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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON CNN'S NEW DAY**

**Alisyn Camerota:** Joining us now to talk about this tragedy and more is New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio. Mr. Mayor, thanks so much for being here.

I know you were there last night. This is the worst fire tragedy in 25 years in New York City – 12 people dead. So what happened? What went wrong here?

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Well, Alisyn, we need to know that, and our Fire Department is looking into that right now. I hope to have more information in the course of the day. But here's what we know – we've lost 12 people, we could lose more. There are some still fighting for their lives. It's a horrible tragedy in the middle of the holidays when people are trying to be with their families and finally have a moment of peace. To have something like this happen to folks in the Bronx is just – just horrible. Our first responders did an amazing job. They saved at least 12 lives.

**Camerota:** They were there within three minutes, I read.

**Mayor:** They were there right away, and they did – and remember with the freezing cold tough conditions for our firefighters and our emergency personnel, but they did a great, great job.

**Camerota:** When you hear Scott say that there were these violations – there was a faulty smoke detector, there was a fault carbon monoxide detector – whose fault is that? Who's responsible for those things?

**Mayor:** Well, the building owner, the building management is supposed to make sure that all those basic safety precautions are in place. Now this is an older building, I believe it's over 100 years old, but still they are liable to make sure that the basic safety elements are in place. But we should not speculate yet – we have the best Fire Department in the world, they are very expert at investigating to figure out what the cause of a fire is. We need to give them a little time to work through this.

**Camerota:** Okay let's talk about what's going to happen on New Year's Eve. Obviously people come from all over the world to be here in Times Square for New Year's Eve, does the cold complicate the security conditions for you?

**Mayor:** Well it doesn't complicate the security – I think there is health ramifications in it. I want to say to anyone who wants to go out in Times Square, it's going to be a long day if you go out there and you get in line to be a part of that.

**Camerota:** Because you have to get into a pen hours early.

**Mayor:** Yes, that's right.

**Camerota:** And then you're not moving around in these frigid cold conditions.

**Mayor:** Exactly right, you're talking about hundreds of thousands of people do this. A lot of them are young and hardy – God bless them. But, you know, wear everything you got, wear long underwear, wear everything you got because it is going to be really, really cold out there. It's going to be a great celebration, very safe.

The NYPD has done an extraordinary job of protecting New Year's Eve. It's one of the biggest events in the world each year and we have tremendous precautions in place. But look, it's going to be a tough day because of the weather but you can at least know for sure – best police force in the world, a year's worth of preparations to get ready for this and it's going to make a huge difference.

And I got to tell you, one more thing about the NYPD. At the end of this year, based on the information we have right now – this will be the safest year in New York City in over a half century. Go back to the 1950's to find a time where New York City was this safe. The NYPD has done an extraordinary job.

**Camerota:** That is a huge story and I do want to get to it in a second – the plummeting crime rate here in New York City and I do want to know what is behind that but first one more thing on New Year's Eve. I heard that you're doing something new this year and you're emptying out 125 parking garages all around Times Square so that makes sense – it is sort of amazing that you've never done it before but is this a result of the two terror attacks that have happened recently in the city?

**Mayor:** Look, we constantly update our approach based on what we see happening here and around the world. And our enemies are using new approaches all the time. For an example, we don't allow any vehicles to cross parade routes or to cross the area of Times Square where the celebration is happening because we've seen tragedies elsewhere in the world and even here. NYPD is constantly updating the approach.

**Camerota:** And so what has changed? Since the terror attack where the suspect mowed down people on the bike path and the terror attack where he tried to blow himself up in the subway – what's changed?

**Mayor:** A lot more careful precautions to avoid exactly those kinds of situations so more of what we call the vapor weight dogs. These are the dogs that can sense if there is anybody with a bomb – you'll see a lot more presence there. You're going to see some of the precautions, you won't see others. There are going to be a lot more snipers out there watching the buildings in the surrounding areas. And obviously not allowing vehicles to go anywhere near where there is large concentrations of people.

Look, one thing we pride ourselves on in New York City is we will change out tactics all the time. We won't always tell you about all the changes because some of that has to be kept careful, kept quiet. But the fact is we are watching the whole world all the time. We have NYPD detectives literally all over the world getting the most up to date information on what's going on. The terrorists want to attack New York City because New York City is a beacon to the world. It's a place where people of all faiths and backgrounds get together and actually work together and create a relatively harmonious environment. That makes us the number one terror target in America. Our job is to be ready for anything that gets thrown at us.

**Camerota:** We have to talk about the crime rate. What a success story. Let me just put up some numbers. I mean for those of us who remember coming into New York in the 80's and the 90's – it is a different city. Look at this, what happened with the murder rate, in 1993 there were 1,668 murders in New York City. This past year, ends this weekend, just 284. How do you explain what's happened with the crime rate in New York?

**Mayor:** Amazing strategic work by the NYPD, an increasingly a partnership between the NYPD and the communities they serve. Look, for a long time the CompStat idea, originated by Bill Bratton who I was honored to name as my first police commissioner, that idea revolutionized policing in the city. It was strategic it was putting the cops where the problems were, going after the hardened criminals, focusing like a laser on the biggest problems.

We have taken that idea, built upon it year after year, NYPD gets better all the time, we are giving them more training more support, more technology. But on top of that, because of a neighborhood policing philosophy, now we have a relationship between police and community that is increasingly is a partnership so what's happening?

Community members are telling police, proactively, if they know someone has a gun, if they think there's going to be a problem between gangs, if they think there could be any kind of violence going on. This is giving the police the kind of intelligence, the kind of on the ground information they needed all along – now they have community partners more and more helping them get the job done. It's making a huge, huge difference.

**Camerota:** I mean it's just the model for, you know other cities around the world. Okay you're being sworn in for your second term –

**Mayor:** Yes.

**Camerota:** This weekend, congratulations.

**Mayor:** It's going to be chilly.

**Camerota:** Yes it is. Wear your hat. So why did you choose Senator Bernie Sanders to do this?

**Mayor:** I think Bernie Sanders has revolutionized the political discussion in this country. He has focused the entire country on the question of fairness and on addressing the income inequality crisis. And here we have against the backdrop of a tax bill that the republican leadership and President Trump passed in Washington that's literally a giveaway to the wealthy and corporations. Here in New York City we're going to have the number one voice in this country calling for a fairness and calling for a real break for working people. I'm honored to have him swear me in.

**Camerota:** Do you think Bernie Sanders is going to run for President again?

**Mayor:** Who knows, that's a long way away, but I'll tell you one thing. His campaign last time changed the entire debate in this country. You see all this energy on the ground now around the country, you see what happened in a state like Virginia or a state like Alabama, some of that really goes to the credit of Bernie Sanders for activating a whole new generation of people and getting them involved in the political process. That's going to have ramifications for years to come.

**Camerota:** Mayor Bill de Blasio thanks so much for being here.

**Mayor:** Thank you.

**Camerota:** Happy New Year.

**Mayor:** Happy New Year to you too.

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