

CANNABIZ ZEITGEIST

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Can you really blame children who grew up here and survived **CAMP** (*The County eradication team known as the Campaign Against Marijuana Planting*), for not trusting the government?

Thomas Alder said it best in a March 27 Supervisor's meeting: "Many people still have that fear, we hid from **CAMP** in trees and bushes as children, that institutional fear is not something you can put a value on.... I was flown for two hours last year." Maybe it's high time to talk reparations?

For those at least 90% who are untrusting, or unable to participate in legalization for whatever reason, they face the justice department's heavy stroke of criminalization weekly. It's a regular game of whack a mole where law enforcement armed with wood chippers, swoop in to random neighborhoods, arrest folks innocent or not, and paint them with abatement letters to remove cannabis plants, un-grade, tear down buildings, etc. in ten days. Which is a death sentence to owning the property in question essentially, as the fines are steep, ever growing and can quickly lead to foreclosure. And let's hope you aren't out of town when you get this friendly letter! If you do not respond within ten days Humboldt County fines you 30k and tacks on \$10k per day PER VIOLATION (typically 3), not to exceed 90 days. As a consequence, your friends, family and neighbors lands are in danger of being lost and lives are slowly destroyed.

Eugene 'ED' Denson, one of the lawyers in the Cannabis Cultivation Tax Suit against the County, and Attorney assisting during the **CAMP** case stated:

"The County has done more damage than CAMP did."

When are we going to wise up about the County intentions? It is amazing to me that with all the



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scandals, with the vast unmet road repairs and unsafe bike and walking lanes, the opioid crisis, the housing shortage, lack of resource centers, rehabs and heaps of other concerns, that more are not clued into the ineffectiveness of government to adequately manage county budgets and tax dollar allotments, but somehow voters fell for the rhetoric allowing for the county to collect a one-of-a-kind tax on your hopes to grow cannabis, rather than what you produce, like any other crop. Legalization never was so illegal. And really, 6 plants for a single property? Yeah that might cover a person's big toe for the year. What are tiny house communities meant to do for medicine if we were to live without the 215 program?

Days like these are crucial to critically assess what we think we know or we will be in trouble. Until we cease buying the police scanner propaganda and **lazy-believe-everything-the-police-tell-you** reporting set to put fear in us about our neighbors, we will continue to lose our collective power. Perhaps it is time to flashback to the past and be good, nonjudgmental neighbors and community members, and help one another instead of tearing each other down and buying the **BS** meant to keep us separate and so powerless.

Advice for the County:

Walk the talk. Instead of focusing on money interests, why not revisit the propaganda slogan put in place years ago: "legalization is going to help the environment"? Why not walk the talk and actually focus on restoring the ecosystems you too have and continue to take part in destroying?

Offer bonuses to those who remediate property that has been destroyed or trashed. Allow them to photograph their property, clean it up and prove it for some benefit to them. Perhaps that bonus could be not to give them an abatement letter?

Trash the tax, refund everyone, apologize for the greed and 'illegal changes' to the hope-to-grow-cannabis tax, then implement a fair appropriate point of sale tax such as Mendocino has.

How about offer free counseling to children and locals who suffer from PTSD from **CAMP**, incarcerated parents and other forms of government oppression and negligence? There's your drug overdose and alcohol-use stats.

Look at the roads in Humboldt. It takes someone from out of the area to make us realize a bike path through the forest would be a good move? Wow. Bike lanes everywhere needs to be the new norm. We live in one of the most beautiful places in the world, yet in many regions you have to own a **grow dozer** to get from point A to B safely. Its about time and thank you to McGuire! (*SB 1029, has passed the state senate- seeking to create 'The Great Redwood Trail'*

-linking San Francisco with Humboldt Bay.)

Speaking of roads how about fixing the roads around these places you are making millions on, instead of blaming those who pay enormous amounts of money to use them, grower or not?

If you don't want greedy extractive minded people gaming the system, well stop appeasing their interests already and focus on helping small farms in a real way rather than contradicting yourselves and encouraging the 'gaming of the system.' It would be as simple as decreasing the permit cost for those less than 5 or 10k a square foot. and putting a reward system in place for good actors.

Make a plan to help the more than 90% of farms come in to compliance with environmental laws. Instead of making legalization impossible to afford or participate in for the vast majority, prepare for federal legalization (no doubt just around the corner when someone sane is in the white house), by bringing everyone who grows into compliance and get prepared for exporting to the East Coast etc. The longer folks are forced underground, the more damage will be done on all scales.

So again County- please walk the talk, your entire community and generations to come are counting on you.

-Shakti

FORWARD TOGETHER TO A NEW POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN

Forward Together has become a coalition of 145 organizations representing Christians, Muslims, Jews, nonbelievers, blacks, Latinos, and poor whites, labor, civil rights, feminists and environmentalists, doctors and the uninsured, businesspeople and the unemployed, women and men, gay and straight, young and old, documented and undocumented. This unity was based on a belief that "none of us would be free until all of us were free."

A number of principles have shaped Forward Together's actions. One is simply "showing up to support any group in the state that was standing for justice." In 2013 Forward Together supported the fight of Planned Parenthood and NARAL against new abortion restrictions. A few years later a hundred people filled a Durham church to demonstrate solidarity with a Durham-raised asylum seeker fighting deportation. Forward Together seeks "powerful images of solidarity" manifested in "daily acts of justice and community building."

In Forward Together "our most directly affected members" would "speak to the issue closest to their own hearts" but "they would never speak alone." The movement exists "so preachers can fight for fifteen and workers can say 'black lives matter,' and a white woman can stand with her black sister for voting rights, and a black man can stand for a woman's right to health care, and L.G.B.T.Q. folk can stand for religious liberty, and straight people can stand up for queer people, and a Muslim imam can stand with an undocumented worker."

Barber says, "effective work for justice in the real world" requires "real political power." And yet, "The battle, while deeply political, wasn't fundamentally about campaigns and elections." More than winning seats in the legislature it was about "exposing the conspiracy of the governing elite to maintain absolute power through divide-and-conquer strategies" and reshaping "the stories that tell us who we are."

Within two years of the first Moral Monday in Raleigh, Moral Mondays coalitions had come together in fourteen states. Now the Forward Together movement is going national in the form of the Poor People's Campaign. For the past year co-chairs Barber and Liz Theoharis of the Union Theological Seminary have been holding meetings and rallies around the country. Barber

says, "Our focus has been to go to the people first, in the states, on the ground, and build a network of coordinating committees." Activists in dozens of states and Washington, D.C., are joining in 40 days of civil disobedience "to build the power of the poor and the working class to reset the national agenda."

It is not self-evident how to apply the Forward Together model to national politics. It will certainly include dramatic civil disobedience at local, state, and national levels. But Barber says "civil disobedience is just one part of the plan." A second phase will include voter registration, building a broader network, and creating a detailed list of policy demands.

Theoharis makes clear the political but non-party character of the campaign. "We surely want to influence the 2018 midterm elections and the 2020 Presidential election." But they do not plan to endorse candidates or support any political party. Their statement of fundamental principles states that "**no elected officials or candidates get the stage or serve on the State Organizing Committee of the Campaign.**"

The new Poor People's Campaign, like the original one, addresses a wide range of issues related to poverty but going far beyond it to oppose American militarism and foreign wars and emphasizing the threat of climate change. Barber says "Four diseases, all connected, now threaten the nation's social and moral health: racism, poverty, environmental devastation, and the war economy." The tens of millions of people who have participated in the Women's March, the March for Our Lives, and the many other protests of the Trump era are marching in place in every community large or small. They have the potential to provide a vast grassroots network if the Poor People's Campaign can reach out and inspire them to act together.

Conversely, all of us who have participated in one or another aspect of what has come to be known as the Trump Resistance should think about how we should be connecting with the new Poor People's Campaign – and with each other. Perhaps we can make that campaign and similar efforts starting points for a non-party opposition that can challenge Trumpism and the power of the 1% – and indeed "transform the political, economic and moral structures of our society."

forwardjustice.org

On June 1, 1967, the Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) was founded in New York City after six Vietnam veterans marched together in a peace demonstration.

The group was organized to give voice to the growing opposition to the escalating war in Vietnam among people in the military. The VVAW, through open discussion of soldiers' first-hand experiences, revealed the truth about the nature of U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia.

See the award-winning documentary film 'Sir! No Sir!'

vvaaw.org

