

London bus drivers and other workers call for Bogdan's freedom

Our reporters
23 September 2026

Socialist Equality Party members and supporters in London have taken the campaign for the freedom of 27-year-old Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk into the working class through workplace and neighbourhood campaigns.

They have encountered widespread support, with many workers calling for Bogdan's freedom and opposing the escalation of the NATO proxy war with Russia.

Hundreds of bus drivers and residents of Tottenham took the leaflet, "Fascist Ukrainian court sentences Bogdan Syrotiuk, socialist opponent of war, to 15 years in prison".

One driver said that Bogdan's 15-year sentence was "shocking" and connected his imprisonment to authoritarian measures by the major capitalist powers against their own population: "Look at what's happening in Britain to Palestine protesters. If you put your head above the parapet, they are chopping it off."

Another driver said of the Ukraine war, "I think about this every day. I have grandchildren—what kind of world is being created? Ever since the end of the Soviet Union, it has been very dangerous. NATO has been moving against Russia, right up to the border with Ukraine. It is a war for Russia's resources, as with all the other wars, since when they first invaded Iraq up to Iran today."

In response to Bogdan's persecution, he said, "I will read about this young man's case. The wars have to stop; they are always about seizing natural resources. In the country I come from, they discovered gold in the mountains. Now many countries are trying to get their hands on it and are encouraging conflict across the region."

At the Wood Green bus garage in north west London, drivers were also shocked by the sentence and the

situation inside Ukraine, "No one should ever be put in jail for expressing their opinion. I follow these injustices around the world. I am very shocked by this. Fifteen years? I will sign the petition, and I will most certainly pass it around at work and online."

Other workers in London have joined the call for Bogdan's freedom.

Contract engineer Owen told WSWs: "The West has completely backed Russia into a corner, and they haven't done a good job of negotiating with Russia on equal terms. And it's cost lots of people their lives.

"Bogdan's obviously been swept up in all of that. I feel what he did was completely benign. If you were in the UK writing the sort of articles he has been writing, criticising the government, you still wouldn't expect too much to happen."

Owen said that war and the rise of the far-right had the same cause, "I think a lot of it's down to the billionaire class trying to make as much money as possible, control as much as possible. I feel the world is being run by these few individuals that don't have the wants and needs of working people in mind. There's such a huge amount of power that's pressing against everybody that's just kind of crushing people down."

He concluded, "I just feel like humanity is at a tipping point really where people like Bogdan are showing us how to really push back and fight."

Council worker Martin stated, "I'm backing Bogdan. It's ludicrous to suggest that he's been colluding with the Russians in terms of any kind of military harm to Ukraine or [that he] knows any higher-ups in Russia. He's a young guy who's really politically motivated and has peace in his heart.

"It's clear that the Zelensky government is using a hard line in Ukraine to shut down everything and calling it propaganda, which is just like during the

world wars when they would shut things down. It is military rule in Ukraine, and it's crushing freedom of speech. It feels like Ukraine is just a completely lawless place.

"In terms of what Bogdan has done, I was thinking of Julian Assange and what happened to him for his so-called crimes – leaking secret information and horrific war crimes. For just writing six articles, Bogdan has been thrown in jail for 15 years. This shows how important they are. And it's really worrying that could happen to anyone just writing what they think publicly online.

"I really fear that Bogdan could be trapped in prison for eternity. And it's one of those things, isn't it, where you just worry for his mental health and life just because he's trying to bring peace in Russia and Ukraine, and now he's been punished for it."

"The other day I saw something about Ukraine and public polls on whether they like Zelensky or whether they should be continuing this war, and it has completely reversed now. So, the ordinary public there are going against what's happening."

SEP Supporter Gnaani told the WSWs, "The charges against Bogdan and the court ruling against him expose the repression directed against class struggle. It must be seen as a capitalist court ruling designed to prevent working-class unity, crush efforts to awaken their consciousness, and intimidate them. We must view this verdict as a threat to the working class. We must also view this as a threat directed at the WSWs."

He explained, "The 15-year jail sentence handed down to Bogdan is connected with WSWs. Bogdan's articles contributed to this site, not only to stimulate the critical thinking of the Ukrainian working class, but also to expose the underlying context of the war in Ukraine. WSWs is a platform dedicated to uniting the world working class, expanding their socialist consciousness, and exposing the preparations for a third world war by global powers plundering resources."

Gnaani warned, "The arrests and state repression currently faced by those engaging in anti-war protests in Ukraine must be recognised as a serious threat. In particular, this serves as a warning to members of socialist organisations and all those protesting against the war there. This should not be viewed as an isolated incident, but as a precedent of what could happen to anyone who opposes war in the future."



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact