by the United Nations Security Council and led by the United States intervened in Haiti to restore elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power. Aristide was elected in December 1990 and took office on February 7, 1991. His government lasted only seven months before it was overthrown in a military coup on September 29, 1991. After the coup, a military government headed by General Raoul Cedras ruled the country until the U.N. military intervention.

"The coup unleashed a massive outbreak of human rights violations, including extrajudicial executions, "disappearances," torture, rape, and severe restrictions on freedoms of expression, assembly, and association. The Haitian army and police conducted a campaign of terror, specifically targeting supporters of President Aristide and driving many Haitians human rights organizations underground. The armed forces destroyed radio stations, killed reporters, and conducted sweeps in Port-au-Prince slums known as strongholds of President Aristide."¹

Human rights organizations estimate that 3,000 to 4,000 people were killed by security forces and

paramilitary groups during the rule of the military regime. During this period approximately, 100,000 Haitians sought refuge abroad, and another 300,000 were internally displaced during this period.²

The OAS and the UN Security Council and General Assembly quickly condemned the coup and the subsequent human rights violations. The Council of Ministers at the OAS, following the Declaration of Santiago, recommended that its members "isolate the military Junta diplomatically; suspend all economic, commercial and financial ties with Haiti; cut off foreign aid, and bar arms deliveries to the junta."⁴ The OAS subsequently demanded the re-establishment of President Aristide and the rule of law, imposed a trade embargo, and froze the assets of the state. In 1993, the UN Security Council also declared an embargo on shipments of oil and weapons to Haiti.

In September 1992, a small OAS delegation of 18 observers was accepted by the military regime "to help secure a general reduction in violence and to promote respect for human rights, to cooperate in the distribution of humanitarian aid, and to assess the progress made towards a political solution of the crisis. The delegation, ill-equipped and unable to move from Port-au-Prince due to lack of guarantee of security from de facto prime Minister Marc Bazin, languished in the capital for the next five months."⁵ A few months after the coup, Aristide requested a larger human rights monitoring mission formed by UN and OAS observers. After several months of negotiations, in February 1993, the OAS mission became a OAS/UN International Civilian Mission to Haiti (MICIVIH), with approximately 200 observers deployed throughout the country. Due to the deterioration of the Haitian human rights situation, lack of cooperation from the government, and intimidation and attacks on UN personnel by the de facto Haitian government's security and

1. "Human Rights Monitoring vs. Political Expediency: the experience of the OEA/ONU Mission in Haiti" by W.O. Neill, Harvard Human Rights Journal, vol.8 Spr. 1995. O'Neill was a consultant and former director from the Legal Dept. of the OEA/UN International Civilian Mission to Haiti.

2. "Haiti: Human Rights after Aristide's Return," Human Rights Watch/America, October 1995, vol. 7, No. 11, p.2.

3. The declaration of Santiago stipulates that if a democratic elected government in the hemisphere is overthrown, the OAS Council of Ministers is authorized to adopt 'all additional measures which may be necessary and appropriate' to restore order. *Ibid*, O'Neill, p. 101-102.

4. *Ibid* O'Neill, p. 102 5. *Ibid* O'Neill, p. 103

paramilitary forces, the OEA/UN mission was forced to leave Haiti twice during the period of military rule. The mission had to be evacuated to the Dominican Republic in October 1993, and was expelled from the country in July 13, 1994.

On July 31, 1994 the UN Security Council approved the use of Resolution 940, authorizing the use of force under Chapter VII of the UN Charter to create and maintain a secure and stable environment in Haiti. "Never before had the Security Council agreed to use Chapter VII in a purely domestic matter where human rights violations were the primary cause of a threat to international stability."⁶ As the human rights situation was deteriorating in Haiti, and in the middle of heated debates against and in favor a military intervention in Haiti in the US Congress, on September 15 U.S. President Clinton finally decided to intervene militarily. As a result of a last-minute negotiation led by president Carter, Gen. Cedras and two other top officials—Francois and Biamby—were allowed to leave the country in exile. On September 19, 1994 a UN multinational force (MNF) led by the US Army and almost entirely composed of US Army troops landed in Haiti in what it was called a military intervention or invasion, or "intervasion."⁷

The role and point of view of the UN/OAS ground mission and its strong differences with the UN-OAS diplomatic team of negotiators, as well as the differences between President Aristide's government-in-exile and the two successive American administrations during the negotiations, are important to understand if human rights problems in similar circumstances are to be prevented in the future. However, they are not the subject of this report.⁸

MICIVIH returned to Haiti after the UN military intervention. A UN Civilian Police Monitors Division (CivPol) was added to the

civilian and military UN divisions. The military leadership of the Haitian Armed Forces (Forces Armées d'Haiti, FAd'H) were dismantled by President Aristide and there was a gradual dissolution of the rest of the FAd'H, greatly reducing state-sponsored violence.⁹ An amnesty law, which resulted from the Carter negotiations, finally did not cover political crimes. "There had been fears that the October 1994 amnesty law might be interpreted in such a way as to protect perpetrators of human rights violations and common crimes as well as those involved in the coup. Fortunately, by January 1996, no such broad reading had been upheld."¹⁰

The Truth and Justice Commission

This Commission was created by former Haitian President Aristide to investigate human rights violations committed during the military regime of General Cedras (September 29, 1991-October, 1994). The Presidential decree which created the commission states:

"...as a need to harmonize the relations within Haitian society... as a will of the Haitian people to build up the rule of law in the country... considering that the rule of law can not be built with impunity, but that it has to rely on the trust of the citizens in the democratic functioning of the institutions, especially the judicial system...[that] only the complete and public truth would satisfy the minimum requirements that justice demands and would create indispensable conditions for a real and effective process of transition and national reconciliation... [and] considering that the knowledge of the truth and the official State acknowledgment of its responsibilities vis-à-vis the damage inflicted would rehabilitate the victims' dignity in the public opinion...[President Jean Bertrand Aristide] created the National Commission on Truth and Justice, on December 17, 1994."

The Commission began working on May 6, 1995, and carried out its inquiry over a period lasting close to a year. The decree which estab-

6. *Ibid.*, O'Neill. 7. "Haiti: Building Democracy" by W. O'Neill, CIIR Comment, 1-36, 1996.

8. For further reading, see O'Neill, *ibidem*; Nat'l Coalition for Haitian Refugees/ Human Rights Watch/America Report; Amnesty Int'l Reports.

9. "Haiti: Human Rights after President Aristide's Return," Oct. 1995, vol. 7, no. 11, New York, p.2-3, 5.

10. *Ibid.*, O'Neill "Haiti: Building Democracy," p. 23

lished the Commission did not rule out the possibility that judicial processes may be initiated as a result of its investigations. At the end of the inquiry, the Commission was mandated to publish a public report containing its conclusions. In addition, it was required to make public a number of recommendations to prevent a repetition of tragic events of the past, and to improve the Haitian judicial system and security forces.

On February 5 1996, the president of the Commission delivered its final report to President Aristide.

The work of the forensic team

The purpose of these missions was to assist the work of the Haitian Truth and Justice Commission by providing technical forensic advice.

In 1994, Michael Levy, from the International Liaison Office of former President Aristide in Washington, D.C., and Claudette Werleigh, former Haitian Foreign Minister, contacted the AAAS and requested that it assist the Truth Commission in forensic and data-base analysis. This report deals only with AAAS's assistance in forensic investigations

Dr. Daniel Salcedo, former Senior Program Associate at the AAAS's Human Rights and Science Program, traveled to Haiti in February 1995. He returned in May 1995 with Patrick Ball, a database expert, and EAAF member Luis Fondebrider.

Fondebrider and Salcedo visited several possible burial sites and, on the basis of this research, produced a report for the Commission. The report proposed that an international forensic team coordinated by AAAS conduct a series of exhumations and laboratory analyses.

The Commission approved the recommendation and requested that the AAAS organize a new international team. The members of this team included Mariana Valdizon and Federico Reyes of the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Team (EGAF); Dr. Karen Burns of

the University of Georgia, USA; and Luis Fondebrider and Mercedes Doretti of EAAF. Daniel Salcedo of the AAAS assembled the team and coordinated the mission. Jose Pablo Baraybar, physical anthropologist working with the OAS- UN Civilian Mission at Haiti (MICIVIH, OEA/ONU), worked with the team and made substantial contributions to its work.

The mission took place between August 28 and October 11, 1995.

Because the forensic team was working for the Commission, it limited its investigations to cases that fell under the Commission's mandate—that is, those which occurred during the rule of the last Haitian military government.

During the second mission, the international forensic team investigated ten different cases of alleged human rights violations committed under the military regime. The cases can be grouped into four broad categories, according to the nature of the investigation. In two cases, Fort Dimanche and Grand Goave, the team conducted background research and on this basis decided not to proceed with further investigations during the current mission. In two other cases, Omega and Lamentin, on the basis of initial research, the team dug test pits, but did not find human remains. Although the possibility that further research would yield different results was not ruled out, the team decided not to pursue these investigations. In a further three cases, Source Puanes, Mount St. Cristophe, and Morne a Cabrit, the team investigated sites where human remains were found on the surface of the earth. At these sites, research involved recording and analyzing the remains, and gathering information about the circumstances in which they were brought there. Finally, three cases, Rossignol, Gonaives, and Raboteau, involved the exhumation of grave sites where human remains were found. The team recovered and analyzed the remains, and collected other information about the circumstances of death and burial.

All the remains recovered during the research were analyzed at the University Hospital of

Port-au-Prince. A final forensic report was submitted by the international forensic team to the Commission on December 1995.

In addition, the team produced also a separate statistical report entitled "Violations of the Right to Life in Haiti, 1985 to 1995" analyzing records from the morgue of the University Hospital at Port-au-Prince. Mercedes Doretti conducted the investigation in Haiti with the collaboration of Gracia Guy Joseph, field researcher from the Truth Commission. A team of six people from the Commission collected the data at the hospital: Danielle Andre, Marie Alice Luis Jean, Yvette E. Pierre, Eddy Beauliere, Joseph, and Doretti. Ignacio Cano, of the Evaluation Group for the Analysis of Data (EGAD) of the University of Arizona at Tucson conducted statistical analyses of the data on this last project. We would like to thank Professor L. Sechrest, Director of EGAD, for his professional and logistical support.

Main Conclusions from the Forensic Cases

The team worked at ten different sites around the country, which are described in the following sections. All investigations were conducted in the presence of the local Justice of the Peace and representatives from the Truth Commission.

Fort Dimanche

During the Duvaliers' rule, Fort Dimanche was an infamous prison for political and ordinary prisoners where, according to the testimonies of former inmates, prisoners were starved, beaten and tortured, in some cases to death. Fort Dimanche was closed down by President Aristide shortly after he assumed power in 1991. However, some testimonies suggest that it may have been used as a clandestine detention center during the latest period of mil-

itary rule (September 1991 to October 1994). The issue is complicated by the fact that Delmas 33, a barracks and detention center which replaced Fort Dimanche, was also informally known as Fort Dimanche. In many testimonies collected by human rights organizations it is not clear whether witnesses are referred to the original or the *new* Fort Dimanche.¹¹

During the preliminary investigations in May 1995 members of the international team were told by squatters living in the now-abandoned Fort Dimanche that prisoners killed during the period of General Cedras' military rule were buried in mass graves on the prison grounds. The squatters claimed they could differentiate between these graves and those from earlier periods, an issue of importance because the Truth Commission was under mandate to investigate only human rights violations committed by the recent military regime.

On August 31st, 1995, members of the international team visited Fort Dimanche to conduct more detailed investigations. They found human remains lying on the surface of the prison grounds, and holes which squatters claimed were mass graves. Since there is no technical means to determine from such recent human remains the precise year or month when death occurred, and the prisoners were unlikely to have been buried with associated evidence which would have clarified the matter, the testimonies of the squatters were crucial to the investigation. Interviews with the squatters, however, resulted in very inconsistent information concerning the dates that the people had been killed and the graves dug.

The team conducted two other sets of interviews in the first two weeks of September. These testimonies were similarly inconsistent. Accordingly, it was decided not to conduct further investigations at Fort Dimanche during the mission. Further work at the site might be reconsidered, however, if new and more precise information is discovered.

11. "Terror prevails in Haiti" Human Rights Watch/ America and the National Coalition for Haitian Refugees, April 1994, vol. 6, No. 5., and "The Aristide Government's Human Rights Record," by Human Rights Watch/America and the National Coalition for Haitian Refugees and Caribbean Rights, Nov. 1, 1991, vol. 3, no. 12, p. 10-12.

Lamentin

According to the accounts of many local and international human rights organizations, the Haitian military undertook a campaign of violent repression directed at the civilian populace during the days immediately following the coup d'etat of September 29th, 1991. In Port-au-Prince, several poor neighborhoods such as Cite Soleil and Lamentin were particular targets of such violence. Records from the morgue and emergency room of the Hospital of the University of Haiti examined by members of the forensic team and the Truth Commission support these reports. The records document a sudden and dramatic increase in the number of people wounded or killed by gunshot wounds during the night of September 30th and the first days of October. Interviews with hospital personnel confirmed these findings.

The forensic team focused on the Lamentin neighborhood, where human rights organizations report that approximately 30 people were killed in the days following the coup. The team visited the neighborhood several times in September 1995, and collected testimonies which were highly consistent in their descriptions of the date, time and general circumstances of the killings. According to witnesses, on the evening of Monday September 30, 1991, a soldier was killed in a riot, and shortly after military personnel went on a rampage through the neighborhood, shooting at civilians and destroying buildings. They continued such activities over the next week or two, although most of the casualties occurred during the first few days. The soldiers were reportedly stationed at Lamentin 54, a military base in the neighborhood.

Local human rights organizations collected lists of 18 people killed in Lamentin on October 2nd, 1991. Witnesses say the military disposed of the bodies in two ways: some were taken away by military trucks to unknown destinations,

while others were buried in the neighborhood in graves which the soldiers forced local residents to dig. A comparison between the names of the 18 casualties from Lamentin and those listed in the hospital morgue records on October 2nd did not reveal any matches, although the morgue records listed 12 non-identified men killed by gunshot wounds, some of whom may have come from Lamentin.

The team interviewed several witnesses of the military rampage, but was not able to locate persons who had themselves witnessed the digging of the graves. According to some testimonies, most of the witnesses to these burials were hiding or had themselves been killed by the soldiers; they may also have been afraid to speak to the team for fear of reprisals from former Tontons Macoutes living in the area.

Team members thought that because the information provided by witnesses was so consistent, it is likely that bodies are buried in the neighborhood. Due to time constraints, the team dug only one test pit, and did not find human remains. However, the consistency of witnesses' testimonies suggests that a more extensive search might result in the discovery of burial sites in Lamentin.

Grande-Goave

On September 26th, 1995, the forensic team, anthropologist Jose Pablo Baraybar, and members of the Truth Commission explored ten sites in the Grande Goave region. Nine of these sites were located near the national highway in the La Saline, Carrefour Blaies, Papette and Morne Tapion areas. These sites were reported by the Truth Commission to be possible burial locations, each containing the body of a victim killed during different incidents of political repression.

The team interviewed witnesses and local residents, who provided information about the possible identities of the victims, the alleged victims' physical features, the circumstances in which the bodies were found, the precise location of the

12. See, for example, "Cahier de la Plate-Forme des organismes haitiens de defense des droits humains" Oct.-Dec. 1991; Amnesty International "Haiti: The Human Rights Tragedy: Human Rights Violations since the Coup," Jan. 22, 1992

alleged burial sites, and the persons who buried them.

On the basis of this research, it was decided that the testimonial evidence justified exhumations of four or five of the ten gravesites. In several of the other cases, the testimonies suggested either that the deaths were not related to political incidents, or that they did not fall within the time frame under investigation by the Truth Commission. Finally, in several cases there was not enough information about the local of the gravesite.

The exhumations were carried out by Jose Pablo Baraybar after the forensic team left. The results of this investigation are contained in his report to the Truth Commission.

Omega

Omega is a Security Forces barracks located on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince. According to allegations, prisoners had been killed and buried in the back yard of the building.

Several trenches were opened, with negative results. No human remains were found.

Source Puantes

In Port-au-Prince it is common knowledge that Haitian officials used the Titayen region, located approximately 15 kilometers from the city, as a dumping ground for bodies of those killed by the military, as well as for unclaimed bodies from the university hospital. Source Puantes and Mont Saint Cristophe (see following section) are two sites within the region where bodies were deposited.

Source Puantes is a large area where bodies have been deposited, together with garbage from the city, in a series of shallow pits, each approximately three meters in diameter. The site has been used as a dumping ground by the Hospital of the University of Haiti, which serves the entire Port-au-Prince region, since 1973. Reports also say that the Haitian military has used the site to deposit the bodies of persons it has killed.

The first team visited Source Puantes in May 1995 and explored an area roughly 100 meters by 20 meters. They found hundreds of non-articulated human skeletal remains, and some cadavers in advanced states of decomposition. Some of the bodies were wrapped in hospital sheets. Two skulls with clearly evident gunshot wounds were also found. The team concluded, however, that given the co-mingling of the bodies and the absence of other information, it would be virtually impossible to identify the remains of persons killed by political violence during the recent military regime.

On September 5th, 1995, the larger forensic team visited the site and collected human remains for further analysis. The most significant findings resulting from the analyses were five skulls, which bore marks indicating physical violence. The back of one skull presented an entrance gunshot wound, strongly suggesting that the cause of death was homicide. Three other skulls were damaged by gun shots to the side of the head; in these cases the cause of death could have been homicide or suicide, although the large-caliber weapons which caused the wounds are rarely used in suicides. The fifth skull was damaged by blunt force trauma, which was likely to have been the cause of death.

Although the cause of death in these cases was most probably a gunshot wound to the head, it is virtually impossible to determine when and in what circumstances death occurred. Thus, even in the cases in which physical violence seems extremely probable, it is not possible to establish whether the killings occurred during the period under investigation by the Truth Commission, nor whether they were in fact human rights cases. The team accordingly decided not to pursue further investigations at this site.

Saint Cristophe

Saint Cristophe is a site approximately 800 meters north of Source Puantes in the Titayen Region. It lies at the foot of Mont Saint Cristophe, on a flooding terrace close to the sea. Like Source Puantes, the site was allegedly used as a dumping ground by the Haitian military. However, the remains found at the site, and the information collected about the circumstances in which they were deposited there, contrast strongly with the findings at Source Puantes in several crucial respects.

Jose Pablo Baraybar conducted an investigation of the Saint Cristophe site in early 1995.¹³ He found human remains, most of which had been scavenged by dogs and scattered over a surface area of approximately 180,000 square meters.

Mr. Baraybar conducted interviews with local residents. The surrounding area is very desolate, with only a few houses. During part of Cedras' regime, a 6:00 p.m. curfew had been imposed in the area, and as a result everyone stayed at home at night. During 1993 and 1994, residents in this area sometimes heard trucks driving into the St. Cristophe area late at night. The trucks would stop, and a few minutes later the residents would hear gunshots. A few minutes after that the trucks would start again and drive away. In the morning the residents would go to look in the area, and find bodies. None of the witnesses had actually seen the assailants or victims, however.

Distribution of the remains suggested that the bodies had originally been deposited in at least five different sites relatively distant (5 to 40 meters) from access roads leading in and out of the site, in contrast with the Source Puantes site, where the bodies had been dumping in shallow pits close to the road. Also in contrast with Source Puantes, no hospital paraphernalia was found at the site, and no evidence that graves or pits had been dug was found.

At the time, Mr. Baraybar observed two skulls showing traces of gunshot wounds, and spent cartridges near the remains of a third skeleton.

On the basis of this evidence, Mr. Baraybar hypothesized that at least eleven persons, mostly men, had probably been brought alive to the site by truck, and were forced to walk from the road into the bushes, where they were executed. Mr. Baraybar mapped the location of the findings and left the evidence in situ. In September 1995, the forensic team, working with the Truth Commission, followed Mr. Baraybar's map and collected human remains and associated ballistic and textile evidence.

Analyses of the remains showed that a minimum of eleven bodies had been left at the site. Laboratory analysis also determined that at least one person, an adult male, had been shot by a large-caliber weapon behind his left ear. At least nine of the dead were adult males, and there is no evidence suggesting that the others were women or juveniles.

The testimonial and physical evidence strongly suggest that St. Cristophe was used as an execution and/or dumping ground during General Cedras' regime.

Morne a Cabrit

Morne a Cabrit is a mountain chain in the Tomazeau jurisdiction, Department of the West. The area was suspected to be a site where the Haitian military had conducted executions and/or deposited bodies during the Cedras regime.

An investigation was conducted by Jose Pablo Baraybar in early 1995. Mr. Baraybar collected testimonies from former prisoners, relatives of victims, the Judge of the Peace from the nearby village of Tomazeau, and MICIVIH personnel. Several sources indicated that the southern slope of the mountain, which faces Trou Caiman, had been used as an execution and dumping site between July 1992 and September 1994. Both men and women were allegedly killed and/or left dead at the site. Testimonies differed regarding the number of bodies deposited at the site;

¹³"St. Cristophe: A killing field on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, W.I." by J.P. Baraybar, Msc., MICIVIH report.

some accounts described separate incidents involving small numbers of victims, while others estimated that 100 or more bodies had been left in the area.

Mr. Baraybar visited the site in early 1995 and found human remains in a large ravine approximately 200 meters deep. The remains had apparently been scattered along the ravine by water and other natural forces. He searched the nearby ravines to the west, but did not encounter human remains in other locations.

In September 1995 the forensic team and Mr. Baraybar descended into the ravines with ropes, and collected the human remains described above. Laboratory analysis determined that the remains of a minimum of nine individual bodies had been deposited at the site. No obvious signs of trauma were observed. Post-mortem damage had affected large numbers of the bones, obscuring possible peri-mortem trauma. It is unlikely that identification, cause of death, or time of death can be established. However, it is clear that human remains were disposed of in an unusual area and manner, and several testimonies suggest that the place was used as an execution and/or dumping site. There is so far no clear link between the finding of the remains and specific events that could explain their presence in the ravines. If further investigations provide more precise information, the possibility of continued forensic work at this site should be considered.

Rossignol

Rossignol is a village in the Grande Saline region of the department of Artibonite. According to testimonies taken by the Truth Commission and a report issued by the local grassroots group *Mouvement Paysan de Rossignol* (Rossignol Peasants Movement) or MPR, an incident of military repression, resulting in the death of a resident teen-ager, occurred in the village in late 1991.

According to the MPR report, attaches and soldiers from the Grande Saline barracks began harassing, arbitrarily detaining and maltreating

residents of Rossignol shortly after the coup d'état of September 30th, 1991. Many MPR members went into hiding. On the night of December 12th, a soldier attempted to detain a local resident, and a scuffle ensued, during which the soldier's gun was fired. The soldier eventually fled the scene. The following day a jeep of uniformed soldiers entered the village. They allegedly burned approximately 37 houses; beat and arrested local residents; and fired their guns, injuring several peasants and killing one teen-aged boy, Kesner Dangerville.

According to testimonies, Dangerville's body was left lying on the road for many hours after his death, and was scavenged by pigs. He was buried in the local cemetery by his mother after the Judge of the Peace arrived. Witnesses said he had been killed by three bullet wounds; one to his left eye, one to his skull, and a third to his stomach.

The forensic team visited Rossignol on September 21st, 1995 and conducted an exhumation of Dangerville's corpse in the presence of Truth Commission members, the local Judge of the Peace, and Dangerville's family. As the identity of the remains were not in dispute, the goal in this case was to examine the remains for possible cause of death. The team recovered a casket containing the remains of a single individual from the site. The remains exhibited disturbances of the thoracic bones, which may be due to intrusion by pigs, but virtually the entire skeleton, including all fragments of the multifractured cranium, were recovered, together with a complete set of clothing.

Laboratory analysis determined that the age (15-18 years), stature (161-163 cm.), sex (male) and ancestry (black) of the remains corresponded to those of Kesner Dangerville. The skull, which was shattered, had an entrance wound through the left eye (lower edge of orbit) and an exit wound through the back of the skull (right parietal/occipital junction). One of the vertebrae (T5) was also damaged.

The evidence of skeletal trauma corresponds with testimonies regarding the circumstances of

Kesner Dangerville's death. The third wound described in witnesses' accounts was probably caused by the exit of the bullet. The bullet in the stomach probably continued through to the backbone and broke the fifth thoracic vertebra.

Raboteau

Raboteau is a poor neighborhood of Gonaïves, a city located approximately 150 km. northwest of Port-au-Prince in the Department of Artibonite. One section of the neighborhood, known as Bas-Raboteau, borders the sea.

On April 22nd, 1994, a series of violent events occurred in Bas-Raboteau. Two very different and contradictory accounts of these events have been given, one by the military, and one by human rights groups and independent investigators.

The military outlined its version in an official press statement in April 26, 1994. On April 22, according to the statement, a terrorist group attacked "Toussaint L'Ouverture", Gonaïve's military barracks. The attack was led by Amio Metayer, a local resident known to be a supporter of President Aristide, and was intended to incite the local population to rise up in solidarity with armed rebels allegedly located in Borgne, a region of the North Department of Haiti. According to the press statement, military personnel repelled the attack, and were obliged to respond to it by pursuing members of Metayer's group when they attempted to escape by boat. Six people were killed during the incident. The attack and other similar incidents which occurred throughout the country at the same time were part of a well-known

plan to destabilize the country, the military press statement claimed. This plan was allegedly designed by Aristide supporters in a meeting held in Washington DC on November 1991.¹⁴

The UN/OAS Civilian Mission for Haiti (MICIVIH) conducted an initial investigation at Raboteau on April 27th and 28th 1994. During a second investigation on May 24th and 25th, MICIVIH researchers interviewed many witnesses of the events. The Mission stated its conclusions in a press release:

"MICIVIH was unable to discover testimony or evidence consistent with the version of facts provided by the Haitian military. According to many consistent sources of information, it appears that, contrary to the military's statements, members of the Haitian army provoked the incident. On April 8, 1991, military personnel, accompanied by a local FRAPH (Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti) leader, shot and ransacked the house of Mr. A. Metayer.¹⁵ They also detained his father, Mr. Ludovic Metayer (65 years old) on the same day, although they released him hours later. Early in the morning of April 22 a larger group of soldiers



Bas Carenage. Local residents look on as exhumation proceeds.

14. AFP Press Agency cable, April 17, April 26, and April 27, 1994. The military communique was partially reproduced in MICIVIH press communique on the Raboteau case, from end on April 1994.

15. FRAPH emerged under Cedras' military rule as a particularly violent paramilitary organization.

burst into Raboteau." As in previous such incidents, people attempted to take refuge by fleeing to the sea in their boats. (The local residents were so accustomed to doing this during military raids that some of them referred to the sea as their 'embassy'). "The military attacked and pillaged [several] dozen houses, beat the inhabitants, and then summarily executed many people whom they had chased from their houses on the littoral or in their boats. Among the victims were a number of people who had been passing by the area..."¹⁶

MICIVIH observers were not able to establish the precise number of victims killed in this incident, because several corpses were washed out to the sea, and others were buried hurriedly without the appropriate legal documentation (the *constat du juge de paix*). MICIVIH established that as many as twelve persons may have been killed by soldiers wearing the uniforms of the Tactical Unit. A witness showed MICIVIH observers small piles of earth where six or eight people had probably been buried. According to different and consistent testimonies, the bodies which floated out the sea eventually washed up on the coast. Members of the Haitian Armed Forces did not allow the families of the victims to collect and bury them.

Several people were wounded during the military operation, the MICIVIH press communiqué stated. A massive exodus followed the events, leaving Bas-Raboteau almost empty. MICIVIH condemned the killing of innocent civilians and requested a more extensive investigation to establish who was responsible.

Many of the victims were residents of Bas Raboteau, many of whom worked in fishing or salt production.

The Judge of the Peace of the North Sector of Gonaïves, Mr. Derismond, conducted an independent investigation between the 22nd and the 28th of April, 1994, at the request of the General Prosecutor (Commissaire du Gouvernement pres de Tribunal Civil) of Gonaïves.

According to the testimonies collected by the Judge, the events of April 22 were not an isolated incident. The population of Bas-Raboteau had been harassed by the Haitian Army, by FRAPH (Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti) and by attaché members since 1991, when the military coup forced President Aristide to leave the country. Individuals who were involved in activities supportive of Aristide and his return were particular targets of such harassment. In his investigation of the events of April 22nd, the judge verified that at least 50 houses had been damaged and left in disarray, and that many of them had been abandoned by their inhabitants. Several witnesses stated that the soldiers took money and other goods, such as televisions and radios, from their houses. The military were reportedly looking for Metayer and for arms belonging to an armed group supposedly led by him. No military personnel, attaches or FRAPH members were killed or injured.

Independent journalists and other groups such as the Catholic organization Justice and Peace have also conducted investigations concerning this incident. Their findings are similar to those described in the MICIVIH report. The case also received attention from the international press.

The Raboteau case is currently on trial as this report is being written. Several people are accused of aiding and/or participating in the massacre: Cenafilis Castera, former Commandant of the Gonaïves Commissariat, Jean Pierre Tatoune, and Sgto. Cherefant among others. Members of the forensic team will probably testify on it in the coming months, explaining the evidence collected on its investigation of the case.

On September 13th, 1995, the team undertook exhumations at three sites in an area of Raboteau known as Bas-Carenage, which lies at the edge of the ocean. Truth Commission and MICIVIH members, in particular forensic expert Jose Pablo Baraybar, took part in these investigations. The local Justice of the Peace was also present, and wrote a record of the proceedings.

16. MICIVIH press release

At the first site, the complete skeleton of an adult human male was uncovered. At the second site, the remains of two adult human males were found. Both were found with ropes around their cervical areas.

The remains of all three individuals were analyzed in the laboratory. The cause of death of the individual excavated at the first site was not easy to determine; he had a broken sacrum, which was difficult to interpret, and several broken ribs.

The first individual exhumed at the second site had been shot in the back at time of death. The entrance wound went through the left buttock into the body cavity. This wound could have been the cause of death.

The second individual exhumed at the second site had sustained a blunt force injury to the right cheek, a common injury from facial traumas, or "beating". No clear cause of death was found on the skeletal remains, however.

The three individuals have not been identified. Identification would be possible, however, if sufficient antemortem information could be obtained. Violent death is suspected because of the large caliber gunshot wound in the pelvis of the second individual, and the broken cheek bone of the third.

The archeological findings are consistent with witnesses' testimonies. According to these accounts, in the days following the incident attaches and soldiers used ropes to recover several bodies from the sea at Bas-Carenage. They buried these bodies at the edge of the sea in shallow graves. The finding of three individuals, buried in shallow graves at the edge of the sea, and two of the three with ropes around their necks, is consistent with these testimonies.

The fact that one of the recovered individuals had a gunshot wound entering through his back is also consistent with witnesses' testimonies, which stated that that during the events under

investigation several people were shot in the back while running towards the sea.

Events in Gonaïves City, October 2nd, 1991

On October 2nd, 1991, residents of Gonaïves demonstrated in the city in support of former President Aristide and against the military coup which had taken place three days before. According to witnesses, over the course of the day seven civilians were fired upon and killed in separate incidents by members of the Haitian Army. According to the Gonaïves division of the Catholic organization Justice and Peace, at least other seven people were wounded by gunfire, and others were severely beaten.¹⁷

According to the different sources of information consulted, the names of the seven people were: Frantz Moise, Fred Cheriska, Line Joseph, Jean Pierre Dazeme, Elysien Dazeme, Navoir Odena and Yfalien Alcius.

Reportedly, Frantz Moise (approx. 26 years old), and Fred Cheriska (approx. 19 years old), were both shot when the Haitian armed forces opened fire on the demonstration. Mr. Cheriska died on arrival at the hospital. Elysien Dazeme and his cousin, Jean-Pierre Dazeme, were on their way to the hospital on a motorcycle to inquire about Cheriska's condition when soldiers reportedly opened fire and shot them dead from behind. Line Joseph (approx. 39 years old) was killed early that morning, when soldiers allegedly fired indiscriminately at people in the Detour Laborde district of Gonaïves. Navoir Odena (approx. 35 years old) was shot dead in the streets by soldiers in the Trou-Sable district of Gonaïves. Yfalien Alcius (approx. 14 years old) was shot dead in the street by soldiers that morning close to his house.

The bodies were returned to the families, but no autopsies were conducted. Moreover, death certificates of three of the victims gave no cause of death, stating only that the victims had "died

17. Sources of information for this case: direct interviews with witnesses and relatives of the victims; judiciary reports; death certificates from the local hospital La Providence at Gonaïves; "La Repression au Quotidien en Haiti: 1991-1994" by Gilles Danroc and Daniel Roussieres. Commission Justice et Paix du Diocese des Gonaïves, Ed. Karthala et HDSI, 1995; Amnesty International "Haiti: The Human Rights Tragedy: Human Rights Violations since the Coup," January 1992.



Line Joseph, one of the victims of the events in Gonaïves, October 2, 1991.

after or as a result of the events" (mort a la suite des evennements).¹⁸

With the authorization of the families, the forensic team conducted exhumations of five the seven victims of the events of October 2nd, 1991. The exhumations, which took place in the Gonaïves Cemetery, were intended to recover the bodies of these five individuals — Frantz Moïse, Elisyen Dazemé, Jean-Pierre Dazemé, Liné Joseph, and Fred Chériska —and enable the team to analyze the remains and search for evidence of the causes of their deaths.

The skeletons of five males were exhumed. Four of the five were buried in separate, individual graves. The fifth was recovered from a concrete collective tomb designed to hold two persons.

Witnesses of the events took pictures of the bodies of these five men at the time of death. The photos were given to us by the Office of Justice and Peace, Gonaïves Section. Injuries observed in the photos were compared with the

trauma observed on the skeletal remains.

The skeletal descriptions (age, sex, race and stature) of all five individuals were consistent with the expected identifications. The testimony and photos regarding the wounds sustained at the time of death is supported by the evidence of skeletal trauma in four of the five individuals.

Franz Moïse has three broken upper ribs (#2 right and #3 and 4 left). He was shot high under the left arm. The trajectory of the bullet could have passed through left #3 rib and then through right #2 rib.

Jean-Pierre Dazemé has a broken back from thoracic vertebrae #1 to #3 and broken right ribs #3, 8, and 9. He was shot while driving a motorcycle. The bone injuries are consistent with the testimony and photos of wounds at the time of death. Liné Joseph has a broken neck (cervical #5, left arch). He was shot in the neck at a demonstration. The bone injuries are consistent with the testimony and photos of wounds at the time of death.

Elysién Dazemé has very little skeletal injury — a broken left rib (#9). He was shot while riding a motorcycle with Jean-Pierre Dazemé. The bone injuries are not inconsistent with the testimony and photos of the wounds at time of death. Notably, both men on the motorcycle have broken lower ribs. This may be a result of the fall from the motorcycle rather than the bullet wounds. They probably both fell in the same direction when the motorcycle went down, after the bullets struck them.

18. Death Certificates from La Providence Gonaïve local hospital.

**Statistical Report
based on Morgue Records**

The existence of important records at the University Hospital at Port-au-Prince came to light while the forensic team was at the end of their mission in Haiti. Consequently, it was decided then to extend the mission by another two weeks. The result of this investigation was a comparative study titled "Violation of the right to life in Haiti, 1985-1995." This study attempted to evaluate the impact of the authoritarian regime that interrupted democracy in Haiti in 1991 in terms of human rights violations. Specifically the study was intended to measure whether killings by state authorities increased significantly during the regime of General Cedras, as compared to other periods in the recent past. Second, it was intended to test whether the brief democratic episodes in the recent history of the country brought about a decline in these extreme violations.

Port-au-Prince is by far the area where reportedly most of the human rights violations, particularly the violations to the right to life, took place during Cedras' military regime. According to the Plate-Forme, a local human rights umbrella orga-

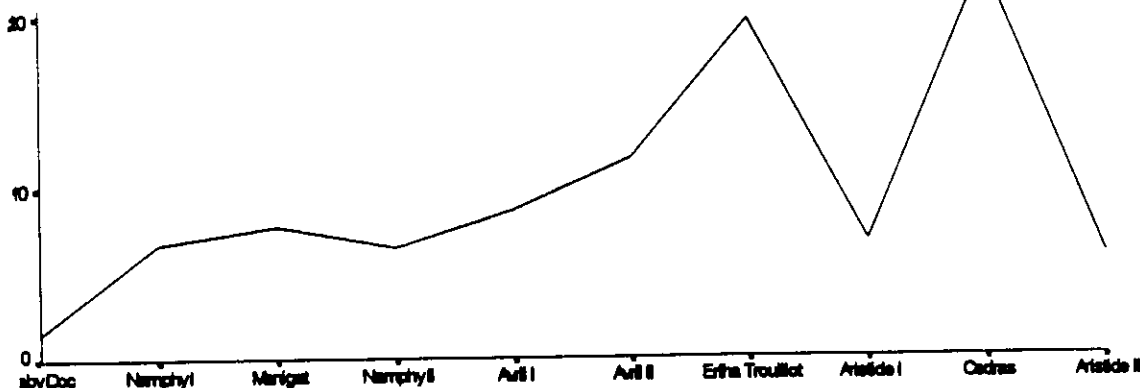
nization, more than 70% of the abuses have taken place in the region of Port-au-Prince. The University Hospital is the only hospital in the entire region of Port-au-Prince that has a public morgue. There are also private morgues. Although this was not always the case, in principle, all the bodies of individuals who die in violent or suspicious ways should be transported to the public morgue, and registered in its records. The hospital is apparently also the only place in the country where autopsies were done.

During the period under study – 1985-1995 – firearms were largely confined in Haiti to the Armed Forces and security and paramilitary forces. No armed opposition has existed during those years. It is then legitimate to assume that a large percentage of the individuals who died by gunshot wound are probably victims of the political repression. For all these reasons, the information at the University Hospital morgue could provide one of the best records to evaluate violations against the right to life.

This research was conducted under the assumption that at least a certain percentage of the victims of political repression passed through the morgue of the University Hospital, before

being returned to their relatives or disposed of in some body-dumping site on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince, such as Source Puantes, at the Titayen region. Most probably, many other bodies of political victims were not taken to the morgue but were disposed of in different dumping sites, thus virtually escaping any accurate record or registration.

Monthly Average Number of Deaths by Regime



This graph shows the average number of persons killed per month under each of these regimes, leaving aside the transitional months. This must be interpreted bearing in mind that some are averages of many months, and therefore stable and reliable, while others are an average of as few as two months. The transitional months, which do not appear in the graph, have a monthly average of 26 persons killed—higher than that any of the regimes. This confirms that these periods tend to produce a surge in violence and repression, and, consequently, peaks in the series.

The study was carried out under far from ideal conditions, due to the limitations of historical records and to time constraints, but we were able to find continuous information on dead bodies in the morgue records of the University Hospital in Port-au-Prince. These records reached far into the past and allowed us to construct a lengthy series covering the last ten years. Even though the records did not separate victims killed by the military or police forces, and did not provide exhaustive and mutually exclusive categorizations of the causes and manner of death, we built a composite index of persons classified in the records as dead from gunshot wounds plus those described as assassinated. This figure, even though it may include some cases of common violence or a few suicides, seemed to present the best available index of persons killed by the state authorities.

The statistical analysis revealed that during the regime of General Cedras the number of political killings rose in comparison with preceding years. This difference was statistically highly significant, and implied that the average number of victims more than doubled during under the Cedras government (up to 24 victims per month as compared to 10 per month in previous years). Further, this authoritarian regime showed the highest number of killings of all previous regimes in the last 10 years, which included a number of other non-democratic, post-Duvalierist governments.

Second, the analysis revealed that both brief democratic periods under President Aristide were accompanied by a dramatic decline in the number of killings, compared to the immediately preceding periods. Indeed, the brief period from March to August 1991 reversed an apparent slow but long-standing increase in killings that began in the days of Jean Claude Duvalier. Likewise, Aristide's resumption of government in 1994 ended the period of abundant killings that characterized the Cedras regime. Nevertheless, even though the differ-

ence between democratic and authoritarian governments is statistically significant, the very brevity of the democratic periods in Haiti precludes a sounder statistical analysis and a higher statistical significance.

In short, the possibility of the differences we have detected being due to chance are negligible. Hence, despite the limitations of our registers, our data provide unequivocal support for the notion that the Cedras regime was particularly notorious for its violations of human rights.

Moreover, there are powerful reasons to believe that the figures gathered and the effect detected are but a part of the volume of the violations that really happened. These include: the possibility that some bodies were not registered in the first nights following the coup, due to the overload of cases; reports that bodies were dumped after being executed without going through the morgue; and *constats* that strengthen the suspicion that in some of the cases in which the registers do not state the cause of death the victims died from gunshot wounds. In other words, the results are, if anything, biased downward, and the magnitude of political repression is suspected to be even greater than already unveiled. Further research on these and other data would be desirable to confirm these results and to shed additional light on the patterns of violence.

Recommendations based on the Statistical Report

1. To use the data from the morgue records of the University Hospital of Haiti in Port-au-Prince for humanitarian, legal and historical purposes, in order to:

- a. Attempt to locate in the list of names of deceased persons brought to the morgue the names of disappeared persons or extrajudicially executed individuals whose bodies have not been returned to their families.
- b. Relate specific entries in the morgue records with specific incidents of repression,

thereby making available information about the number, identity and destiny of the victims of these events. In other words, compare the chronology of political events with the entries in the morgue records. Even though there is virtually no possibility of recovering the remains of the unclaimed bodies that passed through the morgue, further information about their whereabouts could provide some solace to the relatives of the victims.

c. Rescue the important evidence of Haiti's recent history that is embedded in these records. They could be used in legal processes, and should be protected as historical documents. We suggest photocopying all the morgue records from the last years in order to preserve them.

2. To continue this investigation. More time and planning would certainly provide complementary information and improve this investigation. More information is probably available in other sources of information outside and inside the hospital.

Haiti digs up its bloody past to bring killers to justice

Washington Post Service

GONAIVES, Haiti — Slowly, the masonry tombs have crumbled under the blows of hammers, exposing the skeletons that Haitians are counting on to help them deal with their violent past and begin a process of meting out justice for thousands of people killed by the army and its allies.

Haiti's National Commission of Truth and Justice hopes to use the skeletons being dug up by forensic anthropologists in the past two weeks to help convict murder suspects.

During the recent military dictatorship, human-rights groups documented about 3,000 political deaths, along with politically motivated rapes, beatings and disappearances.

The truth commission, formed in March by President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and financed in part by Canada, will probe killings during the 1991-94 period — the first investigations into state-sponsored terror in Haitian history.

"I am here to watch, because I believe in this work," said Nerlande Rinchere, 30, standing in the blazing noonday sun as the group prepared to dig up the remains of her husband, Line Joseph, killed by the army. "When he was alive, our children ate and were able to go to school. They killed him, and now we have nothing."

The exhumations in the Gonaives cemetery were carried out by forensic anthropologists from the American Association for the Advancement of Science, headquartered in Washington. The same group has carried out exhumations for human-rights investigations around the globe.

Daniel Salcedo of the AAAS said the purpose was to help establish the cause and manner of death, gather physical evidence and document the killings "in a way that is a whole lot stronger in a court case" if suspected slayers are brought to trial.

MIAMI HERALD

AAAS to send forensic experts to Haiti

Washington. Forensic anthropologists and other volunteers from Argentina, Guatemala and the United States will visit the troubled island of Haiti in September to exhume bodies in search of evidence of human rights violations.

The specialist team is being sent by the science and human rights programme of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) at the invitation of a commission established by President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to investigate human rights abuses on the island between 1991 and 1994.

The team will be led by Clyde Snow, a leading US forensic scientist who is at present working on the investigation into

the Oklahoma bombing. It will spend four weeks on the island recovering bodies from two mass graves, at Fort Dimanche prison and near the capital, Port au Prince, and assessing their cause of death.

Other team members will help the commission — which is due to report by the end of the year — to establish a computer database to help it track connections between up to 20,000 human rights allegations which it expects to receive from the Haitian public.

Dan Salcedo, who is managing the programme at the AAAS, says that experts involved in two earlier programmes in Argentina and Guatemala will join the Haiti mission.

C. M.

NATURE

Forensic Scientists Helping Haiti Heal

ON A BEACH under the blistering Haitian sun, an international team of forensic anthropologists began to scrape away the sand and debris they hoped was hiding the remains of one of the dozen or so people who were killed there by the country's armed forces in April 1994.

They were led to this spot by a resident of Roboteau, a seaside shantytown in Gonaïves, a 4-hour drive north of the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince.

The man described how the police made members of the community swim out into the bay and tie ropes around three corpses that were not washed out to sea, tow them to the beach, and bury them in two shallow graves.

The investigators, Mercedes (Mimi) Doretti, and Luis Fonderbrider, PhD, two of the founding members of the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team, and Federico Reyes and Mariana Valdivia, of the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Team, are veterans of similar exhumations and human rights investigations in their own and other countries scarred by state-sanctioned murder (*JAMA*. 1992;268:579-583 and *JAMA*. 1993;269:1911-1913).

The forensic experts were brought to Haiti by the Science and Human Rights

Program of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), Washington, DC. Their intent was to assist the Haitian Truth and Justice Commission investigate some of the atrocities that allegedly occurred during the 3 years of brutality and terror following the military coup that ousted Haiti's first freely elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

More Difficult Mission

For many reasons, the team's mission in Haiti was proving to be more difficult than earlier assignments. For one, their efforts to find the remains of victims had been frustrated by the inaccurate memories of witnesses, says Daniel E. Salcedo, PhD, senior program associate for the AAAS Science and Human Rights Program. "And worse," he says, "are those damn pigs."

The army and its paramilitary allies dumped the bodies of many of their victims along streets and roads for Haiti's ubiquitous pigs to dispose of. Unlike death squads in Argentina, Guatemala, and other places notorious for "disappearing" persons, the Haitian killers preferred to display their work so that others also thinking of objecting to the

dictatorship would get the message.

This day appeared to offer the team of investigators no relief from frustration. Several administrative snafus delayed an early start by a couple of hours. The first site, where the anthropologists were certain two skeletons lay buried, was under water. They would have to wait for low tide and then fight seeping brine to conduct the exhumation. The other suspected grave was above the waterline, a few hundred yards south along the beach. However, they could not be sure that the witness's memory was correct. An hour of unproductive digging made them even less sure.

After another consultation with the witness, the scientists extended the shallow hole in the direction of the water. Finally, a human pelvis appeared. Carefully, the team dug out each bone, cleaned it, and made a record of its appearance.

As if they hadn't had enough discomfort from the heat and digging in the sand contaminated with pig and human wastes, it began to rain. Thunder and lightning in the distance threatened the team further as they packaged the last of the bones for removal to the laboratory set up for them at the General Hospital in Port-au-Prince.



As one of Haiti's ubiquitous pigs patrols the beach, left, a witness to the clandestine burial of three of the people killed in an army-led massacre leads an international team of forensic anthropologists, United Nations officials, and members of the Haitian Truth and Justice Commission to one of the graves on a beach in Gonaïves, right. Efforts to scientifically document political atrocities in the country have been frustrated by the military's practice of leaving the pigs to dispose of victims. As soon as the skeleton is uncovered, forensic anthropologist Mimi Doretti begins making photographic and video records of the common burial site.



Residents of the seaside village, including several young children, keep watch as the forensic anthropologists carefully remove bones and other evidence for their human rights investigation.



At a midnight ceremony, Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide unveils a memorial statue to the women victims of political violence.

Quickly, they moved their gear up the beach to the other grave site. It was late afternoon and the tide had receded. The bones of an arm could be seen sticking out of the foul-smelling muck.

This exhumation proved harder going. Frequently, the forensic anthropologists were forced to put down their hand tools and bail out water that seeped into the hole.

Along with the bones of one victim, they recovered an olive green T-shirt bearing the words "Bacardi Rum" and a silver Virgin Mary medal. The other skeleton had a bullet-fractured pelvis that showed the victim had been shot from behind. Around both skeletons were ropes that further supported witnesses' account of what happened here when the army made a midnight raid on this village of Aristide supporters.

Helping Establish Truth

The following week, the team was joined by Karen Burns, PhD, forensic anthropologist and adjunct professor, University of Georgia, Athens. They recovered five additional skeletons from a cemetery in Gonaives. According to the official account, the five people had suffered accidental deaths; however, there were no death certificates, says Salcedo. A former member of the military and another suspect are in custody awaiting trial for the killings. The evidence from the forensic investigation should help establish the truth, Salcedo says.

In the hospital laboratory, the skeletal remains, clothing, and other recov-

ered evidence are now undergoing analysis using x-rays and other techniques through which the investigators hope to establish the identity of each victim and the cause and manner of death.

The AAAS' Science and Human Rights Program has been a pioneer in the application of science to document cases of human rights violations and has sponsored forensic archeology and anthropology training workshops in the United States, Argentina, Guatemala, and other countries. In addition, the program has been an innovator in the application of information management technologies for the documentation and analysis of human rights abuses, according to Salcedo.

Realizing that a peaceful and democratic society cannot be built when gross human rights violations go untried and unpunished, the Aristide government established a Presidential Commission on Truth and Justice to conduct a thorough, rapid, credible, and public investigation of the more than 3000 killings and other atrocities that allegedly followed the military coup. The commission asked the AAAS to provide it with technical expertise in the application of scientific methods of documenting human rights abuses.

The commission, which was installed on March 28, 1995, is headed by seven commissioners, four from Haiti and three from other nations. Its mandate, which ends December 1995, can be renewed for an additional 3 months. While it has

no power to prosecute anyone who took part in political killings, rapes, or other abuses, the information it gathers may be used by others to initiate criminal proceedings.

On September 11, 2 days before the exhumations on the beach of Roboteau, President Aristide unveiled memorials to commemorate the anniversary of two of Haiti's more notorious political killings. The first was in a square near the burnt-out church of St Jean Bosco, where Aristide had been a priest. Hundreds of Haitians gathered to see their president dedicate a statue to the women of Haiti who have fallen victim to political violence.

On September 11, 1988, while Aristide was conducting mass in his church a party of Ton-Ton Macoutes—paramilitary thugs who carried out killings for Haiti's two previous dictators, Papa Doc Duvalier and Baby Doc Duvalier—burst in and shot and hacked to death 12 women and men, setting fire to the church as they left. None of the bullets aimed at Aristide found its mark.

The second memorial, two bronze busts, commemorate George and Antoine Izmerly, two prominent businessmen brothers who had been murdered for their support of Aristide's presidency. "Assassinated for democracy," reads the plaque between the two busts.

Change Occurring Rapidly

Things are happening quickly in Haiti. In August, a member of a paramilitary group who took part in Antoine Izmerly's killing was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment at hard labor. On September 27, 17 others, including coup leader and Chief of Police Joseph-Michel Francois, were convicted in absentia of the murder and also sentenced to life sentences at hard labor.

On October 15, Haitians celebrated the first anniversary of Aristide's return following US military intervention that forced the junta from power.

In December, election of a new president of Haiti is scheduled. On September 17, the nation held peaceful local and parliamentary elections. That was just 4 days after the forensic anthropologists dug up the remains of the three victims on the beach of Roboteau.

Just when the anthropologists were removing the last of the bones, the rain clouds cleared, revealing two picture-postcard rainbows hanging in the sky. "A good omen," the people of Roboteau said. For a country that has suffered decades of brutal oppression and terror, free elections, the first trials of those responsible for the terror, and good omens are all welcome sights.

—by Andrew A. Skolmen

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Uncovering the Sins of the Past: AI2

SCIENTISTS EXHUME THE BODY OF JEAN-PIERRE DAZOMBE FROM A HAITIAN CEMETERY

International Experts Help Probe Haiti's Bloody Past

GONAIVES, HAITI—Under a blistering sun, a team of foreign scientists began digging in this town's dusty cemetery last week to uncover the details of a bloody moment in Haiti's history. Led by forensic anthropologist Karen Burns of the University of Georgia, the team is trying to determine what happened on 2 October 1991 in an incident known locally as "the Raboteau massacre." It was one of many violent clashes in Haiti in 1991 to

1994. And it is one of a growing number of cases around the world in which researchers are using techniques of forensic anthropology and biology to document mass killings.

Townpeople say that government soldiers shot and killed four men near the Raboteau military post in this poor region of northern Haiti. The incident took place, according to a local priest, Daniel Roussiere, shortly after a protest march against the coup of 30 September 1991 that deposed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and installed a group



Mute witness. Anthropologists unearth remains of Jean-Pierre Dazme, allegedly shot by soldiers in 1991.

of generals under Raoul Cedras. When Aristide was returned to office, following the September 1994 invasion by U.S. troops, his supporters demanded that the alleged crimes of the Cedras period be punished. But the government is moving carefully: It hopes to establish the facts before offering amnesty or taking the accused to court. And that's where the foreign scientists come in.

The Aristide government has created a quasi-independent "National Commission of Truth and Justice" to probe the events of

1991 to 1994. The Truth Commission, consisting of four government-named members and three chosen by a United Nations group, is getting advice on forensics from a team that has documented civilian massacres in Argentina and other parts of the Americas. Some members of this group—sponsored

by the Science and Human Rights Program of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). Science's publisher—were trained by Burns.

These efforts began when forensic anthropologist Clyde Snow led a major AAAS research and training program in Argentina in 1986–87 to identify remains of people who "disappeared" when the country was under military rule. Some of those trainees have become international investigators in their own right, including Mercedes Doretto, who is coordinating the field work in Haiti. The AAAS spon-

sored similar efforts in El Salvador in 1992 and in Guatemala in 1993. The team's previous investigations—and similar ones under way around the world (see box)—have involved high-tech biology, including DNA analysis.

The Haiti project is less ambitious technically, but no less challenging: It aims to employ traditional forensic techniques in a country that hasn't used them before. The team is recovering human remains from graves up to 4 years old, confirming identities, and searching for clues such as bullet wounds or bone breaks that may support eyewitness accounts. In addition, AAAS advisers in Haiti helped create a database of alleged atrocities.

Françoise Boucard, the sociologist who presides over the Truth Commission, said the goal of exhuming bodies at Gonaives and conducting forensic studies "is to bring proof of the means of repression" that will be credible to neutral observers. Some Haitians have denied that there were any mass murders, Boucard explained, and she hopes that when the Truth Commission issues its final report in December, the scientific data will help establish a consensus.

The commission's computer expert, Luis Quiel, says the staff has collected about 4500 accounts of rape, torture, murder, and other abuses. He adds that human rights groups claim that 3000 to 4000 Haitians were killed in the Cedras era, but these estimates have not been confirmed as yet. With the help of AAAS consultants, Quiel created a computer database, and staffers are now entering data from interviews, including the names and locations of former military groups and commanders. The goal, says AAAS human rights officer Daniel Saicedo, coordinator of AAAS's technical assistance, is to uncover any "patterns of abuse" that

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WORLD NEWS

HOLDING EX-RULERS TO

Evidence Exhumed In Haiti

*Anthropologists Seek
To Fix Killings' Cause*

By Douglas Farah
Washington Post Foreign Service

GONAIVES, Haiti—Slowly, the masonry tombs crumbled under the blows of hammers, exposing the skeletons that Haitians are counting on to help them deal with their violent past and begin a process of meting out justice for thousands of people killed by the army and its allies.

Haiti's National Commission of Truth and Justice hopes to use the skeletons being dug up by forensic anthropologists to help convict murder suspects. The digging is also part of an effort to ensure that state-sponsored violence is not repeated.

Haiti has spent most of its 192 years of independence under dicta-



Guatemalan Federico Reyes Lopez helps exhume the bodies of persons killed under military rule in Gonaives.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Haiti's National Commission of Truth and Justice hopes to use the skeletons being dug up by forensic anthropologists to help convict murder suspects. The digging is also part of an effort to ensure that state-sponsored violence is not repeated.

Haiti has spent most of its 192 years of independence under dictatorships. The most recent lasted three years, beginning on Sept. 30, 1991, when the army and civilian militias overthrew democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in a bloody coup, and ending after a U.S.-led force of 20,000 troops occupied the nation a year ago to restore Aristide to power.

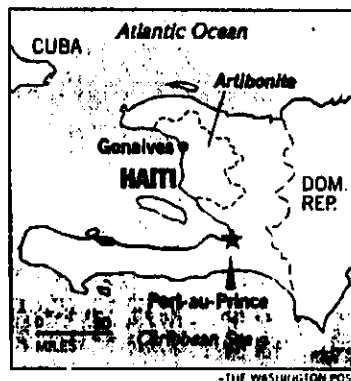
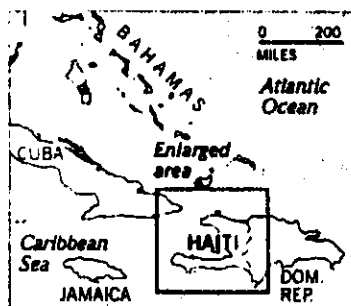
During that time, human rights groups documented about 3,000 political deaths, along with politically motivated rapes, beatings and disappearances.

The truth commission, formed by Aristide and financed in part by Canada, will probe killings during that three-year period,—the first investigations into state-sponsored terror in Haitian history.

"I am here to watch because I believe in this work," said Nerlande Rukhere, 30, standing in the blazing noonday sun as the group prepared to dig up the remains of her husband, Lue Joseph, killed by the army. "When he was alive, our children ate and were able to go to school. They killed him, and now we have nothing. It hurts. It hurts every time I think of him."

The exhumations in the Gonaives cemetery were carried out by forensic anthropologists from the American Association for the Advancement of Science, headquartered in Washington. The same group has carried out exhumations for human rights investigations around the globe.

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—THE WASHINGTON POST

physical evidence, and document the killings "in a way that is a whole lot stronger in a court case" if suspected slayers are brought to trial.

Charlisena Daznie, 30, was in the crowd around the cemetery, watching as the body of her brother Elysian was extracted from the earth. His bones were put in plastic bags. Elysian, 33, was killed with his cousin Joseph on Oct. 2, 1991, after participating in a protest against the coup. Their shallow graves are marked by large, above-ground cement and cinder-block vaults.

"I hope this provides proof of who did it," Daznie said, after naming the soldiers she said gunned down Elysian and Joseph as they were riding on a motorcycle. "The killers said they died in an accident. That is a

lie. I had to risk my life to bury him. Otherwise, they would have thrown him in a ditch. If we don't find evidence, they can say we made all this up and stay free to commit more crimes."

That, say those associated with the commission, is what the painful experience of digging up the bodies is intended to avoid.

"The years of the coup were not the first time Haiti has witnessed violence," said Francoise Boucard, the sociologist leading the commission, as she sat on a raised cement tomb in this city about 100 miles north of the capital. "But the reason it keeps happening is that there was no way for people to see the structure of the violence. People need to understand the culture and structure of repression that was part of the state."

Other nations that have suffered traumatic, state-sponsored violence—El Salvador, Chile, Argentina, South Africa—have used truth commissions to try to help its people deal with a bloody past. Like most of them, Boucard said, Haiti's commission has no power to prosecute alleged killers, but the evidence found could be used by family members to press for prosecution. Boucard said it is not yet clear if the commission's final report will name those responsible or limit itself to outlining patterns of state violence.

"We want to show the stories of summary executions were not invented," Boucard said. "Supporters of the coup never stopped saying people were inventing stories, that there was no repression, no disappearances, that the army was pure. That is why the truth commission was formed: to shed light for people. It is very important for Haiti and those outside Haiti to understand what happened here."

But there is not much time to establish symbolic cases, as the man-

date of the commission expires at the end of the year. It was established March 28.

The commission consists of four Haitians and three foreigners. Senior government officials expressed disappointment in the international community's financial response, despite public support for the process. Of the total budget of about \$2.3 million, officials said, Canada contributed about \$200,000—the only foreign benefactor.

"Things have gone slowly," Boucard said. "We do not have ideal conditions. There are some problems. But this is extremely important and we will do the best we can."

Before digging at the Gonaives cemetery, the forensic scientists had excavated three bodies at the nearby Roboteau beach, where, in 1993, the army killed more than a dozen people.

The Rev. Daniel Roussiere, a member of the Roman Catholic Peace and Justice Commission who at personal risk documented human rights abuses in the region through the years of military rule, scarcely contained his excitement as the forensic experts did their work. His reports are the basis of many of the investigations in the Artibonite region, of which Gonaives is the capital.

Roussiere said 200 to 300 people were killed in the region during the years of military rule, adding that in a society as impoverished as Haiti, each loss of the head of a household contributed to many other deaths.

"When you torture the father, you kill the child," Roussiere said. "We will finally be able to show beyond any doubt these men died by military bullets. The fact the work can be done without fear of repression is a marvel. This is a historic moment."