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Currently in Humboldt County someone could potentially clear cut their property for the at least 30k it costs to obtain a permit. They would be authorized to do harm to the environment for money, to obtain a piece of paper that essentially claims they are superior in not causing environmental harm. That's the irony of legalization and why it was such a bad idea to begin with. The damage is further exacerbated by Humboldt County ejecting over 90% of farmers from compliance with a permit process designed for wealthy people.

Do not get it twisted though, this inherent ineffectiveness of cannabis legalization is not surprising. This corruption in regulatory industries is widespread. Regulations permit harm, they do not protect the environment. Take it from legal experts at the **Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF.org)**, fighting the very types of environmentally damaging regulatory agencies all across the world,

"Regulatory Capture is an economic theory which states that regulatory agencies may come to be dominated by the industries or interests they are charged with regulating. The result is that the agency, which is charged with acting in the public's interest, instead acts in ways that benefit the industry it is supposed to be regulating. This is when CELDF, and its partner communities, decided to forge a new path, one that doesn't beg for constitutional rights; but asserts them. CELDF rejects the idea that regulations stop harm. The regulatory system was set up to legalize the harm done by corporations as well as to remove their exposure to being sued and held accountable.

Within our democratic republic and under a federalist form of government, when we exercise the rights we know we have, it creates a space for them to be realized.

Obedience to just law is important, and most of us would agree it's one of our civic duties to obey the laws – the social contract – of society. However, when governments that have been created to secure and protect our rights instead begin to establish laws that protect the rights of multi-national corporations and the wealthy over the civil and political rights of We the People, we have to question the legitimacy of some of those laws and the governmental structures that create them."

What is happening to people in Humboldt via the abatement program is an issue regarding much more than cannabis. Put your feelings about the plant itself aside, and jump in these people's shoes. Just like their neighbors who have permits, they cultivate the same plant (often at a lower quantity) to survive and often have for generations. They likely contributed to the community, didn't exploit the land or the people who helped them, perhaps they grew modest amounts, never offering excesses like 30k plus to invest in a permit. Then the compliance process comes with such beautiful propaganda that the county is welcoming applicants with open arms, **"Come on down folks we've got lines out the door and our cash machines warm, you'll find out what's required for the permit after you pay up! Rest assured you can trust us, legalization is great!"** After paying large permit fees, undisclosed to you in an appropriate time, you discover this is going to be beyond a headache and cost way more money than you can afford, requiring immense experts, engineers, legal teams, contractors, consultants, water agencies, fish and wild life and you may have to hire someone to assess sensitive wildlife populations too (Can you imagine if our food was so meticulously produced? In my dreams!) Sometimes folks have to fix legacies left from logging and other remediation work just to be in compliance. So imagine you've given thousands over to the county. Along with your application, is all the proof they need to come after you for your unpermitted home, your old car, your compost toilet, your recycling pile, your low income tenant in an RV, your rain catchment pond or a plant. If you fall out of compliance you are an easy target because you already gathered all the evidence the county needs to charge you.

This is exactly what happened to one unlucky abatement recipient that fell out of compliance with his permit application for a single month. Falling out of compliance is fairly easy to do, address change, miss a letter, vacation, illness/ in the family, no money, hired the wrong consulting company, etc. After only a month of non-compliance he received an abatement and then lost his hearing. In his decision order, it states "The illegal cultivation appears to have been conducted for years based on ...[the defendant's] own declaration of cannabis cultivation," with his "permit submitted December 30, 2016." No wonder 90% of farmers do not trust the county to attempt to come in compliance. District 2 Supervisor Fennel (up for reelection March 3) and PBD Director John Ford assured us in many town meetings that what they are doing today, would never happen.

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The irony around the abatement program runs much deeper. Currently in Humboldt County someone could potentially clear cut their property for the at least 30k it costs to obtain a permit. They would be authorized to do harm to the environment for money, to obtain a piece of paper that claims they are superior in not causing environmental harm. That's why legalization was such a bad idea to begin with and the damage is further exacerbated by Humboldt County ejecting over 90% of mostly small farmers from compliance.

The allegations that people came here to make money from cannabis, also called **"Greenrushers,"** is often used as a means to justify these attacks. I've witnessed several abatement hearings now and I have yet to see a Greenrusher. I have seen elderly residents, people who are terminally ill, disabled, and some highly honored members of our community under attack. This Greenrusher narrative has to stop because it justifies these heart-wrenching actions. Not only is calling someone a Greenrusher as offensive as calling a human "an illegal," it's just as misinformed. It is money that affords a permit after all, so those most enabled by legalization are those who made the most money from cannabis cultivation prior to it being legal. This isn't about where you are from or how old you are, but where you are going and what you value.

Fennel claims, "The Greenrush came very close to destroying our community." The only Greenrush I see is that brought by legalization, which undoubtedly has "come very close to destroying our community," and still easily could if we do not make drastic changes to policy and so policymakers. Last I checked Estelle Fennel is making quite a bit off of legalization, from over 40k in this year's campaign contributions alone, to leadership roles in affiliated agencies (CCA), to farm affiliations and all those connections afford, to her \$500k taxpayer funded Trellis program (that has yet to help any small farmer, but has paid her friends handsomely), then of course there is her approximately 90k yearly salary plus benefits for the last 8 years. Who is making millions? Who is the Greenrusher? The pot policymaker is calling the pot farmers black (market).

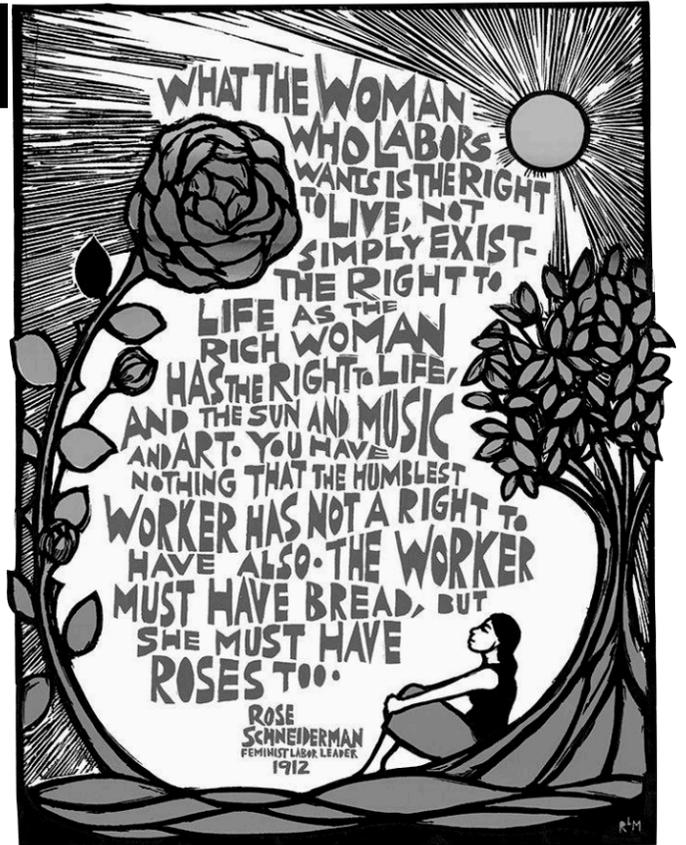
We are all living on the edge in Humboldt, people are moving away, revenues are way down, accidents, addiction, suicide, adverse childhood experiences, it's all so disproportionate to our population. There are the most bizarre crimes lately too, further revealing the desperation in people consequence of an entire industry in collapse. Likewise there are vast robberies of permitted farms and others. Students are suffering and so are our educators. When people do not have their basic needs met, it gets to be a stressful, dangerous and undesirable place to live for everyone.

Even considering all of this, I still think there is hope for Humboldt and it all rides on this coming election. It's time to elect a representative for District 2 that has a legal background, compassion for everyone in our community, awareness of economics, ideas on building all in our community up, not tearing us down. We need a supervisor who cannot be bought, nor caught selling out. That's why I endorse Sean Devries for District 2 Supervisor and Cliff Burkowitz for District 1.

Whatever you choose, no matter how corrupt we all know the election arena can be, please vote- March 3!

– SHAKTI

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DEFORESTATION
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA STYLE
Continued from front page

Imagining the forest without the Mendocino Redwoods Company, and the Humboldt Redwoods Company, is to bet on the planet Earth. By allowing the Redwood forest to return to itself, to revert to its vastness, to continue to flourish, we are betting on the return to a survivable Green Age. The only thing the logging companies guarantee is that no remaining forest will be permitted to become real forest. It is time to stop them "bleeding" the planet. We cannot survive the loss of the Redwood forest now near 100 years old and eminently pluckable. The idea seems to be that the rape of the old growth has left the remainder tainted and beyond help. Rather, this forest is a dynamic field that provides the very atmosphere that our human culture has thrived within. There is no safe amount of timber removed from this forest, or any other, as the planet burns. There must be a re-assessment of forest practices so we can provide watershed protection through a **Whole Watershed Assessment**. "Harvesting" must be clearly revealed as inoperable in the age of Climate Crisis. "Logging" itself should become an obscene word, a euphemism for what's taking place, here, there and everywhere – deforestation.

Studies have shown from the very beginning of the Timber "Harvesting" hoax that this has created unrecoverable negative impacts on streams and fish. The National Marine Fisheries Service in 2000 made recommendations for changing California Forest Practices in order to better protect aquatic habitat and anadromous salmonids, but their **imperatives have not been incorporated** into the rules. Meanwhile, environmentalists have to painstakingly teach ourselves how to end this losing game.

CEQA had been mangled with precision because otherwise it **required consideration of adverse environmental effects which might not, in and of themselves, be significant but which, when taken together with additional, similar effects in the same project area, might then cause significant adverse environmental effects**. Whole Watershed Assessment had been explicitly made impossible.

In the face of this, in 2001, way before my epiphany as I fought a losing battle on the Mendo Coast, a study by T.J. Dunne et al recommended that **"responsibility for the assessments be taken out of Timber Harvest Applications and given to a new unit of a State agency, which would make whole-watershed assessments of how land use alters the risk of damage to ecosystem values."** In the age of Climate Catastrophe, that whole watershed is the size of the planet.

– Paul Encimer sowbug@greenfuse.work

We care a lot ~

*We care a lot about the gamblers and the pushers and the freaks
We care a lot about the people who live on the street
We care a lot about the welfare of all the boys and girls
We care a lot about you people 'cause we're out to save the world,
yeah-*

*It's a dirty job but someones gotta do it
Oh, it's a dirty job but someones gotta do it
Its a dirty job but someones gotta do it...*

*We care a lot about the army, navy, air force and marines
We care a lot about the NY, SF and LAPD
We care a lot about you people
We care a lot about your guns
We care a lot about the wars you're fighting, gee that looks like fun*

*It's a dirty job but someones gotta do it
Oh, it's a dirty job but someones gotta do it...*

–FAITH NO MORE