

DELAWARE COUNTY PLEDGE OF RESISTANCE



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Winter 2006

Crisis in Haiti

by Ronald F. Coburn

Haiti is in crisis, and we hear or read almost nothing about this in our media. For this and other reasons, several organizations concerned with conditions in Haiti held a forum on September 10, 2005, at the 5th and Arch Street Meeting House.

Over the last few years, we have learned that the U.S. House of Representatives Black Caucus has been trying to force bills out of committee that would reinstate loans to the government of Haiti which were promised but never funded when President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and his political party LAVALAS were returned to power in 2001. A group from the Delco Pledge was involved in lobbying. We read of the International Monetary Fund's demands for privatization, resisted by Aristide's government. We read of U.S. government programs that provided monetary support and arms to the anti-LAVALAS groups that were opposing Aristide policies. Then President Aristide, who had been overwhelmingly elected for a second term, was forcibly removed from office by U.S. Marines on February 29, 2004, following political turmoil, and replaced by a U.S.-backed, unelected, interim government.

Since then, life for most Haitians has been terrifying and continues to deteriorate. Government-sponsored literacy, nutrition, medical, and education programs have been dismantled. Violence and abuses of human rights and the rule of law occur daily. People

aligned with the LAVALAS movement have been systematically terrorized, killed, arrested, and incarcerated in Haitian prisons without due process or charges. Haiti is in a political, economic, and human rights crisis. Many of the participants in this forum have seen poverty, murder, and chaos on the streets of Port-au-Prince. Political repression and terror have been accelerating at this time, just prior to scheduled Haitian elections.

The idea of organizing a forum to respond to the crisis in Haiti originated at a meeting six months ago attended by members of three different organizations, the Third Tuesday Steering Committee from Delco Pledge, members of the House of Grace Catholic Workers, and the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Haiti Working Group. The goal of the forum was to assemble activists, to hear

about current events in Haiti, and to develop ongoing programs. The steering committee consisted of Karen Wisniewski, Buddhist Peace Fellowship; Johanna Berrigan from House of Grace Catholic Workers; Paula Bronstein, Ronald Coburn, and Marge Van Cleef from Delco Pledge; Denise Davis and Angie Berryman from the American Friends Service Committee; Ray Torres from Witness for Peace, and Frantz Latour from the Committee for the Return of Democracy in Haiti.

The forum emphasized three areas: medical care, human rights violations including womens' issues, and propaganda and the media. Keynote speakers and workshop presenters were recruited in these areas. We originally built the program around a keynote present-

Continued next page.



(L-R) Michelle Korshem, Bill Quigley, Paula Bronstein, Eugenia Charles, and Johanna Berrigan, activists on Haiti, assembled at the forum.



Angie Berryman, from the American Friends Service Committee, served ably as forum facilitator.

tation by Father Gerard Jean-Juste, pastor of St. Claire's Parish in Port-au-Prince, who is an internationally known figure, an outspoken advocate for human rights, democracy, and the return of President Aristide, and a voice for the defenseless poor. Other keynote speakers were: Bishop Tom Gumbleton, auxiliary bishop of Detroit who has traveled to Haiti dozens of times since 1999 and was invited by President Aristide to be among a small group who escorted Aristide back to Haiti in 1994 (after the first coup in 1991 removed him from power); Bill Quigley, professor of law at Loyola University in New Orleans, a social justice and volunteer lawyer with the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti; Eugenia Charles, executive director of Fondasyon 'Mapou' and co-editor of *Let Haiti Live: Unjust U.S. Policies towards its Oldest Neighbor*. Workshop leaders were: Anne Sosin from the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti; Thomas Griffin, an immigration lawyer from Philadelphia and author of the report *Haiti Human Rights Investigation*; Frantz Latour, representing the Committee for the Return of Democracy in Haiti; Bob Boucher, a surgeon who traveled to Haiti twice in the last year on health care and human rights delegations (see his article in the summer issue of the Pledge newsletter); and Johanna Berrigan, from the House of Grace Catholic Workers who also has visited Haiti several times on human rights delegations, most recently two

weeks prior to the forum day when she visited with Father Jean-Juste. Angie Berryman, from the American Friends Service Committee served as an excellent facilitator.

Although Father Gerard Jean-Juste committed to serve as a keynote speaker, he was unable to attend as a result of being accused of a murder in Port-au-Prince that occurred at a time when he was not in Haiti. He was then imprisoned in solitary confinement in the Haiti national penitentiary. Just prior to the forum, Father Jean-Juste, in failing health, wrote from his

cell, "Thank you to everybody across the world for all your support. I am in prison, again. Please keep pushing for democracy and human rights in Haiti—they are feeling it. Please remember all the people in prison. There are so many young people here who have never seen a judge. Please keep up the pressure. Democracy will return to Haiti."

Over 100 people attended the forum and participated in discussions. We met our goal for an "activist gathering"—most of those attending had worked on various Haiti issues. There was some shock and concern. There was togetherness in support of the Haitian people and a return of democracy to this country.

The organizers felt one of their roles was to organize and facilitate future programs. Participants in the workshop on media and propaganda are being organized for lobbying. Participants in the workshop on health care in Haiti, who heard of the ongoing development of a clinic in Port-au-Prince by the House of Grace Catholic Workers, are organizing to help support this facility and to facilitate coordination of ongoing medical projects. Workers in two other ongoing medical programs added to the discussion—the Pediatrician Exchange Program (between Port-au-Prince General Hospital and Childrens Hospital of Philadelphia), supported by members of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Haiti Working Group, and the large medical facility in southern Haiti

supported by the American Friends Service Committee. Participants in the workshop on human rights, political prisoners, women and rape are organizing to recruit people for trips to Haiti to monitor events occurring there with visits to the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti. Of course, if any of our readers would like to participate, this could be crucial for the success of these groups. If any reader would like to be informed of planned trips to Haiti, please get in touch with members of the Third Tuesday Steering Committee. See the Delco Pledge web site for information about this. Delco Pledge expects to be involved and supportive of all of these programs.

Many questions were raised about why the U.S. government is so involved in political and economical control rather than developing programs that aid these desperate, starving people. Attempts to answer this question considered several factors. The first is the power of the 1 percent of Haitian citizens in the ruling class that have resisted any change that might hurt them economically. These people, who usually have been educated in the U.S., speak English and have close ties to U.S. business people and officials in the U.S. government. The International Monetary Fund's demand for privatization of Haitian property suggests U.S. commercial interests are looking for cheap labor.

One participant suggested that our government's need for control is a continuation of fear-driven attitudes that originated after the slave revolt of 200 years ago or maybe simply due to racism. Some participants suggested that our government's policies are a continuation of the fear of a communist takeover. When lobbying in Washington three years ago, I learned from an administrative assistant that the prospect of a revival of communism in Haiti and in Latin America is considered a threat to U.S. security. A critical issue in Haiti is, as in other countries, whether people would be better off in a corporate controlled, profit-driven economy where there could be "trickle down," or a gov-

See Crisis, page 3.

Bishop Gumbleton on U.S. Policy in Haiti

by Will Scull

Bishop Gumbleton started his speech with the questions often asked after 9-11, “Why do they hate U.S.?” In answer to that he recounted what we have done:

In Chile in 1973, the U.S. supported the murder of a democratically-elected president. In 1953 the U.S. made sure that the popularly-elected president of Iran was overthrown and the repressive shah was back in power. In 1988 our CIA encouraged an attack on a church after mass during which a member of the Haitian elite was dragged out and

killed because he spoke up for the oppressed mass of fellow Haitians.

In fact, Haiti has been abused by U.S. policy since its slaves overthrew the French in 1804. We, a newly-democratic nation ourselves, would not recognize Haitian democracy as legitimate. Even Abe Lincoln supported the policy of Haiti paying reparations to France in 1864. Of course, we supported Papa Doc Duvalier, one of Haiti’s longest-in-power and most oppressive dictators.

President Aristide scares us because he asks in his speeches, “Do you feel under the table?” He gets a big cheer. “Are there a few who are on the table?”

Answer, “Yes.” Aristide then says, “We Haitians should all be at the table.”

It is amazing to this author that no Haitians I have met hate us North Americans. But I share their question of why we act as if we hate Haitians.

The human struggles of which we are so proud—for equal opportunity, pursuit of happiness and freedom to choose our leaders—should be our export to our neighbors, our sisters and brothers south of our borders.

We must replace economic imperialism and exploitation with a shared struggle for humane treatment of our fellow human beings.

Activists Speak Out at Haiti Forum

by Brad Bradlee

If Haiti and its problems seem remote to you, think of New Orleans, and maybe you can shorten the distance. When we see the victims of Katrina—poor, in need of food, water, and medical attention, desperately vulnerable—we see how many Haitians live every day. But there’s an important

difference between the Gulf Coast and the island nation. According to Bill Quigley, a law professor at Loyola University and human rights advocate for Haiti: “Haiti is like New Orleans, but no one is coming to help the people of Haiti.”

That’s what he told nearly 100 people gathered at the Haiti Forum held at Philadelphia’s Friends Meeting House. Quigley and his wife, Debbie, are hurricane evacuees who spent five days volunteering at a New Orleans hospital before arriving for the September 9 conference. Quigley said it was important for him to come to Philadelphia to speak because he sees all people as members of one fam-

See Activists, page 4.

Crisis

ernment that primarily aims to support people’s issues such as education, medical care, and programs to alleviate poverty. The U.S. policy aggressively supports the former goal, and the policy of Aristide’s government supported the latter. We know that “trickle down” is not working in the U.S. Why would it work in Haiti?

Many thanks to the White Dog Café for providing lunches for the speakers, and to Helen File and the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting for allowing use of the 5th and Arch Street Meeting House.



Karen Wisniewski (L) of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, and Bob Boucher, a surgeon who traveled to Haiti twice in the last year on health care and human rights delegations, participated in the forum.



Close to 100 people gathered at the Haiti Forum held at Philadelphia's Friends Meeting House on September 9.

Activists

ily. And family means obligation.

"We need to expand our compassion zone, our safety zone. We need to go to Haiti," he said.

Americans, Quigley explained, have a special responsibility because people throughout the world are affected by U.S. government policies.

Involvement for change was a recurring theme of the day, from moderator Angie Berrymen's opening remarks—"This is a time to act, and act we will"—through afternoon workshop strategy sessions. Dedicated to "taking back democracy and defending human rights," workshop presenters focused on human rights abuses in Haiti—particularly rape—plus health care issues and media propaganda. (See R. Boucher article in the Summer 2005 newsletter for a first-hand account of the medical crisis.)

Hurricane Katrina was a natural event, one that came out of nowhere. Haiti, by contrast, is a disaster created by deliberate policy, a crisis with a history. This was the story told by Eugenia Charles, Haitian advocate and executive director of Fondasyon Mapou, an organization founded to protect human rights and the environment in Haiti.

Those unfamiliar with Haiti's politics and the country's relationship with the U.S. were treated to a compact but comprehensive narrative, including President Aristide's 1990 election, his exile, return, American economic pressure, deteriorating internal conditions, and the final coup that replaced Aristide with the current U.S.-backed interim government. (See R. Coburn article in Spring 2004 newsletter for this recent history.)

One confirmed keynote speaker, Fr. Gerard Jean-Juste, couldn't be at the forum because he is imprisoned by this U.S.-backed government. Bill Quigley gave a compelling first-hand account of the activist priest's arrest. (See the Johanna Berrigan interview in the Fall 2005 newsletter for the Jean-Juste story.)

Given Haiti's dire straits, what is to be done? One audience member, during a Q & A period, suggested that "after 200 years of failure of democracy," maybe it is time for an international body like the Organization of American States (OAS) or U.N. to rule "by force." Another suggested that corruption within the Aristide government necessitated its removal.

The panelists disagreed with both these views. Any changes to be made in Haiti, they said, need to be made by Haitians—not imposed by outside forces. Mistakes made under Aristide,

they argued, were mistakes for the Haitian people to address, not the U.S. government. Similarly, any elections held by this interim government, installed by a coup, cannot be seen as credible. And how can outside organizations rule when Aristide is the democratically elected president of Haiti?

Working for change in Haiti must, of course, include pressuring our own government to change its policies towards that country. But social justice lawyer Quigley reminded the audience, "We are not doing something *for* Haiti, but *with* Haiti." And he quoted an Australian aboriginal activist: "If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is

bound up with mine, then let us struggle together."

Rape in Haiti

Excerpted from a report by Anne Sosin, director of VIDWA (Haitian Rights Vision), which includes KOFVIV.

KOFVIV, or the Commission of Women Victims for Victims, is a Haitian women's group that combines help for individual victims of rape with grassroots women's organizing and advocacy to transform the social and political conditions that allow sexual violence against poor women to occur with such frequency. KOFVIV was formed in 2004 by a group of women from poor neighborhoods of Port-au-Prince, who were victims of rape during the 1991-94 military coup d'état, to help new women victims of rape. VIDWA provides free medical care, peer support groups, a micro-credit loan program and other activities for women victims.

VIDWA identifies victims of rape through a network of 25 *ajan kominote*

See Rape, page 8.

Guatemala: Hidden from the Headlines, Still in the News

by Marge Van Cleef

US MILITARY AID

As the U.S. Congress wrapped up the fiscal year 2006 foreign operations bill, the bodies decided to maintain the ban on military aid to Guatemala, in place since 1990. While the Bush administration pushed to lift the ban, grassroots activists called on Congress to keep the ban as a result of continued threats and attacks against human rights and social activists as well as lack of progress in implementing military reforms contained in the 1996 peace accords.

Guatemala has not yet made the substantive reforms necessary to justify a removal of the ban on U.S. military aid in the form of international military training (IMET) and foreign military financing (FMF). The Guatemalan military has yet to be held accountable for its past abuses and continues to commit abuses against the Guatemalan people. Resuming assistance now would reward the military for continued human rights violations.

IMET/FMF

Following the assassination of U.S. innkeeper Michael Devine by a Guatemalan military officer and CIA agent in 1990, the U.S. Congress banned all foreign military financing (FMF) and international military education and training (IMET). In 1996, the ban was modified to permit the Guatemalan military to attend expanded-IMET courses.

Earlier this year, the U.S. released \$3.2 million in military assistance to Guatemala that had been frozen in the “pipeline” since 1990. This is a significant increase in aid without any significant progress in military reform.

The Bush administration has asked Congress to permanently lift the ban on regular military training and aid, IMET and FMF, and resume assistance in the

next budget. The \$3.2 million that has already been disbursed is only the beginning of a plan to reestablish a close relationship between the Guatemalan military and the Pentagon. Just days after Donald Rumsfeld’s visit, Guatemalan defense minister Carlos Aldana remarked, “The armed forces need to become more involved in internal security.”

Clandestine groups with strong ties to the Guatemalan military continue to attack human rights defenders and other civil society activists with more than 50 threats and attacks reported in the first four months of 2005 alone.

Call members of the foreign operations sub-committees, and let them know you agree that the IMET/FMF ban



Secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld (R) met with Guatemalan president Oscar Jose Rafael Berger Perdomo, in Guatemala City, March 24, 2005. Earlier this year, the United States released \$3.2 million in aid earmarked for the Guatemalan military.

should NOT be removed. Capitol switchboard: 202-224-3121. Ask to be transferred to the following offices and ask to speak to the foreign affairs staff person.

Senate: Arlen Specter (Pa.)

House of Representatives: Chaka Fattah (Pa.); Don Sherwood (Pa.)

Fair Trade and Hurricane Stan

Excerpted from *The Seattle Times*, November 9, 2005

When Hurricane Stan hit Guatemala last month, homes, crops, and livestock were washed away in the waters. One entire village was buried under a torrent of mud. As aid began to flow into the country, immediate needs for food, water, and medical care were paramount. Poverty that has long plagued this region makes its inhabitants extremely vulnerable to the effects of natural disasters. For example, less than a nickel of the \$3 consumers spend on an espresso coffee drink typically finds its way back into these communities.

In a fair-trade coffee cooperative in San Marcos, workers are able to pool resources, cut out middlemen, and channel shared profits into community-development projects. Although the final prices of fair-trade and non-fair-trade coffees are comparable, the difference lies in whose pockets the profits end up. Ultimately, by buying fair trade, consumers can protect our planet and the long-term sustainability of communities in places like San Marcos where, without other options, large numbers are forced to migrate or are left to eke out a fragile existence ever more vulnerable to disasters like Hurricane Stan.

What Will It Take to Stop this War?



Bob Smith (L) of the Brandywine Peace Community joined other activists at the September 26 action at the White House where 374 war protesters were arrested.

by Melissa K. Elliott

What will it take to stop this war? We who oppose the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq have struggled and strategized during the past three years and done our best to be heard. We've become angrier—and more discouraged—watching the months tick by with no change in U.S. policy, the death toll climbing, and our country defamed by a private war of lies and profiteering.

Some of us—while still committed to nonviolence—look to embrace a more visible and insistent way to make our government listen to us. As stories come to light about the dishonesty and manipulation that got our country into this war, public opinion is starting to turn around. More and more people are call-

Melissa K. Elliott works in the Iraq Peace Building Program of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. For more information about the AFSC's Iraq programs, visit www.afsc.org/iraq.

the nonviolent resistance activities in an effort to end the war from another important angle.

Much of the organizing for the September 26 CD action was done by the National Campaign for Nonviolent Resistance, which includes individuals from national and regional peace groups, including Military Families Speak Out, Gold Star Families for Peace (who have lost family members in this war), War Resisters League, Iraq Veterans against the War, Veterans for Peace, Brandywine Peace Community, Code Pink, Pacem in Terris, American Friends Service Committee, and Clergy and Laity Concerned about Iraq.

After marchers arrived at the Pennsylvania Avenue side of the White House, a small delegation of religious leaders and Gold Star Families for Peace approached the gate and asked to meet with the president. As was expected, they were denied such a meeting, and so they sat down on the sidewalk in front of the White House, soon joined by many others.

Before sitting, protesters strung names and photos of the war dead from the iron fencing that separates the White House from the sidewalk. Then we stretched crime tape across the fencing. Finally, we flung handfuls of sunflower seeds through the bars of the wrought iron fence and onto the lawn to symbolize our hopes for replenishing and nurturing life, not destroying it.

WHY RESISTANCE NOW?

It has taken many months for U.S. opinion to shift, but support for the war is now slowly being replaced with anger and bafflement as shameful truths are revealed. Like a sweater unraveling when a snag in the yarn is pulled, the administration's carefully laid deceptions are coming apart. Each freshly proven fact of torture and corruption, arrogance and poor judgment, and squandered tax dollars is another loose thread. And so, the numbers increase of people who are ready to declare the emperor has no clothes.

For those of us who have opposed this unjust, cruel, and unprincipled war from its beginning, patience is wearing

Continued next page.

ing for U.S. troop withdrawal and settling accounts with Iraq and its people.

Echoing this discontent, one of the largest nonviolent actions of civil resistance in history took place on September 26 at the White House where 374 people were arrested. The headliner of the day was Cindy Sheehan, risking arrest for the first time in her life, along with many

others, including this writer. We joined many seasoned activists who shared their counsel, experience, and inspiration. There were celebrities among us, such as Cornell West and theologian Walter Wink, and many others who went nameless blending into the group.

The action drew more than 1,000 people and began with two lines of marchers circling the White House, each column led by people carrying a banner and somberly tolling a bell to represent the dead. One line was led by the Philadelphia-area affinity group organized by Brandywine Peace Community.

The nonviolent resistance action was part of a three-day event in the capital, sponsored by United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ), to rally opposition to the war. On Saturday, September 24, a gigantic peace march with an estimated 100,000 to 300,000 participants was followed by a peace festival with tents full of information and representatives of peace groups. An all-star concert capped the day. On Sunday, interfaith services attracted many people, and on Monday morning, lobbying preceded



Cindy Sheehan, mother of a soldier killed in the Iraq war, joined another activists at the September 26 action.

Cinema Resistance Presents

by Bob Small

On Saturday, January 14, 7 pm, Cinema Resistance will present our first film of 2006, at our usual site, Media Friends Meeting, 125 W. 3rd St.

Salt of the Earth (1954) is probably better known for the circumstances surrounding it than for the movie itself. This movie was filmed by many black-listed actors and technical people. Chief among these was the director, Herbert J. Bieberman, a native of Philadelphia. He and his wife, Gale Sondergaard, were one-fifth of the Hollywood Ten, ten actors who tried to take a stand against Senator Joseph McCarthy and McCarthyism. As a result, their careers were destroyed. Other blacklistees involved in this film, include actor Will Geer, composer Sol Kaplan, producer Paul Jarrico, and writer Michael Wilson.

This film is based on an actual strike against the Empire Zinc Mine in New Mexico. It was financed by the American Mineworkers Union. Anti-Mexican feeling is clearly articulated in this film.

But beyond the political implications of this film and its modern attitudes towards women's role in shaping history, this actually stands as one of the best films to define why we need unions. It has a quasi-documentary feel, and there is much in the film that asks, rather than answers, questions.

There will be a pre-cinema introduction and a post-film discussion. Refreshments will be available, and donations will be accepted.

For further information, call 610-543-8427 or visit, www.delcoplege.org.



thin. Repeated efforts to jump through hoops of propriety feel more like compliance with the system, not witness for change. This is hardly a new thought. Henry David Thoreau in his essay, "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience," summed it up 156 years ago when he wrote, "Dissent without disobedience is consent." It is our responsibility to speak up, even if it means disobeying the law.

On that sunny Monday in September, it took the park police the entire afternoon to arrest all of us. Many arrestees had to sit in buses at Anacostia Prison for hours before being processed and released, some in the

wee hours of the morning. Transportation from the prison was a struggle because public telephones and a subway station were more than a mile away. Our support teams and their cars faced tricky traffic patterns, long drives to maneuver around them, and phone problems in keeping in touch with us.

Many of those arrested told stories of surprising kindness and helpfulness by arresting officers who offered bottles of water and even food in two reported instances. In some cases, individual officers quietly commented that they agreed with our desire to end the war in Iraq.

What will it take to stop this war?

When U.S. forces invaded Iraq nearly three years ago, thousands of people, though sick at heart, worked to oppose it. After a lull, we took stock and went back to work, realizing that the mighty indignation of the world represented a formidable force to be reckoned with.

Nonviolent resistance and creative ways to use it are crucial to strengthening personal commitment, building the peace movement, and making our voices heard.



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Community Calendar

Dec. 22, 7 pm, Christmas candlelight vigil for peace, Lockheed Martin, Mall & Goddard blvds., Valley Forge, Pa.(off Rt.. #76, behind King of Prussia Mall).

Jan. 17, 2006, noon, Martin Luther King Day of Nonviolent Resistance, Lockheed Martin, Mall & Goddard blvds., Valley Forge, Pa. Call the Brandywine Peace Community by Jan. 6 to participate in the nonviolent civil disobedience. Join us in nonviolent resistance as we face arrest in honoring Martin Luther King, Jr., by resisting “the giant triplets of American society: racism, materialism, and militarism.” (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, Apr. 4, 1967).

“The great initiative in this war is ours; the initiative to stop it must be ours.”—Martin Luther King, Jr., speaking in 1967 about the Vietnam war, resounds today about the war in Iraq.

For ongoing protests and acts of non-violent resistance to the war in Iraq, check regularly the Brandywine Peace Community website, www.brandywinepeace.com.

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RAPE, continued from page 4.

or community-based human rights workers, based in several poor neighborhoods of Port-au-Prince. VIDWA documents the case of each victim it sees. This documentation is stored for use in future legal proceedings and forms the basis for the advocacy work on behalf of victims. VIDWA has documented more than 400 cases in an eleven-month period and has collected information about circumstances in which these abuses occur, the actors responsible for them, and the impact of rape on the lives of poor Haitian women. This research has shown that rape against women in poor neighborhoods is a widespread, and in some cases epidemic, phenomenon that has been largely ignored by local authorities, human rights groups, and representatives of the international community in the country.

Rape is linked to political repression, violence by a multitude of armed groups, and destabilization of community systems. Armed gangs are responsible for the greatest percentage of rapes documented by the commission. Some groups identify with or are financed by political groups and/or actors while others are purely criminal in nature.

In April 2005, the findings of VIDWA/KOFAVIV on rape were presented to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. VIDWA has [facilitated] meetings between victims and representatives of international institutions and NGOs in Haiti to talk about the failure of national and international actors to protect women in poor neighborhoods. While members of VIDWA see their current advocacy as an essential response to the immediate tribulations of poor women, their long term goal is to rebuild a women’s movement destroyed by political instability, class division, and failed programs. Its members hope to begin organizing women victims so that their voices are heard and respected.

(For more information about VIDWA/KOFAVIV, contact Karen Wisniewski at 215-545-4122 or karenwphilly@yahoo.com)