

Diplomacy By Death Squad,

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On Dec. 14, 2004, in the predawn hours, a large convoy of U.N. troops entered the Port-au-Prince slum of Cite Soleil. They began firing. Esterlin Marie Carmelle was in bed with her 2-year-old son, Herlens. Her husband got out of bed to get ready for work. The shooting intensified, and she remained in bed beside her child. According to a Harvard Law School report the following occurred:

"Ms. Carmelle recalled, she 'felt something warm' on her arm and said to her husband, 'I feel like I got hit with a bullet.' She told us that she realized that 'it wasn't me who had been shot,' as her boy lay limp and lifeless beside her, his 'blood and brain matter were sliding down my arm.' Though Ms. Carmelle said that she then passed out, her husband told us that a stray bullet had entered their shack with such force that it had removed part of their child's head, leaving Herlens to die in his mother's arms."

When U.N. troops are not engaged in these kinds of incursions, they can usually be found providing support for the Haitian National Police as they execute peaceful demonstrators demanding the return of their democratically elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Just last week, five Haitians were killed by the Haitian National Police while U.N. troops stood by watching. The Haitians' crime was that they were peacefully demonstrating for the release of political prisoners in Haiti.

On Feb. 28, 2005, demonstrators met the same fate and were executed by the Haitian National Police while peacefully protesting. Amnesty International has also reported "incidents in which individuals dressed in black . . . and traveling in cars with Haitian National Police markings have cost the lives of at least 11 people."."

Just this week, Amnesty condemned the Haitian police for their "use of lethal and indiscriminate violence" to "disperse and repress demonstrators."

The Bush administration's response has been to place more weapons in the hands of these police. During Haiti's democratic administrations, the U.S. government imposed a full-scale arms embargo on nonlethal as well as lethal weapons to the Haitian Police. They could not even buy bullet-proof vests or tear gas to disperse crowds.

In November 2004, however, John Bolton, as under secretary for arms control in the Department of State, signed off on providing the current police, under a nondemocratic government, more than 3,635 M14 rifles, 1,100 Mini Galils, several thousand assorted 0.38-caliber pistols, 3,700 MP5s and approximately one million rounds of ammunition, according to the Small Arms Survey, an authoritative resource published by the Graduate Institute of

International Studies, located in Geneva.

It is no surprise that Bolton is at the center of this controversy as well. He has been one of the hard-liners in the State Department who sought the overthrow of Aristide and who bullied intelligence analysts on Haiti who were trying to provide a more-balanced picture. Even his cohort in overthrowing Aristide, Otto Reich, was quoted as stating that they both rightfully went after an intelligence analyst who gave the "benefit of the doubt" to Aristide as the democratically elected president.

Perhaps Bolton can explain to members of the Senate when they reconvene why he would place more weapons in the hands of thugs and murderers whose police work is composed largely of executing peaceful demonstrators who are demanding the return of democracy to Haiti.

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