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QUARTERLY REPORT
JULY-SEPTEMBER, 1998
DEMOCRACY SUPPORT PROGRAM
HAITI

I PROGRAM SUMMARY

The second phase of the International Republican Institute's (IRI) multifaceted program is designed to continue addressing critical deficiencies in Haiti's democratic culture and political system, building on the successes of the first phase. IRI's program includes Political Dialogue Forums in several regions of Haiti to promote dialogue and open political space among diverse sectors of Haitian society, strengthening democratic political parties at the departmental and national level, and international election observation. IRI also continues observing, assessing, and reporting on Haiti's ongoing political developments.

IRI initiated the program in July 1997 against a backdrop of political instability, which persisted this quarter. The country continues to lack a prime minister, major governmental issues remain unresolved, and much needed international aid remains blocked pending resolutions to these and other outstanding matters.

II PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the **Political Dialogue Forums** are

- To continue establishing connections between the electorate and elected officials and between the electorate and political parties
- To continue redressing the debilitating paucity of accurate information pertaining to popular political attitudes and preferences

- To continue cultivating an environment of open political debate among diverse sectors of Haitian society

The objectives of the **Political Party Support** component are

- To strengthen political parties' capacities to function more effectively in the political process
- To support parties' efforts to improve the rules of political competition

The objectives of the **Election Observation** component are

- To provide objective information and analysis about the electoral process to national and international communities
- To bolster the electorate's confidence in the integrity of the electoral process

III QUARTERLY ACTIVITIES

A Political Dialogue Forums

IRI's Political Dialogue Forums (PDFs) seek to strengthen the connections between local elected officials, political parties, and the electorate. These forums provide an ongoing opportunity for citizens to interact with their elected officials and party leaders, serving as an outlet for public expression and two-way communication. Additionally, the forums seek to educate and promote other forms of citizen participation in the country's political process. An important element in this regard is ensuring better citizen understanding of their rights and responsibilities as well as those of other actors such as political parties, electoral and other governmental officials, local organizations, etc.

In addition to the PDFs in the provinces, IRI has begun organizing PDFs in Port-au-Prince and inviting interested organizations to have a delegation of animators and trainers participate, with the idea that they will organize similar activities in their own communities. IRI has developed a specific format, discussing political parties in the first section and elections in the second section. IRI also invites political party leaders to make presentations on the given subject, always from a neutral perspective and not their own individual party. The leaders then take questions from the audience. In this way, political parties and grassroots organizations are afforded an opportunity to share their respective views and identify ways in which they can collaborate. The organizations' animators and trainers are then expected to replicate the format. IRI has developed materials in Creole for them to use in their own sessions, including a document on the role and function of political parties and questions for them to use in

animating working group discussions IRI organized five PDFs at its offices during the reporting period

CGT and OGITH

IRI organized a PDF with two prominent unions, the General Independent Organization of Haitian Workers (OGITH) and the General Confederation of Workers (CGT), at its offices on July 27. Fifty representatives of these two unions attended. Former President Leslie Manigat, leader of the RDNP, spoke on the role of political parties, unions, and democracy, and former Prime Minister Marc Bazin, leader of the MIDH, spoke on elections. Mr. Bazin was present for part of Mr. Manigat's presentation, and intervened on several occasions during the Q&A period. Both speakers took questions following their presentations, and commented afterwards that they were impressed with the quality of the questions. The participants considered Mr. Manigat's presentation to be particularly useful and IRI is transcribing it in Creole to use in future programs.

IRI shared with the unions the information that it had collected during its activities in the provinces. The unions appreciated this information being put at their disposition. The unions will take up these same themes of tolerance and reconciliation and will use the same methodology of debate and discussion in their own activities with union chapters across the country. They would like to organize similar meetings with IRI in the future to reinforce the link between parties and worker organizations. As a result of this activity, other unions have requested IRI's cooperation in their efforts.

The parties present also benefited by hearing the message of the union members that "yes, we want to become a member of your party, but you must regroup yourselves, create clear platforms, prepare good candidates, and listen to us, otherwise, you cannot count on us." The parties now understand better the reality that the unions face, their defects, and the bridges that can be built between them and unions to reinforce their ties and strengthen democracy. The parties also understand even better the work of IRI because these are themes that IRI has been emphasizing for a long time.

The participants' questions and comments demonstrated that IRI's approach for the event—raising awareness of the role of parties, inviting party leaders to speak, and having party leaders take questions—was successful and has created a new dynamic. The unions understood the importance for them to clearly define their aspirations and how to get parties to understand those aspirations. They understood their role relative and complementary to political parties, particularly that they do not replace political parties. They understood how to pressure the parties to organize conventions, define programs that take into consideration workers' needs, and the importance of having good candidates. They discovered the importance of debate and dialogue with the parties on questions that concern them. They recognized the importance of ongoing, civil dialogue with party leaders and elected officials and an electoral environment.

favorable to debates and free political competition. They also understood that it is necessary to participate in the democratic process.

Radios Vision 2000, Metropole, Signal FM, Plus, Ginen, Magic, and HHN (a station that broadcasts to Haitians in the United States) all attended this PDF and interviewed Mr. Manigat and Mr. Bazin, the leaders of the two unions, and IRI staff. Radio Vision 2000 broadcast a very positive report, noting above all the importance of the presence of Mr. Manigat and Mr. Bazin together at the same event. *The Nouvelliste* also noted in its front-page editorial the significance of this event, as did *Haiti Observateur*. USAID attended the event.

OCODER

IRI organized a two-day PDF with the Community Organization for Rural Development (OCODER) on July 28-29 at its offices to discuss the role of political parties and the electoral process in a democracy. Approximately 50 trainers attended. The purpose of the session was to raise awareness of these issues and equip the trainers to return to their communities where they are expected to organize similar sessions.

Mr. Hubert DeRonceray, leader of the MDN party, spoke on the first day about political parties and responded to questions from the audience. In the afternoon, IRI went over its guide on political parties' functions. The animators then broke up into working groups to discuss how political parties can contribute to democracy, how they can work with grassroots organizations, and how citizens can have influence in a political party. On the second day, Mr. Serge Gilles, the leader of PANPRA, spoke about the importance of elections and responded to questions from the audience. The animators will use this information to organize sessions in their own communes.

The participants made many interesting and relevant comments to the party leaders. They talked about the need for parties to get together and asked what the parties were doing to make this a reality, the need for parties to develop programs that respond to their needs and implement them once elected to office, and the need for high quality candidates that are capable of making a difference. Their criticisms of the parties were very strong but constructive, always leaving open the door for future collaboration. Their comments and questions demonstrate that they understand the role that parties play and the importance of dialogue and debate.

USAID representatives Belinda Bernard and Gerard Philippeaux attended both days. The press also covered this event, interviewing the speakers and representatives of OCODER. Radios Signal FM, Ginen, Tropic, and Vision 2000 broadcast news reports on the event.

Grassroots Organizations

On August 6-7, IRI invited grassroots organizations (COCODEC, MOFADEM, GBBC and ODM) to each send a delegation to a two-day PDF at its offices. The purpose of the session was to discuss the role of political parties and the electoral process in a democracy and equip the trainers to return to their communities where they are expected to organize similar sessions. The event was attended by 54 people including 14 women.

On the first day, leaders from the parties MODELH-PRDH and PNT were invited to speak about political parties and then respond to questions from the audience. Several participants doubted the parties' effectiveness when they are so numerous, and a few participants persistently questioned the leaders about how political parties could become more effective. In the afternoon, they broke into working groups to discuss the role of political parties in more detail. On the second day, IRI gave a presentation on elections, and took questions from the audience. The leaders of the grassroots organizations were then asked to evaluate the activity. Interestingly, they did not think the party leaders who spoke on the first day were very convincing. This kind of critique will be very useful in IRI's discussions with the parties. Telemax, a local television station, interviewed the party leaders and IRI In-Country Director Stanley Lucas. Gerard Philippeaux of USAID attended the second day.

On September 23-24, IRI scheduled a PDF with three grassroots organizations (APL, CSMC, and OPODEC) but this was canceled due to Hurricane Georges. The activity took place on October 7-8, and will be reported on in the next quarterly report.

B Local Political Dialogue Forums

IRI has been providing support to local organizations organizing their own PDFs. IRI's role in these activities has evolved since the last quarter in terms of how it decides to support a local organization, the content of the activity, and its format. First, when an organization visits IRI on its own initiative, staff have lengthy discussions with its representatives on its activities and goals. If deemed an appropriate partner, IRI will then invite them to participate in an upcoming PDF after which IRI may provide support to similar activities. Second, the content of the forum is modeled after the content of IRI's PDF, with an emphasis on political parties and their role in a democracy. Third, the working group discussion has been expanded to get participants to discuss in more detail their views on political parties and make recommendations for how to improve the political process.

IRI participated in and supported six local organizations' activities with funding totaling H\$6,500 (approximately US\$1,935) for 13 different activities attended by approximately 300 people. All of these organizations participated in one of the PDFs organized by IRI in July and August. These included the Community Organization for Rural Development (OCODER), the Women's Movement for the Development of Mussotte (MOFADEM), the Central Committee of Organizations for the Development of the Third District (COCODEC), the Bon Berger Group of Carrefour (GBBC), the Mariani Development Organization (ODM), and the General Independent Organization of Haitian Workers (OGITH). Areas where local organization activities were held included Belledere, Thomonde, Anse-a-Veau, Estere, Port-au-Prince, and Carrefour.

The agenda for these local PDFs followed very closely the format and content of the PDFs organized by IRI, focusing on the role of political parties in a democracy, political party

platforms, and citizen participation in a credible electoral process. The organizations also dedicated a portion of the agenda to working group discussions of these issues and completion of the IRI survey.

IRI has asked each organization to report on the activities supported by IRI. While lacking in certain details and analysis, the reports on the working group discussions provide excellent insight into their thinking on political parties and elections. Following are some of the comments made during these working group discussions:

- *Political parties have a vital role to play in these matters, as they represent the population's demands*
- *Political parties should maintain open channels of communication with grassroots organizations to prepare adequate programs that might alleviate the population's misery*
- *Political parties should organize debates to fully present their programs to citizens, and also motivate them to become party members*
- *To facilitate citizens' involvement and ensure a growing membership within their ranks, political parties need to establish adequate structures and develop well-articulated programs*
- *For their part, citizens must join political parties of their choice in order to participate in the development of their party's political platform and program*
- *Political parties and candidates, once in power, must execute the program they were elected on*
- *Citizens should submit their demands to political parties to ensure that they are taken into account*
- *Have candidates present their programs and organize different meetings between parties and the community on the parties' political programs*
- *Citizens and grassroots organizations should meet regularly to ensure that the elected officials execute the program platform they were elected on*

IRI is encouraging these organizations to report in greater detail what is discussed during these forums. To help them, IRI is developing a handout to help them prepare reports that answer not only the question of what people said during the meeting, but how the meeting changed their understanding of the democratic process, and how they will participate in this process in the future. Naturally, this is a challenge for them but IRI wants to explore these issues.

in detail with its local partners because it remains committed to a results-oriented program
Indirectly, writing these reports will help strengthen the local organization and foster a similar
commitment for results-oriented programming

C Survey on Political Attitudes

During the past quarter, IRI expended a significant amount of time and effort on a study of political attitudes in Haiti. Working with its consultants, IRI developed a questionnaire to learn more about citizens' attitudes toward democracy in Haiti and elections in particular. The objective of the study is to get a realistic view of citizen hopes, concerns, and recommendations for resolving the controversies surrounding the April 1997 elections and planning the next elections.

The questionnaire was developed with input from a statistician, a sociologist, and a political scientist, with an eye toward developing questions that determine not just what is wrong with the system, but what it would take to fix it and get people out to vote. This information will be collected, analyzed, and disseminated in a written report to the Haitian and international community. Fourteen students were trained to administer the questionnaire.

IRI's methodology is to go to departments where it has sponsored activities in the past, and select a mixture of communes where it has and has not worked in the past. The municipalities thus selected were Lascahobas, Boucan Carre, Mirebalais, Hinche, Thomonde, Jacmel, Cayes-Jacmel, Les Cayes, Cavaillon, Miragoâne, Petit-Goâve, Delmas, Petion Ville, Kenscoff, St Marc, Arcahaie, Croix des Bouquets, and Port-au-Prince.

Preliminary site visits were made by one or another of the four different teams of interviewers that were organized, in order to identify logistical arrangements, complete wherever necessary available lists of local organizations, and organize the distribution of invitation letters. The following week, the same team of interviewers returned to execute the survey. All field trips were led by senior IRI personnel or consultants.

The original survey design calls for 2,000 questionnaires to be completed, although from a statistical point of view half that number would have to be considered as highly illustrative, if not scientifically representative of the Haitian population as a whole. This number, and the overall methodology designed for this survey, compare favorably with other research instruments utilized by various democracy-sector related studies of the past few years sponsored by USAID, including the CID-Gallup, USIS and ASOSYE surveys.

Field activities were initiated on September 5, and by the end of the reporting period, some 969 questionnaires had been completed. It is expected that by October 31, interviews will have been completed with the final targeted social sector, the various socio-professional associations headquartered in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area.

IRI encountered a number of difficulties during the execution of this activity. Some of these have to do with the general poor condition of rural roads, particularly in the Central Plateau. Fortunately, most field activities were nearly completed in the provinces when

Hurricane Georges struck Haiti, so this natural disaster had only a limited impact on the survey activities

IRI encountered difficulties of a political nature in some places (although not in others), demonstrating that it is not possible for IRI to always predict where an activity might be disrupted, only that the potential exists. It is important to note that even where there was an attempt to disrupt the activity, many participants were vocal in their desire to see IRI continue its work in the field, despite the risks to themselves.

Below are brief descriptions of the incidents experienced this quarter surrounding the survey activities

- When planning the activity in Petit-Goâve, IRI learned that a local organization intended to disrupt whatever IRI planned to organize there, regardless of when and why. IRI took the precaution of informing the local police. The activity took place in total tranquility with a significant turnout.
- In Les Cayes, 2-3 individuals arrived at the site and refused to sign in. They were not allowed entry and subsequently began making a lot of noise, denouncing IRI. Despite the attempted disruption, a large number of individuals participated in the activity.
- In Arcahaie, IRI staff arrived at City Hall the morning of the activity (Monday, September 28) to find anti-IRI graffiti covering the inside walls. Only 3-4 people came for the event, so it was postponed for a later date.
- The activities in the Central Plateau (Hinche, Mirebalais, Thomonde, Boucan Carre) all went well with a significant turnout, apart from some problems in Lascahobas. There, 13 members of the National Popular Assembly (APN), a Lavalas-affiliated organization, and Fanmi Lavalas came to the event carrying concealed weapons and hovered outside the site where they made many negative remarks about IRI and the meeting taking place.

D Political Party Support

The inauguration of the Political Party Training and Information Center (later renamed the *Maison du Dialogue* or 'House of Dialogue' at the request of the political parties) on August 12 dominated IRI's schedule for the latter part of July and August, as staff dedicated many hours to prepare for the event. The Center is part of IRI's long-term commitment to helping Haitian democratic parties create a fair playing field for pluralist competition. IRI will use the Center to conduct party training activities. The Center will also accommodate the parties' own training activities and other meetings. It will provide the parties access to office equipment and serve as a resource center for information regarding the parties and relevant laws. IRI hopes the opening of the training and information center will contribute to creating pluralist party.

competition, which was the overarching theme of the inauguration

Agenda In developing the agenda for the event IRI took into consideration several issues the need to have the spectrum of parties speak and giving our partners a chance to make a formal statement IRI accorded a priority to the two groups within the Haitian Conference of Political Parties (CHPP), the MPSN and the Group of Six IRI also invited Mr Marc Bazin of MIDH and Mr Leslie Manigat of RDNP, both of whom accepted

- The MPSN, a coalition of seven right-of-center parties, decided unanimously to have Mr Hubert DeRonceray, leader of the MDN, speak on their behalf Mr DeRonceray currently holds the rotating presidency within the MPSN In addition, the parties that comprise the MPSN signed his speech, giving him their full support
- Within the Group of Six, an alliance of six left-of-center parties, two party leaders were scheduled to be out town, Serge Gilles of PANPRA and Claude Roumain of Generation 2004 Evans Paul of KID was invited but declined Thus no one spoke on behalf of the Group of Six at the inauguration
- Although both had accepted the invitation to speak, neither Mr Manigat nor Mr Bazin was present as the ceremony began, so IRI asked Mr Martial Celestin, a former prime minister and secretary general of RDNP to speak as the dean of all the parties Mr Bazin arrived 45 minutes late, and since the program was well underway, IRI was unable to accommodate him on the schedule

To complement the political parties, IRI invited select members of the international community to speak, including the USAID Director Phyllis Forbes and U S Ambassador Timothy Carney IRI also invited Congressman Benjamin Gilman, whose speech was delivered by his staffperson, Caleb McCarry IRI President Lorne Craner gave the closing address

- USAID Director Phyllis Forbes reiterated USAID's commitment to funding IRI and the training center, and its desire to see pluralism advance
- U S Ambassador Timothy Carney denounced the disruptions to IRI's activities as " reverting to old habits," condemned the rumor-mongering against IRI as irresponsible, and called upon the political class to rise to the challenges in front of them
- Congressman Gilman similarly lamented the disruptions to IRI's activities, denouncing political violence in Haiti and reiterating his support for the restoration of constitutional order in 1994
- Mr Craner concluded the ceremony by highlighting IRI's commitment to remain engaged in Haiti and with Haiti's democratic political parties in particular

Invitations IRI invited approximately 40 political parties to the event, including parties such as Fanmi Lavalas and PLB that have not participated in IRI party activities at the national level. IRI also included members of the diplomatic and international community, as well as representatives of Haitian civil society. IRI also invited all the organizations that receive funding from USAID, as well as USAID representatives.

- Turnout neared 200, completely surpassing expectations
- A total of 24 political parties attended, with a handful of party leaders attending an IRI event for the first time (PNT, PADEMH). KONAKOM and PNDPH, two left-of-center parties, also attended, noteworthy because they have been critical of the CHPP.
- The ambassadors from the United States, Venezuela, Dominican Republic, and Germany attended, and the Embassy of France sent a representative. The Spanish ambassador later conveyed his disappointment at not being invited. Assuring him that no slight was intended, IRI committed to ensuring that he, and the entire diplomatic community, will be invited to future events. MIPONUH and MICIVIH both sent representatives.

Press IRI carefully managed the relationship with the press for this event, sending out invitations to the event the day before to all the radio stations with newsrooms, television stations, and the major newspapers.

- The press accorded significant coverage to the inauguration. The event dominated the afternoon news, pulling highlights from the speeches and interviewing many of the party leaders present. Radio Nationale was the only station to not cover the event.
 - Two television stations, Telemax and TeleHaiti, covered the event, whereas the government owned station, Telenational, ignored it entirely.
 - Of the newspapers, *Haiti Observateur* did a lengthy piece in the days that followed. *Haiti Progres* had an inflammatory headline, referring to IRI and the CHPP as coup-plotters. Ironically, the headline had very little to do with the content of the article, which dealt with the OPL and the search for a prime minister. *The Nouvelliste's* only coverage was its editorial on the day of the event, portraying the Haitian political party leaders and former President Manigat as 'kids' whom the foreigner is sending back to primary school. *The Nouvelliste* declined to publish Mr. Manigat's response, later published in *The Matin*.
- E Challenges to IRI Program Activities

IRI remains at the center of a debate on democracy in Haiti. While the reaction to the CHPP has abated somewhat, radio broadcasts, newspaper articles, and TV reports continue to dedicate a great deal their time and space to IRI and its activities. The current of virulent criticism and verbal attacks that developed during the previous reporting quarter continued.

during this quarter A few of the most important events are described below

- July 6 IRI activity in St Marc is disrupted (See attached IRI report specifically on this event)
- July 14 IRI receives a threatening call at its office, in which the caller indicates that there will be incidents "in the place where IRI normally goes "
- July 20 Mr Boucher, a representative of MOFADEM, an organization that has sponsored local forums in the Nippes region with IRI's assistance, attended a meeting of the Miragoâne Municipal Assembly of which he is a member Members of the third communal section of the Assembly threatened to have him beheaded if he organizes a meeting with IRI in their communal section Other members of the Assembly called him a traitor for working with IRI because "IRI is plotting to assassinate Aristide, wants to block Fanmi Lavalas in the next elections, and actively promotes the return of the Macoutes " A Fanmi Lavalas member, Mr Boucher defended IRI's work, saying that IRI is promoting tolerance and dialogue, both of which are essential
- July 26 Mr Patrick Norzeus, the mayor of Delmas and member of the Fanmi Lavalas secretariat, and Mr Guy Ferdinand, the former Vice-Consul of Haiti in New York, gave an interview to *Radio Soleil International* in New York in which they threatened IRI and called for tougher actions against the Institute The interview was rebroadcast in Haiti A partial transcript of the interview was reprinted in *Haiti Observateur*
- July 27 The owner of Louco night club in Petit-Goâve informs IRI that he has received threats that his club will be burned if he allows the right-of-center MDN political party to organize its annual party congress at his night club The MDN later canceled the congress after receiving no response to its letter to Police Chief Paul Denizé asking for security guarantees
- August 9 IRI's second and only remaining phone line ceases to function, just days before the inauguration of the Political Party Training and Information Center Reliable sources within Teleco, the state-owned telephone company, confirm that it is deliberately disconnected and any Teleco employee who reconnects it is subject to dismissal IRI's other phone line has been out of order since November 1997
- September 18 In Les Cayes, 2-3 individuals arrived at the site of the activity and refused to sign in They were not allowed entry and subsequently began making a lot of noise, accusing IRI of destabilizing the country, forcing people to participate in the activity, etc One attempted to compel his colleagues to leave the activity, who instead expressed their desire to participate
- September 28 In Arcahaie, the IRI team arrived at City Hall the morning of its activity to find

graffiti denouncing IRI covering the outside walls Staff later learned that uniformed police officers vandalized the building on the night of September 25 The mayor confirmed this the following week with IRI staff

September 28 In Lascahobas, 13 members of the APN and Fanmi Lavalas came to the event carrying concealed weapons IRI staff did not allow them to participate and the activity proceeded without further disruption

October 4 IRI In-Country Director is threatened by Deputy Alix Fils Aime, who tells him that he will have to be carried away in a bucket once they are through with him

In addition to the above events, the *Haiti Progres* newspaper continues to publish a series of incendiary articles with unfounded accusations against IRI, its staff, USAID, and the NED

IRI's response to these challenges has been to reiterate its commitment to working with all democratic, peaceful parties for pluralism and democracy in Haiti IRI's In-Country Director has had meetings with several of the individuals criticizing the activities to explain IRI's program and to make clear that IRI is open to all democratic parties and that IRI facilitates the work the parties themselves want to achieve

F Other Program Activities

IRI took part in many program-related meetings during this period In-country staff and visiting Washington staff held several meetings with USAID in Port-au-Prince as well as with the U S Embassy staff to discuss the evolution of our program and recent events related to the Institute's work

On July 14, IRI-Washington staff attended a "Haiti Group" meeting organized by Georgetown University in Washington D C , at which the featured speaker was Louis Jacques Gracia Pierre, the assistant mayor of St Marc and a long-time supporter of IRI's activities When asked about the impact of U S military projects in his region, the assistant mayor responded that, while he is not aware of these activities, the only organization in Haiti that is having a significant impact on democracy is IRI He further said it was unfortunate that IRI's recent meeting in St Marc was disrupted and that he hopes IRI activities will continue

On July 15, IRI met with the U S Ambassador and USAID personnel to discuss St Marc and related security issues IRI provided them with its report on St Marc

On July 20, IRI's in-country staff attended an impromptu meeting with USAID's Mission Director Phyllis Forbes and other staff IRI's proposal was discussed

On July 22 IRI's Regional Director and Deputy Director and the Haiti In-Country Director met with USAID Assistant Administrator Mark Schneider at USAID's offices to discuss

the future of IRI's work in Haiti

IRI attended two "Results Package" team meetings during the reporting period, one on August 4 at NDI's office and the other on September 8, at IRI's office. Those attending included USAID and the political section of the Embassy, and the four organizations that comprise this team: IRI, NDI, IFES, and ARD (implementing the parliamentary program). Each organization gave program updates during these meetings.

On August 7, IRI attended a portion of a meeting to revise USAID's indicators pertaining to elections, civic education and political parties. USAID, IRI, NDI, IFES, and ARD were present and collectively revised the indicators that affect their projects. They were later presented to USAID Mission Director Phyllis Forbes, who made several changes.

On September 29, IRI attended a briefing at USAID on the results of the focus groups that they organized in various parts of the country. Political party leaders, civil society representatives, and elected officials were also invited to attend.

IV FUTURE ACTIVITIES

IRI will continue implementing phase two of its program, as outlined in its proposal to USAID. IRI will continue with its PDFs and local PDFs, extending them further into the provinces, pursuant to ongoing evaluations of the security environment. IRI also expects to complete and disseminate its report on popular political attitudes. In addition, IRI expects to formally launch its political party training program during the next reporting period.

V EVALUATION

Political Dialogue Forums

Objective 1 *To continue establishing connections between the electorate and elected officials and between the electorate and political parties*

The PDFs and local PDFs that IRI organized and supported during the quarter contributed to an increased dialogue among the electorate, a debate on the value of political parties in the democratic process, and a discussion of how citizens can and should participate.

In nearly all of the local PDFs, participants underlined their conviction that political parties should make all necessary efforts to meet with their constituents and civil society in general more often, to develop their political program on the basis of citizens' demands, to present such a program when it exists, and, once elected, to ensure that the program is being

implemented Haitian elected officials are roundly criticized for making many promises during the campaign period, and doing nothing once elected

Participants expressed their regrets that very little such efforts are presently being made by Haitian political parties throughout the country The participants applauded IRI's initiative to bring party representatives and their organizations together for a dialogue and debate during the PDFs

Participants in the local PDFs agree on the need for political parties to build their political programs and concrete developmental proposals on the basis of in-depth dialogue with the population The conclusion reached—that citizens and grassroots organizations have the responsibility of engaging parties on detailed programmatic issues—speaks well for future prospects related to the development of political parties in Haiti in general Many participants stated their resolve to meet in the future with local political parties, in order to question them and participate more fully in both their general development as well as the elaboration of a political platform

Local PDFs unequivocally offer positive results with regards to increasing connections between the electorate and political parties With minimal IRI financial and technical guidance these events are proving to be most effective in reaching the leadership of local community organization in a nonpartisan, non-sectarian approach that highlights increased dialogue, tolerance, and fosters consensus-building at the local level The exchanges of information and views greatly extend the impact of the PDFs organized by IRI at the national and regional level and represent clear models in further political dialogue at the local level

Objective 2 To continue redressing the debilitating paucity of accurate information pertaining to popular political attitudes and preferences

Once completed, IRI's survey on popular political attitudes will make enormous contributions to this objective There are too few surveys of this nature in Haiti, and even fewer that are widely disseminated to the Haitian public IRI intends a wide dissemination in order to get the word out on popular political attitudes and preferences

The information gathered in the PDFs and the local PDFs is also being shared with the political parties to help them improve their own operations on the ground and better respond to citizen demands and expectations This information is also being returned to local participants through the collaborating organizations, and thus become the object of further local debates and discussions The process should lead to increased interactions among officials and their constituents, and between political parties and candidates and the electorate in general

Objective 3 To continue cultivating an environment of open political debate among diverse sectors of Haitian society

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During the PDFs and local PDFs, community leaders from a broad range of the social and political spectrum engaged in open political discussion and debates, effectively sharing information and opinions, reaching a consensus on a number of issues that are then expressed in the form of resolutions adopted both in subgroups and in plenary sessions. These debates therefore effectively augment the level and quality of dialogue among competing political perspectives at the local level.

News coverage of IRI's activities also continues to play an important role in multiplying the effect of these activities. The four PDFs that it held during the quarter were well-covered by the press and served to broaden the possible audience for IRI's activities. News coverage of the inauguration of the Political Party Training and Information Center contributed to the ongoing debate on democracy in Haiti. Even IRI's trips to the provinces to conduct a survey were deemed newsworthy, with journalists filing stories on the activity in Les Cayes and Petit-Goâve. For every person who participates in an IRI activity, and unknown number of radio listeners hear about the activity, form their own opinion, and possibly have a debate among themselves, their friends, colleagues, and neighbors.

Unfortunately, Fanmi Lavalas and Lavalas-affiliated organizations such as the APN have thus far resisted full and open participation in this process, and seem in fact to have opted for a deliberate strategy of intimidation and harassment to impede locals from participating in IRI activities.

Political Party Support

Objective 1 To strengthen political parties' capacities to function more effectively in the political process

During the PDFs, political party members, activists and sympathizers have consistently demonstrated a clearer understanding of the appropriate roles and function of political parties during these activities, particularly on the issues of the development of coherent party platforms and programs, on the relationship that should exist between parties and civil society in general, and on the growing notion of accountability of political parties, candidates and elected officials. This will be very useful as IRI's training program kicks into higher gear.

IRI took advantage of the opportunities presented to it to encourage the process of regrouping among the parties, which will directly contribute to their ability to function more effectively in the political process.

First, IRI carefully selected the party leaders to speak at its PDFs in order to maximize impact. Having former President Manigat and former Prime Minister Bazin appear at the same event was important because the two are political rivals and rarely appear at the same function together. Getting them to come together marked a step forward in encouraging greater

cooperation

Second, IRI used the inauguration of the Political Party Training and Information Center as an opportunity to highlight existing party groupings within the CHPP. That fact that one of the two responded reflects both the progress made and the challenges that lie ahead. The MPSN not only responded to IRI's invitation, but it surpassed expectations by coalescing around its designated leader and speaker. The Group of Six not participating reflected bad timing more than anything else, but still demonstrates the need for the group to better structure itself to fill in a void left behind with the temporary absence of one or more of its members.

Objective 2 *To support parties' efforts to improve the rules of political competition*

No activities in this area were undertaken during the reporting period.

Election Observation

Objective 1 *To provide objective information and analysis about the electoral process to national and international communities*

No activities in this area were undertaken during the reporting period.

Objective 2 *To bolster the electorate's confidence in the integrity of the electoral process*

No activities in this area were undertaken during the reporting period.

Report on July 6, 1998 IRI Activity in St. Marc, Haiti

Background

IRI has been active in Haiti since 1987. In 1997, resulting from its commitment to reinforcing political pluralism in Haiti, IRI initiated a new phase in its program focusing on political party development. This new phase builds on IRI's program efforts since 1987, in particular the Institute's March 1996 *Report on Political Parties and Pluralism in Haiti*.

In that report, IRI concludes that

“ it is essential to create the political space necessary for the emergence of true political party pluralism in Haiti. In this political environment, information would flow rapidly from the governed to the governors and to the opposition leaders who compete with the governing party for a popular mandate. Such a policy would require the development of information media to provide accurate data on popular political preferences, to be used by both the governing and opposition parties. The organization of fora for conducting a dialogue on Haiti's political, economic, security and other challenges would constitute a further valuable contribution to creating political pluralism in Haiti. Such fora must emerge if those currently alienated by the electoral process and the political system are to be brought back into the framework of constructive political action. A program to cultivate and strengthen true party pluralism in Haiti will restore meaning and value to the fledgling democratic institutions and processes so recently implanted.”

Stemming from these conclusions, IRI's recent activities have created new opportunities for Haitian political parties and other sectors of civil society to begin working together for the country's democratic development.

In St. Marc, IRI has organized four town hall meetings and dialogue forums since September 1997. A broad cross-section of political tendencies and other sectors have actively participated. Participants have included local elected officials, political party representatives,

(FL, OPL, KONAKOM, FNCD MIDH, RDNP, MNP-28 UPUR, and others), grassroots organizations, religious and business groups and journalists' associations The response to IRI's initiatives among local leaders in St Marc has been among the most positive of any localities in which we work

IRI's previous activities in St Marc have collected and shared information on popular attitudes in the area, given an opportunity for elected officials and their constituencies to interact on community needs and government initiatives, and created an environment of debate and dialogue The Political Dialogue Forum on May 26 was a strong success, giving community leaders an opportunity to directly interact with political party leaders from RDNP, ALAH, and MOP and with representatives of FL, MIDH, KONAKOM, UPUR, and MNP-28

Planning for the July 6 Activity

Attached as Annex 1 is a report from IRI staff member Roudy Choute detailing FL and PLB threats against him and IRI during his preparation visit to St Marc on June 29 IRI shared this memorandum with the U S Embassy and USAID mission in Port-au-Prince IRI/Washington and in-country staff spoke with DCM Bob Felder and USAID's Belinda Bernard concerning these threats and the most appropriate way to continue IRI's activities

IRI requested that the Embassy and USAID send representatives to the St Marc event, which had been rescheduled for July 6 IRI believed an Embassy and USAID presence would demonstrate U S government support for IRI's activities as well as give the Missions a clear sense of the situation and its potential impact on USAID's democratic development objectives At the Embassy's Independence Day celebration, Bob Felder and Political Counselor Sue Ford Patrick confirmed that Political Officer Howard Davis would represent the Embassy Belinda Bernard informed IRI that USAID would not send a representative

Bob Felder and Sue Ford Patrick also informed IRI that they had spoken with PLB leader Senator Renauld Bernadin and Chief of Police Pierre Denize regarding the threats against IRI Senator Bernadin reportedly denied any knowledge of the threats and accused IRI of fabricating the story Denize pledged police cooperation to help ensure there would be no disruptions

Events of July 6 in St Marc

Local elected officials, political party representatives, journalists, and other participants began arriving and signing in on the second level of City Hall The list indicates the presence of several members of KONAKOM and MIDH, CASECs and ASECs, journalists, and two members of FL Early on, one person wearing dark sunglasses stood over the sign-in sheet IRI In-Country Program Officer Kim Clark asked what organization he represents, to which he responded he was an Inspector for the Mayor's office After leaving and then returning, IRI In-Country Director Stanley Lucas requested his identification credentials, which he did not present, and then left again

At the street level, Ms Clark witnessed a small group of agitated people. One slammed his fist on the IRI vehicle. At that point, St Marc journalist Ralph Pierre Charles suggested that Ms Clark return upstairs for her own safety because the group was talking about IRI in a hostile manner. Mr Charles also indicated he had been threatened, but gave no further details.

Upstairs, Mr Lucas initiated the meeting by introducing the Institute's activities and sharing information gathered in previous meetings. Within a few minutes, a group of about one dozen people, of whom five or six appeared to be the most agitated, came upstairs and began shouting, kicking chairs, threatening participants, taking IRI materials from the participants and ripping them up, ripping up the sign-in sheet, and slamming their fists on the table. They shouted:

"Only one party has the right to function in St Marc, and it is Fanmi Lavalas. There is only one leader, Jean Bertrand Aristide. Other parties do not have the right to function. They are Macoutes who are plotting to assassinate Jean Bertrand Aristide. The Americans tried to do this during the three years of the coup d'etat, but they did not succeed and will not succeed now."

"The Americans are sending Haitian boat people back in cuffs, so we will send the IRI people back to Port-au-Prince in cuffs."

"This meeting cannot take place. We received instructions from the FL legal advisor to stop it."

The agitators began stacking the chairs and pushing them against the wall. Further threats were made. One agitator said to IRI consultant Guy Vincent that they had come "to burn the IRI people." Of the dozen provocateurs, several appeared to be the leaders -- Biron Odige, Pascal Nard Denis, Jean Robert, and Serge (only name available). Odige and Nard Denis were among those who threatened IRI's staff member on June 29 in St Marc. Serge and Jean Robert were the most agitated and outspoken, and it appeared to IRI staff and the U.S. Embassy representative that Jean Robert may have been under the influence of drugs.

The participants' reactions to these developments are worth noting. Several participants quickly but calmly left, whereas others stayed behind. Of these, a few spoke up, but most seemed to be afraid. The Delege de Ville, Pierre Joseph Alexandre, said to the agitators, "What are you trying to do with this menacing behavior? Do you want to beat me? You know that if you do, as a minority in this town, you will have to leave. What you are doing is illegal and undemocratic." The MIDH representative also spoke up, saying that the actions of this non-representative minority did not have the right to sabotage such democratic initiatives and did not bring honor to St Marc.

Soon after the incident began, IRI dispatched its driver to find the police. About 10

minutes later an HNP inspector and agent arrived and talked to the agitators, telling them that IRI's meeting was peaceful and legal and intended to promote democratic values. They further said that what the agitators were doing was wrong and illegal. No further measures were taken against the perpetrators. When Assistant Mayor Jacques Pierre Gracia arrived, after being called a traitor to the Lavalas cause, he conveyed the same message about the peaceful, legal nature of IRI's activities.

Mr. Lucas engaged some of the agitators in a debate to ask them if they believe in democracy and tolerance. One participant actually backed down from his previous negative view of IRI. After approximately 45 minutes, for the security of the participants and IRI personnel, Mr. Lucas decided to postpone the event for another time. Assistant Mayor Pierre Gracia agreed that the City Hall conference room would be available to IRI as in the past. He agreed to meet IRI staff in Port-au-Prince later in the week to discuss future plans and how best to approach the matter.

Conclusions

IRI remains committed to pursuing its multifaceted program in Haiti. The Institute is deeply concerned, however, about the resurgent environment of intimidation, harassment, and violence. IRI believes this environment -- not only the St. Marc incident, but also the ongoing public campaign against its initiatives -- will make it even more difficult for pluralist, democratic political competition to develop in Haiti. Democratic political party representatives ask IRI, "If things like this happen now, what can we expect if we compete in elections?" IRI is also concerned by the absence of any punishment of those who disrupted a legal gathering. Entering a public building and threatening people with impunity potentially signals opponents of free speech and assembly that there is no risk of punishment for illegal actions. IRI is equally concerned by the absence of strong public statements from important sectors of the international community to support political pluralism, dialogue, and debate, and to oppose hostile attempts to prevent these developments.

Annex 1

To Stanley Lucas, IRI Director
From Roudy Choute, Staff Consultant
Date June 29, 1998
Re Report on Preparation for St. Marc Political Dialogue Forum

At the request of journalists from St. Marc, IRI organized a field visit on June 29, 1998 to prepare the next forum IRI plans to undertake on July 2. I have delivered IRI invitations to the CASECs, the mayors, the journalists, and to all local party representatives.

I have personally met and invited the local party representatives who were present during IRI's last activity in St. Marc, including RDNP, FNCD, MIDH, UPUR, MNP-28, MOP, OPL, and FL.

The party La Fanmi Lavalas (FL), which participated in our last forum, is still represented by Mr Biron ODIGE who always receives our invitation letters at his work at APN (National Port Authority) of St Marc Therefore I personally went to his office to invite him to participate in our July 2 forum

When I arrived at the APN, I was met by a group of five people from the FL and the PLB I could only identify two people from the PLB, Alcena and Pascal Nard Denis, and one person from the FL, Biron Odige They were surrounded by supporters I could not identify Mr Odige and an armed man from PLB threatened and pointed a gun at me They tried to force me to abandon IRI activities Pascal Nard then told me that "Odige has received orders from PLB and FL leaders that he will not be able to participate in IRI's demagoguery "

He also told me that if IRI returns to St Marc, its staff will not be able to leave town He and his men said they will smash our vehicle windows, flatten our tires, and beat the IRI staff

He then declared that one of his partners, commonly called "Ti Pascal, the violent," was very angry because during our previous visit, he was not present and he wanted to shoot us with his gun "Ti Pascal" was present this time, he seemed to be very calm and he did not say a word while Pascal Nard and the others were talking to me

Conclusion

They were all very threatening and eager to reenter a new cycle of violence to stop IRI activities Since the verbal attacks did not bring any results it seems their people are ready to use violence to stop the democratic environment that IRI is trying to build This environment is perceived as a threat to PLB and FL representatives in St Marc I think that these threats should be taken very seriously

Recommendation

The violent atmosphere that the PLB and FL is creating in St Marc violates IRI prohibition on working with violent groups. Because of this atmosphere, I suggest that the representatives of the two parties mentioned above not be invited to IRI activities. Preventive security measures also should be taken to prevent regression.

INTERNATIONAL REPUBLICAN INSTITUTE

**AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT NUMBER
521-0254-A-00-5019-AA**

**QUARTERLY REPORT
APRIL-JUNE, 1998
DEMOCRACY SUPPORT PROGRAM
HAITI**

I PROGRAM SUMMARY

The International Republican Institute's (IRI) multifaceted program is designed to begin addressing critical deficiencies in Haiti's democratic culture and political system. IRI's program includes townhall meetings in several regions of Haiti, discussion forums to promote political dialogue and open political space among diverse sectors of Haitian society, and educational programs on the proper role and function of political parties in a democratic system. IRI also continues observing, assessing, and reporting on Haiti's ongoing electoral processes and developments. The program is intended to serve as a platform on which to build a longer term effort to assist in Haiti's democratic development.

IRI initiated the program in July 1997 against a backdrop of political instability, which persisted this quarter. The country continues to lack a fully functioning prime minister, major governmental issues remain unresolved, and much needed international aid remains blocked pending resolutions to these and other outstanding matters.

II PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The three components of this program are designed to meet the following objectives:

- 1 To begin establishing connections between the electorate and elected officials and among various sectors of Haitian society and to begin redressing the debilitating paucity of accurate information pertaining to popular political attitudes and preferences
- ~~2 To cultivate an environment of open political debate among diverse sectors of Haitian society~~
- ~~3 To raise awareness among political leaders at all levels on appropriate roles and~~

functions of political parties in a democratic system

III QUARTERLY ACTIVITIES

A Political Dialogue Forums

IRI's political dialogue forums seek to strengthen the connections between local elected officials and the electorate. These forums provide an ongoing opportunity for citizens to interact with their elected officials, serving as an outlet for public expression and two-way communication. Additionally, the forums seek to educate and promote other forms of citizen participation in the country's political process. An important element in this regard is ensuring better citizen understanding of their rights and responsibilities as well as those of other actors, such as political parties, electoral and other governmental officials, local organizations, etc.

IRI sent letters to all political party leaders requesting the names of their local representatives and encouraging them to participate in forums. Five forums were organized this quarter: two in St. Marc, two in Kenscoff, and one in Mirebalais.

1 **St. Marc - May 21**

Several party leaders spoke about the role of parties and responded to questions for an hour and a half. Seventy-five people were expected to attend, 125 showed up. Attendees represented all different sectors of St. Marc. The debate was very animated, yet cordial. Radios Metropole, Ginen, Vision 2000, Signal FM and Radio Haiti reported on the event. The Haitian Press Agency called IRI for more information on the event, and a short article appeared in *The Nouvelliste*.

2 **Kenscoff - May 26**

The Kenscoff activity was canceled the morning of the meeting due to lack of participation. IRI later learned that the mayor's office did not distribute the invitations as it had pledged. In addition, the site of the meetings was the subject of a dispute between a grassroots organization and several pastors, causing invitees to fear attending.

3 **Mirebalais - May 27**

The event in Mirebalais succeeded despite the absence of several party leaders who canceled at the last minute due to other engagements. The mayor welcomed the participants and spoke favorably about IRI's work to advance democracy. Approximately 65 people attended. IRI attempted to direct the discussion toward the issue of election observation. However, everyone seemed to want to talk about IRI's work and what was being said about IRI in the press. Several participants voiced differing views on IRI's work. Some felt that IRI should be expelled, while many others were very positive about the program activities.

Journalists present recorded the event and Radio Metropole broadcast a report about the event on its national news

4 Kenscoff - June 16

It was particularly challenging to organize this event due to sharp divisions that exist between different sectors and political tendencies in Kenscoff. IRI staff spent a great deal of time talking to organization representatives and ensuring that everyone understood IRI's intentions to work in a neutral manner with all sectors. The extensive preparation work paid off. Approximately 50 people attended the event, representing all sectors and tendencies. Many of the CASECs were present and the mayor's office sent a representative. The debate focused on the role of political parties, the importance of elections and citizen participation in the democratic process. USAID and ASOSYE sent representatives to the event.

5 St Marc - July 6

IRI's forum in St. Marc on July 6 was aggressively disrupted by individuals who attempted to intimidate staff and participants, upset the chairs and tables in the meeting room and strike IRI vehicles with their fists. A full report on the events of July 6 and the problems experienced during a planning trip to St. Marc appears in the appendices of this report.

B Participation in and Support for Local Organization Activities

As a result of IRI's townhall meetings and discussion forums, several organizations have expressed interest in working with IRI. IRI frequently participates in and provides limited assistance to local organization events. In this way, IRI is able to introduce greater sustainability to its work as the local organizations do most of the work.

IRI's role in these activities has evolved since the last quarter. Now, instead of answering questions for 30-45 minutes, IRI's role consists of leading participants into working groups for discussion on the role that political parties play in the democratic process, the importance of platforms and candidates, and the relationship between grassroots organizations and political parties. This approach encourages more discussion among the participants and allows for important questions and answers to be generated by the participants. IRI also provides an average of \$111 per activity for costs such as lunch or chair rental.

IRI participated in and supported 12 local organization activities during this quarter.

Organizations worked with included The Community Organization for Rural Development (OCODER), CREDDI, CSMC, The Movement of Women for Democracy (MOFADEM), The Peasant Committee for the Development of the Second Plain of Petit-Goave

(KOPEDPT)

Areas where local organization activities were held included Laschoabas, Belladere, Hinche, Gasgone, Arcahaie, Boucan Carre, Saut de'Eau, Kenscoff, L'Azile, Petit-Goave, Bon Repos

C Political Party Awareness Building and Training Activities

Haitian political parties have made significant progress in this quarter in response to IRI's political party awareness and training activities. The scope of this progress has greatly increased the profile of IRI activities and created an important space for the continued development of pluralism in Haitian politics. The majority of activities in this period focused on the creation and development of the Haitian Conference of Political Parties (CHPP) and the Technical Support Committee to the Political Parties (CTSPP).

At the request of the parties, IRI invited all the political parties operating in Haiti to a meeting on April 16. The objective of the meeting was to produce a common declaration on Haitian institutions and democratization that would emanate from the parties' shared conclusions. This meeting grew out of a series of workshops and meetings with political party staffs organized by IRI in January of this year, and the subsequent plenary session meeting held on February 12, which was attended by party leaders and their staffs. The April 16 meeting furthered the gains made in January and February and resulted in the formulation of a "Declaration of Principles," which was signed by a majority of the participants. In addition, the political leaders created a formal framework -- CHPP and CTSPP -- within which to continue meeting and working toward addressing the challenges of democratization and economic and social progress in Haiti. Further description of these developments appears in the annexed document *Update on IRI Activities in Haiti: Political Party Awareness Building and Training, May 1998*. The Declaration of Principles and the newly created Haitian Conference of Political Parties were made public on May 5.

The first meeting of the Technical Support Committee was held on May 8 and centered on prioritizing training needs. The second meeting held on May 15, focused on defining the rules and procedures on the Committee. Subsequent meetings of the CHPP and CTSPP have further addressed training needs as well as organizational matters, such as the need to create an Executive Committee of some kind to act on behalf of the CHPP when all members cannot be assembled.

In May, the CHPP attended various meetings with U.S. officials to contribute to the process of negotiations to the ongoing political crisis. Each meeting with high level officials was preceded and followed by extensive internal meetings to plan the Conference's message and choose delegates to attend the meetings. First, at the invitation of the American Ambassador,

selected delegates of the CHPP met with Ambassador Carney at his residence on May 25 to hear a presentation on the status of negotiations and ask questions. Second, a delegation of the CHPP met with Anthony Lake and the Ambassador for several hours on May 29 at the Ambassador's residence. The purpose of the meeting was to continue the discussions begun earlier on proposals for creation of a provisional CEP, and to allow the parties to express their concerns about conditions for elections and serious misgivings about the status of negotiations.

The CHPP also participated in an ASOSYE-sponsored civil society debate in Jacmel on June 18 that brought together the representatives of approximately 200 different organizations from the communes of the South-East. This was an excellent opportunity for CHPP representatives to hear their counterparts in civil society express their needs on economic growth and poverty reduction. The CHPP participants will prepare reports on what they learned to assist all the parties in developing platforms for the South-East region.

Other political party training activities this quarter included IRI participation in an FMR party meeting in Kenscoff on May 23. IRI's presentation on the role of political parties in a democracy was well received and many good specific questions were raised.

D Challenges to IRI Program Activities

Since the May 7 release of the Declaration of Principles and the creation of the CHPP, IRI has been at the center of a debate on democracy in Haiti. The reaction to the CHPP has been enormous. Radio broadcasts, newspaper articles, and TV reports have dedicated much of their time and space to the CHPP and IRI. Most of this reaction has been positive, although a strong current of virulent criticism and verbal attacks developed during the reporting quarter (and continues beyond it). A few of the most important events are described below.

May 9 An IRI consultant was threatened at gunpoint by members of his party, the PLB. The PLB asked him to choose between IRI and the PLB, to which he responded that IRI's work is democratic. The PLB formally expelled him from the party and he responded that he would abstain from activities of the party because of the threats he received.

May 18 President Preval denounced the CHPP in his Flag Day speech as an ideological coup d'etat and accused member parties of affiliating with Macoutes who attempted to overthrow Aristide before he could take office.

May 26 Deputy Gabriel Fortune of Cayes denounced IRI and asked the President to expel IRI from the country and to declare its representatives *persona non grata*. Deputy Kelly Bastien, the former president of the lower chamber and FL leader Yvon Feuille publicly join the call.

June 29 An IRI consultant was threatened at gunpoint in St. Marc by local FL.

leaders He was conducting a preparation visit to St Marc

July 6 IRI's Political Dialogue Forum is aggressively disrupted (See full report describing the threats of June 29 and the subsequent disruption of IRI's event on July 6 in the appendices of this report)

In addition to the above events, the *Haiti Progres* newspaper has published a series of incendiary articles with unfounded accusations against IRI, its staff, USAID, and the NED

IRI's response to these challenges has been to reiterate its commitment to working with all democratic, peaceful parties for pluralism and democracy in Haiti IRI's In-Country Program Director has had meetings with several of the individuals criticizing the activities to explain IRI's program and to make clear that IRI is open to all democratic parties, and that IRI facilitates the work the parties themselves want to achieve

E Other Program Activities

IRI took part in many program related meetings during this period In-country staff and visiting Washington staff held several meetings with USAID in Port-au-Prince as well as with the U S Embassy staff to discuss the evolution of our program and recent events related to the Institute's work

On May 12, IRI attended a Chief of Parties meeting at USAID in Port-au-Prince at which USAID made a presentation on the issue of conflict of interest The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the challenges to the IRI program and to exchange ideas with others such as NDI and IFES

On May 13, IRI met with USAID/Washington's Mark Feierstein in Port-au-Prince to discuss recent developments with the CHPP and related activities

IRI's Washington-based Deputy Regional Program Director and Assistant Program Officer visited Haiti from May 18 to May 23 During their visit IRI staff worked on program management and development matters and met with U S Embassy DCM Bob Felder and USAID Mission Director Phyllis Forbes

IRI's Washington-based Regional Program Director visited from June 22 to June 24 During his visit, he worked on program development and management matters and met with Ambassador Carney and other U S Embassy representatives, USAID representatives, MICIVIH's Colin Granderson, OPL's Gerard Pierre Charles, Senator LeBlanc, Deputy Thernelan, and others

The In-Country Program Director and Program Officer visited Washington from June 24

to June 27 to assist in program development and management matters

IV FUTURE ACTIVITIES

IRI will undertake the activities described in its proposal approved by USAID on July 24

V EVALUATION

Objective 1 To begin establishing connections between the electorate and elected officials and among various sectors of Haitian society and to begin redressing the debilitating paucity of accurate information pertaining to popular political attitudes and preferences

Connections Between Electorate and Elected Officials

- IRI's Political Dialogue Forum in St Marc in May represents a step forward in the effort to develop relationships between political leaders and the electorate. The party leaders who spoke were well received and many participants actively engaged them in debate and discussion of relevant political issues. Among the topics of dialogue were the role of political parties and the conditions for free elections. The debate although very animated remained constructive and cordial. It was reported that Fanmi Lavalas organized an event in response to IRI's PDF. IRI believes that this is a positive development for the generation and continuation of constructive debate.
- The Kenscoff event in June made significant progress in establishing much needed connections between elected officials and the electorate. All sectors and tendencies attended and had extensive dialogue with several CASECs and the mayor's representative. Citizen participation in the democratic process was a key focus of the discussion, which demonstrated an increased understanding on the part of participants of the responsibilities of elected officials and the ability of citizens to affect the actions of those officials.

Redressing Paucity of Accurate Information

- Several independent journalists and Radio Metropole covered the May 27 forum in Mirebalais at which the objectives of IRI's work was publicly debated. IRI believes this coverage is very important because it provides an opportunity for the general public to hear differing opinions debated cordially.
- IRI staff meetings with Haitian parliamentarians and prominent political figures during this period served to dispel myths about popular political attitudes. IRI was able to convey the diverse opinions expressed at its Political Dialogue Forums in an effective manner to the individuals most likely to act on such information. IRI believes it is essential that rumor and innuendo about popular attitudes do not remain the only source of information for political leaders.
- Two broadly disseminated reports were completed in this period. IRI published a

report on the recent creation and activities of the Conference of Haitian Political Parties as well as a report on the events surrounding the July St Marc Political Dialogue Forum. These reports served to educate the interested audiences both in the United States and in Haiti about the current situation and the very real challenges facing democratic development. (Both appear at the end of this report.)

Objective 2 *To cultivate an environment of open political debate among diverse sectors of Haitian society*

Constructive Debate Among Diverse Sectors

- Program support of local organization activities this quarter succeeded in continuing to cultivate debate. Frequently, the presentations made by IRI spark very tough questions, which demonstrate the participants increasing ability to express criticism and concern.
- IRI's role in local activities has grown and changed this quarter. Staff are now more able to lead participants into groups in which they can formulate their own answers and debate different points of view.
- The participation of several members of the CHPP in a civil society debate on June 18 contributed to the increase in constructive dialogue between different sectors. Party leaders were able to hear citizens articulate their needs with regard to economic growth and poverty reduction.

Objective 3 *To raise awareness among political leaders at all levels on appropriate roles and functions of political parties in a democratic system*

Parties Develop Understanding of Challenges Confronting Them

- The creation of the Conference of Haitian Political Parties and the Technical Support Committee are landmark events in the continuing growth of political parties in Haiti. The participating members have overcome great obstacles (political, personal, historical) even to attend the same meetings in the same room with one another. Their being able to formulate common goals for the democratization of Haiti is extremely noteworthy. The parties have learned a great deal about the difficulties inherent in compromise and making their positions known. They have made progress in assessing their training needs and have begun to work with IRI to remedy them.

Parties Develop Better Understanding of Appropriate Role

- The development and publication of the Points of Convergence and Declaration of Principles were a significant step in the process of fostering better understanding of political parties' role. They understand the part they can play in resolving the political situation and now have concrete frameworks within which to work.
- The CHPP meetings with Ambassador Carney and Anthony Lake demonstrate an increased understanding and active fulfillment of the parties' role. The CHPP chose representatives to hear and ask questions on the Ambassador's and Mr Lake's presentations. They later jointly formulated clear responses and submitted these responses to the Embassy. Such action shows progress has been made in cooperation and reconciliation.

Appendix A

Update on IRI Activities in Haiti Political Party Awareness Building and Training May 1998

Introduction

In the past several months, IRI has organized a number of working sessions with the political parties. These activities occur within the framework of IRI's overall program efforts and result from the Institute's commitment to reinforcing political pluralism in Haiti. The sessions build on IRI's program efforts since 1995, in particular the Institute's March 1996 *Report on Political Parties and Pluralism in Haiti*.

In that report, IRI concluded that

“ it is essential to create the political space necessary for the emergence of true political party pluralism in Haiti. In this political environment, information would flow rapidly from the governed to the governors and to the opposition leaders who compete with the governing party for a popular mandate. Such a policy would require the development of information media to provide accurate data on popular political preferences, to be used by both the governing and opposition parties. The organization of fora for conducting a dialogue on Haiti's political, economic, security and other challenges would constitute a further valuable contribution to creating political pluralism in Haiti. Such fora must emerge if those currently alienated by the electoral process and the political system are to be brought back into the framework of constructive political action. A program to cultivate and strengthen true party pluralism in Haiti will restore meaning and value to the fledgling democratic institutions and processes so recently implanted.”

Stemming from these conclusions, IRI's recent activities have created new opportunities for Haitian political parties to begin working together for the country's democratic development.

Progress Achieved

At the request of the parties, IRI invited all the political parties operating in Haiti to a meeting on April 16, 1998. The objective of the meeting was to produce a common declaration on Haitian institutions and democratization that would emanate from the parties' shared conclusions. This meeting followed a series of workshops with the political party staffs organized by IRI in January 1998 on the theme, "Political Parties, Elections, Political System, and Institutions for Democracy," and the subsequent plenary session on February 12, attended by party leaders and their staffs.

- The political parties responded in large numbers to this invitation 29 parties attended Two parties (UPD, Ayiti Kapab) participated for the first time, demonstrating that interest in IRI-supported activities is increasing over time, not diminishing
- The agenda for the April 16 meeting contained five points an assessment of the latest meetings with the parties, a discussion of the declaration by the political parties resulting from the February 12 meeting, a reminder of the eight points of convergence at the February 12 meeting, planning for future IRI activities with the parties, and the establishment of a technical committee to support the political parties The political party representatives were universally interested The level of participation was intense given the implications of the subject matter for the party members who want to innovate, progress, and see their discussions achieve concrete gains
- All the party representatives who participated in the working groups agreed upon the working document, "Declaration of Principles of the Political Parties," after certain corrections and modifications Three political party leaders were chosen to lead the discussion on the document which was subsequently renamed "Declaration of Principles" and signed immediately by a majority of the parties present Others reserved the right to consult with their respective leaders, as there exists a 10-year-old friction among the party leaders present at the meeting Some see this friction already beginning to dissipate, with victims forgiving former aggressors in the spirit of reconciliation and tolerance promoted by IRI They hope this friction will continue to dissipate (See Annex 1)
- The political leaders created a formal framework within which the Haitian political parties can meet dialogue and work toward addressing the challenges of democratization and economic and social progress in Haiti The framework they created consists of the "Haitian Conference of Political Parties (CHPP) and the "Technical Support Committee to the Political Parties" (CTSP) The political parties signed a formal declaration creating these two entities (Annex 2)
- Once the principle of a technical committee was accepted, it was easy to obtain agreement on its composition 10 names were presented and ratified by the group The selected individuals represent political parties and were chosen for their competence willingness, and availability to participate in the work of the technical committee The technical committee will immediately take up the eight points of convergence and make concrete proposals to permit the parties, through the Haitian Conference of Political Parties, to defend their position in the democratic process This technical committee will also work with IRI on the

subject of training, defining platforms, preparation of candidates, supporting coalitions, proposing electoral law reform, etc

- For the political parties, the eight points of agreement that resulted from IRI's February 12 meeting constitute issues that should be studied by the technical committee. These points concern security, assistance to parties, the formation and training of political groupings, electoral law, the entity charged with holding elections, the legal framework for the functioning of large state institutions, amendments to the Constitution, and relations with IRI (Annex 3)
- The last point on the agenda was to present a summary of possible IRI training programs for the political parties in this period. IRI briefly explained the content of programs implemented in other countries, such as Mongolia, Russia, and Romania

Conclusions

While creating an opportunity for permanent dialogue, these efforts have prompted the participating political parties to request that IRI remain actively engaged to continue the following

- 1 bringing the necessary expertise to help parties formulate their proposals for the realization of free, fair, and democratic elections, these proposals include developing a revised electoral law and an organic law for the new provisional electoral council (CEP)
- 2 bringing training and information concerning important aspects of political party functioning via conferences and debates with political actors of today and the recent past
- 3 reinforcing dialogue among the parties, increasing their level of cooperation and collaboration, and contributing to the rapprochement of parties
- 4 progressively diminishing its direct presence and making its direct interventions increasingly more discreet, in such a way that the process of strengthening parties progresses
- 5 organizing debates, forums, and conferences around the country to continue creating an environment of debate, dialogue, and tolerance

The parties also have expressed their hope that, according to criteria developed in cooperation with IRI, USAID will provide logistical support (motorcycles, photocopiers, fax machines, computers, megaphones, etc) for the next elections. Any logistical support would come directly from USAID rather than passing through IRI, whose role would likely be limited to providing

appropriate assistance to USAID in this regard

ANNEX 1**Declaration of Principles by Haitian Political Parties**

The political parties having signed the present declaration

I They State

- 1 That the political and institutional crisis deepens, worsens, and gets more complicated with each passing day,
- 2 That the current political situation heavily penalizes the entire population, which encounters difficulties at all levels to ensure its survival as well as to make economic progress,
- 3 That the retention of the power of the state (Executive Parliament, Judiciary, Administration) by one reduced group of partisans and militants from a single political tendency, as well as abuses committed, constitute the source of inextricable political conflict,
- 4 That other marginalized and excluded sectors and political parties are powerless to bring a mediation or see a solution to the current crises, this creates frustrations that do not help the democratic process,

II They Affirm

- 1 That measures must be imposed to break the current political impasse and hold elections, in order to ensure political alternation of power,
- 2 That the next elections should be free, honest, and democratic,
- 3 That all the political parties and other institutionalized sectors must be able to participate in the next elections, this participation could result in a larger voter participation in the electoral process and the establishment of a government and a parliament that enjoys the confidence of the population,
- 4 That before holding elections, it is necessary to establish institutional mechanisms in a negotiated manner and with the participation of political parties and institutionalized sectors of civil society, it is also necessary to establish indispensable legal instruments, i.e. an organic law on a new Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) to which its true role of arbiter is restored, an electoral law, etc ,

- 5 That the officials elected from these elections should play their role fully to avoid political crises like those experienced today, the government, parliament, and presidency should be guided by laws that regulate their functioning, organization, and relations among the three institutions,
- 6 That all the financial, institutional, and human means should be mobilized as quickly as possible for the production of legal texts within a tight collaboration among all groups and individuals affected,
- 7 That the security of all political actors must be guaranteed by the law and respected by an apolitical police force,

III They commit

- 1 To bring to this effort their contribution and their collaboration in the most frank manner possible in order to stabilize political life over the medium- and long-term,
- 2 To encourage all citizens to bring their civic participation to this effort which will create confidence in the future of the country

Signed in Port-au-Prince on April 16, 1998, by the following parties

ALAH	RDNP
CDSH	UDELH
CREDDO	UPAN
FMR	UPD
Generation 2004	UPDC
KID	URN
KLE	
MDN	
MIDH	
MKN	
MNP-28	
MODELH-PRDH	
MOP	
PAN	
PANPRA	
PARADIS	
PARAN	
PDCH	
PNT	
RDC	

ANNEX 2

ACT OF CREATION OF THE HAITIAN CONFERENCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES (CHPP) AND THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (CTSPP)

The following political parties, represented by their leaders (or legitimate representatives), and following several working meetings, have recognized the need to constitute themselves and hereby form the "Haitian Conference of Political Parties" (CHPP) and endow a technical body charged with preparing and following issues of interest to the political parties

The political parties gathered on this day, April 16, 1998, have also decided to create a Technical Support Committee for the Political Parties (CTSPP) This committee is formed by 10 people chosen for their competence and agreed to by the Conference This committee is by nature technical The political responsibility will always fall to the Political Leaders, members in their entirety of the Haitian Conference of Political Parties (CHPP)

Signed in Port-au-Prince on April 16, 1998, by the following parties

ALAH	UPDC
CDSH	URN
CREDDO	
FMR	
Generation 2004	
KID	
KLE	
MDN	
MIDH	
MKN	
MNP-28	
MODELH-PRDH	
MOP	
PAN	
PANPRA	
PARADIS	
PARAN	
PDCH	
PNT	
RDC	
RDNP	
UDELH	
UPAN	
UPD	

ANNEX 3

Convergences

Following the IRI plenary session of February 12, 1998, the participating political parties agreed to explore the following eight points

- 1 Security linked to parties' freedom of movement,
- 2 Assistance to political parties,
- 3 The possibility for regrouping of political parties and training for political regroupings,
- 4 Political parties' contribution to the elaboration of an electoral law,
- 5 Political parties' participation in the establishment of a Provision Election Council charged with organizing the next elections,
- 6 Strengthening the capacity of major Haitian state institutions through a definition of a legal framework for their functioning,
- 7 Amendments to the 1987 Constitution,
- 8 Maintenance of relations with IRI, development of IRI's program and the agenda of the political parties

Appendix B

Report on July 6, 1998 IRI Activity in St. Marc, Haiti

Background

IRI has been active in Haiti since 1987. In 1997, resulting from its commitment to reinforcing political pluralism in Haiti, IRI initiated a new phase in its program focusing on political party development. This new phase builds on IRI's program efforts since 1987, in particular the Institute's March 1996 *Report on Political Parties and Pluralism in Haiti*.

In that report, IRI concludes that

“ it is essential to create the political space necessary for the emergence of true political party pluralism in Haiti. In this political environment, information would flow rapidly from the governed to the governors and to the opposition leaders who compete with the governing party for a popular mandate. Such a policy would require the development of information media to provide accurate data on popular political preferences, to be used by both the governing and opposition parties. The organization of fora for conducting a dialogue on Haiti's political, economic security and other challenges would constitute a further valuable contribution to creating political pluralism in Haiti. Such fora must emerge if those currently alienated by the electoral process and the political system are to be brought back into the framework of constructive political action. A program to cultivate and strengthen true party pluralism in Haiti will restore meaning and value to the fledgling democratic institutions and processes so recently implanted.”

Stemming from these conclusions, IRI's recent activities have created new opportunities for Haitian political parties and other sectors of civil society to begin working together for the country's democratic development.

In St. Marc, IRI has organized four town hall meetings and dialogue forums since September 1997. A broad cross-section of political tendencies and other sectors have actively participated. Participants have included local elected officials, political party representatives

(FL, OPL, KONAKOM, FNCD, MIDH, RDNP, MNP-28, UPUR, and others), grassroots organizations, religious and business groups, and journalists' associations. The response to IRI's initiatives among local leaders in St. Marc has been among the most positive of any localities in which we work.

IRI's previous activities in St. Marc have collected and shared information on popular attitudes in the area, given an opportunity for elected officials and their constituencies to interact on community needs and government initiatives, and created an environment of debate and dialogue. The Political Dialogue Forum on May 26 was a strong success, giving community leaders an opportunity to directly interact with political party leaders from RDNP, ALAH, and MOP and with representatives of FL, MIDH, KONAKOM, UPUR, and MNP-28.

Planning for the July 6 Activity

Attached as Annex 1 is a report from IRI staff member Roudy Choute detailing FL and PLB threats against him and IRI during his preparation visit to St. Marc on June 29. IRI shared this memorandum with the U.S. Embassy and USAID mission in Port-au-Prince. IRI/Washington and in-country staff spoke with DCM Bob Felder and USAID's Belinda Bernard concerning these threats and the most appropriate way to continue IRI's activities.

IRI requested that the Embassy and USAID send representatives to the St. Marc event, which had been rescheduled for July 6. IRI believed an Embassy and USAID presence would demonstrate U.S. government support for IRI's activities as well as give the Missions a clear sense of the situation and its potential impact on USAID's democratic development objectives. At the Embassy's Independence Day celebration, Bob Felder and Political Counselor Sue Ford Patrick confirmed that Political Officer Howard Davis would represent the Embassy. Belinda Bernard informed IRI that USAID would not send a representative.

Bob Felder and Sue Ford Patrick also informed IRI that they had spoken with PLB leader Senator Renauld Bernadin and Chief of Police Pierre Denize regarding the threats against IRI. Senator Bernadin reportedly denied any knowledge of the threats and accused IRI of fabricating the story. Denize pledged police cooperation to help ensure there would be no disruptions.

Events of July 6 in St. Marc

Local elected officials, political party representatives, journalists, and other participants began arriving and signing in on the second level of City Hall. The list indicates the presence of several members of KONAKOM and MIDH, CASECs and ASECs, journalists, and two members of FL. Early on, one person wearing dark sunglasses stood over the sign-in sheet. IRI In-Country Program Officer Kim Clark asked what organization he represents, to which he responded he was an Inspector for the Mayor's office. After leaving and then returning, IRI In-Country Director Stanley Lucas requested his identification credentials, which he did not present, and then left again.

At the street level, Ms Clark witnessed a small group of agitated people. One slammed his fist on the IRI vehicle. At that point, St Marc journalist Ralph Pierre Charles suggested that Ms Clark return upstairs for her own safety because the group was talking about IRI in a hostile manner. Mr Charles also indicated he had been threatened, but gave no further details.

Upstairs, Mr Lucas initiated the meeting by introducing the Institute's activities and sharing information gathered in previous meetings. Within a few minutes, a group of about one dozen people, of whom five or six appeared to be the most agitated, came upstairs and began shouting, kicking chairs, threatening participants, taking IRI materials from the participants and ripping them up, ripping up the sign-in sheet, and slamming their fists on the table. They shouted:

Only one party has the right to function in St Marc and it is Fanmi Lavalas. There is only one leader, Jean Bertrand Aristide. Other parties do not have the right to function. They are Macoutes who are plotting to assassinate Jean Bertrand Aristide. The Americans tried to do this during the three years of the coup d'etat, but they did not succeed and will not succeed now."

"The Americans are sending Haitian boat people back in cuffs, so we will send the IRI people back to Port-au-Prince in cuffs."

"This meeting cannot take place. We received instructions from the FL legal advisor to stop it."

The agitators began stacking the chairs and pushing them against the wall. Further threats were made. One agitator said to IRI consultant Guy Vincent that they had come "to burn the IRI people." Of the dozen provocateurs, several appeared to be the leaders -- Biron Odige, Pascal Nard Denis, Jean Robert, and Serge (only name available). Odige and Nard Denis were among those who threatened IRI's staff member on June 29 in St Marc. Serge and Jean Robert were the most agitated and outspoken, and it appeared to IRI staff and the U.S. Embassy representative that Jean Robert may have been under the influence of drugs.

The participants' reactions to these developments are worth noting. Several participants quickly but calmly left, whereas others stayed behind. Of these, a few spoke up, but most seemed to be afraid. The Delege de Ville, Pierre Joseph Alexandre, said to the agitators, "What are you trying to do with this menacing behavior? Do you want to beat me? You know that if you do, as a minority in this town, you will have to leave. What you are doing is illegal and undemocratic." The MIDH representative also spoke up saying that the actions of this non-representative minority did not have the right to sabotage such democratic initiatives and did not bring honor to St Marc.

Soon after the incident began IRI dispatched its driver to find the police. About 10

minutes later, an HNP inspector and agent arrived and talked to the agitators, telling them that IRI's meeting was peaceful and legal and intended to promote democratic values. They further said that what the agitators were doing was wrong and illegal. No further measures were taken against the perpetrators. When Assistant Mayor Jacques Pierre Gracia arrived, after being called a traitor to the Lavalas cause, he conveyed the same message about the peaceful, legal nature of IRI's activities.

Mr. Lucas engaged some of the agitators in a debate to ask them if they believe in democracy and tolerance. One participant actually backed down from his previous negative view of IRI. After approximately 45 minutes, for the security of the participants and IRI personnel, Mr. Lucas decided to postpone the event for another time. Assistant Mayor Pierre Gracia agreed that the City Hall conference room would be available to IRI as in the past. He agreed to meet IRI staff in Port-au-Prince later in the week to discuss future plans and how best to approach the matter.

Conclusions

IRI remains committed to pursuing its multifaceted program in Haiti. The Institute is deeply concerned, however, about the resurgent environment of intimidation, harassment, and violence. IRI believes this environment -- not only the St. Marc incident, but also the ongoing public campaign against its initiatives -- will make it even more difficult for pluralist, democratic political competition to develop in Haiti. Democratic political party representatives ask IRI, "If things like this happen now, what can we expect if we compete in elections?" IRI is also concerned by the absence of any punishment of those who disrupted a legal gathering. Entering a public building and threatening people with impunity potentially signals opponents of free speech and assembly that there is no risk of punishment for illegal actions. IRI is equally concerned by the absence of strong public statements from important sectors of the international community to support political pluralism, dialogue, and debate, and to oppose hostile attempts to prevent these developments.

Annex 1

To Stanley Lucas, IRI Director
From Roudy Choute, Staff Consultant
Date June 29, 1998
Re Report on Preparation for St. Marc Political Dialogue Forum

At the request of journalists from St. Marc, IRI organized a field visit on June 29, 1998 to prepare the next forum IRI plans to undertake on July 2. I have delivered IRI invitations to the CASECs, the mayors, the journalists, and to all local party representatives.

I have personally met and invited the local party representatives who were present during IRI's last activity in St. Marc, including RDNP, FNCD, MIDH, UPUR, MNP-28, MOP, OPL, and FL.

The party La Fanmi Lavalas (FL), which participated in our last forum, is still represented by Mr Biron ODIGE who always receives our invitation letters at his work at APN (National Port Authority) of St Marc Therefore, I personally went to his office to invite him to participate in our July 2 forum

When I arrived at the APN, I was met by a group of five people from the FL and the PLB I could only identify two people from the PLB, Alcena and Pascal Nard Denis, and one person from the FL, Biron Odige They were surrounded by supporters I could not identify Mr Odige and an armed man from PLB threatened and pointed a gun at me They tried to force me to abandon IRI activities Pascal Nard then told me that "Odige has received orders from PLB and FL leaders that he will not be able to participate in IRI's demagoguery "

He also told me that if IRI returns to St Marc, its staff will not be able to leave town He and his men said they will smash our vehicle windows, flatten our tires, and beat the IRI staff

He then declared that one of his partners, commonly called "Ti Pascal, the violent," was very angry because during our previous visit, he was not present and he wanted to shoot us with his gun "Ti Pascal" was present this time, he seemed to be very calm and he did not say a word while Pascal Nard and the others were talking to me

Conclusion

They were all very threatening and eager to reenter a new cycle of violence to stop IRI activities Since the verbal attacks did not bring any results, it seems their people are ready to use violence to stop the democratic environment that IRI is trying to build This environment is perceived as a threat to PLB and FL representatives in St Marc I think that these threats should be taken very seriously

Recommendation

The violent atmosphere that the PLB and FL is creating in St Marc violates IRI prohibition on working with violent groups. Because of this atmosphere, I suggest that the representatives of the two parties mentioned above not be invited to IRI activities. Preventive security measures also should be taken to prevent regression.