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Guide to the

Force Armée d'Haïti documents

1964-1987 [bulk 1980-1987]

Sc MG 735

Processed by Martin Chocotte with assistance from Edwina Ashie-Nikoi, July 2014.

Summary

Title: Force Armée d'Haïti documents

Date: 1964-1987 [bulk 1980-1987]

Size: 2.5 linear feet (6 boxes)

Source: Purchase from Frantz Voltaire, November 2003.

Abstract: Force Armée d'Haïti (Fad'H) comprised all military branches of the Haitian armed forces, including the police, and played a central role in Haitian political life for most of the 20th century. This collection, also known as the Haitian Military collection, is chiefly comprised of reports, written in French, from various military and security organizations that constituted the Haitian Armed Forces.

Preferred citation: [Item], Force Armée d'Haïti documents, Sc MG 735, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: French Collection in French; no English translation available.

Processing note: Processed by Martin Chocotte with assistance from Edwina Ashie-Nikoi, July 2014.

Related Materials:

Duvalierist Government collection, Sc MG 733, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Book Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

Haitian Government documents, Sc MG 770, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Book Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

Creator History

Force Armée d'Haïti (Fad'H) comprised all military branches of the Haitian armed forces, including the police, and played a central role in Haitian political life for most of the 20th century. It evolved out of a professionalized constabulary force called gendarmerie created by American officials during the U.S.

occupation of Haiti (1915-1934). In 1928, it became the Garde d'Haiti, signaling its growth into a national institution, and was rechristened Fad'H in 1958 under the dictatorship of François Duvalier. The Fad'H exercised considerable control within the Haitian government, usually implicitly or overtly involved in the selection or removal of Haitian heads of state. President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, returning to power in 1995 after being ousted by the military in 1991, disbanded the FAd'H in an attempt to end the political instability caused by the Haitian military.

Scope and Content Note

This collection, also known as the Haitian Military Collection, is chiefly comprised of reports, written in French, from various military and security organizations that constituted the Haitian Armed Forces (Forces Armée d'Haïti, FAd'H). These include reports from military branches of the Haitian Air Force (Corps D'Aviation) and the Haitian Navy (La Marine Haïtienne); the specially trained small armed units of La Garde Présidentielle and Corps des Léopards; the police force that also fell under the central military command of the FAd'H; and the school of Académie Militaire d'Haïti and the military training institution of Camp d'Application. This collection also holds a few documents from the terrorizing militia called the Volontaires de la Sécurité Nationale (VSN), infamously known as Tonton Macoutes which, although not officially under the command of the FAd'H, was organizationally tied to the FAd'H because of shared interests in national security and intelligence.

Arrangement: Arranged into five series which reflect the spatial and structural organization of the FAd'H and the historical context that shaped the content of many reports : I. Military branches and institutions; II. Regional military districts; III. General Chief of Staff; IV. General files; and V. Conseil National de Gouvernement.

Key Terms

Geographic Names

Haiti -- Armed Forces
Haiti -- Armed Forces -- Political activity -- History -- 20th century
Haiti -- History -- 1934-1986
Haiti -- History -- 20th century
Haiti -- Military police
Haiti -- Politics and government -- 20th century
Haiti -- Social conditions
Haiti -- Social life and customs

Subjects

National security -- Haiti
Political crimes and offenses -- Haiti
Tontons macoutes

Names

Duvalier, Jean-Claude, 1951-2014
Namphy, Henri
Saint-Albin, Roger
Force armée d'Haïti

Container List

Military branches and institutions 1980-1985

This series includes reports from various military arms that either fell under the command of FAd'H or were associated with national security and intelligence. These reports touch on a number of concerns: the purchases of arms and equipment, list of monthly budgets and expenditures, forms requesting or authorizing military leave or for firearms permits, information on military tactics and formations, and a variety of forms related to the administrative functions of the FAd'H. The Military Academy folder includes lists of graduating cadets and examination results, while the Camp d'Application holds reports on military training including one describing the retraining of VSN/tonton makouts. This series also documents activities relating to the military and the Haitian population. The La Marine Haïtienne folder holds reports related to drug trafficking and Haitian migrant "clandestine voyages" to Miami. Also included in this series are reports of military ceremonies with a political agenda.

The FAd'H Police folders hold police reports spanning the period 1981-1985 and were usually addressed to or were written by the Commission d'Enquête Permanente (Investigation Committee or Palace Intelligence Agency), located in the courtyard of the prison of Casernes Dessalines where many Haitian political prisoners were tortured or executed. The notorious chief of police Albert "Tiboule" Pierre usually signed or wrote these police reports suggesting their perceived importance to national security. Many of the reports detail acts of public violence involving the FAd'H and the VSN/tonton makout, effects of natural disaster on the economy, and incidents of popular unrest such as 1984 food riots in the central region of Hinche. Additionally, there is a high volume of reports describing the repatriation of migrants interdicted by U.S. Coast Guards on the high seas, and other reports of popular unrest, which were probably the antecedents to the dechoukaj.

- b. 1 f. 1 Fad'h-Camp d'application 1980
- b. 1 f. 2 Cercle D'Airain Et De L'Intelligence 1980
- b. 1 f. 3 Corps des Volontaires de La Securite Nationale (U.S.N.) 1980
Corps des Leopards
- b. 1 f. 4 1980
- b. 1 f. 5 1982
- b. 1 f. 6 1983-1985
- b. 1 f. 7 Haitian Air Force (Corps D'Aviation) 1983-1984
Military documents
- b. 1 f. 8 Marine Haïtienne 1980-1985
- b. 1 f. 9 Military Academy 1980-1983
- b. 1 f. 10-11 Presidential Guard 1983-1984
Fad'H – Police
- b. 2 f. 1 1980
- b. 2 f. 2-3 1981
- b. 2 f. 4 1982-1984
- b. 2 f. 5 1984
- b. 2 f. 6 1984-1985

Regional military districts 1980-1985

This series contains reports originating from regional military outposts, districts, or sub-districts. Although Haiti is divided into nine administrative departments (Artibonite, Central, Grand'Anse, North, Northeast, Northwest, South, Southeast, and West [Ouest]), this series has consolidated the regional departments into two basic geographical classifications: Northern Military Districts (includes the departments of North, Northwest, and Northeast departments) and Southern Military Districts (includes the departments of Grand'Anse, South, Southeast, and, West). The Artibonite Department and Central Department folders were left out of this basic classification of files because of their geographic ambiguities: the Central Department is specifically located in the eastern central zone of the country and Artibonite is located in the western central zone. Moreover, the Artibonite Department folder encompasses valuable reports related to popular protests and food riots in the region that could have been forerunners to the dechoukaj in 1986. Also an exception to the series' organizational scheme is a folder titled Croix-des-Bouquets (in the department of West) which holds scores of reports related to a state-sponsored program in that region which provided sugar-cane workers to the sugar plantations in the Dominican Republic. In general, this series documents security activities, ceremonies throughout the country, popular protests, and some investigative reports.

- b. 3 f. 1 Artibonite Department 1981-1985
- b. 3 f. 2 Central Department 1982-1985
- Fad'H-Northern Military Districts
- b. 3 f. 3 1980-1982
- b. 3 f. 4 1983
- b. 3 f. 5 1984
- b. 3 f. 6 1984-1985
- Fad'H-(South) Croix des-Bouquets Districts
- b. 3 f. 7 1980
- b. 3 f. 8 1980-1982
- b. 3 f. 9 1983-1984
- b. 3 f. 10 1984-1985

General Chief of Staff 1981-1983

This series comprises reports usually signed or addressed to the serving chief of staff (Chef d'Etat-Major Général, CHEMG) who was the highest ranking military official after President Duvalier, Chef Suprême et Effectif des Forces Armées d'Haïti (equivalent to "Commander-in-Chief" in the context of U.S. executive powers). Two CHEMGs are represented: Roger Saint-Albain (who served in this role until 1984) and Henri Namphy (who served in this role until 1986). Although the series mostly relates to general administrative matters such as a list of invitees to the Cadet Commission Ceremony, it also holds documents related to international affairs including an invitation to the XIV Conference of American Armies, a letter to the U.S. College of InterAmerican Defense expressing Haiti's interest to enlist students, and a copy of a statement made by Israeli Major General Yehoshua Saguy. It also holds a few records of military investigations including several reports of a telephone fraud case involving a Haitian army officer named Patrick Desire and the U.S. military, and another report regarding a collaborative effort between the Haitian police and some agents of the United States' Federal Bureau Investigations.

- b. 4 f. 1 HQ, North-West Department 1982
- b. 4 f. 2 Regional reports on clandestine emigration 1984
- b. 4 f. 3 Fad'H-General Henri Namphy (Chief of Staff) 1984
- b. 4 f. 4-6 General Chief of Staff 1981-1984
Includes St-Albain and Namphy.
- b. 4 f. 7 Fad'H-General Henry Namphy (Chief of Staff) 1984

General files 1964-1985

This series documents events that occurred in the last decade of the Duvalier dictatorship. These include reports about fighting between exiled rebels and the FAd'H in the southeast zone near the Haitian-Dominican border; arrangements for the security of Pope John Paul II's visit to Haiti in 1983; and the legislative elections, held in 1984, as part of Duvalier's effort to convince the international community that his government was moving toward democratic rule. There is also a "Duvaliers" folder which contains letters to and from the Duvaliers some of which, like the letter from a women sports' team thanking the President for selecting them to compete in a national game with the Dominican Republic, are seemingly unrelated to national security. Nevertheless, there are letters that have a political angle, such as those from different regional political organizations applauding Duvalier's order to arrest his political rival Sylvio Claude.

Fad'H

- b. 5 f. 1 Rebels Landing 1964 July
- b. 5 f. 2 1964 February-July
- b. 5 f. 3 1975-1979
- b. 5 f. 4 Pope John Paul II visit to Haiti 1983
- b. 5 f. 5 Legislative elections 1984
- b. 5 f. 6 Miscellaneous 1984-1985
- b. 5 f. 7 J.L. Duvalier letters 1981-1985

Conseil National de Gouvernement (CNG) 1986-1987

This series documents the period 1986-1987, when the triumvirate military-civilian government replaced the Duvalier dictatorship with General Henri Namphy as its principal leader. Included here are monthly reports by the Ministre de l'Information et des Relations Publiques (Ministry of Coordination and Information) on the political activities of the Haitian masses, such as a briefing on "la marche des femmes" (the women's march) that sought to bring awareness to gender inequality in Haiti; another demonstration against the violence committed by the VSN militia in the Duvalier era; and an Artibonite peasant protest against the import of rice from Miami. There are also materials on the Corps des Léopards and letters from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including one containing the profiles of several U.S. congressmen who were part of a delegation to Haiti.

- b. 6 f. 1 Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1986-1987
- b. 6 f. 2 Fad'H-Corps D'Aviation (Air Force) 1986
- b. 6 f. 3 Fad'H reports on popular movements in the Artbonite Department
- b. 6 f. 4-7 Fad'H Ministry of Coordination and Information 1986 February-December
- b. 6 f. 8 Fad'H-Chief of Staff under CNG
- b. 6 f. 9 Force Armees D'Haiti 1987