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**TRANSCRIPT FROM SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2022: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS  
APPEARS LIVE ON MSNBC'S POLITICSNATION WITH REVEREND AL  
SHARPTON**

**Reverend Al Sharpton:** Welcome back to PoliticsNation. New polling suggests Americans aren't buying Republican's latest political stunt on immigration. A new survey finds just 29 percent of Americans approve of Republican governors busing and flying migrants to democratic states. 40% of respondents disapprove, including nearly half of Republicans. The city of New York is dealing with an influx of thousands of migrants and asylum seekers, but coming by their own choice some, and others at the urging of Republican officials. Joining me now to talk about what's being done to accommodate them is the mayor of New York, Mayor Eric Adams.

Mayor Adams, first of all, thank you for joining us. Let me get right to the immigration challenge New York City is facing right now. You recently estimated more than 13,000 migrants have arrived in New York City since the spring but more than 9,500 of them are seeking housing in the city's shelter system and that number continues to grow every day. Put that in perspective for our viewers. What kind of strain is that placing on the city's resources?

**Mayor Eric Adams:** It's an amazing problem. When you look at the numbers, 10,300 are still in our shelter system. Over 13,600 were brought here to New York City, some wanting to go to different destinations but they were duped into believing that they could only go to New York City, they were incentivized to do so. But when you look at it, it's more than shelter, Reverend Sharpton. It's all about education. You have 3,200 school-aged children we are finding and incorporating into our school system. It's about healthcare. It's about making sure they have the basic needs that is required, that's food, shelter, clothing. When you look at already the problem we are facing coming out of COVID it was just an inhumane, uncooperative action on the part of, particularly, the governor of Texas.

**Reverend Sharpton:** Now, with that in mind, you announced this week the city is responding to the influx of migrants by building two humanitarian emergency response and relief centers, which are essentially tent cities designed to shelter migrants temporarily. On the one hand, your administration is responding to a desperate need, but on the other hand immigration advocates

have many concerns as the facilities are legally adequate or whether a more permanent solution is needed, especially as we head into the winter. What's your response to these concerns?

**Mayor Adams:** No one could have predicted over 13,000 refugees, asylum seekers, migrants coming to New York City. We will always fulfill our moral and legal obligation to house New Yorkers and those who come to this city. This is not a homeless issue, this is a migrant, refugee, asylum crisis that we are facing and this is a humanitarian action that was created by human hands. And so, those who are evaluating this situation based on the traditional models that have been set in place over 40 years ago that those who seek housing in New York City must get that housing, we fulfill that all the time and we have done that with over 13,000 people who have come to New York. That is not the same issue and they need to look at it through the proper prism and not try to state that we're not meeting our obligations both legally and morally.

**Reverend Sharpton:** Since August, Texas Governor Greg Abbott has sent roughly 2,700 migrants to New York City, aboard more than 50 buses. In a recent interview for the Texas Tribune Festival, you said your team reached out to Governor Abbot's administration asking to coordinate with them in their busing efforts and they refused. Why is the Texas governor refusing to make even the slightest effort to make sure these transfers of human beings from one place to another are at least handled in a more orderly and humane manner?

**Mayor Adams:** A crisis really causes us to have cooperation and coordination and people make a comparison to my communication with the El Paso mayor in comparison to the governor of Texas. This is not a Democrat or Republican issue. When people came to America they were not trying to come to any particular state, they were trying to come to a place where we state dreams come alive, the American dream. We were able to speak with the El Paso mayor and stated, "Let's communicate. We're not asking to have migrants or asylum seekers to come here in large numbers but at least we should have some type of communication."

We did the same early with the governor of Texas. They committed to communicating with us, they did just the opposite. They compel people to get on the buses. They tag some of them. 45 hour ride without proper food, water, restroom facilities, and medical care. Some arrived here with COVID. It was clearly a subterfuge that they used, I believe, Reverend Sharpton, to take attention away from what they have been doing over the last few months in this country, taking away the women's right to choose, taking away our protection by some of the gun laws that have come out of the Supreme Court decisions. We really need to focus on that this was just a political stunt and, as you indicated in the poll, I think the stunt backfired.

**Reverend Sharpton:** Now, I've got to go a little deeper, Mr. Mayor. You and I know each other over 30 years and you were one of the original members of National Action Network when we started. I've got to bring up a question of race. I'm bringing this up because not only are these Republican governors showing a callous disregard for these migrants and asylum seekers, most of whom are coming from Latin American countries, but they also seem to be specifically targeting cities with Black mayors such as Lori Lightfoot in Chicago, Muriel Bowser in Washington, DC, and of course you as mayor of New York.

Even Martha's Vineyard, well known as the summer home for former President Barack Obama and many successful Blacks. What are your thoughts? Because I'm saying there's a racial element to this and the president and others need to come in and help black mayors who are already dealing with challenges. It's not like you don't have sanctuary cities with white mayors. It seems like there's a racial element to this. I've been saying it and I'm going to keep saying it because I don't believe these are coincidences.

**Mayor Adams:** Well, Reverend Sharpton, we need to be clear on the facts. The facts are clear. Three black mayors, Chicago, Washington, and New York City, we were targeted. It's very clear. The governor of Texas clearly stated that he was targeting these areas. It was clear that Martha's Vineyard, a place where African Americans have been coming for years, including, as you stated, the former president, President Barack Obama. I believe it's a clear attempt to undermine our cities.

We're already dealing with the over-proliferation of guns that are coming from the southern border. We are coming out of COVID. New York was ground zero for the COVID crisis. We are experiencing historical crises already. When you look at the specific targeting out of all the states in America, we looked at the cities, cities where you had three Black mayors, where they specifically sent buses to. They passed through a lot of cities to get to New York, with a destination of getting to New York.

**Reverend Sharpton:** A lot of sanctuary cities they passed through, by the way. They passed through a lot of sanctuary cities as well. Before I let you go, I have to ask you about our fellow Americans in Puerto Rico. The island was devastated last weekend by Hurricane Fiona and some areas are still without power. You tweeted in solidarity with Puerto Rico earlier this week, pointing out the deep connections between this city and the island territory. Can you tell me more about what you and the city are doing to help them out? I know you've announced, I believe, you're going tomorrow to Puerto Rico.

**Mayor Adams:** These are our fellow Americans. I don't subscribe to the theories of the former president that these are not our current Americans, our brothers and sisters. New York has one of the largest Puerto Rican populations outside the island of Puerto Rico. I will be leaving tonight to join a team that I've already sent to Puerto Rico. They're on the ground. Three members of my administration, two Emergency Management officials, and one police officer will be joining them and we're going to also look to go to the Dominican Republic as well. We have an obligation. No matter how difficult things are, we have to continuously look after our brothers and sisters who are experiencing difficult times. That is what happened when we experienced some horrific issues like 9/11 and other natural disasters, people came to our aid. We are responsible for our brothers and sisters and we're going to do as much as we can there in Puerto Rico.

**Reverend Sharpton:** New York Mayor Eric Adams. As always, thank you for being with us, good to see you.

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