

# Expert report shatters fraudulent case against Bogdan Syrotiuk: Deepen the international campaign for his freedom!

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The campaign to free the Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk has reached an important turning point with the publication of a forensic linguistic analysis that shatters the fraudulent case against him. Commissioned by Syrotiuk's defense attorneys, the 65-page report by Professor Yuri Borisovich Irkhin—one of Ukraine's most prominent criminologists—demonstrates unequivocally that the charge of "state treason" is a political frame-up aimed at outlawing socialist and internationalist opposition to the NATO-Ukraine war against Russia.

Syrotiuk, 26, is a leading member of the Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists (YGBL), the Trotskyist youth movement in Ukraine affiliated with the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI). He was arrested in April 2024 and charged under wartime statutes with "state treason," a crime carrying a sentence of 15 years to life. The "evidence" consists almost entirely of political analyses published by the WSWs and the YGBL—denounced as "Russian propaganda" because they oppose both the NATO-backed war and the capitalist regimes in Kiev and Moscow.

For years, Ukrainian courts have weaponized so-called "linguistic expertise" to criminalize dissent. State-appointed "experts" scour political texts searching for phrases that can be twisted into proof of a supposed crime. In Bogdan's case, the official expert, functioning as an arm of the Ukrainian Secret Service (SBU), declared that his writings supported Russia's invasion.

But Professor Irkhin's independent review is a devastating repudiation of this fraudulent conclusion. From that standpoint it also will be an important tool before the European Court of Human Rights, which accepted Bogdan's case earlier this year. After examining more than a dozen WSWs and YGBL publications—including articles by Syrotiuk, speeches at the 2023 International May Day Rally and statements on the Gaza genocide—Irkhin concluded:

There are no statements, phrases, sentences, or word combinations that contain public calls aimed at undermining the national security of Ukraine ... and **NO statements** that have signs of propaganda aimed at supporting the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. (Emphasis in original)

The report's thoroughness and Irkhin's stature—he is a widely cited criminologist and former deputy head of the psychological service of Ukraine's Interior Ministry—forced even a hostile court in Pervomaisk to order a third expert review. This is far from a guarantee of justice, but it constitutes a significant legal blow to the SBU and a major advance for the international campaign demanding Syrotiuk's release.

The implications of this development extend far beyond Bogdan's individual defense. From its inception, the prosecution of Syrotiuk has been a political show trial aimed at banning opposition to the war. The SBU's case rests on the reactionary premise that *any* critique of NATO, denunciation of the Putin regime from the left or call for the unity of Russian and Ukrainian workers constitutes treason.

In their attempt to criminalize internationalism, the authorities effectively placed the WSWs itself on trial. This strategy has now exploded in their hands. Irkhin's report confirms what every honest reader already knows. In analyzing statements produced by Bogdan and fellow YGBL leading member Andrei Ritsky to the 2023 May Day rally, Irkin concluded:

The speeches express the position of the Trotskyist movement, which condemns both the policies of the US and NATO and the actions of Putin's regime, viewing the war as a consequence of the global crisis of capitalism and imperialist rivalry. The text

contains criticism of historical Ukrainian nationalism and the cult of the OUN-UPA, as well as condemnation of Putin's regime and the Russian oligarchy as heirs to Stalinism. Both speeches contain a call for the unification of the international working class on the basis of the anti-war movement and revolutionary internationalism.

One YGBL statement that prosecutors themselves cited condemns "Putin's adventurist invasion of Ukraine" and calls for "the creation of an international anti-war youth movement." Irkhin notes that this language "clearly indicates the absence of any support or justification for the Russian Federation's armed aggression." Instead, it expresses solidarity with the anti-war movement of youth and workers and advocates the unification of the working class across national borders.

Every text examined reaches the same conclusion. There is no "treason"—only a consistent, principled socialist opposition to the war and the capitalist system that produces it. This is precisely what the Ukrainian regime and its imperialist sponsors seek to criminalize.

The timing of this blow to the prosecution is politically significant. The NATO-Ukraine war is in deep crisis. After sacrificing hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian lives and exhausting tens of billions of dollars, the much-heralded NATO offensive has failed catastrophically. Zelensky's government, which rules on the basis of martial law, is disintegrating under corruption scandals, and he has dismissed his closest confidant, Andriy Yermak. European governments, facing mass opposition at home, openly accuse Washington of strategic betrayal.

These internal fractures are driving both the Zelensky regime and NATO to ever more desperate and reckless measures. The European imperialist powers—above all, Germany and France—are sharply escalating discussions about the deployment of troops to Ukraine, the expansion of long-range strike capabilities and the shift to wartime economies.

The Ukrainian state's persecution of Bogdan Syrotiuk is an integral part of this broader war policy. The imperialist powers fear above all the emergence of a *conscious, internationalist movement of workers and youth* against the war. They intend to silence those who oppose the propaganda lies used to justify the slaughter and who fight to unite the working class across borders.

The assault on Bogdan is part of a global campaign against socialist and anti-war movements, as the ruling class turns to authoritarianism in preparation for a far larger and more catastrophic conflict.

- In Germany, the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (SGP) has been targeted by the intelligence agencies for its Marxist program and opposition to militarism.

- In the United States, the fascistic Trump movement is threatening to classify "anti-capitalism" and "anti-Christianity" as forms of terrorism, while targeting immigrants, political opponents and left-wing activists.

- Across Europe, governments are resurrecting wartime censorship laws and criminalizing opposition to the genocide against the Palestinians.

The refutation of the frame-up provided by Irkhin's report places immense responsibility on the international working class. The fight for Bogdan's freedom is inseparable from the struggle to build a conscious, organized movement against the drive to world war.

As the WWSW wrote when Bogdan was first arrested:

The fight for Bogdan's freedom must be taken up by workers, students and all those who are committed to the defense of democratic rights and opposed to the escalation of imperialist wars that, unless stopped, threaten humanity with a nuclear catastrophe.

This warning is even more urgent today. We call on workers, youth, students, artists and intellectuals around the world to:

- Share this perspective and expose the fraudulent character of the charges.

- Sign and distribute the petition demanding Bogdan's immediate release.

- Organize meetings and discussions in schools, universities and workplaces.

- Donate to support the international campaign.

- And above all, join the International Committee of the Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution.

The fight to free Bogdan Syrotiuk is in essence the struggle to mobilize the working class in Ukraine, Russia and internationally against the war. His defense is inseparable from the struggle to build a global movement of the working class capable of ending the system that is plunging humanity toward catastrophe.



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