

More statements demanding freedom for Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk from Australia and New Zealand

Our reporters
18 July 2024

Workers and defenders of civil liberties in Australia and New Zealand continue to send statements to the *World Socialist Web Site* supporting the fight to free Bogdan Syrotiuk, a Ukrainian socialist and principled opponent of the fascistic Zelensky regime and the NATO proxy war against Russia in Ukraine.

Bogdan was arrested by the Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) on April 25 on false charges of “high treason” and defending the interests of the Putin regime in Russia. In fact, as a member of the Trotskyist Young Guard of Bolshevik Leninists (YGBL), Bogdan is an intransigent opponent of both the oligarchic regimes in Moscow and Kiev.

The YGBL, in political solidarity with the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) which publishes the WSWs, operates in Russia, Ukraine and throughout the former Soviet Union. Its perspective is the unification of the working class across national borders against the capitalist governments and against imperialist war.

Bogdan is being targeted because of his fight against war. His arrest comes as the US and NATO engage in further reckless escalations of their proxy war in Ukraine which has already led to the deaths of half a million Ukrainians and tens of thousands of Russians.

Increasingly, Ukrainian workers and youth oppose the militarist and authoritarian Zelensky regime. The concern of the Ukrainian government and its imperialist paymasters is that, under these conditions, Bogdan’s socialist revolutionary and internationalist perspective will find broad support among the Ukrainian population.

His arrest is the highpoint of attacks on anti-war and left-wing sentiments internationally. The WSWs’s call for Bogdan’s freedom has won support globally, with nearly 3,500 signing a petition in his defence and dozens of

statements of support from workers, youth, artists and professionals published on the WSWs.

We publish below statements from workers, youth and professionals from Australia and New Zealand calling for Bogdan’s immediate release.

Mitya Moor, a civil servant in Adelaide, South Australia

Free Bogdan! I am outraged by the injustice of all capitalists against the workers of the world. Ukraine, Russia, and China are proving to be battlegrounds of the rich against the poor!

I condemn the actions of the SBU and the Ukrainian puppet state for its oppressive and warlike attacks on democratic rights and principles. Bogdan Syrotiuk has been unjustly held in prison for the simple act of speaking up for the working classes against imperialism. As a leader of the Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists (the YGBL), Bogdan has shown great courage against the machinations of NATO interests. A nascent barbarism of monstrous warfare has been stoked by finance capital.

After the dissolution of the Stalinist bloc, the capitalists have deemed the “Far East” as a playground for their economic projects, regardless of the working classes, peasants, and impoverished masses who live and subsist on those lands.

For nearly a decade, the Socialist Equality Party, the ICFI, and the YGBL with them, have warned of the imperialist build-up of forces and aggression on Russia and China’s doorstep. We can have no doubt now that the world, and all humanity and life with it, are but fair game for the capitalist classes. The emergence of WWIII is an existential threat facing the world proletariat.

We see the rise of fascism, the erosion of democratic rights, the destruction of the environment, the wholesale

slaughter of thousands of Palestinians by Israel, and ever more militarisation and nationalism.

We must stand together, as workers and socialists, against the interests of war and greed. For Bogdan Syrotiuk, a brave man of 25, has been imprisoned for nothing more than standing up for the working class who grow tired of being the fodder for imperialism.

An attack against Bogdan is an attack against us all. As long as Bogdan stays in prison on false charges and lies, I am not free.

Justin, a young worker in Sydney

I am signing to free and support Bogdan because he was illegally arrested for calling on the working class and ordinary people of Ukraine to stand up against the warmonger, fascist and pro-imperialist Zelensky government. Not just in Ukraine, Bogdan is also calling the same people in Russia to oppose the militarist and oligarchic Putin regime as well.

His arrest is a symbol of opposition against democracy and free speech by the Ukrainian government who don't want ordinary people to stand up against the senseless imperialist war against Russia. The same goes for the Kremlin as well. It is illegally cracking down on working-class people for opposing the hopeless attempts to re-establish an imperial Russia.

Bogdan's arrest had inspired thousands of people around the world to not just free him, but also to stand up against their right-wing ruling class governments which are dangerously putting ordinary working people's lives at risk for imperialist wars.

His fight for freedom is a symbol for ordinary people to rise and stand up for what is right, freedom and democracy.

Stephen Keim, SC is a Brisbane, Australia barrister who in 2007 successfully defended and represented Indian-born doctor Mohamed Haneef, who was framed-up and detained by the Howard Liberal-National government on false terrorism charges. For the stand he took, Keim was awarded the 2009 Human Rights Medal by the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Keim signed the petition demanding Bogdan's freedom, and left the following comment:

Ukraine should respect international human rights principles such as those in the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, particularly, freedom of speech and freedom of assembly.

This is particularly the case where Ukraine's government, no longer holds the popular endorsement of having been elected since the term of office from the last election has now expired.

Matthew, a 26-year-old student in Christchurch, New Zealand

I stand unreservedly in support of Bogdan and his tremendously brave stance against the Ukrainian government. And I think we should all try to make his story known to the world as much as we can.

Bogdan Syrotiuk, 25-years-old, has committed no crime. He has only said publicly that the working class of both Russia and Ukraine must unite to end this war. Yet the Zelensky government has thrown him in prison on the basis of outright lies. Let's be clear—this shows that not only have the Ukrainian government and NATO sent thousands of young men to their deaths, but they have no problem with using lies, intimidation and extra-legal methods to do so, all in aid of not freedom for Ukrainians, but imperialist plunder.

If Bogdan is reading this, I hope he can take comfort from knowing that he has friends even in New Zealand, and while there are hard times ahead, I'm sure he'll be out of prison soon. Wars are not sustainable; police-state repression is not sustainable. I think the worldwide reaction to the Gaza genocide is proof of this. In 2024, you can't suspend human rights on a massive scale without people fighting back. And the more the Zelensky government uses criminal methods, the more its support will crumble like sand.

We need to stand with Bogdan now, because it's easy to imagine the alternative: if Ukraine is able to imprison socialists and ban the *World Socialist Web Site* without protest, what's to stop the UK, Germany or the US, from doing the same?



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