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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good morning, everybody. We had a long day and a long night yesterday in our city. And I want to talk about the whole picture, but I'll be very quick and you're going to hear from Commissioner Shea as well. The most important thing always is to protect the lives of all New Yorkers. There was a lot of activity around the five boroughs yesterday, well into the night. The bottom line, the most important thing, thank God, is that lives were protected. No loss of life last night or obviously in the nights before and the days before in these protests. As much as we know at this moment, no serious injury, one incident being looked at, but generally speaking, no serious injury to protestors or to officers. There are many things to discuss and we will, things that must be addressed, things that need to be done better both in terms of our immediate work addressing this situation and certainly in our work going forward, much that has to be done, much that has to change and that we will change. But I want to note that overall, even in a day where thousands of people were out expressing their views, expressing their frustration, their pain, their anger, their deep desire for change in locations all over the city, overall, what we saw was, overwhelmingly, peaceful demonstration. I'm definitely going to address some of the things we saw late in the evening that were not peaceful and not acceptable, but if you talk about the reality of the full day, we saw more and more the peaceful demonstrators coming to the fore and establishing a different tone, a different reality, people who are from communities want change, want it done the right way, the peaceful way, the democratic way, and that was more and more evident yesterday than in the last few days.

I spoke to, yesterday, a number of community leaders. I was out in central Brooklyn, talked to elected officials, also talked to community residents. What I heard overwhelmingly was a desire to keep things peaceful, to work on change in a positive constructive fashion. I heard both with my own ears, saw it with my own eyes, community members saying, we are going to set the tone for any protest, not folks who are not from our community, not folks who want to do violence. We, the community members, the community leaders, will set the tone. Saw this, heard about the specifics of it in central Brooklyn, heard examples from Harlem, from Southeast Queens of elected officials, clergy, community leaders, civic leaders, Cure Violence Movement members and leaders stepping in and setting a different tone. And I think that's very, very important. So, I want to commend and thank all of the community leaders, all the community members who have said it is up to the community to determine how this will go and to ensure that change is made the right way. Thank you. And it's crucial that that good work continue.

I also want to say there's some issues to discuss for sure and certain specific situations involving the NYPD that I will discuss that need to be addressed, but, overall, our officers showed restraint throughout the day and evening yesterday. Overall, the peaceful protest was handled the way we

want it to be handled with officers staying back and protests allowed to continue in the tradition of this city. In fact, we saw, in many cases, police leaders and police officers engage protestors, engage community leaders, have a real discussion with them, show empathy, show connection. This is what neighborhood policing is about and we saw powerful examples of it. There's a video out there, Chief Fausto Pichardo, Chief of Patrol of the NYPD, one of the highest ranking members of the NYPD, proud member of our Dominican community, out there talking face to face with a protest leader saying, we want to keep this peaceful, we want this to be done the right way, we want everyone to be able to express their views the right way. There's the images out there of a Chief Delatorre, Chief Maddrey in Brooklyn taking a knee, respecting the concerns of the protesters saying we can work together.

There's this very powerful image. I want to thank the Daily News for putting this on the front cover today. Deputy Inspector Vincent Tavalaro in Queens showing that the NYPD is listening, working with the community. This kind of thing, our police leadership reaching out, connecting with the community, this is the entire concept of neighborhood policing and that's true in the middle of this difficult moment, in fact it's how we're going to overcome this moment and move forward. So, I commend and I thank all the police leaders who found a way to reach out, listen, connect, and the restraint of so many of our officers.

Now, there are things that have to be addressed. Later in the evening, last night, and in several locations, particularly Lower Manhattan, we saw looting. That is something we do not see typically in this city. That is unacceptable in New York City. It will not be allowed in New York City. We're going to address that very, very aggressively. Again, that phenomenon, rare and we saw it for the first time in any serious manner last night, did not see that in the other nights. That is being fomented by a very small number of violent protesters. That is not what everyday community people are doing, want to be very clear about that. And that is also why I am confident in the NYPD's ability to locate those individuals and deal with this problem. We also have seen situations where police officers acted inappropriately and it's rare, I want to be clear, but it must be addressed in every instance.

Now, I want to take a step back and talk about a very troubling video from the night before last of two police cars moving through an intersection, moving through a crowd that was so troubling to the people in this city. And I spoke to it and I spoke from the heart about what I saw. But what I also knew had been happening in that day and the day before, including very dangerous situations where the lives of our officers were in danger. And I tried to express that reality while also saying it's not acceptable for a police car to ever move through a crowd. I don't think I expressed it as well as I should have. So, I want to try again to help the people of the city understand there is no situation where a police vehicle should drive into a crowd of protestors or New Yorkers of any kind. It is dangerous. It is unacceptable. This was an extremely aberrant situation and there were extenuating circumstances, I believe, because of an instance that happened earlier and I understand why the danger that there could have been a much bigger conflict there was looming, but it is still not acceptable for our officers to ever drive into a crowd. This incident is under investigation as we speak, both within the NYPD and by the independent review that I have set up with our Corporation Counsel and our Department of Investigation Commissioner.

There's going to be in each and every instance where an officer did something wrong – and we've all seen the video of an officer pushing a young woman to the ground, we've seen the video of an officer opening a car door and hitting a protester – all of these matters are under review right now. They need to be speedy reviews. Discipline must be meted out in any case where it is merited. We need to show the people of this city that there's one standard that – and I got this when I've talked to community leaders and community members, this is the nagging, deep complaint, this sense of double standard and it can't go on. Vast majority of officers do their job, do their job well. The vast majority of officers are trying to connect to communities and do the right thing. They're in this job for the right reason. There are some who do not belong in this job and there are some that use violence when they shouldn't. There are some that are disrespectful to the people that serve. There are some that harbor racism in their hearts. These people should not be in the police force and it's our job to get them out. So, any situation where an officer does something, even in the context of a protest and a tense situation, they do something offensive and inappropriate, there must be an immediate investigation, there must be the appropriate penalty. And that penalty can include all the way up to being removed from the police force.

There's a video going around of a police officer in the middle of a situation that admittedly looked chaotic but where protesters were in front of that police officer. That police officer drew his gun at some point yesterday. That to me, seeing that video was absolutely unacceptable. Now, I don't know all the circumstances and we must know all the facts. There will be an immediate full investigation of that incident. But I can say as a New Yorker, as your Mayor, as someone who understands that the vast majority of protestors are there peacefully, and even those who do have that violent intent are still human beings. We have to always know it is not the place of an officer to pull a gun in the middle of a crowd knowing that there are peaceful protesters in that crowd that is unacceptable. That is dangerous. I want you to note on that video how a superior officer immediately came over and moved that officer away from that crowd. That officer should have his gun and badge taken away today. There will be an investigation immediately to determine the larger consequences. So, this to me makes clear as we've known that the work of reform has been gone for years, but must deepen. People are demanding more change and they have every right to because they're in pain. They feel an injustice is being done to them every single day. I've talked the last few days about what racism means in people's everyday lives for so many people in so many communities of color and this particularly afflicts people of African descent. Racism hangs like a cloud every hour of every day and if their assumption is in their encounters with a police officer that they will not be given fair and equal treatment, that's an unacceptable state of affairs.

So, how do we change it? In addition to neighborhood policing and body cameras and all the other things that we've tried to do to change policing, what more can we do? Here's what we could do immediately. The legislature right now could repeal the 50-a legislation, the 50-a law. That is holding back transparency in police discipline. I have called for this. My police commissioners have called for this. The Governor has come out and said he is ready to sign a repeal bill. We need 50-a repealed. Let's do that in the month of June. This will be one of the single most important things that we could do to increase trust between police and community. I've been very clear. We must also have legislation that protects the identities of police officers in their personal life, their home address. They deserve that protection, but discipline processes

must be transparent. We have a moment now that we can get that done and that will deepen the trust and deepen our ability to have progress going forward.

What else do we have to do? There has to be a faster discipline process. Anytime an officer is alleged to have done something inappropriate, there needs to be an immediate investigation, immediate consequences. It always takes too long. It makes people so frustrated and so angry. We can't accept that state of affairs. We have to change. If we have an instance where an officer has done something inappropriate, that needs to be an immediate investigation, consequences quickly. If that officer should not be on the police force, we should remove that officer. If an officer is not right for a community, if an officer has shown that they are unable to work appropriately on the street and with a community, they should be removed from work on the street. If an officer should not be on the police force, they should be removed from the police force. We've done a whole host of other reforms and they have changed policing in the city, but it's time to go to the next level and we have to go there quickly because any officer who should not be wearing that uniform needs to get off this force and we have to have a way of doing that so the other officers, the vast majority who are doing their job, respecting communities, honoring the law, serving people, putting their lives on the line – that vast majority of good officers, let their work shine through when we get the bad apples off this police force.

My final point before turning to Commissioner Shea, as has been reported, my daughter, Chiara, was arrested at a protest. I want you first to know and I think many, many parents can appreciate this, she's 25 years old and did not inform Chirlane and I have her intention to get arrested. I knew of some of her views. I knew she believed in peaceful protest. I knew she had participated a few nights ago, but in a peaceful manner. And when I found out she had been arrested, finally reached her with Chirlane and we asked her to recount the whole story and, look, I love my daughter deeply. I honor her. She is such a good human being. She only wants to do good in the world. She wants to see a better and more peaceful world. She believes a lot of change is needed. I'm proud of her that she cares so much and she was willing to go out there and do something about it. She recounted the story in detail to me. She was acting peacefully. She believes that everything she did was in the spirit of peaceful, respectful protest. And the bottom line is I will let her speak for herself in any way that she wants to, but I admire that she was out there trying to change something that she thought was unjust and doing it in a peaceful manner. It's a reality that every parent faces that you never know when your kids become adults, how they're going to go about their lives. Sometimes you get surprises. But even though this was a surprise to Chirlane and I, I respect my daughter, I honor her, and I know her heart. I know she appreciates humanity, every kind of humanity. She appreciates the fact that people serve us. She appreciates the fact that we need to change this world. And she in her own way has tried to do something about it. And for that, I want to just tell her how much I love and respect and admire her. With that, I turned to Commissioner Shea.

Police Commissioner Dermot Shea: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. So, yesterday, over the course of the day, we encountered a number of protests throughout New York City, large crowds were taking part in the protest. They were overwhelmingly peaceful throughout the day. They were concentrated in Brooklyn, Manhattan, and to a smaller degree in Queens. But again, the largest concentrations were in and around the Barclay Center in Brooklyn, and then in the area around Union Square, 14th street in Manhattan. The Manhattan one was a little more mobile.

Throughout the day, as I said, overwhelmingly peaceful protests. I think there was a different – less tension in the air from my perspective and the reports that we were getting back throughout the day. That changed as the night-time came. What we saw was a marked shift about probably 8:30 PM, 9:00 PM. As many protestors were leaving for the day, we started to see some criminal activity concentrated more in Manhattan than other areas. And that's some of the looting that was recounted. We're still tallying up the totals in terms of arrests, injuries, or things of that sort. As, as the Mayor said, we start with the most important thing, loss of life. We did have some dangerous incidents in New York City yesterday attributed to the protest, but thankfully there was no loss of life. I thank the officers and the protestors, community leaders that came out again. I think this is an ongoing process. We're in day four. We expect more protests throughout the city today and I will tell you that the men and women of this police department will be consistent. They will be out there again ensuring the rights of people to peacefully assemble and we ask all New Yorkers to participate and do it safely.

Mayor: Thank you very much, Commissioner. Let's take some questions from the media and please let me know the name and the outlet of each journalist.

Moderator: We'll now begin our q-and-a. The first question today goes to Jen Peltz from the AP.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor. How are you?

Mayor: Good. Jen, how are you doing?

Question: Fine, thanks. I wanted to ask whether you are considering a curfew and if not, whether you're considering any other steps other than what has been done in the previous nights.

Mayor: Yeah. Thank you, Jen. A central question, I appreciate it. To date, we have not believed a curfew was the right strategy, but the Commissioner and I are going to talk about it as an option today. We'll discuss it over the next few hours. I'm also going to have a discussion with Governor Cuomo about it. We have to look at it as an option, but that being said we have not made a decision. There are advantages and disadvantages, to say the least, to instituting a curfew. Previous nights, I think we're different than what we saw last night, so we're weighing that right now. In terms of the strategies that will be in effect tonight. I'll let the Commissioner speak to it, but I can say having gone all over the areas where there were protests last night, I saw a huge number of NYPD officers, which I think is essential to keeping the peace where there is this kind of attempt at looting. So, we have a lot of officers ready to go. I think a lot became clear from last night about how to strategically approach this situation. I feel tremendous confidence that the NYPD will know how to deal with it. Commissioner, do you want to go into any [inaudible] –

Commissioner Shea: Thank you. I was out there last night throughout the city, saw firsthand some of the activities. What a good day that turned bad, unfortunately, and I think it leaves a black mark on everything that's trying to be accomplished. Again, I made the reference yesterday and I think it's appropriate – it's hijacking a cause, and you had such good stories coming out, whether it's the cover of today's Daily News or other stories, you saw a lot on social media of all different ranks. Not always agreeing, but agreeing to see and hear each other and listen to each

other and knowing that it's a long journey to get to where we want to be, to working together, to denounce when we see something wrong. That changed last night with the looting. We have to recognize that that is where the protest ended. There was no agenda for a protest last night as breaking into stores and stealing property. We will have a robust amount of officers both in plainclothes and uniform out there tonight. Anyone coming to, whether it's one of the outer boroughs or to Manhattan with the intent to take advantage of people during this very difficult time, we are going to ensure that we do everything that you are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. We see you driving a car into Manhattan and using it to facilitate that crime, you are going to lose your car. So I encourage everyone again, come out protest, make yourself heard, enact change. But we will have little tolerance for criminal activity. The one thing I will say is I saw increased, again, numbers last night of New Yorkers of every faith, of every religion, of every ethnicity speaking out against it, that they are not speaking for us. I saw many incidents where I was quite frankly a little worried that it was going to turn to violence where people confronting people that are breaking windows on stores, saying that doesn't help us. I saw a doorman, I saw residents coming down trying to aid, and I think that you know, we are a significant part of this story, the NYPD and law enforcement, but it's a groundswell that's going to really end this terrible situation that we're in the middle of now, and we encourage all New Yorkers to speak up, speak your cause, whether you agree or disagree, but do it peacefully, and work with us. Thank you.

Moderator: The next is Dave Evans for ABC.

Question: Hi Mayor. I wanted to ask you a couple of things, and forgive me if you addressed this at the very beginning because I was doing an interview right as you began talking. So I—

Mayor: Dave? We seem to have a problem with Dave's audio – two days in a row. Dave, are you there?

Question: Dave, do we have it here?

Mayor: Yeah, try again. Start – I know you said you didn't hear the beginning of the press conference, so what is your question, Dave? Okay. Dave needs a new cell phone. This is what we're learning for the last two days. Dave, last call. Dave?

Question: We're in Lower Manhattan. It's, it's a dead zone. I'm sorry. Can you hear me now?

Mayor: Yes.

Question: Okay. I just wanted to ask you if you could address some of the criticism of you and the police department that you have been to pro-police [inaudible] couple of days to defeat [inaudible] I also wanted to ask [inaudible].

Dave, you got to get to a better cell zone. So, I'll take the first part and we'll get them back and we'll get the rest of his question last call. Dave, can you hear me okay, Dave, last call. Can you hear me? I hear you stay still. Dave, what is the rest of your question?

Question: I just wanted to see if you thought Chiara had done anything wrong?

Mayor: No. Dave, look, I trust my daughter. I've known her her whole life. I really – she is an incredibly good human being. She just cares for other people. I've seen this throughout our whole life. Anybody who was hurting in her life, she would try to help. She was always looking out for the underdogs. She was always looking out for the person that wasn't heard. She's just a very good human, that a lot to try and help people in lots of ways. She's also been an activist for years and lots of different ways. This is not someone who would ever commit any violence, and she recounted in tremendous detail to Chirlane and I what happened, and she was very clear that she believed she was following the instructions of police officers, and doing what they were asking. So again, I'm going to let her speak for herself about the details, but absolutely she was abundantly clear. She was peacefully protesting not doing anything that would provoke a negative response, and the criticisms, Dave – look, I've spent the entire time in my public life trying to bring change to the relationship between police and community, and I know we have done something very different in the city in the last six and a half years. I know neighborhood policing alone and it's just begun, is going to create a transcendent reality where police and community come together. When you look at this, I'm going to show it again because I think it is so powerful. This didn't happen in previous administrations. It just didn't. Let's be very real about that. This is because neighborhood policing says, find a way to connect with communities and work with communities and hear and see them as Commissioner Shea just said, and you didn't use to have Dave, a lot of Police Commissioners sitting here talking about hearing and seeing communities.

We are making profound change, but we got to do a lot more. So, what I have said these last days is we must, we, the elected officials, the police leadership, we must change more. It is on us to do that. But I'm also going to express my respect for the vast majority of police officers who are doing their job out there. It's very tough circumstances, in the last few days they've shown a lot of restraint. I'm always going to respect that. But any officer does a wrong thing. There need to be consequences and they need to be fast and we need to show, we need to not talk about, we need to show it so communities would see action. That's what people will believe in.

Moderator: The next is Jeff Mays from the New York Times.

Question: Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor. I have two questions. The first one is from my colleague Ashley. Yesterday, the police counter-terrorism commissioner said that investigators knew ahead of the protest that interlopers were planning to use the protest as a [inaudible] for violence. But he said the police did not share that information with the public because they feared being seen as trying to sabotage the protest. Do you think it was the right decision not to put the public on heightened alert? And then my second question is regarding your daughter's arrest. Do you think the SBA or any other police entity violated any privacy rules when they released news of that arrest? Will there be any investigation into that incident? And should you have informed the public yesterday that your daughter was arrested? Why did you – why did you wait a whole day –

Mayor: Jeff, I respect you greatly. I respect your news organization. I'm smiling and laughing because I think you misunderstand. If I had known that my daughter was arrested, I would have

been the first to let the public know. I found out when my staff got a media inquiry, which gets back to your point about the fact that information was leaked. I have a 25-year-old adult daughter who lives her own life, chooses to share information with me, if she deems to, but not something that's a guarantee when you're dealing with an adult child. So, I knew that she had been out peacefully protesting on Thursday nights. She had given me her sense of what she was seeing and her critique of things never heard from her after that, that she was involved in anything I'd found out.

The only reason I found out she had been arrested was there was media inquiry that then I heard about from my staff. I reached out to her immediately and said, where are you? What's going on? I didn't even know if it meant in real time or had happened previously, and finally she called back and Chirlane and I got on the line with her and she went through exactly what happened, and we did not know that it had happened the night before, and she told us about the experience. So, no the – actually this is a case and this is the whole truth and nothing but the truth. The media knew about this before I knew about it.

No, of course not. The SBA did something unconscionable and it's not just cause it's my daughter. They do this all the time with people's privacy. This is another one of the things that has to change. Look, police unions could be part of the change and the improvement in the city and this country. They really should reevaluate what they are doing at this moment in history, more and more police officers are speaking up around America and saying that this is an unacceptable state of affairs that has to change. Every time a police officer comes forward and says "I want to be part of the change" It is helping us move forward. The unions could play an incredibly positive role if they would just step forward and say, we're ready to be part of that constructive change, but when they leak information on someone, it's absolutely inappropriate and it's – but I'm not going to tell you that it's only happening to my child. It's happening to people every single day. All of those things you often report about, all of you come from leaked information within the NYPD that's not supposed to be leaked. So, I don't want to see anything done more than would be done for anyone else. But I wish the whole phenomenon would stop. I don't think it's fair that people in law enforcement inappropriately provide information that's not supposed to be public on individuals, but they do it every hour, every day, and you all report it every hour of every day. So, there's a little bit of a contradiction, and then on the question of alerting the public.

Jeff, I think it's a very fair question, but I believe that in my comments, the Commissioners, we've been saying for days now that we see a violent element, including a violent element from outside the city and outside the communities where the protests are happening, attempting to use the cover of those who are there to peacefully protest, to try and foment acts of violence. We've seen the acts of violence. We've seen it in this city, we've seen it in cities all over America. It's a very clear pattern. I think we've made that statement very clearly to people. I think it's a very fair question to say going forward. If we see something very specific that we think might be a particular danger to folks coming to it, we need to alert them. I agree with that entirely. But I feel like we did try to say to people, maybe we need to say it more sharply that there is an element out there that aims to do violence. They will be out there again today, I'm – again, I'm hearing from mayors all over the country the exact same pattern we're seeing here. Vast majority of protestors are peaceful, small group going in the midst of the peaceful protesters, using them as a

shield and then trying to attack officers and trying to attack property and more and more people are fighting back, Jeff. Look, I'm telling you, I heard from Southeast Queens, Harlem, Central Brooklyn, community leaders, elected officials, clergy, Cure Violence saying, "no, we're going to do this peacefully. We do not want people trying to create violence in our communities. If you're going to do that, you need to get out of a protest in our community," and a lot of times the protestors who were there to do violence left because the peaceful protesters or community-based protesters took over the situation, or like what Commissioner Shea said about some of the looting last night where community members came out and were confronting those who were looting. So there are a very small number of people doing this violence. Very small. We have to get them, we have to stop them. But more and more I think the answer will be community members stepping forward and saying, we will not accept this.

Moderator: Next is Nolan from the Post.

Mayor: Nolan? What is going on with cell phones today? Nolan, can you hear us?

Question: Yes, I can. Can you hear me, Mr. Mayor?

Mayor: There we go. How you doing?

Question: I'm alright, it was quite a weekend and I'm not really sure to begin with all the questions. But maybe let's start here. Things – just by the recounting offered by your own office, it seems like [inaudible] arrived in Brooklyn at Barclays Center, Saturday night, Sunday night, it was on Flatbush and then well I guess it, it's Friday night [inaudible] but I guess basically the question is, you seem to always come to Brooklyn after things had gotten out of—

Mayor: Nolan, repeat that last – your conclusion was what?

Question: Conclusion was – so this is – I had two questions. So, if you'll bear with me, first question is, it seemed like on Saturday and Sunday, Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday, you got to Brooklyn after things had gotten out of hand. In Flatbush at Barclays Center on, on all three of those nights. So my first question is, I'm curious, why weren't you out during the day with the protestors talking to the protestors, trying to emulate what John Lindsey did in '68 to keep the city calm, as an example, and my second question is to touch on your daughter's experience. I walked with the protestors from Barclays across the Manhattan Bridge last night, and when they arrived on Canal Street, they faced a wall of cops wearing riot gear carrying nightsticks. The crowd was subsequently divided up into sort of a series of smaller protests, some of which did grow violent –

Mayor: Nolan, what is your question my friend? What's your question?

Question: No, no, I gave you one question, Mr. Mayor, one of which was, you know, why weren't you out among protestors –

Mayor: I got the first one, what's your second one? What's your second –

Question: The second question is – the second question is I wonder if everything that I've seen Saturday night and Sunday night doesn't meet sort of a common English definition of de-escalation, doesn't sort of meet a common English definition of what you would think community policing has looked like. I wonder if you think the police in these instances have been too aggressive and –

Mayor: Okay, thank you.

Question: And to finish the question, Mr. Mayor –

Mayor: It's a long question, Nolan. Come on, brother.

Question: Mr. Mayor it was a very serious weekend. I'm trying to, like, ask questions –

Mayor: I know, Nolan, I respect it, just give me a question. I can answer them. Go ahead.

Question: I'm wondering if splitting – if the police tactics of splitting these large protests, which are fairly good at self-policing and to several smaller groups hasn't helped a fuel some of this violence?

Mayor: Okay, good questions. I appreciate them. Well, obviously these are questions that I ask all the time. The Commissioner's asking, we're talking. The Commissioner and I talked yesterday, I'm not making it up, I think about 30 or 40 times in the course of the day. We are asking these questions constantly. If we were dealing with traditional, peaceful protest, everything would have been different and we want to deal with traditional, peaceful protest and my hope, Nolan, is that more and more of that is what's going to happen. I – look, people have made a very powerful point, but what we need is for the community to speak more and more and that's what we're seeing, elected officials are speaking out, clergy. That is the essence of how we're going to make change. And peaceful protest is what has worked and violent protest only comes with horrible, unintended consequences and it's the wrong thing to do unto itself.

So, the reason you saw a mix of different approaches is because you did have violent protesters mixed in and that has been shown time and time again in these last days and all over the country. If we were dealing with – the Commissioner, and I have talked about this, I've been in a lot of protests as a protestor. I've been there as an elected official. Commissioner has been there as a police officer. We have been the protests with 20,000 people, 50,000 people, a 100,000 people, all peaceful, where the PD consistently stood back, let the peaceful protest move, simply protected everyone. That's what we believe in. That's what we want. That's not the hand we were dealt the last few days. That's why there had to be also the ability to deal with those who were violent. So, it is a balancing act the commissioner can speak to as well.

Clearly you saw yesterday many police officers working to de-escalate and the community coming to the fore. And I think those are very positive trends, we want to deepen those trends. To the 1968 reality, it's not 1968. We're in a whole different reality. I constantly think about what is the right way to engage and what I've found it is to work with community leaders, so I'm talking to all the time to figure out whether the best actions we can take to address concerns

about each protest. I'm monitoring each and every protest as they're unfolding. When I go somewhere, sometimes it's because I don't like the answers I'm getting and I go there to see for myself and to meet with the police leaders to talk about exactly what's going on.

But it's not 1968, we're in a different environment, I think sometimes when a leader puts themselves in the middle of situation, it actually exacerbates the situation. It doesn't address it, when you're talking about a situation like this where there are different kinds of protestors. We were dealing with community members, I was speaking to community members in Central Brooklyn, I do that all the time throughout my life in public service. I'll do that all day long. But when you're dealing with folks who want disruption, who want to create something that will go on video and that becomes their cause to create a visible disruption, I got to be smart about how I handle that. So, we're conscious of this all the time. But in my conversations with community leaders, conversations with community activists, people are working to address this problem at the grassroots and that's what matters. You want to add anything?

Commissioner Shea: Yeah, I'll just say generally speaking nothing would make us happier than a large group voicing their opinion safely. That happened yesterday at the Barclay Center. There was a large number of people there for many, many hours and I would describe it as not contentious at all. There was some police officers there. There was very little hostility at all – if at all. There was also police officers in reserves should things get out of hand, but it thankfully it didn't come to that. There's another group in Brooklyn yesterday, that I got to give them credit, I think they marched halfway around the world. They walked all over Brooklyn to Manhattan back. Eventually they met up with the group at the Barclay Center and all of that was accommodated. And that is generally speaking what we would like to happen again, peaceful.

But we are also fluid and we also go by the conditions on the ground and just yesterday there were some occurrences that took place. I'll give you a couple of examples, where we had to either alter our route or as you said, divide a route for safety reasons. We had one occurrence in Brooklyn where protestors were actually fighting with other protestors and it got dangerous. We had a very small number, a very small number during that march I described where people made their way into the march and threw objects at police officers, that caused some alterations to the route. But again, if we can go in with a surgeon – like a surgeon and a scalpel and make a correction or make a couple of arrests and allow the larger group to continue, that's what we look to do. So, and the last one I can think of off the top of my head is we had an occurrence yesterday where people were trying to light fires and burn stores down and we cannot have a large protest moving towards that. So that's one of the situations you described. So, I think I would agree with you that we try to be as flexible as possible. Let protest march, exercise their right, that's what we all want. Overwhelmingly it worked yesterday. We had very minor issues until it got dark yesterday.

Moderator: Next is Juliet from 1010 WINS.

Question: Yeah, yes. Good morning Mr. Mayor and good morning Commissioner. My first question is for Police Commissioner Shea and then Mr. Mayor for you. Commissioner how do you know who these outside agitators are? Who are they? Where are they coming from? Are they identifiable in any way? And Mr. Mayor you're calling the looting not acceptable and will

not be allowed. Is that the strongest language you can muster for people who are destroying cars and property and stealing merchandise in stores?

Mayor: Juliet, I'm not going to fall into the notion of I have to use a certain language that someone wants to hear bluntly. I'm just going to be real with you. That we're not going to allow it. It's illegal. It's wrong and we're going to go deal with it. These folks have nothing to do with peaceful protest. What they're doing is criminal, so we're going to go deal with it. That's the bottom line, Commissioner on the other question.

Commissioner Shea: Juliet - Deputy Commissioner John Miller's comments yesterday. I think he briefed members of the media yesterday. There are a number of ways that we look at this. We obviously have made some arrests and we have the intelligence from those arrests, who was arrested. There's also a variety of open source advertisements if you will, that are put out for the public to see. Some of this is not unique to this environment that we're in right now, unfortunately, where you have outside agitators coming in and trying to rally up people to do some bad things. That's done under the cloak of a greater cause and again, this is what we're dealing with, it makes it a little bit difficult right now, but we are working with federal partners, we're working with local authorities, and just trying to, number one, first and foremost as we start everyone, make sure that we don't have loss of life or we keep people safe. Then we quickly go to property. What we saw yesterday, we never want to see and we're going to do everything we can to stop it. Whether it's committed by somebody coming from outside or somebody within New York City.

Moderator: Next is Rosa from The City.

Question: Hi Mr. Mayor, I see you're taking kind of a bad apples to violent behavior by police. That that was your worst then and I think by protesters too, but there are more systematic ways to think about how police handled protests. There's a whole body of literature on how the kind of uniforms people wear, whether wear helmets or not, whether they [inaudible] crowds, whether they're on bicycles as opposed to bringing SUV onto the street and how that influences what happens. And so, my question is for you and for Commissioner Shea, like has the PD changed its model for crowd control in 20 years? What is the philosophy here? Does it need updating or is this all kind of reactive, kind of individual responses? You get my question?

Mayor: Yeah, no, Rosa, that's a great question. I'll start and turn to the Commissioner. There's a really good point you're making and I appreciate it in Nolan's question too about whether there are parts of the tactics that have the reverse impact. And I would say if we were dealing with consistently peaceful protest it would be immediately clear that we did not want a riot gear, we did not want a large number of police officers. We want a de-escalation approach just like we are showing in everyday policing. And I know that the de-escalation training has had a huge impact on how police encounter a situation because we've seen the reduction in gun discharges. We've seen the reduction in incidents that turned violent because of de-escalation strategies. And I think you're right also to say even how police present themselves to the community, it is structural. It's not just about talking about bad apples. I agree with you. The culture of policing has to change. And that's what, at least from the policy level we've been trying to do with the de-escalation

training, with implicit bias training, with neighborhood policing, with a whole set of strategies I think are being felt on the ground in many ways, but we got a lot more to do.

I think when you're dealing with a protest that mixes a small number of dedicated, violent protestors with a group of peaceful protesters, it creates a deep complexity that has to be addressed. We see it, Rosa, we see it, we have – I wish we didn't – but we have the examples of the violent protesters. We've seen their instructions to people of how to attack property, of how to bring weaponry with them, we've seen the weaponry that's been recovered it – we know there is a small subset doing this and that changes the whole nature of the police approach. So, I think your question leads to a really powerful point. Are we trying to get to the day where it looks very different and when there's a protest and the amount of police to look at the police, the approach of the police? Absolutely. And I think we were doing that in many ways. Recent protests I've been at like the climate strike, the police presence was very, very subdued. But this one is just a different reality. Commissioner, you want to speak to it?

Commissioner Shea: Yeah. The short answer is we evolve constantly. From many years ago with our Disorder Control Unit to where we are with strategic response today. Every element of what you said from uniforms to deployment to bicycles constantly changes and it is a fluid situation. I think that many New Yorkers would be surprised at some of the reports that we get on a daily basis within the police department. Forget the current climate of what we're going through right now or even the months before with the pandemic. On an average day in New York City, you could have six protests that go off and many New Yorkers have no idea about that. And they go off flawlessly. Each one is evaluated daily. And we work with the details that are in front of us, but we have certainly changed over the years and continue to and always look to learn, but it's changed quite a bit and we recognize exactly what you said, how we line up, how many officers we have, how were they dressed, all of these things are important and we look to do the best that we can. I will say to echo the Mayor's words, be careful how you identify here. The earlier question was what did you know about this earlier? We had some intelligence, but how would it look also balancing out in this difficult time if we told New Yorkers with this exact situation don't come out, we think there's going to be problems. And I also don't think that that's anything new, because we've had some of these agitators come out many times before and I think the media is aware of that. I think ultimately everyone is accountable for their own decisions here. And I think New Yorkers are wise beyond anyone and they know that we're in the midst of a protest if something is amiss and if there are people looking to do bad things. I just ask – really, I plead with people and that's in that circumstance. The last thing I want you to do is try to dissuade people from coming out, especially now and voicing your concern. But also, you have to be careful and be alert of what's going on around you. And if something doesn't look right, if you think people are planning something, please let the police know or please make sure you take care of yourself and keep yourself out of that dangerous situation. Thank you.

Moderator: Next is Andrew Siff from NBC.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor and everyone on the call. Hope you're doing well.

Mayor: How you doing, Andrew?

Question: I'm okay. We're nearly an hour into this news conference and, to my knowledge, no one has even mentioned the pandemic. So, what I'm wondering is, first of all, do you have any concerns about all of these crowds gathering, regardless of the purpose and regardless of the passion in terms of public health? I'd love it also if one of your public health experts who's on this call could answer as well. How much are you concerned that there will be a rise in COVID cases as a result of all of these crowds and why have you not made public health statements over the last couple of days reminding about social distancing?

Mayor: Yeah, Andrew, excellent questions. We've been talking about this. I don't think we have our public health folks on now, but they can certainly speak to it later. Andrew, this is – I have to say, and I want to just express this openly to everyone. Just a few days ago, what we were entirely focused on all of us was one of the greatest challenges this city has ever, ever faced – this pandemic, this painful, horrible crisis, taking the lives of so many New Yorkers. When I was out in central Brooklyn yesterday, maybe I had, you know, 15, 20 conversations with just everyday people on the street. Overwhelmingly, people were talking about their concerns about their health, about their kids, about the fact that we're running out of money or to had not gotten checks from the federal government. Some people, of course, raised concerns about criminal justice, but most people are dealing with this crisis. They're scared. They're scared for their health. They're scared for their family's health. They're worried that they don't know where things are going with this coronavirus that hasn't stopped Andrew, I think the honest truth is we are dealing with right in the middle of that another absolutely unforeseen moment that's vast in its scale that if there had not been the coronavirus now, these last few days would stand out in American history as a painful, profound moment. And you're seeing it happening literally in cities big and small. It looks like entirely all over the country. So, I think we've got to almost exact opposite realities, if you will, that are colliding at the same time. Now, the disparities pervade both. Let me hasten to say, the disparities, the racism that is inherent in what happened with the pandemic is also inherent in all the concerns running through the policing debate. We've got to address them across the board. We've been trying to for years. We have to do a lot more. But to your central point, it's very hard to say to people, you know, when there's such pain, there's such anger that if you say don't come out because of the pandemic. I think that this is something we grapple with all the time. We don't want people to hear that as we are not hearing your concerns or your concerns are not valid or we don't have to change things. And it's a very tough balance. And again, this is happening on a such a painful, intense national scale. This is not like – before this, we had small protests and I kept saying whatever your left, right or center, I wish people would stay home, not protest, do it virtually. But this moment is the outpouring of such pain and frustration – years and years, decades, generations of pain and frustration outpouring. This is a different reality. We've had to adapt to it. We've had to try and understand it and address it. And I am very worried about the health impact, to the core of your question. I would urge everyone to think about this. And I do think that for those who have made their presence felt, made their voices heard, the safest thing for this point is to stay home, obviously, because we don't want people in close proximity to each other. We don't want people out there where they might catch this disease or spread this disease. And I think more and more people have to realize there is a danger that it will cause some real impact on the resurgence of this disease. We don't have the facts yet, Andrew. And these things are happening outdoors – that's better, thank God, than if people were gathering together indoors, but there's a real danger here, there's no question there's a danger of this could intensify the spread of the coronavirus just at a

point when we were starting to beat it back profoundly. So, I want to beseech everyone to think about that. I would certainly urge everyone – look, you've made your point, it's time to stay home. If you do go out, please try in any way you can to observe social distancing and keep those face coverings on. But, Andrew, in conclusion, this is just a horribly complex situation. It just is. We've never dealt with anything like this, this combination of features and we're all trying to find our way to the best solutions. That's the honest truth.

Moderator: The next is Marcia from CBS.

Question: Mr. Mayor, good morning. How are you doing?

Mayor: I'm all right, Marcia. How are you doing?

Question: So, I have a couple of questions. First of all, at times it seemed, because of the violent protesters who've joined, that the police have been overwhelmed. And I'm wondering if there's a so-called war plan going forward for how the police are going to deal with both the peaceful protesters and those who would seek to do violence or to loot or to engage the police in a violent way. And my second question has to do with the briefing that John Miller gave yesterday about these protesters. Since they NYPD did have intelligence about the fact that they wanted to loot and they were ordered according to their encrypted messages to target high-volume stores – fancy stores, chain stores in wealthy communities – why weren't the police able to get ahead of that and stop it?

Mayor: I'll start and I'll turn to the commissioner. The way you opened the question, Marcia, I know you were speaking sincerely, but I would never use the words you just used there. We have a peace plan. We have a plan to keep the peace. And even with all the tensions of the last few days, again, thank God, no loss of life. Thank God, we have not seen a lot of serious injuries. We had some situations that could have been very, very bad that were averted in large measure because police leadership showed restraint and saw situations and dealt with them before they got worse. And we've got things that weren't done well and we have to fix. But overwhelmingly the plan has been to keep the peace, to respect the peaceful protesters, to deal with those who are aiming to do violence. And that was working, it was not perfect by any stretch. And the fact that a lot of these violent protesters in particular break off and go all over in different groups makes it really challenging for the police. Now, that's not new in the world, Marcia. We've been seeing that kind of violent protest, that kind of tactic for years around the world. We hadn't seen it as much in this city. And again, some of this is from the city and some of this is from outside, but that puts a real strain on the NYPD, trying to chase all sorts of groups and trying to be present in so many areas simultaneously. That said, it was working and working in many ways very well until about nine o'clock last night. And then we saw something we hadn't seen as much, and that now needs to be defended against in a new and different way and that's what will happen today. There was a lot of presence out and we're going to make sure that presence is in the right places, seeing what we now are seeing from this violent few. But from the peaceful protesters, we saw people trying to just get their message out and not attacking property, not attacking people. So, this is a day-to-day, hour-to-hour thing and we're going to constantly make those adjustments. Commissioner?

Commissioner Shea: Yeah. Marcia, thank you for the question. I mean, when you talk about intelligence and deployment and how they come together, I think the Mayor touched on what we face at times, trying to be that even keel in respecting the right to protest and dealing with cowards, if you will, that are hijacking a cause and look to do ill will to New Yorkers, whether it's property damage, whether it's – think of the New Yorkers that are calling for help and now have to wait longer. I mean, it just has so many impacts by some of these – whether it's barricades, or fires, or looting that that is taking place. The officers have been very nimble. I think when you look at what happened last night, we're still tallying up the arrests. They were certainly deployed in the right place and engaging. I expect them to be close to probably 400 or more arrests just from last night, Marcia, just regarding looting and similar types of activities. And we need the rest of the criminal justice system now to step in as well and we need a deterrent and we need, Marcia, consequences. We need the Manhattan DA's office, we need the Brooklyn DA's office to do their job and make sure that people have the right to protest freely, but there is a line, and when you take bricks, whether it's throwing it at police officers – I can't say enough to thank the Eastern District for prosecuting those cowards that throw a Molotov cocktail at our officers. But all of these, I think we separate minor actions and being flexible and understanding the environment we're in and allowing people to protest, we know that there's going to be some minor arrests made. We are able to deal with that and I think that comes with the territory and everyone understands that on both sides. What we do not have patience for is violence, lighting fires, putting people's lives at risk. And that's what we need the prosecutors to step in and make people understand that it's unacceptable and there are consequences.

Mayor: Go ahead.

Moderator: Last question for today goes to Henry from PIX.

Question: I just wanted to zero in on these issues of outsiders a little bit more. I'm wondering why, Mr. Mayor and Commissioner, we're shying away from being more specific. I know one out of seven were outside of state, according to Mr. Miller the other day. But, you know, what what's the ethnic background? What are the political background? We're hearing white supremacists in other states. So, with all that intelligence, why can't you be more specific about what's going on here?

Mayor: I mean, we will get you – Henry, this is going to be day-to-day, gathering information. And I've said to the commissioner, John Miller, keep putting it out to the media as you get facts, keep putting it out. I'll be plain, what we're seeing, certainly from the people coming out of town, primarily white people, and certainly from some of the young people that we have seen who are not from neighborhoods and go into neighborhoods and do violence, they happen to be white people as well. I struggle to categorize their ideology, because it doesn't resemble anything that I've ever seen as a coherent philosophy, but I do know they want to cause destruction. So, we should continually get you more and more information, but it just doesn't bear any resemblance to what the communities, the folks who are expressing their grievance at racism, at structural, institutional racism, at the problems of policing, they are of, and by, and for the communities of New York City. And then, I think there are some others, whether they're from different neighborhoods in the city or from outside the city, they have a different agenda and it is

definitely a violent agenda and it's not consistent with what community people are calling for. So, that's the reality, but we will get you more information as we have more.

Everyone, we're going to keep you updated and we're going to let New Yorkers know what's happening. But most importantly, let's keep the peace today. Good people out there, speak up, keep the peace in the community. And then, we have to move forward. We've got a lot to do in the city. We have to get back to fighting this coronavirus. We have to get back to being unified and doing this together. Thank you, everyone.

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