

Eric Adams leaves New York City mayoral race, as Trump steps up attacks on Mamdani

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A right-wing political gang-up against New York City Democratic mayoral candidate and self-described democratic socialist Zohran Mamdani took place this week in a coordinated series of moves, as the November 4 election nears.

On Sunday, incumbent mayor Eric Adams announced he was dropping out of the race after polling in single digits, far behind Mamdani, who is leading by double digits, and former New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, who lost the Democratic primary to Mamdani and is now running as an independent. Adams trailed even Republican Curtis Sliwa, who is also under pressure to quit the race and throw his support to Cuomo.

In a video announcing his withdrawal, Adams launched into a thinly veiled attack against Mamdani, repeating the chorus of right-wing attacks depicting modest but left-sounding social reforms as extremist and anti-American.

“I must also sound a warning: extremism is growing in our politics. Our children are being radicalized to hate our city and our country. Political anger is turning into political violence,” Adams said. “Major change is welcome and necessary, but beware of those who claim the answer [is] to destroy the very system we built together over generations.”

Cuomo contributed his own diatribe against “extremism” only an hour after Adams’s withdrawal, applauding his decision. “We face destructive extremist forces that would devastate our city through incompetence or ignorance, but it is not too late to stop them,” he said.

Following the Adams pullout, Trump launched an anti-communist tirade against Mamdani on social media. “He is going to have problems with Washington like no Mayor in the history of our once great City. Remember, he needs the money from me, as President, in order to fulfill all of his FAKE Communist promises. He won’t be getting any of it, so what’s the point of voting for him?”

This type of intervention in a mayoral election by the

sitting US president, threatening to withhold all federal funding if a political opponent wins, is wholly unprecedented.

The actions by Adams, Cuomo and Trump represent a desperate last-ditch effort to try and block Mamdani’s election through blatantly undemocratic means. It also reveals the alignment between Adams—who *was* the darling of the Democratic Party establishment—Cuomo—who *is now* the last straw for the Democratic Party establishment—and the would-be fascist dictator Trump (who is rumored to have offered Adams a position in his administration).

Despite their anti-communist hysterics, however, Mamdani is no threat to the political establishment or the capitalist system. Since winning the Democratic primary, he has only moved to the right and gone through great pains to meet with and reassure leading representatives of Wall Street and big business that he can be trusted to serve their interests.

He has notably continued to downplay coordinated political assaults against him. In response to Adams’s exit, Mamdani told *Democracy Now!*, “I think it’s very much the same race.” He shrugged off Trump’s latest threats, saying in a press conference Monday, “I think that Donald Trump is going through the stages of grief.”

Nowhere does he raise that a cutoff of funds by Trump would be a frontal attack on the entire population of New York City and the ripping up of their democratic right to choose what candidate to elect, nor how to stop this from taking place.

On Wednesday, after the beginning of the federal shutdown, Trump’s budget director, Russell Vought, made good on Trump’s threat, announcing he was freezing \$18 billion in federal aid to major transit projects in New York City, including the new Hudson River tunnel and extension of the subway system in Manhattan along Second Avenue.

While Mamdani reassures the ruling elite, however, the significant popular support he has won by centering his campaign on the affordability crisis, fighting Trump and opposing the Gaza genocide is an indication of the radicalization of the working class and youth throughout New York City.

As the *World Socialist Web Site* has emphasized, the attacks against Mamdani by significant sections of the ruling class represent not fear of his minor reform proposals but concern that the election of a self-proclaimed socialist advocating even minor reforms amid crisis levels of inequality and moves towards dictatorship could encourage the development of a broader movement in the working class.

On the other hand, a portion of the Democratic establishment has chosen to embrace Mamdani, in light of his widespread popularity, for the purpose of using him and the pseudo-left Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), of which he is a member, to corral workers and youth back into the dead-end of the corporate-controlled two-party system.

Most recently, former Vice President and 2024 Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris endorsed Mamdani, which he enthusiastically accepted. Harris—who bears responsibility for the genocide in Gaza and the ongoing US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine, which could trigger a nuclear war—called Mamdani for a 10-minute discussion last week. One topic they discussed was “the importance of joy amidst the struggle of our politics,” according to the *New York Times*.

Mamdani, in a pandering to identity politics, also raised their similar ethnicity, as both his parents are of South Asian descent, while Harris’s mother was born in India. “She mentioned the way in which our candidacy has brought more New Yorkers to see themselves in our politics,” Mamdani said. “I think hers offered the same to so many across the country.”

The mayoral frontrunner has nothing serious to offer in a time of extremely acute political crisis, where Trump is carrying out a coup to establish a presidential dictatorship, without resistance from the Democrats. There is a growing radicalization of wide layers of workers and youth thrown into struggle and looking to fight back, but he avoids any discussion of a struggle beyond the confines of local electoral politics.

Such unserious politics are representative of both Mamdani and the DSA, and the entire “left” wing of the Democratic Party, including such figures as Alexandria

Ocasio-Cortez and Bernie Sanders. This was spelled out at a recent DSA-aligned *Jacobin* event, which was analyzed by the WWSWS as follows:

The DSA and *Jacobin* are consciously working to block workers and youth from drawing the necessary political conclusions. They insist there is no viable break with the Democratic Party, even as, in Narefsky’s words, it is “an existential question that Mamdani not succeed” for the party establishment. For the Democrats, Mamdani’s role is to channel opposition behind the Democratic Party; *Jacobin* and the DSA present this as proof there is still “room” for a political struggle within the party.

This is a total fraud that must be repudiated. *Jacobin*’s program is tailored at every point to the interests of the affluent upper middle class. Its perspective is to chain workers and youth to the Democratic Party, paralyze opposition and ensure that no genuine struggle against capitalism and dictatorship develops.

As the Socialist Equality Party statement published September 27 stressed, “The Democrats, the unions and the media cultivate the myth of an all-powerful government while insisting that nothing can be done. This is a lie. What is lacking is not mass opposition but, rather, a political strategy to guide and organize the struggle against Trump’s assault on democratic rights. ... Our program is not for the pessimists, the skeptics and the demoralized, but for the fighters among workers, students, youth, professionals, artists and intellectuals. There is no time to lose.”



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