

We must march on in solidarity with one another

The times are changing. They always have been. Given the current circumstances politically, it feels like we're being bombarded in almost every direction. We are.

Waking up every morning to a news cycle that delivers more and more desperate and devastating news, sometimes it feels like our world is spinning out of control.

We know our world is fragile.

We know our country is divided.

We know that our community in Portland is increasingly made up of the haves and have nots.

We know that many of the issues Street

Roots and our readers care about — immigration, housing, climate change and race — are being tested at both a policy level and on our streets. They always have been.

A vendor reminded me of this on the day after the November election. He said, "Israel, don't be so blue. I can tell you one thing, like it or not, I was homeless before Donald Trump was president and unless we find some housing, I most likely will be homeless after Donald Trump is president."

His message to me was essentially that we are all walking on the long road, a road that's been traveled before. We must march on. We must hold the line for social justice.

It's hard to imagine that given the hate and bigotry and policy decisions coming out of Washington D.C. how that could be possible.

The reality is that every single day, Street Roots vendors remain steadfast in helping deliver a message of hope in the larger community. It's one smart silver lining on the edge of a raging storm.

It's not enough. We must march on. We must hold the line for social justice.

We must continue to shelter our immigrant friends to the best of our abilities and support coalitions working to curb deportations. We

must support the ACLU in continuing to fight the good fight in the halls of justice. We must continue to speak out, rise up and expose individuals and organizations that carry the banner of hate.

We must continue to work toward policies locally and nationally that will curb climate change. We must continue to stand up for people experiencing poverty and homelessness. We must work to the best of our ability to set ourselves up for a time when we aren't playing defense and have the chance to take the offense in maintaining and creating a better world.

We must march on. We must hold the line for social justice.

It won't be easy, but for anyone that's poor or a person of color, it's never been easy or just. There has never been a time when life has been equitable. There has never been a time when housing or worker's rights or the gay and lesbian community ever had anything handed to them. Poor and common folk have never had anything handed to them.

We must march on. We must hold the line for social justice.

The reality is that people have lived and died for the rights that we have today, and there are people living and dying to defend the rights that are being stripped away from us today.

In the coming months, it's going to get harder before we even have a chance to make it better. There is no single strategy that will win the day. We must stand in solidarity with one another. We must stop tearing each other down when the enemy of hate wants to see us crumble. We must not let the noise of the world drown out the good. We must not work to support *one* group of people, but work to support *all* people to have an opportunity for better days.

No matter how hard those winds blow, my friends, we must march on. We must hold the line for social justice. Yesterday, today and tomorrow. We must march on. We must hold the line.



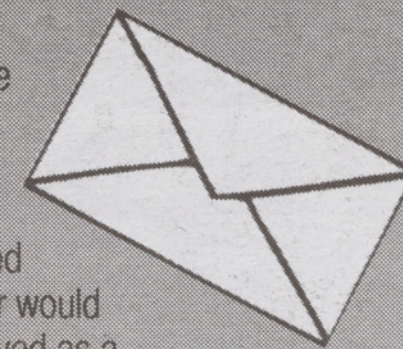
DIRECTOR'S DESK

By Israel Bayer

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If you would like to have something that you've written published in our pages, or would like to get involved as a member of our reporting staff, contact Executive Editor Joanne Zuhl at 503-228-5657, joanne@streetroots.org. We ask that all submissions include the author's name and contact information, if available.



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