

Roger Waters named on far-right Ukrainian hit list

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The Kiev-based website Myrotvorets has accused musician Roger Waters, a founding member of rock group Pink Floyd, of “anti-Ukrainian” offenses. These alleged offenses include spreading “anti-Ukrainian propaganda,” collaborating in efforts to legalize Russia’s annexation of Crimea and challenging Ukraine’s territorial integrity.

The site displays screen shots of an interview that Waters gave to Russian media in 2018, along with general information about Waters and remarks about the war in Ukraine that the musician has made in recent interviews. For example, it cites his comments about Crimea, the US State Department’s support for the 2014 coup d’état in Ukraine, and the campaign of Russophobia. The site also quotes his characterization of Russians as “brave, steadfast and unyielding.”

At the bottom of the page, Myrotvorets calls for “law enforcement agencies” to intervene against Waters for his “deliberate acts against Ukraine’s national security, against peace, human security and international law and order, as well as other offenses.”

Myrotvorets reportedly was established in 2014 by Anton Gerashchenko, former aide to Ukraine’s minister of internal affairs. It lists personal information such as addresses and phone numbers for some of the alleged “enemies of Ukraine” that it names. The site became infamous when several people that it had singled out were murdered. These figures include Ukrainian writer Oles Buzina, former Ukrainian legislator Oleg Kalashnikov and Italian freelance photojournalist Andrea Rocchelli.

Among the thousands of names that Myrotvorets lists are those of journalists, businessmen and politicians, both Ukrainian and foreign. In addition to that of Waters, notable names include Viktor Orban, the prime minister of Hungary; Gerhard Schroeder, former

German chancellor; Henry Kissinger, former US secretary of state; and Bashar Assad, president of Syria. In an indication of its thoroughly foul and reactionary character, Myrotvorets also lists the names of more than 300 children.

Waters has long spoken out against nationalism and war in his music and in interviews. His own father was killed during World War II, and his grandfather during World War I. Among the themes of the legendary Pink Floyd album *The Wall* (1979), of which Waters was the main writer, is the menace of fascism. *The Final Cut* (1983) contrasts the patriotism that the British state promoted during World War II with what Waters saw as the country’s betrayal of its fallen soldiers. It also includes fierce statements against the Falklands War.

In his comments on the war in Ukraine, Waters has demonstrated an understanding of history and a healthy opposition to state authority. He has consistently distinguished between ordinary people and the states under which they live. Regarding the status of Crimea, Myrotvorets quotes Waters as saying, “I know that Sevastopol is very important for Russia and Russians. There are many contracts and papers according to which Russia has all the rights to this city.”

Waters has correctly argued that the war did not begin with the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February. “The change of power in Ukraine [in 2014], planned by Washington, simply provoked Moscow to take further action,” he said. In a recent interview with CNN that garnered significant attention, Waters flatly refuted the US State Department talking points that interviewer Michael Smerconish repeated. He emphasized that the eastward expansion of NATO, which was carried out in violation of diplomatic assurances that had been given to Russia, was a major contributing factor to the war.

Waters also has raised hackles by pointing out the

hypocrisy of President Joe Biden's insistence on respect for international law. Myrotvorets quotes Waters as observing that the US itself freely breaks international agreements when they conflict with its imperialist interests. "They constantly violate them and claim that they can do whatever they want," said Waters. "This position just scares me, because someday it will just kill us all." Waters also has stated that Western politicians are using the campaign of Russophobia and the demonization of Russian President Vladimir Putin to suppress domestic opposition.

Despite the way he has been depicted in various publications, Waters does not support Putin. In response to a letter from Alina Mitrofanova, a 19-year-old Ukrainian fan, Waters wrote, "I read your letter, I feel your pain, I am disgusted by Putin's invasion of Ukraine, it is a criminal mistake in my opinion, the act of a gangster, there must be an immediate ceasefire." He posted his response as an open letter on Facebook in March.

Waters added that "Western governments are fueling the fire that will destroy your beautiful country by pouring arms into Ukraine, instead of engaging in the diplomacy that will be necessary to stop the slaughter." He also politely contradicted a statement that Mitrofanova had made about the political atmosphere in Ukraine. "Your '200 percent' belief that there are no neo-Nazis in your country is almost certainly mistaken," he wrote, mentioning the Azov Battalions, the National Militia and C14 as "well-known, self-proclaimed neo-Nazi groups." Such statements have aroused the ire of the Ukrainian far right and its sponsors: US and NATO imperialism.

Waters is currently performing on his "This Is Not a Drill" tour, which, we wrote, "uses Waters' extensive artistic catalog to condemn the ruthlessness of the ruling elite in the US and around the world. Virtually every song is directed toward pressing issues of our time: imperialist war, fascism, the poison of nationalism, the plight of refugees, the victims of state oppression, global poverty, social inequality, the attack on democratic rights and the danger of nuclear annihilation."

Speaking of this tour, Waters recently said, "I'm getting this weird feeling that, unlike other gigs I've done in the past, this gig sort of feels like it might be

turning into a movement of some sort. I'm not saying I'm leading a movement, but what I'm saying is, I'm part of the movement and so many people in the audience are part of it or are capable of becoming part of it, that it feels like we are really together and that we are really talking to one another."

Indeed, it is precisely a mass movement, based in the international working class, that must end the war and defeat fascism and imperialism.



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