

Australian youth and students call for immediate release of Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk

Our correspondents

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The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) in Australia has been campaigning for the freedom of Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk as part of the global campaign of the world Trotskyist movement.

Nearly 1,500 people from around the world have signed an online petition initiated by the *World Socialist Web Site* calling for Bogdan's release.

Meetings of the IYSSE university clubs in Australia unanimously passed the following resolution:

This meeting of the IYSSE demands the immediate freedom of Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk.

Syrotiuk is 25 and in poor health. He was arrested by the Security Service of Ukraine on fraudulent charges of serving the interests of Russia. In fact, Bogdan is an intransigent opponent of the capitalist Putin regime and its invasion of Ukraine. He opposes the NATO-instigated Ukraine-Russia war and fights for the unity of the working class in Ukraine, Russia and throughout the former Soviet Union.

If found guilty by a kangaroo court, Syrotiuk is threatened with a prison sentence of 15 years to life. The arrest is the latest example of the fascistic Ukrainian regime of Volodymyr Zelensky brutally suppressing left-wing and anti-war voices.

The IYSSE demands the immediate release of Bogdan Syrotiuk. We resolve to campaign among students and youth as part of the fight to build a global fight for his freedom. This struggle is an essential component of the fight against imperialist war, genocide and dictatorship.

Bogdan is a member of the Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists (YGBL), a Trotskyist youth organisation active in Ukraine and throughout the former Soviet Union. The YGBL, in political solidarity with the International Committee of the Fourth International of which the IYSSE is the youth and student arm, fights for a unified movement of the world working class against imperialist war and the capitalist nation-state system.

The concern in the Zelensky regime and the imperialist centres is that this perspective is gaining support in the

Ukrainian working class, threatening NATO's imperialist proxy war against Russia.

Students and youth from around Australia submitted statements of support for the campaign to free Bogdan.

We are publishing these statements below and call on others to send statements to iysseaus@gmail.com.

Gabe, Sydney

The arrest of Bogdan Syrotiuk goes against the principles of a free and fair society. Freedom of opinion and association are essential democratic rights. The violation of these freedoms shows that Ukraine is a police state that silences dissidents to maintain control over the consciousness of the population and suppress political opposition.

Bogdan fights for the unity of Russian and Ukrainian workers and an international anti-war movement of the working class. This cuts across the lies of Zelensky and his defenders that the only way to end the war with Russia is to lean into the military aims of US and European imperialism.

Alongside Bogdan's arrest, students protesting against Israel's genocide in Gaza are being suppressed around the world. This is a glaring signal that police state measures like those used in Ukraine could be employed by governments worldwide to silence opponents of imperialism and war.

Ibrahim, Western Sydney University

I condemn the imprisonment of Bogdan, a young 25-year-old Ukrainian citizen, by the Zelensky regime. He was arrested on

completely falsified and fabricated grounds of serving Russian interests. Bogdan is a member of the Trotskyist and socialist movement which, by definition, stands against Putin's oligarchical capitalist regime and also has a vocal history criticising Putin's regime. This fact clearly demonstrates the intellectual dishonesty of Zelensky and the Ukrainian establishment.

This is one of many clear examples of the ruling class's willingness to ruin the lives of its citizens through imprisonment and other forms of torture. The basis that a citizen is vilified and unjustifiably imprisoned is because they reveal the established powers' corruption. In this case, Bogdan exposed the role of NATO and the US in creating the conditions for this war, which poses to the world the danger of nuclear annihilation and is being waged by the openly fascist Zelensky government at the expense of the Ukrainian people.

I call on all students, young people, and workers to demand Bogdan's freedom!

Daniel, University of Melbourne

I am compelled to address the severe injustice inflicted upon Bogdan Syrotiuk, a young Trotskyist leader targeted by the Ukrainian authorities. Bogdan's arrest on spurious charges signifies a deliberate effort by the Zelensky regime to quash voices of dissent, highlighting a serious breach of political freedoms. His voice was meant to unite us this May Day; instead, he is unjustly confined.

I urge you to act swiftly: sign our petition, mobilise your networks, and demand his immediate release. We must not let his crucial call for worker unity be stifled.

Stand with us to free Bogdan Syrotiuk now!

Miranda, University of Melbourne

Bogdan Syrotiuk is a young Trotskyist leader who has been unfairly arrested in Ukraine on false accusations of supporting Russia. Those who defend this decision and Zelensky argue that his government is fighting against dictatorship for the sake of democracy and the self-determination of Ukraine. The framing of Bogdan proves that this is not the case, rather they are threatened by any opposition to the capitalist oligarchies in both Ukraine and Russia.

Bogdan was meant to deliver a speech for May Day calling for the international proletariat to unite, and anyone who supports that message should help by signing our petition demanding his release.

Gracie, Victoria University in Melbourne

Bogdan Syrotiuk is being inhumanely and wrongly persecuted for holding socialist beliefs and justly standing against the actions of the Ukrainian and Russian governments. He is vehemently opposed to war and there is no crime in this. He should not be forced into the horrendous conditions he now faces, nor should anybody be vilified for expressing anti-imperialist sentiments. It's crucial that people sign this petition so he is released as soon as possible.

Matt, Brisbane

The arrest and detainment of Bogdan Syrotiuk by the Zelensky regime must be condemned and opposed by all workers and students. His immediate release is an urgent demand, for the conditions he is being held in, as well as the looming threat of life imprisonment, pose imminent threats to his life.

Bogdan, a socialist in Ukraine and a principled opponent of the war, has been charged with bogus accusations of "serving the interests of Russia." In fact, Bogdan has campaigned for the unity of the Ukrainian and Russian working classes, along with the international working class of all countries, which is the only social force that can put an end to the unrelenting drive towards militarism and a third world war.

The arrest of Bogdan must not be seen as an isolated incident, but rather as the most recent example of widespread attacks on free speech and democratic rights for any who speak out against war and genocide. These attacks, not only from the Zelensky regime, but also the Biden administration as well as governments in Europe and Australia, are taking on an increasingly fascist character as opposition to the NATO escalation of war in Ukraine as well as Israel's ongoing genocide of the Palestinians continues with mass demonstrations.

The campaign for Bogdan's freedom is inescapably linked up with the campaign to oppose the drive towards war by the imperialist powers, in particular the United States, as well as the corresponding attacks on the working class and students across the globe.

The *World Socialist Web Site* and the International Committee of the Fourth International have started a petition on change.org calling for the immediate release of Bogdan. It is vital that this petition reaches the highest possible audience and gains a large number of signatures, to demonstrate our opposition to this latest infringement on free speech. Please sign it and share with others.

Free Bogdan!



To contact the WSWWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact