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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 29, 2020, 9:30 AM

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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON CNN'S STATE OF THE
UNION WITH JAKE TAPPER**

Jake Tapper: The CDC is issuing new domestic travel restrictions for the New York region as New York City sets up makeshift morgues for the first time in that city since 9/11. Joining me now is the Mayor of New York City, Bill de Blasio. Mayor de Blasio, thanks for joining us. The CDC now telling residents of New York to refrain from nonessential domestic travel for 14 days effective immediately. What's your reaction?

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Jake, actually I don't think it's the most central question before us right now because I'm just entirely focused on making sure we have what we need to save lives in New York City. The only comment I'd have on it is we've got to be mindful of families that at this crucial moment want to reunite. Whether that means families coming back to New York or leaving New York to go to another place where they're based. We got to be really respectful of, in the middle of a crisis, families have a right to be together and this is going to be a long crisis, Jake. I think this whole discussion of, you know, how quickly we can restart is missing just how deep a crisis this is not only in New York but it's going to spread around the country. We should get more girded for the sheer timeline here.

But other than that concern, you know, a travel advisory isn't something I'm going to fixate on. I want to know where we're going to get the ventilators and the PPEs and the doctors and the nurses to save lives here in New York, that would be lost otherwise. Because that's the standard to me. Are we going to be able to save every life we can or do we risk that possibility – and I'm saying in a week or two, do we risk that possibility of losing lives that could have been saved if the equipment and the supplies and the personnel were there when we needed them?

Tapper: So, let's talk about that because you have been calling for more ventilators, more ICU hospital beds, more masks, more PPE. Your 9-11 system in New York City is overwhelmed with almost twice as many calls as normal. What do you need from the federal government right now and when do you think you're going to run out of the capacity to care for any New Yorker who is sick?

Mayor: So, Jake, I've told the President, the Defense Secretary, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, all of them – and I want to say they've all been very available, very responsive – I've told them all the same thing. Sunday, April 5th – we have enough supplies to get to a week from today, with the exception of ventilators, we're going to need at least several hundred more ventilators very quickly. But we have, otherwise, the supplies to get to next Sunday. We are going to need a reinforcement by Sunday, April 5th in all categories, especially ventilators, but in

other areas as well, and personnel is becoming more and more of the issue. And I want to say the military has been very responsive on this. They have a lot of doctors and nurses. I've made a direct request to the president and to the military to find us immediately more military medical personnel and get them here by next Sunday, but also to start figuring out how to get civilian medical personnel from around the country here.

We're talking about a sharp escalation ahead. We've got almost 30,000 cases now, over 500 deaths already. We are over a quarter of the nation's cases here in New York City and I only can guarantee you the next week. That's how difficult, that's how challenging it is. And our frontline health care workers, Jake, are giving their all, they're in harm's way. And, you know, we need to get them relief. We need to get them support and protection, but also relief. They can't keep up at this pace for weeks and weeks and weeks ahead and expect to save lives the way we need them to.

Tapper: So, let's talk about the way that you've handled the response in New York City. I want you to take a listen to yourself and your message to New Yorkers – these are three different clips. One's from January, one's from February, and one's from early this month.

Mayor: It's important. Just go about your lives. Continue living as you have.

New Yorkers should go about our lives. Continue doing what we do.

This should not stop you from going about your life. Should not stop you from going to Chinatown and going out to eat.

We want people still to go on about their lives. We want people to rest assured that a lot is being done to protect them.

Tapper: That last clip was from March 13th, just about two weeks ago. In retrospect is that message, at least in part, to blame for how rapidly the virus has spread across the city?

Mayor: You know, Jake, we should not be focusing, in my view, on anything looking back on any level of government right now. This is just about how we save lives going forward. We all were working, everybody was working with the information we had and trying of course to avoid panic and at that point for all of us trying to keep, not only protect lives but keep the economy and the livelihoods together, keep ensuring that people had money to pay for food and medicine. I mean this was a very different world just a short time ago. But the bottom line is, none of us have time to look backwards. I'm trying to figure out how we get through to Sunday, next Sunday, and then what we do the week after that. And that's the only thing we should be talking about in this country. And by the way, any other place in this country that thinks this is just going to pass them by and it's going to be a nonissue – it's in all 50 states now.

And what we're all learning at the front line is this moves very, very fast in a way none of us have ever experienced in our lives. So, the focus has to be on getting the personnel, the ventilators, the supplies, where they need to be, and then when each region of the country starts to see that improvement the way Dr. Fauci just described to you. When you actually see the case-

loads go down and you actually have the testing to know what's going on, then send those personnel, send those ventilators to the next place that needs it most. That's what we're going to have to do. And I think the military is the only part of our nation that can actually organize and engineer such a massive effort.

Tapper: So, Mr. Mayor, you say you don't think you should look backwards, but you've criticized President Trump for “actions that are far, far behind the curve”. I mean, Mr. Mayor, weren't your actions in this outbreak also far, far behind the curve?

Mayor: Jake, I, in real time, said – and this was weeks and weeks ago as it was happening, that we were not being given the testing we needed. I think the big historical point here that will be looked back on is, if this country had had the testing when we needed it, this could have been a very different reality. But there's no time to go back over that. There's only time to focus on getting through the next week and the week after that. I mean, you could ask all the questions you want, they're fair. But I think the time to deal with these questions is after this war is over, because literally here in New York City, it feels like a war-time environment. I am talking to doctors, nurses, front line public health leaders, they're literally trying to figure out what's going to happen just days from now and they're watching an escalation, Jake, that we've never seen in our lives. The only comparison is to a hundred years ago, the Spanish influenza pandemic. The only comparison in terms of our economy in our lives is to the Great Depression. None of us have ever experienced this. We've got to focus on today, tomorrow, next week if we're going to get through this.

Tapper: Mayor de Blasio, thank you so much. Good luck dealing with the crisis. Our thoughts and prayers are with all of our brothers and sisters in New York City.

Mayor: Thank you very much, Jake.

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