

NATIONAL PRESS CLUB LUNCHEON WITH MITCH LANDRIEU AND MICHAEL NUTTER

SUBJECT: ISSUES AFFECTING OUR URBAN COMMUNITIES

MODERATOR: ANGELA GREILING KEANE, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

LOCATION: NATIONAL PRESS CLUB BALLROOM, WASHINGTON, D.C.

TIME: 12:30 P.M. EDT

DATE: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2013

(C) COPYRIGHT 2008, NATIONAL PRESS CLUB, 529 14TH STREET, WASHINGTON, DC - 20045, USA. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. ANY REPRODUCTION, REDISTRIBUTION OR RETRANSMISSION IS EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED.

UNAUTHORIZED REPRODUCTION, REDISTRIBUTION OR RETRANSMISSION CONSTITUTES A MISAPPROPRIATION UNDER APPLICABLE UNFAIR COMPETITION LAW, AND THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB RESERVES THE RIGHT TO PURSUE ALL REMEDIES AVAILABLE TO IT IN RESPECT TO SUCH MISAPPROPRIATION.

FOR INFORMATION ON BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB, PLEASE CALL 202-662-7505.

ANGELA GREILING KEANE: (Sounds gavel.) Good afternoon, and welcome to the National Press Club. My name is Angela Greiling Keane. I'm a reporter for Bloomberg News and the 106th president of the National Press Club. We are the world's leading professional organization for journalists committed to our profession's future through our programming with events such as this while fostering a free press worldwide. For more information about the National Press Club, please visit our website at www.press.org. To donate to programs offered to the public through our National Press Club Journalism Institute, please visit Press.org/institute.

On behalf of our members worldwide, I'd like to welcome our speakers today and those of you in the audience. Our head table includes guests of our speakers as well as working journalists who are Club members. And if you hear applause from our audience, I'd note that members of the general public are also attending, so it's not necessarily evidence of a lack of journalistic objectivity.

I'd also like to welcome our C-SPAN and Public Radio audiences. You can follow the action today on Twitter using the hashtag NPCLunch. After our guests' speech concludes, we'll have a question and answer period. I will ask as many questions as time permits. Now it's time to introduce our head table guests. I'd ask each of you to stand briefly as your name is announced.

From your right, Jeffrey Ballou, a news editor for Al Jazeera Media Network, and a member of the National Press Club Board of Governors; Carolyn Coleman, Director of Federal Relations for the National League of Cities; Dr. William C. Bell, the President

and CEO of Casey's Family Programs; Donna Leinwand-Leger, a reporter for *USA Today*, a former National Press Club president, and the Vice Chairwoman of the Speakers Committee.

Skipping over our speaker for just a moment, Alison Fitzgerald, project manager for the Center for Public Integrity and the Chairwoman of the National Press Club Speakers Committee; skipping over our other speaker, Bob Carden with Carden Communications and the Speakers Committee member who organized today's luncheon. Thank you, Bob. Kenneth A. Polite, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Louisiana; Jennifer Babich, the Washington bureau chief for Time Warner Cable; Ryan Dalton, the City of New Orleans midnight basketball coordinator, and a former gang member; and Matt Friedman, a video producer for the Associated Press. (Applause)

Our guests today say one of the greatest epidemics facing our country is the death of African American men and boys at the hands of other African American men and boys. Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter, and New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, are here to talk about their initiatives to reduce violent crimes in major cities. In New Orleans, that effort is known as NOLA FOR LIFE. Mitch Landrieu hails from a rich tradition of Louisiana politicians. Sister Mary is a United States Senator from the state, Father Moon was a one-time mayor of New Orleans and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. Mayor Landrieu also served as Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana for two terms including when Hurricane Katrina slammed into the state.

No stranger to Washington, Mayor Landrieu attended Catholic University here. He created a public/private partnership called The New Orleans Business Alliance that helped spur growth in the city and now New Orleans is one of the fastest growing cities in the nation.

Mayor Nutter has been mayor of Philadelphia since 2008 after serving as a member of the city council. Considered aggressive on crime, Mayor Nutter has supported making certain neighborhoods in Philadelphia crime emergency designations, which impose curfews and limit public gathering in those areas. He has also launched a number of economic development initiatives in the nation's fifth largest city, and educational reforms. A native of Philadelphia, Mayor Nutter grew up in the western section of the city and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania.

The mayors are here today to talk about their perspectives on the role of the federal government, nonprofits, business leaders, and communities, in creating safe neighborhoods where individuals and families can thrive. Please help me give a warm National Press Club welcome to New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, and Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter. (Applause)

MAYOR LANDRIEU: Good afternoon to all of you. Mayor Nutter and I come to you today to talk about an urgent national issue. Young African American men are being killed and are killing at alarming numbers in America. Across America, it is a constant drumbeat of death, of shootings, of murder, day after day after day. We are

losing a whole generation of promise. But the response to this daily carnage has been eerily quiet. We are numb to the violence, numb to its dreadful consequences. The problem is so complex and so painful that we are overwhelmed and we often look away. Maybe we're scared that if we speak up and get involved, we'll end up in the cross hairs. Or, perhaps we have bought into the evil notion that the lives of young African American men are somehow less valuable than the rest of us.

We've all heard it before, "Just thugs killing thugs. There's nothing that you can do about it." But this is a lie. Every life is precious, and these young men were not predestined to this fate. We will never know, in many instances, what might have been.

Last year, 193 people, our fellow citizens, were murdered in my city of New Orleans, 193 tragic stories and a wake of destruction and heartbreak. A huge number of the victims and perpetrators, young African American men, many of whom knew each other. The shooter of today often becomes the victim of tomorrow, and along the way so many innocents caught in the cross fire of hell. Hard truths fall painfully on ears that do not want to hear. America is drunk on violence and we drown in this sorrow as we suffer these deaths and the consequences there from.

Let's take a minute just to remember some of the names of the recent victims. Samuel Bryant, Alvin Banks, Tyron Nettles, Michael Rendell, Tillman Hawkins, Edward Eisen, Billy McCormack, Christine George and her two children, Theresa and Leonard.

Mayor Nutter and I look at these circumstances with eyes wide open and we are here to say that we are not afraid because we have great faith in America and its people. There is nothing broken here that cannot be fixed. There is no problem here that cannot be solved. But the challenge of murder is both wide and deep and must be addressed broadly as an issue of public health with close connection to economics, education, poverty, law enforcement, race, and yes, American culture.

Here is the point: a lot must change to stop the shooting, to stop the violence. So now is the time to marshal every resource; federal, state, local, private, faith based, not for profit, to turn the tide. It is time we take a hard look in the mirror and recognize our own personal responsibility, to strengthen our families, to improve our communities and change the culture of violence. We need everyone on board; every parent, every grandparent, every pastor, every coach, every friend, every neighbor. This violence will not stop until we all get involved. We may not all be at fault, but we all have responsibility to take on this fight and to find an answer.

MAYOR NUTTER: We are not all at fault, but we are all responsible. As Dr. King wrote, we are tied together in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. Young black men are dying in America. Does America notice? Last year, 333 people, our fellow citizens, were murdered in my city of Philadelphia; 331 (sic) tragic stories in a wake of destruction and heartbreak. And generally, 75 to 80 percent of the victims and perpetrators, black men, many very young.

Each violent act tears at our nation's soul and each murder leaves a wide wake of destruction and a long line of victims. A child who loses a father, a mother whose heart is broken, a family left alone. And in a downward spiral of violence begets violence. A son of today's victim picks up a gun and tomorrow, two victims; perpetrator and the victim. Murder doesn't just happen. This poisonous fruit grows from the contaminated soil fed by poverty and hopelessness. For many, the deck is stacked against them from day one. Poor schools, inadequate healthcare, no jobs. The cycle of poverty is chewing up another generation and spits out the results for all of us to see.

Criminals terrorize communities and decent, hard working people become afraid in their own neighborhoods and they struggle to hold the line. Indeed, during these past decades, I've seen a marked change in the neighborhoods where I grew up. The sense of community has diminished. Neighbors who a generation before lived together, ate together, congregated together and shared a collective responsibility. Now that commune of fellowship doesn't seem to exist. We're estranged, we're not watching each other's back.

Now, the mindset is it's not my business, it's not my fault. As our neighborhoods decline, so do the dreams and expectations of those who live there. And from this downward slide comes the various ills we face today including the scourge of murder.

But Mayor Landrieu and I are here to say it's not too late, we must change. Every life is precious. This is a national problem with national implications that deserves a national response and action, everyone doing their part; local, state and federal governments, parents and teachers and pastors, friends, and neighbors. Now is the time to say what needs to be said, to do what needs to be done, period.

No more nice talk, no more happy talk, no more talking to be talking; only results and action. And if we do not have the urgency to stand up now and say, "Enough," then when?

MAYOR LANDRIEU: We are running out of time. If we do not have the urgency to stand up now and say, "Enough," then when? Every minute we wait costs us a life. Every day, before the dawn to the stroke of midnight to night, an average of 40 more of our fellow citizens will be lost, 40 people killed in the neighborhoods of America today. America cannot be strong abroad if we are weak at home. The humanitarian crisis is not just in some far off nation, but here on our streets, in our neighborhoods, in our homes. Morally, economically and for the good of this nation's strength and security, we must do more.

Each generation comes to this point. Each generation makes a choice. Each generation for a moment grips that arc of history and bends it one way or the other. During the March on Washington 50 years ago, a quarter million men, women and children, took that turn and came to the foot of the Lincoln Memorial to demand that America live up to our founding creed, the sacred promise of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and justice for us all.

In a million ways since that moment in 1963, America has moved forward. But somewhere along the way, something has gone terribly wrong. Congressman John Lewis laments the condition saying that we didn't get arrested and go to jail, we didn't march for young men to continue to kill each other. Dr. King did not take a bullet, and Congressman Lewis did not take a beating for this drumbeat of death and violence to become a way of life.

I want you to consider this. From 1980 to 2012, 626,000 people, American citizens, a disproportionate number, young African American men, were murdered on the streets of America. That's more Americans that were lost during World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf War, the war in Iraq, the war in Afghanistan, combined. So, the struggle goes on. And it's clear that the catastrophic death of young black men on the streets of America remains strange fruit from the same poisonous tree of hatred, injustice, inequality, a vestige of this nation's original sin.

As William Faulkner noted, for us the past is never dead. It's not even past. Oh, we have come far, but what will it take for our nation to take on these burning issues today? Fifty years ago, it was the bombing at Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church and the death of four innocent little girls that galvanized this nation. Today, now many months removed from this horrible Newtown massacre and in the shadow of the recent Navy Yard attack, not much has changed. Just last week in Chicago, 13 people were shot including a three year old. Even the nearly daily shootings and murder of innocent children on the streets of America doesn't seem to spur us to act.

Indeed, it was earlier this month in New Orleans when one year old Londyn Samuels was shot and killed as she was held in her babysitter's arms. Days later, Arabian Gayles was shot dead as she slept on the couch in her living room in the middle of the night. Jeremy Galmon heard gunshots and peered out the back window of his grandma's car while he was in her arms and a bullet meant for another struck the two year old in the head, killing him. Londyn, Arabian and Jeremy join a long line of baby angels taken from us. We should remember them.

Keira Holmes, aged two, Briana Allen, aged five, Edward Barton, Kendall and Kelsey Thornton. Fifty years ago, the nation wept for Addie Mae Collins, Cynthia Wesley, Carole Robinson, and Denise McNair, the four little girls killed by the Ku Klux Klan at the 16th Street Baptist Church. Today, the same young faces, the same innocence lost, the same potential snuffed out not so much as a whisper.

This cannot stand. It is time for this nation to finish the work of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln, of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King.

MAYOR NUTTER: The current situation of violence in America is perfectly captured by a federal report for the National Commission on Civil Disorders. This blue ribbon commission created by the President reports that our nation is moving to two societies; one black, one white, separate and unequal. And that the violence

is foreshadowed by an accumulation of unresolved grievances, and by widespread dissatisfaction. The commissioner's recommendations are straightforward and basic. Better housing for black men and women outside of impoverished areas; more investment in public education; new major public works projects that include job training; and a stronger safety net.

These recommendations resonate. This is our reality today. But this report was not written about today's situation, it was written in 1967, 46 years ago, by a group better known as the Kerner Commission, which was created by President Lyndon Johnson in response to the rioting in Detroit and Los Angeles, Chicago, and Newark. In 1967, the federal government, just as some in government do today, largely ignored the truth and the commission's recommendations. And now our problems are bigger and more difficult to resolve.

Black men are becoming an endangered species in America; locked up, dead or dying. No education, no money, no healthcare, no security or stability. The pressure of poverty takes a toll and often turns to desperation. Frustration becomes cynicism and misery and despair. Hate grows and the violence spreads like a virus. One crime leads to another, the dominoes start to fall and it often ends in tragedy, blood in the streets.

We justify our collective inaction on this issue of murder with self deception. "Not my problem, not my neighborhood, not my children. Thugs killing thugs, and there's nothing we can do about it." And let me be clear: poverty is not an excuse for violence, but it is a major explanation for the many negative life changing circumstances and outcomes in America.

MAYOR LANDRIEU: But there is something that we can do about it. There is something that we must do. Here is the truth on the issue of violence. We as a society have lost our way. Like a vine choking the life from a proud oak, the creeping scourge of violence tightens its grip on our nation. We have to change. Turning the tide is a huge challenge and much needs to be done in order to make a difference.

In New Orleans, we have designed, and we are implementing a cutting edge, comprehensive murder reduction strategy called NOLA FOR LIFE. It is smart, it is holistic, and yes it hits the streets. Prevention and helping our young people and our families succeed is the name of the game. So we support innovative reforms in our schools, and we double funding for our recreation department. We launched the innovative Cease Fire initiative in New Orleans to help mediate conflicts and stop the cycle of violence.

Earlier this week, we tipped off season five of midnight basketball where every Saturday night, hundreds of mostly young African American men come from high crime areas to play ball and then we connect them to the jobs, or whatever else they need, so they can get out of the life and into the real game that matters.

But step one for NOLA FOR LIFE is to stop the bleeding, to stop the death, to stop the shooting. We have to stop the shooting first. So we're focused on enforcement. We've beefed up our homicide unit, gotten smart with more precise hot spot police and focused on gangs, establishing the new multi-agency gang unit with local, state and federal law enforcements like U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District, Kenneth Polite who is with us today. Kenneth, it's great to see you.

To fight the scourge of murder, we have sent a message through both word and deed that those terrorizing our neighborhoods need to stop the shooting, put down your gun or else we are coming for you and all the people that you hang out with. With NOLA FOR LIFE, we are making progress. Last year, nationally murder and violent crime was on the rise. But in New Orleans, overall crime was down and now murder is down 25 percent compared to this time last year. Our progress is promising, yes. But, it is really just a drop in the bucket against this tidal wave of trouble rolling our way.

Now, the Pledge of Allegiance asserts that we are one nation indivisible with liberty and justice for all. Indivisible means one. It means not capable of being divided. That is what it means to be an American. We have a shared destiny whether you live in North Philly, the south side of Chicago, New Orleans' 7th Ward, Southeast D.C. or right here in this very spot. And therein lies part of the message for today. Preventing murder and stopping violent crime must become a national priority to be faced together as one nation indivisible.

So Mayor Nutter and I come to you as generals in war time. We are telling Congress and the American people we need a surge on the streets of America; local, state and federal government each need to do their part. Churches and schools, friends and neighbors, mothers and daughters, each need to do their part. Washington is broken, it is time for our country to do what is difficult for the sake of doing what is right.

MAYOR NUTTER: In 2012, three out of every four Philadelphia homicide victims were African American men. That's 236 people. Last year in 2012, 193 murders in New Orleans, 500 murders in Chicago, 419 in New York City, 127 in Oakland, 133 in Memphis, 331 in Philadelphia, 113 in St. Louis, 218 in Baltimore, 386 in Detroit. On average, 40 people lost every day to this crisis, this virus of murder. A massacre worse than Newtown every 24 hours, a body count higher than 9/11 every 2 ½ months.

Now, think about this. If the Ku Klux Klan came to Philadelphia and killed 236 black men, the city would be on lockdown. If 236 Philadelphians were killed in a train accident, the National Transportation Safety Board would mobilize and there would be congressional hearings on train safety. If 236 well off white kids in the Philadelphia suburbs were killed, there would be hell to pay.

And if international terrorists killed 236 Philadelphians of any race, we would hunt them down for decades and bring them to justice no matter the cost, no matter the time. We would just do it. And yet, 236 African American men murdered in one city, not one word. No hearings on the Hill, no investigations, no special select committees,

nothing but silence.

On September 11, 2001, the United States suffered a horrific attack on our country and our citizens. A year later, a 9/11 Commission was created. Eighty top notch staffers and a budget of about \$15 million, the commission over nearly a year and a half interviewed more than 1,200 individuals in ten countries and left no stone unturned. Issued a final report with dozens of recommendations. Because of 9/11, a sprawling new cabinet-level department was created, the Department of Homeland Security. Transportation Safety Administration was established, and the federal government took complete control of airport security, spending billions of dollars to train and hire tens of thousands of new airport screeners.

Now, you can hardly cough in an airport without the TSA doing a check, and I respect and appreciate their work because we all want to be safe. On that horrific day in 2001, there were 2,977 innocent victims. And as a result, two wars costing thousands of lives and trillions of dollars. But in 2012 in America, 14,827 people were lost to murder.

Here is the point. As Americans, if something is a priority like national security after 9/11, we find a solution or we make one. Here's the crisis: thousands of black men and boys, and many other Americans, die every year and every day in our country and virtually nothing happens. No sustained comprehensive action is taken to prevent it or stop it, no political or diplomatic solution is brokered among the nations and the Congress regarding guns coming into our country, nothing, as if it's not even happening. But it is, and it does every day.

Illegal guns are the weapons of mass destruction on our streets and we experience, as one of my fellow mayors have said, mass murder one by one by one in slow motion every single day in the United States of America. And so I ask the question, where is our red line on violence in America? Ten thousand plus murdered Americans every year, that is a crime against humanity. We have a Civil War unfolding in our cities every day, every week and every month.

Mayor Landrieu and I both have personally spoken with President Obama on this issue and he is ready to act. The question is where is the Congress and what are they prepared to do? And so let me ask this question: what if our response to domestic terrorism was as thorough and as engaged as our response to international terrorism? What if we had a 9/11 commission about black men getting slaughtered on the streets of America? A national commission on domestic terrorism, violence and crime in America to examine the root causes of this violence, find solutions and make recommendations for what governments at all levels can do to reduce domestic terrorism, violence and crime in America?

From the 9/11 Commission, we created the TSA, the Transportation Security Administration. Well, now maybe we need the WASA, the Walking Around Security Administration. This is serious because we have a violence problem in America.

MAYOR LANDRIEU: This is another way the federal government can help reduce gun violence in America. You have to hit the streets; Democrats, Republicans, Congress and President Obama, lock hands and launch a strong but more targeted cops program to put more cops on the beat, just like Congress and President Clinton did in the 1990s. Congress has the money. In fact, according to the Governmental Accountability Office from 2009 to 2011, nearly \$14 billion was spent by the United States government building, hiring, training and equipping police departments. But this \$14 billion wasn't spent in New Orleans or Philadelphia or Chicago, even though we are fighting the good fight against violent crime on what amounts to a shoestring budget. No, this money went to build police departments for the people of Afghanistan and Iraq, Pakistan, Mexico and Colombia.

We need to redirect those federal resources back to the home front. We need Congress to treat fighting murder and violent crime as a national priority. Furthermore, we need to do something about criminals with illegal guns. So let me be clear: I support the second amendment. And the genius of our constitution is that it creates a strong balance in every sentence between rights and responsibilities. It distinguishes between the right to speak our mind and the crime of yelling "fire" in a crowded movie theater. Commonsense solutions can be found that strike this balance and stay true to its original intent.

There is common ground on this issue. I will give you just one example. Everyone can agree that we should do what we can to get illegal guns out of the hands of dangerous criminals. And here is one specific way that we can do it. Over 30 years ago, Congress authorized federal agencies and prosecutors to target drug dealers as part of the war on drugs. We should do the same with violent gun offenders and make their prosecution a federal priority. Let's give prosecutors clear, concurrent jurisdiction over all violent offenses committed by firearms that travel in interstate commerce. Let's bring the hammer down on these violent criminals with the full weight of the judicial system.

MAYOR NUTTER: On these big issues, these major issues of the day, Mayor Landrieu and I will not look away, we won't be quiet. Americans tackle problems. We fix things, we put our hands to the plow and we find a way to make life better. So we started to do the research and we got others involved to answer the question: what is happening in our streets and why?

What we found was that murder, of course, is not just a Philadelphia issue, it's not just a New Orleans issue, this is a national issue that deserves a national conversation and national action. In America, young black men are being slaughtered and we need everyone on board to find solutions.

So we've brought together our federal and state partners, mayors from across the country and philanthropic leaders like Dr. Bell in Casey Family Programs, to establish Cities United, a new initiative specifically aimed at finding ways to stop the murder of young African American men and boys. Now, Cities United seeks to create an urgency, dispel myths, unpack the reality and name the challenge. And as a part of this effort, we

in Philadelphia have taken some very practical steps to reduce violent crime and murder in my city.

First, as Mayor Landrieu said, we have to do something about illegal guns. And as I often say to the guys in the street with illegal guns, got a gun, go to jail. I'm not talking about legally purchased guns that people use for protection or other legal purposes. We're targeting illegal guns bought by straw purchasers and used by criminals to wreak havoc in our city.

Second, we must get tougher on enforcement. We've restarted our Operation Pressure Point which details our police officers and other law enforcement personnel into crime hot spots and takes the fight to the street corners. And furthermore, we're working closely with business owners to register outdoor video surveillance cameras so when a crime happens, police can get there quickly, get their evidence and take down these criminals.

And third, we're reaching out trying to stop violence before it starts. We convened a wide variety of stakeholders from all across the city to help on the front lines confronting and preventing violence. We're making some progress. I can report to you today that this year in Philadelphia, murder is down nearly 30 percent and our shootings are down over 16 percent as compared to this same time last year. The progress is promising, but as was mentioned, it really is a drop in the bucket against the tidal wave of trouble. One murder or shooting must be unacceptable.

MAYOR LANDRIEU: If you really understand this problem, you can see that no law, no rule or regulation alone is going to fundamentally change the culture of death on the streets of America. Government on its best day can never replace a family. The government must invest in communities so families can thrive and children can have a chance. We need safe streets, more jobs, better schools. But, it won't matter without personal responsibility. Babies having babies just does not work.

The point is government can't solve all of the problems. We each need to take care of our own business. This means pastors, teachers, coaches, neighbors and friends, we each have a big role to play. There is no excuse. We have to quit waiting, we have to start doing. We may not all be at fault, but we are all, we are all, responsible.

As mayors of major American cities, Mayor Nutter and I, are the governments closest to the grounds. We are called upon to do the hard work of governing. It is where word must meet deed, ambition must meet human frailty. Aspiration crashes against the rocks of reality and hope hits the streets real time, real challenges, real life, real death.

We are the ones that get the call to go to the crime scene after the murder. We get the call when the police officer gets shot. We get the emails day in and day out that tell the same story. "Mr. Mayor, I am sorry to inform you that last night, shots rang out in the middle of the night. We arrived at the scene, we found a young African American man faced down, three bullet holes in the head. There are no witnesses." We're the ones that

go to the funerals where they lay to rest the one year old, and an 11 year old caught in this terrible crossfire from hell. We feel the searing pain of mothers and fathers grieving the loss of a baby child taken before her time. We are called to bear witness and so today we do.

To all of the naysayers, I say that you may be able to kill the messenger, but you cannot kill the truth. Some are cynical and believe that we cannot change. Some believe that the murder of thousands of young African American men on our streets is to be accepted like it is a part of the natural order of things. It does not have to be this way. There is hope because of young people like Ryan Dalton. Ryan Dalton is the 6th of 11 children raised by his mom in New Orleans in the 8th Ward. Ryan was nearly lost to us, shot three times, with an AK47 laying on the streets of New Orleans. But he survived. He got up, he turned his life around.

And with a program that we have in New Orleans called Cafe Reconcile, a not for profit, that connects young people to skills and jobs, he came. He then started his own organization to help young people, and last year he went to the White House to talk to the national leaders about how to stop the violence. And this winter, he joined the mayor's staff as the coordinator for midnight basketball where, so far this year in 2013, he's hosted over 2,100 mostly young African American men. (Applause) Ryan was saved because through word and deed, we as a community came together and showed him love and helped him see his unique worth and his remarkable potential.

By working together, we created a pathway to a better future and he took the responsibility to walk down that pathway. Now, he is saving the lives of others. He flipped his script. Don't tell me that it cannot be done. Ryan, thank you very much. (Applause) That young man right there, his life is a testament that hope, though she may be concealed, is always there waiting for us to seek her out.

This is where fortitude and courage calls us to keep going, to hurt but not to despair. To struggle, but not to stop. The never-ending march to the more perfect union that we all dream of.

MAYOR NUTTER: These issues, these issues of the day, should capture our attention on a continuous basis. After all, peace and freedom come only through struggle. And everything can be lost just in a moment, in an instant, in the blinking of an eye. We cannot dodge our responsibility and ignore these problems because they won't just go away. We've actually tried that before, and now the problems are bigger and the remedies are more painful than ever.

In closing, every New Year's Day, clergy and I visit inmates in our city prisons. I talk with them; men, women and, yes, juveniles. A few years back, I met a young man, his name was Kent. He was 17 years old and was facing 7 to 20 years for four armed robberies. His total haul from those robberies, \$2,000. So much of his life given for so little. I stayed and talked with him for a while and despite his crimes and decisions, Kent had a youthfulness about him; still a sense of hope. He was very smart and very

respectful.

It broke my heart to hear that he had a 3.6 GPA, scored a 1400 on his SATs. Colleges were still sending letters to his parents' house trying to get him to apply while he was still in prison. That's a tragedy. Kent's story shows in stark terms the crisis that we face. This boy had remarkable potential. In a different world, he could have been anything; a lawyer, a doctor, an engineer, mayor, governor, president. But instead, it's the same old story so similar to so many other young African American men before him. So much talent, so much potential wasted either behind bars or in the cold ground.

Now is the time to make combating murder and violent crime a top national priority. Now is the time for adults to take responsibility for the young people in our lives, whether it's your children, your nieces, your nephews, students, your own employees, kids who maybe live down the block. We may not all be at fault, but we are all responsible. We each have our role to play and through our work, we can inspire our nation and the world and prove that tragedy can come from triumph.

I have great hope for the people of America because we never stop moving forward even in our darkest hours, because we take action. But we have a long way to go together. So here's what you can do. Do stories on this American problem, week-long specials. Show what's going on like you did during the civil rights movement; the hangings, the water hoses, the beatings, the dogs. Like you did during the Vietnam War, dead Americans coming back from foreign battlefields. Take the responsibility and show that Americans coming from the battlefield streets of our cities all across America.

Talk with mayors and governors and ask what they're doing and what they need. Meet with citizens on the streets and hear their pleas and cries for peace and freedom from violence. Talk to police chiefs in the law enforcement community about their ideas, ask a member of Congress what they think about all this. And more importantly, what are they going to do to stop the daily carnage?

What is the federal response to America's new Civil War? Cover these stories, care about these issues. Devote air time and budgets and personnel to this horrific American tragedy. Black men and boys are dying, Americans are dying in our own killing fields. Do something now because knowing demands action. (Applause)

MS. GREILING KEANE: Thank you, Mayors. Both of you sounded solutions that appear much like those advanced by your predecessors, Mayor Marc Morial and Mayor Ed Rendell. What will be different this time around?

MAYOR NUTTER: Thanks for the question. I think the difference is we've carved out a pathway, I think we've articulated some solutions. But the discussion that many of us are having is how do we best utilize, in many instances, the limited resources that we have? And we continue to learn from our predecessor mayors. I continue to learn from the mayors who are currently in office, those who maybe have gone out of office recently.

The issue for us, I think, is how do we best collaborate, how do we coordinate, how do we maximize the resources. But I think most importantly, how do we get America to pay attention to this particular issue in ways that the country has not in the past? This is happening every day in the streets of America, and I firmly believe that if it were some other issue, it would just have a lot more attention.

MAYOR LANDRIEU: Also on that note, to recognize the work of Mayor Morial and Mayor Rendell along with President Clinton and Vice President Biden and Senator Breaux who was here today. Back in the mid '90s, they actually expanded and targeted the cops program across America, and it was one of the main tools that actually helped restore public safety to the communities. And we're asking for Congress and the President to do that again on a targeted basis because we know that worked. If you start doing something that works and you stop it, and it goes back to where it was, it's a good message that you might want to try it again. And we think of that as a really targeted way to make this happen.

MS. GREILING KEANE: Funding is, of course, an A list topic right now in Washington. You talked about looking at the pot of money coming back from wars overseas as a potential source. Do you have any other potential sources of revenue to fund these initiatives given that you're not the only ones interested in that particular pot of money?

MAYOR LANDRIEU: Well, first of all, I think Mayor Nutter and I would agree, and most mayors in America. We're called upon to do the hard work of governing. And we have balanced budget requirements, too. We cut our budgets, I mean significantly, over time and we recognize that waste, fraud, abuse, ineffectiveness, inefficient, it needs to be routed out of our governments. In the city of New Orleans, and I know Mayor Nutter did similar things, we cut \$100 million, or 25 percent out of our budget. So we know what cutting is about. We actually know how to do it and we do it fairly well.

But it is also true that you need resources to work. The message from Washington is always, "We don't have any money." But it is curious to me, I'm speaking for myself now, that in the discussion of the immigration bill, as it has waxed and waned over time, turned into, "Well, we need \$32 billion to build a wall," and that money evidently materialized because it was something that the nation thought was important.

As Mayor Nutter has said before, when this nation has decided that something was a priority, it either finds a way or it makes one. We believe that this is a national priority. It is a national issue, and we have to prioritize our resources much like we do when we try to protect ourselves not only away, but on our homeland as well.

MS. GREILING KEANE: You said President Obama is ready to help. What specifically has he said he'd do?

MAYOR NUTTER: A group of us were with President Obama and Attorney General Holder, Valerie Jarrett, about a month or so ago, and notwithstanding, as Mayor Landrieu pointed out, when the Congress wants to fund something, they fund it. I think we are not laboring under the misimpression that suddenly significant funding will come flowing to cities.

But the federal agencies, whether it's the Attorney General's office, or the U.S. Attorney in our respective areas, the FBI, the DEA, Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the federal marshals, all those agencies are on the ground in our respective cities. They all have budgets, they have personnel, they have equipment and technology. And so the current discussion is how do we best use what we have in a much more coordinated fashion.

I was in a conversation with some federal folks listening to some of the discussion and realized in that discussion, the two different agencies were looking for the same person. That can only be a waste of resources. And so, again, through greater collaboration and coordination on the ground and if it is known down the chain for the local U.S. attorney, for the local FBI, SAC, for the local DEA and all the other respective folks, that the national priority is your level of coordination and cooperation with the local government.

That if you had something, each of our cities has a version of CompStat or CitiStat. If you have a federal CitiStat, that the department head knew that two levels above is going to ask, "How many cases did you take federal? How many guns did you get off the streets? How many parolees, people who skipped bail, have you captured in the local jurisdiction because it actually matters to us what you're doing on the ground, you would see a very different response on the ground if everyone knew that their evaluation was partially dependent on what they're doing in the local jurisdiction, not just operating in silos. You can use the resources that we have in a much more effective fashion.

MS. GREILING KEANE: Mayor Nutter, you talked about the macro level stories that you'd like to see the news media pursue. But the media is often criticized for not writing or not broadcasting much about individual victims of urban violence, and particularly young black male victims of urban violence. Do you think that that's something the news media should do better on?

MAYOR NUTTER: Well look, I mean, let me be blunt with you. Obviously, murder and destruction every day is not the most positive story to cover. Most news casts, at least local news, I mean the first 12 minutes or so is about every possible bad thing that could happen. It can be depressing. On the other hand, we cannot ignore that these issues are going on. And when I talk about the civil rights movement, it was when people saw the water hoses, the dogs, heard about the hangings and all the other stuff that was going on that America said, "This is outrageous. We cannot stand for this," and there as movement in the civil rights issue.

The Vietnam War, a number of other things, when the American public truly understands what's going on on the streets of America, I think that you will change hearts and minds and see some folks get a little more courage up on the Hill to do something about this particular issue. Folks need to see it. It is painful, it will make you uncomfortable, believe me. Mayor Landrieu and I, and Mayor Linder who are here, we're uncomfortable every day. When you get that page, when you get that text message about what's going on on our streets, it's not a happy time.

Well, you can't always be happy in these jobs. Death and destruction is not a happy business, but it's taking place. The question is, what are we doing to change that outcome?

MS. GREILING KEANE: In your remarks, you singled out illegal guns as a root of the problem. Yet, right here in Washington last week, we saw gun violence with a legally purchased gun. Do you think that more needs to be done to restrict purchases of guns, even when they're done legally?

MAYOR LANDRIEU: Well, one of the things that the mayors have tried not to do is to get caught in this seemingly mind-numbing debate about gun control. Because as I've said, and we said in both parts of our speeches, it is not just about guns. It is a fact that there are millions of people in America that are law abiding gun owners that are not shooting people. As Mayor Nutter said, poverty is a part of it, but it's not just about poverty. There are a lot of people that are poor that are not shooting people.

Some people will say it's about joblessness, but there are a lot of people that are unemployed that are not shooting people. And it is a Molotov cocktail of a number of different things that have come together. And one of the challenges has been not to divert your attention onto issues that are not going to solve the immediate crisis that we have before us, which is to stop the shooting.

It seems to us, and this is where our brains go, I'll speak for myself, it goes to where is that common ground now on guns? And is there a place? I gave you one space where that is. That's where we ought to spend our time.

Mayor Nutter said just a minute ago, although we said we need more money from Congress, we're not laboring under the misimpression that somehow they're going to bestow money on us. So we know that we have to do it ourselves. We said it's a national problem. We didn't say it was just a federal problem. And those are different words that mean different things. And so there are many ways that we can work together on all of the issues. It's got to be coordinated, and it's got to be focused. It does have to talk about guns, but it's got to talk about mental health. It's got to talk about mental health, but it's got to talk about education. It has to talk about education, but it has to talk about the relationship that people have to their communities with churches and pastors.

The point is that when everybody pulls together and says it is a problem we have to solve, there are tons of resources out there already, that if pulled together and focused can, I believe, make measurable impact.

MS. GREILING KEANE: This questioner says the current Congress seems to treat poverty as a crime. How can you work against that attitude?

MAYOR NUTTER: Poverty as a--?

MS. GREILING KEANE: A crime.

MAYOR NUTTER: Well, I mean, that's ignorant. (Laughter) If you talk to anyone of lesser means, I can assure you that they are not enjoying their status in life. We had a job expo for folks who have a previous criminal record. I don't use the term ex-offender, they're returning citizens. Thirty-two hundred folks pre-registered, 2,500 plus actually showed up. Folks who are living in poverty don't want to be in poverty, they want the same thing everybody in this room wants. They want a good job, they want the kids to be safe, go to a good school and move up to get some version of the American dream.

And so, you know, I don't understand a great deal about Washington, D. C. or some of the things that go on in the Congress, but cutting the-- the Republican budget to cut the CDBG program by 50 percent seems not to make sense since it's less jobs, fewer opportunities, fewer housing for folks who need it. So, I mean, there is a mean spiritedness, some kind of philosophy, that castigates those who might be of lesser means and says, "Well, it's your fault and you should stay there." I don't think that's the America that we have grown up with, an America that started 200 and 30 some odd years ago in my great city. I thought we looked after folks. We look after everybody around the world, but kids go to sleep hungry in Philadelphia, in New Orleans, in New York.

But if something horrific happened on the other side of the world, I can assure you that within 24 to 48 hours, you will see a C117 cargo plane with parachutes of food going right out the back of the plane. And that should happen. My question is where was that food yesterday? And why wasn't it in my city and many other cities across the United States of America? We have some contradictions here that we need to deal with. We cannot just take care of the rest of the world and not take care of ourselves. It is the epitome of the doctor whose kids are sick, it is the shoemaker whose kids have holes in their shoes.

We're actually big enough and bad enough as a country that we can do both. We can do great things around the world, but we need to take care of our own people at the same time. (Applause)

MS. GREILING KEANE: This questioner says in two decades of Americans demanding that government leaders be "tough on crime," a disproportionate number of African American men have been incarcerated. What do you think the impact on violence

has been of that and should we change the approach? And if so, how?

MAYOR LANDRIEU: One of the things that America is beginning to come to communion on, when you see right-leaning think tanks and left-leaning think tanks talking about the incarceration rate, and the mandatory sentencing without much thought, is that we have to do two things. We always have to be tough on crime because safety on the streets of America is what allows people to be free.

But you have to be smart on crime, too. You can't just have a one size fits all approach, and I think very smart people who have been looking at this have said, "You know what? We may have missed our way on that as well. We may have, in fact, put people in jail who were not the most violent criminals and then didn't have the resources to find the most violent criminals." And we have to rethink all of that.

Much of this is being led by a movement, really, in juvenile justice. We did this in the state of Louisiana where after we did studies, we found out that two-thirds of the people that were in the juvenile facilities didn't need to be there, and the one-third that were were still on the street. That we could actually be much, much smarter in how we did it, creating continuums of care, reduce the amount of money for incarceration, have recidivism practices in place to help kids stay where they need to stay.

And that same thing can be applied to the adult population. But, let's be clear about this, and Mayor Nutter speaks to this much more forcefully than I do, is that we have to understand that there can be no toleration for the kinds of shootings on the streets of our cities and that we know in New Orleans, for example, that at least 5 percent of our population, 691 young men belonging in 38 gangs are causing trouble for themselves and everybody else. And we're not soft on them. They have to stop.

We actually have something called the Gang Violence Reduction Strategy where we bring them in and we tell them, "We know who you are." And just to prove it to them, we show them their picture and we tell them they know everybody around. And the next one of them that shoots will be visited by the multi-agency gang unit that is made up of DEA, ATF, FBI, NOPD and everybody else. You got to stop. And if you shoot somebody, as the mayor said, you got to go.

Now, that's today. But as the drumbeat of death continues, as the tidal wave moves on, we have young children being born into the same culture of violence. So again, this is not just a public safety issue, this is a public health issue. It is very much like a virus. And as I enunciated to you in my prepared remarks, from 1980 to 2011, 626,000 people, we didn't have that before that time. This is kind of a new historical trend that did not always exist. And if it didn't always exist, it means it doesn't have to always. And that we can change it, but not if we don't recognize it as a problem. And not if we don't all do everything we can to fix it.

MS. GREILING KEANE: We are almost out of time, but before wrapping up, I've got a couple of housekeeping matters to take care of. First of all, I'd like to remind

you about our upcoming speakers. On September 30th, we will have U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan talking about this year's education priorities. On October 18th, we will have George Takei, actor and gay rights activist, who will discuss LGBT issues. And on November 5th, we will have Goldie Hawn, actress and founder of the Hawn Foundation.

Secondly, I would like to present our speakers today with the traditional National Press Club coffee mug.

MAYOR LANDRIEU: That's what I came for.

MAYOR NUTTER: Yes, absolutely. Oh, my goodness. I've been waiting all my life for one of these.

MS. GREILING KEANE: Oh, good. (Laughter) Especially suitable with cafe and beignets in New Orleans. Well, thank you both for coming. I would like to ask for a round of applause for our speakers. (Applause) Thank you, guys.

I'd also like to thank our National Press Club staff including the Journalism Institute and the Broadcast Center staff for helping organize today's event. And here's a reminder; you can find more information about the Press Club online at www.press.org. Thank you, we are adjourned.

END