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Zohran Mamdani's win: a vote against racism, a mandate for class struggle

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Mass demonstrations against the U.S.-backed genocide in Gaza helped fuel Mamdani's campaign, galvanizing Muslim and working-class voters across the city.

Democratic Socialist Zohran Mamdani's resounding victory for New York City mayor against billionaire-backed Andrew Cuomo was a vote against racism — and a direct rebuke to Trump's "Make America White Again."

The unabated Islamophobia in the campaign's final days was aimed at whipping up racism and division. Cuomo joined right-wing shock jocks who claimed Mamdani would "cheer for another Sept. 11." Trump called him a "communist," threatened to deport him — though Mamdani is a U.S. citizen born in Uganda to South Asian

parents — and vowed to cut off federal funds to a Mamdani-led city.

The [electoral map](#) tells the story. The wealthiest neighborhoods — the Upper East Side, TriBeCa, and longtime racist enclaves like Howard Beach — voted for Cuomo. But from Harlem and Washington Heights to the South Bronx, Jackson Heights, and the Black and Caribbean heart of Central Brooklyn, the working-class vote for Mamdani was overwhelming.

Cuomo, who made \$5 million last year and lives in Sutton Place, carried his wealthy neighbors and most of TriBeCa, where homes average over \$3 million. But money couldn't buy this election.

Despite \$40 million in Super PAC spending against him, Mamdani won more than a million votes — in what analysts say was the city's largest turnout in 50 years.

The fight against racism is the fight for working-class power

The problem of bigotry, racism, and white supremacy — now visible in Gestapo-like ICE raids and the militarized occupation of cities, many led by Black mayors — must be confronted head-on.

This cancer has divided the working class since the twin crimes of slavery and Indigenous genocide. Every blow against racism today is a strike at the heart of capitalist exploitation.

A campaign powered by workers and youth

Mamdani's campaign spoke directly to the grinding realities of working-class life — championing hospital workers, cab drivers, bodega owners, sanitation crews, and delivery drivers who keep New York running. His platform affirmed the right to affordable housing, food, free transit, and child care.

It was these workers — joined by young people alienated by capitalism, enraged by genocide, worried about the climate crisis, and open to socialism — who powered his victory. The campaign became a vehicle for struggle, not just for votes.

Gaza solidarity fueled the movement

Mamdani's win would have been impossible without the thousands of protests against the U.S.-backed genocide in Gaza and the heroic resistance of the Palestinian people.

These mobilizations galvanized oppressed communities — especially Muslim voters — to stand up. In another era, even a whisper of sympathy for Palestine could end a political career. That Mamdani won while defying U.S. imperialism marks a seismic shift in political consciousness.

Wall Street won't surrender

The struggle doesn't end with an election. Wall Street and the state that defends it — including the 50,000-strong NYPD — will fight to contain this movement.

Already, backroom deals and media spin aim to “manage” Mamdani and lower expectations among the 90,000 mostly young volunteers who fueled his campaign.

Our task is to raise those expectations, deepen them, and transform them into a fighting movement.

National repercussions

This victory reverberates far beyond New York. It strengthens resistance to Trump's MAGA bloc and the billionaires it serves. It could energize the fight against ICE raids and push labor toward militant tactics — including the general strike.

We know the limits of bourgeois elections and the Democratic Party's tendency to

co-opt radical energy and channel it toward imperialist war. But we also know this: Breakthroughs like Mamdani's can open doors to deeper class struggle.

Lenin's lesson on elections

Lenin argued that revolutionaries must engage in bourgeois elections — not to glorify them, but to reach and educate the masses where they are. To abstain is to abandon the field to capitalists and opportunists.

He insisted that revolutionaries contest power even in hostile institutions, exposing their limits while organizing for something beyond them.

That's the task before us now: to use this victory to connect every reform demand to the fight for a new system — one that dismantles capitalism, ends imperialist war, and builds socialism.

As *The Internationale*, the 19th Century socialist anthem sung by workers worldwide, declares: "We have been naught, we shall be all!"

