



**THE HISTORY AND FUTURE OF HAITI:
REVOLUTION, REPRESSION, RESISTANCE AND EVENTUAL VICTORY**

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DR. MAULANA KARENGA

THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF HAITI IS marked by extraordinary expressions of revolutionary struggle and victory, suffering and repression, but always righteous and relentless resistance of the people and their radical refusal to be defeated. The Haitian nation was born in revolutionary struggle, achieving what no enslaved people had done before or after. It defeated its enslavers and other armies and political forces that sought to thwart and negate its national liberation, inspired and assisted liberation struggles in Latin America, and became a beacon of African and human liberation, teaching possibility and achievement against all odds. But the enemies of Haiti, the world African community and human freedom never forgave it and have since its birth worked to divide it, reconquer it, and reverse its instructive and enduring achievement. In a word, their efforts were directed towards rendering it irrelevant, except as a site of imperialist exploitation, name-calling and conversational contempt.

The recent assassination of the U.S. chosen and backed president, Jovenel Moïse, has gained the attention of the U.S. and world. But who turned toward Haiti with any modicum of care and concern before this? Who was shocked or shaken to ease or help eliminate the deep, enduring and undeserved suffering of the Haitian people who were mercilessly murdered, even massacred, by gangs and thugs in cahoots and with consent and collaboration of this U.S.-supported president and cohorts, as well as those before them?

And who stood with Haitian Americans in their struggle to maintain Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for immigrant Haitians, to prevent their return to dangerous and deadly conditions, and to win for them the rightful asylum they sought here? Likewise, who came forth to defend and rescue them and their children from the internment camps at the U.S./Mexican border along with Latinas/os and others? And who has protested the U.S., France's and Canada's brutal occupation of Haiti and their Core Group of ambassadors' commitment to and practice of domination, deprivation and degradation of the Haitian

people? So, whether the American people like it or not, or are conscious of it or not, the American government is deeply implicated in the prior and current events of killings and chaos, disruption and suffering imposed on the Haitian people.

Clearly, the Haitian people reject the political violence involved in killing a president and thus call for justice. But they are not demonstrating in the streets for Moïse, whose history of killing them was as recent as the day he died and who fostered an environment of corruption, gangster government, drug trafficking, political and civil institution gutting, political killings, office grabbing and vocational corruption. What they want is an inclusive justice, one for all the people, the everyday people, the journalists, community leaders and organizers, the teachers, lawyers, the opponents of a corrupt and gangster government who were killed without mercy and often en masse.

It is then a claim and demand of justice for all the anonymous and known victims, adults and children, killed, kidnapped, tortured, raped, infected with cholera, sold and enslaved in houses or on farms and in factories anywhere and everywhere. For there is no real justice in simply seeking justice for the rich, powerful and prominent and disregarding and denying justice to the poor, the disempowered and the vulnerable. The future and hope for Haiti must be in its own hands, must be self-determined by its own people. The Commission to Find A Haitian Solution offers promise for a united practice and struggle necessary for Haiti's move forward and upward on the revolutionary, dignity-affirming, life-enhancing paths it marks out for itself. It seeks rightly to build consensus for a shared way forward and upward by all political and civil society groups committed to a free, self-determining, justice-practicing, and people-focused society.

The Haitian people have asked the world to cease intervention in their country and the occupiers, the U.S., France and Canada, to end their occupation in the disguise of manipulative puppets, oppressive policies, and elite support and

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protection. The claimants to Moïse' crime-corrupted "throne" have asked the U.S. to intervene, but the people know this is no more than a plea to protect them and the other elites from each other and to thwart the liberation aims and efforts of the people. It is seeking support for their claims to legitimacy and authority that had been there for their patron-turned-problem, Moïse. They rightly fear there is no honor among thieves and no security among assassins, and that the wave of killings they orchestrated, sponsored and/or supported will blowback and engulf them.

There is a constant call among the Haitians we used to raise in the Sixties: Let the masses decide! Let them decide their future, their destiny and daily lives. And they cannot do that with the presence of foreigners propping up puppets, suppressing the people and robbing the people of their lives, livelihoods, resources and future. Clearly, the U.S. has no moral right or legal ground to return to occupy Haiti and has a sordid and savage history of presence in Haiti. It is disqualified by its invasions and occupations of Haiti, overthrowing its democratically-elected president, undermining its economy, and supporting a series of dictators, as well as its inhumane and unjust treatment of Haitian immigrants.

The UN has no more standing than the imperialists who sent it as a surrogate, after the U.S., under Bush, overthrew the democratically-elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 2004. Indeed, the UN has a horrific history in Haiti marked by sexual predation and assault, causing a cholera epidemic that killed thousands and for which it never accepted real responsibility or made just restitution and also ruthlessly suppressing the people in the interests of the occupiers and the elite.

To build a true democracy in Haiti, that democracy must be conceived, constructed and sustained by the Haitian people themselves as self-conscious agents of their own lives and liberation. This is the central objective, concern and commitment of the Commission to Find A Haitian Solution. A reorganized society will determine how others can assist, but the Haitian people must, in the final analysis, wage a second revolution in order to recover, renew and expand the promise and possibilities of the first revolution in 1804. This means ending the regime and reign of criminals and crime in government and in the streets, holding free and fair elections, rebuilding government and civil institutions, establishing a just order and bringing security to the people. Also, such a just and free society will secure justice for the people at every level; provide basic necessities of food, housing, health care and education. It will put an end to "capital flight," the billions sent abroad to be hoarded, invested and laundered. And the Haitian people might want to consider reraising the demand for reparations from France and even the U.S.

HAITI'S RISING, RECONSTRUCTION AND RECOVERY will be difficult, dangerous and demanding, but their history and revolution, resistance and resilience is evidence that argues strongly for their eventual and inevitable victory. Drawing on this revolutionary history, let us, as the liberation leader Boukman urged us, "Listen to the voice of freedom which speaks in all our hearts" and stand in active and unbreakable solidarity with the Haitian people as they struggle mightily and victoriously to reignite and uplift the light of human freedom in their country and the world.▲

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