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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS CALLS IN LIVE TO WABC'S "SID & FRIENDS IN THE MORNING" RADIO SHOW**

**Sid Rosenberg:** The mayor's been busy again, just saw him on MSNBC moments ago, and tomorrow's a big day for the mayor. He's got the State of The City — I want to get into more of that. In the last couple of days he's got the feed of the homeless initiative — something he does on Wednesday nights, I've done with him. He may be doing that later on tonight. I'm not sure. Also, really helping out the taxi drivers with this new medallion relief program. But of course New Yorkers want to talk about crime and asylum seekers and those two major issues. And say what you want about my friend, the mayor, Eric Adams, he does not shy away from the important topics and or the controversy. Instead, he stares it in the face and comes on with me now once or twice a month. Here he is my friend, the mayor of New York City, Eric Adams. Eric, what's going on brother?

**Mayor Eric Adams:** Hey Sid. How are you man? I hope everything is well. I'm moving straight ahead and you said something at the opening that's so important. I'm a typical New Yorker, the average New Yorker. We don't run from problems. We share it. We know that this is what's in front of us. We have to be prepared for it. We don't always get it right, but it's not perfection, it's dedication. And we are going to continue to be dedicated, turn our city the way we want it to be.

**Rosenberg:** I believe that's true. I do. But there are two criticisms, Mr. Mayor, that I get every day when it comes to the asylum seekers and the migrants and those issues, and here they are. "Why doesn't the mayor call out Joe Biden by name?" Saying the national government, the federal government, that's not good enough. "I want to hear him scream at Joe Biden." Just like I want to hear you scream by the way, Mr. Mayor, at Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Carl Heastie and Kathy Hochul, when it comes to the barrel reform. That's one. The second one is we cannot be a sanctuary city and complain. You can't have it both ways. You can't be a sanctuary city and then complain about the influx of migrants. So those are the two criticisms, Mr. Mayor, I get all the time. When will we call our people by name, and when will he shed sanctuary city?

**Mayor Adams:** Well, let's peel back both of those questions. Number one, this is a national problem and the national problem is the long term and short term solutions that must be addressed. Reason I say national government because we have an immigration problem that goes beyond what we are facing right now and it needs to be fixed and it takes Congress and it takes the White House to accomplish that. And if we don't state national, then we are going to leave

the other half of the relationship off the hook. Republicans have traditionally and continuously blocked real comprehensive immigration reform, that has to stop. We have to fix this problem.

And second, when you look at my stating that we need a real coordination at the border, that is a responsibility that the White House must do. I made that clear over and over again, yelling and screaming is not going to solve the problem. Now, when we talk about a sanctuary city that is codified in law — there was a lawsuit, and this is a state and city of law and order, the courts rule that this is a sanctuary city. We have a moral and legal obligation to fulfill that. We don't believe asylum seekers fall into the whole right to shelter conversation. This is a crisis that must be addressed based on what was created on this national platform.

**Rosenberg:** Well, I know this, you're about to open up four more emergency hotels. I read a story, Mr. Mayor, about a soup kitchen in Brooklyn being overrun yesterday. So whatever we're doing, when I say we, I mean the federal government, Joe Biden, these other cities, and to a certain extent here in New York, it ain't working because they keep coming and we don't have the money and or the means to take care of this. So what is going to be the end? You talk about this crisis, Mr. Mayor, how's it going to end? It's getting worse.

**Mayor Adams:** Well, no, and you're right, I don't believe our national government are doing what needs to be done to address this. But New York City is doing what it needs to be doing. I've been down to the border in El Paso and I saw people sleeping on the streets, people sleeping in airports. I'm seeing what's happening in other municipalities. That's not happening here in this city. We're overrun, but we clearly given and participating in our obligation, we're doing our job.

And people will critique that. When I say, listen, there's no more room at the inn, and the reason there's no more room at the inn is because the federal government is not doing their job. But we have been responding to this crisis for several months, and I want to take my hat off to Senator Schumer and Congressman Jeffries and an entire New York delegation able to secure resources for us. But this must be fixed. It can't be just kicking the can down the road. We have to face this because we at the end of the road.

**Rosenberg:** Are you still looking for a billion dollars from Biden and the White House?

**Mayor Adams:** We need a billion dollars from our federal government. Remember, it's a partnership up there. I know that sometimes people believe that it is solely the president, but it's a partnership in Washington D.C. of when we saw the allocation of over \$800 million through this crisis nationally going to all the cities that are involved. It had to come through Congress to get to success. So it's not that the president can write that check on his own. He needs participation from Congress to get things like this done.

**Rosenberg:** I want to go back to something you said, Mr. Mayor, my friend Eric Adams here. You said the Republicans block immigration reform time and time again that needs to stop. And I will tell you that one of the reasons why they do is because Joe Biden uses a lot of fancy words for one word that we don't want, which is called amnesty. And if that in fact is what the Democrats really want, at the end of the day, we're going to keep blocking it because we don't want that. What about the amnesty word that Republicans really believe is what the Democrats really want?

**Mayor Adams:** Well, I think Congress should come together and come to a solution so that we can get beyond it. We can't have decades over decades of talking about this same issue. And now it has basically overrun our entire, not only borders, but also other cities. We're seeing what's happening in Chicago, Houston, Washington, Brownsville, Texas, New York City. This is really unfair to those cities and is unfair to the American people who live in these cities. And it's unfair to the migrants that are going through this. We deserve to allow people to have a real pursuit through the American dream and citizenship instead of what we're seeing now.

**Rosenberg:** Tell you what, Mr. Mayor, my deal here moving back into the city, have had dinner with me, Danielle and Gabe, and the disaster back at my house in Rockaway. And so now I take the train to work every morning. I'm on the train, Eric, at a quarter to five in the morning. It is early and I will tell you, I'm going to be honest with you, there's a lot of homeless sleeping on those trains, laying themselves out. My car this morning at 4:50 a.m., three homeless guys in my one car. Now what I have seen — and I had this argument with Curtis Sliwa and Andrew Giuliani yesterday — is police.

I've now seen police two consecutive days at my train stop in the morning and going home at 42nd Street. Now, Curtis jokes that you provided me with a detail, which of course is not true. So on one hand, the good news is I do see the police presence, but I am seeing a lot of homeless and only a couple of days removed from that Fox News weatherman getting beat up on the subway. And the perception is still Mr. Mayor, that you really can't take the subway because it's too dangerous.

**Mayor Adams:** Well, I'm going to push back on that a little because there's a customer satisfactory survey that's coming out and it says just the opposite. It's saying that people are feeling more and more comfortable on the system. They're seeing the presence of a police officer. Nothing gives us the feeling of safety more than that blue uniform. I say that over and over again, and let's be clear, we have a little over six felonies a day on our subway system that we must get rid of. We must get rid of every one of those felonies. But Sid, we have 2.9 million riders. 2.9 million riders. Think about that number for a moment. And they get to and from their place of employment, school, et cetera. You take the train every day. You get to and from every day. So sometimes when those terrible incidents, the unfortunate one that happened with the news reporter, sometimes when that happens and then we see the visible disorder, we start to feel unsafe in the process.

But those customer satisfactory surveys are saying, "Hey, we like what we're seeing. We like how they did the Subway Safety Plan. We're moving in the right direction. We have to continue to do so." But what's really challenging is that when we see that homeless person and we know they can't take care of themselves, some of our laws are restricting us from doing the involuntary removal that's needed. Police officer can't do anything if the person is uncared, is on our subway system and is sitting on our subway system and we know that this person needs additional... We cannot have stronger laws to allow us to carry that action out. It's really handcuffing our police officers, is handcuffing our outreach workers that are really leading this challenge of making sure that we give people the care they deserve. Sid, I'm clear. It is inhumane to allow people to live on the streets, live in the subway system if they cannot take care of their basic needs and they're endangered to themselves. That's just inhumane and whoever want that status quo, I don't subscribe to.

**Rosenberg:** I know you don't. In fact, I do like your homeless plan and know some of your good buddies like Jumaane Williams, very critical of what you put out there. But I thought it was a really good start to be honest, Mr. Mayor. Eric Adams here again with me, Sid Rosenberg on 77 WABC. So I see the numbers. I talk to you. I talk to Fabian, the folks at city hall. Murders are down, robberies are down, rapes are down. Not every number is down. Hate crimes, no good. Jews and Asians still being hunted in this city and assaults are still up. But five of the seven major categories, Mr. Mayor, the numbers are down. You wouldn't know that or think that based upon people staying on the streets and even guys at the station. But that happens to be the truth. So are you feeling like there's a real reason for optimism in this city that crime really is on its way down despite the perception?

**Mayor Adams:** Well, my optimism comes from the police commissioner. I think Keechant Sewell, Commissioner Sewell is a real leader. We have a chief of department, Chief Maddrey, chief of patrol, Chief John Chell. I think that we are moving in a direction of where we need to be traveling to, and I think it's imperative that we stay there. And I said earlier, 2.9 million riders, but it's actually 3.9 million riders. And that leadership that we are seeing in our system is going to really move us in the right direction.

We know that a city of this size, that there's 1,700 people, Sid, that we have identified that are repeated violent offenders, 1,700. So we have to go to Albany and zero-in on those 1,700 and come up with ways to keep them off the street. And I'm looking forward to speaking with the leadership in the assembly, the leadership in the Senate, and lean into those real ways of having a holistic approach of dealing with a public safety in the city. They're engaged, they want to do that, and I think we can find the solutions to make our city safe —

**Rosenberg:** But you've already done this, Mr. Mayor. You went up there, you took it very seriously. Talking about bail reform and recidivism and all these things. And far as I know, basically Stewart-Cousins and Heastie and those folks up there in Albany slammed the door and said, "No, thanks. We got it covered. You go back to a nice little city of Manhattan; we got it covered." Now, of course, I may be exaggerating here, but that's kind of the way it was explained to us. What makes you think, Mr. Mayor, that if you go back there and try the same thing that this time it's going to work?

**Mayor Adams:** Well, number one, I served in Albany and anyone that's familiar with Albany knows that you don't get everything you want on your first visit and your first try. And look at the list of things we asked for in Albany around childcare, around hotel conversion, around earned income tax credit. We had a list of approximately 10 things that we needed from Albany. And you know what? We got eight of those 10. Two things we disagreed and we got modifications on some of the criminal justice stuff. That's a real win in Albany. You don't get everything you want and oftentimes you may get one or two items. I got just the opposite. I had a successful year in Albany on those important things that's improving the lives of New Yorkers, putting money back into pockets of middle income, low-income New Yorkers. That's a real W for us. And you don't want to burn bridges that you're going to have to cross again. And I got to cross that bridge again this year when I go to Albany and lean into those recidivous problems that we're having.

**Rosenberg:** Now, the cover of today's New York Post, Mr. Mayor, there's a street in the Bronx and these owners like John Catsimatidis, a mutual friend of ours, dear friend. His stores Gristedes, D'Agostinos, they get robbed all the time. The bodegas, they're freaking out. They get robbed all the time. And now you got this street in the Bronx that basically they've said, "The police, not enough. We got to actually police our own block." Now when you see something like that, that's a little embarrassing to be honest. What are your thoughts on the cover of today's New York Post?

**Mayor Adams:** And no, it breaks my heart when I see people walking into stores, stealing whatever they want. That happens all over the country. And we need to look at a social media role in this also. And one day you should do a show just on what social media is doing to our families and city.

**Rosenberg:** You're right.

**Mayor Adams:** But let's be clear, we had a summit two weeks ago with major chain stores, major retailing stores, police, prosecutors. We all came together and said, "How do we zero-in on these retail thefts?" And we have a combination. Number one, some of these folks said is organized crime. They're still in the items. They're having boosters going still and they're selling them on the internet. We partnered with the AG Letitia James, who went after a large chain. Others, we have people who have real drug problems, people who have real problems around substance abuse.

We want to now take those individuals instead of them repeatedly participating in this crime. We want to take them and now give them the necessary services they need and try to put them on a pathway of not being arrested 40 times for the same action. If you have a drug problem, let's give you the service you need. If you have a food problem, let's give you the services you need. Now, those who don't listen, then we need to go the criminal justice route. But we should start siphoning off those and identify the needs that they have so you don't have to go in and commit these crimes. But the organized crime aspect of it, the law enforcement must arrest and prosecute and hold them accountable.

**Rosenberg:** Mr. Mayor, that's a great job. Thank you so much. Good luck tomorrow with the state of the city. We'll all be watching. Keep working, man. I see a difference. I do. I'm back in the city living here. I do. And keep up the good work and we'll talk again very soon. Maybe I'll see you tonight. I'm not sure, but either way, thank you for coming on this morning. Thank you so much.

**Mayor Adams:** Thank you. Take care.

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