

Socialist Equality Party announces California candidates in midterm elections

Statement of the Socialist Equality Party

3 April 2018

The Socialist Equality Party is running candidates in California for the US midterm congressional elections. The SEP has selected David Moore as its candidate for the US Senate and Kevin Mitchell as its candidate for the US House of Representatives from the 51st Congressional District. Moore and Mitchell will run on a socialist, anti-war and anti-capitalist program in the interests of the working class in California and around the world.

Both Moore and Mitchell have obtained ballot status and will be listed as non-party candidates in the June 5 statewide direct primary election.

David Moore, 31, is a special education teacher in Oakland. He grew up in a farming family in Ventura County. David joined the Socialist Equality Party in 2010 after seeing the enduring impact of the 2008 crisis. As a contributor to the *World Socialist Web Site* he has written extensively on the social crisis and working class struggles, including first-hand coverage of strikes by oil, transit and health care workers.

Kevin Mitchell, 30, studied film at the University of California Riverside and was raised in Southern California. Based in San Diego, he is a writer for the WSWWS and covers issues ranging from immigration to homelessness and the social crisis. He also contributes regularly to articles on film and culture. Kevin joined the Socialist Equality Party in 2007 after having been radicalized by the Iraq War and the SEP's intervention in the 2006 midterm elections.

The SEP campaign will fight to mobilize the working class in California, throughout the US and internationally against the Democrats and Republicans and the ruling class agenda of war, social counterrevolution, censorship and authoritarianism.

The first three months of 2018 have seen an intensification of class conflict around the world. In the United States, the West Virginia teachers' strike has been followed by protests and strikes by teachers in other cities and states. Mass protests by student youth against school shootings have expressed widespread opposition to war and social inequality.

The growing wave of strikes and protests in the US is part of an international development. Since the beginning of the year, major strikes and working class protests have taken place in Britain, Germany, Spain, France, Greece, Eastern Europe, Iran, Tunisia and Kenya.

The growth of the class struggle in the US is bringing workers into conflict with the capitalist ruling elite and its two parties. The Trump administration is waging a war against the working class, carrying out a campaign of terror against immigrants and threatening the nuclear annihilation of North Korea. The Democrats have focused their opposition to Trump not on his tax cuts for the rich, witch-hunting of immigrants, encouragement of police violence, cuts in social programs and gutting of corporate regulations, but on the demand that he escalate US aggression against Russia and expand Washington's intervention in Syria. The unsubstantiated claims of "Russian meddling" in US affairs are being

used to censor the Internet in the biggest attack on free speech since the Second World War.

The Socialist Equality Party candidates will use the campaign to advance the socialist alternative to capitalism and raise the political consciousness of workers and youth. The SEP candidates oppose all forms of national chauvinism, racism and anti-immigrant baiting. They fight to unify all workers in California, the United States and internationally and prepare the working class for the historic struggles that lie ahead.

1. Oppose US militarism! Stop the drive to World War III!

Under the fraudulent cover of the unending "war on terror," now in its 17th year, millions of people—in Iraq, Libya, Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and other countries—have been killed, injured or turned into refugees by the United States since 2001. The Department of Defense recently dropped the "war on terror" pretext and declared that "Great power competition—not terrorism—is now the primary focus of US national security," calling for preparations to wage war against nuclear-armed Russia and China.

The reckless confrontations provoked by US imperialism—from the Syrian civil war to the war-mongering against North Korea and Iran—threaten to spiral out of control and lead to thermonuclear war. The ongoing preparations for global warfare, which would lead to the deaths of billions of people, are cloaked in lies and secrecy. The SEP campaign will alert workers and youth to the immense dangers they face and build the foundation for a powerful anti-war movement.

Far from presenting an anti-war opposition to Trump's bellicose foreign policy, the Democrats have attacked his administration from the right for being "too soft" on Russia. In the current elections they are campaigning as the party of the military-intelligence apparatus, with former CIA and military operatives forming the largest single category of Democratic candidates.

2. Defend democratic rights! Oppose Internet censorship!

The most basic democratic rights are being ripped to shreds. While the Trump administration is seeking to establish an authoritarian and personalist regime around the president, the Democrats—including California Senator Dianne Feinstein—have spearheaded the drive to censor the Internet and criminalize domestic opposition.

The US intelligence agencies have worked hand in glove with tech giants Google, Facebook and Twitter to monitor and censor left-wing content on the Internet. Using the pretext of alleged Russian interference in the 2016 elections, for which no serious evidence has been presented, Google has demoted socialist, anti-war and progressive websites in its search results in order to promote “authoritative sources,” a euphemism for the corporate media promoters of government propaganda. Facebook announced that it was hiring 15,000 censors to combat the efforts of “folks trying to sow division.”

The ruling class is terrified of the growth of social opposition in the working class. A wave of strikes and protests by teachers across the country is being organized at the grassroots level through social media, outside the constraints of the pro-capitalist and anti-working class trade unions.

The Internet must be removed from the private control of billionaires and corporations and brought under the democratic control of the masses of people who rely on it for daily information and communication. The vast government spying apparatus must be dismantled. Genuine democracy is incompatible with an economic system in which all decisions are dictated by a ruling class that controls the giant corporations and banks and demands ever more brutal attacks on the rights and interests of the working class.

3. Put an end to poverty and social inequality!

The SEP fights to abolish a system in which the super-rich exploit the labor of billions of workers around the world. We call for a vast redistribution of wealth to secure basic social rights, including the right to a decent-paying job, quality education, affordable housing, universal health care, a dignified retirement and access to culture.

Ten years after the financial crash of 2008, the disastrous reality of life in California and throughout the US is drastically at odds with the official proclamations of “economic recovery.” While the stock market has soared and California’s economy has grown at nearly double the rate of the US as a whole, the country’s largest state retains the nation’s highest rate of poverty. Soaring housing prices, the rising cost of living and stagnant wages have pushed thousands of working families into hunger and homelessness.

Social inequality today is greater than ever before. The top three billionaires in the US have as much wealth as the bottom 160 million Americans. The rich not only enjoy untold wealth and privilege, they live longer. The life expectancy gap between the richest and poorest Americans averages almost 15 years for men and 10 years for women.

Young people are burdened by more than \$1 trillion in student loan debt, millions of people are being cut off from food stamps, and millions more are seeing their pensions and health care slashed or eliminated. The government spends trillions on a vast military machine and so-called “homeland security” while it allows the country’s public schools and basic infrastructure to collapse.

The SEP advances a program not for the improvement of capitalism, but for its abolition and replacement by socialism. No social problem—health care, housing, pensions, education, infrastructure—can be addressed as long as the bulk of the world’s wealth is squandered to satisfy the unbounded greed of a handful of capitalists. The social rights of the working class cannot be secured without a direct attack on the wealth and power of the capitalist class and the domination of the financial aristocracy over economic life. This means an end to the private ownership of the large corporations and their transformation into publicly owned enterprises under the democratic control of the working class. To

provide quality jobs to all those who need them, the SEP calls for a multitrillion-dollar public works program to rebuild crumbling infrastructure throughout the country. The resources exist to build new hospitals, clinics and schools and hire hundreds of thousands of teachers to ensure smaller class sizes and high-quality education for all.

4. Defend immigrants! Disband ICE and open the borders!

The SEP fights for the right of workers to live and work in any country they wish. We demand the immediate end to Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids as well as the detention and deportation of immigrants.

The world is confronting the greatest refugee crisis since World War II, stoked by a quarter-century of unending war and economic turmoil. Hundreds of workers seeking a better life die every year crossing the US-Mexico border. The US government’s efforts to militarily dominate the world go hand in hand with its efforts to divert social discontent into racist, anti-immigrant channels.

Without any opposition from the Democratic Party and little attention in the corporate media, President Trump and his fascist advisers are quietly carrying out the most dramatic right-wing shift in US immigration policy in a century. They are laying the basis for mass roundups and the brutalization of hundreds of thousands of immigrants in an expanding network of internment camps nationwide.

Ostensibly left-wing Democrats like Bernie Sanders have boosted the Trump administration’s anti-immigrant policies in the name of “border security” and “protecting American jobs.” The agreement of the Democrats to pass a budget that leaves the 800,000 immigrant youth registered under DACA subject to deportation is in line with the Obama administration’s anti-immigrant policies, including a record number of deportations.

The SEP opposes all national prejudice and insists that workers in the US, immigrant and native-born, share a common fight against the bosses and billionaires who exploit them.

5. Break with the Democrats and Republicans! Join the Socialist Equality Party!

The fight for peace, equality and democracy is inseparable from a fight against the capitalist system, which subordinates the global economy to a criminal financial elite. The oligarchs control the political system and both major parties. To defend their rights, workers need their own party.

In California, the Democratic Party has controlled the state legislature for nearly 50 years. The results have been mass poverty, hunger and homelessness for the many and the accumulation of unbelievable wealth for a few. In addition to the largest homeless population in the US, California hosts the largest number of billionaires, 144, with a combined wealth of over \$725 billion.

Dianne Feinstein, the senior Democratic senator from California, has been a constant defender of American militarism and the illegal activities of US spy agencies. Feinstein has been a consistent defender of US imperialism, from the invasion of Iraq and the PATRIOT Act to the border wall with Mexico and NSA spying on US citizens.

In the 51st Congressional District along the US/Mexico border, incumbent Democrat Juan Vargas has postured as a defender of immigrants and the poor. At a town hall, Vargas placed blame on the Trump administration while conveniently ignoring the anti-immigrant

assault under Obama, which saw 3 million deported. Vargas has continually voted for legislation to deepen sanctions on Iran and North Korea as part of the Democratic Party's militarist agenda.

The struggles of workers and youth in the heart of world imperialism are a critical part of the class struggle internationally. What happens in the United States has global implications, and the struggle against the American ruling class can be waged only as an international struggle. Moore and Mitchell will address their campaigns to workers throughout the United States and the world, not just in California.

The SEP campaign fights to unite all sections of the working class in a common struggle. Our campaign rejects all forms of nationalism, chauvinism and bigotry, used by the ruling class to divide workers against each other.

Our campaign is not simply about votes. It is an important part of the fight to build a socialist movement and provide a political alternative to the masses of workers and youth who are looking for a way forward. We urge you to get involved in the campaign. Now is the time to take up an active fight for socialism!



To contact the WSWWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact