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**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY WITH  
COMMISSIONER BRATTON AT ONE POLICE PLAZA**

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Thank you, commissioner. Thank you for your leadership in what's been a very difficult time for our city, and we appreciate that you've been steadfast throughout.

It is a very painful journey for everyone, to go from the hospital where the commissioner and I and so many others went to see our fallen officers, prayed over them, met the family members – you can only imagine what a family member is going through at that moment, where their lives have suddenly been made unimaginable – that everything that they thought and believed would be a part of their lives is suddenly gone. And that night was painful for all of us. I know a lot of people standing around me have been a part of many nights like that. It's something you can never get used to, trying to console families who have lost so much.

We follow that today by going out to each family's home – first to the Ramos family, and then to the Liu family. And they are in tremendous pain, and they are worried deeply – in the Ramos' family's case, two teenagers – reminding me of my own children – who now don't have a father. The family is extraordinary – the Ramos family – they are close-knit, warm, large family, a family that really believes – they have strong Christian faith, they have a strong sense of family, they strongly believe in public service. Officer Ramos was extraordinarily proud to be a member of the NYPD, and all of that is giving the Ramos family some ability to find strength in the middle of this pain, but still you have two teenage young men, good young men, who no longer have a father because of an assassin. And it was very difficult for Chirlane and I to talk to two kids – that of course we saw the parallel to our children – and hear them trying to put on a brave face, trying their best to make sense of such a painful situation. They were incredibly admirable, impressive young men. I told them that I lost my own dad when I was 18, and that as painful and difficult as it is, families come together – people find a way forward. And I also told them we would all be there for them – that the NYPD family would be there for them, and the people of New York City, and the family of New York would be there for them. And we will be.

And we went to see the Liu family – and this family is feeling such a profound pain and fear. For the parents, this was their only child, their only son. They feel distraught, like so much of what they live for is gone. His wife of only two months – I can't tell you how painful it is to talk to a young woman who had just begun this beginning of a whole new life, was looking forward to building a family, and now, her husband was gone in an instant. And again, they found strength in the other family members who were there, and I want to thank the NYPD and our colleagues in the federal government who are doing a fantastic job working to get other family members from China back so they can be of support to the Lius at this incredibly difficult time. So, we just let them know, also, that they were part of a larger family now, that we would stand by them throughout.

And all I can say is, this is a time for every New Yorker to think about these families. Focus on these families. Put them first.

We can do that by respecting their pain, respecting their time of mourning. I'm asking everyone – and this is across the spectrum – to put aside protests, put aside demonstrations. Until these funerals are past, let's focus just on these families, and what they have lost. I think that's the right way to try and build towards a more unified and decent city.

And I also think it's important to recognize we can't let these tragedies happen in the future, whenever we have the power to do something about it. I said, some days back, that anyone who knows of any effort to harm a police officer needs to report it to the police immediately, needs to intervene personally in any way they can. This is another example. Once this very troubled individual – a career criminal, a troubled individual with a clearly, deeply emotionally troubled past – once this individual posted on Facebook his intention – anyone who sees that has the obligation to call the police immediately and report it. We cannot take anything lightly. We always say – and we've learned as a society because of tragedies like 9/11, and everything since – we've learned, if you see something, say something. I've seen with my own eyes New Yorkers quickly run over to a police officer and point out a bag left unattended, and that is good and important, but this is another thing we have to do now, in a social media age. Any statement suggesting violence towards a police needs to be reported to the police so we can stop future tragedies. That is our obligation. The attack on these two officers – the assassination of these two officers – was an attack on the city of New York as a whole – on every one of us, on our values, on our democracy. We cannot tolerate such attacks. Anyone with the ability to help us stop them must step forward.

So, I just ask everyone, in this season that is supposed to be a season of understanding and joy – remember the meaning of this season, but first and foremost, remember what these families are going through. Put them first.

Commissioner?

[...]

**Police Commissioner Bill Bratton:** With that, we are now available for questions for any of us here at the podium.

**Question:** Commissioner Bratton, can you explain for members of the public, why it is so important to find [inaudible] a two-and-a-half-hour gap, please?

**Commissioner Bratton:** Actually, let me ask Chief Boyce to speak to that. It is the idea of affirming that in fact, he was a solo player, and just additional evidence that might be gathered – did he have conversations with people to flesh out his motivation? What was going on in his mind in these last two hours of his life? They've done a great job, literally, following him from Maryland up to the Atlantic Terminal, and then he dumps the phone and we lose him.

**Chief of Detectives Robert Boyce:** The first part of it is, we owe it to the family to find out what happened and that's our main concern here. To the families – I've had to explain to his mother and father – Officer Ramos – and his wife, as well as the Liu family. It's very difficult to do. We owe it to them to find out exactly what happened. We're also looking for other witnesses to paint a better picture of this individual to see if he told anybody beforehand. So that's why we, you know, we're seeking to build this case up, so we know going forward, exactly who spoke to this man and may have stopped him.

**Mayor:** I just want to – let me just add first – the point that I think here, that again, the commissioner said there had been copycat threats – anything like that needs to be taken very seriously. I just to emphasize that the simplest thing any New Yorker can do is call 9-1-1. I want to make sure there's – and I'm asking all of our colleagues in the media to please get this message out – if you hear someone make a physical threat against a

police officer, if you see something on social media that is a threat against a police officer, call 9-1-1 immediately. We would much rather get too much information than too little.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Mayor:** Yeah, go ahead, Mark.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Mayor:** Mark, I think the point here is, we're in a very difficult moment. Our focus has to be on these families. And we are in a season, again, that suggests we have to find a way forward. It's supposed to be a time of peace. It's supposed to be a time of reconciliation. I have, throughout my public life, expressed tremendous respect for the NYPD. It's very well documented. I will continue to. I also think, in a democracy, that people express their desire for a more fair society, and that's right and proper as well, but they must do it peacefully. There can be no violence. There certainly can be no violence against those who protect us and who represent our society. The police are our protectors and they must be respected as such. But, I think the most important reflection – in answer to your question – the most important reflection I can give you right now is, in this tragedy, maybe we find some way of moving forward. That would be an appropriate way to honor these fallen officers and their families that are in pain right now – somehow knit our city together, bring police and community closer together. I've always believed we could. There's never been a doubt in my mind that we're working towards a day when there is greater harmony between police and community. It is achievable. It must be achieved. And Commissioner Bratton, to his tremendous credit, has devoted his entire life to this mission. And I learn from him every day about how much perseverance it takes to get there. But we have to get everyone to move away from anger and hatred. If there are differences, we have to address them peacefully. We have to give people faith that their concerns can be heard peacefully, across the spectrum. And we have to move forward. It's not going to be the kind of city it was meant to be if there is a division between our police and our community.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Commissioner Bratton:** [inaudible] I can stop you right there. Nobody has owned up to those messages. You find that delegate that, basically, was going to stand up say that he sent that message. The men and women of this department have been – before and after this awful event, this awful tragedy – doing what we expect of them. They're New York City police officers, sworn to protect and serve. And they're out doing just that. There has been no indication whatsoever, of any stepping back from that responsibility. In this day and age of social media, anybody can put up any posting and claim to be from any organization. And so, in terms of that issue, this department has and will continue to serve the residents of New York in a way that has allowed this city to become the safest large city in the country, but one that always – as in every city in America – where our officers are at risk of those, whether deranged or otherwise, would seek to attack them. And we had the unfortunate attack, certainly, over the weekend. But that type of social media mongering, if you will, it has had no impact on the delivery of services by our cops. They are the best in the country and they're continuing to serve. Thank you for the question.

**Mayor:** Dave.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Mayor:** Well I think we have to transcend that, I really do. We have a deeply troubled career criminal – previously suicidal individual – who did this heinous crime, who assassinated two police officers. It's a horrible thing and I emphasize the one immediate lesson to learn from that is – anytime we have any evidence, we as citizens need to step forward and act. We need to protect our police as they protect us. That is what we can learn from this troubled individual's horrible actions, but you have to separate the various things going on here. And

in a democracy it is our obligation to do so. It is our obligation to do so. We have people who are trying to work for a more fairer society. Anyone who does that nonviolently, I respect that. I respect our men and women in uniform. Those are not contradictory thoughts. In fact, the very question – I don't blame you for the question, I think you are reflecting what a lot of people are saying, but think about it – does that suggest that therefore police and community can never come together, that there always has to be a wall between them? No, we can't allow that. We cannot allow that. We have to keep working for harmony between police and community, and for understanding. So, I believe we will transcend this. I believe we'll overcome this.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Mayor:** Dave, go ahead. Dave.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Mayor:** First of all, I think we need to honor the families by not getting into a back-and-forth. There'll be a time for me to talk about my own personal views. I will simply say I think that what he said was a mistake and it was wrong, but I am not going to elaborate because we need to focus on the families. We need to focus on healing. And I think that's what leaders do. I think leaders have to rise above the fray and the anger and the back-and-forth – and take us somewhere. So, I am going to do everything I know how to do to help move us forward. Andrew. Andrew.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Commissioner Bratton:** Don't we wish the technology were like it's portrayed on television and on the movies? We are moving on fairly quickly, fortunately. And I will ask Chief Boyce to speak to the particulars, which he did yesterday, about the controversy someone is trying to create between this department and Baltimore. There is no controversy. It's an awful tragedy that occurred – that one of the things that I think you are well aware of that we're investing over \$160 million in money that the mayor and Cyrus, our district attorney from Manhattan, have moved forward – is the equipping of all of our officers with smartphones, and 6,000 of our police vehicles with tablets, that inter-messaging system where we were going to receive a picture – we could instantly send that picture and information to every cop on their post no matter where they were. Even if that information had come in half hour, hour before – at most, an officer sitting in a radio car would have received was an alert on the description of a black male, mid-twenties, that basically is making threats against police officers. So, that issue in terms of timeliness and the current state of the art, if you will, for advancing information between agencies – we're continually trying to find better ways to improve that. Let me ask, Detective Chief Boyce to speak to the particulars of this case, because there has been some confusion on timelines, and I thought we made it quite clear yesterday about that, but obviously some of you may not have been at that press event yesterday.

**Chief Boyce:** We investigated this fully yesterday. Baltimore County Police Department were made aware in around 1:30 in the afternoon of this threat on the Instagram account by the victim's – the girlfriend's, ex-girlfriend's family. They immediately got the information, called the 70 Precinct. The 70 Precinct officer did a great job. She immediately notified her sergeant. Her sergeant told her to call inter-city correspondents, as is our operating procedure. All things were done exactly the way they were supposed to do. Within about 45 minutes later, we had a document to move on of this individual. One minute after that document was faxed, the double homicide occurred. So, there was no – there was no lapse on anybody's part. They had been great partners to us in this investigation, the Baltimore City Police Department – Baltimore County Police Department.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Chief Boyce:** Are you referring to the Union Square Park? Which is basically, he is standing there like anybody else. Taking – watching the picture of an event go by – of a protest go by. He was not participating in it; he was just taking a picture of it.

**Question:** Sound as well?

**Chief Boyce:** Sound as well, yes.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Chief Boyce:** Just the noise from the protests, that's it.

**Commissioner Bratton:** Speaking if I may, for the – as on the side on the technology issue. We're spending a huge sum of money over the next year on technology for this department. You're aware of a lot of it. We've talked about it. One of the systems we're buying is called ShotSpotter, and that's an acoustic detection system where we're able to triangulate in areas where we have high rates of gunfire, the majority of which, oftentimes, is not even reported to us if there is no injury – that we're installing those devices now in certain precincts around the city. It is not up and operational yet, but in an ironic twist, one of the first systems that's been put in as part of this installation of the system caught the four shots that were fired on Saturday and mapped it exactly where the incident occurred. So, again it's – technology is constantly evolving. This type of technology is going to be a great assistance to us in the future. The mayor has been a champion of it from the get-go when he was first introduced to it. Part of the reason we want this technology is that in an incident like occurred on Saturday – two officers down, not able to communicate radio for help – we would have, if the system had been fully operational, been able to start dispatching cars to this area because we had documented – even before 9-1-1 calls started coming in that shots were fired at that location. So it is, just again, one of the ironies of the events of Saturday that the technology that will in fact, in the future, help to save lives is in the process of now being installed.

**Question:** Mayor, you referred to the protesters as people who are working to advance justice in society. The chants that we're hearing at protests – "NYPD KKK" "How do you spell racist – KKK" – would you be comfortable with your young adults in your household chanting like this at the protests, and we're hearing this [inaudible]

**Mayor:** No, of course not.

**Question:** What do you make of these specific – [inaudible] who are literally getting in cops' faces and yelling at them "murderer"?

**Mayor:** We've talked about this so many times. I'm going to talk about it again. And now the question is, what are you guys going to do. What are you guys going to do? Are you going to keep dividing us? I'm not talking about every single one of you, but let's get real. Just in that question – 25,000 people marched down one of our streets a few days back, absolutely peaceful, no chants like that, peacefully calling for what they believed in as American citizens, and the NYPD protected them. And I told people at the time – I've said it repeatedly – I got calls from all over this country with admiration for the NYPD, for the way it protected people's democratic rights. I heard from so many protesters who appreciated the NYPD. I heard from NYPD officers and leaders who said they saw peaceful protest, respectful protest. What you manage to do is pull up the few who do not represent the majority, who are saying unacceptable things, who shouldn't be saying those things, and they – some who actually physically attack police officers, which I've said is absolutely unacceptable. We will prosecute them to the fullness – every – fullest – everyone must participate in finding those individuals, providing information to the police, intervening to stop them, alerting the police. I will keep saying this over and over. The question is will you tell the world about it. Because you all are part of this too. So, yes, there are some bad people, who say inappropriate things. There are some people who say hateful things. They have no

place in these protests. They are not what I'm talking about. I am talking about – excuse me – I am talking about the vast majority of New Yorkers, like the vast majority of Americans, who believe in peaceful democratic process. I don't care where they are in the political spectrum. The vast majority of our citizens are good and decent people who do not say negative things, racist things, nasty things to police – threatening things to police. The few who want conflict attempt that. And unfortunately, so many times, you guys enable that. I don't see reports on the many decent good people. I don't see reports on the everyday cops who do the exemplary thing, and hold the line, and show restraint and discipline no matter what invective is hurled at them. You know what? You –

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Mayor:** I am telling you over again.

**Question:** – people throwing fake blood on your police [inaudible]

**Mayor:** I am telling you over again, that's how you want to portray the world, but we know a different reality. There are some people who do that. It's wrong. It's wrong. They shouldn't do that. It's immoral, it's wrong, it's nasty, it's negative – they should not do that, but they, my friend, are not the majority. Stop portraying them as the majority.

**Question:** Follow up on this [inaudible] Twice today you've called on demonstrators, or leaders, to have a hiatus [inaudible] grieving process, bury the dead – are you going to have any direct communication to the protest organizers, to do exactly that, or ask them to do –

**Mayor:** Yes, absolutely. We've done that already, and we will continue to.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Mayor:** Hold on one second, I'm sorry.

**Question:** Forgive me if you've answered this, but are you planning to attend each funeral, and –

**Mayor:** Absolutely.

**Question:** And what would be your desire, in [inaudible]?

**Mayor:** The same – we've – unfortunately, I've been to funerals for police officers, fire officers, sanitation officers. We'll do the same thing, and show respect for them and their family.  
Erin.

**Question:** [inaudible] this morning that some [inaudible] and he also said that what happened was a direct [inaudible]?

**Mayor:** Well, I'll let him, obviously, define his own words. On the – on the first question, I will keep reaching out to everyone who serves this city. They don't have to all agree with me – [inaudible] that 35,000 people, almost, in uniform in the NYPD – I think they are, like every other part of our society, a group of people with a lot of different viewpoints, a lot of different backgrounds. I've said repeatedly – many, many journalists have said, do you think police officers think – and I always stop them and say, there are 35,000 individuals. They all have their own views, like every other individual in our society. So, the way I would frame it is, I think some people feel one way, others feel another way, but to me, that's not what I need to pay attention to. I need to support them regardless of what they feel. And I have. The commissioner will tell you about the almost \$400 million dollars in additional investment we've put into the safety of our officers, beyond that which was in the

budget in June – the almost \$400 million dollars we have added since, to protect our officers. Actions speak louder than words. So I will continue to support them. They have a right to their opinion 100 percent, and I'll continue to support them.

**Commissioner Bratton:** Inasmuch as to my comments you're referencing, that – let me explain those comments. Do some officers not like this mayor? Guaranteed. Some officers aren't like me. Amazingly, some don't. I can't quite understand that, but some don't. Some of you have been around this town for a while. Can you point out to me one mayor that has not been battling with the police unions in the last 50 years? Name one. Name one. So, the experience of this mayor, in terms of some cops not liking him – there's nothing new. It's part of life, part of politics. And it is what it is. This is New York City. We voice our concerns, and we voice our opinions. So, what I'd suggest, that – as I mentioned – in conversations with the heads of the five police unions, that the rhetoric that has been so much a part of the issues over these last several weeks – that we will engage in dialogue once we get our officers respectfully mourned and buried – and return to dialogue where we can hopefully resolve whatever differences are out there. But in terms of – debate is healthy. Discourse is healthy – that it's not impacting on the public safety of the city at this moment, that in the sense that we had an individual – and we're trying to determine his actual motivation – who took the lives of our two officers, and murdered them, cold-blooded. And we will attempt to determine that – so we learn from it, and as we go forward, maybe as we continue to analyze social media, and as we continue to educate the public about seeing something and saying something – we can prevent it from happening again. But the idea that, you know, some cops don't like this mayor, some cops don't like their boss, some cops don't – that's life. I have 35,000. They're great cops. They're caring cops. And we just lost two of the best.

**Question:** [inaudible] one of the ways that you [inaudible] was by talking to the unions, union leaders [inaudible] point of reference that you [inaudible] at this point, do you still believe that they speak for the low morale [inaudible] or are they kind of – have they grown out of touch with their –

**Commissioner Bratton:** Union leaders are free to say what they believe and what they feel, based on their representation of their members. I don't quarrel with that. That's part of – part of the bargain with them. That's part of the agreement we have with them. Morale in policing – I've been doing this for 44 years. It goes up, it goes down – your morale goes up and down. Look at the changes in your newsrooms, that all the colleagues that have been laid off, the companies that are closing, your fear about jobs. You aim to tell me anybody in this room is basically running with high morale at the moment? You're an industry and a profession in great change. We're one going through great change also. So, we work on morale, but morale, oftentimes, is something that we can't control. People are – I've got 35,000 individuals. They might be having a good time at home, they might be having a bad time at home, they might be having a good day, they might be having a bad day. What our obligation is – mine and the mayor – is, to the best of our ability, to equip them, to train them, to lead them, and as much as possible, try to keep them safe so they can keep all of you safe. And we work very hard at that. And this mayor, referencing the \$400 million dollars – think of that, \$400 million dollars, within the space of the last number of months, focused on officer safety issues. So the safer my officers are, the better technology they have, the better equipment they have, that they can keep the citizens of this city even safer. When was the last time you saw that type of commitment to this police department? Not any time since I've been aware, over the last 20 or 30 years.

**Unknown:** Two more, folks, two more.

**Question:** [inaudible] Commissioner Bratton also spoke about, you know, a bit about the [inaudible] tension in this city [inaudible] I'm wondering whether it reminds you of that period as well, and as someone who ran on sort of ending that position, [inaudible]?

**Mayor:** I think the cardinal really laid it out perfectly. He talked about the fact that we always fear we could be slipping backwards. He used a beautiful analogy of the Winter Solstice, and talked about how in ancient civilizations, people – in the lead-up to it – feared that the sun was leaving us, and the light was going away.

And then the light would return, more and more, and there would be hope again, and then over time, that became part of our understanding of the world. And the holidays that we celebrate at this time of year so powerfully invoke light and hope. And so, my answer to you is, we have to move forward. There is no other choice. These divisions are very old. Some of them, we've talked about, you know, in recent days – they go back not just decades, they go back centuries in their origins. They're deep. They have to be overcome for us to be a strong society. And I believe we will. I really do. The – part of the – what I've seen in the last year is a kind of a progress I find very heartening, even with these very painful and difficult moments along the way. I still see so many leaders in this department, and so many average, everyday NYPD officers, who are trying to make things better, who are trying to bring police and community together. I'm inspired by Commissioner Bratton, because he has spent a lifetime at it, and I think there's something powerful in what you – the way you asked the question. Because he saw what I saw, and we both lived in the same part of the world in the 1970s, a very divided reality and –

**Commissioner Bratton:** You know, you were probably on the other side of the picket fence –

**Mayor:** No, it's – I was too young. [Laughs]

**Commissioner Bratton:** He grew up in Cambridge –

**Mayor:** I grew up in – he meant – he meant Boston versus Cambridge. But the – what we saw was a very divided society. And I was, you know, in my earliest years, and then in my teens, watching this painful division. It was unbelievable – as an American – and I remember feeling at the time, because this was against the same backdrop as, you know, the Watergate years, and one thing and another, and I felt simultaneously inspired by seeing our nation overcome during the Watergate moment – heroes rise up, people stand up for democracy, people overcome things that seemed insurmountable – the nation somehow finding its way back together, but across the river from where I lived, there was an ongoing strife. Well, I didn't know it, obviously, at the time, but right in the middle of the strife was a young man – I believe the story I've heard outside South Boston High School – you were a sergeant at the time. And I remember, Commissioner diGrazia came up to you – this commissioner, you know, had, in my opinion, some of his formative experiences in the midst of a strife much greater than anything we've seen recently – much more painful, much more pervasive. He took from that an inspiration to try and heal it. I would not have blamed Bill Bratton if, in those days, in the 1970s, he said this is just insurmountable. If you had been there at the time, I can tell you as an eyewitness, it seemed insurmountable. It seemed as if there was nowhere but to go backward. But people persevered. He persevered. And I think it's very telling that a man who saw such pain, and such division, instead of choosing to retire, or go into another business, said – I'm going to go farther, I'm going to go deeper – we can change this. We can make community and police come together. And we can keep people safe. We can make them safer. And that's what I've always admired about him, that he never loses sight of the goal, and always helps all of us to move toward it, and I've seen that extraordinary impact amongst the men and women of this department, what his leadership is doing in terms of giving people that sense that we have a way forward and we will achieve it. So, that is my answer to you. We have no choice but to move forward, and I believe we will move forward.

**Commissioner Bratton:** If I could, let me close – inasmuch, as once again, you were referencing my remarks this morning. What the mayor is talking about was the profound period of change in the 1970s, coming out of the 60s. And it was my formative years as a police officer – 1970, coming into the Boston Police Department. And I saw, in my profession that I'm so proud of, the beginnings of much needed change in the 70s. My college education was provided out of the change that was demanded, that police must be more professional, must be much better educated. I saw the technology that was required, the many sciences that were improved upon. So, a lot of that crises – incredible crises – that surmounts anything I've seen so far in the turmoil of the moment – many great changes came. And out of the turmoil of the moment, I'm seeing many great changes already occurring, and the mayor supporting – with those hundreds of millions of dollars, changes that will make my officers much safer, will keep them much better informed, will be able to allow them to deliver much improved services. So, I also, in that discussion this morning, talked about this being a change moment. The 70s were a



change moment that my profession benefitted so phenomenally from – if you go back to the New York City of the 1970s, back then we were killing police each year, in the performance of our duties – 90 people a year. We have transformed the NYPD over that 40-year period of time where we have some of the lowest, if not lowest, rates of abuse of force of any police department in the United States. So, out of crises comes opportunity and challenges, and I intend to embrace the opportunities and challenges as we address these crises. And I think I can successfully predict that, as we did in the 70s, we will come out of this better and stronger as we go forward.

**Mayor:** Thank you.

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