

Will Murderous Ex-Haiti Leader Target Christians?

✖ The sudden unannounced return of former Haitian President Jean-Claude Duvalier to Haiti puzzles everyone associated politically, socially and spiritually in that beleaguered nation. Haiti suffered a devastating earthquake one year ago, then a cholera epidemic, and then riots caused by election irregularities. This makes his return to Haiti suspect.

Duvalier who's also known as "Baby Doc" was ousted from power in a popular uprising 25 years ago. He's been living in exile in France since his ouster.

President of Christian World Outreach Dean Yoder says, "I just can't imagine why he came back."

Christian World Outreach has been working in Haiti for 30 years. Yoder was actually in Haiti during Duvalier's ouster. He says Duvalier's return has been met with mixed reaction. "There are two camps of people. One says 'Oh great!' and they're in the streets saying, 'Jean-Claud, Jean-Claud.' There's another camp that says, 'He needs to be destroyed. They should arrest him and take him out.'"

According to Yoder, this makes the situation even more difficult. "This will only add to the stress and the uprising of the election. The total results are supposed to be released on January 20th."

According to Human Rights Watch, Duvalier ruled Haiti from 1971 to 1986 after his father, Francois Duvalier known as "Papa Doc," appointed him president for life. The Duvaliers are estimated to have ordered the deaths of 20,000 to 30,000 Haitian civilians.

Christian World Outreach works in Haiti with eight churches,

feeding programs, leadership development, and feminine training sessions.

Reaching out to women in the tent cities is a desperate need, says Yoder. "In the tent cities there are young girls 13 to 19 years old. 50 percent of that age group are pregnant. We want to do something, so we took 25 ladies into our center."

They taught them sewing, handicraft, and other vocational skills to help them make a living. Yoder says the program has worked incredibly well. "We had a graduation just last Friday of the first group of ladies. And they were so excited."

Yoder adds, "11 of the 25 accepted Jesus already!"

Each girl in the program receives a godmother from various churches across Port-au-Prince. "She is to pray for this young lady, to meet with her, to encourage her and help her in any way she can." That includes discipleship.