

Paying Thru the Roads

Continued from front page

It must have been quite a ride in 1946. Get rid of the redwoods as we did, what's left but a Disneyland Ride? You connect the alpha wave state that driving provides with the underlying thrill of going 75 miles an hour (possibly to a horrible, exciting, mangled death!), and it is almost worth the \$4.00 a gallon, even with having to buy the vehicle. This is the thrill ride culture pioneered by the likes of James Dean.

Greed being served, speed comes as the luxury pay off. The whole 101 should all be called the California Bypass. As in "**Getting-Passed California**" to something better, like shopping in a Disneyland city where the workers can't afford to live and some of the streets are right out of The Walking Dead. When I settled in **SoHumNoMendWesTrin** many little villages (Honeydew, Briceland, Piercy, Whitethorn, Ruby Valley) had little business districts. There were gas stations every four miles or so on country roads. Like the Leggett stretch of highway, that's all dried up now in terms of country culture. The freeway changed habits quick. When I first came into the area, the people in Whale Gulch came to town in three cars. Now those people and all the rest of us probably have three cars. (I only have two, but one's not working right now). Meanwhile we have an efficient bus system which we will only use for children, because the luxury ride of our cars is too addicting to abandon.

The other Redwood-based culture was obliterated without any higher tech courtesy of CalTrans. The road that was there did the job of roads in general, getting the troops in and getting the resources out. But that's the good old days when Hollywood visited the Benbow to stand among the unmolested Redwood Forest. Ninety-seven percent of trees gone in the years after WWII. The Redwoods went to feed a suburban housing boom both politically and socially necessary to "pay off" millions of returning soldiers for the sometimes horrifying disruption of their lives.

After previous wars the troops were paid off in *Indian Land* (now ironically Native Americans provide a shred of some kind of higher highway culture with their Casinos every fifty miles.) We aren't through taking *Indian Land* of course, as the pipeline struggles show. In this last gasp, the theft straight from the Earth itself by the privatizers substitutes for the disappearing commons of Indigenous, Earth-Sustaining cultures. We are eating up our "capital." After that, all we have to eat will be our poisoned cities. And we know what happens when, returning as a revenge-motivated raiding party, we enter the last of Earth's Wilderness and the Garden of Eden is finally consumed. We all know. It's happening. See the Rainbow Sign?

But lest we forget, CalTrans remains the evil genius of our Petroleum culture, intent on wrapping that black snake of highway around our throats tighter and, more importantly, faster. They serve the auto culture handsomely, with their cornucopia of projects to put more cars on the roads at higher speeds. Getting funding from gas tax and licensing, they are richly motivated to make things worse. Their mission, underwritten by the habits of the citizenry, will demand that they reopen their attack on the Grove. They will be back to plague us with an obsolete game plan, obsolete but still a luxury product – speed, convenience, privacy, managed atmosphere. And we will pay everything we have until we don't have any more. Unless.

- Paul Encimer

A Day for Solidarity not "Loyalty"

Happy Mayday!

I am an in- house- supportive- care-worker here to share that we are facing a crisis here in Humboldt County that effects the most vulnerable in our communities including elderly and disabled. This crisis is a direct result of our local government refusing to pay a livable wage.

I am one of about half a million in the state and about 1500 in Humboldt County who tend to the desperate needs of the most vulnerable people in our society. We work incredibly hard doing some of the most stressful work imaginable, with little if any training. In Humboldt County IHSS workers are the largest workforce next to the hospital so this matter impacts more workers locally than most any other issue. This is also a women's rights issue because 80% of care workers are women-

Currently care workers in Humboldt make 11\$/hr. minus taxes, gas expenses and absolutely no benefits to speak of, which ends up being about 7\$/hr. 7\$/hr. is obviously not enough to support myself or my family, especially in the most affluent state of the most affluent country in the world.

Over the past 2 years caretaker workers in Humboldt have fought to raise our wage just \$1 and our local supervisors such as Virginia bass offered us a nickel in response. When gas expenses were requested by workers Estelle Fennel commented that she didn't get a gas stipend either. Well there is a big difference in the pay scale of almost 100k\$/yr. plus benefits and what I make about \$10k/yr. and no benefits. If Fennel is complaining about her gas expense, imagine how care workers feel. The 5 cent raise for myself working 20 hours a week equates to about 4\$ A MONTH or \$48/yr. minus taxes. This is a meaningless crumb, and a total insult added to injury.

While wages are completely inconsistent with what is needed to survive in Humboldt County, there is a deficit of care workers willing to work for these low wages and the outcome isn't looking so good for those who need care. Currently Humboldt County has about 11% of approved hours for clients who have no worker and this trend is growing in Humboldt and beyond.

To cover all individuals who have a self-care limitation, a Berkeley Labor Center study estimates that "California would need at least 600,000 and as many as 3.2 million additional workers by 2030."

While demand is growing quickly for workers, low wages also cause immense turnover and compromise care. "The California Legislative Analyst's Office estimates that annual turnover of IHSS workers is about 33 percent."



A GARLAND FOR MAY DAY 1895
DEDICATED TO THE WORKERS BY WALTER CRANE

ISRAEL DOING THE EMPIRE'S DIRTY WORK

For the first time in Israel's history it will send troops abroad. This would be the second time that Honduras is allowing foreign military personnel in the territory. A multilateral military treaty between Honduras, Israel, and the United States will see the deployment of 1000 Israeli soldiers at Honduras. They will train the Armed Forces of Honduras (FFAA) and National Police (PN). The main mission of the troops is to train for border protection to stop migrants fleeing Honduras to the U.S., especially children.

According to local news media El Heraldo, (*elheraldo.hn*) the presence of Israeli soldiers is part of bilateral cooperation between the two countries based on Honduras transferring its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Honduras has also made a million-dollar deal with Israel, acquiring arms and military equipment, as well as repowering ships and planes. The 10-year agreement was signed in 2016. The agreement was discussed between Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernandez, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and the U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo during the inauguration of Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro.

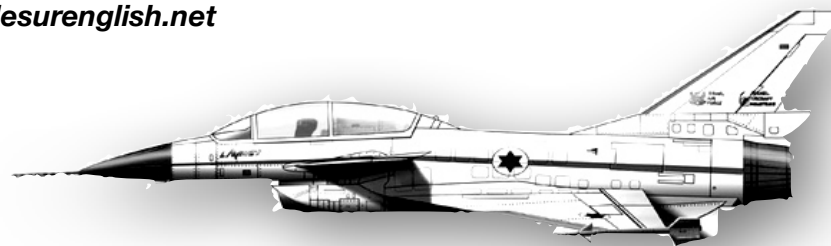
The U.S. joined this military training agreement because they already have a permanent military base in Palmerola and want the borders of Honduras guarded to blockade the upsurge of migrants aiming for the North American nation. The Israeli army will share space with the Joint Task Force-Bravo (JTF-B) of the U.S. at the Jose Enrique Soto Cano Air Base in Palmerola. Apart from border protection, efforts against drug trafficking, investigation, and counterterrorism will be offered as well.

The link with Honduras goes back to the 1982 visit. Shortly after Israel invaded Lebanon, Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon visited Honduras, then a stronghold in the US campaign of subversion against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. Israeli radio reported that Israel had helped Honduras acquire what is regarded as the strongest air force in Central America. This involved sophisticated jet fighters, tanks, and Galil assault rifles (a specifically anti-guerrilla weapon).

Although billed as a "first time" for Israeli troops, this does not count the 300 "advisors" that Israel supplied for the genocidal Guatemala regime's Dirty War in the 1980s. It was noted in 1983 media reports that the advanced weaponry and methods Israel peddled in Guatemala had been successfully "tried and tested on the West Bank and Gaza, designed simply to beat the guerrilla."

Israel's selling points for its weapons relied not only on their use in the occupied West Bank and Gaza but also in the wider region. Journalist George Black reported that Guatemalan military circles admired the Israeli army's performance during the 1982 invasion of Lebanon. Their overseas admiration was so unabashed that rightists in Guatemala "spoke openly of the 'Palestinianization' of the nation's rebellious Mayan Indians," according to Black.

-telesurenglish.net



Each turnover is said to cost approx. \$2500. Paying people such low wages costs us all enormously and in more ways than turnover dollars wasted.

Not only is paying workers starvation wages an unnecessarily and ineffective cost, but its entirely inhumane for all involved. Not only are care workers struggling to survive, but consequentially their clients are struggling to get the complete care that they require.

"Researchers have documented that lack of sufficient care leads to negative health effects such as missing meals, dehydration, falls, burns, wetting or soiling clothes, and making a mistake in taking medication. Moreover, if the homecare system is unable to attract enough workers to meet growing demand, consumers will have to turn to more costly forms of long-term care such as nursing homes. In California, the annual cost of nursing home care (\$97,000) is nearly double the annual cost of homecare (\$57,000)."

Paying such a low wage as Humboldt county government insists on paying also exacerbates the need for public assistance, which again costs taxpayers more money. The Berkeley labor center study also found that, "Because their earnings are so low, about half of homecare workers nationally have to rely on some kind of public support program, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)."

My time and energy is valuable and so is yours, your sisters your mothers your grandmothers and brothers. The time has come to value those who nurture the sick and elderly. We are all human and so we have basic needs to be cared for, its time to stop denying the fact that many of us will need a caretaker someday. When that day comes don't you hope that your worker is effectively paid enough to survive so they may serve your needs? That's what our clients are demanding today.

As modern national discussions are taking place around a basic minimum wage of 15\$/hr. it is imperative that the people realize 15\$ may be a livable wage across the country, but it is also a starvation wage in Humboldt County. If we look at minimum wage in the 1960s and adjust it for inflation today it would be about 22\$/hr. (Washington Post).

When we speak about raising the wage to a "livable wage" for ihss workers, we are talking about thousands of county residents who no longer need public assistance programs just to supplement their low wage. We are talking about the sick and elderly getting the care they desperately need and deserve. The system as it stands sets up workers to fail; it sets workers up to be a drain on public assistance programs. It creates desperate situations for the most needy elderly and disabled residents. This inhumanity must cease Humboldt County Supervisors; we demand a livable wage for IHSS workers now!

- Ashley