

# Mamdani promotes DSA candidates in New York Democratic primary election

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On Thursday, New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani and Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders spoke at a “Get Out the Vote” rally at the historic Kings Theatre in Flatbush, Brooklyn. Coming five days before the June 23 Democratic primary, the event sought to promote Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) candidates in New York as an alternative to the traditional Democratic Party leadership in order to prevent an independent movement of the working class.

The rally was sponsored by a coalition of so-called “progressives” along with the DSA itself. All the candidates featured at the rally, except for Brand Lander, a Zionist who broke with the DSA over the organization’s response to the Israeli genocide in Gaza, were endorsed by the DSA. Mamdani, however, did endorse Lander, who initially ran against him in the Democratic Party mayoral primary in June last year, but then actively supported Mamdani’s campaign.

Mamdani refused to endorse DSA New York City Council member Che Ossé in his run for Congress in New York’s Eighth Congressional District against Hakeem Jefferies, the House minority leader. This support for the thoroughly establishment and right-wing Jeffries exposes the fraud of Mamdani’s claim to be spearheading an anti-establishment crusade.

The New York DSA’s Electoral Working Group bowed to Mamdani and voted against recommending an endorsement of Ossé’s congressional bid. Ossé obediently withdrew from the race. Because there were no challengers, the primary was cancelled and Jefferies will automatically become the Democratic candidate in November against Republican Lewis Mizrahi in an election that is not expected to be competitive.

One of the two DSA-approved congressional candidates that Mamdani and Sanders boosted at the rally was Clair Valdez, a minor United Autoworkers Union bureaucrat and supporter of current union President Shawn Fain. Valdez is running in New York’s Seventh Congressional District to replace the retiring “progressive” Democrat Nydia Velázquez. Valdez will face three other candidates in Tuesday’s primary election, the winner of which will run

against the Republican candidate and an independent. A Democratic victory is virtually assured in this district.

The other DSA-endorsed congressional candidate is Darializa Avila Chevalier, who is running for the House seat from New York’s Thirteenth CD in northern Manhattan. She is seeking to unseat the incumbent Adriano Espaillat, a staunch supporter of Israel, with whom Avila Chevalier is running neck-and-neck.

In a recent primary debate, Espaillat as well as the moderators asked if Alvia Chevalier would apologize to Kamala Harris. This is because, as a student organizer at Columbia University in 2021, she made a now-deleted tweet that read “Fk Kamala Harris,” when Harris told Guatemalan migrants “Do not come” to the United States illegally.

Avila Chevalier looked straight at the camera and delivered a direct apology, saying, “To Vice President Kamala Harris, I sincerely apologize. You did not deserve that language from me... Words really matter.”

The DSA candidate’s groveling apology to Harris, a supporter of the Gaza genocide and enemy of immigrants, does indeed matter. As do Mamdani’s words at Thursday’s rally supporting Avila Chevalier’s candidacy.

No less significant are the words that Mamdani did not utter, including “capitalism,” “Iran,” “dictatorship,” and “Trump.” The last is not surprising since Mamdani met with the fascist president twice in the White House and called the meetings “productive.”

Mamdani’s hypocrisy and opportunism are in the service of what? The promotion of the fiction that the Democratic Party—a party of the same corporate-financial oligarchy that controls the Republicans, complicit in Trump’s criminal wars and attacks on democratic rights and virulently hostile to the working class—can be reformed, as can the capitalist system. And what are the means for accomplishing this feat? The bourgeois electoral system in general and voting for the Democratic Party in particular.

There is perhaps no place on earth where the class contradictions are starker than New York, the center of financial speculation and the billionaire capital of the world.

According to the Hurun Global Rich List 2025, New York was the city with the highest number of billionaires, and the only city in the world with more than 100 of them. It is also a city where millions live near or below the poverty line, plagued by homelessness and social misery. This is an explosive combination that is increasingly producing eruptions of the class struggle, such as this year's nurses' strike and the recent strike by Long Island Rail Road workers.

The job of Mamdani and the DSA is to blunt these social contradictions and suppress the struggles of the working class. Hence the theme of social unity and harmony in the mayor's remarks. "We have a love of our neighbors that can be heard in bodegas and nine dollar coffee shops alike," he preached.

To the same end he invoked once again last week's New York Knicks basketball championship as proof that all New Yorkers can come together in a spirit of joy and hope. Earlier the same day, Mamdani presided over an enormous ticker-tape parade for the basketball team. Wearing a Knicks jersey, he told the crowd that the team had "brought this city together in a way that we often only see in moments of tragedy, but in a moment of pure joy this time."

At another point, speaking of his naysayers, he said, "After all, they told us, surely government couldn't both fill potholes and provide universal childcare... My friends, if these past six months have proved anything, it is that these are false choices."

In fact, his first six months in office have seen the abandonment of all his campaign promises of social reform, from free buses to taxing the rich to reforming the New York Police Department.

Mamdani's support for the NYPD's army of 30,000 cops, its billionaire heiress commissioner Jessica Tisch, its specially armed anti-terrorist unit, its mass surveillance apparatus, and its collaboration with ICE has become so blatant that even the New York DSA leadership was forced to issue a statement criticizing it on Friday.

This is in addition to pro-business ventures such as his Commission of Government Efficiency (COGE) to streamline city departments and his "Block by Block" housing program, which is intended to accelerate the privatization of public housing in the city.

Eruptions of the class struggle such as the nurses' strike and the walkout by LIRR workers exposed the class axis of his administration and the DSA itself. Mamdani was silent on Democratic Governor Kathy Hochul's scabbing on the nurses' strike and launched his own scab bus operation during the LIRR strike.

Sanders' speech was a similar attempt to channel social opposition into the dead end of bourgeois electoral politics

and the Democratic Party. He began by listing DSA and "progressive" Democrats running in elections across the US, noting that Janice Lewis George, a "Democratic socialist," had won her primary and was set to become the next mayor of Washington, D.C, the nation's capital.

There are two processes involved here. There is the growing political radicalization of the working class and sections of the middle class, and there is the ever greater integration of the DSA into the Democratic Party for the purpose of giving this instrument of Wall Street, the military and the CIA a phony "progressive" face.

Sanders made his usual denunciations of the oligarchy, without mentioning the capitalist system that produces oligarchic rule. He too was careful not to mention the war in Iran. Nor did he refer to the attacks on immigrants and democratic rights.

Highly revealing was his call for raising the minimum wage. "Twenty bucks an hour, that is a living wage," he said. Further on he declared, "No teacher should be making less than \$60,000 a year."

These are, in fact, poverty wages. Twenty dollars an hour provides an annual income of \$41,600. With two breadwinners, this comes to \$83,200 a year. A two-income family at \$60,000 per worker makes \$120,000 a year. But according to a SmartAsset study, a working family of four in New York City requires \$337,875 to live comfortably. To live decently—covering necessities without constant financial stress—a household requires \$150,000 to \$200,000.

So the great vision of "progress" advanced by Mamdani, Sanders and the DSA within the framework of capitalism amounts, at best, to deprivation for workers and almost unimaginable levels of wealth for the rulers. This is neither socialism nor progress. In fact, the reality of capitalism in mortal crisis is even worse—world war, dictatorship, worsening poverty for the masses. Such is the trap being set by the pseudo-left Democrats.



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