

# Spain's Revolutionary Left group calls for freeing of Bogdan Syrotiuk

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On Saturday, the Revolutionary Left (IR) group posted a statement calling for the freedom of Bogdan Syrotiuk—a Trotskyist opponent of the fascistic Zelensky regime, and the NATO-instigated Ukraine-Russia war, now threatened with life imprisonment.

Syrotiuk, 25 and in poor health, was arrested by the Security Service of Ukraine, the SBU, last month in his hometown of Pervomaisk in southern Ukraine. He is being held in a prison in Nikolaev on fraudulent charges of serving the interests of Russia. The accusations are a frame-up. Bogdan is an intransigent opponent of the capitalist Putin regime and its invasion of Ukraine. He has fought for an anti-war socialist programme based on the unity of the working class in Ukraine, Russia and throughout the former Soviet Union, against the US-NATO proxy war and all the governments.

His arrest is the latest example of the NATO-backed Zelensky's regime's brutal repression of left-wing movements, including the banning of *World Socialist Web Site* across the country, whose opposition to the war is finding a growing response within the Ukrainian working class.

IR, despite its substantial and well documented differences with the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) of which Bogdan is a member, published a statement on its website under the title "Immediate freedom for Bogdan Syrotiuk!" It declares:

On April 25, Bogdan Syrotiuk, a socialist member of the Young Bolshevik-Leninist Guard and collaborator of the World Socialist Web Site, was arrested at his home by the Ukrainian police. The 25-year-old, who has

severe health problems, has been held incommunicado in inhumane conditions for weeks in a prison in the town of Nikolaev. With fabricated evidence and charges, he has been accused of serving Russian interests and, therefore, of committing "high treason."

His only "crime," for which he faces a sentence ranging from 15 years to life imprisonment, is that of having resolutely denounced the imperialist nature of this war and being a known left-wing activist.

The reality is that Zelensky's far-right regime has annihilated any type of opposition and the most basic democratic rights. Already in March 2022, it outlawed eleven opposition political parties using the same excuse: being "friends" and maintaining ties with Moscow. Previously, the most important television channels were closed. Torture and degrading treatment, enforced disappearances, life-threatening prison conditions, arbitrary detentions, restrictions on freedom of expression and association, censorship, corruption... are some of the facts that even its North American ally and master is forced to recognise, through a report by the Office of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor of the State Department in April 2024.

Bogdan Syrotiuk is a political prisoner. He has been retaliated against for fighting this dictatorial government and for pointing out the imperialist nature of a war into which the Ukrainian people have been pushed for the sake of NATO and US imperialist interests in their dispute for dominance of Europe against the other imperialist bloc represented by Russia and China. A war that has nothing to do with the

defense of democracy or the national liberation of Ukraine.

A repression that also reflects Zelensky's weakness and nervousness in the face of a scenario of political crisis, military defeats, shortage of weapons and troops (only 20% of men of mobilization age are willing to enlist and more than 15,000 soldiers have deserted or have mutinied) which has led him to approve a tougher new conscription law, raising strong opposition among affected youth and their families.

The false accusation against Bogdan, portraying him as a "Russian propagandist" despite his public stance against Putin's capitalist and authoritarian regime, is an attempt to intimidate and silence all opposition to the war. It is the same vile and cynical mechanism used by the Biden Administration in the US, and its European allies, when they label the youth and working-class movement that massively takes to the streets and camps at universities against the Zionist genocide in Gaza and against their accomplices as "anti-Semitic."

From Revolutionary Left, we express our full solidarity with Bogdan, his comrades, and his family, and we join the international campaign to demand his immediate release without charges.

Enough repression against left-wing activists!

Against the capitalists' war, socialist revolution!

IR's statement is part of growing support by left-wing websites, artists, intellectuals, workers and youth demanding the freedom of Syrotiuk. This includes workers from Sri Lanka, Britain, Canada, and across the world and prominent artists like Roger Waters, co-founder and lead singer of the rock band Pink Floyd.

On Saturday, 96-year old Barbara Slaughter, a leading member of the Socialist Equality Party in the UK and a fighter for socialism for nearly 80 years called for the release of Bogdan.

Spanish-speaking sites have also supported the campaign. The left site Rebelión and Venezuelan left-

wing website Aporrea, which is censored in Venezuela but remains the second-largest leftist website in the country, has reposted the two statements from David North calling for Syrotiuk's release. The website Prensa y Gente, which is based in the Dominican Republic, posted an article entitled "Socialist militant opposed to war in Ukraine seeks release from prison."

On social media, Anti-Repression Movement of Madrid (Movimiento Antirrepresivo De Madrid), an organisation calling to "struggle against repression and generate resistance strategies" with 14,000 followers on Twitter/X, posted a tweet stating: "The Nazi regime in Ukraine continues to brutally repress its opponents while imperialism applauds. We demand the release of Bogdan Surotiuk."

The small Cultural Association Las Afueras, established in 1987 to promote cultural activities in the old working-class district of Barcelona, Sant Martí de Provençals, translated David North's statements into Catalan. Las Afueras site now regularly translates WSWs material in Catalan onto their website, particularly on NATO's nuclear escalation against Russia.



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