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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON MSNBC'S MORNING JOE

Mika Brzezinski: With us now, just back from his trip to the U.S.-Mexico border, the Mayor of New York City, Democrat Bill de Blasio. What did you see and what are your reflections on where we are at right now?

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Well, you said it before, I saw something un-American. I saw our government taking kids from their parents and then not letting any of us know what's going on. And what's so interesting, when you go down there it is literally a remote location, a government facility, where no one is allowed access which should be eerie to Democrats, Republicans, independents alike that the media can't see, that elected officials are not allowed in.

But I will tell you on the silver-lining side of this, Mika, the outcry here which has been profoundly bipartisan – I was down there with a group of 20 mayors, Republicans and Democrats alike saying this is broken and we need a whole different approach obviously to immigration in this country.

I see some silver-lining here in that people are coming forward in moral outrage and wanting to see American values in how we approach immigration, and wanting to see American values in terms of how we approach these kids.

And also no one took the bait. It's very interesting. The President did the executive order with the big signature and I think he thought that would be the smokescreen and everyone would go away. No one took the bait. Everyone said rightfully this isn't over until all these kids are back with their parents.

Brzezinski: Even his wife didn't take the bait. Melania Trump flew to the border and she asked some questions. She wanted to know how children were doing, how they're going to be reunited with their families. Melania Trump wants to know how her husband is going to reunite these children with their families, and I hear that for some children it may not ever be possible that this could be extremely complicated. But since the First Lady herself is asking, are we getting any answers?

Mayor: No, of course. There's no plan. Look if the President wanted to acknowledge the error of his ways he should have put forward a plan at the very same time and say, in the next 30 days, next 60 days – whatever it is – we will reunite all these families, here's how. What is actually happening, Mika, and we're seeing it in New York City with the hundreds of kids who come here is we are working with the social service providers who are taking care of these kids to get these kids lawyers, to get the parents thousands of miles away lawyers so they can actually navigate the process of reuniting as a family. The federal government is not doing it. We all, in cities around the country down at the border, are trying to get these families back together. But they don't have any guarantees. They don't have any legal representation.

Brzezinski: And it's incredible, Jonathan Lemire, that the First Lady is asking questions that there are no answers to. The First Lady of the United States is asking the President, where are the children, how are they, how are they going to be reunited? She goes in public and this is embarrassing for him because he has no answers. We're not getting any. She's not getting any.

Jonathan Lemire: It's emblematic of the federal government's just utter lack of control of the situation. So, Mr. Mayor, you alluded to it. New York City, thousands of miles from the border is now playing a role here. How many – couple quick questions – how many children do you believe are here? When did they arrive? Was the City government given any kind of notice that that was happening and what happens to them now?

Mayor: Jonathan, you're going to be shocked as I was to hear the answer is there was no notification, no facts have been given, no plan has been given. Let me give you one example that's so powerful. At this center in East Harlem, there's a young boy named Eddie. He's nine years old. He's from Honduras. His mom and him fled a very violent situation, seeking asylum.

He's taken from his mom in Eagle Pass, Texas 2,000 miles away, put on a bus with a federal escort, sent to New York City. No sense at all, for him, when he's ever going to see his mom again. I mean this is happening in this country.

You talked about un-American. How on Earth are tax-payer dollars going to separating mothers from children and then there's not even a semblance of accountability as to when it ever ends? So, no, we were never told there were kids in our city. We found out – I found out by going to the center directly, sitting down with these social service professionals who are trying to help these kids.

It absolutely blew me away. I said how many are here now because of the policy that started in May, the family separation policy? With absolute straightforward – they looked me in the eye and they said, 239 kids at that moment were in that center. And that's one of three centers in New York City. And now what we're seeing around the country is, and I talked to my fellow mayors Republican and Democrat, they're now finding – what they thought was they had no kids, it turns out they have dozens, they have hundreds.

None of us have been given the facts. So, we're demanding of the federal government, lay out exactly where they kids are, who's taking care of them. What kind of help are they getting? When will they be reunited with their families? And not a single clear answer yet.

Brzezinski: Wow, we don't even know if they're okay.

Unknown: They put them on a bus [inaudible] imagine that.

Mayor: And we don't know if they're okay. In fact we do – and the health providers and social service providers are telling us this, that these kids [inaudible] of us. If you're a young child separated from your parent, the kind of trauma you go through alone is horrifying.

Also, they physically, they unfortunately because they were in government facilities with lots of other people, some came with bed bugs or lice or chickenpox. It's incoherent. It's inhumane.

Now, again, what I appreciate [inaudible] of this crisis is what we're seeing all over the country is people are feeling something very human, very direct, and intense about American values right now and are speaking up across the spectrum.

This has in some ways brought out a feeling that maybe other outrages and crises didn't. There's a demand now for change that's powerful and what I also appreciate is the bipartisan nature of it. I am seeing a lot of powerful Republican voices including my fellow mayors who were at the border with me yesterday, who are saying this transcends party.

Brzezinski: It does.

Mayor: In crisis, we may see something very healthy that people – arm-in-arm, literally, we were literally Democrats and Republicans standing next to each other in literal common cause.

Brzezinski: The President has manufactured a crisis that is a nightmare for little children. Mayor Bill de Blasio, thank you very much.

Mayor: Thank you.

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