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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT TEMPLE EMANUEL

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Rabbi Potasnik, thank you. You are one of the people we all turn to in these moments of crisis to help bring us together. I want to thank you for being one of the great voices of unity in this city. This gathering sends a message, New York City will never succumb to hate, we will never allow ourselves to be divided, we'll never allow people to separate us by faith or nationality, or any of the other things that make up the distinctions of the human family because here in New York City, we are one larger family. We are a place for everyone. And we have shown that year in and year out and never more than the last few years as we've seen a growing harmony in this city. These leaders – I want to really give them credit, these faith leaders have deepened their relationships over these last years in times of tragedy in this city they come together for the good of all of us. And that's something that wasn't always true in the past here and it's not true in a lot of other places in the world. But here leaders of faith believe it is part of their mission to reach out to each other. So I have to say with deep appreciation, Cardinal Dolan, Reverend Sharpton – I want to thank Reverend Sharpton who thought this was important to gather us all together in a public way, I want to thank him for promoting this idea. Reverend Bernard, Rabbi Potasnik, Rabbi Miller, Imam Talib, so many other faith leaders who have really made it a priority, to bond together for the good of people of all faiths in this city. They are helping to make New York City a beacon, and example to the world of how to live in a kind of practical harmony where people respect each other.

Is it perfect? No. It's not perfect we are humans. But what it is, is real. It's meaningful that people know how important it is to express respect for each other's faiths and to have a constant dialogue. And I want to thank all the elected officials who are here all the labor leaders, civic leaders, everyone wanted to be here to send a message of solidarity to the people of Pittsburgh, to the Tree of Life Synagogue community, but also to the larger community of this city, particularly our Jewish community – that we stand with you, that we will not let anyone harm you. People need to know in a moment like this that we don't succumb to voices of hatred. And it's been a very painful week, a very tough week and New York City was right in the center of it before the tragedy turned to Pittsburgh.

The letter bombs that came here were unsettling for all of us – the notion that people were being targeted because of their political party or their beliefs. That doesn't represent the America we all

believe in. Violence against people because of our faith does not represent our values and we have to reject it in every way. Not only do we have to say it's unacceptable, we have to show by our actions and in our lives that these acts of hate are not changing us in any way, in fact they are causing us to reach out to each other. We are here at Temple Emanu-El, Reverend Davidson thank you for having us, one of the great synagogues of this city, because we want to show the people of this city that we will defend with our lives, the synagogues of this city and the community of this city. We want people to know the NYPD will be present in force to protect Jewish community institutions. You know it is so important to send that message of protection and respect because we cannot let the haters have any sense of license. These last years in this country unfortunately have been a time when those who hate have felt they could come out in the open more. We need to send a message to them – it's not acceptable, it never was acceptable, it will never be acceptable and we have to never allow the normalization of hate, that's not what we will stand for.

And in that vein we have to say what was said yesterday was also unacceptable. No, houses of worship do not have to have armed guards to be able to practice their religions. That's not America.

[Applause]

America is a place where people worship in freedom and in peace where they know their community stands by them. Where they know their fellow citizens will protect them, where they know law enforcement is on their side, every faith community needs to know that. And so in this city and I'm so proud of the people of this city for this reason – when refugees came under attack, New Yorkers embraced refugees, when Muslims came under attack New Yorkers embraced Muslims. When the LGBTQ community came under attack, New Yorkers embraced members of the LGBTQ community. New Yorkers know that the only way to address hatred is head-on, don't sweep it under the rug. Don't look away, don't act like it won't get worse. In fact we have to confront it, all of us together.

I have an important duty to tell people that while we stand here in solidarity, and while we are vigilant, it is a fact that there are no credible and specific threats against any Jewish community institutions or synagogues in this city today. But the fact that there are no credible and specific threats does not take away from our resolve. We will be vigilant, you'll see a very strong and clear NYPD presence in the coming days outside Jewish community gathering places and community centers. And we will continue that as long as necessary to keep people safe. Our hearts go out to people in Pittsburgh today, our hearts go out to the members of the Tree of Life Synagogue. We feel at one with them and I hope they can hear the love and the prayers and the soulful solidarity of the people of New York City today, we stand with them. Thank you and God bless you all.

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