

The people who organized this petition have created an incredible opportunity for those of us, specifically in music who have often felt powerless to stop the wheels of fascism in our country. Even though we're all here, I don't think social media is the medium for the messages we feel compelled to communicate with each other lately. It is not a medium receptive to empathy, nuance, or earnest appeals. But the petition's organizers understand that social media is sure as hell connected to eyes and ears.

I think most people feel trapped one way or another: trapped in a lack of future or the certainty of one we don't want, trapped in the alienation of our invisibility or hyper visible overexposure where our every move is judged, commented upon or determining whether doors open or close. People feel trapped when they've worked so hard and have so much to lose. People feel trapped when they've worked so hard and have nothing to show for it. People who speak freely usually have at least one of three things: enough to lose some, nothing to lose at all, or no one listening.

I am not addressing anyone who supports ICE and the government, I don't feel that is where my energy best serves. I am addressing anyone — those who work in the music industry, specifically but also anyone— who stands in opposition to ICE and the government. I hope we can all agree that we need to (continue to) fight. If you do not agree, no need to read further. If you are still with me, I don't think we all need to fight the same way. A diversity of tactics means more likelihood at least one tactic might "work" (accomplish some set goal of a movement). So if you've already decided you best serve this fight by not signing this petition again, there is no reason to read further. But if you are even remotely considering it, I ask you to stay with me a bit longer and use your imagination. There are names of artists, groups, record labels, agencies, distributors, there are all kinds of names who have not yet signed this petition who could make a more significant difference than all of the ones who already have. Imagine if an internationally renowned big profit record label sent an internal email to its roster encouraging and supporting its artists who sign, despite a potential revenue or partnership sacrifice. Despite the likely chance of losing potential privileges a good relationship with a streaming service provides. Imagine if 5 or 6 artists who consistently do 100s of thousands in streaming numbers talked it over and decided to sign together. Imagine if the 5 or 6 artists each reached out to 5 or 6 peers to see if they might want to join as well. Imagine if an artist or band who sells out stadiums signed. Imagine if *their* signature in turn inspired one of the world's biggest pop stars to break ranks to do something their management might beg them not to, something that might cost them millions. Imagine if they inspired millions of fans to boycott Amazon until Amazon stopped aiding and abetting our government's family-destroying death squads.

These things often hurt to imagine, because they shamelessly contradict what takes no imagination at all: the possibility that none of this will happen, if it happens that none of it will work, that nothing will persuade Amazon to break this contract, that even if persuaded, whatever sense of victory we feel will be short lived when the government signs a new contract with some other multinational corporation for cloud services to hunt and cage human beings. It hurts a little bit to imagine the ways it could work when you're not stupid and you already know all the reasons it could not. But if this is part of a much bigger fight that will ultimately have only one of two outcomes (that we win or we lose), and if the last four years (or longer, depending on your subjective reality) have taught us anything, it is that it is going to hurt no matter what. We have been losing and it has sucked. The potential outcomes of defeat require no imagination because they are strikingly similar to the one we already inhabit. We have the potential to work together to push back on forces that enable suffering. If these endeavors are not worth the time, the risk of loss and heartbreak, I simply don't know what is.

I do not believe the strength of a movement is born out of attempting to invoke shame in those who haven't yet joined. I am not certain of much but I believe deeply in the strength of greater numbers. When you think about it "people power" is just facts of math, really. $2+2=4$ etc. The way people power withstands opposition, abuse, scare tactics, attempts to divide its solidarity, is through those joining hands out of a shared and unwavering belief in their own personal and collective capacity for making a difference. There is no possible way to shame, coerce, or punish a person into believing this. So I personally see no use in trying to employ tactics of social pressure, shunning or other punitive gestures. Like the act of war or physical violence itself these are desperate and primitive attempts at communication from those who can't imagine a better way to get their message across. These strategies discount the very thing they are (or were, at one point) presumably trying to reach: an appeal that makes contact with another soul's humanity.

So to those of you still reading who generally want to fight back, who want to sign but aren't sure they can, who agree with the sentiment but not the strategy, anything like that: your frustration and hesitation make sense to me. Whatever you stand to lose is probably a good measure of what you stand to contribute. But only you know what you can and can't do, it is not for me or anyone else to really say, obviously (though people will certainly try lol, another one of life's few certainties) If you can't sign it, all I really ask with insistence is that you find another way to fight, or continue fighting. Not claiming to be right, superior, certainly not in charge— again, another nod of gratitude to this petition's organizers, I am not one of them. I am just a person in a band who signed the petition, currently scribbling in a tour van in Switzerland, soon transcribing to an iPhone, and you don't need my permission to take it or leave it.