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RACE AND FOREIGN POLICY IN REFUGEE LAW: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE HAITIAN REFUGEE CRISSES

INTRODUCTION

Through the Supremacy Clause of the United States Constitution, treaties to which the United States is a party are the supreme laws of the land.1 This took on new meaning with potentially far-reaching implications in the wake of World War II. The events leading up to the war and the brutality of the Holocaust spawned previously unparalleled international cooperation in establishing protections for basic human rights.2 The outrage over wartime atrocities formed the foundation of the United Nations, and the various human rights instruments promulgated under its auspicess both articulated and helped shape an international consensus regarding the protection of human rights.3

The United States ostensibly has been one of the leading proponents of international human rights, acceding to many major human rights treaties4 and playing a significant role in United Nations peacekeeping operations, such as those in the former Yugoslavia and Haiti. Reality, however, reveals the American government's commitment to the international protection of human rights is somewhat dubious. Illustrating this point is the opinion of George F. Kennan, one of the leading architects of United States foreign policy after World War II:

1. U.S. CONST. art. VI, cl. 2. "This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every state shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding." id.

2. FRANK NEWMAN & DAVID WEISSBRODT, INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS: LAW, POLICY, AND PROCESS 6 (2d ed. 1996).

3. See generally id. at 6-13 (discussing the movement towards protecting international human rights, the formation of the United Nations, and the subsequent codification of human rights obligations under its charge).

We have about 50 percent of the world's wealth, but only 6.3 percent of its population. In this situation, we can not fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity. We need not deceive ourselves that we can afford today the luxury of altruism and world-benefaction. We should cease to talk about vague and unreal objectives such as human rights, the raising of living standards, and democratization. The day is not far off when we are going to have to deal in straight power concepts. The less we are then hampered by idealistic slogans, the better.\(^5\)

All rhetoric aside, there is little indication that any subsequent administration has deviated from Kennan's fundamental assessment. Indeed, while claiming adherence to formal human rights protections, the United States has, at best, construed its international human rights obligations very narrowly. Nowhere is this more apparent than in American relations with Haiti. The United States government was exploiting the people of Haiti long before the pronouncements of postwar foreign policy pundits. Kennan's advice, however, at least implicitly recommended that the United States ignore the same principles of the postwar human rights treaties that it was ratifying at that time.\(^6\) The American government has done this with impressive resolve when dealing with Haiti.

The most recent chapter in Haiti's long but little-discussed history of exploitation at the hands of the United States—and the focus of this Comment—primarily involves American asylum laws as they pertain to Haitians. Specifically, when a line of United States supported dictators sent thousands of Haitian refugees to American shores, the superpower responded with the "Haitian Program."\(^7\) This program, carried out mostly through a series of executive orders and Immigration and Naturalization Service ("INS") procedures,\(^8\) virtually eliminated for most Haitian refugees the possibility of receiving any kind of asylum hearing for entry into the United States, let alone temporary protection.

In *Sale v. Haitian Centers Council, Inc.*,\(^9\) the Supreme Court considered one aspect of the Haitian Program that constituted a potential violation of America's international legal obligations, not to mention domestic law. These specific legal obligations are embodied in a

6. This is the author's interpretation of Kennan's advice.
7. See infra notes 78-141 and accompanying text.
8. See infra notes 78-96 and accompanying text.
treaty to which the United States is a party, and are thus the "the supreme Law of the Land." The complaint was brought by the Haitian Centers Council on behalf of unnamed Haitian refugees being intercepted at sea by the United States Coast Guard and returned to the tempestuous situation in Haiti. Haitian Centers Council challenged the interdiction program initiated under President Reagan and continued under Presidents Bush and Clinton. The complaint alleged that the interdiction program violated the obligation of non-return under § 243(h) of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 and corresponding obligations under Article 33 of the United Nations Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. Although the Court insisted that the complaint presented strictly legal issues, policy considerations proved difficult to escape. In particular, the Court’s decision would favor either “vague” and “unreal” human rights objectives or the pragmatic criteria of United States foreign policy. The Court ultimately upheld the interdiction program, holding that the obligation of non-return embodied in both domestic and international laws did not extend beyond the territorial boundaries of the United States. In reaching this decision, unfortunately, the Court conformed to Kennan’s prescription.

The Court’s decision in Sale did not signal the end of the challenges to the Haitian Program, particularly the interdiction process. The postwar instruments that formed the backbone of the international human rights mandate also provided for various enforcement mechanisms. While the Court considered the Sale case, the complainants filed a petition with one such regional international legal forum, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (“the Commission”). Apparently not constrained by the particular brand of “objectivity” typically employed by American courts, the Commission’s recommendation in the 1996 Annual Report found that the United States shirked its obligation of non-return under Article 33 by interdicting the Haitian refugees. In coming to this conclusion, the Commission expressly disagreed with the Supreme Court’s holding that Article 33

10. U.S. CONST. art. VI, cl. 2.
11. Sale, 509 U.S. at 166.
12. Id. at 158-59.
13. Id. at 167.
14. Id. at 165-66.
15. See Chomsky, supra note 5, at 318.
18. See infra notes 475-77 and accompanying text.
20. Id. at 599.
was not intended to apply extraterritorially. The Commission also considered more general interpretations of the "vague" and "unreal" human rights objectives that so vexed Kennan.

The Haitian Program, and the court decisions like *Sale* that approved it, elicited both criticism and praise. The debate over the Haitian Program, however, including the issues as they were framed by the Commission's re-visitation of *Sale*, failed to address its significance as part of the historical context of Haitian-American relations. By failing to place the Haitian Program within this background, most commentators miss the racial contingencies of American asylum policies towards Haitians.

The history between the United States and Haiti is one that is fraught with racial tensions. An assessment of the refugee and immigration laws as a part of this history makes apparent the continuing nature of this racism. This Comment evaluates the United States' use of asylum laws as a means of continued exploitation of the Haitian population.

Part I delineates the relevant international and domestic legal protections for refugees. It offers a critical analysis of the policies that comprised the Haitian Program and the extent to which the Program complied with these legal protections. This section also outlines the litigation over the Haitian Program, both in domestic courts and before international forums.

Part II offers a critical analysis of the Supreme Court's decision in *Sale* and compares its disposition with the decision of the Commission. This section also advances a history of Haitian-American relations. This history provides the prism through which any adequate consideration of the Haitian Program must be viewed, and it is thus appropriately located in the analysis portion of this Comment. When viewed against this background, the shortcomings and limited nature of both the Court's and the Inter-American Commission's analyses are readily apparent. In an attempt to offer an alternative and more complete assessment of the Haitian Program, Part II compares the treatment of Haitian refugees with that of other refugee groups fleeing to the United States. Using the Haitian-American history and asylum statistics, the analysis breaks down the official justifications provided for the Haitian Program, its racial contingencies, and the

21. *Id.*


23. See *infra* Part I.

24. See *infra* Part II.
“position of disparity” 25 sought to be achieved by the American government through the application of the Haitian Program.

Finally, Part III briefly analyzes the shortcomings of both domestic and international legal processes and how they ultimately failed the Haitian refugees. 26 It also reconsiders the American policy toward the refugees within the international scheme of refugee protection. Specifically, it examines potential solutions to the continued subordination and exploitation of the Haitian population through American asylum policies. This section concludes with a critical assessment of the Eurocentric nature of the international scheme and its implications for refugees of color. The contention that “rich, white” countries were responsible for the postwar human rights instruments is not novel, but the case of Haiti illuminates the extent to which the “international protection of human rights” serves the purposes of the powerful, a characteristic with undeniable racial implications. The pattern is familiar.

I. BACKGROUND: NON-REFOULEMENT AND THE HAITIAN PROGRAM

The overwhelming majority of the Haitian population has long endured severe poverty and its concomitant political turmoil. 27 Haiti’s tumultuous history reached new depths, however, under the harsh rule of Francois (“Papa Doc”) Duvalier and his son Jean-Claude (“Baby Doc”) Duvalier. 28 Their campaign of terror sent tens of thousands of Haitians seeking refuge on foreign shores throughout the 1970s and 1980s. 29 After Baby Doc and other interim military dictators were overthrown, Haiti enjoyed a relatively peaceful eight months during the presidency of the democratically elected Jean-Bertrand Aristide. 30 In September of 1991, however, Aristide fell victim to a military-led coup, and the poor Haitian masses once again set sail for foreign shores in astounding numbers. 31

In order to cope with the overflow of Haitian refugees washing up on American beaches throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, the United States enacted the so-called Haitian Program. This section will outline the formal international and domestic legal protection for ref-

25. See Chomsky, supra note 5, at 318.
26. See infra Part III.
27. See infra notes 287-343 and accompanying text.
28. See infra notes 317-31 and accompanying text.
29. See infra note 328 and accompanying text.
30. See infra notes 333-40 and accompanying text.
31. See infra notes 341-43 and accompanying text.
ugees known as “non-refoulement.” When the Haitian Program is then explained against the backdrop of these legal obligations, the controversy over American policies is apparent.

A. General Refugee Law

Before examining the details of the Haitian Program, it is necessary to review some general principles of international human rights law, specifically treaty law, and their effects on domestic jurisprudence. Perhaps the most effective means of implementing international human rights law is through domestic judicial and legislative systems. States can incorporate treaty law into their domestic systems in either or both of two main ways: the monist and dualist approaches. States following the monist approach simply accept international law as their domestic law, directly incorporating international legal obligations into their own legal systems. Under the dualist approach, however, international law concerns only a State’s relationship with other governments. In other words, for international law to have any domestic effect, it must be specifically incorporated by national legislation.

The United States follows a combination of both approaches. The Constitution provides that treaties are considered the supreme law of the land, indicating adherence to the monist model by directly incorporating international treaty law as a part of domestic law. The doctrine of self-executing treaties first articulated by Chief Justice Marshall in Foster v. Neilson, however, renders the United States approach somewhat dualist in practice. This doctrine provides that a self-executing treaty is to be regarded “as equivalent to an act of the legislature, whenever it operates of itself without the aid of any legislative provision.” Its practical effect is that non-self-executing treaties do not independently create a cause of action in United States

33. “States” refers to the individual nations that make up the United Nations. Id. at 2-3.
34. Id.
35. Id.
36. Id. at 22.
37. Id.
38. U.S. Const. art. VI, cl. 2.
40. Newman & Weissbrodt, supra note 2, at 22.
Naturally, conflicts arise between international and domestic laws. Where a treaty conflicts with the Constitution, the Constitution prevails. Where a treaty conflicts with federal legislation, the last in time prevails. Typically, however, when a federal statute conflicts with pre-existing treaty obligations, courts will presume that Congress did not intend to override treaty provisions and will endeavor to construe them as consistent with each other, absent clear evidence to the contrary.

Using these guidelines, United States legislators and courts attempt to decipher American obligations under international law. These guidelines also provide the context for the following discussion of international and domestic instruments.

1. The International Protection of Refugees

The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees ("the Convention") was entered into force in 1954. Although the United States was a signatory to the Convention, it did not ratify the treaty. The United States did accede, however, to the subsequent Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees ("the Protocol"), which incorporated much of the Convention. The Convention protected only those per-
sons who became refugees as a result of events occurring before January 1, 1951; however, the Protocol covers all refugee situations irrespective of that date. By acceding to the Protocol, the United States bound itself to many of the Convention's provisions.

In order to fall under the provisions of the Protocol, one's status must comport with its definition of "refugee" as adopted from the Convention. Article 1 of the Convention defines refugee as follows:

[A]ny person who . . . (2) owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

After establishing the individuals protected by the treaty, the Convention spells out the circumstances under which refugees may or may not be returned to their home countries. Article 33 provides in relevant part that "[n]o Contracting State shall expel or return ('refouler') a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion." The second section of Article 33 carves out the only exception to the general prohibition of return, providing that such protection cannot "be claimed by a refugee whom there are reasonable grounds for regarding as a danger to the security of the country in which he is, or who, having been convicted by a final judgment of a particularly serious crime, constitutes a danger to that country." By ratifying the Protocol, the United States agreed to abide by its provisions, including the obligation of non-refoulement.

simply refer to it throughout this Comment in order to be consistent. The Protocol, however, incorporates much of the Convention, including Article 33, the article at issue.

52. Id. at preamble.
55. Convention, supra note 47, art. 1, 19 U.S.T. at 6259, 189 U.N.T.S. at 152.
56. Convention, supra note 47, art. 33 (1), 19 U.S.T. at 6276, 189 U.N.T.S. at 176. This essay will refer to the obligation spelled out in Article 33 as the obligation of "non-refoulement" or "non-return."
57. Id. art. 33 (2), 19 U.S.T. at 6276, 189 U.N.T.S. at 176.
2. The Inter-American System

In addition to its obligations under the Protocol, the United States also maintains more regional human rights responsibilities as a member of the Organization of American States ("OAS"). An express purpose of the Charter of the OAS is to effectuate regional obligations arising under the Charter of the United Nations.\footnote{Organization of American States Charter, April 30, 1948, art. 4, 119 U.N.T.S. 3, 52 ("The Organization of American States, in order to put into practice the principles on which it is founded and to fulfill its regional obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, proclaims the following essential purposes.")}

Pursuant to this objective, the OAS created the Commission in 1959.\footnote{See \textit{Newman} & \textit{Weissbrodt}, \textit{supra} note 2, at 20 (discussing the origins of the Commission).} The Commission "is an organ of the Organization of the American States, created to promote the observance and defense of human rights and to serve as a consultative organ of the Organization in this matter."\footnote{Statute of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, O.A.S. Res. 447, 9th Sess. art. 1(1) (Oct. 1979).} The Commission’s mandate consists mostly of making recommendations to member governments regarding appropriate measures to ensure the protection of basic human rights, and submitting an annual report documenting its suggestions to the OAS General Assembly.\footnote{Id. art. 18, at 5-6.}


3. United States Refugee Law

In accordance with the provisions set out by the Protocol, the United States established its own laws for the protection of refugees.\footnote{See \textit{INS v. Cardoza-Fonseca}, 480 U.S. 421, 436-37 (1986) (discussing the legislative intent behind the Refugee Act of 1980).} Prior to 1980, § 243(h) of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 ("INA") provided that:
The Attorney General is authorized to withhold deportation of any alien within the United States to any country in which in his opinion the alien would be subject to physical persecution on account of race, religion, or political opinion and for such period of time as he deem to be necessary for such reason.67

The INA defined “alien” as “any person not a citizen or national of the United States.” 68

After the 1968 accession to the Protocol, Congress eventually began entertaining legislation to conform the INA to provisions of the Protocol. Pursuant to this goal, Congress amended the INA through the Refugee Act of 1980.69 The Refugee Act made several significant changes. First, it added “refugee” to the list of definitions:70

[A]ny person who is outside any country of such person’s national-ity . . . and who is unable or unwilling to return to, and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of, that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of . . . membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.71

This definition intentionally mirrors its counterpart in the United Nations Protocol.72

Additionally, § 243(h)(1) of the INA, as amended by the Refugee Act, removed the discretionary language of the previous version. Section 243(h)(1) now provides, in relevant part, that “[t]he Attorney General shall not deport or return any alien . . . to a country if the Attorney General determines that such alien’s life or freedom would be threatened in such country on account of . . . political opinion.”73

Not only does the amendment remove the Attorney General’s discretion, it also eliminates the words “within the United States” from the original section,74 apparently broadening the geographical scope of the provision. The language in § 243(h), was meant to be a virtual reproduction of the “non-refoulement” section of Article 33 of the Protocol.75 Indeed, the proposed amendment of § 243(h) originally

70. 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(3).
71. 1.
72. Compare with the Protocol’s definition, supra text accompanying note 55. See Cardoza-Fonseca, 480 U.S. at 436-37 (summarizing congressional intent).
74. See supra text accompanying note 67 for comparison with original.
75. See supra text accompanying note 56 for comparison. The Court in INS v. Stevic conceded that the Refugee Act aimed to conform United States law to its international obligations
provided that forcible repatriation of refugees would be prohibited "unless deportation or return would be permitted under the terms of the United Nations Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees." 76

4. Summary

Under the Convention’s non-refoulement clause in Article 33, refugees have a near absolute right to seek asylum, which necessarily entails the right to a hearing in order to determine refugee status. The United States, in acceding to the Protocol, agreed to the obligation of non-refoulement. This obligation gained the force of domestic law through the Refugee Act of 1980. 77 Additionally, the United States is bound to regional compliance with the obligation of non-return via its responsibilities as a State Party to the American Declaration.

B. The Haitian Program and Resulting Litigation

In spite of the formal protections for refugees provided by the Protocol and the INA, the United States typically has not afforded Haitians the same amount of protection as most other refugee groups. 78 The flood of refugees fleeing the Duvalier regimes throughout the 1970s caused the INS to adopt special procedures to deal exclusively with the Haitian refugees. 79 Although this Haitian Program was supposedly carried out in accordance with all international and domestic obligations, a brief review of the Program and related policies indicates that basic refugee protections did not apply to Haitians en route to America.

1. Enacting the Haitian Program

The first, and perhaps most important step, in the Haitian Program focused on the type of persecution to which the Haitians were subjected. The INS usually claimed that Haitians were economic refugees fleeing the abysmal economic situation in their homeland, 80 and thus

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78. See infra notes 362-81 and accompanying text.
79. See infra notes 80-96 and accompanying text.
80. Haitian Refugee Ctr. v. Smith, 676 F.2d 1023, 1030 (5th Cir. 1982) (modifying Haitian Refugee Ctr. v. Civiletti, 503 F. Supp. 442 (S.D. Fla. 1980)). “One July 1978 report from the Intelligence Division of INS to the Associate Director of Enforcement advised in absolute terms that the Haitians were ‘economic’ and not political refugees.” Id.; see 126 CONG. REC. at 29,606.
not entitled to asylum. The characterization of the type of persecution Haitians suffered is of paramount importance. If a Haitian is fleeing for economic reasons, as the INS routinely assumed, then she is not entitled to asylum.81 Only political refugees can claim a right to seek asylum.82

The INS's assumptions regarding Haitian refugees reflected a broader policy that pervaded its asylum processing programs. In general, the policy provided that those individuals fleeing client regimes of the United States government were assumed to be economic refugees.83 The Duvalier regimes were such regimes,84 which almost automatically and without question meant that individuals fleeing the country were considered economic refugees by the INS, regardless of reality. The flip side of this policy established a practice of admitting refugees from communist countries and other enemy regimes at a much higher rate as obvious political refugees.85

The INS adjusted this ideology-based program to accommodate the mass exodus of Haitians, thus earning the title of the "Haitian Program."86 By June of 1978, almost seven thousand Haitian deportation cases were pending in the INS's Miami office.87 The reason for the enormous backlog, the acting District Director admitted, was that INS officials in Miami "were not doing [their] job."88

To expedite the Haitian asylum claims, the INS decided to suspend certain regulations.89 The process of hearing Haitian asylum claims was accelerated by assigning more judges with instructions to increase "productivity."90 The notion that the Haitians were "threatening the community's well-being—socially and economically" served as a con-

81. Note that "refugee" is defined by the INA (as well as the Protocol) in terms of political persecution. 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(3) (1994). Persons fleeing for economic reasons cannot seek the protection of § 243(h) under the current definition because such persons are not explicitly included in the definition. Id.

82. Political refugees, contrary to economic refugees, are specifically included under the definition of the statute. Id.

83. See 126 CONG. REC. at 29,605. Conyers criticizes "the favorable treatment, historically, toward refugees from Communist countries versus the restrictive treatment against refugees from right-wing governments allied to our own" such as Haiti's government was at the time. Id.

84. See infra notes 317-20 and accompanying text.

85. See 126 CONG. REC. at 29,605.

86. Haitian Refugee Ctr. v. Smith, 676 F.2d 1023, 1029 (5th Cir. 1982).

87. Id.

88. Id.

89. Id. at 1030.

90. Id. "Among the specifics set forth were the assignment of additional immigration judges to Miami, the instructions to immigration judges to effect a three-fold increase in productivity, and orders for the blanket issuance of show cause orders in all pending Haitian deportation cases." Id.
stant reminder of the urgency to deport them. Immigration judges held up to eighty deportation hearings per day. The INS handled asylum interviews at the rate of forty per day, which typically meant only fifteen minutes of substantive dialogue per individual. With only twelve attorneys to assist the thousands of Haitians, most refugees proceeded without counsel, (a fact of which the INS was well aware). The Haitian Program prompted one judge to declare that the "uniform rejection of their claims demonstrates a profound ignorance, if not an intentional disregard, of the conditions in Haiti." Still, Haitians were inevitably labeled economic refugees, and the Haitian Program proceeded without delay.

These INS policies resulted in the Haitian Refugee Center v. Smith litigation. In 1979, the Haitian Refugee Center ("HRC"), on behalf of 4,000 Haitians seeking political asylum in south Florida, filed a complaint challenging the INS program for processing Haitian asylum seekers. It argued that the program aimed "to achieve expedited mass deportation of Haitian nationals" without regard to the validity of their individual asylum claims. Through the inadequacies of the program, the HRC argued, the defendants engaged in unlawful discrimination based on national origin and denied due process rights to the Haitian complainants. The district court found that the pro-

91. Id.
92. Smith, 676 F.2d at 1031. There were only one to ten hearings per day prior to the Haitian Program. Id.
93. Id. "Prior to the program such interviews had lasted an hour and a half; during the program the officer devoted approximately one-half hour to each Haitian." Id. Given the time for communication through interpreters, one-half hour meant only fifteen minutes of substantive dialogue per individual. Id.
94. Id. "It was not unusual for an attorney representing Haitians to have three hearings at the same hour in different buildings; this kind of scheduling conflict was a daily occurrence for attorneys throughout the Haitian program." Id. The following is a typical Haitian asylum hearing:

Applicant made a motion for depositions and interrogatories, and that motion was denied. Motion for simultaneous translation – this motion was overruled or denied. Applicant made an oral motion for a continuance. That motion was... that motion was also denied. I conclude that the applicant has failed to establish that he will be persecuted if deported to Haiti because of his race, religion, nationality, or membership in a particular social group or political opinion. It is ordered that the application for political asylum and/or withholding of deportation be denied. It is further ordered that he be deported, excluded and deported from the United States to Haiti – on the line for signature, Martin F. (inaudible), immigration judge.

Videotape: Bitter Cane (Haiti Films 1983) (on file with the Chicago Public Library).
95. Smith, 676 F.2d at 1029.
96. Id. at 1042 (citing Haitian Refugee Ctr. v. Civiletti, 503 F. Supp. 442, 457 (S.D. Fla. 1980)).
97. Id. at 1023 (modifying Haitian Refugee Ctr., 503 F. Supp. 442).
98. Id. at 1026.
99. Id.
100. Id.
gram "violated the Constitution, the immigration statutes, and international agreements, INS regulations and INS operating procedures." Accordingly, the court ordered the defendants to establish a program that would sufficiently protect the Haitians' right to seek refuge in the United States, enjoining the defendants from hearing any more Haitian asylum claims or deporting any Haitians until a program was approved by the court. The appellate court affirmed the district court's judgment.

2. Reagan's Interdiction Program

As the flow of Haitian refugees continued into the early 1980s and in light of Smith, a new, more direct approach to excluding the refugees from American shores was added to the Haitian Program. In 1981 President Reagan entered into an agreement with the Haitian government authorizing the United States Coast Guard to intercept vessels that were illegally transporting undocumented aliens to American shores. Both sides agreed to prosecute illegal traffickers, but the Haitian government agreed not to prosecute interdicted Haitians for illegal departure.

Pursuant to this agreement with the Duvalier dictatorship, President Reagan issued a proclamation classifying the flight of Haitians as "a serious national problem detrimental to the interests of the United States." His Executive Order required the Coast Guard to intercept vessels carrying the illegal aliens and return them to their point of origin. Significantly, however, Reagan's order provided "that no person who is a refugee will be returned without his consent." The treatment of Haitians under the INS procedures carried to the Coast Guard's treatment pursuant to Reagan's interdiction program. Although the order ostensibly comported with international obligations under Article 33, in practice the interdiction program was not so benign. The Coast Guard employed inadequate interviewing proce-

101. Id. at 1027.
102. Smith, 676 F.2d at 1027.
103. Id.
104. Though typically not considered a part of the Haitian Program, the Executive Orders worked in conjunction with INS policies and served much the same purpose. As such, the author includes them under the "Haitian Program" rubric.
106. Id.
107. Id. (citing Exec. Order No. 12,324, 3 C.F.R. 181 (1981-1983)).
108. Id. (citing Exec. Order No. 12,324, 3 C.F.R. 181 (1981-1983)).
109. Id. at 160-61 (citing Exec. Order No. 12324, 3 C.F.R. 181 (1981-1983)). The Court also noted that this provision was included in order to conform the order to the obligations under the Protocol. Id. at 161 n.9.
dures on its ships to determine the refugee status of those fleeing Ha-

110 iti, invariably concluding that all of them were merely economic

111 refugees. From 1981 to 1991, about 24,600 Haitians were intercepted

at sea pursuant to the interdiction program. Of those, the Coast

113 Guard found that only twenty-eight had credible asylum claims and

114 brought them to the United States for asylum hearings. The rest

115 were returned to Port-au-Prince in accordance with the agreement

116 with Baby Doc. It is significant, of course, that the average member

117 of the Haitian citizenry endured political persecution on a daily basis

118 during this time frame.

119 Naturally, the new interdiction program met resistance. Once

120 again, the HRC filed a lawsuit challenging the program. The com-

121 plaint attacked the program on the grounds that it violated the rights

122 of Haitians under the INA, deprived interdicted Haitians of rights and

123 liberties guaranteed by the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution,

124 failed to satisfy the non-refoulement obligations under the United Na-

125 tions Convention, and violated the extradition agreement between

126 Haiti and the United States. The district court dismissed the com-

127 plaint, holding that the plaintiffs stated no cause of action upon which

128 the court could grant relief. The decision was affirmed on

129 appeal.

130

3. The Interdiction Program Under Bush

131 The fall of Baby Doc in 1986 and the rise of Haiti's first democrati-

132 cally elected president rendered the interdiction program unnecessary

133 for a few short months. The 1991 ouster of the democratically

134 elected Aristide, however, ushered in a reign of terror that was sadis-

135 tic even by Haitian standards, thus resulting in a deluge of Haitians

136 seeking refuge overseas. In the wake of the mass exodus, the Coast

110. Id. at 161-62.
112. Id.
113. Id.
114. See infra notes 320-29 and accompanying text.
116. Id. at 1401.
117. Id. at 1406.
119. See infra notes 333-40 and accompanying text.
120. See infra notes 341-43 and accompanying text.
Guard announced that it would resume the interdiction program under the Bush administration.\textsuperscript{122}

The day after the Coast Guard’s announcement, the HRC filed another complaint challenging the program in \textit{Haitian Refugee Center v. Baker}.\textsuperscript{123} The plaintiffs argued that the interdiction program violated the Protocol as well as the protections set forth in the INA.\textsuperscript{124} The district court enjoined the program,\textsuperscript{125} but the Eleventh Circuit dissolved the injunction and remanded the case with instructions to dismiss the claims that were based on the Protocol.\textsuperscript{126} On remand, the plaintiffs obtained a temporary restraining order,\textsuperscript{127} and the defendants appealed.\textsuperscript{128} The Eleventh Circuit again disagreed and ultimately held that the INA, even as amended, only applied to aliens within the United States or at United States borders or ports of entry.\textsuperscript{129} Thus, the interdiction program was found to be valid.

While the \textit{Baker} decision was still pending, the Haitian Centers Council ("HCC") filed another complaint, initially arguing that the interdiction program and the refugee processing on Guantanamo Naval Base did not adequately protect the Haitians’ statutory and treaty rights.\textsuperscript{130} In \textit{Haitian Centers Council, Inc. v. McNary}, the court granted the plaintiffs a preliminary injunction requiring the defendants to supply Haitians with counsel during the screening process on Guantanamo.\textsuperscript{131} The Supreme Court stayed that order.\textsuperscript{132} After the final result in \textit{Baker}, and while the defendants’ appeal was pending in \textit{McNary}, President Bush issued a new Executive Order.\textsuperscript{133} His Order differed slightly, but significantly, from President Reagan’s Order. The Bush Order expressly declared that Article 33 did not extend to persons located outside United States territory.\textsuperscript{134} Additionally, his Order provided that “the Attorney General, in his unreviewable discretion, may decide that a person who is a refugee will not be returned

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{122} \textit{Id.} at 162.
\item \textsuperscript{123} 789 F. Supp. 1552 (S.D. Fla. 1991).
\item \textsuperscript{124} \textit{Id.} at 1553.
\item \textsuperscript{125} \textit{Id.} at 1578.
\item \textsuperscript{126} Haitian Refugee Ctr. v. Baker, 949 F.2d 1109, 1111 (1991).
\item \textsuperscript{128} Haitian Refugee Ctr. v. Baker, 950 F.2d 685 (11th Cir. 1991).
\item \textsuperscript{129} Haitian Refugee Ctr. v. Baker, 953 F.2d 1498, 1510 (11th Cir. 1992).
\item \textsuperscript{131} \textit{Id.} at 930-31.
\item \textsuperscript{133} Exec. Order No. 12,807, 3 C.F.R. 303 (1993).
\item \textsuperscript{134} \textit{Id.} “Article 33 of the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees do[es] not extend to persons located outside the territory of the United States.” \textit{Id.}
without his consent," whereas Reagan's program required the Coast Guard to refrain from returning a refugee without first obtaining her consent. Finally, the Bush Order did not allow for even cursory refugee hearings on Coast Guard cutters, thus eliminating the opportunity for refugee status determinations.

Bush's interdiction program proved as effective as his predecessor's. Between September 30, 1991, (the date of the coup), and April 7, 1992, an estimated 18,095 Haitians were interdicted. Of these, about 10,149 were sent back to Haiti without an interview of any kind. The remaining Haitians were either brought to the United States for more asylum interviews, taken to Guantanamo Bay, or deposited in another country. Of those who underwent screening procedures on Guantanamo Bay, an estimated 40% were found to have credible claims.

The HCC immediately amended its complaint to challenge Bush's Order, but the district court denied its request for a temporary restraining order. The court of appeals reversed that decision, holding that the interdiction program violated § 243(h) of the INA, and defendants appealed.


In Sale v. Haitian Centers Council, Inc., the plaintiffs, Haitian Centers Council, first argued that the interdiction program violated § 243(h) of the INA, which explicitly provides that the Attorney General shall not deport or return any alien to a country where such alien will be the victim of political persecution. By removing the words "within the United States" from the original section, plaintiffs argued, Congress meant to broaden the scope of § 243(h)(1) to protect all aliens fleeing persecution, thus giving it extraterritorial effect. The

135. Sale v. Haitian Ctrs. Council, Inc., 509 U.S. 155, 204 (emphasis added). Bush's order revoked and replaced Reagan's order. Id. at 171. It also provided that the program should not be "construed to require any procedures to determine whether a person is a refugee." Exec. Order No. 12,807, 3 C.F.R. at 304.
136. See supra notes 108-09 and accompanying text.
137. Exec. Order No. 12,807, 3 C.F.R. at 304; see supra note 135.
139. Id.
140. Id. at 7-8.
141. Id. at 8. These Haitians were screened in, but not "accepted." Id.
145. Id. at 170-71.
146. Id.
plaintiffs argued that the plain language of § 243(h)(1) prohibited the implementation of Bush’s interdiction program.\textsuperscript{147}

The plaintiffs further contended that Article 33 applied extraterritorially.\textsuperscript{148} Although the Protocol had previously been determined not self-executing, they argued that the history of the Refugee Act of 1980 clearly indicated Congress’ intention to conform the INA to the provisions of the Protocol.\textsuperscript{149} Because Article 33 applies extraterritorially, the plaintiffs argued, § 243(h)(1) also applies extraterritorially.\textsuperscript{150}

The Court also reviewed the lower court’s holding that the term “Attorney General” was meant to apply to the President as well, thereby prohibiting the issuance of his Executive Order.\textsuperscript{151} The court of appeals held that the Attorney General almost always acts as an agent of the President and exercises her powers at the behest of the President in matters regarding immigration.\textsuperscript{152} As such, it determined, prohibiting the Attorney General from forcibly repatriating refugees with credible asylum claims also prohibits the President from doing so.\textsuperscript{153}

The defendants reasserted their argument that the plain language of § 243(h) dictates that it applies only to the Attorney General; thus, only the Attorney General is prohibited from returning the aliens, not the President.\textsuperscript{154} Additionally, they argued that the entire INA, when read with the legislative history of the 1980 amendments, reveals that § 243(h) was not intended to apply outside of United States territory.\textsuperscript{155} The defendants also argued that the negotiating history of the Protocol clearly indicates that Article 33 does not apply extraterritorially either.\textsuperscript{156}

In finding for the defendants, the Court determined that the INA’s non-return provision applied only to the Attorney General.\textsuperscript{157} It reasoned that, because other sections of the INA mention the President, the INA would have expressly prohibited the President from returning refugees, rather than just the Attorney General, if it meant to extend the prohibition to him.\textsuperscript{158}

\textsuperscript{147} Id.
\textsuperscript{148} Id.
\textsuperscript{149} Id.
\textsuperscript{150} Sale, 509 U.S. at 170-71.
\textsuperscript{151} Id. at 171.
\textsuperscript{152} Id.
\textsuperscript{153} Id.
\textsuperscript{154} Id. at 168-69.
\textsuperscript{155} Id. at 171.
\textsuperscript{156} Sale, 509 U.S. at 171.
\textsuperscript{157} Id. at 171-72.
\textsuperscript{158} Id. at 173-74.
It also found persuasive the defendants' argument regarding the interpretation of the 1980 amendment to the INA that removed the words "within the United States." The Court noted that it presumes that acts of Congress only apply within the United States. The Court relied on the Leng May Ma v. Barber decision to decipher the significance of removing the territorial limitation from the original section.

The Leng May Ma Court explained that an alien who is legally in the United States is "within the United States," while one who is physically, but not legally, present in the country is not "within the United States." The latter is an "excludable" alien, and the former is a "deportable" alien. The Court in Leng May Ma noted that "deportable" aliens traditionally have been afforded more protection by United States law, while "excludable" aliens did not receive such protection.

Relying on the distinction between "deportable" and "excludable" aliens articulated in Leng May Ma, the Sale Court held that, by removing "within the United States" from the original version of § 243(h), Congress merely extended to "excludable" aliens the same protections afforded to "deportable" aliens under the INA. Thus, the removal of the words was not intended to extend protection beyond United States borders.

Further, the Court held that the negotiating history and language of Article 33 indicates that it does not apply extraterritorially either. Thus, the Court determined that the statute and the treaty are wholly consistent with each other in their territorial limitations.

Justice Blackmun dissented, arguing that both the INA and Article 33 apply extraterritorially. He found the majority's reliance on the presumption against extraterritoriality inappropriate. Additionally, he noted that, in light of the territorial restriction throughout other sections of the INA, the removal of "within the United States" was

159. Id.
160. Id.
162. Sale, 509 U.S. at 172.
163. Leng May Ma, 357 U.S. at 187-90.
164. Id.
165. Id.
166. Sale, 509 U.S. at 175-76.
167. Id. at 177.
168. Id. at 179-87.
169. Id. at 188.
170. Id. at 188-208 (Blackmun, J., dissenting).
171. Id. at 205-07.
clearly meant to remove the territorial restriction of § 243(h).\textsuperscript{172} He rejected the majority's \textit{Leng May Ma} argument.\textsuperscript{173} Justice Blackmun discovered no references to \textit{Leng May Ma} in the negotiating history of the Refugee Act of 1980.\textsuperscript{174} He also noted that references to the Protocol permeated the history of the amendments.\textsuperscript{175} He relied on these references in determining that the Refugee Act conformed the INA to the provisions of the Protocol.\textsuperscript{176} He contended that, had the majority employed the standard rules of treaty construction, it would have necessarily reached the conclusion that Article 33 did in fact apply extraterritorially.\textsuperscript{177}

5. \textit{Proceedings Before the Commission}

Although the \textit{Sale} decision effectively ended litigation over Haitian interdiction in United States courts, it did not terminate the inquiry into the extraterritorial nature of Article 33. After the final decision in \textit{Sale}, the Commission agreed to hear a similar petition brought by many of the same complainants.\textsuperscript{178} Although the Commission is a regional body that usually deals with regional human rights instruments, such as the American Declaration, it found it necessary to address the extraterritorial applicability of Article 33 of the Convention.\textsuperscript{179}

The Commission conducted its deliberations by inviting both parties to submit their understandings of the relevant provisions of the American Declaration.\textsuperscript{180} Specifically, the Commission accepted interpretations of Article XXVII,\textsuperscript{181} which provides that "[e]very person has the right, in case of pursuit not resulting from ordinary crimes, to seek and receive asylum in foreign territory, in accordance with the laws of each country and with international agreements."\textsuperscript{182} The pertinent international provision, of course, is Article 33.\textsuperscript{183} The United States government, the defendant, contended that the Supreme Court's

\begin{thebibliography}{18}
\bibitem{172} \textit{Sale}, 509 U.S. at 204-05.
\bibitem{173} \textit{Id.} at 203-05.
\bibitem{174} \textit{Id.} at 203.
\bibitem{175} \textit{Id.}
\bibitem{176} \textit{Id.}
\bibitem{177} \textit{Id.} at 190-98.
\bibitem{179} \textit{Id.} at 599. It is important to note that any decision of the Commission has no obligatory power in international law. \textit{Newman} \& \textit{Weissbrodt}, \textit{supra} note 2, at 142. It is not within the Commission's mandate to pass on domestic laws of nations in and of themselves. \textit{Id.} Rather, the Commission only articulates international obligations and recommends that nations comply with those obligations. \textit{Id.}
\bibitem{180} Case 10.675, Inter-Am C.H.R. at 565.
\bibitem{181} American Declaration, \textit{supra} note 63, at art. XXVII.
\bibitem{182} \textit{Id.}
\bibitem{183} Case 10.675, Inter-Am. C.H.R. at 599.
\end{thebibliography}
opinion in *Sale* already determined that the interdiction program was consistent with both domestic and international law.\(^{184}\)

The Commission ultimately found that the United States was in violation of several articles of the American Declaration.\(^{185}\) Significantly, it concluded that the United States violated Article XXVII.\(^{186}\) Expressly rejecting the Supreme Court’s determination that Article 33 does not apply extraterritorially, the Commission held that the interdiction program violated the obligation of non-refoulement and, thus, Article XXVII.\(^{187}\) The Commission determined that its decision be published in the Commission’s Annual Report and it recommended that the United States pay adequate compensation to the victims.\(^{188}\)

6. **Summary**

The Haitian Program elicited substantial litigation. Most complaints challenging the interdiction aspect of the program were unsuccessful. In *Sale v. Haitian Centers Council, Inc.*,\(^{189}\) the Supreme Court made the final decision that the interdiction programs violated neither the INA nor Article 33.\(^{190}\) In reaching this conclusion, the Court held that neither provision meant to extend protection to refugees outside of American territorial waters.\(^{191}\) In an opinion handed down three years later, the Commission on expressly disagreed with the Supreme Court’s holding finding the interdiction program a violation of the United States’ obligation of non-refoulement.\(^{192}\)

II. **The Role of Race in Haitian-American Relations**

The controversy over the decision in *Sale* focused mostly on the American government’s potential violation of international and domestic law. Although the Commission took a broader approach in determining the American government’s compliance with its international obligations, its decision was strictly limited in scope. Not as widely recognized, let alone criticized, was the advantage gained by

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184. *Id.*
185. *Id.* at 609.
186. *Id.*
187. *Id.* at 599.
188. *Id.* at 609.
190. *Id.* at 171.
the United States through the forcible repatriation of Haitian refugees. When viewed in light of the history of Haitian-American relations, the racist thrust of Haitian Program is revealed. Only after considering the role of race in the program can one accurately assess the objectives and impact of American treatment of Haitian refugees.

A. A Critical Analysis of the Sale Decision

Because the Sale case represents the culmination of litigation over the Haitian Program—specifically the interdiction program—in United States courts, it provides the starting point for the following analysis. This subsection will first focus on the Court's argument against the extraterritorial applicability of the INA and the Protocol. It will then examine the Commission's assessment of the interdiction programs' legality.

1. Non-return and the INA

The first important step in this analysis requires a look at the scope of the INA as amended by the Refugee Act of 1980. In Sale, the Court held that the amended version of the INA does not extend beyond United States territory to cover refugees on the high seas. In ruling against its extraterritorial application, the Court relied heavily on the presumption that acts of Congress ordinarily do not apply outside the borders of the United States. However, the presumption is applied primarily to avoid conflicts between the laws of the United States and those of foreign nations. No such risk was involved under these circumstances. Refusing to return Haitian nationals to their tumultuous homeland, as is required by § 243(h), would not have conflicted with the laws of other nations.

The Court rejected this argument, however, relying on a footnote in Smith v. United States. This "well-established" precedent, articulated only a few months before the decision in Sale, concluded that "the presumption is rooted in a number of considerations, not the least of which is the commonsense notion that Congress generally legislates with domestic concerns in mind." While the Court's reliance on a footnote of a recent opinion might seem a somewhat dubious foundation for invoking the presumption against extraterritoriality, one need not be overly concerned about the Court's rationale on this
point. Perhaps even more remarkable is the Court's disregard for the "commonsense notion" that the very nature of refugee law is international. Additionally, the presumption applies only where congressional intent is unexpressed. Here, Congress removed the territorial restriction from § 243(h), leaving little doubt about its intentions. A further look behind the history of the Refugee Act of 1980 is instructive.

The Refugee Act deleted the words "within the United States" from § 243(h) of the INA. It also removed the discretionary language in this section, expressly prohibiting the forcible return of any alien to a country where the alien would be subject to persecution for the enumerated reasons, including political persecution. On its face, the amendment flatly prohibits, without territorial restriction, the precise activity that the interdiction program required. The Court, however, remained unconvinced by this argument. Relying on the Leng May Ma decision, the Court determined that the amended version of § 243(h) extended to "excludable" aliens the same protections afforded to "deportable" aliens under the INA. It pointed to language in the legislative history which provided that the amendment required the Attorney General to withhold deportation of aliens in both exclusion and deportation hearings. More precisely, the Court used the Leng May Ma distinction to narrow the meaning of the word "return" in § 243(h). It reasoned that by adding "return" and removing "within the United States," Congress extended protection to both types of aliens.

The Court rightly pointed out that Congress was aware that the amendment erased the distinction between "deportable" and "excludable" aliens, extending its protection to both. It is peculiar, however, that the Leng May Ma decision shows up nowhere in the legislative history of the Refugee Act, though references to the Protocol permeate these documents. Indeed, the provisions of the Protocol, specifically Article 33, inspired the 1980 amendments. Not only did Congress intend to define "refugee" in conformity with the

198. Sale, 509 U.S. at 206 (Blackmun, J., dissenting).
199. Id. at 205-06.
200. See supra note 73 and accompanying text.
201. See supra note 72 and accompanying text.
203. Id.
204. Id. at 177.
206. Sale, 509 U.S. at 202-03 (Blackmun, J., dissenting).
207. Id.
208. Id; see supra note 69 and accompanying text.
definition contained in the Protocol, but it also aimed to harmonize American law regarding the deportation of refugees with the obligation of non-refoulement arising under the Protocol. Although pursuing this goal ultimately eliminated the archaic distinction between "deportable" and "excludable" aliens, the overriding purpose of the Refugee Act was to render the INA's provisions "consistent with our international obligations under the United Nations Convention and Protocol."

It is important to note the proposed version of § 243(h) in the Senate conference report on the Refugee Act, the report on which the Court so heavily relied in asserting the amended form of § 243(h), functioned primarily to remove the "deportable"/"excludable" alien distinction. This proposed version contained all of the changes that would eventually form the final amended version of § 243(h). At the end of the section, however, it added the words "unless deportation or return would be permitted under the terms of the United Nations Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees." Although the language was not kept in the final version, it serves as a rather convincing indication that Congress intended to conform § 243(h) to the provisions of the Protocol. Indeed, because congressional intent was clearly expressed, the Court's reliance on the presumption against extraterritoriality was misplaced.

2. Article 33 and Extraterritoriality

The Court recognized that bringing "excludable" aliens within the protection of the INA was not the sole purpose of the changes made by the Refugee Act. If it determined that the amended form of § 243(h) merely extended protection to previously excluded groups of aliens, rather than conform United States law to obligations arising under the Protocol, then there would have been no occasion to pass on the extraterritorial nature of Article 33. Indeed, at least one court has indicated that the provisions of the Protocol are not self-executing. As such, it does not give rise to a cause of action in a

211. 126 Cong. Rec. at 4450.
213. Id.
215. Id. at 178.
216. Bertrand v. Sava, 684 F.2d 204, 218 (2d Cir. 1982).
United States court. Nevertheless, because the Refugee Act sought to effectuate the treaty's obligations, specifically that of non-refoulement, it was necessary for the Court to determine the extraterritorial application of Article 33. If Article 33 applies extraterritorially, then so does § 243(h).\(^{217}\)

At the start, the Court mostly engaged in wordplay in its analysis of Article 33. It first argued that, taken as a whole, the Article could not have been intended to apply extraterritorially.\(^{218}\) Paragraph 1 of the Article provides, in relevant part, that no contracting State shall return a refugee in any manner whatsoever to a territory where that refugee's life or freedom would be threatened for the enumerated reasons, subject only to the exception spelled out in Paragraph 2.\(^{219}\) Paragraph 2 excepts from the obligations of Paragraph 1 situations where a refugee constitutes "a danger to the security of the country in which he is" or where the refugee poses a threat to the community of a country.\(^{220}\) The Court found that if Paragraph 1 applied to the high seas, then countries could not invoke the second paragraph's exception because an alien on the high seas is in no country at all.\(^{221}\) In the Court's view, this would create "an absurd anomaly: Dangerous aliens on the high seas would be entitled to the benefits of 33.1 while those residing in the country that sought to expel them would not."\(^{222}\) Rather than falling victim to such flawed rationale, the Court found it "more reasonable to assume" that Paragraph 2 was limited to those already present within a country because it was understood that Paragraph 1 implied no extraterritorial obligations.\(^{223}\)

Justice Blackmun deftly dismantled the majority's argument in his dissenting opinion. He maintained that a reasonable decision to allow nations to deport criminal aliens in no way betrayed an intent on the part of the signatories "to permit the apprehension and return of non-criminal aliens who have not entered their territories, and who may have no desire ever to enter it."\(^{224}\) On its face, the goal of Article 33 is to prohibit the return of refugees seized anywhere while permitting the expulsion or return of a small class of refugees within a country's

\(^{217}\) Sale, 509 U.S. at 178.

\(^{218}\) Id. at 179.

\(^{219}\) Convention, supra note 47, art. 33 (2), 19 U.S.T. at 6276, 189 U.N.T.S. at 176.

\(^{220}\) Convention, supra note 47, art. 33 (1), 19 U.S.T. at 6276, 189 U.N.T.S. at 176 (emphasis added); see supra text accompanying note 57.

\(^{221}\) Sale, 509 U.S. at 179.

\(^{222}\) Id. at 179-80.

\(^{223}\) Id. at 180.

\(^{224}\) Id. at 193 (Blackmun, J., dissenting).
territory. As Justice Blackmun reasoned, non-return is the rule, and Paragraph 2 provides the only exception.\textsuperscript{225}

Rather than creating an absurd anomaly, the territorial restriction in Paragraph 2 indicates the intention that Article 33 applies extraterritorially. Just as "Congress knows how to place the high seas within the jurisdictional reach of a statute" if it so desires,\textsuperscript{226} the drafters of the Convention presumably knew how to limit the territorial application of the protection offered by Article 33. Not surprisingly, Paragraph 2 does in fact provide a territorial limitation, demonstrating that such a capability was indeed within the realm of skills of the drafters.\textsuperscript{227} Had the drafters intended to limit the geographic applicability of Paragraph 1, they would have expressed it in the provision. Far from constituting affirmative evidence, the majority's argument merely offered an elaborate diversion from the plain language of Article 33.

The Court also pondered the meaning of the word "return" within the context of Paragraph 1 of Article 33. The majority once again relied on the distinction spelled out in the \textit{Leng May Ma} decision and determined that "return" (refouler) merely extended protection to the previously excluded class of aliens at the threshold of entry to a country.\textsuperscript{228} The Court's rationale here is fantastic. When interpreting "return" in § 243(h), the Court ignored Article 33.\textsuperscript{229} Instead, it relied on the \textit{Leng May Ma} decision,\textsuperscript{230} even though the legislative history clearly indicated an intent to conform the section to the provisions of the Protocol.\textsuperscript{231} The Court then used this interpretation as evidence that "return" in Article 33 has a meaning narrower than the standard definition.

The validity of the Court's contention is questionable. The determination that the word "return" in a multilateral treaty does not really mean "return" in the standard sense because it was intended to be consistent with a decision by the United States Supreme Court is an untenable proposition. By starting with a narrow and somewhat tortured interpretation of "return" in lieu of the \textit{Leng May Ma} decision, the Court began its construction on shaky ground. It also violated the first rule of treaty construction, namely that a treaty be construed ac-

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{225} Id. at 194.
\item \textsuperscript{226} Id. at 173 (quoting Argentine Republic v. Amerada Hess Shipping Corp., 488 U.S. 428, 440 (1989)).
\item \textsuperscript{227} Convention, \textit{supra} note 47, art. 33 (2), 19 U.S.T. at 6276, 189 U.N.T.S. at 176.
\item \textsuperscript{228} \textit{Sale}, 509 U.S. at 180.
\item \textsuperscript{229} Id. at 173-77; see \textit{supra} notes 145-58 and accompanying text.
\item \textsuperscript{230} \textit{Leng May Ma} v. Barber, 357 U.S. 185 (1958); see \textit{supra} text accompanying notes 161-65.
\item \textsuperscript{231} \textit{Sale}, 509 U.S. at 180 n.36.
\end{itemize}
According to its ordinary meaning. It is unlikely that the drafters of Article 33 intended the ordinary meaning of the word "return" to conform to the meaning articulated in *Leng May Ma*.

The Court did not rely solely on the holding in the *Leng May Ma* decision, of course. It buttressed its assertion that "return" has a legal meaning narrower than its ordinary meaning by emphasizing the parenthetical inclusion of the French word "refouler." The Court's argument was an intricate and somewhat confusing one. It was troubled by the fact that neither of two respected English-French dictionaries include "refouler" as one of the definitions of "return." Moreover, it noted that the dictionaries' English translations of "refouler" do not include the word "return." The Court then listed some of the other definitions of "refouler," such as "repulse," "repel," "drive back," and "expel." Using these definitions, the Court determined that "return" actually means "to 'repulse' rather than to 'reinstate.'"

Nevertheless, even these definitions fail to support the Coast Guards' actions. Using some of the most common translations of "refouler," one might have proposed a more plausible version of Article 33. Substituting the standard synonyms for "refouler," Article 33 reads: "No contracting state shall expel or [repulse, drive back, or repel] a refugee in any manner whatsoever." These translations accurately describe what the Coast Guard was doing. In fact, as Justice Blackmun noted, the French press used the word "refouler" to describe the interdiction program. The majority, however, determined that "[t]o the extent that they are relevant, these translations imply that 'return' means a defensive act of resistance or exclusion at a border rather than an act of transporting someone to a particular destination." Of course, the text of Article 33—to the extent that it is relevant anyway—speaks of no such "border" or threshold that would activate the obligation of non-refoulement.

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234. *Id.*
235. *Id.*
236. *Id.* at 181.
237. *Id.* at 182.
238. *Id.* at 192 (Blackmun, J., dissenting).
240. *Id.* at 181-82.
Finally, the majority rested its analysis on some comments included in the negotiating history of the Convention, specifically those made by the Dutch delegate. The delegate expressed concern over the scope of Article 33, and requested that his view that mass migrations across borders were not protected by the Convention be placed in the record. It was recorded without objection. The Court determined that the comments made by the Dutch delegate demonstrated a consensus among the contracting parties.

Here, too, the rules of construction employed by the Court were flawed. The first principle, already discussed above, provides that a treaty provision be construed consistent with its ordinary meaning. As such, the negotiations behind the treaty cannot supersede its language. Reliance on a treaty’s *travaux preparatoires* is disfavored in international law. Reliance is only appropriate where the terms of the treaty are “manifestly absurd or unreasonable.” By emphasizing the negotiating history, the Court elevated it above the plain language of Article 33.

Even accepting the Court’s method of treaty construction, its conclusion that the Dutch delegate’s concerns represented a consensus because no party objected to the comment’s entry into the record is not convincing. Failing to object to the documentation of a minority viewpoint does not imply one’s acceptance of that view. The Court used the few comments that arguably could be interpreted as expressing a desire to limit the scope of Article 33 as proof that it did not apply extraterritorially. In doing so, the Court elevated the negotiating history above the language of the provision itself. Instead, the

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241. See id. at 184-87 (relying on the comments of Baron van Boetzelaer the delegate from the Netherlands).
242. Id. at 185-86.
243. Id. at 186.
244. Id. at 186-87.
245. See Restatement, supra note 44, at 229.
248. The court erroneously relied upon the unofficial comments of a few countries to assert that Article 33 was meant to have extraterritorial effect. See Sale, 509 U.S. at 184-87 (relying on the concerns expressed by the Dutch, Swiss and English delegates).
249. It is important to note that the United States was among the countries that did not object. Sale, 509 U.S. at 195 (Blackmun, J., dissenting).
Court should have interpreted Article 33 according to the ordinary meaning of its terms. The plain language of the treaty prohibits forced repatriation in any manner whatsoever.250

3. The Interdiction Program and the Object and Purpose of the Protocol

At the outset of Sale, the Court noted that “[t]he wisdom of the policy choices made by Presidents Reagan, Bush, and Clinton is not a matter for our consideration.”251 Surely the majority did not believe that laws exist in a vacuum, affecting no one and leaving no room for policy considerations. In fact, had the Court adhered to more traditional rules of treaty construction, it likely would have considered the interdiction program’s impact on the Haitians a necessary step in determining the extraterritorial applicability of Article 33.

Though international rules of treaty construction differ from those used in United States courts, both methods have significant similarities. Both the international and American approaches ultimately endeavor to ascertain the meaning intended by the parties.252 Under traditional rules of construction, the ordinary meaning of the terms of the agreement is the starting point for such a determination.253 The terms are to be considered in light of the object and purpose of the treaty.254 Although American courts are more willing than international bodies, such as the Commission, to resort to the negotiating history of an agreement in determining its object and purpose,255 both ultimately examine the action at issue within the object and purpose of the agreement. As explained at length above, the Court misconstrued the ordinary meaning of the text of Article 33. Even if one concedes that the language is ambiguous, however, the history of the interdiction program illustrates that it was not consistent with Article 33’s overriding object and purpose.

251. Sale, 509 U.S. at 165.
252. See Restatement, supra note 44, § 325 n.4 (“On the other hand, both the Vienna Convention and the United States approach seek to determine the intention of the parties.”).
253. Id.
254. Id. § 325(1) (“An international agreement is to be interpreted in good faith in accordance with the ordinary meaning to be given to its terms in their context and in the light of its object and purpose.”).
255. Id. § 325 n.4.

Moreover, since the “ordinary meaning” of terms is to be determined in context and in the light of the object and purpose of the agreement, both “context” and “the object and the purpose” may have to be identified and often cannot be determined without recourse to the preparatory materials and to other “extraneous” evidence.

Id.
In upholding the interdiction program, the Sale Court summarily dismissed these policies as irrelevant to its inquiry.\textsuperscript{256} Even passing contemplation of the Haitian Program and its adverse effects on the Haitian refugees reveals that the program was not consistent with Article 33 as understood within the context of the object and purpose of the Protocol. As the Supreme Court has previously stated, "[t]reaties are to be construed in a broad and liberal spirit, and, when two constructions are possible, one restrictive of rights that may be claimed under it and the other favorable to them, the latter is to be preferred."\textsuperscript{257} This principle of treaty construction is particularly relevant to the Protocol, "the overriding purpose of which was to safeguard the rights of a special, vulnerable group in need of protection. Indeed, the preamble to the [Protocol] notes that it was adopted in order 'to assure refugees the widest possible exercise of these fundamental rights and freedoms.'"\textsuperscript{258} When read as the Court interpreted it, Article 33 would extend to refugees the fundamental right of non-return and then extinguish that very right through the extraterritorial loophole.\textsuperscript{259} Such an interpretation is hardly consistent with the object and purpose of Article 33, which seeks to prevent the return of refugees to frontiers where their life or freedom might be threatened.\textsuperscript{260}

4. The Commission's Decision

The flawed method of treaty construction used by the Court throughout its analysis resulted in an interpretation of Article 33 that ignored the ordinary meaning of its terms within the object and purpose of the treaty. Though it effectively ended litigation over the matter in United States courts, the Sale decision did not completely halt the inquiry into the extraterritorial nature of Article 33. After the Court handed down its opinion, the Commission agreed to hear a similar petition brought by many of the same complainants.\textsuperscript{261} The Commission ultimately concluded that the interdiction program violated, among other things, the right to seek and receive asylum guaranteed by Article XXVII of the American Declaration.\textsuperscript{262} In reaching this

\textsuperscript{256} See Sale, 509 U.S. at 249 (Blackmun, J., dissenting) (refusing to address the policies behind the program).
\textsuperscript{257} Asakura v. City of Seattle, 265 U.S. 332, 342 (1924).
\textsuperscript{259} Id. at 12-13.
\textsuperscript{260} Convention, supra note 47, art. 33 (1), 19 U.S.T. at 6276, 189 U.N.T.S. at 176.
\textsuperscript{262} Id.
conclusion, however, the Commission necessarily considered the extraterritorial applicability of Article 33. In order to more thoroughly consider the international obligations entailed by Article 33, the Commission felt it was necessary to examine the impact of the interdiction program on the returned Haitians within the context of the object and purpose of the Protocol—a much broader inquiry than that of the Supreme Court.

Article XXVII provides that "[e]very person has the right, in case of pursuit not resulting from ordinary crimes, to seek and receive asylum in foreign territory, in accordance with the laws of each country and with international agreements."263 The Article sets forth two criteria, both of which must be satisfied in order for the right to seek asylum to exist. First, the right must be consistent with the laws of the country in which asylum is sought.264 Second, the right must be in accordance with international agreements.265

The Commission addressed the second criterion first, pointing out that the Protocol was the international agreement relevant to the analysis.266 It explained that the Protocol established the criteria for being a "refugee."267 The Commission held that international law recognizes the right of a person seeking refuge to a hearing to determine his or her status as a refugee.268 It cited the obligation of non-refoulement provided by Article 33 as evidence of the right of Haitians to seek asylum free from interference.269 Contrary to the Supreme Court's view, the Commission concurred with "the view advanced by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in its Amicus Curiae brief in its argument before the Supreme Court, that Article 33 had no geographical limitations."270

The Commission then examined the first criterion of Article XXVII. According to the Commission, the fact that the United States violated the duty of non-refoulement does not mean that it violated Article XXVII of the American Declaration.271 The right to seek and receive asylum must also be consistent with the laws of the United States. The American government argued that the Sale decision provided that Haitians "are not entitled to enter the United States or to

263. American Declaration, supra note 63, art. XXVI.
265. Id.
267. Id.
268. Id.
269. Id.
270. Id.
271. Id.
avoid repatriation to Haiti, even if they are refugees under the standards of the 1951 Convention or the standards of U.S. law.\textsuperscript{272}

In contrast, the Commission noted that the United States recognizes the right of aliens who have arrived at American shores to "seek" asylum under United States law, though there is no mandatory "grant" of asylum.\textsuperscript{273} Indeed, asylum is only granted to those who meet the criteria of "refugee" provided in American law. Therefore, the Commission concluded, United States law recognizes the general right of aliens to seek asylum without restriction.\textsuperscript{274} Additionally, it explained that, contrary to the assertion by the Sale Court, the United States has consistently recognized the right of Haitians, even those intercepted at sea, to seek and receive asylum.\textsuperscript{275} It pointed to the language in Reagan's Executive Order which provided that "no person who is a refugee will be returned without his consent."\textsuperscript{276}

The practical difference between the right to "seek" asylum and the "grant" of asylum is also crucial. By interdicting Haitians on the high seas without the opportunity for hearings to determine refugee status, the United States deprived the refugees of their right to seek asylum.\textsuperscript{277} At this point, American domestic laws do not even come into play with respect to this right. The right to seek asylum attaches upon the refugee's departure from the territory where she is persecuted, not upon her entry into the territory where she seeks asylum.\textsuperscript{278} Indeed, the actions taken by the United States outside of its territory violated the right to seek asylum, a right generally regarded as fundamental. The interdiction program also prevented Haitians from seeking asylum in other countries, such as Jamaica, Cuba, Mexico, or any other country in the area.\textsuperscript{279} The Coast Guard failed to make any factual determination with respect to the destination of the Haitians. In fact, one third of Haitian refugees sought asylum in countries other than the United States.\textsuperscript{280}

The Commission also concluded that the United States denied Haitian refugees equality before the law.\textsuperscript{281} It cited the long time Ameri-

\textsuperscript{272} Case 10.675, Inter-Am. C.H.R. at 600.
\textsuperscript{273} Id.
\textsuperscript{274} Id.
\textsuperscript{275} Id. at 600-01.
\textsuperscript{276} Id. at 600 n.36 (citing Exec. Order No. 12,324, 3 C.F.R. 181 (1981-83)).
\textsuperscript{277} Bush's Executive Order completely eliminated interviews aboard Coast Guard cutters. Exec. Order No. 12,807, 3 C.F.R. 303 (1993).
\textsuperscript{279} Case 10.675, Inter-Am. C.H.R. at 601.
\textsuperscript{280} Id.
\textsuperscript{281} Id. at 591.
can policy that provides for more favorable treatment of refugees from Communist or enemy countries. This discrimination clearly violates the object and purpose of the Protocol. The Protocol established rights for refugees, irrespective of their nation of origin.

B. A History of Haitian-American Relations

Although the Commission’s inquiry was much broader than that of the United States Supreme Court, it still failed to consider the significance of the Haitian Program within the context of Haitian-American relations. Thus, even the Commission’s analysis did not address the racial contingencies of American policies toward Haitian refugees. As such, it overlooked the extent to which the United States used refugee law as a tool of foreign policy, something which the Commission expressly decried in its decision. This subsection provides a basic history of Haitian-American relations. Using this history, the analysis seeks to offer a more complete account of the Haitian Program, an account which both the Court and the Commission failed to address. When viewed in light of this history, this analysis reveals that the Haitian Program involves exactly the kind of policies that the Refugee Act of 1980 sought to eliminate.

1. The “Exploration” of Haiti

The Haitian population has long endured persecution, often in the form of political violence. Columbus’ arrival on the small Caribbean island in 1492 brought with it the virtual annihilation of the native inhabitants, a familiar practice among “explorers” of the day. He claimed the island for Spain, naming it Hispaniola, and used the native

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282. Id.; see infra notes 364-72 and accompanying text.
286. It is important to point out that, in considering the object and purpose of the Protocol, the Commission did assess what happened to Haitians returned to Port-au-Prince pursuant to the interdiction program. Id. Furthermore, the Commission pointed out that the United States has favored the extraterritorial applicability of Article 33 in other contexts. Id. at 569. It is the position of this Comment, however, that the Commission’s neglect of even broader American policies, past and present, resulted in an insufficient account of the role of racism and foreign policy considerations in the Haitian Program, thereby downplaying the extent of American disregard for international law.
287. EMILY GREENE BALCH, OCCUPIED HAITI 2 (1927); see PAUL FARMER, THE USES OF HAITI 60 (estimating the number of natives at 50,000 in 1510, down from nearly eight million at the close of the fifteenth century).
population as a no-wage labor pool working to benefit the motherland. After decimating the native population, the Spanish masters began importing Africans to replenish the dwindling labor supply in 1505. The brutality continued without mercy.

The 1600s marked increased piracy in the Caribbean, and many French buccaneers settled on the western end of Hispaniola. The western third of the island, named by the pirates "Saint Domingue," was eventually ceded to France in 1697 through the Treaty of Ryswick. By the mid-1700s a solid class system had already developed, with three main groups populating the island: French (born either in France or on the colony), mulattos, and African slaves (by far the majority of the population). Ownership of the territory mattered little; the French rulers were as brutal as their Spanish predecessors.

Inspired by the French Revolution and, to a much lesser extent, the American war for independence, the African population on St. Domingue began to stir. What followed was a bloody slave-led revolution that saw the last of Napoleon's forces routed in 1803 and resulted in independence for the new slave-led nation on January 1, 1804. The new state renamed itself Haiti for the island's native Arawak name. Haiti was the first free nation in Latin America, and the second oldest free nation in the western hemisphere, behind only the United States.

2. The United States in Haiti

The United States watched with great interest as events unfolded in Haiti. Of particular concern for the young nation to the north was the possible example that the war in Haiti provided for its own slave pop-
During the later stages of the Haitian Revolution, the United States contributed at least $750,000 and some troops to aid the French effort. The American contribution added to an already significant number of foreigners fighting the slaves, including English, Dutch, Polish, German, and Swiss troops. When the slave colony finally won its independence, the United States withheld official recognition of the republic until 1862. As Senator Robert Hayne of South Carolina explained in 1824, “We never can acknowledge her independence . . . [t]he peace and safety of a large portion of our union forbids us even to discuss [it].”

Although the United States initially refused official recognition of Haiti, increased American involvement in Haitian affairs from the mid-1800s betrayed its interest in the island country. Between 1849 and 1913, American Navy ships entered Haitian waters at least twenty-four times, purportedly to protect American property and lives. Perhaps more interesting to the United States than protecting American lives, however, were the strategic advantages of the Môle St. Nicolas, a safe harbor across the Winward Passage from Cuba. Given this persistent presence in and around the island, the American invasion and subsequent occupation of Haiti in July of 1915 seemed to surprise few observers:

In retrospect, it was merely surprising that the US had held back so long from military intervention. Between 1849 and 1915 American warships had been almost continually present in Haitian waters, ostensibly protecting the lives and property of US citizens. Now, with the final disintegration of Haitian constitutional politics, what had hitherto been seen as a ‘public nuisance’ by US governments had become an unacceptable security risk . . . What mattered was the US perception of Haiti’s strategic importance and its view that European, and particularly German, expansionism in the Caribbean could not be tolerated.

301. FARMER, supra note 287, at 68.
302. CHOMSKY, supra note 300, at 199.
303. Id. at 200. Chomsky argues that the timing of recognition was no coincidence: With the American Civil War underway, Haiti’s liberation of slaves no longer posed a barrier to recognition; on the contrary, President Lincoln and others saw Haiti as a place that might absorb blacks induced to leave the United States (Liberia was recognized in the same year, in part for the same reason).
304. FARMER, supra note 287, at 78-79.
305. CHOMSKY, supra note 300, at 200.
306. FARMER, supra note 287, at 82-83.
307. JAMES FERGUSON, PAPA DOC, BABY DOC: HAITI AND THE DUVALIERS 23-24 (1987). Ferguson also describes the use of Haiti for strategic advantages against Germany in World War I and the increase in American investment in Haiti during the occupation. Id. at 24-25.
Many commentators portray the occupation as a benign effort to restore order to Haiti after its president was lynched.\(^{308}\) Reality contradicts this assertion. More than 3,000 Haitians died fighting the American occupants from 1918 to 1920.\(^{309}\) Moreover, attitudes among important members of the United States government demonstrated little beneficence. President Woodrow Wilson’s Secretary of State Robert Lansing bluntly summed up the prevailing view at the time of the occupation:

The experience of Liberia and Haiti show that the African race are devoid of any capacity for political organization and lack genius for government. Unquestionably there is an inherent tendency to revert to savagery and to cast aside the shackles of civilization, which are irksome to their physical nature. Of course, there are many exceptions to this racial weakness, but it is true of the mass, as we know from experience in this country. It is that which makes the negro problem practically unsolvable.\(^{310}\)

His opinion was not uncommon.\(^{311}\) Regardless of past or present interpretations of the occupation in American history books, many Haitians viewed the United States presence as yet another chapter in an ever-lengthening saga of strained relations with the hemispheric superpower.

The United States continued its occupation through 1930, initially governing Haiti directly, but later establishing a puppet regime after

\(^{308}\) See Noam Chomsky, Democracy Enhancement II: The Case of Haiti, Z MAGAZINE, July/Aug. 1994 (visited Jan. 25, 1999) <http://www.2mag.org/chomsky/index.cfm> (disputing some standard historical accounts of the occupation which assert American beneficence); see also FARMER, supra note 287, at 95-103 (discussing historical accounts portraying Haitians as resisting of the occupation).

\(^{309}\) Greg Chamberlain, Up by the Roots: Haitian History through 1987, in HAITI: DANGEROUS CROSSROADS, supra note 294, at 14. Chamberlain describes the brutality:

The caco leader Charlemagne Péralté was shot dead in his camp in October 1919 by a U.S. Marine disguised as a Black who had been led there by a Haitian mercenary. The North Americans lashed his half-naked body to a door. The resulting Christ-like image has been a powerful symbol of Haitian national identity and resistance ever since.

\(^{310}\) See CHOMSKY, supra note 300, at 224 (quoting then Secretary of State Robert Lansing).

\(^{311}\) Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan once exclaimed, “Dear me, think of it, Niggers speaking French.” Id. at 201. On a trip to Haiti in 1917, then Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin Delano Roosevelt recorded in his diary a conversation he had with a traveling companion who was to become one of the occupation’s leading civilian officials. Id. His companion marveled at the Haitian Minister of Agriculture, commenting that “that man would have brought $1,500 at auction in New Orleans in 1860 for stud purposes.” Id. Colonel Waller from Virginia described the Haitian elite, stating, “they are real niggers and no mistake – there are some very fine looking, well educated polished men here, but they are real nigs beneath the surface.” Id. Ferguson indicated that “[t]here is no reason to assume that Waller’s view was an isolated one.” FERGUSON, supra note 307, at 27.
increased Haitian resistance.\textsuperscript{312} American control of the island nation continued in spite of its obvious violation of international law.\textsuperscript{313} With opposition to the occupation mounting, however, the United States government realized that the puppet regime would not last.\textsuperscript{314} The American military began its withdrawal from the island in 1934 with a treaty recognizing full Haitian sovereignty.\textsuperscript{315} The occupation impacted the subsequent political stability in Haiti in two significant ways: it greatly weakened the civil society and it entrenched the state apparatus in the form of the newly created gendarmerie, “an army to fight the people.”\textsuperscript{316}

These two developments made the climate right for the “election” of Francois “Papa Doc” Duvalier on a black nationalism platform.\textsuperscript{317} In a 1957 election that was riddled with fraud, Papa Doc secured the presidency, thus inaugurating another tempestuous chapter in Haitian history.\textsuperscript{318} Papa Doc proved especially adept at the art of brutal population control, and with the aid of the newly organized Tontons Macoutes,\textsuperscript{319} he terrorized the poor masses more vigorously than any previous Haitian leader.\textsuperscript{320}

Although Papa Doc’s despotic tendencies were well-known in the United States, American support for the dictator was substantial. For example, the Kennedy administration agreed to increase monetary aid to Haiti, much of which provided Papa Doc’s vast wealth, in exchange for the nation’s crucial vote to keep Cuba out of the Organization of

\textsuperscript{312} FARMER, supra note 287, at 93.

\textsuperscript{313} For a brief analysis of the occupation’s illegality, see BALCH, supra note 287, at 163-65 app. A. Among the “generous” acts of the occupying forces, Balch explains, are the seizure of Haitian national funds, the imposition and enforcement of martial law, and the establishment of a puppet government, “chosen in 1915, [and] unsupported by any elected representatives since 1917,” all illegal by the prevailing norms of international law. \textit{Id.}

\textsuperscript{314} See FARMER, supra note 287, at 90-103 (discussing Haitian resistance to the occupation).

\textsuperscript{315} FERGUSON, supra note 307, at 27-28.

\textsuperscript{316} Michel-Rolph Trouillot, \textit{Haiti’s Nightmare and the Lessons of History, in Haiti: Dangerous Crossroads}, supra note 294, at 121, 127.

\textsuperscript{317} The first two Haitian regimes after the American withdrawal proved nothing more than light-skinned puppets of the United States. See FERGUSON, supra note 307, at 30-37. The still powerful resentment of the occupation ultimately doomed these regimes and made the black nationalist movement popular. \textit{Id.} Papa Doc took advantage of this popular sentiment, articulating a platform that framed Haiti’s troubles as a function of race (the mulatto elite versus the black masses), not class. See \textit{id.} (describing Papa Doc’s rise to the presidency).

\textsuperscript{318} See FARMER, supra note 287, at 107 (explaining some of the election’s “anomalies,” such as the 7,500 ballots returned from small island with only 900 registered voters).

\textsuperscript{319} Duvalier created his own personal security force, the Volunteers for National Security (“VSN”). \textit{Id.} at 107. The VSN was dubbed Tontons Macoutes, mythical “bogeymen with sacks,” into which children were stuffed. \textit{Id.} at 108.

\textsuperscript{320} See \textit{id.} at 107-08 (discussing the formation of the Tontons Macoutes and their initial reign of terror); see also FERGUSON, supra note 307, at 40-41 (discussing the formation and functions of the Tontons Macoutes).
American States ("OAS"). The United States primarily justified the support as necessary to "contain the spread of communism" in the region. One commentator noted,

The US dilemma was obvious: to support an unsavory regime which would remain anti-communist if paid to do so, or to withdraw aid and run the risk of 'losing' another formerly dependable fiefdom. The dilemma became all the more acute when Duvalier finally abandoned all pretence of democratic rule.

When Papa Doc became ill in 1970 his control of the country declined noticeably. Papa Doc, however, quickly dashed any hope among the Haitian citizenry of escaping another dictatorship when he appointed his son Jean-Claude to the presidency. The minimum age for the presidency was accordingly lowered from forty to eighteen, and "Baby Doc" took control of Haiti as its "president for life" the day his father died in April of 1971.

Baby Doc's reign of terror was tyrannical at best, and it rolled along with the tacit approval, and surreptitious support, of the United States. Thousands of Haitians attempted to escape Baby Doc's wrath, taking to the seas in rafts in an attempt to make it to foreign shores. The American government, for its part, continued to sup-

321. The money supplied by the United States built the international airport in Port-au-Prince, among other things (such as lining the pockets of Papa Doc and his entourage). Ferguson, supra note 307, at 44.

322. See id. at 43 (describing America's concern over Papa Doc's apparent ambivalence towards communism, a fear that he often used to blackmail the United States for more financial support); see also Farmer, supra note 287, at 109 (outlining the American policy objectives regarding Haiti).

323. Ferguson, supra note 307, at 43.

324. Id. at 55.

325. Id. at 56. Papa Doc made special constitutional arrangements in order to appoint his son.

326. Id.

327. Ferguson, supra note 307, at 57.

U.S. warships were standing by between Haiti and Miami, preventing the return of any exiles who might find the moment appropriate for an uprising. On the Dominican border, too, troops and tanks were prepared to stop unusual movements into Haiti. True to their word, the U.S. administration and its Dominican ally, Balaguer, were determined to ensure the uneventful and uncomplicated succession of Jean-Claude Duvalier.

328. Chomsky, supra note 300, at 206. Ferguson sums up the Duvaliers' rule as:

[The social and economic ruin of Haiti. Between 30,000 and 60,000 people were killed by state terrorism during this period, and many others were exiled and otherwise brutalized. The country had become the poorest in the western hemisphere . . . . Aid, the mainstay of the economy under Duvalier, had been squandered and pilfered at the approximate rate of 80 per cent . . . . Papa Doc was relieving the treasury of some $10 million per year. The US government and other national and international agencies had thus paid dearly to preserve "stability" in Haiti, as had the Haitian people for Washington's toleration of their dictator.
port the dictatorship despite its full knowledge of the extent of its corruption and violence. Baby Doc failed to inspire the same fear as his father in the Haitian population. Consequently, his overthrow became imminent. Rather than face the angry masses, he and his family fled to France in February of 1986, taking with them much of the wealth that they had accumulated at the expense of the Haitian population.

After Baby Doc's departure, Haiti's political situation saw more bloodshed and chaos, at one point having three national leaders in as many months. In 1990 the United Nations-monitored elections in Haiti provided the first democratically elected leader in the country's history. Jean-Bertrand Aristide garnered nearly 67% of the vote in an election with a 70% voter participation rate. Significantly, the closest candidate was Marc Bazin, the choice of the American government, with only 14% of the vote.

As a Catholic priest and an adherent to liberation theology, Aristide gained popularity among poor Haitians with anti-capitalism and anti-American rhetoric. During the first few months of his tenure, Haiti saw a sharp decline in human rights violations and extrajudicial killings, something that should have won him at least a little support from the American government. Aristide's reforms also endeav-

Ferguson, supra note 307, at 57-58.

329. Frontline: Showdown in Haiti (PBS television broadcast, June 14, 1994). The U.S. State Department referred lovingly to Baby Doc and his entourage as “the morally repugnant elite.” Id.

330. See Farmer, supra note 287, at 115-25 (discussing the popular opposition to Baby Doc, led in part by Jean-Bertrand Aristide, during the last year of his reign); see also Chamberlain, supra note 309, at 16-18 (discussing the origins of resistance to Baby Doc).

331. Ferguson, supra note 307, at 119. An unmarked American transport plane from the United States base at Guantanamo in Cuba flew Baby Doc to safety. Id.

332. Id. at 146.

333. See, e.g., id.


335. Chomsky, supra note 300, at 209.

336. See Jean-Bertrand Aristide, In the Parish of the Poor (1990). Aristide frequently used the pulpit to preach against American involvement in Haiti: “The great contrast between the U.S. and Haiti is not because— theologically speaking—God has abandoned us and looks after the U.S., but because our wealth has been, is, and will be stolen by the U.S. It's clear that God has not abandoned us.” Frontline, supra note 329.

337. Of course, no such support was forthcoming. See Farmer, supra note 287, at 161-71 (noting the reforms under Aristide). Human rights abuses decreased by 75% under Aristide. See Chomsky, supra note 300, at 210-12 (citing several human rights reports). Not surprisingly, Aristide's presidency marked the first time since the fall of Baby Doc that the United States concerned itself with human rights abuses in Haiti. Id. The American government hurriedly compiled records of alleged human rights violations committed under Aristide in an attempt to undermine popular support for him in the United States and abroad. Id. at 210-11. No prior
ored to root out government corruption, an especially formidable task in Haiti. The mass migration that began in the late 1970s and early 1980s slowed to nothing more than a trickle, and many Haitians living legally in the United States returned to their homeland.

The hiatus from the violence lasted only a few months for the Haitian people. The military, led by General Raoul Cedras, overthrew Aristide in September of 1991. The resulting terror proved familiar to the Haitian population, over 1,000 citizens of which were killed in the months after the coup. The renewed attack on the citizenry resulted in yet another mass migration. Once again, Haitians tried to escape the junta-sponsored violence via the seas.

3. **Summary: Analyzing American Involvement in Haiti**

The role of the United States in Haitian history is often viewed in either of two ways. The domination of Haiti can be seen as motivated by American strategic concerns. Given the American government's fairly recent obsession with communism, this approach is the most attractive and natural choice. As the brief history above indicates, strategic concerns often dominated Haitian-American affairs. Another perspective, however, provides that the treatment of Haiti is a function of race. The blatant racism that permeated Haitian occupation effectively demonstrates the significance of race in the American-Haitian relationship. Perhaps, however, the best way of looking at American-Haitian relations requires both perspectives as inextricably intertwined.

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administration had compiled such records during the Duvalier years. *Id.* The mainstream American press echoed Washington's concerns about Aristide's dedication to democracy, reality notwithstanding. *Id.*

339. *Id.* at 169.
340. *Id.* at 167.
341. The military as it presently exists was organized by the United States during the occupation to act as a domestic police force. *See* Trouillot, supra note 316, at 127.
342. *See* Farmer, supra note 287, at 180-83 (describing the coup).
343. Compare Human Rights Watch, World Report 119 (1993) (estimating that well over 1,000 people had been executed in the months after the coup) *with* Farmer, supra note 287, at 183 (quoting Bishop Willy Romélus' estimate that 1,500 people were killed in the first few days after the coup). The Commission also reported in 1993 that 1,500 Haitians had been killed by state-sponsored violence, House Subcomm., supra note 111, at 8, though many observers argued that this number is a conservative estimate. *See* Murray Kempton, Haiti Blockade Works Two Ways, Newsday, Oct. 24, 1993, at 31.
344. This is the author's opinion.
345. *See* supra notes 300-23 and accompanying text.
346. *See* supra notes 309-11 and accompanying text.
The United States became involved in Haitian affairs for strategic purposes. Its efforts in support of the French during Haiti's war for independence\(^{347}\) sought to protect its substantial investments in the colony.\(^{348}\) Primarily out of fear over the example the slave nation might set for American slaves,\(^{349}\) the United States government withheld recognition of the new republic for almost sixty years. It finally recognized Haiti in the midst its own civil war, at least in part to use the nation as a dumping ground for its now “free” slave population.\(^{350}\)

Since the mid-nineteenth century, American warships frequently patrolled Haitian waters,\(^{351}\) primarily to stem the tide of European expansionism. The occupation served much the same purpose.\(^{352}\) Post-World War II involvement in Haitian affairs, typically through either puppet regimes or friendly dictators,\(^{353}\) was mostly justified as necessary to contain communism,\(^{354}\) an “obvious” national security issue.

Foreign policy, by definition, involves strategic considerations. Explaining away the domination of Haitian politics as motivated only by such concerns, however, sterilizes the nature of American involvement. Given the prevailing attitudes of United States officials during the occupation, one must conclude that racism has always guided the implementation of United States foreign policy in Haiti. Though admissions of racist tendencies on the part of American policy wonks are much harder to come by in recent times, inferences can reasonably be made when contemplating advice such as Kennan’s.\(^{355}\)

At the short end of Kennan’s “position of disparity” are the developing nations, predominately nations of color. “Vague” and “unreal” objectives such as human rights, of course, offer at least bare protections to those nations that have been drained by their colonizers.\(^{356}\) But to support a system that protects these rights would eliminate the “disparity” that so benefits countries such as the United States. The dominant nation must therefore eschew such policies and manipulate

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347. See supra notes 296-99 and accompanying text.
348. See Farmer, supra note 287, at 68 (noting that, by the time of the French Revolution, 500 ships sailed to St. Domingue ports each year - a “booming business”).
349. See supra notes 300-01 and accompanying text.
350. See supra note 303 and accompanying text.
351. See supra notes 305-16 and accompanying text.
352. See supra notes 305-16 and accompanying text.
353. The dictators were friendly to American interests, though by no means friendly in the traditional sense.
354. See supra notes 322-23 and accompanying text.
355. See Chomsky, supra note 5, at 318.
356. Id.
to the greatest extent possible the domestic politics of developing nations.

History seems to demonstrate that, the more spite the American government has for the population that it is exploiting, the greater its level of involvement. The "otherness" of "foreign" populations as perceived by American officials makes them ripe for conquest. The United States has frequently interfered in the affairs of our "little brown brothers" throughout the hemisphere, but none as much as the Haitian population. Indeed, the "Niggers" might speak French, but the entire race clearly "lack[s] genius for government," and thus deserve no voice in their own affairs. Such is the vile maxim of the masters—not applicable in American relations with, say, France.

C. Comparing Refugee Groups

American manipulation of Haitian domestic affairs through its support of the Duvalier regimes and other unsavory dictators eventually forced Haitian citizens to flee to foreign shores. The Haitian Program was adopted to deal with the deluge of refugees. In contrast, other substantial refugee movements did not elicit similar programs from American policy makers. One might contend that the "special treatment" prescribed by the Haitian Program reflected typical American hypocrisy. After all, the United States was denying relief to the victims of the very conditions that it was responsible for creating. When viewed within the context of the foregoing history, however, the

357. See generally Robert A. Williams, Jr., The American Indian in Western Legal Thought: The Discourses of Conquest (1990) (documenting the sources of legal justification for conquest of normatively divergent peoples in the western hemisphere). Although Williams' history sought to reveal the legal foundations of the United States' conquest and continued subordination of American Indians, his sweeping account of the "discourse of conquest" applies equally to American subordination of other populations. Id. Although Williams argues that the discourses of conquest are based less on pigmentation of "foreign" populations than on their normative divergence, he presumably understands pigmentation as one form of normative divergence. Id. at 149 n.116.


359. Haiti is one of the only and longest occupations by the United States in this hemisphere. Farmer, supra note 287, at 47.

360. Chomsky, supra note 300, at 201; see supra note 311 and accompanying text (quoting then Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan in 1917).

361. Chomsky, supra note 300, at 201; see supra note 310 and accompanying text (quoting then Secretary of State Robert Lansing on his visit to Haiti between 1918 and 1920).

362. See supra notes 328-43 and accompanying text.

363. See supra notes 80-96 and accompanying text.
Haitian Program fits nicely into a well-established pattern of discrimination against the people of Haiti.

The extent of discrimination against Haitian refugees is indeed shocking. As noted earlier, only twenty-eight of 24,600 Haitians were granted asylum under Reagan's interdiction program from 1981 to 1991.\textsuperscript{364} Under Bush's order about 18,095 refugees were interdicted in a six month period, 10,149 of whom were sent back to Port-au-Prince without any kind of status interview.\textsuperscript{365} Most of the remaining Haitians were subsequently deported.\textsuperscript{366}

While Haitian refugees were summarily excluded from American shores during the Haitian Program, refugees from the Soviet Union during roughly the same time period received asylum at a rate of 72.6%.\textsuperscript{367} Romanian refugees were admitted at a rate of 70.3%,\textsuperscript{368} while 61.5% of Iranian refugees were granted asylum.\textsuperscript{369} More astonishing still is the fact that only one week after the \textit{Sale} decision the INS granted automatic eligibility for permanent United States residency to 80,000 Chinese dissidents who fled to the United States after the Tianamen Square massacre.\textsuperscript{370}

The disparity between Haitians and other classes of refugees is most striking in the case of Cuba. Between 1966 and 1980, the United States accepted over 800,000 Cuban nationals.\textsuperscript{371} Indeed, Cubans have enjoyed virtual celebrity status in the United States, as evidenced by the failure of the American government to prosecute forty-eight Cubans who hijacked an airliner and steered it to Florida.\textsuperscript{372} Criminal acts apparently are not sufficient reason to exclude persons fleeing from such harsh political situations, unless they are Haitian.

Of course, these refugees fled enemy or communist regimes, and were thus, according to the American ideology-based policies, political refugees.\textsuperscript{373} It would be absurd to downplay the extent of political discrimination against the people of Haiti.

\textsuperscript{364} See supra notes 111-12 and accompanying text.

\textsuperscript{365} \textit{House Subcomm., supra} note 111, at 7-8; see text accompanying notes 141-43.

\textsuperscript{366} \textit{House Subcomm., supra} note 111, at 8. Of course, these numbers reflect only rough estimates, due primarily to the fact that the INS database contained “numerous inaccuracies.” \textit{Id.} Other mistakes riddled the INS's procedures, such as the “numerous” Haitians found to have credible asylum claims who were “accidentally” sent back to Haiti. \textit{Id.} at 8-9.


\textsuperscript{368} \textit{Id.}

\textsuperscript{369} \textit{Id.}


\textsuperscript{371} Lennox, supra note 367, at 712.

\textsuperscript{372} \textit{U.S. Seeks Legal Ground to Free Group Who Diverted Plane from Cuba}, \textit{L.A. DAILY NEWS}, Dec. 31, 1992, at N15. “Diverted” is a euphemism for “hijacked,” which is precisely what the individuals did. \textit{Id.}

\textsuperscript{373} See supra note 56 and accompanying text.
persecution in these countries at the time. The Haitian population, however, experienced more than just political persecution. The realistic possibility of murder and torture at the hands of the state presented itself to almost every poor Haitian with every sunrise.374

The discrimination that drove the Haitian Program reveals another facet of Washington’s prevailing attitudes toward Haiti. The ideology-based refugee policies reflect a belief that resistance to communist or enemy regimes was widespread in those particular countries. This belies the seemingly substantial domestic support for certain enemy leaders, for example the Ayatollah or Soviet leaders.375 Such leaders’ domestic “popularity” could largely be attributed to strong nationalist tendencies and anti-American stances. Regardless of the reality of their domestic support, the American government often looked upon these favored populations as peoples steeped in the struggle for democracy, needing only help from lax American refugee policies.

In contrast, none of the Haitian leaders, from Papa Doc until Aristide, enjoyed any kind of popular domestic support. Resistance to these regimes was frequent and massive and often rewarded with state-sponsored violence.376 The extent of dissidence in Haiti was demonstrated by the election of Aristide, an event that grassroots organization worked on for over a decade.377 Yet Haitians historically have been treated by the INS as if they lack any political convictions. The INS assumed that persons fleeing Haiti, having no political concerns, could only be leaving for economic reasons.378 The “Niggers” might be able to speak French,380 but they still lack “any capacity for political organization,”381 and thus could never be fleeing for political reasons.

D. Justifying the Haitian Program

The American government and other “impartial” observers posited several reasons for treating Haitian refugees differently. The first justification, already discussed above,382 provided that the Haitians’
flight was prompted by the country’s lugubrious economic state. As such, they were not even “refugees” by any formal legal definition, and thus not entitled to protection. Some other official reasons offered to justify the Haitian Program—all as disingenuous as the economic refugee rationale—attempted to mask its racial contingencies.

1. Some Official Justifications

The American government successfully avoided its legal responsibilities to the Haitians by asserting that the obligation of non-refoulement did not extend to refugees on the high seas because they were in no territory at all. But contrary to the government’s position in the Sale case, the argument accepted by the Court, the United States unquestionably has understood Article 33 to prohibit the forced repatriation of refugees. Reagan’s original interdiction program provided that “no person who is a refugee will be returned without his consent.” The agreement between the United States and Haiti was bound by “international obligations mandated in the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees.”

Similarly, in response to an agreement among Britain, Hong Kong, and Vietnam that provided for the forcible return of Vietnamese refugees, a State Department spokeswoman stated that “[w]e oppose forced or mandatory repatriation.” As demonstrated by this statement, the United States has always opposed forced repatriation of refugees; with the exclusion of Haitians, of course. In voicing its opposition, the United States previously has indicated its understanding that the obligation of non-refoulement focused on the persecution to which a refugee might be subjected in the territory to which she is returned, not the refugee’s location at the time of interdiction. In other words, the availability of the most fundamental protection afforded a refugee turns on the refugee’s need for protection, not on the refugee’s location when she needs that protection. Essentially, the

383. See supra notes 54-55 and accompanying text.
384. See supra notes 155-57 and accompanying text.
386. UNHCR, supra note 258, at 14.
Court’s decision in Sale eviscerated the express purpose of the INA and the Protocol by allowing the United States government to shirk its legal obligations on the basis of a questionable interpretation of Article 33.389

Others might justify the Court’s decision in Sale by pointing out that refugee matters properly fall within plenary power doctrine, and thus were properly subject to judicial deference. As such, issues concerning asylum claims can be checked only through congressional legislation:

The power of exclusion of foreigners being an incident of sovereignty belonging to the government of the United States, as a part of those sovereign powers delegated by the Constitution, the right to its exercise at any time when, in the judgment of the government, the interests of the country require it, cannot be granted away or restrained on behalf of any one . . . . If there be any just ground of complaint . . . it must be made to the political department of our government, which is alone competent to act upon the subject.390

Congress sought to check this power, of course, through the Refugee Act of 1980.391 Its express purpose was to end the Executive’s use of asylum as a foreign policy tool aimed at solidifying opposition to communist regimes.392 Congress properly reigned in Executive abuses in asylum matters, Executive Orders contrary to the Refugee Act such as those comprising the Haitian Program do not enjoy judicial deference.393

The American government further justified the interdiction program as a necessary means of deterring Haitians from making the deadly voyage across the seas to American shores.394 The government asserted that the Haitian Program actually saved Haitians who would have otherwise drowned en route to the United States.395 Of course, most proponents of this argument fail to mention the Haitians that were drowned as the Coast Guard boarded their vessels for purposes of repatriation.396 This rationale also fails to account for widespread Coast Guard abuses.397

392. Chinese Exclusion Case, 130 U.S. at 283.
393. Id. at 305-06.
395. Id.
396. Id. at 603.
397. Farmer, supra note 287, at 263-96 (recounting Coast Guard abuses at sea and on Guantanamo Bay).
In addition to dangers presented by Coast Guard interdiction, Haitians returned to Port-au-Prince in accordance with the Haitian Program were required to report their names and addresses to the Haitian soldiers greeting them at the docks. Many of these interdicted refugees were later arrested at home, some were beaten in public, and others were shot outright.

The United States contended that the interdiction program saved Haitian lives. Returning Haitians to their homeland, however, where human rights violations were a part of quotidian life, in fact subjected many of the interdictees to severe reprisal. Indeed, if a Haitian was not a legitimate refugee under international law upon her initial flight from the country, she certainly would have had a reasonable and particularized fear of persecution upon her return, thus qualifying her as a refugee. Despite the United States government’s assurances otherwise, the Haitian Program violated domestic and international legal obligations. Furthermore, the idea that the program actually saved Haitian lives contradicts reality.

2. More Likely Reasons Behind the Haitian Program

In spite of American assertions to the contrary, the United States government did not discriminate against Haitian refugees “for their own good.” A closer look at other events occurring contemporaneously with the Bush interdiction program helps illuminate the racial contingencies of the Haitian Program in general.

As an immediate matter, advisors sought to assuage domestic concerns over the overwhelming number of Haitians arriving on American shores. While Reagan saw the Haitians as “a serious national problem detrimental to the interests of the United States,” others were less evasive about the real threat that the refugees posed. Former presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan explained, “If we had to take a million immigrants in, say Zulus, next year, or Englishmen, and put them up in Virginia, what group would be easier to assimilate and would cause less problems for the people of Virginia?” Affording the refugees temporary protection would burden the people of Flor-

399. Id.
402. Sale, 509 U.S. at 160.
403. Patrick Buchanan – In His Own Words, FAIR, Feb. 26, 1996 (quoting This Week With David Brinkley (ABC television broadcast, Jan. 8, 1991)).
ida, who, according to Buchanan's logic, would be unable to cope with the massive increase in their black population.

Still, one might point to the wholesale acceptance of Cuban asylum claims as evidence that United States asylum policies are not racially based. After all, Cubans, persons of dubious whiteness, have benefited from relaxed asylum policies far more than any other refugee group. In contrast, the favored treatment of Cubans can be easily explained under an interest convergence analysis, which generally provides that "[t]he interest of blacks in achieving racial equality will be accommodated only when it converges with the interests of whites." Granting Cubans free passage to American shores served to strengthen the United States government's crusade against communism, very much in accordance with the express purpose of the ideology based asylum policies. The only reason to accept these undesirables is to effectively demonstrate to the American public the ills of communism, and thus justify a massive military budget and other forms of corporate welfare. Haitians, unfortunately, lack the "benefits" of living under communist rule and are therefore properly subject to exclusion on an unprecedented level.

Even viewing American policies toward Cuban refugees under an interest convergence analysis, however, does not mean that race has played no role in Cuban asylum claims. Prior to 1994, many, if not most, of the Cubans fleeing to the United States were light-skinned, affluent professionals. But when the Cuban economy was on the verge of collapse in 1994, sending thousands of poor, black Cubans fleeing to American shores, the Clinton administration responded by extending the interdiction program to counteract the flood, thus ending over three decades of favored treatment of Cuban refugees. Perhaps if the refugees were lighter-skinned, richer, or more adept at baseball, then the United States would not have been so quick to deny

404. See supra notes 367-72 and accompanying text.
405. Derrick A. Bell, Jr., Brown v. Board of Education and the Interest Convergence Dilemma, in CRITICAL RACE THEORY: THE KEY WRITINGS THAT FORMED THE MOVEMENT 20, 22 (1995). As Bell explains, "Racial remedies may instead be the outward manifestations of unspoken and perhaps subconscious judicial conclusions that the remedies, if granted, will secure, advance, or at least not harm societal interests deemed important by middle- and upper-class whites." Id.
406. See supra notes 69-70 and accompanying text.
407. JON LEE ANDERSON, CHE GUEVARA: A REVOLUTIONARY LIFE 409 (1997) (pointing out that the affluent and middle class were the first to flee the Cuban Revolution, forming a well-off exile colony of sorts in Miami).
409. Id.
their admittance. As they were, however, their lot fell quickly with that of the Haitians.

Allowing Haitian refugees to present asylum claims offered little benefit to the American government, and thus was not a policy pursued in response to the deluge of refugees. Even if accepting the Haitians served the purposes of American policy makers, as did the acceptance of Cuban refugees, it probably would not have improved their treatment. Clinton's 1994 Cuban interdiction program demonstrated that any benefits gained by the admission of poor blacks fleeing from enemy regimes are easily outweighed when their numbers reach significant levels.410

E. Maintaining the Position of Disparity

Both the Court and the Commission failed to address many of these issues. When viewing the Haitian Program in conjunction with the foregoing history, however, one can reasonably infer the probable American objectives behind the program. A particularly sanguinary version of power politics was American policymakers' driving force as they attempted to ensure a submissive Haitian population that would have no choice but to cater to the whims of United States foreign policy. These inferences are strengthened by the fact that the refugees' exclusion proved an essential link in a chain of contemporaneous events that broke the back of Haiti's nascent democratic movement. Properly fit into this context, the Haitian Program signifies yet another chapter in the history of exploitation.

The first factor contributing to the demise of Aristide's popular movement411 was the complete failure of the sanctions imposed on the de facto government.412 It was clear from the start that the OAS embargo imposed immediately after the coup would be toothless. The blockade never managed to stop the free flow of contraband, especially oil, across the porous Haitian-Dominican border.413 Surprisingly, the United States was unable to detect this embargo evasion,

410. See supra notes 406-07 and accompanying text.
411. See supra notes 337-40 and accompanying text.
412. The first such embargo, imposed immediately after the military coup, was initiated by the OAS. See Chomsky, supra note 308. Another embargo was subsequently imposed by the United Nations. Kim Ives, The Unmaking of a President, in HAITI: DANGEROUS CROSSROADS, supra note 294, at 65, 80.
413. Deidre McFadyen et al., Introduction to HAITI: DANGEROUS CROSSROADS, supra note 294, at 1, 4-6.
probably because it had busied its forces with stopping the flow of Haitian refugees.\footnote{414} Enforcement became even less likely in February of 1992, as the Bush administration announced that it would lift the embargo for assembly plants doing business for American companies.\footnote{415} This “exemption” was continued under the Clinton administration, as trade increased by 50\%.\footnote{416} These facilities were “exempted” because “the Bush and Clinton administrations believed these [U.S.-owned] companies were so vital to Haiti that they allowed them to continue operating during the embargo.”\footnote{417} Of course, this shift mostly benefited Haiti’s business elite who continued to profit from the import/export business generated by the “exemption.”\footnote{418} In turn, the elite, who initially financed Aristide’s overthrow, helped sustain the vitality of the putchists.\footnote{419}

As the embargo continued in 1993, American trade with Haiti increased by more than half.\footnote{420} In June of 1993, the United Nations Security Council attempted to increase the pressure on the junta through Resolution 841, a mandatory global embargo on oil and arms supplies to Haiti.\footnote{421} The new United Nation’s embargo did little to destabilize the regime, however, as contraband continued to flow into Haiti from the Dominican Republic.\footnote{422}

Finally, the United States announced in May of 1994 that it would tighten the embargo by lifting the exemption for American businesses.\footnote{423} The plan also banned all commercial flights and financial transactions with Haiti.\footnote{424} The American government, however, failed to sever the illegal regime’s substantial support from the Haitian elite. The ban on financial transactions with Haiti did not include the assets of the business elite. Thus, the elite were allowed to safely transfer their money out of American accounts and into other foreign

415. Id.
416. Id.
417. Id. (quoting from the \textit{Christian Science Monitor}). Chomsky wondered, “While the vision of our benevolence brings tears to the eyes, nevertheless duller minds might wonder why only U.S.-owned enterprises have the curious property of being so beneficial to the suffering people of Haiti.” \textit{Id}.
419. Id. at 222.
421. Ives, \textit{supra} note 412, at 80.
422. Id.
423. Chomsky, \textit{supra} note 414 and accompanying text.
424. Id.}
banks where it could be used to sustain the junta. Additionally, although the United States paid lip service to the enforcement of the oil embargo, American oil companies regularly subverted it under Washington's blind eye. By the time the American government finally reprimanded the American companies, the Haitian elite had already stockpiled their oil depots for use by the military. Thus, the coup regime remained steadfast, constantly looking to thrash any peasant that dared raise her head.

The sanctions, however, were not completely ineffective. One Haitian observed that "the people the embargo was supposed to help are being hurt. They have to pay for things with a 300% increase. They aren't really hurting any of the big guys. The big guys in the country are making more money than ever for the past two years." While the Haitian poor and middle class lived under the embargo without electricity and oil products, the elite and the military regime enjoyed all of the usual amenities. "There was, in effect, no embargo against the coup supporters — at the same time the long standing embargo against the Haitian poor was strengthened," one commentator observed. Indeed, the embargoes crushed the poor, while simultaneously solidifying the junta's control over the country.

A second series of events that contributed to the subversion of the Haitian popular movement involved the negotiations over Aristide's return to power. Immediately after the coup, the OAS convened a rare emergency session in order to condemn the action and plan a course for Aristide's return, resolutions that were explicitly supported by the United States.

During the following months, an OAS delegation worked with the coup leaders while the elected president remained in exile. It was clear from the start of the process, however, that OAS and American diplomats would require significant concessions by Aristide. The first proposed agreement, for example, would have lifted the embargo in exchange for more negotiations, although it mentioned nothing about restoring Aristide. Not surprisingly, Aristide rejected the proposal

425. Id.
426. Farmer, supra note 418, at 221.
427. Id.
428. Frontline, supra note 329.
429. Farmer, supra note 418, at 221.
430. Id. at 223.
431. Ives, supra note 412, at 65.
432. Id.
433. Id. at 71.
and was quickly labeled "intransigent" by coup parliamentarians and American officials for refusing to be "flexible."\textsuperscript{434}

Aristide learned the lesson quickly; if he was to regain his seat as president, he would have to play along with the very people responsible for his overthrow. His first concession in the negotiation process was his popular prime minister, René Préval.\textsuperscript{435} Aristide was pressured by American ambassador Alvin Adams and OAS special envoy Augusto Ocampo to replace Préval with either Marc Bazin or René Théodore, both choices of the junta.\textsuperscript{436} When Aristide refused, the American press once again lambasted him for being "intransigent."\textsuperscript{437} He eventually acceded to the demands and named Théodore as Préval’s replacement.\textsuperscript{438} Théodore was removed by the military shortly thereafter.\textsuperscript{439}

The first major agreement to come out of the negotiations was the "Protocol of Accord," signed in Washington in February 1992.\textsuperscript{440} The agreement provided for:

1) an amnesty for the army and other authors of the coup; 2) respect of parliamentary legislation ratified after the coup, which included Cédras’ appointment as head of the army through 1994; and 3) the lifting of the embargo "immediately after the ratification of the prime minister and the inauguration of the government of national consensus."\textsuperscript{441}

Significantly, there was no specific date set for Aristide’s return.\textsuperscript{442} Aristide later backed out of the agreement, asserting that he did not agree to amnesty for Cédras since “common criminals” were excluded from the amnesty.\textsuperscript{443} Once again, the American press disparaged him.\textsuperscript{444}

After the failure of the Washington Protocol, the junta attempted to win the approval of the international community by naming a new prime minister to head the reorganized civilian government.\textsuperscript{445} The junta appointed Marc Bazin, an obvious attempt to win approval from

\textsuperscript{434.} Id.\textsuperscript{435.} Id.\textsuperscript{436.} Id. Note that Bazin was the American-supported opponent of Aristide in the 1990 elections. See supra note 335 and accompanying text.\textsuperscript{437.} Ives, supra note 412, at 71.\textsuperscript{438.} Id. at 72.\textsuperscript{439.} Id.\textsuperscript{440.} Id. at 74.\textsuperscript{441.} Id.\textsuperscript{442.} Id.\textsuperscript{443.} Ives, supra note 412, at 74.\textsuperscript{444.} Id. at 74-75.\textsuperscript{445.} Id. at 75.
the United States government. With this appointment, the junta had successfully consolidated its rule, and Aristide was forced to negotiate directly with Bazin.

As the negotiations continued, the American government circulated a pamphlet documenting human rights abuses under Aristide's brief tenure, although none of the reports alleged state-sponsored violence. The CIA reported the contents of Aristide's medicine cabinet as proof of his mental instability. The press echoed disgust over the exiled president's perceived ungratefulness, and members of Congress began shifting on their support for Aristide's reinstatement.

The tepid American support for the democratically elected government of Haiti left Aristide with little bargaining power as he entered into a new set of negotiations in June 1993. It was appropriate that, as the Coast Guard was returning refugees to Haiti, the negotiations took place on Governor's Island, New York, a Coast Guard base. The final agreement set the schedule for Aristide's return:

- Aristide would name a new prime minister, the UN would lift sanctions, the parliament would undertake a series of reforms of the police and Armed Forces under the supervision of a UN force, Aristide would decree a blanket amnesty for those involved in the coup and then Cédras would voluntarily retire at some point before Aristide's return, which was set for October 30, 1993.

The United Nations/United States-brokered Accord was a disaster for the Haitian people. The newly appointed prime minister provided the junta with the legitimacy of the Aristide government, while the end of the embargo allowed it to further consolidate its grip on the country. As the negotiations were closing, the coup leaders in Haiti renewed their attack on the peasant movement. It should have surprised few observers when the October 30 restoration date came and went with no hint that the military planned to relinquish control.

Although the United States initially appeared adamant about Aristide's return, American negotiators dragged their feet throughout the negotiations. Officials at Governor's Island continued to make difficult demands, knowing well that Aristide would not accede to many of
their stipulations. When Aristide repeatedly refused to accept an amnesty clause for the coup leaders, American negotiators such as Lawrence Pezzullo accused him of being "obstructionist," apparently confounded by Aristide's reluctance to let murderers go with impunity. It is interesting to note that Aristide was labeled "intransigent" throughout the negotiation process for his refusal to negotiate with an illegal regime, one composed of bona fide terrorists. Furthermore, when the restoration date passed with no change of power, the American government showed little in the way of response, asserting that democracy in Haiti was not worth one American life. The message to the poor Haitian masses was clear: there would be no help from the United States.

Aristide did not return as president of Haiti until early 1995. American delay tactics had worked to perfection, as the democratically elected president was nearing the end of his five-year constitutional term having actually served only twenty months. He was barred from running again. The lengthy negotiations served to legitimize the junta and extend their stay in power. Additionally, the sieve-like embargo further strengthened the military's grip on Haiti's poor. The final piece of the puzzle, the Haitian Program, effectively broke any resistance to the illegal regime, and life for the Haitian poor continued in tragedy as usual.

Aristide once said, "I cannot accept that Haiti should be whatever the United States wants it to be." This attitude obviated the need for his prompt removal. The Haitian military, in the familiar position of doing American bidding, did not let American officials down. While the junta was consolidating its strength during the negotiations and international embargo, the United States made sure that the people responsible for Aristide's success, namely the Haitian peasantry, were sufficiently punished for their mistake. Accordingly, Haitians fleeing the widespread violence were immediately returned by Coast Guard cutters.

456. Ives, supra note 412, at 81-83.
457. Id. at 82.
458. It is reminiscent, of course, of past American and Israeli refusal to negotiate with the PLO for much the same reason. See Chomsky, supra note 5, at 373 (discussing reasons behind U.S./Israeli rejectionism). American hypocrisy has seldom reached such depths.
459. Ives, supra note 412, at 85.
460. Farmer, supra note 418, at 224.
461. Chomsky, supra note 308.
462. Id.
463. CHOMSKY, supra note 300, at 209.
464. Id. at 210-11.
465. See supra notes 110-22 & 138-39 and accompanying text.
The Haitian masses understood the message well. In the 1990 elections, 70% of the voting population went to the polls to vote for Aristide compared to just 29% turn-out rate in the 1995 elections.\textsuperscript{466} Though former Aristide prime minister René Prévall succeeded him as president, the series of neoliberal economic reforms thrust upon Aristide by American negotiators as a part of the restoration agreements thwarted his popular agenda.\textsuperscript{467} Aristide’s proposed increase in the minimum wage to $3.20 a day was scrapped, leveling the minimum at about $2.00 a day.\textsuperscript{468} American companies assembling clothing in Haiti no doubt breathed a sigh of relief, by 1984 Haiti was the ninth largest assembler of American goods in the world.\textsuperscript{469} Post-coup Haiti also proved an excellent market for American goods such as rice, which currently accounts for over half of the country’s consumption.\textsuperscript{470} This in spite of the fact that over 60% of the population attempts to make its living by growing crops like rice.\textsuperscript{471} Meanwhile, modest social programs such as the literacy project initiated under Aristide have been eliminated in accordance with IMF austerity measures.\textsuperscript{472} Indeed, the Haitian Program worked exceedingly well in reinforcing the traditional position of disparity, relegating the Haitian population to its “rightful place” with other nations of color.

III. RECONSIDERING REFUGEE LAW: 
THE IMPACT OF JUDICIAL “OBJECTIVITY”

The Sale decision is perhaps most significant for the things that it failed to do rather than the law that it created. The most apparent impact of the Court’s decision was the continued vitality of the Haitian Program, this time under the aegis of legality.\textsuperscript{473} More importantly, by ignoring the effects of the Haitian Program and the historical context in which it took place, the Court narrowed the scope of its inquiry. In doing so, it passed on the opportunity to at least draw attention to the long-time discrimination against Haitian refugees, a practice that fits nicely into an overall pattern of abuse and

\textsuperscript{466} Clara James, Haiti: The Roof Is Leaking, Z MAGAZINE, June 1997, at 36.
\textsuperscript{467} See supra notes 435-39 and accompanying text.
\textsuperscript{468} Farmer, supra note 418, at 221.
\textsuperscript{469} James, supra note 466, at 33-34.
\textsuperscript{470} Id.
\textsuperscript{471} Id.
\textsuperscript{472} Id. For additional information on the effects of IMF and World Bank programs in Haiti, see Farmer, supra note 418, at 226-27. Farmer’s essay also describes Haiti’s status after Aristide’s return. Id.
\textsuperscript{473} President Clinton eventually ended the interdiction aspect of the Haitian Program after being pressured by Randall Robinson’s hunger strike. Colman McCarthy, Classic 27-day Hunger Strike Convinces Clinton, NAT’L CATH. REP., May 27, 1994, at 10.
subordination of the Caribbean nation at the hands of the United States. The Court eschewed "vague" and "unreal" objectives such as human rights, favoring instead the political expediency of the Haitian Program.

Although the Court’s analysis fails on its own terms, it is likely a more favorable disposition for the Haitians would still lack sufficient scope to reveal the extent of American violations of international law. In an attempt to give an “objective” hearing to the legal issues involved in Sale, the Court ignored things such as historical context and the impact of the of the interdiction program on Haitian refugees, focusing instead on merely “legal” questions. As already outlined above, however, in order to fully consider America’s international obligations within the object and purpose of the Protocol, the Court should have found it necessary to address precisely these broader issues.

Additionally, it is nearly impossible to give a completely objective hearing of a legal issue that has such profound implications for United States foreign policy. Indeed, the Court’s decision reflected an institutional “agenda” very much in accordance with its function as a branch of the government. Laws and treaty provisions are often vague (although probably not in this case), and it is the judiciary’s job to interpret them. In trying to do so, judges

have to draw on their understanding of politics, economics, social organization, and the like to arrive at their interpretation of the law.

It promotes our understanding of how the courts work to see that those understandings are “political,” in a useful sense that doesn’t impute crass motivations to the judges.

Although the Court claimed that the issues presented in Sale were strictly legal issues, the Court’s opinion was in fact “political” in its conspicuous silence on significant aspects of the Haitian refugee crises.

Although the Commission’s disposition of the Sale case involved a much broader inquiry than that of the Sale Court, it too failed to adequately address all sources of the Haitian Program, namely American foreign policy designs. Furthermore, the Commission’s consideration of the legal questions presented in the Haitian refugee case was constrained by the racial contingencies of the very international instruments that it was seeking to enforce. Eliminating future “Haitian

474. See Chomsky, supra note 5, at 318.


Programs” will prove exceedingly difficult as long as the United States continues to seek and maintain its position of disparity. At an initial glance, it would seem easy to eliminate American manipulation of refugee law for foreign policy purposes by simply convincing the United States government to remain true to the spirit, if not the letter, of international and domestic law. Aside from being an unlikely solution, this approach—the path chosen by the Commission—fails to account for racial contingencies inherent in the formal legal “protections” for refugees.

As James Hathaway has argued, the very definition of “refugee” in international refugee law was intentionally drawn up to be somewhat malleable.477 By defining refugee in terms of social and political rights, the drafters of the Convention singled out the difficulties of the Soviet Bloc countries.478 By excluding socioeconomic persecution and the like, the drafters eliminated the realm of problems in the rest of the Western world, thus virtually eliminating “western refugees” by definition.479 The foundation of the formal international refugee protections, therefore, was laid in order to conform to Western political objectives.

The original definition of a refugee in the Convention included only those individuals whose flight was prompted by any pre-1951 event within Europe.480 This definition, promulgated under the auspices of the United Nations, effectively doled out the burden of absorbing European refugee movements to member-states without requiring reciprocation by European countries for non-European refugees.481 The definition was not amended until the drafting of the Protocol more than fifteen years later.482 Furthermore, the competency of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (“UNCHR”) office extended protection to include those displaced persons falling outside of the formal protections.483 Thus, the UNCHR could coordinate regional resettlement for displaced persons from Third World countries while denying them relief under the (Eurocentric) formal instruments.484 Assistance to Third World “refugees,” therefore, is merely voluntary, whereas in-

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478. Id. at 149-50.
479. Id. at 150.
480. Id. at 152-53.
481. Id. at 156.
483. Hathaway, supra note 477, at 158.
484. Id. at 159.
International obligations, such as non-refoulement, are mandatory for European refugees under the formal regime.

Finally, although the refugee definition was changed by the Protocol, most Third World refugees remain de facto excluded from formal protections.485 "Persecution" as it is defined by the formal system reflects a European understanding of the term. Most Third World refugee movements are prompted by broadly-based political and economic turmoil rather than individualized "persecution" as it is understood in the European context.486 By clearly denying protection for those fleeing dismal economic situations, the drafters of the formal protections effectively precluded individuals fleeing from Third World countries. These persons, inevitably people of color, will always be fleeing the economic conditions inherent in their political turmoil.

In the case of the Haitians, the formal regime for refugee protection failed because it was built on a foundation of Eurocentric ideological preferences. The refugee movement from Haiti was precisely the kind of exodus that the drafters of the Convention feared. State parties to the Protocol and/or Convention will continue to shirk their formal responsibilities unless the definition of refugee is broadened to account for economic factors. Furthermore, the understanding of "persecution" must be more generalized.487 Finally, the Protocol and Convention must be enforced in a manner that does not allow a nation to override its international obligations for domestic concerns.

IV. Conclusion

When Sale was decided, it was easy for most commentators to criticize judicial approval of the Haitian Program. To them, it was a set of policies that needed to be changed in order to handle all refugees in an equitable fashion. When placed against the background of past Haitian-American relations, however, one understands that the inequities go far beyond refugee politics. Rather than an isolated instance of injustice perpetrated by a government that typically acts within the dictates of fairness and equality, the Haitian Program reflects another chapter in Haiti's history of subordination and exploitation at the hands of American foreign policy. The extent of American manipulation of Haiti's internal politics, history demonstrates, is easily allowa-

485. Id. at 162.
486. Id.
487. The current definition of persecution requires an individualized and particularized fear of persecution. It is the argument of this Comment that this definition should be expanded to include other factors such as economic fears. See supra text accompanying note 55 for the current definition of refugee.
ble because of its population's blackness. Indeed, it is not hard to imagine the color of which Kennan's position of disparity is generally composed: peoples not worthy of "vague" and "unreal" objectives such as "human rights" and "world benefaction" because of the darkness of their skin. Without this backdrop for discussing the Haitian Program, its significance will be forever consigned to the ashcan of history: forever buried deep within the American conscience.

James R. Zink

488. See supra text accompanying note 309.
489. See CHOMSKY, supra note 5, at 318.