

More letters oppose Democrats' attempt to bar SEP candidate from Illinois ballot

8 July 2004

The following letters were sent to Mark Shelden, the County Clerk in Champaign, Illinois, to protest the efforts of the state and local Democratic Party to exclude the Socialist Equality Party and its state legislative candidate, Thomas Mackaman, from the ballot in the November elections. [See "Letters from around the world denounce Democrats' effort to bar SEP candidate from Illinois ballot" and "Democrats move to keep SEP candidate off Illinois ballot" and "Stop the Democratic Party's attack on third-party campaigns! Place SEP candidate Tom Mackaman on the ballot in Illinois!"]

The effort to exclude the SEP from the ballot is part of a nationwide effort by the Democrats to stifle any campaign that opposes the bipartisan policies of militarism and the attack on the democratic rights and living standards of working people. We urge all those who oppose the war and who are angered by the pro-war politics and antidemocratic methods of Kerry and the Democrats to add their voices of protest against the attempt to exclude antiwar candidates from the November election. Send emails of protest to Champaign County Clerk Mark Shelden's office at: mail@champaigncountyclerk.com

Please send copies to the World Socialist Web Site at editor@wsws.org

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am following up my email from last week in order to protest the continuing assault on democratic rights that the Democratic Party is waging in Illinois. It is my understanding that representatives of the Democratic Party have falsely claimed that third party petition sheets were not notarized, and that they have accused petitioners of forging signatures, without offering any proof to substantiate this serious charge.

The Democratic Party's challenge is clearly frivolous. Their only motivation is to forestall genuine

political debate during the election campaign, and to offer voters a false choice between two parties of big business. I call on you to reject their attempt to violate democratic rights through bureaucratic tactics.

Sincerely,

Ron Golaszewski

7 July 2004

Mr. Shelden,

I am writing to urge you to dismiss the Democratic Party's challenge to Tom Mackaman's signatures and to place him on the ballot. The fact that several of the charges brought by the Democratic Party—e.g., the absence of notarization—were patently false is evidence that the Democrats brought the challenge in bad faith and that they are attempting to limit the options available to voters. This maneuver is obviously undemocratic and clearly illustrates the need for an alternative to the two big business parties, both of which use undemocratic tactics to exclude parties and candidates which pose a challenge to their hold on political power.

Best regards,

John Bamford

Washington, DC

7 July 2004

Dear Mr. Shelden,

I've recently read of the Democratic Party's attempt to keep Mr. Tom Mackaman of the Socialist Equality Party off the ballot in the fall election for the legislative seat in Illinois' 103rd district. There are numerous aspects of the Democratic Party's machinations here which reek of bad faith and abuse of democratic procedures. Formal challenges to a candidate's signature petitions have a reasonable intent: they are supposed to avoid fraud. But they are NOT meant to be invoked simply as a means of harassing legitimate competition, and attempting to keep alternative voices

off the ballot.

In particular, I've read of the July 6 hearing, at which the Democratic Party representative Adam Simon appeared. Mr. Simon apparently had not even bothered to familiarize himself with many specifics of the very accusations against Mackaman's petition signatures he was supposedly at the hearing to represent. He flagrantly distorted the position of the SEP candidate, claiming the latter was challenging the validity of the hearing—while in fact Mackaman was simply challenging the factual accuracy of the Democrats' trumped-up objections to his petitions.

Furthermore, paid state employees were sent during working hours by the Democratic Party to examine Mackaman's petitions, hoping to find technical grounds for challenging the validity of his signatures. These people were thus engaging in blatant partisan political activity at taxpayer expense—a practice which is morally (and probably legally) indefensible.

In your capacity as an elections official, I appeal to you to weigh in on the side of democratic principles. Your responsibility is to defend the spirit and practice of open, genuinely free and fair elections. This means that all legitimate candidates who comply in good faith with election laws should be able to gain access to the ballot. It does NOT mean abetting the two major parties' efforts to harass their potential competitors, in their attempt to maintain total control over our political system

Sincerely,

Richard Mynick

Berkeley, California



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact