



THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS DELIVERS REMARKS AT THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE'S NEVER IS NOW CONFERENCE

Juju Chang: I'm so glad that everyone broke so much ice out there. I really and truly believe, I say this to Jonathan Greenblatt all the time, convening power is a superpower and that's why we're here. But first, please welcome to the stage the mayor of New York City, the honorable Eric Adams.

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you so much. I am so pleased to join you all at the Anti-Defamation League's, Never is Now conference. And I know somewhere out there is my good friend Deborah Halberstam, who has talked about this for so many years. No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin or his background and religion, people must learn to hate. Nelson Mandela wrote these words in 1994 in his autobiography, Long Walk to Freedom, and he could have been talking about today. Antisemitism is on the rise in America and unfortunately it has become normalized. It has become mainstream. It is fueled by misinformation and conspiracy theories and amplified by social media. And it is given a platform by misguided celebrities, athletes, notable people and former presidents and politicians. People are learning to hate again. This month the FBI issued a statement that synagogues in New Jersey were under threat and I want to thank FBI Director Christopher Wray, who's here, and the FBI for committing to protect our Jewish community and all Americans.

We also saw antisemitic signs flown over a freeway in L.A. as people performed the Nazi salute and antisemitic messages were shown in public spaces in Jacksonville, Florida, including at a college football game. All of these incidents occurred because antisemitic tropes and beliefs were promoted by famous people. Last year we saw the highest number of antisemitic incidents on record in the United States. This is the uncomfortable truth about hate in our society. It is being normalized and it is being spread from one community to the next. Lies about COVID-19 led to attacks on our Asian-American brothers and sisters. Conspiracy theories about stolen elections led to the January 6th insurrection and violence against politicians and their families. Denials about the holocaust and belief in the replacement theory fuel extremists' rallies like the one we saw in Charlottesville.

Antisemitism and extremism must not be ignored. It must be confronted, it must be called out. I know the last few weeks have been tense for the Jewish community here and across the nation. Many of you are feeling fear and anxiety, no matter where you live. Let me be clear, hatred and antisemitism will not be tolerated in New York City. No one should ever feel threatened walking down the street or traveling on the subway. No one should ever feel threatened walking into their synagogue or their house of worship. This is personal for me. Over the years I've worked closely with the Jewish community and with many of you. I often say that New York is the Tel Aviv of America and we know the power, influence and the love and compassion of the Jewish community here. New York City is home to the largest Jewish community in the nation.

And as mayor, I take that responsibility very seriously. Public safety is my administration's highest priority. I want you to know, we will continue to protect all communities with every resource necessary. We will prosecute hate crimes to the full extent and we must reach our young people with anti-biased education so we can address hate at its root causes. Above all, we will not remain silent. We will push back against this rise in antisemitism. The memories of those who perished during the Holocaust sustains us. The courage and resiliency of our survivors inspire us to act. I want to thank Jonathan and the Anti-Defamation League for the work you are doing to combat all forms of hate.

My mother once said, "If you find yourself in a dark place, you make the determination if that dark place is a burial or a planting." And while it may seem that we're in a dark place right now, we can make this a time of planting. Let's rededicate ourselves to defeating all forms of antisemitism. Let's rededicate ourselves to educating generations about the horrors of the past. Let's dedicate ourselves to acting when we see injustices take place. Together, we can ensure that never is now. Thank you very much.

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