

## **Notes from observer meeting**

**Saturday, July 17**

**Catholic Church, Wanamèt (in French, Ouanaminthe)**

**27 Sokowa members attended (notice given three hours prior)**

**Release date: July 27, 2004**

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### **Context and background**

The current situation is a result of several factors. In 1987-1988, with a lack of true government, foreign agricultural goods flooded the market, crippling local production. Many small peasant farmers found they couldn't compete with subsidized foreign rice, etc. Out of work, many peasants flocked to the already-crowded cities, with no job prospects. Instead of exporting rice, Haitian local production has been irrevocably crippled by the influx of foreign rice, for example. The same is true of sugar, as the government was forced to sell off its sugar-production factory, triggering a further loss of jobs for Haitians and a decline in the national economy.

Forced with no other choice, many people cut down trees to make money selling charcoal, further depleting Haiti's natural resources. Also at the time, foreign manufactured goods were flooding into Haiti, causing a trade deficit.

The embargo started in 1992 set the country back some more. Many lost their jobs.

All of these are reasons why Haiti got into such a desperate situation in which this Free Trade Zone, promising assembly jobs, could even be considered helpful. The problem was created by foreign exploitation in the first place, setting up the supposed need for further foreign exploitation.

In addition to Haiti's poverty, this situation has been exacerbated by the weak state of the government to protect its citizens, unable to enforce labor laws and other protections. This is also not an accident, according to the local organizers. Since Aristide's return from the three-year coup in 1994, foreign institutions have disrupted Haiti's sovereignty, and gradually pulled out funding to Haiti, until 1999/2000, when most international institutions stopped paying the government altogether. International aid was sent directly to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), many of them international organizations.

In 2002, Aristide had a National Plan for agriculture, emphasizing national production and self-sufficiency. This fertile Maribaroux plain was to play a central role in this effort.

The relationship between Haiti and the Dominican Republic is also an important background. While it is true that Haiti invaded the territory now called the Dominican Republic in 1801 and 1822, since then, the situation has reversed. Of note is dictator Trujillo's 1937 massacre of 35,000 Haitians living in the Dominican Republic (from which the Massacre River, forming part of the border, is named). Also, more recently, Haitian born (or people of Haitian descent) workers are exploited, cutting cane fields (batey) in conditions that are often described as slavery.

In August 2003, the World Bank gave a loan of \$20 million to private Dominican company Grupo M (and subsidiary Codevi, Corporation for Development of Industry) to build this free trade zone. It was the first such money to come to Haiti since the international donors instituted an aid freeze to Haiti in 1999/2000, citing Haiti's unstable political situation as justification. People were hopeful at the prospect of employment but it was not long before hopes were dashed. When building the Free Trade Zone, peasants' land was confiscated, and they did not receive any compensation. There were protesters, (mainly civil society organizations) that claimed that this was 200 acres of fertile agricultural land and should not be developed into an industrial zone. Their protests were in vain. George Augustin stated that no money was reimbursed to the peasants that lost their land due to the building of the Free Trade Zone.

Also in August, the United States government gave ammunition and other aid to the Dominican Army, in part to help police the border and the Free Trade Zone.

There is a current lack of institutional control and government protection. The Dominican army is free to do as they please, and employers like Grupo M are free to act with impunity. The armed irregular forces (the so-called "rebels" who played a central role in Aristide's removal) are in control of the city, freely roaming around, heavily armed. They are occupying the army base. An armed, uniformed officer stopped the bus our team took on the way out of town. Nationwide, the army is threatening a return to violence if the interim government doesn't pay them ten years' back wages. Their ultimatum is August 10.

Given the insecurity in the area, and given the time of our visit, cut short because of problems with transport, we did not get to speak to representatives of Grupo M, and were denied access to the inside of the factory. We spoke with a handful of non-union members who are still employed at the factory, but the bulk of this information is from a series of meetings, and individual interviews.

### **Promises of the Free Trade Zone**

The Free Trade Zone consists of a training center and two factories (one producing jeans for Levi-Strauss company and the other manufacturing t-shirts for Sara Lee company). Both factories are owned and managed by Grupo M. According to Pierre Ronal, vice coordinator of Sokowa (recently fired), Grupo M representatives came to recruit workers in May 2003. He states that they required job applicants to have a university degree or at least have finished schooling. He states that the applicants asked about the work conditions and were told that at 100 per cent capacity they would be making 1,000 pairs of jeans a day per line. Their salary at this 100 per cent capacity, they were told, would be 250 gourdes a day (at that time the exchange rate was approximately 35 gdes to every US\$ so the equivalent of \$7 US per day, \$35 per week) minimum. They were told that they would receive production bonuses in addition to their base salary when quotas were reached or exceeded. These were all verbal statements yet, given local precedent (however all of these workers are high school graduates, representing less than 20% of

Haiti's population that has this level of education), these were the expectations of those hired when they entered the factory. The Free Trade Zone opened in August 2003.

### **What actually happened...**

The hired workers had to spend 4 months in the training center 'learning the trade' and during those four months they received 300 gourdes per week – the equivalent of \$8.60 US each week.

The eight-hour working day, stated in Haitian law, is not being respected at the factory. Workers would begin as early as 6 a.m. without any fixed time that they could leave. Even though they had previously been told 4:30 – 5 p.m., it was often later than this. Workers also came to work on Saturday and only received a little 'gratification' for this extra work. Haitian law states that workers should be paid double if they work on Saturday.

The need for these excessively long working days resulted from the fact that Grupo M changed the quota to 1,500 – 2,000 pairs of jeans a day per line. The factory had 10 lines at that time and each line had between 38-40 workers. (That is to say that if each line produced 1,500 pairs of jeans, the weekly output would be 15000 x 5 = 75,000 pairs of jeans.) Grupo M had previously stated that the factory would be working at 100 per cent capacity if it produced 1,000 pairs of jeans per line. The workers received a base salary of 432 gourdes a week (approx. \$12.34 US), slightly more than the minimum wage that just increased in 2003 to 70 gourdes per day (350 per week).

Workers claim that regardless of the number of pairs of jeans produced most did not receive production bonuses. They testified that regularly they would meet quotas Monday and Tuesday for example and then on Wednesday they would be idle for hours and not given any work to do. Then they would make and perhaps exceed the quota on Thursday and Friday they would only be given enough work to last a half-day, even though they would sit there idle during the remaining time. They believed that management purposely did this. Workers also claim that on several occasions some finished products were deliberately not counted as part of the quota. No percentage of the production bonuses were paid and so for example if one had to produce 1500 to earn a bonus and the total came to 1499 she/he would not receive any bonus. Employees received their salaries in cash in a blank envelope, so workers have no records of the amounts they were paid. Only recently did Grupo M begin to give workers a legible pay slip with their salary.

**On 25 February 2004**, armed soldiers in uniform, members of the Dominican Republic army, entered the Free Trade Zone.

**On 26 February 2004**, committee members of Sokowa were to meet with representatives of Codevi, including the general manager of Grupo M, Lambert Cruz and Fernando Capellan, founder and owner of Codevi. When Sokowa insisted that they would only meet with management as a group of 12 people, not one or two delegates by themselves, they were told that Cruz was unavailable. That same day Ariel Jerome was fired. Jerome

states that his machine was broken and so he was asked by a supervisor to use another worker's machine and to complete not only his own quota but that of the other worker also. Dominican soldiers forcibly removed Ariel Jerome. He was the first victim of physical assault by the soldiers.

Four days later on **1 March 2004**, in the midst of political crisis in Haiti, Grupo M fired 34 workers. The reason given was that Levi Strauss had decreased its orders. No written termination letters were given to those let go from their positions. The Dominican soldiers, who had traded in their military uniforms for civilian clothes, helped to ensure that the workers did not protest too loudly.

**29<sup>th</sup> March 2004:** Grupo M administered an injection to workers without giving them any prior notice and without consulting the Ministry of Public Health (MSPP) in Haiti. It was announced for the first time that morning that all workers had to receive this vaccination for tetanus. Management made it clear that receiving this vaccination was not an option. Some were told to leave if they did not take the vaccination. Workers were told that if they collapsed at work due to sickness the company would not take responsibility unless they went for this vaccination. The process was as follows; workers would line up, and no personal details were taken from them beforehand. They would receive a shot and then their identification badge would be used to record their names and identification number. There was no opportunity for questions and no explanation on what injection they were receiving. Several workers claimed that at least two of the 'health workers' were from the Dominican Republic. According to at least 15 witnesses, they remember distinctly that they were given a shot from a syringe that was filled with a mixture of two different substances from two different 'medical containers' that were on the table. They claim that one 'flacon' - laboratory flask or tube held a substance that was clear like water and the other was cloudy in color.

On **13 April 2004**, a meeting was held between a delegation of the Sokowa union of workers and Grupo M management. Also represented at the meeting was Batay Ouvriye, various other Haitian labor groups and a representative from Levi-Strauss. Sokowa presented in writing a list of the 34 workers that had been revoked on March 1<sup>st</sup> and asked for their reinstatement. This was the first meeting in which it seemed progress was being made. The management agreed to reinstate the workers that had been fired, to make a public announcement to employees about free choice with regard to joining the union and they also agreed to meet with union delegates. When Sokowa tried to discuss the question of salaries, they were promised salaries would be discussed at another meeting on 1 June 2004. One worker at our meeting stated that on this date everyone present, including representatives from a Human Rights delegation witnessed the presence and intimidation of the Dominican soldiers at the Free Trade Zone.

The very next day, **14 April 2004** when the reinstated employees returned, they were forced to wait in the training facility before being allowed to return to the factory. They were intimidated in other ways also and made to feel inferior, e.g. they were given 'temporary' work badges.

On **April 19<sup>th</sup> 2004**, workers received another shot, again without any advance warning. They were told that the first vaccination was of no use unless they got this one too. Management announced that there would be a third one in the months to follow. The same procedure took place: workers lined up for a shot in the arm, afterwards gave their badge, their names were written down and then immediately they returned to their workstations. Again witnesses claim that they received one injection containing a mixture that came from two tubes, one clear and one cloudy substance.

#### **Subsequent to the ‘Vaccinations’**

A significant number of workers showed signs of ill-health, some within three days, others as long as a month after the second vaccination. Four pregnant women who received the injections at the factory lost their babies. Those women are

Eveline Jean Baptiste – the baby was born dead at 8 months  
Asilia Deshommes – lost the baby at 4 months  
Michelle Bertelene – 4 months pregnant  
Claudette Orilus – 4 months pregnant

Several women who had received the shots reported irregularities and problems with their menstrual cycle. We heard testimonies from workers who claim that the effects of the ‘vaccinations’ were strange and confusing to them. One told us that she did not want to take the vaccinations, her supervisor forced her to take it both times, in March and in April. She states that before the vaccinations she would regularly menstruate on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. On May 15<sup>th</sup> she began bleeding and it continued for 22 days. She avoided going to the clinic in the Free Trade Zone and went to the government Hospital in Wanamèt. She told us that when the doctor examined her, much later, he asked her if she worked in the Free Trade Zone. She replied that she did and the doctor told her that the workers in the Free Trade Zone were undergoing a family planning regimen<sup>1</sup>.

Another young woman, was told the same thing when she went to see the doctor at the hospital with menstrual problems. There were at least two women present at the meeting that have not had any menstrual bleeding since the second shot on April 19<sup>th</sup>. A man reported that his wife always had normal periods each month. Since she took the second shot at the factory, she has been having two periods every month. They last several days and are accompanied by stomach pain, day and night. They have twin babies and he stated that before the injections his wife had a lot of breast milk, since she has virtually none. He sadly added that an additional worry for them now is finding the money to buy milk (both the powder and clean water) for the twins because his wife is no longer capable of breastfeeding. Some men also spoke of effects they experienced or still experience after the injections, namely discomfort while urinating and/or swollen testicles. One man reported a serious fever and severe problems with his vision after the second vaccination.

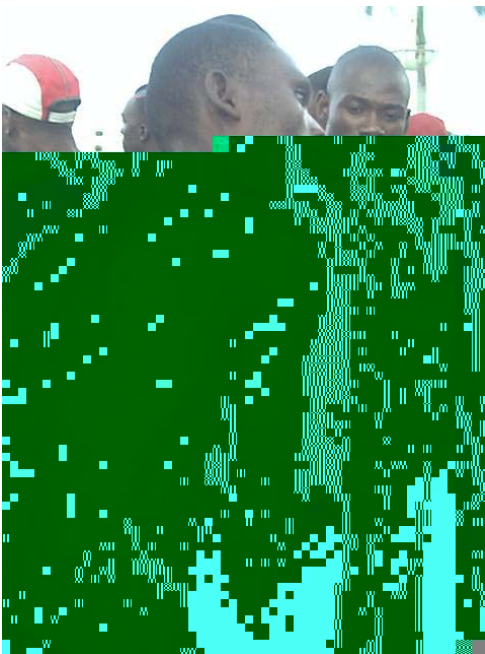
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<sup>1</sup> It seems that it is subsequent to a visit from a group of doctors from Port au Prince recently (July 2004) that the local doctor in the General Hospital is telling the patients that they have received (unknown to themselves) family planning shots. Further research on this is certainly a grave necessity.

Doctor Claude Joazard, employed at the Free Trade Zone at the time, (who has also been fired) testified that the injection substance came from two separate tubes. He himself was there and helped administer the first injection but did not become involved in the distribution of the second. When we asked, one of the workers present replied that the doctor had said that he did not know what was in the vials. It is suggested that he is afraid to speak out against the company.

On **1 June 2004**, representatives from Levi Strauss Company met with management of Grupo M at the Free Trade Zone. None of the workers were present. Several workers stated that many finished products, i.e. pairs of jeans, were hidden somewhere while the Levi Strauss representatives walked through the factory. Union members believe that the objective was to give Levi Strauss representatives the impression that the workers are lazy and therefore should not be asking for an increase in salary. When Sokowa members asked about their planned meeting with management including Cruz to discuss salaries, they were told that the management had already left, probably out the entrance and exit reserved for Dominican Republic citizens that does not go through Haiti. Sokowa called an emergency meeting in light of these recent events and voted to strike.

On **3 June 2004**, there was a thirty minute work stoppage from 9 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.. After that all employees returned to work. Louis Gilles 'Coordinator Dominicaine' and Jean Renaud from Human Resources called on two executives from Sokowa to have a meeting. Sokowa informed them that they would only meet with a delegation of 12 people from the union. There were two Dominican soldiers in civilian clothes and wearing visitors badges present. Grupo M management were furious when they saw that more than two representatives of Sokowa came for the meeting. They locked them into the conference room, they were in there for approximately 45 minutes. They shouted for help and it was only because of the protest of other workers that they were released. On this date, Sokowa alerted both management at Grupo M and the Haitian Social Affairs Office that there would be a further strike on Monday 7 June.



**4 June 2004:** Sokowa claim that Grupo M called on the soldiers from the Dominican Republic's military to intimidate and physically assault workers in the plant. Many workers were beaten and pushed around including pregnant women. One of these pregnant women, Luna Alfreus was hit in the back and fell to the ground. She subsequently received a medical certificate from her doctor stating that as a result of this assault she could lose her baby. She was 5 months pregnant at the time. Another worker, Feliciene Michel received blows to the shoulder and lower back (see picture). He received a medical

certificate, verifying that he suffered these physical assaults. One worker stated that the Dominican military usually beat the workers on days of mass firings. It was also stated that they did not physically assault the workers all at once. It was over a period of time, when workers were most vulnerable, when they were not in a large crowd.

On **Monday 7 June 2004**, workers in both of the factories (producers of Levis and Sara Lee) went out on strike. Sokowa members claim that out of approximately 1,200 workers (not certain of this figure but it is for both factories), only 15 or so did not strike. Those 15 were Dominican supervisors in the factories.

The following day, **8 June 2004**, the management declared a lockout, no workers were permitted to work. This was illegal, as they had not informed the Haitian Social Affairs Office in advance.

On **June 9<sup>th</sup>**, the Free Trade Zone reopened and everyone worked.

On **11 June 2004**, 370 workers were let go without any warning. Again management did not respect Haitian law as outlined in the “Code of Work” (Articles 42 and 43), they did not notify the Office of Social Affairs and Work. The team was uncertain how the law applies to temporary workers, apparently non-permanent staff can be let go at any time but there must be some criteria. More research is needed in this area.

A few individual workers recollected their experiences of this particular day at the factory. The process of being fired seemed to be as follows; a worker would be called into the office, in many cases a 3-4 hour interrogation would follow, then workers’ badges would be taken, and they would be told to leave. Some workers stated that they were interrogated until 10 p.m. Soldiers from the Dominican army were called on again to assist the company in their mass firing.

#### **Discrimination within the Free Trade Zone**

It seems that Grupo M has been discriminating against the Haitian workers since the beginning. Apparently 20 percent of their workers are supposed to be Dominican, as a result of the accord signed by Grupo M, the Haitian government and the World Bank. More research needed on this point also. None present at the meeting could say exactly how many Dominicans work at the Free Trade Zone but they did not believe that it was 20 percent of the workforce. However they could testify that Dominicans and Haitians are not paid the same salary for the same labor. It is true that the majority of supervisory positions seem to be held by Dominicans, which could explain the difference in salary. It would not explain why Dominicans doing the same work on the line as Haitians should be paid more. The Haitian workers and Dominican workers do not even drink the same water, according to several workers. One worker did point out that although there is discrimination between Haitians and Dominicans, he also believes that the Dominican workers are exploited too by Grupo M. Apparently Cruz has over 30 factories and there have been reported violations of workers’ rights in these premises. It should be noted too that according to the workers present at this meeting, very few Dominican workers (they

remembered only one) received the vaccinations. Management said that they and the supervisors did not need the vaccination because they were not ‘on the factory line’ and were not in danger because they did not handle needles. This is a situation that merits further investigation, as our team could not obtain supporting evidence.

**On June 17**, an ‘interministerial’ team came to observe the situation. The Minister of Social Affairs has said that the firings are against the law (Article 42 of the Kòd Travay – Code of Work – outlaws automatic firings, and Article 43 specifies that there needs to be a letter stating an intention to fire, listing the reasons, before the action can be taken. If these steps aren’t taken, as is the case in Wanamèt, Article 49 declares the firing illegal and abusive), and Grupo M needs to respect the Kòd de Travay regarding workers’ rights to organize (Articles 235-253, title 4, law #6). The team also concluded that Codevi needs to pay workers six months of overtime pay, as outlined in Article 160 of the Kòd Travay.

**On July 8**, a private group of doctors came from the General Hospital in Pòtoprens (in French, Port-au-Prince) to investigate the medical records, talking with both the factory clinic and public hospital staff. They interviewed the factory clinic staff, members of staff at the local state-run Hospital and also some workers who were affected by the injections. They took medical records of various workers, including the pregnant women who lost their children for further analysis. They have promised to return with a full report, which should be published within the week.

### **What do the Sokowa workers demand from Grupo M?**

1. Immediate reintegration of all 370 workers fired.
2. To respect the eight hour workday. In such case that the workers have to work overtime, they have the right to overtime pay.
3. Provide the workers with adequate working conditions. Workers report a lack of access to drinkable water, and they do not feel they have access to the services of the clinic, because of the intimidation.
4. Respect the workers’ right to organize, and the right to freely join and create a union of their choosing.
5. Respect promises made to the workers (none of the workers received a copy of their contract... this also needs to be changed, as it is a violation of Haitian law) of the salaries they were supposed to have received, and that they receive regular production bonuses.
6. Allow Batay Ouvriye members and representatives to be present at meetings where workers are negotiating or discussing with the management.
7. Damages for people who have left, the overtime pay as well as their “unemployment insurance.”

### **What are the Sokowa workers asking of the government of Haiti?**

1. Without delay, to prosecute Grupo M for their violations of workers’ rights.

2. Specifically, bring Grupo M to court for the vaccinations.
3. That they clearly state the legal status of the Free Trade Zone, insist on an end to the Dominican Republic army presence on Haitian territory.
4. From Social Affairs – they need to receive six months back pay.
5. That the Ministry of Social Affairs conduct a regular of the working conditions, specifically paying attention to workers’ rights issues, almost daily (not giving Grupo M to cover things up), until such time as conditions in fact improve.
6. That ONA (“Social Security” office) give them their notebooks (*Livret D’Assurance*), which should show how much money Grupo M paid them on workers’ behalf on a weekly basis. And these weekly slips should be clear and easy to read, not using faded copies.
7. Enforce the relevant passages in the Kòd Travay relating to management, specifically requiring Grupo M pay ONA the amount they deducted from workers’ paychecks.
8. For the various branches of the government, including the legislature that currently is not functioning, to change the Kòd Travay regarding the minimum wage, increasing it to three times what it is now.
9. That ONA increase the “unemployment insurance” from 2000 gourdes to 3000 gourdes.
10. To obtain any progress on above matters, a concerted effort needs to be made to address the structural problems of the weak state, that has allowed these abuses of workers’ rights to go unpunished, unenforced. The state also needs to stop all corrupt practices and needs to function for the protection of its citizens.

**What are the Sokowa workers asking of foreigners acting in solidarity?**

1. Publicize this story as widely as possible.
2. Write – letters from the post office are preferable to e-mail, as they have greater impact – letters to the Levi-Strauss Company, the Sara Lee Corporation, and the World Bank. Ask them to use their influence to change the situation. When we asked if the workers were afraid about *all* the jobs being lost as a result, if these clients took their business out, they said no, because Grupo M needs their business and will respond to pressure from their clients.

Mr. James Wolfensohn  
 President of the World Bank  
 1818 H Street, NW  
 Washington, DC 20433

Michael Kobori,  
 Global Code of Conduct Director  
 Levi Strauss & Co.  
 1155 Battery St.  
 San Francisco, CA 94111

Tel: (415) 501-1459  
Fax: (415) 501-1485  
e-mail: [mkobori@levi.com](mailto:mkobori@levi.com)

3. Demand that information be brought out in the open, demand a full investigation.

**Testimony from a woman who lost her pregnancy:**

My name is Jean-Baptiste Eveline. I work in the Free Trade Zone. I started working there in November. I work in the jeans factory. I don't work on a sewing machine. I put rivets and the tags on the jeans. Gerard Borgella passed a message in the "fabrik" – the shop floor. He said that everyone should be vaccinated. He said that if people fell ill, and they didn't take the vaccine, Grupo M wouldn't be responsible. He made the announcement almost the beginning of the workday, and immediately after the announcement, they began the vaccination. It was the same day. Gerard Borgella said that the vaccination was for tetanus. After the announcement was made, there were some people that didn't take the vaccine, because they were sick. But it was understood that everyone had to take the vaccine. Since I was pregnant, I asked if I could take the vaccine, and I was told yes, of course, it was safe to take the vaccine. Then a message was sent, everyone that was pregnant could take the vaccine.

Gerard Borgella is a Haitian who works in the Human Resources division. He did not work for the clinic. They told us that everyone needed the vaccine, the technicians, in addition to those of us working on the line. Dominican employees didn't take the vaccine. We don't know what arrangement that was made why Dominican employees didn't get the vaccine. They were in the factory that day. All of the announcements were made in Kreyòl.

There were more people that took the first vaccine than the second. There were people that got a fever as a result of the vaccine, problems with their neck, so they didn't take the second one. For myself, I didn't feel anything after the first vaccination. After a couple of days, my feet became swollen and sore. I didn't think at the time that it was a result of the vaccination. Don't forget that I was very large at the time, several months pregnant.

They didn't give us the vaccination in the clinic. It was inside the factory itself, between the shop floor and the office. They set up a couple of tables, with a series of syringes. They had two test tubes where they took the vaccine, one clear, like water, and one white, like milk. They first took from one of the tubes, and then from the other. They mixed the two like that, and then they gave us the shot. We didn't know what was in the test tubes. We didn't ask. I have heard several people tell me they were given a shot from the two vials. I haven't heard of anyone that said that they only received a shot with one of the liquids. The people who gave the shot were Dominicans. I only saw them the two days they gave the vaccinations. They were the same people for both of the doses. There was one big woman who sat, and two other people who helped them. After we were done getting the shot, we gave them our badges, and then they wrote our names down. They

didn't give any other information, advice, or anything before or after the shot. We were all expected to return to work.

The second shot was administered in the same way. All the same way. It was the same day that they gave the shot that they told us about it, between 9 and 10 a.m. As soon as they finished with the announcement, they gave the shot. Gerard Borgella gave the announcement. He said that if people don't take the second one, it's like you didn't take the first, it won't do any good. Therefore, everyone should take the second one too. People told me that they didn't take the second shot, because they had a fever, etc. People took a risk, and were very vague with Borgella. But they weren't as pressured as the first. I took the second shot, because I didn't have any symptoms. They didn't say anything, except that everyone can take it, and it was for tetanus. They didn't repeat the part about being pregnant. No one was given advice about the dosage for tetanus, from the doctor, medical personnel at the clinic, or public health officials.

They have since lied about the date of the second vaccination. The first was in March, the second was in April. Now they are saying that the second dose was in May. I think it's because they don't want to be held responsible for the problems after the second dose. They speak about a third dosage, but it's for the children of the employees. But they aren't doing this anymore.

After I took the second shot, my feet became inflamed. I couldn't stand. I couldn't work. They wouldn't let me sit. I felt weak. I went to the state-run Hospital, and the doctor gave me some medicine. After I got home, I had pain in my stomach. On Sunday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, I was feeling very sick, and I went back to the hospital. My blood pressure was 24/14. They gave me a bed and medicine. (pause... she wiped her eyes and sniffled) After that I fell asleep. The next morning, Monday, I was told that the child had died. They pulled out the fetus. It was dead. The placenta didn't come out (except after a lot of effort from the doctor). I lost a lot of blood and the doctor did not think I would survive. I went home.

*Eveline did somehow pull through and very soon received word that she was on the list of workers that had been fired from the factory. When she was feeling somewhat physically stronger, she went to the Free Trade Zone to find out more, they told her that she was fired. She asked for the money she was owed. They only paid her for a couple of weeks. She said that the Grupo M office staff she encountered did not mention the loss of the baby even though they knew what had happened. She said that she has not received any word from Grupo M since but she plans on returning to work on 10 August 2004 (that is the day that her 'conge' (time off) ends). That is assuming that they will not fire her again immediately. One of the other women who lost her pregnancy has already been fired; management claimed that she did not have a medical certificate. When asked why she would go back to work there after all she has experienced, Eveline responded that it would be better for Grupo M management if she did leave. She stated that if any other human rights groups or foreigners come again to the factory and ask her about the conditions there she will tell them the truth, even if it means that she would be fired again. According to Eveline whenever independent groups visited*

*the factory they were only allowed to talk to the workers in the presence of a member of management or office staff. No one told the truth to these visitors about the conditions at work because they were afraid of the repercussions, not only could you lose your job but you could also be physically assaulted by the Dominican soldiers. Eveline says that she would be brave the next time because the truth needs to be told, the truth is the most important thing.*

*Her husband who was present throughout this interview stated at this point that many people in Haiti do not know a lot when it comes to questions of health. He said there is a major need for the general public to be informed about what vaccinations they should be taking, and under what circumstances, etc... This vaccination took place in a context of a national vaccination campaign. While there is this national campaign for vaccination, there isn't any specific information or advice, just that people **should** get vaccinated.*

*Eveline Jean Baptiste stated that she never doubted what Grupo M's management told her about the vaccinations, she trusted that they knew what was best for her and her baby. They told her that it was tetanus and that it was safe to take and she believed them. She said that it was only when she heard that Grupo M were lying about the date of the second vaccination that she began to doubt. Grupo M claim that the second vaccination was administered on 19 May 2004. This disturbs Eveline greatly because she knows that she received the second vaccination on 19 April. She says that there is proof that she couldn't have received the vaccination on 19 May because she was at home in bed recovering from the stillbirth of her child. She says that her name is on both of the lists of people that received vaccinations. She asked if we or any other group could check the list for her, if her name had not been erased then that would prove that the vaccinations did not take place on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May. We explained that we were denied access to the factory and that the lists were probably not going to be made available. Eveline remained silent.*

***We explained to Eveline Jean Baptiste that we are not part of a powerful organization that can fix the problem that exists in the Free Trade Zone, however we do have small voices and as we know many small voices can be as loud and sometimes louder than the big ones.***