



WORKS

laundering, he declared, “we will invest in and cultivate available lands, build roads, bridges, and electricity networks... build schools, dispensaries, and hospitals, facilitate great tourist projects, take all the advantage we can from the HELP and HOPE acts [of the U.S. Congress] by promoting investment in the assembly sector.”, promises that have gone unheeded.

His first year in office was marked blatant corruption as well as by continuous protests, strikes, riots, and blockades for minimum wage increases and against the government that have taken an increasing revolutionary stance with protesters chanting “Down with the government, down with the bourgeoisie!” The Haitian State has responded with a wide range of repression through strike breaking and firing on with live ammo. This cycle of revolt and repression has been ongoing and it’s a pattern that will repeat itself with greater intensity in the next year.

An intensely unpopular right wing government riddled with abuse and corruption and wave after wave of protest and revolt in the winter set the stage for a hot summer. In July, using the cover of the World Cup hoping everyone would be too distracted to notice, the government implemented an IMF imposed reform raising the price of gasoline, diesel, and kerosene by 38%-51%, with a liter of diesel costing around 4\$ USD and a liter of gasoline costing about 5\$ USD. This price hike also meant that costs for public transportation would rise and for a country who’s minimum wage is between 215 Gourdes (about 3 USD) to 500 Gourdes (about 7 USD) a day depending on industry any price raise is a large chunk out of a days wages.

This all out assault on the poor (that the IMF claimed is actually helping the poor) didn’t go unnoticed and the state’s hope for people being distracted by the World Cup fell apart when Haitians took to the street as it ended. Protests, mostly centered in Haiti’s capital Port-au-Prince, quickly escalated to rioting and looting and not even 24 hours later the state reversed the price hike, but that didn’t get people off the streets and days of intense revolt followed in which multiple people were killed and ended up with the resignation of Prime Minister Jack Guy Lafontant and members of his cabinet.

Resumen Latinoamericano describes the revolt saying,

Hundreds of thousands of protesters are in the streets, building barricades, setting fire to service stations, car dealerships, premises, homes and so on and there are calls to occupy the centre of the capital, where the palace of government is located.

