

A Short Trip to Mamdanistan
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We are living in some of the darkest times politically in the history of this country, by my opinion at least. But when visiting New York City in early March of 2026, I couldn't help but feel, not only hopeful, but almost certain of what this nation is truly capable of. I took the Amtrak's Northeast Regional train from Richmond. A very short walk from home, I boarded at Main St. Station, 6 hours later I was dropped a few blocks from my hotel in midtown Manhattan. Those familiar with the route will know you don't see the Manhattan skyline as you approach it. I've been to the city once before, a senior trip in high school with friends almost a decade ago. We drove in from home, a strong contrast to the current trip. It was much different being dropped in the center of it all than slowly embedding yourself in the depth of NY. It felt much lighter and more navigable. I visited again this time with close Richmond friends Nef, Cat, and her mom Christy. We stayed for 3 nights, doing mostly standard NY activities, but spending plenty of time just sitting outside relaxing. But I won't go on about our itinerary.

Firstly, I was anxious to see if I could feel the energy on the ground following the election of Zohran Mamdani, the city's first socialist and Muslim mayor. To me his election felt like an inflection point in Americas story, certainly not a change in velocity while under the Trump regime, but a change of acceleration. Though there was nothing obvious to note. No signs of the beloved mayor, even near city hall. But as I rode the subway, I contemplated what it took to build this underground train network, a shining example of what human beings can accomplish. At one point in history, we sat around and dreamed about what could be. But decades of corporate elites plundering their own people and their puppet politicians telling us LESS is possible (very much so including the democratic party), has worn the hearts of Americans into a paste. In this moment though, on the train, realizing we just elected a socialist mayor in maybe the most significant city on earth, I just knew that something had snapped, we've had enough subjugation...

Secondly, beyond politics, I borrowed some new perspective from the city. Everywhere I go I do my best to learn every lesson I can, I took many from New York. But I've thought on how to write this for months, so I'll just keep them to myself. I'll do as Mamdani, and let the work speak for itself.

Forward,
Jimmy