
*International Action Center Statement in
Solidarity with the People of Haiti*

US/France - Hands Off Haiti Respect the 5-Year Mandate of President Aristide

The U.S. and France are Responsible for the Continuing Crisis in Haiti. Four years of brutal economic sanctions have destabilized the freely elected Aristide government. The CIA and the Pentagon have organized, financed, armed and trained the death squads of the former Duvalier dictatorship. These same thugs are today terrorizing northern Haiti and surrounding Port-au-Prince. The International Republican Institute and the so-called National Endowment for Democracy are working with these criminal forces.

The supposed "peace plan" being widely promoted by Secretary of State Colin Powell is really a maneuver to conceal Washington's plans to destroy the militant Haitian mass movement. Even as Washington's envoys talk about "peace," the Bush regime has shown its contempt for Haiti's people by ordering the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard to forcibly prevent Haitians from fleeing the violence.

The U.S. government has a long history of orchestrating massacres and coup d'etats in Latin America and the Caribbean, as the people of Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Chile, Argentina and Haiti can testify.

The banker-politicians in Washington look at Haiti as they do all of Latin America and the Caribbean--as a place to be plundered. In 1915 U.S. Marines marched into Port-au-Prince and stole Haiti's gold reserves. They also killed many thousands of Haiti's people, including the great freedom fighter Charlemagne Perrault. US Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Smedley Butler later confessed, "I helped make Haiti and Cuba a safe place for the First National City boys to collect revenues in."

The looting of Haiti since that time by U.S. banks and sweatshop-owning corporations continues. André Apaid, a prime leader of the U.S.-backed forces in Haiti, is a major sweatshop owner. He is also a U.S. citizen, born in the U.S.A. now with dual Haitian citizenship.

What is Aristide's real crime in the eyes of the Wall Street and the Bush administration? The Aristide government made an effort to put the needs of Haiti's poor before the demands of the U.S.-run International Monetary Fund. It built schools and HIV clinics and raised the minimum wage. These simple, human measures were considered defiance of the IMF's "structural-adjustment" program. That is Aristide's crime.

The racist, unelected Bush regime cannot teach Haitians anything about democracy. Haitians made the first democratic revolution in the Western Hemisphere, at a time when millions in the U.S. still wore the chains of slavery. They defeated the French empire and gave military aid to the people of South America in their fight for freedom from Spain.

For 200 years the Haitian people have fought for freedom against the U.S. and France. They have a right to independence and democracy and end to racist, imperialist intervention. And they have a right to seek aid and assistance from whomever they choose.

The only productive role that the U.S. and France can play in Haiti is to return the vast wealth they have stolen from that impoverished country from the time of slavery to the present.

We will raise the following demands in protests in the streets of the United States:

- We demand the Bush and Chirac regimes respect the laws and constitution of Haiti and the five-year mandate of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.
- We demand an end to U.S. gangs in Haiti.
- We demand an end to the embargo in Haiti.
- We demand no interference from the U.S. in Haiti's international relations.
- We demand that the stolen wealth of Haiti be returned to the Haitian people. **Reparations Now!**

New Book! *Haiti: A Slave Revolution.* This book combats 200 years of racist propaganda about the Haitian Revolution. It is essential to challenge these stereotypes in order to build true, informed solidarity with Haiti. Order the 250-page book ***Haiti: A Slave Revolution*** from www.leftbooks.com. Read chapters from the book at www.iacenter.org/haiti/index.htm. Published by the IAC and the Haiti Support Network.