

Occasional Paper N° 18

Bryant C. Freeman, Ph.D.
Series Editor

Tèt Kole Ti Peyizan Ayisyen

Dosye chāf seksyon. English

The Rural Police



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THE RURAL POLICE

In June 1995 was published as Occasional Paper N° 10 of the University of Kansas Institute of Haitian Studies the original Haitian-language text of Tèt Kole Ti Peyizan Ayisyen, *Dosye Chèf Seksyon: Chèf Seksyon - Yon Sistèm Ki Merite Elimine* (pp. vi-52). It has subsequently come to our attention that Max Blanchet, an eminent Haitian chemical engineer and holder of an MBA in Finance, originally from Les Cayes, Haiti, and now a resident of the San Francisco Bay area, has edited and translated an English-language version of the same text, published by the Bay Area Haitian-American Council and the Haitian Information and Documentation Center. Since there are many persons vitally interested in Haiti, but whose reading knowledge of its language is limited, we are reproducing here the Blanchet version in hopes that it will reach an additional audience, especially in the university world. This is an essential text in understanding recent Haitian history, and should receive as wide a distribution as possible.

The original Haitian-language edition was produced in mimeographed form in March 1991, with only a very limited number of copies, by the Haitian cooperative group Tèt Kole Ti Peyizan Ayisyen. Of historical as well as evidently of socio-political importance, it provides an excellent first-hand study of the ravages wrought by the system of rural section chiefs who, along with their numerous deputies, were for so long the bane of the Haitian peasants' existence. Rather than a report by an outsider, this is testimony by members of the peasant community themselves, with a mine of exact information available, to our knowledge, nowhere else. While we cannot corroborate, nor be responsible for, certain specific charges made, the general picture of repression and venality described was certainly a constant of rural Haitian life. In a major article in the Haitian-language weekly *Libète* (8-14 novanm 1994, N° 111, p. 5), this report is cited as "the only serious study produced concerning the system of section chiefs."

During much of Haitian history, the *kako* in the North, the *pikè* in the South, were a main element of political instability. The United States Occupation 1915-1934 put an end to this threat with the formation of a relatively efficient means of national control called first the Gendarmerie d'Haïti, then the Garde d'Haïti, and later the Forces Armées d'Haïti (FADH). Whether this is to be interpreted as having put an end to organized banditry and recurrent armed uprisings, or rather as a means of increased oppression by the élite, depends upon one's view of Haitian history. Nevertheless, the formal establishment of rural section chiefs was one of the concrete results of this transformation.

Section chiefs were members of the Haitian army, answerable not to any civilian authority, but only to the local army commandant. Their exact number was variously reported as 535, 561, or 565. Whatever the exact number, each was in effect a feudal lord who could arrest, imprison, try, torture, and even put to death at will. His main method was intimidation, carried out by threats, beatings, theft, slaughter of domestic animals, burning of houses or crops, property

expropriation, ransom, or selected assassinations. His special targets were peasant organizations deemed subversive to the status quo, such as community development groups, cooperatives, or even literacy-training projects. He has often been described as being the center of human rights violations in Haiti. His strength was based essentially upon the weakness of the Haitian state. For the immense majority, he was the sole visible government functionary; in effect he *was* the government. He was characterized by a systematic abuse of authority, an organized scheme where the strong, clothed in "legality," prey upon the weak. Perhaps through no other institution do we see more clearly the utter abjectness of the peasant condition, totally subjugated to the whims and caprices of a rapacious, petty, ignorant local dictator.

The very structure of Haitian society was designed to create a system of servitude whereby a small élite exclude and control the peasant majority, and the section chief was at the backbone of this structure. However one man alone could not control an entire rural section, thus each section chief had his own small private militia, an army within the Army, though with no legally recognized status. How many men each had is open to question, with estimates going from 50 to 200, which means that in reality the Haitian armed forces could have had anywhere from 26,750 men (535 rural sections with 50 each) to 113,000 men (565 rural sections with 200 each) - in addition to the 7,000 officially listed. Thus the real total could have been between 33,750 and 120,000, a far cry from the mere 7,000 usually cited.

The section chief had to pay the military for his position, and received a salary of only 600 gourdes a month; his assistants were obliged to pay him for their position, and received no salary. Both represented in effect an investment of capital, to be recouped with interest. Some of the multitudinous schemes by which this was carried out are outlined in this report, always on the backs of the people. Oppression and corruption were erected into a system.

With the inauguration on 7 February 1991 of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, in April 1991 - perhaps coincidentally one month after the publication of the present document - the institution of rural section chiefs was abolished by presidential decree, a move called "perhaps the most important step taken by the Aristide government to improve respect for the rule of law" (William G. O'Neill, "The Roots of Human Rights Violations in Haiti," in *Georgetown Immigration Law Journal*, Vol. 7, N° 1, March 1993, p. 106). Predictably, since this system constituted a highly effective means of repression and control, after the overthrow on 29-30 September 1991 of Aristide's government, one of the first actions of the de facto regime under Cédric-Biambé-François was to restore the section chiefs to power. But since Aristide's return on 15 October 1994, the institution of section chiefs has now been abolished, to be replaced by local elected councils (KASEK) and the Haitian National Police.

It is our fervent hope that never again will thugs with uniform and thugs without uniform dominate the Haitian countryside, and that rule by law will prevail.

Bryant Freeman

TÊT KOLE TI PEYIZAN AYISYEN

THE RURAL POLICE: AN INSTITUTION THAT DESERVES TO BE UPROOTED



*In memory of the Haitian peasants who fell victim To Marine Corps machine guns
in Marchaterre on December 6, 1929*

March 1991

reproduced and distributed by

**THE BAY AREA HAITIAN-AMERICAN COUNCIL
&
THE HAITIAN INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION CENTER**

TÈT KOLE thanks all those people and organizations who helped out with the preparation and publication of this report, especially:

- *Solidarite Peyizan Ayisyen (SOPA)* [Haitian Peasant Solidarity]
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- *Jistis ak Lapè Dyosèz Gonayiv* [Justice & Peace of the Gonaïves Diocese]
- The artists who did the art work for the Creole version of this report
- Max Blanchet of the Bay Area Haitian American Council for the translation and editing of the English version of this report

TÈT KOLE does not forget to thank the peasants, activists, and friends of the peasantry who braved all sorts of dangers and made great sacrifices to enable the many in the peasantry to give testimony and voice their opinion on the system of rural police. Also, our gratitude goes to the many in the media who supported peasants in their denunciation of the rural police. Finally, our appreciation goes to all who want to change the condition of the Haitian peasantry.

Preface

The rural police which is central to the repression of the peasantry is the last extension of the Haitian army. The rural sheriff, who may have as many as 250 assistants, controls the peasantry completely as he wears many hats, namely that of justice of the peace, district attorney, notary, land surveyor, and agent of the army. In other words, the sheriff makes the law, implements the law, and interprets the law. In addition, the sheriff plays a repressive role because he acts as the agent of the big landowners who appoint him to his position in the first place.

Today, as we live under an American military occupation which pretends to reform the army and the police, we think that the rural police should be dismantled once and for all. It is imperative that the new rural police, who would report to the ministry of justice, be limited to a straightforward police role. It is imperative that the rural police be elected by the population which must have the power to dismiss police agents at any moment for abuse of power. For this reason, the selection of the rural police and communal councils must be under the control of the people who in addition must be in the position to supervise these bodies directly. This is the only way to avoid the emergence of opportunists and thugs who would otherwise behave as they please.

Today, there is much talk about reforming the army and police. Not much is said about the rural sheriffs who have a stranglehold on the country's 565 rural sections. While the debate on police and army reform goes on, rural sheriffs continue on their repressive rampage, at times with the complicity of the American military. While the American military is showing off in Port-au-Prince, rural sheriffs continue to brutalize the population, especially militant peasant groups. Change cannot take place at the top only. To be effective, change must be implemented at the grassroots, among the peasants who live in the rural areas.

Following the publication of this document in Creole in 1991, The Aristide administration had taken the decision to disband the rural police. Unfortunately, the decision was a hurried one as the government did not have the time to create a substitute to the rural police. This explains why General Cedras simply reinstated the sheriffs who continued with their repressive practices.

We thank our fellow citizens in the United States who took the initiative of publishing the English version of this report in these historic times. We think that the publication of the English version is important in order to set the record straight at a time we doubt that things will really change in Haiti. Also, this publication will enable the American public to understand the nature of the rural police, to follow the activities of the American military, especially in Haiti's rural areas, and to denounce its misdeeds as they may take place.

While we work for the complete overhaul of the rural police, we demand that in the mean time sheriffs be arrested, tried, and condemned for piling new crimes committed in the last three years on top of the many crimes visited on the people of Haiti previously.

**Pierre Joseph
Permanent National Executive Committee
Tèt Kole Ti Peyizan Ayisyen**

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I. Introduction

Festivities are currently underway to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the general slave revolt of Saint Domingue on August 22, 1791, that led to the independence of Haiti on January 1, 1804. To commemorate this event, TÈT KOLE has prepared a report that dissects the system that crushes and ultimately threatens the very existence of the Haitian peasantry.

1791: The slave of Saint Domingue said no to slavery, no to a system that trampled all their rights.

1991: 200 years later, Haitian peasants who are the descendants of the slaves of Saint Domingue are rejecting the system of rural police which constitutes a modern form of slavery.

The struggle for the complete liberation of Haiti's poor is continuing. The struggle will continue as long as it takes for all workers, all poor peasants, all those out of work to enjoy all their rights as human beings, to enjoy a better life in which their most basic needs are satisfied.

Let us continue the fight for a new and better society!

II. The System of Rural Police

A. Genesis of the System

The rural police are a branch of Haiti's armed forces. One cannot understand the history of Haiti's army without referring to 1915 the date when Americans landed in Haiti and destroyed the national army in order to replace it with the army which is still in existence today.

Although TÈT KOLE focused on the nature of the rural police after the American landing, it also researched the relation between the army and civilian authorities before and after 1915.

1) Before 1915

- From the day Sonthonax (1) distributed weapons to the slaves in 1793 until the American landing, peasants had the right to have weapons in their homes in order to protect their interests as well as those of the country when necessary.
- Peasants had their own armies of resistance. In the south, they were known as the *Pikè* and in the north *Kako*. The role of these armies was to put pressure on governments so that they would meet the demands of the peasantry. Once this was achieved, the peasant soldiers would return to field work.
- Peasants used to set up their own organizations on the plantations and in neighborhoods to work the land, build homes, etc.
- They would join forces with other groups in order to face a common enemy.
- At times, certain generals and big landowners would use the peasantry in order to settle their own political disputes. They would mobilize them with attractive promises, march with them on Port-au-Prince, overthrow the government to install their own, without ever meeting the demands of the peasantry.

2) From 1915 until 1934

- Following the landing of the United States Marines, the *Kakos* rose to fight the American Occupation. With the exception of a few people like Charlemagne Pèralte, Pierre Sully, and Germain Jean-François, who played a leadership role in the rebellion, the regular army sided with the Americans to it put down.
- The Marines disarmed the peasantry, and reorganized the army to make it subservient to the interests of the US, the bourgeoisie, and the big landowners. Since then, one of the principal duties of the army has been to repress individuals or organizations trying to defend the rights of the majority.
- The same way peasants used their organizations to promote their own interests, the Americans at times used the same organizations against the peasants, coercing them into providing forced labor to build roads, airports, and army barracks in the rural areas.

1. Sonthonax was a member of the second civil commission sent in September 1792, by the Convention, the then-revolutionary government of France, to pacify Saint Domingue and defend it against attacks by the English and the Spanish.

- After 1919, once the Kako rebellion had been crushed, the army had a free hand to repress peasants and, in partnership with other sectors, to exploit them without mercy.

3) After 1934

Even though the Americans left the country in 1934, they left behind an army very much set against the civilian population, an army devoid of a nationalistic orientation inasmuch as it has no interest in defending the country. For instance, in 1937 when Trujillo massacred thousands of Haitians, mostly peasants, to put an end to the *ethiopianization* of the Dominican Republic by Haitian blacks, the Haitian government and army did not raise a finger to prevent the event from happening nor did it retaliate after it took place.

The role of the army is :

- to defend the interests of US imperialism in Haiti,
- to defend the interests of the bourgeoisie, big landowners, and politicians, and
- to crush individuals and organizations that look after the interests of the people.

In the rural areas, the rural police are the direct representatives of the army. Each sheriff commands a small army that parallels the regular army structure within his area of responsibility.

4) Legal Aspects

A brief survey of various laws shows that the system of rural police is the legacy of measures voted over the years by the political establishment in order to harness and control the power inherent in the peasantry. The more important of these laws are as follows:

- *The Rural Code of 1801*, enacted by Toussaint L'Ouverture (1801-1802), which reduced the status of the peasants on the great plantations to that of slaves, ironically under a government controlled by blacks.
- *The Rural Code of 1804*, enacted during the administration of Jean-Jacques Dessalines (1804-1806), which maintained the practice of forced labor on state-controlled farms although it reduced the importance of large plantations. Even at that time, the military and rural police kept an eye on the work force to insure its subservience and productivity.
- *The Rural Code of 1812 (Henry Code)*, enacted in the northern kingdom by Henry Christophe (1806-1820), reinstated the features of the 1801 Code but required that health care be provided.
- *The Law of 1817*, enacted under Alexandre Pétion (1807-1818), which put an end to forced labor on plantations and for road building. In reality, these practices continued in farming.
- *The Rural Code of 1826*, enacted under Jean-Pierre Boyer (1818-1843), which reinstated all the repressive measures instituted by Sonthonax, Toussaint, and Christophe.
- *The Rural Code of 1863*, enacted under Geffrard (1859-1867), which reinstated forced labor in road building and plantation maintenance and shaped the rural police headed by sheriffs. This law created the positions of district sheriff and farm guard under the command of the rural sheriff.

- *The Law of 1922*, enacted under Dartiguenave (1915-1922), whereby the Americans integrated the corps of rural sheriffs into the Gendarmerie d'Haiti.
- The opening in 1943, during the Lescot administration (1941-1946), of a *rural police school* which graduated only one class made up of 91 individuals.
- *The Law of 1952*, enacted under Magloire (1950-1956), which revamped the Law of 1922, strengthened the integration of the rural police into the Haitian army by confirming its status as a special corps of the army, and further refined its structures by defining its ranks of captain, lieutenant, adjutant, rural sheriff, and rural agent.
- *The Rural Code of 1962 (Duvalier's [1957-1971] Rural Code)* which instituted rural administrative councils (RACs), and reconfirmed the integration of the rural police into the army. The local councils were never implemented. The rural police and the militia never accepted the idea of being part of the judicial system.

These were the more important laws enacted, although from time to time minor laws would be voted according to the needs of the times. For instance, in June 1986, the Provisional Council of Government revisited the issue of the RACs even though the basic law dated back to 1962. Also, in December 1988, General Prosper Avril, the then president of Haiti, decided that one would be elected to the position of sheriff. This law was never implemented.

Generally, we should note that the laws always involve generous clauses such as the provision of health care in the Code Henry; the prevention of vandalism; the provision of security for life and property; and support for agriculture. In practice, these clauses were a facade to fool those who did not know better.

In fact, today the rural police remain under the control of the army, they exploit the labor and property of peasants for the benefit of the wealthy, the big wigs in the army and government, and big landowners. They are always there to prevent the rise of organizations independent of the government.

B. The Rural Police and the Army

1) The Rural Police and the Military Sub-District

The rural sheriff is a member of the army. He reports to the officer in charge of the military sub-district where he works. Like any member of the army, he has an identification number, wears an iron badge that is typically affixed to his chest, and a colonial cask bearing the arms of the republic.

Thus, whatever the means he took to gain his position, he is not under the control of civil authorities who therefore have no influence on the most powerful institution in rural society. Even if a civilian becomes rural sheriff, the people have no way to control him. This civilian turns into a military man who reacts to orders issued by the military hierarchy. Under such conditions, the rural sheriff cannot be made accountable to the people regarding his use of power.

The rural sheriff is wholly dependent on the officer in charge of the military district. Typically, this is a lieutenant or an adjutant. Under normal conditions, the sheriff reports weekly to the commanding officer. In crisis situations capable of turning into an upheaval, however, there is more frequent communication between the two.

Typically, the sheriff's report to the officer covers the following:

- the movements of foreigners or individuals new to or unknown in the area,
- the planning for the visit of the commanding officer or big shots of the government,
- the activities of political candidates,
- the activities of development experts not associated with the government, and
- above all, the delivery of the officer's share of money or goods extorted from the population.

In the other direction, the commanding officer transmits to the sheriff orders received from above, especially as they aim at improving the efficacy of the repression. Often he will ask the sheriff to watch this or that individual more closely. Together they will plan with others such as prefects, magistrates, justices of the peace, how to destabilize grassroots organizations. This is exactly what happened on August 14, 1988, in Labadi, the 3rd rural section of Petite-Rivière-de-l'Artibonite, where sheriff Esperans Chal with the support of the prefect, judge, sergeant, and officer, attacked the *Youth Movement of Labadi* (Mouveman Jèn Labadi).

The close ties existing between the sheriff and his officer demonstrate that when the former engages in repressive activities, he does so at the behest of his officer or with his implicit support. The actions of the sheriff are not isolated incidents. Typically they are part of a global strategy to exploit the peasantry and to break any attempt on its part to organize. Thus, there is no accident in the actions of the sheriff. They are all calculated, planned, and well implemented. Nothing is left to chance.

2) Selection of the Rural Police

The government and the army are careful as to whom they select to be sheriff. The individual selected must have given proof of his loyalty, in other words his support for the repressive system and his willingness to follow orders from above. The recruiting can take place in various ways:

- According to the formula, "*Après nous c'est nous*", a retiring sheriff passes the baton to his son. The son knows well how to use power, having served as his father's secretary. Before February 7, 1986, when Jean-Claude Duvalier was overthrown, it was the most common approach for becoming sheriff. As a result, in many sections, the same family has controlled the position for 50 years. For instance, in Lamontay, 4th section of Jean-Rabel (Jan Rabèl), the Dèlyen family has occupied that position since the administration of President Estimé (1946-1950).

In Pewoden, 5th section of Petite-Rivière-de-l'Artibonite, the Pyè family has occupied the position since 1933. Here are the family members who served as sheriff: Pyè; Ilis Pyè, Pyè's son; Antwàn Pyè a sibling of Ilis; Tourilis Pyè, Ilis' son; and Andre Pyè, a sibling of Tourilis.

In Anba Moustik, 8th section of Port-de-Paix, next to Kabarè, 1st section of Jean-Rabel, and Mawotyè, 7th section of Port-de-Paix, the Senvil family - Merizye Senvil, Janbatis Senvil alias Manm Tcho, and Anovil Senvil - has occupied the position in all three sections for a long time.

- Through *outright purchase*, a power-hungry individual is appointed by the district officer, the head of the military department, or some other big shot. At times, an appointment to the position sells for as much as \$4,000.00. The position goes to the highest bidder. Under military regimes, in addition to having lots of money, the candidate must be ruthless.

According to public disclosures of army activities, Sadrak in the 3rd section of Petite-Rivière, paid \$2,500.00 to the district officer, Maksi Maksim, for his position, while Silyen Telo, 5th section of Petite-Rivière, purchased the position for \$3,000.00 from the same Maksi Maksim.

In some cases, payment is made monthly by the sheriff who turns over his paycheck to the district officer. This was the deal made between sheriff Mèsidye Jèn, 7th section Djondjon/Jean-Rabel, and lieutenant Adriyen Senjilyen. This sort of thing happens when the previous sheriff lacked political support in high places or when the population begins to agitate and a new person comes up to buy the position.

- The taking of an *examination* when, as happens many times, an incumbent cannot pass the job to his son. Also, when the population turns against an incumbent because of his brutality or his corruption, resulting in the disgrace of the family, the district might resort to an examination to select the next sheriff. Typically, the big shots in the area would send their children or friends to take the test. This process is never as simple as it appears. Candidates pull strings and pay bribes to influence the process. It is only after the military authorities assess the correlation of forces that they are able to select who will come out first in the so-called test.
- By *popular choice* as happened after February 7, 1986, during the "Democratic Fiesta" that followed the fall of Jean-Claude Duvalier, when local committees or religious personalities succeeded in imposing their choice as sheriff to the military authorities. More often than not, the individual in question is an activist, a member of a popular organization, a preacher, a religious teacher, or to sum up, a "good person" from the community. This good person, as he falls under the control of the army, often forgets the beautiful speeches he used to make, the good actions he used to do before being appointed to the position. At times, this good person turns out to be worse than the individual he replaced, as he becomes a tyrant in the community.

This is what happened in the 1st section Matino of the La Chapelle district where the community had chosen Gregwa Dòseyis, a former seminary student and activist, as sheriff. Later, Gregwa Dòseyis forced the population to go through hell. He was forced to take refuge in the Verrettes barracks in April 1990, after the population turned against him for paying bribes to keep his position.

We can also cite the case of Prezantye Mètis, sheriff in Medò in the 6th section of Petite-Rivière-de-l'Artibonite. After February 7, 1986, progressive youth in the area as well as nuns and priests had managed to have him appointed sheriff. Subsequently he arrested someone, forced him to dance to a radio tune as he beat him up, and fined him \$50.00 even before his trial. He even abused those who had made him sheriff.

- Through *favoritism* of the army which will pick someone with strong army support and impose the choice on the district officer. In Ti Kawo, 5th section of Marchand/Dessalines, Zakari Dèlva and Frank Dèlva recommended Jozèf Kadè to General Jacques Gracia.

In Pewoden, 5th section of the Petite-Rivière-de-l'Artibonite, Sister Marie Josèf had recommended Silyen Telo to sergeant Joseph Ebreu, the right hand of General Prosper Avril.

Thus we can see that the issue of the sheriff has nothing to do with individuals but has everything to do with a system rooted in the poverty and the state of terror in which the peasantry lives.

C. Structure of the System

1) Ranks and Titles

The system would not have lasted if the sheriff were alone in carrying out his dishonest duties. There is a small army behind the sheriff to help him keep the lid on the system.

The head of this small army is the sheriff whose title varies depending on where he operates. The sheriff's titles in various parts of the country are as follows:

SHERIFFS' TITLES IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY	
Central Plateau	Kolo, Commandant
L'Artibonite	Kolo, Delegate, Commandant
North	Officer, Kolo, Section Member, Kapo, Commandant, the Section
Northeast	Kapi, The Section, Kolo
Northwest and parts of the North	Section Member, Commandant
South	Notable, Lapo, Commissar, Councilor
Southeast	Commandant, Police

Likewise, there is great variation in the lower ranks and titles found among the rural police in various parts of the country. They are as follows:

RANKS & TITLES IN THE RURAL POLICE		
Central Plateau	l'Artibonite	North
1. Section Chief	1. Section Chief	1. Section Chief
2. Section Marshall	2. First Assistant or Police Chief	2. Marshall
3. Section Assistant	3. Assistant	3. Assistant
4. Police or Police Aid	4. Police	4. Police or Police Aide
5. Small Stick or Soukèt Lawouze	5. Police, Choukèt Lawouze, or Small-Stick Police	5. Choukèt Lawouze or Chanpèt
Northeast	Northwest	Southeast
1. Section Chief	1. Section Chief	1. Section Chief
2. Marshall	2. Marshall	2. Neighborhood Chief
3. Assistant	3. Assistant	3. Assistant
4. Police	4. Police	4. Police Guard or Section Aide
5. Choukèt Lawouze	5. Choukèt Lawouze	5. Soukèt Lawouze
South/Grande Anse	West	
1. Section Chief	1. Section Chief	
2. Marshall	2. First Assistant	
3. Assistant	3. Plantation Assistant	
4. Choukèt Lawouze or Small Stick	4. District Captain	
	5. Choukèt Lawouze	

2) Assistants

Assistants are easy to recognize as they always carry a badge affixed to their hat. Some carry side arms purchased through contraband from higher-ups, or simply inherited from their service in the militia known as the *Volontaires de la Sécurité Nationale* (VSN), a corps created by Duvalier to neutralize the army. In l'Artibonite and the Central Plateau, they wear uniforms. Assistants often have their own private secretaries. Some big shots often become assistants to provide for their own security and the protection of their property.

According to a survey conducted by TÈT KOLE, under each sheriff there are at least 5 and up to 15 assistants depending on the size of the section. The greatest number of assistants is found in the 5th and 6th sections of Petite-Rivière-de-l'Artibonite.

An individual's economic power, social position, ties to big landowners in the city, and general influence, condition his ability to become an assistant. We cannot estimate how much it costs to become an assistant, as people typically give a variety of bribes to be chosen, namely, money, goats, plantains, etc. At times, such people are recommended to the district commander by big landowners and powerful businessmen with whom they have relations. This way, in no time an individual becomes a member of the armed forces. This is so because he becomes officially registered with the district officer who gives him a badge to be affixed to his hat. This explains the relative independence of the assistants vis-à-vis the sheriff, as he typically does not have the power to dismiss them.

Assistants are beholden to both the sheriff and the district commander. This holds the structure together so that it may exploit the last link in the system, namely the small peasant who must sweat blood in order to support it. Let us now look at some features of the system:

- Whenever a new district officer is named, all assistants must meet and bribe him. Assistants are a source of money for the new district officer who in return gives them new papers.
- In special situations such as a visit by the head of state - Jean-Claude Duvalier, Henri Namphy, or Prosper Avril -, Army Day on November 18, Independence Day on January 1st, Flag Day on May 18, or patron-saint day of the county, the district officer often demands that assistants bring to the barracks chicken, goats, turkeys or plantains.
- Even on ordinary days, assistants routinely bring gifts to their officer.
- When the officer decides to attend a party in some section, the sheriff and his assistant routinely provide him with housing, food, drinks, young women, a horse, etc. such that the officer is treated royally during the visit.

Infrequently though it may happen, an assistant may have more authority than the sheriff due to special economic power. In such a situation, he gives orders to the sheriff. He lends him money. Often a big shot who is an assistant but does not want to be in the limelight will support the selection of a puppet as sheriff.

In a given area, the big thieves often work hand in hand with the assistant, sheriff, and officer. In other areas, butchers serve as assistants and use their position as a cover to retail stolen animals.

Assistants are full partners of the sheriff in his repression of the peasantry. For instance, in the massacres that took place in Jean-Rabel, Danti, Milo, Labadi, Pyat, and Chavàn, assistants always helped the soldiers identify the homes of potential victims, gave testimony against them, and spied on them.

Assistants typically have police deputies reporting to them. Assistants collaborate with sheriffs in nominating them. The more important assistants have prisons in their homes. They act as judges, carry out arrests, arbitrate conflicts, deal with petty thieves, etc. In l'Artibonite they will adjudicate matters involving as much as \$800.00.

3) Police Deputies

From one department to the next, these are also called police, police aide etc.

They typically are people with no economic means or relation with the district officer. Thus, they belong to a very special social category. They are poor people with no empathy for the social class from which they come, who forget their origins, who have the ambition to get to a position of power, and will do anything to get money. Often, the deputy is a farm guard, a gofer for the sheriff or assistant.

Night and day they stand guard in remote posts. Typically, they set up the drums for army road blocks on highways and keep themselves busy buying cigarettes and running other errands for the soldiers. At times they manage to alternate as guards at remote outposts.

They are a source of money for the sheriff. Once a year, he will tell them that they will all be replaced by a certain date unless they can come up with \$20.00 to \$200.00 each depending on the practice of the district.

As a result of the survey it conducted in the sixth section of Mate, TÈT KOLE was able to establish how much money deputies paid to purchase their positions (See Annèx).

Whenever sheriffs feel they are about to be uprooted, they post deputies as guards around their homes and demand that assistants, aides, and their families send messages of support to radio stations.

Deputies typically carry a badge. This enhances their standing and help prove their identity. As soon as they go out, they put on the badge and carry a whistle and a stick. The sheriffs train them to spy on people, beat people, break up demonstrations, etc. Most of them cannot read or write. They do not function as independent agents but are directly attached to the service of the sheriff or the assistant. They are always more than willing to do the most degrading jobs such as buying cigarettes and rum for soldiers, spying on others night and day, assisting their bosses in their thieving, and carrying heavy loads for them. Nonetheless, they do the real police work and the dirty job of repression.

In order to buy their job and pay for its accoutrements, they must raise money in various ways: they extort money to take testimony, they charge to keep stray animals in their homes, to arrest people, to serve papers, and to give testimony, often false, to the sheriff.

When a petty thief is arrested, the deputy will take him to the nearest military post from where, at the whim of the commanding officer or simplest soldier, he may be sent away for work at a remote location. Police aides will also act as judges in cases involving minors or in petty farm disputes.

The deputy helps the sheriff in the extortion of the peasants. The sheriff does not miss any opportunity to exploit the peasantry, even if this means spying on their private lives. The saying that, "The sheriff knows when the small peasant goes to the bathroom" is no hyperbole, no joke. We will now illustrate the kind of surveillance that takes place in the countryside.

Let us imagine that a peasants' son, a city dweller, decides to visit his family for 2 or 3 days. The aide must report the event to the assistant, giving details as to what sort of gift the son brought and who else is visiting with him. If the family kills a goat to celebrate the visit, the fact is reported to an assistant who rushes to tax the owner of the animal up to \$1.40.

Thus, every time the small peasant takes the liberty to do something that should not be under the control of the army such as receiving people at his house, organizing a meeting of his peers, ignoring meetings called by the authorities, and refusing to repair roads for the visit of higher-ups, the sheriff and his assistant are always informed, just as they are informed whenever a peasant loses a small strand of hair.

4) Choukèt Lawouze

They occupy the lowest rung of the rural police. In places, they are called soukèt lawouze, chanpèt, police, small-stick police. Typically, they are landless peasants, sharecroppers, who serve as gofers for the sheriff and assistant. Their economic standing is so low that they do not have much status in the society. In order to gain some respect, they will buy the position of Choukèt Lawouze. Typically, they will pay \$3.00-4.00 for the position. At times, they get

the position because they are faithful servants of the sheriff, assistant, or some landowners. Often, they serve as security guards for landowners.

Their job is to assist the deputies. They do odd jobs such as running errands, watching the sheriff's cattle, etc. They do not register animals nor do they act as judges in small matters. Typically, they tie and torture prisoners at the behest of the sheriff or assistant.

5) Border Guards

On the common border with the Dominican Republic, the sheriffs run a special police called line chief or border guard. At times, they report directly to the ministry of the interior. Under Duvalier, they were especially concerned about émigrés attempting to infiltrate the country. They were adept at spying on and capturing illegals who were then taken to the sheriff who shot them as émigrés. They also arrested people involved in contraband, stole their belongings, and then denounced them as émigrés.

Usually, these border guards engage in cattle rustling in the Dominican Republic for the sheriff. It is easy for them to move the stolen animals from one section to another with the complicity of the sheriffs of both sections. This traffic takes place at night and the animals are covered with white sheets so that people running into them are tricked into attributing such sightings to magical activities.

Confronted with this army of occupation, the small peasant is exposed day and night to beatings, jailing, taxes, and the need to buy his freedom at great expense from the sheriff, assistant or Choukèt Lawouze. While city folks have some space in which to move, in the countryside, small peasants have a sword of Damocles hanging over their heads, one that can fall at any time under any circumstance.

III. Operation of the System

The rural police rest on a foundation which is both economic and political. These two features are interwoven and must therefore be analyzed together.

The goal of the system is to squeeze the small peasants, to exploit them, and to prevent them from organizing in order to claim and defend their rights.

A. The Economic Power of the Rural Police

Given that people are willing to pay hard cash for a position as sheriff; that the sheriff must turn his monthly check over to the district officer; that assistants must buy their positions from the district officers; that assistants must in addition keep their sheriffs and officers well supplied with chicken, goats, turkeys; and that deputies must spend many sleepless nights spying on others, it is easy to understand that these people are not doing these things because they have time and money to spare much less because they want to protect the lives and property of the small peasant.

This system has a special characteristic: aside from the salary of the sheriff, the state does not even invest a penny to support the system. Let us note that at the time this report was written, the sheriff received a monthly salary of \$100.00 from which \$20.00 was deducted for expenses.

Thus, all the money spent by police members to bribe the higher-ups is an investment that must be recovered with profits in short order at the expense of the small peasants. The police is like a company or business that preys on the poorest segments of rural society.

1) Taxation and Extortion

Let us now enumerate some of the revenue sources under the control of the rural sheriff:

1. Declaration of a birth
2. Declaration of a natural death
3. Funeral preparation of the deceased
4. Shenanigans surrounding "unnatural" deaths resulting from drowning, hanging, falls, thunder strikes, poisoning, etc.
5. A spot for a tomb in a cemetery
6. Surveying
7. Tax for receiving testimony, drafting legal papers, issuing warrants
8. Trial tax
9. Animal licenses
10. Tax for the recovery of stray animals
11. Authorization to cut trees

12. Tax to make charcoal or limestone
13. Authorization to move animals
14. Tax for property deeds
15. Tax to have a cock fight
16. Authorization for "Rara" group
17. Authorization for Vodou ceremony, dance, or dinner
18. Tax for construction of grain drying surface in one's home
19. Pillage of the homes of peasant organizers
20. Stealing of peasant land
21. Tax on burned-down homes
22. Tax on prostitution
23. Tax on prisoners

2) Forced Labor and Thievery

Aside from these activities that bring in money directly, the sheriff and his assistants rob the peasants of their labor in a variety of ways:

- Forcing peasants to work for free on their land, especially when they are unable to post bail after being tried.
- Forced labor to repair roads.
- Forced attendance at public events to welcome the president or some other political boss.
- Forcing peasants to guard their animals.
- In the border areas, sheriffs often plot with soldiers and inspectors posted there to spy on and rob those crossing the border. Typically, they prey on Haitian braceros returning home and steal their money and working tools.
- In the border areas, sheriffs work hand in hand with animal thieves, often supplying them with false papers for stolen animals. Typically, some people steal animals in Haiti that are then sold in the Dominican Republic and the same traffic takes place in the other direction. Border guards are chiefly responsible for this traffic. They pay as much as \$60.00 to the sheriff to secure false papers for each animal stolen.
- Once a year, sheriffs make a lot of noise about arresting all thieves. On such occasions, all thieves, be they new, old hands at the trade, or retired, must bribe the sheriffs to avoid being arrested. The various names given to big established thieves in various parts of the country are as follows:

1. *Old soldier* in the South,
2. *Good for Nothing or Marked Card* in the Southeast,
3. *Old One* in the North and Northeast
4. *Recidivist* in l'Artibonite and Central Plateau
5. *Old Repeater* in the Northwest
6. *Old Guard* in the West

- When an animal is lost, the sheriff charges as much as \$5.00 for an inquiry regardless of its outcome.
- On occasions sheriffs will impose a 24 hour curfew in their sections as a means of giving the thieves a free hand to steal animals and break into homes. While moving the animals, they put lighted candles on their horns to give potential onlookers the impression that werewolves are involved.

3) Slaughter of Creole Pigs

We would be derelict not to mention the role played by sheriffs, their assistants, and aides, in the slaughter of Creole pigs, the native pigs of Haiti. In the process, the Jean-Claude Duvalier government (1971-1986), in cahoots with imperialist powers, robbed Haitian peasants of their bank accounts.

This was done under the *Project d'Eradication de la Peste Porcine et de Développement de l'Elevage Porcin* (PEPPADEP) with the advice of 4 Haitian veterinarians, namely Fred Calixte, Robert Joseph, Jolivert Toussaint, and Max Millien. The sheriffs ordered their subordinates to start killing pigs in their own homes. The commanders of the militia (VSN) issued the same order to their troops. It was carried out fully in spite of hesitations here and there. Thus, the very perpetrators of the system of exploitation became the first victims of the hurricane called PEPPADEP. This campaign was a hard blow to the peasantry as it enabled PEPPADEP to eliminate all Creole pigs without sparing a few to breed a new herd.

In this fashion, the rural police aided by the militia went against their own interests in this matter and scoured the countryside in order to insure that the last Creole pig was killed. The rural police thus played a central role in the ravage carried out by PEPPADEP.

B. The Political Power of the Rural Police

The army and the sheriffs are the king makers in the countryside. This is the result of the fact that they play multiple roles in the rural areas such as: army representative, judge, public notary, surveyor, civil clerk, fiscal agent, information and propaganda officer, forest agent, development promoter, landowner, etc., and even at times religious teacher and preacher.

This shows that, in addition to their economic clout, rural sheriffs have substantial political power to buttress the system of exploitation and prevent peasants from claiming their fundamental rights and from organizing to achieve freedom and a minimum of material well-being.

Thus, regardless of a peasant's decision to stay out of trouble by keeping a low profile, he is very likely to have problems nonetheless because he always runs into the sheriff in the

course of his activities. The system interferes with the private as well as the public lives of small peasants. The very existence of the small peasant is challenged by the rural police.

1) Repressive Activities

TÈT KOLE deems it essential to denounce some of the repressive methods used by the army and sheriffs to crush the peasantry. Such methods illustrated below are in direct conflict with the Declaration of Human Rights signed by the Haitian state in 1949.

- Sheriffs and their assistants often fire on peasants participating in demonstrations, and often fire at night to prevent people from sleeping and to create and maintain a climate of tension and fear in the civilian population.
- Sheriffs often humiliate a family by forcing children to beat up their parents. In this they follow the example set by the army in its barracks. For instance, following the massacre in Jean-Rabel, the commanding officer, Adriyen Senjilyen (Adrien Saint-Julien), forced a group of friends arrested together to slap and beat one another.
- Typically, they would tie prisoners and expose them to the sun unprotected for a whole day, or expose them to the elements for a whole night. As a result, the victims would fall sick, and even die from such mistreatment.
- Often they subject people to the torture of the "jack". One version of this method of torture is to tie the wrists of the individual together, to slip a stick through his elbows behind his back, and to beat him without mercy while he stays standing for hours on end. This method is called "akwe" or "bare" in the Central Plateau. Another version consists in forcing the individual to squat, to tie his wrists below the knees, and to slip a stick through the elbows and between thighs and calves. The individual is thus transformed into a ball on the ground. As the sheriff gets tired of beating the individual on one side of his body, he would kick him over and beat him on the other side. At times, both ends of the stick would be made to rest on supports with the result that the body hangs like a human wheel easily rotated and of course beaten all over with special attention to the genital parts.
- Sheriffs often tie a rope to the testicles of prisoners. From time to time, they would yank the rope to make them suffer.
- Sheriffs use sticks to beat and break the bones of peasants, to turn their behind into a pulp, bang their heads against a wall, and slap them so hard as to make them dizzy.
- Sheriffs and assistants with influence often keep prisoners for days in sheds also used to store products from the sheriffs' garden. Thus, prisoners are forced to sleep on bags of grain and saddles, often infested with vermin.
- Sheriffs and assistants often take advantage of a theft in a given area to arrest many in that area under the guise of carrying out their alleged investigation. In reality, it is a way for them to make money (at least \$40.00 per prisoner) from those wanting to get out of jail. Those unable to afford the bribe are forced to work for free on the sheriffs' gardens or to take their animals to pasture.
- Sheriffs and their assistants frequently get drunk before they sit in judgment of a case.
- Sheriffs often demand that assistants attend the meetings of peasant organizations.

- In the event someone flees after a violation of the law, it is not unusual for sheriffs and assistants to arrest the spouse, brother, sister, and children until the individual surrenders. In addition, detainees are forced to pay money to regain their freedom.
- Sheriffs and their subordinates often refuse to respond to court summons issued at the request of abused individuals.
- Often, they force detainees to cover on foot, and often bare foot, distances in excess of 60 miles as they move them around from sub-district stations to district headquarters, or departmental military barracks.
- Whenever a detainee is put away in a home jail or at the sub-district station, his/her personal belongings such as wallet, money, watch, rings, purse, earrings, and necklaces disappear in short order.

Sheriffs and their acolytes often participate in punitive expeditions to destroy a village, steal the land of peasants for their own benefit or that of a big landowner as happened in Jean-Rabel, Danti, Labadi/Le-Borgne, Grand-Bois (l'Artibonite), Pyat, Pewoden, Jèvè, Chavàn, Latapi, Fresino. On rare occasions, peasants defend themselves and in so doing kill the sheriffs. This is what happened in Danti on May 28, 1988, Pyat in March 12, 1990, and in Pewoden in January 1990, where 3 sheriffs were killed.

In such cases, the army always returns en force with heavy weapons to avenge the death of their peers. In Pyat, for instance, among the soldiers who participated in the massacre, peasants recognized Lieutenant Bazil, head of the Saint-Marc tactical unit, Moransi and Valme, a soldier from Montrouis. Among the big landowners who paid money to the army to carry out massacres, we can name: Remi and Patrik Lika (Rémy and Patrick Lucas) in Jean-Rabel, Bagidi Granpyè in Labadi, Charidye Chal in Grand-Bois, Pyè V. Etyèn in Marchand, Olivier Nadal in Pyat, Polinis Vòlsi in Jèvè, and Antoni Lalàn in Aquin.

Under the Duvaliers, sheriffs would work hand in hand with the *Macoutes* (VSN) in all acts of repression carried out against the peasantry and the Duvaliers' adversaries called *Kamoken*. Every time opponents challenged the regime in some zone of the country such as Thiote, Belladère, Ouanaminthe, Jérémie, La-Tortue, Casale, sheriffs participated in the arrest of people, beatings, torture to force people to speak, killings, all of which aimed at making the regime stronger.

Later, after the fall of Jean-Claude Duvalier, sheriffs kept their old habits. As the word *kamoken* fell out of fashion, they participated with gusto in the propaganda that would make a communist out of any individual who denounced the actions of the governments of Nanphy version I & II, Manigat, Avril and Trouillot, or would meet with others to discuss the problems of the country. Even those involved in the literacy campaign caught hell in this anti-communist witch hunt.

2) Seminars for the Rural Police

Frequently, the misdeeds of sheriffs put the governments that followed the Duvalier dynasty in a tight spot. In spite of the fact that they supported the rural police, they always aspired to put on a democratic facade. Thus, they could not defend the actions of the rural police. In order to fool both the international community and Haitian public opinion, Prosper Avril (1988-1990) and Ertha Trouillot (1990-1991) organized seminars to teach the rural police the respect of human rights.

These seminars never challenged the pillars of the system. They were an attempt to paper over the true nature of the system. Did they ever question the high purchase price -- up to \$5,000.00 -- paid by a sheriff to the district commander for the position? Could these seminars address the issue of torture, while in the national palace, under the very nose of President Avril and at his behest, political prisoners were nearly tortured to death and then displayed on national television?

Thus, these seminars were a charade, a deceptive demonstration put together for the benefit of people paying attention to the evolution of events in the country to convince them that serious efforts were underway to establish democracy in Haiti. The proof rests in the fact that the seminars never slowed the sheriffs down in their zeal to exploit and brutalize small peasants. Sheriff Jorèl Janbatis of the 7th section of Mahotièrè/Port-de-Paix did not hesitate to declare after attending the seminar called by Avril in the first week of March 1989, "Aside from the beautiful things reported by National Television on the goings-on at the seminar, President Avril spoke secretly to the assistance of the need for the rural police to continue the repression." This explains why two days after attending the conference, Sheriff Janbatis tried to break up with a horde of assistants a demonstration called by the women of Mahotièrès on March 8, 1989, on the occasion of Women's Day. On that occasion, he revealed everything that had been discussed at the conference.

Thus, the seminars were always a nice show that could not hide the fact that nothing of substance had really changed.

3) A Special Case: the Department of l'Artibonite

For a long time, land conflicts have ravaged l'Artibonite where a real war has been underway between big landowners and small peasants. Of course, sheriffs have not remained on the sidelines of such conflicts. For that matter, they received the support of bigwigs in the army and state, and latifundistas such as:

- Roger Lafontant, Zacharie Delva, Prophète Delva, Pyè V. Etyèn, Bagidi Granpyè, Charite Lwi, Gharidye Chal, and Franswa Bègwòm, all associated with the *Tontons Macoutes* (VSN).
- Colonel Gambetta Hyppolite, Lieutenant Gabryèl Pinas, Lieutenant Bazil, Adjutant Maksim Maksim, Captain Jozèf Ira Irak, General Acédius Saint-Louis, Colonel Henri-Robert Marc-Charles, General Henri Namphy, General Prosper Avril, and Jan Iv Chanpay, all of the army.
- Rogue soldiers Liberis Liben, Moransi, Valme, Pwospè Fleristil, Corporal Ismit, and Mirabo.
- Landowners Salim Attié, Olivier Nadal, and Polinis Vòlsi.

We will not fail to mention the dishonest actions of most judges who come up with unjust decisions, sell their decisions, stretch procedures while innocent people rot in jail in order to serve the interests of big landowners and army chiefs.

Some sheriffs lost their jobs due to popular pressure, and others their lives in clashes with the population: Esperans Chal in Labadi, Silyen Telo who died during the events in Pewoden, Benisyè Chal - he died during the Pyat incidents -, Gregwa Doseyis in Matino/La Chapelle, Dimasè Chal in Tènèt/Verrettes, and some others. The state never took steps to bring these thieves and murderers to trial. Many of these people are still enjoying the wealth they stole

from peasants with total impunity. A former sheriff like Esperans Chal continues to work as an army auxiliary in the barracks in Petite-Rivière.

In l'Artibonite, some sheriffs, such as Silyen Telo in Pewoden have police records, some are former members of the *Motherless* such as Nèlson Dòval, alias Nelon, in the 5th section of Verrettes, some former members of the militia, or former soldiers such as Abèl in the 4th section of Gros-Morne. Nelon Dòval, according to a report of *Justice and Paix* of Gonaïves, had stolen a barrel of gasoline. He was arrested, tried and found guilty, and his head was shaved. In order to become sheriff, he changed his name, calling himself Mak Nèlson Dòval.

In order to repress and exploit more efficiently, sheriffs hire many assistants and aides. TÈT KOLE found out in the Artibonite the section with the highest number of police: more than 500 in a section in the Chaîne des Cahos. Among the most ruthless of the Artibonite police, we can name:

- In Gwayavye (Saint-Marc): Emasèt Telo, Nòmil Eska, Vilia Lwi
- In Cheno (Marchand/Dessalines): Onondye Poleyon, Eliyis Chalen, Sentivèn Estimab, Ibè Estimab
- In Fabias (Marchand/Dessalines): Benisye Jenen
- In Petite-Rivière-de-l'Artibonite: Natès Sentima
- in Lakwa Peris: Sorèl

The land issue is such that it leads to acute exploitation of the small peasantry by the rural police. Once the system is destroyed, it is important for the state to clean up all those institutions involved in the land issue such as the district attorney's office, the judicial system, the army from top to bottom, the rural councils, the surveying service, etc.

4) The Rural Police and Women

It is difficult to find a sheriff who only lives with one woman. Typically, they have two kinds of women. In the first category, one finds his wife and mistress. In the second, one finds transitory women, that is to say a series of women that assistants find for the sheriffs for a dance, a party,....

The political and economic power of the sheriff, in addition to the macho mentality so prevalent among Haitian big shots, explains why he is able to have so many women. In the countryside where there is so much poverty, it is easy to understand that some women would look to people with economic power for economic security. At the political level, there is at issue a matter of relations, even spying that must be factored in.

Sheriffs often have women on each plantation who automatically achieve a social promotion in their areas as a result. They do not pay taxes at the market. They find credit easily. They cannot be arrested. Some use their power to humiliate others.

Peasant organizations have problems with such women because they never miss an occasion to praise their lovers, to denounce women who are active, to malign them, and to discourage others from joining. When popular organizations were boycotting the payment of market taxes, such women would make a big show of paying them before anybody else. Thus, tax collectors were emboldened to do their job. When confronted with beatings, some women with a good heart would ask for mercy and go as far as taking the stick away from the hands

of their men. Others by contrast, would insult or beat a newly-arrived prisoner in the absence of their men. In the 7th section of Mahotières/Port-de-Paix, the wife of Jorël Jan Batis was known to exhibit such behavior.

In this area, a fallout particularly painful for society has to do with the plethora of children fathered by sheriffs all over the countryside. Some are taken care of; others are not and live in poverty. When a sheriff is fired the many people he supports are devastated.

Thus, in addition to the exploitation of small peasants resulting from the theft of their money and property, the imposition of all sorts of taxes, and forcing them to perjure themselves, sheriffs and their assistants take a perverse pleasure in torturing their bodies. They invent all sorts of methods to insure that the small peasants continue to suffer as much as their forebears did in slavery under the French and during the Occupation under the Marines. Under such conditions which involve the trampling of their rights, the denial of their grievances, and the extortion of their resources, only the very brave dare get together to organize themselves.

V. Major Findings

- Whether there is a military or civilian government in power, 80% of the Haitian people, that is the peasantry, continues to suffer under a military system, namely the rural police. Haiti is one of the few countries on earth where the military has been at the forefront of politics as far back as we can remember, and is involved in all aspects of civilian life. This situation prevails mainly in the countryside because the military does not have as much power over the population in urban areas. We can safely state that while Port-au-Prince and the other cities may enjoy civilian rule, the rural areas always remain under military rule.
- Statements to the effect that the Haitian army has only 7,000 members are not correct. We do not know if those who make them are attempting to mislead deliberately. Nonetheless, they fail to take into account the many sheriffs, marshals, assistants, deputies, and Choukèt Lawouzes found in the rural police. A simple calculation will illustrate our point. If we assume that there are on average 200 officers (sheriffs, assistants, aides, ...) per section, and given that the country has 561 sections, this means that there are, in addition to the 7,000 soldiers of the regular army, at least 112,000 rural police whose main job is to brutalize and destroy the sections where they operate.
- The rural police system is the modern reincarnation of the system of slavery that existed in colonial times. Today, both systems converge in that:
 1. Freedom of speech, freedom to move, freedom to organize are not guaranteed.
 2. Exploitation is the order of the day so that people end up working for others for free.
 3. The lives of common people are deemed worthless by those in power.

Thus, the situation of the peasantry is not different from that of our ancestors during colonial times. Before 1804, the year of our independence, the slaves were demanding two things: freedom and land. Today, the rural police are the offspring of the imperialist powers allied with the bourgeois class and the big landowners in order to deny the peasants their most basic rights as human beings and to suppress any idea of freedom that might come to their minds. At the same time, the system is set up to exploit peasants without mercy, thus denying them any possibility of material progress in spite all their efforts and sacrifices towards that goal.

V. TÈT KOLE's Proposals for the Replacement of the Rural Police

A. Ultimate Structure

In order to put in place a system that will enable all small peasants to enjoy life as they should and will end forever their exploitation and brutalization, TÈT KOLE offers the following proposals:

- Abrogation of the François Duvalier Rural Code.
- Complete separation of the police from the army.
- Subdivision of the larger rural sections, especially those that incorporate nearby cities or villages.
- Subordination of the rural police -- made up of no more than 7 persons per section -- to the Ministry of Justice.
- Complete removal of the army proper from the daily lives of the rural sections.
- Establishment of the complete panoply of state services in the rural sections through the opening of one office per section that would include a tribunal, notary, surveyor, tax collector, agronomist, social worker, county delegate, and in the border areas, a representative of the Ministry of Interior and National Defense.
- Responsibility by the state for all costs associated with the building, equipping, and operation and maintenance of such offices.
- Publication by the state of all taxes to be paid by the peasantry and the implementation of a fair system to insure that such taxes and no more are duly paid.
- Public accounting of how taxes are used.
- Implementation of a system of justice to enable peasants to seek redress against those who abuse them.

B. Transitional Structure

The roots of the current system are so deep that it cannot be eliminated in one step. For this reason, TÈT KOLE proposes a system to be put in place for a transitional period of no more than 3 months.

- Dismiss all sheriffs denounced by the public. Replace them by serious individuals proposed by the communities themselves. Limit the number of assistants to 10 per section.
- Set up the civil framework, namely the local assemblies, that must control the action of the rural police.
- Arrest and try all sheriffs accused of abusing the peasants.
- Arrest and try all big animal thieves denounced by the public.
- Study the idea of compensating victims of past abuses.

- Publish a well-thought-out law on state jobs in rural sections.
- Put in place training seminars for all state employees slated to work in rural areas.
- Educate peasants as to the new relations they will have with the state.
- Prepare a new rural code -- to be drafted by peasant organizations -- that favors the interests of the peasantry.
- Elaborate a well-thought-out law on the rural councils that must set policy, and monitor the implementation of development programs for the sections. The councils must be set up to have some autonomy vis-à-vis the central government especially in financial matters.

To respect all rights of small peasants as human beings, to respect their property and their labor, all of this is tied to the elimination of the rural police. No improvement is possible within the existing framework which is based on the exploitation and brutalization of people. The system is rotten from top to bottom. Thus, to try and patch up the system is a waste of time; to convene seminars for the sheriffs is a waste of time. At issue is more than people or training. The whole system must be dismantled piece by piece.

C. Recommendations

TÈT KOLE wishes that all peasant organizations deepen their understanding of the problem of the rural police. In the context of the struggle being waged to change living conditions, it is very important that there be a big meeting of the various peasant organizations for a general discussion of the system and of ways to deal with its problems.

This meeting might result in final resolutions aiming at solving the issue of the rural police and the elaboration of ways and means peasant organizations can carry on with the struggle.

TÈT KOLE supports any initiative taken along this line. This might be the first step in coordinating the activities of the various peasant organizations in Haiti.

VI. Conclusion

A brief survey of Haitian history reveals that civil society has been for the most part under the control of military regimes. It's only after 109 years of independence that Haiti succeeded in having its first civilian president, namely Michel Oreste (1913-1914). Right after, the country spent 19 years under the boot of an American military occupation that did great damage to the peasantry at the political, economic, and social levels. After the occupation, the same situation prevailed whether under the control of the army or all-powerful armed groups such as the "Red Lights", the militia (VSN), or the *Attachés* and *Motherless* under Namphy, Manigat, or Avril. In other words, the country always labored under a dictatorship, coups d'état, or governments that spent but a few days in the national palace.

The political instability, the looting of state coffers, the frenzy to make or unmake presidents, the repression to keep an unpopular regime in power, the burden of the American Occupation, all of this fell on the weakest link of the social chain, namely the small peasantry. Nonetheless, peasants have always continued to struggle without respite, a struggle fraught with disappointments at the many crossroads it has traversed:

- Disappointment at the constitution of 1801 which peasants greeted with these words, "We have changed masters, but the job remains the same."
- Disappointment with the heroes of the war of independence who forgot about the peasantry when divvying up the spoils of that independence, land and freedom.
- Disappointment with the behavior of certain leaders such as Salnave (1867-1869) and Salomon (1879-1888) who dealt exclusively with personal interests once they got power.
- Disappointment with other political leaders such as Anténor Firmin, Rosalvo Bobo, and Daniel Fignolé (May-June 1957) who mismanaged the political potential represented by the peasantry because they failed to carry out the proper work of education and organization at the grassroots.

Only a few of the historic leaders deserve the respect and affection of the small peasantry, namely Goman, Jean-Jacques Acaau, Charlemagne Péralte, Benoît Batraville, etc.

On the occasion of the two hundredth anniversary of the general slave revolt in Saint Domingue, the descendants of the slaves continue to mobilize, to speak loudly against a system that would turn them into zombies, a system that undermines their zest for life, a system that forces *the donkey to work so that the horse may show off*.

The destruction of the system of rural police with all that this implies remains one of the preconditions that will permit the peasantry to catch its breath in its struggle for a better life. The destruction of the rural police will represent a break with history, that of our forebears the slaves and our own, based on brutalization and exploitation and the denial of any opportunity to progress. At the same time, the destruction of the system constitutes a rendezvous with a new kind of history, one in which those in power will be forced to respect the rights and property of small peasants, one in which all will be treated as equals with no difference among them.

VI. Annexes

TÈT KOLE gives below the partial list of commanding officers who distinguished themselves in supporting sheriffs and assistants in the exploitation and brutalization of peasants. Some of these officers were still at their posts at the time of this report's publication.

LIST OF ABUSIVE MILITARY PERSONNEL	
Name	Location
1. Adriyen Senjilyen	Jean-Rabel
2. Aleksì	Port-de-Paix
3. Bazil	Saint-Marc
4. Bènadèl Yeye	Jean-Rabel
5. Captain Kastrà Senatis	Limbé
6. Captain Pyè Richa Foche	La Gonâve
7. Commandant Vye	Aquin
8. Corporal Pwospè Fleristil	Petite-Rivière-de-l'Artibonite
9. Davilma David (Ochomil)	Petit-Trou-de-Nippes
10. Ens Raviks	Saint-Marc
11. Evans Jedeyon	Les Cayes
12. Feliks Gotye	Lascahobas
13. Gabriyèl Pinas	Thomonde
14. Ganbeta Ipolite	Gonaïves
15. Izayèl	Corail
16. Izidò Ponyon (Isidore Pognon)	Fort-Dimanche (Port-au-Prince)
17. Jadis Sen Pyè	Le Borgne
18. Janèl Milat	Jean-Rabel
19. Jozèf Ira Mirak	Saint-Marc
20. Jozye Banav	Miragoâne
21. Kastrà Fis	Cerca-La-Source
22. Liberis Liben	Saint-Marc
23. Maksi Maksim	Petite-Rivière-de-l'Artibonite
24. Masèl	Kenscoff
25. Michèl Egzantis	Bombardopolis
26. Pòl Lidovik Valèt	Thomassique
27. Rene Medò	Petit-Goâve
28. Sèj Tousen	Port-de-Paix
29. Sergeant Lwi Enès Wòch	Limbé

The names and locations of sheriffs denounced by TÈT KOLE and other organizations since 1986 are given below. Most of them remained at their posts at the time of this report's publication.

L'ARTIBONITE	
Name	Location
1. Abèl	4th Section, Gros-Morne
2. Alfons Adlen	6th Section, Gros-Morne
3. Amilyen Ilèt	Saint-Michel
4. Benisye Chal	Pyat
5. Danyèl Selabon	8th Section, Gros-Morne
6. Dimasè Chal	Lakwa Peris
7. Diserès Senjen	6th Section, Marchand/Dessalines
8. Esperans Chal	3rd Section, Petite-Rivière
9. Gregwa Doseyis	1st Section, La Chapelle (Matino)
10. Ipolit Pyè Lwi	Marchand/Dessalines
11. Jan Wobè Dònevil	6th Section, Verrettes
12. Jesnè Dòleyan	5th Section, Marchand/Dessalines
13. Jozafa Eme	3rd Section, Saint-Marc
14. Krisnè	2nd Section, Marchand/Dessalines
15. Leyònn Tid	4th Section, Gros-Morne
16. Lisyen Oseyan	Saint-Michel
17. Mak Nèlson Dòval (Nelon)	5th Section, Verrettes
18. Merès	6th Section, Saint-Michel
19. Milò Josèf	4th Section, Verrettes
20. Monelis Jozèf	5th Section, Marchand/Dessalines
21. Moris Renvil	4th Section, Verrettes
22. Ogis Pedonèl	Saint-Michel-de-l'Atalaye
23. Prezandyè Mitis	6th Section, Petite-Rivière
24. Pwofèt Benjamin	5th Section, Gros-Morne
25. Roni Senjen	Grande-Saline Section
26. Samson Estime	7th Section, Gros-Morne
27. Silyen Telo	5th Section, Petite-Rivière

NORTH	
Name	Location
1. Apolon Dosenvil	3rd Section Ranquitte
2. Elize Josèf	2nd Section, Bahon
3. Franswa Senflè	5th Section Limbé
4. Jak Inosan Telemak	8th Section Limbé
5. Jan Ganye Alvidò	4th Section Limbé
6. Jasmen Sensiren	1st Section, Bahon
7. Kloden Jan	7th Section Limbé
8. Lekè Ilè	4th Section, La-Victoire
9. Livèdye Andresi	5th Section, Le-Borgne (Chanpay)
10. Matino Pyè	3rd Section Saint-Rafaël
11. Matyas Alfrèd	3rd Section, Bahon
12. Merilyen Pyè	2nd Section, Pilate (Nan-Piman)
13. Sen Pyè Valsen	3rd Section, Limonade
14. Sonn Liben	1st Section Limbé
15. Tèmid Sezè	1st Section Ranquitte
16. Toma Izzarak	4th Section, La Victoire

NORTHEAST	
Name	Location
1. Abeni	2nd Section, Trou-du-Nord
2. Antoni Jozèf (alias Woule)	1st Section, Ouanaminthe
3. Deklamis Degravye	4th Section, Fort-Liberté
4. Eliofa Pyè (alias Ozamou)	3rd Section, Trou-du Nord
5. Jak Richa	2nd Section, Perches
6. Jilbè Nwèl	2nd Section, Sainte-Suzanne
7. Josèf Chal	1st Section, Perches
8. Leyon Jozèf	4th Section, Sainte-Suzanne
9. Makorèl Sezè	1st Section, Sainte-Suzanne
10. Masèl Dòsen	3rd Section, Fort-Liberté
11. Ovilyen Jozèf	3rd Section, Sainte-Suzanne

NORTHWEST

Name	Location
1. Anovil Senvil	1st Section, Jean-Rabel
2. Ase Michèl Pyè	8th Section, Port-de-Paix
3. Bonifas Paskal	3rd Section, Anse-à-Foleur
4. Erilyen Delyen	4th Section, Jean-Rabel
5. Filogèn Pòl	1st Section, Bassin-Bleu
6. Franswa Richadson	1st Section, Jean-Rabel
7. Jan Tirèn	2nd Section, Saint-Louis-du-Nord
8. Jano Andre	3rd Section, Saint-Louis-du-Nord
9. Jilbè Jozèf	3rd Section, Bassin-Bleu
10. Jorèl Janbatis	7th Section, Port-de-Paix
11. Klovis Desalin	3rd Section, Baie-de-Henne
12. Legwaz Alezi	5th Section, Chansolme
13. Lerison	1st Section, Saint-Louis-du-Nord
14. Mèsidye Jèn	7th Section, Jean-Rabel
15. Moris Peti	6th Section, Port-de-Paix
16. Odenye Franswa (Jan Eskame)	4th Section, Port-de-Paix
17. Petyon Sen Chal	6th Section, Saint-Louis-du-Nord
18. Sentaman Jilmis	2nd Section Jean-Rabel
19. Senvil	5th Section, Saint-Louis-du-Nord
20. Vaslè Dorival	3rd Section, Bassin-Bleu
21. Wilfrid Fòtina	5th Section, Jean-Rabel
22. Wilfrid Teyodoris	1st Section, Mole Saint-Nicolas

PLATEAU CENTRAL

Name	Location
1. Andre Sanon	2nd Section, Grand-Bois
2. Andwonik Tèmilis	1st Section, Savanette (Hòy)
3. Banav Lwi Jèn	1st Section, Savanette
4. Bovwa Dèlmon	1st Section, Belladère
5. Filisten Sen Felis	5th Section, Grand-Bois
6. Foucha Egzantis	2nd Section, Savanette
7. Joran Telis	3rd Section, Mirebalais/Koup-Madigra
8. Jozèf Karay	2nd Section, Mirebalais
9. Obennsonn Siryak	2nd Section, Belladère
10. Olipte Pòl	Thomonde Section
11. Pyè Lwi	Grand-Bois
12. Rene Lamwendri	3rd Section, Belladère
13. Sovè Pèl	3rd Section, Hinche
14. Ti Jera	1st Section, Grand-Bois
15. Vòlvik Ledou	1st Section, Belladère
16. Wolan Desi	1st Section, Lascahobas

SOUTH/GRANDE ANSE

Name	Location
1. Eransyon Jan	2nd Section, Baradères
2. Esterom Pyè	3rd Section, Baradères
3. Frederik Odne	5th Section, Baradères
4. Gabriyèl Janti	3rd Section, Baradères
5. Gèrye	2nd Section, Saint-Michel-du-Sud
6. Janèl Fontis	10th Section, Maniche
7. Konstan Lawòch	4th Section, Petit-Trou-de-Nippes
8. Lwinès Kasto	1st and 4th Section, Aquin
9. Mebwa	8th Section, Maniche
10. Omè Samdi	2nd Section, Cavaillon
11. Pòl Fontis (Janèl's son)	10th Section, Maniche
12. Rodòlf Opon	3rd Section, Petit-Trou-de-Nippes
13. Rwayal Janti (Gabriel's son)	3rd Section, Baradères
14. Sebonè Nozeyis	1st Section, Baradères
15. Sinwa	Petit-Trou-de-Nippes Section
16. Woje Tòchon	2nd Section, Petite-Rivière-de-Nippes

SOUTHEAST

Name	Location
1. Meryòd Viktò	3rd Section, Marigo
2. Milsen Lwi	4th Section, Marigo
3. Vètis Jistama	Bainet Section

WEST

Name	Location
1. Aliyis Lwi Jèn	7th Section, Arcahaie
2. Anyès Denvilis (alias Chèlbè)	21st Section, Carrefour
3. Commander Danje	Léogâne Section
4. Difisil	8th Section, Arcahaie
5. Jedeyis Poristil	6th Section, Arcahaie
6. Jera Liben	4th Section, Kenscoff (Bèl-Fontèn)
7. Jezilan	7th Section, Léogâne
8. Kamiy Angran	Pointe-à-Raquettes
9. Krisyan Alvarès	Kenscoff Section
10. Morèn Lanbè	Petit-Goâve Section
11. Remi Jozèf (alias Alibon)	7th Section, Arcahaie

Following is a list of police deputies, the bribes they paid to be appointed, and their locations in the 6th section of Mate in the commune of Arcahaie.

Name	Amount of Bribe, \$ 1)	Location
1. Adjasi Milyen	140.00	Babans
2. Benise Pòl	150.00	Lagrenad
3. Blansiyis	100.00	Kapoul
4. Desiyis Plezido	150.00	Granplas
5. Deziyis Desenis	150.00	Divye
6. Dije Lwiviyis	100.00	Domalfini
7. Dyelifèt Pyè	200.00	Babans
8. Dyesèl Lwi	100.00	Bag
9. Emano Woziyis	150.00	Domalfini
10. Emarès	100.00	Godswa
11. Fritsnè	190.00	Larat
12. Gresiyis	100.00	Gworavin
13. Jan Dòviyis	100.00	Leje
14. Jeniyis Dòvil	150.00	Grewa
15. Kobo	100.00	Fonwondòl
16. Konsa	100.00	Leje
17. Lesyo	170.00	Mitapwenn
18. Masèl Pyè	100.00	Babans
19. Matlòt	100.00	Manso-Pego
20. Mezil Jozèf	100.00	Granplas
21. Nanpay	100.00	Manso-Pego
22. Orison Sene	100.00	Kapoul
23. Palo	100.00	Domalfini
24. Pyè Chal	150.00	Tènèt
25. Rezide	180.00	Leje
26. Reziyis Jozèf	180.00	Jèlen-Pouye
27. Sekout Chal	100.00	Larat
28. Sekwa	150.00	Larat
29. Senpyè Sena	150.00	Kapoul
30. Seziyis Jozèf	100.00	Tibwa
31. Swariyis Senflè	100.00	Kapwèl
32. Tichout	180.00	Leje
33. Tinoujwenn	100.00	Leje
34. Tisen	100.00	Tibwa
35. Toulimen	100.00	Dyenèt
36. Veliyis Deriyis	100.00	Kouyo
37. Zandolèt	100.00	Manso-Pego

1) Exchange rate assumed: 5 Gourdes per dollar

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