

SEP electoral members say new Australian electoral laws are “highly autocratic”

Our reporters
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Socialist Equality Party (SEP) electoral members are continuing to speak out against Australia’s anti-democratic electoral laws which target parties without parliamentary seats, including the SEP. The legislation threatens deregistration, meaning parties cannot run under their name during elections, unless they submit a list of 1,500 members, treble the previous number.

The Labor party opposition marched lockstep with the Morrison Coalition government to rush the laws through the Australian parliament on August 26, behind the backs of the population and in less than 24 hours. The laws aim to stifle growing opposition to the major parties and prevent it from finding a socialist or left-wing expression.

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

Jasper, a postal worker, became an electoral member last year. “I hadn’t heard about the laws when they were first introduced, I only found out from the SEP. They are highly autocratic,” he said.

“People are losing trust in the major parties—Labor, Liberal-National—but the problem is they feel that there is no other choice. There are many reasons why these laws were introduced, including in order to force voters to pick the main parties,” he added.

Referring to harsh delivery productivity demands, Jasper said: “It’s difficult for us couriers, especially during lockdowns and the COVID pandemic. Management hasn’t brought in many new workers to assist. I’ve been doing around 200 parcels a day because it’s all that I can fit into my van.

“As a parcel courier subcontractor, you’re pretty much on your own, essentially working for yourself. You have the contractor, who allocates to you what needs to be done, and you do it.

“During a daily shift it takes up to three hours to get the packages out of the crates and sort them out, then put them in the vans. Then it can take six hours or more to do all the deliveries, depending on where you are going, what type of parcels you have and how many you have.

“It’s more difficult for those who have to travel further and it doesn’t help that the depot is only accessible for about eight hours a day. Any moment I get to myself, all I want to do is read or sleep,” he said.

“We’re paid per parcel, which is okay if you are single, but harder if you have to support a family. Most of the workers use their own vans or vehicles but there are others who use hire vans.”

Jasper also described the deteriorating and dangerous working conditions. “There’s a real bureaucracy at Australia Post. For example, I use trolley shelves to sort my parcels but the wheels on them have had it—some have broken off or they stick. It took Australia Post two years to replace those wheels. Half of them need replacing now and it slows us all down and makes our job harder on top of everything else.

“We keep saying to the higher ups we need new wheels. But they’re supposedly not a priority. The main toilets at my workplace are shut due to maintenance and have been for the past month and a half,” he stated.

Michael, 30, works in IT and has been an electoral member since 2012. “I want to see the SEP come to power and make a change. It’s the party that I have most faith in because it sees politics as a science,” he said.

“A lot of people don’t accurately understand what socialism is. Socialism has been misrepresented and that misrepresentation has had its effect and the SEP works hard to get support,” he continued.

“The SEP will point you to historical truth, what happened in the past and the facts of the Russian Revolution, and they draw lessons from the experiences and continue to work towards socialism, a system that is about benefiting everyone,” he added.

“I work in IT and see companies heading towards monopolising the internet and they’re trying to filter out content from the viewer. The companies are using the internet to keep the population in the state they want, instead of the internet being used for progressive purposes. It should be used to educate people. The SEP stands for more transparency and integrity and also removing the ability for dominating powers to have influence over people,” he said.



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