

Ukrainian court rejects motion to dismiss judge for bias as Bogdan Syrotiuk is barred from accessing dental care

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On October 3, 2025, a Ukrainian court ruled against a request from the defense that the judge in the case of Ukrainian Trotskyist Bogdan Syrotiuk should be removed. Bogdan, then 25 years old, was arrested in April 2024 on charges of “high treason under martial law,” which carry between 15 years and life in prison. Bogdan’s defense lawyers had argued that the judge should be recalled for bias.

Bogdan’s indictment was based primarily on articles that he wrote and translated for or distributed from the *World Socialist Web Site*, the publication of the International Committee of the Fourth International. Yet while the prosecution describes the WSWWS as an “information agency” of the Kremlin, the WSWWS and Bogdan’s Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists (YGBL), have consistently opposed the Russian invasion of Ukraine from an internationalist standpoint, fighting for the unity of the Russian and Ukrainian working class. This line has been publicly documented, including in the articles cited as “evidence” by the prosecution.

Since his arrest, Bogdan has been detained in an overcrowded prison in Nikolaev in southern Ukraine. In virtually all court decisions regarding his arrest and the seizure of his property, the court used language that was almost identical to the requests submitted by the prosecuting body, the Ukrainian Secret Service (SBU). In many instances, entire paragraphs were simply copied and pasted. This is under conditions where, in multiple court sessions, the prosecution has been unable to muster any evidence to substantiate its grave charges, despite calling multiple witnesses.

The recent decision to not dismiss the judge for bias underscores yet again that, within the Ukrainian court

system, everything is stacked against Bogdan. A few days earlier, on October 1, the Nikolaev appeals court had ruled against a request by the defense that Bogdan’s imprisonment be changed to house arrest. The same appeals court had also ruled against the same request of the defense in July.

The unlawful detention of Bogdan is the principal basis for his case before the European Court of Human Rights, which recently agreed to hear the case. Bogdan’s lawyers argue that his arrest constituted a violation of Article 5 of the European Convention of Human Rights, which guarantees the right to liberty.

But many other aspects of the case also speak to a systematic violation of his basic human and democratic rights. In particular, there is growing evidence that the conditions under which he is being held constitute inhuman treatment, which is prohibited by Article 3.

Bogdan was already in ill health at the time of his arrest, suffering, in particular, from serious dental problems. Because of his arrest, he was unable to get a planned dental procedure. Now, in a prison with poor food and hygiene, he has been suffering from pain because several of his teeth are severely damaged. However, an urgently necessary appointment with a dentist outside the prison, which was originally due to take place in July, has been repeatedly postponed.

This kind of procedure is not uncommon for the Ukrainian prison system. In June, the European Court of Human Rights ruled in the case of *Benyukh v. Ukraine* that the Ukrainian state had withheld necessary treatment for 19 months from a prisoner who was suffering from adentia (loss of his teeth). Despite the authorities being aware of the diagnosis since at least October 2019, it was only thanks to the intervention of

an NGO, “Youth with a Mission,” that the prisoner Benyukh, who had no financial means to pay for his treatment, received dentures in 2021 at the expense of the NGO.

The ECHR found that the state of Ukraine violated Articles 3 and 13 of the European Convention of Human Rights. Article 3 prohibits “torture” and “inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment” and Article 13 says, “Everyone whose rights and freedoms as set forth in this Convention are violated shall have an effective remedy before a national authority notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity.”

The *World Socialist Web Site* has turned to the NGO to request its involvement in the case of Bogdan Syrotiuk.

To support the campaign to free Bogdan Syrotiuk and his case before the ECHR, go to this page to sign the petition, donate, and learn more.



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