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Japan

Our hearts go out to the suffering Japanese who 65 years after Hiroshima are experiencing radiation again. Let us hope we all can learn from this tragedy and realize the dangers of nuclear power and weapons from the mining of uranium to the problem of nuclear waste to the radiation that knows no borders. This is the time to eliminate all nuclear reactors, deny new licenses, stop manufacturing nuclear weapons, and sign the agreement to eliminate those we have.

As SOA Watch makes clear, in El Salvador President Obama visited the tomb of Oscar Romero, but isn't closing the School of the Americas (now WHINSEC) which trained Major Roberto D'Aubisson, UN Truth Commission identified assassin of the Monsignor. And they go on to show that foreign policy remains the same. SOA Watch continues:

The Past is the Present

While Obama tries to portray a change in the dismal history of US relations towards Latin America, no where is it clearer than in neighboring Honduras that the past is the present



[Ilse Velasquez, on the ground](#)

became [the latest victim of the repression](#) unleashed by the illegitimate regime of Porfirio Lobo. She was hurled unconscious onto the pavement, then hit by a car, after being struck in the head by one of the many tear gas canisters shot by police into the peaceful crowd. Ilse was the sister of Manfredo Velasquez, a student leader tortured and killed by the Honduran military in 1981 who was the subject of a landmark trial that was brought by Zenaida, also a sister, at the InterAmerican court that led to her co-founding COFADEH, significantly improving the ability of victims of human rights violations to demand justice from their governments. **The common denominator in all of these incidents is the leading role of SOA graduates.** The repressive Lobo came to power via illegitimate elections following a coup led by two SOA graduates against President Manuel Zelaya in 2009. One of SOA's most notorious graduates, General Gustavo Alvarez Martinez, was the head of the Honduran Armed Forces at the time of their murder of Manfredo Velasquez. He was also the founder of the brutal Battalion 3-16, whose tentacles continue to penetrate current Honduran repression. The person responsible for ordering police repression against peaceful protesters that led to Ilse's death on Friday is the nephew of General Alvarez: Security Minister Oscar A. Martinez Guerrero, a 1991 graduate of the SOA. Zenaida is living in San Jose, CA.

Letters to Hillary Clinton, President Obama, Senators and Representatives are urgent asking for closing of **SOA/ WHINSEC**, ending military aid to Honduras and abandoning support for military coups (US law demands that.)

This time, the people of Haiti may win

[Mark Weisbrot guardian.co.uk](#), Thursday 10 February 2011

The US has overthrown Jean-Bertrand Aristide twice. But now it will encounter a new reality in the Americas

In 1915, the US Marines invaded Haiti, occupying the country until 1934. US officials rewrote the Haitian constitution, (as in Honduras in 1982, Ed.) and when the Haitian national assembly refused to ratify it, they dissolved the assembly. They then held a "referendum" in which about 5% of the electorate voted and approved the new consti-

tution - which conveniently changed Haitian law to allow foreigners to own land - with 99.9% voting for approval.

The situation today is remarkably similar. The country is occupied, and although the occupying troops wear blue helmets, everyone knows that Washington calls the shots. On 28 November an election was held in which the country's most popular political party was excluded; but still the results of the first round of the election were not quite right. The OAS - under direction from Washington - then changed the results to eliminate the government's candidate from the second round. To force the government to accept the OAS rewrite of the results, Haiti was threatened with a cutoff of aid flows - and, according to multiple sources, President Préval was threatened with being forcibly flown out of the country - as happened to President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 2004.



After first coup upon his return. Now, Aristide with a diplomatic passport from the government, has returned. US state department spokesman PJ Crowley, (then Hillary Clinton and finally President Obama ..ed.) made clear the US disapproval. The US pressured South Africa to stop the travel. Ed)

The United States has been the prime cause of instability in Haiti, not only over the last two centuries, but the last two decades. Although Haiti is a small and poor country, Washington still cares very much about who is running it - and as leaked WikiLeaks cables recently demonstrated, they want a government that is in line with their overall foreign policy for the region. In 1991, Aristide, Haiti's first democratically elected president was overthrown after just seven months in office. The officers who carried out the coup, established the military government, killing thousands of innocent

Haitians, were subsequently found by the New York Times to be in the pay of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

When Aristide was elected to a second term, in 2000, the United States and its allies destroyed the economy through an economic aid cutoff. Together with aid to the Haitian opposition and an armed insurrection, Washington's effort succeeded in overthrowing the government four years later.

Now that Aristide has returned, we can expect to see a massive smear campaign again against him in the mainstream media, with allegations of human rights abuses and "moral equivalence" comparisons with the Duvalier dictatorships. In his book, Damming the Flood, Professor Peter Hallward looks at the best available data for the number of political murders in Haiti: Duvalier dictatorships (1957-1986): 50,000; after the US-sponsored coup of 1991 (with US-funded death squads): 4,000; after the US-organised coup of 2004: 3,000; Aristide's tenure in office (2001-2004): 10 to 30. Aristide eliminated more than 98% of the political violence in Haiti by abolishing the army and the murderous "section chief" system, which were the main sources of political violence. For that, Washington will not forgive him. And for that, Orwellian media outlets portray him as a dictator.

Can the US and its allies continue to deny Haiti's national sovereignty, which it won 207 years ago in the world's first successful slave revolt? This is, after all, why they overthrew Aristide twice and seek to prevent his return. He is still a symbol of Haiti's sovereignty, and respect for the poor, for millions of Haitians. For Washington, that is inherently dangerous.

But the Americas have changed since the last time Aristide was overthrown. Washington met strong resistance from South America when it supported the coup government in Honduras in 2009; Honduras has still not been allowed back into the OAS. Governments that Washington did not want, for example, in Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela, have been re-elected and survived despite coup attempts and other destabilisation efforts that were sometimes supported by the United States. This would not have happened 15 years ago. The left governments that now preside over the majority of Latin America have dramatically and permanently changed hemispheric relations.

Last week, Washington failed to get support for its change of Haiti's election results in both the OAS and the 23-nation Rio Group. Unfortunately, Brazil has supported **P 4**

Washington in heading up the UN occupying force in Haiti; but this will not go on indefinitely, especially if they are called upon to shoot people who are demanding their basic democratic rights.

These rights can no longer be denied to Haitians, simply because they are poor and black. Nor was Aristide denied the right to return to his country. Washington will have to adapt to a new reality, as it is discovering in Egypt.

Too many things to talk about!

We spent a wonderful ten days giving and going to workshops at the CCSS annual statewide conference. (California Council for the Social Studies) See lesson plans on our website. And then to Missoula MT where we were with WILPF and others for the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, gave a program at the University on Honduras, and a class on Nicaragua and El Salvador, and facilitated our simulation Starvation and Survival in two high school classes. We felt well used and so well cared for! And have been invited back the end of September/beginning of October. We'll drive through Sacramento, to Ashland, Eugene, Portland, Seattle and eastward and would love to give programs on Honduras, Cuba (where we're taking a group in April) and/or facilitate our Starvation or Survival. If you're enroute please help us find places to do any of the above.

Egypt!

A passionate speech on video posted to Facebook on January 18 by Egyptian human rights activist Asmaa Mahfouz who issued the first invitation to come to Tahrir Square motivated protesters to gather in Cairo's Tahrir Square on January 25, sparking a massive movement against President Hosni Mubarak.

"Don't think you can be safe any more. None of us are. Come down with us and demand your rights, my rights, your family's rights. I am going down on January 25th, and will say 'No to corruption. No to this regime.'"

Egyptian union leaders sent solidarity messages to Wisconsin teachers and unionists from all over the world sent money to the local pizza place to feed protesters! **P 5**

From one of our Board Members, Susan Sylvan:

Israel was fascinating. We are supporting apartheid with our tax dollars....saw it in all its glory. I went across the wall twice..once to Ramallah, once to Bethlehem. Both times went to interfaith schools which were impressive and sad. The people there are in jail----crossing the wall for me with an American passport was humiliating and grim. For someone without the right passport...Israeli, Palestinian, etc....often impossible. I am very glad I went...it is a mythical land with storied sites...went to Jericho and The Wall etc,etc--even for me, it is a holy place.

Recommended: [Mornings in Jenin by Susan Abulhawa](#), an historical novel and [I Shall Not Hate](#), a memoir by Izzeldin Abuellaish, a doctor who grew up dirt poor in a refugee camp feels he must be the bridge to peace between Israelis and Palestinians, even after three of his daughters were killed in an Israeli attack in January 2010.

Dr. Mercola Interviews OCA, Organic Consumers Association, Director Ronnie Cummins

"It's an act of premeditated genetic pollution of the gene pool of alfalfa and related plants by Monsanto... They understand ..if you pollute enough alfalfa across the country it becomes impossible to grow organic alfalfa. They hope the organic community will weaken and allow GM animal feed under the rules of organic production.."what Monsanto tried to do in 1998, pushing the Farm Bureau and corporate agribusiness to allow GMO as organic. Only because of a campaign that Organic Consumers Association and others led were we able to keep GMOs out of organic standards for 12 years. More and more countries are refusing to buy GM seeds or crops. As consumers we can ask organic markets to label GM produce.

Food Crisis Benefits Goldman Sachs *Friday, February 11, 2011* by [RT](#)

This is the second global food crisis in three years, one factor fueling uprisings and protests in Tunisia, Egypt, and elsewhere. World food prices hit a record in January, driven by huge increases in the prices of wheat, corn, sugar and oils. Contributing Editor for Harper's Magazine Frederick Kaufman warns there's a direct link between the sky rocketing cost of food and Wall Street, particularly Goldman Sachs who own major shares of food commodities.

California water: “free-market” politics with public trust Bill Hatch

This is California’s fourth year of drought and its second year of high-powered water warfare.. a state of perpetual water anxiety. We have a monthly religious rite at the top of Echo Pass, near Lake Tahoe. A priest from the state Water Resources Department, surrounded by reporters stumbling in snow shoes, takes a magic wand onto a field of snow, plunges the wand into the snow, pulls it out, and utters predictions of the state’s water supply. Reporters then write that there is not enough. Some older ones think of the 1974 classic, “Chinatown,” about a local water war in Los Angeles.

An overpopulation and agribusiness problem combined with three light-rainfall years, shut down the King salmon commercial fishery for two years due to over-pumping in the San Joaquin Delta.. This over-pumping the largest estuary on the West Coast has occurred from the two pumps, state and federal, during a huge real estate boom and a gigantic expansion of orchards (mostly almonds) south of the Delta. Following a settlement between California and upstream users on the Colorado River, Southern California’s other main source of fresh water, this ruinous over-pumping makes extinction likely for some Delta species,threatening the existence of a viable salmon fishery.

The plan to construct a second peripheral canal around the Delta, tying into the state and federal canals running south, would permit salt from the ocean to penetrate the Delta all the way to Sacramento, cause great damage to Delta farming, the richest land in the state, in favor of sending water to the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, where farming takes place on alkali flats and soil and groundwater is laced with salts and heavy metals. West-side farms drainage water has been legally trapped since the ecological disaster at Kesterson Wildlife Refuge in the early 1980s was shown to cause death and deformity in migratory birds and other wildlife on the refuge. “Informal” exporting of toxic drainage water is under investigation. The west side is salting up, unfarmable in the near future. The landowners sell their federal water allotments to Southern California at urban retail prices or land for the water that is alleged to go with the land..

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Website: Meiyu Chen and many others

*We're asking \$15 per year from our readers to mail **voices** and support the publishing and broader circulation of this newsletter. Thank you. We welcome your email address to send it electronically with no trees!*



Libya

If we and our allies had immediately frozen Libyan assets, stopped all trade (we might have to have gas rationing, (less gas than the planes use) and limited issuance of travel visas for the regime, Gaddafi would probably be gone by now. Tell your Representative only Congress can authorize bombing.

March 23: Radio Globo in Honduras is reporting police of the coup government have surrounded and begun throwing tear gas bombs inside of the COPEMH building in Tegucigalpa. COPEMH, the association of secondary school teachers in Honduras have about 27 teachers and parents inside, eating and resting. Representatives of human rights organizations and the sub-director of the FNRP (Front for National Popular Resistance) are on site. The public offices of the Comisión de Verdad are also located in the COPEMH complex, two buildings side by side. COPEMH occupies one and the CdV office is located in the tower next to it, which COPEMH rents out. Teachers organizations and the FNRP are calling for a national civic strike tomorrow,