

More letters oppose Democrats' attempt to bar SEP candidate from Illinois ballot

16 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: A travesty of democracy in Illinois Democrats conspire against voters in bid to remove SEP from ballot]

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

Sirs,

Isn't it about time to call a halt to this illegal, obstructionist attempt by the misnamed Democratic Party to keep SEP and Green presidential candidates off the ballot? The use of public employees for partisan political purposes, as practiced by the Democratic Party in this case, is clearly illegal, as is their unevidenced, unsupported objection to SEP petition signatures. Such deception is a felony and charges should be brought against the Democratic Party representatives responsible.

Political thuggery adds nothing to claims made by the US ruling elite to be spreading "democracy" and "freedom" across the globe. Further, it takes place in a situation in which the Republican Party are preparing

the ground to postpone the presidential election on the spurious grounds of a terrorist threat to the elections.

Please, sort your own house out before you even think about anybody else's.

R. Boulting-Vaughan

London, UK

13 July 2004

Mark Shelden, County Clerk:

After reading the details of the manner by which signatures of voters supporting the Socialist Equality Party candidate for the state legislature in the Illinois' 103rd District, Tom Mackaman, are being wantonly and frivolously facing objection in examination, I feel it necessary to write to you for a second time. Under your watch, the electoral system is being turned into a circus. The two-party system in this country has long been a club designed to make it difficult for the citizenry to have a choice for new political parties.

Now, as news is released that the government under George W. Bush is considering the possibility of postponing elections, it seems that the Democratic Party in the Champaign-Urbana area is as willing to manipulate elections. As in the case of Florida during the 2000 presidential election, the Democrats are proving that they fear social conditions and opposition to the war against Iraq that may upset their rule, more than they value basic democratic rights. As long as you allow this malicious mockery of election law to continue, you implicate yourself in this attack on the rights of the voting public. Please uphold the right of Tom Mackaman to run for office now.

Sincerely,

Harvey Lichtman, New York, New York

13 July 2004

To the Champaign County Clerk,

I write with great revulsion at the undemocratic attempt by the Democratic Party to disallow the

signatures of legitimate Illinois votes on petitions for SEP candidate Tom Mackaman. Apparently all alternative parties to the Democrats and Republicans are subject to these obstructionist tactics, no matter how relatively few votes they may receive, their size, or wealth. One shortsighted rationale for omitting socialist and other third parties from public debates has been that they were not “electable candidates”; the established parties fear open debate of serious issues and now even a ballot line without a capitalist stooge on it.

Please reject these false petition challenges and all such dubious challenges to alternative candidates. Place Tom Mackaman on the ballot.

Anthony Bellissimo
13 July 2004

Dear Sir:

If the article “Illinois Democrats disenfranchise voters to bar SEP from ballot” (posted at <http://wsws.org/articles/2004/jul2004/illi-j13.shtml>) is an accurate description of what transpired in your office on Monday, you should consider starting legal action against those representatives of the Democratic Party who were involved.

I would appreciate your comment on the proceedings.

Sincerely,
Joseph Sudol
Newark, Delaware
13 July 2004

To whom it may concern:

After hearing how representatives of the Champaign County Democratic Party have behaved during the review of their bogus objections to voter signatures supporting the presence of Tom Mackaman on the ballot for state representative, I feel compelled to write to your office a second time to urge that you simply throw out their obviously false and likely illegal challenge. The fact that they consistently upheld objections after signature after signature was proved valid is simply disgusting and shows that they care nothing for the citizenship rights of residents of Champaign County. I urge you, end this process now and place Mr. Mackaman on the ballot, where he rightfully belongs.

Sincerely,
Jeff Patten
13 July 2004

Clerk, Champaign County:

As a high school teacher in Illinois, I taught the US and Illinois constitutions for a number of years. I am truly amazed and disheartened that your election officials have attempted to keep Mr. Mackaman, the SEP candidate, off the ballot in your district. Thus those responsible are trampling on both constitutions. This is not Mississippi or Alabama during the days of segregation and the poll tax, but the great state of Illinois, home of Abraham Lincoln. That this could happen in Champaign County, home of the Univ. of Illinois, is even more disgraceful and almost unbelievable.

Vicki Doetsch
Germantown, Illinois
13 July 2004

County Clerk Mark Shelden,

I am a registered Democrat writing in support of SEP candidate Tom Mackaman and his bid to run for state legislator in Illinois’ 103rd District. The Democratic Party’s overt attempt to ban Mackaman’s name from the ballot is an illegal offense not only against registered voters in Illinois, but against democratic principles everywhere, the world over. I believe this year’s elections will mark a turning point, for voters and for the nation alike. With current levels of social and political unrest, the elections will serve as a catalyst for change or an instrument of repression. Or perhaps voters will choose, after all, to preserve the status quo. But in a democratic nation, it is up to voters to decide. By all means, Mr. Shelden, use your influence to uphold the integrity of the American elections process.

Thank you,
Natalie Duncan

Epidemiology, Dept. of Public Health, Indiana University
13 July 2004



To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact