

sidered particularly worthy of confidence because, from his first press conference, he adopted the same militant anti-Communist position as his father. Those who saw the shadow of Fidel Castro and the hand of Moscow behind all nationalist movements in Latin America were reassured.

Psychological ploy

In this perspective, liberalization was seen merely as a psychological ploy aimed at projecting a new image of the Duvalier Government abroad and giving credibility, at home, to the idea of "change in continuity", in order to make the Government of Jean-Claude acceptable to all. The youth of the head of state was a key selling-point, since he could be represented as a symbol of hope and renewal.

Initially the operation opened the way for an influx of foreign capital. François Duvalier's stormy nationalism and his extremely bad reputation abroad had deterred foreign investors, who were uneasy, not about the tyrant himself, but about the climate of uncertainty he caused. On the other hand, Jean-Claude Duvalier, through his Government's "diplomatic availability" and *laissez-faire* approach, practised an "open-door" policy that found its clearest expression in the establishment of commercial banks and assembly plants.

The enhancement of Haiti's international image through liberalization also entailed modernization of the machinery of repression, which gave the Government, pressured to some extent by public groups, the opportunity to make a conciliatory gesture and temporarily do without the rather conspicuous *Tontons Macoutes*. They have since gone back on duty. At the same time, the army increased its firepower, trained its anti-guerrilla corps, learned modern close-combat techniques, and increased its attack capacity to an unparalleled level. In this connection, the 1975 resumption of foreign military assistance gave official sanction to a clandestine and unofficial trade that had continued in spite of the Kennedy embargo.

Notwithstanding the refinement of the machinery of repression, certain significant signs of resistance have appeared in Haiti. In the social sphere, particular note should be taken of demonstrations by farmers who, shouting "Down with famine!", have seized undistributed stocks of food provided by international relief organizations and of the turbulence of others whose land has been expropriated, as well as of disturbances by assembly-plant workers demanding back pay and wage-increases and of a paralysing strike by public-transportation drivers. In the political sphere, men-

tion should be made of the release of 105 political prisoners in September 1977, of the creation of a human-rights league, and of the efforts by certain journalists to regain control of their professional association and to produce politically-independent publications.

This outburst of political activity does not mean that the Government of Haiti wishes to revise the doctrinal and ideological tenets on which its power rests or to abandon its autocratic treatment of the Haitian people. Concessions were wrung from the Duvalier dictatorship after a long, hard and bitter struggle. The battle for an "independent press" merits special attention.

The press

Although Jean-Claude Duvalier has renounced neither his father's doctrine nor his methods, he has nonetheless undertaken to create a new political image for himself. To this end, he tolerated the operation, in the capital, of two weekly publications and a radio station the content of which made them stand out from the others. Though they did not initiate truly democratic debate, they made veiled criticisms of the previous Duvalier regime and, through allusions to other governments, such as Franco's in Spain and Salazar's in Portugal and the current Nicaraguan regime under Somoza, they criticized the present Government of Haiti as well. Furthermore, this new impetus persists in this fringe element of the press, in spite of the "disappearance" of a radio announcer, the assassination of a reporter for the weekly *Petit Samedi Soir*, and an attempt on the life of Pastor Nérée, editor of *Hebdo Jeune Presse*, which is not being printed because the conditions required for the production of an independent publication are lacking. The movement has also had to endure censure meted out to isolated journalists or editorial staffs, as well as police strong-arm sessions at which a single journalist might confront 17 policemen.

The Government faces the dilemma that it cannot be openly repressive without destroying the fiction of liberalization it is itself fabricating. The regime reaps political benefits from the desire for independence felt by a section of the press — benefits that are particularly valuable because the journalists know the limits of the state's tolerance, having paid the price for overstepping them. This so-called independent press never discusses, for example, the possibility of a political alternative — everything must happen "within the framework of the present system". At the very most, it calls for a dialogue involving all Haitians