

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

12 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

To members of the Champaign County Election Board,

I would like to express my concern that the candidacy of Tom Mackaman can be threatened by the most spurious, baseless, and frivolous challenge. Even your initial hearing of this case on July 6 exposed for any thinking person the contemptible nature of the challenge filed by county Democratic Party functionary Geraldine Parr. Her claim that some of the signature sheets were not signed by the circulators and notarized has been shown to be baseless. She offers not one scrap of evidence for her claim of forged signatures, and an examination of the electoral roll in relation to specific signatures she claims are invalid has already made a mockery of these claims.

This frivolous and vile challenge by the Democratic

Party should have been dismissed immediately and recognized for what it is, a fear of the democratic process itself. Tom Mackaman is right to note the irony of this challenge in relationship to the historic events of the Declaration of Independence and the establishment of the Bill of Rights, the struggle for the right to vote for African Americans, and the success of Illinois "third party" (Republican) candidate Abraham Lincoln, who understood the meaning of government "of the people, by the people, and for the people."

Sincerely,

Tom Hawkins

(US citizen)

Perth, Australia

11 July 2004

Dear Mr. Shelden:

It's my understanding that the Democratic Party is taking extreme measures to keep candidates opposed to our country's invasion and occupation of Iraq such as Socialist Equality Party candidate for Illinois state representative Tom Mackaman off the November ballot.

I, as a life-long Democrat, a former Democrat as of now, am especially offended by these actions by a party to which I had entrusted so much faith as a defender of the people—the people's rights, one being the right to hear all sides of all issues.

And so, therefore, I stand among others in protest to the extraordinary action taken by the Democratic Party (or any party) against Tom Mackaman's petition for candidacy. And I most respectfully request that this extreme action be viewed correctly by you as such and then, consequently, be rejected.

With respect and sincerity,

Sarie Bryson

10 July 2004

To Mark Shelden,

I would like to take the occasion of the 4th of July to object to the thoroughly undemocratic efforts of the

Democratic Party in Illinois to exclude Socialist Equality Party candidate Thomas Mackaman from the ballot. Its attempt to claim that half of the signatures collected are invalid on the basis of technicalities is a transparent, and cowardly evasion of the real issues at stake in this election. By confining the choice before the American voters in November 2004 to one between a Republican and a Democrat, when both parties are committed to maintaining the occupation of Iraq and protecting the geostrategic interests of capitalist enterprise, the Democratic Party resorts to running a “lesser of two evils” campaign. It is the fundamental weakness of this position that underlies its near hysterical insistence that any and all third-party candidates be excluded.

Sincerely,

Ann LaFond, artist
Brooklyn, New York
4 July 2004

Dear Mr. Shelden,

I wish to register my opposition to the challenge filed by Geraldine Parr, a Democratic Party official, to the candidacy of Tom Mackaman. Having closely followed the reports of this case on the *World Socialist Web Site*, it is clear that not only is the objection factually unsubstantiated, but has been made in bad faith.

In the extremely short time that Tom Mackaman and his supporters had to check the disputed signatures, they were able to confirm the validity of the great majority. The fact that the Democrats allege otherwise attests to the fact that their challenge is dishonest, and moreover, anti-democratic.

The Democratic Party, as well as the Republicans, is currently engaged in a national campaign to prevent third-party candidates from standing. Filing objections like the one against Mackaman is just one of the methods they have employed. I recently read that Tony Fabri, the chairman of the Champaign County Democrats, personally wrote to the student candidates of the Green Party asking them not to run. Nationally, the hostility of the Democratic Party to Ralph Nader’s candidacy is well known. The Democrats’ contempt for democratic rights is breathtaking. What are they afraid of?

The elections in the United States in November this year, coupled with the war in Iraq, have already sparked intense debate not only among residents in the US, but internationally. Recent polls indicate that the majority of the US population opposes the war. It is absolutely vital that these elections be conducted in an environment where all political opinions can be discussed freely and

openly. And this includes placing Tom Mackaman, the Socialist Equality Party candidate, on the ballot.

Yours sincerely,

Jason Nichols

10 July 2004

“The Prairie Greens of East Central Illinois support the right of Tom Mackaman to be on the ballot for Illinois State Representative in the 103rd district. We condemn bad faith efforts by members of the Democratic party to remove third party alternatives from the general election ballot.”—Consented at Prairie Greens Membership Meeting 7/7/2004

Dear Mr. Sheldon,

I would like to add my voice to those who have expressed their dismay at the Democratic Party’s bad-faith and undemocratic efforts to keep SEP candidate Tom Mackaman off the ballot for Illinois state representative.

All over the nation, the two big-business parties (the Republican and Democratic parties) are attempting to maintain their stranglehold on and limit the breadth of US politics by systematically preventing any viable third-party alternatives from achieving ballot status. As the SEP and its candidate, Tom Mackaman, well point out, this is not only an undemocratic attempt to limit the choice of parties and candidates from the electorate, but an attempt to maintain the two-party stranglehold over the very discussion of the biggest issues of the day—wars of aggression abroad (the so-called “war on terror”) and the concurrent attacks on democratic rights at home—the latter of which this Democratic party challenge is an integral part.

I will be looking forward to seeing fundamental democratic rights upheld in the Champaign-Urbana state district by your dismissal of this bad-faith effort on the part of the Democratic Party to limit political choice and discourse in the upcoming elections in your district.

Sincerely yours,

Dan Klinger

Roeland Park, Kansas

9 July 2004

To contact the WSWWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

<http://www.wsws.org>