

# Roger Waters calls for release of Ukrainian Trotskyist Bogdan Syrotiuk

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In recent days, the campaign for the release of the Ukrainian Trotskyist Bogdan Syrotiuk, who was arrested by the Ukrainian Secret Service (SBU) on April 25 for his socialist opposition to the far-right Zelensky government and the NATO-instigated war between Russia and Ukraine, has gathered momentum.

Syrotiuk, who is only 25 and of poor health, is now being held in a prison in Ukraine by the SBU, which is notorious for its infestation with fascist elements. If found guilty, he faces between 15 years and life imprisonment, the equivalent in contemporary Ukraine of a death sentence.

On Wednesday, Roger Waters, co-founder and lead singer of the rock band Pink Floyd, called for Syrotiuk's release on X, formerly Twitter, and shared the video statement by David North, the chairperson of the international editorial board of the *World Socialist Web Site*, with his over 600,000 followers. Waters, who is widely known and respected for his principled opposition to war and defense of figures like Julian Assange, wrote, "Free Bogdan Syrotiuk, Thank you David North for Exposing Zelenski for what he is."

As of this writing, the video statement, originally posted on X/Twitter on April 30, has been viewed by over 80,000 people. The petition demanding the release of Bogdan Syrotiuk has been signed by over 1,400 people.

In Spain, the left site *Rebelión* reposted the statement from David North calling for Syrotiuk's release. The statement was also reposted on Twitter/X by Aaron Maté, journalist with the Grayzone.

In Latin America, *Política Obrera*, despite its substantial and well documented differences with the International Committee, has published a report about the arrest of Bogdan Syrotiuk, explaining it as part of the Zelensky's regime crackdown on leftist

movements. The article concluded by writing, "The struggle for Bogdan's freedom is part of the struggle against imperialist war, genocide and fascism. Immediate freedom for Bogdan Syrotiuk!"

In Turkey, several outlets have reported on the case in the past few days. The daily newspaper of the Labour Party (EMEP), *Evrensel Gazetesi*, whose X/Twitter account has almost 840,000 followers, reported on the case and the WSW's campaign in his defense. Turkish journalist Ceyda Karan also referred to the case on Wednesday on her radio program on Sputnik Türkiye. The Turkish online outlets dokuz8HABER and Tüm Haberler likewise informed their readers of the arrest and the campaign in defense of him.

The campaign has also gathered growing support among workers and youth the world over. In Australia, an educators' rank-and-file committee passed a resolution in defense of Syrotiuk. Several clubs of the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) in Australia have similarly passed resolutions, demanding the release of Bogdan and pledging "to campaign among students and youth as part of the fight to build a global fight for his freedom."

In Germany, a rank-and-file committee of train drivers passed a powerful resolution demanding Syrotiuk's release, and pointing to the broader political implications of the case amidst the developing NATO war against Russia and the genocide in Gaza. It said,

As an action committee, we have already protested strongly and clearly in an earlier appeal against the German government's support for the war in Ukraine and against the ongoing arms deliveries.

At that time, we emphasized that the claim by

the German government and the media that the arms deliveries and support for the war serve the purpose of defense is a vicious lie. The weapons and ammunition produced in Germany kill people, soldiers and civilians alike. The mass murder of women and children in Gaza is not self-defense. The senseless slaughter on the Ukrainian-Russian front does not serve the defense of Ukraine, but the prostration and division of Russia. The arrest of Bogdan Syrotiuk makes it clear how important and urgent it is to take action now. Anti-war protests are being brutally suppressed at universities. Tomorrow, colleagues who take action against the military transports may already be persecuted. This must not be allowed to happen! The struggle against the arrest of Bogdan Syrotiuk is an important part of the struggle against war and dictatorship.

Readers from around the world also continue to submit comments to the WSWS, opposing the political persecution of Syrotiuk, including from Greece, the United States, and Russia.

Robert in the US wrote, “The imprisonment of Bogdan Syrotiuk is just one of the countless atrocities funded and made possible by the billions Biden and congress send all around the world to promote leaders like that Zelensky in the name of the “freedom and democracy”.

John wrote, “I am a civil-rights lawyer in California who specializes in fighting police repression. Free Bogdan and all the prisoners throughout the world being held on such political charges.”

Frederick Smith, also from the United States, submitted the following statement to the WSWS: “I call the authorities of the Ukraine to reconsider the arrest and imprisonment of Bogdan for supposedly serving the interest of Russia. Bogdan is known throughout the world as opposing Putin and his invasion of the Ukraine. He and I both support building unity of working class people all over the world. Please release Bogdan at once.”

The growing support for the release of Bogdan Syrotiuk amidst a developing mass protest movement against the genocide in Gaza has great objective

significance. As David North explained in the statement initiating the campaign for his release,

The working class and youth throughout the world are justly outraged by the criminal war being waged by Israel, with the support of the Biden administration and NATO, against the people of Gaza. But it must be understood that the same governments that are collaborating in the Gaza genocide are sponsoring the proxy war in Ukraine. The violence in Gaza and Ukraine are interconnected fronts in a global escalation of military conflicts that threaten humanity with a nuclear catastrophe. The fight for Bogdan’s freedom and for an end to the proxy war must be seen as an essential component of the struggle against imperialism, genocide, and fascism.

We call on all our readers to sign the petition today, to make a financial contribution to the development of the campaign, to circulate the statement and petition as widely as possible, and get involved directly by writing to the WSWS.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**