

Shine a Light on the Role of U.S. Marines in Haiti

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Do you know about the Marines in Haiti?*

While the fight to oust US Marine recruiters from Berkeley has galvanized public opinion and sparked headlines, we in the U.S. hear little about the US Marines in Haiti, a nation of 6.5 million people of African heritage. Since 1914, US Marines have intervened repeatedly in Haiti to enforce US strategic goals in the region. February 29th, 2008 marks the 4th anniversary of the latest US intervention which overthrew Haiti's democratically-elected government.

Consider these facts:

*The demands of the Haitian grassroots movement which represents Haiti's majority are:
End the US/UN Occupation, Free the Political Prisoners, Return President Aristide!*

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1915-1934 US Marines invade Haiti and establish a 20,000-troop US occupation lasting 19 years, which featured martial law, dissolution of the Haitian legislature, and transfer of the most fertile land to foreign ownership. Major General Smedley Butler, a high-ranking US Marine, said, "I spent 33 years...in active military service...as a high class muscle man for Big Business...I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in."

1958 US Marines return to Haiti to support US-backed Duvalier father-son dictatorship whose brutal rule, protected by the dreaded "Ton Ton Macoutes," dominated Haiti for 27 years, killed 30,000 people and crushed political opposition. The US spent \$3 million training "Papa Doc's" Haitian army officers, many at the infamous School of the Americas.

2004 US Marines overthrow the elected democratic government of President Aristide and install a US-appointed coup regime later buttressed by UN troops. They occupy a medical school for housing, forcibly kidnap the President, and arrest dozens of Haitian elected government leaders and grassroots activists.

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