

Why DSA Should Attempt to Lead the Movement against the War on Iran

written by Dan La Botz | March 15, 2026



The Democratic Socialist of America (DSA) with 100,000 members nationally and important experience in organizing campaigns, should put itself forward as a leader of the movement against the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran. In fact, for the good of the American anti-war movement, for the good of the Iranian people and the people of the region, it is important that DSA take the lead.

The war, now a regional war affecting the entire world, has already claimed thousands of lives and it will kill many more. Many of the victims are civilians, like the 150 children killed by an American missile at a girls school in Iran. U.S. soldiers have also been killed. The war will lead to rising prices for gasoline and everything else, affecting the entire American and world economy. Working people here in America and around the world will pay the price, in fact they are already paying with their lives and their well-being.

The groups now attempting to lead the anti-war movement—the Workers World Party, the Party of Socialism and Liberation (PSL), and ANSWER—will make it impossible to build a strong, healthy movement that can attract the American people. All of those groups have for years supported the Islamic Republic of Iran, a theocratic totalitarian state that has killed tens of thousands of its citizens for participating in pro-democracy protests. The American people will not want to march against the Iran war under the flags of the Islamic Republic.

Those groups argue that because Iran has been an enemy of the United States and Israel, and because it is now fighting them, that the Iranian government is an anti-imperialist nation that deserves our political support. Their position of support for the Iranian state made it impossible for them to rally or even to offer full-throated support to the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement in Iran in 2022 or the reform movement protests of 2025-26.

Some in DSA want to join with Workers World, PSL, and ANSWER to build the antiwar movement. That would be a grave political mistake. DSA members should consider how their association with pro-Iranian government groups will affect their electoral campaigns and their elected officials. Zohran Mamdani’s mayoralty and the campaigns of other DSA members will be jeopardized by such an alliance. *The New York Times* and other news media will conduct investigations that reveal such connections. *The New York Post*, *Fox News* and other rightwing media will publicize the association in an attempt to discredit DSA.

Rather than joining the small, existing anti-war movement with its current leaders, DSA, with its large numbers, talented members, and organizing experience, should put itself forth as a leader of

the movement. It should enter into a coalition with the groups like Indivisible that have organized the No Kings protests, most of whom are liberal democrats and independents, and many of whom are progressive activists, while some are democratic socialist. DSA should organize with them. As all good organizers have always done, DSA should organize those to its *right*, not those like PSL who falsely claim to stand on the left. There is nothing leftist about support for the authoritarian governments of Iran, Russia, and China as those group have.

DSA, unlike Workers World, PSL, and ANSWER, should at the same time demonstrate a consistent anti-imperialism, opposing the imperialist wars of Israel and the United States, but also opposing Russian imperialism and supporting Ukraine. Support for Ukraine means defending its right to sovereignty and self-determination, including its right to get arms wherever it can.

When an organization campaigns, whether for a candidate or for a cause, it changes itself and it changes its relationship with other groups and with the public. A serious DSA anti-war campaign, based on democratic socialist principles, calling for ending the war on Iran and self-determination for the Iranian people, will bring out the best in DSA, clarifying its politics and unifying its membership.

DSA has the numbers and the wherewithal to play a leading role in the anti-war movement with allies like those in No Kings, and it should step up now.