



N O N V I O L E N T E X P E R I E N C E S

I N H A I T I

A Quest for Peace

Nonviolent experiences in Haiti: A Quest for Peace

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Peace Brigades International (PBI) is an international non-governmental organisation working for peace. On request, PBI sends volunteers to conflict zones in order to contribute, with nonviolent means to opening and maintaining a space for peace.

Cover painting: Return to the country after the democratic elections in 1990. Painting by Jean-Baptiste Jean, (Haiti). Private collection.

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Peace is here, in this island with its violent past and indigent present. And yet so beautiful, so vibrant, so young - "*Haïti chérie*". Peace is here, but it must be sought out, now and in the future. Peace is here, but must be sought out, now and in the future. And isn't peace after all, the path we take to aim for it?"

This book is the account of a meeting between PBI and Haiti, an exploration of the possibilities for addressing violent conflict in peaceful ways. Together they undertook a journey of discovery, a path walked together, the one accompanying the other. From 1993 to 2000, PBI volunteers from several countries came to live with Haiti, to see, to encounter, to share. Each had made a personal commitment to nonviolence. Together, they wanted to share the hope of peace among the Haitian people, leaving behind the clichés which lock Haiti in a freeze-frame image or folklore museum ... *zombies, Tontons Macoutes, boat people, the poorest country in the Western hemisphere* ... the idea being to keep this people at a distance, avoid any real encounter or analysis, abandon it to the throes of congenital violence. In contrast, the PBI Haiti Project is laid open to our gaze, down to the last detail; unusual, yes, but uncovered, a present to all those seeking peace, to all real friends of the Haitian people.

With this book, PBI is restoring to the Haitian people the modest and yet invaluable results of this experience. With this uncompromising assessment, it clears a path, while at the same time leaving the field to Haitian artisans of peace so that they can continue to make progress in Haiti. But a commitment has been made, to share this Haitian example with all the citizens of the world who are facing violence and struggling for peace, against poverty and the economic domination of the North. In short, this is an intercultural adventure, an encounter on equal terms, away from patterns of domination, a peace to be shared...

Acknowledgements

An account of an encounter between PBI and Haiti, or rather, the encounters, so rich that they left us changed for ever. Our gratitude reaches across the ocean to each of our friends in Haiti.

Our gratitude also reaches around the world towards the members of PBI and the artisans of peace in various corners of the world who listened, understood and supported our PBI Haiti project. We also - and above all - wish to thank those who chose, during the height of poverty and violence, to walk together, and accompany each other on a path called Peace.

We want to thank all those also who, in so many ways, worked together to help create this book : the authors of the texts and the quotes, as well as Philippe Beck, Chris Chapman, François Dabadie, Necker Dessables, Laurent Duding, Jean-Marie Müller, Tania Stevanato for their precious feedback. And finally, we are grateful for the translation of this book from French to English by Alison Anderson, Chris Chapman and Isabel Waterstone.

Homage to Father Jean-Marie Vincent

For you, Jean Marie Vincent.

Your life was all a gift. And so was your death.

I want to say this to those here, in your presence, your continuing, luminous presence among the Haitian people walking the long walk towards peace, for peace. To you, friend, brother - seared by the mark of the Freycineau attack - and yet, still hoping.

During the long night of the military coup, a small number of us decided to go on hunger strike, in September 1994. I remember the day we took this decision - afterwards you sunk into a profound silence, so unlike you. To put one's life on the line, to offer it up to give hope to an entire people. On 28 August 1994, the forces of death bore down on you because you love peace, because you love your people, your country. These same forces were not able to prevent the momentum of life, liberation and hope. You gave a human face to this momentum, which is the reality of so many unknown men and women in Haiti and everywhere in the world.

And you remain our light.

Gilles Danroc

Homage to Armand Ducertin

Peasant and human rights activist, victim of the violence of the period of the Coup d'état, you were assassinated on April 25, 2000. You remain alive in me, through images and emotions:

Revolt. "Impunity, the path to death," was the title given by the Peace and Justice lawyer who was with you during your legal proceedings. Yet again, arbitrary power and violence have struck down a modest man.

Perseverance. For years you went all over the region of Thomazeau, motivating and organising local groups of Justice and Peace. After the return of democracy to Haiti, week after week you stood indefatigably before the judicial authorities to ask that your rights be respected.

Truth. You never claimed to know more than you did. For every event you reported, the elements were dated and sources were given.

Patience. Despite the threats, ordeals, and meagre results, you strove to behave like a citizen. You were patient with us, too, strangers clumsy in understanding the subtleties of Creole and the tortuous realities of Haitian politics.

Pain. The pain of all those like you who suffered injustice in their flesh. There is an open wound in the heart of those who were close to you, your friends, your companions...

Messenger. From Thomazeau to Port-au-Prince, from the countryside to the city, from the peasants to the judges, from Haiti to us, you bore witness to injustice.

Hope. Without being naive, because you had suffered too greatly to comfort yourself with illusions, you placed your trust and energy in the advent of a legitimate state in Haiti.

Thinking of you keeps me standing.

Marc Allenbach

Claudette Werleigh: Preface

On February 7, 1986, Haiti astonished the world: a "people with its bare hands" had, in a way, forced a dictator to flee. Since that time the country has experienced multiple upheavals: repression, anarchy, mismanagement, political turmoil, merciless power struggles, rivalry, pettiness, abuses of all sorts... Violence on a daily basis: people killing one another, dog-eat-dog, or "*chen manje chen*" as we say, get out of my way so I can take your place...

There is political violence, to be sure, but above all a deep social divide, a sort of economic and social apartheid; a structural violence, therefore.

And yet, Haiti is not only about violence. The people have been scorned, marginalized, victims of ostracism and exclusion, yet painfully they try to assert themselves, to be acknowledged, to be accepted as full citizens of Haiti, with duties but also with rights. This is an attempt to go against what history has shown for two hundred years!

Paradoxically, although it is a torn land, Haiti is also in many ways a haven of hospitality and conviviality. What we are witnessing are the convulsions of a country in the midst of a dramatic change. The birth throes of a society of justice and peace, full of pain and difficulty. We need help.

KNOCK, KNOCK! HONOUR! RESPECT!

With *respect*, we knocked on the door of Peace Brigades International. In deep harmony with our culture, they told us that they would consider it a privilege, an *honour* therefore, to give a positive reply to our invitation. Thus from 1993 to 2001, a small team, later joined by others, got quietly to work, in Port-au-Prince of course, the tumultuous capital, but also in the *départements* of the Arbonite and of the South.

Peace Brigades International did not settle here definitively: that was not their mission. First and foremost they bore witness by virtue of their very *presence*, which was highly significant, at a time when others had cautiously chosen to seek shelter. By coming forward with humility, claiming neither to be the bearers of absolute truth nor even to be able to offer us any magic formulas, the Peace Brigades showed themselves to be true *companions* on a road towards a peace we could *build together*.

This Peace to be built is first of all individual and spiritual, deep, well-anchored within each of us. One must cultivate certain values, a life view, certain attitudes and Nonviolent behaviour. One must strive carefully for *knowing-how-to-be*, for the way one lives must be in accord with the messages one sends out!

But peace, obviously, also has a social and collective dimension: it is the harmony in social relations which must be created and maintained. One learns to manage differences of opinion and to resolve problems in a peaceful way. It is a *knowhow* one acquires and shares with others.

Building peace also requires a certain respect for nature, a particular attention to be paid to the environment of a country which has already been rendered so fragile!

Believers will add no doubt that peace also presupposes and necessitates being in harmony with a Supreme Being, Creator of all things. But the three components indicated above cannot fail to lead there also.

Peace Brigades International have listened to Haiti and its population. Without passing judgment, they have tried to understand: with their minds, but also their hearts; with, moreover, the unshakeable desire to help. The experience was not perfect. We have learned that it was even frustrating for some of the volunteers.

Through this evaluation, the reader is invited to share the experience of Peace Brigades International in Haiti. In a world torn apart, it is a good thing to be able to associate with

this *daily presence*, this *respectful accompaniment* weaving the fabric of *deep and true solidarity*.

For many Haitians, the opportunity to welcome and meet Peace Brigades International was an *honour* and a *joy*. With *respect* we salute the end of their mission in Haiti, and we are convinced that they are needed elsewhere, as we are convinced that the seeds of peace sown will bear their flowers and their fruit in the new season.

INTRODUCTION

"Peace is there, we're searching for it." This Haitian phrase has become the guiding principle of this book. PBI's mission in Haiti (1995-2000) was involved in Haiti's own research for a possible peace, one that was already present and not yet acknowledged. A peace that was already there in spite of, or as a result of, a long history of violence in a singular culture; a peace not yet recognized on its own terrain or elsewhere and, therefore, still not very effective or beneficial, but promising all the same.

The search for peace is the best aspect of the nonviolent experience we are presenting in this book. The experience of a project which has been analysed for its interaction and its accomplishments, and which intersects with and leads to other experiences where the choice of nonviolence helps to build a lasting peace.

The idea was never to set up a turnkey project in Haiti to be conceived and run from the outside. Nor is this book a treatise on Haitian culture or the political situation there; we do not consider ourselves to be specialists on Haiti. We think that the people of Haiti who are involved in the process are better situated to know what they need in order to make headway on the path towards peace. We were there to listen to them, to be of service to them. This book is therefore above all the record of an encounter which took place, depending on the author, as direct experience or observation, from close by or from a distance.

The analysis includes three approaches:

- History and context: a presentation of PBI Haiti, its environment and evolution.
- The view from the exterior: evaluations of the project by three sociologists.
- Building peace: the fruits of this experience for Haiti, but also for all those who, the world over, are committed to working for the respect of human rights, positive conflict transformation or peace education.

The inclusion of photographs and documents in the appendix will help to give substance to this analysis. By the same token, the testimony of Haitians themselves and quotes from the volunteers illustrate and enrich several of the texts.

For information on the human rights situation in Haiti, those who are interested can consult the numerous reports published by

- Amnesty International
- Human Rights and America's Watch
- Justice and Peace Commission
- the UN Civil Mission in Haïti,
- the National Coalition for Haitian Rights

as well as their studies on human rights violations, the Haitian judicial system, the embargo and its economic consequences, the agrarian reform, and so on.

By way of an introduction to our experience, we've decided to share with you two letters of accreditation of the PBI Haiti project which describe its essential impact. Jan Hanssens wrote the first one on behalf of Justice and Peace Haiti, who had requested PBI's presence and who have remained up to the present day one of our main partners. The spokesperson for PBI's International Council is Liam Mahony, one of the project's pioneers.

Jan Hanssens : Letter of introduction on behalf of the National Episcopal Commission of Justice and Peace in Haiti

Peace Brigades International maintained a presence in Haiti from 1995 to 2000; a Haiti which was in the process of recovering from the suffering of the years of blind repression following the military coup d'état; a Haiti which was beginning to take a new step forward, in the democratic transition which doesn't seem to be coming to an end.

One of the ways of contributing positively to this new experience was the request made by members of Justice and Peace in Haiti to Peace Brigades International to bring their experience in the field of nonviolent struggle for change in support of our commissions and of the Haitian people. This started a process whereby the Justice and Peace Commission in Haiti worked in close partnership with PBI, though without there being any official contractual relation between the two organisations.

The commitment to nonviolent change and to nonviolent conflict transformation lies at the heart of the concerns of both the Commission and PBI. After all, so many of the Justice and Peace commissions across the country, based in local communities, reported that local reconciliation and nonviolent conflict transformation were one of their main activities. It is therefore not surprising that several Justice and Peace commissions turned to PBI to learn from the organisation's experience and skills in this field. Others benefited from its presence and the training sessions it organised. PBI in turn found that the work carried out across the country by the commissions created favourable conditions for their own work to strengthen nonviolent struggle as an effective means for change.

It is this sort of support which the commissions of the diocese of the Gonaïves (department of the Artibonite) approached PBI for on several occasions. The parishes of Pont Sondé and Chénol provide two examples of this. In Chénol, a group called *Shalom* is continuing to take nonviolent reconciliation in the local community to heart as its own mission. The Cayes diocesan commission (South-West department) also asked PBI to hold local training sessions. In the other dioceses, a number of members of Justice and Peace benefited from the training, for example in the departments of the West (Port-au-Prince) and the North-West (Port de Paix). Now there are several members of our commissions who are also members of the *Groupe de Formateurs pour la Paix* (GFP, Peace Trainers' Group) which is carrying on PBI's mission in Haiti.

Peace Brigades International's stay in Haiti was only brief. Certain circumstances meant that the project could not be extended. The protective accompaniment of threatened individuals or of those in danger cannot easily be carried out in Haiti. Neither did the constant turnover in PBI's representatives make the task easier. But in the field of training and of strengthening the nonviolent struggle for change, their time in Haiti has left its mark. We are grateful to them for this and we hope that the ties of friendship which were beginning to form between our two institutions will not disappear along with their physical departure from the country.

Liam Mahony : Letter of introduction on behalf of the International Council of PBI

My first encounter with the third world, with its poverty, its hard work, its community, came in Haiti in 1984. It was also my first encounter with the deeply political cultural consciousness of the Haitian peasant, still aware and proud of their status as the first and only slave rebellion to create a black republic in the colonial world. And it was the beginning of my exploration into the challenging relationship between the “foreigner” and the people living in communities struggling for dignity, justice and self-determination in most of the world. This exploration, a decade later, gave me the privilege of participating in the founding of Peace Brigades’ Haiti Project.

“Challenging relationship” is too kind a choice of words. Devastating would be a more accurate description of the impact of the outside world on Haiti: a genocide of the indigenous people, initiated by Columbus in 1492; centuries of bloody slavery; a slave rebellion punished by a century-long economic embargo; an extended and violent occupation by US Marines; subsequent military dictatorships supported by the US as well. When Haitians rose up in a second—and nonviolent-- revolution in 1986 to overthrow the Duvalier regime, the world was caught by surprise. But the US continued to spend the better part of a decade deliberately undermining Haitian attempts to consolidate democracy. This long history of deliberate and murderous intervention lived side-by-side with an onslaught of ostensibly well-meaning missionary and developmental intrusion, most of which was deeply flawed by paternalistic attitudes and instilled both deep scepticism and disempowering dependency.

As a member of the PBI International Council, I was approached in 1992 by Haitian organizations who were desperately seeking political support and human rights protection to recapture the momentum for democracy under the renewed repression of the *de facto* military government. Nonviolent human rights protection was PBI’s specialty, having developed the process of protective international accompaniment in Central America in the 1980s. The combination of internal repression and external spotlight suggested that our protective methods should have worked in Haiti. But we failed to respond: to my utmost dismay, PBI could not gather together the necessary human or financial resources to launch a project of emergency protection in Haiti when it was most needed.

A year later we joined with ten other NGOs in the Cry for Justice coalition, again responding to Haitian pleas for protection and support. This noble initiative sent 75 volunteers to Haiti during the disastrous months of late 1993, but after ten weeks the effort strained the resources of the entire coalition to the breaking point. When the coalition left Haiti, we knew we had done something good and important, but we also knew that what Haitians needed was for us to stay for the long-term. And again, we weren’t capable of it.

Failures are important to recognize and learn from. After the 1991 coup the Haitian civilian movement and Diaspora stayed firmly committed to nonviolent tactics of resistance inside Haiti, and put their faith and organizing efforts into the international community. They counted on those of us who form that community to mount effective international nonviolent pressure to reverse the coup and protect their rights. And we couldn’t do it. Instead, the coup was eventually reversed by the threat of a massive and violent US invasion. The paradox of the invasion threat was stark, since on the one hand it reversed the immediate human rights situation overnight, effectively eliminating the need for PBI’s traditional protective role, while paving the way for the subsequent unarmed peace building efforts of the UN, PBI and many others. On the other hand, it sent the message of violence and dependency loud and clear to the Haitian people.

Against this backdrop, the challenge for nonviolent activists was no longer resistance and protection, but the active construction of a nonviolent future. The request for PBI’s

presence was immediately transformed: Haitian activists now asked us if we could mount a project of educational workshops in conflict transformation and other related skills. Such a task was not new to us: it fit perfectly within our founding mission. Our projects in Central America had to a certain extent developed workshops in Peace Education, even while focused primarily on protection.

But once there it became more and more clear to us that what was called for in Haiti was quite different. A project devoted entirely to peace education would have to take on in a conscious and strategic way the challenge of creating an alternative relationship between the foreigner and the Haitian. The devastating legacy described above has left a deep well of distrust, disempowerment and dependency—a well that could be easily tapped and reinforced by any level of unconscious arrogance or merely sloppiness on our part.

In PBI we have a deep commitment to non-interference in the affairs of the organizations we work with and humility in our own role. The task of accompaniment protection in our earlier projects epitomized both commitments. But the field of education is much more complex. People in cultures over the world are accustomed to the classic educational power relationship: the teacher imparting knowledge to the student. However, in the post-colonial third-world, the relationship is even more perversely skewed by the image of the “educated European” teaching the ignorant native. Needless to say these would not be the model we would try to replicate, but it would be naïve to deny that these powerful dominant images colour both our own attitudes and those of the Haitian we would work with. We had already seen in Central America that the field of “education” is particularly delicate: subtly yet deeply vulnerable to unconscious replication of global and colonial power imbalances. Not surprisingly, our peace education work has always been controversial and hotly debated within the organization.

The task then, was to create a space for education in nonviolence characterized by equality and mutuality between Haitians and foreign volunteers. It had to be a process of “co-construction,” in which Haitians would be involved strategically and organically from the start. If we could create this space, it would encourage the development of two distinct corps of trained cross-cultural nonviolence facilitators: Haitians who would continue to train each other and multiply the experience as they worked to create a more peaceful future for their country, and PBI volunteers who would return home with hands-on experience in nonviolence education from one of the most unique national political experiments in post-colonial history. Both groups would take home a dynamic blend of traditional problem-solving processes deeply imbedded in Haitian culture and practiced through the hard reality of long-term conflict and repression, and the diverse techniques and teaching methods brought by PBI volunteers from around the world.

Equality and mutuality, however, do not mean symmetry. The relationship would always be a contextual one, and the defining context all around us would remain one of global inequality, racism and colonialism. If this joint effort succeeded in creating an alternative education space against these odds, it needed also to go one step further. If it was to make a long-term contribution to the development of a culture of nonviolence and independence in the new Haiti, the process needed to be internally self-sustainable. In other words, from the beginning, we saw our ideal goal as that of making a permanent PBI presence unnecessary, and leaving behind an ongoing educational process completely independent of our support or guidance.

These were ambitious goals. We learned, from our first volunteers’ experiences, that to get anywhere near such an accomplishment, each volunteer would first have to face the most important challenge of all: understanding Haiti and Haitians. This task is much more than reading books on history and politics, more than learning the words and grammar of Haitian Creole. It requires a process of deep listening, throwing aside preconceived

notions, familiarizing oneself with the personality of a culture and language where meanings lay behind meanings behind meanings. Each volunteer finds him or herself looking back at their early months and realizing with some embarrassment how often they had understood words and sentences, but not meanings. But over time, the meanings sink in, and from the contact we learn as much about ourselves as about our hosts. This understanding not only informed the educational workshops, but often laid the basis for powerful personal transformations in each volunteer. They return home with awareness and a capacity for cultural bridge-building that will continue to contribute to the cause of global nonviolence for a long time to come.

Did we achieve our goals? Such a question is never answerable in simple terms. We can look with some satisfaction at the hundreds of participants in the workshops given, and perhaps with even more at the dozens of active Haitian facilitators – and that some of them work together in a “Groupe de Formateurs pour la Paix” (GFP). But deeper results will come over the long haul. As some of the contributors here point out: peace is not the goal, it is the path taken. Gandhi never spoke of achieving peace, but only of carrying out “experiments with truth.” You have in your hands a unique document evaluating PBI’s five year experiment with truth in Haiti. It isn’t a boring chronology, nor a self-congratulatory puff-piece, but a serious attempt to learn from the experience. It doesn’t hesitate to be self-critical. True to the educational methods developed in the field, the book uses a range of techniques to draw its lessons, from personal testimony to statistical social science.

PBI has always tried to demonstrate through the commitment and action of its own volunteers that even in desperate conflict situations, nonviolence is not only a moral choice, but also realistic and pragmatic option. We have seen in our two decades of fieldwork that in every conflict and every culture there are courageous people who are making nonviolence work, and who need encouragement and support. We have also come to see another important mission that of demonstrating alternative positive roles for “foreigners” based on mutuality and equality, in cultures where legacies of colonialism, violence and paternalism make this extremely difficult. Nowhere was this more true than in Haiti.

We are hopeful that this mutual experiment with Haitians will make a long-term contribution to that country’s struggle for peace and dignity. With this study, perhaps some of the lessons of the experiment will also serve other experiments in mutual peace building in conflicts around the world.

Part One

History and Context of the PBI Haiti Project

It is not an easy task to present in a few dozen pages the essence of the thousand and one experiences, decisions, ideas and emotions undergone by dozens of PBI members and hundreds of Haitian militants. One after the other we have taken up our pen to trace the broad outline of those experiences. Gilles Danroc has contributed an overview of the phenomena of violence and nonviolence in Haiti's history. Jürgen Störk presents the unique modes of intervention and the original philosophy of action developed by PBI, then goes on to describe the Haiti Project, which was very innovative within the PBI framework for its clear orientation towards Peace education. Marc Allenbach describes the project's evolution, like an adventure unfolding through time, with its discoveries, its disappointments, its joys and re-adjustments. "Questioning Peace Education," a synthesis of texts written by the volunteer teams in Haiti, illustrates the ideas behind the action, as it unfolded and became a notion, bit by bit, for each of the project members.

1. Gilles Danroc : *Haiti, or Peace Denied*

Is Peace Possible in Haiti?

Peace was prevalent throughout Haiti at the time of its forced entry into history. Christopher Columbus discovered not only an abundant earthly paradise on December 5, 1492, but also the hospitality and conviviality of the Native American population. He described this peaceful enchantment at length in his log book and to the Spanish court-an enchantment which lasted only a few months however, for the garrison which had been left behind was massacred and its fort was destroyed by a population which had quickly wearied of extortion, rape and violence at the hands of drunken Spaniards.

At the time, over a million Tainos lived all over the island of Haiti, which meant mountainous island; it was baptised Hispaniola and corresponded to the present-day Haiti and Dominican Republic. By the middle of the 16th century, not a single Native American survived. All had perished, victims of massacres and epidemics, in less than fifty years of Spanish colonisation. But the main cause of this brutal disappearance was the despair of the Tainos people: many fled by sea, ancestors of the boat people; others threw themselves from cliff tops in collective suicides. Women resorted to abortions in order not to give birth to slave children. What could be more painful for a native population than to be dispossessed of its land, its culture, and its freedom within its own country? Moreover, once the gold and silver discovered in the riverbeds had run out, the Spaniards would seek to make a maximum profit from green gold, or tropical agriculture. Hispaniola thus became the rear base for the conquest of Mexico and Peru, and then went on to export its products back to the home countries-to Spain, and from the western part, Dominican Republic, to France.

Discovery, conquest, and colonisation were the three stages of this violent era where new populations-whites who were in the minority and blacks uprooted from Africa-mingled and settled in the place left vacant by a vanished people. All that would remain of the early paradise was nostalgia, source of songs with which to welcome tourists ("Beloved Haiti, there is no finer land than thee"); as if following its destiny, that same paradise has gradually succumbed to a modern Euro-American barbarism. Is peace still possible in Haiti? Will a past of exacerbated violence determine the country's future? No one has the answer at this point, at the beginning of the Third Millennium.

The slave revolt in 1791 and the war of liberation led to the independence, on January 1, 1804, of the first black-led Republic on earth. The violence of liberation was necessary for the country to free itself from the omnipresent and humiliating violence which combined the repressive elements of the dominant culture and religion with that of the armed forces, the state, daily coercion and the economy's all-powerful law of maximum profit-to such a degree that under the colonial system the slave workforce had neither social rights nor existence. It was more profitable, according to the colonists, to push the workforce to the limits than to give field slaves the chance to have a semblance of family life, which would have guaranteed the renewal of slavery from father to son (a choice made, for example, in the South of the USA). In the Dominican Republic, the average lifespan of a slave from the moment he began working was seven years. The colony was a living hell. The violence of domination penetrated every aspect of the social and personal life not only of the slaves but also of the colonists themselves. Despite the French Revolution, they have become incapable of devising any other models of organising.

Thus the violence of liberation seemed to be a necessary rite of passage, or the matrix to exit of crises, dictatorships and phases of state-sponsored violence. The positive vision of liberation violence has been diminished by the failure of the popular movements in 1991-1994. The people of Haiti were unable to quash General Cédras's military coup by their own forces, and it required the intervention of 20,000 US marines under UN mandate to

restore democracy. Nevertheless, the culture of violence as liberator and founder of the Black Republic remains vivacious. The way history is taught in schools, in a framework of institutional precariousness, only helps to legitimise this omnipresent vision of violence.

Notable Events in the History of Haiti :

- 1492 Christopher Columbus lands in Haiti.
- 1499 Arrival of the first black slaves on Hispaniola.
- 1650-1700 Arrival in mass in the Dominican Republic of the first ships filled with black slaves from Africa.
- 1685 Promulgation of the black code.
- 1750 Number of runaway or fugitive slaves estimated at 3000.
- 1791 In the night of August 14-15, a voodoo ceremony is held at Bois-Caïman to prepare the slave uprising; the '*marronage*' or resistance gets organised. Haitian consciousness is born, with the cry "Liberty or death."
- 1802 Napoleon sends troops in order to restore slavery on the island.
- 1804 Haitian independence declared by Jean-Jacques Dessalines.
- 1915-1934 American military occupation: violent repression of voodoo and the peasantry; the gendarmerie becomes the spearhead of an imminent and equally bloody dictatorship.
- 1957-1971 Dictatorship of François Duvalier.
- 1983 Visit of Pope John Paul II: "Things must change here."
- 1986, February 7, Fall of the dictatorship and flight of Jean-Claude Duvalier.
- 1987 Decriminalisation of voodoo.
- 1990, December 16, Jean-Bertrand Aristide elected president with 67% of the vote. Following a coup d'état, he is overthrown by the military and goes into exile in September, 1991.
- 1991-1994, Dictatorship of General Raoul Cédras: bloody repression.
- 1994, October 15, Jean-Bertrand Aristide returns in triumph to Port-au-Prince as part of an operation mounted by the UN. Dissolution of the FRAPH and of the Haitian army.
- 2000, December, Jean-Bertrand Aristide re-elected to a second term in the presidency.

Excessive violence in the colony had multiple consequences, continuing to affect the culture and society of the first black-led Republic of the 19th and 20th centuries. Where the economy was concerned, the peasants had learned their lesson from slavery and rejected any system of production leading to inequality. Structured inequality would indeed arouse the spectre of the colony. Thus, people refused to make use even of effective colonial tools, in particular the irrigation systems that had been installed in the 18th century. The consequence was a rejection of export agriculture in favour of food crops. Small plot holdings were created, thus encouraging individual property. As long as there were land, trees, and water, this sui generis system could function. But in the present day the state's levies-along with its anarchy and negligence-have accelerated the degradation of Haiti's rural landscape. Despite the mass exodus from the countryside which has caused the capital, Port-au-Prince, to expand out of all proportion, demographic pressure has also led to deforestation, erosion, and the rampant dismemberment of the countryside into subsistence plots. The mountainous regions, which have always been overpopulated, can no longer retain the topsoil, which is eroding seaward. One might even say that today's boat people are following their land into the sea with their dreams of a new land, Florida. "Liberation violence" has left other marks, still affecting Haitian society today. In particular, there is the militarisation of everyday life. The liberation army was much more than a guerrilla force and, with the help of the Spaniards in the eastern part of the island, it confronted two armies sent by Napoleon; very quickly their cadres were rewarded with property titles. The famous "great gifts" were distributed in the early 19th century under the presidency of Boyer, the very same individual who would lead a military invasion of the

Spanish part of the island. In 1844 what would become known as the Dominican Republic obtained its independence, despite the opposition of Haiti and Spain. The massacre of forty thousand Haitians in the Dominican Republic by the dictator Trujillo in 1937 and the inhuman treatment of Haitian cane cutters in the Dominican Republic testify today to the ongoing and unresolved historical tension.

"Liberation violence" has turned against Haiti, a sign that this concept, with the exception of Simon Bolivar's support, has not been able to create a free society, be it in Haiti or anywhere else in the Caribbean region or Central America. When the great leader Dessalines was assassinated by his officer-landowners, it was a foregone conclusion that the liberation would lead no further than to a new dominant order. How could it be otherwise for a Revolution isolated by culture and geography? The new elite would merely take over the existing dominant infrastructure for its own benefit. King Christophe claimed more victims in the north -35,000 dead- in building his Citadel than the war of liberation did. The debt imposed upon Haiti, once again pioneer in the matter, to obtain international recognition of her national independence would put a lasting strain on the economic development of the country.

Absentee landlords, agents of the state and import merchants would repopulate the towns. The split between town and country and the domination of the former over the latter grew rapidly. It would not be long before the armies of presidential candidates would march against each other and ravage the provinces. The peasants withdrew ever further into the hills. The republic was at the mercy of new civil servants who were isolated from the people and who lived by shamelessly exploiting the peasants.

The Haitian power structure became easy prey for the military oligarchy in their pursuit of getting rapidly wealthy. One constitution would replace another at a frenetic pace. The legitimate state found it very difficult to gain a foothold when faced with this "militarisation" of political and public life-all the more so in that the state was-and still is-a chronically "weak state" (the famous "Estado debil" of Latin American analysts), that is, a state incapable of meeting more than 10 per cent of the country's social requirements. All the more so, too, in that the new elite has been more easily influenced by the cosmopolitan culture of powerful countries-Europe, the US, Canada-than by Haitian or Caribbean culture. The split between city and country or the elite and ordinary people thus reproduces the pattern of former colonial domination in what is essentially a classical neo-colonialism. This split also testifies to the failure of any "liberation violence" not founded on a legitimate state and on the emergence of an organised civil society.

The racial question has been crucial all through the two centuries of independence. This may be a black-led Republic, but the white model of society and culture prevails with the elite. The officers of the army of liberation, once they had become big landowners and lieutenants of established circles in power-or about to seize power-, would maintain an aimless anarchy that led to the US occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934.

It was not only the dominance of the foreign model but also, to a certain degree, the failure of the Haitian model, corroded as it was by political and economic violence, that were made even more visible and palpable by this occupation. I add also religious and cultural violence: the peasantry remained stubbornly marginal, which goes some way towards explaining the current mass illiteracy. As for voodoo, it was invented and gained acceptance as religious creation in the immense margins the Haitian system left during the 19th and 20th centuries in the countryside, and, very much later, also in the towns. The United States eventually imposed a new order, a sort of modernisation on the surface and of the towns, based upon the transformation of the army in Haiti. The army as it was constituted after the 1804 Liberation became more modern, better designed to occupy the country than to defend it.

Thus one can easily understand the significance, both real and symbolic, of the return of the US Marines to Haiti under UN mandate on July 31, 1994. The US army was there to

quash a military coup and to put an end to sixty years of rule in Haiti where the army carried out the partition which had been prepared by the American invasion. Could it be that this mission on the part of the Haitian army, transformed into an internal army of occupation, had failed? It would seem that the Pentagon had grown tired of the repeated blunders of an army that was arrogant, poorly prepared to rule, and increasingly involved with civilian armed gangs. The US refusal to hand over the archives of the Haitian army and of the "FRAPH" (the civilian paramilitary force) which were stolen by the Marines under US mandate, is a good indication of the way in which protection was granted to former allies, while at the same time muzzling them.

The Question of the Army

The Haitian constitution of 1987 regulates but provides for an army to guarantee national sovereignty. There is nothing to prevent the legal rebirth of a military corps capable of imposing a political regime by force. At present the army in Haiti has actually been dismantled, since the return from exile of President Aristide (1994-1995), but the issue has not been fully resolved. A new police force, incorporating former military personnel, has been set up. Issues of security risks, drug trafficking and delinquency have not been resolved as such either. To get a better idea of what this means, one must unravel the tangled threads of violence in Haiti:

- * Haiti's army, historically, has been an army of liberation.
- * It rapidly became an army of domination, both internal (officers gaining control of the land) and external (military unification of the island before the creation of the Dominican Republic).
- * For over a century, the army, or rather regional gangs, have been making and destroying successive presidents, thereby encouraging anarchy.
- * The United States occupied Haiti (1915-1934) and created a Haitian guard, an auxiliary force of "US Marines", who would become, step by step, what was Haiti's army until 1994, say an internal army of occupation implanted on the national territory yet unable to protect the country from foreign intervention.

The following points are currently being debated in civil society:

- * The idea of a non-aggression treaty with international guarantees along the borderline between Haiti and the Dominican Republic.
- * The idea of a civil service for young men and women which would favour the development of a legitimate state (struggle against illiteracy, mixture of previously segregated populations, improvement of public health, vaccinations, policies for major construction work). In other words, the idea of Haiti being a common good to be created together.
- * How can a truly democratic debate be launched to prepare a revision of the Constitution on the question of the army?
- * The island's history textbooks must be rewritten, with historians from both countries, in order to eliminate the will to war, prejudices about other people, and reductive slogans.
- * Everyday-security must be re-thought on the grounds of a genuine de-centralisation allowing to bring power, finances and techniques closer to the people, under the auspices of active associations.

Debates on these issues and many others could go hand in hand with the effective and legal disappearance of the army in Haiti, while constituting a framework of security and peace if not for all then for the greatest number.

A racial problem existed with regard to the army and, by extension, to political, economic and cultural power. The divide between the "State/ruling class and the people" grew ever wider up to the mid-20th century, given the increasing stranglehold exerted by foreign influence and the cosmopolitan mulatto bourgeoisie. The refusal of the US invasion followed by a "noirist" reaction in 1946 among intellectuals who rejected the systematic denigration of the blacks, of the local culture, of history and of voodoo would set the stage

for Duvalierism, particularly that of Papa Doc in 1957, as constituting a form of black power, closer to the people and to real life. In this respect François Duvalier would have to free himself of the influence of the army, traditionally in the hands of the higher mulatto officers and allied to the ruling political and business classes of the country. Thus one can understand the logic behind the creation to counter the strength of the army, particularly among the masses, peasants and blacks-of the volunteer forces of the Sécurité Nationale, otherwise known as the Tonton Macoutes. Duvalierism, however, be it that of the father (1957-1971) or of the son (1971-1986), was not a true political revolution, since the authoritarian, neo-colonialist structure of power was maintained, although it did incorporate a new, black, administration who would gradually form a black middle class close to the ruling elite.

Just as the colonial model founded on the apartheid of master/slave lasted well into the 19th and 20th century in the guise of a new apartheid between the urban elite and the peasant masses, so has the racial question not been resolved by noirisme. The question that remains crucial to this day is that of the structure of power, society and culture. The interminable democratic transition from 1986 to the present day has not yet clearly resolved the issue of post-Duvalierism, nor has it given any clear indication of a resolutely democratic choice on the part of Haitian society, of the new rulers in power and of the state. The violence of domination will continue to prevail in the context of the misery as long as liberation violence has not yet given a clear signal that it will retreat in the face of a democratic bid for power. The post-coup d'état era, the longest in history (1991-1994), has not offered the soothing prospect of respect for democratic institutions and the implementation of a culture of democracy. Apart from the dismantling of the army, the struggle for power as well as the struggle against poverty have not yet loosened their grip. But the hope for peace and a culture of peace is increasingly shared by many in Haiti.

History of Non-Violence in Haiti

Should one assume there is no evidence of a Nonviolent struggle in Haiti? To the contrary. For although the struggle between the two forms of violence-the violence of domination ceaselessly reborn in opposition to liberation violence-plays a huge role in the history of Haitian society, the fact remains that a society is not constituted solely on the basis of the dominating violence of a handful of people. Life always finds a way to endure and to survive. There have also been cases, in greatly differing situations in history, where liberation violence has been founded on the defence of property and social values worth protecting. Liberation violence therefore does not coincide with all aspects of the struggle for the liberation towards which a society aspires. The choice of violent means to obtain that liberation may be the deed of a handful of individuals founding their faith on much wider aspirations, on a need shared sometimes by the majority. Finally, as may be stated, the violence of domination has stifled the social and cultural expression and creativity of the dominated people. Consequently, symmetrically violent means to the weapons used by the coercive dominant power, prevail as the only resource available to a people who has been hindered to invent its future. The path of nonviolence has always yet to be found, at most times in cases of emergency, in the near-impossibility of creating links or establishing communication in an atmosphere of fear, even terror, which is reinforced by a feeling of helplessness. Haiti remains to this day a striking example of the extreme difficulty of "getting along" -to use an everyday expression. But the difficulty reveals more than it conceals the deeply peaceful aspirations of the Haitian people as conveyed by their culture and history.

Here are some of the signs, the fundamental "moments":

* Despite the atrocious conditions in the colony and the system of slavery, a "Creole" society was gradually formed, native to the island, with a shared language, despite the extreme diversity of ethnic origins.

* While in Haiti there is not the mix to be found in the countries of Latin America, a society of racial apartheid has not come about. A more appropriate term would be that of "economic apartheid" between rich and poor, rather than a racist society. Colour prejudice has not prevented a mixing of races and the Creolisation of the entire Haitian society. The mistake of the noirist ideology promoted by François Duvalier was to confuse blacks with those who were poor or dominated. And while it is true that during the 20th century the great majority of those excluded from political, cultural and economic life have been black, Duvalierism showed that blacks could oppress blacks using the same mechanisms of dominant violence that it claimed to oppose. It has been shown that it is the colony which engenders racism, not the contrary. Haiti was able to create a truly multiethnic and multiracial society capable of aspiring to independence. And at the time of this creation, many values of hospitality, conviviality, closeness and cultural inventiveness served as the cement to the mass aspiration for liberation. To put up with resorting to violent means to obtain liberation may be seen, in a way, as a disappointment in not having been able to proceed otherwise.

* The quality of what later would be known as traditional values-ecological, cultural values such as the beauty of the "pearl of the Antilles" and respect for nature -are part of the "shared wealth" of Haiti. The present-day ecological disaster is not something people really wanted. Deforestation is not cynical, it hurts everyone.

* Numerous international ties outside of diplomatic channels have been created through Haitian migration. The solidarity of exile, the amplitude of exodus have impressed. Many associations for the defence of Haiti have had a real impact in the United States, Canada, France, and Switzerland. In the Dominican Republic, despite the dreadful history of the massacre of Haitians, mixed families and Haitian-Dominican associations for the struggle against the inhuman treatment of the "batteyes"¹, when illegal Haitians were employed to cut the sugar cane, have contributed to mutual respect between the two halves of the island.

* Finally, the "Madame Sarahs"-Haitian tradeswomen-have been able to establish a solid trade network throughout the Caribbean region. Haitian crafts and art have obtained widespread international recognition. The music, rhythms, and dances of Haiti have inspired many contemporary masterpieces. The "magical realism" of Haitian painting and literature have helped to convey a positive, convivial image of Haiti to the world.

These signs, and many others, are an indication of the positive and peaceful values at the basis of an educational, social and cultural system which could enable the Nonviolent transformation of Haiti.

'Marronage': a Form of Nonviolent Reaction?

'Marronage' is a cultural phenomenon which's name came from the "*marron*" slaves: slaves that had fled their owners, in order to live in the mountains and forests, free but chased and having to survive in plain nature. Seen that oppression got perpetuated in Haiti (the various upheavals and revolutions sooner or later all ended with a recuperation of old power structures by the dominant power stakeholders), many sociologists also applied the concept of '*marronage*' to name several forms of resistance to oppression in Haiti:

- the "boat people" having fled to the United States or Canada, and the whole Haitian Diaspora in general.
- a means to hide any information to potential oppressors (White men, mestizo, foreigners, townsmen, bourgeois, military...)
- through language: almost permanent agreement, proverbs with multiple meanings...
- through religion: hidden aspects in voodoo, secret societies...

¹ "Batteyes" is a creole word designating the cane cutters.

- through socio-political structures: the custom to put in the foreground formal aspects, apparatus leaders, Western ways to organise society... Behind this formalistic forest hides another structure of society based on "*lakou*" (from "*la cour*", an enlarged family, clan), groups interests, "personalities" (people renowned for their power or wisdom), etc.

'*marronage*' is not peculiar to Haiti. Vestiges of '*marronage*' have been found, and sometimes it has even been revived, in all societies marked by slavery. It is particularly common in countries like Brazil, where vast tracts of land have been occupied by "runaways", many of whom have been able to set up alternative societies. However, '*marronage*' is key to understanding the history and society of Haiti. It is a deliberate rejection of the excessive violence of the colonial system, a getting out of the way of or in distance to the inhumanity of slavery. Might this be considered an individual or collective manifestation of non-violence?

At first glance, to remove oneself from the vicious circle of violence might seem a worthwhile gesture, the expression of non-resignation, non-passivity. But it does not necessarily indicate a radical rejection of the logic of violence. Many runaways have helped from the sidelines or from a place of safety to plot the revenge with poison. Makandal was the most representative figure of such a rebel. But multiple rebellions do not make a revolution. In this case we are dealing with the history of a liberation violence opposed to the dominant violence of the Colony. However, the option of running away also meant the chance to create new modes of behaviour, different social relations and even an alternative survival economy. This is at the origins of the widespread attitude of avoidance: the reed bends but does not break. This attitude is part of the Haitians' cultural background to this day. There is no doubt that one could graft a culture of peace onto a "modern-day *marronage*", deploying a creative attitude towards the Nonviolent resolution of conflicts, for the refusal of violence leads to an ethical, social, responsible path to the future.

Thus, during a workshop which brought together a few Haitian peasants, all the participants were unanimous in their opinion, clearly voiced, that running away and calling for help were examples of reaction to conflict worthy of recognition, a behaviour which the peasants refused to assimilate with either violence or non-violence, or passivity.

PBI and Political Life in Haiti

PBI's choice not to interfere in the country's political life was not an indication of some sort of disdain or systematic rejection of politics; PBI was only affirming thereby the principle and the method of a mission or action in serving as a partner to the country. The Haitians who invited PBI to collaborate in the research for peace in their country were members of associations formed within civil society among the citizenry. By means of observation, ideas and action PBI regularly integrated given elements of political life, both structural and short-term. However, unlike the action of the "international community," which sought either visibly or covertly to find ways to circumvent General Cédras' coup d'état, PBI had neither the means nor the will to offer Haitian political society any particular policy or political model which would remain the expression of the Haitian people's independence and autonomy. In addition, PBI members took part in discussions and actions with the aim of ensuring the overall respect for "human rights" within the Haitian constitution, as well as elaborating a program for "politics of peace" for Haiti, as detailed within this report.

Finally we need to add, that it was in the middle of a political crisis and because of it, that PBI was invited to prepare a mission to Haiti. The coup d'état of September 91 perdured on and on while violence was instaurated. A violence typically political : the army had seized the power in order to put an end to the first democratically elected government of Haiti.

The Haitian society which had exercised its freedom in December 1990 to elect President Aristide was now taken hostage by the army, which was itself at the service of the economic and political oligarchy. This oligarchy had no intention of implementing any alternative form of democratic government but sought rather a return to a traditional form

of politics where the elite would think and decide for the people, excluded from their own country. Such a policy could lead only to violence, and was entrusted to an "internal army of occupation" exerting a ruthless and systematic repression. This army expanded its tight stranglehold over the country thanks to a civil militia, the FRAPH (*Front pour l'avancement du peuple d'Haïti*), which was a direct descendent of the VSN (*volontaires de sécurité nationale*), the only too famous *Tonton macoutes* of the previous Duvalier era.

The unresolved duration of the coup d'état eventually brought Haiti onto the international scene. The first free and fair elections in Haiti, after several aborted attempts, were held in the winter 1990-91 and were monitored by the UN and the OAS; the results were recognised by all the states concerned—unlike the military coup seven months later, which was condemned by means of an economic embargo imposed by the UN and the OAS in October, 1991. International public opinion, particularly in North America, Europe, and Latin America, was mobilised by the question of liberties and human rights abuses; this mobilisation galvanised states and intergovernmental organisations into seeking a solution to the crisis.

It was in this context that people at PBI began to commit themselves to a peace mission in Haiti. President Aristide's return from exile in October 1994 did not cause them to reconsider this commitment, given the severely traumatic effects of the coup d'état (1991-1994) on Haitian society.

It was obvious that democracy, first born in 1991 then reborn in 1994, remained fragile. A society so marked by violence and poverty cannot emerge from a dictatorship at the mere wave of a magic wand. Political democracy calls for the slow growth of a democratic culture which will expand to all sectors of society; young people who have never known the benefits a democratic society need to be educated in that culture. Between 1995 and 2000, PBI spent a great deal of time observing political life, the "laboratory" where the legitimate state is implemented. The project paid particular attention to the following issues:

- ? respect of public liberties
- ? implementation of an authentic system of justice
- ? situation of the victims of the coup d'état
- ? elaboration of agrarian reforms
- ? decentralisation
- ? education
- ? role of women in the society
- ? respect for human rights and labour rights
- ? respect for the rights of the weakest members of society
- ? respect of the constitution and organisation of free and fair elections

PBI Haiti observed and at times took part in debates over these issues, without seeking to favour any given individuals or political groups but rather to commit to democracy and peace. PBI Haiti's news bulletins were proof of this concern in Haiti itself as well as directed towards the public opinion of the international community. By choosing to work in partnership with local NGOs, PBI wanted to encourage the disadvantaged and outcast realm of politics. By placing itself at the service of Haitian citizens working for peace and the respect of human rights, PBI contributed to democratic efforts. Thus the framework of Haitian political life helps to explain PBI Haiti's project strategy for the duration of its action in Haiti.

A Short Illustration of the Type of Political Analysis within a PBI Team

There are signs that something is going on in Haiti. President Préval has appointed a new Prime Minister, for the second time since June 9, the date Rosny Smarth handed in his resignation. In addition, the largest state-owned company, the Minoterie, has been privatised, despite popular opposition; and important foreign companies have shown signs of wanting to begin operation in Haiti. Six of the nine members of the *Conseil Electoral Provisoire* (CEP - Provisional Electoral Council) have offered to resign in order to facilitate a resolution of the electoral crisis, a consequence of strong protests on the part of various sectors over the way in which the CEP oversaw the most recent elections; Préval later went to set up a presidential commission in support of the CEP, charged with supervising the organisation of the second round of senatorial elections. The choice of Garry Lissade to preside over this commission, has been met with vehement protest because of his role as president of the lawyers Bar association in Port-au-Prince during the coup d'état. Finally, United Nations troops will in all probability leave the country by the end of the month, after so many extensions of their mandate. It nevertheless does seem fairly certain that a foreign military force will remain in one form or another.

And for the Haitians, the more things change, the more they stay the same. The cost of living continues to rise and instability follows its usual cycle of highs and lows, including however a number of political assassinations, among them that of a deputy and a member of the presidential guard, and the explosion of a home-made bomb in the centre of town. As for the informal economy, it continues to flourish, which only goes to show the inability of the other sectors of the economy to ensure the survival of the population. The trial of those presumed guilty of the Raboteau (Gonaïves) massacre during the coup d'état has led to hopes that the reign of impunity will not be total, although the government commissioner and the public prosecutor in charge of the proceedings have threatened to resign because of the threats they have received.

Impunity has become a current topic and we are not alone in believing that a lasting peace will not be achieved in Haiti until justice prevails and the sufferings of the victims are recognised. Despite the apparent inertia which seems to be affecting the country's political life, initiatives have been undertaken, like that for example of the symbolic International Tribunal for violence against women, the Raboteau trial and the sit-in at the Peace Monument to demand justice for the victims of the coup d'état.

An excerpt from the editorial in Bulletin 13 of the PBI Haiti team, November, 1997.

2. Jürgen Störk : *Peace Brigades International: An international network for nonviolent missions to promote peace*²

Part A : Peace Brigades International (PBI)

Origin and principles

"PEACE BRIGADES INTERNATIONAL" (PBI) came into being in 1981.³ It carries out peace-keeping and peace-building programmes, using nonviolent methods, in support of civil society in conflict regions. The vision of the founders, inspired by the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi, was to set up peace teams to make nonviolent interventions in conflict areas. Since 1992, PBI has been recognised by the United Nations as a non-governmental organisation (NGO).

All actions carried out by the peace teams are guided by the principles of non-violence, impartiality and non-interference. Another characteristic is consensus decision-making at all levels of the organisation: at PBI, there is no central office, nor are there any managers.

Mission Statement

PBI works to open a space for peace in which conflicts can be dealt with nonviolently. We use a strategy of international presence and concern that supports local initiatives and contributes to developing a culture of peace and justice. We act on request of local Nonviolent groups working for human rights and social change in regions where there is oppression and conflict.

The aim of PBI's international presence is to accompany both political and social processes through a joint strategy of deterring violence and promoting active non-violence. Our international teams of volunteers use methods such as protective accompaniment, peace education, independent observation and analysis of the conflict situation. In addition, PBI learns about, develops, and models forms of nonviolent intervention. Where possible, we initiate contacts with all the parties to a conflict in order to inform of our presence.

PBI supports this work through a broad international network of organizations and individuals. Our identity is built upon non-hierarchical structures and consensual processes.

Nonviolence

PBI undertakes to give the utmost consideration to human life and its protection. It respects the fundamental human rights of all people, and democratic values and freedoms. Using its experience and its international standing, the organisation strives to combat unjust and violent power structures, in order to contribute to the building of a humane society.

PBI is convinced that violence cannot bring about a lasting peace, or sustainable solutions to international or internal conflicts; this is why it rejects violence, in whatever form or whatever its origin. The organisation aims to contribute to the process of building a peaceful society by encouraging co-operation between groups which use democratic and Nonviolent channels to find political solutions to conflicts.

² Presentation compiled from texts and documents of PBI

³ For the more details on precursors and the origins of PBI please consult :

www.peacebrigades.org/history.html and www.peacebrigades.org/publications.html

Non-interference

The teams' Nonviolent interventions in conflict regions also result in stimulating and promoting peace initiatives by the local population. PBI respects the autonomy and the right to self-determination of all peoples, and considers its services as a small contribution complementing the efforts of these peoples to build peace. This is why it undertakes never to impose itself or to interfere in their methods of thinking or acting. As a consequence of this approach, PBI only intervenes in a situation at the request of the inhabitants of the region concerned. All the services carried out by the volunteers are free of charge for those requesting them.

Impartiality

As an international, neutral "third party", PBI works independently and without taking sides. In accordance with its "Vedchhi Declaration " (1986), impartiality is understood here to mean:

- dealing with each party in a spirit of open-mindedness;
- reporting its observations as objectively as possible;
- refraining from making any judgements;
- conveying its concerns to the people responsible without being accusatory.

Impartiality means neither indifference nor neutrality, nor a passive attitude to injustice or to violations of human rights, personal dignity or individual freedom. On the contrary; PBI commits itself to these values and acts against violence - physical or structural - in order to obtain a sustainable peace.

For this reason, the nature of PBI's work obliges the teams and their members to refrain from implicating themselves in the work of the groups and people whom they are supporting or accompanying; to do everything to avoid any kind of judgmental attitude, despite the fact that they might identify emotionally with the oppressed or the victim; to respect all laws and not to get involved in the official politics of the host country; and to share the tools of Nonviolent Conflict Transformation (NVCT) at their disposal with those who request them, by providing information or training, and without interfering or imposing opinions.

Consensus

PBI not only promotes nonviolence in its projects; it also considers itself, through its internal workings, as a school of nonviolence and a model of Nonviolent practice. This is why, at all levels, decisions are taken by consensus. It always seeks to consult as widely as possible, in order to listen to and integrate as many points of view and perspectives as possible, before taking a decision. The aim of seeking consensus is to carry out each action in such a way that the means implemented correspond to the objectives chosen.

PBI's projects around the world

Any group or person, working to promote the respect of human rights by exclusively Nonviolent means, may request the assistance, protection or accompaniment services of PBI. The first stage is to review the request to see whether it is consistent with the organisation's general mandate, and then, by means of an exploratory mission, to determine whether the context of the conflict in question allows for a mission to be set up in the short or long term. Finally, PBI considers the human and financial resources necessary for setting up a team of volunteers. At the time of going to press, the organisation has teams in Colombia, Mexico and Indonesia with a total of around 60 volunteers working on the ground. In the past, the organisation has run projects in Sri Lanka, Guatemala, El Salvador, North America, and of course in Haiti. PBI has also taken part in joint projects with other organisations in the Balkans.

Current Projects

Colombia

On the invitation of Colombian human rights organisations, PBI set up a project in 1994 for the protection of members of civil society working to defend human rights and peace. With four teams of volunteers (in Bogotá, Barrancabermeja, Urabá, and Medellín), the Colombia project is the largest the organisation has ever undertaken, in terms of both cost and the number of volunteers working in the field (more than 35 spread across the four sub teams).

The teams accompany more than a dozen human rights defence organisations, as well as peace communities which have come together to form demilitarised zones in the North of the country. The volunteers regularly visit their offices, accompany the activists when they leave the office, and escort investigative missions in particularly dangerous areas. Sometimes, in order to ensure their safety, they accompany these people 24 hours a day for several weeks.

The high level of violence makes public relations work indispensable, in order to explain our work tirelessly to the people we are in contact with, and to argue our legitimacy as representatives of international civil society.

Misinformation about the Colombian situation contributes to the violence. To remedy this, PBI produces a considerable amount of documentation, in the form of thematic reports and bulletins, which are also available on the internet.

Using the expertise of its volunteers and affiliated experts, PBI leads workshops for local organisations on support for victims of torture, the psychological effects of repression, human rights, etc.

Indonesia and East Timor

- In 1999, PBI decided to set up a new project in East Timor, on the request of various human rights organisations. The arrival of PBI's exploratory mission coincided with the outbreak of violent attacks perpetrated by the militias. Thereafter, due to the rapidly changing situation, the team was constantly obliged to re-evaluate the risks linked to the areas it was working in. For example, it had to leave West Timor, in September 2000, having worked there for several months accompanying refugees, after militias threatened to attack international organisations.

In collaboration with local workshop leaders, the team members organised several trainings in positive conflict management, on the request of NGOs in East Timor and Flores. In response to calls from local bodies, the PBI Indonesia team extended its activities to Aceh province, in Northern Sumatra, where a peace team began at the end of the year 2000 to set up a project of protective accompaniment.

Mexico

In Chiapas, PBI has been participating since 1995 in a project bringing together around thirty organisations, the International Peace Service (SIPAZ). This was set up on the invitation, among others, of Mgr Samuel Ruiz García, Bishop of San Cristóbal de las Casas, a recognised mediator in the conflict, and of human rights organisations. The objectives of SIPAZ are to keep open the channels of dialogue with people of all sides, from the local peasants to the church activists, from the land owners to the party in power. The team of volunteers publishes objective information about the conflict, and disseminates it internationally, and discourages human rights violations by the presence of international observers.

The increased militarisation of other regions of Mexico, and the upsurge in disappearances and in imprisonment for political reasons, in particular in Guerrero and Oaxaca, decided

PBI to extend its activities to these departments. In 1999, an exploratory committee met various representatives of human rights and indigenous peoples' defence movements, who requested a PBI presence.

A peace team was set up in Mexico at the end of 1999 to undertake intensive diplomacy work. Since mid-2000, volunteers have been accompanying people and institutions working to defend human rights and build peace, in such a way as to limit the attacks which they are a victim of.

Closed Projects

Guatemala

It was during this pilot project, which began in 1983, that PBI conceived and implemented an accompaniment service for human rights defenders. Later, PBI developed a programme of grassroots peace education. For 16 years, volunteers accompanied the whole process of re-creating an organised Guatemalan civil society, after years of unrestrained massacres. Limited at first to the capital, this renaissance gradually spread to the countryside, to the indigenous Maya peoples, to the refugees wishing to return from Mexico, to the populations displaced by the war... PBI contributed in a significant way to opening up these "fields of action". The signing of the peace accords, at the end of 1996, did not solve Guatemala's problems. Despite everything, the peace process now seems to be irreversible. At the end of 1998, PBI felt that Guatemalans had now gained a sufficient degree of liberty of action, and closed the project in March 1999, satisfied with the role that it had been able to play there. Ever since, PBI has been following the evolution of the human rights situation in Guatemala and organized in summer 2001 a delegation with a perspective to eventually reopen a peace team in the country.

El Salvador

In 1987, PBI was invited by Mgr Medardo Gomez, Archbishop of the Lutheran Church, to set up a project similar to the one in Guatemala. A team worked in El Salvador from 1987 to 1992, the last six years of the civil war. Almost all of the country's grassroots organisations were provided with protective accompaniment: unions, families of the disappeared, displaced populations, indigenous communities, co-operatives... After the Peace treaties in 1992, PBI closed the project.

Sri Lanka

When PBI sent its first team to Sri Lanka in 1989, the government was faced with two civil wars: against the Tamil Tigers (LTTE) in the North, and against the Sinhalese Popular Front (JVP) in the South.

The volunteers helped to protect a group of lawyers being persecuted for representing people who had been kidnapped or detained in the context of the Sinhalese guerrilla war. Rapidly, accompaniment was also provided to witnesses in such cases, who were also subject to serious threats, and in other domains: labour conflicts, refugee camps, election monitoring... In the face of a government unable to tolerate our critical work, PBI left Sri Lanka in 1998.

North America

This project came about as a result of the eruption of violence on the Mohawk reservations in 1990. PBI sent short-term missions to observe acts of the resistance of the First Nations Peoples against structural violence which they are a victim of in the USA and Canada. For example, Inuit, Chippewa's and Shoshone communities were accompanied during

negotiations with the Canadian and American authorities. Structural weaknesses of this only sporadically active project led in 1999 to its closure.

Awards received by PBI:

1995 Friedrich Siegmund Schultz Prize (Germany)
1995 Peace and Justice Service Award (USA)
1996 Pfeffer Peace Prize (United Kingdom)
1998 Peace Cereals Award (USA)
1999 Peace Prize of Seivershausen (Germany)
1999 Peace Prize of Aachen (Germany)
2001 Martin Ennals Award (International)

PBI and Nonviolent action

In general terms, PBI aims to support the process of building a peaceful society, by the intermediary of a strong, vigorous civil society. The volunteers seek therefore to create or to enlarge a "freedom space" around those threatened; a space which these activists can make use of to attack the roots of the conflict, thanks also to the skills gained in the training workshops and to the national and international contacts put in place with the help of PBI's international network.

PBI wishes neither to propose tailor-made solutions, nor to resolve conflicts, nor to act by proxy for the people directly affected. The organisation strives to create and maintain protected spaces, in order to allow those on the ground to continue their work of promoting human rights and peace. In addition to the physical protection of threatened people, the peace teams can also contribute to promoting methods, techniques and tools of Nonviolent conflict management, so that local protagonists may be better prepared in their own activities.

Protective Accompaniment

The guiding principle behind protective accompaniment is to introduce an impartial and independent third party into the conflict scenario. This international observation watches for the security of civil actors and therefore considerably increase the political price to be paid for an aggression, what can deter those who might carry it out. At the same time, the aim is to encourage local activists by decreasing their fear of acting in difficult circumstances.⁴

In the field, this means accompanying threatened people or groups. This physical accompaniment takes very different forms, depending on who makes the request, and varies from 24-hour-a-day accompaniment to monthly visits. Accompaniment can also take the form of international witnesses being present at and observing conflictive situations such as demonstrations, in order to prevent acts of violence.

Promotion of active nonviolence and of peace education

The objective of "opening up" civil society's possibilities for action is attained by promoting nonviolence and developing peace education programmes; training workshops in Nonviolent conflict management, mediation, consensus decision-making, and political analysis. In concrete terms, this means disseminating, promoting and raising awareness about Nonviolent methods, researching and strengthening the personal skills of participants who request it, sharing know-how and skills, whilst respecting cultural

⁴ Liam Mahony and Luis Enrique Eguren delivered an in-depth analysis of the respective framework in question, in: "Unarmed bodyguards : International Accompaniment for the Protection of Human Rights" , Kumarian, 1997.

differences. Within this context, PBI also carries out workshops relating to community support for torture victims.

Contributing to the strengthening of the social fabric and civil society

Public relations - the process of building up contacts and putting the various local and international players in contact with each other - is an integral part of PBI's Nonviolent presence. The team is in constant contact with national and local NGOs, and maintains contacts with governmental bodies, embassies, and international NGOs. The team members use these contacts to inform people about their objectives, role, principles and limitations, in this way promoting the idea of Nonviolent action.

Thanks to the extended network of contacts which each project develops, PBI is often able to establish (or re-establish) links between bodies with similar goals, within the country and outside of it, thus making their activities more effective.

Disseminating impartial information

Informing the public is an integral part of each team's mandate. The information, put together by the teams in the field and by the project committees, is disseminated locally and internationally, thanks to the country groups which form PBI's principal base.

In particular, this information takes the following forms:

- Written: various bulletins and thematic dossiers;
- Internet: At present about two hundred pages, and around 300-400 weekly visitors to the site;
- Visits of expert delegations to the country projects;
- Public lectures and interviews with former volunteers.

Each team works in several or all of the areas of Nonviolent action described above. However, the proportion of the work taken up by each area is different in each team, for the requests from organisations or individuals involved in the conflict situation vary according to the specific nature of the conflict. In practice, protective accompaniment and the active promotion of nonviolence are the main areas of work, while the two others (maintaining a broad network of contacts, and the dissemination of information), are the means necessary for achieving the first two objectives.

Organisation and structure

Essentially, PBI is an international organisation which seeks to enable, in concrete situations, the effective contribution of ordinary citizens to Nonviolent action for the prevention of violence. Each person makes his or her contribution using individual means and skills, from whatever part of the world. For twenty years, PBI has been developing organisational structures which allow more and more people to live out this ideal. This international network for peace develops and adapts continually, thanks to the work of its members, whose motivation and active commitment make it real.

In summer 2001, an average of sixty volunteers was in field in Indonesia, Colombia and Mexico. They were supported by 400 volunteers in sixteen countries. This worldwide volunteers network for peace has been co-ordinated by part time staff people totalling not even 23 full time staff positions. All the work was financed by more than 13'000 members and supporters. In 2000, the total expenditure of all PBI entities throughout the world amounted to 1,82 million dollars.⁵

⁵ In 1999, the total summed up to 1,56 million dollars. In 2001, the total of all budgets amounts to 2,39 million dollars.

The country groups

In 2001, the PBI peace network is composed of country groups throughout four continents. In the Americas, the organisation is represented in Canada and in the United States. There are country groups in the Pacific region, Australia and New Zealand, and in India. On the African continent, a first country group is currently emerging in Tunisia. In Europe, the organisation is represented in a dozen countries: Germany, Belgium, Spain, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Switzerland. In these countries, hundreds of volunteers, supported by national co-ordination offices, contribute to the continual work of bringing together the human, political and financial resources necessary to maintain the peace projects in conflict areas.

It is the country groups which build up the international component of the urgent response networks which support the work of the teams in the field. This network is composed of members ready to intervene, upon receiving an urgent call from one of the teams, by communicating with any authority which may be able to influence the situation being denounced. This network allows volunteers to maintain their role as international witnesses, able to publicise the facts, trigger a rapid reaction abroad, and in this way, exert pressure on governments, which are, after all, concerned about their image.

PBI's international structure

Every three years, a General Assembly brings together delegates from all the entities of PBI to take decisions regarding the organisation's direction and strategies, and the project mandates.⁶ Each mandate expires at the time of the Assembly, and must be renewed by consensus, based on an evaluation of the project's impact.

In between Assemblies, decision-making power is held by an International Council made up of volunteer delegates from each continent and from each project, and from the international finance committee. This council is supported by the international office, based in London and staffed by four part-time paid employees.

The three constituents of a PBI project

Each project is made up of at least three different parts:

- In the conflict areas, a PBI project takes the form of peace teams formed by about four to ten volunteers stemming from various parts of the world, in general for a stint of one year. Its members live and work in the same house. Within the context of the project's mandate and strategy, the team takes decisions by consensus on the requests received, and organises the work in an autonomous way, albeit based on the broad experience of PBI.
- The second constituent of the project is the committee. It is composed of three to eight (or more) members: volunteer representatives of the country groups, others interested in or having skills relating to the conflict region in question, and one representative of the team. This committee takes overall responsibility for the project; it engages staff persons and selects volunteers. In accordance with the mandate approved by the organisation as a whole, it manages the project's strategy and policy, and takes care of administration and financial management. It meets twice a year. In between meetings, it supervises the team and the co-ordination office, by means of e-mail, and guarantees the continuity of project policy and strategy.
- The third constituent is a co-ordination office situated outside the country of conflict, run by a salaried worker. The co-ordination office takes care of the day-to-day management of

⁶ The Haiti Project received a first mandate at the General Assembly in summer 1995 on the ground of which the team started its work. The entire paper archives are being transferred to McMaster University in Hamilton Canada, who maintains the general archives of PBI. With the evolution of the project, the mandate has been précised and was re-approved at the General Assembly in 1998 (see document in appendix 4, page ?????)

the team in particular, and the project in general. Its role includes, among other things, disseminating information, and organising meetings between the different constituents of the project and the country groups. It organises the recruitment and training of volunteers, and contributes to fund-raising for the project. It deals with publicity, takes care of administrative tasks, gives accounting support and manages the archives.

Internal dynamics of a PBI project

On the one hand, there is the permanent team of volunteers which has daily, privileged contact with a considerable number of the main actors of the civil society of the country in conflict. It develops an "internal" vision of the conflict dynamic which will reflect this position of closeness. It must constantly adapt the mandate and principles of PBI to the specific situation on the ground and to each request received by the team.

In other parts of the world, far away from the players in the conflict, are the committee members, who read and digest all of the reports concerning the team's activities. This "virtual" committee communicates by e-mail and meets in general twice a year, to fulfil its role of evaluator, supervisor, giver of direction, and - sometimes - safety mechanism, for example if a team loses its objectivity in relation to its partners in the field, or if it neglects one of the principles.

Between the two, playing a role something akin to oiling the cogs, is the co-ordination office which carries out the project administration and facilitates the flow of communication between the two other constituents, and with the PBI international network.

The teams work in an autonomous manner, whilst respecting the organisation's principles. Each activity is described in a written internal report, which is "digested" and commented upon by people with specific expertise, either of the situation in Haiti, or of PBI, but always far removed from the conflict in progress.

The result of this structure is a system for weighing up the pros and cons of any activity undertaken by the team in the country, which must achieve an equilibrium, as all decisions are taken by consensus.

As a secondary result of the process and over the years, large archives are created, with files on the country, the partners of PBI and each action undertaken by the team members. They serve as memory of the project and are maintained partially by the team that uses them often (e.g. for the induction of new arriving volunteers, for the transmission of each partner's contact history amongst team members of one and the same, but above all, of the successive teams), The co-ordination outside the country maintains the same, but complete archives, which are transferred to the archives of PBI at McMaster's University in Hamilton Canada, when the project is closed.⁷

Another dynamic common to PBI projects is the desire and the possibility to learn on all levels and to immerse oneself in the host country. First, there is the whole PBI approach in the host country, which is very much anchored in the people and in the local culture. Often volunteers talk about intense and profound contacts developed with the activists within a civil society under threat. A good number of volunteers who created close links during their service with PBI, continued their work in Haiti in another form.

In addition, the desire to learn and to commit oneself to a process of continual evolution is shown in the fact that the projects develop various dynamics with regard to evaluation.

- The peace team in the conflict region carries out a permanent evaluation process, immediately after each activity. In the reports written on each activity carried out by the team, the team's own evaluation is included.
- On the basis of systematic matrices, an evaluation of all of the project's work is carried out every six months by the committee, in the context of its twice-yearly meetings. The plan of action for the next six months is also based on this evaluation.

⁷ On request, most of the PBI-Haiti archives are also accessible electronically on CD-R.

- A third evaluation, much more far-reaching, and sometimes carried out by external evaluators, is done every three years for the General Assembly - and hence with a view to renewing or possibly changing the mandate.
- On a personal level, all involved in PBI carry out periodic individual evaluations. They are done on the basis of a written self-evaluation, which is shared and discussed during a team meeting. Finally they are sent to the project committee with the comments of the team-mates.

Becoming a PBI volunteer

The organisation is open to people of all cultures, languages, religions and geographic origin, who wish to work with the Peace Brigades on the local, national, regional or international level.

PBI requires that its volunteers have a minimum age of 25, are prepared to commit to a service of one year, and master the working language of the project and of the host country. Apart from these more or less measurable criteria, volunteers must be motivated, have a demonstrable interest in nonviolence and social justice, and an ability to live and work in a team, under pressure and in the context of a different culture. It is also necessary to have a knowledge of the local history, politics and culture, and of methods of conflict management...⁸

Candidates are first trained by their country groups in the basic principles of the organisation, before participating in a regional training programme. This brings together volunteers from several countries who are interested in working on a particular project. It lasts between one and two weeks, and also takes the form of a selection process. Although not a fixed rule, volunteers should allow for a preparation period of at least six months, from when they first register serious interest to starting their stint.

Once in the field, an orientation period of several weeks begins, during which veteran volunteers, coming to the end of their stint, introduce the new arrivals to the customs of the country, the links with partner organisations, and the team's work and procedures. The orientation of new volunteers is a very important element within a peace team, since there is a constant turnover of volunteers. The aim of the orientation is to carry out the most comprehensive possible handover of the experiences accumulated by the team members. It concerns not only the life and functioning of the team, but also Haitian culture and customs. It also provides an initial overview of the context, the protagonists and their role in the network of contacts.

⁸ There is a table with volunteers evaluation criteria, worked out by the Haiti project committee in appendix 4, page ????,

Peace Brigades International : Organizational Structure 2000

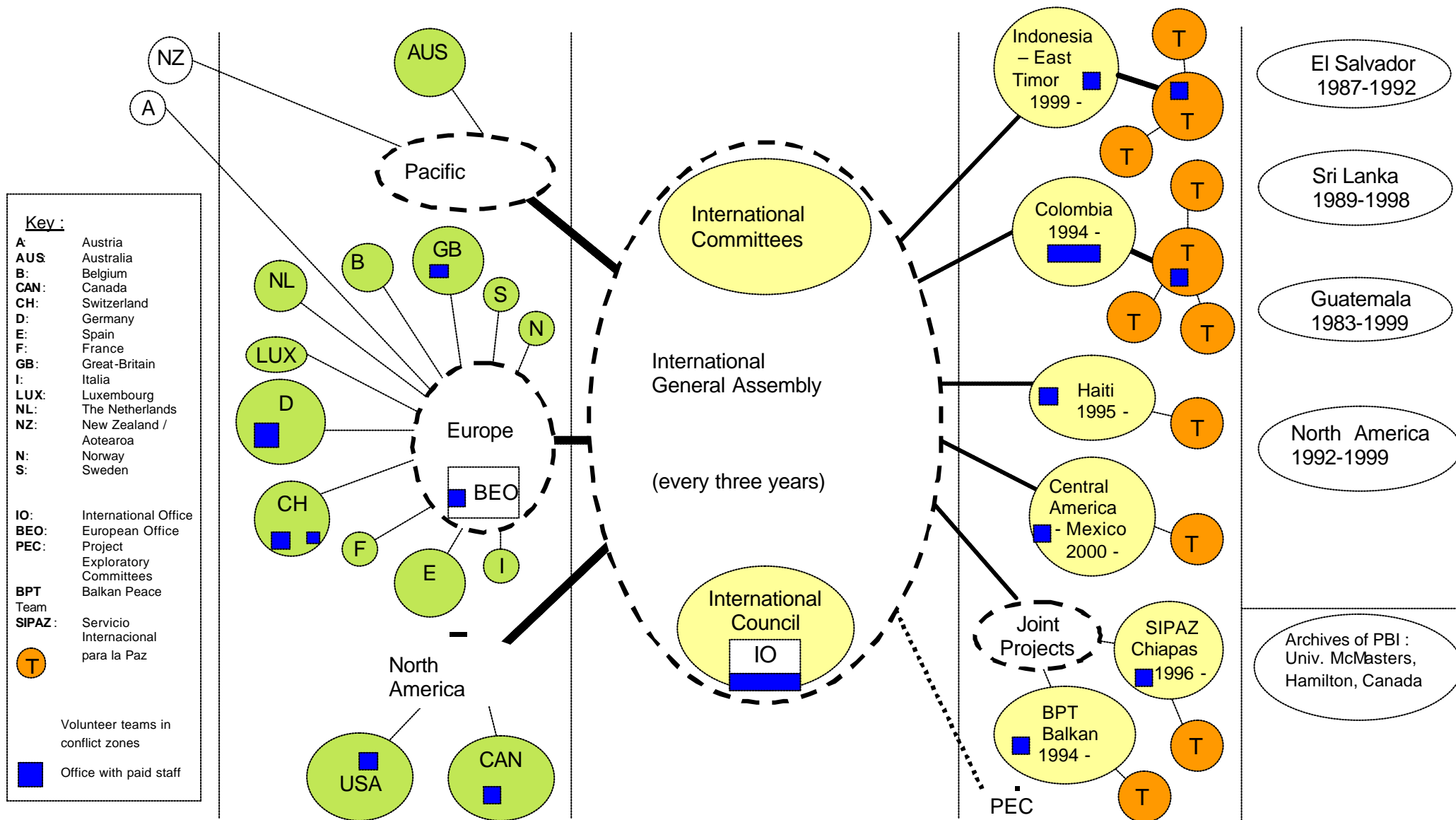
Associated Groups

Country Group & Regional Offices

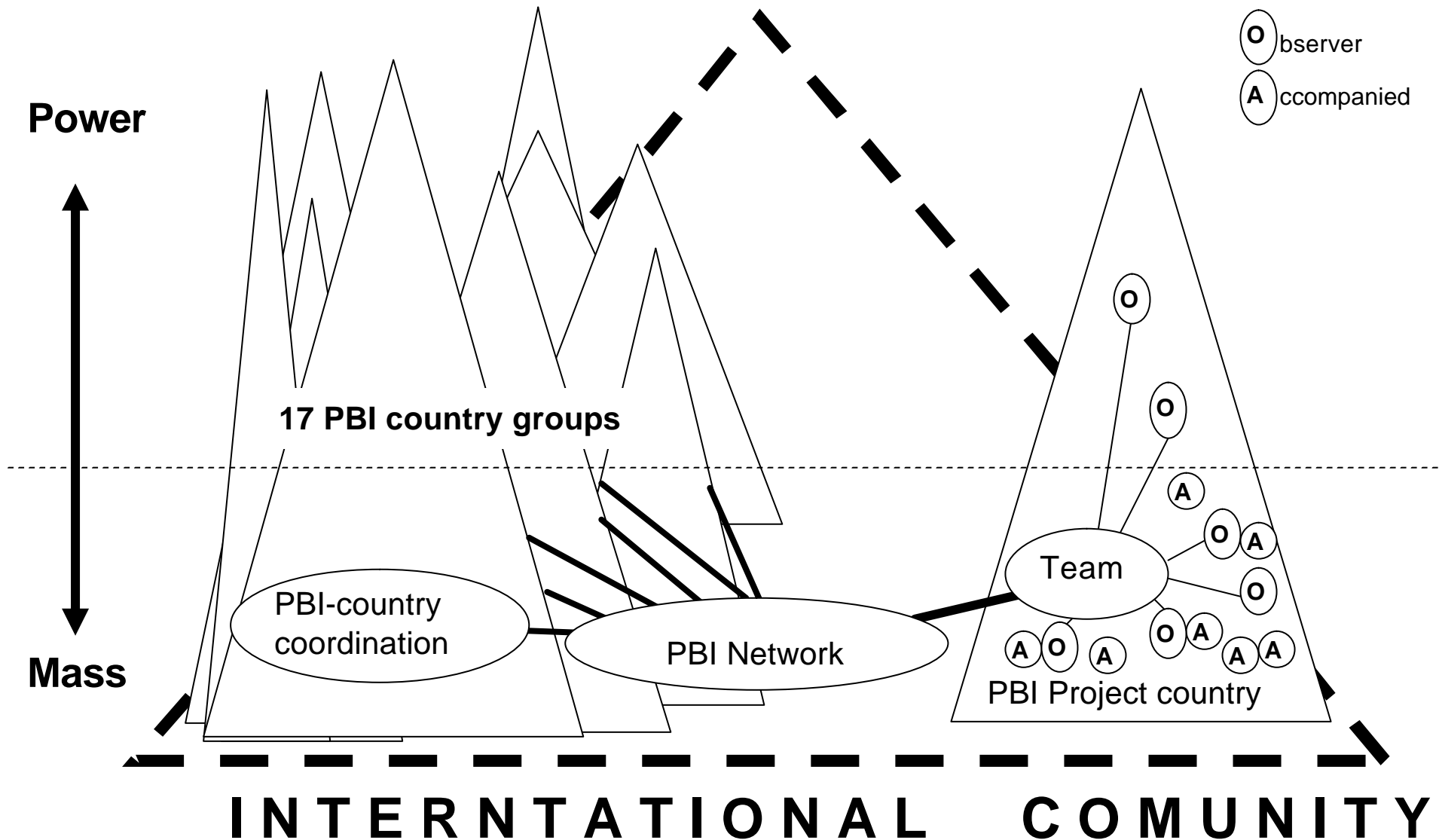
International level

Current Projects

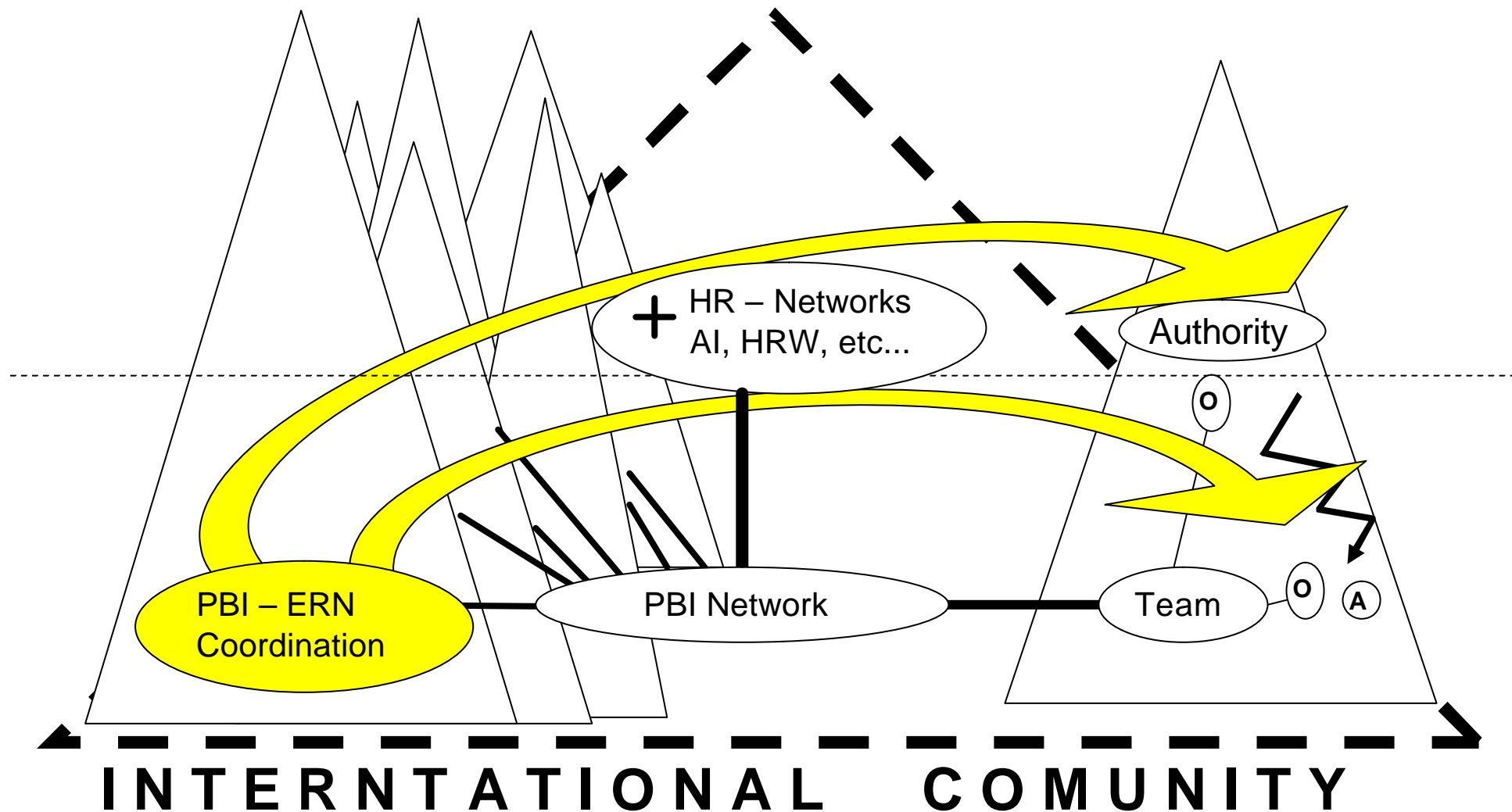
Closed Projects



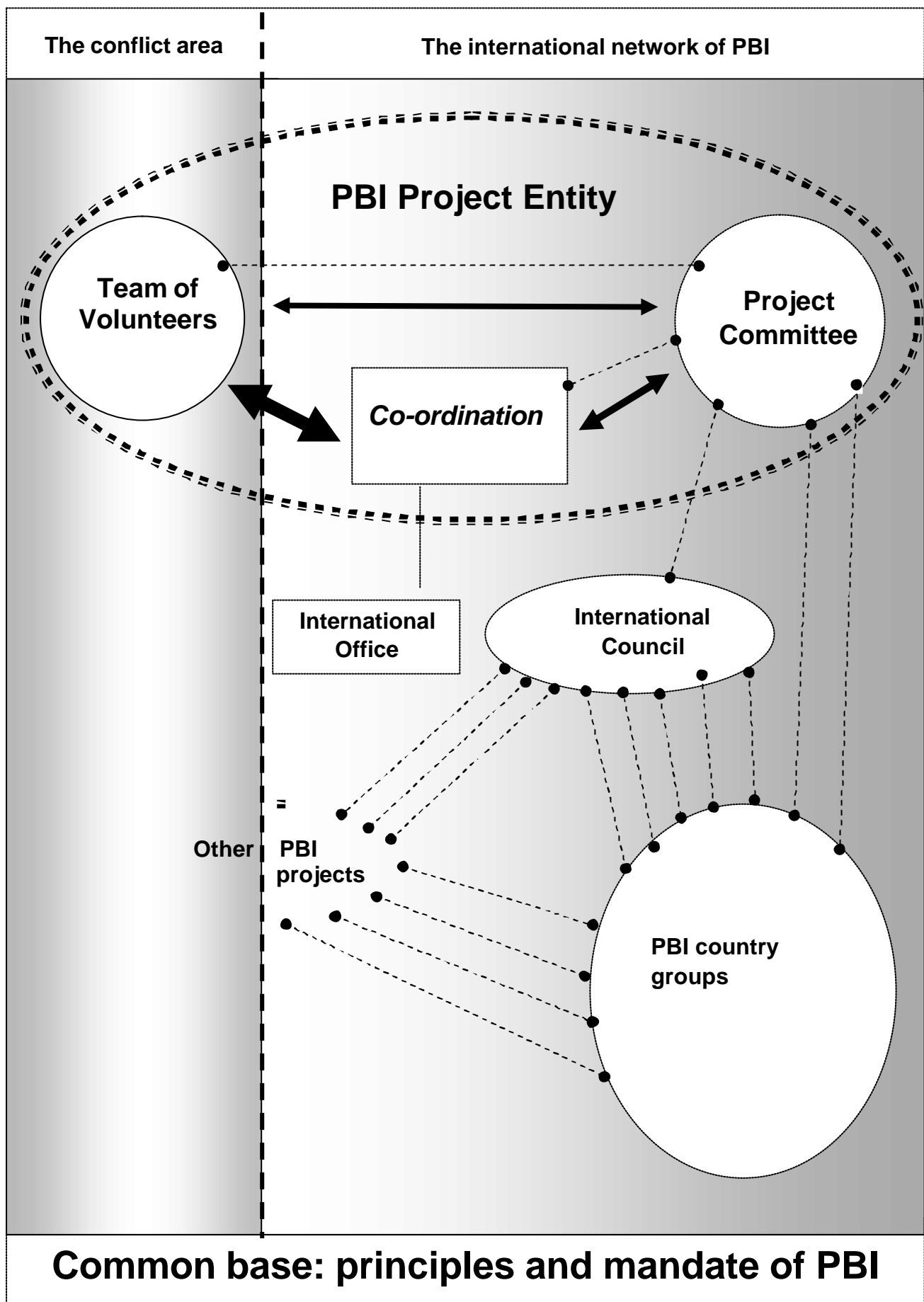
Backing International Peacework : Bridging the gap between citizens



Quantitative Alert of Concerned Citizens as a Member of PBI's "Emergency Response Network", ERN



Structure and internal dynamics of a PBI Project



Part B : PBI in Haiti

The Political Context of PBI's Activities in Haiti

PBI began working in Haiti at the end of 1995, with the aim of supporting the process of democratisation already underway there.⁹ After Aristide's return and during the period PBI had a permanent team on the island, there was no organised State repression. The army and paramilitary organisations have been disbanded, and police reform was underway. This assessment does not intend to imply that there was no violence or fear, for murders continued to take place. But the origin of these acts of violence was more difficult to establish: political infighting, corruption, accounts being settled, crime, or a combination of these elements. The years of repression left behind a vacuum with regard to organised civil society; in some areas, after the Macoute system collapsed, there were no local structures left to manage conflicts.

Nevertheless, civil society had to face up to all of the conflicts inherited from the dictatorship years. Firstly, there were all of the wounds and injustices experienced by the direct victims of State violence. In addition, arbitrary rule, over several decades, had given rise to extremely complex situations. This can be illustrated using the example of a land conflict case: an opponent of Duvalier had to go into exile; his land was confiscated; it was given to a soldier, who sold it to a farmer; the farmer had the land confiscated again by a corrupt judge, acting on behalf of a rich landowner; the landowner sold the land; but the farmer who bought it had to go into exile during the coup d'état; finally, another farmer, seeing this land uncultivated and dried out, worked for several years to make it suitable, today, for farming. To whom does it belong?

In addition to this difficult legacy of the past, Haiti is also weighed down by the usual conflicts arising from any transition period.

"Being an activist is not limited to what you do in meetings of an organisation. Being an activist means fighting every day against society's aggressions, against the consequences of the *ancien régime*."

Rosanne Auguste of the *Association pour la promotion de la Santé Intégrale de la Famille* (Association for the Promotion of All-round Family Health, APROSIFA), in Newsletter no.11 of the PBI Haiti Team

Nevertheless, the aftermath of the dictatorship has presented some opportunities which are unique in Haitian history. Firstly, the army was disbanded (even if, in law, it has still not been abolished). Secondly, for the first time in Haiti, on 7 February 1996, a democratically elected President (René Prével) succeeded another democratically elected President (Jean-Bertrand Aristide).

But Haitian society has had few opportunities to practice using rights to freedom of association and to take part in grassroots democracy. Some civil society movements were created at the beginning of the 80's (for example, the grassroots communities of the Catholic church, the "*Ti Legliz*"). But, having chased the dictator into exile, and ushered in presidential elections, they were systematically crushed during the coup d'état.

For years, every community initiative was nipped in the bud, and there remains, on the collective level, very little experience of organised action and co-operation within civil society. As a consequence, on the individual level, there have been few opportunities to develop democratic leadership skills.

As part of its work of political analysis, the project committee identified the following elements as being the major challenges facing both civil society and the Haitian State:

- To strengthen the process of democratisation, in view of the fact that the Haitian political world is still taken up with the quest for points of reference. To create a

⁹ The mandate of the PBI Haiti project as approved by PBI's General Assembly in 1998 is reprinted in appendix 4, page ????.

Haitian democratic system, and not one simply copied from various Western systems.

- To actively work for the good of the community (by means of participative democracy), starting with various civil society organisations.
- Establish a judicial system guaranteeing the rule of law.
- Supervise the global process of reform of the State apparatus, by acting as an intermediary with the authorities, denouncing and taking action against abuses committed by the police and the judicial system, and proposing improvements.
- Establish an education system and democratic social structures.
- Stabilise the national economy and improve Haitians' standard of living, by means of co-ordinated projects, at least on a local level.
- Reaffirm Haiti's right to self-determination, in the context of the power and presence of the international aid donors and the policies of the major foreign powers, in particular the United States.

In this period of post-repression, characterised by instability and conflict, and the need to rebuild civil society which had suffered severely damage, Haitian organisations asked PBI for a very different type of intervention than, for example, the local organisations in Guatemala, who requested international protective accompaniment for civil society actors threatened by a repressive state apparatus. In Haiti our partners - individuals and grassroots organisations working for peace and human rights - above all expressed the need to further develop their skills in Nonviolent conflict management.

The project strategy

Throughout its presence in Haiti (1995-2000), the PBI Haiti Project sought to base its activities on a continually updated analysis of the political situation.

The Haitian State, rising up from the ashes of a coup d'état during which much blood was spilt, faced an enormous task of reconstruction. To help with the reform of State structures, Haiti received support from the international community (United Nations, Organisation of American States, development and aid agencies of various countries), which was willing to invest human and financial resources in reforming the police, judiciary and prison system. But the Haitian State, faced with these tasks and a multitude of constraints, needed (and still needs) a strong civil society to support, advise and watch over it, throughout the process of constructing and putting into place the building blocks of a true rule of law. By offering its services to civil society, PBI's activities have complemented those of the overseas agencies which have dealt primarily with the State.

The overall aim of PBI's presence and activities was to support the process of democratisation in Haiti, by supporting local initiatives working nonviolently for the respect of human rights, the consolidation of democracy and the promotion of peace. PBI volunteers pursued this goal by providing international presence at events organised by Haitian civil society, disseminating information concerning these events, and an intense programme of peace education. These areas of work have been adapted to the specific situation in Haiti in order to contribute more effectively to maintaining and opening up spaces for political activity and dialogue. These spaces for discussion, exchange, meetings and training have been offered to civil society in order to enrich and foster its active role in society.

Over the years, at the request of our Haitian partners, and within the limits imposed by our mandate and principles, the Haiti project has developed a strategy on two levels:

- grassroots level, participative workshops on positive conflict management, group decision-making, communication, Nonviolent action, etc.
- trainings for trainers for civil society representatives wishing to carry out workshops of this type.

The aim of PBI's activities in Haiti was therefore never to propose ready-made solutions, but to contribute to the opening up of a space for exchange, reflection and training. The style and techniques of participative workshops seemed to be the most suitable in order to allow the participants to develop their own skills. The trainings for trainers aimed to create a broader base of trainers willing to respond to the great demand for this type of workshop from Haitian organisations.

The project's focus on training influenced the way in which volunteers were sought out and prepared. Contacts were made with various organisations working on conflict transformation and peace training in Europe, in order to identify volunteers who had already followed a course of this type. Several candidates, before leaving for Haiti, followed basic-level courses or a training for trainers given by one of these organisations. Moreover, during the training organised by PBI for the purpose of preparation and selection of volunteers, the candidates were required to design, lead and evaluate workshops on various themes linked to conflict management. These exercises allowed each candidate to evaluate his/her skills as a workshop facilitator. The trainers observed the candidates and evaluated these skills, as well as others with regard to attitude and life skills, which are necessary for working on a PBI project: ability to work in a team, take decisions in a group, be affirmative, listen, accept and give criticism, etc. At the end of the training, the project committee decided whether each candidate was accepted for the project or not, with reference to a report drawn up by the trainers and the candidates on a consensus basis.

To enable team members to communicate more effectively within the Haitian context, a number of strategies have been developed.

- ? From the moment they arrive, the volunteers are given Creole conversation lessons by bilingual Haitians.
- ? Shortly afterwards they go to stay for about two weeks with a Haitian family in a Creole-speaking rural environment, to learn about and get to know Haiti, its language and its culture. Ideally, these "immersion" periods are repeated (totalling about a month).
- ? The library of the PBI house in Port-au-Prince had reference books on conflict transformation, Haiti and various aspects of Haitian life in French, English, and Creole.
- ? Prominent Haitians and specialists on the Haitian context are periodically invited to the PBI house for discussions and informal analysis.
- ? The team reads most of the Haitian newspapers, of all political tendencies, including publications in Creole, and they listen to radio news.
- ? The PBI workshops are facilitated in collaboration with a Haitian trainer.

Some of these strategies were implemented right from the start of the Haiti Project, while others have been developed and tested progressively.

The type of work in Haiti was challenging for all volunteers, primarily with regard to social and attitude skills (for example, their ability to interact with the people and country). These qualities were much more important than any contribution of specific knowledge or know-how. In the beginning, volunteers are asked to remain attentive, humble and self-critical, in order not to impose their contributions, but to simply offer them (for criticism, amongst other things). But above all, PBI volunteers are asked to remain open to discovery, and to create space for, acknowledge and enhance Haitian resources.

Synoptic table of PBI Haiti project

Year	Project in general and within PBI	Training activities	Accompaniment	Public Relations	
1992				First request of MPP	1992
1993	Cry for Justice		70 observers for the return of President Aristide	Contact with Haitian Diaspora, exiled people and with solidarity organizations with Haiti	1993
1994	Constitution of project exploratory committee		Request of Justice and Peace Commission		1994
1995	Exploratory mission in Haiti General Assembly of PBI approves the project. Arrival of the first team on 10 December		Accompaniment of election observers	Pick up contact with requesting organisms and other personalities in Haiti. Request of the bishop of Gonaïves, E. Constant	1995
1996	Installation; exploration Definition of the strategy Development of procedures	First training workshops, first training for trainers; mediation group in Pont Sondé; first visit in Chénôt. Beginning of meetings of the GFP. Start of co-animations training workshops.	Various explorations Some protective accompaniments	Presentations of PBI, interviews. First concrete requests. Collaboration with UN and other international NGO's	1996
1997	Evolution of the strategy	Cycle of preparatory workshops, the two training for trainers, one of which in the province	Observer's presence at the sit-in on the Champ de Mars, requesting justice et compensation for the victims of the Coup d'Etat	Forums on insecurity Meetings on reform of the justice system	1997
1998	Mandate HAP re-approved by PBI's GA in Sweden	Women's workshops Four training for trainers (in the Capital and the province) Co-facilitation of the training for trainers by members of the GFP, Guide for Peace Education, in Creole	Presence at demonstrations in Pont Sondé	Visit of Perez Esquivel in Haiti Contacts with women's organizations	1998
1999	Internal evaluation of the project Proposal for a closure Strategy for preparing our departure: Organizational reinforcement, networking	All requests for workshops received by PBI transferred to GFP. Two training for trainers. General Assembly of the Group Shalom at Chénôt with 80 persons stemming from 20 communities. The GFP is working on its bylaws. First workshops led by the GFP as such.	Various investigations	Team evaluation of the work realized by PBI in Haiti	1999
2000	Haitian evaluation in field. In July : Closure of the team and the co-ordination in Paris. External evaluation on the grounds of the archives and interviews. Preparation of internal transmission to PBI: book, encounters, archiving	Workshops for organizational reinforcement of the GFP. Approval of GFP's legal status as non-profit by Haitian authorities	Frequent contacts with external evaluators	Interviews with all partners: announcement of departure, collection of last requests. Establishment of inventory of Haitian resources on NVCT. Closure feast with more than 175 persons	2000
2001	Formal Closure of the project at PBI's GA in November 2001	Various correspondence with GFP, exchanges. Contributions to the book. Representative of the GFP at PBI's international 20 th anniversary conference		In September, publishing of the Haiti book at Karthala editions, Paris. Haiti Fiesta on 27 th October in Switzerland, Translation to English	2001

Table of resources put at work for the realisation of the PBI-Haiti project										
Year	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Volunteer members of the Project Committee				PBI-Haiti as a PBI entity from Jan.1995 to Nov. 2001						
MAHONY Liam, USA, 1958										
ALRED Bue, U.K., 1946										
HARRIS David, USA										
STRUYVEN Yves, F										
MARCHAL Cécile, F, 1942										
PRÉAUBERT Annick, F, 1925										
NOLLER Monika, D, 1961										
STÖRK Jürgen, CH, 1961										
OSWALD Christophe, CH, 1967										
ASHMORE Max Simon, U.K., 1967										
ALLENBACH Marc, CH, 1970										
DANROC Gilles, F, 1950										
REBETEZ Frédérique, CH, 1974										
Project co-ordination in Paris										
URREGO Luis, Colombia, 1961										
Volunteers of the PBI Haiti Peace Team				Field team from Dec. 1995 to July 2000						
BONALDI Michel, F, 1930										
OSWALD Christophe, CH, 1967										
STÖRK Jürgen Ulrich, CH, 1961										
MOREL Elisabeth, F, 1969										
ALLENBACH Marc, CH, 1970										
ASHMORE Max Simon, CH, 1967										
FOESTER Kira, D, 1969										
DAVIS-METZNER Justin, USA, 1972										
CHAPMAN Christopher, U.K., 1966										
THIERRY Catherine, F, 1938										
SERGEANT Chantal, F, 1948										
CAKLEY Joe, USA, 1955										
PÉTIAUX Stéphane, B, 1971										
LAGRANGE Alfred, Martinique F, 1971										
NOIRFALISSE Tom, B, 1976										
MACHABERT Nathalie, F, 1973										
ONIAN Charles, U.K., 1973										
LOUIS Vincent Rémy, B, 1970										
FRIELE Boris Andreas, D, 1969										
VROKLAGE Bernhard, NL, 1943										
REBETEZ Frédérique, CH, 1974										
KONING Martijn, NL, 1969										
SCHICK Imgard, D, 1966										
LEBRUN Wenefried, F, 1971										
DABADIE François, F, 1967										
ESCHER Judith, CH, 1966										
Add the trainers of the volunteer candidates, the trainers of the training for trainers, the volunteers at the project co-ordination and in other PBI entities.										
Year	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Yearly total expenditure in \$ US				20559	101578	90130	116383	173885	92930	~22000
Total cost from 1995 to 2001 amounts to approximatively 600'000 \$ US (incl. external evaluation, publication and translation). Thanks to all contributors !										

3. Marc Allenbach : *Chronicle of an Encounter*

Prologue

It is both a rich and difficult task to describe five years of experience with PBI in Haiti. Beyond the events and actions accomplished, it has been an adventure, where the lives of PBI members and Haitian militants became intertwined in pursuit of several shared goals: building peace, the respect of human rights, a path towards democracy, the development of a civil society, the endeavour to create authentic and enriching intercultural relations... These encounters have given rise to debate, collaboration, collective and individual evolution. How can I choose from such a wealth of activity, how can I enable the reader to perceive its energy and life? How can I help but limit myself to compiling a fastidious list without interfering all the same with the work of evaluation?

"PBI, you are like a friend encountered in the course of my search through socialisation to become a human being. To benefit from this exchange, I was motivated to set up a discussion workshop on nonviolence and prepare a broadcast on two radio stations entitled: "The law, laws, and us." Therefore I am honoured, and why not honour this small catalyst which has changed me into a true trainer."

Pierre Jean Hervé, Assistance Program Co-ordinator, Legal Aid for Prisoners (PALD), Co-ordinator for the Coalition of Organisations for the Development of the Centre (CODEC), Member of the GFP

Preparations: 1993-1995

The military coup d'état in 1991 plunged Haiti into a dictatorship, after years of struggle by the Haitian people and one year of presidential democracy. Repression affected all democratic movements. At their request, in June 1993 several North American and international Nonviolent organisations sent teams of volunteers. PBI took part in this action, called "Cry for Justice," which sought to install a massive presence of observers to prepare for President Aristide's return and for democracy.

Unfortunately, his return was postponed... Initially planned to last a few weeks, the operation "Cry for Justice" managed to maintain its presence for about ten weeks, then had to leave the country. However, contacts had been made. A long-term presence was desired. At PBI, which took part in the operation, the request was examined and discussed, while the research to find the necessary human resources and financing begun.

In the meantime, President Aristide's return was being organised in the United States, and this occurred on October 15, 1994. In the winter however, Bishop Constant from Gonaïves, together with Justice and Peace, the commission of the Catholic Church entrusted with the question of respect for human rights, wrote to PBI to reiterate their request. There was the "hope for the birth and flowering of authentic democracy in Haiti," but it required a "change in mentality and behaviour" and in the meantime the situation remained "fragile and unstable" and "threats and violence were still present."

In the spring of 1995, a so-called "exploratory" team prepared to leave for Haiti... But did it still make sense to implement a project initially planned to intervene in a country under a military regime? The members of the exploratory team put this question to all the Haitian partners they met, who all replied in the affirmative: the memory of the 1991 coup was still very much alive in people's minds and many human rights activists lived in fear of a new coup, or of a political descent into chaos. PBI's presence was desired as a sign that the international community recognised Haiti's efforts towards democracy. Support for Nonviolent training was also expressed by a number of interlocutors.

PBI response: December 1995 - June 1996

In December 1995 the PBI project was officially launched in Haiti. During the first months, three volunteers set up the logistic bases of the project and began extensive public relations work. Meetings were organised with Haitian ministers, ambassadors, and political and religious leaders in order to present PBI's work methods and to listen to their points of view on the situation. Above all, the team met with the heads of Haitian and foreign organisations. A strong relationship was established with those who worked in promoting peace, human rights and conflict transformation, both Haitian (Justice and Peace, NCHR) and foreign (UN Civil Mission, Witness for Peace,...) Right from the start there was a concern to encourage collaboration and synergy whenever the opportunity arose. The team, and PBI in general, had everything to learn in Haiti, in particular the positive experiences and disappointments experienced by Haitian militants or foreigners working there. What they learned would enable them better to understand the context of their work and to avoid repeating old mistakes; each piece of information was also an indispensable step for their project to take shape with meaning.

A few observation presences and two protective accompaniments were carried out, but requests for accompaniment were few, whereas there were a number of requests for conflict transformation training. But that type of action was only little developed within PBI. An internal debate arose: could PBI Haiti respond to these requests? Was that its role? How could PBI remain non-interferent and yet be in charge of training? How could they avoid lapsing into a relationship of supremacy, between "Whites" who "know" or rather, who "think they know everything" and Haitians who felt less worthy as a result?

This internal debate was nourished by thoughts shared between our Haitian partners and expatriates from other NGOs. For example, two workshops were set up by a volunteer who had already run seminars of this type in Guatemala. The techniques used (games, exercises, verbal and non-verbal exchange, role-playing, etc.) questioned and intrigued the participants. The project then decided to invite an experienced Swiss trainer to facilitate a one-week training session in workshop facilitation, in which volunteers from PBI and seven Haitian workshop facilitators, recommended by their respective organisations, took part.

Why did the Haitian human rights organisations turn to us with such a request? They explained that they were trying to expand the scope of their activity: to the role of protest, denunciation and resistance to a dictatorial regime they must now add participation in the gradual building of democracy. While it must retain a critical outlook and control over the state's actions, civil society is called upon to play the role of partner and, in some cases, to make up for what was lacking, at least from a Western point of view. The state apparatus, indeed, distorted and ruined by centuries of corruption, does not fulfil certain functions which are commonly viewed as being the responsibility of the State in industrialised countries.

For example, in the region of the Artibonite, a vast plain where irrigation has allowed the monoculture of rice, land disputes are frequent and sometimes violent. Over recent decades, land has been confiscated, people have had to flee and plots of land have been handed out at the whim of the various political upheavals, but always in a totally arbitrary fashion. So when an irrigated piece of land turns out to be fertile, it often happens that several people claim ownership, deeds of ownership in hand. These disputes are the result of repeated abuses of power, and from a legal point of view are of a virtually inextricable nature. To this one must add the absence of any land registry, the sorry state of the archives, the judges' lack of education, obsolete laws, and various forms of corruption. Resorting to justice therefore turns out to be very disappointing for the

peasants. If they find no other means to resolve certain disputes, protagonists often resort to violence.

To prevent this type of excessive behaviour a mediation practice was set up in a parish of the Artibonite region at Pont-Sondé. In the spring of 1995, many peasants came to ask for help in resolving their disputes, at times even asking for arbitration. This practice came to the attention of several foreign organisations: the Civil Mission of the United Nations and the Mennonite Committee Centre, the latter being active in reforestation projects. PBI was also invited to attend these sessions. The main mediator took part in the training of trainers, organised by PBI in the summer.

Setting the stage: Summer 1996- Summer 1997

July, 1996, the first training session of trainers, led by Philippe Beck, was the date of my initiation into Nonviolent conflict transformation, and it proved to be a very important moment in my life. I was trained in the legal profession, but my place is no longer in the courtroom defending the behaviour of people and their acts. My work consists in helping people to monitor their disruptive behaviour, to prevent problems resulting from a lack of communication, to communicate with their emotions, to practice co-operation and collaboration when necessary—in short, to live according to their minds and hearts. I recall one of Philippe's questions: "Who has found life's trade?" That's my new Christian ministry, my new trade, my profession as a craftsman of peace.

Ernst Pierre, Craftsman of Peace, TNVC trainer, Member of the GFP, Consultant in Peace building with MCC Haiti.

Subsequently, the INARA (National Institute for Agrarian Reform) also hired this mediator. As a result, its work was recognised by the State, which used its skills judiciously. But at the same time this movement which had emerged from civil society found itself "beheaded." (This happened on a number of occasions in the country during this period.) Moreover, given the precarious context, participation in the "Pont-Sondé Group" would become associated, in the minds of the local population, with the possibility of obtaining a job as a civil servant. The presence and financial support, however modest, of the MICIVIH (food, transportation costs, per diems for the peasants' loss of earnings) would fuel their hope of material gain. Very quickly this Haitian civil movement turned into a project both supported and financed by Western organisations. It lost its essence: not a single peasant came forward to present a conflict situation anymore, and within months the action died.

The evaluation of this experience incited PBI to underline the importance of the principle of non-interference:

- ? by being very attentive to financial intervention, even when it seems minimal;
- ? by going deeper into an analysis of the continual demand centred on the Haitian partners;
- ? by consequently taking distance from projects planned by foreign organisations¹⁰.

The participants in the first workshop-facilitation training session for conflict transformation all expressed their desire to meet again. Henceforth regular meetings were organised at the home of a Haitian workshop facilitator or at the PBI house.

¹⁰ In several international organizations, a new project is accepted only on the basis of a detailed plan of the action, centred around medium or long-term aims. As a result, the file on the project, once it has been compiled by the designated employee, cannot leave much room to the local partners to elaborate and redefine the action on the basis of the evolution of their request and their relation with the international organization. Such a project has without doubt been conceived with a great deal of care, following a detailed analysis of what was needed, and, at times, an in-depth consultation with local partners. But as it has been written and approved by an international organization, the Haitian actors have already lost ownership on the project.

The PBI team was receiving ever-increasing numbers of requests for workshops from various regions of the country, which gave the PBI volunteers, and the Haitian workshop leaders the opportunity to put into practice the elements elaborated during the training sessions.

Some workshops went very well, but others fell short of expectations. Debate over the requisite conditions for a fruitful workshop produced procedures for future.¹¹ It was recognized as indispensable that one of the two workshop facilitators be a Haitian. There had to be a preliminary visit to meet with the various protagonists of the region, and to try to understand the context in which the volunteers were asked to intervene. It was necessary to ascertain that the participants were coming of their own will... Financially, contrary to a practice widespread among foreign organisations, PBI refused to cover expenses for food, lodging, transportation or any daily per diems warranted by the participants' loss of earnings.

Measures such as these aimed to create a favourable framework for training in a way of being: it was indispensable that the participants be present of their own free will, and sufficiently motivated to be ready get involved on a personal level. Several workshops were set up according to this model. Some requests led to encounters or visits but workshops did not materialise.

In the spring, the climate of insecurity in Port-au-Prince was cause for serious concern among our Haitian partners and this incited the team to suggest a meeting on the topic. In one year in Haiti PBI had created a wide network of relations with Haitian human rights organisations, as well as with various foreign organisations.

"It was through the National Episcopal Commission of Justice and Peace, an organisation for the promotion and defence of human rights, that I got to know PBI. I followed a Training for Trainers course in 1997 and since then I have been part of the GFP (Peace Trainers' Group), which complements my other work. My main motivation in my role as a peace trainer is especially to give techniques to local people for them to use in resolving their conflicts without having to go through the justice system, which to me is corrupt and violent. In my opinion, the techniques used in the workshops are not entirely appropriate to the culture in this country and they should not be completely relied on. The concept of consensus, for example, is not widespread, and the more usual Haitian approaches to conflict management are mediation and conciliation. The issue of adapting the techniques used to Haitian culture remains an important one and one constantly called into question. But I remain convinced that these participative methods are a valid form of learning nonviolence. To work for peace education is to work for justice, i.e. for the rights and responsibilities of all and to give the least powerful the right to live as any others do." Jocelyne Colas, Member of Justice and Peace Commission and the GFP, bulletin 13 of the PBI Haiti team, November 1997

The idea of organising a forum was met with enthusiasm by the majority of partners contacted. A Haitian trainer agreed to facilitate these meetings. This was the opportunity for several Haitian and foreign organisations to get to know each other. Collaboration and synergy were later developed, as was the organisation of a first Nonviolent demonstration on the champ de Mars in Port-au-Prince, to demand justice and compensation for the victims of the coup d'état. PBI's presence was solicited by the demonstrators, who were afraid of reprisals on the part of groups close to the former regime.

In 1997 the second training program for trainers was organised, and was preceded this time by a cycle of preparatory workshops. Candidates for workshop facilitation discovered the themes of non-violence, conflict transformation, and various styles of participatory facilitation. The cycle thus allowed for a selection of participants. It also met individual

¹¹ See the list of points to clarify when receiving a request for training in appendix 4, page ????

requests for basic training which, taken all together, justified the creation of workshops on site.

Finally, it also corresponded to a need for exchange and ongoing training expressed by the facilitators who had followed the previous training for trainer's program. Their skills were put to good use, for they were called on to facilitate or co-facilitate these workshops.

Ripening: Summer 1997 - Summer 1998

During this period, the project suffered from a shortage of volunteers, and the team was reduced to three people, whereas the requests for basic workshops increased. A few volunteers tried to rationalise the work by suggesting workshop "modules." But in the end these modules were not used by the facilitators of subsequent workshops, who preferred to design a program of "made to measure" workshops for each new request.

The number of workshops increased, but the low percentage of women gave rise to debate within the team and with our Haitian partners, particularly the representatives of Haitian women's organisations. These discussions led to the organisation of workshops reserved for women in Port-au-Prince. At the request of the participants, the workshops would be held on a regular basis until the end of the project.¹²

That year two training sessions for trainers were set up. Experienced facilitators were recruited abroad, but henceforth they would be accompanied in their work by Haitian co-facilitators chosen among those who had already gained experience in this domain in Haiti.¹³

In fact, our Haitian partners insisted that we not be centrally focused on Port-au-Prince. From the very beginning of the project, PBI volunteers and Haitian facilitators had a heartfelt desire to respond to the requests coming from the different *départements* (districts). They did not skimp in their efforts to reach the most remote regions. But it was also important for many of the partners that the training for trainers sessions be held in the provincial towns as well. So two successive sessions were held: one in the capital, and the other outside the capital.

The PBI team maintained strong relations with a remote region in the Haitian hills, in Chénôt, between the Artibonite and the Central Plateau. In 1996, at the initiative of a nurse working in community health, PBI volunteers visited the region. Then the local group of "Justice and Peace" asked for conflict transformation workshops. The nurse and the priest from Chénôt, of Swiss origin, worked with both PBI and Justice and Peace to forge this partnership. But two more preliminary meetings were necessary to bring this about. These meetings allowed the PBI volunteers to focus attention on the Haitian activists and other local people involved in order to understand their requests, and the context, and to design their workshops together.

"In the first place, it seemed to him straight away that there was a meeting of minds between PBI and Justice and Peace (JeP) in terms of their ideals. PBI teaches the philosophy of peace as applied to a particular space, as JeP does in its own way. Little by little, he also became aware of PBI's stricter parameters, operating as it does within a far more limited field of action, which he respects and considers to be an asset, as long as this specialisation is used to advantage in taking the time to get to know the field, the local culture and what training is appropriate to each case." Report of an interview with Pierre Junior Constant, Member of Justice and Peace and the GFP, Bulletin 13 of the PBI Haiti team, November 1997

Subsequently, the participants decided to form groups which would be called "Shalom," and who would work on conflict prevention, thus developing an original and authentic

¹² In bulletin No. 11 the team published a report on one of these workshops : "A women's workshop". See appendix 2, page ????

¹³ See the report of the Haitian trainer Gracita Osias, appendix 2, page ???

response to the violence in their region. Some of the most active members later signed up for training for trainers. The relationship between PBI and the Shalom groups would be maintained right up to the end of the project. This was a very encouraging example of the fruitfulness of an encounter between PBI volunteers, Haitian facilitators and local activists. With a great deal of commitment and tact, the priest and the nurse from Chénôt greatly facilitated the continuity of this relationship, both from a human and a practical point of view. Worthy of note is the fact that particular care was given, right from the start, to the quality of these encounters, before the first workshop was set up.¹⁴

The team received very few requests for protective accompaniment. This type of work was undoubtedly unknown in Haiti, as suggested several of our interlocutors, although the volunteers regularly presented this offer to our Haitian partners. But the regular protests in the centre of Port-au-Prince, asking for justice and compensation for the victims of the military regime, started to take place on a weekly basis. PBI's presence was always requested.

The volunteers also took part in meetings with Haitian militants to demand the restitution of the archives of the FRAPH (the parallel police force which committed excesses during the coup d'état) which were being withheld by the United States government. How deeply should PBI get involved in this process? Where did its role end? This issue, much debated within PBI, finally yielded to a role as intermediary, relaying information through the global network of the organisation, without the PBI Haiti project being defined as an active player in the process.

As far as information was concerned, from that point on the team produced thematic bulletins, using the numerous contacts established in civil society to highlight education in Haiti, justice, the agrarian reform, etc.¹⁵

New challenges: Summer 1998 - Summer 1999

Response from readers of the bulletin, both in Haiti and abroad, indicated us that the specific role it fulfilled was appreciated: it contained information on the actions and points of view of Haitian civil society. From that point on the PBI bulletin would also include articles written directly by Haitian militants.

In August 1998, Adolfo Perez Esquivel, laureate of the Nobel Peace Prize, and three other militants from South America were invited to Haiti by a number of Haitian human rights organisations. They organised a week of interviews, press conferences, travel through the country, meetings with Haitian political leaders and representatives of international organisations. PBI's participation was requested both in the preparatory stage and during the actual talks.

In the meanwhile, the trainers group continued to get together once a month. They deplored the fact that there were not enough of them to be able to respond to the requests for basic workshops in positive conflict management. Moreover, a number of organisations, as well as isolated individuals, asked PBI if they too could receive training in facilitating these workshops. That winter therefore a fourth training session would be held. Additionally, several facilitators put in a request for a time for exchange and ongoing training. So a one-week retreat, open to anyone who had already followed a training for trainers session, was organised. This was also an opportunity for the group to consolidate. So this project also resolved one of the PBI team's concerns: not to become

¹⁴ A good report on the encounter between PBI and the people in Chénôt can be found in: Workshops on conflict transformation in the rural environment: a collaboration between PBI and the people of Chénôt, Mornes Cahos, in appendix 2, page ???

¹⁵ See „Thirsty for Justice” in appendix 1, page ????

indispensable, not to get entrenched in a dependent relationship with the group of trained Haitian facilitators.

During the week a "Guide to Peace Education" was created (gathering ideas, definitions, exercises in Creole, testimonies...) as well as the bylaws of the "Group of Trainers for Peace" (GFP), which nearly all the Haitian facilitators trained by PBI in Nonviolent Conflict Transformation would join.¹⁶

At the same time, it was a very difficult period: the volunteers were plagued with disagreements and doubts, among themselves and with the committee. The team had grown bigger, but the transmission of information and experience within the project turned out to be very incomplete. Thus, some of the errors made earlier occurred again, and several volunteers were uncomfortable with the definition and significance of their work. During the biannual meeting of the project committee in the spring, it was also noted that time had brought an evolution of the context of PBI's involvement: at the beginning of the project, running the training program for conflict transformation was an adventure which Haitian facilitators and international volunteers embarked upon hand in hand. Three years later, several of the Haitian facilitators had gained considerable experience. The PBI volunteers, on the other hand, continued to replace each other in succession with, on average, only one year to develop their own experience in Haiti.

The project co-ordinator made an enormous effort to improve the skills of future volunteers: recruitment in peace universities, preliminary training sessions financed by the project. But the volunteers seemed to find their efforts to adapt to the language, the culture, and the reality on the ground arduous, however fascinating. On the other hand, now that the project was already a few years old there was a new opportunity: to travel through the country and interview former participants of the various basic workshops in order to find out, a posteriori, what the workshops had given them. This task kept volunteers busy during the summer months in 1999, along with the completion of the last training program for trainers. On the Champ de Mars in Port-au-Prince, the weekly solidarity marches with the victims of the coup d'état continued. This was the first long-term Nonviolent demonstration in Haiti, which by the way expanded in the course of 1999 to several other towns in the province (Les Cayes, Gonaïves,...). The PBI project decided to reduce its presence at the march, for it no longer seemed indispensable for the action's durability.

There are two things I would like to share, very succinctly, of my experience with the Fondation Trente Septembre, and which were inspired by my work with PBI:

1. Three months after Jean Dominique was assassinated, on the anniversary of his death, we set in motion a series of operations to put pressure on the judicial system and demand Justice for Jean Dominique.
 - a. - Operation Red Telephone consisted in blocking the main telephone switchboard of the Ministry of Justice for four hours with the message: JUSTICE FOR JEAN-DO. It was a great success.
 - b. Operation Red Carpet: a human carpet for four hours in front of the Palace of Justice.
 - c. Operation White Nightingale: a special sit-in, everyone in white, with a concert of horns of 30 motorcycles in front of the Parquet of the Civil Court in Port-au-Prince.
2. - With the aim to continue building peace we launched a public awareness campaign on March 14th 2001 against the return of the Armed Forces of Haiti. The campaign consists of an itinerant photo exhibition in the nine geographical *départements* of the country to show the atrocities committed by the army and paramilitary groups. At the same time, we are circulating a petition to collect 100,000 signatures to demand the Haitian parliament to eliminate the army from the constitution of the Republic of Haiti.

Lovinsky Pierre-Antoine, Director of the "Fondation Trente Septembre", Mai 2001

¹⁶ See : "The Trainers group for Peace, a new star", in appendix 2 page ???

Relaying the work: Summer 1999 - Summer 2000

The summaries of the survey carried out that summer among the participants in the various basic workshops showed that there were rich and complex results. There was an expression of overall satisfaction, but the volunteers had the feeling that compared to the experienced Haitian facilitators they lacked skills. For peace education in Haiti to progress, the way forward necessitates, rather, an exploration of the construction and the evaluation of training programs: how to create a system, a method of training in conflict transformation which would be increasingly rooted in Haitian culture?

Is this PBI's role? Who would be better able than the Haitian facilitators and militants to choose what must be created and developed within the concepts of peace and nonviolence in their own country?

During the committee meeting in the autumn of 1999, these ideas led to the decision to close the project in summer 2000. There had in fact been very little work of protective accompaniment, because there had been little demand.

Protective accompaniment in Haiti

Why was there such little demand in Haiti for the work of protective accompaniment and for an observing presence? During the time of the coup d'état, there would undoubtedly have been far more requests for this. However, throughout the period of PBI's project in Haiti, certain activists of the civil society did face risks and were subjected to threats. In other countries in "democratic transition", such as Guatemala, PBI has carried out a lot of accompaniment work.

At first, the committee, and several Haitian and westerners involved, thought that it was simply a case of our accompaniment work not being sufficiently known about.

In their public relations work, the volunteers thus continued to present this possibility and explain it in detail, as it was a relatively new concept.

The few individuals who were accompanied were happy with it: it gave them a feeling of security and enabled them to carry out their intended activities (for example, to be able to go home and continue their human rights work, or to take up legal action). As for our observer presence work, this encouraged the use of nonviolent strategies and meant that certain actions by Haitians for human rights and for peace gained recognition.

However, the demand for this kind of work did not increase. Our Haitian partners put forward the following possible reasons for this:

- although some forms of repression, abuse of power and extremely violent political crimes did continue to occur, there was no systematic repression or state body of repression during the entire duration of PBI's project in Haiti;
- it was often difficult even for the victims themselves to identify the sources and types of violence occurring (i.e. whether political or common-law);
- for some activists, "hiding" behind a '*blan*' (a westerner, a foreigner) went against the very concept itself of commitment;
- accompaniment did not provide protection against certain forms of violence feared by many activists, such as the use of harmful voodoo spells, poisonings and revenge exacted over the very long-term.

Protective accompaniment did not in itself justify maintaining a team of international volunteers in Haiti. But many Haitian activists said they would like there to continue to be an international interest in what was happening in Haiti, particularly in the situation for civil society and its actions.

The work of setting up networks and informing about the Haitian situation did not in themselves justify the presence of a team of volunteers. "However, the project has had a real and wide impact in the domain of information and consciousness-raising in the themes of Conflict Transformation and Nonviolent Action. Moreover, many of the Haitian facilitators have developed their skills to facilitate workshops on these themes"—according

to the communiqué of the PBI Haiti Project committee which was addressed to the entire organisation. As a matter of fact, the members of the Group of Trainers for Peace were about 70 in number. Moreover, several Haitian NGOs organise basic workshops on a regular basis on the theme of conflict transformation. For PBI, to continue and to go into greater depth with the work in this field would mean "settling" in Haiti.

The project wanted to leave smoothly. Informing their Haitian partners a long time in advance allowed these partners to take over the project and to request whatever they might still need in the meantime. Teamwork consisted at that point of meeting the various Haitian organisations to announce the upcoming closing of the project.

The Group of Trainers for Peace asked PBI for a few workshops on experience transmission, something which went beyond the framework of conflict transformation and centred on subsequent needs: workshop evaluation, fund-raising, bulletin production. Moreover, an inventory of Haitian resources in the field of conflict transformation and training was carried out by the team. It has left a written record of the network of relations created around PBI in four and half years of presence in the country. The aim was to allow everyone to make good use of it. Several meetings were also organised by PBI to introduce those partners, both foreigners and Haitians, who wanted to meet. The Farewell Party, finally, brought together over a hundred people, including representatives from a dozen Haitian human rights organisations. Most of them had been collaborating with PBI for several years, and testified to a rich, friendly, and long-lasting relation.

PBI would like to go into greater depth in evaluating its projects, particularly this one, the first which had been primarily centred on peace education. A Haitian intellectual, Sabine Manigat, together with a team of students produced an evaluation of the training work and workshop facilitation.

Finally, several people, in Haiti and abroad, have asked that there be a written record of this experience, doubly original for its modest approach in the Haitian context, and for its non-interventionist point of view in peace training. Such expressions of interest have incited us to produce this report.

"I support PBI's action in making this project carried out in Haiti widely known as it highlights their approach and their relationship with the Haitians. PBI's intervention was such that they let the Haitians they worked with do their own thing whilst offering them tools which allowed them to find in themselves and in their environment what is needed to build a fairer society, one which is able to move forward on the path towards peace. It is true that Haitians need help from outside, but what every organisation, every Haitian in particular, every leader must know, is that no-one except the Haitians themselves can find solutions to their problems in this country."

Gracita Osias, GATAP (Group for Technical Support and Teaching Action), Adult educator, Member of the GFP, Co-animator of Training for Trainers.

4. Haiti Project Committee : Questioning Peace Education

Peace Education. This term certainly raises questions. Does it mean that Peace is something which is learnt? And even before that, what is Peace? In Haiti, this is not at all an obvious question to ask.

In the Haitian context, violence is everywhere, it's latent in the air. From the landscape of permanent catastrophe that are the shanty towns, from the rural communities subjected to deforestation and erosion, the energy of a long-repressed frustration and despair rises up. The media images of burning tyres, the scenes of rioting and looting occasionally conveyed by the news, are these the expressions of a legitimate and nihilistic popular violence? Are they the signs of the damned of the earth rebelling, the symptom of a curse that reeks of grime and bootleg alcohol? These images of Haiti are in any case the ones

the international media love to peddle. *"Haiti, hell at home"* was the recent title in a French weekly.

Is it possible to define Peace as the absence of confrontation, of violence? If we look around us, violence is everywhere. Brutal and loud, silent and appalling. The violence, firstly, of inequality and of the misery of the greatest number. As a Creole proverb says, "*si pa gen lapè nan vant, pa gen lapè nan tèt*" (if there's no peace in bellies, there can't be peace in minds). For those whose reality it is, it means constantly struggling, living every day as one act of resistance to the next.

And yet there are many from this background who want to choose another path and explore other ways of living and of working together. It is the requests coming from groups of men and women committed to the development of their communities which we have sought to respond to.

We are humbly aware that there are no ready-made recipes to follow, no predetermined path to take. But as the trainer Ulrike Laubenthal said, quoting Gandhi in the course of a preparatory seminar for future Haiti Project volunteers: "There is no path towards Peace. Peace is the path."

First listening

We have certainly read about Gandhi and the *satyagraha* (literally "the power of truth", a theory and practice of nonviolence developed by Gandhi in South Africa and then in India), and about Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement. But when the *Fondation 30 Septembre* (30 September Foundation), a support organisation for victims of the 1991 coup d'état, asked us to run a workshop for exploring potential forms of Nonviolent action in the struggle against impunity, we were aware that we knew far less on this subject than the participants did. Facing long-term activists who had in some cases suffered personally from repression, physically or in their soul, it was clear that we could not in any way justifiably say: "*You should do that*".

However, what we could do was to start listening to people and use participative facilitation techniques to bring out, analyse and structure with them their knowledge and their experience, in order to allow them to work out their own solutions.

Then sharing

The concept of sharing lies at the very heart of participative methods. Sharing the experiences, opinions and creativity of every participant, through collective processes. The tools used for this are numerous: various forms to help the groups reflections; games to create an atmosphere of trust, to get the participants relaxed or energised as appropriate; theatre activities to role-play problematic situations and find creative solutions, in short, experiences shared on the spot allowing participants common ground to analyse. The Haitian participants were mostly members of grassroots organisations and their knowledge was generally limited to the practice of '*brase lide*', a Creole version of brainstorming. Through activities such as drawing, "human sculptures", singing, role-playing, forum-theatre etc., our workshops offered various forms of expression which stimulate creativity. And of course this search for new solutions, for new communicative approaches, is aimed at trying to open up a path towards a society which can manage its conflicts in a more harmonious way.

In searching together with Haitians for ways to manage neighbourhood conflicts or conflicts arising from the management of development projects, we shared ideas and opinions which contrasted and collided and then complemented each other, in an integrated whole which was greater than the sum of the ideas each started out with. This approach to training essentially mirrors that of cooperative conflict management.

Participative peace education methods do not present an all-knowing trainer who will somehow reveal the Truth to pupils. Instead, the process involves gathering together each

person's input to build up a collective knowledge. In a way it is like a community street party, where everyone shares and eats together what each person has brought to the feast.

And speaking of feasts ... the PBI Haiti project often raised eyebrows a little, in asking organisations who were having workshops held for them to take care of meals and where possible accommodation for the workshop facilitators (usually a PBI volunteer and a Haitian trainer). Other international organisations carrying out similar work in Haiti did take care of meals and accommodation for the participants for the entire period of the workshops. These were usually organisations with greater resources, but our approach was not just dictated by financial considerations. It was also based on the idea that training in positive conflict management or in participative methods contributes to the development of a community. It was therefore appropriate that the community should itself invest, however modestly, in the training being offered. In this sense, the meaning of sharing for us was to refuse to consider people as passive recipients of help.

To talk of sharing is also, and especially, to talk of the new perspectives which opened up around a given theme each time we tackled it with a different group. The same training module will always generate different ideas and new comments arising out of the daily experiences of participants, out of their own world view. Working with these groups of women and men, training after training, we were privileged to receive more and more. We progressively discovered the reality of Haiti in its complexity, conflicts and contradictions, but especially in its richness and originality.

An interculturality constantly to be discovered

Most Haitians have experienced a social and economic situation very far removed from the one the volunteers were coming from. The specificity of their culture and their history also informs their perception of the concepts of violence, of nonviolence, of justice, equality and freedom, often different from the references which we use to situate these concepts. The issue of interculturality lay at the heart of the work and the thinking of the PBI Haiti team. Discovering a country and a culture is a fascinating and extremely enriching experience. Moreover, the commitment to a real communication between cultures is intimately bound with active nonviolence, as we see it. The volunteers were conscious of coming from a cultural context often far removed from the reality in Haiti, whether it be language, the political situation, social organisation, recent history and so on. In their encounters and in their work, they were thus faced with fundamental questions which lay at the heart of PBI's presence in Haiti:

- What do the Haitian participants receive in the course of the exchanges which we co-facilitate?
- What do we understand of what the Haitians participating in the workshops are saying?

Towards trust and an equivalent partnership

Our aim was to achieve an interactive relationship between the Haitian facilitators and the PBI volunteers, as well as between participants and facilitators during the workshops. By interactive, we mean a relationship of mutual exchange in which each and every person can interact as equals partners and learn from each other.

The ideal was for the workshop facilitators to feel able to express their doubts and difficulties to the participants and to be open to criticism; and in return, for the participants to feel able to express theirs in a sensitive and constructive way. This is a far from easy thing to achieve, as at the personal level everyone is laying themselves open to others and investing heavily of their own self by facilitating or participating in such workshops.

So this leaves a very narrow path to tread, with many potential pitfalls. All those involved need to commit themselves to listening, to being open and aware. They need to have developed a sensitivity to and understanding of how oppression works and the ways in

which it operates at several levels: political, economic, social and so on. When such commitment leads to a genuinely honest encounter, the problems and doubts that go with it are more than compensated for as those involved discover and acknowledge each other's resources.

Avoiding to be “experts”

As far as participative techniques are concerned, Haitians had very little familiarity with these apart from their experience of popular theatre (i.e. sketch-based theatre) and of workshop-style debating in small groups. Added to which, running workshops on such themes as conflict transformation and nonviolence was to introduce something even more unfamiliar in the country. This meant that no-one was an expert in Haitian-style workshops on the positive management of conflict, on mediation, on nonviolence or on group-based decision-making. Our task was thus to build spaces for learning in which the facilitators could develop their skills in these fields.

Beyond the training for trainers, the basic groundwork workshops themselves provided an opportunity for PBI volunteers and Haitian facilitators to explore and experiment with various workshops techniques. The dual facilitator approach (i.e. with one PBI volunteer and one Haitian) also provided in itself a space for mutual learning. To achieve this, what had to be developed was a partnership-based relationship. The fact that the PBI volunteers did not have extensive experience or skills before arriving in Haiti may have actually been an advantage here, in helping them avoid the trap of thinking they were there to somehow impart expertise to our Haitian partners. Whether PBI volunteers or Haitian facilitators, we were all trainees together, learning to run workshops in conflict transformation in Haiti.

In order to progress together, it was important that each facilitator should be engaged in a process of exploring and developing their knowledge. A workshop is only truly participative if the facilitators themselves also learn something from the participants. It is about creating something interactive between co-facilitators and between facilitators and participants. As soon as we start thinking that we hold the key to an absolute, universal knowledge, as soon as we start appearing as experts, then we start losing this kind of dynamics. Thank you and goodbye to any comforting certainty, to any expertise taken for granted, and hello to continuous questioning and learning!

So let us take a closer look at the kind of personal qualities and abilities that are useful for workshop facilitating. We sought to take a positive rather than a negative approach to this question. In other words, we started off by considering what skills each person could bring to the team and to the Haitian co-facilitators, rather than first considering what skills they might lack. For the preparation and running of participative workshops, a team needs members who assemble together a variety of skills at various levels:

- Content i.e. a practical or academic knowledge of mediation, nonviolence, conflict management etc.
- Methodology i.e. experience as trainers and/or participants in the various techniques of facilitating, such as game-playing, theatre, exercises and role-playing; experience in training for trainers (not necessarily in the fields of nonviolence or conflict transformation).
- Conceptual and evaluation skills i.e. the ability to analyse our approach and our workshops, to initiate ideas on how to deal with requests, to plan and run workshops, to manage co-facilitation, to carry out evaluations etc.
- Sensitivity i.e. tuning in to group dynamics, being sensitive to people as individuals, being able to clarify things without giving offence, etc. Those who have never run group activities before may still have these qualities appropriate to the work of e.g. facilitating, co-facilitating or observing.
- Cultural and/or linguistic knowledge.

Every time a request was made for a workshop, the team decided by consensus which volunteer(s) would run it. The skills needed varied according to who the participants would be, to the situation, the theme and the skills which the Haitian co-facilitator(s) could bring in on their side. This procedure was used as a safeguard to avoid the situation of a volunteer being “sent to the front”.

We have noted with regard to the individual process of continuous training of volunteers or Haitian partners that it was very important to respect each person’s individual pace of learning. For example, some preferred to attend strictly as observers for a number of workshops before daring to launch themselves into their first co-facilitating, whilst others needed to participate earlier in preparing or even facilitating workshops. However, it was essential for everyone to have observed or participated in some workshops on these themes, in Haiti, before facilitating any.

This is why newly arrived PBI volunteers and Haitians wishing to train themselves in this field often attended basic groundwork workshops. This was also of benefit for the facilitators of these workshops, who learnt from the participants’ criticisms, suggestions and what they felt about how the workshops went.

What can we contribute?

There were two kinds of concerns which often arose in the course of the project: either that of not being sufficiently trained or on the contrary, that of imposing our western cultural models. These concerns served as warning bells that had to be heeded. Taken to extremes, there was also the risk that they might, each in their own way, induce a feeling of guilt in relation to what we – the foreigners – could actually contribute in Haiti, in terms of the training offered.

Yet what we could contribute seemed valuable in several respects:

- In relation to the formal education system in Haiti, which often amounts to a process of learning by rote phrases, texts and songs. This is tied to the repressive political system which has prevailed for generations there, as well as to the formal education systems which in most countries favour a teacher-pupil approach rather than participative techniques.
- The repression in Haiti, in its efforts to destroy any community space and any space for expression, effectively prevented in many social domains the practice and exercise of free debate, group decision-making and other such activities. As we come from countries which have long enjoyed a greater freedom of association, expression, organisation and so on, we have had the opportunity of being able to gain experience more freely in these domains. Although heavily influenced by our social and cultural contexts, this experience can be useful to people from another culture when they are trying to develop new tools.
- There was a strong demand for the input of western techniques and concepts of conflict transformation. Not accepting such requests out of a fear of interference or of paternalism can paradoxically itself become an act of paternalism, because a refusal would amount to our not crediting our partners with having sufficient critical faculties either to determine their own needs or to decide for themselves what we can contribute as foreigners. By being too concerned about intervening, we also end up at times wrongly attributing a problem to cultural differences between westerners and Haitians, when the problem is in fact due to something entirely different. For example, with regard to the evaluation of workshops, we sometimes found ourselves despairing that we would never manage to gather criticisms – negative ones, that is! Because these are essential if progress is to be made. We often thought then that if we hadn’t managed to establish a real relationship of trust, it was because we were *Blan* (white). Yet our Haitian partner facilitators also had problems drawing out negative criticisms from the participants. So there were issues at work which went beyond that of the relationship we had established with the participants.

Recognising and respecting Haitian cultural resources has furthermore proved to be essential for a people who have suffered too much from the arrogance and disregard of the west. Moreover, the concern not to impose a western cultural model is even more significant in Haiti, given that many elements of western culture were used as tools of oppression. Following which certain Haitians appropriated these and then used them in turn themselves. However, not all the tools of oppression have come from the west: Duvalierism, for example, certainly knew how to use voodoo for its own ends.

To conclude, putting into practice the principle of non-interference in our training brings to light many complex and occasionally highly emotional issues. This is just one dilemma amongst others, as over the years many questions arose. The volunteers, together with their Haitian partners, found solutions to these, sometimes immediate and practical but inevitably partial, incomplete. The teams developed and adapted procedures and criteria, for example for the process of accepting workshops¹⁷ (see appendix). It was a way of formalising the experiences of the volunteers, an essential part of developing the project. But in the end, beyond implementing the adapted approach, what prevailed was the system of consensus: what needed to be done was decided on a case-by-case basis.

This dilemma, as with others, played a big part in the team meetings, in communications with the project committee and in the discussions with our Haitian partners. It is over the course of such exchanges that the project formed, little by little.¹⁸

¹⁷ See the list of points to clarify when receiving a request for training in appendix 4, page ????

¹⁸ "The living experience in the trainings", proposes a series of lively testimonies on the workshops facilitated by PBI on topics of Peace education, see appendix 2, page ???

Part Two:

The View from Outside

Our wishes dictated our acts, but have our acts served our wishes? And did our choices, principles, and actions help us along the way? We wanted to submit our work to a detailed analysis and to critical, competent scrutiny from outside. Sabine Manigat, a Haitian intellectual who has the advantage of considerable practical experience, conducted an evaluation on the ground. On the basis of interviews with participants in various training workshops, she has been able to put together a fine overall view of the successes and limitations of our work. She then analyses and compares the testimonies of the Haitians and PBI volunteers interviewed, showing the risks and the benefits of this intercultural undertaking.

And what about the volunteer nature of the project, or the decision-making process through consensus—were these pitfalls or advantages? Ueli Mäder and Hector Schmassmann based their replies to this question on archival material and interviews with volunteers: excerpts from some of those interviews have been re-transcribed here. They illustrate both the rewarding and trying aspects of commitment to the project.

5. Sabine Manigat : Elements for an evaluation of the work of Peace Brigades International in Haiti

This report is aimed at evaluating the work carried out by PBI in Haiti from 1995 to 2000. It is essentially based on an analysis of material from three types of sources: PBI archives (including reports, minutes and other documents), research carried out in the field, and interviews with a number of Haitian trainers and volunteers or former volunteers. Five key domains are covered: it charts the nature of PBI's project, identifies who benefited from the training activities and what reach these had in the population, assesses the workshops held by PBI in the field, assesses the training for trainers programme and the transmission of nonviolence concepts and tools to local activists, and finally, explores the volunteers' own evaluation of their work.

The conditions for carrying out this evaluation were particularly good, thanks to a combination of factors. The PBI volunteers were always at hand to help in the main stages of the work, whilst being very understanding about the many different constraints arising from the local context and from the consultation process itself; they were also discreet enough throughout not to intervene in the evaluation work. The work of establishing contacts with the trainers, with certain former volunteers and in the localities where the research was carried out, was supported throughout by the PBI team. In short, the best of this report owes an awful lot to the team's support.

The first phase of the work consisted in a thorough assessment of the organisation's archives, a substantial collection of documents which provided a wealth of useful material. The archives handed over by the team at the very beginning of the consultation process were relatively well organised and provided a useful overview of PBI's work.

In terms of the work carried out for preparing this report, this may be summarised as covering the following different stages between March and July 2000:

- ? Reading and classifying the contents of the archives; this was the first task undertaken and in fact it was continued throughout the evaluation work, as it was necessary to keep referring back to the archives to follow up on the first reading and analysis.
- ? Designing the questionnaire used for the field research and the two interview formats; this part of the process lasted from mid-April to the beginning of May.
- ? Evaluating the training for trainers programme and the results of the questionnaires; this was carried out over the month of May.
- ? Setting up the database and analysing the data; this was done over June.
- ? Conducting 14 interviews, six with PBI volunteers and eight with Haitian trainers; this was carried out between May and July.
- ? Writing up the report: this was started in mid-June and required most of July to finish it.

The quality of the work carried out by the researchers and by the database manager contributed significantly to the work of gathering non-documentary information.¹⁹

The nature of the Haiti project

In essence, PBI carried out three types of activities in Haiti over the course of the period in question:

¹⁹ Certain records of the survey on which the following analysis is based upon are presented in more detail in appendix 5, page ???

- ? Training: this covered everything related to developing local human resources and sharing tools and techniques.
- ? Accompaniment: this essentially involved monitoring and observation of nonviolence campaigning activities initiated from within Haitian civil society.
- ? Disseminating information: this was basically covered by the PBI bulletin.

Something that should also be mentioned, even though the information gathered for the evaluation was relatively minimal on this, was PBI's activation and development of networking in Haiti, a key aspect of its mission.

These activities had different levels of priority and were developed to varying degrees. They will be considered here in turn, starting with the less important ones.

1.1 Accompaniment: This was not a major feature of PBI's project in Haiti. The aim was more to provide 'witness-observers' at public demonstrations held by various groups in the civil society. Apart from providing observers for sporadic demonstrations (for example by Pont Sondé peasants in Artibonite Province on 28 January 1999, or for the commemoration of the Raboteau massacre on 21 and 22 April that same year), accompaniment was essentially limited to PBI volunteers acting as observers at the weekly sit-ins of the *Fondation Trente Septembre* (30 September Foundation), a coalition of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) defending the rights of the victims of the coup d'état on 30 September 1991. There are a couple of points worth noting about this type of activity. Usually, accompaniment "is a fundamental aspect of PBI's work in the various countries where the organisation has been asked to assist" (²⁰). However, in Haiti this type of activity is minimal, not only for PBI but equally for other human rights defence and promotion organisations; this has been the case from at least 1995. In fact, accompaniment is normally done at the request of local organisations and one volunteer suggested that perhaps PBI had not made this side of its country work sufficiently known to the Haitians. The second point is to do with the relatively low level of activity in terms of active nonviolence demonstrations in Haiti and indeed, the degree of familiarity with this approach in the country. Moreover, in its last bulletin (No. 15 of May 2000) the PBI team made the comment on the subject of accompaniment that "the restoration of democratic institutions together with the fact that the source of the violence was less easily identifiable meant that protective accompaniment activities were limited". There has also been the suggestion made that the very low numbers of requests for accompaniment might be linked to certain characteristics of Haitian society, such as the political culture there or perhaps local traditions more generally. This issue will not be investigated further in this evaluation.

1.2 Dissemination of information: The PBI bulletin was published between 1996 and 2000 in a series of 15 numbers. It was intended to be a quarterly bulletin, although it did not always come out every three months because of the workload involved in preparing it. However, the volunteers and trainers who were interviewed said they found it interesting and useful. There are some information gaps in the archives on this aspect of the work, for example concerning how the bulletin was edited, produced and distributed, and the contributors.

1.3 Training: This was by far the major and most important activity and covered

²⁰ Report on the activities of the Peace team in Haiti, 1999, page 2.

two main areas: training focused on introducing the concepts of nonviolence, and training for trainers focused on sharing experience and skills for these to then be passed on to others in the civil society.

Target population and participants

An overview of the target population for PBI's project shows that an explicit priority was to reach a wide range of participants at various levels of society: women, community activists and leaders of grassroots organisations. If we simplify the picture a little, we can identify three kinds of training more or less linked to these three target groups: female-specific workshops for women, training workshops in nonviolent conflict transformation (NVCT) for grassroots activists and training for trainers (TFT) for the leaders.

- ? Women (female-specific workshops): the available written material shows that in Port-au-Prince alone, seven workshops were held exclusively for women. The number of participants varied from 18 to six people, depending on the particular session. Unfortunately, nothing in particular stands out from the evaluations of these workshops which would make it possible to determine what was specific to these compared with the mixed workshops, which did tend to have a significant majority of men participants.²¹ A report from 1999 notes that the number of women involved in PBI project activities did not reach beyond 30 percent. There did not appear to be specific features in terms of workshop content either. In any case the important thing to note is the objectives of the workshops, which aimed to focus a section of the population usually excluded from civil society activism because of its being on the margins of that same society.
- ? Community activists were an obvious priority target for PBI's work. Nearly 70 organisations worked in partnership with PBI over the five years. The sheer diversity of the groups participating speaks volumes for the diversity of contacts developed by PBI. It also gives a clear measure of the challenge for PBI in adapting their offer to meet the needs expressed by the population. The documents in the appendices relating to the training workshops give an account of this work and of its results²².
- ? NGO personnel and the leaders of grassroots organisations participated in far more in-depth training and in some way they personify PBI's work in Haiti. Through such training PBI reached more than forty organisations. Their presence is especially tangible in the *Groupe de Formateurs pour la Paix* (GFP, Haitian Trainers Group for Peace). The sections below on the training for trainers (TFT) and on the GFP explore further the work achieved with these groups.

The training workshops

According to the organisation's archives, PBI held around 38 training workshops in 10 localities (including in Port-au-Prince) across five Provinces and in which around 500 people participated. On average, these workshops lasted between two and three days, with some lasting exceptionally for just one day. The main themes covered were defining what a conflict is and basic introductory concepts and tools for nonviolent conflict transformation. There was also a less traditional type of workshop held at Moulin in the Artibonite, on the subject of community organisation.

²¹ As a matter of fact, the workshops for women were created following the repeated observation, that in mixed workshops women did not only participate in fewer numbers, but even less in terms of speaking time. The idea therefore was to create a space for dialogue for Haitian women who apparently did not often speak up, when men were present.

²² See appendix 2, page ???

The distribution of workshop training was as follows:

Chénôt: 6 sessions

Gonaïves: 4 sessions

Cap-Haïtien: 2 sessions

The South (Zanglè, Cayes and Vieux-Bourg d'Aquin): 4 sessions

Dubuisson (Artibonite): 1 session

Gros-Morne (Verneil and Moulin): 3 sessions

Port-au-Prince: 17 sessions (at least – the archives do not seem to be complete on these).

The fact that far more workshops were held at Port-au-Prince does not really need further comment. However, it is worth highlighting the 'privileged treatment' that the small locality of Chénôt received. The constraints of this evaluation do not allow for a more in-depth analysis of the 'Chénôt case' but it is worth noting here that six sessions being held there represents a solid foundation for training, leading to real results over the longer term. The archives material and the bulletin both report on the existence in Chénôt of an organisation for nonviolent conflict management, called Shalom. The particular case of Chénôt and the impact of the training there is picked up again further on.

As regards the frequency with which training was held, it would seem that 1998 was the busiest year (with 12 workshops recorded in the archives), followed by 1999 (10 workshops recorded).

The substantial documentary material was reviewed in order to evaluate the training in the following three areas:

- ? Whether there was a 'typical' training format.
- ? What were the main problems arising from the training workshops.
- ? The results or impact of the training.

With regard to the training format, it is important to note here first that a major positive element of PBI's approach was that the workshops were organised not just following formal requests for these, but also following one or more preparation and planning meetings in which the volunteers would work to identify very closely what the needs and expectations of the requesting group were. So for example, the workshop organised in Dubuisson in January 1999 was held after three preparatory meetings.

Having said this, there did appear to be a typical training workshop format which could be identified from the relevant documentary material. Its key features were:

- ? Focusing the training on a core concept: that of conflict.
- ? Adopting an approach based on the real life of the participants: the methods and materials used (case studies, games) were designed to reflect as closely as possible the day-to-day reality of people's lives.
- ? Consistently applying the methodology of conveying the content through active participation such as role-playing; in fact there were extremely few or even no theory-focused sessions.
- ? Teaching was non-prescriptive and took into account the dynamics and the specific circumstances of the participants.
- ? PBI volunteers and Haitian facilitators collaborated in leading the workshops. This important aspect is examined further on.

This type of workshop happily seemed to meet local needs and match the local context well, in terms of skills and experience in nonviolent conflict transformation. However, the training offered did have the disadvantage of tending to aim towards the lowest common denominator, which left those with greater skills or experience or who were keen to develop these further with no alternative but the leap to the training for trainers. This observation is based on reading a large number of more detailed workshop evaluations. From these it quickly becomes evident that the evaluators themselves feel frustrated about often not being able to set up or develop further follow-up training with the group concerned. In other instances, it is workshop facilitators from outside PBI who expressed their disappointment at “the training being too focused on entertainment”. It should be noted though that this type of comment was far from being common (there is one such reference in an archive report from June 1999 and a comment from a GFP trainer made in the course of the interviews). In any case, such an observation does not in any way imply a critical assessment of the quality of the training but again, of the level the training is pitched at. Above all, it points to an underlying reality which crosses all groups and all communities in Haiti, however isolated or homogeneous they might be. That reality is the entrenched inequality of opportunity and of access to resources, and the limitations which constrain the development of individual abilities. This means that any training which aims to be widely accessible will pretty much inevitably give rise to frustration for one group or another of those taking it up. It should also be noted here that life experience was an important part of the training workshops and one which had little or nothing to do with conceptual knowledge or formal education, but instead explored and developed those facets of the individual personality and ‘humanity’ of participants which are usually ignored. This side of things is difficult to extrapolate from the documentary material and the interviews, but it has been mentioned by some Haitian trainers and PBI volunteers who emphasised how in fact it lay at the heart of the workshops.

Basically it is clear that the **key problems** arising out of the workshops relate to the issue of the diversity within the groups, not only in terms of participants’ educational background but also in terms of their previous experience and current concerns. This means that the differences between men and women or between organisation leaders and grassroots members (as was experienced in Gros-Morne) were felt to have been some of the major challenges of the training. Nearly all of the evaluation reports report that “everybody has said they were happy overall” with the workshops, but several reports from volunteers point to the difficulty in interpreting the participants’ evaluations, arguing that the Haitian culture of submission and of an extremely formal sense of manners might lie behind such practically automatic praising. However, what must on the other hand not be underestimated is that the vast majority of Haitians have a real thirst for learning because of their long history of being deprived of education, and so they have a tendency to simply absorb any education offered rather than taking a critical stance to it.

Another key problem concerns how the content offered by the workshops may be formally described, for example whether it is more to do with awareness-raising rather than being strictly speaking actual training. We will not consider this question further as it goes beyond the remit of this report and should in any case be explored by the volunteers, i.e. by workshop facilitators themselves. Having said this, there is some archive material which allows me to report briefly on this issue. In the context of an evaluation of the PBI workshops in Haiti, one volunteer wrote in July 1999: “PBI, overwhelmed by requests for workshops, could not organise any follow-up and instead began new projects with other organisations, almost certainly again without being able to ensure a proper follow-up.” At another meeting on workshop evaluation in June 1999, one organisation leader suggested “extending the range of themes”. He meant by that developing further concepts related to

nonviolent conflict transformation and which went beyond it; he also raised the issue of the workshops making heavy use of role-playing and other game-playing activities.

Weighing up these various aspects to the workshops, including their short duration and the fact that their content had more to do with introduction and induction rather than substantive education, and considering especially their impact, particularly that of opening hearts and minds, all points to defining the workshops as being experiments in raising awareness about nonviolence. An additional advantage of defining them as such is that it clearly distinguishes them from training for trainers workshops.

As for the mark they may have made, the results or impact they have had, this is of course very difficult to determine now on the basis of the documentary material and of a simple survey of fewer than 80 people. The evidence presented here is primarily intended to be by way of illustration and in parts indicative of certain aspects which only the future will perhaps come to confirm. This evidence is based on the assessment of a questionnaire given to 79 people in six locations who had participated in PBI workshops. The questionnaire focuses on three aspects of the experiences of the participants in the training, namely: details on their personal situation, what they retained from the workshop and finally what they think of the training they received and how they are applying it. Table 1 in appendix 5²³ summarises the main replies; here, there follows an analysis of a few specific aspects of interest.

To summarise, the survey carried out gave the following results in terms of what concepts participants took away with them: 90 percent of those questioned were able to name one concept, 81 percent were able to name two and two-thirds (67.1%) were able to name three concepts, of which 60 percent of those with the best scores were able to give a correct meaning of the concept in question. With respect to the usefulness of the training, the enthusiasm of the responses stands out with 92.4% of positive replies. This enthusiasm becomes positively passionate when it comes to the techniques used (64.5% of replies), which is the best demonstration of the expected impact of this kind of training.

The results for the training in Chénôt were particularly interesting, demonstrating a perfect understanding of the concepts learnt, a strong appreciation of nonviolent conflict transformation and especially a highly appropriate use in practice of the training; no 'top-down teaching' tendencies were noted. It should be noted here again that the locality of Chénôt was the subject of particular attention. The PBI Bulletin No. 15 provides further details: "[...] raising awareness led to [...] local groups being set up to intervene in conflict situations in their area. The most striking example of this is that of Chénôt". This evaluation is eloquently echoed in the small survey analysed here. In any case, volunteers involved in training workshops would benefit from a close study of what was done in Chénôt and in the South, which may well represent models of best practice. The same comments apply to a large extent to what was done in the South (i.e. Zanglè and Les Cayes). On the other hand, the Gonaïves results were disappointing. Aside of this, one point of concern was that some people seemed to consider themselves as fully-fledged 'trainers' following their participation.

It should be remembered that the questionnaire was originally intended to gather and systematise sample-based information on what seeds may have been sown in the field by PBI's project and thus to evaluate what participants have retained from the training. There

²³ See page ???

was moreover no intention of testing people, the aim was rather to find out what they thought after the event about the content and usefulness of the training they received.

In a general comment, one volunteer noted that “the usefulness and impact of the training have to be set in context”. He went on to highlight the problems of follow-up and also of organising the sessions (including number of participants and duration). Several evaluation reports, in particular the one for 1999, also highlight the possibly limited or at least unproved appropriateness of nonviolent conflict transformation in the Haitian context. This volunteer is almost certainly right, as are the reports. But the participants themselves demonstrably counter this scepticism when they repeat, correctly in most cases, the concepts learnt and their usefulness. Having said this, there must still remain concerns about whether the concepts learnt were effectively assimilated and whether they risked being inappropriately reinterpreted in the course of being passed on to others. This seems in any case to be the conclusion to draw from the results of the analysis of the questionnaire used. What this conclusion might be worth is something that only time will tell.

Training for trainers (TFT)

As the key objective of PBI was to communicate a culture of peace in Haiti, this meant that training soon became a key element of its work there, particularly as accompaniment turned out to be such a minor part of the project. In the light of this, the training for trainers is a major focus of this evaluation, more so than the training workshops in nonviolent conflict transformation.

The philosophy behind TFT was to train Haitians themselves to pass on more widely through the society the concepts and techniques of nonviolent transformation of conflicts. The task therefore was not just to raise awareness but to work to create an ongoing and internally sustainable process of awareness-raising and education. The report on TFT in the PBI archives defines the aims of the training as: “contributing to developing the skills of local activists working in the field of positive management of conflict, so that they can then disseminate this experience in their respective communities... [and] help to create local pools of skills”. The Trainings for trainers reached around 60 NGOs and were provided in tandem with preparatory workshops as well as a few follow-up development workshops.

The conditions for carrying out the TFT were not very promising at first. The testimonies of volunteers indicated that a number of them at least had not received the necessary training for them to carry out this kind of training. The issue of language and of intervention by non-locals (outsiders) was also a significant one in the project, though it did not in fact prove to be an obstacle to the benefits gained from the experience. There was in addition the issue of the periodic turnover in volunteer teams, which disturbed the continuity of the trainer/participant relationship, to the extent that TFT needs to be based on a longer-term, more sustained relationship with the participant group if it is to have an impact beyond imparting concepts. Both volunteers and members of the GFP (Haitian Trainers Group for Peace) noted this drawback.

The approach was broadly to divide the TFT into three parts: participative seminars centred around training, practical co-facilitating sessions and finally forming the GFP from the trained activists. The training seminars will be considered at greater length as their content informed not only the other two aspects of the TFT but also more generally the impact of PBI's work in Haiti. The theme of co-facilitation is also considered, more briefly. With respect to the trainers forming the GFP, the important thing to note is that this was at

the instigation of the first generation of TFT participants themselves. So it was not something that came about following a PBI decision.

There are archive records for eight sessions for trainers, which mostly consist of the evaluation reports for these sessions. Their content has been systematically ordered into an analysis table with three variables, so as to highlight certain aspects of this training which is considered as the key activity of PBI in Haiti. The variables are: the content of the training, the techniques used and the evaluation of the participants on the way the workshops worked.

The analysis table appended as table 5²⁴ brings out the following features:

- ? With respect to the content: the written accounts of the training and the interviews with those involved showed that participants made a clear distinction between the general concepts related to nonviolent conflict transformation (NVCT) and the concepts particular to conflict management, such as negotiation and mediation. Conflict management was often more easily taken on board than NVCT concepts, these being no doubt more abstract and more at the level of philosophy (active nonviolence, for example). The more complex NVCT concepts were the subject of an evaluation ranging from “difficult” to “accessible”. In any case, both the degree of difficulty and the problematic aspects of these tended to diminish with time, which leads to the conclusion that the teaching of theory was progressively adapted to make the concepts more accessible. Presumably the experience gained fed into successive sessions helped to bring about this improvement.
- ? With respect to the techniques used: this was by far the most successful aspect of the training. Not simply (and not so much) because of the appeal of the activities involved, but especially because of their educational and participative potential. All the trainers who were interviewed were unanimous on this. Except for the first session, the techniques used were considered accessible or even simply easy. The participants took particularly well to role-playing, which may perhaps be explained by what is considered as a ‘natural’ aptitude of Haitians for theatre. Other workshop tools were considered to be more complicated, though still accessible.
- ? With respect to evaluations by groups of the way the workshops worked: two distinct factors emerged here. One was the issue of language, the essential medium for sharing concepts as much as for communication itself. The other was that of the shared experience (i.e. social mixing and exchanges). The most problematic seems to have been the language issue, the question of food or logistics was only occasionally raised. As for the social dimension, the sharing of experiences and development of new relationships were particularly appreciated.

Overall, the training was held to be a positive experience in one respect or another across all the evaluation reports and participants, whether referring to its collective aspect, the aspect of self-discovery or the learning of new concepts. What stood out from the feedback was:

- ? The shared learning and collaborative group dynamics.
- ? The participative method used. Both the written evaluations and the interview testimonies indicated that this richly productive approach to learning was particularly valued. As a member of the GFP said: “In Haiti we’re not used to learning things using the ideas and experiences of those doing the learning”.

²⁴ See appendix 5, page ???

- ? The discovery of the concepts and of their value. On this there was a noticeable progression in the ease with which participants assimilated conceptual material over time.
- ? New practices coming from the setting up of the GFP. This opened up a new and more productive approach to relationships within the family, the community and within the organisation, where the activists engage. This was the key message from the interviews of trainers and is explored further below, as it relates to the question of PBI's impact in Haiti.

The fact that this type of work was so important also brought out some of its more problematic aspects. In particular the following:

- ? The complex nature of the core content in relation to the general level of initial training of the participants. This difficulty was noted in several of the evaluation reports, as was the related one of the diversity within the groups, reported by Haitian facilitators as much as by PBI volunteers.
- ? The imperfect matching between the values of Haitian culture and the values being promoted. All of the evaluations from the facilitators and the members of the GFP highlight this issue. An example of this is the concept of active nonviolence, which was not only found to be difficult to grasp but, as several facilitators also pointed out, does not seem to have any resonance with the Haitian temperament. Several PBI volunteers also expressed reservations about whether this concept had been really taken on board by the Haitians.
- ? The uniform nature of the training in relation to a very diverse cultural context. Both participants in the TFT and PBI evaluators noted the problems raised by the sheer diversity of those being trained. It seems that there are no easy solutions to this, though there were suggestions noted in the documentary material such as pre-selecting trainees or providing preparatory sessions for participants to be sufficiently equipped to embark on the training.

The collaborative approach to training, or co-facilitating, was an experiment worth recording here, because of its importance as experienced by certain trainers. It was also mentioned in several TFT evaluation reports. The volunteers and the Haitian trainers agreed on this though without entirely sharing the same point of view. The volunteers felt that the collaborative approach was a decisive step in the progress towards the assimilation of both concepts and techniques. The reports written by the volunteers emphasise how important co-facilitating was and how it helped to provide an opportunity for professional evaluation, a kind of placement where the freshly trained trainers could put ideas into practice. They did also note how important language and cultural background was in providing a comparative advantage to the Haitians when co-facilitating. In addition, some argued that any adoption nationwide of a nonviolent approach and a culture of peace must be mediated by national trainers, these being in a better position to convey a culture of peace more in tune with the Haitian mentality. For their part, the Haitian trainers felt the co-facilitating approach to be an important form of personal and professional development for them. They often noted a regret that they had not played a greater role in shaping and applying the training that they co-facilitated. Though here the reservations expressed by most of the volunteers about the degree to which the new trainers had assimilated concepts and techniques seemed to make it difficult for local participants to take on more responsibility.

There is no doubt that the collaborative approach represents a symbolic turning point in the whole process, whereby initiators who are aware of their quality of being 'outsiders'

and of the temporary nature of their work hand over their know-how to initiated partners who in turn are keen to test and validate their newly acquired knowledge. In this sense, it is a practice which is worth recognising, valuing and reproducing, not just by PBI elsewhere (which in fact has already happened) but also by the GFP trainers if they are going to work on increasing their own numbers and on spreading the message. Here too, the co-facilitation report for the KIROS²⁵ in February 2000 clearly established the benefits of co-facilitation, following an experiment which was held to be a total success: "The GFP has played its role brilliantly".

The GFP (Groupe de Formateurs pour la Paix, Haitian Trainers Group for Peace)

The origins of this group go back to the summer of 1996. Its first members were essentially the participants in the first training for trainers (TFT) session which was held from 14 to 21 July 1996. Twelve leaders of NGOs and of democratic organisations benefited from this first session, along with the PBI volunteers who took part. Most of the participants of the next seven TFT sessions then joined the GFP. In the spring of 1999, the GFP organised itself into a more formal structure following two constitutional general assemblies in which its statutes were adopted. The GFP currently has sixty members, of which fifteen constitute its hard core of activists.

The archive documentation on the GFP mostly consists of material produced by the group itself, such as minutes of meetings and evaluations on training projects and on the setting-up and structuring of the GFP. There are three issues which need to be considered here:

- ? The issue of structuring and sustaining individual participation. Following the first meetings to set up the GFP, it was noted that the group was "dragging its feet" in terms of organising itself. It is true that there was a secretariat, an executive committee and a general assembly structure put in place and intended to meet regularly. However, in practice the problem of the unequal participation of its members arose very early on in its development and which cannot be wholly attributed to their geographic dispersion. The problem of consolidating the group as a solid organisation (i.e. with a mission implementation plan and a strategy for development and fundraising) is still a crucial issue. From this same perspective, one trainer who was interviewed felt that the GFP was still "PBI's baby", whilst another one thought that the group was in fact more or less ready to "stand on its own two feet" and to expand more widely its geographical reach.
- ? The issue of resources. This is clearly neither a new problem nor one with easy solutions in the Haitian context. However, the fact that all the members of the GFP already belong to some form of organisation should provide food for thought on strategies for fundraising based on the grassroots organisations. This would also have the advantage of pooling initiatives and creating shared interests and, by extension, shared benefits. The collective experiences of training are not enough to create a sufficiently strong sense of unity in this kind of group, given its fundamentally voluntary nature and the kind of work it does.
- ? The issue of differences in the motivation and contribution of members. Here the problem is not just limited to the traditionally uneven distribution in practice of responsibilities, a familiar feature of group dynamics. There are specific factors involved stemming from the different personal, professional and social backgrounds of members, such as: their education and training, the organisational and social positions they have held in their group of origin, how much training they have received from PBI, whether they are from urban or rural, religious or secular organisations. All these determine to a

²⁵ KIROS is a movement of young people existing in Haiti since 26 years, created by the religious community Scheut (catholic movement in Belgium)

significant extent the nature and level of their commitment to the GFP. This issue has been variously raised not just by TFT evaluators but also within the group itself. One GFP member summarised his view of the problem as follows: “The first generation of trainers have pretty much deserted the GFP; the second generation are currently the most active ones in it; and finally the third generation are still cautious about it and don’t fully commit themselves.”

Overall though the GFP experience has been very positive. The trainers were unanimous in valuing and emphasising this group as being at the heart of PBI’s work in Haiti. Similarly, the majority of volunteers interviewed referred to it as “the most important legacy” in the country of their organisation. However, a closer look at people’s comments reveals distinct differences in points of view. In order to highlight these, I have devised a summary of the opinions of the trainers and those of the volunteers in table 6.²⁶

The PBI volunteers displayed a range of views on this, though on the whole they had two main approaches to the question. On one side there were those who took a more ‘self-centred’ approach, seeking to find both the source of the problems and the source of their solution ‘in themselves’, in their behaviour, their motivation, their own preconceptions – this was the predominant approach in the group interviewed (four out of six testimonies) and made its presence felt when it came to the categories: “quality of training” (felt to be incomplete or insufficient), “usefulness of the training” (difficult to gauge) and “appropriateness with respect to local values” (difficult to decide). With the other approach, which was closer to the view taken by the Haitian trainers, the volunteers sought to identify, understand and resolve the problems through the relationships formed and from the results of the work, ‘outside (aside) of themselves’. Roughly speaking the conclusion could be drawn that the volunteers displayed a highly (self-)critical stance (perhaps thus showing themselves to be over-scrupulous?).

As for the way in which the GFP members perceive PBI, this seems to show that the relationship between the two groups is fundamentally healthy. The testimonies received all endorsed the approach adopted by the volunteers and confirmed the trainers’ commitment to the learning and assimilation process and their positive assessment of the benefits gained both from this process and from the exchanges that were a part of it. Just one person mentioned that the volunteers being foreigners affected the effectiveness of their work; here the respondent was referring to their ability to understand the local mindset in order to provide better training. The table thus shows that there was near-unanimity on the excellent “quality of training”, total agreement on the “usefulness of the training” and a positive emphasis on the issue of the “appropriateness with respect to local values”.

There were also significant differences between the two groups, which in a way qualifies the overall meeting of minds by ‘personalising’ the views of each group. Thus the following was noted:

- ? A less than ringing endorsement by the Haitians of the educational format used. This was not due to a rejection on the part of the trainers but more to their keen awareness of the complexity of adapting the format to a social environment whose values often diverge from those on which this educational approach is based, such as participation and mutual learning.

²⁶ See appendix 5, page ???

- ? A different view of what were “incompatible values” between the two groups. The Haitians placed great emphasis on history and social relationships, whilst the volunteers tended to mention questions of temperament and of culture.
- ? Above all, experiences of the relationship with the other team that were reverse mirror-images of each other. The majority of volunteers were struck by the Haitians’ emphasis on personal relationships. The Haitians, on the other hand, felt that the limits on developing these (due to the regular turnover in volunteers) were almost a handicap. Culture played a crucial role in this crossover of views from each side, which will be presented by way of conclusion.

6. The project from a PBI perspective: what the volunteers experienced

The accumulated documentary material is the main source for evaluating the actual work that was carried out. Yet the experiences that the volunteers had is an essential complement to the documentary material, in that they add a human interest dimension and usefully inform any assessment of the work effected with a view to any future plans. Relatively in-depth interviews were therefore carried out with six volunteers or former volunteers who were still in the field at the time of the evaluation.

The format of the interviews (see the appendix) were designed in order to identify five aspects of the PBI project as seen by its volunteers: the circumstances around their engagement, their experience of the work carried out, their opinion on it, their experiences of life with the Haitians and of their way of life and customs, and their assessment of the culture of peace in Haiti. The questions relating to the actual work carried out are dealt with in the section on the evaluation of PBI’s project (training and accompaniment). The others are set out below.

The circumstances of engagement varied with each volunteer, though with some common features that tend to situate the specific nature of PBI’s project in Haiti compared with the organisation’s experiences in other countries. Previous training varied greatly and there was no dominant type of professional background (type of training, level of experience) in the group interviewed. Two points stood out: the volunteers recruited had not received any specific or in-depth training for what turned out to be the main activity of their group, namely the training of others. Four out of six of those interviewed stressed this as a key factor in their work with PBI, either negatively as something that should have been provided, or in fact positively, as providing the opportunity to learn on the job and so being decisive in their decision to stay or to extend their stay. It should be noted that the young PBI volunteers generally arrived already intimately familiar with a culture of nonviolence and of pacifism, developed in their past. This did mean they also arrived with certain expectations and preconceptions which did not always square up with what they experienced in Haiti. Several of them had additionally had experience, however brief, of one or more third world realities. Finally, in order to get a fuller picture of what makes a volunteer, I read with interest the “table of evaluation criteria for PBI-Haiti volunteers”.²⁷ Amongst the specifications featured there of interest for this evaluation were the following: ability to live and work as part of a team, respect for cultural differences, knowledge of and ability to communicate PBI principles. The ability to facilitate nonviolent conflict transformation workshops is listed as an “advantage/desirable”. These criteria seem to have been drawn up (or applied) from 1998 onwards.

Their experiences of the work in Haiti were fairly varied. Some took part in a training for trainers and felt this to be the central feature of their experience. Others on the other hand

²⁷ See the appendix 4, page ???

were working mostly during the period of evaluation and winding-up, so their approach to Haitian life was fundamentally different. Yet here too certain common features could be made out. The periods of 'immersion' (intensive initiation into local life) were considered by all to be a unique and positive experience and a decisive one for the coming time and the process of adaptation. Not everyone mentioned writing the bulletin as a central feature of their work, but the three volunteers who did mention it stressed how positive and productive this work was, in itself but also because of the contacts and exchanges that it involved, working with the local population. Even the volunteers who came just for the evaluation were involved in local life through skills-sharing work and the evaluation work itself, which they greatly valued.

Those interviewed were asked to identify the most striking features and the most difficult aspects of their time in Haiti. The results point to a reality which PBI will probably have to take into account in the future, notably the way in which communal life impacted on all aspects of the volunteers' lives; privacy, social conditioning, and the dynamics of the interaction with Haitian life. This was a kind of flip side to the immersion process, described in a basically critical way by most of the volunteers, though a small number of them did also report there being benefits to this situation. It is also interesting to note that the Haitians for their part, in particular the trainers who were interviewed, saw the volunteers not as a collective group but as a series of individual people, who in fact regularly arrived and departed without there being much continuity to the group. The other striking aspects noted related to features of the local culture: curiosity, a lack of transparency, passivity or "pacifism", these were some of the problematic traits of the Haitian character as reported by the volunteers. Though here too there was no particular common feature that stood out strongly, except perhaps for one that a volunteer summarised as: "The Haitian does not exist", i.e. it was not possible to identify a 'typical' Haitian.

Their perception of the country was critical and pertinent, without any misplaced tolerance. The aspects that were most commented on by the volunteers were directly connected to PBI's mandate: according to them, Haitians were strikingly religious and this inevitably informed local outlooks and culture. For example, they would only react to some problems or events with resignation, stemming from deeply rooted beliefs. The volunteers pointed to the passivity of the Haitians and their tendency to put themselves in the hands of the "Bon dye bon".²⁸ They also highlighted the strength of Haitian community values and sense of solidarity, as we have seen when considering the views of the two groups of each other. Another aspect that was focused on was violence: firstly the social and economic violence in Haiti, then the daily violence of life there (endemic crime, insecurity), all existing side by side with a real sense of respect for life and of the value of life.

All the volunteers felt that their knowledge of Haitian culture remained very patchy or even superficial. They identified three reasons behind this. One was the distance created by ethnic differences (some were very sensitive to this) or by language difficulties (which was experienced by all the volunteers). Another was the relatively secretive and closed nature of Haitian culture (linked to voodoo and beliefs in the supernatural). A third one was the Haitians' strong sense of modesty and the reserve which governs their social relations, which meant for example that volunteers were rarely invited to people's homes (and such invitations were not automatic), and that people did not talk much about themselves or about their opinions whilst at the same time being curious to the point of "indiscretion" about the private lives of others.

²⁸ "The good Lord is good". He will provide for everything, hence one must not do something oneself.

Generally speaking, volunteers left the country still puzzled about who Haitians were. In the end, the volunteers were one way or another left with the impression that they had not even begun to integrate themselves into the host culture. Examples of their comments on this were: “I remained essentially myself”; “You are always still *‘blan’*, i.e. a foreigner”; “I’m not really sure that I managed to properly understand this country”. Does this mean that the PBI volunteers left just the same as when they came? I decided to conclude this report by weighing up what the volunteers contributed to the country and what they learnt from it; because in the end, PBI’s project in Haiti was its volunteers.

By way of conclusion: “New openings?”

We must first account for the project’s results based on the factual evidence from the field. On this level, PBI has undeniably left its mark in Haiti. There have been some more than creditable results, already noted, with respect to the acquisition of nonviolence concepts by those who participated in the awareness-raising workshops. We should add to this now the testimonies of the Haitian trainers. Asked about PBI’s legacy in Haiti, they all replied in terms of the training work carried out. Six of them pointed to the GFP as the jewel in the crown of this legacy. The other two tended to speak more about the training in nonviolent conflict transformation as a whole. The trainers’ experience of the training given may thus be summarised as follows:

- ? All except one of them had had more than one session of training and had also tried their hand at co-facilitating. They thus had a relatively rounded view on the subject.
- ? Two out of the eight trainers interviewed focused particularly on the importance of nonviolent conflict transformation, personal skills and life experience. All the others found that the training had a much wider usefulness and potential. One said: “Its usefulness goes way beyond its legal dimension”, whilst another stated that “This training should be extended across the whole country and should be provided in schools”.
- ? Other equally positive comments made nonetheless also stressed the complicated nature of this type of training and the interviewees felt that its potential was dependent on sustained work on the part of the trainers.
- ? The workshop format was also largely highlighted, including the techniques used and not just the concepts taught. All those interviewed recognised that they had benefited from applying these techniques to their own organisational work.

However, a sense of expectation was detectable amongst the Haitian trainers. The training had certainly gone down well and been taken on board. It was a resource and in a certain way an opportunity which they had taken up as it presented itself. But with the exception of two people for whom all this experience had been essentially a personal one, the trainers, as ‘inheritors’ of the PBI experience, felt themselves to be shouldered with a heavy responsibility, as we shall see.

On the other side, a feeling of achievement outweighed all else for the PBI volunteers. Beyond the question of the impact of the project and of the degree to which the training was assimilated by the Haitians or compatible with their culture, the volunteers all felt that the concepts to do with a culture of peace and with nonviolent conflict transformation had taken root and that this was in fact the essential part of their work and of their legacy (“if one can call it that”, one volunteer commented). From this point of view, the existence of the GFP is a living testimony to this. The idea of a ‘legacy’ is not, as they see it, the idea of passing on a message or an inheritance, it is far more a question of being something that was freely offered and which the Haitians participating in the training were free to accept.

This is why the issue of matching the offer to the cultural context and of the necessary adaptations was not a problem. This is also why it is worth understanding that the feeling of achievement did not stem from any misplaced confidence the volunteers might have had about how they stand with the country. The two areas of concern are clearly distinct. Finally, this is also why it is worth recording what personal experiences people had. Encountering differences and their personal impact on the volunteers is in some way the distinctive feature of PBI's project in Haiti. It is worth recalling here how important personal commitment was for the volunteers, as this in a way went hand in hand with how important personal relationships were for the Haitian trainers. There is no doubt that the individual dimension of these experiences played an important role in the impact the project had on individuals and so, in the end, on the groups. The persistent doubts lingering in the volunteers' minds about how genuinely they understood the country actually parallel the doubts and feelings of near-insecurity conveyed by most of the trainers when talking about the future. This parallel seems to lie at the heart of PBI's work in Haiti. It also lies at the heart of the marked differences in perception on both sides about the importance of relationships.

Whilst the evaluations of both groups agree or complement each other when it comes to the various activities, they do diverge when it comes to their perceptions about personal experiences and relationships. This is at the heart of the issues surrounding PBI's legacy. It is important here first to note again the clear and detailed comments from the volunteers on how the GFP was an independent project from the start ("PBI did not set up the GFP, it was the trainers themselves who decided to set it up"). It is certainly true that the Haitian trainers' testimonies do not contradict this position. However, the issue of the autonomy of the group remains a live one, bearing in mind that one of its members has even bluntly called it "PBI's baby".

The truth of the matter is that the problem lies not in who originally activated the idea of the group, but more importantly in how it was actually set up. It is here that the issues of organisational capacity, of the various kinds of resources and of relationships come into play. Because supporting a group or an initiative does not at all have the same meaning for a foreign volunteer as for a Haitian trainer. It is an issue, in fact, of personal interpretation and social conditioning. Dependence is deeply rooted in the social conditioning of Haitians. A certain dependence has developed in terms of external initiatives and the trainers are very aware of this, as are the volunteers. The volunteers are however barely concerned about this, not having anything to sell and aware of their being resources who are just "passing through". But the trainers have to live with its effects even as they are sharply watchful about its dangers. All the precautions taken by PBI against such dependency cannot prevent this, the answer lies in mobilising the will and determination of the trainers.

One of the trainers who saw things most clearly explained the situation as follows: "In a way, PBI leaving will provide the opportunity for testing the GFP's autonomy. There is reason to be worried, but there are also a lot of reasons to be hopeful. A lot of people have been changed by the introduction of nonviolent conflict transformation in Haiti [...] There has been organisational and structural progress [...]". Another trainer puts it differently: "PBI has sown seeds in Haiti which could transform the country in ten years". Is this conclusion an optimistic one? In fact this is pretty much what was put forward by the "millennium" bulletin when it stated that "following a six-month evaluation, PBI believes that the dissemination of a culture of peace has begun".

There are certainly other possible openings on the horizon, but only if PBI's departure from Haiti is seen as a positive move. There is a rite of passage here to go through and the members of the GFP are well aware of this. People still talk about support from PBI but everyone knows that in reality a new phase has begun. This is in fact the wide-open future before the GFP.

6. Ueli Mäder : *"It is a privilege to work for PBI"*

"The death sentences hanging over each of our heads were not carried out, because we were not alone, because we had PBI's protective accompaniment", writes Francisco Campo. He is a member of the Regional Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CREDHOS) in Colombia.

These words illustrate the essential nature of PBI. This organisation, active on an international level, sends observers to crisis and conflict zones. Teams of volunteers use their presence to protect people who are threatened with politically motivated violence, abduction and murder. PBI opposes direct, structural violence with active non-violence. It was set up in 1981 as an international peace organisation by activists from four continents.

Today, Peace Brigades International is active across the world in various areas of tension, supporting peace, human rights and social justice movements. Peace Brigades International attempts to prevent these movements from becoming isolated, and to allow them to make themselves heard. It opposes all forms of oppression. The lawyer Jürg Meyer concludes that PBI's activities are of an equal value to the social objectives of development aid²⁹. The teams are present in areas where the threat of human rights violations and crime exists, on the request of those directly affected. They strive to play a preventive role. The assumption is that those who seek violence shrink from the public light.

In Haiti, as well as protective accompaniment, PBI worked on promoting active nonviolence by means of peace education - again, respecting the principle of non-interference. It remains yet to be seen whether this broader activity of awareness raising will also be taken on board in PBI work in other countries. After the 'gentle withdrawal' from Haiti, the first job is to evaluate the work carried out there. An in situ evaluation was done by Sabine Manigat. The social scientist Hector Schmassmann and I have gained an impression of the project from an analysis of the archives and interviews.³⁰ I will begin by bringing together some important outcomes of our research, and will complement this by focusing in more detail on two areas which are of particular significance for PBI, volunteering and international civil society.

An open organisational culture

PBI is clearly keen to open itself up to close examination. Internal and external evaluations are part of an open organisational culture. This is not a plug for PBI, but the conclusion of a sociologist who has, on more than one occasion, experienced organisations which do not appreciate people taking a look behind the scenes. PBI opened its doors and archives to us without hesitation. It also provided us, in confidence, with the addresses of all the people involved. This allowed us to flip through numerous documents (reports, minutes, correspondence, etc.), read certain samples in detail, and, by means of targeted questions, discuss issues further. The aim is not to set out in writing the internal affairs of this organisation. Through illustrative impressions we simply intend to shed light on some aspects which remain hidden behind the plain facts.

At PBI, about several hundreds of volunteers world-wide are carrying out a considerable amount of qualified work. The organisational processes are regulated and work smoothly. All processes can be reviewed at any time. Mutual exchanges of experiences are highly

²⁹ Basler Zeitung, 21/11/00

³⁰ For transcribed excerpts of these interviews, see chapter 7

valued. In addition, there is a constant process of introspection. This is cultivated on an advanced level as a particular form of evaluation. For the continuation of the projects, structural and organisational changes are necessary; the management of administrative matters, accounting, resource acquisition and public relations work need to be further professionalised. PBI would be well advised, however, to approach these changes with caution, and carefully consolidate the work already done.

PBI must not allow itself to be dazzled by its own successes. It does not have to do everything which it might be able to do. An expansion of the peace education activities may be called for, if approached with the necessary finesse, but not at the expense of protective accompaniment. This work still has its *raison d'être*, considering the many violations of human rights that take place. However, worldwide networking remains a great challenge; it is more important than ever. PBI contributes to global civil society, and in this area, it can do considerably more. But - a word of caution: I am not promoting a great rush forwards. Internal consolidation and coherence are essential pre-conditions for countering repressive power structures. An organisation's credibility is more than just a moral strength. It also depends on the proper functioning of the organisation. A transparent organisational structure promotes identification with the organisation. It is just as important for the outreach activities of the organisation as the exemplary seismographic activities and the - sometimes - clever PR work.

Lively Exchange

"PBI succeeded in introducing perspectives of nonviolence into Haiti, and giving them a sustainable basis there", was the not exactly modest opinion of one of the people involved. Is this presumption or an overestimation of PBI's achievements? Others involved are more cautious. They point to egalitarian and peaceable practices to be found in the traditional social structures of Haiti, and relativise their own influence, while mentioning how difficult this is to evaluate. PBI volunteers who have several stints behind them and have come to terms with a long-term interruption of their careers, are modest about their contribution and emphasise above all the "personal gain".

Taking about democratisation which was the principle goal of the action, a report mentions the establishment of an inventory of Haitian resources, as if it was about a procedure of mechanisation or electrification. Other minutes of meetings resemble subtle, well-founded sociological analyses of nonviolent forms of conflict management and participative workshop techniques.

One former volunteer boasts about hardly having had a minute of free time during his entire time with PBI. Another considers that the lack of time to oneself could lead to a lack of personal demarcation, or to an excessive tendency to cut oneself off from the others.

So far then, we have some quite varying emphases. What clearly dominates, is an understanding approach which is also conscious of the dangers of euro centric automatisms. In all cases, the volunteers are carefully selected and well prepared. Some complain that PBI is too bureaucratic and self-obsessed. The criticism of others is that the chaos principle dominates, and that the organisation concentrates too much on protective accompaniment. On the whole, the judgements are positive. PBI is an organisation which achieves much with relatively few means. It operates at the grassroots level and contributes to securing spaces and enhancing people's capacity to organise themselves.

Consensus promotes identification

PBI works with many volunteers who go into the field for relatively short periods. The minutes of meetings are part of the organisation's memory. They document communication on and between various levels. The committees have to rely on comprehensive reports. These also help the newcomers to orient themselves. The volume and density of the information, however, is overwhelming. It provides transparency, but at the same time it is very difficult to gain an overview. The procedure of justification requires considerable energy. The fact that, in discussions and decisions, the principle of consensus is paramount, contributes to strengthening processes. However, these procedures are time-consuming. The high turnover of volunteers sometimes results in partially re-inventing the wheel. A more systematic and targeted handling of information could contribute to avoiding mistakes. The flood of e-mails should be rethought. Some mails are excessively abbreviated, maybe because the frequency of correspondence is too high. This lively electronic exchange is however no replacement for the necessary personal contact between the co-ordination centres, which should be made more frequent. The contents of some reports indicate an actionist culture which continually questions itself. This does not have to be a contradiction.

It is true that considerable energy is spent on the reports. The six-monthly evaluations of the teams each take a few days, but they are of great benefit for all. This is equally true of the yearly evaluations and the procedure of accountability with regard to PBI International. Each project must provide a fundamental justification for itself. Projects which are treading unusual paths are subject to greater pressure to legitimise themselves. Intensive personal reflection is part of the institutionalised self-evaluation process. It helps people to progress. What is open to question, is whether the principle of consensus is too strictly implemented. Consensus promotes identification. The lengthy discussions continually open up new perspectives. Because PBI's cogs turn for as long as is necessary for consensus to be achieved, actions are well supported. The volunteering system means that there is an indispensable handover process - otherwise, valuable know-how is lost. The archives are treasure troves of social studies and information about countries. They could be good for many further use.

PBI is intensively introspective. The internal and external activities are roughly equally weighted. In certain very few publications, the Western actors are in the foreground. The countries where the teams operate appear rather secondary, although PBI works very closely with the host country and people. This thorough approach promotes individual development and a high degree of self-education among all involved. Most remain active after their stint. They pass on their experiences and personal gain to others.

PBI's concepts may well bear a western stamp. But they are also rooted in the tradition of Mahatma Gandhi. The partners overseas include many who are well-educated and have an international outlook. Furthermore, PBI does not propose off-the-peg solutions. Paths are forged in partnership. "We teach partners that we have nothing to teach them", says one of the volunteers. With the so-called simple people, the farmers, more than just translation is necessary. The resistance of many locals proves to have great potential. What is more difficult, is how to deal with excessive trust in authority and attitudes such as "we can't do that. The foreigners will sort it out".³¹ Here there is a danger of falling prey to paternalistic patterns of behaviour. PBI deals with these problems intensively when preparing volunteers. "Those that don't approach their own 'helper' syndrome critically,

³¹ « Nou pa kapab, blan ap fè l. »

don't get accepted. The classic missionary types stay at home", affirms a volunteer who works on the training and selection of prospective volunteers.

The potential of voluntary work

All over the world about 500 people work as volunteers within PBI, coming out of a network of maybe thirteen thousand members and supporters located in 15 country groups on four continents. Surely there is a need for greater professionalisation? For the internal processes and accounts, yes. For the volunteers, no; they are irreplaceable and invaluable. Maybe in the Basque Country, there is a need for specifically trained people. But many of the important, basic tasks within civil society are best taken care off by volunteers. The protective accompaniment works well. It could however be extended - as could the peace education aspect. And that is where PBI comes up against its limits, both in terms of personnel and funding. Due to a lack of resources, PBI was forced to ask its Haiti team to help with fund-raising. Furthermore, a team should have at least four members at all times, which is problematic, when personnel is short. PBI intends, as an incentive, to improve recruiting and preparation. Otherwise, people leave for organisations which pay for their services.

"It is a privilege to work for PBI", says a nurse and psychologist, who worked for PBI in Haiti and has paid part of the expenses herself.

Nowadays there is an intensive discussion going on about what volunteering entails, not only in PBI. By voluntary work, we mean unpaid work carried out within organisations, for the benefit of others.³² Without volunteering, modern societies would fall apart, states the sociologist Ulrich Beck.³³ At any rate voluntary work is not passé. Whether it is expanding, is a matter of controversy. Some identify a "new social culture".

In Switzerland a study of the federal statistics office offers data on the number of people working as volunteers, and on the time invested.³⁴ One out of four persons volunteers at least for one organisation. Unpaid work amounts to a total sum trespassing 215 milliards of francs.³⁵ This amount corresponds to about 60% of the domestic gross national product.³⁶

What has changed, however, is the view of volunteering as charity. When asked about their motivation, volunteers cite the need to take on social responsibility, get to know other people, gain recognition, strike a balance with their professional work, or get interested in marginalized groups. Some simply want to "stay on the ball", or "prepare for a career". "When I get involved with problems like this, I forget my own", said one woman. She is aware that, when helping, she is also helping herself. The 'helper syndrome', where benefactors see themselves as compassionate, is gradually disappearing. For most volunteers, human exchange is as important as noble-mindedness, according to the sociologist Isidor Wallimann. The bad conscience element is losing significance. As a result, volunteers are making precise demands on social institutions, asking for information, training and concrete tasks.

Volunteering is an important learning domain. People can try out new skills, while at the same time doing something useful. For this to work, established institutions must be prepared to make space for individual initiative. They need to refund expenses, insure

³² Nadai E., Hess B., *Gemeinsinn und Eigennutz*, Haupt, Bern, 1996, p. 9.

³³ Beck U., *Kinder der Freiheit*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, 1997, p. 15.

³⁴ Bundesamt für Statistik, *Unbezahlt aber trotzdem Arbeit*, Neuenburg, 1999, p. 7.

³⁵ Bundesamt für Statistik, *monetäre Bewertung der unbezahlten Arbeit*, Neuenburg, 1999, p. 8.

³⁶ Wallimann I., *Freiwillige im Sozialbereich*, HFS, Basel, 1993.

volunteers and ensure the work carried out is visible. When social volunteering work becomes more attractive, it replaces artificial training. Volunteering is solidarity in action. It represents a counter to the rational world of careers, which is oriented towards recognised training. But isn't there also a danger that volunteering covers up for lacunae and mitigates social problems which demand structural solutions? Aren't volunteers mainly used to save money? The particular efficiency of well formed people justifies a clear separation of tasks and roles. Some promote a different repartition of paid work and household tasks, between men and women. A reduction of formal work time would allow more time for social life activities. There we see little by little a door opening between professional and volunteer work.

Social problems cannot however be dealt with in a bureaucratic way. Participation, self-esteem and joie de vivre also play a role. In order to foster people's involvement for social work, the concept of 'social time' could be introduced. Those who have completed an initial training could carry out a socially or ecologically useful activity for a few months, volunteering for PBI, for example. In this way, experiences of inestimable worth can be gained. People can obtain social skills which are useful for the rest of their lives. Those who carry out social activities are confronted with the question, what is important in life? The intention is not however to create competition between professional work and volunteering. Social time must not lead to wage dumping, or compete with existing jobs. While current time structures reflect social divisions, social time represents a questioning of the whole system. It pushes for an peaceful reshaping of society and reduces the monetarisation of social work. If work was distributed differently, it would not be necessary to attribute to all services a money value. Volunteering is able, in part, to complement and improve existing production systems. There are institutions where volunteers triple every franc donated. Nevertheless, these activities must not be regarded as cheap replacement for state services and duties. They must neither be used to consolidate existing power differentials between men and women. Rather than bypassing current systems of protection currently in place, it is about examining which of the new social tasks can be handled on a voluntary basis. No doubt that peace work is an important area. It has the capacity to strengthen the bonds of civil society and link them up on a global level. This is clearly shown in the valuable work of PBI.

Towards a perspective of international civil society

The sociologist Ralf Dahrendorf³⁷ mentions the crumbling of institutions as an unavoidable consequence of globalisation. As a result, the significance of new networks is increased. The reactivation of civil society, supported by the state, should form a bulwark against the domination of the economy and promote social cohesion. The "Lisbon Group"³⁸ points to promising beginnings: global civil society is composed of thousands of organised groups, which make a commitment to protecting the environment or to human rights and nonviolence, as in the case of PBI. What is needed is a network, ready for action, which locates as much decision-making power as possible at the lowest levels. Organisations like PBI can, in the context of a global civil society, make problems visible, call the powerful to render accounts, extend the process of public decision-making and democratise societal structures.

³⁷ In Misik R., *Mythos Weltmarkt*, Berlin 1997, p60.

³⁸ Lisbon Group, *Grenzen des Wettbewerbs - Die Globalisierung der Wirtschaft und die Zukunft der Menschheit*, Munich 1997, p170.

Elmar Altvater³⁹ describes what the principles of a global social policy might look like, referring to the agenda of the Copenhagen World Social Summit of 1995. This demanded a new World Social Charter, which records the minimum goals of an ecologically sustainable and socially balanced development. Among these are: overcoming malnutrition, housing for all, education for all, the reduction of adult illiteracy, health provision organised on a grassroots level, voluntary family planning, equality of men and women in all areas of life, safe drinking water and sewage systems, and access to credit, particularly in order to improve employment possibilities. Furthermore, a "peace dividend" is to reduce military spending world-wide. A yearly reduction of three percent would bring in US\$ 460 billion in five years. This amount, according to UN estimates, could be enough to satisfy the basic needs of the earth's entire population.

In pre-industrial societies, solidarity was experienced via the concrete encounters between people, who were directly dependent upon each other.⁴⁰ The transition to institutionally implemented solidarity in modern society brought with it anonymity. The shifting of solidarity onto an abstract level means that, on the conscious and emotional level, different demands are made. Here, ruptures occur. One possibility of overcoming this lies in defending the State commitment to social services and complementing it by means of new forms of solidarity which can be directly experienced. In this respect, PBI offers significant possibilities of discovery. Josef Senft⁴¹ warns against excessive confidence in international solidarity. In his view, the chances of improving global conditions by political means or by economic pressure have worsened. Certainly, local strategies have obtained a particular significance. They see themselves forced to get organised in order to guarantee their means of survival and fill in the gaps which come about due to the slackening of previously existing commitments.

Ulrich Beck⁴² calls for a world-citizens' republicanism, resting on five principles. Firstly, the significance of the individual, secondly the centrality of world-citizen actors and networks, thirdly a re-evaluation of local activities, fourthly the key position of freedom, and fifthly, institutional reforms. I consider these points to be important, but I doubt an awareness of crisis promotes readiness to act. The opposite is often the case, according to my investigations.⁴³ When people stand with their backs to the wall, they risk retreating into themselves, or simply fleeing blindly forwards. For precisely this reason are organisations like PBI so important. They lend strength to people who are in desperate situations. The consolidation of civil society requires a global solidarity. It sets as a precondition - with a view to a bottom-up development process - the shoring up of independent local politics and identity. I wish PBI all the best in their valuable work.

³⁹ Altvater E., "Sozialpolitik im 'globalen' Dorf", in: F. Hengsbach, et al., *Eure Armut kotzt uns an! Solidarität in der Krise*, Frankfurt, 1995, pp173-190.

⁴⁰ Keupp H., *Der Mensch als soziales Wesen*, München 1995, p3 ff.

⁴¹ Senft J., *Im Prinzip von unten - Redefinition des Subsidiaritätsgrundsatzes für ein solidarisches Ethos*, Frankfurt 1990, p5.

⁴² Beck U., *Kinder der Freiheit*, Frankfurt 1997, pp27-28.

⁴³ Mäder U., *Für eine solidarische Gesellschaft*, Zurich 1999, p43 ff.

7. Hector Schmassmann : Challenges faced by the actors of the project

On October 27, 2000, I spoke with PBI volunteers about their mission. We chose to start with some provocative questions that we prepared on the basis of our reading of the archives, touching on delicate or critical points including the five important domains which are bureaucracy, the organization's practise of self-examination, interculturality, volunteering, and the relay of the work. Here are some excerpts from the discussions, which were originally held in French.⁴⁴

Bureaucracy

What do you think of the allegation that PBI is bureaucratic?

A: There is a certain bureaucratic side, to be sure, insofar as there is a lot of written material; we write a lot of reports and use a number of different methods. There is a bureaucratic side, something I noticed particularly in the beginning. For consensus to work well—that is, a decision is made only when everyone agrees—information has to circulate between the team and the coordinating office. There are certainly things which seem tedious, but they are justified by the methods used and the results obtained. They guarantee the communication between the committee members, who are in charge of a project from beginning to end, and the volunteers, who stay roughly a year. This is why you have to invest a lot of effort in relaying the internal work to those who come after you, not to mention all the relationships with Haitians. So of course there is bureaucracy, in the sense that you have a lot of paperwork, a lot of procedures; you're trying to pass on what has been learned.

B: I get the impression it is the fate of all these organizations who are committed to defending human rights. But already two years after this project got started there were many things to relay. And yet it was absolutely necessary to relay this experience. So for sure, if you're at the start of a project and you make a few mistakes, to reassure yourself you can tell yourself, for example, that this is the first workshop you're organizing; but if volunteers are still making mistakes by the tenth workshop and they notice that the same problems have cropped up more than once, it's very frustrating: you wonder if the project really is worthwhile, or if it's just the same mistakes being made.

A: There is an important legacy, particularly in terms of the way PBI has proceeded with other projects—procedures which have shown their effectiveness in other projects—and PBI Haiti has inherited that legacy, so that the pilot project in Haiti got started with the structure developed and tested in other places. That also brought with it more work, since we had to adapt the way we worked and that our project in Haiti was different from those in other countries.

B: I've heard a lot about this topic, both in connection with the political analysis and with the various efforts which came about as a result. On the one hand you have the political analysis, on the other the attention you might give to political contacts and networking. A few volunteers said that the reason they were in this country was peace education, and they couldn't understand why they had to meet with leaders from political parties and so on. Why should we have a political analysis? People asked this question several times. In my opinion, this was sign of a lack of specific skills. Because if you want to work in peace education, towards a positive evolution of conflicts, you have to know the basis, the

⁴⁴ These excerpts of interviews, chosen by H. Schmassmann compile topics that have been much discussed amongst the volunteers and the committee. "A few ideas to follow-up for possible improvements" for such a project are gathered in appendix 4, page ???

context you're working in; if you don't, you'll do things, which have no relation with reality. The committee, the coordinator, and several volunteers surely had to insist on this point. A lot of time has been spent in discussions, in writing reports, in communicating. I think this kind of bureaucracy is useful if you take into account the fact that the volunteers change every year and that the new replacements, when they arrive, don't have all the necessary know-how to do their work; I also think that what's lacking is a permanent on-site person. Factors like these have increased the administrative load.

"The intense experience gained within a multicultural team puts the concept of work into question. I have always been fascinated by the diversity of activities that the life of a PBI volunteer offers. There are almost no specialisations: everybody does everything and helps each other to get on with the job. I think there are no fields in which I haven't worked – from public relations to articles for the bulletin, from workshops to observer work, from writing reports to meetings or organisational tasks, from evaluations to doing the accounts ... to name but some. The question I am now asking myself is how will I go back to a "normal" way of working, with a boss who gives me jobs following a well defined set of terms and conditions?"

Haiti. After a year, I feel as though I have had just the tiniest little insight into this country, its people, its culture, its language, its politics ... To this day, I still haven't managed to feel sure about anything to do with it. It's very disturbing, especially for someone who tends to think of himself as rather rational. *'Ayiti, tè glisan!'*⁴⁵ Why is Haiti so difficult to understand? Or is it perhaps the intercultural experience pushed to its extremes which has made me much more sensitive and cautious about daring to state anything for sure? I do know that I know nothing ..."

"What am I to make of the changes in my own behaviour, changes which happened to me or which I developed myself through this powerful experience in Haiti? Me, who has always described myself as an idealist and an optimist who focused on what was positive, on what had improved, without underplaying the problems, I feel as if I have come down to earth, as if I have become a realist. There are times when such "coming down to earth" is horribly painful, when the loss of illusions is hard to take."

Jürgen Störk, Self-evaluation at the team's departure, December 1996

All these structural givens however have been based, among other things, on the functioning of a system conceived for protective accompaniment; in this case the annual change of staff may be justified, otherwise emotional ties with people become too strong. But for training, on the other hand, it would be without doubt a good thing to commit for longer time periods.

So in that respect we took over a structure, which did not correspond to what we were doing. That's a risk inherent to PBI, which only operates on demand: so of necessity we are constantly adapting. We try our best to respond to the requests of the organizations, which approach us. After the event we can always say, well, that wasn't the right solution, the volunteers should have been told to stay for two years. But you can't know ahead of time what the requests or needs of your partners will be, because they're constantly changing, along with the entire context, during your collaboration.

So you would say that PBI is bureaucratic?

A: In some respects, yes, but that side is offset by the very personal relations we have with our partners. That's something, which clearly goes beyond any bureaucratic context. There are some institutional procedures, but there are also moments of great flexibility, which are part of the overall experience along with your contact with other people, so you become very open-minded when you encounter new things.

⁴⁵ Literally translated: "Haiti, slippery soil!", meaning that there are no certitudes, there is nothing for sure.

B: And there is another skill that we haven't taken into account: developing and analysing training programs. We've mentioned the skills required to set up a course, but not those you need to develop programs and evaluate them. You need specific skills for that, which you should apply over several years. In one year there's not enough time to be able to apply these types of skills.

The Organization's Self-Reflection

What do you think of the allegation that PBI is turned to the inside rather than to the outside?

B: It's true that you might get this impression when looking through the archives, because that's what's helped above all, as we just said, to relay, create a consensus, and so on. With hindsight I think that for the majority of the volunteers the interaction with Haitian culture was very important, even if they did not express it formally. There are actually very few PBI texts on "Haitian culture". Perhaps we should take a sort of moral aspect into account: in other words, as PBI volunteers, we didn't feel we had the right to make any generalization about Haitian culture. We didn't feel we were qualified to do so either: it would have been presumptuous of us to say that their culture is like this or like that. Our discussions about Haitian culture were always held in an informal way, and we discovered their culture above all thanks to the meetings we had with our partners. All this does not show when you just read the documents.

A: When you read what the team has written you really do get the impression that they've been pressured to write a great deal specifically for the organization's internal use, in order to create respect for the principle of consensus where decision-making is concerned. But the ultimate aim of this procedure is to develop things in collaboration with the Haitians and their country. There are some elements, which indicate that we haven't been headed in the wrong direction, that PBI is not some sort of closed circuit or an organization, which theorizes its experience just for its own purposes.

Are there ways to improve relations between PBI and Haitian culture?

B: Yes, the volunteers should stay for longer.

C: It's true that in the beginning you feel overwhelmed by your work because you have to assimilate the principles (non-interference, nonviolence, impartiality, consensus...). You constantly have questions about these principles, because they're always present. They are important, but a bit difficult to deal with too. You feel obliged to respect them and you tend to forget the external aspects. You need time to feel at ease, to take your distance and see your own experience confirmed more or less by the principles, but also to manage to learn to recognize your own limits in order to say: up to this point, I agree, but beyond that, I don't. I think that one year is just too little to be adequately concerned with what is going on outside as well.

B: I've just thought of a positive point, which attenuates this hypothesis to some degree. It concerns immersion: at the beginning of a mission, each volunteer spends a certain period alone in the middle of a group of Haitians.

In my opinion, this period is of vital importance. I learned a great deal, in particular things, which helped me in my work later on. The second thing I wanted to point out in reference to the allegation that we are too focused on what's going on within the organization is the fact that we live in a community. Because there are also problems in people's relations which have to be resolved. The positive aspect is that we have experience where conflicts are concerned, we've learned to gain control over some aspects of them. This influences the way we see other people's conflicts.

The everyday life of the team is relatively well organised, you get used to people, to their little habits, and in certain cases you can understand where their reactions are coming from. Habit breeds the ability to put up with attitudes which, in another context, we would try to avoid. The relationships which are formed, despite everything, push us into accepting the frayed tempers and bouts of bad moods that a human being has the right and the duty to express, when it becomes too much to keep them in. Human weakness also has the right to be accepted in our micro-society. This laboratory of human relations teaches everyday to everyone that it is not impossible to push beyond one's own limits, that tolerance is a virtue without which "Hell is other people".

Nathalie Machabert, PBI Haiti team diary, 24 March 1999

C: But depending on the atmosphere among the team members, sometimes you don't have the strength to deal with what's outside.

B: We live in a community, we work together and we make decisions based on the principle of consensus. Also, the context we are living in might seem unbelievable and very strange; as a result, one of the things the team has to do is to keep emotions in balance. A team is like a sort of family that comes at times into a crisis situation, and at the same time it has to deal with violence and conflict very present in the outside world. All of this is a great burden on the team and sometimes it reaches the limits of what's bearable. I would like to add the following thing: it was absolutely necessary for us to think about certain aspects together, particularly about the way we do certain things, the stance we have to take with regards to Haiti, to our partners, and so on. It was important for us to discuss our principles—like not taking sides, for example—within the group, until we find a consensus. Even if sometimes it's difficult, it gives us a guarantee of quality in our contacts with local partners, even if this might seem paradoxical. It's a bit like the job of a social worker or educator or psychologist who spends hours in meetings and reviews... I think it's just a necessary thing... The contacts we have had with our partners have been of an exceptional quality. Other expatriates haven't had such good contacts, even if some of them had fine theories about Haitian culture because they took part in excursions every weekend, were visiting artists, and so on. They had their own theories about Haitian culture, but they had become bitter and defeatist about the significance of their work and the type of relation developed with their local partners. We enjoyed a very authentic contact with our Haitian partners.

Do you think PBI concentrates too much of its activity in Port-au-Prince?

C: The fact that two-thirds of the workshops have been held "outside" (*'andeyô*) shows that the team and the committee both have really wanted to carry out an important part of the project outside of Port-au-Prince. So we've had especially good contacts with other parts of the country, for example Chénol, in the Cahos Mountains, which has become the second focal point of our activity. There have been other places as well, in the North and in the South.

B: We always work on request. From time to time however there have been requests from Haitians or Internationals to be present everywhere in the country. But this was not the way PBI worked. We might go to a certain place on our own initiative to present our work and to meet local organisations; then sometimes a request emerged, and sometimes not. But we couldn't decide to do a job in that place if we didn't have an explicit request.

C: We sometimes had trouble following up with projects, particularly with concern to communication and transportation needs; but there too it was just part of the Haitian reality

and something we had to accept. But on the other hand there were some projects '*andeyô*' (out there) we were able to follow through on fairly well.

Interculturality

What do you think of the allegation that PBI is too euro-centric?

C: I'm not so sure: is PBI euro-centric? Western, rather. We've talked about this regarding the recruitment of the volunteers: we've had trouble, for example, finding volunteers who were not from a northern country. This is typical of a certain aspect of PBI's structure⁴⁶: if you look at the countries where PBI has country groups, they're always northern countries... And then you have to look at the way we deal with our partners in Haiti in order to tell whether we are capable of evolving. When we first get here, we are who we are, and without a doubt, we are westerners.

What has been the Haitian perception of these "Western" groups? Did they have any particular expectations?

B: Yes, they viewed us as '*blan*' (white/foreigner). This term refers above all to a person's national and social origins rather than their skin colour.

A: We can't escape our origins as '*blan*,' but we can try to go beyond them and take the risk of seeking out a true, authentic relation with Haiti and its population, a relation which won't be skewed by the fact that we come from the Western world, something which implies that we have money, that we need a visa, and so on.

B: Differences will anyway remain present in relations whenever two people meet from different worlds. But it was necessary and possible to build up a partnership, as A has just pointed out, in order to establish a true relationship.

"For me, the life of the Haitians I'm living side-by-side with remains more than ever an enigma, about which I feel incapable of formulating an opinion. The more I discover this life, the more I learn about it, that's true. But the more I learn about it, the more I know I've got a lot left to discover. Nothing is clear-cut or simple. Here, car or no car, '*kòb*'⁴⁷ or no '*kòb*,' Creole or not, a white is still a white⁴⁸. Me, I'm a white who bears his culture on his back, his idealism tucked in his left pocket and with a scepticism tucked in the right one that grows day by day. Sometime the pockets get unexpectedly mixed up."

Tom Noirfalis, PBI Haiti team diary, 27 February 1999.

A: We didn't ever try to instruct the Haitians either, that is, to present ourselves as '*blan*' who know everything better than they do, so for this reason we didn't fulfil all their requests either, like, for example, figuring out a way for them to resolve a conflict, or acting in their place. Those kinds of requests we never granted, because nobody knows their needs better than they themselves.

C: I think it also has something to do with the volunteers' skills. Someone who is not very well trained, who is not professionally involved with developing training programs, will have a more modest behaviour.

B: I think it is also thanks to our concept and our particular approach. I get the feeling that the facts bear this out, because we've had a good contact with the population. We've been in contact with Haitians who gave a lot of their time and energy, a lot of themselves, and it has always been completely willingly. With a lot of NGOs this is not the case: if they're not

⁴⁶ See show table page ???

⁴⁷ 100th of a Haitian Gourde; dough (money).

⁴⁸ Sometimes, to insult us, they would also call us '*massisi*', or white.

paid, Haitians often think that they're being exploited by the organizations and that their work has not been given enough credit. Working for an international NGO often represents one of the rare economic opportunities in Haiti. In addition Haitians are aware of the sums of money involved in the humanitarian and developmental sector; if the westerners earn a decent salary for this type of work, why should they work for free? All the more so in that their work justifies the money they receive from western institutions. This is not making a moral judgement, just stating facts.

What do you think of the allegation that people in Haiti, oppressed for so long, are passive?

B: When you're from the West and you've spent a few months in Haiti, you might get the impression that "all it would take" would be a few things, which seem very simple to us, to resolve some very serious and problematic issues. So then you might be astonished, annoyed, or disappointed to see that the Haitians aren't doing that. And you risk becoming condescending or arrogant. It's a serious trap, one which prevents encounters, because respect is fundamental. In fact, they have their own reasons that have to do with their own context... something which is far more complex than you might imagine as a foreigner. For example, they've developed ways to resist in accordance with their own social reality, their culture, and their history.

The last discussion I had with Haitian friends, before I came back to Europe, was precisely about respect: they told me that respect was the most important thing in Haiti. And it's true. This was shown time and again in all our meetings with Haitians. The minute I gave them the impression that I was arrogant, they would withdraw into an attitude of '*marronage*' and it was pointless to try to go on. You always had to behave modestly if you wanted to get close to the Haitians and discover the wealth of their culture. What I liked about working for PBI in Haiti was that I managed—I think—to get close to people who didn't try to withdraw into an attitude of '*marronage*'. Quite the opposite: in Haiti I met people who were both committed, and critical.

A: I felt that very strongly. When I arrived as a "newcomer" in Haiti I immediately noticed one particular thing in our contacts with our closest partners: they could criticize us. Normally most Haitians don't behave like that.

B: As a rule they would have said things which they thought we would be glad to hear.

Volunteering in Haiti

B: Several partners told us that they thought that the volunteer aspect of PBI was very important. Yet volunteers from PBI are always in a comfortable situation compared to the average Haitian: they have a place to live, enough food, and so on, and the \$50 US stipend a month they receive corresponds to an average monthly salary in Haiti. But the Haitians knew that we could have been earning a lot more working for other Western organizations. So they'd ask us why we were working for PBI rather than for another organization where it would have been easier to make money. Hence, we must have been motivated by something other than money. I think this helped to make our commitment seem more credible.

So you got the impression that the Haitians were more open towards you than towards other whites working in Haiti?

A: I don't claim that we were the only ones. But a lot of the Haitians I met wondered about this issue.

B: There were also some Haitians who had no contact with us because what they wanted was paid work. They went to work for other organizations who could pay salaries. But we found partners whose motivations coincided with ours and with whom we were able to have an effective collaboration.

Relaying The Work

What do you make of the allegation that the relaying of work on site would need more time?

B: The committee was often confronted with the problem of finding people who would stay in the country for a longer period of time, but it was impossible to find any... it was a practical problem.

A:... or rather financial. It seemed very difficult to find volunteers willing to commit for a long term with the conditions offered by PBI. But on the other hand, in Haiti itself, there was a fear of losing the particular quality of our relation with the Haitians; for sure the volunteer status ensures a quality of relations, which was above average, and this made things much easier for our work on the ground. So we were constantly pulled back and forth between a western reality—with all its possibilities and its dangers—and a Haitian reality, particularly from the economic point of view. It was very wearing to try to find a working harmony between these two very contradictory realities.

But PBI deliberately operates like this. In the first place it is a personal choice to work for PBI; later on, everyone has to admit that the decision has given rise to a lot of frustration, particularly on a personal level. That was the real problem. At times we felt out of our depth; the reality on the ground gave us a lot of worries, and it was difficult to gain personal satisfaction in the work. At the beginning of the mission we said, OK, I'm not earning a lot of money, but this is an exceptional experience... but then once we came up against the difficulties on the ground we'd start to swear... I'm not earning much and this really isn't easy.

Aren't there also some positive feelings, like those of having had new and enriching experiences, acquiring new know-how, and so on?

A: Yes certainly, but I don't think you really are aware of that in the moment. The length of the mission—a year or six months—is just too short. In the beginning you're mainly preoccupied with what has suddenly hit you—also in a positive sense—but you need time to get some distance from events and assimilate your impressions. You try to keep your head above water by encouraging yourself. But at a given point you may just crack: you can't take it any more. One way or another you let your frustration explode and you try to stand back from it all. With hindsight you recognize that there were a lot of positive things, a lot of good experiences; I also learned a lot, had positive experiences. But I think that you have to go through a whole process in order to become aware of the positive experiences and events.

“Here is a personal insight into the hard bits and the nice bits about life as a team: under the first category, perhaps the first thing is the amount of internal work to do (meetings, reports to write, evaluations etc.) which take up a considerable amount of our time. It can get pretty difficult planning personal schedules, which sometimes leads to undesirable results like not getting enough sleep or getting stressed by deadlines. We never follow normal office hours! Everyday inconveniences such as power cuts or telephone lines not working become even more of a problem. There is also the lack of privacy, because of living together as a team and sharing bedrooms. However, for myself at least, the positive aspects far outweigh all these negative ones: for example the very good rapport between the team members at the moment, the warm welcome which we received and are

continuing to receive in the country, going on visits outside the capital (for work or other reasons), and the fascinating discovery of a whole new culture.”

Chris Chapman, from Bulletin No. 6 of the PBI team in Haiti, February 1998

A: There are as many ways to experience it as there are people and personalities.

B: As a committee member, I got the impression we placed the volunteers in an extremely difficult situation, not only in relation to what's just been said, but also in relation to the skills required of them, the work they have to do in the training programs, the problems involved in relaying their work—there's no one located on site for example that they can turn to. Maybe it's more on this level than on others that things didn't work. Not all the volunteers found enough satisfaction in their work. But I always found it interesting to see that several volunteers who left PBI a bit bitter and disappointed then stayed on in Haiti... When I went back there in summer 2000 I saw several of these former volunteers and they told me that they still felt a connection with PBI, and that there were ways in which their experience with PBI had helped them.

Do you envision a solution, any way in which the volunteers can be spared these painful experiences?

C: By diminishing the range of expectations; that is, you cannot demand what you may be expecting of a volunteer. The job has to be done, but you have to be able to share it out. One person alone can't carry the burden of everything PBI expects.

B: And how should this re-distribution of expectations be organized?

C: I don't know, I don't have an answer. You might imagine a group of people sharing out the responsibility. That would need a lot of organization. Changeovers should not take place so abruptly any more: if, for example, the team's bookkeeper leaves, another person has to come back to take over that job, and that person has to agree to just do bookkeeping. But is that really feasible? I have my doubts. Can you really, for example, ask a volunteer to take care of only one aspect of things?

A: Also, you have to think a lot more about mediating internal conflicts. I haven't personally experienced this type of situation, but I heard from others that conflicts within the team took up a lot of energy. There were internal conflicts which couldn't be dealt with quickly enough or which were resolved by mediation and as a result used up an awful lot of strength. Maybe some thought should be given to setting up an external body that people could turn to if need be: that would mean a certain distance could be taken from the work and some of the oppressive things could be resolved.

C: That should be the role of the committee, but often it's not informed about the difficulties undergone. Even when you have a bad dynamic and there is conflict, the team is so tightly knit that under no circumstances do they want the conflict to get out. Perhaps there's this belief that the committee is some sort of superior body. I don't know why they don't want the outside world to know what's going on in the team. The committee, in any case, was not able to play the role of an outside body.

A: I think the idea of a supervisor would be a good one. That's something I experienced when I worked on a team for six months. The supervision, on the one hand, gave us a chance to step back from our daily frustrations, and on the other hand it enabled us to move beyond it. For example, we'd be obliged to explain ourselves or to try to understand the other point of view. In a lot of cases these were situations we didn't want to think would

lead to conflict, because we had created emotional ties. You have to have an outside person who forces you to open your eyes and helps you to resolve the conflict.

Part Three: BUILDING PEACE

If it is true that with this type of work one must constantly return to the drawing board, what are the lessons which can be learned from this experience? And what are the perspectives for the future?

From Haiti, Jacques Juvigny, Ciliane Haselbach and Jocelyne Colas, three long-time friends and partners, have sent us their testimonies, their ideas, and an evaluation of their encounters with PBI. Marc Allenbach tells us how he rediscovered Haiti, when the project was about to close down, three years after his involvement as a volunteer. Gilles Danroc shares the ideas and leads which he heard all during his commitment to peace and justice in Haiti, and Christophe Barbey through his global knowledge on demilitarisation, takes our look to new horizon.

In the guise of a "conclusion" we look on the path itself we have come, in order to emphasise those discoveries which seem essential.

8. Juvigny Jacques : A rainbow of vibrant memories

I could recount here a whole host of memories about PBI or the GFP (Haitian Trainers Group for Peace) the one more interesting than the other. Trying to choose some from amongst these remains a particularly difficult task. However, I'll content myself with presenting them according to how they tie in with certain themes which to me play an important role in NVCT (Nonviolent Conflict Transformation).

It begins with the memory of a first training session and my discovery of a new concept, that of NVCT. It was in fact through responding to an invitation from PBI at some time in 1997 that I first got to learn about NVCT. I then went to the Gonaïves in the department of the Artibonite, without knowing when I left where I was going to stay as I didn't have any family or friends in the area, to take part in a series of training sessions on the following themes: active listening, introduction to the positive management of conflict, nonviolent communication, and so on.

It's there that I was won over by the participative approach, which had not only allowed the participants to be actively involved in their training but had also helped to create an atmosphere of fellowship and friendliness, essential conditions for ensuring the success of any training in this field and even in others. It is even possible to say that this approach has become a philosophy for some people.

Then ... a memory of creativity and of the development of people's abilities. After having followed the Training for Trainers (TFT) in January 1998, which helped me to strengthen my knowledge in the field of NVCT, I never imagined that eight months later I might be co-facilitator of the next TFT session. It was for me an opportunity to put to the test my skills as a facilitator, as much in preparing material as in devising exercises adapted for clearly identified audiences and themes.

I still have in mind the memory, full of emotions, of fifteen or so participants with tears in their eyes as they couldn't accept the idea of leaving each other after having spent nine days together in a warm and close family atmosphere. After this training, I couldn't resist the desire to launch myself into the struggle for nonviolence and for peace.

I do also have memories of conflicts. There were moments in fact when the team asked me to take part in some of their meetings because everything was going wrong and an understanding needed to be reached, a consensus between the young PBIs with different views on things as much because of their colour as their culture, and with different ideas, particularly about the independence of the GFP. So I was to help try and keep the whole thing going. The leaflet entitled "peace trainers guide" came out of this kind of situation.

Then ... a recollection of true camaraderie, whether within the team itself or between the team and its friends or partners. I can take the example of my favourite co-facilitator, Stéphane, a former member of the team, with whom I ran several training sessions for PBI and the GFP and to date for other institutions.

The last two sessions were run for the '*Agents Multiplicateurs de Changement*' (AMC, workers responsible for promoting change) of the government office for Youth and Sport. They met with such success that the senior officers of this institution felt moved to consider including a course on NVCT in their training curriculum for the next year's intake.

I remember a whole host of discussions and debates which we had with PBI and with the GFP. If we leave aside those which were the subject of personal discussion with team members, one of the points which kept coming up was "PBI's support for the development of the GFP". We asked ourselves, for a long time, what kind of partnership there should be between the two organisations, so as to avoid repeating the traditional set-up, i.e. the top-down relationships which tend to develop between international and local organisations. Although the context in which the GFP was born was more favourable for the development of a maternal relationship with PBI.

I will end with a recollection of joy and celebration in a climate of peace and non-conflict. How could I indeed forget the many festivities I took part in with PBI and at which were gathered in the same space a whole mosaic of people, diverse in their language, culture, country of origin, colour, gender, age etc. ? All gathered together in an atmosphere of music, dance, games and joking. PBI's leaving party is on this count pretty much unforgettable.

9. Ciliane Haselbach : *At the beginning was chaos, some say – at the beginning was the word, say others*

Between PBI and ourselves, right from the start, there were the “Cahos” lot and there was the word! The first PBI team had barely just arrived in Haiti when I learnt what the expression “one man/one woman, one voice” meant. No sooner said, than done. Then Marc and Max were taking the bumpy path to our “caotic”/chaotic mountains for a first seminar dedicated to resolving conflicts without violence. This seminar would touch many hearts and minds but, at the time, not one of us imagined yet what would come out of it and that its effects would still be real to this day.

Taking into account the highs and lows particular to each country, in the region of Chénôt there are two dozen groups who meet (nearly) every month, to train and support each other in nonviolent conflict transformation. Once a year, if possible on 10 December, we organise our annual meeting, elect the committee responsible for coordinating actions and take forward the work we do in collaboration with similar groups in the region. Our relations with the Justice and Peace parish branch are friendly and productive. We organise some seminars together; at the moment these are especially for women's self-help associations working on the prevention of different forms of violence, particularly sexual violence within marriage.

In our geographic isolation, when two PBI members would appear with their big rucksacks and dripping with sweat because of their walk up from *Bwa Care*⁴⁹, bearing chocolate as a surprise for us, this was always a cause for celebration. Irmgard too got to experience our spontaneity, when she turned up without warning and in the blink of an eye, or rather with a well organised word-of-mouth, she was able over the next 48 hours to meet most of the key people of the movement and ask them all her questions.

Between ourselves, let it be said that PBI are not just “no sooner said than done!”. PBI are also evaluation and ‘*noitalavé*’, i.e. “forwards and backwards” evaluation. Evaluations are actually really helpful, but it was difficult for us to accept the final conclusions: namely that it was time for PBI to withdraw from Haiti. The GFP (Haitian Trainers Group for Peace) which had been formed in the meantime is certainly a good strategy in principle, but the practical communication difficulties in the country are so great that without the presence of people who have sufficient time and means to deal with these, many things inevitably grind to a halt (e.g. at the moment there are no Tax cards available at all with which to make phone calls).

The situation of violence is by no means resolved. The numbers of robbers roaming around in bands is becoming unbearable. Yet neither is the answer to shoot down as many robbers “caught in the act” as possible, with the aim of lightening the load of the prisons bursting at the seams and the judges living under threats. In any case, this is how several police officers have interpreted the president's new watchword of “zero tolerance”. Apparently, people are sometimes denounced as thieves or murderers and then the police arrive at their home gun in hand. In our communities, in the mountains, the growing famine along with the deficient justice system give rise to personal vendettas with acts of violence that horrify the whole population.

⁴⁹ “Bwa Care” is the name of the last village accessible by 4WD-car, from where it still takes a few hours of walking up the mountain to reach Chénôt.

We fully understand that PBI was not able to extend its presence here. But we hope that you will come back to us again, if only purely out of friendship, for seminars to "consolidate what has been undertaken" or to strengthen and support the positive forces which come out so often the losers in such situations.

WELCOME, THANK YOU, WELCOME, THANK YOU
With all my heart, on behalf of the Shalom committee
Ciliane

10. Jocelyne Colas : A Pawn Leaving Behind Other Pawns

Given the situation in Haiti following the coup d'état carried out in 1991 by the Armed Forces of Haiti, it was terrible to see people dying as a result of torture, summary execution and other inhuman treatment. All sorts of violations were everyday occurrences. Many women and young girls were victims of rape. Human rights organisations at the time found themselves burdened with heavy tasks, that of denouncing the violations committed by the military, the paramilitary, and other agents of the state, that of accompanying the victims, that of informing and mobilising public opinion about the situation in the country both, on a national and international level. This situation provided various international organisations with the opportunity to lend their support to the population, in keeping with their skills and their possibilities, to work for the restoration of democracy in Haiti. It was also at this time that Peace Brigades International came to Haiti, at the request of people working within the Justice and Peace Commission in Gonaïves.

The Brigades arrived in Haiti at the end of 1995, with the aim of running activities such as the accompaniment of people who were persecuted or whose lives were in danger, and peace education for change, through themes such as active nonviolence, nonviolent conflict transformation, participatory facilitation and other related subjects. They focused on the second type of activity, given the fact that the situation in the country had evolved. They organised a many training workshops, and trained trainers. The beneficiaries of these training sessions were members of rank and file or human rights organisations including members of the Commissions for Justice and Peace. Their work bore fruit: it gave those involved the possibility to have a better understanding of the philosophy of active nonviolence, along with techniques for resolving conflicts without resorting to violence, and techniques of participatory facilitation. These are all notions which can be useful in establishing true democratic practices. The beneficiaries also discovered new ways of doing things. The Peace Brigades may not have stayed for a very long time, but they acted as a pawn, leaving behind other pawns...

On the basis of these training sessions, those who were trained have continued to meet to share their experiences. Little by little they had come to see the necessity of forming a group, and after four years of unstructured operation, they created the GROUPE DE FORMATEURS POUR LA PAIX (GFP - Trainers Group for Peace). Registered at the Ministry of Social Affairs with the number STC00191 in January, 2000, the group has as its motto "Peace is there - we are searching for it."

The Brigades gave a lot of support to this group. The GFP continues to operate, and has received several requests for training, to which it responds within the limits of its capacities.

As a member of the Trainers Group for Peace I believe that the presence of Peace Brigades International in Haiti was very beneficial. They made the philosophy of active nonviolence and techniques of nonviolent conflict transformation readily understandable and workable for the benefit of a good number of organisations which have, in turn, integrated these concepts into their program of activities. Other groups like SHALOM in Chénol have also come to existence.

The impact of these training experiences has not yet been felt in the society at large. A great deal remains to be done. But I can give as an example the village of Chénol in Gonaïves, where the atmosphere, once one of violence and intimidation, has greatly improved. There are peasants who used to never leave home without a machete but who have now decided to carry it no longer, so there is reason to hope that efforts are continuing in the direction of a culture of Peace.

11. Marc Allenbach : *Rediscovering Haiti: An Account written during the closing of the project.*

I was a member of the PBI Haiti team from 1996 to 1997, and I had the opportunity to go back to Haiti this summer for six weeks in order to help close down the project which had begun in December 1995. To rediscover Haiti after three years away was a powerful experience: a chance to take my fill of images, echoes, and impressions, and it was also the opportunity to see my Haitian friends involved in human rights again. I asked them to help me understand what Haiti is going through. It was the results of these exchanges and ideas that I sought later to put down on paper. So I cannot quote from my sources, since I had not asked their permission in advance.

I arrived on the day of the second round of legislative elections, and we followed the news on the radio on a regular basis: it was accurate, rapid, varied without being contradictory, and came from a good number of different districts... what a lot of progress in four years! In the papers there were several in-depth and analytical articles which did not take sides and which enabled me to grasp in detail all the issues raised by this second round in the elections.

However, what we heard in the news was worrying: most of the parties representing a certain number of citizens seem to have been involved in electoral fraud, corruption, or political violence.

In this charged atmosphere, '*La Fanmi Lavalas*', an umbrella group of parties and popular organisations around the charismatic figure of ex-president Aristide, seemed to represent the only political movement with enough power and electors to be able to govern the country. Most of the people I spoke with, whether they were for or against '*La Fanmi Lavalas*', did agree on this last point, but all without exception expressed their concern regarding the future and the use of power: after so much deception over the last ten years, Haitians would no longer place their trust blindly in any one movement or individual. Despite the constant flux between these concerns and negative outlooks, all the militants or heads of NGOs I met with spoke out against the possibility of economic sanctions, particularly where direct aid to Haitian organisations was concerned, for poverty contributes to the current political difficulties by encouraging corruption and the creation of specific favoured clienteles.

I was also astonished to hear on the radio reports of numerous nonviolent actions against impunity: red faxes, sit-ins, red telephones... Citizens were called on to put pressure on the Ministry of Justice (by telephone, fax, or their physical presence). The month of July was proclaimed "month of Justice for Jean Dominique," a well-known journalist assassinated in the spring. This type of mobilisation has been developed over the last three years.

"The Role of Civil Society" is the title of a three-day seminar bringing together activists from member organisations of the Haitian Platform for Human Rights, the 30 September Foundation (at the source of most of the nonviolent actions mentioned above) and of SOFA, a women's organisation which has increasingly achieved recognition in Haiti and abroad.

Five years ago, civil society was emerging from several centuries of repression, and had been profoundly traumatised and terrorised by the coup d'état in 1991 and then,

paradoxically, was "beheaded" by the return of democracy to Haiti, for a large number of its leaders had taken up political or government positions.

I was invited to the seminar, and it was with a great deal of emotion that I watched as these organisations, despite their differences, got together to consult one another and exchange ideas about the role they can play in the current situation in Haiti.

The seminar was the second of a series of three preparatory meetings for an international symposium on impunity, a problem which remains as crucial as ever: "How can anyone believe in a legitimate state when they meet their former torturer in the street?" —as some of the victims of the coup d'état have said. "How can we believe in justice when those who ordered assassinations during the de facto period are still moving among the upper spheres of society in Port-au-Prince?", ask the activists of the human rights organisations. The violence of the past and of the present seem indissociable where impunity is concerned. It is not enough, it would seem, to make a "clean sweep" of the past in order to move from the reign of the arbitrary to a legitimate state. Despite the return to democracy, there seems to be a lasting vicious cycle: because of the risk that they might fall victim to political violence, both the media and the judiciary system do not dare follow through on their investigations; without investigations, one gets the impression that a confusion or chaos is prevailing, behind which those who are guilty can enjoy impunity; they continue to perpetrate their political violence, something which the judges fear as much as the journalists do.

Fortunately, there have been several instances where this vicious cycle might be broken.⁵⁰

- the trial in Raboteau, a neighbourhood in Gonaïves where the army, during the de facto period, had shot into the crowd, killing a great number of inhabitants;
- the trial in Carrefour-Feuille, a neighbourhood in Port-au-Prince where the police shot a number of young men whom they considered to be delinquents;
- the investigation into the assassination of Jean Dominique.

Time to Take Stock

It has been a poignant experience for me, and for all the volunteers of the Haiti team, to leave behind our Haitian partners who are human rights activists, faced as they are with a situation which remains extremely difficult: one of them was assassinated, another barely escaped an attempt on his life, several have received threats. However, we do not feel that our decision, which was taken after careful reflection and of which our partners were informed a year ago, can be reconsidered. The first pillar of our action, protective accompaniment, offers no protection against certain types of threats perceived by the Haitians: poisoning, voodoo evil spells, or long-term vengeance. For several militants, the accompaniment of a "White person" (any foreigner in Haiti) does not correspond to the idea they have of their own commitment.

We feel that for the second pillar of our work, training in nonviolent conflict transformation, we have contributed what we could, within the limits of our possibilities and our mandate. How can we evaluate the five years spent in Haiti? For a non-interventionist organisation like PBI, the question is not so much "What did WE accomplish?" as it is "Were we useful to THEM?", the THEM referring to the Haitians involved in a nonviolent way in working towards human rights and peace. Once the question is posed in this way, signs of encouragement are to be found not in the direct results of PBI's activities, but in the actions accomplished by our Haitian partners.

First of all, a few dozen Haitian facilitators, trained by PBI to lead conflict transformation seminars, are continuing this work within their associations or under mandate. They have come together under the name Trainers Group for Peace.

⁵⁰ Two years later, none of these – at the time hopeful – instances have been carried through in a way that would have helped to significantly improve the human rights situation.

More generally speaking, we intervened in a situation where organisations and resources working for Human Rights in Haiti were very dispersed. For the duration of our presence we sought to encourage contacts and networking and we did perhaps contribute to the greater coherence they have at present.

Finally, when we formulated the terms "conflict resolution" and "active nonviolence" five years ago, these were notions which were often not very clear or attractive on a first approach to those we spoke with. At present, the notion of conflict transformation generates a great deal of interest, and nonviolent actions in civil society are increasing. To be sure, as is clear from the media, the economic and political situation remains very tense. There is an impression of stagnation, deterioration, and confusion, leading to massive discouragement. This also hinders a perception of positive evolution, dynamic strength or opportunities for change. It was in reaction to this atmosphere of gloom that I sat down to write this article, to try to identify the prospects for hope and viable commitment.

First of all, I was impressed by the import of the debates during the workshop which brought together the Haitian human rights organisations: "The economic and financial milieu want to be seen as being a part of civil society. We have to watch this phenomenon very carefully," suggested one of the speakers. The Haitian chamber of commerce is claiming this image... just like the *'Davos Forum'*, in Switzerland.

"At a time when the goals of peace and human rights are being adopted by the politicians in power, how should one approach the state bodies created to work towards these goals? How can one collaborate and maintain sufficient autonomy to criticise and denounce their blunders or shortcomings?" This is a question which NGOs the world over must face with regard to national and international government bodies.

"Can there be peace without justice?"

These are just a few examples of the issues currently at stake, crucial on a global level. Thus, Haiti no longer seems a country which is merely isolated and engulfed by its difficulties in integrating the modern world, but one which has to face issues and suffer from problems which go beyond the borders between states and which concern us all. A variety of actors stemming from many nations start sharing ideas of solidarity, exchange and mutual apprenticeship in order to confront these problems together.

At the end of the meeting I asked each of the NGO leaders and activists whom I spoke with what we could do from *'lot bò dlô'* (from abroad). Rarely were there requests for financial aid, despite the urgent economic needs of many of these organisations. (This has to be put in relation with PBI's very modest means, and its role, which is not that of a funding agency.)

On the other hand, it has often been said that it is urgent to exert pressure on certain governments: on the United States, to begin with, in order to reduce the mass expulsion to Haiti of Haitian delinquents, or to demand the restitution in their entirety of the archives of FRAPH, the Haitian movement at the origin of the coup d'état; secondly, on the Dominican Republic, to protest against the way in which Haitian nationals had been expelled; thirdly, on Western governments in general, to convince them not to impose economic sanctions against Haiti, even in the form of a reduced financial aid.

Moreover, support in the form of letters, e-mails, faxes, telephone calls and public relations would be greatly appreciated. Such support can reinforce specific actions undertaken in Haiti (like, for example, the nonviolent actions described above), or lend support in a more general fashion to a human rights organisation and its activists, or yet again to display international interest in matters of symbolic importance (the Raboteau trial, the Carrefour-Feuilles trial, the investigation into Jean Dominique's assassination...).

I will close with the request which touched me the most. In this request I could sense the wounds of a nation who have suffered from Western arrogance to a particular degree. The

situation in Haiti is perhaps so complex and so confused that it requires, in all urgency, both attention and humility. This utterly simple request represents the program of a life: "Continue to try and understand the reality in Haiti..."

Founded in 1981, PBI arrived in Haiti in 1995. A lot of ground had been covered therefore during this period. Haiti reaped the benefits of this experience, just as the Haitian experience of peace and active nonviolence education would benefit others. Thus, in addition to providing protective accompaniment, PBI can now proudly display an additional asset, since the time of its prolonged stay in Haiti from 1995 to 2000. The actions carried out are noteworthy in themselves, notwithstanding the difficulties and, no doubt, some disappointments as well. The men and women of Haiti who have been touched by PBI were also able to become better acquainted in their relations with each other.

It is a good thing to say that peace is the path we take to aim for it. The same thing applies to justice and for justice. The contents of this book are very apt in this respect; one must absolutely not forget Gandhi's aims: active nonviolence does not mean pacifism for the Mahatma. The two institutions which arose from this action, GFP and Shalom, still have their work cut out for them, if it is true that "if you don't fight against injustice or for justice, you lose your dignity."

Another result of PBI's action could be the publication of this report in Creole, for all of us!

Necker DESSABLES, July 2001, Consultant

Former Director of the National Episcopal Commission Justice and Peace in Haiti.

12 Juvigny Jacques : "Peace: Reality or Pious Vows", dialogue from here to there with Gilles Danroc

This contribution does not represent the opinions of PBI but of the author, who is a friend of ours. We are publishing it as is for its significant reflection of the current state of mind in the country. Our aim is to enable a maximum number of people active on the ground to express themselves.

"After the dawn of a new century, after February 7, 2001, and before January 1, 2004":

1) What are the principal obstacles to Peace on the following levels: political, economic, social and cultural?

First of all, we must specify the current meaning of the notion of "PEACE" in Haiti. Nowadays, the demagogic - political use which is made of the word completely distorts it and drains it of any significant content. In fact, the term "PEACE" is associated in more ways than one with other words in order to acquire the desired spin. Thus, one speaks of *peace in the belly* and *peace in one's head*, as in the electoral slogan of the ruling party, "Fanmi lavalas." One also speaks of "*Peace in the small of the back*" to designate the pact signed among the different gangs of the "CHIMÈ"⁵¹ groups who have divided up control of the 34 neighbourhoods of the Cité Soleil. *Peace in one's pocket* to talk about financial needs. On occasion I've referred to the "distortion of the notion" because in the first case the ruling party, which claims to do all it can in the name of peace, has been accused—fairly or unfairly—of protecting the majority of the "chimès", drug dealers and other professional criminals. Moreover, they have given no indication of working to make the transformation of the justice system any easier, or of ridding themselves of the numerous crooks who work for the party. The State is nothing more than an assembly of insalubrious institutions infiltrated by the various gangs. One need look no further than the

⁵¹ Chimè = chimère (chimera).

elected officials, members of the judicial system, ministers and even presidents who have been fingered in drug scandals and/or the assassination of the CEO of Radio Haiti Inter and the station security guard.

Secondly, the "chimès", five times more heavily armed than the institution in charge of public security (the Haitian national police), have seized the right to kill, burn, and wreak destruction whenever they like on the terrain they control. Thus, they make up a state within the State, with their own leaders and their own rules.

One of the main obstacles to peace resides in the rejection of responsibility and total lack of commitment on the part of state authority in this country. For peace is above all a synonym of law, order, and justice. Without a responsible captain the ship of peace can only drift indefinitely. One should take note that the process of rejecting responsibility and disengagement of state authority was set in motion immediately after the departure of the Duvaliers thanks to a false interpretation of democracy on the part of the Haitian population: *Demokrasy se: mwen fè sa'm pito*.⁵² This "counter-definition" of democracy came about thanks to the chronic laxity of public institutions and has been reinforced by the way in which society was run in the years which followed. The phenomenon has so greatly hindered the normal functioning of the community that one of the constitutionally elected presidents made his prime objective the restoration of state authority. The irresponsibility made possible, moreover, the emergence of a number of violent areas in the old and new slums of Port-au-Prince.

The absence of a reliable justice system. The present system cannot meet the needs of the citizens. As it is inefficient, corrupt, politicised, and inaccessible, among other things, as well as being under the authority of the executive, it cannot protect citizens, it cannot even deal with the simplest cases. The vagaries of the investigation into the assassination of Radio Haiti Inter's CEO and security guard, and the climate of fear and widespread insecurity which has engulfed the country, are ample proof of this. It is a deleterious system producing primarily impunity and insecurity.

The institutionalisation of a vicious circle of violence. Violence today is the main means of conflict transformation in Haiti. The simplest conflicts are resolved by bullets, machetes and knives with the untimely complicity of the authorities. In the present day the various working-class neighbourhoods have unbelievable stockpiles of weapons, and there are occasional confrontations. The latest was in Fort-Mercredi where over a dozen people were killed, including a two-year-old girl who was burned alive while dozens of houses were torched. Scorning all principles of law or justice, government envoys and officials met with these armed groups in an effort at reconciliation. The final result is that, like in Cité Soleil, the armed gangs have kept their weapons (which they obtained who knows where) safely under wraps for who knows what unspeakable (political or economic) intentions. That's the nature of insecurity in Haiti.

In fact, if one looks a bit further back in history, one will note that these fifteen years of endless democratic transition have contributed to the mental and cultural preparation of the *incorporation and banalisation of a non-innocent violence*.

Poverty and precarious living conditions create despair among the population and have driven some citizens down the wrong path (gangs, drugs, prostitution). Violence has become a way of life. Haitian society is little more than a jungle where everything is allowed: this is what the famous president Preval tried to put in words through the expression *naje pou'w soti*.⁵³ He compares Haitian society to a rough sea where only the strongest and most capable will survive. Other expressions have emerged, such as KPS (*kapab pa souffri*)⁵⁴, MAB (*moun afè bon*)⁵⁵, and so on.

⁵² "Democracy means doing what I want".

⁵³ "Swim your way out of it."

⁵⁴ "Those who do not suffer."

With no regulatory measures, middle-class tradespeople are waging a bitter struggle against the rest of the population, the great majority of whom cannot even get a hot meal during the day. There exists a real policy of *pi gran manje pi piti*⁵⁵ in the community. The fact that Haiti is completely useless where production is concerned only aggravates this situation because the major exporters make over 500% profit on their merchandise, as do the major retailers, and the small retailers try to do the best they can.

And to hell with the consumers! I'll give the example of a cybercafé which charges 125 gourdes an hour, while most of the cafés in the capital charge only 50 gourdes; soda which is sold for 7 gourdes elsewhere costs 20 in this place. And the worst of it is that the secretary (employee), for a part-time job, gets only 1,500 gourdes a month; unbelievable, but true.

Social decline and the loss of moral human values. A society which has virtually no models. The vast majority of our elder citizens are shoved aside. Respect for law, respect for life, a sense of patriotism, a sense of responsibility, citizen involvement are all lacking in our people these days and probably will be tomorrow. Zombie citizens, that is what the society produces. Right or wrong, our citizens accept anything and do anything. One must emphasise that at the basis of this situation lies a problem of education, training, and culture. Nowadays you can see *zenglendos*—drug dealers, notorious criminals, and "chimès" who are respected, honoured members of the community, particularly among young people. We have, thus, a society totally on the verge of losing its way. In reaction to this situation, a good number of young people, who are desperate, have lost their faith and do not want to jeopardise their future, prefer to take the path of exile rather than face a dismal and uncertain future. This is the brain drain problem which has been affecting the country for the last few years.

2) What dreams are possible? What are the chances for Peace? (On the same level)

We have not yet reached a point of no return, if there is one. Thus, all dreams are possible. A true climate of peace in Haiti means carrying through on a series of short and long-term actions whose aim is to create a basis for society to evolve.

These are:

- a) *The creation of political stability in the country.* This necessarily depends on the resolution of the current crisis, implying a compromise between the different players on the political stage and society as a whole. There absolutely must be a consensus in order for the community to be governed.
- b) *Strengthening the institutions of society.* The agencies of civil society and of the State must be allowed to play their true role. These roles must be part of a perspective conducive to peace, where all these agencies must work together on the most urgent priorities facing the community.
- c) *The revalorization of standards.* Every legitimate, peaceful State is founded upon the consolidation and respect of standards adapted to reality. By this we mean, firstly, the need to reform our judicial system so that it will be the pillar of our society, and secondly the need to incorporate these standards within society to make it easier for citizens to cultivate them.
- d) *Education of the masses.* The people of Haiti, more than ever, need the elements of education, information, awareness and consciousness-raising required for the cultivation of responsible citizens who will be involved in the development of society. To keep more than 60% of a country's population in ignorance is a criminal act and the worst thing is to pretend that this is not a handicap (in any case, this is a well-known formula in the history of colonialism: no elite, no problems).

⁵⁵ "Those who live well."

⁵⁶ "The rich eat the poor."

3) Does Haitian civil society want to turn its back on violence? And can it? What fundamental needs must be met in order to move forward? What role can the methods for nonviolent conflict transformation play in building Haitian society?

These methods can help to make society more peaceful, facilitate citizen involvement in the community, make the institutions of society more humane, give a sense of responsibility to the various sectors of national life, create a democratic culture, change mentalities (*tout koukou klere pou je'l*)⁵⁷, and strengthen the ties of the community.

The methods of nonviolent conflict transformation are all the more welcome given the fact that those who shape society are not very familiar with them and have not made much use of them. I would like to emphasise that despite the fact that the history of Haitian society has been characterised by violence, and despite the fact that we do not have an efficient judicial system and have moreover only 3,000 agents of law and order throughout the country for seven million inhabitants (which is catastrophic), our society is still not a bloodbath—although violence has been making great strides recently.

4) The past and recent history of Haiti has been marked by violence. What socio-cultural elements can be relied upon so that a culture of Peace might develop?

Above all, one must emphasise that the development of a culture of peace in Haiti implies essentially a change of mentality, in particular, where certain social and cultural practices acquired over recent years are concerned.

In fact, certain factors augur well for the emergence of a culture of peace in Haiti. At present Haitian society is adrift. It is in search of reference points and models that will enable it to start afresh. It is easier in such a context to introduce constructive elements such as the notions surrounding the culture of peace and the positive transformation of conflicts, founded on a heightened well-being of the community, a spirit of sharing, understanding, mutual assistance, solidarity, and so on.

5) What local, national, and international strategies should be implemented in order to make the current wave of peace to become more efficient? What methods will best render the nonviolent conflict transformation effective in the realm of education, decentralisation, the State and civil society?

In terms of methods, we believe that the practice of a culture of peace must bank on the participation and involvement of national and international actors. In other words, this issue concerns all of society. It demands a great deal of reflection. In the long term there must be a campaign of mobilisation and consciousness-raising on a national scale regarding the different values (positive and negative) cultivated by society. This is a long-term educational task which must be accompanied by the strengthening and modernisation of all the institutions of society (private/public). It is also a way in which to close the gap between daily practices and norms. Such an action will serve as a basis for the establishment of a social consensus which can then be used as a guide to the different actions to be undertaken. Consensus must be the watchword for all our actions: the country has been torn for too long by internal conflicts (colonists/slaves, whites/blacks, exploiters/exploited, bourgeois/poor, mulattos/blacks, makout/lavalas⁵⁸, lavalas/convergences⁵⁹, civil society/the State, etc.). In the medium term, the right thing to do would be to implement programs enabling citizens to practice active nonviolence in their daily lives. These programs must be preceded by a massive popularisation of the idea of nonviolence which will impact various sectors of society such as the schools, universities, churches, community organisations, and so on.

⁵⁷ "Every man for himself."

⁵⁸ Partisans of Duvalier/partisans of Aristide.

⁵⁹ Partisans of Aristide/partisans of the opposition

13. Gilles Danroc : For a Peace Policy in Haiti

As an active member of Justice and Peace in Haiti for 17 years, I participated in a number of debates in the civil society reborn after the return to constitutional order in October, 1994. I will try in this text to summarise the variety of proposals which were discussed during these debates, between 1994 and 2000.

1. Foreign and International Policy

Being the first black-led republic on the globe, Haiti remains marked by its singular history. To be sure, during its turbulent history, Haiti was able to create ties with the liberation struggles of the black slaves in the American South, and it contributed to the saga of Simon Bolivar. But Haiti is an exception in the Caribbean region, in Latin America, and on the American continent. Any policy of peace in Haiti must go through a persistent policy of connections and networks. The Duvalierist dictatorship applied a doctrine of isolation: "Appear on the outside, assassinate on the inside." The key to a policy of peace is the requirement of transparency: pacify Haitian society and on that basis create relations with all those who support peace. Who might they be?

- ? International bodies: Haven't the UN, the OAS and Europe just intervened to put an end to a military coup? Aren't the international circumstances possibly favourable? The "image" Haiti gives is, in the eyes of international opinion, one of a country in a process of "democratic transition".
- ? The support of institutional or non-governmental (NGOs) networks committed to the respect of human rights.
- ? The support of networks committed to nonviolence world-wide, in particular in Canada, the US, and Europe (through the Haitian Diaspora) and Latin America (following the visit by Perez Esquivel).
- ? Ties with African culture to encourage nonviolent conflict management according to specific cultures.

Any discussion of international relations must also include two neighbouring countries, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic. In the case of Costa Rica, the example of a demilitarised country can help to give an understanding of what might come beyond the "Army of Haiti."

With the Dominican Republic however, Haiti must establish peaceful relations despite their disputes in the past. If Haiti agrees to dismantle its army, a peace agreement with the Dominican Republic could be signed, with an international guarantee to oversee the shared border which splits the island in half.

In order to resolve stubborn historical disputes, the Dominican Republic and Haiti could organise a joint commission of historians to rewrite the island's history in such a way as to purge it of warmongering slogans.

To be sure, there have been invasions, wars, and massacres. The exploitation of the Haitian cane cutters is well known and has been well-documented, as has the existence of smuggling and corruption. But no amount of history, however turbulent, can justify xenophobic, racist, or belligerent behaviour. The two nations on the same island are at the very least condemned to get along, given the difficulties of economic survival.

This commission of historians would also constitute a useful collaboration between civil society and political power. The implantation of a UNESCO house of peace would also facilitate other projects of this type.

It also seems logical for Haiti to engage on an economic level with the independent states of the Caribbean (CARICOM) for the purpose of equitable exchanges in international trade.

2. Internal Politics

A foreign policy of this nature is meaningless for Haiti unless it is also accompanied by an internal evolution in the direction of peace. The leading role must of course be played by the Haitian people and society. If the path is a long one, the first step—the political decision to move ahead—is the hardest.

Historically, working for peace has meant the refusal of slavery in the Colony and of dictatorship. Thus it implies a quest for freedom and democracy, and a struggle against poverty.

The creation of a truly constitutional state in Haiti, respect for the Constitution and the implementation of genuine public services for a population which is mostly poor, illiterate, and outcast in its own country are the primary conditions for Peace. But the culture of democracy, like that of peace, takes time. One has to plant, water, and watch it growing, one must meet certain goals in order to reinvest... This slow rhythm must be learnt, even though everything is urgent. Thus people must take certain necessary steps, and work to change their outlook—in a word, their culture.

The first measures should affect and transform the relation between the Haitian people and their own security within their borders. The army in Haiti was an army of internal occupation in control of a population that those in power did not trust. Since the Constitution of 1987, experience has enabled the question of security to be formulated in other terms, through a revision of the Constitution to abolish the army and promote efficient decentralisation, which in turn will allow the local population to be responsible for a good part of its own security.

At the same time, a local judiciary, like a local police force, would enable the establishment of new relations. By revitalising the level of the justices of the peace, by developing the use of mediators—who already exist in Haitian tradition—and by training local leaders in nonviolent conflict transformation within the associations, trade unions, NGOs and other intermediary bodies, the judicial system granting common law would be relieved of the enormous burden of a society frustrated by the impossibility of seeing justice done—Justice being the greatest demand expressed since the departure of the dictatorship.

Finally, by way of a provisional conclusion, the cultivation of peace should be a fundamental cornerstone in every aspect of education for children and young people. National education, working together with private and religious instances, can show the way towards peace as a fundamental convergence of their combined efforts.

This desire for peace and tranquillity after turmoil is like the yeast in the dough of Haitian society.

It may be a ferment to the culture of peace—at the cost of a policy or even an economy of peace, but first of all, of a determined political will.

"I'm an electrician by trade, but for the last few years, my devotion to the building of a civil society in Haiti has caused me to take another direction, and the range of activities in which I'm involved includes community development, trade unionism, militant activity alongside grassroots organisations, and finally active participation in the Trainers Group for Peace (GFP). The motivation behind my involvement is nothing other than a desire to build Peace, which represents the basis of Haiti's development. In my opinion the violent conflicts which the country is experiencing results in an unstable situation, which hinders the construction of a civil society. Therefore we have to start by changing this mentality of violence, by using participatory methods of positive conflict management which will help to prevent violent acts. And I suggest that in order to increase its impact, the GFP should organise seminars in schools, as well as take part in radio and television broadcasts. I view the role of the group members as that of messengers who must join in the march towards democracy."

Jean Saurel Beaujour, Bulletin 13 of the PBI Haiti team, November, 1997.

14. Christophe Barbey : Demilitarisation

Among the close to two hundred countries in the international community, demilitarisation (or non-militarisation) is becoming increasingly common. This might be a result of the force of circumstances, because many of these countries are simply too small in either population or resources to assume a military defence. This can also be because of abuses committed by an existing army, or because of a framework of international operations to restore or maintain peace. Non-militarisation, can also be as well the result of a choice ! Whatever circumstances led to it, when demilitarisation is successful, it proves to be a powerful force for social integration, development and political stability. And indeed, all the countries "without an army" —there are 27 of them—are democratic countries.⁶⁰

For demilitarisation to succeed and, therefore, act as a sign of good governance, for it to benefit the population in its entirety, it must first of all seek to reintegrate former soldiers into the social system, for otherwise they are in danger of remaining a source of disturbances. A thorough geostrategic analysis is also a necessity; there is no point in leaving a country exposed unnecessarily.

The savings which could thus be made in terms of infrastructure and resources should benefit education and social services. The absence of an army could facilitate the creation of a culture of peace: people feel peace-oriented and can be proud of it. This could also encourage the development of techniques of peaceful conflict transformation, something which is very important because "there is no justice without peace and, inversely, no peace without justice."

It was in the wake of conflicts between the army, the civil institutions and the population or following foreign interventions, that Costa Rica, Dominica, Grenada and Panama abolished their respective armies. The fact that Costa Rica has been able to live democratically and in peace without an army since 1948, while all other states in Central America have experienced war or dictatorship is proof of how this original solution is viable, efficient and above all human. In the Caribbean, the islands of Saint Kitts and Nevis, Sainte Lucie, Grenada, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines are also states without armies.

Where Haiti is concerned, it was after the coup d'état and upon Aristide's return that the question of demilitarisation arose, first among certain pacifist circles who financed a public opinion poll among the Haitian population.⁶¹ Oscar Arias, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and former president of Costa Rica, presented the results to President Aristide. As the majority of those polled were in favour of abolishing the army, Aristide decided to do so in April, 1995. In facts if not in law, the army has effectively been dismantled. An attempt to suppress the army from the Haitian Constitution as well has not yet succeeded because the Haitian Constitution requires a double vote in Parliament for any modification, and each of the two votes has to take place during a separate legislature.⁶² The first of these votes was held in May 1995, but the second did not follow. Moreover, the constitutional amendment procedure stipulates that the two votes must be held at the end of the legislative period for the first vote, and at the beginning of the following legislative period for the second. Therefore the procedure will have to take place all over again, and this means at the end of the present legislative, in 2004. Is this desirable? Will the parliament or the president propose such an amendment? In the final analysis it will be up to the Haitian people, through the intermediary of their representatives, to decide. We do hope, regardless, in the name of concord and social justice, that Haiti will opt for a true peace project and carry it through.

⁶⁰ Except Vatican city, lets say ! See : "Non-militarisation et les pays sans armée : une réalité " Christophe Barbey, 2001, APRED, Switzerland. (Translation expected). See also www.demilitarization.org.

⁶¹ The "Center for Global Demilitarization" in Troy, USA, raised the funds and "Borge and Associates" carried out the poll. The results are available from the author of this article on request.

⁶² Haitian constitution, articles 282ff.

15. Haiti Project Committee : Conclusion

Politics and Culture : Of human rights and Peace education

In PBI's other projects, the main work is that of protective accompaniment. This implies above all a structural type of work: the presence of an international observer reduces risk and fear by enlarging the political space of local activists. This effect does not in itself represent any lasting change in the social structure. It does however enable local activists to work for a cultural and structural modification of their social environment towards a greater prevalence of justice and peace.

In Haiti, however, the requests received from Haitian organisations redirected the PBI project towards an essentially cultural work. The term culture, in this paragraph, is to be taken in the broader sense of the term, not as a reference to the differences between cultures but to distinguish it from the concept of structure (power relations, social organisation, etc.). Forums, participatory workshops and sessions of training for trainers are opportunities for the participants to share and to bring into play their perceptions, attitudes, and values. In this respect it is cultural work. What are the links with a violence whose structural dimension is plain for all to see (inequality, poverty, oppression)?

These links are subtle and indirect. Fundamentally, PBI's strategy has remained the same: to be attentive to those in Haiti who are committed to human rights and peace, and to help them. We are convinced that they are the most appropriate people to bring about lasting change in this direction. So rather than asking us to protect their political space, they wanted us to open, together with themselves, spaces for dialogue and exchange. To confront a multitude of highly complex conflicts they sought to enrich their ideas, exchanges, and tools. The question therefore is whether we have been useful to them or not. Here are a few elements by way of a response:

By developing their skills in conflict transformation and in communication, individuals, organisations and Haitian communities have gained in strength. They have also implemented new forms of nonviolent action. Where public awareness and training are concerned, they have enlarged their scope of techniques of participatory facilitation. And finally they have expanded their network of relations, as well as developing new collaborative efforts.

Our modest work only acquires meaning through the actions undertaken by our Haitian partners. These partners have been aiming, little by little, to change the mechanisms and social structures of the country in order to obtain a greater respect of human rights and to build peace. All along this path our Haitian partners have been very vocal in expressing their desire for foreign nongovernmental organisations to continue to show an interest in them and to support them.⁶³

Training of Social Competencies in an Intercultural Environment

As far as we know, in the domain of conflict transformation or active nonviolence, there are no absolute truths, nor any proven formulas. We have considered the development of social competency ('*savoir-être*', "know-how to be") to be essential in relation to certain techniques ('*savoir faire*', "know-how to do") and knowledge ('*savoir*'). But it's a well-known fact that the development of social competency is far more effective when it takes place in the framework of non-judgmental exchanges, rather than in a framework of theoretical courses.

Differences of culture and of context also underline the limitations of Western contributions. Whence the necessity of an intercultural exchange from which Haitian, or

⁶³ See chapter 11: "Rediscovering Haiti", page ???

intercultural, elements, can emerge, along with the culture of peace in the domain of nonviolent conflict transformation.

The way in which a space for exchange and dialogue can be created to encourage the development of this social competency also depends upon cultural and contextual factors. It is not merely a question of workshop facilitation techniques, but also of the framework in which they are held, thus of the way in which they are explained, prepared, negotiated and then evaluated among those requesting the workshops and their participants.

This is another domain where we have sought to discover Haitian concepts and tools for training in peace culture, by bringing together PBI's knowledge, know-how and social competency on the one hand, and Haiti's on the other.

In other words, training in social competency in an intercultural context implies and necessitates exchange. One can only (trans)form insofar as one is, oneself, (trans)formed. These goals have been met in part if one takes into account the "Guide to Peace Education" compiled during a two-week seminar, as well as all the facilitation techniques developed by Haitian facilitators, alone or in collaboration with PBI. A number of approaches for positive conflict transformation were developed by Haitian facilitators (the Shalom Groups in Chénôt, for example).

However, this all remains at an embryonic stage at the moment. There has been little formal consideration of traditional Haitian methods of conflict management, for example. These surely contain an exceptional wealth of possibilities since they often enabled the population in the countryside to maintain a peaceful coexistence in the absence of government resources. In five years, PBI Haiti did little to improve its knowledge in this domain: in other words, we would have been delighted, if the participants had contributed in the workshops more elements rooted in traditional Haitian culture. Didn't they want to, weren't they able to or didn't they think of the resources and conflictive concerns linked to voodoo, for instance? This question remains unanswered, but represents, no doubt, one of the greatest limitations of this project.

However, a significant evolution in PBI's activity in Haiti could be observed. This was proof of an intercultural exchange, evident also in the evolution of the volunteers' perceptions? The Haitian evaluator, S. Manigat, and the Swiss evaluators, U. Mäder and H. Schmassmann, have testified to this effect.

Non-interference and Training: Towards a Space for Dialogue

Non-interference and training may, at a first glance, seem paradoxical. But apparent paradoxes can turn out to be very productive. Intervention in countries in conflict in a non-partisan way enabled PBI to develop the concept of "political space."⁶⁴ In the same way, working towards peace education in a non-interventionist way has enabled us to create, in partnership with Haitians, "spaces for dialogue."

To bring this work to fruition it was not enough just to "reply to requests": an entire labour of co-construction together with those requesting was necessary. Their requests were studied and analysed, and on that basis, as well as that of meetings or preliminary visits, little by little a favourable context was created for social competency training, and intercultural exchange.

Non-intervention or the right to intervene has become a theme of international politics (for example, "was it right to intervene in Kosovo?"). For those of us in Haiti, non-intervention, or rather non-interference is a concept which involves each volunteer and the project itself in a permanent state of interrogation. It did not hinder but rather helped to give direction to our action. We are dealing therefore with both an ethical principle and a practical tool for building spaces for dialogue.

⁶⁴ Liam Mahony and Luis Enrique Eguren delivered an in-depth analysis of the respective framework, in: "Unarmed bodyguards : International Accompaniment for the Protection of Human Rights" , Kumarian, 1997.

Two Characteristics of the Project: Modesty and Little Means

The means at the disposal of the PBI teams have been modest: volunteer status, a simple way of life... This was not only the result of the precariousness of the resources at our disposal. It was also a conscious choice, which enabled us to interact on a more equal basis with the Haitians who invited us. Quite often, money and the way of life of foreigners working in Haiti have only widened the gap...

The absence of any material gain in our workshops (e.g. per diems, food...) helped also to gauge the motivation. Training in social competencies only make sense if the participants get really involved on a personal level.

To be sure, this simplicity has frequently brought with it difficult living and working conditions. The time spent on public transport, the logistical difficulties of communication also constituted a heavy burden which hindered the team from holding a greater number of workshops, for example. However, this "lost" time was not lost at all insofar as it created a space for encounters with the everyday reality in Haiti.

Given our desire to respond to the Haitian requests, the precariousness of our means revealed other limits and dangers. Our volunteers had to deal with too many demands put on them: the amount of work, of solicitations, the variety of tasks to complete, stressful situations, the skills required, and the total sum of experience that had to be acquired and transmitted to the next group of volunteers...

To deal with these problems, a number of solutions were envisaged.⁶⁵

- ? reduce the number of skills required or increase skills within the team
- ? create a reference point to ensure the transmission of experience on site
- ? ensure the continuity of skills with regard to elaborating and evaluating training systems
- ? reduce the amount of work and the variety of tasks to be carried out
- ? improve working conditions for the volunteers
- ? ensure supervision of the team by a person trained in this type of exercise and external to the project.

Shortcomings in transmission and in skills, as well as in the turnover of volunteers, no doubt contributed to the limitations in terms of the project's evolution and efficiency. But at the same time, these handicaps also represented certain advantages.

First of all, the presence of highly experienced or skilled volunteers would not have simplified the creation of a real partnership with the Haitian co-facilitators, who were beginners in this domain. It was already a very delicate undertaking to establish a relationship on an equal footing, given the prejudices and cultural and structural barriers. Secondly, the modest and fragile nature of the project, linked with the principle of non-interference and the use of volunteers, encouraged the creation of a real partnership with the Haitian co-facilitators. Fortunately, this prevented the Haiti project from centralising and formalising the experience of training in nonviolent conflict transformation in Haiti. Given the institutional and organisational weaknesses of Haitian civil society, the PBI team would no doubt have maintained a central role in this domain. The problem is that such a formalisation would have been carried out by the volunteers, according to a Western cultural model, that is, or at least Western control. This would have jeopardised the very value of the formalisation of experience. To gain its full significance the experience had to bring together the Haitian understanding and adaptation of concepts of conflict transformation.

Finally, if the volunteers had been the sole agents of this experience, the question would eventually have arisen as to how to transmit this experience to the Haitian co-facilitators. One of PBI's strengths therefore is its ability to train ordinary people, from all walks of life, to become "artisans of Peace," by creating a space of freedom for people and

⁶⁵ The solutions are described in detail in "A few ideas to follow-up for possible improvements" in appendix 4, page ???

organisations caught up in violent conflicts. And these are spaces which these people will be able to use to their advantage to attack the root causes of injustice, the source of conflict.

Peace is the Path We Take to Aim for it

Principles of nonviolence, impartiality and non-intervention, modest financial means, volunteers, life style and work in teams, decisions by consensus: all these aspects of PBI have helped our partners to change their usual image of international presence in Haiti. Because PBI displayed no material interest, they were able to offer a type of exchange in which they had no power of financial control, nor did they encourage corruption in any way. Because they did not operate according to any pre-established plans but only in response to requests, and because they were constantly careful to encourage a truly egalitarian intercultural exchange, PBI represented an alternative to a considerable number of Western training programs.

For example, PBI placed the question of "how to do it" before the question of "what to do"; social competency before knowledge; decision-making processes before level of expertise; the quality of relations before the quantity of accomplishments. Similarly, this book seeks in no way to propose a ready-made model or a strategy to be reproduced as is.

PBI is in a constant state of evolution. The fruit of its experiences have rarely been set down in a formal way. We decided to write this book in order to bear witness to an exceptional experience.

We have not brought peace to Haiti and we have never pretended to do so. The Haitians invited us there. We are grateful to them: by travelling a bit of the way with them, we have grown.

Charles Ridoré : After word

A Welcome Accompaniment

I'll say it right out: I greatly appreciate this work, for the way in which it bears witness and the light it sheds on a course of action. Haitian society has long been besieged with conflicts. The Haitian people, as well as their friends outside the country, share the aspiration expressed by the poet Anthony Phelps: "A day will come when the country will once again find its angle of repose..." But in order for that day to come, it is good that there are peacemakers at work. The paths taken and the instruments used may differ, provided they complement each other and converge.

In a sequence of the film "Ben Hur," Myriam, the fiancée, calls out to the hero. "Hatred leads to more hatred, violence engenders violence..." is basically what she tells him. The teaching of nonviolence, as practised by PBI, is based upon this conviction. This does not necessarily mean judging or condemning legitimate violence out of hand, but actively preferring, rather, whenever possible, to seek out and implement nonviolent methods for conflict transformation. This is the philosophy which led PBI to Haiti.

PBI's volunteers in Haiti accompanied local peacemakers along their way, towards that desired and elusive goal. Their accompaniment endeavoured to be amicable and respectful. Their instruction was more concerned with facilitating, revealing and mobilising their partners' resources than with imposing given formulas or know-how. "*Mèsi anpil*"⁶⁶ for this fine gesture of solidarity!

Conflict transformation in Haitian society is an immense and complex task, and it would have been naive to hope that this brief experience might suffice to resolve all the problems. I have appreciated the clear-sightedness and modesty displayed in the evaluation of this experience by the persons involved. The main impact was to be felt on the level of training, the strengthening of the Haitian partners' ability to take over the work of conflict transformation and peace promotion. It would seem indeed that the goal of any collaboration for lasting development must be the following: the outside collaborators must aim to attain, as quickly as possible, the rank of "useless servants." PBI's mission in Haiti has been accomplished, but others there have taken up the torch. The results are not, moreover, unilateral. Activists in Haiti have spoken of "tales of encounters so rich that we have all been transformed" or even of contacts where "we learned as much about ourselves as about our hosts" .

So there are a multitude of reasons why this eye-witness account ought to be read and why it should meet with success, both in Haiti and abroad.

Launching the Debate

This book also provides me with an opportunity to call on all Haitians active in social issues to take a good look at their own responsibilities. Indeed, the debate about the problematic issue of peace and conflict in Haiti deserves to be dealt with more widely than between the covers of a book; this one will provide an illustration of action, on the cultural level, over a limited period of time, in response to a social demand, with a view to contributing towards the resolution of current conflicts. What can we do to begin dealing with a problem before it spreads, to deal with it at the very root of the conflict, and not just when it has become blatantly obvious? Gilles Danroc's historical introduction testifies to

⁶⁶ "Thanks a lot"

the endemic presence of structural violence in Haitian society, from its origins to the present day. This violence has a multitude of dimensions: political, social, cultural, etc., and it takes its source in inequality, injustice, and domination.

From this point on, social change, the changing of the structures of inequality, domination and injustice, remains both a condition for and a way towards peace. This presupposes, for those Haitians who are involved, other forms of mobilisation and other strategies; other types of action, at other levels. Thus, political and social democratisation, a product of political involvement, can in turn provide a basis for a democratic agrarian reform, legitimate land laws, and a trustworthy land register, all of which are indispensable to reduce to a residual level the number of land disputes which might eventually require recourse to methods of nonviolent conflict transformation. For obvious reasons, the fight for social change, and the places where it is to be waged, must be the task of Haitian militants. It is up to them to identify the problems facing their society, to formulate their expectations, and to define strategies for effective action. Militants from outside can, at most, contribute to reinforcing the ability of the local activists to take care of themselves. They cannot replace the local activists who are directly concerned, nor do they want to.

In addition, structural violence in Haiti most often sets a privileged minority against the masses, who are deprived of everything. This is therefore a relationship of a structural order. As a result the following question begs an answer: is it possible to integrate the dominant and the dominated in a process of nonviolent conflict transformation, particularly by trying to influence mentalities and attitudes? The answer is probably yes, in certain cases, when dealing with interpersonal conflicts. But when you are dealing with conflicts of a structural order, you cannot leave out the workings of an institutional order—on the judicial level, for example. In this case I might refer to what Benjamin Constant once said: "Between the strong and the weak... it is the law which liberates." And the law is in itself the expression of relationships on a political level. So once again we are faced with the process of a thorough democratisation of society as the fundamental way to reduce social conflict.

"Peace is here, but must be sought out, now and in the future. And isn't peace after all, the path we take to aim for it?" Beyond its concrete impact on the ground, PBI's experience in Haiti will prove to have been useful insofar as it has also given rise to debate over the quest. Wherever we might be in our thinking or our options regarding this quest, the main thing is to keep moving, on a mental level as well, for as Antonio Machado has pointed out, "there is no path... the path is made by walking."

Happy trails!

Appendix 1 : ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIALS ON HAITI

Haiti Peace Team : A Thirst for Justice—the Status of Judicial Reform⁶⁷

The demand for justice has always been—and particularly since the return to constitutional order on October 15, 1994—a fundamental one for the Haitian people, expressed by popular and peasant organisations and intellectual circles alike. Haitian citizens have voiced the urgent need for the establishment of a legitimate state, indispensable for social regulation and a civil movement toward peace. A legitimate state cannot be built on impunity, but must necessarily be founded on the faith of the citizenry in the regular functioning of democratic institutions, and justice in particular.

What progress has been made, what structures have been implemented, laws passed, or reforms carried out by the democratic Haitian state? What of the "advent in Haiti of a "qualitative modern, efficient, equitable and democratic justice—a true instrument of social and economic regulation at the service of our entire population," which was one of the wishes of the Justice Minister, Max Antoine, who has now resigned?

Justice in Crisis.

The conclusion is a bitter one: according to Jean Sénat Fleury, a magistrate and teacher at the École Nationale de la Magistrature,

*"There is a crisis in the Haitian justice system, and its image among the those it concerns has declined over the years. Ninety five percent of the Haitian people have no faith in this justice system. (...) The disengagement of justice in Haiti has been more and more noticeable recently, and there has been a veritable explosion of unpunished crimes: rape, murder, assassination, embezzlements... And because we put up with this state of affairs, we are on the verge of a virtually lawless society."*⁶⁸

This conclusion has been echoed as often by the media as by popular and professional organisations. According to a controversial report by the Ministry of Justice:

*"Haitian justice has been criticised because it is inaccessible to the masses, and that is because of its organisation, its operation, its cost. The entire police and judicial apparatus as an actual system seems to have turned against the people. (...) Haitian justice stands out for its systemic inefficiency, so well characterised by the problem of impunity. Impunity seems to have become a system of its own. The doctrine of national reconciliation has evicted justice and erected impunity as a duty and a virtue."*⁶⁹

An Unprecedented Effort at Development.

Since the return to constitutional order, new structures have however been implemented. The Ministry of Justice has become a major government institution, a new police force has been created, a Magistrates' school has been opened, and the penitentiary Administration has been reorganised. International cooperation has made significant contributions to these endeavours. Thus, in 1997 fourteen new courthouses were inaugurated throughout the country, with adjacent civil tribunals supplied—thanks to the help of the Canadian government—with all the office equipment necessary for their operation. Since that time, peace tribunals have been in operation in places which previously did not have any. With the creation of the Office for the Protection of Citizens, which was inaugurated on November 4 last year and has already received a number of complaints, Haitians now have a recourse against administrative abuse. Finally, the minister has begun to appoint

⁶⁷ From the PBI Haiti bulletin, February, 1998. It was co-authored by the PBI team.

⁶⁸ Chronicles by Jean Sénat Fleury in the daily *Le Matin*, October and November 1997; January, 1998.

⁶⁹ Report by the Ministry of Justice, "Éléments d'orientation pour une réforme de la Justice en Haïti," April, 1996.

new registrars in order to apply the decree issued by the former president, Aristide which provides for the delivery of birth, death and marriage certificates at no cost.

The Hopes Behind an Anticipated Reform

The Governmental Commission which had been working on legal and judicial reform handed in its report to the Ministry of Justice last December 10. This report, which was meant to be distributed to all the organisations and sectors concerned for comments and suggestions, has thus far remained confidential. According to Florence Elie, president of the Commission (and also in charge of the Raboteau trial), "It is truly an autopsy of the problems of society... The reform is a new justice system which has taken into account the infrastructures and relations between the Executive, the Legislative and the Judicial in order to formulate a thorough, coherent, and global approach. Our plan of action is two-fold: a first five-year cycle, then a second one of equal duration in order to consolidate our achievements."...

The aims of the reform were set down by the Ministry in 1996: "The judicial reform must seek to bring about a rapprochement between the citizens and their justice system. Those in charge of the reform must henceforth explore all the means available to bring the justice system closer to those to be tried, and to find new modes of participation."⁷⁰ Among the methods suggested in the preparatory studies and research, there has been, on the structural level, a particular emphasis upon the modernisation of institutions, on the independence of judiciary power, and on the further education of magistrates and justice auxiliaries within the Magistrates' School.

Other suggestions include an overhaul of Haiti's laws and codes (in Haiti's two official languages, French and Creole), the implementation of free legal aid for the most dispossessed people or groups, so that they can be accompanied before the tribunal, and the popularisation of judicial information in Creole. The development of non-judicial methods of conflict resolution (conciliation, mediation, and so on), the increase in the number of government judges and Commissioners of the government (prosecutors), and the establishment of a code of ethics for judicial personnel have also been recommended. Finally, the role of the national Police, as an auxiliary of the justice system, must be specified and codified. According to Max Antoine, this is a "plan of action which will fulfil the deepest aspirations of the Haitian people, for whom the union of Law and Justice will mean social stability, the security of property and individuals, respect for rights and liberties, as well as economic prosperity." There is a great deal at stake, and 1997 ended more on a note of eloquent declarations than with concrete advances towards the implementation of a new equitable and democratic justice system.

A Contradictory Practice

On December 18, 1997, the Senate adopted the framework law on judicial reform presented to the parliament on October 3, 1996. The first article of this framework law provides for the necessity of an independent judicial power. In fact, in Haiti, judicial power has always been subordinate to the executive power. Up to now it has always been the Executive which has appointed, revoked or transferred magistrates at its discretion, contrary to the provisions of the 1987 Constitution. This constitution sets out (on paper) the separation of powers. The second article deals with the reorganisation of the Superior Council of Magistrates, which has up until now been largely overlooked in its mission of "offering to magistrates the necessary guarantees of independence and impartiality." But as one judge has pointed out, "Is it enough to speak of reform, without political will? Will we really manage to make the Superior Council of Magistrates (Conseil supérieur de la magistrature - CSM) into a working body, one that will have the task of helping the

⁷⁰ Report by the Ministry of Justice, "Éléments d'orientation pour une réforme de la Justice en Haïti," April, 1996.

President with the appointment of magistrates? If this is the case, will the Executive follow the recommendations of the CSM, made up of eminent, renowned figures from the judicial world (...)? Will the disciplinary procedures governing suspension be followed to the letter?"⁷¹

This is where the limits of judicial reform are most obvious, if this reform is to concern only a revision of the laws, without re-examining the issues of their political and social environment. A judicial reform means not only mobilising the means at one's disposal, but also changing behaviour.

The Need for Real Dialogue

In its recommendations on the reform of judicial institutions, the National Commission for Truth and Justice had drawn up a list of absolute priorities, without which no progress would be possible. It noted in particular "the establishment of a process of interrogation on the conception, organisation and operation of a judicial system, support for the participation of associations, public education in human rights, widespread dissemination of a popularised version of the overall plan for a judicial reform."⁷² However, up to now it would seem that the reform has for the most part been prepared behind the closed doors of the Ministry, with an influx of foreign participants whose interests are not necessarily compatible with the goals pursued by Haiti. Above all this reform has largely been prepared without the real participation in the thought process of the Haitian judicial world as a whole, or of the organisations and sectors concerned.

Thirst for Justice

It is no doubt too early to pass judgment on the reform in progress. What is clear is that the Haitian people's thirst for justice has not abated. Many people continue to believe that there can be no true reform without a global plan which will include the demands of the population and have the support of the entire civil society. At a time when we are still waiting for a date to be set for the Raboteau massacre trial (the events took place in 1994), human rights associations and those for the defence of the victims of the coup d'état are increasingly mobilised in their demands for a truly equitable and democratic justice. Be it in Gonaïves, the town of Independence, or in the capital, actions denouncing the situation continue. Every Wednesday, from 11:00 to twelve noon, dozens of people march to demand compensation, taking inspiration from the movement of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina. Various organisations have been carrying out joint actions to demand the return of the FRAPH archives which were seized by the United States armed forces in 1994. At the same time, justices of the peace and government commissioners have been striking to draw the attention of the authorities to the shaky functioning of the judicial system.

*"Judges, figureheads of the new Haitian democracy, are in a situation of crisis. The symptoms of the crisis are familiar: arbitrary suspension, absence of independence among the magistrates, poor treatment, low salaries."*⁷³

They have denounced the fact that the police, considered an auxiliary of the justice system, are better equipped and better paid. Often considered to be corrupt or "schemers," judges have now emerged from their silence to denounce the constraints and difficulties of their work. "The more poorly justice functions, the more often it becomes a scapegoat."⁷⁴

Will 1998 witness the advent of the equitable and democratic justice that Haitian civil society aspires to? Will it see an end to impunity and the beginnings of a truly legitimate

⁷¹ Chronicles by Jean Sénat Fleury, in the daily *Le Matin*, October and November, 1997; January, 1998.

⁷² Report by the National Commission on Truth and Justice, and texts of the draft bills on judicial reform.

⁷³ Chronicles by Jean Sénat Fleury, in the daily *Le Matin*, October and November 1997, January, 1998.

⁷⁴ Chronicles by Jean Sénat Fleury, in the daily *Le Matin*, October and November, 1997; January, 1998.

State? Wherever one looks there are increasingly obvious signs of frustration, dissatisfaction and despair. And at the same time, the political crisis which arose in June 1997 has been holding the entire country hostage, paralysing the smooth operation of all the institutions. Haitian political leaders however cannot help but be aware of the fact that "Justice for one means Peace for all."

Justin Davis-Metzner : Race and identity in modern Haiti - a few observations by an african-american PBI volunteer⁷⁵

Nwa, Blan, Wouj, Jòn, Pèch, Brun, Milat/Milatrès, Marabou, Gif/Griffonn Grimo/Grimèl, Grimo Chode/Grimèl Chode... The Creole language makes use of a number of words that distinguish subtle differences in skin colour and hair texture. These distinctions were indispensable in pre-independence Haiti where certain legal rights were granted or denied depending on one's melanin count. Today with Haiti's constitution recognizing all citizens as equal under the law, these words tend to be used for simple identification or a much more complex implication of beauty.

Before I came to Haiti I had read and heard a great deal about its "mulatto elite" and how one could generally tell someone's social and financial standing based on their skin colour. What I have discovered since coming here is that these interpretations were based on a non-Haitian understanding of race. As Sidney Mintz wrote in his book *Caribbean Transformations*: "North American ideas about what 'colour' someone is are far more hindrance than help in understanding Haiti". Granted, my limited experience with Port-au-Prince's nightlife has shown me that well-off crowds tend to be, overall, of a lighter complexion, but by no means exclusively so. Moreover, I have met farmers in the Haitian countryside with very light skin tones who are struggling to feed their families. People of all skin colours can be found throughout Haiti at all economic levels.

I have witnessed a few incidents, where a lighter-skinned Haitian has mistreated someone darker than themselves, that in the United States would have been considered examples of colour prejudice. However, interpreting these situations within their Haitian context, I see them as examples of prejudice that is class-based. I do not mean to imply that Haitians are entirely free of colour prejudice. Such prejudice is often found throughout the world in black communities affected by the white supremacist norms that is so common today. However, in Haiti, the power that structures this prejudice is economic. An upper-class individual with very dark skin could just as easily mistreat a poor Haitian with light skin.

The result of this distinction is a society free of racism as I have experienced it in the United States. An important point to note is Haiti's lack of race inspired violence. In his book *Haiti: State Against Nation*, Michel-Rolph Trouillot points out that "Haiti has never had a 'colour riot' let alone a 'race riot'". This fact offers a certain advantage to those individuals and organizations working for peace in Haiti. The already complex problems that the country faces, such as its economic inequality and weak judicial system, are not further complicated by racial tensions.

Most of the discussions that I have had with Haitians relating to issues of race and racism were initiated by my objection to certain labels that I had been given. Most commonly I find myself correcting friends and strangers who use the word '*blan*' or '*nèg*' to describe me. On one level my reaction is misguided and unnecessary. My problem is with the literal translation of these words that strays from their real meanings in '*Kreyòl*'. In the end, however, I treat the whole issue as a question of self-determination - my right to define

⁷⁵ Taken from PBI Bulletin no. 6, March 1997

myself. I am never insulted when these words are used. I understand what people are saying. In the end, it simply makes for interesting conversation.

'*Blan*', which literally translates as "white", is a term used throughout Haiti to describe just about any foreigner regardless of their skin colour. I understand perfectly how the world's first Black republic could adapt such a word to mean a general "other". Yet, I reject the term for myself. I would like to believe that I am somewhat conscious of Haiti's experience in a world plagued by white supremacy. I do not claim that my skin colour gives me any kind of special knowledge of Haitian culture or politics; but, I do know that first hand experience with colour prejudice and racism offers a certain insight which helps to facilitate a form of empathy. I realize that I will always be an outsider to Haitian society. As one friend put it: "it's the clothes you wear, the way you walk, the eyes you use to look around..." Even before I speak, allowing my lack of '*Kreyòl*' to give me away, people that I meet will often ask whether I am Haitian - generally, I believe, to confirm a suspicion that I am not. Despite the barrier that is a natural product of being foreign, I do find that there are moments when the Haitians I am with feel perfectly at ease discussing issues, such as racism, on a level that I imagine would be difficult to achieve with a white '*blan*'. It is a distinction that I appreciate.

My objection to the word '*nèg*' is much harder to explain to people. The word actually means "man" or "guy" in Creole. However, I can not help but hearing the French word "*négre*" which I have always translated as "nigger". I was raised to always confront such language. Of course, without any of the racism implied, I can only describe the discomfort I feel hearing the word. Even then, I simply can not ask, or expect, people to avoid using such a common word to identify me.

There is an interesting twist along this same path. On more than one occasion I have had young men, wanting to practise their English with me, called me "nigger". I understand this as negative result of the influences that American popular culture, particularly certain types of rap music, are having on Haiti at the moment. Each of these incidents led to a long conversation where I felt the need to explain the meaning and history of the word. What I discovered in each case was that these people had taught themselves English - mostly by listening to music or watching television and films - and were genuinely interested in understanding my strong reaction against the use of such a word.

There is one label that I have accepted with pride. When people call me "Diaspora", I acknowledge the term as a compliment. The first time I heard someone call me that, I was somewhat confused. I was not sure if it was a reference to the African Diaspora or whether it was being assumed that I was a member of the Haitian Diaspora who had "come home". It was later explained to me that it was probably a reference to my dread locked hairstyle. I like to believe that the meaning goes much deeper.

Promoting active nonviolence in Haiti; some constraints and some positive factors...⁷⁶

François Dabadie, with contributions from Judith Escher and Frédérique Rebetz

"First you give up on the impossible, then the rest." Henri Thomas

There is something absurd in writing about a subject like this at a time when the country seems to be engulfed by recurring violence (as we write, the assassination of the journalist

⁷⁶ Taken from PBI Bulletin no. 15, May 2000.

Jean Dominique is taking on a symbolic power). All the same, as a final contribution before we leave, we wanted to make an evaluation - incomplete and provisional - of our work, over the past five years, of promoting what we call nonviolence (active non-violence, it should go without saying).

This is an evaluation which speaks with several voices, in the form of four interviews with Haitians chosen on the basis of their varying fields of work and skills (political, economic, cultural, sociological)

The interviewees were:

Guetry AIME (GA) and **Maurice FAURON** (MF) of the Bureau of Research and Development - COHAN (COHAN-BRD).

Guy ALEXANDRE (GX) sociologist, and member of Democratic Initiatives, a civil society movement. Guy has done a great deal of work in the field of education; from 1991 to 1997 he was the Haitian Ambassador in the Dominican Republic; he is also the author of various studies for UNESCO (principally on issues surrounding a culture of peace);

Bernard ETHEART (BE) sociologist and director of INARA, the National Institute of Agrarian Reform, set up under provisions of the 1987 Constitution.⁷⁷ Within the Institute there is a Grievances and Conciliation Commission, dealing with land conflicts;

Freud JEAN (FJ), priest and executive secretary of the Alternative Justice Programme (PAJ) which works with grassroots organisations (trainings, legal advice, observations in local courts) supporting the Haitian people in fulfilling their rights. Jean FREUD is a former director of the National Episcopal Commission of Justice and Peace, and a former member of the Commission of Truth and Justice.

At PBI, we believe that Nonviolent Conflict Transformation (NVCT) is much more than a simple technique for 'avoiding violence'; it can be one possible motor for elaborating and conceptualising cultural change, and making it real. And it would indeed seem that Haitian culture, in the face of continual changes in the country, is in crisis. Despite differing on many points, most analysts seem to agree on this point (whilst according it greater or lesser importance, or attributing it to different causes).

As for the appropriateness of putting nonviolence at the centre of the debate, some differences of opinion exist - there is some reticence, and even outright opposition. The leaders or thinkers of the struggle for justice, the rule of law, the fight against oppression and the violence of the 'system', do not always seem to be enthusiastic about including a perspective of nonviolence as a possible lever or reference. Ignorance or profound difference of opinion? Misunderstanding or legitimate mistrust? Or, as the French proverb goes, a scalded cat fears cold water?

We decided to pull together some short extracts of the rich conversations which took place, with the support of **Gilles Danroc** (GD), a Dominican priest and member of the PBI-Haiti Committee.

We grouped the main ideas around the following five points:

- 1) The factors for violence identified in the Haitian context;
- 2) The question of State responsibilities and Nonviolent Conflict Transformation;
- 3) An analysis of the social fabric in crisis;
- 4) Regulatory mechanisms currently at work
- 5) The possibilities of conceiving responses by referring to nonviolence.

In this way, we hope to trigger some reflections around the constraints and the positive factors which exist with regard to promoting active nonviolence in Haiti.

⁷⁷ see PBI Bulletin no.13

1) FACTORS FOR VIOLENCE IDENTIFIED IN THE HAITIAN CONTEXT

One could almost title this section "The misfortunes of Haiti". Throughout these interviews, we sought out each person's perspective on the latest developments. This allowed us to cast some light on the factors which are used to understand, or explain the phenomena of violence. Is the country overwhelmed by external factors, or by institutional violence? Do certain players with contradicting interests bear some responsibility? What is the entry point for action in dealing with these phenomena?

GA: "In general, what people stigmatise as violence in Haiti, is in fact a pattern of behaviour in reaction to institutional violence, and one cannot deal with those reactions without first rethinking institutional violence."

PBI: *"Against this background of crisis, are there no traditional mechanisms for dealing with conflict, which could be highlighted, and which could be useful, even if they have to be adapted? It is often said that the State is not present everywhere in Haiti, therefore it is not the State which manages conflicts, it's the people themselves who deal with them. What aspects of these conflict management mechanisms can be used, so that people do not always resort to violence? Do Haitians have this kind of know-how?"*

GA: "Your question is problematic, for it is tendentious: you put the people who have conflicts on one side, and the State which fails to manage conflicts on the other. In fact the conflicts between people are manifestations of a conflict which the State has with them - which is a different matter! For example, land... it's the State which fails to create an institutional framework and the respect for law and order which would allow people to maintain securely property; it's a conflict between the State and the people."

Is it fair to say that the present situation is like a hot potato being thrown back and forth between, on one side, a section of the middle classes, the economic elite and the intelligentsia, and on the other, the State? Each avoiding responsibility for the violence by attributing it exclusively to external factors (the politics of the USA, the CIA, the global economic system). For others, this violence would be identifiable and controllable, if there was a consensus concerning the need for the rule of law; it is neither inevitable nor natural and widespread.

Far from absolving Haitians of all responsibility, Guy ALEXANDRE describes the influence of the economic factor, as one of four or five elements which characterise recent developments in Haiti.

GA: "The economy is undergoing a process of the "cessation of production"; the rice problem... we have become food importers, even plantains from the Dominican Republic! This implies a general slide in the living conditions of the majority urban and rural poor - which, by the way, is why the problems with the Dominican Republic are increasing, because there is an increasingly uncontrolled surge of migration which causes real problems."

2) The question of State responsibilities and Nonviolent Conflict Transformation;

Between civil society and the international context, there is the State, oft criticised, as much for its failure to offer basic public services, as for tendencies sometimes described as arbitrary. The State, whether it is in itself a player, or whether it is the great regulator of citizens' conflicts, has responsibilities. Can the promotion of NVCT in places where the

State is not present, encourage or finalise the process of the State washing its hands of the matter?

FJ: "One point which we are very sensitive about, when we are talking about methods of conflict transformation, about alternative forms of justice, is that in this society, which is essentially based on the neo-liberal model, the system of justice and laws embraces that very model. In that sense, the very fact of seeking methods of conflict transformation may play into the hands of the neo-liberal system, in that one tends to eliminate the State, with regard to the responsibilities which it should face up to. There are judicial services which the State should normally guarantee, and in one sense, seeking out resolutions for conflicts at any price, would allow the State to withdraw from its obligations. And this is not what we want. "

PBI: *"With regard to land conflicts, it seems that property, or the way in which it is codified in law, is not necessarily in accord with the mentality and practices of Haitian peasants."*

FJ: "This is true, and this goes back to the Haitian people's strategy or tactic of '*marronage*'⁷⁸. We can even consider '*marronage*' as a method of conflict transformation. But we cannot continue indefinitely with this situation where extra-legal solutions continue to be found. Whether we like it or not, we are part of a system. Therefore we must struggle to bring about another structure, another system which takes into account those inequalities. To achieve this, we not only have to change some laws, but also we have to remember laws which exist but which are not applied. Also, there are all of these inequalities which exist in society; we not only have to find mechanisms which allow us to re-establish the equilibrium; I would go as far as to say that we must find mechanisms which allow another imbalance to be established, for a certain period of time. So it is really a whole process, a struggle, which can only be given concrete form by truly mobilising and giving structure to grassroots organisations."

BE: "When farmers come to the INARA, each with a machete in hand, we begin to deal with the case. But the people have information about the case, and we make use of that; the people know who was there three generations ago! We have to make use of this collective memory, and of the wisdom and respect for norms which the rural people have, which are not necessarily the official legal norms regarding the way of determining ownership.

That's why I want (...) a form of mediation which is outside of the judicial system, the local courts, etc. We already have the legal foundation, we have to find the way to create a bridge. Once the mediation has achieved an agreement between the people, signed by the representatives of the mediating body, then we can have it approved by the judicial system. But you keep the judicial system out of the negotiation process, because... they are a bunch of crooks! ... The peasants arrive in groups, at the INARA mediation sessions, you really ought to see it! They say "we were welcomed in straightaway, we didn't have to pay a penny, they listened to us, they discussed with us, it's not like a court, it's completely different!"

They keep on coming! Chesnel Alphonse⁷⁹ has a natural gift! I saw people turning up in a rage, one hour later they left gentle as lambs! (...)

⁷⁸ The term referred originally to the practice of slaves fleeing to places which their masters could not access, see the explanations on the phenomenon '*marronage*' page ???

⁷⁹ A mediator at the INARA Grievances and Conciliation Commission, who attended PBI's first training for trainers in July 1996.

To give you an idea of just how far we got with the INARA, I heard cases where people went to the local courts, to the civil land court, to the Court of Appeal... the highest level was the INARA! It was the INARA which resolved it!"

GD: *"In other words, there was a sort of alternative justice, respecting the people and the local culture, perhaps much more effective than a foreign conception of legal culture, which, necessarily, resolves everything in terms of the relationships of power and money."*

BE: "Yes; it means that, at a certain stage, we have to formalise that informality. But we have to start by acknowledging it, by letting it work, letting it formalise itself on its own, not imposing anything on it... that's what I learnt working with farmers; first, you have to let the people talk. Especially as, being a middle-class Port-au-Prince resident, my Creole is not the Creole of the farmer. There are things which I don't know, which I don't understand, even from one area to another! So you have to sit down, drink your coffee, you have your cigarettes, they ask you for one, you give one (you walk around with two or three packs) and you let them speak."

GD: *"This where the conflict between the culture and the judicial system with its laws, papers in French as well as its lawyers becomes apparent, the whole system does not meet the daily needs of the people on the ground."*

Should we rejoice or be amazed, that Bernard Ethéart, the interviewee who is the closest to the structures of the State, is working to bring those structures closer to the practices of the people? Must the grassroots militants continue to struggle on the margins, in opposition, or hoping that the State will reform itself, and fulfil its role of regulator?

GX: "But I also have a feeling (even if I don't have any definite idea about it) that in any environment (urban, rural, right down to the poorest sections of the population) there is a practice which consists of just taking it for granted that *"nou pa gen leta"* (we don't have any state here)... In any case that state isn't our state, it doesn't work in our favour, so let's sort out our business independently of the state, which won't lift a finger anyway!" The problem is that this tendency, or practice, which consists of ignoring the state (probably very much linked to the tradition of *'marronage'*) cannot resolve this issue of the State; it's an impasse, and we are caught in a vicious circle which, one day, we will have to break, or else... the country will die!"

GD: *"Could we paraphrase this by saying that culture which reigned up until the present (including the time of Duvalier, in the modern era) was a counter-culture, which was aware that the State would not do it any favours, and which avoided problems and conflicts (with the army and the tontons macoutes) and worked in a concrete sense to build something "opposed", using methods of 'marronage' and avoidance? And could we say that today, the State having failed to offer an answer or a slight hope of offering a service to society, we still don't have a solution, and we are worse off than before because the counter-culture is no longer alive, so that hope is dying for all the people? ... This means that if we want progress towards more peace in Haitian society, it is essential that we construct a State based on the rule of law. As things stand, we cannot take the route of cultural vitality?"*

GX: "On the contrary, this route leads to the extinction of that cultural vitality. To sum up, if there is one obligatory path to take in order to attempt to resolve the problems of Haitian society, it is the construction of a State based on the rule of law: it's that, or the death of

society, as a result of the unrestrained conflicts which can only be resolved by anarchic violence, in the absence of the rule of law."

3) AN ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIAL FABRIC IN CRISIS

PBI: *"Are there, in your opinion, elements which are specific to the Haitian problem, compared to other countries in the area, for example?"*

FJ: "If we refer to our history, the fact that in Haiti there is a heritage of colonialism, leads to our judicial system being practically a carbon copy of the French system, even today. Further, this whole practice of '*marronage*' which existed from the very beginning, the fact that immediately after independence, the economic structures which were adopted, were those of the former colony. These are specific elements which need to be considered when attempting to change or reform our situation profoundly. There is also right from the beginning the agrarian issue, that marked our history, and till today we can see with the agrarian reform where that has led. There is the question of Haitian nationalism. And, of course, the issue of Creole/French is a specific element."

GX: "... a parallel process of a weakening of society, if not a tearing of the social fabric. I only need to mention this wave of strikes in the public hospital sector, where young doctors (whose training the community paid for) let sick or injured people die on the pretext that they are on strike, without anyone shouting "stop!". We are talking about people who are supposed to have learnt, at society's expense, how to protect and save lives. The other example, is the extraordinary ease with which '*zenglendos*' (armed criminals) kill without reason. In France, Canada, or Senegal, criminals know they may run the risk of punishment (of one level or another), depending on the seriousness of the crime committed, and the act of killing is the one which carries the maximum sentence. Here, the extraordinary ease with which people kill, is linked, in my opinion, to much more banal things such as the way in which people react in traffic, the chaos which reigns in Port-au-Prince traffic: all of this seems to indicate that people are no longer concerned by their obligation to create the minimum bother possible to other people, because we are all part of the same social fabric. "

Another element: "I see by people's expressions that my wife and I must be total idiots to be still trundling around in that '*tacot*' (old car) you see there, after six years on diplomatic mission to the Dominican Republic. There is a sort of insatiable, ostentatious consumption and accumulation of riches, without working, as quickly as possible, which means that people (including some former comrades in arms, from organisations X and Y, including from the clandestine movements of twenty years ago and more), find themselves in the places of power, engaging in the practices of the '*grands mangeurs*' (the corrupt classes), or allowing such practices to exist. Here it is those who *don't* take part in the work of siphoning off public goods who should be punished" (laughter).

GA: "... I think that before, there was a kind of perspective whereby there were two approaches to conflict: on the one hand, the conflict, which is between people, or clans, or groups, and which is defined and dealt with above all in terms of fairness, that is, to not harm the other and not be harmed; on the other hand, the conflict between the people and the institutions, which is defined in terms of the relationships of power, where violence goes above all in one direction. Only recently, you have a situation where violence moves out of that spontaneous relationship (where you had explosions from time to time, etc.) to one where it appears in the relations between people themselves. It is linked to the issue of impunity!"

PBI: *"There is another interpretation ('Le pays en dehors'⁸⁰ by G. Barthélémy), according to which the culture of equality is so strong that people cannot stand it if one has more than the other... "*

GA: "No, it's not true; in Haiti, there is no culture of equality at all. There is a culture of redistribution and doing others a service, and maybe of mutual support. There is an equality, not in what you have but in what you are, the value of the person, but not in terms of having."

MF: "If that was the case there would be mass killings every day!"

GA: "There has always been a very strong belief that the route to the accumulation of riches is not something which is entirely natural. If you have \$40,000 and I have five Gourdes⁸¹, maybe it's because there is a spirit who likes you. You don't ask any questions about the origin of the money, you don't analyse the process by which those riches were built up - exploitation, graft, etc. In fact, it is very much frowned upon in Haitian culture to be bothered if someone has more than another; there is even a proverb which says "look at the hand, there are several fingers and they are not all the same".

PBI: *"It's more a question of power then?"*

GA: "That's right, and also, the principle of doing a service and mutual support. You may be rich, you live in a house and I live in a cottage, there is no problem. But if someone gets ill, you will support me, and vice versa. If I take an example from the present economic crisis, you used to have the Duvaliers, and people tend to say '*Makout yo te konn manje ak moun, Lavalas pa fè sa a*'; that means, the Macoutes knew how to share their food with others, but the Lavalas people eat on their own. So the principle of there being some privileged people, or people who have more, is not questioned; it's how it is shared around. Since the people are very much clan-oriented, that means "the important thing is that you have a job, I don't have one, I'm unemployed, but I know that I know someone who works, if I have a stroke of bad luck I can call on you". But now, if you break these mechanisms of cohesion, there is nothing left, and the social contract is not rethought either! There is no system of a greater justice, and these mechanisms don't exist anymore."

4) REGULATORY MECHANISMS CURRENTLY AT WORK

In a situation so favourable for manifestations of violence, we might be surprised that there are no more serious eruptions. However, it is important to find out whether traditional know-how and conflict transformation models can be used, and their capacity to adapt to these new situations.

GD: *"How did you come to believe that NVCT, a pacifist contribution, could have a role to play in negotiation?"*

BE: "Before taking charge of the INARA, I had always tried to imagine how we could bring about an agrarian reform in Haiti without being obliged to spill blood. And I remember the discussion I had once with someone from the Artibonite, where we had gone to deal with a conflict. He says to me, "This Mr Aristide is a joker". "Why do you say that?", I asked. He says, "listen, this man, sitting in his ivory tower, declares an agrarian reform! That's not

⁸⁰ "The Country Outside". Is the title of a book written by Gérard Barthélémy, Editions Henri Deschamps, Port-au-Prince, Haïti, 1989

⁸¹ Currency in Haiti : At the time, about 16 Gourdes equalled 1\$ US.

how you do an agrarian reform! When Fidel Castro did his agrarian reform, he had a machine gun." I replied to him, "listen, (it was in October), we have just celebrated the first anniversary of Aristide's return, it's the first time in the history of the world that a deposed president is coming back as president. In Haiti that's the second time that we have achieved a first; the first time was the way we achieved our independence. My ambition is to achieve a third: an agrarian reform without weapons".

"It's the same guy who said to me, the first time that I went to Desdunes, "hey, you're alone", I said "if you think I have bodyguards you're wrong! the President, the Chief of Police, the Minister, all say, "what's wrong with you? You can't be in that job and go around without a gun, without an escort, without protection, nothing!". I tell them I don't want it and I tell it by purpose to everybody! Once, I was told that there was an ambush, a trap for me, right at the beginning. I was warned by someone I don't know from Adam or Eve. That person told me: something is awaiting you between St. Marc and Pont Soudé. I didn't go. But I went back 2 or 3 weeks later and I met up with the group which I had a rendezvous with that day. I told them, "I'm sorry that I didn't come, I had a bit of a problem. They said, "yes, yes, we know all about it. They were waiting for you at St. Marc. But we took steps to warn you on the road before St. Marc". True or false, I never tried to find out".

GD: *"Is it possible to say that there are people of all ages, literate or not, who, in Haiti, naturally serve as mediators, as part of their culture? I have seen illiterate people who said, "I have two ears, I can listen to one with this ear, and the other with this ear". So, would you think that an institutionalisation (paperwork, relation of power and money) of traditional practises for transforming conflicts would lead to an assimilation of the foreign culture?"*

BE: "You need patience... you have to listen to that old friend of yours! It might take three hours before you find the expression which will unblock everything. But you have to listen to him, because he has his own way of speaking, he has his own vocabulary, his images, his parables, his metaphors, and all of that business.

... No-one wants to lose everything, or win everything. So, we need to find out how to make sure that no-one loses everything, but, at PBI, you know that!"

GD: *So, you mean that the in judicial system, he wins everything, or he loses everything, and when it comes down to it, he doesn't want to lose everything, so he wants to find a way to share the risks.*

Mediation as a means of resolving conflicts is a valued technique in PBI... but, with regard to Haitian culture, some of the people we have spoken to doubt its appropriateness...

GA: "Speaking as someone who understands how the people work and the cultural references, I think it's difficult to envisage a mediation process.

... If you have communication problems, you can use a mediator. But in this case, what is lacking is the social contract. This means that each player is able to see her or his own attributes, but cannot see the other person's attributes. So now, if you are in mediation situation, each person says, I say 'me' and the other one says 'me'. A mediator will not be able make them understand each other, since there is no framework which determines our attributes. If there is no transformation at the macro level, I doubt that we will be able to obtain concrete results using mediation programmes in civil society.

"Now there are many programmes - education, campaigns, evangelism, pacification - whose aim is to tell people, "you must not seek out the way to obtain justice yourselves". But there is a need for other instances, which are applied and which offer a right to appeal.

In direct negotiation, a direct resolution of the conflict, what will be the guarantor of the agreement which has been made, if it isn't respected by one of the parties?

"As far as mutual acceptance is concerned, on a psychological, temperamental or behavioural level, this is an extremely tolerant society. Here, even if the conflict manifests itself on the interpersonal level, the subject matter of the conflict is not interpersonal."

Are Haitians a violent people? Or fundamentally tolerant? Guy Alexandre gives his opinion on what he calls the contradictory character of the pre-election politics and the Haitian culture regarding Peace and violence. Once more, he turns back to the question of the State, a problem that would seem to be a vicious cycle?

GX: "I have the feeling that there is a profound aspiration, which was expressed most forcefully in a meeting yesterday, with three Senate candidates for the West department, representing *Espace de Concertation* (Forum for Concord), OPL and FRONCIPH, that the political game, or combat, be carried out within a logic of cooperation and confrontation, including different points of view, but in a relatively calm atmosphere where (I quote) "people respect each other, and respect the divergences and differences."

Now, the paradox is, I believe, that at the same time that we have this aspiration, the Haitian world, without any doubt, is still profoundly characterised by a logic which, at the drop of a hat, assigns the responsibility for resolving problems to violent confrontation - whether the violence remains essentially a verbal one, or whether it suddenly swings over to the practices of physical, or even paramilitary confrontation."

GX: "My wife tells me, often very enthusiastically, about the efforts of, say, the people of the Plateau Central, to regain control over their own lives within that context, using only the means available to them on the local level. You could also mention the efforts of the people of Port-au-Prince, supported by GRET (Research and Technology Exchange Group), to set up and run a system of running water. These are things which are to be encouraged - these people are taking over the running of certain aspects of their lives or of economic production - but, in the end, you realise that initiatives like this reach a limit because there needs to be a State which is capable of creating links between these initiatives and inserting them into some sort of plan, without which they are probably condemned to die out.

"The problem now is that we have a kind of historical residue which implies a whole set of contradictions. The whole struggle of the different categories of Haitian people encompasses an aspiration towards something different than what history has passed down to us (which we call democracy), which is founded on the institutionalisation of the rule of law as a principle for resolving differences and conflicts; but at the same time, we carry within our historical make-up, germs of violence which are in my opinion, the consequence of the level of socio-economic inequalities which constitute the situation in this country, and which cannot be reduced in any other way than via a painstaking programme of educating society about itself... but that also implies a different kind of State.

5) The possibilities of conceiving responses by referring to nonviolence.

GA: "I think it would be a shame if, as part of this effort to promote non-violence, the fact that conflict and violence are the expression of injustice is masked; that the quest for justice is a basic human urge! And the failure to seek justice constitutes a loss of dignity. So, violence is bad, but not seeking justice is worse."

MF: "Has PBI, in its work in Haiti and in other countries, tried to do work on both sides? Because, as soon as we speak of conflict, there are two sides. If we develop conflict transformation techniques in a Nonviolent way, only on one side, without approaching the other, we turn round in circles! For example, the case which Guetry presented, as long as the established authorities, be they the police or whatever other State structure, do not express any will to resolve conflicts with the Haitian people in a nonviolent way, the people can be as technically prepared for conflict transformation as they like, they will always be victim when faced with authority."

GA: "That's right. You see all of these projects and programmes, and even the projects that we Haitians carry out ourselves, each time that we are confronted with reality, the one thing we cannot do is influence reality itself, so we do trainings. And always with the tacit understanding that training is for later - you understand. But what should we do? We need to do something, something which works."

GA: "But you know, I am really sorry that you have come to Haiti at this time. That you come now and you talk about Ghandi. If you go to the Télévision Nationale (national television company) and you watch films from 1986 and 1991, the people are out there, they agree, they go out into the street where they get killed by soldiers, each day there are loads of them getting killed, but they are there saying "yes, but we want this to change!" and were even ready to get killed for the cause. What they did in India, Haitians have already done here. You understand; and nothing has changed! That's the problem. I believe that, in terms of a collective, Nonviolent strategy, six years is a lot! It's a lot of people, but it didn't change anything..."

Guetry's reply is a good example of what can be considered as a deep-rooted misunderstanding regarding non-violence. As with a good many others that we spoke to (those who do not have a precise understanding of PBI's work), nonviolence is suspected of being synonymous with resignation... "violence is bad, but injustice is worse"... it's an almost verbatim quotation from Ghandi! There is still some work to do to make people understand that nonviolence is necessarily an active, determined struggle for justice. Maybe we need to find another, less 'chilly' word for a strategy which renounces violence in order to gain in combativity... maybe a Creole word?

The fact that PBI did not take part directly in any actions here, is above all out of a concern to avoid interference; we do not pretend to be able to tell Haitians (including those who are well-versed in Nonviolent action) what they should do. Our activities in Haiti were limited to NVCT training, which is not anodyne.

Can we really speak of six years of Nonviolent struggle in Haiti, because the people were unarmed and many went so far as to give their lives (which we are not in any way trying to play down)?

The words of Jean Freud cast a different light on a period in which an opportunity may have been missed, and other things were learnt.

We spoke to him about what he thought about a Haitian expertise in regulating and resolving conflicts within the spirit of non-violence.

FJ: "I think that we shouldn't have any illusions about this. In my opinion, in our history, two great movements can be identified which could have brought about a radical change in society. That is during the war of independence of 1791 to 1804, and then from 1986 to the present. The first was an armed revolution. 1986 cannot be called an armed revolution. Maybe it cannot even be called a revolution. But, there was a popular movement, a historical momentum, which could have brought about a profound, historical change. But they were two opportunities, which, in the end, were wasted, were missed. So, with that in

mind, to say that in our country we may have a particular potential for seeking out methods of conflict transformation might be going a bit far. Another dimension is this tradition of 'marronage' which has always existed in Haiti, and which will always exist, as long as we fail to create a different kind of State which can at least guarantee a minimum level of rights and service provision to the ordinary citizen. In that sense, it's true that, if we don't achieve that, Haitians will be inventive enough to continue to survive. And Haitians are engaged in a struggle for survival since 200 years. In that sense, we have a lot of experience...

FJ: "There was an event in our history which may be worth emphasising in this regard; it's the time of the U.S. occupation. When the United States arrived in Haiti in 1915, one of their actions was to disarm the Haitian people. The people were deprived of one of the methods at their disposal for resisting a model of State and society which had been imposed on them. After that, Haitians were forced to develop other methods and strategies, not only for resisting but also, by pure pragmatism, for continuing to struggle, still based on the model of 'marronage'. This explains 1986 and 1990, and I believe that today, the struggle will continue along those same lines in Haiti, with a majority of the population having discovered and acknowledged the necessity and importance of being organised. The coup d'état of 1991-94 was a fatal blow to this capacity to organise and mobilise, which the Haitian people could have been making use of today. The departure of Jean-Claude Duvalier was not strictly the result of a mobilisation. Let's say that, at that time, it was a popular movement which had the capacity, the potential to reach maturity. But it was not given the opportunity, precisely because, if it had achieved that, there would have been a strong chance that a much more profound change be brought about. So it was cut short. Today, that is the struggle which must be reinforced: organisation, mobilisation of the people; in such a way as to form an alternative power-base, to put pressure on the seat of established power. In this respect, I believe that the 1987 Constitution offers some openings which permit the participation and inclusion of the people, with this matter of decentralisation which has never really been put into practice."

PBI: *"Within this work of organising, what role do you see for a nonviolent tendency? Is it important to talk about nonviolence and to reflect on this issue in order to make progress?"*

FJ: "I wouldn't use those terms. We are confronted by a structure, a State which produces violence. So, this violence is not produced by the people, it is produced by a system, a State. Faced with this, the reaction of the Haitian people has not, for a very long time, necessarily been a violent one; not violent in the sense of really destroying, or of taking up arms. There is no sign that this strategy will change in the near future."

PBI: *"Yes, but the absence of violence does not mean, from a PBI point of view, that there is a Nonviolent strategy, in the sense of 'organisation' or 'struggle'. Is there a point of reference in Haiti towards a struggle incorporating the values of nonviolence such as those of Martin Luther King or Ghandi, or the figureheads of other countries engaged in struggles, or could you see a place for it?"*

FJ: "We can always talk of a culture of nonviolence which is to be cultivated or introduced in Haiti. But I don't think that this has been a central or dominating element in our way of evolving or acting, or confronting realities. Perhaps we have an insufficiently conceived or expressed culture of long-term thinking. We tend to act more in the short term."

PBI: *"Can we say that nonviolence is not a point of reference in Haiti?"*

FJ: "No, I wouldn't say that. For me, when Jean Claude Duvalier left in 1986, you could say that Haiti had put itself back on the map, in the sense of, "hey look, here is an example of a Nonviolent revolution, which should be an example to all other countries", I think that the situation, the events determined the form of action and popular mobilisation which the Haitian people decide to use. If we refer to what happened from 1986 to 1990 we can find some elements for a strategy of non-violence. But I don't think you can go from that to saying that for us it was a conscious application of a Nonviolent strategy."

FJ: "I would be willing to move towards working in such a way as to raise awareness about the potential of a culture of non-violence. I think that this culture of nonviolence is still an aspect of the struggle for an alternative social model. When we talk about this there is a tendency more or less to target the issue of justice. And then we realise that it is also a political and economic issue. So that's what I mean when I say that the culture of nonviolence is a dimension in a global struggle. "

PBI: *"We can approach this theme from the other side, that is, that Nonviolent conflict transformation is a dimension of nonviolence which includes the political and economic dimensions, and that's what we would like a network to be used for. People who have until now been thinking in particular about the nonviolence aspect, in terms of conflict transformation, may also be able to take on aspects of political and economic issues. Because we have the impression that these are themes that don't converge. Meaning that politicians think in terms of gaining power and "nonviolence is something else". And the proponents of nonviolence think in terms of "we will resolve the problems of these people who are fighting each other" and forget the political, economic issues. And that's what's missing; the convergence of these themes, and these people coming together to talk, so that they can support each other. The network would be useful for that."*

FJ: "Well, that's a dynamic which I can only applaud."

*Freud JEAN's answer (to a question which was not put to each interviewee in such a precise way) opens up the possibility of a continuation of the debate .
It is not our place to sum up each person's thoughts in a couple of glib catch-phrases, but we thought it would be useful to take note of a few contradictions:*

- *that the Haitian people's strategy of struggle without violence had failed, considering that this strategy had not developed the full breadth of non-violence, as applied in other countries (open for discussion);*
- *regarding the fundamental values of Haitian society in the year 2000...*

But what strikes us in the first instance, is the vast range of possibilities, at least for those who seek to identify regulatory mechanisms in a society which some consider to be self-regulating.

Although it is not disputed that there are real and numerous constraints on the promotion of non-violence, we are convinced that the positive factors are even more numerous and real, as long as there is a determination to seek them out and maintain them.

In the light of what has been said by the interviewees, it can be said that there is a future for active nonviolence in Haiti, building on what exists today:

1 if nonviolence takes into account the problems which concern the general population, as well as the intellectual and political elites (including impunity, crime, the rule of law, choice of development path);

2 if Nonviolent action demonstrates that it can open up new paths, then not only its methods and the life vision which inspires them, but also the historical experience built up

in all parts of the world (including the Third World) may be a source of cultural inspiration which will allow people to transform the crisis and resolve conflicts, thinking about them in a different way, or even to provoke new and other ones which may help to progress the "common welfare"

To achieve this, it is not constructive to put the State and the country's global problems on one side, and the 'people's private matters' on the other; when analysing the roots of conflicts, including the individual ones, there are no doubt some links which can be identified.

PBI sees the usefulness of a network within this perspective. The idea is to relocate the issues, concept and techniques of NVCT within the Haitian discourse (to obtain justice and the rule of law). Including the various perspectives and competences within a network would create the possibility of working together on the collective, structural, and cultural roots of conflicts.

Those who already see themselves as supporting the demands of the people might then consider NVCT, not as a fashionable gadget as part of the 'year of peace' (or even as a new opium for the people), but as a possibility for dynamic change, a pragmatic, effective culture of justice, which could be conceived in accordance with Haitian specificities.

PBI, as a foreign organisation, has attempted, on the request of a number of Haitian citizens, to contribute its own know-how stemming from attitudes and techniques inspired by non-violence. This is why we invite everyone to reflect on this nonviolent dimension of the type of conflict transformation which we advocate.

For us, this does not mean promoting a tool for 'stability at any price', but allowing everyone to have their interests taken into account, even within a context of conflicts which may arise as a result of positive management, which we call, for want of a better term, nonviolent.

Chris Chapman : Creole proverbs and conflict⁸²

At the beginning of March, I went to North-West department with the Ecumenical Committee for Justice and Peace, to observe a presentation of Nonviolent conflict transformation for the benefit of local members of the committee. One of the questions which the participants were asked was, what is conflict? During the resulting discussion, we realised just how many words exist in Creole to describe the concept of conflict, not forgetting that, according to some, Creole is a language with a limited vocabulary.

Apart from 'konfli', which some perceived as being an example of the strong influence of French on Creole vocabulary, we found 'chirepit, akwochay, kabouyay, kont, pale anpil, tchobol', and 'deblozay'. From other sources, I also found 'lobo, tire rale, eskonbrit' and 'yingyang'. Clearly, Creole is a language which contains marked regional differences; not all Haitians will be familiar with all of the words in this list.

This can make our work difficult sometimes, especially when we try to find a translation for 'workshops in conflict transformation'. For a while we used 'seminè sou kijan moun kap jwenn antant nan zafè yingyang', but we dropped it because there were too many who didn't understand the word 'yingyang'.

⁸² Taken from PBI Bulletin no.6, March 1997.

What does this diversity of words for conflict in Creole tell us? Is it an expression of the plurality of Haitian culture, and of the regional diversity of Creole? Or, is it that, sadly enough, conflict plays such a significant role in society that people are obliged to find different words to describe the many different kinds of conflict that can arise? Even more interesting than singular words are the proverbs. During the mentioned training session we found the following:

<i>Bay kou bliye pote mak sonje</i>	He who strikes the blow, forgets; he who bears the bruises, remembers.
<i>Ras tig se tig (or: pitit tig se tig)</i>	The child of a tiger is a tiger; this was the caption under a photo in a Haitian newspaper, showing Raoul Cédras' father, an infamous Tonton Macoute (Raoul Cédras was the leader of the de facto military regime between 1991 and 1994).
<i>Bat chen an, tann mèt li</i>	Beat the dog, wait for its master (the weak may well have powerful protectors).
<i>Rale mennen kase</i>	If you pull on the rope enough, it will snap (if in any case you don't agree, don't push it, or things may get out of hand).
<i>Kabrit anpil mèt mouri nan soley</i>	The goat which has many owners will be left to die in the sun (each owner thinks it's one of the others who is taking care of the goat).
<i>Depi nan Ginen, nèg rayi nèg</i>	People have hated each other ever since they were living in Africa (it was often the chiefs of the African tribes who sold the slaves to the Europeans, so Haitians are well aware that even their own people can betray them). The Haitian music group "Boukman Eksperyans" modified this one to: " <i>Depi nan bwa kayman, nèg renmen nèg</i> ". Since Bois Caïman black men love each other", Bois Caïman being the place of the ceremony where the uprising of the slaves started.
<i>Sa nèg fè nèg, sa pa pèdi</i>	What a man does to another man is never forgotten.
<i>Bel dan pa di zanmi pou sa</i>	Someone who smiles a lot is not necessarily your friend.
<i>Lè w ap plimen poul kodenn pa ri</i>	When you are busy plucking the chicken, the turkey doesn't laugh.

From other sources, I found:

<i>Ravèt pa janm gen rezon devan poul</i>	When the cockroach and the chicken argue, it's always the chicken who's right.
<i>Lè vant chat plen bouden rat anmè</i>	When the cat's stomach is full, the rat's behind is bitter.
<i>Li konnen manje farin, li pa konnen plante manyok</i>	He knows how to eat manioc bread, but he doesn't know how to plant it.
<i>Nan bay kout men, ou jwenn kout pye</i>	If you give someone a hand, they will return the favour with their feet (i.e. they may kick you/walk all over you - this one doesn't translate very easily into English).
<i>Konstitisyon se papye, bayonèt se fè</i>	The constitution is made of paper, the bayonet is made of steel. This one is more of a sound-bite than a proverb - it was said by General Namphy, who took control of the country after the departure of Jean-Claude Duvalier - but it throws light on the question of conflict in Haiti all the same.

Most of these proverbs refer to the violent, aggressive side of human nature; they are either realistic or pessimistic, depending on your point of view. They create an image of a people which has suffered immensely, and which doesn't really expect a helping hand from anyone when it is in difficulties. Nevertheless, there are proverbs which approach the subject from a more positive angle:

<i>Timoun pa chen, granmoun pa bondyè</i>	Children aren't dogs, adults aren't gods.
<i>Moun ki swe pou ou, ou chanje chemiz pou l</i>	If someone sweats for you, you change his shirt.
<i>Ann kase fey kouvri sa a</i>	Let's break up some leaves to cover this up - this one often has a negative connotation, in the sense of covering up an act of corruption.
<i>Lè ou nan mitan bourik, ou</i>	When you are amongst donkeys, you carry the pack-saddle.

<i>pote ba</i>	
<i>Men ale, men vini, fè zanmi</i>	I give you a hand, you give me a hand, the friendship lasts.
<i>dire</i>	
<i>De je kontre, manti ka ba</i>	When two eyes meet, the lie disappears (you cannot tell lies if you are looking into the eyes of the person who knows the truth).
<i>Evite miyo pase mande</i>	To avoid is better than to ask to be forgiven.
<i>padon</i>	
<i>Regleman pa gate zanmi</i>	To resolve an argument does not damage a friendship.

If we observe the language which people use, we can learn much about their culture. And proverbs are possibly even more revealing than other aspects of language. We notice, then, that there are always two sides to the coin. Considering their history of slavery, exploitation, occupation and dictatorship, both at the hands of their own people and of Europeans and the US, Haitians have every right to believe that the human race in its entirety is mean, exploitative and greedy. However, there is clearly an irreducible core of optimism, which would seem to prove that even the Duvaliers' frontal attack on the very fabric of society and human relations did not quite succeed in destroying patterns of solidarity and mutual support.

But it is not easy to draw conclusions from these proverbs, for the meanings are not always clear, and there are sometimes more than one, which are not necessarily compatible. We have a tendency to consider languages as a tool which people use to enable all of those around them to understand what they are saying. But we forget here the role which accents and dialects play, not only in creating a group identity but also in ensuring that 'outsiders' don't understand what is being said. For example, there are three people in a room in Haiti: The first says to the second, 'about that matter we were discussing yesterday, well, if your brother's beard is burning, soak you own beard in water'. So it's quite possible that even initiates will not understand what is being said around them, if those speaking do not want them to understand. Languages are indeed a tool of communication, but in some case they are a selective tool.

Appendix 2: THE LIVING EXPERIENCE IN THE TRAININGS

Workshops on conflict transformation in the rural environment: a collaboration between PBI and the people of Chénot, Mornes Cahos⁸³

To teach nonviolent transformation of conflicts - what a challenge! There are no formulas, no definitive quick-fixes. Furthermore, the management of conflicts is closely linked to culture and social structures. What contribution can active nonviolence trainers offer in a little village in the hills of Haiti?

For a few hours we've been making our way through the night. The rain has started and the roads have turned into rivers; I am quite happy not to have to be the driver. In fifteen years of working for nongovernmental organizations, my Haitian partner and co-animator has had time to cover the countryside and to acquire a good mastery of roads crisscrossed by floods. The rain has wreaked havoc on the roads since my visit two weeks before. I had come for two days to meet the future workshop participants and to get a first look at the region; before each training, we make a preparatory trip in order to adapt our workshops to the needs and context of the participants. My partner had unfortunately not been able to come, but I had passed on to him my impressions and the feedback of the future participants.

To arrive in Chénot, after several hours of hiking from the end of the road, is to enter another world. The area in itself covers about 10 square miles spread out over the mountainsides.

The Mornes Cahos mountain chain separates the Artibonite Plain from the Plateau Central; it contains varied landscapes, from arid slopes (the 'desolate savannah') to fertile valleys. Nearly everyone in the area works some land, but to say that the local population subsists on what it grows would be untrue. Depending on the quality of the soil, peasants eke out a precarious existence growing millet, green 'congo' peas, black beans and corn. Each day of the week, the market is held in a different place, and the local people carry their produce on their heads from one to the other. With hours of mountainous paths stretching between the Central Plain and the sea-boarding lowlands of the Artibonite Valley, this is the main means of transporting goods. There is no such thing as running water or electricity and it takes a six-hour walk to reach the nearest doctor, policeman or judge.

Since the end of military rule, the people of the area have been demanding a stronger presence of state representatives in their communities. The region's remoteness does not help; to take a case to court, or to ask for police help involves walking for more than eight hours to the village of Marchand Dessalines, the administrative centre for almost all of the Mornes Cahos. It is reported that the police has agreed in principle to send two officers to visit the area once a fortnight.

The local Catholic priest in the area is involved in a community project to build a road which reaches further up the mountainside. He told us that when paying the men who have worked on the project he has to take into account that some of them live in communities where notes worth more than 25 Gourdes - approximately \$1.50 - are too large to use. In this climate of economic scarcity, it is not surprising that trees are cut down in vast numbers to be made into charcoal and sold, even if deforestation speeds up the process of soil erosion. It is equally unsurprising that conflicts relating to natural resources - access to land, water and trees - are often at the root of conflicts. It was due to the widespread problem of conflict that we were originally invited to visit Chénot last November,

⁸³ Report compiled from articles by Marc Allenbach, Simon Max Ashmore and Chris Chapman, published in PBI Bulletins no. 5, 7 and 9, from December 1996 and February 1999.

and subsequently asked by several local grassroots organisations to present workshops exploring Nonviolent conflict transformation.

Some organizational "details"

The custom is that the foreign organizations pay for the meals, the journey, and compensation for each workday lost because of being at the workshop. The estimate of the real loss is difficult for foreigners and even for Port-au Prince residents; when earning opportunities are extremely rare, there's a fine line between what would be placing a burden on the rural community, and paying people to participate in trainings. With this, our Haitian colleagues came up against some problems. Although they occasionally offer their time on a volunteer basis to lead workshops, they cannot afford to pay the expenses for food on top of that. To institute this type of practice would thus lead to an impasse in the long-term.

A man is surprised that we only do workshops when we receive requests, and that yet we have more work than we can handle. "Oh, you mean you weren't obliged to come and do this training?" Development aid obeys market forces. Our friend had clearly understood the mechanisms of justifying funding proposals. One of the local leaders criticizes the financial dependence on foreign organizations whose projects crumble when they leave.

Participatory workshops: Toward an exchange of knowledge

The main objective of the workshop was to explore possible ways of approaching conflict in a Nonviolent fashion, but we also wanted to create a piece of Forum Theatre (a technique widely known through the books of Augusto Boal) which could be used, not only as an exercise within the workshop, but also as a tool to create debate within the community. The theme for this short theatre piece would come out of the experiences of the participants themselves. To arrive at this point we chose to take a different theme for each day. The first day was an exploration of what conflict is, the second day explored the various attitudes that can present themselves within a conflict situation, and the third day was about the ways in which conflict can be confronted in a Nonviolent fashion.

An other objective in any of the workshops that we run is to empower the participants by creating a space where everyone is valued for the contribution she or he makes. We have found it difficult at times to explain to groups participating in our workshops, particularly those that explore Nonviolent conflict transformation, that we, the facilitators, do not have the answers. The education system in Haiti, as in many countries, is based on the idea that teachers have the answers and students listen and learn. It can therefore be extremely difficult to break that mould and create a space in which the participants believe themselves capable of coming up with ideas themselves rather than expecting us, the facilitators, to do that for them. But it is absolutely necessary. Any so-called solution imposed by people from outside a community is almost bound to fail.

By 8.30 on the first morning of the workshop, all of the participants were gathered and we could begin. We found ourselves with a very mixed group. Unfortunately, only about a quarter were women. This is a situation that happens fairly often and we have to continually think about strategies to boost the number of women to a more equitable level without imposing our own judgements on the communities and groups with which we work. Aside from this discrepancy, the participants were drawn from all economic levels of the local society and included both young and old. Religion is very important in Haiti, and along with members of both Catholic and Protestant congregations, the group included some voodoo practitioners, including a 'houngan' (voodoo priest) and a doctor of herbal remedies.

In Search of Criticism

One recurring problem that we have encountered over the last year of presenting workshops in Haiti is trying to get a critical evaluation of our work from the participants

themselves. Perhaps it is the result of my European cynicism, but I find it difficult to have faith in an evaluation in which every participant states that they thought every exercise was very useful and that they enjoyed everything. Perhaps it is a result of Haitian hospitality and the habit of treating guests well. Perhaps it is a result of living in a country that has rarely allowed its people the right to criticise without the risk of reprisals. For this workshop we came up with an idea which would gently force the participants to make a choice between exercises during the daily evaluation without saying so openly. At the end of each day we drew a picture representing each exercise that we had presented on a separate piece of paper. The use of drawings is necessary in a region that has very little access to educational facilities and consequently has a high percentage of people not able to read and write. We then gave each participant some small stones - three or four less than the amount of exercises. They then had to place the stones they had on the exercises they had found useful or had liked. Although not very subtle, this at least gave us a result that showed some exercises as popular and others as less so, which is very important with regard to improving the workshops.⁸⁴

The Great Game of Power

On the first day, one of the most popular sessions was the Great Game of Power, another of Augusto Boal's exercises. This is an exercise that explores in both symbolic and physical ways the uses of power, which is often an important aspect of conflict and how it is perceived. The exercise involves asking one of the participants to arrange six chairs, a table and a bottle so that one of the chairs has more power than the rest of the objects. Once she or he has finished the other participants have the opportunity to change the configuration of the objects to give even more power to the one chair. Each time that the configuration has been changed the other participants discuss whether the balance of power has in fact changed. One of the most interesting moments during this exercise was when the configuration consisted of three chairs, balanced precariously one upon the other, on top of the table. Some of the participants thought that the chair at the very top was in the position of greatest power because it was higher. Others thought that the chair on the bottom was the most powerful because it was the base upon which the others rested. At this point, several of the participants drew an allusion between population and state. The chair at the bottom represented the people, and although the government was higher than them, it relied on the people for support. For me, the idea that it is the ordinary citizen of a country who holds the real power is very attractive and is what democracy should be about.

When a Game Touches Reality

The second day's most popular exercise was The Citadel. This is an exercise used to explore the attitudes that people take on in a conflict situation. There are three groups, one of which takes on the role of observing the action. The other two groups are given differing instructions. One group is asked to create a 'human' fortress, using only their bodies. During the exercise this fortress is not allowed to let anyone enter for any reason for two minutes. The second group is told that there is an emergency and they have to find shelter within five minutes, and that there is a hospital close by. The instructions are left deliberately vague and the participants are allowed to fill in the details. The idea is to create what seems to be a conflict situation, but where there is also the possibility to resolve this conflict if there is good communication. We split the groups into two parts for this exercise and were surprised at the diversity of results. One group ended up getting into their fortress on both occasions that the exercise was run, using a variety of means to achieve this - ranging from physical force to dialogue. The other group never managed to

⁸⁴ See photos, page ???

get into their fortress. But more than the exercise itself, it was the discussions that it provoked that began to give a real insight into the lives of the people of Chénôt.

For several participants, it was clear that it was not possible to let strangers into a hospital because of the problems of banditry. This was countered by the story of another who had suffered such a refusal. His fifteen year old daughter had become gravely ill, and the nurse who works in the area had written him a note asking for certain medicines from the local hospital which was a six hour walk away. When he arrived he was not allowed in and was sent home. The next day the nurse told him to try a local dispensary, a four hour walk away, which she did not think was likely to have the necessary medication, but which was the only hope. The dispensary did in fact have what was required, but unfortunately it was already too late when he got back. His daughter was dead.

It is in hearing such stories, told in such a matter-of-fact way, that I find myself face to face with the enormous gulf in experience between myself, raised in a country where a functioning health service is considered to be a fundamental right, and Haiti, where the lack of even basic health services and malnutrition have led to a life expectancy of about 53 years.

Theatre is not just for actors

The third day consisted of a series of exercises leading up to the Forum Theatre piece. This was to consist of a short presentation acted out by the participants and dealing with a scenario they had chosen themselves. The scene started with a song chosen by the participants which told of the problems created if communities are unable to work together. As the singers repeated the song, but humming this time, they drew back to reveal a man working the land that he had rented from a landowner for a two year period. He was telling of the difficulty of his life, the poverty in which his family lives, and his hope for a good crop. Then the landowner arrives. He has decided that now the land is planted he wants to break the contract after a year and take it over again.

At the point of conflict the scene is stopped and is restarted from the beginning. Now Forum Theatre comes into its own. The idea is that any member of the audience can stop the action at any time and can replace one of the actors. In this way, everyone can try different ideas in order to resolve the conflict presented. The scene can be restarted any number of times and the audience can stop the action at any time. Unlike the Europeans in the workshops which I have taken part in, many Haitians seem at ease with the idea of role-plays, theatre and so on, and it was not difficult at all to convince the Chénôt group to get involved. Even more extraordinary was the audience that the Forum Theatre drew. There had been another meeting in the church where we were holding the workshop. As our group experimented with the scene, people started gathering, until there was an audience of about twenty-five watching from the sanctuary of the church and through the windows. The scene was riveting, dealing with a problem with which every inhabitant of Chénôt is familiar. As various attempts at solving the problem were tried, the audience would discuss the pros and cons in whispers. No more proof is needed, in my mind, to show the possibilities for using theatre to create debate about social problems and conflicts within a community, and, consequently, to create a space for different approaches to conflicts and alternatives to violence.

Evaluation: a theme of the work

At the outset, both co-animators shared by chance the same desire: to emphasize the importance of times for evaluation. One of the goals was to work on the expression of feelings and needs, which often seems to pose problems in Haiti, even for the local facilitators. But above all, we wanted to arrive at an interactive and reciprocal relationship with the participants.

Little by little in the course of the evaluations, the participants dared to express feelings and needs, even those which risked being construed as negative or upsetting. But not one direct criticism was addressed at us.

During the final evaluation, the positive points were rich and numerous and we were asked to set dates for a next training. Among the exercises, a photo exercise was unanimously appreciated: we had asked each one to choose a picture which made her/him think of a conflict which had been experienced and to explain it in front of the group. The participants' accounts were rich and profound.

The few negative criticisms concern only the behaviour of participants in the group, with no criticism concerning us. We repeat then that we would like them to help us progress too by telling us what they didn't appreciate or what we could have done better in their opinion.

"You?" they asked, astonished. "Yes, us."

Finally several participants dare to tell us which exercises they didn't like. Then several interesting criticisms appeared. Among other things, some would have liked to hear us say what was right and wrong in what they were saying. This is our chance to tell them that we don't know! As long as the opinions and feelings expressed were their own, they satisfied our expectations of initiating a process of sharing the riches of all the participants. Then came another criticism: we often asked each person's opinion, but rarely gave our own. Maybe we sinned by excess.

And Next...

In a few months' time, we hope to go back to Chénôt to meet the participants of the workshops and to see how they have helped their communities to start looking at conflict and to begin to create strategies to deal with it. There was talk of trying to create local committees who would be available to try to intervene in conflict situations, and to initiate a discussion of the specific problems which the different communities are trying to come to terms with, in order to avoid the upsurge of conflicts. However, in the daily struggle for survival even small steps along the path to creating a safer and less conflictive society will not be an easy one.

I was impressed by the commitment of the participants. Each one attended the whole of the workshop, even though the rain had fallen for the first time in months, and planting was a priority. Finishing this article in Port-au-Prince by the light of an electric bulb, on a computer, knowing that I can wash in running water from a tap before I go to bed, I think of the extraordinary people I met in Chénôt and the hospitality and honesty with which they welcomed me. I cannot but feel humble and privileged that I have had the opportunity to know them.

The work of the Shalom 'Rezolisyon Konfli'*⁸⁵ *groups

Following the workshops which PBI led in Chénôt, the participants formed a group which meets every last Wednesday of the month. With twenty or so members from various parts of the Mornes Cahos, this group, Shalom aims to collect information on conflicts arising in the area and to offer help in finding a peaceful settlement of the differences. According to Shalom, their interventions have helped to calm tensions on several occasions. The monthly meetings also provide a space for sharing information, advice and thoughts on the workings of the Mornes Cahos micro-society, as well as the country as a whole.

It is possible that Shalom's achievements have been talked up to please us. Things are more complex than they seem, and telling a foreigner what she or he wants to hear is a self-protection mechanism. In any case, it is not in PBI's remit to evaluate the group and its achievements; the beauty of this initiative is that it is entirely indigenous and seeks out ways of ensuring its autonomy, while at the same time requesting more training and tools

⁸⁵ Conflict resolution in Creole

to enable it to work and develop. We are therefore following with great interest the efforts of the people of the Mornes Cahos, who, faced with difficulties which seem insurmountable, are determined to get organised in order to change their situation.

A Women's PBI Workshop⁸⁶

15 women singing, dancing, but above all enacting their daily lives and their problems. 15 women discussing the problematic issues of conflict, violence and oppression from a woman's point of view. An indisputably original experience, rich in teachings.

One cannot speak of Peace Education or social change without including women in that same envisioned perspective. However, for a number of reasons, women make up on average only ten to twenty percent of the participants in the workshops PBI has organised in the rural environment. A desire to reverse this tendency, and the idea that a workshop focused on the issues of violence, power, and communication "from a woman's point of view" would be extremely interesting, have led us to take the initiative. This is how, together with Jocelyne Colas, a member of Justice and Paix and the Trainers for Group Peace, we came to organise a workshop in Peace Education specifically for a female audience. The workshop was held on June 13 and 14, 1998, in Port-au-Prince in the PBI House, and was facilitated by Jocelyne Colas and Chantal Sergeant, a PBI volunteer who was giving her last workshop before leaving the team. Twelve participants in all were able to respond to our invitation. Roughly between the ages of 18 and 50, they came from very different backgrounds: city-dwellers and women from the country, students, health professionals, farmers, and so on. Two modules lasting one day each were on the program: "Conflict Definition and Analysis" and "Introduction to Nonviolent Communication," topics which were dealt with through participatory methods and through the sharing of each woman's experience and ideas.

Inequality and Dissatisfaction

In the course of the first day, a wealth of ideas on the topic of conflict in Haitian society were expressed. Dissatisfaction with regard to needs—a source of conflict—and problems of inequality (between men and women, among women of differing social conditions, etc.) were discussed through activities involving role-playing or theatre, during which the participants were able to act out their conflicts with astonishing realism. A theatre-forum activity was used to explore the different attitudes of protagonists in a conflict. The situation chosen was a scene between a housewife and her cleaning lady, and inspired a number of questions. For example, in a conflict, should one attach more importance to things or to people? The participants agreed that in any case the need for personal recognition is something very important for all individuals. Song and dance also played a significant role all through the workshop. The participants who arrived late in the morning had to dance in order to be excused—a perfectly positive and agreeable way to manage a problem that cannot be ignored!

From a forum-theatre to "Giraffe" language

The second day of the workshop began with a session of *brase lide* (brainstorming) which allowed us to touch upon various aspects of Communication. Brunine David, a member of the Trainers Group for Peace who had recently completed a ten-day training session at the Namur Peace University in Belgium, then gave a presentation on the principles of nonviolent Communication as defined by the American specialist Marshall Rosenberg. She spoke in particular about something which Rosenberg calls "Giraffe language," a way of listening and speaking to people by emphasizing the deepest needs of each individual, according to four stages: observation, expression or recognition of personal feelings,

⁸⁶ From the PBI Haiti Bulletin, number 11, July, 1998.

expression of needs, and the formulating of concrete requests anchored in the present. Methods of communication were examined by means of psychomotor exercises and forum-theatre sessions. Then, two role-playing games introduced issues of active listening. Using the example of a mother in need seeking to borrow the wherewithal to start a small business from a wealthier friend, the participants analysed two possibilities. Indisputably, a failure to listen reflected a severely scornful attitude, whereas the opposite attitude, a compassionate approach from the start (the friend agrees to lend the money), also symbolised the perpetuation of an exploitative pattern. Thus a very clear and uncompromising vision of contemporary Haitian society came to light.

A Desire to Go Further

Participation all through this workshop was eager and intense. During the evaluation process, the participants emphasized the good opportunity to establish links and strengthen friendship and solidarity. They were unanimous in saying that this was an example which ought to be shared with other women's organisations, and in hoping that this initiative would be taken further. We wholeheartedly agree with such suggestions. The wealth of the experience gained, and the resulting assessment with our female partners at the Trainers Group for Peace, have led us to believe that it is well worth continuing to focus our attention on the requests emanating from women's organisations.

Detailed Illustration of a Conflict Analysis Exercise: Group Exercise: The impact of conflict on the social dynamic⁸⁷

Participants are divided into four groups. Two groups are told to choose, to relate and to analyse, in their own words, a local conflict (within a group, organisation, family, etc.). The two other groups are each told to present a more global conflict (on the scale of a town, *département*, country, etc.). The groups are divided up according to the consecutive choices of four people who must "constitute" their teams. Everyone (including the PBI members present), with the exception of the facilitators, takes part in the exchange of ideas and analysis in small groups. After twenty-five minutes of discussion, each delegate comes to present his or her group's production. The first group presents their case with the help of questions from the facilitator, who then withdraws completely, leaving the delegate to present the conflict freely.

Local Conflicts

- An NGO chooses, arbitrarily and without consulting anyone else, only one local organisation as its partner in a place where there are several. The other local organisations are disappointed. Emphasis is placed on the opportunities connected with this conflict. The next time a similar event occurs, it would be better for the NGO to consult with a representative of each local organisation. Next, the question of the impact of a conflict on the dynamic is raised. How were the relations between the parties before and after the NGO intervened?
- Conflict at Cité Soleil. An armed gang has been creating panic in the Cité Pelé, a slum zone. In the presentation, emphasis is placed on the analysis of "before-during-after." Before, there had been various development projects (schools, water conveyance, housing, etc.). During, people were killed, the police began to fight with the zone, residents left and projects came to a halt. After, the projects were not carried out, the development of the zone stagnated, and the zone itself acquired a bad reputation.

⁸⁷ Example taken from a team report on the workshop with the Groupe d'action civique pour le développement et la culture (GRADSEC-Civic Action Group for Development and Culture), September 19, 1998.

Global conflicts

- Conflict within the State. The minister of the Interior blocks the salaries of the employees of the cemetery service, and in return they close the cemetery, which prevents burials from taking place.

- Conflict between the House, the OPL, and the President.

- The suggestion to analyse conflicts by opposing "local" and "global" is perhaps not such a good idea. It might lead participants to believe that there exists an opposition or a Manichean and simplistic classification of conflicts when in fact two conflicts can be local and each have a very different source, evolution and implication.

However, it was very interesting to note that each of the four groups spontaneously suggested an interpretation or analysis of these conflicts (either through questions or by means of an evolving "before-during-after" description, or by empirical conclusions regarding conflicts, such as "next time, all the local organisations must be consulted before working in partnerships."). On this topic, it was noticed that the "Who? Which problem? Which stages?" model that we hesitated to include in the workshop curriculum "emerged" all by itself and virtually in that very form, subsequent to a group's presentation.

Gracita Osias : PBI's Training for Trainers: Testimony of a Haitian Facilitator⁸⁸

Gracita Osias has shared with us her impressions, and her ideas about the theme of Peace education.

Three months after the end of the seminar which I co-facilitated together with Olivier Gailly, a lot of things have stayed with me. I had already facilitated other seminars and taught various techniques, but the way this seminar evolved was something new, particularly for the way in which people received and integrated the techniques taught.

It was the participatory techniques we used which were new to them. This was a considerable change in comparison with the magisterial educational system which is traditional in Haiti.

Over the course of nine days the seminar participants expressed a great many emotions and a great deal of warmth. An exceptional dynamic developed within the group.

What was striking, psychologically, was that each participant was able to analyse himself or herself. Everybody expressed what they felt most deeply, regarding the way in which they experienced the training. The casual moments (meals, discussions after the workshops, etc) were very important on this level. They began to be part of the program.

There were discussions every day, at various times during breaks— on the married life in the Haitian home, on the place of women in society, on violence against women.

In other seminars or sessions in which I took part, people didn't gain from casual discussions in the same way. But where the PBI seminar was concerned, these moments actually strengthened the group. For example, there were people who hadn't planned to sleep over at the training centre, but in the midst of the training session they made arrangements so that they could stay on in the evening and wouldn't miss anything that was going on.

Such training sessions are necessary

This seminar remains an excellent memory for me but a great deal more as well. Since the participants have since come to join the Trainers Group for Peace set up in 1996, there is hope that more and more people will commit to helping the Haitian community to manage the conflicts which trouble the country. This commitment can find its expression in groups

⁸⁸ Taken from the Haiti bulletin no. 10, April 1998.

or in the institutions where they work, in the communities where they live, and in their families.

On a personal level, the things I learned in this seminar are for me a place to turn to in the situations of conflict which I experience both within my family or work and in a general way. I can feel a tremendous difference when I look back at the first PBI seminar I took part in, in 1996, and where the approach towards the theme of nonviolence was more difficult. In that context of transition from repression, I expected to find practical tools to counteract political violence, but personally I had the impression that speaking of nonviolence was serving rather to "put people to sleep."

After the seminar which I co-facilitated, I now feel more comfortable in taking on such a topic. The prejudices I had have disappeared. With these new techniques and approaches, it's now possible to take on the theme of nonviolence without complexes and to get better results.

Training sessions like this must be continued and expanded to other institutions: schools, homes, and so on. They are a vital necessity for the country. This type of conflict management through participatory techniques—games, case by case analysis, theatre forums, exercises, discussions—allows everyone to go beyond their preconceptions and to develop and discover themselves, to discover and understand others, without, for all that, giving up the principles which they hold dear. I can only hope that these training sessions will continue and develop in the future, and I will contribute as much as I can to help bring this about.

Gracita Osias Saint Louis is joint leader of a program of post-literacy and teaching assistance to the community schools within the GATAP (*Groupe d'Appui Technique et d'Action Pédagogique* - Group for Technical Support and Pedagogical Action). An elementary school teacher by training, Gracita has had much experience in the field of formal education. After taking part in the first Training for Trainers Session organised by PBI Haiti in July, 1996, she co-facilitated workshops in Positive Conflict Management with PBI volunteers in 1997.

Jocelyne Colas : Trainers Group for Peace - Groupe de Formateurs pour la Paix (GFP) : A New Star⁸⁹

Historical Overview

Since 1996, individuals working for various groups or organisations have been taking training courses offered by Peace Brigades International (PBI), who have been in Haiti since 1995. These training courses have covered the following topics: nonviolent conflict transformation, nonviolent communication, techniques of participatory facilitation, consensual decision-making, and so on. Very quickly these individuals expressed a keen interest in pursuing certain topics in greater depth and in sharing their experiences in conflict management in the midst of their daily activities. Subsequently, the group decided to meet on a monthly basis to exchange ideas and think about ways to make the team more dynamic and functional.

Bodies of the Trainers Group for Peace

The GFP consists of a general assembly and an executive committee. Regional committees may be set up. The executive committee examines and implements the ideas put forth by the general assembly, which meets every six months. If necessary, the

⁸⁹ Bulletin PBI Haiti, number 15, May, 2000.

executive committee can summon group members to an extraordinary general assembly. In our capacity as Peace Trainers Group, we have already held two ordinary general assemblies, and one extraordinary general assembly, on the date of March 27, 1999, to set up an executive committee for a duration of eighteen months. Consensus was reached during this assembly to agree on the statutes and internal regulations of the Group.

Members of the Trainers Group for Peace

The members of the Trainers Group for Peace are individuals who have taken part in a training for trainers seminar in the realm of active nonviolence, including methods of conflict management such as mediation, nonviolent communication and techniques of participatory facilitation. Members of the Trainers Group for Peace are divided among Haiti's nine geographical *départements*. There are roughly fifty of them.

Social Service

The Trainers Group for Peace is here to: - serve all the organisations or groups who are interested in the question of active nonviolence, nonviolent conflict transformation, and the method of participatory facilitation, in workshops of one to three days, in seminars of seven to nine days, in group debates, day-long retreats, etc.;

- develop education towards peace (in schools, communities, etc.);

- help people to believe in dialogue as a way to resolve their problems.

It is with an open mind that we await: - your requests for training; -your advice; - your help.

PEACE IS THERE, WE'RE LOOKING FOR IT.

Jocelyne Colas, Executive Secretary, Trainers Group for Peace, 2000.

Appendix 3: TESTIMONIES ON BEING A PBI VOLUNTEER

*Philippe Beck : Life in the team, as seen by a visitor*⁹⁰

In these lines, I would like to describe life at the PBI house in Port-au-Prince, using the fresh perspective that my four short weeks here have given me.

The first thing you notice: *the heat*. It's crazy how much time it takes up... You're constantly drying yourself; taking showers (when there's water); pumping water from the tank into the barrels on the roof (when there's none left); drying the fuses in the water pump which have been short-circuited by the humidity; then you find out there's no more electricity—hey, is it Monday or Wednesday?—so, no more water pump, no more fan, no more fridge, no more fax... and no more computer, apart from the brief respite your batteries will give you...

Second thing you notice: *the smells*. I'll be frank: Port-au-Prince stinks, wherever you go. The garbage is piled up in heaps, in hills (they call them '*fatras*' here); in the midst of all that the organic matter decomposes and stinks; what's inorganic doesn't stink, but it stays behind. In any case, all of it blocks the sewers and the gutters, even blocks entire canals. It's a sad thing...

Third thing: *trick telephones*. Who knows what clever devil seems to have taken the trouble to tangle up the wires of the Haitian telephones, but the result is that half a dozen times a day you have to say No, Grégoire (or Théluscat or Dieudonné or...) doesn't live here. Not to mention the Club Med, whose old phone number we seem to have inherited... If you try to call the team and get a complete stranger, don't jump to the conclusion that you've been given a wrong number: let fifteen minutes go by.. then try again! We strongly recommend Zen meditation as a "medicine" after the fifth abortive try. It's far less harmful in any case than anti-spasmodic or chemical anti-depressants...

Fourth thing: *the flow of people*. It is amazing how quickly PBI has become a place where a great many partners drop by, whether they come in person or just call up (not counting all the wrong numbers!) So-and-so comes by to get an application form for the training for trainers program. Someone else calls to ask if we have heard what just happened in Jérémie. A third will come to get some feedback about the upcoming co-ordinating session for an important group. The paper delivery man rings at the door, the first visitor calls to check on a detail, someone shouts that lunch is ready, someone else is leaving, another is arriving, the telephone rings again, someone asks if we're finally going to be able to eat because he has to leave right away afterwards, the telephone rings again...

It's no joke, there are moments of true madness. The contrast between this whirlwind and, notwithstanding, the slowdown brought on by the heat (see above) is really striking.

Fifth thing: *friendliness*. People talk a lot. To co-ordinate. To ask for help with a procedure or a computer detail. To complain, when their nerves need it. To clear the air, when one person's nerves have ruffled someone else's. For the pleasure of talking, and for that of listening. To go over what didn't quite get across the day before.

There's an exchange, well beyond that of mere words. You listen to a record. You finish the evening by sharing a little glass of rum. You massage, you smile, you pass the mosquito repellent around. You do your laundry side by side. All these insignificant little things bind us together.

Sixth thing: *the complexity* of situations. Nothing is straightforward anywhere, to be sure. But in Haiti, reality is always one degree more complicated than you would think. The ancestral mixing of a multitude of African cultures, combined with the contribution of the whites in Haiti in the past ("Creolisation") and in the present (the influence of the NGOs and the educated classes, for example) have created a multi-faceted reality which no

⁹⁰ Taken from PBI Haiti Bulletin No. 3, July 1996

amount of explaining can get to the bottom of. Plenty of others have cut their teeth on the issue before us, even though they seemed far more qualified...

There is one sole resource: listen to each person, be patient, accept the contradictions while you hope that they are only apparent and that they will eventually work themselves out at a higher level of understanding...

Working in Haiti means confronting history that has been completely woven with conflict. "Our entire history since 1806 has been based on the dominance of violence," someone said to us the other day. And yet, there is so much gentleness alongside a certain brutality in the gestures between men and women in this country; there is so much solidarity despite obvious individualism. Even the constant traffic jams on the streets of Port-au-Prince: they would never be resolved if the hundreds and thousands of drivers, between two pedestrians who've just narrowly escaped being hit, did not yield the right of way of their own free will, without sticking stubbornly to their rights.

In addition to complexity there is *complication*: about almost any event or encounter there are almost as many different versions as people involved either directly or indirectly.

Untangling truth from falsehood is both an urgent and delicate procedure, and one which applies equally to minor everyday details and the analysis of the major events shaking the country.

Given the complexity and the complications, the team needs to remain clear-headed and help each other out in order to make sense of the versatile and varied information which they receive, to analyse it in depth, and to gain sufficient understanding of the situation in order to intervene actively when they have to, without the risk of making mistakes or being endangered.

Chris Chapman : Volunteering in Haiti

I went to Haiti in January 1997 to work on the Haiti project, which was then only just over a year old. It was a fascinating and challenging experience, and like many people who go to Haiti, I stayed longer than I first intended - I came back in August this year, although only the first 12 months was with PBI.

My time with PBI was hard going in many respects. The project was more or less unique within PBI - there are others, which worked on peace education - workshops in conflict transformation and Nonviolent communication, for example - but PBI Haiti was the only one doing it almost full time, and it had gone into a cultural environment which was quite new to it. This meant that we spent a lot of time in discussion, evaluation, and to some extent, experimentation, trying to arrive at a way of working, which we were happy with and which worked in Haiti.

This was a unique learning experience, and at times a difficult one. The project went through some periods of very low morale, sometimes due to low staffing, sometimes due to doubt or confusion about our way of working. This added to the tensions, which inevitably arise within a team, which lives and works in the same space - the usual PBI set-up.

But my first, and maybe most memorable learning experience, came outside of the team. After a short period of acclimatising, and being taught just about enough Creole to survive, I was sent on an 'immersion', as all new volunteers are. This means staying with a Haitian family, usually outside the capital, not only to learn Creole but to try to get at least an idea of what Haitian culture and society is about.

To my untrained eye, the family I was staying with was poor. There were about 10 people, sometimes more - sisters, husbands, mother, children - living in 5 small, stuffy rooms under corrugated iron, some sleeping on the floor. Cooking was done outside on a charcoal stove. But I soon had to revise those first impressions. Some had jobs - not what

we would call top-flight jobs but the mere fact of having one at all puts you in a relatively privileged position in Haiti. And they had 'restaveks' - children who work and live with a family, in return for food and board. 'Restaveks' do long hours, cooking, cleaning and sweeping.

My family's 'restaveks' were relatively well-treated - they went to school, unlike most. But they also worked long hours, were verbally abused, and sometimes beaten. They were called ugly, simply because they were dressed in rags. It was a confusing and upsetting experience. My 'family' were lovely people, had welcomed me with open arms, and were themselves working for a pittance in exploitative jobs. I soon learnt to ditch any ideas I may have had about trying to identify the good and the bad, the exploiters and the exploited.

Many people go to the developing world, not only in the hope of doing something of benefit to others, but to experience a new and different culture. This is at the root of the soul-searching of many working in the humanitarian domain - am I not taking out more than I put in? But I think PBI, of many foreign organisations working in developing countries, comes as close as any to allowing you to do both. Its painstakingly developed, and sometimes frustratingly limiting philosophy, ensures that you work in conjunction with local initiatives, in as culturally sensitive a way as possible, and avoid that ex-pat tendency of 'parachuting in' programmes put together without local input.

But this philosophy also allows you to come closer to the reality of the country - at least, as close as you are likely to get. The 'immersion' is just one example. Like all PBI projects, we had a principle of working with locals at almost every stage, including working in tandem with Haitian trainers when carrying out workshops. And because of this philosophy - also simply because the project had so little money - we travelled around by public transport. This required great reserves of patience and physical endurance, but opened the door to chance encounters - which often started with something like 'where's your white jeep?'.

I went on to work as a human rights monitor, and later as a journalist, and had many more fascinating encounters with this unique culture. I never earned enough to buy a jeep. But I think that I can thank PBI for helping me get off to the right start in Haiti, by encouraging me to get to know and respect Haitians and their culture and not walk around in a mental 'white jeep'.

Appendix 4: Documents of PBI and the Haiti Project

PBI Haiti Project Mandate

International Observation and Accompaniment

Objectives:

- to support the democratic process by supporting local initiatives aimed at consolidating and promoting peace by nonviolent means;
- to maintain a team of volunteers able to offer protective accompaniment in sensitive situations, in order to help create a space for freedom and communication;
- the aim of the accompaniments is also to reassure people with regard to their rights;
- international observation is intended to open up a space for dialogue between the parties involved. The volunteers' role is one of observers, not mediators.

Activities:

- protective accompaniment, international observation, dissemination of information and awareness-raising through the team newsletter, reports, and in extreme cases, the urgent action network.

Training Workshops in Nonviolent Conflict Transformation (NVCT)

Objectives:

- to allow the actual or potential protagonists of conflicts to work actively together in envisaging nonviolent solutions, and to develop their own skills in positive conflict management. However, the aim of the workshops is not to resolve a specific conflict within the organisation requesting the training;
- to create a space for exchanging and recognising the value of respective experiences, and sharing NVCT methods and tools;
- to take part in a process of adapting and creating NVCT techniques and concepts which are appropriate to the social and cultural realities of Haiti;
- to identify together traditional Haitian NVCT resources;
- to work towards establishing, in the long term, a sufficiently broad network of Haitian trainers to respond to the demand for NVCT workshops;
- to help to consolidate the democratic process by contributing to the efforts of civil society to organise itself and gain strength.

Activities:

- workshops, carried out using participative techniques to encourage exchanges among the participants, and between workshop leaders and participants. Participative techniques are used throughout the design, execution and evaluation of the workshops;
- participating in and supporting a group of trainers, of which the majority of the members are Haitians;
- trainings for trainers, preceded by a series of basic-level preparatory workshops.

Information

Objectives:

- to disseminate objective information on activities carried out by Haitians with the aim of consolidating democracy by nonviolent means;
- to disseminate varied information on the day-to-day life and culture of Haiti;
- to give information about PBI activities, in order to encourage our partners to support the project.

Activities:

- regular newsletters, reports, the website (www.peacebrigades.org), conference tours, talks given by ex-volunteers.

Approved by the PBI General Assembly, July 1998, Plönningeskolan, Sweden

Table of criteria for the evaluation of volunteer candidates for PBI Haiti

	Conditions	Trump - desirable
Knowledge (<i>'savoir'</i>)	Knowledge of principles, functioning and the structure of PBI Have command of French Basic knowledge on Haiti Knowledge of the work of PBI Haiti	In depth Knowledge on Haiti Basic command of Haitian Creole
Know-how to do (<i>'savoir-faire'</i>)	Consensus decision making Capacity of analysis and synthesis Capacity of writing reports Capacity of public relations Capacity to apply the principles and the mandate of PBI Capacity of facilitating groups	Conduct workshops Capacity of writing articles Computer skills Accountability skills
Know-how to be (<i>'savoir-être'</i>)	Capacity to live in a team: Nonviolent communication To give and receive critics To live and work in a multicultural team Command of own emotions Knowing own limits Knowing your own capacities Flexibility, specifically in unclear situations Stress management Positive attitude towards conflicts Awareness of own motivations	
Other	Minimum of 25 years, with exception for candidates proving exceptional maturity Minimal engagement of 6 months in Haiti Attending an internship of training-selection of the Haiti project	To constitute a personal support group for moral and financial support during the stint.

Checklist of points to be clarified upon receiving requests for workshops

Relation with the organisation

- 1) How did you learn about the training programme of our organisation?
- 2) What do you know about the training programme of our organisation?
- 3) Why do you address your request to our organisation?

Analysis of the request

- 1) What is the topic of the requested training?
- 2) Who is the person or which group is requesting (name, function)?
- 3) Who are the participants (what occupations, roles, gender, age...? Do they know each other? Is it a group, which?)
- 4) What is the relation between the person requesting the training and the participants?
- 5) What is the purpose of the requested training? In other words, what are the expectations of the people requesting?
- 6) What is the context? (problems scope...)

- 7) What has already been done? (antecedents, discussions, interventions, other trainings...) and how did they go about?
- 8) How are the future participants already informed? If not at all, how is the proposed training going to be presented?
- 9) What would be their principle motivations?
- 10) What types of conflicts, what topics, which techniques should be addressed?
- 11) What would be the role of the requesting people during the training?

Trainers Group for Peace

- 1) Present the Trainers Group for Peace to whom we would pass on the request. If there is no objection?

Preparatory steps

- 1) Which are the possibilities to communicate with the requesting people or the organisers of the training, in case of unforeseen events?
ATTENTION: At least one of the three following preparatory steps is mandatory
- 2) Is it possible to meet the future participants before the training?
- 3) Is it possible to visit the locality, the organisation the situational context?
- 4) Is it possible to discuss the draft training programme with the people requesting or organising the training or eventually with the participants?

Practical aspects

- 1) Which are the possible dates, how many days?
- 2) working hours?
- 3) In what locality would the training take place? (How can it be reached and in what time, which are the sleeping facilities (separated, together at one place, everyone going home)?
- 4) Number of participants?
- 5) Level of education (capacity to read/write, to understand/speak of French)?
- 6) Accustomed to what kind of training or group activities?
- 7) in what type of room would the training take place (number of rooms, closed or in "come-and-go" place, level of noise, heat, are there tables, chairs...)?
- 8) What pedagogical materials are available (blackboard, possibility to suspend papers?)
- 9) Who will be responsible for meals, water, housing?

Haiti Project Committee : A Few Ideas to Follow Up for Possible Improvements

Improvements were made all through the project, but certain problematic areas still persist. In the summer of 2000, Marco Allenbach, representative of the committee in charge of closing down the Haiti Project, made note of some of the suggestions still being voiced by members of the team and the committee to improve the effectiveness of projects of this nature, and to make the work of the volunteers, committee members, and the coordinator more pleasant. Here are some of the suggestions, each of which has both advantages and disadvantages; for the most part, these suggestions can be combined.

Increase the Volunteers' Time Commitment

Several NGOs (Mennonite Central Committee, or E-Changer, in Switzerland) take on volunteers for a three-year period. This would allow greater continuity and leave more time for volunteers to become familiarised with conditions on the ground, and then to transmit their experience to those who follow. However, a period of this length would be difficult to envisage under present conditions (communal life, near-absence of privacy). The actual total cost of a volunteer's stay must also be taken into account, as well as a

repatriation bonus that would have to be more than merely symbolic. This would not resolve the problem of long-term continuity, nor that of competence.

Hire a Coordinator on site

An on-site coordinator would have to have strong skills in nonviolent conflict transformation training and be prepared to stay for several years. This would give the volunteers the reference point which seems to be missing. In addition to the difficulties this would entail on the level of role definition and the limits of a consensus on volunteers, PBI would find itself committed to a potentially long-term project, and this raises issues regarding PBI's non-interference. The hiring of a local coordinator would have advantages from an intercultural point of view, but would not resolve the issues cited above. PBI would still be the sponsor and the controlling body of the project. Moreover, PBI's presence would no longer be founded upon the external origin of members active on-site. This condition might be more appropriate for an accompaniment project than for a training project.

Collaboration with Local Institutional Partners

This would have great advantages from the intercultural point of view, and where continuity is concerned, but would raise certain issues regarding a non-partisan attitude, in light of the choice of one partner over another. However, the greatest "success" of the PBI-Haiti project has often been linked to the particular investment of a Haitian institutional participant, or to foreign participants who have had deep long-term connections with Haitian reality in terms of a basic, communal commitment (for example, Justice et Paix, on the one hand, Chênot, on the other, and seminars given by NCHR, SKDE, INEADI, etc.)

Become more selective and give up some of the Project's activities

This would, as a result, decrease the number of basic skills necessary and the variety of activities to discover and experiences to transmit. It would also resolve certain incompatible issues: for example, a one-year rotation seems very useful for an accompaniment project, in order to maintain the adequate emotional distance between partners and volunteers and thus ensure a non-partisan attitude, but it is more of a handicap where training projects are concerned. The disadvantage of focusing on one or two activities would be a loss of valuable flexibility in order to adapt to the requests of local partners, all the more so in that these requests can change with the fluctuating political evolution of the country. Another disadvantage would be the loss of some very useful ways of working together to share competence: for example, skills in political analysis, as well as in non-partisan observation presence, are very useful in the preparatory stages between the initial request and the actual presentation of a workshop.

Increasing Volunteers' Skills

The advantages in terms of effectiveness, continuity, and the understanding of the project could be offset by a risk of behaving, or of being viewed, as "specialists" by the Haitian co-facilitators, something which certainly would not have helped towards the creation—already a delicate operation—of a real partnership. However, greater skills might have fostered a greater sense of internal calm and self-confidence among the volunteers, therefore the possibility of being more open to the contributions of the Haitian co-facilitators, since there would have been less anxiety about the success of the basic workshop itself. In this case, it would have been necessary for experience and skills in participatory facilitation to be supplemented with a great openness, a deep-rooted sensitivity to the intercultural dynamic and an acute awareness of the need to achieve a true partnership.

Increasing the Time Perspective of the Project

PBI projects are based upon a short time perspective: every six months, an evaluation of the project as a whole is undertaken by the team, the coordinators and the committee. Following the semestrial meeting, the committee can suggest closing to the PBI international body. This is a pertinent feature where international presence is concerned, since its purpose is to decrease the risk of direct violence against civilian activists. Where *savoir-être* training is concerned however, when the effects can only be evaluated in the long term, one might wonder if such a time perspective still makes sense. In any case, the number of evaluations within PBI has not served to allay the volunteers' doubts; one might even presume that such a short limitation time-wise has in no way helped them to ask the "right" questions when evaluating. However, it remains indispensable that any decrease in the rhythm or impact of these evaluations should not be detrimental to the quality of contact between the committee and the team.

Offering Team Supervision

PBI volunteer work requires adapting to cultural differences, developing specific skills, responding to a variety of requests, taking into consideration the evolution of the situation, and maintaining a high quality of communication within the team and, by extension, within the project. The team must therefore confront a wide variety of stress factors; the volunteers' skills, particularly in the field of *savoir-etre*, are severely tested on a regular basis. Supervision implies regular meetings, facilitated by a person from outside the team. This constitutes a tool for the team and each of its members in order to deal with problematic situations. It can also enhance and develop existing skills. The coordinator and the committee members have played this role on occasion. However, the committee sometimes runs up against contradictory situations where their role and their attachment to the project are at stake. Even when there are no problems for the coordinator or committee members, such contradictions can be a source of anxiety for the volunteers. For example, sometimes volunteers do not dare bring up certain subjects, which are nevertheless relevant. The supervisor should therefore be someone who is outside the project. His or her role is not that of advising the team, but of helping it to work. This person does not need therefore to be a "specialist" from the point of view of content (human rights, interculturality, training, etc.), but rather a process facilitator. He or she should therefore have experience and competence as a supervisory facilitator.

Appendix 5: Sabine Manigat : Detailed Analysis of a Survey among 79 Beneficiaries

Table 1 - Summary of Responses from Recipients of PBI Training - Survey May, 2000.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
GROUP	Dubuisson :	10	12.6%
	Chénôt :	10	12.6%
	Gonaïves :	7	8.9%
	South :	12	15.3%
	Port-au-Prince :	40	50.6%
GENDER	Women	29	36.7%
	Men	50	63.3%
AGE	20 to 39 years	61	77.2%
	40 to 49 years	13	16.5%
	50 years and more	5	6.3%
YEAR OF PBI TRAINING	1997	11	13.9%
	1998	28	35.4%
	1999	39	49.4%
FIRST CONCEPT QUOTED	Conflict	37	46.8%
	Management	27	34.2%
	Conflict Resolution	7	8.9%
	Facilitation	8	10.1%
	Nothing/ N/A		
SECOND CONCEPT QUOTED	Conflict	31	39.2%
	Management	21	26.6%
	Conflict Resolution	12	15.2%
	Facilitation	15	19.0%
	Nothing/ N/A		
THIRD CONCEPT QUOTED	Conflict	20	25.3%
	Management	20	25.3%
	Conflict Resolution	13	16.5%
	Facilitation	26	32.9%
	Nothing/ N/A		
MEANING OF CONCEPT 1	Correct	46	58.2%
	Incorrect	25	31.6%
	N/A	7	8.9%
MEANING OF CONCEPT 2	Correct	41	51.9%
	Incorrect	27	34.2%
	N/A	11	13.9%
MEANING OF CONCEPT 3	Correct	33	41.8%
	Incorrect	26	32.9%
	N/A	19	24.1%
USE OF TRAINING	Training	23	29.1%
	Use in practise	51	64.5%
	Promotion		
	N/A	5	6.4%
USEFULNESS OF TRAINING	Yes	73	92.4%
	No	6	7.6%
VALUE NVCT	Enormous	60	75.9%
	Relative	11	13.9%
	Little	5	10.2%

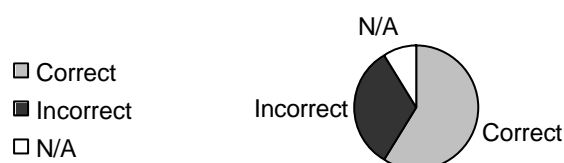
In summary, the results of this survey constitute without a doubt a solid enough base for evaluating the work accomplished by PBI in Haiti. In addition to the periods covered (the first training sessions were held in 1997), the elements of the sample, compiled after a fairly long interval, recreate with indisputable objectivity that the ideas imparted are deep-rooted. However, more generally speaking, one must take two factors into account— the small size of the sample and its non-proportional distribution—if one does not want to render absolute the tendencies observed. The analysis allows the following information to be deducted from the point of view of the sample profile:

Partition women / men



- ? Men make up roughly two-thirds of the sample, which corresponds globally to the proportion of 30% of women affected by the PBI training. These figures do not validate the sample per se but do are somewhat representational all the same.
- ? The population affected is young by an overwhelming majority, more than three-fourths
- ? Most of the people questioned were trained between 1999 (almost half) and 1998 (a good third), years which correspond to the greatest intensification of PBI training activities. Another advantage is that the training date is fairly recent, and yet is sufficiently distant in time in order to appreciate the effect of time on assimilation.
- ? The division into groups was fairly balanced between Port-au-Prince and the provinces and reflects *mutatis mutandis* the division of PBI activities between the two locations.
From the point of view of ideas retained:
- ? Conflict management is of course the dominant and most frequently mentioned topic (nearly 47% of the responses). The key words (negotiation, mediation) are also mentioned, more than techniques of facilitation, which shows that people have indeed understood that the aim of the question was to refer to concepts. Only eight people were unable to refer to a notion they had learned during the workshop. Naturally the relation is reversed between the first and the third idea mentioned. In sum: 90% of those questioned were able to cite one notion, 81% were able to cite two, and two thirds (67.1%) could refer to three ideas.
- ? It is one thing to be able to refer to a notion; to give a rough definition of it is something else again, as becomes apparent through the analysis of the definitions given by respondents (meaning of the notion mentioned). In this case in the best scores the notion was correctly defined by less than sixty (60%) per cent of the respondents.
These results, rather encouraging given the circumstances and the length of training received, must however be put into perspective in terms of the use made of this knowledge acquired.

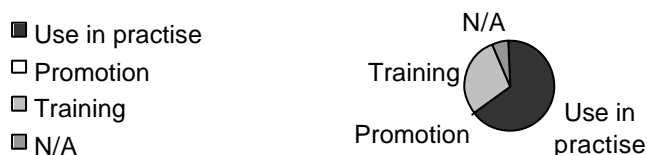
Meaning of the quoted concept



From the point of view of the usefulness of the training:

- ? Responses regarding the usefulness of the training were above all enthusiastic, and 92.4% of the responses were positive. Even if one takes into account the usual receptivity Haitians display towards the training they receive, this is a meaningful result. In addition, it tallies with a veritable enthusiasm for the practical side (64.5% of the responses), which is the best illustration of the positive impact of this type of training.
- ? However, one source of concern is the assumption on the part of some individuals that they can claim to be "trainers." This is hardly a new phenomenon, or one that is peculiar to this experience. It is fairly common to observe this type of behaviour among those recently initiated into the *savoir-faire* acquired at this type of basic training.

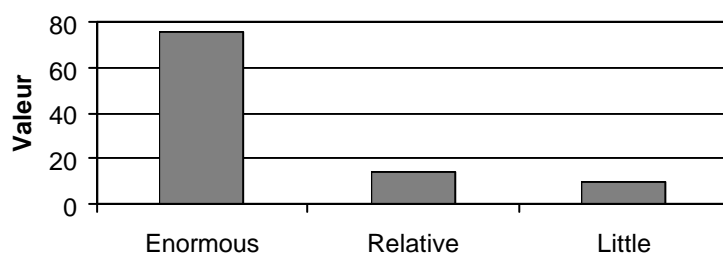
Use of the training



There is also an awareness that the habit which many nongovernmental bodies have got into of handing out "diplomas" is based upon a myth of title and knowledge which is inversely proportional to the actual dissemination of knowledge in Haiti, and this habit merely serves to feed and perpetuate the myth. A cursory look at the relevant documents would seem to indicate that PBI has had to deal with this issue when responding to requests for certificates. Whatever the case may be, what is ultimately preoccupying is the incompatibility between such temptations and the Peace Trainers' Group's vocation.

The valorisation of nonviolent conflict transformation is clearly apparent in the responses as a framework of action needed to ensure social progress.

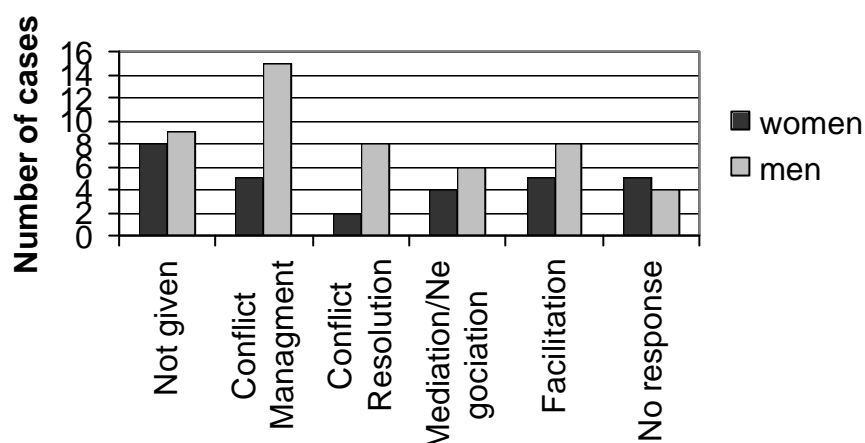
Value of the NVCT



On this topic, this particular question is followed by another which contains the explanation to the answer given. It has not been coded, for technical reasons, but given the small number of sceptical or negative responses (16), we have gone over them. It turns out that they do refer in a significant way to the opinion according to which nonviolent conflict transformation has aspects that are incompatible with Haitian culture or the present national context; this is something also encountered in the interviews with both Haitian trainers and volunteers.

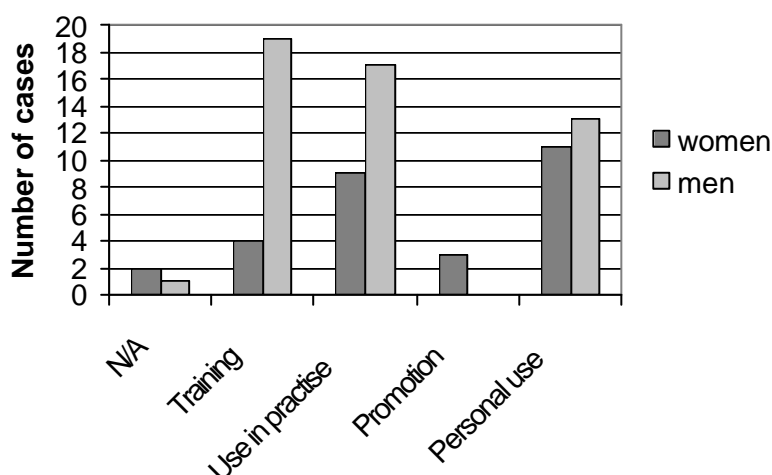
Also conducted was an analysis of data according to variables which were considered relevant: gender, group (locality), and age. Here are some of the most significant results.

The gender variable seems to be the situational variable which most subtly affects the profile of responses. The women to begin with are less organised than the men; this is nothing new or surprising, although one should bear in mind that the training was given essentially to organised groups. As for questions relative to the notions retained and their accuracy, the discrepancies are undeniable but one must maintain a relative outlook because of the statistical effect of small numbers.



This statistical effect however is not enough to explain the broad differences between men and women where claims to the title of trainer are concerned.

There is a familiar propensity to adopt such an attitude among groups of neophytes in general and in under-educated Haitian circles in particular, to which one must add the eventual impact of the gender-effect (men are more sure of themselves).



To a lesser degree this also holds true for opinions on the usefulness of the training and its content, also viewed differently by men and women; percentages are not very different but the gap is meaningful nevertheless. It is possible that one is dealing with a problem of opportunities (fewer for women) to put into practice or to confront the training received.

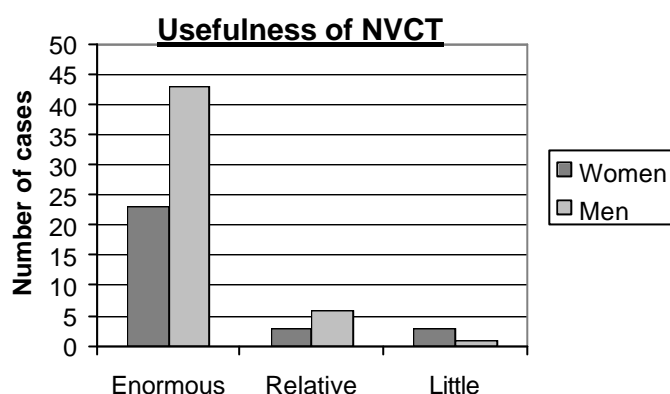
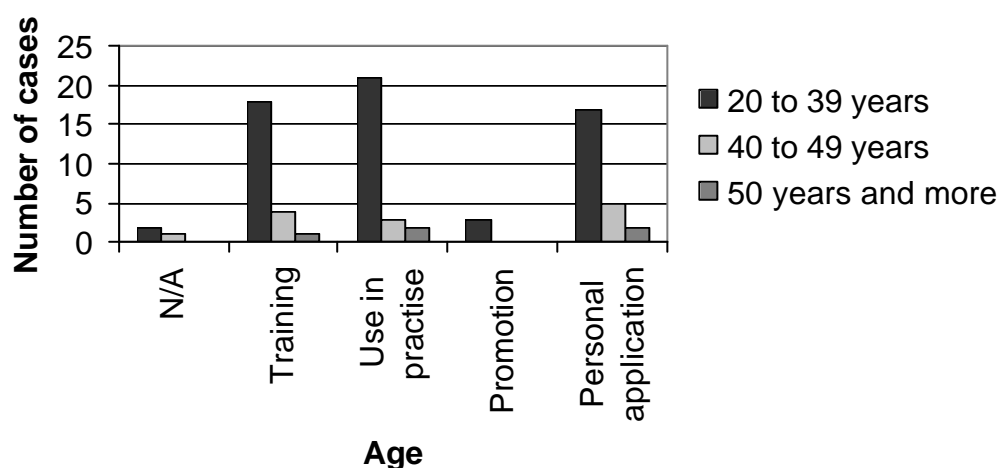


Table 2 - The gender variable and training assimilation

VARIABLE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Organizational Activism	M : 44 W : 23	M : 88% W : 79%
Three concepts recalled	M : 29 W : 11	M : 58% W : 38%
Correct definition of the concepts	M : 21 W : 12	M : 42% W : 41%
Use of the training as trainer	M : 19 W : 4	M : 38% W : 14%
Usefulness of NVCT	M : 43 W : 22	M : 86% W : 76%

The age variable, on the other hand, does not have a significant influence on the results. With the exception of the variables for usefulness of the training and for usefulness of nonviolent conflict transformation, the gaps have little statistical significance given the small number of observations.



For the two "sensitive" variables (in particular the usefulness of the training) it is difficult to interpret the gaps. A more advanced statistical treatment, consisting in a search for a possible gender effect behind the age effect, did not yield any convincing results.

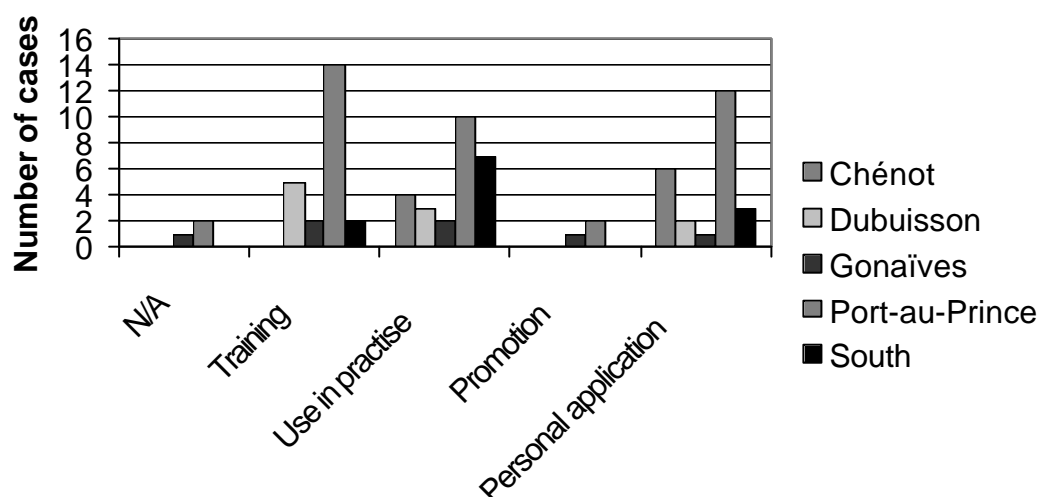
Table 3 - The age variable and training assimilation

VARIABLE	NUMBER *	PERCENTAGE
Organizational Activism	20-39 years : 42 40 and more : 12	20-39 years : 69% 40 and more : 67%
Three concepts recalled	20-39 years : 42 40 and more : 12	20-39 years : 69% 40 and more : 67%
Correct definition of the concepts	20-39 years : 27 40 and more : 6	20-39 years : 44% 40 and more : 33%
Use of the training as trainer	20-39 years : 21 40 and more : 2	20-39 years : 34% 40 and more : 11%
Usefulness of NVCT	20-39 years : 54 40 and more : 11	20-39 years : 88% 40 and more : 61%

**For reasons of statistical convenience the categories of age 40 to 49 and over 50 have been grouped together (only five in this last category).*

Lastly, the group variable is particularly revealing as a variable of influence. Naturally, here too one must take into account the distortions caused by the small number of cases. However, certain tendencies are remarkable in the light of other elements of information compiled in this report. Thus the results for Chénôt are particularly noteworthy: a perfect mastery of the notions learned; a strong appreciation of nonviolent conflict transformation and above all a fully pertinent use of the training; there are no "professorial" temptations.

To a large degree the same observations are valid for the South (Zanglé, les Cayes).



Lets note that the consistence of these results by group (very good performance on all levels or - in the contrary - weak results in all categories) tend to validate the quality of the survey.

Table 4 - The group variable and training assimilation

VARIABLE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Organizational Activism	Dubuisson : 10 Chénôt : 8 Gonaïves : 7 South : 11 Port-au-Prince : 36	Dubuisson : 100% Chénôt : 80% Gonaïves : 100% South : 91% Port-au-Prince : 80%
Three concepts recalled	Dubuisson : 3 Chénôt : 8 Gonaïves : 1 South : 10 Port-au-Prince : 32	Dubuisson : 30% Chénôt : 80% Gonaïves : 14% South : 83% Port-au-Prince : 80%

Correct definition of the concepts	Dubuisson : 1 Chénot : 10 Gonaïves : 0 South : 12 Port-au-Prince : 10	Dubuisson : 10% Chénot : 100% Gonaïves : 0% South : 100% Port-au-Prince : 25%
Use of the training as trainer	Dubuisson : 3 Chénot : 0 Gonaïves : 5 South : 2 Port-au-Prince : 16	Dubuisson : 30% Chénot : 0% Gonaïves : 71% South : 16% Port-au-Prince : NP*
Usefulness of NVCT	Dubuisson : 7 Chénot : 8 Gonaïves : 2 South : 12 *Port-au-Prince : 36	Dubuisson : 70% Chénot : 80% Gonaïves : 28% South : 100% Port-au-Prince : 90%

*The exercise is not valid for Port-au-Prince because in revising the questionnaires we realized that the TRAINERS were affected by the survey.

Table 5: Acquisitions and assimilations of the content of trainer training (FORFOR) on the basis of participants' evaluations.

Each variable was coded according to a progressive scale: difficult, accessible, easy (D, A, E).

Dates and locality of the training	Content	Techniques	Organisation/ environment
14/21 July 96 Port-au-Prince	? D : concepts NVCT ? A : Conflict Management	? A : Facilitation tool ? F : role plays	? D : language ? F : socialisation
13/21 December 97 Port-au-Prince	? A : concepts NVCT ; Conflict Management	? F : Facilitation tool ; role plays	? D : language ? F : socialisation
3/11 January 98 Ennery	? D : concepts NVCT ? F : Conflict Management	? F : Facilitation tool ; role plays	? D : logistics ; time ? F : Socialisation
8/16 August 98 Ennery	? D : concepts NVCT ? D : Conflict Management	? F : Facilitation tool ; role plays	? F : Socialisation
26/28 June 98 Gonaïves	? A : Conflict Management	? A : Facilitation tool ? F : Theatre	? N/A
18/26 July 98 Port-au-Prince	? A : concepts NVCT ? A : Conflict Management	? F : Facilitation tool ; role plays	? D : Facilitation (language) ? F : Documentation
17/24 December 98 Port-au-Prince	? A : strengthening of the organisation ? F : Q. Pedagogy ? D : Development of the ONG	? F : Facilitation tool ; role plays, Theatre.	? F : Human experience
30 July /8 August 99	? A : concepts NVCT	? F : Facilitation tool ; role plays, Theatre.	(Very critical evaluation of the trainer)

Table 6: Peace Trainers Group Trainers and PBI volunteers: comparing opinions

THEMES	GFP TRAINERS	PBI VOL UNTEERS
Quality of the training	? Excellent :7 ? Incomplete (content) : 1 ? Insufficient (duration) : 0	? Excellent : 1 ? Incomplete (content) : 2 ? Insufficient (duration) : 3
Applied Pedagogy	? New, good: 4 ? New, to be tested : 4 ? Known : 0	? New, good : 5 ? New, to be tested : 1 ? Known : 0
Transmitted Pedagogy	? Well adapted: 2 ? Complex : 6 ? Not adapted to environment: 0	? Well adapted: 1 ? Complex : 5 ? Not adapted to environment: 0
Usefulness of the training	With all respects very utile : Organisation, community, family, personal behaviour.	Difficult to gauge : assimilation does not necessarily imply use in practise.
Incompatible values within the environment	? Historical violence ? Hypocrisy ? Authoritarianism ? Irresponsibility ? Disciplinary education	? Fatalism ? A feeling of insecurity ? Lack of daring ? Violence
Convergent values within the environment	? Solidarity ? Hospitality ? Community traditions ? A sense for feasts	? A sense of community ? A certain sense of equality
Correspondence with the needs of the environment	Considered as important if not essential, but « difficult to apply.»	A certain perplexity
Relationship with the other team	? Discontinuous because of too much turnover : 6 ? Very good : 2 ? Little developed : 0	? They are personalising : 4 ? Very positive : 1 ? Little developed :1
Potential of the GFP	? Enormous : 1 ? Depending on the work of its members : 5 ? Depending on the support of PBI: 2	? Depending on the evolution of the country : 1 ? Depending on the work of its members : 5
Quality of PBI team	? Generosity ? Availability ? Ministering spirit ? Discretion/respect of others	

Abbreviations

Cry for Justice	North American coalition of NGOs who sent unpaid volunteers to observe the anticipated return from exile of President Aristide in 1993
ForFor	Formation de Formateurs - Training for Trainers
FRAPH	FR ont pour l' Av ancement du Pe uple Haï tien : a paramilitary organisation which together with the Forces Armées d'Haïiti (FadH - the Haitian Armed Forces) led the coup from 1991 to 1994 and which is responsible for a large number of human rights violations. Upon his return, Aristide declared the organisation as illegal and it was dissolved.
FRONCIPH	Front civilo- politico haïtien , founded in May 2000
GATAP	G roupe d' a ppui technique d' a ction p édagogique - Group for the technical support of teaching action
GFP	G roupe de F ormateurs pour la P aix - Trainers Group for Peace
HAP	HA ïti P roject : PBI abbreviation for the Haiti Project
INARA	I nstitut n ational de r éforme a graire - National Institute for Agrarian Reform
MCC	M ennonite C entral C ommittee : The Mennonites send people on peace and conflict transformation missions for a period of three years. In Haiti, MCC is now active in Desarmes and in Port-au-Prince.
MICIVIH	M ission C ivile I nternationale en Haï ti : International Civil Mission in Haiti. This is a joint mission of the United Nations and the Organisation of American States involved in monitoring the human rights situation in Haiti since 1993. With the return to constitutional order, MICIVIH began to focus its programs on police and justice issues. (National police of Haiti, Magistrates' School, penitentiaries). MICIVIH has also put into place a program for Peace promotion.
MPP	M ouvman P aysan P apaye
NCHR	N ational C oalition for H aitian R ights : This began as an organization to protect refugees, with a branch in Washington, and then after 1994 it was established as a popular organisation for the defence of human rights. NCHR is deeply involved in Human Rights training.
NGO	N on- G overnmental O rganisation
NVCT	N on V iolent C onflict T ransformation: At the beginning of the project, we referred more frequently to "nonviolent conflict resolution," whereas this wording was not appropriate for the task at hand, for it was not really a question of "resolving" conflicts. Gradually the concepts have evolved: after "positive management" of conflicts we have finally adopted the more general concept of "nonviolent conflict transformation."
OAS	O rganisation of A merican S tates
OPL	O rganisation du P euple en L utte - Organisation for the People's Struggle
PBI	P eace B rigades I nternational
Shalom	Groups of peasants for positive conflict management set up in the Mornes Cahos in 1998-1999.
UN	U nited N ations O rganisation
UNDP	U nited N ations D evelopment P rogram

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