

# “We need leaders for the working population”—SEP electoral members support campaign against new election laws

Our reporters  
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The Socialist Equality Party’s campaign against Australia’s anti-democratic electoral laws continues to receive strong support. The new measures, which were rushed through parliament on August 26, are designed to deregister minor parties if they cannot provide a list of 1,500 members to the Australian Electoral Commission by December 2.

The comments by electoral members below—one from an Egyptology PhD student and another by a television producer—point to growing social inequality, attacks on democratic rights and the necessity for a genuine socialist working-class party to be on the ballot in coming federal elections. They urge workers and young people to become SEP electoral members and take forward its campaign.

**Suzanne**, 63, is studying Egyptology at Macquarie University in Sydney. A teacher and experienced university tutor in education and history, she became an SEP electoral member in 2020.

“We need more young people to join and fight,” Suzanne said. “We need people to stand up. The SEP represents the workers of Australia. We have seen this before, where the people rise up and push out what is corrupt...”

“I’m seeing a lot of support going to the very wealthy with ordinary people missing out altogether. The same is happening with older people. Their living conditions are being eroded. We certainly don’t have an even-handed society. We have an elite while the majority are being left behind. That terrifies me,” she said.

“Smaller parties are being squeezed out. Those in the fight against corporate interests and media and industry interests are being silenced,” she continued. “The two

main parties are becoming even more similar. They both represent large corporations. The Labor Party claims it represent workers, but they don’t. They are just Liberals with a different coloured tie...”

“We need a party that pushes us to the front, rather than behind, which is what political leaders are doing now. They have proven themselves to be unworthy. We need leaders for the working population.”

**George** is a Sydney-based television worker and producer. He began supporting the SEP in 2003–04, during the second Gulf War in Iraq.

“At that time, I was desperately clinging to illusions that the Labor Party might take Australia out of the war. I spoke to a member of the party—the late Barry Jobson—who was campaigning at a rally in Belmore Park in Sydney.

“A former railway worker, Barry was able to make me think, for the first time in my life, outside of the dead-end framework of parliamentary politics and persuade me to attend my first ever meeting of the SEP. I’ve been an electoral member ever since,” he said.

George denounced Australia’s new electoral laws and pointed out that they are part of an escalating government assault. “I’ve lost count of the number of pieces of anti-democratic legislation that have been passed, most of them in the name of national security,” he stated.

“One event in 2005, however, sticks out. That year the Greens joined the ALP in rushing through a Howard government bill, criminalising conduct in preparation for ‘a’ rather than ‘the’ terrorist act.

“That small change meant that the Greens endorsed a law allowing an individual to be imprisoned without any evidence of any actual plan, time or place. It

represented a fundamental attack on basic legal rights,” he said.

“Both sides of politics, who have been in bipartisan lockstep throughout the pandemic via the ‘national cabinet,’ are all too aware of the hostility of the working class to their pro-business plans to end lockdowns. They are terrified that this opposition will erupt outside the current political framework. Above all, the laws are aimed at suppressing opposition to the plans being made for war with Australia, on the frontline in a war between China and the US, two nuclear-armed powers.

“These plans are bipartisan, having begun a decade ago with the announcement of the ‘pivot to Asia’ by Barack Obama, and demonstrates that preventing mass murder requires a break with the parties of the political establishment and the building the SEP,” George said.



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