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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS CALLS IN LIVE TO WABC'S "SID & FRIENDS IN THE MORNING" RADIO SHOW

Sid Rosenberg: Up in New York, New York. My first show back in 2023. 8:40 on your Tuesday morning. Jay-Z, Empire State of Mind. I will not be sitting court side of the Knicks tonight, but I will be sitting by the Ice Rangers thanks to Pete Morgan. Me, my beautiful wife, Danielle and Gabe going to the Ranger game tonight. And then tomorrow night I get to hand out food for the homeless with the mayor of New York City, my friend Eric Adams — who was out there on Saturday night, of course Times Square, New Year's Eve — and now has a year under his belt... He likes to say his Aaron Judge year. Is coming up next. Here he is the mayor of New York City, Eric Adams. Mayor Adams, how are you, pal?

Mayor Eric Adams: Quite well. How are you? The favorite part of that song that I like — Jay-Z song — is "You can tell by my attitude that I'm from New York." New York is having a certain level of gravitas, a certain level of attitude that I don't see anywhere globally.

Rosenberg: Well, I agree with that. There's no question. And experiencing what I did for the first time ever in Times Square with the family the other night to see... and a lot of those people are tourists. I understand that, but I was in a pen between the wounded warriors and the cops. That was pretty much New York and it was pretty cool. I mean, there was one minor damper on the event and that was a kid wielding a machete as you talked about, and your commissioner talked about and Lynch as well. The police acted quickly and thank God it didn't get worse. But even that night, we had something go wrong. You disappointed about that?

Mayor Adams: It's actually even in the dark spaces where you have an act of that magnitude — three officers were struck. I had an opportunity to go to the hospital immediately after the ball dropped and speak with their families and the officers. I say that we witnessed what is amazing about the Police Department. There was a 1013 call, officer needs assistance immediately. Those officers responded. They addressed the condition even where there was a discharge of a weapon where the suspect was struck. But the officers immediately after controlling the situation continued to provide the services to hundreds of thousands of people. We saw just really why New York City is a professional Police Department, bar none. You have your officers, your colleagues who were injured and were real injuries, but even in spite of that, you allowed the medical professionals to do their job, the investigators to do their job. And we went back to

focusing on securing the city and securing Times Square. And that is really commendable of an amazing law enforcement agency.

Rosenberg: No question. And it was a great night. So New Yorkers have a habit. I'm the worst at this, Mayor Adams. My show is number one. I say it every day, all the time. I don't care. Bring on high expectations. I want those, right? I want to live up to those. You've kind of done that. You're like, I got the rookie season under the belt. You didn't go with an all-star season. You're number two. You went to Aaron Judge who broke every record and hit 62 home runs. I mean, you'll put some real high expectations on yourself a year number two but I guess you're okay with that.

Mayor Adams: Well, because I know the team, I know the team that I have built. I know what we're capable of. And I know this city. I know how this city recovers during a difficult time. We saw it on September 11th when our Center of Trade was attacked. Many people look at that day and we acknowledge who we lost, but I also know what happened on September 12th. We got up and when we got up the entire country realized the capabilities of surviving something as devastating as that. I was a lieutenant at the time and I saw how it impacted us, but I saw how we responded and we are here again. Covid, many people don't want to realize it wasn't terrorism, but it brought terror and it knocked us off our feet. We saw that for the first time our city was closed down, businesses were lost.

Many people lost their jobs, their homes, our economy took a hit. Tourism, which was a major economic booster, was devastated. But when you look at where we are now, post-Covid. On January 1st, I inherited a city where there was just a high level of uncertainty. We cycled through that. People wanted us to close our schools. We didn't. We knew it was the safest place for our children. We're seeing tourism recover 56 million tourists. You see what's happening on our streets. We're predicting to get about 7- 65 next year. We're leading in major hotel markets. Out of the 25 major hotel markets, we're number one. We're recovering jobs at a faster tick than the national government and in the state government. We're going after the crime that we witnessed. Some of the mental health issues that we faced and the homelessness that we faced. You saw a decrease in homicide, decrease in shootings.

We were at a 40 percent increase in February of last year. And you're seeing the slow down tick in the right direction now at a 20 percent. We're going to continue to go after those quality of life issues, but we're also going to rebound our economy, Sid. I'm clear on that. It's about opening our economy to make it easier to do business here and attract good jobs here in this city and go after those tough challenges. So I'm like you, I say, I'm not running away from tough challenges. I'm not running away from homelessness. I'm not running away from crime. I'm running away from the economy. I'm running towards it. And I just think that's how we flow as New Yorkers.

Rosenberg: I will tell you this, that even some of your bigger detractors, they know, of course, that you and I have become very friendly and I am rooting for you because I want this city to succeed. And I know you want the same thing. And even some of your biggest detractors say, Sid, I know his heart's in the right place. I know he means well. But the truth is crime is not down. Maybe homicides are and shootings are, but there's a ton of other crimes that are way up, including hate crimes, assault, battery, rapes. And they say things like, and until all that is down

and until I feel safe enough to work and travel in this city, he may be a nice guy, but he ain't no Aaron Judge. That is some of the criticism I get. You're laughing but that's what I hear, Mayor Adams.

Mayor Adams: Well, at the same time, you also know New York. You know that even with subway crimes, I think we get an average of 3.6 felonies a day on our subway system with 3.9 million riders. We have some of the lowest numbers in many years on average of crimes in our subway system. You know New Yorkers, we are going to turn around with those other crimes and continue to trend in the right direction. But even when you bring it down to historical levels, New Yorkers always going to have an opinion. 8.9 million people, 35 million opinions and I like that.

We should continue to strive for better over and over again. We want the criticism of when we bring crime down and continue to make this the safest big city in America. Let's be clear on that. We are the safest big city in America. And even when we do that, New York is going to say, "Well, okay, I got another task I want you to accomplish as well". And we like that because that forces us to show that we're able to pivot, shift, adjust, and really bring the city to a level that I believe it deserves to be.

Rosenberg: Just a couple of weeks ago, you did unveil that homeless plan, which again, I heard the same thing. I like the plan. We got to get the homeless off the street. Some people, Mayor Adams, they actually feel badly for these people. Others are like, I just don't want to see them. And you had a very good plan, but even some of your best friends were critical because not enough beds, what do you do afterwards. Where are we exactly today on January 3rd with the Mayor Eric Adams' homeless plan?

Mayor Adams: We wanted to be clear on what the plan was because many of our friends in the local tabloids they gave the impression that we stated everyone who has a mental health illness would be compelled to be removed to a hospital or involuntarily taken to a hospital. That was not true. No matter that we did a speech and a question and answer press conference later, they still reported that anyway.

The plan is clear. Anyone that's on our streets or on our subway system, et cetera, that is at a state where they cannot take care of their basic needs, they cannot make the decisions on their basic needs, and they're in danger to others, they will be removed to a hospital for evaluation by a medical professional. We also stated clearly that this is not a police-led plan. This is not a plan that the police are in front of. This is the continuation of the partnership we created with mental health professionals, outreach workers. They will call in the police if it is needed or if the police observe a person that fits that description, they will call in the outreach workers to assist them in the entire process.

This is a small number of people that are doing a great level of harm. Not only actual harm, but also, what we like to say, how people feel in our streets. We wanted to train our police officers. We wanted to give the actual facts and clarify the uncertainties that I observed out there while I was in the subway system and on the streets. Many of our outreach workers did not have that

clarity. Matched with our training is also the clarity of how they can execute this plan. We have been in the midst of training the officers and doing this job already.

Now I want to be clear on that. Sid, we were already out on the streets dealing with people with severe mental health illnesses. Now we're just bringing it to another level that we did throughout the year.

Rosenberg: Gotcha. You and I will be with those folks coming up tomorrow night. I'm all too happy to help you with that. Thank you for the invitation.

The whole deal with my house, all the specifics, Mayor Adams. We were forced to move to the city for this week, my wife and my kids. We missed the house and all that, but it is what it is. But somebody made a joke because we were having difficulty the first couple of days finding a hotel room. They said, "Well, why don't you just tell them you're migrants because they seem to get the best hotels." They were trying to be funny, but they were being serious. As it turned out, we did get a very nice hotel and we're okay, but the whole migrant crisis, you want a billion dollars from Biden. This was a couple of weeks ago. Where are we with that, the migrant crisis here in New York?

Mayor Adams: It's a real embarrassment, I believe, on a national level, and we must have an appropriate response. We have had conversations around the issues on migrants for decades. This is a national issue. It must have a national response. And...

Rosenberg: For one second, I'm going to stop you for a second because we have this type of relationship. When you say it's a national issue, it's a Biden issue because I know, Mayor Adams, you're well aware that before people like DeSantis pissed you off or Abbott pissed you off, Joe Biden was flying in these migrants to Stewart Airport, Westchester Airport in the middle of the night. It was well reported, Rob Astorino, Miranda Devine. This is a Biden issue, a Democrat issue that now folks like you have to deal with. To be specific and fair, that's just the truth.

Mayor Adams: Well, when we think about the immigration reform, we're going to need the help from Congress as well. I think the president has an obligation to deal with the immediate concerns. But when we talk about immigration, it is going to take a combination of the executive and the legislative body. We have to address this. El Paso should not be going through this. Chicago should not be going through this. Houston, Washington, New York, no city should have to make a decision if they're going to provide for their citizens, particularly coming out of Covid or if they're going to deal with an onslaught of migrants and asylum seekers.

We received over 30,000 asylum seekers that are in need of not only shelter or food, education for children, healthcare, some of the basic items that are needed, and this is really impacting on the quality of life in New York and our ability to provide for every day, long-term New Yorkers on the needs that they have during this difficult time. This must be addressed.

Now, I said we were notified yesterday that the governor of Colorado is now stating that they are going to be sending migrants to places like New York and Chicago. This is just unfair for local

governments to have to take on this national obligation. We've done our job. There's no more room at the end, but we are compelled by local laws here that we must provide shelter...

Rosenberg: Sure.

Mayor Adams: and continue to move in the right direction.

Rosenberg: That's fair. 60 seconds to go, Mayor Adams. As always, thank you. Terrific job here. Kathy Hochul was sworn in on Sunday. We know that you went to Albany and you fought to get rid of cashless bail. You did fight for it. Stewart-Cousins wasn't having it. Heastie wasn't having it. Quite frankly, Hochul has not done enough. Do you feel like, now that she's sworn in, that she may do more during this upcoming year, you'll have a chance to go back there and get something done? Or is this a lost cause, at least for now?

Mayor Adams: Well, I think that the most important thing I must do in this legislative cycle, as I attempted to do last time, is to really educate New Yorkers that I know bail reform was the center of many people's conversations because it became a symbol of reform (...) with the criminal justice system. The criminal justice system needs to be corrected. The entire system needs to be corrected. People are in jail too long, not doing trial. The bottleneck of the system, the discovery laws. I had great conversations with Speaker Heastie, Leader Cousins and the governor. I'm looking forward to this legislative cycle as we sit down and deal with many of these issues that we are facing and become partners in ensuring that this state moves in the right direction.

Now we have some real wins, Sid. Many people stated that Eric had a terrible time in Albany last year. That is just not true. I received most of the things that I asked for around childcare, around NYCHA Trust, around increasing earned income tax for our young people, around hotel conversions for permanent housing. I walked out of Albany with more success than I know mayors have traditionally received. Was there one, two items we disagreed on? Yes, but the overwhelming number of things that I needed, Carl Heastie, Andrea Stewart-Cousins and the governor gave New York City.

Rosenberg: Well, it's all true. That is true. All right. I will see you tomorrow night at 9 p.m. on 34th Street. I look forward to it. Happy New Year. Thank you for starting off my first show with me this morning, Mayor Adams. Excellent job, as always. I'll see you tomorrow, buddy. Thank you so much.

Mayor Adams: Take care.

Rosenberg: You too. There he is. The mayor here in New York City, Eric Adams.

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