

SEP electoral members speak on Workers' Inquest into COVID-19 and Australia's anti-democratic electoral laws

Our reporters
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The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) campaign to defeat anti-democratic electoral laws, rushed through the Australian parliament on August 26, continues with new and longstanding SEP electoral members voicing their support for this struggle.

The laws target the SEP along with 35 other parties that do not have members of parliament. The parties are threatened with deregistration if a membership list of 1,500, treble the previous number, is not submitted to the electoral authorities. The legislation seeks to silence left-wing and socialist opposition to the major parties.

The electoral members interviewed below oppose these laws and call on people to join the party. They also comment in support of the Global Workers' Inquest into the COVID-19 pandemic recently announced by the WWS. The inquest will seek to expose the political and social forces responsible for the mass spread of the virus and the deaths of millions.

Support the SEP's campaign against the legislation and sign up as an electoral member today.

The SEP spoke to **Liam**, 37, who works in the auto industry. He joined as an electoral member this year. "I support the SEP because they are the only Marxist party. I joined as an electoral member to fight against these undemocratic laws.

"The Coalition, the ALP [Australian Labor Party] and the Greens want to consolidate their own power. It's being done from a position of weakness, not strength. Votes for these parties over the past election cycles have been decreasing. People are looking at alternative parties. That's a sign of weakness for the main parties. If you were confident in your ability to attract votes, you wouldn't feel the need to introduce these laws.

"As time goes on, the politics of the Socialist Equality Party becomes more relevant. There's a gulf between the ruling class and the workers. Lots more people are becoming more class conscious. That's the perspective of the SEP, increasing class consciousness. A revolutionary epoch is approaching, and the perspectives of the SEP are aligned with that.

"The SEP needs to stand in elections to promote our perspective to a broader audience. An election is a platform for that. If we were elected, we would use the position to expose the problems of the capitalist system. It can't be resolved with reform, but it is still important for the SEP to run in elections under our name. With a member elected, we would have access to more information.

"Regarding the pandemic, the policies of the federal government have been dangerous and not orientated to caring for the working class. It's more about getting the economy opened so that they can keep their capitalist masters happy. We have seen increased inequality over the pandemic. It has exacerbated the conditions that are already there under capitalism.

"The reopening of schools is criminal. They need the schools to do a baby-sitting service so everyone can go back to work and get the economy going again. Children are going to be suffering on the front line. If we were to listen to the health experts' advice, they would have kept the schools shut a lot longer. The economic pressure is to have schools open."

Speaking of his own experiences, Liam said: "I am a member of the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union, but they are a dues collecting service. They don't act in the interest of the workforce. They are also very nationalistic, always pushing 'Australia first'

policies. As an internationalist, that doesn't sit well with me. I am in the auto industry, and this is being consolidated into fewer and fewer hands with our workloads increasing. The new labour rates have increased pressures on us."

The SEP also received two statements of support from **Jenny**, a longstanding electoral member of the party. She wrote on the Workers' Inquest: "I think this a crucial initiative to unravel the timelines and the consequences of this pandemic that has killed millions of people.

"From the lack of preparedness regarding mask supplies; the failure to develop quarantine facilities; the inequality of the global vaccine rollout favouring rich countries; the punitive measures targeting working class areas; the lack of mitigation in workplaces causing mass infections, and policies of deliberate mass infections known as 'herd immunity.' The ruling class never ceases to prove that they are willing to destroy millions of lives and livelihoods to continue their relentless pursuit of ever-increasing wealth. It's criminal.

"An entire layer of people, from headmasters and unions to countless media talking heads are going along with these policies, eager to help. Those people need to be exposed. It is the working class that is bearing the brunt of this social homicide. The inquest will bring it all out of the shadows of lies and confusion. What we need now, more than ever, is clarity."



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