

History of a Haitian Holocaust

Blackwater before drinking water

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In-depth Report: [HAITI](#)

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1. Bless the President for having rescue teams in the air almost immediately. That was President Olafur Grimsson of Iceland. On Wednesday, the AP reported that the President of the United States promised, "The initial contingent of 2,000 Marines could be deployed to the quake-ravaged country within the next few days." "In a few days," Mr. Obama?
2. There's no such thing as a 'natural' disaster. 200,000 Haitians have been slaughtered by slum housing and IMF "austerity" plans.
3. A friend of mine called. Do I know a journalist who could get medicine to her father? And she added, trying to hold her voice together, "My sister, she's under the rubble. Is anyone going who can help, anyone?" Should I tell her, "Obama will have Marines there in 'a few days'"?
4. China deployed rescuers with sniffer dogs within 48 hours. China, Mr. President. China: 8,000 miles distant. Miami: 700 miles close. US bases in Puerto Rico: right there.
5. Obama's Defense Secretary Robert Gates said, "I don't know how this government could have responded faster or more comprehensively than it has." We know Gates doesn't know.
6. From my own work in the field, I know that FEMA has access to ready-to-go potable water, generators, mobile medical equipment and more for hurricane relief on the Gulf Coast. It's all still there. Army Lt. Gen. Russel Honoré, who served as the task force commander for emergency response after Hurricane Katrina, told the Christian Science Monitor, "I thought we had learned that from Katrina, take food and water and start evacuating people." Maybe we learned but, apparently, Gates and the Defense Department missed school that day.
7. Send in the Marines. That's America's response. That's what we're good at. The aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson finally showed up after three days. With what? It was dramatically deployed — without any emergency relief supplies. It has sidewinder missiles and 19 helicopters.
8. But don't worry, the International Search and Rescue Team, fully equipped and self-sufficient for up to seven days in the field, deployed immediately with ten metric tons of tools and equipment, three tons of water, tents, advanced communication equipment and water purifying capability. They're from Iceland.
9. Gates wouldn't send in food and water because, he said, there was no "structure ... to provide security." For Gates, appointed by Bush and allowed to hang around by Obama, it's

security first. That was his lesson from Hurricane Katrina. Blackwater before drinking water.

10. Previous US presidents have acted far more swiftly in getting troops on the ground on that island. Haiti is the right half of the island of Hispaniola. It's treated like the right testicle of Hell. The Dominican Republic the left. In 1965, when Dominicans demanded the return of Juan Bosch, their elected President, deposed by a junta, Lyndon Johnson reacted to this crisis rapidly, landing 45,000 US Marines on the beaches to prevent the return of the elected president.

11. How did Haiti end up so economically weakened, with infrastructure, from hospitals to water systems, busted or non-existent – there are two fire stations in the entire nation – and infrastructure so frail that the nation was simply waiting for “nature” to finish it off?

Don't blame Mother Nature for all this death and destruction. That dishonor goes to Papa Doc and Baby Doc, the Duvalier dictatorship, which looted the nation for 28 years. Papa and his Baby put an estimated 80% of world aid into their own pockets – with the complicity of the US government happy to have the Duvaliers and their voodoo militia, Tonton Macoutes, as allies in the Cold War. (The war was easily won: the Duvaliers' death squads murdered as many as 60,000 opponents of the regime.)

12. What Papa and Baby didn't run off with, the IMF finished off through its “austerity” plans. An austerity plan is a form of voodoo orchestrated by economists zomby-fied by an irrational belief that cutting government services will somehow help a nation prosper.

13. In 1991, five years after the murderous Baby fled, Haitians elected a priest, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who resisted the IMF's austerity diktats. Within months, the military, to the applause of Papa George HW Bush, deposed him.

History repeats itself, first as tragedy, then as farce. The farce was George W. Bush. In 2004, after the priest Aristide was re-elected President, he was kidnapped and removed again, to the applause of Baby Bush.

14. Haiti was once a wealthy nation, the wealthiest in the hemisphere, worth more, wrote Voltaire in the 18th century, than that rocky, cold colony known as New England. Haiti's wealth was in black gold: slaves. But then the slaves rebelled – and have been paying for it ever since.

From 1825 to 1947, France forced Haiti to pay an annual fee to reimburse the profits lost by French slaveholders caused by their slaves' successful uprising. Rather than enslave individual Haitians, France thought it more efficient to simply enslave the entire nation.

15. Secretary Gates tells us, “There are just some certain facts of life that affect how quickly you can do some of these things.” The Navy's hospital boat will be there in, oh, a week or so. Heckuva job, Brownie!

16. Note just received from my friend. Her sister was found, dead; and her other sister had to bury her. Her father needs his anti-seizure medicines. That's a fact of life too, Mr. President.

Through our journalism network, we are trying to get my friend's medicines to her father. If any reader does have someone getting into or near Port-au-Prince, please contact Haiti@GregPalast.com immediately.

Urgently recommended reading – The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution, the history of the successful slave uprising in Hispaniola by the brilliant CLR James.

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