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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

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CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS DELIVERS REMARKS AT NAN'S MARTIN
LUTHER KING DAY CELEBRATION**

Reverend Al Sharpton: I was not the only one that did some traveling, we have our next speaker who traveled from a little further back than I did, but he's home for King Day. And may I bring you straight from El Paso, Texas, the Mayor of the City of New York, Mayor Eric Adams.

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you. Thank you. And acknowledgement to Dr. King's Day. I was in Tulsa, actually, I was in Texas. And on my way back on the plane, I saw an amazing documentary. I really think we all should see. It's a documentary that was done on Sidney Poitier. And the director was Oprah Winfrey. She remembered during the time when she was a little girl, she used to watch the documentary. And I remember the scene in the documentary, she talked about as many of us who are old enough to recall, she talked about whenever black folks was on TV, everybody used to run and say "Black people on TV." And we used to watch, if it was Julia, if it was Porgy and Bess, it didn't matter. But it showed the journey of Sidney Poitier who was born a poor... He did not even know what racism was because where he was born and we was raised in Nassau, there were just so many black folks around that when he came to Florida and was introduced to racism and the Klan, it was just unbelievable. And he couldn't read.

He had a problem reading. But he touched Oprah so much and he inspired her because of the roles he played. He would only play roles that were dignified roles. He would not play a role. He wouldn't be stepping, fetching. He wouldn't be anything that was comical. He always played these roles. And then during the height of his career, there was an article that was written in the New York Times that basically stated that he's not black enough. And they basically set the tone that Black folks felt he wasn't black enough. And Oprah tells the story of her 42nd birthday that Quincy Jones held for her. And she walked inside the room and turned the corner. And who was standing there, but Sidney Poitier. And she said, tears rolled down her eyes and she spoke with him and he sat her in the corner, because at the time Oprah was going through, "She's not black enough."

And Sidney said to her, "You cannot carry the dreams of others on your shoulders. You must live your life and your dream." And it's so significant in this moment because if you were to do an analysis of Black and brown folks who stood in the line of fire, you will find this unique

sentence, "They're not black enough." I cannot tell you how many times if it was a knife in his chest or standing up and being incarcerated for fighting on behalf of the people in Puerto Rico, fighting on behalf of people who were going through tragic moments, that there were those who were detached spectators, sat under the bleachers and watched people like Reverend Sharpton on the whole battle of life, and then want to critique what he is and what he is not. And so as we acknowledge the physical transition of Dr. King, some of us want to have a retrospective appreciation. But let's be honest with ourselves, just like Sharpton, Dr. King had a letter opener stuck in his chest because someone thought he was not black enough.

And if you would read the articles back then, not the ones now, not the clean up version of saying how much he was this great civil rights leader. But go read the articles back then and how all of them demonized Dr. King and did not understand the real mission that he was putting forward and what he was fighting for. So we could talk about the greatness of who he was, but how do we treat him when he was there? And what are we doing to our Dr. Kings of today? I think about when I was running for office, all the years I put on fighting abuse and policing, when I became a candidate, I wasn't black enough. It's mind boggling to me. There hasn't been a mayor in the history of this city that has done more to prevent our young people being in the system of violence. What we're doing around childcare, dyslexia screening, earn income tax credit, partnering with our crisis management team.

And then you hear some of the ancestors who attack King are now adults attacking me. I'm not black enough. But let me tell you something. I didn't hear it from Sidney Poitier, but I heard it from Oprah Winfrey. "I cannot carry the dreams of others on my shoulders." I know my purpose in my mission and my purpose and my mission is to say to the Black and brown people who are running this most important city in the most important country, this is our opportunity to uplift the things we fought for years. The real reflection on Dr. King is what are we going to do with the power we have now. Person of color is the Borough President of the Bronx. Person of color is the Borough President of Queens. Public advocate, person of color. Hakeem Jeffries, person of color. Leader of the Senate, person of color. Leader of the assembly, person of color. Leader of the City Council, person of color. Borough presidents... The mayor, person of color. Heads of major committees are people of color.

So the real celebration of Dr. King is to say, this is what he marched for. This is what our ancestors fought for. This is what we put our lives on the line for. This is the moment that they all asked for. So now the question is what are we going to do with that moment, and how do we uplift the people in the process? And so I don't walk around with a dashiki. I don't have enough hair on my head to have an Afro. But when you do an analysis of my office and you start to see that my first deputy mayor, person of color. My chief of staff, person of color. My chief advisor, person of color. You go into my agencies and you see the first Korean that has ever been a commissioner. You see the first person that's a Muslim that has been a commissioner of a major agency.

When you see the diversity, five women are now deputy mayors in the City of New York after being locked out for so many years. When you see what we are doing, we're not yelling and screaming or saying who we are. We're living who we are. That's the Dr. King moment that I know. Let's not be distracted. This is such a significant moment for us all. And I'm going to focus and not be distracted on this moment. Now think all of my DAs, DA in the Bronx, person of color. DA in Manhattan, person of color. DA in Brooklyn, person of color. I don't know what

city they used to call it, but now they need to call New York, this is Chocolate City. Now quote that. And we don't have to leave anyone behind.

That's why, Ken Sunshine, we are fighting with our Jewish brothers and sisters to deal with anti-Semitism in the city. That's why we are connecting with Grace Meng and the AAPI community and Assemblywoman Rajkumar to deal with what is happening with our brothers and sisters from the AAPI community. That's why we are connecting with people who are a part of the migrant and asylum seekers. I don't even know the madness of people telling me I shouldn't go speak to my fellow mayor in El Paso to deal with a crisis that the national government is supposed to be dealing with. Stop running for office and do the office you got now. So on Dr. King's Day, we are not just going to think about the dream. We are going to live the dream and we're going to move our city and the country in the direction of where the dream is supposed to take us. Thank you so much. Thank you, Reverend Sharpton.

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