

Avi Benlolo: Whatever you think of Rogers Waters' music, his anti-Israeli propaganda is offensive

Avi Benlolo, National Post · Aug. 27, 2014 | Last Updated: Aug. 27, 2014 6:31 AM ET



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In May, Pink Floyd's Roger Waters and Nick Mason published an open letter to the Rolling Stones encouraging the band not to perform in Israel. The Stones summarily disregarded Waters and Mason, and played to 50,000 adoring Israeli fans in June.

Even the Stones realize that Waters and Mason's denunciation of Israel as the new "Sun City" is off base. Israel is not apartheid-era South Africa; its security barrier is not the Berlin Wall.

Waters and Mason are simply old-school hipsters who have latched on to the Palestinian cause to stay relevant. Their new film — *The Wall* — which launches at Toronto's International Film Festival this Fall, undoubtedly will bring renewed attention to their music. But they see themselves as more than musicians. Like all artists, they seek to take down walls; deconstruct social systems; create revolutions that transform societies; and connect with a cause that seems just. Their decision to partner with extremists who seek to boycott Israel is part of that misguided project.

As the world watched in horror as Palestinian missiles slammed into Israeli populated areas indiscriminately, these rockers find themselves on the wrong side of truth and justice. As the free world recoils from Islamic terrorism — ISIS, Hamas and Boko Haram being just a few examples — Waters and Mason are targeting a nation that is on the front lines fighting this menace.

Waters has rejected charges of being anti-Israel and anti-semitic. And yet he has hoisted a pig-shaped balloon emblazoned with the Star of David at almost 200 of his shows. In defense of the pig (a heresy in Judaism, and Islam as it happens), Waters says it represents the “evil of an errant government” (Israel, presumably). When the show ends and the pig is brought down to the audience, he says, “the people always do the right thing ... they destroy it.”

Remember this when Waters is getting the red-carpet treatment in Toronto this Fall. Whatever you may think of his music, his anti-Israeli propaganda is offensive.