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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT THE INTREPID SEA,
AIR & SPACE MUSEUM'S ANNUAL MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: If you look around, this site is powerful. If you look around at this great ship, you look at the good men and women in uniform, all around us. If you're like me, you feel very proud at this moment. Regardless of the challenges we've been through, there's so much that bonds us together gives us a reason for hope. Memorial Day is a day to remember the people we lost, those we know, and those we didn't. It's also a day to take stock, remember who we are, why we are called to higher ideals as Americans. I was very moved, and I hope you were to, by the words of a man I've gotten to know and a great leader. It makes me proud of this country that Admiral Chip Rock is helping to lead our United States Navy. Let's give him another round of applause and thank him.

[Applause]

When I'm here the moment gets very personal for me because as you heard from Bruce, while this great ship was in the waters off Leyte Gulf and off Okinawa during World War II, my dad was on the ground with so many other good men fighting extraordinary battles, doing everything they could to protect their comrades in arms, to win a victory for freedom and come home alive, and so when I'm with Intrepid, I feel a connection to my dad, may he rest in peace. And he would talk to me about the men that he served with and I always saw pain every time because he was starting to remember the guys that didn't come back, and I knew that it never left him, and I felt fortunate that he came home. Although he bore the scars of war, both physical and emotional, but at least he was there. But I could see for him there was something, a hollowness because he couldn't get out of his mind his comrades in arms that didn't come home, and he missed them.

So, today should be a day we all take very personally, and we should appreciate the Intrepid - Susan, Mel, Bruce, everyone associated with the Intrepid, thank you because you give for all of us that connection to so many who did so much for all of us, even if we never got to meet them, this place gives us that connection. So, it is hollow ground. It's places like this that make us better and make us reach our better angels.

Now this last year is indescribable even for all of us who went through it. But I remember, so powerfully, that day when the USNS Comfort steamed into our harbor after we had gone through the worst that gave us hope. I remember the men and women of our armed forces, the military medical personnel in our public hospitals, saving lives, giving hope to our healthcare heroes who had been through so much, needed a helping hand, needed some inspiration, and I was there when they arrived at some of our hospitals in their fatigues, and that feeling that finally the reinforcements had come, and we were going to get through it okay. It was palpable. It was deep.

So, our military was here for us in our toughest hour and all New Yorkers will always appreciate that.

I hope on Memorial Day, we remember what was, and we remember the ideals of those who gave their lives, and then we recommit ourselves because in the end, everyone here has talked about the challenges we faced, but we cannot let those challenges overcome us. We have to be better than that. The pandemic threw at us more than we ever could have imagined, but we did persevere, all of us, as New Yorkers, as Americans, we did persevere. We found something inside ourselves. Let's find it now. As we bind our nation together, again, let's find the unity that we felt in those moments, fighting COVID shoulder to shoulder and take it forward, create something better. If we want to honor those we lost, let's create something as good as their place of unity and hope again. I do believe in that, in this moment and this Memorial Day, that's how we honor them, and that's how we honor our country. Thank you. God bless you all.

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