



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 28, 2022, 11:30 PM

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**TRANSCRIPT FROM TUESDAY, JUNE 28, 2022: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS APPEARS
ON COMEDY CENTRAL'S "THE DAILY SHOW" WITH TREVOR NOAH**

Trevor Noah: Welcome back to The Daily Show. My guest tonight is the mayor of New York City. He's joining me to discuss his first six months in office and how he's tackling some of the city's most pressing issues. Please welcome Mayor Eric Adams.

Mayor Eric Adams: You don't realize it, but you just assaulted me with that handshake.

Noah: I'll try and be a little more gentle next time.

Mayor Adams: Please, please, please.

Noah: I'll try and be a little more gentle.

Mayor Adams: Please.

Noah: Welcome to the show.

Mayor Adams: Thank you because you doing that, you could be inside for 24 hours.

Noah: Let's talk about that before we move on. I heard what you said about Rudy Giuliani. You said that he should actually be investigated for reporting a false crime because if it wasn't for that video footage, that person who tapped him on the back, which again I don't condone, but that wasn't assault.

Mayor Adams: No, it was not. He falsely reported a crime, and the district attorney should take that seriously. That person that he falsely reported spent 24 hours in jail. That's not acceptable. It's not acceptable. So I'm going to call the DA. We must be consistent. All of that theatrics that he did, that's not acceptable. If that tape wasn't there, imagine what would have happened to that man. Can't happen. Can't happen.

Noah: Many New Yorkers have really been impressed by the attitude you've taken to education. You've come in, you've revamped the system, you're creating a world where your staff is really

focusing on getting New York City's education up to where it needs to be. Two parts to the question. Number one, what do you still think needs to be achieved in terms of education in New York? And number two, how do you remove or fight against all of the segregation that happens in New York City schools? Because you have a city where everyone mixes, and yet in the schools, it seems like the city's still in Jim Crow.

Mayor Adams: Couple things. Number one, I learned a lot when I was in South Africa. I drove from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth to Joburg, and I spoke to a lot of people there. When people talk about segregation, they don't look at the hidden segregation we have in America. Our school system is dysfunctional. We have acknowledged that dysfunctionality because Black and brown and poorer students are the impact of that. 65% of Black and brown children never reach proficiency in our New York City school system.

Noah: Wow.

Mayor Adams: We've normalized that. So what I did, I looked at my journey. I was dyslexic. I'm dyslexic. From K through 12, I used to walk in the school building, they used to put "dumb student" on the chair. I was bullied. Then not until I got into high school, did I discover I was dyslexic. There was nothing wrong with me.

Noah: Wow.

Mayor Adams: 30 to 40% of the prisoners that are in Rikers Island, dyslexic. So what am I doing as mayor? I'm taking my journey and now helping other children. We have dyslexia screening for every child now, and I'm going to Rikers and screen the prisoners for dyslexia so they can get the services they need.

Noah: I'm going to chat to you a little bit more after the break. We're going to be chatting about police and we're going to be chatting about rents in the city and we'll be chatting about why some people think you're the quirkiest, most interesting man in America. Don't go away. We'll be right back with more from Mayor Adams.

[...]

Noah: Welcome back to The Daily Show, where we are joined by New York City Mayor Eric Adams. Mayor Adams, let's jump into two of some of those pressing issues in the city. Number one, police, which touches on crime, but it's almost two separate issues at the same time. One of the things you ran on, coming into office, was I'm going to bring down crime in New York City. Since you've come into office, crime has skyrocketed. It's only been five, six months, but I'm sure many people would love to know from your perspective, how long do you think that promise will take to achieve? And how do you actually bring crime down? Because every mayor has a different solution for actually achieving that.

Mayor Adams: Well, it's a unique moment. People that know my history, I was arrested at 15. I was beat badly by police officers. They assaulted my brother and I in 103rd Precinct. I returned back to that precinct when I became the mayor. I fought against the abuse of stop-and-frisk. I've

testified in federal court, and the judge mentioned my testimony when she ruled against the Police Department. I can't go backwards. We can't go back to the days when every Black and brown child that walked the streets was treated unfairly, and so we have to have that balance.

Mayor Adams: I like to say intervention and prevention. Intervention is right now. We took 3,000 guns off our street. Shootings dropped by 30%, homicide dropped by 13%. We're moving in the right way, but I'm not going to allow us to be abusive in the process. Prevention, let's do the long term things. Let's lean into foster care children so they have the opportunities and not age out without the support.

Noah: Let me ask you this then about New York. This city has always been an interesting place, where the police unions and the mayors have often had a fraught relationship. You are a really unique mayor in that you were police. You come from police and yet you've experienced police and you've tried to change police. And yet at the same time, you have to encourage the police, so obviously you have critics and fans that inhabit both spaces.

Noah: I'd love to know this because I know a lot of New Yorkers have this as a question. When crime is down in the city, mayors will say, "Well, that means the police are doing their job. We need to give them more money, more funding to the police force," which oftentimes means less funding for the schools, the other services, et cetera, et cetera. But then when crime is up in the city, mayors will say, "Oh, that means we need to give the police more money because they need more help bringing the crime down." So what I'd like to understand is why is it that in that job, whether things are going well or not going well, the money always increases. It doesn't seem like it matches what's happening in the city. And how do you address that as mayor, whilst also acknowledging these are people, these are people in the city trying to keep everybody safe, et cetera? From a mayor's perspective I understand it. How do you find that balance?

Mayor Adams: Good question. Well, first of all, the prerequisite to prosperity is public safety and justice. They go together. Historically, people will say, you could only have justice, you could only have public safety. And I say no to that. It's not a trade off. We could have both. We could be safe and we could have justice. That accountability is going to be in place. But let's not kid ourselves. We have been producing an inferior product all across the city. We spend \$38 billion a year on education, yet 65% of Black and brown children never reach education.

Mayor Adams: They've been playing us. We've been getting played for so long. The problem is not that people dislike me. You know who dislike me? People who have been eating off of us. All of those people who made contracts from pulling people downstream, you know much money is made when a child is dyslexic and is not educated, and he's incarcerated? You have counselors, you have therapists, you have people who feed them prescription and drugs. People have been playing us, brother, for a long time. And now I come along and say, "Listen, the game, the gig is up."

Noah: Just in case I missed it though, I don't think I did, but how do you then grade whether the police are doing well or not in your city?

Mayor Adams: Combination. We'll never be able to deal with this crime part problem with just police. We can't police our way out of this. When you have foster care children that age out at 21, and you know every year 6,700 of them are – only 5% graduate from high school, only 22% graduate ... I mean 22% graduate from high school, 5% from college. They're more likely to be homeless, mental health, unemployed, victims of crime, participate in crime. What I'm saying: no, let's let them get support until they're 26, 90% graduate from high school. Let's open up our trade schools like I did at the Brooklyn STEAM Center, and give these children certifications. Let them go into some of these jobs. Google is here. Facebook is here. Why not have these children fed right into employment, be part of the growth of this city? If you employ, then you won't have to worry about the criminality that you're seeing. By the time a child picks up a gun, we already failed. We failed already.

Noah: But then why do you care so much about some of the smaller things? For instance, why does the city need to spend so much money on police monitoring who jumps a fare and who doesn't? What is the percentage of money that the city's losing on fare jumping?

Mayor Adams: I like that. That's a great question.

Noah: Do people really need to go to jail for... Come on. People are going to pay. And the people who don't pay, what is that percentage versus everyone else?

Mayor Adams: That's a great question. Here's what we can't do. We cannot send a message that any and everything goes in our city. Because it starts with, okay, so and so jumps the fare, and when there are systems – we have a reduced fare MetroCard program, when if you can't pay enough, we're going to give you the MetroCard. And there's ways to get on the system if you can't pay. You can't walk into Duane Reade and say, "You know what? I'm going to take whatever I want off the shelf and I'm going to walk out." Because now Duane Reade is going to close down, and that low-wage employee, who's going to school at night to try to make a living, is going to lose his job because you decided you don't want to pay.

Mayor Adams: We can't have a city where you can do whatever you want, no. We're going to be a city. We're not going to criminalize poor, but we're not going to allow someone to state that their economic status is going to allow them to disrespect what it is to live in a city like New York. I know what it is to be poor, brother. We used to go to school every day with a garbage bag full of clothing because mommy said we're going to be thrown out and we want you to have clean clothing so you won't be embarrassed when you go to school. But mommy made sure we're going to always uplift ourselves, fight hard and we're going to be respectful in the process. I'm not going to allow people to believe because of where they are is who they are. We're so much better.

Noah: Let's talk about one of the parts of the city that everyone agrees needs to become better, and that is affordability.

Adams: Yes.

Noah: As you said, New York City is not made by the Empire State Building, it's not made by the Statue of Liberty. It's made by the people.

Mayor Adams: Yes.

Noah: The people feel like they can't remain in New York because they can't afford to live here. And you're seeing this spread. It's going out to Brooklyn, it's spreading into Harlem, many parts. The main part of the island is almost unaffordable for most people. For people who don't live in rent control apartments, where there's no recourse ... I've heard people's rents jump by 20%, 30%, 40%. It can just do whatever, and you're out. Your life has changed. It becomes unaffordable. Half the places in Midtown are owned by people who don't even live in the city, never mind the country.

Noah: What do you do as mayor to prevent that from happening? How do you make it so that the people actually want to live in the city? Because I've seen you say by the way, "People need to come back to the office." I've seen you say, "We need to get back in the office. People need to get New York City back to life." And I understand why. But I can also see why people say, "Well, Mayor Adams, why should I come back to the city when I can go and live 40 minutes away, 50 minutes away in Connecticut on a train and not have to pay these rents anymore?" How do you prevent these people from turning this into a ghost town? What do you do?

Mayor Adams: What I must do as the mayor is now create affordable housing, which we're doing, which is very interesting. You have some of the people who are advocating for affordable housing, and I say, "Okay, great. We're going to build it on your block." "Whoa. Not on my block. You want to up zone on my block?" See, we have to stop the hypocrisy of people, those who are advocating for something, but when it's time to produce it in their space and inconvenience them, now they have a whole nother conversation. We want to build safe haven beds. Show me the community that's going to allow me to build the safe haven beds to give wraparound services. We must get in the business of affordable housing, but once we build it, we have to put people in the units. We're going to change the game of NYCHA, which you know what NYCHA residents have been going through for years, and now we're moving in another direction. The affordability is crucial. Make it affordable.

Noah: Do you think you can find the balance? Because as a mayor, you're always responding to business, some of the richest people in the city.

Mayor Adams: Yes.

Noah: You're responding to the people who are annoyed by poor people, as you said, the NIMBYs, not in my backyard. They want to change, but not in their backyard. And you're responding to the majority of the 8 million people.

Mayor Adams: Yes.

Noah: What do you think you're going to be able to do in the short term? I understand the ideas behind it, but what's a concrete thing you consider in New York, where you go like, "Hey, this is what I'm actually going to do for you in the short term."?

Mayor Adams: Right, and we're doing that right now. First of all, the affluent New Yorkers. Do you know 52% of our taxes are paid by 2% of New Yorkers?

Noah: I can believe that.

Mayor Adams: If we lose those 2%, we lose our teachers, our firefighters, our cops. So for me not to engage those high-income earners, that's foolish as a mayor, and I'm not going to do that. I want them to pay their taxes. I want them to volunteer. I want them to contribute to my museums, to my nonprofits. They need to be a part of that. And so when you look at what we're doing right away, child care vouchers for the families in this city. People were paying \$50 a week, we were able to get them down to \$10 a week. We're opening so many new seats in childcare, what we're doing with dyslexia screening, what we're doing with college funds for our children. When you start out a college fund for a child, they're four times more likely to go to college by having this college fund. When you look at what we are doing, what's called the Crisis Management Team and how they deal on crisis on the ground for prevention. Of what we're doing with Earned Income Tax Credit. Brother, we send back billions of dollars because people don't know how to fill out the forms to get the resources that they deserve. So we're making it that easier and streamlining the Earned Income Tax Credit. So we are doing things that are going to put money back in the pockets of New Yorkers.

Noah: So before I let you go, I'd love to know real quick. What would you grade yourself as, as a mayor right now? What grade would you give yourself? And I know it's a tough one.

Mayor Adams: I told you when we spoke earlier, there's no tough questions for me because I'm authentic, I'm going to be me.

Noah: You are definitely, I'll say that about you. What would you grade yourself as a mayor?

Mayor Adams: I'm incomplete.

Noah: Oh interesting. That's an interesting one.

[Applause]

Mayor Adams: I'm incomplete. I'm incomplete as a mayor. I'm incomplete as a man. I'm incomplete as a father. I'm incomplete in my personal life. I get up every morning. I meditate. I exercise. I pray. I say the Pledge of Allegiance and I get myself ready.

Noah: Every day?

Mayor Adams: Every day, every day.

Noah: I mean the last one's a bit weird. You have to admit.

Mayor Adams: But it's not, it's not when you think...

Noah: I mean, surely the flag knows by now that you, I mean.

Mayor Adams: Yeah, well this country has a lot of issues.

Noah: Yes, it does.

Mayor Adams: But I've been all over the globe and this is the only country where dream is attached to our name. There's not a German dream, a French dream.

Noah: Oh the French dream is, but it's a very different kind of dream.

Mayor Adams: Yeah.

Noah: Thank you so much for joining. I appreciate the time, I know you're a busy man. I hope to have you back. We'll talk about this every few [inaudible]. We're going to take a quick break we'll be right back after this.

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