

Workers in Australia and New Zealand demand release of imprisoned Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk

Our correspondents
18 June 2024

The *World Socialist Web Site* continues to receive support from workers in Australia and New Zealand for its campaign to free Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk. He was imprisoned in late April by the far-right Zelensky regime on the fraudulent charge of high treason.

Syrotiuk has been slandered as aiding the Putin regime. In reality, he is the leader of the Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists (YGBL), a Trotskyist organisation that operates in the former Soviet Union, including Ukraine and Russia. He and the YGBL fight for an end to the US-NATO led war in Ukraine through the unity of the Ukrainian, Russian and international working class on a socialist basis. That perspective is based on implacable opposition to all the capitalist governments, including in Russia.

Last week the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) held pickets and lobbies outside Ukrainian embassies globally to demand the release of Bogdan. The ICFI issued an open letter detailing his persecution. The WSWS calls on you to support the campaign for Bogdan's freedom.

Dianne, a WSWS reader from New Zealand

I condemn the April arrest of Bogdan Syrotiuk on false allegations of high treason and demand his immediate release. Bogdan is for peace and works to unite both the Ukrainian and Russian working class against a new imperialist world war. He should not be incarcerated and must be freed.

Prom, a postal worker in Auckland, New Zealand, said WSWS articles on the US-NATO war against Russia had enabled him "to understand a lot more, and if I can see it, I hope that others can too. The website

has taught me a lot better than any history class ever taught me in New Zealand. This war map that they are mapping out for us is not something we should be following. It's barbarous what they're trying to do.

"The WSWS specifically says: we do not agree with Putin or Zelensky on Ukraine. The Russian government might be happy that Bogdan's in prison, because he writes against them as well. That exposes the lie that Zelensky and his mob are trying to say, that he's a propaganda puppet for the Russians."

Prom said the imperialist powers clearly saw Bogdan and the YGBL as a threat. "They're thinking: 'We'd better get on top of these guys before everyone sees that what they're saying is true.' That's what I thought when I read what David North said, when Bogdan was initially jailed: it just confirms that everything that I read on the WSWS is spot on, it's true."

In Australia the WSWS has received the following statements:

Gian, healthcare worker

I write in support of Bogdan Syrotiuk who is currently being held in prison in Nikolaev. Bogdan is a socialist writer who has been peacefully advocating for an end to the war. Bogdan is not part of a propaganda campaign carried out by Russia. In fact, Bogdan has clearly stated in his writings that he is opposed to the Russian and Ukrainian governments and that it is the Russian and Ukrainian working classes who need to co-operate to end this war in which at least half a million people have now died.

Bogdan has been denied his high blood pressure medication in prison and has not been able to obtain legal representation. If Bogdan is found guilty, he may

be sentenced to 15 years in prison. Bogdan may die in jail as a result of the brutal and harsh conditions in which he is being imprisoned.

Imprisoning left wing writers like Bogdan without legal representation will not stop Ukrainian parents from wondering why their children are being sent to die in a war which was provoked and is now being propped up by the West. Bogdan should be freed not only because he has done nothing wrong but because his continued detention is illegal, harsh and brutal.

Richard, factory worker and Lee-Anne, social worker

Bogdan's jailers make the lying and absurd claim he is a supporter of Putin. Bogdan is a Trotskyist. He is a fighter for the unity of Russian and Ukrainian workers. In today's mad, warmongering imperialist world the struggle for peace is criminalised. Doctors, teachers and students are labelled terrorists. Enough!

We don't want to fight your war. For the unity of all workers! Free Bogdan Syrotiuk!

Bernard, retired teacher, Victoria

Neither the WSWS nor Bogdan Syrotiuk are supporters of Putin or Putin's war on Ukraine. On the contrary, both are in ardent and long-term opposition to this war and deplore the high human cost to the Ukrainian populace both military and civilian. In appealing to both the Russian and Ukrainian working classes over the heads of their despotic leaderships, they are seeking to point the way to end this fratricidal bloodbath.

The imprisonment of Bogdan and the banning of the WSWS reveals the outrightly anti-democratic nature of the governments which pursue and support this war. The posturing of big brother NATO coming to the aid of little Volodymyr Zelensky brings on the nightmare of an unimaginable universal conflagration. The origins of this nightmare is the waking dream that we indulge: that our leaders care for and safeguard us.

Richard, retired teacher

Free Bogdan Syrotiuk!

Bogdan Syrotiuk is charged with treason for the same reason that Julian Assange is charged with espionage: capitalism is so rotten and weak it can no longer generate any credible intellectual support for its never-ending war, increasing levels of inequality and poverty. The suffering of the people of Ukraine is devastating and the situation of the fascist regime is so weak that its

repression needs to be ever more vicious.

Bogdan Syrotiuk is imprisoned for a meticulous telling of the truth. His situation is terrible, and he must be free.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact