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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT THE NORTHERN
CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST VIRTUAL CAMP MEETING**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Happy Sabbath, everybody. And I want today to give glory to God as we gather together in this joyous, important assemblage. Pastor Honore, thank you. Thank you for the opportunity to be with you. Thank you for your wonderful leadership. And I want to thank a dear friend, Pastor James Richmond. And I turn to both of you for guidance and wisdom as we go through this difficult, difficult time in our city. And I want to thank everybody in the Seventh day Adventist Church who have been so crucial to the noble fight to bring back New York City. And to go through the worst of this crisis and overcome it. And begin the process of restarting the church and restarting the city. As always there is no community, and I want this to be very clear, there's no community that is more civically engaged and contributes more to the surrounding reality of our city than the Seventh Day Adventist Church. And I thank you. And we have been together many, many times and I've talked many times about the supreme focus of this community, this church community puts on health care and that has been so important as we fought this virus together. SDA communities all over New York City have been part of fighting back so effectively. So thank you.

And I'll be very brief but to say this. We are in a time where we've experienced a lot of pain. There's so much frustration in our communities, there's so much sense of loss and disparity and unfairness. And so much is coming out. But we know, both from scripture and from history, that a moment like that does not have to be a time of destruction or set back. It can be a time of uplift and transformation. And that's what we are all called to do in our time. To realize something new and different can happen. How fitting that we are gathered on Independence Day, to reflect what those hundreds of years ago realized, that something had to change and they took upon themselves to create a new and better society.

Scripture says shake the dust off our feet, tells us how important it is to recognize when it's time for something new and better and fairer. And that is what we will create in our time. We understand it's not just words, the phrase, Black Lives Matter. It has to become something felt deeply in the core of New York City and the core of America, in all of our government, in all of our institutions. It's something that has to take on a meaning that is felt in everyday lives.

We are starting something powerful in New York City, a commission on Racial Reconciliation and a commission on Racial Justice. Combining these two notions, racial justice and reconciliation in the style of what was done in South Africa, with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Recognizing that we must officially assess where institutional racism exists. And then tear it down, end it, transform it, invest in communities, change policies, change our ways to create something better. And we have the power to do that. We have the power to create a new and better approach to policing. We can create much more accountability. We can take away the

unfairness and discrimination that has been known too often. We can redistribute the resources of our city in a way that reflects the whole of New York City, all of our people.

So it is a day in my view, as Americans, not to look back longingly and just celebrate something from the past. Because we know that that something from the past had very noble elements and very contradictory elements. It's much more a day to remind ourselves of what can change and our power to do it.

And I'll conclude with this that in all of my journey as a public servant in this city, in SDA communities, when I enter a SDA church I feel that sense of self possession and self-determination. I feel that sense of civic awareness and involvement, that belief that we can build. This community has built great things and you will be pivotal to our ability to build so much more together in the future. So, happy Sabbath, everyone. Happy Fourth of July. And God bless you all.

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