

“The electoral laws are to stop and silence opposition to the reopening” – SEP electoral members oppose Australia’s anti-democratic measures

Our reporters
21 November 2021

The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) is continuing its the campaign against anti-democratic electoral laws, rushed through the Australian parliament on August 26. The laws target 36 political parties, including the SEP, who do not have members of parliament. The parties must submit a list of 1,500 members by December 2, treble the previous number, or face deregistration, which means that their candidates will not be permitted to show the party name on ballot papers.

In addition, the laws grant the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) and, any other previously registered political party with a veto on the use of common party names, such as “communist” or “socialist.”

Electoral members interviewed below oppose the premature and dangerous removal of basic coronavirus safety measures being pursued by Australian governments, in line with governments internationally, which is leading to a global resurgence of the pandemic. Tony, who became an electoral member last year, speaks about the recent online launch of Vadim Rogovin’s *Was There an Alternative? 1923–1927, Trotskyism: A Look Back Through the Years*. The book can be pre-ordered in Australia [here](#).

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

Tony, a retired health sector service worker, became an electoral member last year.

“The electoral laws are really unfair and were introduced because they [the parliamentary parties] want to silence the people. They don’t want any protests, they don’t want anyone going against the major parties, Labor and Liberal-Nationals etc,” he said.

rejection of the SEP’s appeal for ac
time to secure the necessary 1,500 electoral members, he continued, “is because they don’t want the parties to meet the requirements. Lockdowns mean it is impossible to meet the demands in three months. They want to eliminate all opposition. It’s similar to what’s happening in the United States. Look at what Donald Trump tried to do on January 6, to silence all those who went against him.”

There is a crisis in the Australian parliament, Tony said. “I don’t think the Labor Party will win the next election because of how little support they have. They agree with whatever Scott Morrison says and does, they don’t fight or go against them at all.

“For example, the Labor Party supported the nuclear submarines under the AUKUS alliance, which is in preparation for war against China. Why is Australia preparing for war against them? Because America is going to war with them.

“The Australian government has joined every US war: Iraq, Libya, Syria, spending billions of dollars. This is money that could have been spent on essential healthcare, education, other essential services. Instead it has devastated the lives of millions. People haven’t forgotten about this,” he said.

“It’s far too early to open up the economy, open the country up,” Tony said, referring to government claims that everyone had to learn to live with the virus.

“The government does not care if people die or not. The vaccines are not the cure and they will become ineffective after six-eight months. To end COVID we need lockdowns to halt the virus.

“In my family, my sister’s daughter, who is a nurse, got

COVID-19. She can't walk more than 50 metres and it's been six months! She brought it home from the hospital. Her 15-year-old son got it, he used to run 15–20 kilometres a day training for the national races. It's also been six months for him and although that boy can walk, he can't run, nor can he ride his bike. I don't know why people are comparing this to the flu, this does not happen with the flu," Tony said.

Paul, 71 and a retired high school teacher, became an electoral member this year.

"Any party that can raise consciousness about the real issues in Australia—education, health and the civil services, and proper values and policies—then I'm all for it. I've kind of always been a socialist. I was a traditional Labor voter but I'm disappointed, like a lot of other Labor voters are. They've lost their working-class roots."

"I am very interested in the book launch of Vadim Rogovin's *Was There an Alternative? 1923–1927, Trotskyism: A Look Back Through the Years* because communism was discredited during the Stalin, Khrushchev and the Cold War periods," he said.

"People take capitalism for granted. But the system goes through huge destructive cycles and creates pain and suffering in the world. I agree with that premise of Marxist ideology that capitalism will eventually eat itself up. We're all slaves to capitalism. People can be caught up in a horrible spiral. Only the rich and privileged types do well," he added.

Referring to the coronavirus, Paul said, "There's some back and forth between the Federal government and the states about who is doing what but the only important thing when dealing with COVID is people's lives.

"What's happening in America and Britain has shocked the world. We're just collateral damage to the whole situation. The working class, the people who work in the coal mines or in the factories, are just collateral damage," he added.



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