

# Haiti Fights On. Rising Fuel Prices Trigger Mass Poverty

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In-depth Report: [HAITI](#)

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## *Media blackout?*

*As much as the Mainstream Media (MSM) loves to feast upon sensational stories of chaos and unrest, little coverage has been allotted to the ongoing crisis in Haiti except brief pieces about “imperiled” missionary groups and other Americans desperate to get off the island, or calls from the American embassy in Port-au-Prince for more Marines to protect them. It has been reported that at least three Haitians, tragically, have died in demonstrations. Without exception in MSM reports, the explanation for protests, destruction of property and looting is the fuel price increases announced by the Haitian government. As reported by Le Nouvelliste, Haitian daily, gas prices would go up 38% which would in effect make many expenses rise: food, dry goods, bus fares and other services; kerosene, which most Haitians depend on for power in their homes would rise a whopping 51% and diesel 47%. [1]*

The racist insinuation that Haitians are dangerous is clear despite the evidence and that, in spite of crushing poverty, Haiti ranks among the lowest crime and homicide rates in the hemisphere. Meanwhile the U.S. mass shooting epidemic continues and many cities continue to challenge and set new yearly homicide records, as my own city Indianapolis did last year and threatens to repeat in 2018.

## **A frame of reference, the reasons for outrage are not so simplistic**

One can imagine what the reaction of Americans to the announcement of price hikes in the form of a tax, including gas by 38% by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo would be. The degree to which Americans would suffer varies widely but a large sector of the population would be outraged and likely demonstrate and vandalize gas stations and corporations.

But of course missing from the official narratives of dangerous protests in “the poorest nation in the Western hemisphere” is the historical and present context in which today’s events are unfolding.

This type of understanding will not be achieved through sporadic MSM reports of lies and half-truths utilized to program people into accepting the Imperial plans the U.S. and allies have for Haiti. My own awakening that much was amiss about American foreign policy regarding our close neighbor Haiti came around 2003 when examining the United States’ refugee resettlement regime: the numbers of Haitian refugees accepted for resettlement

and the numbers and percentages of Haitian asylees accepted or refused (both were very low and especially in light of a comparable situation in Cuba where its refugees were welcomed almost without exception).

Image on the right: Ezili Danto [2]



Soon after, fortunately I found the passionate and tenacious work of Haitian American lawyer Ezili Danto where one can find all the history, context and breadth of knowledge about Haiti and the centuries-old attempts by the U.S., France and others to subjugate this proud nation, the first modern republic established by Africans and African-descended peoples. Ezili Danto has dedicated her life to freeing Haiti from the insatiable Neoliberal monster and you can find her work and related links [here](#).

I recall back in on January 29 of 2016, that I was briefly encouraged by a headline to the op-ed written by the editorial board at the [Chicago Tribune](#). [3] But I was soon brought back to Earth by the familiar theme of blaming the victim they so clearly expressed. Their opinions encapsulated a hundred other mainstream media articles and of course was absent of all context, present reality and historical legacies of repeated imperial aggression and resource plunder.

In the midst of another political crisis forced upon the population by the United States, France, Canada, Brazil, Israel, the United Nations, and in particular Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, ruling Haitian oligarchs and many others, attempts to force yet another president upon Haitians in the election process, one hand-picked by the aforementioned were underway. Haiti once had what Americans only dream about: a direct democracy, direct votes for choosing presidents; it was the U.S. who manipulated and eventually installed a sort of electoral college as America has now. [4] The headline the editorial board offered on January 29: "Haiti should decide who will be its next president" of course, to informed and discerning readers turns out to be the only hopeful part of the piece which devolves into opinions that are nonsensical, ethnocentric, racist, condescending, and serving a neocolonial, imperialist agenda.

A brief sample of helpful contexts to remember

At the time, I collected a few truths absent from this narrative and which continue to be absent in the message the Empire wants to program into citizens when they consider Haiti. Without any sort of context, we are expected to believe all these events (political crises, demonstrations) happen out of the blue or in a vacuum but the following have made a difference in shaping Haiti's history, and present situation, wouldn't you think?:

- France forced tiny Haiti (who beat France and Napoleon in a brutal war for its own independence in 1804, a war that cost Haiti half of its population) to pay reparations for their lost slave colony! \$21 billion dollars they finished paying only in 1947 after refinancing and the U.S. took over the debt in 1915!

- U.S. Marines invaded and occupied Haiti from 1914-1934 to “stabilize and restore order”!
- Haiti was led by ruthless, brutal dictators, with horrendous human rights abuses, with full support of the U.S.; Duvalier reign of terror, father and son from 1957-1986 and were given billions of dollars by the U.S., none of which went to the people. Meanwhile, thousands of asylum seekers were denied entrance to U.S.! While refugees fled Cuba and benefitted from the U.S.’s decades-long “wet foot, dry foot” policy, meaning if Cubans touched foot on the sand of Florida, they were already granted asylum, Haitians who made the perilous journey in rickety wooden boats to flee murderous leaders and death squads were regularly interdicted at sea by Coast Guard ships starting in the Ronald Reagan days through the Bush senior era and continuing whenever deemed necessary. President Trump no doubt admires this method which, with very few exceptions sent the Haitians back to their birthplace where imprisonment, torture and execution was often the fate that awaited them.



Haitian Interdiction Operation 2013 U.S. Coast Guard Photo, Wikimedia Commons [5]

- Starting in the 1980s, then governor of Arkansas Bill Clinton subsidized his farmers’ rice and dumped enormous quantities on Haitian people, which effectively killed the local rice farming economy, a good, popular (and ancient traditional) rice underpriced by an inferior subsidized variety.
- Jean-Bertrand Aristide became the first democratically elected president of Haiti in 1991 but was deposed in a George H. W. Bush (former CIA head) ordered coup. The Catholic priest was trying to share wealth with all Haitians!
- Again, after returning, the popular President Aristide was removed from office in a coup d’etat, kidnapped and whisked to Central African Republic by U.S. Marines in 2004!

It goes on and on but here are a few lowlights:

Hillary Clinton and the U.S. hijacked elections installing their puppet Michel “Sweet Mickey” Martelly (the misogynist non-politician) in 2011; billions (more than 13!) raised by The Clinton Foundation, The Red Cross, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush Fund for Haiti, etc. after the horrific 2010 earthquake that killed more than 300,000 never reached Haitians (Bill Clinton was wholly coincidentally appointed special UN envoy to Haiti months before the earthquake); U.S. military blocked aid and emergency groups from landing after the earthquake; U.S.- supported UN troops occupied Haiti from 2004 until 2017 and some workers brought cholera and many solicited sex from children for food; UN and U.S.-backed militias killed thousands of Haitians; Haiti has enormous reserves of oil, potentially bigger than Saudi Arabia’s, and gold, copper, and iridium, known by the U.S. many decades, possibly going back to first references to oil in Haiti from 1908!

Sweet Mickey was in no hurry to leave office as he was due to and knowing another rigged election was underway, the politically savvy Haitian public voted by not voting in huge numbers so as not to give legitimacy to another fiasco. Thousands demonstrated against the meddling of Hillary Clinton’s State Department, the UN and OAS. The State Department admitted, bragged about investing tens of millions of dollars in democracy for Haiti. In response to some destruction of property, the U.S. declared that the protests were violent and elections were postponed because of “security concerns”. Hillary finagled results to position Jovenel Moise into a runoff vote and in results questioned by many observer groups, and most Haitians, Moise, who was indeed handpicked by the Colonizers and Martelly himself took the presidency. Martelly proclaimed “Give them the Banana!” as he departed in reference to Moise, the banana magnate, and possibly other messages.

Martelly, the former Tonton Macoute death squad member tells what he did with billions of dollars he stole from Venezuela’s Petrocaribe that should have went to earthquake recovery, fuel relief and social programs for Haitians in a video Ezili Danto refers to: he gave it to Western hotels chains in Haiti! [6] This information is quite useful in understanding why many of these hotels were targeted by protesters’ fires and vandalism.

Which brings us to the current President Jovenel Moise and his government which recently tells the people during the World Cup no less, that things will get worse, much worse, with the IMF structural adjustments, higher prices for fuel, much higher. Haitians have had quite enough. But people like the editorial board of the Chicago Tribune continue to feign ignorance about the wishes of Haitians or perhaps they really are that ignorant. The vast majority of people of Haiti did not want Moise for president to begin with yet here is the picture that accompanied the board’s editorial and please notice the irony of the caption they inserted:





Source: [Getty Images](#)

The “possible installation of a transitional government” was underway and the leader was pictured in those nice signs picturing Moise. It has been suggested that many Moise supporters and demonstrators were paid for their efforts and that many donned head coverings and sunglasses to avoid identification as one can see above. The State Department millions had to be spent.

Haitians are *not* the perpetrators of their own poverty and “instability”: it has been imposed and enforced by the U.S.-led West! Like many of the other “poorest nations in the world” like Afghanistan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti is one of the resource-richest. According to Leopoldo Espallat Nanita, the “former president of the Dominican Petroleum Refinery (REFIDOMSA)...There is a multinational conspiracy to illegally take the mineral resources of the Haitian people”. [8]

Besides the great potential of corporations to make huge profits in the future from Haiti’s resources, banks, as seen lately in IMF and World Bank machinations, want to use “the pearl of the Caribbean” as their golden goose. Sweatshops, hotels and tourism industries abroad as well as relief and development (the misery complex) hope to continue cashing in on Haiti.

And perhaps the biggest source of illicit money pouring into coffers for CIA, DARPA, weapons development, destabilizations, black ops and even geoengineering projects is the drug trade that passes through Haiti on its way to Miami and then on to American cities for the pacification, death and mass incarceration of millions of citizens who become addicted to heroin, cocaine, etc. or get caught up in the crossfire of resulting drug dealer and gang violence. Good for Senator Marco Rubio to get after and investigate the intimidation of DEA workers and others and the widespread tentacles of illegal drug trade operating out of Haiti, but is this really a new revelation? Where was everyone when Jeb Bush was governor of Florida and his brother the President? Perhaps we should fill him in on Afghanistan, poppy fields, heroin imported to the U.S.?

The U.S. embassy in Haiti is variously described as being between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> largest of its embassies globally and was unscathed during the 7.0 catastrophic earthquake of January 12, 2010, (U.S. Marines were wholly coincidentally drilling for disaster relief in Miami the day before in case of a hurricane in Haiti). So geo-strategically, Haiti is kept by the U.S. for safekeeping when they are ready to illegally invade other countries in the Western Hemisphere such as Venezuela, Cuba or Bolivia.

But perhaps most important in U.S. and Western calculations into continuing to punish Haiti is that they must be made an example of. Haiti fought against all odds, overthrowing their oppressors and beating Napoleon and the greatest navy on Earth. Since then they have been made to pay for this outrage quite literally. Why did Ronald Reagan order the Marines to invade tiny Grenada? Because they were a threat to national security? Of course not. They had to be made an example of.

Haiti is indeed an example, and an inspiration to millions around the world including this author. Haitians remind me to never give up despite the injustice that often seems to prevail on our small planet. The vast majority of Haitians continue to strive for justice and freedom despite all ideals the U.S. pays lip service to and especially in our holiday just past, The 4<sup>th</sup> of July, our own Independence Day.



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## Notes

[1] Le Nouvelliste

<https://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=fr&u=http://lenouvelliste.com/&prev=search>

[2] Ezili Danto website <http://www.ezilidanto.com/>

[3] The Editorial Board Haiti should decide who will be its next president Chicago Tribune January 29, 2016

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/opinion/editorials/ct-haiti-election-martelly-edit-0201-20160129-story.html>

[4] Ezili Danto "American Celebrities Useful Idiots Part 2" October 2, 2017 YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pVlzAHWZ00>

[5] File: Haitian Interdiction Operation DVIDS1070492.jpg Coast Guard Photo, Wikimedia Commons, public domain, 2013.

[6] Ezili Danto "American Celebrities Useful Idiots Part 2" October 2, 2017 YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pVlzAHWZ00>

[7] Retamal, Hector, AFP/Getty Images, photograph for The Editorial Board Haiti should decide who will be its next president, photograph Chicago Tribune January 29, 2016

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/opinion/editorials/ct-haiti-election-martelly-edit-0201-20160129-story.html>

[8] ESPACINSULAR There is a multinational conspiracy to illegally take the mineral resources of the Haitian people November 17, 2009. [http://www.margueritelaurent.com/pressclips/oil\\_sites.html](http://www.margueritelaurent.com/pressclips/oil_sites.html)

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