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thought it was "imminent" because he found out that the U.S. government had requested radio silence for April 18. A good educated guess and no more, Catledge decided. At his orders, the story's headline was reduced in size, but remained the lead on Page One.

Did the *Times* publish "All the News That [Was] Fit to Print"? Yes, says the author. But some journalistic myths, he concludes, persist forever.

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Voodoo In Haiti

"Voodoo in Haiti Today" by Amy Wilentz, in *Grand Street* (Winter 1987), 50 Riverside Dr., New York, N.Y. 10024; "An Island Between Seasons" by Bob Shacochis, in *Harper's* (Feb. 1987), 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012.

Voodoo, from the word *vodun*, for god or spirit, is Haiti's own amalgam of African animism and Roman Catholic ritual. It has been openly practiced since the late 1700s, when thousands of African Maroons (escaped slaves) fled from French colonial plantations to the hills and mounted a successful 12-year insurrection. In 1804, Haiti became the world's first free black republic.

The republic was ill-fated. Haiti's last dictators, François (Papa Doc) Duvalier, who was president from 1957 to 1971, and his son Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) (1971-86), were "hardly worse than most of the . . . strutting chanticleers" before them, observes Shacochis, an American essayist and fiction writer. Still, by 1983, a mere 0.5 percent of the population controlled nearly half the island's wealth. Rural Haitians' income per capita averaged \$125 a year. Most (85 percent) Haitians were illiterate; life expectancy was only 47 years.

In such circumstances, it was not difficult for the Duvaliers to exploit voodoo. François, self-appointed "President for Life," did not inspire the people's trust, only their fear—he wore the black suit and dark glasses of voodoo's dread spirit, Baron Samedi, Lord of the Dead. His "Tonton Macoutes" (often translated as "bogeymen"), an unofficial army of thugs, spies, and soldiers of fortune, infiltrated voodoo temples and corrupted and enlisted local priests (*houngans*) and priestesses (*mambos*), turning the practice of taking offerings into simple extortion.

When Jean-Claude Duvalier fled to France in February 1986, voodoo, so long embroiled in the island's politics, became a source of direct conflict. As part of the popular *dechoukage* (uprooting), which included the 1986 uprising that brought a provisional military regime to power, voodoo temples have been sacked, voodoo drums—"an essential part of the voodoo ceremony"—have been burned or confiscated, and scores of *houngans* and *mambos* have been murdered, reports Wilentz, a *Time* staff writer.

Much of the violence has been abetted by crowds shouting "Macoute," which suggests that the Duvaliers' minions are the only targets. But many victims are not Duvalierists. According to both authors, local Protestant

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Voodoo was long a major tourist attraction in Haiti. In 1969, during François (Papa Doc) Duvalier's reign, U.S. sailors watch a voodoo ceremony.

missionary sects and some Catholics appear to be turning a political-religious purge into "a chasse à voodoo." Villagers circulate tales of a local Protestant minister who hacked off a *mambo's* legs, and a Catholic bishop who buried a voodoo shrine in cement.

Duvalier's Macoutes—voodoo's long-time corruptors and protectors—are unlikely to survive, the authors believe. But voodoo itself may be extinguished in the process.

Church and State

"Disestablished Religion in America" by Jeremy Rabkin, in *The Public Interest* (Winter 1987), 10 East 53rd St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

John Adams (1735–1826) once said that America's founding document—the oldest written constitution in force today—was "designed for a religious and moral people and no other." Rabkin, an assistant professor of government at Cornell University, argues that the nation's political stability owes more to this religious framework than is commonly supposed.

While the Framers made no mention of God, Americans appear to be the Western world's most devout people. Eighty-six percent call their religious beliefs "very important." (In Britain and Sweden, where churches are established by law, only 49 percent feel that way.) At the same time, while 77 percent of Americans claim to respect "the full authority of the Bible," only 42 percent can name the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). Just what sort of religious beliefs are these?