

# Senator John Fetterman, promoted by *Jacobin*, feted by Netanyahu in Israel

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26 March 2025

On March 19, during his second trip to Israel since he took office, Democratic Pennsylvania Senator John Fetterman met with and exchanged gifts with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is presently overseeing the genocide of the Palestinian people.

Fetterman gifted Netanyahu a framed Philadelphia newspaper article from 1986 which reported on the construction of a memorial for Netanyahu's late-brother, Jonathan Netanyahu, who was killed in action during an Israel Defense Forces raid in Uganda in 1976. More revealing, however, was Netanyahu's gift to Fetterman: a silver-plated beeper.

The silver-plated beeper is a reference to a terror attack launched by Israel against Lebanese civilians and Hezbollah supporters last September. During the attack, thousands of pagers and mobile devices rigged with explosives were set off, indiscriminately killing dozens and injuring thousands in the process.

The shameless depravity of the gift-exchange bears resemblance to events at the Buchenwald concentration camp during World War II. Nazi SS officers at the camp would occasionally exchange gifts that were made from Jewish prisoners at the camp, including shrunken heads, preserved organs, tanned pieces of human skin with tattooing, and a lampshade made from human skin that sat on camp commandant Karl-Otto Koch's desk.

Fetterman gleefully accepted the gift, thanking Netanyahu and shaking his hand in the process. "When that story broke," said Fetterman to Netanyahu in reference to the Lebanese terror attack, "I was like, 'Oh I love it. I love it.'"

Fetterman's support for Israel's wholesale slaughter of Palestinians has been met with rapture by the Israeli ruling class. During a visit to Israel last June, Netanyahu said that "Israel has had no better friend

than Sen. John Fetterman."

Indeed, few political figures have more deeply, and enthusiastically, embraced the genocide in Gaza than the Pennsylvania senator. Fetterman has supported deploying US troops to the region in accordance with Trump's plan to annex Gaza. During a peaceful protest against the genocide in November 2023, Fetterman taunted and laughed at protesters while waving an Israeli flag as participants were arrested.

Fetterman's fulsome support for genocide completely demolishes the "progressive" facade constructed by him and his pseudo-left backers during the 2022 senate campaign. Throughout his campaign, the pseudo-left, led by *Jacobin*, an organ of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), heavily promoted Fetterman and his alleged "progressive" bona fides.

In an article titled "John Fetterman Is the Kind of Political Communicator the Left Needs," *Jacobin* writer and DSA member Ben Burgis touted Fetterman's senate campaign as having "the highly effective Bernie Sanders formula down pat: take progressive positions on social issues while making denouncements of the 1 percent central to his message." Burgis predicted that if Fetterman was elected it "would be an exciting development for the Left."

After the 2022 midterm elections and Fetterman's victory, *Jacobin* published an article titled "Centrists Were Wrong: Left-Wing Candidates Won," in which it touted Fetterman as having campaigned on a "broadly progressive platform."

In another article, titled "The 2022 Midterms Were One of the Best Elections the Left Has Had in Memory," *Jacobin*'s Branko Marcetic defended the senator's reactionary positions by advancing a variation of the tired "lesser-evil" proposition, arguing

that Fetterman “appears to stand to the left of every other Democratic Senate candidate this cycle.”

Halfway into his first-term, Fetterman has shed all of his phony “progressive” stances while taking up the sword of US imperialism under the Biden and now Trump administration. Since his election, Fetterman has voted in favor of every US military package and war budget put before him, including the massive \$95 billion military bill last year that allocated \$60.8 billion for Ukraine, \$8 billion for Taiwan and \$26.4 billion for Israel and the ongoing ethnic cleansing of Gaza.

While voting for imperialist war and genocide abroad, Fetterman has backed both Biden and now Trump’s crackdown on democratic rights in the United States. Following Trump’s re-election, Fetterman has completely embraced the most reactionary immigration policies, including co-sponsoring the fascistic “Laken Riley Act.” Fetterman campaigned for the legislation on Fox News: “I’d like to remind everybody that we have hundreds and hundreds of thousands of migrants here illegally that have [been] convicted of crimes. Hey, I don’t know why, who wants to defend, to allow them to remain in our nation.”

Prior to Trump’s inauguration, Fetterman made the pilgrimage to Trump’s Mar-a-lago to pledge his cooperation with the fascist. He also backed Trump’s cabinet picks and voted, along with every other Democrat, to approve former Florida Senator and arch-reactionary Marco Rubio for secretary of state. Fetterman hailed Rubio, who is currently spearheading the campaign to deport students and legal residents such as Mahmoud Khalil for opposing the genocide, as “a solid choice” for secretary of state.

The *World Socialist Web Site* noted at the time: “Fetterman is a pacesetter for the entire Democratic Party, which is racing to the far right to seek an accommodation with Trump, in order to advance their shared agenda, which, as Fetterman laid out, is centered on continuing the genocide in Gaza and preparing for war on China.”

The case of Fetterman is not an outlier, but rather expresses the essence of the service that the DSA and *Jacobin* perform for the ruling class. They provide a phony “left” cover for the Democratic Party while attempting to corral workers and youth into the dead-end of the Democratic Party and electoral politics.

The opposition to Trump’s dictatorship will not to be

found in the Democratic Party or its pseudo-left organizations like the DSA, but through the development of an independent movement in the working class organized in opposition to all forces and tendencies that advocate “reforming” the Democratic Party or the capitalist system.



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