

Bowman's J Street Zionist Propaganda Trip to Apartheid Israel Must Not Stand



Palestine Solidarity Working Group · [Follow](#)

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Prime Minister of Israel

@IsraeliPM



Prime Minister Naftali Bennett met tonight with a US Congressional delegation led by [@RosaDeLauro](#) at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem.



Jamaal Bowman (second from right) joins other Democrats posing with Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett.

Last week, Congressman and DSA member Jamaal Bowman took part in a propaganda trip to Israel that was sponsored by J Street — a pro-Israel lobby group. At the Knesset on November 8th, Yair Lapid — head of Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which explicitly bars entry into Israel for members of 20 human rights organizations (e.g. DSA comrades affiliated with Jewish Voice for Peace, US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, and Students for Justice in Palestine) — “thanked [the visiting delegation] for supporting the replenishment of the Iron Dome missile defense system,” as they “discussed the importance of continuing to strengthen the US-Israel relationship.” The very next day, Bowman posed for a photo op with Prime

Minister Naftali Bennett — a war criminal and former head of the Yesha Council, the political organization representing illegal Israeli settlements.

The DSA BDS and Palestine Solidarity Working Group (BDS WG) condemns these actions in the harshest terms and, in line with local chapters across the nation, demands that the National Political Committee (NPC) hold Bowman accountable to DSA's principles, policies, and resolutions, including on Palestine and BDS.

We also specifically denounce J Street alongside all other Zionist propaganda organizations.

On their website, J Street claims to organize “pro-Israel, pro-peace Americans to promote U.S. policies... that help secure the State of Israel as a democratic homeland for the Jewish people.” **Unlike right-wing Zionists, who openly and explicitly state their desire to ethnically cleanse Palestinians from the land, liberal Zionist groups like J Street give lip service to universalistic values of “peace” and “democracy” while still ultimately seeking to maintain a Jewish ethnostate in historic Palestine.** In line with their overarching goals, J Street consistently ignores and undermines Palestinian voices and demands. For example, J Street dismisses the self-determination of the Palestinian people by insisting on *only* supporting a two-state solution to ensure that Israel remains a “democratic homeland for the Jewish people.” J Street also explicitly opposes BDS, which more than 80% of Palestinians support.

Inequality between a planned Jewish majority and the indigenous Palestinian population, who were made a minority in '48 Palestine (aka present-day Israel) after al Nakba, is and always has been structurally fundamental to Israel. **Thus, right-wing and liberal Zionists have in**

common the perception of the indigenous Palestinian population as a demographic obstacle, and by remaining unaccountable to the racist reality of the Zionist project, liberal Zionists — and the propaganda trips their organizations sponsor — normalize and perpetuate ethnic cleansing and Israeli apartheid.

Bowman's decision to attend this J Street propaganda trip not only runs counter to his purported values as a DSA endorsed candidate, but it also comes on the heels of his "yes" vote supporting an additional \$1 billion of our taxpayer money being sent to fund Israel's Iron Dome.

These actions are completely out of line with DSA's principles, policies and resolutions, which call for active support of the BDS movement. DSA must continue to unequivocally stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people and in opposition to colonialism, imperialism, and racism in all their various forms. Voting to send additional military funds to an apartheid, settler-colonial state and following that up with a luxurious trip to the region where the vast majority of Palestinians are barred from entry is antithetical to DSA's aforementioned values.

As an organization, now is not the time for us to lower our expectations by allowing endorsed candidates to deprioritize Palestine as a third rail issue, selling out all of our socialist principles by extension. DSA members have shown that they will no longer stand for these kinds of divisive politics through an immense outpouring of solidarity this past week calling for action from the NPC.

The way forward is clear, and now is the time for us to concretely set the bar for what we expect from all of our endorsed candidates.

In that vein, the BDS WG calls on the NPC to expel Bowman if he does not immediately agree to the following demands when he meets with DSA representatives on Friday:

- 1. Uphold Palestinian civil society's call for BDS** until apartheid Israel ends its illegal settlement expansion, dismantles its apartheid system, and grants Palestinians their right to return. When politicians do not commit to BDS, they are literally not in solidarity with the vast majority of Palestinian civil society.
- 2. Provide protection to and support for Palestinians through legislation.** Oppose anti-Palestinian legislation, like anti-free speech laws against BDS or attempts to provide Israel with any kind of military funding. Support pro-Palestinian legislation, such as the Defend the 6 Resolution.
- 3. Participate in the travel boycott for personal travel to Israel and Palestine,** which entails respecting the ethical tourism guidelines called for by Palestinian civil society and laid out on the BDS website. In line with these guidelines, we also expect Bowman and all endorsed candidates to reject any trips or delegations affiliated with the Israeli government or Israeli lobby groups, such as J Street or AIPAC.

In closing, it is clear that DSA's electoral power rests on our ability to hold our endorsed candidates accountable. In a statement yesterday, the NPC wrote that they are "treating this as [NPC's] highest priority right now; to work with the DSA BDS & Palestine Solidarity Working Group..." We feel that it is our duty to note that the NPC has been incredibly non-transparent with us over the last week, disrespecting and dismissing the thoughts and concerns of numerous Palestinians in our working group through a host of dishonest and erratic actions, which the BDS WG may publicly elaborate on at a later date.

For now, it is of the utmost importance that the NPC *not* shirk its responsibility to its membership, Palestine Solidarity partners, and Palestinians everywhere by seriously exploring the types of accountability mechanisms (i.e. censure and/or expulsion) that DSA members are calling for, not just for Bowman, but for all endorsed candidates who are consistently and substantially out of step with DSA's positions on any platform issue.

Signed,

DSA BDS & Palestine Solidarity National Working Group

and over 480 signatures including:

Al-Awda NY: The Palestine Right to Return Coalition

Afrosocialists & Socialists of Color Caucus DSA

Arab Resource & Organizing Center (AROC)

Black and AfroSocialist Caucus of Los Angeles

Block the Boat NY/NJ

Bloomington-Normal DSA

Brown University/RISD YDSA

Cascadia Worker's Project

Central Florida Popular Front

Champaign-Urbana DSA

CUNY for Palestine

Decolonize This Place

Democratic Socialists of Salt Lake

Dartmouth YDSA

DSA Afrosocialist & Socialists of Color Executive Committee

DSA Kern County

DSA Muslim Caucus
DSA Santa Cruz
DSA Wilmington NC
Falastiniyat
Freedom Arts Movement — NYC
Good Shepherd Collective
High Peaks DSA
Irish Republican Caucus of the DSA
Jacksonville DSA
Jewish Voice for Peace at UC Berkeley
Jewish Voice for Peace at UCLA
Jews for Palestinian Right of Return
Labor for Palestine
Las Vegas DSA Steering Committee
Libertarian Socialist Caucus
Libertarian Socialist Caucus, DSA LA
LSU Students For Justice In Palestine
Madison Area DSA Executive Committee
Marxist Unity Group
Metro DC Democratic Socialists of America
Miami-Dade County DSA Coordinating Committee
Middle Tennessee DSA
Mutual Aid Committee, DSA-LA
National Students for Justice in Palestine
Nevadans for Palestinian Human Rights
Nevadans for Palestinian Human Rights — UNLV
NWArkansas DSA
NY4Palestine Coalition
NYC Educators for Palestine
Orlando DSA

Palestinian Youth Movement
Philadelphia DSA LSC
Polk County DSA
Portland DSA
Quad Cities DSA
Rochester DSA
Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network
Socialists for Black Lives & Black Leaders
South Jersey DSA
Spectre Journal Editorial Board
Tacoma DSA Socialist Feminist Committee
Tallahassee DSA
Tempest Collective
Texas A&M University YDSA
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Young Democratic Socialists of America
University of Illinois at Chicago YDSA
University of North Carolina Wilmington YDSA
University of Utah YDSA
University of Vermont Young Democratic Socialists of America
Upper Valley (NH/VT) DSA
Wayne State University YDSA
Whatcom DSA
YDSA at Illinois State University
YDSA University of Houston
Young Democratic Socialists of America at Binghamton University



Democratic Socialists of America BDS and Palestine Solidarity Working Group

One Struggle, United

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Democratic Socialism



Written by Palestine Solidarity Working Group

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