

From the streets of Haiti: End the dictatorship of Jovenel Moïse

written by John Parker

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Feb. 14 mass protest in Port-au-Prince.

Paralleling the dictatorial aspirations of Trump, Haitian President Jovenel Moïse is attempting to hold onto office, a position that was stolen in the first place with the support and backing of the U.S. government. In 2016 with U.S. backing, Moïse took the office of president despite getting [only 6% of the vote](#) in the election. And, as protests swelled against that undemocratic placement of Moïse into office by the U.S., so now are they erupting in demands for his removal since his term in office has, by law, ended.

However, laws in and about Haiti — whether national or international — are irrelevant and cast aside for the will of imperialist interests. Especially in regards to the U.S. since its 1915 invasion and years of occupation of Haiti, which forced control of its economy and de facto control of its government into the hands of the U.S.

This denial of Haitian sovereignty continues under the Biden administration, since most imperialist foreign policies are consistent between Democratic and Republican administrations.

This interference by the U.S. and the ever worsening poverty and repression under President Moïse was again answered in the capital of Port-au-Prince on Feb. 14 with protests against the illegal hold on power that even the official institutions like the Haitian Bar Association and Superior Council of the Judicial Power cite as violations of the constitution and the 2015 Electoral Laws, according to a recent article in [Haïti Liberté](#).

2016 election fraud

Unlike the claims of a stolen election by Trump from his white supremacist, anti-science, anti-fact supporters, the claims of election fraud in 2016 that put Moïse into

power, were echoed by all of the contending candidates, citing the elimination of ballots and disenfranchised voters, with only 21% of eligible voters being counted.

Although, for the most part, the mainstream media did not question the results of those elections, the [Wall Street Journal](#) had to admit a peculiarity in the low numbers of voter participation where voter turnout was just 21% with a large percentage of ballots being discarded for supposed irregularities. The Journal quotes a Haiti expert in Washington: "The real story is the collapse of a functioning democratic system, where 80% of the electorate decided not to participate or was unable to participate," said Jake Johnston, a Haiti expert with the Center for Economic and Policy Research in Washington, who noted that in 2000 and 2006, Haitian presidential election turnouts were around 70% and 56%, respectively.

"There is a general dissatisfaction with the political and economic elite in Haiti that makes people think, not only does my vote not matter, but it may not be counted either," Johnston continued.

This history of the Moïse administration has been one of increased violence by police and gangs associated with the police. In 2019, a massive demonstration erupted in response to the repression and worsening poverty. Those who spoke out against the deteriorating situation in Haiti, whether civilians or officials, were met with violence and kidnappings. This strategy by the Haitian government is repeating today.

Officials who have questioned Moïse's refusal to step down have been arrested or pursued for arrest. [Haïti Progrès reported](#) that on Feb. 7, at least 23 people were rounded up in the early morning hours, including Supreme Court justices. Also the mayor of Port-au-Prince was forced to flee to the Dominican Republic, fearing for his life after a police raid of his home.

The deadly force being used against protesters and journalists has increased significantly and its international visibility has become an embarrassment for the

U.S., and the United Nations which has worked in concert with U.S. policy in Haiti.

Although the Biden administration had echoed unconditional support for Moïse, that visibility forced a tweet from Julie Chung, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, on Feb. 16: “I am alarmed by recent authoritarian and undemocratic acts — from unilateral removals and appointments of Supreme Court judges to attacks against journalists. ... Respect for democratic norms is vital and non-negotiable.” Of course this sentiment does not include the extremely blatant sabotage of democracy that occurred when the U.S. removed from office and kidnapped the democratically elected president of Haiti in 2004, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who put fighting poverty and Haitian sovereignty and self-determination before any subservience to the U.S.

The violence has reached a point where it had to be taken up in a UN Security Council meeting, [reported Haïti Progrès](#). There, French Ambassador Nathalie Briadhurst asked Moïse to address the issue of the gang leader Jimmy Cherizier, who has been cited in national and international reports and accused of numerous massacres, yet remains free.

Add to the refusal of the Biden administration to discontinue U.S. military and financial support for Moïse with the fact that since Feb. 1 over 500 Haitians were deported by ICE. It is clear that this administration, like the Trump and Obama administrations, is all about the appearance of democracy while denying it for African peoples and any targets of U.S. imperialism’s drive for profits and hegemony.

The Haiti Action Committee, a San Francisco Bay Area-based network of activists who have supported the Haitian struggle for democracy since 1991, is demanding of the U.S. government:

- End all support for the dictatorship of Jovenel Moïse

- End all recognition of the government of Jovenel Moïse as of Feb. 7, 2021, as required by Haiti's constitution
- Stop all funding of the criminal Haitian police and security forces.

