Letters continue to condemn Democrats' effort to bar SEP candidate from Illinois ballot

7 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 anti-democratic methods of Kerry and the Democrats to add their voices of protest against the attempt to exclude anti-war candidates from the November election. Send e-mails 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.

Dear Clerk:

It is an outrage that the petition of Tom Mackaman for ballot status has been challenged by functionaries of the Illinois Democratic Party, a political party which apparently should be renamed the Anti-democracy Party. I trust that you will be judicious in your job and have a bias for inclusion rather than exclusion.

Sincerely,

Don Mackaman, Jr.

Ely, Minnesota

6 July 2004

Dear Mr. Shelden:

Please reject the Democratic Party's efforts to derail the third-party candidacy of Tom Mackaman, who is running for the Illinois House seat in the 103rd District.

The Democratic Party has recently filed "an objection" to the petitions submitted by SEP candidate Tom Mackaman to get on the November ballot. Mackaman has many more than the minimum required signatures, as required by state law.

The Democratic Party's attempt to keep Mr. Mackaman from running for the Illinois House is blatantly un-constitutional and un-democratic and represents a slide into totalitarianism. Third parties are not only legal but ESSENTIAL and NECESSARY, particularly when the major parties both represent a similar political philosophy.

The Socialist Equality Party represents a return to government by the people, of the people and for the people, but the Democratic Party is seeking to suppress their candidate. What would Thomas Jefferson do?

Depending on your integrity and sense of fair play,

Rhea Worrell

FREE ELECTIONS FOR ILLINOIS!

6 July 2004

Dear Sir:

I urge you to reject the challenge to the ballot status of Tom Mackaman, Socialist Equality Party candidate for State Representative.

The Democratic Party has, through a series of cringing capitulations, adopted the program of the Republican right from the impeachment of Clinton and theft of the 2000 election to the regressive economic program epitomized by the Bush tax cuts, to ultimately embracing the criminal war on Iraq. Such a profoundly unpopular policy requires the ruthless suppression of dissent. This is why the Democrats have challenged Mackaman.

Their legal arguments simply underscore the reactionary political nature of their claim. They say, for example, addresses are incomplete. But the addresses on petitions are written to identify the signers, not to satisfy the post office. Or they base their claim on lies, as in their assertion that sheets were not duly notarized.

These cowardly challengers have unwittingly proved the urgency of Mackaman's challenge to the two-party system and the truth of the program of the SEP.

Tim Nichols

Southfield, Michigan

6 July 2004

Dear County Clerk's Office, Champaign, Illinois,

I am writing to state my objection to the Democrat Party's attempt to keep the SEP candidate for state representative, Tom Mackaman, off the November ballot. As a Democrat Party member I find such behavior bad news for democracy and bad news for our party's credibility.

The Democrat Party here appears to be trying to play with the rules by making a case for disqualification of the SEP candidate according to reasons that sound suspiciously trivial or groundless. It is hard to believe, as the Objector's Petition claims, that over half of the signatures collected are invalid. The Democratic Party here appears to be pursuing a path that resembles the shameful actions in Florida during the last presidential election (the unjustified disqualification of voter names), a scandal which was not rectified in time, resulting in a major discrediting of our electoral system.

Please know that your actions on behalf of access to democratic processes as defined by our constitution will be applauded by defenders of democracy regardless of their political stripe.

Yours very truly,

Tracy Lord

6 July 2004

As a loyal Democrat who votes straight Democrat and who did in Illinois before moving to New Orleans, please allow Tom Mackaman on

© World Socialist Web Site

your local ballot in his attempted run for the state legislature. Don't act like Katherine Harris!

Jack Whorton,
New Orleans
6 July 2004

Hi:

I think the Republican and Democratic parties, through capitalism, serve to benefit a relative few, to the detriment of ordinary working people.

In the campaign process, I find attempts to degrade candidates through negative campaign advertisements (though quite popular) to be distasteful. Similarly, in election processes, I find attempts to restrict access by potential candidates to the election process to be distasteful and undemocratic.

Therefore , I hope you will reconsider your current restriction of alternative candidates, such as the SEPs Thomas Mackaman.

I intend to point out to as many fellow citizens as I can how the Republican and Democratic parties restrict access of potential candidates to election processes. Furthermore, I will urge them to consider how this undemocratic practice, though only one part in the whole represented by my opening statement, nonetheless clearly illustrates the overall intent and general purpose of these parties.

Thanks,
Pete Liebl
5 July 2004

To Champaign County Clerk Mark Shelden:

I strongly oppose the attempt to stop the SEP candidate Tom Mackaman from participating in the coming elections for state representative in Illinois. The rejection of more then half of 2,032 signatures is an attack on the democratic rights of the working people not only in Illinois or the US, but also all the working people in the world. The Bush administration has stolen the elections in 2000 and then organized an illegal war against the Afghan and Iraqi people backed up by the Democratic Party. Both business parties in the US bring the whole world to edge of a new world war, poverty and the danger of destruction for the human race. So the working class in the world has to take up responsibility to stop the attack on the SEP.

Mackaman and the SEP want to debate these essential questions in the coming elections, which the Democratic Party doesn't want. So, I demand again and urge you to give the right to Mackaman that he is able to participate in the coming elections.

Sincerely,
Andy Niklaus
Berlin
5 July 2004

Dear Mr. Shelden,

As a fellow citizen and concerned voter, I must bring to your immediate attention my vehement opposition to the Democratic Party's recent undemocratic and hypocritical challenge to Tom Mackaman's 2,032 signatures for ballot status as an independent candidate for the 103rd District of the Illinois House of Representatives.

It is a well-established fact that throughout our nation, including the states of Illinois and California, the Democratic and Republican parties consistently engage in legalistic battles to prevent the American people from hearing opposing political platforms and issues.

Given that the two parties have literally written the rules that dictate the legalities of our electoral process, it is not surprising that they both engage in a systematic campaign to prohibit opposing points of view from being heard. Indeed, the two parties have been very successful at discouraging voters, when we remember that in the last presidential election nearly 65 percent of the eligible electorate chose neither to register nor to vote for any candidate. This figure in itself tells us much about the two-party straitjacket that has embittered any real taste of political liberty.

More than 2,000 people in the Champaign-Urbana area have signed petitions to give Tom Mackaman an opportunity to have his policy vision shared within the context of democratic debate. The so-called Democratic Party has chosen not to legitimately campaign for its own vision, but to squelch opposition candidates from small, independent parties before the people have a chance to make up their own minds.

For the sake of fairness and decency, I strongly urge you and your colleagues to reject this backhanded attempt to silence alternative political views. It would seem by its tactics that the Democratic Party favors the politics of bullying rather than the honest, transparent and legitimate discussion of our political priorities.

Thank you for your time and able attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,
Donald J. Donato
Sacramento, California
6 July 2004

Dear county clerk:

Allow Tom Mackaman on the ballot. This is a democracy, remember?

Regards,
Richard Ward
5 July 2004

Dear Mr. Shelden,

I am writing in support of a fair consideration of Tom Mackaman's petition to be on the ballot for election to state representative. The Democratic Party, with which I tend to sympathize, should establish its superiority on the basis of ideas and good policies, not on the unfair exclusion of third-party candidates based on technicalities.

Please realize your responsibility in securing democracy in this country and let the voters decide whom they want to vote for.

Sincerely,
Giunia Gatta
5 July 2004

Dear Fellow Citizens,

I and many others like me are fed up with the unrelenting attempts by Republicans and Democrats to effectively disenfranchise large numbers of voters by using dubious legal tactics to stall and deflect third-party candidates from seeking ballot status all over our nation. This is happening in your state district this year, where there are currently attempts to prevent Tom Mackaman from obtaining ballot status for the Illinois House. This is not an issue solely for the voters of your district, but rather an issue that calls for national attention. I ask you to please consider Mr. Mackaman's application in full fairness.

Jason Willis
4 July 2004

Dear Mr. Shelden:

I am informed through the *World Socialist Web Site* of an attempt by Democratic Party operatives to bar Tom Mackaman from appearing on the ballot in Illinois as a candidate of the Socialist Equality Party.

I found many parts of the article highly disturbing. But let me cite one paragraph as an example.

"The objection makes wholesale fabrications, claiming there are 'sheets which bear a circulator's affidavit which is not sworn before a notary public or other appropriate officer. Every signature on the sheet therefore is not valid.' In fact, all 105 sheets of signatures were signed by the circulators and notarized."

The article goes on to charge: "The Objector's Petition was filed by Geraldine Parr, the current treasurer and former chair of the Champaign County Democratic Party."

Mr. Shelden. Either the *World Socialist Web Site* is lying or the Democratic Party is lying. I will confess that when it comes to the truth, I place more confidence in the *World Socialist Web Site* than the Democratic Party.

© World Socialist Web Site

Knowing something about the two-party system, I suspect that you will come under pressure to cave in to the Democratic Party. But it is your duty to ascertain the truth in this matter. I hope I don't need to point out to you that the United States is sliding down the slope towards authoritarian rule, and lies are playing a big part in it. The 2000 elections, the Patriot Act, Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib, mass detentions without recourse to justice.... And an illegal war based on lies.

The question is, will you contribute to this slide towards authoritarianism or will you do the correct thing and determine the truth and stand by it?

Respectfully,
Cory Johnson
Minneapolis
5 July 2004

Dear Mr. Shelden,

I wholeheartedly support the right of the SEP's candidate, Tom Mackaman, to appear on the upcoming Illinois congressional ballot. An objective investigation will demonstrate that the Socialist Equality Party carefully followed the lawful procedures necessary to place Mr. Mackaman's name on the ballot. The wholesale challenges used by Ms. Parr of the Champaign County Democratic Party to try to exclude his candidacy from the voting process harken back to similar tactics of the Florida Republican establishment in the 2000 national elections, whereby entire groups of voters were targeted because their selections were not appreciated. Evidently the shoe is now on the other foot. The charge that some letters of some signatures are printed rather than written is particularly ludicrous. My wife's signature has contained printed letters since she first learned to write, she has registered to vote in several different locations in different states, and her signature has never been challenged. If Ms. Parr and her associates from the County Democratic Party are fearful of losing votes to a serious Socialist candidate for Congress, I think their proper response would be to examine their party's record on the war in Iraq and other vital questions facing us rather than falsely challenging Mr. Mackaman's right to run for office.

Please reject this transparent attempt to subvert democratic rights. I doubt, Mr. Shelden, you would want your office associated in the public mind with the notorious Florida electoral debacle.

Thank you,
John Brightwell
Prescott, Arizona
5 July 2004

I demand that your office place Tom Mackaman on the ballot as a candidate for the Illinois House of Representatives. Tom Mackaman has met all of the State of Illinois antidemocratic requirements. The attempt by your office and Geraldine Parr, former chair of the Champaign County Democratic Party, to exclude other candidates is an assault on the democratic rights of all people in the US.

Jim Lawrence,
Auto worker and SEP 2004 vice presidential candidate
Dayton, Ohio
5 July 2004

We are not living in a democracy. We cannot expect our voices to be heard if we try to establish new channels. There are only two channels: Democrats and Republicans. Our SEP candidates have to work through the Democratic Party. Not alone as did Perot and Nader. It's doomed to be a failure. The big problem is that 80%-90% of our Democratic candidates are as corrupt as the Republicans. They are all in need of support from Big Money. And that's what is wrong. Nobody, no business entity, no organization that does not have the right to vote should in a pure democracy have the right to influence the outcome of the people's voting procedure. Business has no right to free speech. That is a misunderstanding. We the people can stop any business from speaking out about anything that is against the good of the people. No congressmen and no senators want to admit that they are dependent of the will of BIG Business. None of them wants to go against the interest of Big Business. That's what is wrong. That is what the SEP has to stop. And it can only be done through the Democratic Party!

Old mistakes by lawmakers have to be corrected.

Regards,
Ulf Lidbeck
Cape Cod, Mass.
4 July 2004

Mr. Shelden,

Voters like me are aware that the Democrats are hard at work trying to eliminate third-party candidates from appearing on ballots through out the US. We are demanding that you reject/ignore the effort of the Democratic Party to keep third-party candidates off the ballot. It's their constitutional right to contend with the two-party duopoly.

Elliot Saunders
American Citizen/Truth Commission Investigator
5 July 2004

Dear Mr. Shelden,

Tomorrow you will be making a big decision. Tomorrow you will decide whether the Socialist Equality Party will be placed on the Illinois ballot. It may not feel like it but you will be the centre of attention for thousands and thousands of people in America and around the world.

You will be making your decision two days after celebrating the Declaration of Independence with its ideals of equality and inalienable rights. The Democrats are attempting, using the flimsiest of reasons, to prevent Mr. Mackaman from standing as state representative and offering an alternative to the two-party system in the US. It is but the latest example of the glaring difference between political reality and the ideals represented by July Fourth.

Keep alive the spirit of the Declaration!
Let the people decide!
Place the SEP on the ballot!
Paul Stickley,
London, England
5 July 2004

Mr. Mark Shelden,

I am from a third-world country where we are bombarded with US virtues of democracy and are made to believe that really America is a democracy, but the attempts by the Democrats and Republicans to deny the candidacy of Mackaman, a SEP candidate, from listing on the ballot smacks of undemocratic practices that will be scorned and chided if seen to occur in any other country.

If the US is a true democracy, do not allow these bourgeois parties to dictate to your office who should list on the ballot box and who should not. It is embarrassing to us to see such dirty tricks being played in the US. DEMOCRACY DEMANDS THAT THE MASSES HAVE THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE FROM AS MANY CANDIDATES AND PARTIES AS THEY WISH. I hope Mackaman would stand in the forthcoming elections and those that like what he stands for will be able to vote because that is their right.

Fikile Dube.
Cape Town, South Africa
4 July 2004

Dear Sir,

I protest in the strongest terms against the attempt by the so-called Democratic Party to exclude Mr. Mackaman, the candidate of the Socialist Equality Party, from the ballot in the 103rd District.

Mackaman's campaign, in solidarity with the global work of the Fourth International, seeks to mobilise the workers of the world against the predatory and illegal war of colonialist plunder being waged by the Bush

© World Socialist Web Site

administration in Iraq. Both the main parties of the ruling establishment, Democratic and Republican, fully support this disastrous war. Were the efforts of the Democrats to succeed in excluding Mackaman from the ballot, the vast majority of workers who oppose this rotten war and its perpetrators in the White House would be deprived of a legitimate voice.

It is imperative that your office reject the Democrats' appeal out of hand.

Yours faithfully,
Adrian Lewis, musician
Sydney, Australia
5 July 2004

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact

© World Socialist Web Site