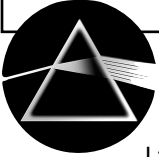


What do the Voiceless Millions Have to Say?

Rocker/Activist Roger Waters gives it a go



Madame/Mr President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I feel profoundly honored to be afforded this singular opportunity to brief your excellencies today. With your forbearance, I shall endeavor to express what I believe to be the feelings of countless of our brothers and sisters all over the world, both here in NY and across the seas. I shall invite them into these hallowed halls to have their say.

We are here to consider possibilities for peace in war-torn Ukraine, especially in light of the increasing volume of weapons arriving in that unhappy country. Every morning when I sit down at my laptop, I think of our brothers and sisters, in Ukraine and elsewhere, who, through no fault of their own find themselves in dire and often deadly circumstances. Over there, in Ukraine they may be soldiers facing another deadly day at the front, or they may be mothers or fathers facing the awful question how can I feed my child today, or they may be civilians knowing that today the lights will go out, for sure, as they always do in war zones, knowing that there is no fresh water, that there is no fuel for the stove, no blanket, just barbed wire and watch towers and walls and enmity. Or, they may be over here, in a big rich city like NY, where brothers and sisters can still find themselves in dire straights. Maybe, somehow, however hard they worked all their lives, they lost their footing on the slippery tilting deck of the neo-liberal capitalist ship we call life in the city and fell overboard to end up drowning. Maybe they got sick, or maybe they took out a student loan, maybe they missed a payment, the margins are slim, who knows, but now they live on the street in a pile of cardboard, maybe even within sight of this United Nations building. Anyway, wherever they are, all over the world, war zone or not, together they make up a majority, a voiceless majority. Today I shall endeavor to speak for them.

We the people wish to live. We wish to live in peace in conditions of parity that give us the real opportunity to look after ourselves and our loved ones. We are hard workers and we are ready to work hard. All we need is a fair crack of the whip. Maybe that's an unfortunate choice of idiom, after five hundred years of imperialism, colonialism, and slavery.

Anyway Please help us.

To help us you may have to consider our predicament, and to do so you may have to take your eye off the ball for a moment, to put your own goals momentarily to one side. What are your goals by the way? And here maybe I direct my inquiries more to the five permanent members of this Council. What are your goals? What is in the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow? Bigger profits for war industries? More power globally? A bigger share of the global cake? Is mother earth a cake to be gobbled up? Does not a bigger share of the cake mean less for everyone else? What if today, in this place of safety, we were to look in another direction, to look at our capacity for empathy for instance, to put ourselves in other's shoes, like, right now, for instance, the shoes of that chap on the other side of this room, or even the shoes of the voiceless majority, if they have any shoes that is.

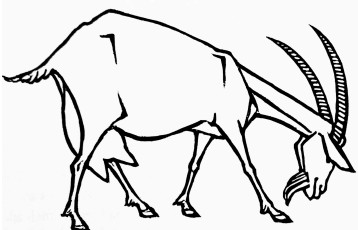
The Voiceless Majority is concerned that your wars, yes your wars - for these perpetual wars are not of our choosing - that your wars will destroy the planet that is our home, and along with every other living thing we will be sacrificed on the altar of two things: profits from the war to line the pockets of the very, very, few, and the hegemonic march of some empire or other towards unipolar world domination. Please reassure us that that is not your vision, for there is no good outcome down that road. That road leads only to disaster; everyone on that road has a red button in their briefcase and the further we go down that road the closer the itchy fingers get to that red button and the closer we all get to Armageddon. Look across the room, at this level we're all wearing the same shoes.

So back to Ukraine. The invasion of Ukraine by The Russian Federation was illegal. I condemn it in the strongest possible terms. Also, The Russian invasion of Ukraine was not "unprovoked", so I also condemn the provocateurs in the strongest possible terms. There, that's got that out of the way.

When I wrote this speech yesterday, I included an observation that the power of veto in this council only lay in the hands of its permanent members, I was concerned that that was undemocratic and rendered This Council toothless.... This morning I had a revelation.....TOOTHLESS! maybe toothless is in some ways a good thing.....If this is a toothless chamber.....I can open my big mouth on behalf of the voiceless without getting my head bitten off..... How cool is that. I read in the paper this morning, some anonymous diplomat quoted as saying, "Roger Waters! To address the Security Council? Whatever next?..... Mr Bean! Hwah! Hwah! Hwah! For those of you who don't know, Mr Bean is an ineffectual character in an English comedy show on TV. So it's a penny to a pound the anonymous diplomat is an Englishman, Hwah! hwah! hwah! To you too Sir! Ok, I think it's time to introduce my mother, Mary Duncan Waters, she was a big influence on me, she was a school teacher, I say was, she's been dead for fifteen years. My father, Eric Fletcher Waters, was a big influence on me too, he too is dead, he was killed on the 18th of February 1944 at Aprilia near The Anzio Bridgehead in Italy, when I was only five months old, so I know something about war and loss. Anyway back to my Mum. When I was about thirteen I was struggling with some knotty adolescent problem or other trying to decide what to do, it doesn't matter what it was, I can't remember anyway, but my mum sat me down and said, "Listen, you're going to be faced with many knotty problems during your life and when you are here's my advice, read, read, read find out everything you can about whatever it is, look at it from all sides, all angles, listen to all opinions, especially ones you don't agree with, research it thoroughly, when you've done that you will have done all the heavy lifting and the next bit is easy, "Is it? Ok mum what's the easy bit?"....."Oh, the easy bit is, you just do the right thing." Hmm!

So speaking of doing the right thing brings me to human rights.

We the people, want universal human rights for all our brothers and sisters all over the world irrespective of their ethnicity, religion or nationality. To be clear, that would include but would not be limited to the right to life and property under the law for, for instance, Ukrainians, and for instance Palestinians.



Yup, let that sink in. And obviously for all the rest of us. One of the problems with wars is that in a war zone or anywhere where the people live under military occupation, there is no recourse to the law, there are no human rights.

Today our brief is the possibility of peace in the Ukraine, with special reference to the arming of the Kiev regime by third parties.

I'm running out of time so,

What do the Voiceless millions have to say? They say:

Thank you for hearing us today

We are the many who do not share in the profits of the war industry.

We do not willingly raise our sons or daughters

To provide fodder for your cannons.

In our opinion

The only sensible course of action today

Is to call for an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine.

No ifs, no buts, no ands.

Not one more Ukrainian or Russian life is to be spent.

Not one.

They are all precious in our eyes.

So, the time has come to speak truth to power. You all remember the story of the Emperor's new clothes? Of course you do. Well the leaders of your respective Empires stand, in one degree or another, naked before us. We have a message for them. It is a message from all the refugees in all the camps, a message from all the slums and favelas, a message from all the homeless, on all the cold streets, from all the earthquakes and floods, on earth. It is also a message from all the people, not quite starving but wondering how on earth to make the pittance they earn, meet the cost of a roof over their head and food for their families. My mother country England is, thank god, an Empire no more, but in that country now, there is a new catch phrase "Eat or Heat?" you can't do both. It's a cry echoing round the whole of Europe.

Apparently, the only thing the Powers that Be think we can all afford is perpetual war. How crazy is that?

So, from the four billion or so brothers and sisters in this Voiceless Majority who together with the millions in the international anti-war movement represent a huge constituency, enough is enough! We demand change.

President Biden, President Putin, President Zelensky,

USA, NATO, RUSSIA, THE EU, ALL OF YOU.

PLEASE CHANGE COURSE NOW,

AGREE TO A CEASEFIRE IN UKRAINE TODAY.

That, of course, will only be the starting point. But everything extrapolates from that starting point. Imagine the collective global sigh of relief. The outpouring of joy. The international joining of voices in harmony singing an anthem to peace! John Lennon pumping the air with his fist from the grave. We have finally been heard in the corridors of power. The bullies in the schoolyard have agreed to stop playing nuclear chicken. We're not all going to die in a nuclear holocaust after all. At least not today. The powers that be have been persuaded to drop the arms race and perpetual war as their accepted modus operandum. We can stop squandering all our precious resources on war. We can feed our children, we can keep them warm. We may even learn to cooperate with all our brothers and sisters and even save our beautiful planet home from destruction. Wouldn't that be nice?

Your Excellencies,

I thank you for your forbearance.

Roger Waters
co-founder of the band Pink Floyd,
addressed the United Nations Security Council
February 8, 2023