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Brief Mutiny Launched By Haitian Soldiers

by Barbara Khol

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On June 3, soldiers at an army-run police station in Petionville, a suburb of Port-au-Prince, launched a mutiny, but quickly returned to duty. President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and Prime Minister Rene Preval intervened directly to quell the disturbance. The soldiers accused their commander, Capt. Ulrich Leandre, of arresting and beating a soldier, and requested Aristide's assistance to settle the dispute. Prisoners cheered as Leandre was driven away in a jeep behind the white presidential car. Since Aristide was inaugurated in February he has taken steps to purge the military of commanders who are notorious for rights abuses or corruption. Another disturbance took place several hours later at an army transport unit in Port-au-Prince. Soldiers fired weapons in the air and briefly blocked downtown traffic to press for the dismissal of their commander, Col. Phillipe Carrenard. They accused him of numerous abuses, including allegedly forcing them to do non-military jobs for him. Independent radio reports said the disturbance was brief, and the Army High Command sent a negotiating team to investigate. (Basic data from AP, 06/03/91)

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