

"We must fight for Bogdan's freedom!"

Ukrainian youth speaks out in support of Bogdan Syrotiuk

A Ukrainian youth in Germany
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This statement in support of Bogdan Syrotiuk was submitted to the World Socialist Web Site by a Ukrainian youth who fled the war and is now working and studying in Germany. To sign the petition demanding freedom for Bogdan and to get involved in the campaign, click here.

Bogdan Syrotiuk has been shamelessly arrested, based on trumped up charges by the Ukrainian state. The SBU (Ukraine's Security Service) claims that this international socialist had a backpack with a "Z" on it. It claims that Bogdan Syrotiuk, a member of the YGBL—an organisation of international socialists across the former Soviet Union—who has consistently called for the unity of Ukrainian and Russian workers against the nationalist-chauvinist governments of Ukraine and Russia, was working as an agent of the Russian state.

Only those deeply affected by Ukrainian state propaganda will believe the SBU's false claims. But those that see things more clearly will recognize that this backpack—the only pertinent piece of evidence in the whole case—has been planted there by the SBU, which is carrying on the legacy of the Stalinist secret service, the KGB.

Aside from the WSWS, few news sources have covered Bogdan's jailing. The mainstream capitalist press remains silent, so as not to undermine their propaganda that the war in Ukraine is a war waged "for democracy." Russian neo-Stalinists and Maoists have refused to support the campaign to free Bogdan on the grounds that this "would be yet another piece of evidence linking him to Russia." They have thus blindly accepted the prosecution's equation of the Russian working class and Russian socialists with the Russian state. They also neglected the fact that the Ukrainian SBU has already forged more pertinent evidence—namely, the backpack with a 'Z' on it—and would forge more of it if necessary. Genuinely

socialist and working-class organisations must fight for Bogdan's freedom—an attack on one is an attack on all.

Bogdan's arrest is part of a campaign to ban all left-wing opposition to the Zelensky regime. The same baseless charges of work on behalf of the Russian state have been raised against the WSWS, which has been banned in Ukraine. Dozens of other left-wing and socialist parties have been banned on the same grounds since 2022. Trotskyism, or, for that matter, any left-wing ideology, is equated with Russian militarism.

In reality, Trotskyism has nothing in common with any kind of militarism, chauvinism or nationalism at all. Trotskyism is the primary enemy of militarism, chauvinism and nationalism. It is a revolutionary guide for the working class to conquer power from the bourgeoisie, who enact these reactionary policies and ideologies in their pursuit of greed and imperialist plunder.

The government of Ukraine is as bourgeois as any other, and acts purely in the interests of its own capitalist class and their partners, above all the US and Germany. The US has provoked Russia's reactionary invasion by financing and training fascist paramilitaries in Ukraine, encouraging Ukrainian nationalist rhetoric, and openly discussing plans to include Ukraine in NATO. The continuation of the war in Ukraine to this day is primarily the result of the imperialist policies of the US, which the fascistic Ukrainian regime has helped execute. In order to establish full control over Russia, the US is determined to militarily crush it. The recent imperialist-backed invasion of Kursk is testimony to this fact: it is an unabashed escalation of a war that has already claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands from both sides.

The ruling classes are mortally afraid of an anti-war movement of the working class, since, under a conscious

Trotskyist leadership, such a movement would not only stop the war, but also develop into an international revolution which would put the working class in power, enabling it to overthrow capitalism and establish socialism. Those are the true reasons for Bogdan's arrest—the war aims of imperialism and the mortal fear by the ruling class of revolution.

The campaign to suppress left wing opposition to war is not unique to Ukraine, however. Attacks on democratic rights and left-wing groups are taking place in countries throughout the world. The Gaza protest movement has been falsely denounced as antisemitic by the majority of NATO-aligned governments, and the police have violently attacked and arrested student protesters. In some cases, organisations opposing Israel's genocidal war in Gaza have been outright banned.

The German section of the ICFI, the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (SGP), has been under surveillance by the country's secret service (Verfassungsschutz) since 2018 because it advocates for socialism and opposes militarism and nationalism. Recently, the German Interior Minister Nancy Faeser has drafted a bill which would allow the federal police to secretly break into any citizen's home and plant surveillance software on their electronic devices, based on nothing more than the mere suspicion that they may have an "anti-constitutional attitude." Unless the working class is mobilized against these police state measures, the ruling class will only intensify them further.

Therefore, the international working class must be mobilized to demand Bogdan Syrotiuk's release and to defend democratic rights worldwide. It is the principal revolutionary force in society, and serves as the basis of the entire economy. It is time for workers to demand their rights and defend them. We must fight for Bogdan's freedom!

Free Bogdan Syrotiuk! Down with war and imperialism!



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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