AN APPEAL TO HISTORY

THE TRUTH ABOUT A SINGULAR LAWSUIT
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By

Prosper Avril
To my lovely wife, Nurse Marie Ange Nazon Avril, who, transferred by destiny from the room of a hospital to the bedside of an ailing and sickly country, has, for nearly four decades, been my most invaluable support and my omnipresent collaborator. Her courage, devotion, simplicity and magnanimity have earned my everlasting admiration.

To my children Prosper Junior, Carine, Grégor and Philippe, who suffered much from the career chosen by their father, and who have shared, without complaint, very difficult moments of my soldier’s life; with a special consideration for Philippe, who had to suffer being taken as a hostage in 1989, and for my daughter Carine and my son-in-law Paul-Henry who, in 1995, had to live through the arduous experience of being political prisoners without being in politics.
This book is dedicated:

To the memory of André Neptune, a Colonel of the Haitian Army, to his worthy spouse Adeline and her humble maidservant Némie Nelson, all three assassinated on January 19, 1990, riddled by bullets, victims of political terrorism;

To the memory of an innocent schoolgirl, little Roseline Vaval, whose angelic grace was brutally cut down by professionals of a blind and destructive terrorism.
If you can bear to hear the truth you’ve spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools, …

Or, being lied about, don’t deal in lies,
Or, being hated, don’t give way to hating, …

Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build them up with worn-out tools . . .

Rudyard Kipling
If it is too big an effort for human weakness
To forgive the harms coming from others,
At least, avoid the torment of hatred;
If you cannot forgive, learn to forget.

Alfred de Musset
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3. Promotion of Sergeant Heubreux Joseph to Sergeant-Major of the Army. (September 1988)

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5. Greeted by the Palace band upon my return to power after the failed coup, accompanied with General Hérard Abraham. (April 2, 1989)

6. Addressing through the media a last message to the Dessalines Barracks troops in an effort to avoid a bloody confrontation. (April 7, 1989)
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10. Warmly greeted by President Lee Then Hui and the Chinese people upon my arrival in the Republic of China. (January 1990)

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15. Passing command to Major-General Hérard Abraham (March 1990)

16. An article of The Times of the Americas: Haiti After Avril (March 1990)

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3. Facsimile of the Order granting default judgment.


5. Facsimile of the Order vacating the default judgment.

6. Facsimile of the envelope carrying Order vacating the default judgment.

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8. Facsimile of the envelope carrying Order vacating Order granting damages to plaintiffs.


An Appeal to History - The Truth about a Singular Lawsuit, is an abridged version in English of the two first volumes of the series Vérités et Revelations: Le Silence Rompu and Plaidoyer pour l’Histoire, published in French in 1993 and 1994, respectively with a specific motto: “Only truth can face injustice” (Albert Camus). Today I undertake this task to allow my fellow citizens living abroad, as well as foreign observers interested in Haitian life and history, to uncover the hidden truths, the ambiguities, the contradictions, and the untold story of a mean and shameful civil action, filed by some Haitian politicians against their former President before a foreign court. I believe that they deserve a better account of the subtleties of this case widely covered by the national and international media and to have a calm and objective reading of this singular undertaking, beyond any consideration of partisanship or prejudice.

I originally dedicated this study to Haitian lawyers,
historians and intellectuals, to the youth of the Colleges so avid for knowledge and so sensitive to the concepts of intellectual honesty and moral integrity, particularly to the students of the Faculty of Law and Economic Sciences of Haiti, my alma mater. Today, through this English version, I intend to reach young Haitians attending university abroad and young American intellectuals, with a special thought to the students of Yale Law School who worked on the case in the framework of the Lowenstein International Human Rights clinic held at that University in 1991 (Yale Daily News, March 5, 1991).

I am persuaded that this lawsuit constituted one of the steps taken towards the loss of Haitian national sovereignty because it was undertaken by responsible Haitian politicians, blinded by only one goal - the destruction of a political opponent. God forbids me considering this cause as exclusively mine. It concerned the honor of national institutions, especially the Haitian Presidency too often sullied and trampled upon.

I urge the reader not to consider this book as special pleading on my own behalf. It is rather a testimony about my own consciousness that will be, without any doubt, of real profit to present and future Haitian generations. Convinced that “a society is strong only when it puts the truth under a spotlight” (Emile Zola), I would feel guilty if I withheld from posterity the knowledge of these truths kept hidden from the public in the interests of unnamed actors.

An Appeal to History - The Truth about a Singular Lawsuit is published as a work of history. I know it will not be easy to
convince everyone, considering the gigantic work of ferment and disinformation undertaken on the collective and individual consciousness by specialists in the art of manipulating the media. I only hope that the light to be shed on many events that occurred in the country at the end of the 1980s will allow everyone to gain a sound perspective about the current Haitian situation. May the insights that will come from the reader’s personal conclusions and impressions be helpful to better understand this little country, Haiti, which is a constant source of wonder to many observers.