

Haiti: Archetypal Scheming Politician Evans Paul Nominated as New Prime Minister

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Over the past 30 years that he has strutted on Haiti's political stage, politician Evans Paul has become something like the empire's ace-in-the-hole. This is why he has always moderated his message in an effort to please the neocolonists who think they can decide Haiti's future. It is no coincidence that he chose to leave the Patriotic Movement of the Democratic Opposition (MOPOD) earlier this year to go it alone and to participate in the dialogue that led to the signing of the El Rancho accord in March. Some elements of Haiti's political class never act without instructions from the embassies of imperialist nations.

After the forced resignation of Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe on Dec.13, President Michel Martelly gave Haiti a booby-trapped gift on Christmas Day, Dec. 25, possibly ordered by Santa Claus or Uncle Sam, when he nominated Evans Paul, alias Konpè Plim or K-Plim, as Prime Minister.

Constitutionally, the nomination is supposed to be approved by the Parliament. But indications are that laws might be bent or even broken to put Evans Paul in power.

Haiti is in the midst of a political crisis created by Martelly's poor governance and attempt to establish a totalitarian regime, while the Haitian people want democracy. In this situation of confusion and anxiety, the traditional ruling class is calling for negotiations with President Martelly to reach a power-sharing deal. But the masses marching in the streets are no longer interested in cutting any deals or compromises with Martelly. They demand Martelly's resignation, the formation of a provisional consensus government, and the organization of elections.

"The problem is Michel Martelly," cry protesters almost daily around Haiti. "The solution is the Martelly's departure."

For the first time ever, a massive demonstration was held on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, despite calls for a holiday truce. "Negotiations or not, Martelly must go!" the protestors chanted. Another chant was: "Instead of negotiations with Martelly, we'd prefer civil war."

According to demonstrators in the streets, any negotiations or political agreement must simply be around how Martelly is going to step down. Martelly was not elected by the people, they say. He was instead imposed by the "international community" (i.e. U.S., France, Canada) as head of state. Now he has plunged Haiti into a deep political crisis, setting the stage for the imperialists to once again meddle in the sovereign internal affairs of the Haitian people. Michel Martelly, due to his political roots among the Duvalierist Macoutes, is not disposed towards negotiations and consensus. He claims to have had dialogue with some groups which don't represent anybody. It is just a way to run down the

clock until Jan. 12, when he thinks he can disband Parliament and rule by decree. Indeed, Martelly's choice of Evans Paul, a clear representative of Haiti's political-financial-media oligarchy, has been rejected by all the leaders and political forces involved in the mobilization. They continue to call for Mr. Martelly's unconditional resignation.

The presidential decree naming Evans Paul as Prime Minister said that the choice was made on the basis of consensus with the presidents of Parliament's two Chambers. However, a few hours later, Senate President Simon Desras Dieuseul denied this.

"It should be clear to everyone that the future of the Parliament must be defined before anything else, for example, any vote on amendments to the Electoral Law of 2013 or the possible ratification of a Prime Minister," Desras said.

In the Senate, the six Senators who have been blocking Martelly's efforts to ram through his Electoral Law also say that they don't support his move. "None of the senators in this group is ready to ratify Paul Evans as prime minister," said Sen. Pierre Francky Exius.

His colleague from the South, Sen. Carlos Lebon, said the same thing, citing Evans Paul's lack of ethics since he was part of the Presidential Commission that proposed Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe's resignation.



On Christmas day, Haitian President Michel Martelly nominated perennial politician Evans Paul (above) as his new Prime Minister

The nomination of Evans Paul has also raised the hackles of political leaders engaged in talks with Martelly, including those of the parties INITE, FUSION, Kontrapèp and Haitians for Haiti, represented respectively by Paul Denis and Sorel Jacinthe, Rosemond Pradel and Alix Richard, Jean William Jeanty, and Jonas Coffy.

Opposition groups which have refused negotiations with Martelly – MOPOD, Patriotic Forces for Respect of the Constitution (FOPARC), the Dessalines Coordination (KOD), the Platform of Dessalines Children (PPD) – also reject the nomination and call for “Non-Stop Mobilization” until Martelly steps down.

The Lavalas Family party, which met separately with Martelly last week, has not yet announced its position on Evans Paul's nomination, nor has it recently clarified its stand on

Martelly's resignation. Months ago, when the uprising was still young, FL leader Dr. Maryse Narcisse said only Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe should resign, but not President Martelly. As thousands of FL militants and sympathizers now call for Martelly's resignation in almost daily demonstrations, the FL's Executive Committee has still not formally changed its position.

The street is also full of talk about Evans Paul. People remember when he was the mayor of Port-au-Prince from 1991 to 1995. When he stepped down, there was nothing left in the town hall. Everything was stolen, looted. Paul's partisans also ran the National Insurance Office (ONA) under the de facto regime of President Boniface Alexandre and Prime Minister Gérard Latortue (2004-2006). They then ran the Commerce Ministry under President René Préval (2006-2011). There were all sorts of scandals. Evans Paul also traveled to Gonaïves to take part in the commemoration last year of the 210th anniversary of Haiti's independence alongside President Martelly, the late former dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier, and former dictator Gen. Prosper Avril (whose soldiers beat up Paul and then nationally televised his battered face). At the same time, Paul was among the coup-fomenting politicians who boycotted the Haiti's Bicentennial organized by President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 2004.

"Evans Paul has already established his headquarters at the Prime Minister's residence on the Bourdon road and is working on the formation of a new cabinet," said Dr. Joseph Enold, the Secretary General of Paul's longtime organization the Convention of Democratic Unity (KID), according to the pro-government website *Haiti Libre*. "It could be installed as Prime Minister by Tuesday (Dec. 30)."

Haiti Libre also reported that parliamentarians could be summoned to an extraordinary session on Dec. 28, 2014 to audit Paul's documents, as required by Article 157 of the Constitution.

But the former pro-coup politician already considers himself Prime Minister, even without Parliamentary approval. "I have not been appointed Prime Minister to make war on anyone," Paul said on Dec. 26, the day after his appointment, "but to work for the well-being of all Haitians."

While touring the Center Department on Dec. 28, he told a crowd in Cerca Carval: "I am not from the government. I was not on Martelly's team. I did not campaign for him. I am also not in the opposition. As Prime Minister, I am a servant who comes to serve society and make things advance because the country is in crisis."

Clearly, Evans Paul thinks he has the post in the bag. Perhaps he knows something, heard in some corridors of power, that nobody else does?

So the appointment of Evans Paul as Prime Minister appears to be his reward for services rendered to the imperialists. It is also the product of a so-called reconciliation with the executioners of the people.

"On Jan. 12, there will be no political tsunami," Paul said. "There will be an agreement among Haitians."

Evans Paul is truly a genuine enemy of the people, a scheming chameleon, always plotting against the people's interests. In this case, the people's interests and their demands are: Down with dictatorship, long live democracy! Down with occupation, long live sovereignty!

Down with the enemies of the people, long live the mobilization! Down with reconciliation with the executioners, long live justice! Down with those who trample the dignity of the people, long live respect of the people!

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