



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on November 6, 2025

In Power, Will Mamdani Be Socialist — or Sly?

Escape from New York is the name of a 1981 film. Now it's also, many fear, going to be a reality with Mayor-elect Zohran Kwame Mamdani's impending socialist makeover of NYC. Why, commentator Bill O'Reilly has predicted that his ascendancy will spark an exodus of 765,000-one million Big Apple residents. This, of course, would involve the loss of significant capital.

Yet this is all predicated on the idea that Mamdani's promises reflect principles more than positions of convenience. And while he is a radical, he's also a power seeker who surely aspires to higher office. So questions arise:



AP Images
Zohran Mamdani

Will Mamdani go the full socialist monty and risk crashing NYC?

Or will he, being the consummate politician he was on the campaign trail, practice some Machiavellian moderation?

Should he pursue the latter route, he not only will survive politically, but will certainly have a good excuse. "Tyrant Trump and the establishment are standing in the way of progress!" Mamdani will be able to say. "They're stymieing the people's agenda!"

("So I need even more power," would be the message — "'governor' comes to mind.")

Won't Lives on Can't Street?

Mamdani can't actually build a wall around NYC to keep people in, as was done in the "escape" movie. (It was only around Manhattan in the film.) And unlike Cold War communists, who also kept people captive via a wall, he won't enjoy absolute power. He's going to have to play well with others to get things done.

So while *USA Today* [laments](#) that "[n]ow we get to see full-blown socialism in action," well, maybe, maybe not. Just consider five obstacles confronting Mamdani, according to New York insiders. *Politico* [lists them](#) in this order:

1. "Donald Trump and the Federal Government."
2. "Legislative Wrangling in Albany."
3. "Campaign Fatigue" — Democratic NYC mayors usually have leisurely general election campaigns. But Mamdani had to work hard to get elected and now will have to hit the ground running. (Personally, I'm not so sure this matters much.)
4. "Democratic Rifts."
5. "Plus — No Big Deal — the Job."

As to the last point, Emperor Tiberius once said that governing Rome was like "holding a wolf by the ears." If true, well, then managing the Big Apple may at least be like holding a coyote by the ears.



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Politico elaborates:

The NYC mayor immediately becomes a manager of 300,000 cops, teachers, social workers and so many more. Mamdani will be faced with constant, complex choices — not to mention weathering the controversies and challenges that no one can anticipate, from police shootings to hurricanes to acts of mayhem that fill tabloids.

Promises, Promises — and Realities

Then there's that legislative wrangling. Mamdani outlined 10 to 12 policy proposals while campaigning, yet he'll lack the power to effectuate about half of them. As to specificity, here's a list (according to a Grok AI analysis):

- Proposal — “increase corporate tax rate from 8.85 percent to 11.5 percent.” Reality — set by state law; mayor proposes but can't enact alone.
- Proposal — “two percent flat tax on millionaires.” Reality — state jurisdiction.
- Proposal — “free buses citywide.” Reality — Metropolitan Transportation Authority (a state entity) controls fares; requires state funding/approval.
- Proposal — “end mayoral control of schools.” Reality — mayoral control is state-granted (expires 2026); changes need legislative renewal.
- Proposal — “free CUNY (City University of NY) tuition for all.” Reality — CUNY funding is state-controlled; city covers approximately 30 percent, but full free tuition requires state match.
- Proposal — “creation of Social Housing Development Authority (SHDA). Reality — involves state capital/financing; mayor can advocate but not establish alone.

In other words, to get any or all of these things done, Mamdani will have to go through the state Legislature and Governor Kathy Hochul. He'll have to deal with an entrenched political establishment.

Human Wrecking Ball?

This said, Mamdani can still do much damage. First, it appears that some NYC residents will leave just over the threat he poses. Wealthy rapper 50 Cent has reportedly already done so.

Second, Mamdani could spike crime by hamstringing the police (he has promised in the past to defund them). He has vowed to intensify NYC's “sanctuary” (read: illegal-alien enabling) status. And his rent-freeze plans could actually cause apartments to be taken off the market and thus ultimately increase housing costs. As U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) [put it](#), encapsulating the danger:

He's called to DEFUND police, ABOLISH prisons, LEGALIZE prostitution, and even attacked Jewish people and American law enforcement in the same breath.

This isn't just New York's problem — it's spreading to cities like Seattle, Minneapolis, and even Congress.

The radical Marxist wing is taking over the Democrat Party — and EVERY American should be alarmed.

The question is again, though: Will Mamdani be socialist or sly? Or will he be both to an extent?



Will He or Won't He?

For sure, Mamdani is a radical man. He has [expressed belief](#) in “seizing the means of production,” a communist tenet. He has paraphrased Karl Marx, [saying](#), “Each according to their need, each according to their ability.” He has also been seen giving the middle finger to a Christopher Columbus statue. And he has threatened to arrest ICE agents and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should they enter NYC’s jurisdiction.

Then there’s the group backing Mamdani and of which he’s a member, the Democratic Socialists of America. It will put pressure on him to deliver on his radical promises. It’s also true that during his victory speech, the mayor-elect didn’t exactly extend an olive branch to foes.

Then again, there’s that power lust. Mamdani is not a dumb man. As mentioned earlier, too, he certainly should realize that crashing NYC would crash his political fortunes.

And he’d have built-in excuses for not implementing his entire agenda. President Donald Trump has, after all, threatened to cut off funding to NYC in response to a Mamdani victory. And then there is that state Democratic machine to contend with. So we can hear it now: “The oligarchs are standing in the way of the revolution!”

For this reason, there’s an argument to be made that perhaps Trump *shouldn’t* take action against NYC. Make sure the responsibility is all on Mamdani, is the idea.

So what will the socialist mayor do? He is intelligent enough to understand his policies’ risks. Yet as Professor Thomas Sowell has noted, “It doesn’t matter how smart you are if you don’t think.”

If Mamdani’s radicalism-shaped emotional foundation and lack of virtue hold sway, he may crash as he ascended: meteorically. And while this would involve short-term pain, it’s likely the best outcome for NYC and America.



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