

“The people of both Russia and Ukraine deserve to hear Bogdan’s progressive ideas about unity and internationalism”

Left-wing websites, artists and workers endorse campaign to free Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk

Clara Weiss
20 May 2024

The demand to free Ukrainian Trotskyist Bogdan Syrotiuk, imprisoned by the fascistic government of Ukraine on the baseless claim that he is a Russian agent, is receiving growing support by left-wing websites, artists, intellectuals, workers and youth throughout the world.

On Saturday, David North, the chairperson of the International Editorial Board of the *World Socialist Web Site*, provided a detailed refutation of the accusations leveled against Syrotiuk, explaining that they represent “nothing less than a declaration of war against all left-wing and socialist opposition to the Zelensky regime and, specifically, the International Committee of the Fourth International and its public organ, the *World Socialist Web Site*.”

The WSWs has explained that support for the fight to release Bogdan Syrotiuk is an essential component of the fight against war and the defense of democratic rights.

Already, significant support has been building up internationally. In Finland, the anti-war website Työväen Antimilitaristit, which opposes Finland’s accession to NATO and the genocide in Gaza, published a report on the case. In Turkey, after initial press coverage by the daily newspaper of the Labour Party (EMEP), *Evrensel Gazetesi*, on the radio station Sputnik Türkiye and by the online outlet dokuz8HABER, the publication of the state capitalist organization DS?P, marksist.org, and the left-wing website direnisteyiz.org have also reported about the case.

On Sunday, the Venezuelan left-wing website Aporrea, which is censored in Venezuela but remains the second-largest leftist website in the country, published the latest statement by David North on the case in Spanish translation. The website Prensa y Gente, which is based in the Dominican Republic, published an article on Sunday entitled “Socialist militant opposed to war in Ukraine seeks release from prison.”

The original video statement in which the WSWs made the arrest of Bogdan Syrotiuk public and initiated the campaign to free him has now been viewed by well over 127,000 on Twitter/X alone.

A petition demanding Bogdan Syrotiuk’s release has been

signed by over 1,700 people, including from Finland, Taiwan, Turkey, Australia, the UK, Germany, Sri Lanka, the US, France, Switzerland and India.

Among those who signed are Roger Waters, who also prominently endorsed the campaign on his Twitter/X account; Dr. Ömer Faruk Gergerlio?lu, a deputy from the Kurdish nationalist DEM Party in Turkey; Professor Ariyaratne Herath from the Department of Economics at the University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka; and German historian Christian Gerlach, a leading expert in the history of the Nazi war against the Soviet Union.

International model and actress Andreja Pejic published a powerful statement on Instagram Monday, calling on her over 500,000 followers to support the campaign. Pejic, who was born in the former Yugoslavia and fled the region after the 1999 NATO bombing, wrote:

Bogdan Syrotiuk is an extremely brave young man who has been imprisoned in Ukraine because of his highly principled opposition to the tragic war between Ukraine and Russia. Every time I read about this war it breaks my heart and reminds me of the Yugoslav wars because it is fratricidal. That is, people who lived together for decades and who share so many cultural and historical roots are destroying each other. It is estimated [that] 500,000 young Ukrainian men have been slaughtered and a 100,000 Russian men. How do their families feel about this war I wonder?

In Russia I read that the government was giving families 600 dollars in cities and in poorer areas flour or livestock or fish to take their young boys. In Ukraine Zelensky’s forces literally abduct young men in shopping centers and send them off to the front. The government has prohibited the taking of pictures at cemeteries to cover up the massive death toll. It is also cancelling the passports of those who have escaped Ukraine in order to force them back to serve

on a front without any training where they will most likely die.

Bogdan has tried to tell the truth about this war. He has stood up against the Putin regime as well as the Zelensky regime and especially the wretched imperialist policies threatening to devastate all of Eastern Europe. He has called for [the] unity of the Russian and Ukrainian working classes to end the war. Now he is being smeared as a supporter of Putin, charged with treason and faces life in prison because the Zelensky regime knows this war is becoming more and more unpopular with their population but the West wants this war to keep going forever as it completely serves their economic interests.

How can this man be a Putin supporter? This is ridiculous. He is a socialist, a Trotskyist, which means he fights for workers. Putin is a nationalist and defends Russian capitalism. Putin hates Leon Trotsky, Vladimir Lenin, the Russian Revolution and the whole idea of multinational unity established by that revolution. Unsurprisingly, he has a soft spot for Stalin. Like all capitalists and like all nationalists he hates the working class of his own country and also of the world. He doesn't mind that his war of aggression has divided Russian and Ukrainian workers. The same can also be said about the Zelensky regime which links up with fascist Stepan Bandera glorifiers because they are the most reliable fighters in the country, to say nothing of the US ruling class which is more than happy to see all of Ukraine as well as all of Russia destroyed as long as their corporations get first rate access to all the delicious natural wealth spoils ...

The people of both Russia and Ukraine have suffered so much and they deserve to hear Bogdan's progressive ideas about unity and internationalism. This man's human rights have been stripped away from him just because his ideas are a threat to the status quo. He has done nothing wrong and he deserves freedom. Anyone who believes in freedom should stand by his side. **FREE BOGDAN SYROTIUK!**

Resolutions supporting the fight to free Bogdan Syrotiuk have been passed by port workers in Sri Lanka, postal workers in Britain, rail workers in Germany and youth and educators in Australia.

Mary from Australia wrote:

Free Bogdan Syrotiuk, end the war in Ukraine, Workers of Russia and Ukraine unite to fight for world socialist revolution, for the united Socialist States of Europe. End all war. Stop the Genocide in Gaza.

Oliver, also from Australia, supported the campaign with the words, "Bogdan's bravery to stand up for a better future for Ukrainians and Russians is inspiring. Free Bogdan today!"

Bob from the US wrote:

The lie that billions must be given to Ukraine to fund a proxy war against a nuclear armed power in the name of "defending democracy" is an utter sham, and this proves it. The monstrous lies about Bogdan are simply absurd. To paint a revolutionary anti-war Marxist as being a Russian agent simply for writing and publishing is nothing less than a blatant attack on freedom of speech and thought. Zelensky is seeking to criminalize and slanderize any left-wing opposition to the bloodshed as he prepares to drag even more unwilling men to the front to die for him and his NATO masters.

Ann, another reader in the US, commented, "The Nazi regime [in Ukraine] has been backed by the West and US in a proxy war against Russia, a basic CIA strategy."

Catherine in New Zealand submitted the following statement to the WSWs:

How much I welcome the energy and motivation of principled young people everywhere calling out the violence and rank hypocrisy of our administrations, who will stop at nothing to silence the universal drive for equality and democracy.

Start by calling for the immediate release of Bogdan Syrotiuk. His arrest by the Ukraine administration is being mirrored in hundreds of arrests of young people across US and other campuses across the world. Bogdan must know the fight he is committed to is shared by anyone willing to fight for the transition to a socialist future.

Read everything you can. Donate to SEP. Find ways to step up support for leaders of our young people like Bogdan. And do it now, because Bogdan's situation is a clear signal our response is required as never before.

To get involved with the campaign, donate and sign the petition, go to [wsws.org/freebogdan](https://www.wsws.org/freebogdan).



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

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