

New York Mayor Eric Adams prostrates himself before Trump

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New York City's top Democrat, Mayor Eric Adams, took a 1 a.m. call last Monday, and rushed down to Washington to attend the inauguration of President Donald Trump. For the former police captain, a summons from the would-be dictator was more important than his scheduled plans, which including two events honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

It was remarkable and revealing that Adams cancelled his commitments for the King holiday to pay homage to Trump, given that the mayor has often falsely claimed that he is the target of harsh criticism and criminal indictments because of his race. (He is the second African American mayor of the city).

The display was particularly obscene because Trump's most notorious intervention into local politics in New York City, decades before he ran for president, was to mount a vicious racist campaign against the Central Park Five, innocent Black and Hispanic youth railroaded to prison in connection with a luridly publicized rape in the park in 1989. Trump paid for ads calling for the execution of the five, and has never acknowledged their innocence, more than 20 years after their full exoneration.

Adams has been cozying up to Trump for some time. After Trump's election victory, the mayor did everything possible to ingratiate himself with the president-elect. He increasingly expressed frustration with New York's "sanctuary city" regulations which currently restrict—at least formally—cooperation by city agencies, including the police, with federal authorities in the round-up of undocumented immigrants. Last month Adams hosted Trump's extreme right-wing "border czar" Tom Homan at the official mayoral residence, Gracie Mansion, where they discussed rewriting New York's sanctuary city laws.

During a press conference the day after the inauguration, Adams refused to criticize any of Trump's executive orders. "You shouldn't start out the gate criticizing. You should start out starting to collaborate,

starting to cooperate," he said. He also indicated support for Trump's vicious characterization of immigrants and a willingness to participate in mass roundups of the undocumented. "People who commit these violent crimes must be addressed and that's our conversation with ICE," Adams said.

It is noteworthy that Adams also refused to declare his opposition to ICE raids in "sensitive" institutions, such as schools and churches, a longstanding federal prohibition that Trump abrogated on Monday.

"That is all part of our conversations that we're having with ICE about these sensitive locations and other aspects of it. ... Our team know[s] how important it is to coordinate, and if you're not at the table, you're not able to give real good input. And that is our goal," said Adams.

Following the inauguration, Adams gave an interview to fascist commentator and arch-Trump supporter Tucker Carlson. He bitterly complained to Carlson about what he felt was ill-treatment by the Biden administration after his criticism of the White House's border policies. He related telling Biden that the influx of refugees into New York City in 2023 (because Texas Governor Greg Abbott ordered illegal busing of refugees from his state to dump them in Manhattan) "is a terrible problem that's playing out on the ground. We need to fix our border."

One obvious reason for Adams' groveling to Trump and his inner circle is that the mayor faces trial in April on federal corruption charges, including bribery, wire fraud and solicitation of contributions from foreign nationals. These encompass 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. Adams is eager to get a place on Trump's pardon list of gangsters, crooks and fascists.

He may also be preparing to switch parties and become

an all-out Trump loyalist. Adams is widely hated in New York City for his right-wing policies, defense of police brutality, and support for fiscal austerity and cuts in public services. He faces a stiff reelection campaign this year, with a slew of left-talking local officials challenging him for the Democratic mayoral nomination, usually tantamount to election in New York. He may be calculating that he can improve his own slim chances at reelection by running as an independent or even seeking the nomination of the Republicans.

Trump has his own reasons for reaching out to Adams, aside from his bottomless appetite for flattery and the debasement of his former critics. Like Adams, he has faced corruption charges in New York City, although he was convicted on state charges, not federal, and cannot pardon himself. Before the election, he suggested that both he and Adams had been targeted by the “deep state.”

The fascist president might be tempted to link a pardon of Adams to his hollow social demagogy, in which he has called himself a champion of workers, including minority workers. In his inaugural address, he claimed to have “set records” for support by black and Hispanic voters, although that is only in comparison to his previous dismal levels in 2016 and 2020.

There is more at stake than the grubby maneuvering of two right-wing political gangsters, however. They are brought together on the basis of substantial political agreement. Adams is only a particularly nauseating example of the general prostration of the Democratic Party before Trump, based on a common policy of war and austerity. As the WSWS noted in its Perspective on Jan. 22:

The response of the Democratic Party and the corporate media to Trump’s return to power underscores a basic fact: the entire political establishment serves the same oligarchic interests that Trump represents. Whatever tactical differences exist between the Democrats and Republicans—largely over foreign policy and the best methods of defending corporate profits—these factions are united in their subservience to the financial elite.

The groveling before Trump by the mayor of the largest city in the US, as part of the overall pledges of

cooperation from the Democrats, illustrates the futility of any remaining illusions that appealing to the Democrats can in any way defend the working class against the fascist program of the new administration.

The leading peddlers of such illusions are pseudo-left groups like the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA). The most prominent DSA member in New York City, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, denounced any left-wing criticism of Democrats, first defending Joe Biden, then Kamala Harris, thus helping pave the way for Trump’s victory.

The DSA’s candidate in the Democratic primary for mayor of New York City, Zohran Mamdani, has had almost nothing to say about the dangers of fascism posed by Trump and his second term. Mamdani’s entire campaign rests on the claim, disproven decade after decade, that it is possible to transform the Democratic Party and make it a force for social reform.

What is necessary to defend democratic rights in New York, including the right of undocumented immigrants to live and raise their families without fear, and for students and youth to protest the genocide in Palestine, is the independent mobilization of the working class.

Neither Ocasio-Cortez, Mamdani, nor their allies in other pseudo-left groups and the trade unions, will lift a finger to defend the immigrant communities which are the first targets of Trump’s onslaught against democratic rights. The working class must take independent action of its own.

Rank-and-file committees, independent of the trade union bureaucracy, must be formed among critical sections of workers, including educators, that will coordinate action with immigrant workers and youth. Neighborhood action committees are urgently needed to organize demonstrations, strikes and occupations of workplaces to defend immigrant workers.

This must be based on a perspective of a break with the two capitalist parties and their policies of war, austerity and dictatorship, on the basis of a socialist program that will unite the working class on a city, state, national, and international scale.



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