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**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO AND COMMISSIONER BRATTON DELIVER
REMARKS AT POLICE ACADEMY RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Well good morning, everyone. What an outstanding day. What a day filled with pride for this city and this police department. So many people, for years, dreamed of a facility – the finest facility for training the finest police force in the world. So, it's a day of pride; it is a day of joy; it is a day to be thankful for so many people who had this vision; who worked so hard on it; who finally get to see the fruits of their labor. I want to thank Commissioner Bratton for his extraordinary leadership of this department. I want to thank all the leadership assembled here. A lot to be proud of in the two years we have all been working together; and a lot to be proud of today as we look forward to even greater accomplishments based on the very best training of a whole new generation of officers in this police force. And, dear I say, Commissioner Bratton you say this at every graduation ceremony, we're also looking at some of the future leaders of this police force because among the men and women standing here today will emerge some of those who will lead us into the future. And for that we commend you. I want to thank the other leaders of the force here today including First Deputy Commissioner Ben Tucker; and Chief of Department Jimmy O'Neill; Chief of Patrol Carlos Gomez, and, of course, the acting commanding officer for this facility, Assistant Chief Theresa Shortell. All the other leadership of the department; all the labor leaders who are here today – I know how proud they are of this formal opening of this facility. I want to thank the elected officials who have joined us, Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz and Council Member Paul Vallone. Thank you to both of them for their support.

You'll hear in a few moments from someone who now has continued over the last two years the work of building out this great facility. It still is a work in progress in the best sense. It's getting better all the time. And I want to thank Commissioner Feniosky Peña-Mora, the Department of Design and Construction for his leadership and his team's good work in continuing this mission. And finally, I want to thank someone who is one of most crucial partners in all we do, and particularly, in the fight against terrorism and in the extraordinary successful work the NYPD has done in preventing terrorism every single day. And that is Diego Rodriguez the assistant director in charge of the FBI NYC Field Office. I want to thank him for the great partnership between the FBI and the NYPD.

This facility, again, you can only feel pride and hope on a day like this. As Commissioner Bratton was saying, the wind has made the flags fly even stiffer and prouder, and it really reminds us of what an exceptional day this is. Here in Queens, we see something having emerged that is literally the top of the line, the state of the art, the best of the best. I know the people of Queens are proud today; proud it's here in this great neighborhood of College Point, but it's something that, obviously, means something to all of us as New Yorkers.

I think it's important also to remember that some folks had foresight in recognizing the need for this great new facility. I want to take a moment to commend and to appreciate my predecessor, Michael Bloomberg and Commissioner Bratton's predecessor, Ray Kelly. They had this vision. They worked hard to achieve it. Let's give them a round of applause and thank them for having realized what could be and having taken it so far.

[Applause]

This facility is extraordinary. There are, in these four walls, representations of so much of what these good men and women will experience on the streets of New York City. There's a mock subway car in there; a mock grocery store; a mock bank; there are so many different things that will allow our recruits to have an opportunity to really experience the kind of situations that they will encounter on the streets; to prepare them to deal with anything and everything. And remember that the men and women of the NYPD know to expect the unexpected. And they train that way, but in this facility the ability is here to actually prepare them for such an extraordinarily wide range of events that we know that will only make them better. It's part of providing them with the finest tactical training anywhere in the country. And to these recruits today who are going through training here in this extraordinary facility, I want to say thank you to you for having chosen this path; for having chosen this mission, this noble career. I want to say congratulations to you because you're standing here it means you've already gone through a number of test; you've already proven your medal. A little more to go, but I know soon you will be helping to ensure the safety of the people of this city in just a few more weeks when you graduate.

And you'll be joining a police force that has a lot to be proud of, and a great tradition to continue. And particularly, what we've seen over these last couple of decades – you can't say it enough times – the fact that this city is the safest off the 30 largest cities in the United States. What an amazing achievement by the men and women of the NYPD. New Yorkers now are safer than anytime in our recorded modern history. That came from a lot of hard work. Yes, a lot of great strategic thinking by the leadership, but ultimately a lot of great hard work by the men and women of the NYPD, and a lot of work by their partners at the community level.

So, as we conclude this year, we're very proud to say that crime is down nearly 2.5 percent from last year, and last year was already a record year for crime reduction. But the NYPD keeps proving that it can reach even higher; it can achieve even more.

We're experiencing one of the lowest number of homicides in the entire history of the city – 332 to date at this moment this year, in 2015. Recognizing that just five years ago, there were 519 homicides – look at the progress that's been made in just five years, and recognize that we will continue that progress and deepen it because that's what the finest police force in the country does. Shootings are near historic lows; gun arrests are up. There is so much to be proud of, but we know every day we have to do more; every day we have to work harder because we don't – we don't for a moment rest-on-laurels. We don't for a moment misunderstand it. Every crime has an impact on a real person and a real family, and we have to keep working harder.

And we know that we are deepening the trust between our police and our communities. We know that safer streets come from stronger bonds, and that is working. This new era of neighborhood policing has begun under the visionary leadership of Commissioner Bratton and Chief O'Neill. And we're already starting to see the impact it has in reducing crime, and bringing police and community together; and encouraging community members to share information with police, so the police can do their job even more effectively. What we're seeing in neighborhood policing is crimes being stopped before they happen – proactive policing, preventative policing. It's happening more and more in this city. And we're not going to stop. In fact, we're going to invest more and more to help you continue this extraordinary progress. With the City Council, we're very proud of the fact that back in June we added 1,300 new officers to the NYPD. And those officers will soon start to be on our streets. And we see some of them here among us today. 700 more officers will reach the important work of patrolling our streets through the civilianization effort, an effective impact of over 2,000 more officers on the street over the next year. That's the first increase in a long time in our police force, and we know it's going to build on the progress we have. But we also know the great training in this facility will make our police even stronger and better. We also know that new technology like ShotSpotter; like the iPhones and tablets that all of officers will have will make their work stronger and better.

This is a police force in constant motion; and constantly in the work of progress and improvement and innovation. And I thank you for that. And I want to express my gratitude on behalf of almost 8.5 million New

Yorkers. To all those who serve us now; to all those who are about to join our police force; to all those who will walk through their doors in the future – who will walk through the doors of this fine academy, all of them will make the life of this city better and safer.

Every day we benefit from your dedication in ways we sometimes see, but in many ways we never see. But we don't fail to appreciate it; we don't fail to appreciate that you fulfill your oath everyday demonstrating courage, professionalism, tenacity; the things that make this city great; the things that make this city safe.

Thank you to all who serve us. And everyone today, this is a day to celebrate a great step forward for New York City. God bless you all.

Commissioner William Bratton, NYPD: Good morning, on this beautiful morning.

As I look above me at this magnificent structure, I'm reminded of a favorite movie – *A Field of Dreams* – and a line from that movie, "If you build it, they will come." Well, the designers, the architects, all those in the construction trades that built this facility, we have come. We are here. We are here today to formally dedicate a building that has been in use for many months. We are dedicating a building that is, we believe, the finest municipal police training facility complex in the United States of America.

It is an extraordinary achievement – an extraordinary accomplishment. On an average day, over 3,000 members of the NYPD are in that building, in recruit training, in service training, specialized skills enhancement training – all the various components of our departments, civilian or sworn, will now have this new home in which to learn, in which to improve their skills, in which to improve their ability to protect eight and one-half million New Yorkers.

Before my brief remarks, I'd like to give you a little background – an overview – of our training in this department – training which is now the ultimate priority of this organization, thanks in large part to the strong support of Mayor de Blasio, who has committed significant resources of the city to grow the department, to give the equipment and facilities necessary, and the technology to ensure that in this new age – this new age of dealing with crime and disorder, and now terrorism, we have what we need – the equipment, the technology, and most importantly, the training to ensure the safety of all New Yorkers.

So, to the mayor and his political colleagues, we say, thank you.

We're also joined by many of the elected officials representing this area – City Council members – many of the community who are here, many of our law enforcement colleagues and, certainly, our union leadership, thank you all for being here to participate in this very important event.

In 1853, the first formal training began for the NYPD. Its focus, then, was on tactics and baton training.

In 1875, it expanded to a school of instruction.

In 1909, it was first dedicated space for training, at a newly built police headquarters – at the newly built police headquarters on Centre Street downtown.

In 1928, training moved to 400 Broome Street.

In 1934, it moved again to 72 Poplar Street and the facility was renamed from Police College to the name it currently holds, Police Academy.

In 1968, the Academy moved to the new building at 235 East 20th Street, which has functioned as our training facility, up until – primary training facility, up until the dedication of this building.

In terms of this facility – 2009, the groundbreaking, 2015, the first recruit class entered this building. The new Academy building, it sits on a 32-acre lot. It has over 1,000 parking spots – not nearly enough – 730,000 square-foot building. The former Academy was only 289,000 square-feet – almost triple the size.

The gym can accommodate, at one time, 11 full recruit companies. The gym contains two full basketball courts and an eighth-of a mile running track.

Dining hall accommodations – we run one of the largest restaurants in New York City -- 664 places and a 40-staff separate lounge.

We have a 660-seat classroom on the third floor of the building and an 800 state-of-the-art auditorium on the seventh floor. We have a two-story library in this facility.

I encourage, after the opening event, that you take the time to walk around this facility and you're going to have to take time because it is so big. It'll be good for you anyways – good exercise, a lot of walking involved, a lot of stairs.

Now, for my remarks.

First, welcome all of you to the new police academy.

As the mayor referenced, we are the beneficiaries of my predecessor, Commissioner Ray Kelly and his predecessor, Michael Bloomberg's vision in support in obtaining the funds and beginning the building of this. They oversaw a long-thought process – a process that was impeded by the recession of 2008. What you see here is only half of what was originally conceived. All this open space to my left and in back, was going to be the other half of the Academy – originally conceived as a one and a half billion dollar facility. The recession of 2008 severely impacted city funds and only half of what was envisioned was built – not built was a nine-story parking garage, a driving range on the roof of that garage, not built was an in-door range to replace our Rodman's Neck facility, not built was a tactical training village – another 750 million dollars.

We are in the process of, currently, doing the redesign plans for Rodman's Neck and for Floyd Bennett Field, for purposes of new firing ranges, new driving range – at less cost than the 750 million and I hope next year, to be able to present a capital budget proposal that we can finish the work that was not done here but that can then be done at much less cost at Rodman's Neck and Floyd Bennet Field.

In moving into this site, they had to move an auto impound site that sat here. They had to get all the approvals and permits – never easy in New York City, as we know. They also confronted the fact that we reclaimed a lot of this land from the waters of Flushing Bay and Flushing Bay keeps trying to take it back.

And finally, designing and redesigning and redesigning again, when the economic downturn affected the plans – what resulted however, is still, the best law enforcement training facility anywhere in the country for a municipal police agency – cutting edge scenario based training.

But we've already outgrow it. We've outgrown it because of our commitment to training. We have five strategies in the NYPD, that are going to guide going forward – dealing with terrorism, tackling crime, rebuilding trust in our communities, acquiring hundreds of millions of dollars in the latest technology – but is all built on the foundation that this building represents – training.

And to that end, we have expanded training that, there is no police department in America today that equals the amount of time, energy and commitment that we do to the issue of training – in service training – the 35,000 officers receiving the three day training, that they will receive every year going forward, in addition to their two

days of firearm training. Specialized training for all of our various units – this morning they had the opportunity to meet the 18 officers who were in the building training with their new dogs – [inaudible] sniffing dogs – part of the expansion of our dog core – all the specialized training that goes on in this building.

Over twice the size of the old academy, this new facility provides capacities such as a mock court, subway, precinct station house, housing environments that we simply didn't have in the previous facilities.

For our recruits in the Academy, for new promotees, for officers going into specialized units, for anyone going into service training, this building is a major step forward as we continue to be a national leader of policing in the 21st Century.

Finally, the NYPD – the country's largest and, arguably, most professional – the finest, has a home for its training that reflects that organization.

On behalf of the men and women of the New York City Police Department, I would like to thank everyone who made this building possible, who allowed us to have a new home to do the important work of training.

Thank you all for your attendance today and, again, please take the time to take a look at this facility. It is an incredible complex and one that I am so proud to be part of the opening of.

Thank you very much.

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