

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HAITI

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I rise today to bring my colleagues up to date on the situation in Haiti. Two weeks ago, I traveled once again to this troubled country. While I knew little about Haiti before becoming a Senator, this was my fifth trip to Haiti in the last 3 years. So I have had the opportunity to see what changes have taken place and the general direction of events.

Later today, the Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, will visit Haiti. She will find when she arrives a troubled country, but a country in which the United States does have a major national interest.

Mr. President, let me begin by pointing out that while Haiti is not of strategic importance to the United States, what happens there does have an impact on our country and on our citizens.

Haiti's current political system is not stable. It is a struggling democracy in its infancy. If this unstable democracy descends into outright chaos, the result could be an exodus of boat people coming to our shores.

It has, of course, Mr. President, happened before. Remember, Haiti is just 700 miles from Florida. During the early 1990s, after President Jean Bertrand Aristide was ousted from power, tens of thousands of Haitians risked their lives by boarding small boats, even rafts, hoping to reach the United States or other countries. Between 1991 and 1994, 67,000 Haitians were interdicted at sea—67,000. Our Government was forced to house more than 25,000 Haitians in Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, at a cost of more than \$400 million.

Historically, our countries have important ties. Haiti is the second oldest republic in the hemisphere. Their defeat of Napoleon's army in 1804 led the French to sell us the Louisiana Territory. In 1915, the United States intervened militarily to restore order to Haiti, and we remained there until a new government was installed in 1934. So our interest in Haiti is not new—it is rooted in our history.

Hundreds of thousands of Haitians live in the United States. In fact, there are more Haitians in the United States than any other country outside of Haiti, and thousands of U.S. citizens live in Haiti, either permanently or temporarily, for humanitarian purposes. I am amazed, as I travel throughout Haiti, at the number of Americans I meet. They can be found all over that small country.

Haiti's troubles have a direct effect on the United States, and impact. Haiti's current political power vacuum already is being filled by dangerous drug lords. Today, 8 percent of the drugs on our Nation's streets come from Haiti or through Haiti. This is a clear example of how the current crisis in Haiti has a

clear and direct impact on the people of my home State of Ohio, your home State of Washington, and the rest of this country.

Geographic proximity has dictated U.S. interest in Haiti over the course of this century. It will continue to do so. In September 1994, the United States—in conjunction with the international community—sent over 20,000 troops, at a cost of over \$1 billion, to restore President Aristide to power. This figure does not include the additional \$120 million the United States provided the United Nations for peacekeeping operations. In addition, since then, the United States has invested well over \$2 billion in nonmilitary assistance to establish and help sustain democracy in Haiti.

Mr. President, I would now like to update my colleagues on where things stand in Haiti with regard to a number of specific topics. Let me first start with American civilian police presence there.

One cause for optimism in Haiti is the American civilian police, who participate in the United Nations civilian police presence. Their mandate recently shifted from mentoring the cops on the streets, the Haitian police officers on the streets, to mentoring the mid-level management of the Haitian National Police.

I had the distinct pleasure, when I was in Haiti several weeks ago, of accompanying American civilian policemen on duty in Cite Soleil—a slum in Port-au-Prince with probably the highest degree of violence in this whole country. Surprisingly, several of these American cops told me they had no problem moving through Cite Soleil both during the day and at night. We have, today, 31 dedicated U.S. police officers, Haitian-born U.S. citizen veteran U.S. cops, who are down in Haiti on a contract basis, mentoring the Haitian police. These 31 dedicated police officers from New York, New Jersey, Florida, L.A.—they are all creole speakers. This enables them to communicate well with the Haitian population. In fact, the majority of these 31 Americans were born or have relatives in Haiti. These U.S. police officers told me they feel their work with the Haitian police is helping. It is beneficial. It is important. Mr. President, I commend them and I support the efforts of these fine Americans.

Let me turn now to the Haitian police. One of the main missions of the United States after President Aristide was restored to power was to help train a brand new Haitian police force. This was a daunting, and remains a daunting, task. I don't know that it has ever been undertaken in the world at such a magnitude as we tried and have been doing in Haiti. We have trained over 5,000 new Haitian police recruits. Our men and women who travel to Haiti to do this did, and continue to do, an excellent job.

The Haitian National Police, or HNP, are doing fairly well and have taken

strides to professionalize the institution. Continued concerns of some human rights violations are being addressed in the newly formed inspector general's office. The United States has spent considerable money and effort in training the police force. In conjunction with other interested international donors, this training must continue. Furthermore, efforts should be made to address the lack of resources needed by this police force.

When the international community restored Aristide to power in 1994, the Haitian military and police were then totally dismantled. A new police force was formed from scratch. Although a very young force, the Haitian National Police has been described as the only functioning institution in Haiti.

When the U.S. Government decided to train the new Haitian police through the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program—this is our U.S. Government program known as "ICITAP"—we laid down three conditions: No. 1, that the old armed forces must be and were disbanded; No. 2, that the new police force must be civilian; and, No. 3, that the police must have reasonable means to overcome their historic corruption.

While the Haitian police are generally doing a good job, some Haitians continue to fear HNP, the Haitian National Police. These Haitians particularly fear the crowd control/riot squad unit. This unit, which dresses in all black uniforms, including reflective sunglasses, is extremely intimidating and reminiscent of the previous military regime. Further, serious human rights abuses by the HNP officials continue, tragically, to occur.

There is really only one solution, and that is to continue to work to help professionalize the police. That is what we are doing. A newly installed inspector general's office within the HNP is looking at these human rights violation cases. We will not see real progress in this area until and unless the IG moves these cases forward—and until and unless the judicial system successfully prosecutes policemen involved in these crimes.

Efforts are being made to start integrating the Haitian police into the Haitian society. The concept of community policing is a concept that our men and women are taking to Haiti. Haitian President Preval has requested the HNP to engage in this community policing. American civilian police personnel are mentoring their HNP counterparts in this effort. Though this effort is only in its initial stages, it is a change in the right direction. The police are also attempting to change from a reactive force to become a more typically American proactive force.

Our continued commitment to the professionalization of the Haitian police is essential. As all Americans know, a strong and effective police force is essential to any civil, democratic society. We must continue the ICITAP program, and urge the Haitian

Government to continue its own efforts to professionalize the police, from the officer on the street to the midlevel management at headquarters.

To succeed, a quality police force needs quality resources. The fact is resources are, of course, lacking in Haiti. For example, in Cap Haitien, the second largest city in Haiti that we visited with over 300,000 residents, 130 policemen have access to only six vehicles. This force also lacks simple phones and two-way radios.

But perhaps most important is not the lack of physical resources, but the lack of human resources.

The current police force—slightly over 6,000 for the whole country—is of course, too small. The Dominican Republic—Haiti's neighboring country—has roughly the same population and a national police force of 29,000. I urge the administration to consult with the international donor community—and together with the Haitian Government—discuss ways to (1) continue training; (2) continue mentoring this police force; (3) provide necessary and better equipment; and (4) slowly but steadily increase the size of the Haitian national police.

Let me turn now to the issue of judicial reform.

Mr. President, the police in Haiti is only one element of the judicial system. While we have made progress in police reform, there is not now a functioning judicial system in Haiti. Reforming the entire judicial system—the courts, prosecutors and defense attorneys—should be a priority for the Haitian Government. If any progress—economic or political—is going to happen, Haiti needs a working judicial system. To get there, the Haitian Government needs to demonstrate a real commitment—real political will—to make judicial reform a priority. We should make clear that our Government is willing to make a commitment—an investment—to create an effective judicial system, but only—if it is clear that the Haitian Government itself is willing to lead that effort.

Although the 1987 Haitian Constitution requires a separation of powers between the judicial and executive branches, the Minister of Justice—an executive branch official—currently has control over the entire law enforcement system: the police, prosecutors, defense attorneys and the courts! Not only are the courts not independent, to make matters worse, I was informed by both U.S. and Haitian officials that the current Minister of Justice in Haiti is not committed to any real reform measures. The seriousness of this problem cannot be overstated.

The credibility of the Haitian legal system is undermined by the perception that it is awash in corruption—and that justice is for sale. Until the Haitian Government demonstrates the political will to bring murderers to justice, for instance, the Haitian people will lack confidence in their own legal system, and vigilante-style justice will tragically continue.

True judicial reform cannot take place unless and until Haiti political leaders exercise the political will to solve the high profile political murders. There have been dozens of political murders in Haiti over the past several years. Unfortunately, to date, not a single one has been solved. Despite the efforts of the Special Investigative Unit inside the Haitian national police, which has the specific mandate to investigate these high-profile murder cases, the Haitian Government has done nothing to help resolve these cases. Some argue that one of the reasons behind this fact is that some senior Haitian Government officials may be implicated in the crimes.

Having said that, I still believe we must continue to fund the Special Investigations Unit, because, as one high ranking U.S. official told me when we were in Haiti: "It keeps pressure on the Haitian Government and keeps them halfway honest."

Mr. President, successfully solving and prosecuting even one of these political cases could serve as a turning point for reform of the judicial system. It could send the right signal. We need to do all we can to put pressure on the Haitian Government to make this a top priority. For example, last year, Congress enacted legislation I proposed which denies visas to Haitians involved in extrajudicial and political killings. The identity of many of these people who committed atrocities is well known. We should keep this law that we passed last year in place as a way of pressuring the Haitian Government—and sending a signal to the Haitian population that the U.S. cares about justice, and that they themselves should demand it.

Any expressed commitment by the Haitian Government to judicial reform cannot be taken seriously without its cooperation in the identification, capture and prosecution of political murderers. That kind of commitment will give the judicial system the credibility it needs to be seen as a viable law enforcement agency for all Haitians.

Furthermore, currently the Haitian judicial system is a system in name only. Although the number of arrests has increased, those arrested are not being prosecuted. At this time, justice begins and ends with the police. If this does not change, we can only imagine the negative impact this will have on police morale. All our efforts to reform the police could end up, in the long run, being in vain. Mr. President, without judicial reform, we cannot expect Haitian society—its government, its economy—to move forward. On the contrary, it will move backward.

Since the Minister of Justice currently is not committed to reform, the U.S. Government has found ways to work around the Ministry by mentoring judges, for example. I was extremely impressed by our Department of Justice representative in Haiti who is helping train judges and prosecutors. He has found ways to work around the

Ministry to start instituting positive change in that system.

But we cannot make serious long-term progress until the Haitian Government—starting with the Minister of Justice—agrees to reform. Working around the Minister of Justice can only go so far. Serious judicial reform in Haiti begins with a commitment from the government's leaders. Therefore, I recommend the following:

First, the United States, along with the international donors, must urge President Preval to appoint a new Minister of Justice who will demonstrate a commitment to work with the international donor community to together help create meaningful reforms in the judiciary.

Second, the United States and the other international donors must get from the Haitian Government a serious commitment to reform the entire judicial system. Amazingly, the list of official priorities the Haitian Government has presented to the U.S. Government does not include judicial reform! Unless that changes, I suggest we reconsider any continued U.S. assistance for judicial reform. Without such a commitment, I am concerned that any money we send will simply be wasted.

A true commitment by the Haitian Government to reform the entire judiciary system must include action on the following basic elements:

An independent judiciary;
New legislative laws regarding the judiciary, including a judicial career system, and reform of the penal codes;
Increased budget for the national and local judiciary system; and

Establishment of an appropriate career and salary structure for the judiciary system, including salary increases for committed prosecutors and judges; and creation of a functioning disciplinary body to oversee the entire judiciary, such as an inspector general's office within the Ministry of Justice.

We must make clear that we stand ready to assist the Haitian Government if they are serious about taking the actions I have just described. We must make clear what that assistance would amount to. This year, we provided \$11 million for judicial reform. In next year's budget request, the Clinton administration has proposed to reduce the judicial reform program from \$11 million to \$7 million and grant an additional \$4 million (which together would equal \$11 million) for human rights initiatives. Now, there are some who will argue that human rights is part of a judicial reform. While providing assistance to those who have suffered human rights abuses is a commendable effort, it should not and cannot replace an effort to reform the system that encourages these abuses.

If the Haitian Government agrees to invest in judicial reform, we should at least maintain our current annual investment in judicial reform—the \$11 million figure—and we should increase it if possible. After all, the level of our investment should reflect the degree of

importance we place on this kind of reform.

However, if the Haitian Government does not express and demonstrate a true political will to do these basic reforms, then the United States must reconsider its assistance in this area.

Thus, Mr. President, we should set aside the same level of funding for judicial reform in this year's budget. But we must make it clear this money will not be spent, cannot be spent, until we have a commitment, a demonstrated commitment in action, from the Haitian Government to achieve these important benchmarks.

Mr. President, before I conclude this section, let me tell my colleagues a quick story about the benefits of judicial reform in another country. During our recent visit to Haiti, we also visited the Dominican Republic where we focused on their efforts to reform the judicial system. Speaking with the President of the Dominican Republic, I got a sense of the Government's true commitment to the judicial reform process. When I asked the President what finally got the process underway, he said that first there had to be political will. Aside from that, the people must also want, if not demand, it.

A well-known writer, Orlando Martinez, was murdered several years ago in the Dominican Republic. At the time, no one attempted to take on the case. No one would. The reason was that no one had trust or faith in the judicial system. Well, one courageous judge in early 1996 decided to take on that case. He made the case a priority and through the process did something unprecedented. He had a number of military officials arrested and successfully prosecuted and sentenced.

Mr. President, to make a long story short, the prosecution of the individuals involved in this murder was a turning point in moving forward with judicial reform in that country.

The case got tremendous media coverage, and the society was never the same—the Dominican Republic was not the same. Soon after the civil society started demanding important judicial reforms, the business community started demanding important judicial reforms. They felt invigorated by the prosecution of this one, but highly important, case. It gave them faith in the system.

Mr. President, as I mentioned earlier, there have been a number of unsolved political murder cases in Haiti. The murder case in the Dominican Republic serves as an important example of an important transformation that took place in that society. We saw a similar scenario in El Salvador in the 1980s when high-profile murders were investigated and those responsible were successfully prosecuted and sentenced. That was something new in El Salvador and had an unbelievable effect on the society. Specifically, in El Salvador, high-ranking military officers were sentenced for the killing of Jesuit priests. The solving of even one politi-

cal murder—the solving of even one political murder—in Haiti would do wonders to send a powerful signal about justice and the rule of law in that troubled country.

Mr. President, let me now turn to another topic in regard to Haiti that is extremely troubling, and that is the drug situation.

The need for a stronger judiciary, Mr. President, and a professional police force becomes readily apparent if you examine Haiti's situation with regard to drugs. When it comes to the matter of illegal narcotics, I must report to the Senate that the situation in Haiti is grave and even approaching a crisis. Because of Haiti's weak political and economic condition, this country is becoming increasingly attractive to international drug traffickers. The United States must pay close attention to this growing concern, for there is a threat that Haiti could turn into a full-fledged narcostate. That means, and would mean, more and more illegal drugs coming through Haiti into our country.

For that reason, the Clinton administration must direct more Drug Enforcement Administration and Coast Guard personnel to Haiti to better combat the drug problem within the country and better control the drug trafficking in international waters surrounding Haiti. We should also incrementally increase our counter-narcotics assistance to Haitian Government agencies responsible for counter-narcotics in terms of training, as they become more efficient and professional.

According to a U.S. Government interagency assessment on cocaine movement, in 1996, between 5 and 8 percent of the cocaine coming into the United States passed through the country of Haiti. By the third quarter of 1997, the percentage jumped to 12 percent and increased to 19 percent by the end of that year. One of the reasons cited for the increase is the enhanced law enforcement effort that is being made in Puerto Rico, which has caused traffickers to move operations from there to Haiti.

Responding to this trend, the Clinton administration added Haiti to the list of countries requiring annual certification in 1995, and though it has been certified as cooperative in the war on drugs each year since, the problem appears to be getting worse.

Mr. President, most people are aware that most of the cocaine coming into our country is grown and processed in Colombia, but the transit routes are always changing. The drug traffickers continue to move them. As indicated on this map, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico are all located approximately halfway between Colombia and the United States.

Drug interdiction efforts have increased to combat direct shipment of drugs from Colombia to Puerto Rico, forcing opportunistic drug lords to seek alternative routes. Thus Haiti, a mere 15 hours from Colombia by speed-

boat, seems a perfect candidate, a mere overnight passage in a boat. Because commercial shipments from Haiti to the United States are scarce, illegal drugs are transported from Colombia into Haiti and across Haiti into the Dominican Republic and then the short distance to Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico is only about 75 miles away at its closest point to the Dominican Republic. These drugs go into Puerto Rico disguised as legitimate commercial shipments. Once they are in Puerto Rico, they are virtually home free into the United States.

Drug traffickers realize that once the drugs land in Puerto Rico, they are virtually home free because of the special status of Puerto Rico as a U.S. Commonwealth. That is the route. And it is increasing every single day, the transshipment through Haiti.

Apart from the strategic location, Haiti has become increasingly attractive to international traffickers because drug interdiction efforts are minimal in that country. Haitian law enforcement authorities present no threat to the drug traffickers. The Haitian Coast Guard consists of only a few boats, and it is simply outnumbered and outgunned by the Colombian professional drug lords.

The Haitian Coast Guard has had, with our help, a few successes. With the assistance of the United States, in 1998 Haitian authorities have seized 1,000 pounds of cocaine, 500 pounds of marijuana, and 25 pounds of hashish oil. But serious problems remain that when Haitian law enforcement succeeds and actually makes a seizure, Haiti's slow and ineffective criminal justice system does not act as a serious deterrent.

In addition, the fledgling Haitian National Police has only 24 agents devoted to the drug problem—24. Granted, this counternarcotics unit was just established last year. I am told there are plans to slowly increase the number of personnel. There is apparently a leadership problem within the unit. Hence, more training is absolutely essential.

Sadly, some evidence also exists that those responsible for upholding the law in Haiti are themselves part of the problem. Last year, the Haitian Government arrested 21 of its own policemen on narcocorruption charges.

Money laundering appears to be on the rise as well. Until several years ago, only a handful of banks existed in Haiti at all. That number is said to have more than doubled, or even tripled, in the last few years.

The transit of drugs in Haiti represents a serious threat to an already fragile democracy. The United States should pay close attention to this growing concern—for there is a threat that Haiti could turn into a full-fledged narcostate, completely controlled by the drug lords with institutionalized power. If Haiti's current political vacuum is filled by these drug cartels, it will then be too late. We simply must not allow that to happen.

The Clinton administration's budget for next year in regard to drugs calls for \$166 million for international narcotics and law enforcement affairs for all of Latin America and the Caribbean. Of that \$166 million, no assistance is earmarked specifically for Haiti. Rather, any assistance for Haiti comes from a general fund. Through this general fund, Mr. President, Haiti is expected to get a meager \$400,000, up from an estimated \$300,000 in 1998—this despite the fact that a country like Jamaica has a requested earmark at \$800,000 and the Bahamas have an earmark of \$1 million.

I believe the President's proposed budget would not do very much to stem the tide of drugs flowing through Haiti. A better effort to seize these shipments simply must be made. That means, of course, more investment in training the Haitian Coast Guard. We are doing some of that, Mr. President. It means, further, the Haitian police counternarcotics units must be professionalized.

It also means a U.S. law enforcement presence in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. When I visited Haiti 2 weeks ago, there was one DEA agent in all of Haiti—one. I was told at the time that two more were on the way. Next door, in the Dominican Republic, when I visited the Dominican Republic, I found they have one permanent and one temporary DEA agent. That is three for the entire island. This is a very small presence considering the fact that Congress has authorized over 100 DEA agents for the Caribbean alone. I was disappointed to find the lack of serious counternarcotics plans for both of these countries. We do not have a plan. I recommended that we do more.

I must say that I had the opportunity late yesterday afternoon to talk on the phone to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright about this issue. She informed me and assured me yesterday when I talked about this that shortly the United States will be beefing up its DEA presence, the number of DEA agents in both Haiti and in the Dominican Republic. I applaud that. We need to do it, and we need to do it immediately.

Let me make today my specific recommendations in regard to this area. One, we have to increase our DEA presence in Haiti. One is not enough. Two, we must increase Coast Guard personnel and boats in international waters around Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Three, we must slowly increase our counternarcotics assistance resources for Haiti. The Clinton administration's proposed fiscal year 1999 budget would provide foreign aid to Haiti in a total aggregate of over \$182 million. That is the proposal. Yet the proposed budget by the Clinton administration only provides \$400,000 in counternarcotics assistance. Clearly, we have to do more.

When we consider the top priorities in U.S. policy toward Haiti, counternarcotics matters should be clearly at

or near the top of the list. Having said that, it is important to note that just giving more money to the weak and inefficient Haiti National Police counternarcotics unit and to the Haitian Coast Guard won't solve the problem. It won't solve the problem, because these institutions are weak, and because they are weak, we first need to focus on training. As these institutions slowly become more professional and efficient, we must incrementally, then, increase our counternarcotics assistance to them.

Let me turn now to probably the most serious problem that Haiti faces. That is the political impasse which has plagued this country for 10 months. The political impasse means there is virtually no Government in existence. A political impasse stops any kind of progress that this country might see. When we look at the challenges I have already described in regard to Haiti, challenges of social stability, law enforcement, and drug trafficking, all of these are symptomatic of a larger problem. The larger problem is the political paralysis that exists within the Haitian Government itself.

Since the Prime Minister resigned from office last June, there has not been a functioning Government. Charges of election fraud in the April 1997 election still remain unresolved, halting any real democratic and economic progress. In conjunction with the international community, the United States must pressure the Haitian Government to, one, resolve the current crisis; and, two, allow for greater international administration and monitoring of the upcoming elections.

Mr. President, almost 10 months ago, then Prime Minister of Haiti, Prime Minister Rosny Smarth, stepped down from his position due to his frustration with the Government's inability to resolve an electoral dispute and implement his economic modernization plan. Since then, a Prime Minister has not been confirmed by the Parliament. The Prime Minister is designed and designated as the Chief Executive of the Government. He appoints the Cabinet and basically runs the Government. Without a Prime Minister, the country simply cannot function.

The current political impasse stems from pervasive fraud and improper vote tabulation in the April 6, 1997, elections. Not only have the opposition of the parties demanded that the April 1997 elections be annulled, the international community, including the United Nations, has deemed the elections—which produced only a meager 5 percent turn out—fraudulent. The political parties, led by OPL, insist they will not move forward on a Prime Minister candidate until the issues surrounding the 1997 April elections are finally resolved.

This paralysis in Government is being felt everywhere. Economic reform efforts have stalled, the legislature has not passed a budget, it has not

enacted structural reforms needed to free up over \$100 million in foreign assistance, nor has it approved loans for millions of technical assistance.

The lack of a Government has halted the process of privatization and made it difficult to implement civil downsizing. Finally, it has discouraged potential investors who could play a key role in economic development and in improving Haiti's image. Regardless of the countless visits to Haiti in the last year alone by very senior U.S. Government administration officials, up to and including Secretary Albright's visit this weekend, there has not been a real movement toward a solution to this crisis.

One thing that is clear to me after my recent visit is that the United States cannot do for Haiti what it will not do for itself. The Haitians first have to realize the need to solve their political crisis. They have not yet hit rock bottom, and maybe that is what it will take to create the political will to move forward. Unfortunately, I do not yet see the requisite political will and determination in Haiti.

What complicates matters even more is that there are upcoming national and municipal elections slated for November of 1998 in Haiti. Hundreds of seats are up, including the entire lower Chamber, up to two-thirds of the Senate, and all municipal seats. The problem is, there hasn't been a resolution to the irregularities surrounding the previous election, and as the clock continues to tick, we are getting closer and closer to even more elections, including the Presidential election scheduled for the year 2000.

During my visit, the Haitian political parties made very clear the importance of this November's election. So far, however, the international community has not developed a united or current strategy for this crucial election. I recommended that the administration—our administration—work with the international community to take the following measures:

One, we must pressure the Haitian Government to allow the international community to take a lead role in the upcoming election; two, we must insist on the establishment of a credible, non-partisan, competent electoral commission to oversee that crucial election; three, we must insist there be a fair, equitable, and transparent resolution to the numerous controversies resulting from the 1997 electoral fraud; four, we must urge the Haitian Government to reform the electoral and political party laws to level the playing field; five, we must insist on attention to several important technical matters, such as the voter registration list, voter cards, access to state media, and access to state financial resources as stipulated in the Constitution and in the electoral law; six, we must ensure that the police do not become politicized, favoring certain factions or parties at the expense of others; seven, we

must encourage a visit by a high-visibility delegation of notable world leaders to go to Haiti and observe the election. This kind of high visibility would help force the Haitian Government to agree to fair and transparent standards for the election. And, finally, we must provide funding for the International Republican Institute and the National Democratic Institute to continue their political-party-building programs in Haiti.

If the current election impasse is broken, the IRI and NDI will need money to help support the crucial institutional election programs that make for open, democratic elections. Unfortunately, several political parties made it clear to me during my visit that they viewed the U.S. Government as strictly aligned with the ruling party of Preval and Aristide, that they are not getting the attention they deserve regarding a resolution to the current crisis. I strongly believe that if we are going to help establish a true democracy in Haiti, we need to stress the importance of political party pluralism in that country.

Mr. President, in light of these benchmarks, I strongly urge that no U.S. assistance should be used to underwrite the November elections until and unless a settlement of the impasse of the April 6, 1997, elections is reached—and until a fair and independent electoral council is established in accordance with the Haitian Constitution.

Since 1995, Mr. President, the United States has provided almost \$17 million for elections in Haiti. Strangely, of \$182 million requested for fiscal year 1999, the Clinton administration has only asked for \$900,000 for these upcoming elections. My first reaction to this is that this specific assistance request is simply not enough for this important election. But before we consider ways to sustain and consolidate democracy in Haiti, by building infrastructures and institutions, it is essential to have the first true element of any democracy; that is, the ability to have free and fair elections. Our administration should make the upcoming election a priority and work with the international community to pressure the Haitian Government to have a fair and transparent election.

Having said that, Mr. President, if the Haitian Government is not willing to make the election a priority and agree to these simple and obvious benchmarks, then there is no use for the United States to administer this kind of assistance for any future election. The money would simply be wasted. We must have a commitment first. We need to know the Haitian Government is serious before we agree to get involved in the election. Our administration should coordinate with other international donors to develop a common front based on agreement to this basic principle.

Let me turn to Haiti's economy. Haiti is an impoverished country that

simply cannot afford further political shenanigans.

The Haitian economy has experienced dismal growth while experiencing some growth in the underground market—primarily, contraband and drugs. Private investment is absolutely critical if Haiti is going to create new jobs and put an end to the cycle of poverty. Several key things the United States should pursue include: 1, extending trade preferences to the CBI beneficiary countries under the Caribbean Basin Trade Enhancement Act; 2, we should urge the Haitian Government to begin implementation of its long-delayed plan to reduce the civil service; 3, we should urge the Haitian Government to move forward with privatization efforts; 4, we should find ways to empower the chamber of commerce communities in Haiti, particularly those interested in economic development. We must empower these chamber communities; they have a tremendous potential.

Mr. President, last year the Haitian economy experienced tepid growth of only 1.1 percent in the formal sector—down from 2.7 percent in 1996. The informal, or nontaxed, sector experienced slightly higher growth of 2.2 percent. It is important to note here that this growth is largely due to the tremendous amount of foreign assistance provided by the international donor community. The reality of the Haitian economy today is that but for the donor contributions to the economy, the economy would have negative growth during the last several years.

This slow growth is causing problems for the Government, through increased tax revenues—and the failure to meet Haitians' expectation that Haiti would begin a period of sustained economic growth and job creation in a country with chronically high unemployment and underemployment. While economic growth is slow or nonexistent, it is well known in Haiti that the underground market—primarily contraband and drugs—is on the rise.

The Preval administration in Haiti is faced with a difficult fiscal situation, compounded by the lack of a fiscal year 1998 budget, suspension of international donor disbursement, and an inability to significantly cut spending.

The Government has trouble cutting spending because the bulk of Government funds go to pay the large civil service. Other factors include the Central Bank's financing of deficit spending, which has increased significantly in the first quarter of this year, and that is a very scary thought, Mr. President. Further, preliminary Government statistics indicate that tax revenues have dropped during the first quarter of this fiscal year, largely because of a strike in the tax office.

The Government of Haiti is moving to implement a cash management program that would limit spending to expenditures. But President Preval will face difficulty putting such a program in place, never mind sustaining it, if

Government workers press for wage hikes to keep up with inflation. Inflation was roughly 17 percent last year. Price hikes for basic foodstuffs will further impoverish more Haitians and could spark demonstrations against the Preval government in the coming months.

Now let me turn to the important issue of privatization.

Though at an extremely low pace, the Government of Haiti has completed the privatization of the country's flour mill, and the privatization of the cement mill will be completed as soon as the new Prime Minister is approved by the Senate. Three other high-priority privatization projects are said to be on track to begin the bidding process later this year—the airport, the seaport, and the telephone company.

Resources have been made available by the international community to ensure that the bidding process is open and transparent and fair to prospective purchasers. During my recent visit, both U.S. and Haitian officials acknowledged the difficulty that can be expected in privatizing these three projects. The main reason that they will have difficulty, of course, is that these state-owned enterprises, particularly the seaport, are a source of revenue for the Government of Haiti. Furthermore, former Government cronies are allegedly involved in the telephone company. The U.S. Government needs to continue pressuring the Haitians to privatize these facilities.

But budget balancing and privatization are just the beginning. Private investment is absolutely crucial if Haiti is going to create new jobs and end the cycle of poverty. To attract new investments, I propose the following specific steps:

One, the United States should extend trade preferences to the CBI beneficiary nations under the Caribbean Basin Trade Enhancement Act. This would tell investors the United States is prepared to help Haiti and other island nations diversify their economies through special tariff breaks.

Two, the Clinton administration should develop a new loan guarantee initiative for Haiti through the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. These loan guarantees would help make small to medium-sized loans available, \$10,000 to \$100,000, to businesses that are prepared to move to Haiti and start new enterprises. Each job in the assembly sector supports at least another 7 to 10 Haitians and also creates secondary spinoff jobs.

Three, we must urge the Haitian government to move forward with the privatization of the remaining state owned enterprises;

Four, we must urge the Government of Haiti to begin immediate implementation of its long-delayed plan to reduce the size of the Haitian civil service. The necessary Haitian laws have been passed to begin this process. Unfortunately, however, the Civil Service

Reform Act, which mandates the reduction in the civil service, has a sunset provision which expires this fall. The U.S. Government and the international community need to pressure the Haitian government to implement this important law. Further, \$20 million in international assistance is available to underwrite this program. Implementation of this program would be a tangible signal to investors that the Haitian Government wants to work more efficiently.

Five, we must work with the FAA and Department of Transportation to improve airport facilities and ensure that the airport meets all international safety standards. The airport is a vital access point for tourists and promotes the free flow of Haitians to and from the country. These Haitians help the economy with their remittances, and provide a healthy dialogue with on-island Haitians about the benefits of democracy. The FAA has a number of current concerns about the airport, and is currently addressing them. We must ensure that the airport is operated efficiently and safely, because it is the principal entry and exit point for Haiti.

Sixth, work with the government to ensure the privatization of the sea port. Mr. President, the sea port is plagued with inefficiency and corruption. It is certainly the most expensive port in this hemisphere to ship into or out of. The port must be privatized and modernized for better efficiency and productivity. I also recommend that the Clinton Administration urge the Haitian government to privatize other ports in Haiti as well.

Seven, find ways to empower the Chamber of Commerce communities in Haiti, particularly in the secondary cities. The Chamber of Commerce in Cap Haitien, for example, is energized—and is working with the local mayor and government to further develop the city. Mr. President, compared to Port-au-Prince, Cap Haitien almost felt like a different country. It's the attitude that was different. For instance, the business community is eagerly seeking foreign investors, and in fact have already been able to secure some investment. Currently, there are two cruise lines which occasionally visit Cap Haitien. The Haitians on the street welcomed us. I remember one elderly woman who came up to our delegation and said: "God bless you. I am so happy you are here. You give us hope." They want tourists. They want people to come in. Findings ways to work with and encourage Haitians in areas such as Cap Haitien, where their willingness is more visible than in Port au Prince, is something we should pursue.

AGRICULTURE

Mr. President, let me now turn to one particular economic sector that is especially crucial to Haiti's future, and that is agriculture.

Amazingly, tragically Haiti imports two thirds of its food. Every day, thousands of Haitians leave rural areas

where they are unable to provide for themselves and flood into the cities which are unable to sustain the population pressures. Right now, approximately 20 percent of Haiti's population lives in Port au Prince. The rest live in secondary cities and the countryside. If this trend continues unchecked, Haiti will not be able to alleviate poverty and starvation. In the long run, agricultural and rural development is critical to the goal of Haiti providing jobs, income and food for its population.

Agriculture production is extremely low for many reasons.

Topsoil has eroded because most of the trees are harvested for charcoal—the major source of Haitian fuel.

Technical skills are lacking—skills as basic as soil conservation techniques, tree planting, and caring for animals.

Basic technology is lacking—including soil and water conservation techniques, tree grafting for higher quality products, crop improvement and improving the genetic base of crops.

Rural infrastructure is deficient. Farmers do not have access to capital or credit, and little access to seeds, saplings and fertilizers.

Delivery mechanisms, including market access and techniques are inadequate and need to be developed.

During my visit, I was encouraged by the U.S. Agency for International Development's Productive Land Use System Program or PLUS Program. To increase output, PLUS works directly with farmers to improve techniques in the fields. These activities are undertaken in collaboration with Haitian farmers. The program deals with the environmental problem through the farmers' own self-interest. This kind of assistance is what works best. This partnership has been a success for local Haitian farmers and should be continued.

In addition, I believe Haiti's strategies for development should focus on the preservation and reclamation of the natural resource base. Linking production and income generation with resource conservation and management activities is being done by field teams that reach farmers through the grass roots. This is similar to our own very successful cooperative extension program in the U.S. We do it better than anybody else. We are now trying to export it and are exporting it to Haiti. This is a good example of something that should be expanded throughout Haiti.

To further develop the rural and agricultural sectors of Haiti, attention needs to be given to a decentralized development strategy. I believe that continued focus on nongovernmental organizations is appropriate. I believe that we should be promoting regional development and that associations linking private sector interests with local government need to be established. One way to do this is to link our own successful foundations and institutions of higher education such as Ohio State

University together with local Haitian interested in pursuing this goal.

The Haitian farmers I met understood that the sound environmental practices and productive agricultural and marketing techniques led to an improved standard of living. If we can help them expand these techniques, they can make the staying in the rural areas more attractive and stem the current tide of urban migration.

AID has also been working to help establish marketing cooperatives. One such cooperative is Servi Coop. which has allowed some Haitian cocoa farmers to have a new market for their goods. Historically, Haitian farm prices have been kept down because farmers have only had one ultimate export source to sell their products to. This AID program is attempting to change that and to create competition. When they have competition, they bid up the price and Haitian farmers have already begun to see in certain areas that type of improvement in their prices.

U.S. TROOPS

Let me talk about the 475 that we have currently stationed in Haiti. Their mission is twofold. First, to provide a visible presence for stabilization. Second, to receive real-life training for readiness—training that can prove extremely beneficial in wartime.

Through humanitarian and civil operations, our troops have built infrastructure and have medically treated thousands of Haitians. Their presence has had a positive impact in Haiti. Their presence, their mission, should continue.

While in Haiti last week, I had the opportunity to visit with our troops. As I said, there are currently 475 of them—down from approximately 2,000 troops in 1996. This year's troop levels will likely range between 475 and 600 on any given day, depending on the number of military personnel at any given time temporarily deployed to Haiti to perform the various humanitarian and civic operations.

Our troops engage in a variety of operations. Just in the last two years, U.S. troops have built or restored approximately 13 miles of roads, repaired or renovated 36 schools, dug 23 wells, and restored a University Hospital. They have treated over 50,000 Haitians and have trained over 200 Haitian health care providers.

The goals for our troop this year include: continued humanitarian and civic operations, such as medical and infrastructure building; and port call visits. One new project our military will undertake is building a maritime operation center in Jacmel to be used by the Haitian Coast Guard. Because of Jacmel's strategic location as a potential drug transit area, this facility will be very helpful for counter-narcotics operations. By the end of this fiscal year, U.S. troops will have renovated or built two other schools, distributed over a million dollars in medical supplies, and treated over 18,000 Haitians.

Our military presence there has had a profound and positive impact. Our troops repeatedly told me, as I talked to them, that they feel useful and generally feel safe. While significant violence is still taking place among Haitians, the U.S. troops that I talked to told me the Haitians understand their presence and, by and large, welcome them there.

Further, the military officers that I talked to, our men and women, told me they have generally found no substantiated evidence of targeting of U.S. forces in Haiti. The vigilantes—those who take justice into their own hands and engage in serious violence through gangs—have apparently not targeted U.S. forces.

Because the conditions in Haiti are so bad, our troops say that the humanitarian and civic work they do is having a tremendous impact, both on Haiti and on their own training. I was told a story by a U.S. military nurse in Haiti who recently treated a child who had conjunctivitis. The little girl was close to losing her eyesight. If it had remained untreated for 2 weeks, the doctors told me, she would have lost her eyesight. The nurse in this case, U.S. military nurse, treated this little girl with eyedrops which saved the girl's vision. The American nurse told us: "I feel useful every day. I feel like I'm doing something."

She is not alone. Thousands and thousands of U.S. citizens travel every year to Haiti to provide humanitarian assistance. When I arrived in Haiti 2 weeks ago, the morning I arrived our troops informed me that several of their key personnel were at that very moment involved in a medical emergency involving U.S. citizens. Three U.S. missionaries had just been in a very serious car accident. A U.S. civilian policeman overheard reports of the accident on his two-way radio and was able to get a helicopter to pick up the individuals and transport them to a medical facility at the American base.

As I arrived that morning at the base, I saw one of the individuals literally being carried into an ambulance to be taken to the operating table. An hour later, during lunch that day, a soldier from Ohio, with whom I was eating lunch, told me he had helped treat the Americans, these American missionaries. He gave me an update on their condition. It was abundantly clear that our troops had saved the lives of these missionaries. This limited U.S. military presence is having a profound positive effect. If we maintain this limited mission then, in my view, our troops' presence should continue for the time being.

The best news in Haiti, though—in addition to our troops who are there and the great work they are doing—the other good news in Haiti comes from the good works of thousands of individuals who are working to make a difference in the daily lives of Haitians. I met many innovative Haitians who were passionate about improving life in

Haiti. They are not part of the Government, they are private citizens. And they have been joined by people from around the world who work in every aspect of society. They help the poor, the orphaned, the starving, the elderly, and the sick. It has been an inspiration to visit these people on my trips to Haiti and to visit their projects.

Let me just talk about a couple. In 1980, Dr. Guy Theodore, a retired U.S. Air Force colonel, founded a health clinic in Pignon to serve a poor rural Haitian community. Through Dr. Theodore's leadership, hard work, and his determination, the clinic has now one of Haiti's most successful comprehensive help and development programs. The hospital serves 150,000 people and provides health services, women's literacy programs, credit programs, an innovative water and sanitation program, and environmental and community development programs.

It was here when we were traveling out in the country that we happened to meet a group of doctors from Fargo, ND. The eight men and women who traveled there traveled at their own expense. They raised \$20,000—enough money to send them and their equipment to Haiti for a week of surgery and medical work. They were giving their time to make a difference to many suffering people.

In Cap Haitien, we met three nurses from Georgia who were working through Emory University. They told me about the work they were doing, training local people about basic health and sanitation, and they encouraged me to urge other American universities to consider cooperative ventures to train more Haitians in these important works. One nurse whom I talked to had been coming to Haiti and working in Haiti for 17 years.

On a previous trip, in the town of Les Cayes, we met Father William Konicki, who gave us a tour of his home for the elderly. People who had nowhere to sleep, nothing to eat, people who were sick and disabled, they all found a place to live and be safe with Father Konicki. Without Father Konicki's tremendous efforts to make something out of nothing, these elderly people would have starved to death.

Some of the most difficult stories have to do with Haiti's orphans. Because of extreme poverty, high premature death rates among adults, parents, and AIDS, thousands of Haiti's children have been orphaned or abandoned. Many end up in places that provide no more than shelter. The children come malnourished and diseased. Often the only food these children eat comes from the U.S. Public Law 480 title II feeding program. Last year, the administration announced a plan to phase out the part of this program that served orphans, the elderly, and individuals with AIDS.

Through legislation, I worked closely with appropriators in Congress to secure funding for fiscal year 1998 at the same level as fiscal year 1997. I will

continue to fight for this money for these children. It is the only food many of them have. If this money is not approved, we will literally be taking away the only food these children have to eat.

These are pictures of the food ration that our Public Law 480 actually provides. This may not look too appetizing to us in the United States, but this is a meal that provides these children—they get one meal a day—it provides them with a well balanced, nourishing meal. It allows them to be healthier, frankly, than most children are in Haiti. That is what that Public Law 480 funds provide. There are tens of thousands of children like this in Haiti.

There are many caring adults who run the orphanages I have referred to. Mr. President, 67-year-old Sister Veronique, a Haitian-born nun whom I have gotten to know and my wife has gotten to know over the last few years, picks up abandoned babies from the hospital every time that she has an open bed. These are children who are about ready to die. Many times they are not true orphans, they are brought into the hospital when people are so poor they bring the children in—they try to keep them at home, but then when they know they are about ready to die or think they cannot keep them any longer or they will die, they bring them into the hospital. What Sister Veronique does is, she goes to the hospital every time she has an open bed, she picks up another baby, and takes that baby back to her orphanage and tries to keep that baby alive. There are many, many success stories. Many of these children do, in fact, make it because of what Sister Veronique does.

Another nun, Sister McGonagle, from San Diego, spends 6 months of every year raising moneys for the Kenscoff Orphanage, where she works the rest of the year. Father Stra, from Italy, a Salesian priest, provides shelter for homeless boys and training programs for street children. We also met an American couple who bring Haitian orphans into their own home in Port au Prince, hoping to find permanent homes for these children later in the United States.

I am pleased that our United States Agency for International Development mission in Haiti is working to develop a local association of people to advocate for children and serve as a network for orphanages, so as to be able to share ideas and resources. This is an important idea and one that we should encourage and continue.

Let me say that after five visits to Haiti, I can assure my colleagues in the Congress that we have, working for the U.S. Government, a number of very dedicated people in AID, a number of very dedicated and talented people at our Embassy as well.

In conclusion, we should be clear. Haiti's democracy is not stable; it is in its infancy. As Americans, we find it hard to imagine a country that is not even able to hold elections. But the

electoral fraud over Haiti's national and municipal elections last April, that cloud over those elections in which only 5 percent of the population even bothered to cast ballots, has brought government there to a halt.

There has been a political impasse since last June, when President Rosny Smarth resigned. In fact, it seems that all the key players, the Haitian Government and the other parties, have decided not to resolve this crisis.

That is why this weekend's visit by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright is so critical. I understand she intends to meet with the two Lavalas parties, which I think is necessary. However, I am surprised to hear that she has no plans to meet with the other opposition parties. I think that is a mistake. It is critical that she meet with the other parties as well. This will encourage their participation in the next elections, and keep them involved in the national political dialogue and will send a signal to the current Government of Haiti of what true political pluralism really means.

Until this political impasse has been resolved, we should not be pledging any kind of financial support for future elections. Indeed, our Haiti policy must be something more than a blank check. Without specific measurable goals, monetary aid to Haiti is an unguided assistance program in search of a policy. It seems to me that we must export our ideas along with our aid. It will take more than just money to bring stability to Haiti; it will require a comprehensive plan and Haitian political will. Without these key elements, all the money in the world will not do any good in Haiti.

I think it is clear that the United States needs to work with the international community, develop a coherent and well-planned strategy, and together pressure the Haitian Government to first resolve the current political crisis. Furthermore, before Haiti can prosper—both democratically and economically—the government must address—and make a commitment to—three key factors: (1) hold free and transparent elections; (2) combat the increasing threat of drugs; and (3) reform the "broken" judiciary.

I have suggested that in these three key areas—which do not currently receive significant funding from the United States; it is a relatively small amount of money that we put in Haiti—that increased funding should be considered if certain benchmarks are met as I have outlined. Current budget request figures for these three areas do not exceed \$10 million, a relatively small part of the total Haitian commitment. These priority areas though are essential and our administration should pay close attention. We must pay close attention to whether the Haitians are willing to address these three specific problems: hold free and transparent elections; combat the increasing threat of drugs; and reform the broken judiciary. Unless they are ad-

ressed, it is very hard to see how any real democratic progress and economic development can possibly ever take hold in Haiti.

In two of these priority areas—political and judicial reform—we must find ways to work with the government. We have no choice. Simply, it will take political will by the Haitian Government to achieve any progress in these areas. Let me make it clear: The United States cannot and should not make an investment in these areas without a clear commitment from the Haitian Government.

As I mentioned before, we can't do for the Haitians what they cannot and will not do for themselves. The political will must exist.

However, Mr. President, there are areas where we can't stand by and wait for the Haitian Government to act. There are ways that the United States can work around the government to provide a semblance of hope for the Haitian people and some stability to that country. These areas include agriculture reform, feeding programs, and other areas of humanitarian support. With respect to drugs, here, too, we cannot wait—we must take action now to reduce the flow of drugs through Haiti. It is in our national self-interest. If we do not do that, we risk the entire nation turning into a narco-state with tragic consequences not only for Haiti but for the United States. No doubt, long-term drug control will require greater cooperation with the Haitian Government, but our Government should devote its resources now to respond to the current threat.

I look forward to working with my colleagues both in the Congress and in the administration to address these priorities, and help create a strategic long-term vision for our policy toward Haiti.

Mr. President, before I yield the floor, I thank you personally for your forbearance this morning and this afternoon. I appreciate it very, very much.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DEWINE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may proceed in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS AND UNIVERSAL SERVICE

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I want to talk today about a subject called universal service, and the threat it faces because of the Federal Commu-

nication Commission's—the FCC's—policy regarding Internet service providers. When we passed the Telecommunications Act of 1996, a number of us—a bipartisan group called the Farm Team—fought hard to include Section 254, the section that ensures our nation's continued commitment to universal service. This section is the heart and soul of this new law, because without this fundamental commitment, telecommunications service in rural areas would not be affordable. Without it, we will watch a new world of haves and have-nots when it comes to telecommunications and access to the Information Age.

When I deal with this issue, I am painfully reminded of another example of deregulation: the airlines. West Virginia and other rural states got the short end of the stick on airline deregulation, and we continue to pay the price for it. That's what made me and others so determined not to let this happen under the Telecommunications Act. We knew we had to make sure that the idea of universal service was not simply expressed as a goal or listed in some weak section—we made sure it was a statutory obligation explicitly stated in the Act.

Maintaining universal service involves a number of issues. Senator STEVENS took on most of these by demanding a major report from the FCC on their progress regarding universal service, in a provision in last year's appropriations bill that funded the FCC. That report is due April 10, and many of us are looking for serious answers from the FCC to the many questions we have about the direction they are heading with regard to universal service funding.

Two big concerns are, (1) the FCC's ill-advised decision to provide only 25 percent of the costs of universal service, leaving the remaining 75 percent to the states; and (2) their decision to only fund the FCC's portion of the high-cost fund from interstate revenues. I do not believe that rural states can live with either of these proposals, because what we'll get are higher rates and dwindling investment in our local telecommunications networks. This simply does not square with the Act's promise of delivering comparable services at comparable rates. Section 254 was designed to ensure a national standard of affordability for telecommunications services, and that is a standard we simply must live up to.

In the 1996 law, we recognized that the maintenance of the nation's telecommunications network is a shared responsibility—and one that provides shared benefits. It is in our national interest that everyone be able to affordably make calls from anywhere and to anywhere in the United States.

This isn't a radical concept. As a nation we share responsibility in many areas. My colleague Senator DORGAN points out that land-locked states like West Virginia, North Dakota and Montana all help pay for the Coast Guard,