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**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS IMPROMPTU PRESS GAGGLE**

**Question:** ...he said we put him in, we can take him out. He's unhappy how long the horse carriage ban is taking to go into effect. You said, of course, it would be the first week of your [inaudible]. You are now in like what – 18, 19 months in. What's taking so long, and do you think that voters have a right to hold you to your promise?

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** I'm going to try to address your 27-part question. I feel very clear about the mission. I've said we want to ban horse carriages in this city. We're going to continue to do that work. We have to do that work with the City Council. It's well-known there are different views in the City Council, and it's something I'll keep working on until we get the work done. So to me this is just a part of the reality of leadership. You set goals – work every day to achieve them. Some move very, very quickly; some take longer, but I know where I'm going.

**Question:** Are you offended by Mr. Simmons' comments?

**Mayor:** I'm not worried about it.

**Question:** On your trip to Italy next week, why are you going? What's your message? And is there any specific conversation that you hope to have with Pope about his visit to New York.

**Mayor:** Look, I – let's set the foundation of this. The Pope is the leading voice on this earth in the fight against inequality. There's no question about it. He is the most powerful global voice against inequality. He has, I think, now become the most powerful voice on why we have to address climate change. And those two issues go together in many, many ways. The Pope has asked me to come, and other mayors to come to Rome and join that effort. And I cannot think of a more important mission to go on than to join his effort. So, from my point of view if we can take his voice and his leadership and elevate the effort to address climate change, and speed the effort to address climate change that has huge ramifications not only for this city, but for this country and obviously the world. And this is, I think, very intelligently planned to come ahead of the Paris Summit in December where nations all over the world have to really declare themselves on global warming. I think what the Pope is doing is very smart – to elevate the issue even further; to force actions by countries. Again, as a coastal city we are particularly sensitive on this question. I do not anticipate a private meeting with him. I think he's going to be addressing the larger group. Best of my understanding this is a public gathering. So media will be invited. I'll be speaking about our efforts here to address climate change with the OneNYC plan. So, I think it's

going to be a powerful moment – because I think for all of us both receiving the leadership of his holiness, but also agreeing together on how we’re going to elevate this issue further.

**Question:** Mayor, Secretary Castro visited New York several times recently. He’s coming back again soon. I’m just curious what you think of the job he’s done – you know, looking at his first year as HUD secretary, and also what you think about his political future. He’s rumored to be considered as a Vice presidential candidate. Wondering if you’d like to see a former mayor go for a spot like that.

**Mayor:** Well look, I’m not going to get into the politics, let me talk about him, and the work he’s doing. So, I think he’s been a fantastic HUD secretary. I think he is someone who has been a great partner for New York City. He is – one of the nicest things I can say about anyone in public service is anti-bureaucratic. He’s a get things done guy. I think that is in large measure because he was a mayor. He’s very – he’s very fast to make decisions or make things move – very responsive, very creative. And I could not be more pleased with the partnership we have with him and HUD. So, I think he’s just a great public servant, and then, you know, the future, of course, will take its course, but I think in terms of what he’s doing with HUD today its making a huge difference for the people of New York City.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, why are homeless people being permitted to live on the streets of the Upper West Side, but the police aren’t permitting them to panhandle outside of Gracie Mansion?

**Mayor:** I don’t actually specifically know what you’re talking about. And I think we have one standard clearly and as Commissioner Bratton said very powerfully yesterday – that people who are homeless – it’s not against the law to be homeless. It is against the law to engage in certain behavior and we address that behavior. And we’re going to do that consistently.

Anything else?

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, how do you feel initiatives like Connect Home can address inequality?

**Mayor:** I think it’s a profound part of the fight against inequality because in today’s economy if you don’t have sufficient education; if you don’t have sufficient access to information; if you’re not able to know about job opportunities and apply for them online you’re just not in the game. And particularly for young people – the ability to – everything from have access to your homework assignments to be able to do them as well will run through the internet. So the fact is that we’re going to have a leveled playing field. You have to have internet access for all. And Connect Home is going to be game-changer because it’s going to mean, literally as we said, 200,000 young people around the country who right now are not in the game; they’re going to have opportunity finally to get ahead. This is exactly the right direction if we want to foster a more equal country.

**Question:** Just on a personal level, going to Rome – it’s a place that you love.

**Mayor:** Yes.

**Question:** I know it’s a short visit, but how excited are you to be able to spend a night or so there?

**Mayor:** Well, I, obviously, care deeply for my ancestral homeland. This is going to be a very, very quick visit. And pretty much revolving around the meetings at the Vatican. Look, it's always moving for me, but what's most moving about this is the leadership of the Pope. I think, you know, we've all watched with tremendous appreciation as he has essentially set the pace internationally for how we address some of the most challenging issues of our time. You know, I've talked about income inequality intensely and some people have said to me, well, you say it's the issue of our time – you say it's the greatest challenge of our time. What do you say about global warming? And I say you can very much make the argument that that's the most pressing existential issue. The difference I've seen is global warming is being addressed to some extent in different parts of the world unlike income inequality here, which I think is being essentially unaddressed. The power of this Pope is that he is bringing all these strands together with tremendous eloquence and with a voice that is waking people up. And so to me what's most exciting about this is to be in his presence and be in the presence of people answering his call to action. This really summarizes so much of what I've devoted my life to [inaudible].

**Question:** Are you still going to Israel?

**Mayor:** Oh, absolutely. We just have to get the details together.

**Question:** Next month, you think?

**Mayor:** We don't know yet.

**Marti Adams:** Last question guys.

**Question:** Mayor, you and the governor will be at dinner together tonight. Any plans to break bread or a lower carbohydrate food – together?

**Mayor:** I appreciate your sensitivity to my diet plans. There's no specific plan around tonight. We'll see how it goes.

Thanks, everyone.

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