

Name

Instructor

Course

Date

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Haiti

Haiti is a poor South American country. Politics has been a key cause of poverty in the country. This paper will present my revelations to a U.S. anthropologist about Haiti's economic and political situation. Also, I will suggest ways in which he should help our country.

Christopher Columbus discovered the island of Haiti in 1492. As soon he did that, he named the island La Isla Espanola meaning a Spanish island. This shows that it the island was under the Spanish protectorate. He found our ancestors who used to refer to this land as Ayiti. The people of Haiti were for a long time enslaved, but under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture, there was an uprising, which helped to set the slaves free and uphold their individual rights. The efforts of the military forces from Britain, France, and Spain were not just enough to curb the will of the people. We might have been poor people, but we fought until we gained independence in 1804. However, Toussaint L'Ouverture knew he had strongly fought for it. This independence was non-recognizable by other countries at that moment until much later.

The economic situation of peasant farmers has been so pathetic that most of them had no option but to move into the cities for alternative means of livelihood. Haiti's people opted to lead lives that revolved around agrarian simplicity mainly to escape corrupt and damaging government, but this simplicity only paved way to misery. The exact date when the massive

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rural-urban migration occurred is non-clear to us, but the consequences are evident. The peasants initially owned a small amount of land that they divided among their sons resulting to the plots getting smaller with an increase in population. The farming methods the Haitian peasants used were damaging to the land, as they involved such things as burning off the top soil. Besides, the most prevalent source of fuel was wood. Wood dependency as a fuel source resulted in the deforestation that in turn left the land bare because of the vagaries of erosion. The consequences of these negative factors lead to an unprecedented hunger, poverty, and malnourishment. The peasant farmers on seeing this sought to move to the cities to seek for other means of fending for themselves.

Just three years after our country's independence, the Creole elite killed our first leader, Jean Jacques Dessalines, and this marked the first of the many coups that followed. The coups were supposedly meant to suppress the poor and ensure the conditions remain the same for the Haiti nationals (Aristide & Flynn). The government of President Aristide brought hope and a semblance of democracy to the people who were not familiar with the word. He led the ordinary people to question the credibility of the foreign-dominated elite, elite that had imposed untold suffering on the Haitians during the three-decade rule of 'Papa Doc' and 'Baby Doc' Duvalier (Flynn). Aristide defeated former World Bank official Marc Bazin in the presidential elections by claiming 67% of the votes. However, Aristide reign lasted only for seven months in office before the military coup ousted him. It was the time of untold brutality coupled with drug deals that were fuelled by the illegitimate government. Many people fled Haiti during this period. The military had to reinstate Aristide as the president to curb the wild waves of unrest. In 1995, Haiti witnessed a democratic transfer of power after Rene Preval had won the elections (Aristide

& Laura). Michel Martelly, the current president, rules with an iron fist with even the most peaceful of demonstrations being met with extreme violence.

The U.S. occupied Haiti in 1915, at a time when Haiti owed the country a huge debt. The U.S. has since had the say in what happens in Haiti right from controlling the economy through currencies, building infrastructure to attract investors, and even backing their preferred government officials (Mullin). The U.S, through USAID, has led to the destruction of the Creole pig that made a significant economic impact on the Haiti peasants. It also championed for the less minimum wages in Haiti. Besides, it has repeatedly sabotaged the food production in this country. The dictators of all time, 'Baby Doc' and 'Papa Doc', received foreign backing from the U.S. It is hard not to rebuke the U.S for all the predicaments Haiti is facing (Meaney). Funding coups has led to extensive loss of lives and property too.

As for the things I have said, I would request the anthropologist not to reveal my identity or background now, since my country is still facing hard times. This would protect my community and me, because we still need to live long enough to see a new Haiti and not die in the hands of the conflicting factions.

As the U.S. anthropologist, the individual has the ear of the American people; at least more than we do. I would like to urge him to emancipate the crowds in U.S. and attempt to get them sympathize with the people in our country. In addition, I will tell him to urge the masses to tell the U.S government to recognize Haiti as a sovereign state whose people have a choice and not to back their preferred candidates. The U.S should pay for all the wrongs it has caused in Haiti. Lastly, I will urge the anthropologist to publish a book or write articles that bring these issues to light and get people to notice and act on the miseries of our people.

Haiti is facing many problems mainly because of political instability. The instability has made the country very poor, and its citizens are facing many predicaments. The U.S. anthropologist can go a long way in helping this country.

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