

More letters denouncing Democrats' effort to bar SEP candidate from Illinois ballot

5 July 2004

The following letters were sent to Mark Shelden, the County Clerk in Champaign, Illinois, to protest the efforts of the state and local Democratic Party to exclude the Socialist Equality Party and its state legislative candidate, Thomas Mackaman, from the ballot in the November elections. [See "Letters from around the world denounce Democrats' effort to bar SEP candidate from Illinois ballot" , "Democrats move to keep SEP candidate off Illinois ballot" and "Stop the Democratic Party's attack on third-party campaigns! Place SEP candidate Tom Mackaman on the ballot in Illinois!" .]

The effort to exclude the SEP from the ballot is part of a nationwide effort by the Democrats to stifle any campaign that opposes the bipartisan policies of militarism and the attack on the democratic rights and living standards of working people. We urge all those who oppose the war and who are angered by the pro-war politics and antidemocratic methods of Kerry and the Democrats to add their voices of protest against the attempt to exclude antiwar candidates from the November election. Send emails of protest to Champaign County Clerk Mark Shelden's office at: mail@champaigncountyclerk.com

Please send copies to the World Socialist Web Site at editor@wsws.org

Mr. Mark Shelden:

Please be advised of my personal support for the position taken by the Socialist Equality Party on its web site in regard to the matter of the proposed candidacy of Mr. Tom Mackaman for the elected office of Illinois State Rep. 103rd District. The actions of your office are ill advised and hearken back to the dark days of Cook County politics and all that was/is involved therein. The Socialist Equality Party is a nationally and internationally based organization capable at the present time of bringing the injustice of this situation to the attention of a worldwide daily readership. Thank you for any consideration that you can give in this matter.

Charles S. Knause

Ormond Beach, Florida

2 July 2004

I am writing in response to your attempt to question the legitimacy of the signatures for Tom Mackaman of the SEP.

If there are reasonable concerns, then efforts to verify the signatures should be conducted. However, the minutiae and unimportant details which are extremely common seem to be little more than political bullying.

Please help keep democracy alive by allowing a third party candidate.

Thank you,

Marc Caswell

Gainesville, Florida

2 July 2004

Dear Champaign County Election Board,

I am writing to encourage you to reject the antidemocratic efforts of the Illinois Democratic Party to prevent Socialist Equality Party congressional candidate Tom Mackaman from appearing on the ballot in the 103rd District of the Illinois House of Representatives. The Democrats have challenged Mr. Mackaman's nominating petitions on the grounds of ludicrous technicalities, such as the way the names of signatories are printed. I do not wish to go into detail here, but I would urge you to seriously consider the fundamental principles of democracy when you are making your decision in this case.

Sincerely,

Matthew Goggin

Palmerston North, New Zealand

2 July 2004

Dear Mr. Sheldon,

I am outraged by the attempt of antidemocratic forces to prevent the Socialist Equality Party's candidate, Tom Mackaman, from appearing on your ballot. The Bush regime seized power in 2000 by carrying out a two-prong assault on the fundamental democratic right to vote: (1) It made a concerted effort to prevent people from voting by "challenging" voters qualifications, and (2) It made a concerted effort to "challenge" the counting of the votes of those who were able to vote. The Democratic Party rather than opposing this assault on the right to vote, instead has openly embraced it. It is this methodology that is currently being expressed in its "challenging" of Mackaman's ballot status as well as that of countless "challenges" it has initiated against other third party candidates in Illinois and throughout the country.

It is your duty and obligation as the Champaign County Clerk to ensure that all candidates can run for office, that all voters have the opportunity to freely exercise their right to vote for the candidate of their choice, and that the votes of all voters will be counted. These basic democratic principles are clearly in conflict with the policies of the Republican and Democratic Parties. I as well as many others await to see which perspective you will ultimately support.

Sincerely,

Alan Gelfand, public defender

2 July 2004

Mr. Sheldon:

I urge you to reject the effort of the Democratic Party to keep the SEP candidate for State Representative, Tom Mackaman, off the November ballot.

This is a blatant and undemocratic attempt to suppress lawful political participation that must be roundly rejected.

Thank you,
Stuart Zimny
2 July 2004

Dear Sirs,

For more than a year now we have been constantly barraged by governments and the media on both sides of the Atlantic that the war against Iraq was about defending democratic rights, and freeing the Iraqi people from a tyrant. How ironic it is that in "the land of the free," just these rights are in danger of being denied and of a tyrannical, unelected president exercising dictatorial powers.

Defend democratic rights. Reject Democratic Party attempts to reduce the elections to "main" party contestants. Let the SEP candidate Mackaman stand in Illinois!

John Upton
2 July 2004

Dear Champaign County Clerk Mark Shelden,

I am deeply outraged at the ongoing attempts to erode democracy in this country, this time taking place in Illinois. I am writing to demand that the Champaign County Election Board reject the efforts of the Democratic Party to keep the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) candidate off the ballot. This is anti-Democratic, and the Champaign County Election Board should not, and *can* not, tolerate it.

Sincerely,
Michael de Socio
2 July 2004

Dear Sir or Madam:

America is going through a unique political phase at this moment.

Right now, our political perspective has no historical parallel with which to easily base our political decisions upon, the American electorate must decide for her own, whether we deserve all of the rights as designated us by the Constitution of the United States of America, whether citizens of other countries have the rights of OUR Constitution as fundamental rights, and whether democracy should be allowed to tend to her own way, essentially whether the electorate may take care of herself or does she need a nanny? I say nay, as I'm sure you do as well.

That said, you have a duty as an employee of the electorate to think outside of the box, if you will, and recognize the inherent right of any individual to run for office, unobstructed from the bureaucracy of a particular government, of any persuasion, of any color, of any particular intention, and allow the American people, the electorate, to decide its ultimate fate, she being the only one able.

Allow Tom Mackaman (SEP) his constitutionally recognized right to run for office. Do not limit democracy by requiring candidates (citizens) follow some arbitrary procedure to exercise rights that Jefferson recognized as fundamental to government,

that to deny individuals the right to run for office and the people to proper representation is to treat all parties involved as animal. That it is human to demand and require democracy.

Do not inhibit social change,
Charles Groce
Richmond, Kentucky
3 July 2004

Dear sir,

I believe the Democrats are quite unjust in trying to bar the SEP from the Illinois ballot. This action has been observed worldwide as very undemocratic.

Ronald T. Gannon
Australia
3 July 2004

By rejecting the Democratic Party's ridiculous efforts to block the SEP candidacy you will be supporting the right of the voter to participate in our government. True democracy demands equal access to do so.

Cynthia Solares
Little Rock, Arkansas
Clerk Mark Sheldon,

I have learned that SEP candidate Tom Mackaman has had his petitions in your district challenged by two paid Democratic Party officials. The Democratic Party actions are based on technicalities, such as whether the signature is close enough to the one on file in your office. Such technicalities should not be taken seriously, since one's signature can vary from day to day, and signing one's name on a petition board can turn out very differently than signing one's name on a voter registration card.

The Democratic Party officials are not protecting the democratic process with this challenge. They are trying to quash it. The last thing they want is a genuine debate on the issues of the Iraq war and the economy, which the SEP promises to raise in the election, no matter how few or how many votes we may get.

I call on you as the Town Clerk to throw out this bogus challenge and restore the ballot status of Mr. Mackaman, who filed over 2,000 signatures to get on the ballot as an independent candidate.

Yours very truly,
Jamie Baker
Brooklyn, New York



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact