

Wave of resignations and attacks put indicted Adams administration on life support

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Amid the barrage of federal indictments and corruption investigations faced by New York City Mayor Eric Adams, the Democratic politician's inner circle is quickly falling by the wayside in an ongoing wave of resignations. While much is still up in the air, it appears that, amidst the mounting attacks on the Adams administration in the financial capital of America, it is now not a question of if, but rather when the mayor will be forced out of office.

A front page *New York Times* article Sunday on a “top fund-raiser and senior adviser for Mr. Adams”—Director of Asian American affairs Winnie Greco—who “has long had dealings with people and groups connected to China’s communist regime” represents the latest salvo in the effort to force Adams to resign or set up his removal. The report on Greco, who resigned following Adams’ indictment, cites her as a central fundraiser for Adams, responsible for raising hundreds of thousands of dollars. It also raises a parallel investigation of a former top aide to New York Governor Kathy Hochul accused of “acting illegally on behalf of the Chinese government.” By focusing on the Chinese “adversary’s” supposed connection to Adams, the *Times* is merging the campaign against the Democratic mayor with the campaign for preparations for conflict with China.

The September 26 federal indictments charged Adams with five counts of bribery, fraud and soliciting foreign campaign donations, including fraudulently obtaining more than \$10 million in public funding during his 2021 mayoral campaign and more than \$100,000 in luxury travel gifts from Turkish officials and businesspeople.

The alleged Turkish connection is only one component part of myriad corruption scandals extending throughout the city’s government which have led to continued resignations from top officials. These include:

- New York Police Department (NYPD) Commissioner Edward Caban, following a home raid by federal authorities connected to a probe on the NYPD shaking down nightclubs and directing NYPD funds to a restaurant owned by brother Richard Caban.
- The Banks brothers—Schools Chancellor David Banks

and Deputy Mayor Philip Banks—following raids and seizures carried out against them (and their younger brother, former transit official Terrance Banks) related to the awarding of city contracts through bribery.

- Senior adviser Tim Pearson, who oversaw shelter contracts to house the influx of migrants, after federal agents seized his phone as part of a corruption investigation. Pearson had a close relationship with Adams going back more than three decades, when they were both in the NYPD.
- Adams’ chief legal counsel Lisa Zornberg, who resigned effective immediately a few days after the indictment charges were unsealed.

- City Health Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasan, who has led city’s Department of Health and Mental Hygiene since 2022.

- First deputy mayor and longtime Adams ally Sheena Wright, who resigned last week. Wright married David Banks the weekend after the indictment against Adams.

The group of figures resigning one after another, nearly all of them individuals who have mentored Adams or worked closely with him throughout his political career, shows the effective collapse of his inner circle.

In addition, recent media reports say that interim NYPD commissioner and former FBI official Tom Donilon, who replaced Caban after his resignation last month, is expected to step down in the coming days following Donilon’s own federal raid just a week after being appointed. Current Sanitation Department head Jessica Tisch, who served as the NYPD’s deputy commissioner for information technology under Mayor Bill de Blasio and is part of the billionaire Tisch family, is being cited as a top contender for the soon-to-be open position.

Deputy mayor for housing, economic development and workforce Maria Torres-Springer was appointed by Adams last week to replace Wright. Torres-Springer was in the Bloomberg and de Blasio administrations and is married to the head of MTA Construction and Development Jamie Torres-Springer. As first deputy mayor, she will oversee daily operations of the city.

Since her elevation, Torres-Springer has been praised both big business and the trade union bureaucracy. Kathryn Wylde, president and CEO of Partnership for New York City—an organization of hundreds of top New York City CEOs—called Torres-Springer a “wise choice,” stating, “We have worked closely with Maria during three mayoral administrations and know she has the capabilities and character required to lead during a time of crisis.”

SEIU 32BJ President Manny Pastreich added, “New Yorkers deserve this type of leadership to manage the city’s critical operations at this moment,” while executive director of District Council 37 Henry Garrido said Torres-Springer is “extremely talented.”

While Adams ran a mayoral campaign that made him the darling of Wall Street—stating, “New York will no longer be anti-business,” after winning former Mayor Bloomberg’s endorsement—this didn’t stop the unions from calling him a “friend of labor” and gaining their support. DC 37 and SEIU 32BJ endorsed him in 2021, along with Transport Workers Union Local 100, the Hotel and Gaming Trades Council and the Amalgamated Transit Union, among others.

The disintegration of the administration of a right-wing mayor, who came into office only two and a half years ago saying he was “the future of the Democratic Party” cannot be understood except in the context of the deepening economic and political crisis in New York City and American capitalism as a whole.

As the WSWS recently wrote:

The demonization of immigrants has been a prominent feature of the Adams’ administration, with the Democratic mayor last year claiming that migrants “will destroy New York City.” ... Adams has used migrants as the scapegoat for a broader austerity agenda in New York City, which imposes sacrifices on working people in a city that is home to more millionaires than any other on the planet. He has close connections to Wall Street and the city’s real estate moguls and has led the austerity charge on behalf of big business, taking an axe to library funding, school budgets and other essential services, supposedly due to the costs of housing some 65,000 migrants.

The Democratic mayor has also used the crisis to eliminate in practice the legal requirement to provide housing for the homeless. With social tensions in the city on a hair trigger, the attack on migrants serves to pit one section of workers against another rather than at the corporate and financial elite who monopolize the resources of the city.

Adams has also overseen the deepening housing crisis and historic rent rises in New York, the disappearance of good-paying jobs amid a continued rise of low-paying gig work and the ongoing COVID pandemic and callous indifference to public health.

Adams, with his law-and-order rhetoric, had one main answer to this crisis—repression, along with a resolutely pro-business program. This included the militarization of the public transit system throughout the city as well as brutal NYPD attacks on anti-genocide student protests.

The discrediting of the Adams administration reflects the impossibility of maintaining any form of political stability under conditions of record social polarization and inequality. Behind this economic crisis lies a social powder keg that threatens to explode. Wall Street, the banks and big business were happy to help Adams into office, hoping that as the city’s second black mayor, he would use racial politics to block criticism as he pursued an austerity agenda. It is clear, however, that his usefulness is running out.

According to the *Times*, a recent email was circulating among Wall Street business leaders, “seeking to recruit a candidate for mayor from within the business community.”

There is even talk of former Democratic Governor Andrew Cuomo, forced to resign over a largely phony MeToo scandal in 2021, returning to public office, this time in City Hall.

Workers must draw their own conclusions. It is not only Adams who is discredited, but the whole Democratic Party, the party of big business, the military-intelligence apparatus and of the capitalist status quo. This is the party that produced Adams. He is only among the more blatant of the corrupt representatives of the ruling elite.

The answer must be to establish the political independence of the working class. The recent revelations of the crisis must be used to convince workers that the only progressive way forward is the fight for a socialist program.



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