

Mamdani hits the campaign trail for Hochul, governor of strikebreaking and police repression

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New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani is taking a more active role in supporting Governor Kathy Hochul for re-election. Mamdani, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), endorsed Hochul, a right-wing Democrat, on February 5, in the midst of the New York City nurses' strike.

Last week, Mamdani released a campaign video on social media in which he called Hochul “the real deal for New Yorkers.” He said he was “looking forward to being out there with her on the trail in the weeks to come” before the November 3 election. The two are expected to appear together in the final weeks of the campaign.

Republican Bruce Blakeman is Hochul's opponent in the gubernatorial race. Blakeman, a loyal follower of Trump, has been campaigning on a program of tax cuts, stricter policing and support for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). On the fundamental questions—the police, the defense of business interests and the attacks on workers—there is little to distinguish the two. The election, like many others that will be held across the country in November, presents a choice between two right-wing candidates of the ruling class.

Hochul leads Blakeman by 9 to 19 points in recent polls. She does not need Mamdani to win. His campaigning for her takes on added significance, reflecting the “socialist” mayor's continuing rightward trajectory, which began even before he was sworn in.

Hochul is a corporate Democrat of long standing, a former aide to Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan who became governor in 2021 when Andrew Cuomo resigned over allegations of sexual harassment.

In his campaign video, Mamdani claimed that Hochul “actually fights for working families in New York.”

This statement is an attempt to cover up Hochul's anti-labor record. When 15,000 New York City nurses struck in January, Hochul declared an emergency that allowed the hospitals to bring in replacement nurses from out of state, three days before the strike began.

When about 3,500 Long Island Rail Road workers struck in May, Hochul denounced the strikers as “reckless” and “the highest-paid workers of any railroad in the nation.” About 40,000 New York City subway and bus workers have been working under a contract that expired May 15, and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which Hochul controls, is offering raises of 2 percent a year (far below inflation), and demanding givebacks and higher employee contributions to health insurance.

Hochul has championed big business, not the working class. She has repeatedly refused demands to raising taxes on the rich. “We're not raising taxes in the state of New York,” she declared in January, rejecting Mamdani's own request for a tax on the wealthy. A week later, he endorsed her. Instead, she has emphasized tax benefits for real estate developers and other business incentives.

Hochul has also been a consistent advocate of the police and repression. A steadfast supporter of Israel and its “right to defend itself,” Hochul defended the NYPD's violent clearing of the encampment at Columbia University in 2024 and offered the State Police to assist. Her much-publicized ICE law, passed with the state budget in May, does nothing to stop the raids and arrests carried out by federal agents across the state.

The embrace of this record is yet another step in Mamdani's steady march to the right. One of his first

acts as mayor-elect was to announce that he would keep the billionaire heiress and Zionist Jessica Tisch as police commissioner. Earlier this month, after an ICE agent shot 28-year-old immigrant Oscar Belgal in the Bronx, the NYPD's Strategic Response Group was sent against those who gathered to protest. Workers and youth called for Mamdani to fire Tisch. "Jessica Tisch is the police commissioner. I have no plans to change that," Mamdani responded.

The mayor also gave his support to Democratic House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, who seeks to become speaker of the House. Jeffries is a hawk on Russia, a loyal defender of Israel and an apologist for the genocide. Mamdani publicly renewed his support for Jeffries a day after the *New York Times* reported that Jeffries had met privately with Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and adviser, in a White House effort to find "common ground" with a likely Democratic House.

When Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu came to New York to address the UN General Assembly, Mamdani announced that he would not arrest the war criminal as he had promised to do during his mayoral campaign. Instead, he oversaw the NYPD's arrest of 104 anti-genocide protesters who sat down to block Netanyahu's motorcade near the UN on September 24. Moreover, the mayor's municipal strategy to combat antisemitism provides millions of dollars to Zionist organizations and equates opposition to the genocide with antisemitism.

In August, Mamdani filed suit to block a City Council bill that provides a one-time payment of up to \$10,000 to paraprofessional school aides. These poorly paid workers assist special education students with significant needs. The Council passed the bill 49–0. Mamdani let it become law rather than face an override, and then sued. Compounding the outrage, Mamdani claimed that the bill violates the Taylor Law, under which pay can be settled only at the bargaining table. This is the law that bans strikes by public employees and has sent their union leaders to jail.

But the most egregious example of Mamdani's move to the right is his "partnership" with the would-be dictator Trump. The two have met three times, at the White House last November, again on February 26, two days before the US attack on Iran, and on September 21 at Gracie Mansion, the mayor's official residence. During a press conference after their meeting, Mamdani

remained silent while Trump said of Iran, "In fact, I have meetings on that today," acknowledging that he was planning the next stage of the criminal war. By hosting Trump, Mamdani lent the fascist warmonger legitimacy at a time when Trump's approval rating has reached an all-time low.

Like these betrayals, Mamdani's active political support for Hochul refutes the DSA's claim to be rebelling against the Democratic establishment. Mamdani is embracing the most right-wing layers of the Democratic Party and prostrating himself before Trump. The DSA's congressional nominees, such as Claire Valdez and Darializa Avila Chevalier, who won their primaries in June, will behave in the same way.

The DSA's founder, Michael Harrington, was a protégé of Max Shachtman, who broke with the Trotskyist movement in 1940 and ended as a supporter of American imperialism. From its origins, the DSA has functioned as a faction of the Democratic Party, which it seeks to shield from left-wing opposition. Its real social base comprises affluent layers of the petty bourgeoisie, for whom it seeks a more favorable distribution of wealth within the given economic system.

Mamdani's election reflected opposition to both capitalist parties, as well as an ongoing process of radicalization. Workers and youth who are seeking a genuine alternative to capitalism will not find it in the DSA or any of the other pseudo-left organizations that share its social base. The working class needs its own party that is rooted in Marxism, as developed by Lenin and Trotsky and carried forward by the International Committee of the Fourth International. The Socialist Equality Party is that party, and all workers and youth who seek to fight inequality, war and dictatorship are encouraged to contact us.



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