

SEP electoral members describe new laws as a “perverse and undemocratic aspect of the Australian electoral system”

Our reporters

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The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) continues to campaign against anti-democratic electoral laws rushed through the Australian parliament on August 26. Behind the back of the population, the Coalition government and Labor passed laws that force all political parties which do not have members of parliament, to submit a list of 1,500 members by December 2 or face deregistration.

This legislation effects the SEP and 35 other political parties. If deregistered it would mean that candidates of the SEP could not run under the party's name on the ballot paper during elections. The laws are designed to silence dissent, above all left-wing political opposition, to the major capitalist parties.

The electoral members of the SEP continue to voice their support for the campaign. They link the laws to the homicidal reopening agenda, in which children are being forced back to school despite continued high infection numbers. They call on workers and young people to study the history of the party and to join the fight to defeat these laws.

To join the SEP's campaign against the legislation, sign up as an electoral member today.

Richard, 60, is a long-time electoral member of the SEP and is currently on a disability pension. “These electoral laws didn't fall from the sky,” he said, “they are coming from a very weak position. The establishment parties are trying to strengthen themselves. The last election was a failure for the major parties, it only led to the growth of minority parties. They are worried they could have a Marxist party getting in.

“We've reached a new historic, social period” he

continued. “Capitalism has passed its lifespan. People need to understand there is no way back to the past. Take the buying of these nuclear submarines, this is a major shift in military policy. These are offensive weapons.

“Capitalism is one big engine. It needs money for fuel. Historically, whenever it has been in a crisis, capital has never put profit interests aside for the people. We currently have the pandemic to deal with, climate change, social inequality; they have no answers. They can only resolve these great problems through war and keeping profits up.

“The working class is now coming to realise that capitalism must be overthrown. Workers and young people need to study the history of the Russian Revolution with an open mind. I recommend the book *Ten Days that Shook the World*. In it, John Reed is reporting on what is happening on the street during the revolution. This is the story of the working class and capital has tried to bury it.”

When asked what he thought of the pandemic reopening policy Richard said, “Overseas it has been disastrous, and we can only expect a similar result. All they say is wear a mask and keep your distance. The ones that are hit hardest are the poor and minorities.”

He also said of those opposing public health measures and lockdowns, “We have so many measures in society that keep us safe, seatbelts, proper footwear, helmets. Just because I wear a helmet when I ride my bike, doesn't mean I'm a slave with my liberty being taken away! This is all part of the establishment trying to get rid of restrictions and force workers back to producing profits. They want people to catch the virus. This virus is real and deadly, and you need to get vaccinated.”

Stacey, an electoral member of the party since 2007, wrote, “I am an artist who lives in Northern NSW with my partner. For us and our community the drought and fires of 2018 and 19 were a real wake up call.

“I feel the current capitalist profit system offers little hope and fails consistently to provide any concerted focused effort or solutions for solving the global environmental crises. I fear COP26 won’t have any real effect either because if capitalism could have solved this problem it would have done so by now.

“The SEP is the only party that offers what the world desperately needs, which is a global system which doesn’t depend on profits and exploitation of the Earth’s resources and inhabitants, one which can offer hope by encouraging creative thinking, problem solving, research and development of alternative energy innovation, medicine, science and farming methods. A framework to support our collective needs by building communities that would promote wellbeing and secure the future of our youth.”

John, 78, joined as an electoral member in 2009. He met the party around 30 years ago during a campaign in Brunswick, Melbourne. “A number of party people were selling papers there. It drew my attention and I started to read the articles.

“I hadn’t been aware of the SEP. I was under the false impression that all of the left, or let’s say fake-left, political parties were inclined to admire and trust [then Soviet Stalinist leader Mikhail] Gorbachev, without exception. It was a period of time when you could identify the politics of a lot of members of the pseudo-left parties based on their attitude to him.”

Gorbachev was preparing the final betrayal of the Stalinist bureaucracy, the liquidation of the Soviet Union and restoration of capitalism. Pseudo-left groups, such as the predecessor of Socialist Alliance, hailed him as a “reformer” who was supposedly reviving socialism.

“It used to irritate me that anybody could even trust him, John said. “There was nothing secret about what he was doing. If you look at his journals and publications he was plainly and obviously opposed to everything that socialists stand for. And yet everyone was singing his praises. And nobody told me, ‘Look, there is this party that takes a different view, and doesn’t think that perestroika and glasnost [Gorbachev’s policies] are the solution to the problems

experienced by working men and women in their lives.

“So, I was quite intrigued by the Socialist Equality Party, simply for the reason that it wasn’t singing the praises of this Stalinist politician.”

John called the electoral laws a “perverse and undemocratic aspect of the Australian electoral system” and said they are “an attempt to exclude parties that don’t have rich funding and influential supporters.”

He joined as an electoral member to “ensure the SEP has electoral status” and “because I think this party has got it right as far as the social and economic state of things as they are now.”



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