

This Land of Hopes and Dreams

By K. Mckinley

In this land of hopes and dreams
The world arrives by any means
But in this land of hopes and dreams
All is not as it seems

In this land of hopes and dreams
Air pollution and poisoned streams
In this land of hopes and dreams
Money talks and its voice is green

In this land of hopes and dreams
Parents murder, baby screams
For in this land of hopes and dreams
Drugs flow freely through their veins

Yes in this land of hopes and dreams
We close our eyes to pray
But in this land of hopes and dreams
It's called looking the other way

And in this land of hopes and dreams
We turn the other cheek
By this I mean to say
The strong beat up the weak

In this land of hopes and dreams
Hypocrisy runs common
In the land of hopes and dreams
Innocence killed by our lawmen

Yes in our land of hopes and dreams
Our leaders lie and cheat
From this land of hopes and dreams
They hide it nice and neat

For this land of hopes and dreams
A soldier goes to war
To this land of hopes and dreams
He will return home alive no more

In this land of hopes and dreams
Another soldier laid to rest
For this land of hopes and dreams
He gave his all, he gave his best

In this land of hopes and dreams
Widows mourn, accept remains
In this land of hopes and dreams
Our freedom comes with ball and chains

So come all ye people
To this land of hopes and dreams
By car by plane by sea by train

Come by any means

We all salute and welcome thee
To this land of hopes and dreams
We hope that you've been practicing
Your lying cheating schemes

For if you have you'll fit right in
To the land of hopes and dreams
Just remember this my friend,
That all is not as it seems.

Here in this,
The land of hopes and dreams.



PHOTO BY ISRAEL BAYER

Demonstrators – most of them living with a disability – marched around Pioneer Courthouse Square July 15 to draw attention to cuts to in-home programs. On July 22, the Oregon Legislature's Emergency Board restored \$17 million of the \$158 million being cut from the Department of Human Services.

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Thursday to shift \$17 million back to the Department of Human Services. The money will help preserve services for many elderly and disabled people, however, it is a temporary move that does not ensure continued funding next year when the state's deficit is expected to approach \$2.5 billion.

The danger still looms that Marquardt and others remain vulnerable to the state's economic crisis, one that threatens to take away their independence and force them to nursing homes, institutions or worse.

"I'd rather be homeless than in a facility," said Erik Ferguson, an organizer for the event who also uses a wheelchair and relies on in-home assistance to live on his own. Ferguson works as an assistive technology specialist with Portland State University and is able to stay in his home with help for basic living needs. It's a critical service that goes beyond what families and neighbors can do to help people remain independent.

"It's one thing to ask a neighbor to help out with grocery shopping, it's another to ask them to help you take a bath," Ferguson says, adding that the rally brought out not just people with disabilities, but families with children who need care, seniors, and special-education workers. "It just didn't seem like something we can sit still for. This is a population that needs the most help. The little bit we have, why take it out of us?"

The budget reductions include the

elimination of the Developmentally Disabled Family Support Program which is expected to eliminate services to more than 1,100 families with developmentally disabled children. Go to www.streetroots.wordpress.com to see a breakdown of the various cuts affecting lower-income families, people with disabilities and senior citizens.

Brigid O'Kane is a nurse and the mother of a 17-year-old daughter with autism. She said she became a nurse because of her daughter and doesn't want to see any children pushed out of their homes into foster care for lack of services.

"I see from a mom's and a nurse's point of view what happens when people are put into foster care," she says. "Everybody deserves to stay in their home."

The services in peril are critical to people's lives and will actually cost more in the long run, O'Kane says. These include even basic assistance for families in which a parent has to stay home to tend to a disabled child.

"With the state cuts for the disabled and elderly, they're going to end up in foster care and nursing homes, which will cost a lot more."

Yvonne Jordan marched in the rally with her son Michael, who has Down Syndrome. Caring for her son has been a 24/7 responsibility for the past 37 years. Her husband died several years ago.

"I'm over retirement age now. I'm starting to look for resident health options for my son," she says. Jordan calls herself lucky in

being able to take care of her son herself but says too many families could be broken up without assistance to keep the home together. "We have seen people who have been devastated," she says. "It becomes catastrophic quickly."

Jan Campbell worked on the Disability Project for the city of Portland before going to work for the Multnomah County Aging and Disability Services. She uses a wheelchair and lives without the aid of in-home care. But in her role with the helpline at the county, along with her advocacy work with Disability Rights Oregon and various committees, she hears firsthand what's being lost.

"What we're concerned about is that we're going backward," Campbell says.

For Marquardt, who was summarily placed in a nursing home at age 17, the years between her injury and today have seen greater rights and opportunities. She worked her way out of the nursing home and began volunteering and went to school. She got her degree in communications, and in 1999, at the age of 45, she got her first paying job. Today she remains a volunteer and an advocate for people with disabilities, and relies on a live-in assistant to stay independent.

The cuts will take us back 40 years, she says.

"Myself and others would rather be homeless or die than be in a nursing home," Marquardt says.

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