WSWS readers demand freedom for Bogdan Syrotiuk

Our reporters
14 November 2024

The campaign to free Bogdan Syrotiuk, continues to gain growing support. Bogdan, 25, is one of the founders and political leaders of the Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists (YGBL), a Trotskyist organization active in Ukraine, Russia and the entire former USSR. He was arrested in April by the Ukrainian government on frame-up charges of "high treason under martial law." He faces 15 years to life in prison if convicted.

Since the publication of the *World Socialist Web Site* perspective marking the six months since the arrest of the young socialist and war opponent and the endorsement of the campaign by Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein, the petition for Bogdan's release has received more than 500 new signatures. In addition, the WSWS has received around one hundred letters from 25 different countries from readers defending Bogdan and highlighting the political motives behind his imprisonment.

We call on all readers to sign the petition for Bogdan's release and actively participate in the campaign.

"Free Bogdan!", writes Jenny C. from New South Wales in Australia: "His only 'crime' was to urge Ukrainian and Russian workers to stop the war by uniting against it! History has illustrated that war only benefits the elite, that it is always the working class that pays the ultimate price and that the working class has no investment in the prosecution of war. Bogdan is innocent and has been framed up by the Ukrainian state which uses 'democracy' as a buzzword, not a practice."

"Bogdan Syrotiuk is illegally detained on false allegations of high treason by the fascist regime of Zelensky," states Octavian P. from Romania. He continues:

No evidence has been provided to sustain such a claim and he faces a kangaroo trial that can result in a life sentence. His opposition to the war is from the perspective of working class, opposing both Ukrainian and Russian capitalist classes that send workers to die on the front lines. His articles on WSWS can be read by anyone. The detention of Bogdan and his possible life or death sentence exposes the claim that the war Ukraine is forced to wage is for democracy. It is no such thing. It is a war at the behest of US imperialism which seeks to subjugate the entire word. Bogdan must be released. And in his place Zelensky must stand trial along with the Banderite fascists that make up his rule, Biden (the Gaza genocider), Scholz, Meloni, Sunak, Starmer, Macron, etc., all responsible for the death of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian soldiers, more than a million amputees and injured and their shattered families.

Wilani Peiris, Political Committee member of the Socialist Equality Party in Sri Lanka, explains in her statement:

Bogdan was arrested because he and the YGBL stand in political solidarity with the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), opposing the war in Ukraine from the standpoint of socialist internationalism and advocating for the unity of Russian and Ukrainian workers. Since the NATO-provoked Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians have already been sacrificed at the front – not for "freedom" and "democracy" or the "independence of Ukraine," but for tangible geostrategic and economic interests of the imperialist powers. Bogdan must be immedietly released. The world working class has to support this campaign.

Jennette F. from Alberta in Canada also emphasizes that Bogdan was imprisoned solely because of his Trotskyist standpoint and points out that the Ukrainian and Russian regimes both have their reactionary origins in Stalinism:

The Ukrainian regime must free this innocent man, Bogdan Syrotiuk, immediately and make amends for jailing him on false trumped up charges in the first place. Everyone knows that Stalinists murdered Trotsky and that there is a river of blood between Stalinists and real socialists. Trotskyists do not support *any* bourgeois nation state. Not Russia, nor Ukraine! What the Zelensky stooges claim is ridiculous on its face. Everyone knows Putin ran the KGB as an arch Stalinist. He is just like Zelensky! This jailing and detention of an innocent man without due process is nothing short of a war crime. Zelensky has kidnapped him and done this to many socialists. Lock Zelensky up!

Many commentaries go into the background of the war in Ukraine and emphasize the reactionary character of the Zelensky regime. James H. from California writes:

Zelensky is a fraud and afraid of a free election. He is a scoundrel and is indifferent to the loss of life on both sides. He is the outcome of the putsch created by Vice President Joe Biden and Under Secretary of State Victoria Nuland in 2014.

Elliott from Tennessee says: "The imprisonment of Bogdan Syrotiuk makes it clear Ukraine is not fighting a war for democratic rights, but a war for imperialist control. His imprisonment does not scare the population into retreating from their resistance to war, but instead ignites the fire under a whole new section of the working class who are witnessing this injustice."

Mia L. from Nevada writes:

Bogdan Syrotiuk is an anti-fascist comrade, a brother in the fight for liberation, and a friend to all those who want a world without needless war. There is nothing heretical or treasonous about wanting to spare the lives of your fellow countrymen and laborers from a violent death by the hands of the oligarchy's war machine! Who will believe in the Ukrainian government's calls to the West to aid them in "finishing" this war when they are locking up their own citizens for demanding diplomatic means to garner peace? Any desire to stop the endless bloodshed is so clearly, universally ethical, that to respond with imprisonment (15 years and up) and condemnation as a government makes for a disturbed display of absurdism. Bogdan Syrotiuk deserves to be heard, his comrades want to work and care for their families, not to roll into slaughter and become fodder for Zelensky's military pyres. Stop the war! End conscription! Expedite diplomacy!

Another reader commented: "For Bogdan Syrotiuk: Stand strong man, and keep your spirits up. You will be free. The working class freed Julian Assange. They will free you too."

Scott P., a coal miner from British Columbia, explains his support for Bogdan as follows: "We at American Metalworks and Coal Inc and Conuma Resources support socialism. [Swiss billionaire] Hans Mende is the largest investor."

Several signatories explicitly call for the demand for democratic rights to be combined with the fight for socialism. Daniel L. from Ontario, Canada, for example, writes: "We need more democracy and less authoritarianism. We need more socialism and less fascism. We must bring freedom to Bogdan, a fighter for antiwar principles, a fighter against oligarchs all around the world, both Russian and Ukrainian included." Mary K. from New South Wales (Australia) writes: "Free Bogdan. Demand the democratic rights to fight for socialism in Ukraine and Internationally."

John U. from the United Kingdom writes:

This is a monstrous crime against not just Bogdan but against all workers in every country. Bogdan's "crime" is that he is a fighter against imperialist wars. His method is a firm no to war and a resolute yes for Socialist Revolution. This is the only way to stop all wars and fascist barbarism and to liberate all of humanity from capitalist exploitation. The source of all wars is the outmoded capitalist system with its nation states in conflict with a global economy. Furthermore the conflict between private ownership of the means of production and socialized production. Zelensky and Putin have one thing in common. They represent degenerate and corrupt oligarchs! Unite Ukrainian and Russian workers! Stop the Slaughter of Ukrainian and Russian youth! Forward to the world socialist revolution!

Here are a few more selected comments:

"Free Bogdan! He is not a supporter of the Russian authorities, that is slander!" – Witali S., Russia

"It's an absolute injustice what is going on here. Bogdan must be free! He is a victim of the Ukrainian complot. This war really must be stopped!" – Alois Zeindl, Berlin, Germany

"Bogdan must be released immediately! He was one of the most active and devoted fighters against imperialist backed fratricidal war." – Sangjin, South Korea

"I fully support the World Socialist Web Site's *efforts to secure freedom for Bogdan Syrotiuk."* – Martin Reyhan, Czech Republic

"The idea of imprisoning those who dissent from the official voice of a state is unbearable for us, we will not become sheep." – Gregorio P., Valparaíso, Chile

"Everyone should be helping this brave young man who is unjustly imprisoned simply for being against this war that is destroying Ukraine. Free him and end this war that is killing a generation of Ukrainian youth for US/NATO hegemony!" – Karen S., California, USA

"Bogdan Syrotiuk is a heroic avatar for the rest of us who are struggling to create a more equitable, equiponderant, and fair-sharing international ambit, socially and economically, against the prevailing, craven political poltroons of the US and its western allies. A pox on your houses, Zelensky and US-controlled NATO!" – Jeanie M., Philippines

"Give him the heads up for being a truly amazing human being." – Ali P., Tasmania, Australia

"The only way the working class of Ukraine and Russia will see justice is when people like Bogdan are treasured, not persecuted." – Joseph F., Spain

"Stop arming Ukraine. End the slaughter. End imperialism. End capitalism." – Graham, England, UK

Sign the petition and contact us to join the campaign for Bogdan's freedom.

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact