

# Letters on the California recall election

17 September 2003

*The following is a selection of letters received by the World Socialist Web Site criticizing the Socialist Equality Party's call for a "no" vote on the recall of California Governor Gray Davis. See "Why the SEP is opposing the California recall" for a reply by Jerry Isaacs.*

Dear Comrades,

I'm pleased to hear that John Burton will be a socialist candidate on the Oct. ballot, opposing the capitalist candidates, major and minor. I understand that two other socialist organizations are also fielding candidates. Hopefully, with three socialist candidates, the basic socialist message will reach and interest some voters and nonvoters alike.

I do have one reservation. It's clear that many in the labor movement interpret a "no" vote on the recall, as a vote for Governor Davis. Art Pulaski, head of the state AFL-CIO, according to press reports, recently and repeatedly called Davis "the best governor in 100 years." Partly for that reason, I plan to vote "yes" on the recall. I certainly, to paraphrase Eugene Debs, don't want to vote for what I don't want and wind up getting it.

Again, I'm pleased that you have the resources to challenge the status quo, and wish you the best.

In Solidarity,

BM

Dear Editor:

I believe it is a mistake on the part of Socialist Equality Party to present an ambiguous election plan—on the one hand to support the present Democratic governor, on the other not to support his reelection but rather to support a socialist candidate. It may confuse supporters of John Christopher Burton. History is full of such mistakes by Marxists at different occasions in different countries. They always recognized their mistakes after missing the opportunity.

While, the SEP believes, as its program states, that the Democrats are equally responsible for the

hegemonic designs of the US at an international level and the suppression of working peoples' rights within US, there is no point to support a wrong against a wrong.

The SEP should give a clear call for an alternate.

Regards,

TL

Since you are the most qualified candidate on the ballot, why do you call for a "no" vote on the recall? Get Davis out and you in!

If the SEP were a mass workers party, would your line be different (that is, if you had a chance of winning)?

The recall is profound evidence of the decay of capitalism: The system is being destabilized by one wing of the bourgeoisie while the other wing acts like deer caught in the headlights. This is because the Republican party is by far the more dynamic and astute in dealing with the decay of the system; it is why they have become the majority party among the less than 50 percent of the population that votes (and, after all, that is how power is divided among the two parties of capitalism in the realm of politics) AND control all three branches of the federal government.

Since you cannot win the election for governor (if you could you should be for the recall), you should at least have a "defeatist" stand towards the two parties of American capitalism and have NO position on the recall.

Your NO on the recall puts you in the same camp as social democrats and the Stalinist CP in giving back-handed support to the Democrats—a bourgeois party of war and racism just like the Republicans. This not a Trotskyist position but a reformist one. It is no different than that of the Democrat Bustamante except you call for a vote for yourself and not the lieutenant governor.

PR

Berkeley, Calif.

Good afternoon Mr. John Burton,

My question to you: Why are you against the recall for reasons other than Gray Davis's sorry job of leading the state of California? You quote reasons against the recall that have nothing to do with why the voters of California are voting to remove Gray Davis. Gray Davis has been a complete vegetable in managing the state of California. That has been the sole reason why the voters have been given the opportunity to vote Davis out of office. Although Republican leaders are credited for initiating the recall, the fact is that the majority of California voters want Davis removed.

Thank you for your attention and your returned comments are appreciated.

DF



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