

From: Laura Nahmias <lnahmias@politico.com>

Date: September 10, 2015 at 8:35:38 PM EDT

To: Mayor's Press Office

Subject: Pool Report, de Blasio on Late Night with Seth Meyers

Mayor Bill de Blasio made his first ever appearance on NBC's "Late Night with Seth Meyers" Thursday. De Blasio, the show's second guest (the first was actor Neil Patrick Harris) walked on to the stage set in a steely gray suit and blue tie and shook hands with his host.

"I'm so happy to have you here," Meyers began.

"You know it's funny because I feel like we've been doing our jobs about the same amount of time."

"Yes," de Blasio said.

"I feel like, as mayor, you must like getting a lot of feedback. But it must be so hard in New York, because New Yorkers are so shy, they never want to let you know."

De Blasio played along. "I'm like, just begging them, tell me how you feel! "Let it out!"

Meyers asked de Blasio about his Red Sox fandom, which he shares with the mayor. De Blasio conceded that he's always been a Red Sox fan but said the Mets have been looking pretty good recently.

Meyers pivoted to the subject of de Blasio's relationship with the New York City press corps.

"One thing, I think, for any New York mayor as well, is you're going to have a contentious relationship with the press. The press is, in New York obviously, very hard on mayors."

"You have sort of been a little bit back and forth with the press. For example, you recently put together a mock New York post headline and you tweeted it yourself," Meyers said, before flashing up an image of the mock Post cover on the screen. The studio audience laughed.

"What makes you want to engage with them like that?" Meyers asked, laughing.

"We want to help them do their job," de Blasio replied. "We sort of said, let's summarize what they're saying in one handy headline. I think it worked beautifully."

Then Meyers congratulated the mayor on one of his most well-known accomplishments, implementation of a citywide system of universal pre-kindergarten in New York City, which is in its second year.

"This is the kind of thing we have to do in this day and age if we're going to help our young people thrive in a modern world," de Blasio said of the program.

"I hope, and I say this humbly, I hope what we're doing in New York City sets a pace for other cities around the country other states to say, 'You know what? all our kids deserve early childhood education too.'"

Meyers agreed. "I would like to see that too," he said. "I think it's a wonderful initiative."

Meyers noted that de Blasio had previously worked for Hillary Clinton, the frontrunner for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination, whom the mayor has repeatedly declined to endorse.

Meyers tried to elicit an endorsement decision from de Blasio. He did not succeed.

"You know, I said to my staff, Seth, that if you really wanna make news, you've got to go on late night. You just break all our news," de Blasio said.

He paused for dramatic effect, before adding,

"But I don't have any for you today."

Meyers sighed.

"It's called a build up. Sorry to let you down there man," De Blasio said.

Meyers asked if it was safe to assume de Blasio would not be endorsing Republican Donald Trump.

"I have to tell you, this is a little bit of news for you," de Blasio began.

"I finally found something to endorse about Donald Trump. I wasn't into the red hat, you know the garish red hat wasn't working for me," de Blasio said. (Trump often wears a red baseball hat that reads "Make America Great Again" at his campaign events).

"The baseball cap that's like flat-brimmed?" Meyers asked.

"Yeah," de Blasio said.

"That was not right, the hair is not right, but just in the last few days, Donald Trump said that millionaire and billionaire hedge fund managers should have to pay the same tax rate as the rest of us," de Blasio said.

He was referring to Trump's support for the elimination of the carried interest tax loophole at the federal level, an idea both Hillary Clinton and Republican presidential candidate Jeb Bush have endorsed, and which de Blasio has pressed for repeatedly, most recently on Thursday afternoon, when he published an op-ed in the Huffington Post calling for the loophole's elimination and attended a film screening on the subject downtown.

Meyers asked de Blasio about "desnudas," the topless painted women who solicit donations from tourists in exchange for photos in Times Square, whom de Blasio has said should no longer have free rein in the area.

De Blasio told Meyers he'd better regulate all the performers in the area, whom the city sees as businesses.

Then Seth Meyers showed a video clip from February 2014 of de Blasio meeting the Naked Cowboy in Times Square, where de Blasio said it was “an honor” to meet the street performer, who wears next to nothing and poses with tourists for photos.

“I have to say that was a kinder, gentler time,” de Blasio said of the video. Between then and now, “the Times Square situation has changed a lot,” he said.

“This is going to be an equal opportunity enforcement situation, so Naked Cowboy and his days of naked bliss are going to change a little bit.”

That line elicited a hearty laugh from Meyers and the studio audience.

“I think you have one of the hardest jobs in America,” Meyers offered.

After a commercial break, de Blasio tried his hand his own late night monologue

Seth Meyers directed his audience to listen as the mayor delivered a “new public service announcement.”

Then, de Blasio, who was seated at a desk mocked up to look like he was sitting in the Mayor’s Office, launched into a speech.

He greeted city residents, and started to tout his administration’s accomplishments.

“We’re pursuing the boldest affordable housing plan ever, our universal pre-kindergarten program is strengthening the city’s educational system, and just last week we announced this was the safest summer in 20 years as we work every day to make our streets even safer,” he said.

“But one message I’d like to impress upon all New Yorkers, is this. Look up from your damn phones,” he said.

“Seriously, what the hell are you doing?” This line resonated with the audience, who laughed and cheered and applauded.

“This isn’t downtown Wichita, it’s New York City. People need to get where they’re going. The last thing they want is some oblivious ding dong standing at the top of the subway stairs watching Transformers 3 on their cell phone,” he said.

“Hey morons, I’ve got one word for you! Move!”

He urged New Yorkers to be considerate on the city’s subways.

“Don’t be the guy that keeps the fifty pound backpack on the subway, man, come on!” he said.

“And one more thing — I swear to God if I see another standing pregnant woman in the subway because no one gave up their seat I’m going to rip their arms off. And I can do it too, I’m like eight feet tall! Seriously, just try me hombre!” (The mayor was exaggerating, likely for comic effect. He is in fact 6 feet and 5 inches tall.)

“The bottom line is this, we have to share this city, so be considerate and treat everyone with respect. In other words pull your heads out of your asses,” he said, with a dramatic emphasis, before wishing all New Yorkers a good night.

Laura Nahmias

Reporter, Politico New York

LNahmias@Politico.com

twitter: @nahmias

mobile: 718-612-3751