

“Rabid attacks on basic democratic rights, such as the imprisonment of Bogdan, leave their mark on workers across the globe”

## Canadian workers call for freedom for Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk

Our reporter

29 May 2024

Bogdan Syrotiuk, a leading member of the Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists in Ukraine, was detained by the far-right Zelensky regime in late April. He has been framed up and arrested for fighting to unify Ukrainian and Russian workers against the US-NATO war against Russia, which has claimed the lives of at least 500,000 Ukrainians and tens of thousands of Russians, and threatens to escalate into a nuclear conflagration.

Syrotiuk is threatened with life imprisonment, which in Ukraine is a virtual death sentence. As a socialist and Trotskyist, he has been charged by the Ukrainian regime for contributing articles to the *World Socialist Web Site* and fighting to bring a socialist and internationalist program to Ukrainian and Russian workers.

The Canadian Liberal government plays a key role in supporting the far-right Zelensky regime and fuelling the war. Canadian imperialism has maintained a decades-long relationship with far-right Ukrainian nationalists at home and abroad, including the political descendants of Nazi collaborators during World War II. It is these forces that make up the backbone of the Ukrainian regime that is persecuting comrade Bogdan.

Workers across Canada have begun speaking out against this outrageous act of persecution against a prominent opponent of the war. One statement received from a postal worker states:

My name is Daniel, and I am a postal worker in Canada. I support the fight for Bogdan Syrotiuk's freedom in Ukraine. He is a political prisoner, denied his basic rights to freedom of expression and freedom of thought. Bogdan, leader of the Ukrainian Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists, is currently locked up in squalid and life-threatening conditions, because he correctly believes the only way to end the US-NATO-led war in Ukraine against Russia is to unite the workers of both those countries and beyond with an international socialist and anti-war perspective.

For me working in the logistics industry, the specter of globalization is readily evident. The global economy is highly interconnected, as I deliver parcels and letters coming in from all over North America, Europe and Asia. Weapons and military gear are also exported from Canada to Ukraine and Israel to decimate cities and wreak havoc on young people and workers. This wanton disregard for human life, funded and propagated by the capitalist elite, must end!

Rabid attacks on basic democratic rights, such as the imprisonment of Bogdan, leave their mark on workers across the globe. Zelensky's frame-up and political persecution of Bogdan tear apart the propaganda that the US or Ukraine are fighting for freedom or human rights or anything progressive. Without fascistic methods of control, the Zelensky regime would be unable to send untold thousands to their deaths on the front lines in service of an unpopular war. The only social force capable of ending fascism and war is the working class!

Eric, a young worker from Montreal, wrote:

The detention of Bogdan Syrotiuk for high treason and the accusations against the WSWS are totally baseless and put reality on its head.

Is NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg also an agent of “left-wing propagandists,” as he himself has stated that “Western countries created conditions under which it (Russia) was forced to launch the so-called special military operation”? This is just an excuse to suppress any left-wing opposition to the war. Bogdan and the WSWS have numerous times condemned the Ukrainian as well as the Russian government's actions in the war, which is being waged by the oligarchs on the

backs of working people of both countries.

We have seen all over the world in the last decades massive austerity, cuts to social programs, brutality and repression by police, criminal indifference to climate change and COVID, wage cuts, evictions and extreme social inequality. All of this has been done for the sake of profits, imperialist war, genocide and destruction of the environment.

The reason for Bogdan's arrest is clear, that he spoke on behalf of the interests of the international working class and was calling for its unity against the war. We must demand his immediate release and the freedom from all persecution. There is no justice under capitalism. Free Bogdan Syrotiuk, Julian Assange, David McBride and all those imprisoned for speaking against imperialism and its crimes.

Tibor, a truck driver, said:

I demand his immediate release from prison because he wants peace, and prosperity for the long suffering Ukrainian working class, to put an end to this already lost war, which has cost hundreds of thousands of lives for nothing. Also, he should be released from prison, because what he was accused of is nothing but lies, fabrication, and distortion.

Laurent, a specialized educator from Quebec and a leading member of the Quebec Public Sector Workers Rank-and-File Coordinating Committee, which was set up during the recent public sector strike to organize workers in opposition to the nationalist trade union bureaucracies, demanded "Hands off Bogdan Syrotiuk!" in his statement. He continued:

On behalf of the Quebec Public Sector Workers Rank-and-File Coordinating Committee, I denounce the illegal imprisonment of Bogdan Syrotiuk and demand his immediate release. This is a frontal attack on the democratic rights of the entire working class, including the right to freedom of expression and free association. Bogdan, a socialist activist aged just 25, has been in a cell of Zelensky's fascist regime for over a month, even though he has committed no crime. On the contrary, he is fighting one of today's most heinous crimes: the proxy war being waged by the imperialist powers of NATO against Russia in his native Ukraine. Bogdan is fighting on the basis of the highest principles and noblest ideals: the unity of the Russian and Ukrainian working classes to put an end to this bloody war that

threatens all humanity.

Quebec and Canadian workers have a duty to come to the defense of Bogdan, whose life is in danger in Zelensky's jail. Canada is directly involved in the current war. The billions that are being used without our consent to fund and arm Ukraine's neo-Nazi-filled military forces are coming out of the public purse; money that should be paying for decent jobs and public services for the population.

The objective of Canadian intervention has nothing to do with defending "human rights," as Trudeau & Co. claim. In reality, the Canadian ruling elite wants a piece of the pie in the plundering of the Middle East and resource-rich Eurasian territory.

Canadian imperialism's wars of aggression abroad are inevitably accompanied by an assault on working people's livelihoods at home, and a repression of opposition to war and capitalist austerity. On Canadian campuses, students peacefully protesting Israel's genocide in Gaza are attacked by police and courts with the full support of the state. For their part, workers have long experience with government back-to-work laws that have criminalized one strike after another.

Bogdan Syrotiuk's imprisonment is intended to intimidate the anti-war movement growing among the working masses and youth in Ukraine, Russia and around the world. This is why the Ukrainian security services have openly admitted that Bogdan was arrested for collaborating with the *World Socialist Web Site*, the only organization fighting to unify the working class on a socialist and internationalist basis.

Just as the WSWS supported and guided us politically in organizing our committee last year, our committee offers its full support to the campaign to save Bogdan Syrotiuk. We'll be doing everything we can to alert workers in Quebec and across Canada to his appalling incarceration and mobilize them to demand his release!

We strongly urge all workers, students, and everyone who defends democratic rights and opposes war to send your statement of support to the *World Socialist Web Site* in support of Bogdan's freedom by filling out the form below. Sign the petition and spread the word about the campaign to free this leading Ukrainian socialist and stop the US-NATO war on Russia.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

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