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\* THIS WEEK IN HAITI \*

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A NEO-DUVALIERIST DICTATORSHIP À LA MARTELLY TAKES SHAPE  
JUSTICE MINISTER SANON PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE  
by Thomas Péralte

The regime of President Michel Martelly, which came to power through the electoral meddling of the United States and its "Ministry of Colonial Affairs" the Organization of American States (OAS), is currently planning to replace the current 6,600 UN occupation troops of MINUSTAH with a new Haitian military force trained by the U.S. and Brazil over the next two years.

In May 2013, Nigel Fisher, then head of the UN Mission to Stabilize Haiti (MINUSTAH), said that there would be about 3,000 UN troops in Haiti in 2017. Currently, UN officials are talking with Haitian officials about speeding up troop withdrawal and "five options [for the UN] to perform the political and peacekeeping functions that are likely to remain relevant beyond 2016," said Sophie Boutaud de la Combe, MINUSTAH's spokesperson.

MINUSTAH was deployed on Jun. 1, 2004, and Brazil has always provided its commanders and the majority of its troops.

Now, Brazil will begin training 200 Haitian soldiers for a so-called "corps

of military engineers." That agreement was signed between Brazil's Defense Minister Celso Amorim and Haiti's Foreign Minister Duly Brutus in Port-au-Prince on May 29.

Beginning in July, the U.S. will train 20 Haitian officers at the Inter-American Defense College in Washington, DC. The military school is similar to the infamous "School of the Americas" at Ft. Benning in the state of Georgia and is run by the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB).

These soldiers will all be part of a projected "National Guard" (Garde nationale), which is similar in name and proxy nature to "the Guard of Haiti" (Garde d'Haïti), conceived, trained, equipped, and set in place by U.S. Marines in 1934 at the end of their 19-year military occupation. Haiti's "National Guard" will begin with 3,500 soldiers.

Furthermore, according to Radio Zenith, Reginald Delva, the Minister of Interior and National Defense, has resurrected Haiti's National Intelligence Service (SIN), which was dissolved 20 years ago. The new SIN will deploy 10 informers in each of Haiti's 565 communal sections for a total of 5,650 spies.

Meanwhile, Justice Minister Jean Renel Sanon, a former officer of the demobilized Armed Forces of Haiti (FAdH), is restoring the infamous section chiefs (chefs de section), again according to Radio Zenith. Each of the 565 section chiefs will have 10 deputies, who were called during the Duvalier era, "chouket lawoze" (dew breakers).

So, "official" networks for spying and repression, similar to the Tonton Macoute legions of the Duvalier regimes, are already being set up by the Interior Ministry, Justice Ministry, and the Communications Ministry, headed by Rudy Hériveaux, a former leader in the Lavalas Family party who has opportunistically joined the government of President Martelly and his Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe.

Alongside are "informal" networks of so-called "legal bandits" directed by regime strongmen like Calixte Valentin, Youri Latortue, Joseph Lambert, and Ronald "Roro" Nelson, who just last week arrested six students who dared to pass his vehicle on the Ruelle Nazon in the capital.

Meanwhile, progressive grassroots activists and organizations have been targeted in recent weeks. Lucien Anerville, an inspector of the Haitian National Police (PNH), led a commando unit which tried to search and, some say, assassinate Sen. Moïse Jean Charles in Gressier on May 8. On May 24, Officer Anerville illegally arrested (many say kidnapped) Rony Timothée, spokesman for the Patriotic Force for the Respect of the Constitution (FOPARC), a mass organization. Prison guard Frantz Julien attacked Sen. Moïse Jean Charles in Arcahaie on May 30.

On May 29 in Delmas 49, as Lavalas grassroots groups met at the offices of the Association of University Students Committed to a Haiti with Rights (AUMOHD), they were surrounded by armed, masked men. A few days earlier, the office had been robbed and burned by regime thugs, according to AUMOHD's president, lawyer Evel Fanfan. Mr. Fanfan, who defends political prisoners including protestors arrested in a demonstration on May 1, also says he was threatened on Jun. 4 at the courthouse by government prosecutor Kerson Charles who said: "You are among those who are creating disorder in the country. You defend troublemakers." Mr. Fanfan was also attacked by three gunmen on a motorcycle in Delmas 65 on Jun. 8 at around 9:00 a.m..

Volcy Assad, an activist with the Heads Together Organization (OTAN), was

also threatened with arrest by the shadowy agents who threatened Sen. Moïse Jean-Charles in Gressier on May 8. In an open letter to President Martelly published last week in Haiti Liberté, Mr. Volcy described the threats and intimidation endured by many progressive activists in recent months.

"On Monday, May 19, four armed individuals in a pickup without license plates forced my driver to stop after he had just dropped off my children at school," Mr. Volcy wrote. "Even my family's lives are in danger."

Unfortunately, some political organizations, through anarchic practices and a lack of security and organizational discipline, allow anyone to participate in their meetings, thereby facilitating the task of regime spies. These organizations function more like a church and often do not know who are members and who are not. This is how, on May 25, Jocelyn Dorval, a liaison officer working for the Justice Ministry and the State Secretary for Public Security was easily able to infiltrate and spy on a regular meeting of FOPARC.

Similarly, on May 23, the regime managed to penetrate a weekly meeting at the Aristide Foundation for Democracy, commonly called "Lavalas Family Fridays." The regime-linked individuals videotaped and recorded everything said at that meeting. Ten days later, on Jun. 2, their tape was broadcast on some of the capital's media, including Radio Zenith and Scoop FM. Journalist Garry Pierre-Paul Charles, owner of the latter station, not only broadcast what was said in a private space but also accused two Lavalas Family leaders - Coordinator, Dr. Maryse Narcisse, and executive committee member, Joel Edouard "Pasha" Vorbe - of "preaching violence." However, it was meeting participants who, at the end of the meeting, loudly chanted: "Grenadiers, to the assault, for those who die, we'll avenge them."

Twenty-four hours after the radio broadcasts, on Jun. 3, the Justice Ministry released a long press release signed by Minister Jean Renel Sanon. It reads: "The Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP) is surprised and very concerned about the recent violent and incendiary statements by two senior officials of the executive board of the Fanmi Lavalas party. In order to maintain public order and prevent at all costs the return to a chaotic period of which the nation still has painful memories, the MJSP feels obliged to alert the public and deter any potential troublemakers. The Ministry reminds people that the mission of political parties is, among other things, to maintain the health of democracy while using peaceful and legal strategies for taking state power. When the most senior leaders of a party use media microphones to chant slogans like 'Mache pran yo' (Go get them), the Ministry believes that it is all of society, and especially the other political parties themselves, which need to be concerned. The MJSP is the guarantor of national security, and these thinly veiled slogans were used to inflame the country in the darkest moments of violence and killings in the past two decades. Under no circumstances nor for any reason should such periods reappear in Haiti today, and we should devote ourselves to the restoration of the rule of law and stability, the sine qua non for attracting foreign investment. Recalling that the Haitian Penal Code punishes inflammatory statements and incitements to violence, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, invites everyone, especially politicians, to show a sense of responsibility, tolerance, and moderation, to assist in the conservation of peace and stability which are key to development in any country."

In response, Ms. Narcisse, accompanied by Mr. Vorbe and Lionel Etienne, another Lavalas Family Executive Committee member, gave a press conference on Jun. 6 in which they denounced government intimidation of their party. "The Lavalas Family will not allow itself to be intimidated by the regime,"

said Ms. Narcisse. "We will not let the image of the Lavalas Family be tarnished. We speak the truth, and we will continue to speak the truth, and the people must continue to mobilize to defend the truth. We denounce the base intimidation and threats carried out by the Lamothe government against honest citizens, the leaders of the Lavalas Family. This is further evidence that demonstrates that they are afraid and panicked."

Ironically, on May 30 in Kenscoff, Prime Minister Lamothe, reportedly sang with the former Macoute leader of that town, Father Jeanty Oxide alias Pè Siko. "Go get them, Martelly. Go get them, Pè Siko. Go get them, Lamothe, go get them."

These songs harken back to the terror during the Duvalier regimes (1957-1986) when dictatorship supporters used to sing: "Go get them, Duvalier, go get them."

There are many disturbing things in the record of Minister Sanon, who today would like to give democracy lessons to others.

- In October 2013, he reported that there was a subversive meeting, organized by people hostile to elections, on Avenue Pouplard in the capital, in which the murder of journalist Jean Monard Metellus of Radio Caraïbes FM was discussed. Despite this detailed disclosure, Minister Sanon has never managed to name the would-be killers or bring them to justice.

- Also in October 2013, on Minister Sanon's orders, Government Prosecutor René Francisco ordered the arrest of opposition lawyer André Michel. A note from the Justice Ministry said the arrest was carried out before the arrest deadline specified by the Constitution, 6:00 p.m. But Mr. Michel was arrested at 7:30 p.m. Nonetheless, Sanon disingenuously said the arrest was carried out in strict compliance with the law.

- In September 2012, Sen. Edwin "Edo" Zenny, a regime ally, spat in a judge's face in Jacmel. Rather than denounce Sen. Zenny, Minister Sanon fired the judge, Bob Simonise. The incident occurred in front of witnesses at a Jacmel radio station.

- In late 2013, Government Prosecutor Jean-Marie Salomon was fired after he arrested in flagrante delicto a suspected drug trafficker, hotelier Evinx Daniel. Minister Sanon dispatched his lawyers to release Mr. Daniel. Mr. Salomon was then fired and forced to seek refuge overseas. Mr. Daniel has been missing since January.

- Minister Sanon took part in an infamous Jul. 11, 2013 meeting in which President Martelly and Prime Minister Lamothe reportedly threatened Judge Jean Serge Joseph for investigating a corruption case involving Sophia and Olivier Martelly, respectively the president's wife and son. Judge Joseph died two days later under very suspicious circumstances.

- On Mar. 29, 2014, Minister Sanon, accompanied by Government Prosecutor Gerald Norgaisse, personally went to the women's prison in Petion-ville in order to illegally release the wife of Woodly Ethéard aka Sonson La Familia, who was accused of involvement in money laundering, drug trafficking, and conspiracy. Since then, Marie Taïssa Mazile Ethéard has disappeared while the examining magistrate Jean François Sonel, who is the only person who can legally release her, has called for her to return to prison.

- Former Government Prosecutor Jean Renel Sénatus accused Jean Renel Sanon, a former FAdH officer, of being involved in sexual encounters and parties

(zokiki) with minors.

The regime's emerging repression and threats have brought about a change in the political position of some organizations, particularly the Lavalas Family. Party leader Maryse Narcisse used to say that President Martelly should complete his mandate despite widespread calls for his resignation. The party even expelled Sen. Moise Jean-Charles for his clear and consistent denunciations of the budding dictatorship. Now, the Lavalas Family is being targeted, and recent declarations by some of its leaders suggest it may soon publicly join the call of the vast majority of the Haitian people that President Martelly and Prime Minister Lamothe step down so that a provisional government can conduct free, fair, and sovereign elections.

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