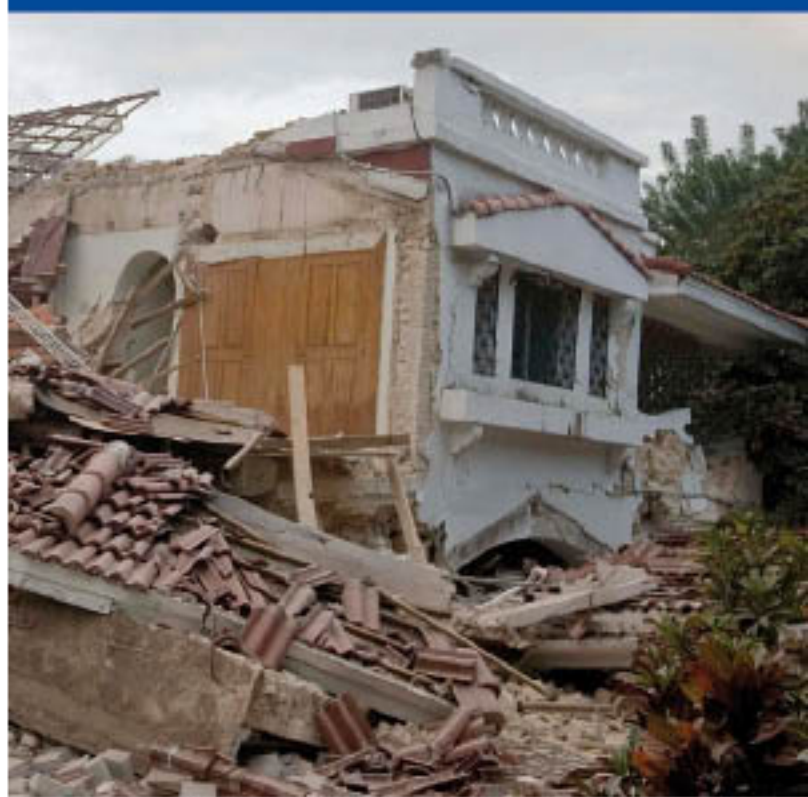


Under the father and son regime poverty increased and an AIDS outbreak spread throughout the country in the early 1980s. The next notorious leader after the Duvalier duo was Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Aristide's reign was besieged with radical populist policies, violence, money laundering, embezzlement, human rights abuses, and drug trafficking, which ended up causing more chaos for Haiti. As the new millennium approached, it was business as usual for all parties involved. The 2004 rebellion was the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. The Haitian people became fed up with the rampant corruption, increasing debt, and unfathomable poverty going on in the country.

Rene Preval was elected again by majority vote to become the new president of Haiti. The current debt of Haiti is an astronomical figure of \$891 million. According to PAPDA, "more than eighty percent of the people in the countryside suffer from hunger. About half of the population is illiterate and seventy percent are unemployed. Life expectancy is 56 years and decreasing. The infant mortality rate is more than double the Latin American and Caribbean average." Not to mention decades of foreign humanitarian aid not getting the appropriate sources and the lack of running water and basic necessities to live a normal human existence.

The Haitian people have done their damndest to resist the economic and military power of the U.S. and European powers ever since their independence. They are a strong, resilient people and like many countries worldwide they've had their share of mistakes. But the power exhibited by the U.S. and Europe have resulted in Haitians paying exorbitant prices in deaths, debt, and abuse. Now is the time for all of us to resurrect the only third world country in the Western hemisphere. The time has arrived for us to unite with our Haitian brothers and sisters to right these previous wrongs and usher in a new era in Haitian history.



Hotel Villa Creole in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, crumbled - Photo courtesy of © AP



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