

Mamdani silent as NYPD attacks protest against Trump's immigration Gestapo

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Protesters thwarted a federal immigration raid in New York City on Saturday, despite a violent crackdown by the New York Police Department (NYPD), overseen by Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani's re-appointed police commissioner, Jessica Tisch.

The spontaneous protest erupted outside a parking garage in Manhattan's Chinatown, where agents from Trump's Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) were preparing to launch their second large-scale immigration raid in six weeks. A crowd of roughly 200 people formed human chains and barricades made of trash to block the convoy of agents from exiting the garage.

The NYPD responded by deploying its notorious Strategic Response Group, which is known for using militarized tactics to suppress protests, to aid the immigration Gestapo. Officers forcibly cleared a path for the agents, violently assaulting demonstrators who refused to move, deploying pepper spray and arresting more than a dozen people. Ultimately, the protest succeeded in forcing the federal agents to call off the raid and retreat to New Jersey.

Murad Awawdeh, president of the New York Immigration Coalition, summarized the role of both federal agents and police. "The violence that occurred today could have been avoided had ICE agents not escalated tensions," he said. "But instead of holding federal agents accountable for their aggressive tactics, the NYPD instead helped facilitate ICE's campaign of terror. ICE must stop wreaking havoc across New York—separating families and harming our communities. The NYPD must immediately release the New Yorkers who they arrested, and stop all collaboration with ICE."

Saturday's police crackdown on anti-ICE protesters was not an anomaly. Since Trump returned to office, the NYPD has maintained a heavy presence around federal buildings, where ICE agents abduct immigrants during check-ins and hearings, shielding them from protest. Last month, a Freedom of Information Act request revealed that the NYPD and the FBI had been monitoring a Signal chat used to coordinate legal observers at immigration court, a blatant violation of constitutionally protected activity.

The NYPD's repression of anti-ICE protesters mirrors its brutal crackdown on anti-genocide demonstrations, including violent raids on college campuses, assaults on street protests and the deployment of its vast surveillance apparatus to target activists.

This is the NYPD that Mamdani will soon oversee. His retention of Commissioner Tisch—the billionaire heiress who has been directly responsible for repression—sends a clear signal: When it comes to the most basic functions of the capitalist state, defending the interests of the ruling class through "bodies of armed men," Mamdani's so-called "democratic socialist" administration intends not to challenge that order but to enforce it.

During the election campaign, Mamdani postured as an uncompromising opponent of Trump's immigration policies, denouncing ICE as "a rogue agency, one that has no interest in laws, no interest in order." His campaign appealed to widespread outrage over Trump's brutal immigrant roundups—the spearhead of a developing dictatorship—while attempting to breathe new life into the discredited Democratic Party.

The significance of Saturday's NYPD operation under Tisch is that it strips away the rhetorical pretense and bares the political reality of Mamdani's incoming

administration.

As of Monday, Mamdani has made no public comment on the ICE raid or the NYPD's role in defending it. His transition spokesperson, Monica Klein, told the press: "The Mayor-elect has made it clear—including to the President—that these raids are cruel and inhumane, and fail to advance genuine public safety."

Tisch, meanwhile, informed the *New York Times* that she had spoken with a Department of Homeland Security official and called the federal agents' actions "unacceptable." Neither Mamdani nor Tisch addressed the glaring contradiction: If ICE is a "rogue agency" conducting "cruel and inhumane" raids in an "unacceptable" manner, why did the NYPD, led by Mamdani's appointee, defend it against protesters?

The attempted raid also explodes the myth that Mamdani's meeting with Trump at the White House was a clever political move that neutralized the fascist president and prevented further immigration raids. Just over a week after their meeting, federal agents were preparing a major operation that could not possibly have gone ahead without Trump's approval.

The raid was a clear political statement by Trump of who controls the "partnership." Mamdani's appearance in the Oval Office did not shield the city from Trump's attacks; it disoriented workers and youth drawn to Mamdani's promises to oppose oligarchy and inequality, by promoting the lie that Trump can somehow be used to advance this goal.

Saturday's ICE raid was not stopped by Mamdani's backroom dealings with Trump. It was stopped by the independent initiative of ordinary New Yorkers who took it upon themselves to defend their neighbors. That spontaneous action is an indication of future struggles on a much broader scale.

Trump, acting on behalf of the capitalist oligarchy, is accelerating the drive toward dictatorship. Opposition to Trump and fascism must be consciously organized, based in the international working class, and completely independent of and in opposition to the Democratic and Republican parties.



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