

ICE arrests New York City comptroller and Democratic mayoral candidate for “obstruction”

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In an escalation of Donald Trump’s drive to dictatorship, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents on Tuesday arrested Brad Lander on charges of obstruction. Lander is the comptroller of New York, the city’s second-highest elected official, and a candidate in the upcoming Democratic primary election for mayor.

A member of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), Lander is one of several self-styled “progressives” running in the primary election. He was escorting a migrant in the city’s main immigration courthouse, at 26 Federal Plaza, where ICE has been active in recent weeks, abducting immigrant workers as they appear in court for routine business.

There have been demonstrations for several weeks by opponents of the ICE Gestapo against the abduction of immigrants at Federal Plaza. The illegal arrest by ICE was video-recorded by a reporter from the *City* and posted on X shortly afterwards. Masked ICE agents could be seen in the hallway pushing through protesters who impeded but did not obstruct them. The protesters repeatedly asked the agents for their names.

As the agents attempted to drag the migrant away, Lander kept his hand on the man’s shoulder. The agents could be heard telling Lander to let go and Lander repeatedly asked the agents to show them a judicial warrant. (A warrant signed by a judge is required to take an undocumented immigrant into custody, although ICE has dispensed with using them on many, if not most, occasions.) One of the agents shouted, “take him in.”

The agents pushed Lander against a wall and handcuffed him as he told them they did not have the authority to arrest a US citizen. He was held on the

tenth floor of 26 Federal Plaza, where ICE detains immigrants.

In a related development, Zohran Mamdani, New York state assemblyman from Queens, the other DSA candidate seeking the Democratic mayoral nomination, announced that he was stepping up his security in light of increased death threats against him and his family. Mamdani is now running second in the polls to former governor Andrew Cuomo.

One such phone message to his office in Albany released by his campaign said: “Hey Zohran, you should go back to f—ing Uganda, before I shoot you in the head and your whole family too... You piece of s— Muslims don’t belong here.”

Two Democratic Party elected officials were shot, one fatally, by a fascistic Trump supporter last week in Minnesota.

Lander’s arrest follows the indictment of Democratic Representative LaMonica McIver on June 10 for allegedly obstructing entrance to Delaney Hall Federal Immigration Facility, an ICE detention center in Newark, New Jersey, and the arrest of Newark’s Democratic mayor Ras Baraka in May at the same Delaney facility. On June 12, California Senator Alex Padilla was cuffed and detained by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) thugs when he attempted to ask a question at a news conference in Los Angeles being held by Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem.

The arrest of Lander and the need for Mamdani to increase his security follow the escalation of attacks announced by Trump on Sunday, one day after the

massive “No Kings” protests. Trump demanded the round-up of millions of immigrants, particularly directing his vitriol against the Democratic Party. He tweeted on “Truth Social:”

We must expand efforts to detain and deport illegal Aliens in America’s largest Cities, such as Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York, where Millions upon Millions of Illegal Aliens reside. These, and other such Cities, are the core of the Democrat Power Center, where they use Illegal Aliens to expand their Voter Base, cheat in Elections, and grow the Welfare State, robbing good paying Jobs and Benefits from Hardworking American Citizens.

Trump’s remarks were a response to the demonstrations on June 14 in over 2,000 localities around the country against his efforts to destroy constitutional rights and establish a presidential dictatorship. The largely spontaneous protests, involving between five and eleven million people, were not organized by or given support by Democratic Party leaders, who have not lifted a finger to oppose Trump’s ongoing coup against the Constitution. New York Democratic Mayor Eric Adams threatened the protesters with arrest, echoing Trump’s rants against the supposed violence of protesters in Los Angeles.

Shortly after Lander’s arrest, several hundred protesters, including his rival in the election, Mamdani, assembled at Federal Plaza to demand his release.

Various Democratic Party politicians rushed to the scene, including Governor Kathy Hochul, who was refused permission by ICE to see Lander, but walked out of the building with him when he was released shortly afterwards. She called for the dropping of charges against Lander and postured as a defender of immigrants’ rights. Various other mayoral candidates also condemned the arrest, including Cuomo.

Department of Homeland Security spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin claimed that Lander had deliberately gotten himself arrested as a campaign stunt and that he had assaulted ICE officers. A host of right-wing politicians, including New York Representative Elise Stefanik, applauded the arrest and repeated the lie

that Lander had assaulted the ICE agents.



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