

America's Role in Haiti: Sabotage of Relief Efforts?

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In-depth Report: [HAITI](#)

Think about it: A whole city that once had a population of two million people. Now there is mile after mile of buildings collapsed after a huge earthquake. Many, many bodies are sandwiched between layers of heavy concrete slabs lying in huge heaps. But there are also many people, perhaps thousands, still alive, trapped inside, crying out. For days help from the outside still hasn't arrived and desperate relatives continue to dig at the rubble with their bare hands. Amazingly, even after three days, human voices are still emanating from the ruins. But then, there are fewer and they are softer. Eventually a deafening quiet surrounds the crumbled buildings as the city of Port-au-Prince becomes a vast tomb.

One woman continues to hit at the concrete with a broom. She believes her four missing relatives are buried inside and hopes they will respond. But hope eventually turns to grief. "There's no more life here," she says.

Another woman stands outside a collapsed trade school where her brother is buried. She has been listening for any signs of life—even a soft moan. Her eyes fill with tears as she dials her brother's cell phone again and again. "He's gone," she says.

Even without serious injuries, those trapped beneath the rubble will most likely die after 72 hours. But no heavy moving equipment has arrived and there are still hardly any medical supplies for the injured. Some foreign rescue teams are now on the ground. But this is only a drop in the bucket of what is needed.

In New York City, in the Haitian community of East Flatbush, many hearts are aching with intense sorrow and worry. So many don't know if their loved ones in Haiti are dead or alive. A young woman eating in a neighborhood restaurant says, "I've been crying for three days. This is the first time I've been out of the house." In the nearby laundromat two older women sit waiting for their clothes to dry, staring up at TV scenes of the carnage in the city that was once their home. They look to be in a state of shock and softly say they have been trying to call home but no phones are working so they have no idea what has happened to their family. Intense grief is just waiting to pour out—but no one can get any information, so a sliver of hope remains.

There are estimates that at least 100,000 have died. And when the rubble is finally cleared, this number could skyrocket even more.

No human being could have stopped the earthquake that hit with such killing force on January 12. But so many of the people who have perished in Port-au-Prince DID NOT HAVE TO DIE.

The earthquake was a natural disaster. But the situation which led to so many casualties

was not natural. Thousands who in fact could have been saved died needlessly because rich and powerful countries which do have the resources to rescue people—most especially the United States—failed to provide such aid in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake. In fact, the survivors who against all odds were rescued from the rubble—only underscores how many more people could have in fact been saved—*but instead died*—because the U.S. did not do everything possible to get rescue teams and equipment to Haiti right away. This amounts to nothing less than mass murder.

The Economist wrote: “[T]he majority of victims did not perish during the 35-second tremor. Ted Constan of Partners in Health, an American NGO, says that some 200,000 people were probably injured or trapped but not killed by the quake. He estimates that an additional 25,000 of them have died on each day that has passed since the tremor, as a result of treatable ailments such as bleeding, dehydration, suffocation and infection.” (economist.com, January 18, 2010)

U.S. Delivers Not Aid But a Killing Delay

The U.S. is the most powerful country on earth. It is only a few hundred miles from Haiti. But in the crucial days after the earthquake the U.S. failed to deliver the food, water, medical supplies, and rescue teams and medical personnel so badly needed. And the \$100 million of aid Obama has promised is an insult given the wealth of the U.S. and the enormity of this tragedy. This is less than one-tenth of one percent of U.S. yearly military expenses in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The first U.S. airdrop of food and water did not even happen until Monday, January 18—a week after the earthquake. And CNN reported there were no deliveries the next day because the U.S. was still assessing target areas that would be secure.

Other countries with less resources and much farther away managed to get rescue teams on the scene right away. Within 48 hours, the International Search and Rescue Team from Iceland, fully equipped and self-sufficient for up to seven days in the field, deployed immediately with tons of tools and equipment, water, tents, advanced communications equipment and water purifying capability.

On Friday night, more than three days after the earthquake, it was reported that tons of supplies stacked up at airports, *not moving*. And while mainstream news continued to warn of looting and chaos, reporters in Port-au-Prince said there was little violence, that people were desperately trying to find and rescue loved ones, help the injured and survive.

Marguerite Laurent, an award-winning playwright and performance poet living in the U.S., was able to reach a woman in Haiti who told her: “With my bare hands, I pulled my two daughters out from the rubble myself but I can’t get them to a working hospital. I searched all night Tuesday to find them in the dark and under the concrete. My other two are dead. I don’t have a way to fly to the Dominican Republic for care. The doctors say one crushed leg must be amputated but they don’t have the equipment to do so. There’s too many dead people at the hospital. I am carrying her somewhere else. I don’t know where. There’s no water or food to give them. I can’t get inside the house to recover anything. We are in the streets.”

Ansel Herz, an independent journalist living in Haiti, reported, “People are in the streets. People are in the public squares, looking, waiting for some kind of help. But there’s really

not much of it forthcoming at all that I've seen. I was in the streets all day yesterday and the day before since the earthquake. I didn't see a single aid worker or a single official aid convoy from the Haitian government or from an aid agency or from the peacekeeping force that's here, the United Nations." (*Democracy Now!*, January 14, 2010)

Meanwhile, as bodies piled up in the streets, U.S. efforts were NOT being focused on organizing and helping to facilitate the thousands of medical people, rescue workers, and others from the U.S. and around the world who want to help. Instead the U.S. military was being mobilized as the main force to go into Haiti in the wake of this horrendous disaster. While over 10,000 naval, air and ground forces were getting ready to be dispatched by the Pentagon, the U.S. government sent only 300 medical personnel. U.S. search-and-rescue teams only dug out 15 people from the rubble.

The *Christian Science Monitor* reported that from the very beginning the U.S. Defense Department response focused on "making initial assessments," instead of getting relief supplies to the people.

The U.S. is sending some 10,000 Army, Navy and Marine forces, a Navy aircraft carrier, and Special Forces under the United States Southern Command (SOUTHCOM). General Douglas Fraser, commander of SOUTHCOM defined the Haiti emergency operation as a Command, Control, Communications operation (C3). At a press conference Fraser was asked to explain why other countries were able to quickly get rescue teams and aid into Haiti while the U.S. did not do this. Fraser replied, "From practice, we've found that the assessments are critical to making sure we get the right equipment in there and make the recovery efforts and the life-supporting efforts as efficient as possible. So the worst thing that we can do is put a lot of equipment forward that we don't know whether or not we'll need."

This merits repeating: Fraser said the *worst thing* in such a crisis is sending *too much* help. In actual fact, the worst thing—which is what the U.S. made sure happened—is that thousands needlessly died because efforts and resources were not focused on immediately getting medical and rescue teams and supplies into Haiti.

U.S. Sabotage of Relief Efforts

The total lack of a functioning government in Haiti has been used to legitimize the U.S. basically coming in and taking over. Very quickly the U.S. took control of the airport—which means it is deciding what goes in and out of Haiti. And this has been a key way that the U.S. has in fact *prevented* food and medicine from being delivered.

Aid organizations are criticizing the U.S. for misplaced priorities—saying U.S. officials have focused efforts not on getting aid into the country but on getting their people and troops installed and rescuing U.S. citizens.

UNICEF tried to send a plane full of medical kits, blankets and tents, but was denied permission to land and was forced to return to Panama. On Saturday, January 16, the World Food Program was finally able to land airplanes with food, medicine and water—after being diverted on Thursday and Friday so that the U.S. could land troops and equipment, and lift Americans and other foreigners to safety. Jarry Emmanuel, the air logistics officer for the agency's Haiti effort said, "There are 200 flights going in and out every day, which is an incredible amount for a country like Haiti. But most of those flights are for the United States military." Emmanuel went on to say, "Their priorities are to secure the country, ours are to

feed. We have got to get those priorities in sync.”

The U.S. claims it is doing all it can to help the Haitian people. But the real truth that has emerged is that in the crucial days right after the earthquake the U.S. was not only *not* delivering aid—but actually *sabotaging* the efforts of others who were urgently trying to get medicine, food, water and teams of doctors and rescue workers into Haiti.

Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) issued a statement demanding that its cargo planes carrying essential medical and surgical material be allowed to land in Port-au-Prince. They argue that priority must be given immediately to planes carrying lifesaving equipment and medical personnel. This was in response to the fact that despite guarantees given by the United Nations and the U.S. Defense Department, an MSF cargo plane carrying an inflatable surgical hospital was blocked from landing in Port-au-Prince on Saturday. It was re-routed to Samana in the Dominican Republic and the material then had to be sent by truck from Samana. It needs to be asked—how many people died because of this 48-hour delay in the arrival of the mobile hospital?

On Friday night, a Belgian medical team evacuated the area, saying it was concerned about security. CNN initially reported, based on conversations with some of the doctors, that the UN ordered the Belgian First Aid and Support Team to evacuate. Later Geert Gijs, the doctor who is the Chief Coordinator of the Belgian team of 60 medical personnel, said it was his decision to pull the team out for the night. He said he asked UN security personnel to staff the hospital overnight, but was told that peacekeepers would only be able to evacuate the team. The decision left CNN Chief Medical Correspondent Sanjay Gupta as the only doctor at the hospital to get the patients through the night. He was assisted by other CNN staffers and at least one Haitian nurse who refused to leave—but the team took their medical supplies with them, limiting what he could do. The Belgian team returned in the morning.

Even retired Army Lt. Gen. Russel Honoré, who served as the task force commander for relief efforts following Hurricane Katrina in 2005—who in fact presided over the National Guard pointing guns in people’s faces—has been critical of the U.S. response in Haiti. On Thursday he said, “I thought we had learned that from Katrina, take food and water and start evacuating people.... I thought we could have had a faster start.” Honoré said that even in the chaos of Katrina he had never seen medical staff walk away. “I find this astonishing these doctors left,” he said. “People are scared of the poor.”

So while the U.S. sabotaged relief efforts it has also been creating a whole atmosphere where even those trying to help are being given a *false* sense of impending danger and violence—which, in the case of the Belgian medical team, led them to sacrifice lives because of “security concerns.”

Humanitarian flights from France, Brazil, and Italy were refused permission to land, and the Red Cross reported one of its planes was diverted to Santo Domingo, the capital of the neighboring Dominican Republic.

France’s ambassador to Haiti, Didier le Bret, said France’s foreign minister Bernard Kouchner lodged a protest with the U.S. State Department after the U.S. blocked a French flight carrying an emergency field hospital. He said Port-au-Prince airport was “not an airport for the international community. It’s an annex of Washington.... We were told it was an extreme emergency, there was need for a field hospital. We might be able to make a

difference and save lives.”

French officials later backed down from these statements (one has to wonder if the U.S. put pressure on them to do this). French Presidential counselor Claude Guéant said, “The U.S., who have a very sizeable Haitian community, have decided to make a considerable effort.... Now is really not the time to express rivalries between countries.”

With the U.S. in command of outgoing flights, one of the first priorities was to evacuate Americans, even as the U.S. blocked the efforts of French and Canadian officials to get their citizens out. Eventually U.S. soldiers lifted their cordon and allowed others through, but not until after U.S. military planes had flown more than 250 Americans from Haiti to New Jersey’s McGuire Air Force Base. In fact, this seems to be right in line with what Obama said at his press conference on Haiti, that: “We have no higher priority than the safety of American citizens.... And you should know that we will not rest until we account for our fellow Americans in harm’s way.”

At Port-au-Prince’s Municipal Nursing Home, barely one mile from the U.S.-controlled airport, 85 elderly Haitians are starving and being attacked by rats. One man, Joseph Julien, has already died. Officials cited fights over food at a nearby soccer stadium to justify not sending them supplies. Nursing home administrator Jean Emmanuel told the Associated Press: “I’m pleading for everyone to understand that there’s a truce right now, the streets are free, so you can come through to help us.”

Laying the Basis for Even More Crimes Against the Haitian People

The media and government narrative—that the real problem is the danger of looting and chaos—is being used, in effect, to blame the Haitian people themselves for the U.S. delay.

Here, it needs to be asked: What is the definition of “looting” in an extreme crisis like this? Is it a crime for people who are desperately in need of food and water to go inside a store and get what they need? Should people be shot if, in the midst of a total breakdown of commerce and services, they take what they need to prevent themselves and their children from dying?

And the actual truth is that the whole time the U.S. has been saying this, there has been very little violence among the people. Instead, and despite getting no help, the masses of people have been working together to try and rescue people, digging at the rubble with their bare hands, trying to tend to the injured and help each other survive amidst the rubble. There were reports of many Haitians walking from other areas of Haiti for hours to get to Port-au-Prince to help people. It was the Haitian people themselves—many who were injured themselves—who did everything they could in the first life-and-death 72 hours to save those who were trapped under the rubble—while the U.S. was not even on the scene.

When U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visited Port-au-Prince on Saturday, she argued for an emergency decree in Haiti that would allow the imposition of curfews and martial-law conditions by U.S. forces. Clinton explained: “The decree would give the government an enormous amount of authority, which in practice they would delegate to us.”

And we should remember: This is the same army that has invaded, occupied and brutalized the Haitian people for decades. This is the same U.S. military that was sent into New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, pointed guns in people’s faces as they tried to escape the

floodwaters, and prevented people from coming to New Orleans to help. This is the same U.S. military that rains down bombs in Afghanistan and Iraq, murders, imprisons and tortures innocent people all over the world.

On Friday two military officials were quoted in the press explaining that U.S. forces in Haiti will be operating under an adaptation of standard military rules of engagement—which means they can shoot people in self defense. U.S. soldiers in Port-au-Prince have reportedly been told to be discreet about how they carry their M4 assault rifles. But we have to ask: Why has the U.S. put more effort into getting men with assault rifles into Haiti than doctors and emergency workers with medicine and rescue equipment?

The U.S. has also announced that Haitians trying to get to the U.S. in this crisis will not qualify for TPS (Temporary Protected Status)—which means they will be deported immediately. Homeland Security announced it would move 400 detainees from the Krome detention facility to an undisclosed location, to free up space in case any Haitians manage to reach U.S. shores. This is part of “Operation Vigilant Sentry” which calls for clearing space at Miami’s Krome detention center by moving existing detainees to other facilities. And U.S. officials have said some people could be housed temporarily at the U.S. Navy base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

The U.S. is the richest country in the world. It has tremendous resources to take in people who are trying to leave such a horrible and unlivable situation. But instead it has vowed to lock up and deport any Haitians who seek safety in the U.S. Meanwhile President Abdoulaye Wade of the poor country of Senegal proposed that African nations offer Haitian survivors the chance to resettle in Africa, “the land of their ancestors.” “Africa should offer Haitians the chance to return home. It is their right,” Wade said on his website. Senegalese officials have reportedly offered Haitian refugees parcels of fertile land.

The U.S. is giving—or at least has promised—just enough aid so it cannot be criticized as it was after the Sri Lanka tsunami of 2004 and Hurricane Katrina. But even this was not delivered in the most crucial days right after the earthquake. As Toby O’Ryan asks in his article, “Seven Questions on Haiti”: “Are you giving this aid in such small amounts and so slowly because you are more concerned to maintain the repressive government authority in Haiti than you are about meeting the urgent and immediate needs of the Haitian people by getting the aid directly to the people and allowing them to collectively organize to distribute it in a time of crisis, when the ordinary authorities are not totally in control?”

To get at this important point a bit further, the question could be examined from another angle:

The hearts of people around the world ached as they watched the horror unfold in Haiti. Contributions of money, medicine and supplies have been pouring in. And thousands have been trying to come to the aid of the Haitian people. Doctors, rescue teams, relief workers and ordinary people are all coming at this situation from the starting point of the *urgent need to save human lives*. So while it is completely outrageous and maddening to see what the U.S. is and isn’t doing, it may seem incomprehensible. For some it looks like the U.S. is just a lumbering, inept bureaucratic machine. That the problem is corruption or incompetence. People might ask, what could be more simple than recognizing that people are dying, they need help, and especially rich countries with so many resources should do all they can to save lives?

But all the evidence shows that saving lives is NOT the concern and calculus governing the actions of the U.S. in its response to this horrible human tragedy.

Its response to the earthquake in Haiti shows that first and foremost what the U.S. is concerned with is maintaining the status quo of existing oppressive economic control over Haiti and the repressive political relations required to enforce that. It is concerned with keeping control and stabilizing the situation so things don't develop in a way that threatens U.S. domination. It is concerned with preventing uncontrolled immigration to the United States. It is acting to safeguard and further its economic and geo-political interests in the Caribbean region. Every move the U.S. is making in Haiti right now is governed by these cold imperialist calculations—not regard for human life. When the U.S. Marines take control of the airport in Port-au-Prince, the message is: The U.S. is in charge and we're going to be setting the terms for everything that goes on here.

Why is Haiti So Poor? Why Did So Many Have to Die?

With the eyes of the world on Haiti, many people are seeing how intense poverty severely multiplied the earthquake's toll. But people need to ask, WHY is Haiti so poor? And WHY did you have a city like Port-au-Prince where so many people were so vulnerable to the devastating effects of such an earthquake?

First of all, Haiti is poor and impoverished because of a long history of U.S. domination and oppression. U.S. Marines invaded and occupied Haiti from 1915 until 1934. The U.S. seized land and distributed it to American corporations. And the heroic resistance that arose against the U.S. was brutally crushed. Starting in 1957 the U.S. propped up the pro-U.S. dictatorial Duvalier governments—first Papa and then Baby Doc—and the murderous Haitian military, along with the Tontons Macoute gangs that terrorized the people. After popular uprisings ousted these dictators the U.S. maneuvered and intervened—opposing any forces that threatened U.S. interests and working to keep a puppet government in power. In 2004, the U.S. was directly involved in overthrowing the popularly elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. (See "[The U.S. in Haiti: A Century of Domination and Misery](#).”) Through all this, the economic and social structures of Haiti have been distorted and geared toward serving the needs of foreign, especially U.S., investments. All this is why Haiti is so poor and dependent.

Over 80 percent of people in Haiti live in abject poverty. Over half the population lives on less than a dollar a day. Over 80 percent of the people do not get the minimum daily ration of food as defined by the World Health Organization. Less than 45 percent have access to potable water. Life expectancy in Haiti is 53 years. Only one in every 100,000 Haitians have access to a physician.

Speaking of the U.S. role in Haiti, Bill Quigley, legal director at the Center for Constitutional Rights, said: “We have kept the country dependent. We have kept the country militarized. And we kept the country impoverished. We have dumped our excess rice, our excess farm produce and that stuff on the country, thereby undercutting the small farmers who would make up the backbone of the place... We didn't create the earthquake, but we created some of the circumstances that made the earthquake so devastating....” (*Democracy Now!*, January 14, 2010)

The extremely impoverished conditions of Haiti, including the lack of infrastructure—that created a situation in which the earthquake was so devastating—is due to the long history of U.S. domination.

Mechanism of Imperialist Domination

Thirty years ago the Haitians subsisted on corn, sweet potatoes, cassava and domestic rice—along with domestic pigs and other livestock production. Then in 1986 the International Monetary Fund (IMF) loaned Haiti \$24.6 million—but only on the condition that Haiti reduce tariff protections on Haitian rice, other agricultural products and some industries. This was aimed at opening up the country's markets to competition from outside countries. Haitian farmers could not compete with rice growers in the U.S., who were being subsidized by the U.S. government. Some of the cheap rice that flooded into Haiti was in the form of "food aid." The local rice market in Haiti collapsed and thousands of farmers were forced to move to the cities to look for work.

Around this same time the U.S. insisted that the Haitian peasantry do away with its huge and valuable pig population—due to a supposed threat to the U.S. pig population.

These are key factors in why there is so much hunger in Haiti today. This was powerfully expressed in the food riots in 2008. Imported rice, which had now become the staple of the Haitian diet, doubled in price—and people could not afford to eat. Many were forced to eat and sell cakes made of mud and vegetable oil to stave off hunger pangs.

In 1994 the U.S. made it possible for Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who had been forced out of the country, to resume his presidency—but only on the condition that he implement IMF and World Bank (WB) policies aimed at opening Haiti's markets even more to international trade.

This is how Haiti's agriculture was destroyed and how it became dependent on imported food, especially rice from the U.S. And in only a few decades hundreds of thousands of people were driven from the rural areas into Port-au-Prince—and forced to live in the most impoverished living conditions, where unemployment in some areas is as high as 90%.

Port-au-Prince used to have only 50,000 people in the 1950s. But when the earthquake hit, over 2 million people lived in this capital city. And tens of thousands died because they were in shantytowns, substandard housing, schools and other buildings that collapsed because they were so badly and cheaply built.

Brian Concannon, director of the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti, talked about why so many people lived on the hillsides where they were vulnerable to the effects of an earthquake: "They got there because they or their parents or grandparents were pushed out of Haiti's countryside, where most Haitians used to live. And they were pushed out of there by policies thirty years ago, when it was decided by the international experts that Haiti's economic salvation lay in assembly manufacture plants. And in order to advance that, it was decided that Haiti needed to have a captive labor force in the cities. So a whole bunch of aid policies, trade policies and political policies were implemented, designed to move people from the countryside to places like Martissant and the hills—hillsides that we've seen in those photos [of the devastation]." (*Democracy Now!*, January 14, 2010)

Dangerous Conditions of Impoverishment

As part of enforcing imperialist relations of domination, the World Bank and IMF have imposed structural adjustment policies on Haiti—requiring the government to reduce or eliminate many social service programs in order to repay foreign debt.

Growing poverty in the countryside has severely affected the very landscape—including

exacerbating conditions that make things more dangerous when things like hurricanes or earthquakes occur. For example less than two percent of Haiti's forests remain—most have been cut down for export or for the charcoal industry. Some have been destroyed because poor people have cut down trees to make charcoal to survive. When hurricanes struck Haiti in 2008 more than 1,000 people died around the town of Gonaïves. This was in large part due to flooding and landslides from erosion caused by deforestation. Dr. Paul Farmer, who runs an organization called Partners in Health, saw how the absence of trees created flash-floods that sweep people away. Farmer said, "It's the ecological disaster that underpins the entire process. And again, the chaos and the ecological disasters are caused by humans and not the wrath of God."

Many of the farmers and peasants forced into Port-au-Prince in the last few decades have ended up unemployed and living in shantytowns of cheaply constructed housing—shacks of cinderblocks, tin and sometimes even straw. When the earthquake hit, these and other structures, like schools made of concrete without any reinforced steel, were some of the most vulnerable buildings that quickly became deathtraps.

For more than a decade geologists have warned of the likelihood of a major quake in southern Haiti, where the faultline between the North American and Caribbean tectonic plates runs. And as recently as 2008, the mayor of Port-au-Prince estimated that 60 percent of the capital's buildings would be unsafe in the event of a major quake. But in a poor country like Haiti there is no money for quake-proofing structures which have been shoddily built. Last year a school in Pétionville, a wealthy suburb of Port-au-Prince, collapsed just by itself.

U.S. Interests and Plans for Haiti

In the wake of this huge tragedy in Haiti, the U.S. continues to press forward its plans to further dominate and exploit the Haitian people. Obama put George W. Bush and Bill Clinton in charge of U.S. aid to Haiti. Bush's resume for this job is that he is the one who presided over the crimes against the people in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. Bill Clinton's credentials are that he is the point man for a much-praised plan for Haiti that involves setting up tourist areas and sweatshops where Haitians will be paid 38 cents an hour.

If you really want to talk about looting—and on a grand scale—this is what Bill Clinton had to say after the earthquake: "Once we deal with the immediate crisis, the development plans the world was already pursuing have to be implemented more quickly and on a broader scale. I'm interested in just pressing ahead with it. Haiti isn't doomed. Let's not forget, the damage from the earthquake is largely concentrated in the Port-au-Prince area. That has meant a tragic loss of life, but it also means there are opportunities to rebuild in other parts of the island. So all the development projects, the agriculture, the reforestation, the tourism, the airport that needs to be built in the northern part of Haiti—everything else should stay on schedule. Then we should simply redouble our efforts once the emergency passes to do the right sort of construction in Port-au-Prince and use it to continue to build back better."

In other words, Clinton now sees the massive destruction in Haiti as an opportunity to press forward with his plans for setting up profitable sweatshops and tourist areas. Clinton has already enlisted Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines into investing \$55 million to build a pier along the coastline of Labadee, which it has leased until 2050. According to the *Miami Herald*:

The \$40 million plan involves transforming various small towns into tourist villages, eco-

tourism, archaeological exploration and visits to Vodou rituals. Clinton's plan also includes a major expansion of the sweatshop industry in Haiti and the U.S. has already put in place provisions for duty-free treatment of Haitian apparel exports.

The U.S. government and the mainstream media continue to paint the U.S. as the most generous and caring country that will "not forget the Haitian people." In his speech pledging aid to the Haitian people Obama said, "Our nation has a unique capacity to reach out quickly and broadly and to deliver assistance that can save lives."

But everything the U.S. has been doing is aimed NOT at rescue and relief, is NOT helping the Haitian people—but has in fact meant many more deaths and more suffering.

As the [January 13 statement](#) from *Revolution* newspaper said: "There must be struggle *against* this system to demand that the needs of the masses actually be met and that there NOT be suppression of the masses."

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