



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

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**CONTACT:** [pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov](mailto:pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov), (212) 788-2958

**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY AT THE  
VATICAN**

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** ...And I find it an extraordinarily effective act because a lot of like-minded people in that room are now committed to acting even more quickly to make an impact on these issues. And I think there's always the reality of [inaudible] life – strength in numbers. I think it's a reminder of how many leaders around the world, locally, want to push their national governments to action and want to lead by example. But let's face it, having the support of His Holiness is the most encouraging thing I can think of. It's the most empowering possibility to have the strongest moral voice in the globe today calling us to action. So, for me, it was an absolute privilege to be a part of this. And I immediately started thinking about what more we can do as we look ahead in terms of climate change – we look ahead to the Paris summit. So, it certainly had the desired effect on me of calling me to do more and more quickly.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, did you get to meet the Pope and introduce yourself?

**Mayor:** I did not.

**Question:** And what sort of document did you sign and the others –

**Mayor:** The document – we can get you a copy of the – you know, the manifesto coming out of this meeting, talking about the commitment that we're all making on these issues. I didn't get to meet them. I had the honor of being in the room as he addressed all of us. And it was fun even to be close to him. But it's, you know – look, his voice is so inspirational and I think for most of us around the world, we see him on television and we read his writings – that's what inspires us. It will be a great honor – I hope to you know, spend some real time with him in New York in September. But just listening to him speak today – the power of his voice – and also, you know, to think about the meaning of the encyclical. The encyclical is an extraordinarily powerful document and I hope that any of you covering this have an opportunity to look at the encyclical closely and characterize it so your audiences will pay attention to it – very powerful, very sharp document about the need for change.

**Question:** Some people say that the attitude of Pope Francis towards climate change is anti-capitalist. As the mayor of New York, what do you think?

**Mayor:** I think he is calling out both the business world and the government world. But I think it is equal opportunity. I think he is saying that institutions around the world have failed and need to deal with the issue much more forcefully. He's certainly not afraid to talk about the problems of the capitalist system, and that's necessary. But he also makes clear that governments must do better. And he also, if you look at the encyclical, it speaks to individual responsibilities as well – to the responsibility of the average citizen to not be so obsessed with consumer culture and recognize this is literally a question of survival. So I think it's very, very balanced.

**Question:** Do you think [inaudible] reducing the greenhouse gases by 2030. How much is the cost for the city of New York and what is your plan to [inaudible]?

**Mayor:** Yeah, we will get you cost estimates and specifics. This was obviously the day we wanted to announce that we are taking a higher level commitment. And obviously, I would like to commend His Holiness for convening us and calling us to action and really demanding action of us. But I also think it's very important to mention that Governor Jerry Brown of California certainly inspired me by his aggressive action – to know that we can do the same thing. And the minute he made his announcement some weeks ago, we did our analysis. We completed our analysis in anticipation of this meeting and knew we could get it done. We'll now be able to delineate the steps it would take. But I think what each of us has to do is figure out in each instance how much farther can we go.

**Question:** Yes, Mayor, if you can speak about the state of preparation underway in New York at this point, and what are your hopes for the visit?

**Mayor:** I think it's going to be extraordinary. There's tremendous energy in New York City in anticipation of the Pope's visit. Now, it will happen during our annual U.N Week. So, certainly, logistically, there will be a lot going on. And it's going to take a huge effort by the city to accommodate both the papal visit and the U.N Week. But we're ready. We've been in preparation now for months, working very closely with Cardinal Dolan and his team, and of course, Vatican representatives in the United States. So, I think it's going to be an extraordinary moment and I think the emotion of the people of the New York City feel for this Pope is going to manifest itself in the streets of the city anywhere he goes. I think you're going to see a great outpouring of support for him.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, can you talk about the symbiosis of climate change, human trafficking, and income inequality. And can you talk about the role of human trafficking in your own city – in New York City – and the impact on the northeast?

**Mayor:** I think – first of all, I appreciate your use of the word symbiosis.

[Laughter]

You're elevating the discourse, sir. The pope very powerfully spoke to that combination in his remarks here. And I think, if you listen carefully, he was saying that we now set up a cycle that's degrading us because not only have we created a dynamic where our environment is in steady decline, but it's also limiting the economic potential of so many people. And therefore, not only is inequality deepening, but in the absence of opportunity, some of the worst possibilities occur. That's where you see an uptick in trafficking – you see people taken advantage of. You see

young people with no other economic opportunities pulled towards the very worst activities, or forced into the worst activities. So I think the Pope very powerfully and elegantly blended those points together. They are all interconnected. If we are not attending to the earth, if we don't have a just economy – if those two realities are based on business decisions and government decisions that don't make sense, unfortunately they deepen the negative trends simultaneously. To the question of New York City, we're very aggressive in our efforts against trafficking. Obviously that means, first and foremost, the enforcement efforts of the NYPD. And they have a very focused effort played to stopping human trafficking. We also spend a lot of energy and resources to try and help those who have been victims of trafficking, by helping them if they have an immigration issue – God forbid, if they've been victims of violence or domestic violence, we have specific efforts to help them. So it's very much on our minds in New York City. But clearly, if anything needs a global solution, it is human trafficking.

**Question:** [inaudible] What's it been like working with Cardinal Dolan on this papal visit? You're in his house.

**Mayor:** Yes, yes.

[Laughter]

Cardinal Dolan is a great friend. My last formal meeting with Cardinal Dolan was at a Mets game at Citi Field, so we – we spend time together socially, as well as doing work together. We also were out in Staten Island together for a very powerful service – memorial service for Eric Garner. So he's a tremendous partner. We've been talking about this visit for months. We've checked in a number of times. And I think there's tremendous coordination between the archdiocese and city government – obviously, as part of city government and the [inaudible] – we're very confident about this visit.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, you were invited by the Pope to speak at the Vatican and represent New York.

**Mayor:** Yes.

**Question:** Certainly a professional highlight. Can you share with us what it means to you?

**Mayor:** Extraordinary. It's one of the great moments, certainly in my professional life, in my life as a political actor, and – but humanly as well. This is a leader such as we haven't seen before, really. He is saying things so clearly and so powerfully all over the world that need to be said. He's moving people on an extraordinary level. And we have few truly international leaders in any sense. What he is doing is, he's creating an international voice of conscience that I can't think of any previous parallel for. To be in his presence is a joy to begin with – very moving. But I'll tell you why it's such a highlight – a life highlight and so inspiring. It's like an energy boost – it's like seeing what can be possible again. And I think that's part of the power of His Holiness – he is reminding us of what's possible. You never see him saying, well, this would be a good thing to do, if only it was practical. He is literally saying to us, we have to reset our assumptions and think more deeply and more morally about our actions, because our current sense of practicality is digging our graves. And I think his voice is having a very powerful impact.

**Question:** Mayor, can you speak about what you think the impact will be of having the Pope bring this message to Congress, and to Washington in particular, and how you think it will be received? He –

**Mayor:** I hope it will have a cleansing effect on the U.S. Congress.

[Laughter]

The Pope's message needs to be heard in Washington. It has been ignored – the very ideas of addressing inequality and creating a more fair economic reality. Obviously, so much of that has been ignored in the Congress. So much of the challenge of global warming has gone unaddressed by the Congress. I think the timing couldn't be better. I think he has the ability to cut through all that, and really be a wakeup call for the Congress. I also think if you look at what's happening with the American people, the consciousness levels are changing so rapidly – and I referred several times to the poll that came out a month ago – CBS-New York Times poll – which showed that the public as a whole, nationwide, was more and more focused on income inequality than ever before. We certainly see a huge uptick in public understanding of climate change and willingness to do something about it. So I think the Pope's visit is particularly timely, and it's going to remind the Congress the world's changing very rapidly – the people are changing. The Congress has to catch up.

**Question:** Can you – has Wall Street been a good partner in the city's and in your fight against global warming?

**Mayor:** We haven't really engaged them on the global warming front much yet. We have begun the process, particularly with the real estate community, on the goals that we have to hit for 80 by 50, and now 40 by 30 will be the new topic. I've said to the business community of New York City, we would love to reach these goals together, cooperatively. But, if there's hesitation on the part of the real estate community, the business community, we will mandate action and we will mandate these goals be met, because it's about survival. So it's too soon to tell but I think initially, certainly with the business leaders that we've reached out to, they understand how resolute the city government is and they do want to help us get to the goal.

**Question:** But do you have any plans to try to engage Wall Street, which is a huge, obviously, employer in the city and –

**Mayor:** We're going to engage the whole business community in terms of getting to 80 by 50 and to 40 by 30. There's no question about it. But, again, I – my message is clear – we come in peace. We would like to do this cooperatively. If we see a lack of commitment, we'll mandate it and I think that's a very important point and I've said that at the United Nations when I spoke last September. But, I do find, in the business community, more and more people who I think are socially conscious and more people who are conscious about the need to address climate change, so I'm certainly hoping for good results. Last call, yes.

**Question:** [Inaudible]

**Mayor:** For us, immigration is a blessing and it makes us stronger – that is, the history of New York City. I remind you, that my own grandparents immigrated from Benevento and Matera to

the United States, to New York City. They had that opportunity. It changed the lives of our family. They contribute to our city, just as generations have. So, in New York City, we believe immigration is a good and positive thing. We believe in being inclusive to all people, we're very proud of that. That being said, we have almost half a million undocumented people in New York City, and their issues are not being addressed by our national government. We've created our own municipal ID card to try and help. We've provided some services, we've provided help but we need national, comprehensive immigration reform for the almost 12 million people in the United States of America who don't have documents. The same is true in Europe. The European community must grapple with this issue. And, there needs to be a European solution. And I say, as a proud Italian American, that I'm deeply troubled by the lack of action by the European Union. The way that Italy has been left to fend for itself – very unfair. I appreciate the view of the Italian government, which I think is a humanitarian view, certainly consistent with the history of Italians emigrating all over the world. There is a consistency of understanding of the human reality that is noble. But Europe, in my opinion – I'm not a European obviously so I'm speaking from outside – but Europe can't decide to be unified some of the time and to ignore important issues at other times. This issue is affecting the people of Europe. There needs to be a European Union policy that really addresses the vast amount of immigration that is happening. It's not fair to shoulder – have Italy have to shoulder so much of the burden.

**Unknown:** Alright, guys, last call.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, do you speak to – you spoke to the mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, she told us that she spoke to you about Uber. I don't know what kind of conversation you both had. Paris has a lot of issues with Uber [inaudible].

**Mayor:** Yes.

**Question:** I don't know if –

**Mayor:** She's having very similar experience. I think it's clear that as a corporation – as a multi-billion dollar corporation – Uber thinks it can dictate to government. I remind them that the government represents the people and the people's larger interests and that is more important than any one company's needs. So, I think the situation playing out in Paris in a way is very similar to New York City. I think it's playing out in London in a way that's very similar. And I think, in each case, the people of our cities don't like the notion of those who are particularly wealthy and powerful dictating the terms to a government elected by the people. So I think that is not a wise course and ultimately the people will reject it. Thanks, everyone.

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