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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 19, 2015

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**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT 29TH ANNUAL BROOKLYN
TRIBUTE TO DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: I love Eric Adams, too.

[Cheers]

Eric has a special voice in this city, because –

Unknown: [inaudible]

[Laughter]

Mayor: Eric Adams served us, in uniform – protected us – and he speaks up for fairness and civil rights
[inaudible]

[Applause]

There is no contradiction between public safety and fairness. There should be no contradiction in the society we
aspire to create in the image of Dr. King. It's a society where people are both safe and respected – safe and
[inaudible].

[Applause]

I want to thank everyone here at BAM – Karen Brooks Hopkins, and everyone who makes this place the place
for everyone, a place for all of Brooklyn, a place for all of New York City. It's happening here at BAM – this is
the kind of city we believe in.

You've had a lot of great people come before you today – our senators, Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand;
our Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito; our DA Ken Thompson. You're going to hear from Congressman Hakeem
Jeffries. You're certainly going to hear from Cornel West. That's a big deal.

And throughout the day, people will rightfully invoke Dr. King's words, because they are the running
commentary of our lives, if you think about it, for all of us who are children and grandchildren of that
generation – and for some of you who marched in that generation, and were activists yourself. This is the
soundtrack. This is the conscience we hear – Dr. King's many, many truthful, powerful, positive,
instructive statements, that keep reminding us of what we're here to do. He left us a roadmap, in effect. The
question is, are we focused enough – are we true enough – to follow that roadmap?

Eric Adams said something important. He said we can't waver. Dr. King talked so clearly, that the path to justice is not easy, it's not convenient – it takes struggle. But if you don't waver, you will find a way to that goal. It's as simple as that – if you don't waver.

[Applause]

The essence of Dr. King's teachings – the power of love, the power of love to overcome hate. In this city, we strive now every day to create one city, one city thinking as a family would think. And that may sound hard in a place filled with so many different people. But it's the right goal. I talked a few years ago about the pain of the tale of two cities. And I didn't talk about it because I believed it was fated to be that way. I didn't believe it was the only option. I talked about it because we had to acknowledge it on the pathway to something better that we could create, in this generation, in this time – that we could create.

We can build bridges. We can find a way to come together in a common cause. That's what Dr. King would demand of us – no matter how difficult, that's what he would demand of us. I know it can be done.

I know Dr. King would speak to us of the power of peaceful protest, because we look at those years – what he achieved, what his movement achieved – and remember Dr. King spoke of the highest ideals, and he elevated everyone with him. He pointed out what we could be, what we should be, and you know what, people started to feel it and believe it, and society started to change. He spoke [inaudible] – he was intolerant, in fact, of hateful words, of hateful speech. He demanded the people show the strength to stay focused on the goal, no matter what challenge they faced. We've seen the footage. We've seen all the extraordinary difficulties those protesters faced.

But they kept their message positive, on a peaceful, positive vision forward – and brothers and sisters, it worked. It worked. It worked. And that's what we honor today.

[Applause]

When I say it worked, I do not mean that if Dr. King had lived, and were among us today, that he would be satisfied, because it is inherently clear he would not be satisfied. I have no doubt about that. That's why I talk about [inaudible].

[Applause]

Dr. King would not be satisfied on many levels, including the economic reality. He would not be satisfied with [inaudible]. He would not be satisfied that what he was shaping together at the end of his life, with the Poor People's Campaign, that those issues were in the front of the public debate at that moment, and then somehow, [inaudible] for the same contradictions only to grow, and in some ways, deepen.

So I'm clear that we have to be purposeful. But what I won't say is that equally, unarguably – is that the movement worked, that it was transcendent, that it changed the hearts and minds of people all over this country, that it shows a different of doing things, something we still haven't fully explored and used with full effect; that it showed us tools, some of the greatest tools in history. Remember – Dr. King's concept of nonviolent social protest was met with tremendous skepticism on all sides – on all sides. Those who didn't want change found it an unlikely effort – found it something that had clearly not rocked the status quo. Those who believed in the old notion – an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth – thought nonviolent protest surely would be a limited act.

And both those extremes were wrong, because of the fact – it was the only that worked, it's the only thing that ever has worked, in fundamental social change in our time.

So in Dr. King's spirit, we're going to keep working for change, but it's incumbent upon all of us to reject hateful voices from inside, to reject them openly, to say that doesn't move our movement and arguments forward – to remember these powerful lessons. One of the most extraordinary moments in this city in recent years, which led to real and tangible change, was the Fathers' Day March a few years ago – the silent march down Fifth Avenue. Did some of you hear take part in that? Do you remember that?

[Applause]

Do you remember the impact it had, how it helped turn the tide on a broken stop and frisk policy? Do you know that just three years ago in this city there were over 700,000 stops in one year – 700,000 in one year, 91 percent of those stopped innocent in every way, shape, or form – and the silent march occurred, and protest occurred. It was purposeful and focused and nonviolent, and lo and behold, a few days ago we announced the statistics for the year 2014. There were 47,000 stops in New York City.

[Applause]

That was the result – that extraordinary change was the result – of purposeful movement. That means in 2014, hundreds of thousands of people were treated with the respect they deserved, and not put through the indignity of an unfair stop. That changes people's lives. That changes the lives of our young people in particular. Our young men of color deserve our respect, our support – they deserve to be upheld.

[Applause]

But it wouldn't have happened – that change wouldn't have happened – if people had not utilized the finest tools of the King tradition, and see that that was the way to bring truth. It's typified by one of Dr. King's many great quotes – "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." That is the message. That is the power of the message.

[Applause]

We will move forward as a city. We will move forward to deeper respect for all. We will move forward to true respect between police and community – police respecting communities they serve, communities respecting the police who serve them. It is a simple [inaudible]

[Applause]

And remember – take yourself back to the silent march, take yourself back to all the efforts and calls for justice – remember that as we did that, we were presented, time and again, with analysis that said, if we were to create a more fair city, if we were to end the abuses of stop and frisk, or if we were to reduce marijuana arrests – take any number of other reforms – the inevitable outcome would be a less safe, more violent, more [inaudible]. That's what we were told [inaudible]. But we have a whole year's work [inaudible]. As I said, the stops came down dramatically. Marijuana arrests came down dramatically. [inaudible] gave them more opportunity to focus on actual crime – real crime.

[Applause]

So people were being treated more fairly, and guess what happened? Murders went down, overall crime went down, robberies went down – we became safer because we became fairer. It's as simple as that.

[Applause]

I want to tell you a quick story. I know you got a lot of speakers ahead, but I just want to do this quickly, [inaudible] powerful. Because the hearts of New Yorkers are good. The hearts of our people are good.

[Applause]

Shortly after I took office, there was a moment that could have been profound tragedy all around, but it turned out to show us something very meaningful. A young rookie cop confronted a fare beater on a bus in Crown Heights. He asked the man to get off the bus. The man got off the bus and pulled out a gun, and shot at the cop. Two rookie cops [inaudible] partners – one fell, having been shot. The other pursued the perpetrator. The officer lay on the ground, and residents of the community immediately ran to his aid. People of every walk of life, every background, ran to the aid of the fallen officer immediately, and as the perpetrator ran away, found a building to run into, community residents pointed, to the police, where the perpetrator had gone, and helped to achieve the arrest. Think about that.

[Applause]

In that one vignette in Crown Heights a year ago – community helping police, police helping community – all working for a common goal. That didn't get publicized a lot. Are you shocked?

Audience: [Laughter] No.

Mayor: That didn't get publicized a lot. But that is the truth of this city. People want to find that way forward, that way to mutual respect. It is available to us. There are doubting thomases, always. Every point in social change, along the way, [inaudible] by those who say it is impossible. It is the price of admission of trying to make things better for all of us. But in this city, we have an extraordinary trait of perseverance. In this city, we have often led the nation and the world in understanding that things could be different, and actually showing by example what that difference looks like. I know it is available to us once again. And I know we will create that fairer and more just city, at the same time, a safer city for all. I know we can create that mutual respect between police and community, and it will not happen overnight, but it will happen. It will happen because we are resolute, because we need it, because we believe in it. Remember, when anyone says to you, it can't happen – when anyone tries to dissuade you from positive action – one more quote, one of the greatest of Dr. King's quotes in my view: "The arc of history is long, but it bends towards justice." Thank you, and God bless you.

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