

DAILY NEWS, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2001

New York's bleeding — red ink

More than three weeks after the terror attack on the World Trade Center, the enormity of the city's economic losses — estimated at \$60 billion so far — is coming into shocking focus. And New York is still bleeding: Businesses and jobs have vanished. Companies and residents are packing up, or thinking about it.

It's not just suburban locales that beckon. Other international financial centers could absorb New York jobs.

For decades, this city has sent billions more to Washington than it has received. Now's the time for some of that cash to come back.

The \$20 billion the feds have promised for rebuilding will be only a down payment on recovery. City officials will seek at least \$40 billion, along with aid to stem tax losses. It's clear: Reconstruction of our city and economy will take years and untold, unprecedented monetary investment.

How much is needed? The city is working on a detailed estimate, and the sum is certain to be staggering, for it will reflect both the costs of responding to the disaster and the costs of rebuilding. Some in Congress may resist sending the city billions more. But such resistance must be overcome, for America's sake.

This is no bailout. A bailout implies bad management or mistakes by the recipient. New York made no mistake; it paid a terrible price for its greatness, and the nation's. Restoring the city is a national obligation. Consider it an insurance policy that this city has paid for — in blood, and in its unmatched role as America's economic engine, generating, by itself, about 5% of the United States' gross domestic product. It was the city's value to the U.S. — as financial capital, as sky-scraping symbol of America — that made it a target.

Billions will be needed just to clear the death-filled canyon downtown. Add to that rebuilding the city's crippled infrastructure. Shoring up shaky buildings and businesses. And replacing the income, sales and corporate tax losses that could ripple into service cuts for New Yorkers and hasten a fiscal crisis that looms — but that can and must be prevented.

The resources must be rushed in as soon as possible to stop that downward spiral. Save New York's economy, save the nation's.

— The Editor

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