

Slava? No, Not Glory But Shame on Ukraine!

By [Stephen Karganovic](#)

Global Research, May 15, 2023

Region: [Europe](#), [Russia and FSU](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

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There is virtually no chance that the Nazi regime in Kiev will feel either shame or remorse for what it has just done. That however does not alter the obligation of decent people everywhere to speak up and brand it with the shame it abundantly deserves.

Chilean-American journalist **Gonzalo Lira**, has been a thorn in the Kiev junta's flesh for a long time. On May 1, the [Ukrainian secret police arrested him again](#) in Harkov, where Lira, a long-time resident of Ukraine, has been living for several years. From the beginning of the Special Military Operation in late February 2022, Lira has been using his internet bully pulpit to convey to a global audience his take on the Ukrainian conflict. After gaining several hundred thousand followers world-wide with his provocative reporting and commentary from the belly of the beast, the beast has apparently decided that it has had enough.

Lira was arrested in a morning raid by police and soldiers in his Harkov apartment. Ukrainian junta media has confirmed the arrest. Over a week later, however, there is still no word about where he is being held, under what conditions, and whether he has access to consular support and other forms of human rights protection to which he is entitled.

The little information there is about the charges against Lira is mostly unofficial and it consists mainly of reports in the Ukrainian media. According to a publication identified as ["The New voice of Ukraine" of 5 May 2023](#), the charges revolve around allegations of "supporting Russian occupation and valorizing [sic] Moscow's apparent war crimes during the war." In addition, Lira is being accused of "attempts to discredit Ukraine's highest military and political leadership."

In "democratic" Western countries, until recently anyway, nebulous charges of this nature would have been automatically nullified by constitutional free speech guarantees. The general public would have reacted to them with a shrug and the question: "So what?" In practical terms, the situation today is somewhat different, of course. Fundamental values

have indeed been systematically and successfully eviscerated, but the normative framework which the collective West invokes whenever that suits its purposes technically still remains in effect.

Western governments, “human rights” NGOs, and journalistic colleagues have ignored Gonzalo Lira’s plight and refused to make inquiries about his condition or voice criticism of the way he has been treated. For them, it is sufficient that he has not been a team player and that his boldly diverse reporting constituted a radical threat to the mendacious Ukraine war narrative they all unanimously support, if for no other reason than because their jobs and perquisites entirely depend on it.

The first arrest and week-long disappearance of Gonzalo Lira in the summer of last year presumably was arranged for intimidation purposes. Subsequently, he was released and some sort of court case was opened against him, but without any discernible movement since then. This time round, according to Alex Christoforou, Lira’s arrest and disappearance is a matter of much more serious concern.

As [Christoforou points out](#), in present-day Ukraine physical liquidation of non-conformist journalists is commonplace and the steadily deteriorating military situation makes it incumbent upon the insecure regime to finally eliminate from the public sphere the dissonant journalist whose reporting contradicts its own and its Western sponsors’ war narrative. Additionally, in light of impending military operations whose outcome is uncertain, it is advisable from the regime’s standpoint to use the persecution of Lira as a warning to any honest and professional journalists that may remain. The message is that departure from approved content will not be tolerated.

The arrest and disappearance of Gonzalo Lira has been passed over in complicit silence by mainstream Western media. Lira is not popular in those circles because his courageous, on the spot journalism puts all of them to shame by exposing their corrupt and subservient relationship to political power centres. So far, this important event has been noted and alarms have been sounded mainly by independent journalists such as [Jackson Hinkle](#) and [Brian Berletic, who also has made mincemeat of Ukrainian allegations against Lira](#).

Lira’s arrest seems also to have gone unnoticed by the diplomatic establishments of Chile and the United States, the two countries whose citizenship he holds and who have the primary duty to come to his assistance. Considering the scandalous withdrawal of consular support from [Spanish journalist Pablo Gonzales](#), who has been languishing in a Polish prison for over a year on similarly trumped up charges, the conspicuous lack of interest in Lira is unsurprising. Apart from being utterly immoral, in both Gonzales’ and Lira’s case this neglect is an impermissible breach of those countries’ legal obligation to protect their own citizens and to provide the assistance and support to which under their own laws and the provisions of the Vienna Convention both prisoners are unequivocally entitled.

Visiting the [Amnesty International website](#) and typing in “GONZALO LIRA” yields the following futile result: “[NO RESULTS FOUND — Sorry, we didn’t find any results for gonzalo lira](#).” Practically abandoned by his professional peers, ignored by phoney human rights advocates, and thrown under the bus by the governments which should be lodging demarches on his behalf, the only remaining hope Gonzalo Lira has, not just for freedom but for physical survival, is a mobilisation of concerned people world-wide to shame, if possible, the Nazi junta into releasing him from their clutches.

After all, even the junta's role model Hitler considered it advantageous during the Berlin Olympics to temporarily ease up on the Jews, to reduce embarrassment to his criminal regime.

This is an appeal to readers and all men of good will everywhere to stand up for a genuine hero who is bravely risking everything, including his personal safety, to affirm freedom of speech and journalistic integrity under the most challenging circumstances.

The governments that are not doing their job should be strongly admonished by their own citizens to demand of the Ukrainian authorities the unconditional release of prisoner Gonzalo Lira, who is being held in Ukrainian secret police dungeons. Lira is a genuine hero and prisoner of conscience, in sharp contrast to the fake PR celebrities that those governments and their institutions always readily champion. Decent people everywhere expect action to free Gonzalo Lira and to squash the nonsensical charges against him. The diplomatic establishments of the countries whose citizenship Gonzalo Lira holds have the primary responsibility to use all means at their disposal to secure his freedom and safety.

They must immediately end their cowardly silence and publicly acknowledge that in Ukraine independent journalist Gonzalo Lira is incarcerated for actions that under their own laws would be regarded as protected speech. And they must publicly and vigorously condemn the outrageous conduct of their Ukrainian minions, who also happen to be Gonzalo Lira's lawless tormentors.

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Stephen Karganovic is president of "[Srebrenica Historical Project](#)," an NGO registered in the Netherlands to investigate the factual matrix and background of events that took place in Srebrenica in July of 1995. He is a regular contributor to Global Research.

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