

Elon Musk becomes the latest Nazi decorated by the Zelensky regime

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Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky signed a decree Wednesday giving Elon Musk the Order of Freedom, the highest Ukrainian order a foreign citizen can receive, for his “outstanding personal merits in protecting human life and freedom.”

In honoring Musk, a committed ideological fascist and the world’s leading promoter of the global far-right movement, the Zelensky regime is once again exposing the fraud of those who claim that Ukraine is fighting for “democracy.”

The same government that praises the fascist and war profiteer Musk as a fighter for “freedom” jails opponents of the war and has outlawed left-wing political opposition. On August 10 a Ukrainian court handed the 27-year-old socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk 15 years in prison for opposing the war and calling for the unity of Russian and Ukrainian workers against it.

Musk is a notorious proponent of the antisemitic tropes of “white genocide” and the “great replacement,” the latter casting immigration as a Jewish conspiracy to wipe out the white race.

In a December 28, 2024 op-ed for the German paper *Welt am Sonntag*, two months before the national election, Musk called the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) “the last spark of hope for this country.” He told an AfD rally in Halle by video on January 25, 2025: “There is too much focus on past guilt, and we need to move beyond that.”

In Britain, Musk addressed a September 13, 2025 London rally called by the fascist Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, who calls himself Tommy Robinson. “Whether you choose violence or not, violence is coming to you,” Musk said by video link. “You either fight back or you die.”

With this decoration, Musk becomes the latest in a series of fascists honored by the Zelensky regime and the Ukrainian state.

On May 26, Zelensky signed a decree giving one of Ukraine’s special forces units the honorary title “Heroes of the UPA,” with the stated aim of restoring “the historical traditions of the national army.” UPA stands for the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, formed in 1942 to fight under the

faction of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) led by Stepan Bandera, whose movement had welcomed Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941.

The militia of Bandera’s organization took part in the Lviv pogroms of 1941, in which German forces and Ukrainian nationalists murdered thousands of Jews. UPA fighters then murdered Poles by the tens of thousands in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia, regions of prewar Poland, beginning in 1943. Poland’s Institute of National Remembrance counts about 100,000 dead through 1945, taking in the Lublin region as well; most were women and children.

Polish President Karol Nawrocki revoked Zelensky’s Order of the White Eagle, Poland’s highest decoration, on June 19 over the UPA title. Zelensky shipped it back to Warsaw the next day by private courier.

Among the other Nazi collaborators honored by the Zelensky regime are:

- Andriy Melnyk, who led the wing of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists whose Bukovinian Battalion, the historians Karel Berkhoff and Per Anders Rudling allege, took part in the murder of Jews at Babyn Yar, where 33,771 were shot in two days of September 1941. Melnyk was reburied with full state honors outside Kiev on May 25, Zelensky attending, over the protest of Israel’s Holocaust memorial Yad Vashem.

- Roman Shukhevych, an officer of the Nachtigall Battalion that entered Lviv the day the 1941 pogrom began, a captain in a German police battalion that fought partisans in occupied Belarus and from 1943 the UPA’s commander, was named a Hero of Ukraine in 2007, and a Kiev avenue renamed in his honor stands to this day.

- Bandera himself was named a Hero of Ukraine by former President Viktor Yushchenko in 2010, and though the courts later annulled his and Shukhevych’s titles on citizenship grounds, Kiev’s Bandera Avenue, the former Moskovsky Avenue, stands.

- Ulas Samchuk, the newspaper editor in German-occupied Rivne who wrote in September 1941 that Jews and Poles “must disappear completely from our cities,” and

whose paper marked the massacre of roughly 21,000 Jews at Rivne with a cartoon captioned “For the Judeo-Bolshevik hydra, it’s the final hour,” received a Kiev street in 2023.

- Petro Diachenko, who commanded a German SD police battalion that fought Polish partisans during the 1944 Warsaw Uprising and was decorated by Germany with the Iron Cross, received state commemorations from Ukraine’s parliament in 2015 and has streets in six Ukrainian cities, the most recent named in 2025.

- Yaroslav Stetsko, Bandera’s deputy, who wrote in 1941 that he supported “the destruction of the Jews and the expedience of bringing German methods of exterminating Jewry to Ukraine,” has streets and monuments in more than a dozen Ukrainian cities.

- Yevhen Konovalts, who founded the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and placed it in the service of German intelligence in the 1930s, before its members went on to join in the mass murder of the Jews of Ukraine, was reburied at the National Military Memorial Cemetery outside Kiev on August 18, eight days after Syrotiuk was sentenced, with Zelensky attending.

The Zelensky regime is a dictatorship, ruling under martial law imposed in February 2022 and extended by parliament 20 times since. Zelensky’s term ran out on May 20, 2024. In remarks to journalists published Sunday, he said elections now would be “a tsunami for the state that will split Ukraine.” In June 2022 the courts shut down the largest opposition party, Opposition Platform—For Life.

The United Nations Human Rights Office reported on September 23, 2025 that Ukrainian prosecutors had opened 22,814 criminal investigations in conflict-related cases and that it continued to document “torture and ill-treatment of conflict-related detainees by Ukrainian authorities,” most often by the SBU, the state security service.

This machinery of repression is aimed above all at left-wing opponents of the war. The 11 parties Zelensky’s government suspended in March 2022 included five left-wing parties, among them the Socialist Party of Ukraine; the Communist Party had been banned in 2015.

Bogdan Syrotiuk was convicted of high treason under martial law by a court in Pervomaisk, in the southern Mykolaiv region. He heads an organization of Ukrainian and Russian Trotskyists, the Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists, which is in political solidarity with the International Committee of the Fourth International. He was convicted of opposing the war and of telling Ukrainian and Russian workers to unite against it. The evidence was his articles, published by the *World Socialist Web Site*.

Among the grounds the verdict names are Syrotiuk’s “comparison of citizens of Ukraine with the fascists and Nazis of the times of the Second World War” and his

“devaluation of the national heroes and historical national figures of Ukraine and their transformation into criminals.” The national hero he turned into a criminal is Bandera.

The decoration of Musk is directly related to the escalation of the war. Ukraine, the *Financial Times* reported Friday, is asking Musk to let its strike drones use Starlink, the SpaceX satellite network, so they can carry out attacks as far as 200 kilometers (124 miles) inside Russia. That is, his award for “protecting human life” is aimed at securing the assistance of the richest man in the world for more killing.

Ukraine’s imperialist backers keep pushing the war deeper into Russia. The Storm Shadow cruise missile, which the French call SCALP, flies more than 250 kilometers (155 miles), according to its manufacturer MBDA, and has already been fired at Russian territory. On August 24, in Kiev on his first trip abroad as prime minister, British Prime Minister Andy Burnham authorized MBDA to declassify the technical data on the missile’s British components, clearing the last obstacle to Ukraine building its own version. Nine days before that, on the night of August 15, Ukraine had flown some 600 drones at the Moscow region in one of the biggest air attacks it has launched in the whole war.

The war has killed, wounded or left missing more than 2 million soldiers on both sides, according to a July estimate by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a Washington think tank.

Bogdan Syrotiuk is imprisoned for advancing the program on which a movement against the war must be built: the unity of Russian and Ukrainian workers against both governments. His defense has spread around the world. The deadline for his appeal is September 9. Sign the petition and donate to the campaign at wsws.org/freebogdan, and send letters of protest to the Pervomaisk City District Court (inbox@pm.mk.court.gov.ua) and the Mykolaiv Court of Appeal (inbox@mka.court.gov.ua), copying freebogdan@wsws.org.



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