

The year 2004 marked the 200th anniversary of Haiti's independence from France, and should have seen the international community paying its respects. This independence was achieved, after all, through an anti-colonial rebellion of tremendous significance, a successful slave revolt with no historic equivalent. Against countless interventions to repress it, the Haitian revolution managed to establish the world's first black republic and to pass the first abolitionist laws in the Western hemisphere. That 2004 was instead the occasion for a fresh display of contempt for Haitian sovereignty speaks volumes to the enduring strength of colonial relations of power and domination in international affairs.

The *coup d'état* that ousted the Haitian government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide on February 29, 2004, and the foreign military occupation that has consolidated it, reveal the continued determination of major imperial powers to roll back the gains made by Haitian movements for self-determination. The means, of course, have become somewhat more subtle with time. In 1803, after more than a decade of slave revolt in what was then the French colony of Saint Domingue, Napoleon's forces moved to restore their control through a straightforward final solution: crush the ex-slave army, exterminate the population sustaining it, and bring in new slaves.¹ Such crude, overtly genocidal responses to resistance in the colonized world are now less politically tenable. Nonetheless, this longstanding effort to return Haiti to dependency status is very much alive in the ongoing intervention spearheaded by the United States, France and Canada.

For France, participation in this effort is nothing new. When direct invasion to re-take its colony failed, it resorted to extracting from its ex-slaves an exorbitant indemnity

¹ C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (Vintage Books, 1989), p. 360.

payment in compensation for lost property; this laid the basis for Haiti's continued indebtedness.² The U.S., for its part, has maintained its own consistent record of sabotaging Haiti's "post-colonial" independence, refusing to even recognize Haiti through most of the 19th century, formally occupying the country from 1915-1934, backing a series of Haitian military governments and brutal dictatorships into the late 1980s, and supporting the overthrow of Jean-Bertrand Aristide's first presidency in 1991 (as well as the repressive military government that ruled Haiti from 1991-1994).³

Canada's experience undermining Haitian sovereignty is less extensive.

David Evans, writing for *Seven Oaks*, has nonetheless made a convincing case that Canadian participation in the latest assault on Haiti does have deep historic roots. In "Canada's Shame, Empire's Profit: The Caribbean Slave Wars 1788-1807," Evans writes that "[w]hen Canada secured the airport in Haiti and was instrumental in overthrowing its legitimate government, there was nothing new in its actions."⁴ Continuing, he explains that "Upper and lower Canada as well as the Maritimes provided not only the lion's share of the resources," but also many of the soldiers and commanding officers for the early 19th century British assault on Haiti.⁵ This attack aimed to succeed where France had failed, in taking control of former French plantations and re-enslaving the population.

In any case, the enthusiasm with which the Canadian government under Prime Minister Paul Martin has participated in this most recent intervention has been striking.

From February to July 2004, Canadian military forces were deployed to join in

² Peter Hallward, "Option Zero in Haiti," *New Left Review* (Vol. 27, May-June 2004), p. 26.

³ This is common knowledge, reported even by the *Globe* itself; see pp. 38-43.

⁴ David Evans, "Canada's Shame, Empire's Profit: The Caribbean Slave Wars, 1788-1807," *ZNet* (December 27, 2005).

⁵ *Ibid.*

overturning Haiti's elected government and installing a new regime under *de facto* Prime Minister Gerard Latortue. Additional support for this regime change in the form of police deployment, diplomacy and financing for the installed government has been extensive and is ongoing. Now – with Haiti's constitutional president in exile, key politicians and activists in prison, and violent repression against the country's only mass political party (Lavalas) continuing unabated – Elections Canada is positioning itself to try to legitimize a farce of an election scheduled by the *coup* regime for early 2006. To add insult to injury, Paul Martin has even had the gall to start holding the case of Haiti up as a useful model for future intervention in “failed states,” a key reference-point as he pushes his favorite neocolonial doctrine, “the responsibility to protect.”

The Globe and Mail, Canada's most prestigious national newspaper, has been in a good position to provide context and coverage of these events. The Martin government is sensitive to domestic political pressure, and critical focus on Canadian policy in Haiti could help to generate oppositional activity and exert a healthy influence on state policy. Unfortunately, the paper has instead joined Canadian policy-makers in displaying clear contempt for the political will and organizations of Haiti's poor majority, and for Haitian sovereignty generally. At key moments, those in government weighing the domestic political costs and benefits of a regressive foreign policy could look to *The Globe and Mail* and find, rather than critical scrutiny, encouragement and strategic discussion of how to best pursue elite interests. In sum, “Canada's national newspaper” has helped grease the gears of the *coup d'état* machinery, and shares a measure of guilt for the ongoing atrocities that have resulted from its operation.

This paper provides a critical assessment of *Globe and Mail* coverage of Haiti since the beginning of 2004, the country's revolutionary bicentennial. It highlights the persistence of *Globe* writers and editors in producing coverage within a morally bankrupt framework founded on racist, colonial assumptions. It suggests that for people in Canada to constructively engage with these issues, a break is required with the official narrative rationalizing Canada's Haiti policy, as a precondition for a broad-based political collision with its architects.

For people in Canada, the implications of these issues extend beyond the question of Haiti. Canadian support for the *coup* and occupation in Haiti stands alongside the escalating combat mission in Afghanistan as a troubling indicator of where Canadian foreign policy is headed. Currently, these interventions are being used as grounds to demand further financial and political support for Canada's military in order to expand the tradition of Canadian participation in U.S.-led imperial campaigns. Canadian elites are trying to regularize this trend, and to use interventions like that in Haiti to set important precedents while improving the deployment capabilities and rhetoric that will allow for an expanded role in the U.S.-managed international order. In this context, exposing Canada's Haiti policy and generating resistance to it should be a priority.

“Canada’s National Newspaper”

The arguments presented in this article are based on thorough evaluation of *Globe and Mail* coverage of Haiti from 2004-2005. A comprehensive critique of this coverage is, however, beyond the scope of this particular piece. While its coverage has been very selective, the *Globe* has published quite a bit of material about Haiti in the past two years. In 2004, nearly 250 articles included discussion about Haiti, including news pieces, columns, editorials, and letters to the editor, and nearly 100 in 2005.⁶ The critique provided below is introductory in nature. It uses an overview of Western policy in Haiti as a reference-point in describing its continuous distortion in the pages of the *Globe*.

It should be stressed at the outset that the *Globe* is not a monolith, the 300+ pieces it has published on Haiti in the last two years by no means a product of methodical planning or censorship. Nonetheless, upon close review of the body of work published by the newspaper, it can certainly be said that the terms of *Globe* coverage have corresponded with the priorities of official policy. There are obvious enough explanations for this. Indeed, while this paper focuses on how the *Globe*’s orientation has expressed itself through coverage of Haiti, the *Globe*’s coverage of a wide range of issues can similarly be criticized. Before moving into the specifics of the newspaper’s Haiti coverage, then, some comments on *The Globe and Mail* itself – and its institutional role in Canadian politics – are in order.

Any stable power structure requires intellectual institutions that generate ideas and analysis suitable to its interests. The Canadian system of state and corporate power is

⁶ A full listing of *Globe* articles in 2004/2005 that touch substantively on Haiti is attached to this paper, excluding articles with references that are peripheral or minor to the point of insignificance (e.g., that include only passing reference to a Haitian sports team).

no exception. The fact is that *The Globe and Mail*, alongside other similar institutions, is to a significant degree oriented towards fulfilling this function. Thanks in large measure to the political culture that such institutions have helped to shape, this conclusion is somewhat counter-intuitive. But the features of the paper that promote this subservience are readily identifiable. They include the institution's basic priorities, its long-time allegiance to particular social structures, and its stated commitment to cater to the upper strata of Canadian society.⁷

Fundamentally, *The Globe and Mail* is a profit-making organization. "On Jan. 9, 2001," the *Globe* website reads, "*The Globe and Mail* became part of a new and dynamic media company, Bell Globemedia Publishing Inc."⁸ While the purpose of this company is profit maximization, the *Globe* cites additional social obligations. It summarizes its commitment to Canada's constitutional monarchy with the following motto, retained since 1844: "The subject who is truly loyal to the Chief Magistrate will neither advise nor submit to arbitrary measures." More tangibly, the institution is geared towards generating revenue.

In its pitch to advertisers, the primary source of this revenue, the *Globe* website describes its intended readership: "they're not just anybody. They are the most sought after demographic, with money to spend, plus they are the most well educated, influential and affluent Canadians. ... When you combine all our products, we reach over 81% of all C-level execs in Canada's largest corporations." The same page links to three success

⁷ The media analysis in this paper draws heavily from the "propaganda model" developed by Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman in *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (Pantheon Books, 1988), and as further explored elsewhere; e.g., Chomsky, *Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies* (South End Press, 1989)

⁸ All citations from *The Globe and Mail* website are online at www.globeandmail.com, led from the bottom of the site's main page to the right of the title *ADVERTISE*. [January 2006]

stories of advertisers that have profited from access to this audience: Hewlett-Packard, Charles Schwab and Hilton.

This sketches a pretty accurate institutional portrait of the *Globe*. A Bell Globemedia asset, it is committed to using its “editorial quality” and “consistently outstanding product” to sell wealthy readers’ attention to corporations like Hilton. So the *Globe*’s class and national bias hardly defies explanation. Its stated mission does seem to require that Canadian elite institutions and individuals, whose trust and attention it depends on, find their perspective and interests properly represented in its pages.

As the Canadian establishment has joined in the assault on Haiti, the results of this orientation have been striking, and particularly ugly. Despite the clearly regressive, anti-democratic character of this assault, *Globe* writers and editors have consistently produced coverage that has helped to normalize, sanitize and even promote Canadian participation in Haiti’s *de facto* re-colonization. Notwithstanding divergences in opinion among writers, the very terms of coverage and discussion have ensured this impact. The paper has thereby encouraged criminal state policies, while regularizing a troubling pattern of Canadian collaboration in this type of U.S.-led foreign policy initiative.

Bell Globemedia’s “Consistently Outstanding Product”

Many of the facts regarding the intervention in Haiti that have been positively spun in the *Globe* are themselves undisputed, and can be gathered from the paper itself.

The fact that Canada played an important role in overthrowing Haiti’s Fanmi Lavalas government under President Aristide is, for example, not particularly

controversial. In the years preceding Haiti's 2004 *coup d'état*, Canada supported U.S.-led efforts to block the Haitian government's access to sorely-needed funds, including a \$146 million loan package from the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) that had been slated for health care, education, transportation and potable water.⁹ As U.S.-linked paramilitary assaults against Haiti's government escalated in early February, the Liberal Party's Pierre Pettigrew – Canada's current Foreign Affairs Minister – met directly with paramilitary leader Paul Arcelin.¹⁰ And on February 29, 2004, Canada joined the United States and France in a carefully coordinated intervention that saw the government dissolved.¹¹ U.S. Marines occupied the National Palace while Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was flown into exile, from an airport secured by Canadian military personnel, aboard a U.S. jet. The Canadian government then put its diplomatic stamp of approval on the establishment of a new regime; Gerard Latortue, a Haitian-born business consultant in Miami who had formerly worked with the United Nations, was flown in from Florida and installed as its *de facto* Prime Minister.¹² This was all reported in factual terms by the *Globe*.

The fact that the ousted Fanmi Lavalas government was an elected one is similarly uncontroversial. As the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL), a Canadian government-linked think tank, explained in 2001: "The May 21, 2000 legislative elections (municipal elections were held the same day) were proof of the Lavalas Family's [Fanmi Lavalas'] continuing popular support ... Aristide's party won 72

⁹ "Haiti's bleak Black History Month," Ken Wiwa (February 28, 2004; A25).

¹⁰ "Canada assailed for failing to step in and save Aristide," Paul Knox, Shawn McCarthy and Jeff Sallot (March 2, 2004; A1).

¹¹ "International force deploys to Haiti as Aristide flees," Paul Knox (March 1, 2004; A1).

¹² "We cannot afford to fail this time," Jeff Sallot (March 10, 2004; A5).

of 83 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 18 of 19 seats in the Senate.”¹³ These results were consistent with a U.S.-commissioned Gallup poll in October 2000, which found Fanmi Lavalas (FL) to be the preferred party by a factor of 13 to 1.¹⁴ When presidential elections were held in November that same year, Aristide was given a mandate to govern thanks to this broad support, a mandate that should have lasted until February 2006.¹⁵

This, too, was reported in the *Globe*. True, *Globe* commentators eagerly regurgitated the line of those calling for the Aristide government’s ouster: the “May, 2000, Senate elections were marred by vote-counting fraud,”¹⁶ Marina Jimenez declared, with Ottawa Bureau Chief Drew Fagan remarking that “Aristide was swept back into office in [November] 2000 in a vote that the opposition charged was rigged,”¹⁷ providing “background” information that was repeated *ad nauseum*. But no specific, let alone credible, case was made to support these offhand allegations. And time after time, *Globe* commentators did acknowledge the Aristide government as elected and internationally recognized.

In fact, it was even reported that Canada was widely considered party to a *coup d’état*. In the immediate aftermath of the *coup*, for example, reporter Jeff Sallot ran through the diplomatic problem facing the Canadian government under the title “Ottawa

¹³ Zaragoza, Jose et al., for the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL), “Haiti After the 2000 Elections: Searching for Solutions to a Political Crisis,” (www.focal.ca, June 2001), p. 5.

¹⁴ Hallward, “Option Zero in Haiti,” p. 44.

¹⁵ “Aristide rejects allies’ pressure to resign; Canada, U.S. adopt France’s suggestion that President’s departure might help Haiti,” Paul Knox, with reports from Drew Fagan and Shawn McCarthy (February 27, 2004; A13).

¹⁶ “Haiti teeters as protests to oust Aristide mount,” Marina Jimenez (January 13, 2004; A4).

¹⁷ “PM offers to help solve Haitian crisis,” Drew Fagan – Ottawa Bureau Chief (January 13, 2004; led from A1, “Martin helps in Haiti,” continued on A4).

works to ease Caribbean ‘upset.’”¹⁸ Sallot explained that a “leading Jamaican newspaper, *The Observer*, said in an editorial yesterday that Canada, the United States and France comprise a ‘Western troika’ that allowed a *coup* to take place and gave ‘the democratic system a good, hard and painful kick in the teeth,’” a sample of what was explained was a widespread sentiment. But, *Globe* news reporters stressed, Prime Minister Martin was doing what he could to shift perceptions of the situation. Martin was quoted explaining that leaders of the 20-nation Caribbean Community (Caricom) “are upset,” but “their upset is not with Canada per se. Their upset is with the fact a constitutionally elected president has lost his position.” What we needed to do, it was implied, was refocus on charitable help for Haitians and spin Canadian involvement in these terms. As Martin put it: “we’ve got to get aid in there.”¹⁹ Caricom, alongside the African Union (AU), refused to recognize the regime that had been installed with Canadian support.

Notwithstanding these realities, the Canadian government has been able to count on its leading national newspaper for persistent support. The cynical spectacle of Martin calling for “aid” to the country his government was joining in attacking was apparently regarded as fine statesmanship by *Globe* commentators. Riding out these diplomatic bumps, the Prime Minister would within a couple of months go on an official visit to Washington, and Drew Fagan would report approvingly how “Martin smiled broadly as Mr. Bush praised Canada's commitments in Afghanistan and Haiti.”²⁰ Lead columnist John Ibbitson would describe the same event as an example of how this Prime Minister

¹⁸ March 3, 2004; A17.

¹⁹ “Ottawa works to ease Caribbean ‘upset,’” Jeff Sallot (March 3, 2004; A17).

²⁰ “Bush backs open border for beef,” Drew Fagan – Ottawa Bureau Chief (May 1, 2004; A1).

“has always worked effectively with other world leaders.”²¹ And by 2005, the Haitian regime change of February 2004 factored into *Globe* news coverage as the start of just another “peace mission.”²²

Even when the facts were too fresh and embarrassing for an offhand whitewash, grounds for the long-term justification of Canadian policy were carefully maintained. Consider the criticism-within-proper-bounds coverage of the *Globe*’s Paul Knox, the paper’s lead Haiti pundit around the time of the *coup* (Knox wrote or co-authored 35 articles on Haiti for the *Globe* in the first three months of 2004).²³ In a late February 2004 email exchange with Knox available online, one reader observed that Knox “provided good public relations for the groups that are moving Haiti back towards dictatorship.”²⁴ The reader, Joe Emersberger, was right on target; but as the effect of this move became widely apparent, Knox did flinch somewhat.

A little background on the situation is required here. Since late 2003, paramilitary forces – including personnel employed by the United States to overthrow the first Aristide presidency in 1991 and terrorize the Lavalas party’s mass base from 1991-1994, as even the *Globe* eventually acknowledged²⁵ – had been mounting armed incursions into Haiti from the neighboring Dominican Republic. As Knox explained, among the leaders of these forces were “Guy Philippe, the ex-chief [of police] accused of plotting a *coup d’état* in 2002,” and “former paramilitary death-squad leader Louis-Jodel Chamblain.”²⁶

²¹ “The PM came across as presidential,” John Ibbitson (May 1, 2004; A4).

²² “Martin vows to ease Darfur’s suffering,” Paul Koring (February 23, 2005; A1).

²³ See *Coverage Listing* pp. i-iv; attached.

²⁴ “Joe Emersberger’s Letters to the Media,” *En Camino – Canadian Media* (www.en-camino.org)

²⁵ E.g., “Haitian rebel leader convicted of murder surrenders,” Michelle Faul (April 23, 2004; A15).

²⁶ “Anti-Aristide march falters a second time,” Paul Knox (February 16, 2004; A10).

Chamblain was the CIA-trained second in command of the Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti (FRAPH), a group “blamed for killing 3,000 civilians” from 1991-1994, as an Associated Press story published in the *Globe* later explained²⁷ (the statistic is a conservative one, and does obviously not include victims of non-lethal torture and other abuses).

The paramilitary assault was misrepresented in certain *Globe* headlines as a “Haitian insurrection” and a “popular uprising,” and its participants were deemed “rebels.”²⁸ The implication was that the paramilitary campaign was an organized expression of widespread Haitian anti-government sentiment. In fact, these forces basically functioned as the U.S.-led intervention’s advance team. They were composed of former members of the U.S.-trained FRAPH, including leaders like Chamblain, and remnants of the Haitian military – a force itself initially established by the United States, in fact – which had been disbanded in 1995 by Aristide. Numerous credible reports indicate that 200 U.S. Special Forces were deployed to the Dominican Republic to help train these forces (under the auspices of the International Republican Institute, or IRI) prior to deploying to Haiti in February 2004.²⁹ Following the *coup d’état*, these paramilitary forces joined Canada, the United States, France and an installed “interim administration” in replacing the Aristide government as Haiti’s functional governing authority.

²⁷ “Haitian rebel leader convicted of murder surrenders,” Michelle Faul (April 23, 2004; A15).

²⁸ “Haitian insurrection spreads to several more towns,” Ian James – Associated Press (February 10, 2004; A17) & “UN envoy to Haiti tours site of popular uprising,” Amy Bracken – Canadian Press (July 26, 2004; A11).

²⁹ See, e.g., “Witnesses: U.S. Special Forces Trained and Armed Anti-Aristide Paramilitaries in D.R.,” An Interview with Dr. Luis Barrios – *Democracy Now* (www.democracynow.org, April 7 2004).

It is in this light that Paul Knox's technique of diluting official public relations with toothless criticism should be considered. The approach was nicely exemplified in a March 3, 2004 article of his on the situation, "Haiti: Brute force rules."³⁰ With Canadian and allied troops deployed and Haiti's elected government ousted, Knox reported, paramilitaries under commanders like Philippe and Chamblain were "the capital's *de facto* security force." They were declaring "openly that they plan selective assassinations of Mr. Aristide's followers," joining in the restoration of neocolonial governance in Haiti: "What seems most likely now is that power in Haiti will be carved up again among military officers, landowners and a business elite with strong foreign ties."

But on the question of President Aristide and the Canadian government, Knox's article continued to toe the official line. It was largely the President's fault, the article explained in a typically condescending tone: Aristide "was untutored in the political arts, and learned little on the job." This ignorant "shantytown priest" was in any case gone, and Haiti would soon fall under benevolent Western protection. Canada, the United States and France would hopefully "stabilize" the regime change, and hand power over to the United Nations: "Then, Haiti will once again become a stage for nation-building, that peculiar entertainment in which more prosperous countries are pleased to engage from time to time." Just some nation-building help for our untutored Caribbean neighbors.

A few days later, *Globe* editor-in-chief Edward Greenspon wrote an article about his newspaper's international coverage which singled out for praise "the excellent

³⁰ March 3, 2004; A19.

reporting that correspondent Paul Knox has provided from Haiti over the past three weeks.”³¹

Meanwhile, Canada continued to escalate its military deployment to Haiti. The Canadian mission, dubbed “Operation Halo,” helped to consolidate the *coup d’état*. The mission had the clear reported focus of buttressing the installed regime and disarming social movements calling for the return of the Fanmi Lavalas government. This, as these same movements were openly targeted for liquidation by incomparably better-armed death squads.

Massive demonstrations calling for the return of constitutional government were roundly under-reported in the *Globe*, but were occasionally mentioned. One March 6 article by Knox and Tu Thanh Ha, for example – “Canada to send 450 troops to Haiti” – explained that “The Canadians are headed for a country that remains politically charged ... Shouting ‘Aristide yes, Republicans no,’ several thousand marchers streamed out of shantytowns to the National Palace to demand the ex-president’s return.”³² But Aristide was the “ex-president,” the regime change presented as a *fait accompli*. Martin was quoted as pledging that Canadian forces sent to finalize the change would “not abandon the troubled country,” suggesting a long-term occupation was in the works. And open paramilitary assassinations continued. With limited means of defending themselves, popular movements faced an ugly reality.

³¹ “Bringing the world closer to home,” March 6, 2004; A2.

³² “Canada to send 450 troops to Haiti,” Tu Thanh Ha and Paul Knox with reports from Kevin Cox and Jeff Sallot (March 6, 2004; A15).

Accounts of specific atrocities in the aftermath of the *coup* rarely made it into the *Globe*, so it is worth filling in some of the blanks with the findings of a delegation to Haiti from the National Lawyers' Guild (NLG). Visiting the state morgue in Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, the NLG delegation was told that 800 bodies had been dumped and buried by the morgue on March 7, and another 200 on March 28.³³ The morgue's director explained that many of the bodies were of young men who had been shot with their hands tied behind their backs and plastic bags over their heads. In another neighborhood, the NLG delegation heard that 40-60 bodies had been dumped in a field on March 23. The NLG investigated, found "a massive ash pile and pigs eating flesh of human bones that had not burned," and "photographed fresh skulls and other human bones."³⁴ On March 23, the *Globe*'s Marina Jimenez reported that *de facto* Prime Minister Latortue had been joined onstage by a Canadian diplomat as he praised the paramilitaries as "freedom fighters."³⁵

And so it was, the *Globe* reported, that Canada continued to keep the peace. "Peacekeeping mission to Haiti more than a job for Canadian soldiers," one March 23 title read, with the repression clearly in full swing.³⁶ Again, it was an absolute whitewash. The author, columnist Roy MacGregor, parroted the official line that Operation Halo was a kind-hearted mission of salvation with the utmost confidence. Canadian troops were being deployed for the most noble of reasons, he explained: "to return peace and

³³ Justin Podur, *The New Haitian Dictatorship* (Unpublished Manuscript, 2006), p. 30.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ "New leader draws crowd of Haitians, praises rebels," Marina Jimenez (March 22, 2004; A11) & Yves Engler and Anthony Fenton, *Canada in Haiti: Waging War on the Poor Majority* (Red and Fernwood Publishing, 2005), p. 62. The former source mentions the presence of an OAS official without specifically naming him as Canadian diplomat David Lee, as the latter source joins many others in doing.

³⁶ "Peacekeeping mission to Haiti more than a job for Canadian soldiers," Roy MacGregor (March 23, 2004; A2).

democracy to a small Caribbean nation that so often seems to want nothing to do with it.” It is dangerous work they are doing, but necessary given Haitian incompetence. The country “has more faults than it can deal with on its own,” and so it is up to Canada to help. No criticism of the termination of constitutional rule in Haiti; no information about paramilitary repression, let alone about Canadian complicity with it; just a faithful pledge of support for the work of our 2nd Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment. Fittingly, MacGregor has since been given the Canadian government’s Order of Canada award for his quality “Communications” work.³⁷

These samples are indicative. Time and time again, *Globe* writers and editors have decided to put their readers’ trust in a pair of familiar assumptions, and continue to. The first of these relates to the mythology of benevolent imperialism – the assumption, maintained despite extensive evidence to the contrary, that Western intervention in Haiti is based on concern for the welfare of people in the country. The second is what Peter Hallward, in an excellent article for *New Left Review*, flagged as “perhaps the most consistent theme of Western commentary on the island: that poor black people remain incapable of governing themselves.”³⁸

Needless to say, these assumptions prove astonishingly resilient to facts that beg a different interpretation.

³⁷ “Governor General announces new appointments to the Order of Canada” (www.gg.ca; August 29 2005): *Media*.

³⁸ Hallward, “Option Zero in Haiti,” p. 25.

Helping Haiti

In 2004-2005, Rick Salutin's columns for *The Globe and Mail* have constituted the sole recurring exception to the rule when it comes to coverage of Haiti. One need not share his impulse to "give thanks that our nation is not an imperial power"³⁹ to recognize in his commentary on Haiti indications of a degree of moral integrity and political consistency rare among *Globe* commentators. In addition to lonely, he has occasionally seemed less than enthusiastic holding up the left-liberal end of the *Globe*'s spectrum. In an April 2004 article on media filtering, for example, he remarked that "the illusion of debate ... may be more dangerous than its suppression," comments which – while not directed at the *Globe* specifically – did faintly ring a tone of self-criticism.⁴⁰ In any event, a passage from his December 2, 2005 column on foreign policy is a reasonable point of departure for discussion of Western policy and Haiti: "every empire says its motives are noble (the British 'white man's burden,' the French mission civilisatrice). It must be checked against the facts."⁴¹

The point is both crucial and obvious. But rarely checking the noble pretensions of Canada and its allies against the facts, the *Globe* has instead generally opted to serve as a forum for developing and articulating them. Prime Minister Martin's deflection of criticism of Canadian intervention with the line "we need to get aid in there," like his declaration of Canada's long-term occupation plans through a pledge to "not abandon the troubled country," were hardly unique. Two years later, with the installed Latortue

³⁹ "A little gratitude, and a jeer," Rick Salutin (July 1, 2005; A13).

⁴⁰ "All the news that's fit to filter," Rick Salutin (April 2, 2004; A19).

⁴¹ "Speaking power to truth," Rick Salutin (December 2, 2005; A23).

government in crisis after endless postponements of planned sham elections, the line is more or less the same. On December 15 2005, for example, Barbara McDougall – a former Canadian official who now works for the deeply anti-Lavalas International Republican Institute (IRI) – weighed in on the situation in a *Globe* article with a stunningly original perspective.⁴² The piece’s title? “We cannot abandon Haiti again.” It’s message? “Haiti, the running sore of the Western hemisphere,” needs our help so that the installed government can hold the ever-elusive elections it keeps promising. But “the real problems start the day after the election, when the helpful outsiders pack up and go home.” And so Canadian support for the occupation must stay the course, Canadian help protecting Haiti continue: “The Haitian people deserve the continuing support of outsiders such as Canada.”

The mix of contempt for this “running sore” country of uppity ex-slaves’ descendants with prettied-up calls for its continued foreign domination has long surrounded Western policy towards Haiti.

Thanks to institutions like the *Globe*, Canadian politicians haven’t needed to work alone to update and maintain this rhetorical approach. In preparing his statements around the time of the *coup*, Martin could simply have been borrowing from his country’s leading national newspaper. A sample of *Globe* headlines from the preceding period of 2004 does convey a similar tone: “Martin helps in Haiti,” “PM offers to help solve Haitian crisis” (January 13); “How to help Haiti” (January 24); “U.S. asks Canada to help police chaotic Haiti” (February 13); “... Canada, U.S. adopt France’s suggestion that President’s departure might help Haiti” (February 27); “Canada considers sending troops

⁴² “We cannot abandon Haiti again,” Barbara McDougall (December 15, 2005; A21).

to help Haiti” (February 28); “Time to help Haiti” (March 1); and so on. Official presentation of Canadian participation in the *coup* as an aid package fit all too naturally into such *Globe* reports.

It is not that potentially self-interested motives went unmentioned. In fact, Canada’s stake in Haiti’s future was clear. Throughout this pre-*coup* period of coverage featuring the above headlines the Martin government was, as Drew Fagan reported in “PM offers to help solve Haitian crisis,” trying to re-launch Canadian-Caribbean free trade negotiations.⁴³ And our superpower ally to the south – to whose occupation of Iraq we were giving ammunition, police resources and other low-key support but no troops – was giving the Canadian government a chance to make up for its wavering support for the U.S. war effort. Meanwhile, the pleas for Western help for Haiti were sounding clearly. One such call for justice was relayed to readers by Paul Knox in “U.S. asks Canada to help police chaotic Haiti.”⁴⁴ As Knox wrote, “A 25-year-old businessman who said he was opposed to Mr. Aristide demanded that the United States come to the aid of Haitians as he said it did for Iraq. ‘They go to all those countries like Baghdad to free all those people,’ he said. ‘We need to be free too.’” What self-respecting civilized power would not be moved to action by such pleas? With Canadian-backed intervention likely, the *Globe* busied itself fitting the intervention with humanitarian, democratic trimmings.

The tone of the paper’s Haiti coverage was nicely set in early 2004 by an article titled “Haiti teeters as protests to oust Aristide mount.”⁴⁵ The article was written by

⁴³ “PM offers to help solve Haitian crisis,” Drew Fagan – Ottawa Bureau Chief (January 13, 2004; led from A1, “Martin helps in Haiti,” continued on A4).

⁴⁴ “U.S. asks Canada to help police chaotic Haiti,” Paul Knox (February 13, 2004; A17).

⁴⁵ “Haiti teeters as protests to oust Aristide mount,” Marina Jimenez (January 13, 2004; A4).

Marina Jimenez, an adamantly pro-*coup* commentator and one of the *Globe*'s most prolific writers on Haiti. The article's very title implied that Haiti's elected government under President Aristide was on the verge of being ousted. The line was taken directly from former Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy, who was quoted in the story as saying that Haiti was "a country teetering on the edge." As Jimenez almost certainly knew, Axworthy had been the Canadian representative at the first meeting of the "friends of Haiti," a formation including Canada, the United States and France, brought together in September 2000 by then-U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.⁴⁶ Axworthy was quite familiar with North American foreign policy on Haiti, and his impression that Haiti's elected government might fall was ominous.

After all, as a news piece by Estanislao Oziwicz explained, even James Morrell – head of the Washington-based Haiti Democracy Project (HDP), a leading anti-Aristide grouping which had helped to bring together the Haitian opposition "Group of 184" – was saying that Aristide "will remain [President] unless the United States, and to a lesser extent Canada, undermines him."⁴⁷ And any such plans were publicly denied. But with a U.S.-led regime change nonetheless impending, Jimenez joined officials and her colleagues in constructing a narrative that could justify it.

Jimenez's January 13 piece therefore began with an introduction of the characters in the story *The Globe and Mail* would tell about Haiti. The first sentence read: "In a country known for violence and chaos, Haiti has reached a new nadir as government-backed vigilantes known as *chimeres*, or monsters, attack and kill pro-

⁴⁶ E.g., Engler and Fenton, *Canada in Haiti*, pp. 30-31.

⁴⁷ "20,000 protest in Haiti's capital," Estanislao Oziwicz (January 22, 2004, A18).

democracy protesters with impunity.”⁴⁸ This introduction would be built upon in the coming months, the characters further developed.

On the one hand was the U.S.-linked opposition, united under the banner of the Group of 184 – the “pro-democracy protesters.” This “largely middle- and upper-class movement seeking to topple Mr. Aristide peacefully,”⁴⁹ in Knox’s words, was calling for complete regime change. It would not accept new elections, nor even a power-sharing arrangement that would automatically give this minority-based opposition an unelected stake in government. It was after nothing less than the immediate removal of Aristide, and the absolute exclusion of the country’s sole mass political party, Fanmi Lavalas, from government; an end since achieved. The principal opposition leaders and spokespeople – individuals like Charles Baker and Andy Apaid – were often described as “civic leaders” in *Globe* coverage, but were accurately reported as being Haiti’s biggest factory owners, with deep ties to the United States.⁵⁰

On the other hand were the movements affiliated with Fanmi Lavalas – “*chimeres*, or monsters,” as Jimenez described them, drawing from the rhetoric of Haiti’s elite and the international corporate press. These movements didn’t have spokespeople so much as inarticulate support for their leader, Aristide, usually described as a “former slum cleric,” or some variant on this theme.⁵¹ One could easily forget, reading the *Globe*, that

⁴⁸ “Haiti teeters as protests to oust Aristide mount,” Marina Jimenez (January 13, 2004; A4).

⁴⁹ “Anti-Aristide march falters a second time,” Paul Knox (February 16, 2004; A10).

⁵⁰ E.g., “Pressure grows to send forces to help Haiti,” Paul Knox and Jeff Sallot (February 25, 2004; A17). & “Little in common: Haiti’s opposition,” Estanislao Oziewicz (February 26, 2004; A17).

⁵¹ “Why peaceful protests fail to stir Aristide,” Paul Knox (February 14, 2004; led from A1, “Aristide’s tight grip,” and continued on A18). The quotation above is a very close paraphrase; Knox’s exact wording was that Aristide was “Formerly a slum cleric” – “former slum priest” was Jeff Sallot’s phrase of choice, as used in articles on March 3 and July 30, 2004 (published, respectively, on p. A17 and p. A8). These descriptions in any case correspond with the general tone of *Globe* coverage.

all available indications suggested these movements enjoyed the support of the majority of Haiti's population. On February 14 2004, for example, Paul Knox helped to downplay this fact in typical terms, describing an upcoming "opposition" march as "A new test of wills between him [Aristide] and the broad coalition of Haitians opposed to his rule."⁵² Knox's suggestion that Aristide was a lone dictator facing off against a popular upheaval was a recurring one in *Globe* coverage. That the suggestion stood directly at odds with Haitian political reality, as revealed by successive election results and opinion polls, did not block its persistent inclusion in the newspaper.

The very title of the article describing this supposed "test of wills" expressed the ritual normalization of calls for the reversal of the Aristide government's electoral mandate: "Why peaceful protests fail to stir Aristide." Aristide's commitment to uphold his electoral mandate was to be understood as a kind of recalcitrance. At the end of the article, Knox did mention the existence of the popular base whose opinions he so easily brushed off. Knox wrote that there was, in certain quarters, "visceral resistance to the idea that an elected leader should resign just because members of a comparatively wealthy, well-educated elite demand it." But this visceral naivety was not shared by Knox in any serious way, nor by the "friends of Haiti," who helped the Haitian electorate overcome this gut reaction through the application of military force.

The foreign intervention's paramilitary advance team, helping to apply the necessary force, were assigned the role of "rebels" in the *Globe*-published story. Exaggeration of their popularity was routine. Straightforward support for them was not,

⁵² "Why peaceful protests fail to stir Aristide," Paul Knox (February 14, 2004; led from A1, "Aristide's tight grip," and continued on A18).

however. It was hard to deny, as Knox explained with relative regularity, that these forces included known and convicted death squads leaders. Nonetheless, criticism of these forces was carefully limited.

The gloves-on approach to covering paramilitary activities was expressed succinctly in a subtitle of one of Knox's February 2004 stories: "Opposition worries about rebel alliance with ex-leader of Haitian death squads."⁵³ Quoting factory owner Andy Apaid, Knox wrote that characters such as this "leading protest organizer" were concerned about the fact that convicted mass murderer Louis-Jodel Chamblain was publicly commanding anti-government paramilitaries. Knox's selection of the relevant concern to print was telling: "opposition leaders said they feared word of the new rebel alliance would frighten Haitians away from anti-government activity." The concern, then, was the effect on anti-government political momentum, not on the popular movements whose supporters the paramilitaries planned to kill *en masse*. The skewed emphasis was typical. Time and time again, *Globe* coverage gave privileged attention to the strategic perspective of those calling for the Fanmi Lavalas government's ouster.

As the regime change came into effect, *Globe* commentary had prepared readers for a complete whitewash of the clash between Canadian foreign policy and the expressed will of the Haitian electorate. The persistent exaggeration of anti-government forces' popularity provided the necessary alibi. In the immediate aftermath of the *coup*, Paul Knox reported the victorious paramilitary march on Haiti's capital, and explained that Louis-Jodel Chamblain – "a former organizer of army-linked death squads," as his article again pointed out – "said he wanted to thank the people of the United States,

⁵³ "Anti-Aristide march falters a second time," Paul Knox (February 16, 2004; A10).

France and Canada ‘for allowing us to get rid of Aristide.’”⁵⁴ Without any apparent irony, the report ran under the following headline: “Haiti’s rebels given heroes’ welcome.” Not to leave the “friends of Haiti” out of the picture, it was subtitled “International forces embraced warmly by citizens happy president ousted.”

As Canada’s Operation Halo developed throughout March, and the impact of the occupation became apparent, the spin persisted. Stressing that it was Fanmi Lavalas and not the paramilitaries that Canada was deploying against, one article by Marina Jimenez quoted Canadian Sergeant Dan Koftinoff on the problems Operation Halo faced: “The *chimeres*” – shorthand for “pro-Aristide gangs,” Jimenez explained – “don’t wear a uniform, so it is hard to know where the danger is.”⁵⁵ The article ran under another rosy title: “Inquisitive smiles greet Canadian troops in Haiti.” And so the stage was set for an ostensibly benevolent occupation of Haiti, and for an interpretation of Canadian involvement in the effort that effectively blurred the line between imperial intervention and international charity work.

As the occupation deepened, the stabilizing efforts of the friends of Haiti did effectively set the stage for Knox’s projected “nation-building” effort, increasingly carried out under the banner of the United Nations. Eventually, a range of countries including Jordan, Brazil and China would join in enforcing the occupation force’s long-term military presence. Brazil’s participation would be lauded in the *Globe* as an indication of “its hemispheric and international leadership aspirations,” with the *Globe*’s

⁵⁴ “Haiti’s rebels given heroes’ welcome,” Paul Knox (March 2, 2004; A14).

⁵⁵ “Inquisitive smiles greet Canadian troops in Haiti,” Marina Jimenez (March 25, 2004; A15).

Marcus Gee similarly interpreting Chinese involvement in Haiti's occupation as one of its chosen means of "show[ing] it is a good global citizen."⁵⁶

But the Martin government would still not "abandon" Haiti. The Prime Minister was just too proud of his country's contribution to the *coup* and to the occupation. At a June 2004 summit of the G-8, Ottawa Bureau Chief Drew Fagan observed in almost congratulatory tones, "Martin even managed, at the last moment, to thrust Haiti on to the agenda as a possible prototype for his failing-states agenda."⁵⁷ He had "tried ably," Fagan explained, but voters were unfortunately not paying much attention to his good work. Rest assured, the article concluded, if they were, they would give Martin "an A for effort and for being a good global citizen." In the meantime, he would have to settle for support from the credulous employees of Bell Globemedia Publishing Inc.

Canadian help, Haitian crime

As 2004 wore on, Canada got more than just inquisitive smiles in return for its help in Haiti. In July, the *Globe's* Report on Business covered an announcement about just one of the perks of recent shifts in Haiti. It turned out that Haiti had indeed improved by the measure of Canada's "global T-shirt powerhouse," Gildan Activewear Incorporated. In accord with the company's "single-minded dedication to developing the lowest possible cost base and erecting a casual-apparel empire upon it," wrote the *Globe's* Bertrand Marotte, Gildan was expanding on its "decision to pioneer offshore

⁵⁶ "It's time to kiss and make up: The Canadian-Brazilian romance is heating up," Edgar Dosman and Ken Frankel (November 19, 2004; A23) & "Headlong into the future," Marcus Gee (October 23, 2004; A3).

⁵⁷ "It was a complete slam-dunk' – for Bush," Drew Fagan (June 10, 2004; A7).

manufacturing facilities in the Caribbean basin where labour and shipping costs are low.”⁵⁸ It therefore announced that it was “closing a major facility in Honduras that has been at the centre of a controversy over allegations of poor treatment of workers” – a plant that the company’s chief financial officer was quoted as saying had “become our highest-cost facility as we added sewing capacity in Haiti and Nicaragua.” Haitian minimum wage hikes instituted by the Fanmi Lavalas government had, after all, been reversed following the *coup*.

(In fall 2005, independent Canadian journalists Andrea Schmidt and Anthony Fenton would recount a recent visit to the Apaid Garment Factory (AGF) in Port-au-Prince, operated by none other than Knox’s “leading protest organizer,” Andy Apaid. Workers complained about heat and dust on the shop floor, and about the fact they could be fired without notice; they received less than \$3 U.S. a day for 10-hour shifts. Managing to enter the factory, Schmidt and Fenton relayed the sight of “row upon row of sewing machines worked by about a thousand workers in between stacks of boxes of multi-colored T-shirts, all of which sported the Gildan label. Mostly, the sewing machines were operated by young women, with male foremen pacing every two of three rows of sewing machines.”⁵⁹)

As Gildan announced the move, signs of discontent amongst the Haitian population still gave cause for the *Globe* to express concern about the country’s political situation. In the same month of July 2004, the *Globe* ran a Canadian Press story by Amy Bracken, stressing the central issue: “A number of Haitians still see Mr. Aristide as their

⁵⁸ “Gildan closing major plant in Honduras,” Bertrand Marotte (July 15, 2004; B5).

⁵⁹ Fenton, Anthony and Andréa Schmidt, “Andy Apaid and Us,” *ZNet* (October 19, 2005).

legitimate leader, raising doubts about the U.S.-backed interim government's control among armed groups.”⁶⁰ But it was framed as an issue of strategic control; related questions about the propriety of continued Canadian support for the Aristide government’s ouster were conspicuously absent from the story.

With Canadian troops beginning to leave at the end of the month, to be replaced by Canadian police backing for the Latortue regime’s Haitian National Police (HNP) and other “assistance,” officials stressed their continued commitment to the country’s occupation. At the same time, they highlighted the successes registered by Operation Halo. In a July 30 piece titled “Canadian troops leave calmer Haiti,” reporter Jeff Sallot reminded readers that the peacekeeping mission nonetheless faced continued difficulties. The article put a recent demonstration in context: “About 2,000 marched through the slums of Port-au-Prince, the capital, on Wednesday, demanding [President Aristide’s] return and condemning the U.S.-backed interim government. As bad as the crime is now, it was even worse when the outside military forces first arrived, Col. Davis said.”⁶¹ Despite Canadian “help,” then, Haitian “crime” persisted. And so the Canadian government continued to chip in, and to hold involvement in Haiti up as Canada’s alternative – alongside the occupation of Afghanistan – to deployment of troops to Iraq as a means of contributing to U.S. foreign policy aims.

That an overriding factor shaping Canada’s Haiti policy was the nature of the Canada-U.S. relationship merits emphasis. On October 15 2004, Prime Minister Martin was again quoted along these lines, responding to criticisms of the limits of Canadian

⁶⁰ “UN envoy to Haiti tours site of popular uprising,” Amy Bracken – Canadian Press (July 26, 2004; A11).

⁶¹ “Canadian troops leave calmer Haiti,” Jeff Sallot (July 30, 2004; A8).

participation in the occupation of Iraq (that criticism of the Canadian refusal to deploy troops to Iraq was sometimes echoed in the *Globe*, as in the June 11, 2004 editorial titled “If asked, Canada should be in Iraq,” is similarly interesting, but not legitimate grounds for sustained digression here). “Think about what we're doing in Afghanistan, think about what we're doing in Haiti,” Martin was quoted as saying in the October 15 news story. We are active and responsible global citizens, was the implication: “we are not on the sidelines.”⁶² As interesting as the substance of the remark itself is the occasion for Martin making it.

This declaration of continued commitment to the occupation of Haiti in fall 2004 coincided with a major escalation of violence against the country’s popular movements. The escalation had begun on September 30, the anniversary of the U.S.-backed ouster of the Aristide presidency in 1991. In 2004, the date was marked by massive anti-occupation demonstrations in such Port-au-Prince neighbourhoods as Bel Air and Cité Soleil. In Cité Soleil, which is separated from the rest of the capital, demonstrations trying to leave the neighborhood to rally in front of the national palace were fired upon by paramilitaries. (A report conducted by the University of Miami’s Center for the Study of Human Rights, briefly explored just below, suggests these paramilitaries under Thomas “Labanye” Robinson were directly supported by Andy Apaid.⁶³) In Bel Air, demonstrations were met with police gunfire – shots were returned in kind by the crowd. As Justin Podur explains in *The New Haitian Dictatorship*, “At

⁶² “Martin cool to renewed U.S. request for assistance; Canada stretched too thin to contribute to Iraq, PM says in Paris,” Mark Mackinnon (October 15, 2004; A16).

⁶³ Thomas M. Griffin, “Haiti – Human Rights Investigation: November 11-21, 2004,” Center for the Study of Human Rights, University of Miami School of Law (www.law.miami.edu), p. 3.

least 80 people were killed on September 30. Three Lavalas politicians, Deputy Roudy Herivaux, Senator Yvon Feuille, and Senator Gerald Gilles, went on Radio Caraibes FM's 'Ranmase' program and denounced the violence, condemning the police for firing on the demonstrators ... The regime quickly arrested them – with heavily armed police officers moving into position around the radio station before the program had even ended.”⁶⁴

Popular movements mobilized against the repression, and were met with intensified attacks by paramilitaries, the Canadian-backed Haitian National Police (HNP), and United Nations military forces.

In mid-November, the University of Miami's Center for the Study of Human Rights conducted an investigation into the escalating violence of fall 2004. The report, produced for the Center by Thomas Griffin, explained with reference to a range of impoverished Port-au-Prince communities that police would “on an almost daily basis ... select and attack a neighbourhood in operations reported as efforts to arrest armed gang members, with UN soldiers backing them up.”⁶⁵ It quoted Samba Boukman from the Mouvement Resistans Baz Popile (MRBP) among others. “Boukman referred to the documented massacre of 12 young men on October 25, 2004, in the Fort National neighbourhood in broad daylight by uniformed police officers that arrived in HNP vehicles [documented by Amnesty International]. Boukman stated that the incident was followed by another undocumented massacre of five young men on October 27, 2004, in the Carrefour Pean section of Delmas 2. At approximately noon on that day, according to multiple witnesses, police vehicles blocked a two-block section of Rue St. Martin,

⁶⁴ Podur, *The New Haitian Dictatorship*, pp. 37-38.

⁶⁵ Griffin, “Haiti – Human Rights Investigation: November 11-21, 2004,” (www.law.miami.edu), p. 9.

forcing traffic and pedestrians to stop. They then brought five boys out of the vehicles and forced them to lie faced own in the street. The police shot one at a time in the back of the head.”⁶⁶ These were the police being funded by the Canadian government and working alongside RCMP and other Canadian police personnel; none of these killings were deemed newsworthy by the *Globe*.

The Griffin report further explained, with reference to a range of poor communities in the Port-au-Prince area, that “hardly any young men (from pre-adolescent youngsters to men in their thirties) leave the neighbourhood for fear of being arrested as a *chimere*, the derogatory label given to them by the pro-government media.”⁶⁷ Thousands of such political prisoners were still incarcerated, and few had been granted trials. Also in prison were politicians from the ousted government, still including Herivaux, Feuille, and Gilles, former Prime Minister Yvon Neptune, and such popular community leaders such as folk singer Anne “So Ann” Auguste and a Fanmi Lavalas-affiliated priest, Father Jean-Juste, to name a few.⁶⁸

The state of the prison system is of particular interest. Report investigators interviewed a Cabinet Member for the *coup* regime, Philippe Vixamar, standing in as the Minister of Justice at the time. Vixamar “stated that he is a political appointee of the Latortue administration, but the Canadian International Development Agency” – overseen by Aileen Carroll, Canadian Minister of International Cooperation and Development – “assigned him to his position and is his direct employer.”⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 10.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 19.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 24.

Martin's pledge of continued support for the installed regime was no fleeting remark, then. And in November, the Prime Minister visited Haiti, highlighting the depth of his government's complicity. Brian Laghi, the *Globe's* Ottawa Bureau Chief at this time, reported on the trip. By way of background, Laghi explained that the "new regime has come under criticism from some human-rights groups, who have criticized it for the arrest of several supporters of Mr. Aristide. Scores of individuals have been killed in Port-au-Prince since Sept. 30, when Aristide supporters marched to demand his return."⁷⁰ Further, while the regime kept promising elections, Laghi reported that "the head of a panel organizing the vote, quit her post, warning that other panel members were trying to rig the ballot." In this context, the story explained, Martin's trip was importantly geared towards bolstering the *coup* regime: Liberal "MP Denis Coderre said the visit was planned in part to recognize the legitimacy of the Latortue government."

Despite the clear implications of this fact, the Martin government did not need to work hard to get the *Globe* to present the visit as part of the familiar story. "Mr. Martin's aircraft also brought with it more than 5,000 kilograms of various forms of aid, including food, clothing for children, medical equipment and other items," the piece by Laghi made sure to mention. Outrageously, in a crude inflation of gratitude for Canada's supposed generosity, the article ran with a picture of a young Haitian girl sitting on Paul Martin's lap, waving a Canadian flag for the camera. This was a happy alternative to easily available images of dead bodies resulting from raids conducted by the *de facto* government's Canadian-backed security forces, or to the grisly images from the state

⁷⁰ "Internal strife will undermine rebuilding plan, PM tells Haiti," Brian Laghi – Ottawa Bureau Chief (November 15, 2004; A4).

morgue in Port-au-Prince, where electricity and refrigeration had been out of commission since February 29, 2004, making corpses deteriorate at a rapid rate and “allow[ing] for the morgue to dump bodies within five days of their arrival, rather than the normal 22 days, inhibiting relatives and investigators from identifying bodies and causes of death” (as the Griffin report explained; the report includes many such photographs).⁷¹

Looking back at Martin’s visit some time later, Brian Laghi described Martin’s promotion of the “‘responsibility to protect’ doctrine, calling on nations to protect people from countries in turmoil.”⁷² Describing its success, Laghi himself recalled the “relatively good press he received for a humanitarian trip to Haiti” in November. A “humanitarian trip.” The deference to official mythology could hardly be more cynical.

Canada’s “Backyard Baghdad”

In early 2005, Marina Jimenez published a major feature to again proudly hammer home the point that Canada was “not on the sidelines,” as Martin had declared. We were supporting the occupation of Iraq as best we could, she explained: “At the moment, police recruits for Iraq also are being trained by Canadians, albeit in the relative safety of neighbouring Jordan.”⁷³ But it was through support for the HNP and the Latortue regime that Canada was really pulling its imperial weight. Haiti was, her headline explained, Canada’s “Backyard Baghdad.” In Haiti, Canadians were on the conflict’s frontlines, “as a shadow war is being played out by Mr. Aristide’s supporters, a war that some say he is funding and directing from his South African exile.” Note

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁷² “On the road again,” Brian Laghi (January 15, 2005; F3).

⁷³ “Backyard Baghdad,” Marina Jimenez (January 22, 2005; F4).

Jimenez's refusal to acknowledge the capacity of poor Haitians for independent political thought and action.

Jimenez's article sketched an updated caricature of the characters involved in the *Globe's* Haiti story. On one side of this story was still Lavalas' grassroots base, referred to here as "cutthroat gangs." These "*chimères*, the gangs that rule Cité Soleil and other slums, remain fiercely loyal to Mr. Aristide." With police afraid of entering such enemy territory as "the slums of Port-au-Prince," Jimenez explained, "the crowds hurl their venom instead at the peacekeepers." She provided the following samples of venom: "‘Help us – we need food and jobs,’ a young man demands as a pregnant woman screams, pointing to her belly, and several children begin to cry ... ‘You, the Canadians, the French and the Americans . . . sent Mr. Aristide into exile,’ a young man named Junior sneers."⁷⁴

For reliable political commentary on the situation, Jimenez's article quoted one of the good guys in the story, a Canadian police officer trying to "calm the crowd." He explained that "It's clear the people are being manipulated by the gangs – and by Aristide himself ... And sometimes it's hard to figure out who the bad guys are." Such confusion aside, Jimenez wrote, attempts to root the bad guys out were nonetheless moving forward. "Last month," for example, "to establish a command post in Cite Soleil, tactical units from Jordan mounted a surprise attack on pro-Aristide gang lord Dread Wilme, storming into the area in armoured personnel carriers."

So the Jordanian military's forces of democracy promotion were clearly not the "bad guys." Nor was Jimenez's favorite character in this story, Jean Francois Vezina.

⁷⁴ "Backyard Baghdad," Marina Jimenez (January 22, 2005; F4).

Vezina, Jimenez usefully explained, is a “32-year-old officer from Quebec city” who resembles Vin Diesel, “the hulking Hollywood action star who also has a shaved head.” As he patrols Bel Air near a contingent of Brazilian troops, “Vezina hopes that all the good work will add up and one day the poor people of Cité Soleil will have a change of heart, switching allegiance from the shadowy and ruthless *chimeres* to ‘les blancs’ in the uniforms who, this time, are in it for the long haul.” To top it off, Jimenez reaffirmed the charitable spirit of “les blancs” – “in the best tradition of community policing, the Canadians make a serious effort. Many run small aid projects on the side, bringing in donated clothing and toys from home. One officer even persuaded Pfizer Canada to donate \$18,000 worth of medication to a children’s hospital.” The mix of racism and self-flattery is familiar.

And so, to protect the poor people of communities like Cité Soleil and Bel Air from “the shadowy and ruthless *chimeres*” – whom it is conceded they support – it is necessary to assist the police imprisoning them *en masse*, and to help pay those running the prisons to which they have been confined for their own good. Just a Canadian chapter in a happy, time-honored history of civilizing colonialism.

“The gleaming capitals where they decide these things”

Thanks to countries like Canada, the return of Haiti to a condition of formal dependency status is now in the works. And with rare exceptions, *Globe* writers and editors are encouraging it.

This possible extension of the intervention has been spelled out in clear and positive terms by columnist Jeffrey Simpson. On March 10 2004, in the immediate aftermath of the *coup*, Simpson was already greeting Canadian intervention as an example of the “idea of promoting democratic development.”⁷⁵ The March 2004 piece’s thesis was that this idea should become Canadian policy’s overriding focus. In a June 2005 column, Simpson took the extra step. He explained that Haiti is basically a “failed state,” one whose “ills ... have persisted and even grown worse despite a United Nations military and police presence and hundreds of millions of dollars of foreign aid.”⁷⁶ For Simpson, deepening Canadian participation in this “aid” effort may well be the most viable solution. “If these elections don’t work,” this regular *Globe* columnist explained, “then don’t count out the possibility of Haiti’s temporarily becoming a United Nations protectorate.” Such a bold move could help to set an important precedent: “Haiti could be a test case.” Could a sovereign country be brought formally under external control? Could Canada help move forward this international push? More specifically, as Simpson asked hopefully, “Could Canada lead a UN protectorate?” These musings ran under a headline containing the usual stale mix of contempt and condescension: “Hello, my name is Haiti and I really need your help.”

Discussion of formal “protectorate” status as an alternative to free elections and sovereignty for Haiti is extremely ominous. Such policy discussions are fundamentally colonial in tone and impact. Around Haiti, they extend from a particularly long and bloody history of imperial attacks on the country’s sovereignty. One of the most

⁷⁵ “Desperately seeking ideas for governing,” Jeffrey Simpson (March 10, 2004; A21).

⁷⁶ “Hello, my name is Haiti and I really need your help,” Jeffrey Simpson (June 8, 2005; A17).

disturbing aspects of *Globe* coverage is that it has helped to regularize the fact that Haiti's "friends" in countries like Canada, the United States and France still think it is their place to decide the terms of Haitian politics.

This aspect of *Globe* coverage requires specific attention. In an article printed in the last issue before the February 2004 *coup*, Paul Knox was not being especially critical when he explained that it was "Far away [from Haiti], in the gleaming capitals where they decide these things, [that] Aristide's fate is in play."⁷⁷ The decisions being made were up for mild critique, but seldom the question of where decision-making power lies. Given the clear direction of this line of thinking, it is necessary to tackle acceptance of this neocolonial power relation head-on.

There is ample evidence that this relation extends from the long and bloody imperial history mentioned above. In fact, what makes support for contemporary Western policy in the *Globe* particularly disturbing is its almost admittedly colonial character. At no point have the many *Globe*-published supporters of Canada's Haiti policy denied the history of colonial control over Haiti. And at no point have they made a serious case that the nature and motives of Western policy have for some reason fundamentally changed. Indeed, *Globe* writers and editors have been telling a story that seems almost to imply that colonial policy towards Haiti has simply evolved into the present along essentially humanitarian lines.

⁷⁷ "“Everyone here is ready to die for Aristide,”” Paul Knox (February 28, 2004; A1); this title's acknowledgement of popularity for the government, while welcome, was rare, and came before a period of conflict that could easily have involved sustained popular resistance by Lavalas-affiliated movements to a paramilitary assault on the capital, had the foreign kidnapping of Aristide not gone so smoothly – a conflict which would have been difficult to report and explain away without reference to this popular base.

It would be nice to think that the case against historic colonialism's claim to morality and civilization is not necessary to make. However, given the stubborn extension of this mythology into the present in such mainstream Canadian forums as the *Globe*, continued attention is certainly due to such accounts as C.L.R. James' *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*. The brutality of colonialism's history in Haiti and the lengths to which its victims have gone to resist it will not be explored in this paper. Instead, the point here is the bare continuity between historic colonialism and contemporary Western policy in Haiti. To explore this point, one need not look further than the pages of the *Globe* itself.

When France was preparing for the February 2004 intervention, for instance, the continuity between contemporary and historic French foreign policy was occasionally referenced. But reporters remained oddly credulous about French motives. On February 18, for instance, Jeff Sallot reported that "Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin said the French government, which has military garrisons in the Caribbean, could deploy resources to its former colony quickly for a 'humanitarian intervention.'" ⁷⁸ Sallot raised no questions about Villepin's characterization of his government's motives as "humanitarian." Just days before the *coup*, Paul Knox similarly reported France's "thinly veiled call for Mr. Aristide to step down." ⁷⁹ This call for the elected leader's removal was in Knox's word an "attempt to break the diplomatic logjam." It was almost as if we were just witnessing some impartial attempt to get things moving, courtesy of Haiti's former (and ever-concerned) colonial slave-master.

⁷⁸ "Canada could send 100 police to Haiti," Jeff Sallot (February 18, 2004; lead from A1, "Help for Haiti?," continued on A16).

⁷⁹ "Aristide's gangs gird for battle," Paul Knox with reports from others (February 26, 2004; A1).

Information suggesting French policy was self-interested did sometimes get published, but didn't make a dent in writers' confidence in justifying the intervention. In an unremarkable run-through of C.L.R. James' brilliant classic, for example, columnist Ken Wiwa had explained in late February 2004 that France forced Haiti to pay it 90 million gold francs for daring to win the revolutionary war for independence.⁸⁰ This is equivalent to \$21.7 billion today. While Wiwa didn't mention this bit, in 2003, faced with the campaign of economic destabilization led by the United States (with Canada in tow), the Fanmi Lavalas government began to construct a legal case for the repayment of this indemnity.⁸¹ This was not even a call for reparations for slavery, which one could easily argue are due, but merely for the return of an entirely illegal extortion payment. It was a response, moreover, to renewed economic suffocation of Haiti.

Right after the *coup*, the *Globe* published a piece by David Malone explaining that French intervention was partly a response to these legal moves. Still, French policy was depicted as entirely reasonable. "France, alienated by a disingenuous Aristide attempt to claim reparations for 19th-century depredations by France against Haiti, signaled early on in the crisis that Haiti's president was the root of the problem and should go," Malone supportively noted.⁸² The problem was not France's greed in hording extorted funds, but the Fanmi Lavalas government's dishonest posturing to demand their return. To reinforce the point, Malone reminded readers that President Aristide was in the end just a "corrupt, self-centred, self-righteous autocrat."

⁸⁰ "Haiti's bleak Black History Month," Ken Wiwa (February 28, 2004; A25).

⁸¹ Hallward, "Option Zero in Haiti," pp. 42-43.

⁸² "A lost door to the future," David Malone (March 2, 2004; A17).

With respect to coverage of U.S. policy, the case is more dramatic still. Information suggesting continuity between the blatantly racist history of U.S. policy towards Haiti and the current situation would be almost impossible to conceal. Combing through the *Globe's* coverage, one can find enough information to piece together the obvious links. (A fact that makes all the more enraging the inability of so many prestigious, intelligent *Globe* commentators to formulate even a mild anti-racist critique of the 2004 intervention.) Historic U.S. policy towards Haiti forms a noteworthy backdrop to the current occupation, and is therefore worth briefly setting, again drawing from information published by the *Globe* without being rebutted or seriously disputed.

Forces for Haitian self-determination have long been attacked by the United States. Facing the threat of an independent black republic formed by slave revolt, the U.S., its economy driven by slave labor and its government run by open racists, immediately went on the offensive. In 1806, it “imposed a century-long commercial embargo that destroyed any chance that the new nation could develop a viable economic structure” (as Elizabeth Abbott wrote in a book review for the *Globe* published on April 3, 2004).⁸³ In fact, the U.S. really never reconciled itself to the idea of Haitian sovereignty. As Rick Salutin explained, the U.S. intervened 24 times in Haiti between 1849 and 1913, and these interventions culminated in a direct military occupation of the country from 1915-1934.⁸⁴

There is no controversy over these facts. About a year into the 2004-2005 occupation, Marina Jimenez – *Globe and Mail* coupster extraordinaire – herself

⁸³ “Three for thought,” Elizabeth Abbot (April 3, 2004; D23).

⁸⁴ “Failed states all over,” Rick Salutin (March 5, 2004; A19).

referenced the obvious parallel between the early 20th century occupation and the ongoing one. Lamenting that “the myth of Mr. Aristide’s return hangs over the poor slums, inciting demonstrations that often turn violent,” Jimenez reminded readers that free elections were not the only way forward for this “beleaguered nation.” Alternatively, “recent studies prepared by experts for the United States Army recommend turning the country ... into an international protectorate,” leaning on the “historical precedent” set by “U.S. occupation from 1915-1934.”⁸⁵

The continuity of U.S. policy can be further traced through the 20th century. The occupation of 1915-1934 did not only leave a precedent for Jimenez and the U.S. military to reference several decades later, but directly established the central state structures that have constrained Haitian politics since. While this fact never factored into ongoing *Globe* commentary on the situation in Haiti, it squeezed its way into the paper. Edwige Dandicat, an author whose book was being reviewed by the *Globe*’s Ray Conlogue, dropped the tidbit in a quote that did go to print.⁸⁶ Bearing this in mind, Paul Knox’s criticisms of the U.S.-founded military can help to illustrate the mid- to late-20th century form of colonialism in Haiti.

In Knox’s words, the military “existed for two purposes only: to dispense day-to-day terror among civilians, and to thwart the periodic expression of the popular will.”⁸⁷ Through a succession of Haitian regimes “run by a combination of foreign interests and a tiny local elite,” Knox elaborated, the military defended elites and their foreign sponsors

⁸⁵ “Haiti’s Latortue envisions success where others see only a failed state,” Marina Jimenez (February 8, 2005; A14).

⁸⁶ “Haunted by Haiti’s ghosts,” Ray Conlogue (April 19, 2004; R3).

⁸⁷ “Haiti: The army is gone, the police are helpless,” Paul Knox (February 18, 2004; A17).

from their principal enemy: “the people in whose name they claimed to rule.”⁸⁸ Among these regimes were the dictatorships run by Francois “Papa Doc” Duvalier and his son, Jean-Claude “Baby Doc.”

From 1956-1986, the Duvalier dictatorships ruled Haiti with the support of the United States.⁸⁹ In a *Globe*-published piece of extremely rare quality, torture expert Miles Schuman explained how, into the 1980s, threats to the stable operation of this neocolonial order were dealt with. Schuman’s piece was only partially about Haiti, and more generally discussed – with the scandal around torture by U.S. forces at Abu Graib as an opening – how in his “experience as a physician, the Abu Ghraib images are not the exception to the rules.” (Publication of analysis such as his in the *Globe* was, in contrast, certainly an editorial exception.) On the question of torture, Schuman elaborated: “They represent the rules, I believe, by which the U.S. government and military exercise power over a non-servile population to optimize the economic and political interests of an elite few in the U.S. and abroad.” Specifically, the “Iraqi man bound naked on the ground with a leash attached to his neck, held by a smiling young American recruit, reminds me of the son of peasant organizers who recounted his agonizing torture at the hands of the tontons macoutes, U.S.-backed Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier’s right-hand thugs, in Port-au-Prince, in 1984.”⁹⁰ (The tonton macoutes were the paramilitary forces associated with the Duvalier dictatorships.)

It is with this history as a backdrop that Jean-Bertrand Aristide came to prominence on the Haitian political scene in the mid-1980s – as a “slum cleric,” in *Globe*

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ “Failed states all over,” Rick Salutin (March 5, 2004; A19).

⁹⁰ “Abu Graib: the rule, not the exception,” Miles Schuman (May 14, 2004; A19).

rhetoric. A Catholic priest and proponent of liberation theology, Aristide was a key organizer in a coalition of social movements united against the dictatorship, “Lavalas.” (Lavalas means *flood* in Haitian creole, and these movements drew on the imagery of many drops of water coming together as they rallied popular support.)⁹¹ Despite the kind of brutal repression described by Schuman, these movements managed to shake the U.S.-backed order. By 1986, the era of Duvalier dictatorship was brought to an end, and “Baby Doc” was flown by U.S. jet to a comfortable exile in France as popular revolts spread.⁹²

The Reagan administration flooded the Haitian military with funds to stabilize the situation, but popular movements continued to gain support and momentum.⁹³ In 1990, rule by a succession of military governments was ended by presidential elections that initiated a brief period of constitutional rule in Haiti. These elections were widely described, in the *Globe* and generally, as Haiti’s first credible ones. Aristide ran as the Lavalas candidate for president, and swept with 67.5% of the vote, against 14.2% for U.S. favorite and former World Bank employee Marc Bazin. The *Globe* never mentioned that the repression of the late 1980s was U.S.-funded, and almost always referred to Lavalas-affiliated social movements with the more personalized term “Aristide supporters,” but otherwise reported all the information from the above account.

Popular movements had gained a foothold in government, and the response of Haiti’s traditional rulers took a familiar form. On September 30 1991, the military carried out a *coup d’état*, overthrowing the Aristide presidency and instituting a military regime

⁹¹ Podur, *The New Haitian Dictatorship*, p. 3.

⁹² “Why was former Haitian president set to the Central African Republic?,” Alan Freeman (March 2, 2004; A14).

⁹³ William Blum, *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Intervention Since World War II* (Common Courage Press, 1995), p. 370.

that waged open war on Lavalas from 1991-1994. In this war, they were assisted by a newly constituted death squad organization called FRAPH – the successor to the Duvaliers’ “tonton macoutes.” The head of FRAPH, Emmanuel Constant, would later explain that he had been approached by the CIA shortly after the *coup* and established FRAPH with direct U.S. support.⁹⁴ According to the International Crisis Group (ICG), repression under this *coup* regime killed between 3,000 and 5,000 people, with Human Rights Watch noting that “[t]housands more suffered ‘disappearance,’ torture, beatings, rape, threats, arbitrary detention, and extortion.”⁹⁵

Later, various FRAPH members would be convicted for these human rights abuses, to the applause of Amnesty International and others. However, most would live with impunity. FRAPH leader Emmanuel Constant currently resides in the United States. FRAPH second in command Louis-Jodel Chamblain, convicted in absentia for his role in having Antoine Izmerly dragged from a church and shot in the head for political reasons in 1993, and for a killing of Lavalas partisans in 1994 known as the Raboteau massacre, presently operates with impunity in Haiti, as mentioned above. (Reference to these past crimes, Chamblain’s conviction and his free reign in post-2004-*coup* Haiti were printed in an April 2004 *Globe* story.)⁹⁶ Remnants of FRAPH would of course go on to play a key role in the *coup d’état* of February 2004.

It is very much worth bearing in mind that the above information forms part of Haiti’s uncontested historical record. What remains to be explored is how – given the

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 376.

⁹⁵ Harvard Law Student Advocates for Human Rights and Centro de Justiça Global, *Keeping the Peace in Haiti? An Assessment of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti Using Compliance with its Prescribed Mandate as a Barometer for Success* (Harvard Law School, March 2005), p. 6.

⁹⁶ “Haitian rebel leader convicted of murder surrenders,” Michelle Faul (April 23, 2004; A15).

brutal history of colonial intervention in Haiti and its clear continuity into the present – *Globe* writers and editors managed to spin this history to fit it into their interventionist narrative.

Spinning the historical record

One of the techniques employed by the *Globe* to address the tension between this history and their chosen story about current events in Haiti was the likening of the 2003-2004 campaign staged by paramilitaries and the elite “opposition” to the popular revolt against the Duvalier dictatorship in the 1980s. As the U.S.-armed paramilitaries escalated their incursions into Haiti from the Dominican Republic in early February, Ian James, for example, wrote for the *Globe* that “A similar revolt in 1985 ... led to the next year’s ouster of Jean-Claude Duvalier and the end of this family’s 29-year dictatorship. ‘We are in a situation of armed popular insurrection,’ said opposition politician Himler Rebu,” whom the article acknowledged was a former military officer.⁹⁷

More importantly, *Globe* commentators looked to the firmest ground for their chosen framework, supporting the story of U.S.-led humanitarian intervention by bringing isolated attention to the U.S. intervention that pulled the plug on the military regime of 1991-1994. Among U.S. interventions in Haiti, the one that took place in 1994 can indeed most easily be construed as humanitarian. After three years of fierce repression, things in Haiti had not stabilized. Mass mobilization against the regime continued, and the massacres designed to put an end to such upheaval were an

⁹⁷ “Haitian insurrection spreads to several more towns,” Ian James – Associated Press (February 10, 2004; A17).

embarrassment. More troubling still for U.S. planners, the terror was forcing Haitians to fleeing *en masse* in boats, heading for U.S. shores and creating a domestic refugee crisis for the superpower. Throughout this period, Aristide was spending his exile in Washington, negotiating for his return.

Eventually, the Clinton administration decided to strike a deal. Aristide's term would end in 1995, as if it had been served in full. His government would agree to implement the IMF-/World Bank- style economic policies that the Haitian electorate had clearly rejected in the election of 1990. And the United States would lead an intervention to restore his presidency, revoking the military *junta's* authority.⁹⁸ This intervention revived the period of constitutional rule in Haiti, which would last fully a decade until the 2004 *coup*. This period did register important gains, including the formal disbandment of the military (and of course of FRAPH), and the construction of more Haitian schools in 10 years than had been built in the preceding 190.⁹⁹

However, it wasn't as if the U.S. had suddenly come to favor Haitian sovereignty. The Republicans always opposed this intervention, and the Democrats under Clinton had also worked to ensure it didn't give too much of a boost to pro-independence forces. For some time before the 2004 *coup*, it was very clear that the United States under the Bush administration was again looking to revoke constitutional rule in Haiti. But as U.S. intervention loomed, emphasizing the United States' generosity in calling off its murderous clients in 1994 remained the best shot for someone trying to tell the developing story as a humanitarian one.

⁹⁸ Podur, *The New Haitian Dictatorship*, pp. 6-7.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

The Globe thus latched on to this history in its Haiti coverage. *Globe* writers' and editors' habit of omitting (or conspicuously delaying) mention of U.S. support for the *coup* regime of 1991-1994, while simultaneously over-emphasizing the 1994 intervention that rescinded this regime's authority, provides a sharp contrast that is quite illustrative.

In the early months of 2004, reference to the intervention of 1994 was an almost uniform feature of Haiti-related articles. Much was made of the process by which "President Aristide, a former slum priest who was ousted in 1991," was "reinstated by a U.S.-led military force three years later," in the words of Jeff Sallot.¹⁰⁰ Knox joined in reminding readers that "Canada participated in [the] US-led invasion to restore Mr. Aristide to power," and framed the prospect of Canadian intervention in these terms. What were the chances (and implications) of, as Knox described the prospect of intervention, "bring[ing] back the U.S. troops who restored Mr. Aristide to power in 1994"?¹⁰¹ Readers considering the issue were constantly reminded of the 1994 intervention's pro-democratic character.

Yet in all the *Globe* material printed during the period of 2004 preceding the February 29 *coup*, despite frequent reference to the intervention of 1994, not one single mention of U.S. support for the *coup* of 1991 or the subsequent anti-Lavalas repression can be found. Without question, this history loomed large over U.S. policy. But it was pushed out of the picture entirely. Aside from a reasonable March 5 piece by Rick Salutin, which ran through the relevant background, this silence persisted until Paul Knox saw fit to mention this murderous history of U.S. support in a piece on March 10.

¹⁰⁰ "Canada could send 100 police to Haiti," Jeff Sallot (February 18, 2004; lead from A1, "Help for Haiti?," continued on A16).

¹⁰¹ "Everyone here is ready to die for Aristide," Paul Knox (February 28, 2004, A1).

The implications of this pattern of over-emphasis and omission were spelled out in an editorial written 12 days before the February 29 *coup*. Since Canada and the United States had already “made significant investments in democracy in Haiti, by restoring President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power in 1994, reversing the *coup d’état* against him in 1991,” the editorial explained, their exacerbation with his government’s performance was legitimate.¹⁰² Aristide had already been given a chance, and had squandered it; he was “a bitter disappointment to supporters, including the U.S. and other governments, which restored him to power after a *coup* and have propped him up through the years as Haiti’s best hope for democratic reform.” So “Haiti’s neighbours and friends, including Canada, should prepare once again to intervene for the sake of order and stability.” The day after the *coup*, another editorial updated the argument. It began with the passage “He brought it on himself. Jean-Bertrand Aristide’s fall from power yesterday was mainly a result of his own misrule.”¹⁰³ And “the international community, and many Haitians as well, said good riddance.”

This treatment of Haiti’s recent history is a good example of how *Globe* coverage spins the actual historical record into line with its national- and class-biased social perspective.

Some final comments are in order about Paul Knox, and his gestures of feigned dissent. On March 10 2004, Knox did finally break his silence on the U.S. history of attacking Lavalas. “The United States,” he explained, “has much to answer for in its conduct toward Haiti over the past two decades. It allowed Mr. Aristide to be overthrown

¹⁰² “Haiti’s descent,” Editorial (February 17, 2004; A18).

¹⁰³ “Time to help Haiti,” Editorial (March 1, 2004; A12).

in 1991 after winning a landslide election, and its agents were linked to organizers of death squads in the next few years. It restored him to power not out of principle but to stem an exodus of boat people. It refuses to extradite death-squad leader Emmanuel (Toto) Constant.”¹⁰⁴ With these passing admissions (revealing facts directly undercutting the framework he had provided for readers following Haitian politics in preceding weeks), Knox established some limited plausible deniability on his conspicuous silence. As for why he had failed to mention this information in the previous 30 articles he had written on Haiti in the preceding period of that year, he left that unexplored.

In the same article, Knox moved to the final position he would take before moving on from his period of Haiti-focused punditry. Things were bad, but the problem was that we had not acted decisively enough, not that the intervention’s goals were fundamentally bankrupt – an astonishing argument with which to accompany acknowledgement of U.S. support for the terror of 1991-1994. The article’s very title was based on this theme – “Aristide’s Haiti was just left to drift” – and was concluded in the same spirit: “What happened in Haiti last month was unconscionable. But there’s much to suggest it was the product of too little attention, rather than too much.”¹⁰⁵

Knox’s last piece on Haiti in the *Globe* hammered away at the same theme: Things had gone wrong, but only because we were not helpful enough – “We should have done more to save Haiti from rebellion,” the title read. It opened with a rhetorical question: “Realistically, could Canada have done anything on its own to prevent the triumph of armed rebellion in Haiti and the overthrow of president Jean-Bertrand

¹⁰⁴ “Aristide’s Haiti was just left to drift,” Paul Knox (March 10, 2004; A19).

¹⁰⁵ “Aristide’s Haiti was just left to drift,” Paul Knox (March 10, 2004; A19).

Aristide?” Some possible ways aren’t hard to think of. It could have refused to back U.S.-led economic destabilization, decided to not deploy forces to help to oust the government, or even supported the diplomatic position of Caricom. But, Knox replied to himself, “I think the answer is probably no. It pains me to say so, because as readers know, I believe the actions of the Canadian government and others over the past few weeks made a mockery of their solemn pronouncements on democratic rule in the Americas.” A gesture of feigned dissent, conveniently compatible with the Martin government’s pledge of “non-abandonment,” and Knox was off.

Knox is now the Chair and an Associate Professor of the Ryerson School of Journalism. On the school website, he writes that he is dedicated to “teaching Canada’s young journalists the tools of the craft.”¹⁰⁶ It is difficult to imagine a stronger indication that the coming decades will require creative thinking to address the skewed approach of mainstream Canadian journalists around issues of foreign policy.

Conclusion

December 2005 closed with the occupation of Haiti still going strong, Latortue’s *de facto* government still in power after postponing elections three times (in early 2006, postponement of the elections planned for January 8 brought the number of delays to four), and *The Globe and Mail* continuing to provide political support to its government’s Haiti policy. On December 20, retired RCMP officer and UN “peacekeeper” Marc Bourque was killed while on duty near Cité Soleil. While the circumstances surrounding his death remain unclear, the horribly skewed presentation of

¹⁰⁶ *Ryerson University School of Journalism* (www.ryerson.ca/journal/knox.htm).

Canada's mission in *The Globe's* coverage made it impossible for readers to put the death in context. In a December 21 press release by the Canada Haiti Action Network (CHAN), Jean Saint-Vil commented that "this death is a tragedy, and our condolences go out to the family of Marc Bourque ... But it is important to understand that this tragedy has occurred within the larger tragedy of a Canadian policy in Haiti that has brought about thousands of Haitian deaths, hundreds of illegal detentions, and the toppling of an elected government. Hopefully, this incident will force our political leaders to address this dire situation."¹⁰⁷ *The Globe's* lead Haiti pundits took the opportunity to stress a different message.

On December 22, for example, Marina Jimenez reported the incident under the title "UN unable to muzzle Haitian violence." The article complained that United Nations occupation forces had "been unable to gain a stronghold in Cité Soleil," where the coming election's "spoilers' have almost unfettered political and military power," extending the familiar story.¹⁰⁸ There is little question as to what Jimenez was calling for. Consider this in light of her coverage of the July 6, 2005 attack on Cité Soleil, in which UN forces assaulted the community with helicopters, tanks, machine guns and tear gas, killing scores of people in what Shirley Pate called "a bloodletting worthy of the Israeli Defense Forces."¹⁰⁹ In an August 1 article, Jimenez contributed the only mention to this incursion that would be published in *The Globe*. Again, she expressed her concern that "The U.S.-backed interim government has been unable to re-establish order, and the 7,400-member United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti or Minustah, been criticized

¹⁰⁷ Canada Haiti Action Network, "Canada Haiti Action Network Regrets Death of RCMP Officer in Haiti" (www.canadahaitiainction.ca, December 21, 2005).

¹⁰⁸ "UN unable to muzzle Haitian violence," Marina Jimenez (December 22, 2005; A17)

¹⁰⁹ Shirley Pate, "Haiti: The Gaza Strip of the Caribbean," *ZNet* (July 20, 2005).

for failing to quell the violence.”¹¹⁰ But there was hope, she explained: “On July 6, however, Minustah did show its muscle in an eight-hour operation in the slum of Cité Soleil that left six armed gang leaders dead.” That the insufficient power and supposed timidity of the Canadian-backed UN mission was the target of criticism in *The Globe* sends exactly the wrong message to policy-planners.

Jimenez’s skewed emphasis is remarkable. It is the *chimeres*, the gangs, the criminals – or, put differently, the prospect of a Lavalas resurgence – that may “spoil” the coming election. Note that the fact that a leading Lavalas presidential candidate, Father Gerard Jean-Juste, has been prevented from running in these elections as a result of his imprisonment in the Canadian-linked prison system does not “spoil” anything. True, even a *Globe*-published Associated Press story in April 2005 provided the basic story for reporters to follow up on: “Supporters call him Haiti’s Martin Luther King, a fiery Roman Catholic priest who electrifies the masses with populist sermons urging social equality and non-violent protest”; if “pro-Aristide Rev. Gerard Jean-Juste will seek Haiti’s presidency in this fall’s election ... [it] could reignite tension with the United States.”¹¹¹ In a February 2005 article about Haiti’s prison system, Jimenez herself mentioned Jean-Juste’s several-week imprisonment in fall 2004.¹¹² Jean-Juste’s July 2005 arrest was not deemed newsworthy by the *Globe*, however, and his continued imprisonment has not been mentioned since.

¹¹⁰ “Haiti’s spiral of violence picks up speed,” Marina Jimenez (August 1, 2005; A3).

¹¹¹ “Populist priest urged to seek presidency of Haiti in fall,” Steven Jacobs – Associated Press (April 5, 2005; A15).

¹¹² “Haitians languish in squalor awaiting trial,” Marina Jimenez (February 7, 2005; A9).

A list of similar examples could go on almost indefinitely. The overwhelming evidence of *Globe* bias points to a serious problem. My paper has been geared towards highlighting this problem; developing strategies to address it is a far more ambitious task. This first task is, however, only valuable insofar as it can help to inform a reasoned approach to the second.

At the very least, it seems that the personnel responsible for the *Globe*'s whitewashing of Canada's Haiti policy should be called on their conduct, and the credibility of their work undermined. However, as suggested above, there is good reason to believe that the problem is deeper than that, and that the paper's structure, more fundamentally than its personnel, is at fault. Efforts to undermine the credibility of media such as *The Globe* generally, while developing and strengthening alternatives, do therefore seem very much in order.

Such efforts must be understood and pursued as part of a broader process. *The Globe* is no aberration, but the inevitable companion of a social system divided along class and racial lines. Systems engaged in imperial policy require institutions that develop the intellectual rationale necessary for such policy to be pursued with coherence, confidence and presumed moral force. To say that effective confrontation of the intellectual manifestations of such systemic policy must be embedded in confrontation of the system itself is to express a truism of sorts; to explore what that means in practice is a good deal more complicated. What kind of social organization against imperial policy can develop outside of Canada's socio-economic establishment? What communication systems can it develop, and which can in turn best strengthen it? How are we to navigate

our confrontation with ideas that are vulnerable to obvious criticism, but legitimized through the force of overwhelming repetition?

This paper seeks to pose these questions, which can only be meaningfully answered through practical trial and error. What is nonetheless tolerably clear is that an orientation towards pursuing these questions must be central to an effective anti-imperialist strategy concerning Canada's Haiti policy, and concerning its foreign policy and reigning political culture as a whole.