

Haiti: Martelly Government is the Most Retrograde and the Most Subject to Foreign Dictates in Latin America and the Caribbean

Elections that bode ill for the Haitian people!

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Anti-government protest, November 25, 2014.

It is hard to imagine a greater contrast than that which is evident in Haiti today. On one hand, we can see the triumphant posturing of the de facto tandem of President Michel Martelly and his new Prime Minister Evans Paul. On the other hand, we witness the pusillanimity of the so-called opposition under the leadership of MOPOD (Patriotic Movement of the Democratic Opposition), the Lavalas Family Political Organization, and the Dessalines' Children Platform, three rather inconsistent formations which are now prepared to play the game of electoral lottery concocted by the government. Despite its record of lawless behavior and of association with people accused of rape, murder, drug trafficking, and kidnapping, this government is still moving towards elections that will no doubt deliver a society which is even more unjust and corrupt, with the encouragement of those who don't see anything wrong with that.

In Latin American and the Caribbean, the political regime that governs Haiti is indeed the most backward, most retrograde, most mercenary, and most subject to foreign dictates in the region. Even the *New York Times* had to recognize this in the article it ran on Mar. 16 headlined "Haitian Leader's Power Grows as Scandals Swirl."

Martelly is marching towards a renewal of political actors which bodes ill for the Haitian people. And it is not without reason that he appears to be the most stable president, the most indulged by the exploiting powers, because he is the straw man of the triumvirate of Washington, Paris, and Ottawa. All three presently want to make us hold elections which they can control, to serve their interests.

The main idea behind these elections is to replace some government officials with new ones, to allow the Haitian ruling classes and the imperial forces to better set in place and ensure their smooth domination of a new government which will do their bidding and which will not solve any of the people's problems.



UN troops overseeing voters at a Haitian polling station. No nation which is militarily occupied, as Haiti is by the UN, can have sovereign election.

And it is not without reason that Martelly spoke to the Haitian people, with a triumphant tone, through a presidential decree that was applauded by the entire political class, with the exception, of course, of a few progressive anti-imperialist parties. According to Martelly's spokesman Lucien Jura "the president wants all political actors, including those of the opposition, to get on board the electoral train which is definitely under way." And to reinforce this hypocritical lie, he hastened to add: "the strength of a party is demonstrated through the ballot box." Isn't this mocking the opportunistic opposition leaders who will be subject to the same political sleight of hand that we witnessed in the 2010-2011 election?

As proof of this, we have the words of the current president of the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP), and its former General Manager, Pierre Louis Opont. He revealed last week that "the results of the 2010 elections were not the real results. Those that were given to [then CEP President] Gaillot Dorsainvil and others were not published." What could be clearer?

Shouldn't such an open admission before political leaders be enough to edify even the most naive? We already know with whom we are dealing and what to expect. Opont, with unusual frankness, invites us to reconcile ourselves with the reality of elections under a United Nations military occupation. There is here a clear warning: Do not expect a democratic exercise; it is the weight of Haitian tradition which wants the electoral outcome to be determined well before the elections themselves, Opont seems to want to tell us.

In any case, these elections, announced to offer the world an image of a stable Haiti and a democratic state, will be nothing more than just another well-executed maneuver by the United Nations occupation forces and Haiti's guardian powers through their embassies to push us further into the unhappy state of poverty, misery, and chronic underdevelopment. It required the spending of a whopping \$53 million, according to electoral advisers, to ensure this lusterless democratic veneer, to establish this hypocrisy that has served once again to deceive the Haitian people and satisfy the greedy appetite of candidates, who are surely salivating at the 500 million gourdes, or \$10.61 million, earmarked to finance the campaign of political parties.

No country is too small or too poor to determine its own destiny and organize its own elections with the means at hand. Only Haiti seems to have avoided this conclusion. The Haitian people should pay no attention to these merchants of illusion and of false promises who come whispering to them the same songs, the same refrains, at each election. The dignity and future of the nation, the living conditions of the masses, will never be taken into account in their false speeches. Since Haiti's birth, there have been many elections, but what has changed for the people? Nothing. With the exception of a very small number of individuals who have succeeded without the people, the fact remains that the vast majority remains as if locked in a prison, afflicted with despair.

Of selection-elections, we have had enough and too much. The so-called opposition parties are preparing to participate in these dishonest games prepared once again by the imperialist powers. By allowing themselves to be duped into this, they will just shove deeper and twist the knife into the gaping wound of the masses, who are being killed little by little.

No to selections-elections! Yes to popular mobilization!

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