



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO, COMMISSIONER O'NEILL, GOVERNOR  
CUOMO HOLD MEDIA AVAILABILITY**

**Police Commissioner James P. O'Neill:** Good afternoon, everyone. I want to acknowledge besides the Mayor and the Governor, our partners from the FBI, of course the FDNY, OEM Commissioner Esposito, the State Police, and Secret Service.

Today, the NYPD and all of our law enforcement partners responded to reports of a suspicious package at CNN. Our intel, Emergency Services, and Patrol Borough Manhattan South responded immediately, secured the area, and began a search of the building.

Responding officers identified a device that appeared to be a live explosive device. NYPD Bomb Squad responded, secured the device, and removed it for investigation. Additionally there was an envelope containing white powder that was discovered as part of that original packaging. And we're in the middle of investigating that right now.

The area has been swept with dogs and equipment and found no additional threats besides the white powder. And in working with our law enforcement partners, we responded swiftly to secure the scene.

NYPD is currently deploying resources around the city out of an abundance of caution. If anyone sees something that looks suspicious, please call 9-1-1. Anyone with information about this incident today, about incidents in the New York area, please call 1-888-NYC-SAFE. We've seen this before and we've seen worse, and we will not be intimidated, and we will bring these perpetrators to justice. Mr. Mayor –

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Thank you very much, Commissioner. What we saw here today was an effort to terrorize. This clearly is an act of terror attempting to undermine our free press and leaders of this country through acts of violence. I want to make very clear that the people of New York City will not be intimidated, that we're going to go about our lives undeterred because the very concept of terrorism is to change us and we will not allow that to happen. You cannot be terrorized if you refuse to allow the terrorists to win.

People of the city have shown time and again that they stand up in the face of these efforts to intimidate and I want to thank the people of New York City for the way they're handling this situation today. I also want to thank our first responders – Commissioner, to you and all of the men and women of the NYPD, thank you for your extraordinary efforts today; to FDNY; Office of Emergency Management; our State partners, our federal partners. Everyone worked swiftly to address this situation and contain it. I also want to commend everyone at CNN for the professionalism with which they handled this very troubling incident.

We at this time do not have other credible and specific threats against locations in New York City. I want to let all New Yorkers know, you can go about your daily routine knowing the NYPD and all these other agencies are here to protect you. It's important to note that this is an ongoing investigation. As we have more information we will provide it. But I emphasize, there is not specific threat against any other location in this city at this time. That said, the NYPD and all of our partners have reinforced our very clear visible presence at key media locations around New York City and other important locations. So, you will see a lot more police presence – that should be reassuring to all New Yorkers.

Finally, I want to say, this is a very painful time in our nation. And it's a time where people are feeling a lot of hatred in the air and incidents like this exacerbate that pain and exacerbate that fear. We cannot let the acts of a very few change who we are. It's really important in a moment like this to remember, the vast majority of Americans, the vast majority of New Yorkers are good people trying to live in peace with each other. There are a few people – and we don't know who they are today, but there are a few people trying to tear us apart through acts of violence.

It is imperative that we ensure they fail. It is imperative that we act as the good and decent people that we are. This is a moment in history that is painful but it will pass. This too shall pass. But today the important point is, everyone can rest assured the NYPD and all other agencies are out in force to protect the people of this city and to make sure that they can go about their lives safely.

Thank you. Governor Cuomo?

**Governor Andrew Cuomo:** Thank you. Thank you, Mayor. Thank you, Commissioner. First, let's remember that we have the best police force and the best law enforcement agencies on the globe. And we want to thank the NYPD and the State Police and the FBI and the Joint Terrorism Task Force, the Secret Service, all who have worked seamlessly together and are coordinated.

And we should take comfort in that level of professionalism that we have in this city and in this state. As everyone is aware there have been a number of packages that have been received. Last night there was – the Secret Service detected a package at the residence of President Clinton and Hillary Rodham Clinton. They notified the State Police and the NYPD.

We personally checked on the President's residence in Chappaqua at about 4:30 am this morning and everything was fine there. This morning obviously we have the CNN package and I want to echo the professionalism with which CNN has handled the situation and the cooperation that they have brought to the situation. So I would like to thank them for that.

This is the world we live in. Terrorism – the attempt to spread fear, is the world that we live in. It is heightened lately. The Mayor is exactly right. There are more tensions than usual. But this is the world we live in. Also a little perspective – the first terrorist attack in New York City was 1993, 25 years ago was the bombing of the World Trade Center.

So, in some ways this is nothing new. We have lived with this for a long time. Actually my father was Governor at that time. This has been a circumstance of being who we are and where we are. We are New York and we are an international icon and for some we are an international target.

Terrorism only works if you let it work. What they are trying to do is scare us and destabilize us and we will not allow that to happen. We are New Yorkers. We are smart. We are tough. We are resilient and we will not allow these terrorist thugs to change the way we live our lives.

They fail unless we allow them to win and we will not allow them to win. Now, as the Commissioner said, you will see an increased police presence from the NYPD, from the State Police, from the MTA police, from the Port Authority police.

You shouldn't be alarmed. There will be more police on subways, more police on streets, more police at crossings. As the Mayor said, that's not because we know any specific threat, it is just a precaution because we are smart and because we have the best talent on the globe when it comes to this.

So, we will take every precaution we can. But we will not let terrorism win – not today, not ever.

**Deputy Commissioner of Intelligence and Counterterrorism John Miller, NYPD:** Good afternoon. I have with me Special Agent in Charge Bryan Paarmann, that's P-A-A-R-M-A-N-N, who is Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force here in New York City. As the Governor outlined this begins on Monday night with a package that was delivered to a residence in Westchester County. That was responded to by the Westchester County Police, the Bedford Police, and FBI Special Agent Bomb Technicians. That package was disrupted and taken to the FBI lab. Overnight – late last night we received word of the package that was delivered to the Clinton residence but was intercepted before delivery to the Clinton residence in Chappaqua, New York. That is also going to the FBI lab.

After that we were notified by the Secret Service that they had received a nearly identical package in Washington addressed to the Obamas. At that point we began to take additional proactive steps. We had gone to locations the day before associated with the first individual who was targeted. Today we went out to offices of elected officials, media outlets, television, and in fact when the package was discovered here in the CNN mailroom we had NYPD personnel present. We were showing them what these look like and what to be on the lookout for. So at this point we are talking with other FBI field offices, the JTTF, about other incidents that are unfolding in other places. But suffice it to say it appears that an individual, or individuals, sent out multiple similar packages. We have been working with corporate partners and the private sector. We have prepared a product through the NYPD's Shield program which goes to

approximately 20,000 of our private security partners instructing them on what to look for, what the characteristics are, and renewed tips on handling of suspicious packages.

At this point we're at a very early stage in the investigation. This is being led by the Joint Terrorism Task Force here in New York City with the FBI and the NYPD. We've had assistance from the New York State Police who are part of that task force and assistance from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearm. So, it's a big group effort.

The incident here today, once the package was discovered, Emergency Services was notified, they called the bomb squad. The bomb squad was able to safely remove a device contained in that package using the Total Containment Vessel, the TCV, or in simple terms the bomb truck. That has gone to our range at Rodman's Neck where FBI Special Agent Bomb Technicians will work with our people on how to get it to the next stop which should be the FBI lab so all of this evidence can be examined together.

There is an additional issue which is being worked on now, which is within the package that contained the suspected device, is also some kind of powder that's being tested now downstairs. So the mailroom area is still being contained while we go through the various steps to test that on a field test, package it up safely for removal and de-con that area and anybody who came in to contact with it.

**Commissioner O'Neill:** We are going to take – just keep in mind that this just happened couple of hours ago, it's still ongoing. So I'm going to take some questions but we are not going to be able to go too deep into it. Yes?

**Question:** Can you talk about how concerned you are about the seeming political connection between these targets? People who have been criticized by the President?

**Commissioner O'Neill:** Well take a look at who is being targeted here right now. And that's why we are doing this proactively, we are reaching out to people throughout the city, checking with the people who do their security and making sure that their mailrooms follow proper protocol. So it is of concern to us and that's how come we are reaching out to the right people. Yes, hold on.

**Question:** To the Mayor and Governor, earlier this week the President commended a now sitting congressman for assaulting a journalist, and all sorts of threats to journalists [inaudible]. Do you have particular message to President Trump, in light of what happened at CNN and to critics like John Brennan?

**Mayor:** Look, I'm just going to say something broad because at a time where there is a lot of hatred and division, it does not make sense to exacerbate it. Let's just say this to all public officials of all partisan affiliations – don't encourage violence, don't encourage hatred, don't encourage attacks on media. You can disagree but you have to show respect for people and air your disagreements peacefully. So unfortunately this atmosphere of hatred is contributing to the choices people are making to turn to violence. There's no question about it. And the way to stop

that is to turn back the other way, to bring down the temperature, to end any messages about the use of violence against people we disagree with. And that has to start at the top.

**Governor Cuomo:** Look, this is a political year, it's a political season. We are weeks from an election. And that's obviously in the air and that's an obvious fact. But we have been through many political seasons and we have political differences. And that's actually good for democracy. What is not good is over heated rhetoric, extremism that pushes people to violence. And at the end of the day we may have political differences but this is one country, we are all Americans, *e pluribus unum*, out of many one. And keeping the debate and the dialogue civil is very, very important and for elected leaders who in many ways set the tone, it is especially important.

**Commissioner O'Neill:** Hold on, hold on, hold on. Right there.

**Question:** Can you describe what the device looks like that was found?

**Commissioner O'Neill:** John?

**Deputy Commissioner Miller:** Sure, Bryan Paarmann from FBI, JTTF – so far the devices have been what appeared to be pipe bombs.

**Special Agent in Charge Bryan Paarmann, FBI :** If I could I would like to make a statement. I know that a lot of the public right now is scared and concerned and there was a lot of confusion surrounding this. I want to assure you that the reason we are here because the totality of the federal, state, and local authorities will investigate this thoroughly and follow every lead and every – we will turn over every rock, we will turn every corner and we will talk to everybody that we have to in order to mitigate this threat. The mission of the New York Joint Terrorism Task Force is to protect the American people and uphold the constitution. The utilization of violence in order to further one's own political agenda is unacceptable to us and we will not rest until we find this, stop these hazardous devices from being mailed, and bring the individual or individuals to justice. We have no better partners than the NYPD, the New York State Police, and the entirety of the Joint Terrorism Task Force. We will be on this until the day that we find this individual and bring him to justice. I'd like to thank NYPD and our partners on the task force, as well as the United States Secret Service, as well as the US Capitol Police, as well as the Westchester County authorities for the cooperation and collaboration that we have thus far. It – with that I'll turn it back over for questions.

**Question:** [Inaudible]

**Mayor:** Hold on a second.

**Governor Cuomo:** The – as you've heard, there is a number of devices, and there's a pattern apparently to the number of devices. We wouldn't be at all surprised if more devices show up. A device has been sent to my office in Manhattan which we were just informed about and that device is also being handled. So again this is a situation, a number of devices have been sent,

they are being handled. We wouldn't be surprised if additional devices are sent and the device that has been sent to my office has been identified and is being handled as we speak.

**Question:** Governor, is the device [individuals] the other ones, are they related?—Terrorism related? [Inaudible]

**Governor Cuomo:** Terrorism, related, right? Terrorism is an attempt to strike terror, and attempt to strike fear. Obviously these devices are an attempt to strike fear, hence, terrorism. Are they domestic, are they international? These are all questions that would have to be handled by the investigation but yes it was a terrorist attempt, it was a terrorist attack. And as you said, what's the intent? To strike fear, and when they strike fear, they win. That's when they are effective. Who controls that? We control that. We control that. This is not the first time we have been through this. We have been through this many, many times. Literally, as I mentioned before, it goes back 25 years to the first World Trade Center bombing. This is New York – it is part of who we are, and part of our profile. So we refuse to be intimidated. We refuse to allow them to make us afraid of going through our daily lives. We have the best law enforcement agencies, we're all working together, we're all here, and we're going to go about our daily lives enjoying this beautiful city and state and we're not going to let them win, period. Kate, you had a question—

**Commissioner O'Neill:** Okay, two more questions guys.

**Question:** Commissioner was anything written on the packages? What was [inaudible]—

**Commissioner O'Neill:** Yeah, [inaudible] I'm not going to go in to what exactly was on the package, okay. It was consistent with the other packaging though. Listen, we have to go back to work so we're going to give you updates throughout the day. We just want to remind everybody here and all New Yorkers; any tips, any leads, call 911 or 1-888-NYC-SAFE. Thank you very much everybody, thank you, thank you.

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