

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 13, 2021, 6:15 PM
CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON NBC'S PEACOCK TV
WITH ZERLINA MAXWELL**

Zerlina Maxwell: President Trump made history today as the first president to be impeached twice. And now, he faces a Senate trial. He loses his office in one week and he could lose the right to ever run for elected office again. Trump is also losing business, a lot of business, as he prepares to reenter private life. New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio announced today, the City is canceling its contracts with the Trump Organization for running two ice skating rinks in Central Park carousel – in the Central Park Carousel, and a golf course in the Bronx. All of that will cost Trump about \$17 million a year. So, it's not chump change. It's also means Trump is being increasingly cut off from the city that was central to his identity for decades, and that is my home city of New York City. And joining me now is New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio. Thank you so much for being here today. The City has been considering canceling the contracts with Donald Trump and the Trump Organization before but lay out for us why you decided to do it right now.

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Look, Zerlina, the President committed a criminal act live on television. He incited an insurrection against the United States government, an attack on the Capitol. From the point of view of common sense, he should be disqualified by any business, any government. He shouldn't have any right to do business. But look, I turned to our lawyers when this happened and I said, what does this mean legally? And they said, this is disqualifying. And we have a right under the contract to cancel the contract if something like this happens. We have a right to just say, this is an unacceptable state of affairs. And you're right, it's going to cost him \$17 million, and he should pay a lot more than that for what he's done to this country. And I just hope every business that looks at this comes to the same conclusion.

Maxwell: Well, you've seen businesses parting ways and banks parting ways, like Deutsche Bank and Signature Bank, parting ways with Trump – Trump's businesses in the Trump Organization. Eric Trump says, this is an example of cancel culture. He also says it won't hurt them because Donald Trump is backed by millions of voters who will allow him to – who will follow him to the ends of the earth. And I think we saw a little bit of what he means by that last week. What's your reaction to this idea that by pulling out of these contracts, it's some example of cancel culture, when the allegations are particularly serious, as you just laid out?

Mayor: Yeah. I mean, look, Eric Trump doesn't have a leg to stand on here. You know, when you talk about – remember how Donald Trump said a few years ago during his first campaign, he could, you know, go down Fifth Avenue and shoot someone in broad daylight and get away with it and his supporters would still be there with him? You know, he, literally, live on television incited an insurrection. Well, you know what? You don't get away with that. You just don't get away with it. And I think what's happening here is that he has given both the moral and the legal

basis for so many people to finally say, we're making a full break. Those Republicans in the House of Representatives who voted against him – first bi-partisan impeachment vote we've seen in history – the businesses that are no longer doing business with them. Look, you're right – what you said at the beginning, Zerlina. You're a proud New Yorker, I'm a proud new Yorker – New York City doesn't want anything to do with Donald Trump anymore. And he moved to Florida – well, you know, that's good he did that, because he's not welcome here. And what he did was just profoundly disturbing and we're not going to have anything to do with him. And, by the way, you know, legally, it's clear as a bell, if you commit a crime like that no one should do business with you.

Maxwell: To that point about Donald Trump's relationship with his hometown of New York, lay out for us how Trump's relationship with New York City has deteriorated since his presidential campaign. Obviously, he was known for New York City as the backdrop of the Apprentice and his businesses, but it seems to me like that that is done. He is no longer, you know, a son of New York City.

Mayor: He is not. He has nothing to do with New York City. We want nothing to do with him. But I want to give a little bit of a different take on it, because I remember the 1980s when he was calling for the execution of the Central Park Five, he was showing his racist tendencies way back when, he was showing his tendency to whip up the mob way back when. Let me tell you something, one of the proudest things I've done as Mayor is when we once and for all provided justice to the Central Park Five and gave them the settlement they deserved to make up for the pain that they had gone through decades earlier. But, remember, a lot of that pain was caused by Donald Trump. So, this is who he's been for a long time, but today's New York City doesn't accept him. Maybe back when he could get away with that, but today's New York City thoroughly rejects the racism. Really what you've seen is the beginnings of fascism the way he approached things, the way he incited people to really what is – can only be described as a white supremacist riot. That doesn't fly in New York City today and he is just not welcome here anymore.

Maxwell: Yeah. I think that New Yorkers, certainly, when he does go there – and he's gone there very rarely throughout his administration – there's always protestors or people yelling outside of the window of Trump Tower. So, he may not want to go back for that reason. Some major business leaders – and they're yelling, they're not rioting. They're just yelling.

Mayor: They're just yelling. And look, we put the message Black Lives Matter outside of Trump Tower, something I'm also very proud of. We painted it right there on Fifth Avenue for him to see. If he ever comes back, he's going to be reminded of a larger truth. But I think you're right, he doesn't want to come back here, because the truth is up in his face in New York City. I think he's going to stay alone in Mar-a-Lago.

Maxwell: Yeah. That'll be interesting to see. Some major business leaders in New York who have been big, big supporters of Donald Trump and the Republican party are also cutting ties with him, like billionaire Ken Langone, the co-founder of Home Depot. What do you see as the future of the Republican party after Trump leaves office? Do you think they will be able to survive or do you think this is sort of the death knell that splits the party apart?

Mayor: I think it's too early to talk about death knell, Zerlina, but I would absolutely say this is going to be something the Republican party struggles with for years and years to come. They welcomed into their house an overt racist, a white nationalist, you know, a white supremacist. They invited into their house someone who divided the country, who absolutely – the moment the nation needed him to fight the coronavirus, couldn't have done a worse job, and set back this country. And how many thousands, tens of thousands of lives lost because of those mistakes. The Republican party embraced this guy 110 percent. There's very few Republicans who can prove they really stood apart. Now, look, I'll welcome the converts now, I'll welcome the 10 who voted for impeachment, for sure. And I'll welcome all the folks who are now trying to scurry away from him. But people are smarter than that, Zerlina. They know that for four long years, the vast majority of Republicans just warmly embraced this guy. That is a stain that won't come off easily.

Maxwell: The lens of history is going to be long and the memory of history is going to be long. New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, thank you so much for being here and please stay safe.

###