

Director's Note

"To be or not to be!" That is no longer the question of our times. What seems to engage us today is rather "to act or not to act." Is it nobler to act against injustice and inhumanity, or do we remain complacent and obedient? To resist or not to resist? To view human history and, by learning, to refrain from repeating it, or blindly to follow those whose greed is fed by the creation of crisis after crisis?

In a society where 98% of the media is owned by three corporations, where the wealth of some 400 individuals exceeds that half of the population, where decisions about war or peace are based on half-truths and misperceptions, we must decide whether to stand against this "sea of troubles" or to maintain our sleeplike existence. How can we support the cause of those whose human rights, dignities and freedoms are bought and sold according to the price of oil?

There is indeed something "rotten" in this state of human affairs. And yet, and yet: there is hope. These words of the Iranian poet Sa'di are engraved in a portal at United Nations building in New York:

Human beings are members of a whole,
In creation of one essence and soul.
If one member is afflicted with pain,
Other members uneasy will remain.

"What a piece of work is a man," says Hamlet. "The beauty of the world the paragon of animals." This is what we can be, if we choose it—and now is the time we choose. We may seek for salvation from the next leader—or the next—or we may take our collective fate into our own hands.

"The days of kings and monarchs now are past," concludes Horatio at the end of our play as he echoes Hamlet's final words: "Speak this to those who need to see what comes: each vote, each citizen, has my dying voice." We, along with Hamlet, must defy augury and prepare ourselves for a future which will demand much of us. "If it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all."

