DSA-aligned *Jacobin* silent for days after Democrats rescue war criminal Pete Hegseth

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On Tuesday, November 10, 11 House Democrats failed to appear for a vote on the impeachment of Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, allowing Republicans to send the resolution to the Judiciary Committee by a vote of 211–204. The maneuver effectively killed the impeachment effort for the remainder of the congressional session. Had all 11 voted with their Democratic colleagues, the motion would have failed, clearing the way for a vote on impeachment itself.

Two days later, no coverage of the Democrats' role in this outcome could be found on the website of *Jacobin*, affiliated with the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA). The magazine has continued publishing articles celebrating Democratic election victories and promoting the politicians supposedly transforming the party into a socialist bulwark. Yet the first major demonstration since the election of what the Democratic Party actually does has gone unexamined.

On Thursday, Drop Site News reported that Representatives Julia Brownley of California, Melanie Stansbury of New Mexico and Brittany Pettersen of Colorado attended a reception hosted by the political action committee Elect Democratic Women (EDW) as the vote for impeachment was taking place.

According to an RSVP list obtained by Drop Site, the expected attendees included 132 lobbyists, representing weapons manufacturers, technology companies, pharmaceutical firms, insurers and other corporate interests. The list included representatives of Lockheed Martin and major defense lobbying firms.

Citing federal campaign finance records, Drop Site reported that United Democracy Project (UDP), the super PAC affiliated with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), had transferred at least $2.35 million to EDW Action this year.

While a resolution charging the Pentagon chief with grave crimes was being blocked in Congress, three Democrats were attending an event organized to bring legislators together with corporate lobbyists and war profiteers. These are the social interests to which Democratic politicians make themselves available.

The political significance of Tuesday's vote extends far beyond the excuses of individual members. As the *World Socialist Web Site* explained, the Democrats' rescue of Hegseth expresses their commitment to the interests of American imperialism. Their differences with Trump concern the conduct and priorities of US foreign policy, mainly centered on Russia and Ukraine, while they continue to sustain its military apparatus.

The resolution, introduced by Republican Representative Thomas Massie, contained eight articles of impeachment. Among its charges were the unlawful war against Iran and the over 200 extrajudicial murders in the Caribbean and Pacific, both crimes the Democrats have been virtually silent on and did not make a centerpiece of in their election campaigns.

Jacobin's silence has a definite political function. An examination of the vote would expose the magazine and the upper-middle class social layer it speaks for. *Jacobin* has spent the past week promoting the claim that electing more "progressives" and "democratic socialists" within the Democratic Party will turn one of the twin parties of US imperialism into an instrument that will advance the interests of the working class.

On November 6 for *Jacobin*, Jared Abbott published "Working-Class Democratic Candidates Won Big in the Midterms." Abbott claimed that the newly enlarged group of Democrats from working-class backgrounds could push the party toward policies benefiting workers.

The day before Abbott's article, *Jacobin* published Eric Blanc's "After the Midterms, the Left Has a Huge

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Opportunity to Seize." Alongside it appeared "The UAW Bet on Abdul El-Sayed and Won," by Alex N. Press, and an interview with Paul Heideman and Vivek Chibber titled "Can DSA Build Working-Class Power?"

These articles present electoral gains and the growth of the DSA as grounds for renewed confidence in this political orientation. Tuesday's vote revealed where this orientation leads.

On Wednesday, the day after the vote, *Jacobin* published "A Sewer Socialist Proposal for the Climate: PowerNYC," promoting a public energy proposal under New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani. It ignored the party's protection of Hegseth and Mamdani's own political alliance with Trump.

Jacobin did mention Hegseth in a November 11 article on veterans' healthcare, describing him as "perhaps the next to go." This passing reference did not explain how the Democrats had just helped keep him in office.

Even publications making no claim to socialism addressed the Democrats' responsibility. The *New Republic* published "Full List of Democrats Who Missed Hegseth Impeachment Vote—and Why," explicitly blaming the absent members for the outcome. *New York Magazine*'s Intelligencer examined their explanations in "The Mystery of the 11 Vote-Missing House Democrats." The Daily Beast likewise scrutinized the absences. In the *Los Angeles Times*, Anita Chabria's November 12 column carried the headline, "One week: How long it took Democrats to let us down."

The contrast between mainstream capitalist publications and the "socialist" *Jacobin* underscores the political service the magazine performs. Readers are encouraged to identify their opposition to Trump with the electoral fortunes of the Democratic Party. Developments that expose the incompatibility of those interests are passed over and ignored.

This silence is aimed at protecting the politicians most closely associated with the DSA. House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries, expected to become Speaker in January, oversaw the Democrats' response to the impeachment vote. Yet the debacle produced no withdrawal of support from Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

Asked by CNN's Manu Raju on Wednesday, "Are you supporting Jeffries?" Ocasio-Cortez replied, "The race is unopposed. Yeah."

The absence of a challenger is itself bound up with the role of the DSA's leading figures. In late 2025, Mamdani opposed support for fellow DSA member and New York City Councilman Chi Ossé's proposed primary challenge to Jeffries. The DSA declined to endorse Ossé, who subsequently ended his bid.

The same political figures presented as a means of "pressuring" the Democratic leadership to the left helped secure that leadership against challenges. They then invoked its unopposed position as grounds for continued support.

The midterm results expressed a substantial movement to the left among workers and young people, driven by opposition to war, inequality, attacks on immigrants and the growth of fascism. The Democrats' conduct after the election demonstrates the conflict between these aspirations and the party through which they found electoral expression.

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