



AJC, Other Jewish Organizations Urge BMG to Reconsider Business Relationship with Roger Waters

July 19, 2023 The following letter was sent on behalf of American Jewish Committee (AJC) and other Jewish organizations to Bertelsmann Chairman and CEO Thomas Rabe, urging the Bertelsmann Music Group (BMG) to reconsider its professional ties with Roger Waters.

Dear Mr. Rabe,

As you may have seen, BMG's client Roger Waters recently caused an uproar in Germany when he donned a Nazi-like uniform and compared Shireen Abu Akleh — a Palestinian-American journalist who tragically lost her life while working in a war zone — to Anne Frank, a young girl whom Nazis murdered for simply for being a Jew.

In response to this most recent incident, the EU Commission Coordinator on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life and the United States Special Envoy for Monitoring and Combating Antisemitism, both loudly condemned Mr. Waters.

The US State Department also stated that Waters recent concert "contained imagery deeply offensive to Jewish people and minimized the Holocaust." The State Department added that, "The artist in question has a long track record of using antisemitic tropes to denigrate Jewish people."

Unfortunately, the State Department is 100% correct, as this is just the latest in a long list of troubling antisemitic incidents by Mr. Waters.

In the past, he's described UK Labour leader Keir Starmer as being controlled by Jewish organizations, he's flown pig-shaped balloons emblazoned with the Star of David at his concerts, he's falsely blamed Israel for the death of George Floyd, and he's openly called for the destruction of the State of Israel.

All of this has happened at a time when antisemitic incidents are rising at alarming rates around the world.

We believe that artists, given their massive influence in the world today, have a unique and important responsibility to speak out against bigotry. Mr. Waters has repeatedly shown that he's determined to do the opposite — and would instead use his voice, his platform, and his public microphone to fan the flames of hatred.

Given Bertelsmann's unique history — specifically its actions during WWII- we find it troubling that the company would continue to profit from this relationship, especially when you just recently demonstrated that antisemitism should have no home on your roster.

We respectfully urge you to reconsider BMG's professional ties with Roger Waters and look forward to your reply.

Signed,

Creative Community For Peace

American Jewish Committee

Anti Defamation League

Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council

B'nai B'rith International

Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, Canada

Community Security Trust (UK)

Conference of European Rabbis

Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations

Conseil Représentatif des Institutions juives de France

European Jewish Congress

Simon Wiesenthal Center

South African Jewish Board of Deputies

World Jewish Congress

Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland (Central Council of Jews in Germany)