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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** November 20, 2015

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**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON WOR 710 AM**

**Len Berman:** Okay, can I time-out here? Because we have an honored guest that's joining us right now. We've been on the air for ten months, and it's our pleasure to welcome the mayor of New York City, Bill de Blasio, to Len Berman and Todd Schnitt in the morning here on WOR. Welcome, Mayor.

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** It's my pleasure to be here.

**Todd Schnitt:** Great to have you on. And, listen, thanks for the time – we appreciate it. And also, for our listeners, if you would like to ask the mayor a question, we're going to primarily focus on city security, and, you know, just all of the issues internationally with terrorism. If you want to ask the mayor a question, the number is 800-321-0710 – 800-321-0710. Mr. Mayor, I am Todd Schnitt, and Len Berman you probably know.

**Berman:** Mayor, this is Len here. I think just the question we all want to know – Todd and I are both native New Yorkers – and, you know, how safe are we?

**Mayor:** We're safe because we have the – the finest police force in the country, because we have our own intelligence-gathering capacity. Remember, NYPD realized after 9/11 that we had to protect ourselves. So not only did we develop a very strong anti-terrorism capacity, we also developed officers around the world to gather intelligence, be ahead of what's going on. That is why for 14 years every terrorist threat has been thwarted – every attack directed at New York City has been thwarted. Now, what's added – we have a closer working relationship with the FBI and the other federal partners than ever before, thanks to Commissioner Bratton. And we just added, as part of the budget last June, we had a 500-plus member counterterrorism force called the Critical Response Command – 500-plus NYPD officers specially trained, specially armed. This is what they do all day long – this is a full-time job. And it means not only do we have more capacity to prevent terror, God forbid there ever was a lone wolf attack or anything like that, we have the ability to respond not only in one location, in multiple locations very quickly with a heavily-armed. So there's a lot of reasons for people to feel secure. And one other point – the terrorists want you to feel insecure – that's the whole name of their game. It's psychological warfare, and I keep telling people New Yorkers will not be intimidated by terrorists. We're going to go about our lives. We're going to show that our way of life works. And we're not going to let them back us down.

**Schnitt:** On the phone with Mayor de Blasio, city of New York, with Len Berman and Todd Schnitt in the morning. You look at Paris, though, Mr. Mayor, and the fact that there was no intel on Paris – does it keep you up at night, that type of attack on soft targets where you have no intel, because you can't stop everything?

**Mayor:** Well, a couple different points – first of all, I think we have an exceptional intelligence-gathering capacity here. The French intelligence services are very strong, but I think between what the U.S. has and what the city of New York has, we are the best-protected city certainly in the country, and one of the best protected in the world. The second point is we have the ability to respond very, very quickly – again, with exceptional capacity, God forbid anything were to happen. So of course it worries me, but I think the more productive thing to do is to keep building up our capacity, also deepening our connection to people who can give us information. Now that means, you know, a much stronger relationship with all the communities of the city, making sure that if anyone has information, they're sharing it with the NYPD. I keep saying, something every resident can do, if you see something, say something. It really means what it implies. Tell an officer, call 9-1-1 if you see anything that you think is suspicious or dangerous, or you have information about someone who might be up to no good. So of course it worries me, but I have a lot of faith in the capacity we have. Now, I'll tell you what gets me angry – on top of, you know, the barbaric acts of these terrorists – is that there are companies that, unfortunately, in the name of their own profit-making, have created these encrypted systems that are, in effect, helping the terrorists to do their work.

**Schnitt:** So you're talking about the communications and the applications where you can encrypt your messages?

**Mayor:** Exactly right. Look, in the end, we all, as Americans, believe in our constitutional rights and our civil liberties. But we also know law enforcement has to have the information about people who are plotting violence. That's a bottom-line reality. Now, for the first time, because of some of the social media companies and tech companies, we see encryption systems that are literally unreachable by law enforcement. These companies have to be held accountable. They have to either change those systems so law enforcement can access the information when they need or come up with a counter-system that can overcome whatever encryption they've put in place. But you cannot have terrorists communicating freely and law enforcement being unable to monitor it.

**Berman:** Mr. Mayor, you brought up the phrase a couple of moments ago, which was on my mind, the lone wolf, and that's what really terrifies me. How concerned are you about lone wolves here in the five boroughs? And, you know, I don't know what you can divulge, but are they under surveillance, the ones you know about?

**Mayor:** Well, I'm certainly not going to divulge the things that I hear in my regular security briefings. I can say, again, a very robust, very, very robust intelligence-gathering capacity. I believe that if there's anybody thinking of doing the wrong thing, there's a very good chance that we know about them. But we also know that the lone wolf phenomenon, remember, it's not isolated just to ISIS. Unfortunately, a very different reality we've seen – the campus massacres,

for example, which are horrific, where some individual decides, in that case usually for a mental-health problem reason, that they're going to go and get a gun and do something. Well, what the attempts by ISIS are is to tell people out in different communities, you know, go get a gun, get a knife, and do something. We know we may not know about every one of those people. We feel very confident if there's something systematic being planned that we will know about it and act on it. But if there's some individual out there, then the question is how quickly can we respond to protect people – and again, the capacity we've built up now means an extraordinarily fast and vigorous response. So it worries me. It should worry all of us. But it should not stop us. It should not stop us, because, again, if we start changing our habits, not only are we giving in to things that are random that we can't predict, and therefore we should not change our lives for that reason, but if we change our habits, if we change the nature of our democracy, if we stop being New Yorkers and Americans, we're letting the terrorists win. It's as simple as that. They want to change us. We should not allow them to change us.

**Schnitt:** Mayor de Blasio's on the phone with us here on 710 WOR. It's Len Berman and Todd Schnitt in the morning. I saw a report last night, Mayor, that there are dozens under surveillance in the U.S. by the FBI – they're keeping a tight lid on them. Also, we know that there are federal terrorism investigations in all 50 states. Can you tell us, give us an idea how many active terror investigations are ongoing right now here in New York City?

**Mayor:** No, that would not be appropriate to talk about, but I can certainly say that there's a very vigorous effort at all times, and, again, more coordinated than ever with our federal partners, to track any potential terrorism in this country. And you've seen over and over again, people being arrested before they could do anything, or people attempting to actualize a plot when the authorities already know about it and are right there to sweep them up. So I think the facts speak for themselves – the track record in this country has been extraordinary, especially in New York City since 9/11. And that's why people have to have some confidence in law enforcement. I have tremendous confidence in what the NYPD is capable of. Remember, we have 35,000 members of the NYPD and growing, because we're adding officers over the next year. I think people should realize that is a – an extraordinary force for one city to have, and they should have confidence in the NYPD. But again, you know, the productive thing to do is if you have information, share it. If you're worried, don't let the worries change who you are, don't let it change who we are, because, again, look at that video the other day. That video that ISIS put out with rehashed footage wasn't anything new – there was no credible and specific threat. And it's very important for your listeners to hear that – no credible and specific threat. All it's meant to do is to create fear. I think Bill Bratton put it very, very simply. He said don't be afraid, be aware.

**Schnitt:** Well, I've got to be honest, there was an image of T.G.I. Friday's in that video, and it made me want to rush out and get some mozzarella sticks.

**Mayor:** [laughs] You see – you're –

**Berman:** There you go.

**Mayor:** That's how you respond the terrorists. Good for you.

**Berman:** Mr. Mayor, speaking of your police commissioner, Bill Bratton, yesterday he vigorously defended the shutting down of mosque surveillance, saying the program didn't develop any great leads. Then you had Donald Trump saying yesterday shutting down the program was, quote, "a terrible mistake." Your thoughts on that?

**Mayor:** Oh my God, that is the easiest question I'm going to get all year. Who are you going to trust on security and keeping people safe? Bill Bratton or Donald Trump – Donald Trump, who's a blowhard, who is saying things that, bluntly, play right into ISIS' hands? ISIS wants to portray to 1.6 billion Muslims around the world that the west hates them, that America hates them, and wants to take over their land. And then Donald Trump says let's shutdown mosques – in a free nation, the United States of America, that respects all religions. It's part of our founding documents – we respect all religions. Donald Trump, leading candidate for president, says let's shut down mosques. It's like ISIS propaganda that they couldn't even buy themselves. So when you think about the comparison – Bill Bratton, the man who's done more to fight crime and to keep people safe than any police leader in America over these last decades, saying the way we're going about protecting people now is superior to a surveillance program that not only didn't achieve much, it was alienating the very people we wanted to give us information – peaceful, law-abiding members of our Muslim-American community, who are the vast, vast majority of that community. Think about that – we are alienating the very people who we need to be allies in the fight. That's why it didn't work.

**Schnitt:** Now, there's been a suggestion that Edward Snowden is partially to blame for the Paris attacks by tipping off terrorists to the surveillance methods used by intelligence. Do your intel folks agree? Have you discussed that?

**Mayor:** We – I have not heard that particular concern. I certainly think the more that experts and media talk about specific methods that, unfortunately, that can help the terrorists to learn. And I think we have to – again, we have to get back to these companies that are creating products that literally help – they don't mean to – I know they don't sit around saying how can we help terrorists? – but that's what ends up happening. Their encryption systems help the terrorists. So I think there's a lot we've got to realize. We are, in effect, in a war, and in a war, you know, loose lips sink ships. We've got to have more care in some of what gets reported about specific methods, and we've got to be very clear that our private sector companies cannot take actions that openly support terrorism, even if it's inadvertent. So, again, I don't know about that specific situation, but I know we've got a number of things we've got to fix if we really want to deny the terrorists the ability to communicate with each other and if we want to maximize our chance of detecting them.

**Berman:** Mayor de Blasio, you're having a great week for name-calling. You just called Donald Trump a blowhard on our show. Chris Christie you said is an embarrassment to this country over the refugee issue. You said that he's callous, heartless, and prejudiced – a lot of venom against your closest neighbor over there in New Jersey.

**Mayor:** Well, you know, I want to say – I don't enjoy having to say it, but let's be clear – and I'm going to make a very painful analogy here – the very same talk that Chris Christie is peddling – he literally said if there's children escaping from one of the greatest humanitarian

crises of our time in Syria that we should not take them in. And so that's not about fighting terror. The children are not terrorists. And remember that painful picture that was on the front pages of the newspapers all over the world of the soldier holding the dead three-year-old Syrian boy had washed up ashore – the refugee boy. That's heartless of Chris Christie to say we should turn away children – again, plays right into our enemy's hands and suggests we don't care about Muslim people. And top of that, here's the painful analogy – in 1938, Fortune magazine did a public opinion survey of the American people. Two-thirds said we should not accept Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi persecution in Europe – 1938. If, in 1938, despite those whipping up negative public opinion about immigrants and about our Jewish community, we had taken in people fleeing Nazi persecution, there would be tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of people who would've survived the Holocaust. So let's be really clear – when we start being un-American, when we start violating our own values, not only do others suffer, it sends a horrible message to the world about who we are.

**Schnitt:** There's no doubt about it. But, also, I don't think we had the same issue with potential terrorists sneaking in, posing as Syrian refugees and trying to cause problems here in the United States. You know, we had the House, yesterday, pass the Refugee Bill 289137. 47 Democrats also joined the – with Republicans. What is wrong with a pause to try to make sure the vetting process is as good as it can get? Many will say that you can't vet these individuals because they don't have papers, they don't have a background but what – and we're also hearing that if – if the White House is telling us they're vetting properly, that – that it's a lie.

**Mayor:** Well, I don't – I don't appreciate – when we're talking about our law enforcement capacity and our intelligence-gathering capacity, I don't appreciate when those who oppose the President then want to undermine our faith in all the things that law enforcement and the intelligence community does. Clearly there've been very, very few refugees let in. This is a crisis that's been going on for years – the grand total who have arrived in New York City is four individuals from Syria over the last few years. So this has been a very painstaking process obviously. I agree – if we don't know who someone is and we cannot confirm who they are, we should be very careful. And there's probably a number of cases where, unfortunately, we would have to say no. But do we think children pose a terrorist threat? No. With people we can confirm of their identities and their background, I think we have to try and help them if we can. So, when you – when you break it down, the question is do we believe there's a way to vet some people properly? I think the evidence says yes – those people we should try and help. People we cannot confirm that we feel comfortable with, that's a different [inaudible]. But – but why – why – think about this for a moment – why this rush in the middle of a humanitarian crisis, which we've rarely seen – millions of people displaced – why do we want America to suddenly close its door and send that message to the world?

**Schnitt:** I think part of the issue is, is that we're hearing that one of the Paris terrorists actually snuck in under the guise of being a Syrian refugee.

**Mayor:** Through a very porous system. Let's face it, we know what's happened [inaudible]. In Europe, there's very poor screening, very inconsistent screening between countries and the – and we heard after the fact, even the mastermind of the attack there was information on in one European country and not in another. In the United States, we can safely say, with our

intelligence community, FBI, and local law enforcement, there's a hell of a lot more sharing of information right now – thank God. There was not enough in the past – now there is. So, I – I want to be very clear, we have not had that situation occur so far. We've had only a trickle of refugees come through because it is a one- or two-year screening process. And I would be very comfortable with saying, if we're not sure about someone, fine, we can not allow that person in. But there's going to be people we can confirm that they're safe to let in. There's obviously a huge number of children who, I'm sorry, are just not terrorists and who are suffering a humanitarian crisis. So, fair ground rules, but I have confidence that the federal government knows how to do that.

**Berman:** We're on the phone with Mayor de Blasio. We're thrilled he joined us this morning with Len Berman and Todd Schnitt in the Morning. Before we go right to your phone calls, you old buddy Joe Bartlett wants to say hello.

**Joe Bartlett:** Mr. Mayor, how are you?

**Mayor:** It's good to hear you, Joe – how've you been?

**Bartlett:** Good. It's nice to hear you back on WOR. And I want to ask you if you're still enjoying the job, because I remember when you were running, you said if it didn't work out, you and I were going to do a radio show together.

[Laughter]

**Mayor:** Joe – Joe, I'm looking forward – in six years.

[Laughter]

[inaudible] negotiations then, and I think, Joe, I just want to say, not only is it going to be a lot of fun because you're great guy to hang out with, but I think it's going to be, you know, very lucrative. I think when you and I go on the airwaves, you know –

**Berman:** Are you going to bump Todd and me off the air? Come on, Mayor.

[Laughter]

**Mayor:** No, we're not going to compete with you.

**Schnitt:** Well, also, the problem is – is apparently you changed your cell number. You didn't give Joe Bartlett your new cell number as well, so –

**Mayor:** Joe Bartlett is always – always welcome on my cell phone.

**Bartlett:** Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

**Schnitt:** Okay, let's grab a couple of phone calls here, it's Len Berman and Todd Schnitt in the Morning, here on 710WOR. Joe is in the Bronx. Joe, you're with Len and Todd, and Mayor de Blasio.

**Joe, Bronx:** Hey, how you doing, guys? Mayor de Blasio, I wanted to ask you, what kind of safeguards do you have in place to protect the subway system? And do you have anything in place to protect a train from being hijacked and possible chemical weapons usage in the subway system? And how rapid would the response time be in those cases?

**Mayor:** I'll – I'll try and get all that in. Thanks for the question, Joe. The response time exceedingly rapid, because, you know, as I said, 35,000 police officers, several thousand of whom are either in our Emergency Services Unit or our Strategic Response Group or our Critical Response Command. So between the different elements that are well-armed, heavily-trained and able to deploy very quickly, that's several thousand officers right there, which means response anywhere in the city literally within minutes. There's a lot of detection systems that we have, obviously a lot of surveillance cameras, a lot of preventative measures, and that's a lot of what you'll see from the Critical Response group – showing up in different places, different times, unexpectedly. You know we've been doing screening in the subways in the aftermath of the Paris attack – you're going to see officers checking bags. There's a lot of tools being used – some you see, some you don't see. And I think it's very clear – and again, we have 14 years of evidence to prove it – that terrorists understand there's the unexpected capacity of the NYPD is very great – that if they think the NYPD is not watching, they're watching, at any place, any time. Thank you.

**Schnitt:** You know the show of force in Times Square – I saw the Critical Response team, and there's been the show of force, but it's got to keep you up at night, just the possibility of the soft targets – that the terrorists are not going to go where the officers are – they're going to try to find places where they're not.

**Mayor:** Well, again, you're going to see officers in lots of different places. You're going to see – there are cameras in lots of different places. There are undercovers in lots of different places. There's a stream of intelligence we have that helps us know if there's something we have to prevent against. But let's be clear, in a city of 8.5 million people, we've got to be confident. We cannot say, okay, there's a restaurant, there's bars, there's bodegas all over the city. Are we going to put a police officer on each one? No, of course not. We need to believe that with 35,000 officers, highly-trained force that's very good at preventing terror and responding to anything, that we have the tools that we need. The other part is what the citizens can do – to share information with the police if they see anything suspicious.

**Berman:** Mayor, we'd love to take – you know, phone lines are jammed –

**Mayor:** Go ahead, go ahead.

**Berman:** We'd love to go back to – we have Rumi in Brooklyn – you're on the air with the mayor right now. Go for it.

**Rumi, Brooklyn:** Hi, Mayor. First of all, thanks for doing everything in your power to secure us and do your job the best you can. And my question is this – the last year or two, there’s a whole movement against the cops, which are putting themselves out on the front line. What are you doing to secure them and make them feel that they have your back and all the people that have real power, that they are backed up, so they can do their job the best, and as most confident and comfortable possible? Because we know that when they are not comfortable, and they have to watch their own back every two seconds, they can’t just deliver their job.

**Mayor:** Well, Rumi, I appreciate the question. Commissioner Bratton speaks powerfully to this point. People who choose to join the NYPD do it because they want to keep others safe and they believe in joining – they’re joining the finest police force in the country. They know how difficult the challenges of New York City are. But they do it willingly – the 500-plus officers who join our Critical Response Command to fight terror, they know they’re putting themselves in harm’s way. That’s a choice they make because they’re answering a call to duty. What do we do to back them up? We’re adding more anti-terror cops. We’re adding more cops overall – the 1,300 more cops that we had in the last budget, and then hundreds and hundreds more we’re getting through civilianization and other approaches. We’re providing the new vests. We’re providing better technology. We’re providing better training. We are investing in protecting our officers and helping them to do their jobs better. And I believe when you invest, it says a lot to people about how much we value their work and how much we want to keep them safe. A lot more tools are being given to the NYPD.

**Berman:** Hey, Mayor de Blasio, before you run – I know you have to leave us – I have a very serious issue here. I’m very upset with you. You and your predecessor are both Red Sox fans. Last time I looked, one of the New York teams made it to the World Series, not your team. When are you going to leave the dark side?

**Mayor:** You know, I want to be – I can’t give you a news flash here, I can’t give you breaking news, because it’s the team of my childhood, I’m sticking by them, and – but I’ve got to tell you something, once my team was out of it this year, it was very comfortable to support the Mets because this was a hell of a cool team, and a great team, and they came damn close, and I’m looking forward to next year for the New York Mets.

**Schnitt:** Alright, before you go, quickly, you’ve been on the job for a while now – what do you consider your greatest success so far and your greatest failure?

**Mayor:** Well, look, I think, success – I’m very, very proud of what we did with full-day pre-k for all – now well over 55,000 kids in full-day pre-k. And I could talk about some other things, but I’ll give you that one. In terms of things I’m not happy with, you know, I’m very clear, I’ve said it – I did not explain to people well enough what we were doing to address homelessness. I still think I have a lot more to do to explain what’s going on with this new reality of homelessness. And I’m proud we put forward a very big new program of supportive housing – \$2.6 billion the other day – but I didn’t get ahead of this to explain to people the problem and the measures we’re taking. And, bluntly, we’re going to have to do a lot more, because the reality of homelessness now is different than it was even just a few years ago.



**Berman:** Thanks, Mayor.

**Schnitt:** Well, let's – let's continue this – what do you say we establish a weekly time with you to do our show? What do you say we have you on once a week?

**Mayor:** I'm not going to make that particular commitment at this moment, although I appreciate your entrepreneurship. The only commitment I'm making – the only hard commitment I'm making is in six years being part of an extraordinarily popular call-in show with Joe Bartlett.

[Laughter]

**Berman:** Joe Bartlett and Bill de Blasio in the morning – yeah, Todd and Len are toast.

**Mayor:** Basically, yeah – every other morning, so just get off the air.

**Berman:** Thanks, Mayor.

**Schnitt:** Mayor de Blasio!

**Berman:** We really appreciate it. Thanks, Mayor.

**Schnitt:** Thank you.

**Mayor:** Alright, guys. Take care now.

**Schnitt:** There we go – maiden voyage –

**Berman:** Very cool. That was cool.

**Schnitt:** – Mayor de Blasio, here on 710 WOR.

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