

# Fighting Spirit Lives on In Haiti



Two women in Haiti days after the January 2010 earthquake

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boys playing basketball in the street, attempts – Muhammad said – to gain some “semblance of normalcy” in their world that drastically changed after the earthquake.

He noted that Haiti is free of individuals standing or laying on street corners with donation cups or signs asking for money. “Despite everything, Haitian spirit is indomitable,” he said, while showing photos of vendors selling handmade crafts, artwork, hats and dolls. Gardeners even grew vegetables in old truck tires to supply some of their own food needs. He captured scenes of Haitian medical students using what they had learned in school to help their own suffering people rather than wait for help to come from relief agencies, some of whom are suspect to many residents.

Muhammad displayed a photo of a male at a water tap that was likely installed by one of the many aid agencies operating in Haiti. Although many are dying from lack of clean water, the water from the tap was contaminated but, because of need, the people chose to use it anyway. “It’s really a travesty that water

would be provided and then the water would be unfit to drink,” Muhammad told DWN after his presentation. “It is criminal. Billions of dollars have been pledged for people to be given a water source.”

During his presentation, he went on to explain that there are more than one million homeless people in Haiti’s capital and now thousands are afflicted with Cholera and, according to Muhammad, many Haitian citizens believe unsanitary practices of certain United Nations peacekeepers are to blame for the outbreak. Media reports show fighting between Haitians and the peace workers but rarely report the true reasons why there is resistance to the foreign forces who are seen as troublemakers more than keepers of the peace to a growing number of Haitians.

Muhammad admonished that observers should seek a better understanding of Haiti’s history to go hand in hand with what they see on the news. Even though Blacks in America may view Haitians as different, he said “we’re still brothers and sisters,” one nation and one people. Centuries ago, he continued, those Black men, women and children

who were kidnapped and transported on slave ships from Africa were taken to various destinations in the Caribbean, the Americas and even Haiti.

“The enemy,” he went on to say, wants us to think we are disconnected and foreign to one another when ancestry and history show all came – originally – from the same place. Because those oppressed in Haiti became the first to successfully revolt against the colonizers and establish their own country, there has been something about the Black republic that has disturbed other countries, particularly, those of the West, since those in Haiti “whipped” the French, as Muhammad put it.

In a 2009 UK Times article entitled “Haiti: the land where children eat mud,” the revolt was described as one which “shook the western world” and for which the struggling country was eventually forced to pay reparations for. “By 1900, [Haiti] was spending 80% of its national budget on repayments,” the article reads. “In 1947, Haiti finally paid off the original reparations, plus interest. Doing so left it destitute, corrupt, disastrously lacking in in-

vestment and politically volatile.”

In addition, Muhammad explained that the U.S. was part of a 60 year blockade of the Caribbean country followed by another two decades of occupation. “What is so troubling to you” about the country?, he rhetorically asked, then suggested that the Haitian fighting spirit and “instinct to be free” were a threat to those who want to control the nation and who do not want Blacks in other countries to adopt a similar mindset and fearlessness to fight against and rise above oppressive circumstances through unified action.

He went on to say this is why negative reporting and policy making about Haiti have been standard, including the double standards from the 1980s when lighter-skinned Cuban refugees were granted asylum if they reached American shorelines, whereas, those from Haiti were turned or sent back, arrested or put into detention camps. Even to this day, unfair targeting and portrayal of the country and its inhabitants in a negative light continues and, at the time of the earthquake, some even speculated that it was triggered by experimental exercises conducted by the U.S. government.

“What has been referred to by a lot of people’s is HAARP, which was this special kind of research,” Muhammad told DWN in reference to the High Frequency Active Aurora Research Program of the U.S. Air Force and Navy. The program, per the Federal Aviation Administration, conducts research requiring use of high power, high frequency transmitter systems. Muhammad noted that some critics believe the earthquake may have been accidentally caused when a HAARP experiment went bad but, given the history of America, he cannot rule out that there may have been some deliberateness in what happened. “Definitely it is something we should not discount. We should try to find out the truth.”

Activists, organizers and Haiti supporters are planning a 2012 Pilgrimage of Hope Cruise in which 2300 people will sail to the country “to lift the spirits of the Haitian people.” Muhammad and The Final Call are taking part in organizing and promoting the journey. For more information, visit [facebook.com/pilgrimage-ofhopecruise](http://facebook.com/pilgrimage-ofhopecruise).