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Primary Candidates Urge Voters to Turn Out as an Act of Defiance

By ADAM NAGOURNEY

Two days before the rescheduled New York City primaries, some of the mayoral candidates invoked the World Trade Center disaster in their campaigns yesterday, asserting they had skills that made them particularly well suited to lead the city through this crisis. They urged New Yorkers to defy the terrorist attack by turning out to vote tomorrow.

Michael R. Bloomberg, a Republican making his first run for any public office, said his experience creating and running a private company made him a "mayor for tough times." His Republican opponent, Herman Badillo, noted his long experience as a member of Congress and in City Hall, saying, "This is not the time for on-the-job training."

Peter F. Vallone, the City Council speaker, said in a televised address that he had been, with Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani, at the center of efforts over the past 12 days to help the city respond to the bombing. Fernando Ferrer, another Democrat, compared the devastation in Lower Manhattan to what he found in the Bronx when he took over as borough president 14 years ago, suggesting that his years in the Bronx had prepared him for what he might face as mayor.

Alan G. Hevesi, a Democrat, said that his skills as city comptroller made him particularly qualified to lead City Hall through difficult budgetary times. And Mark Green, the fourth major Democrat, noted that one of his central campaign themes before Sept. 11 had been unifying New York; he argued that his theme was particularly crucial now.

The remarks came in a day of interviews and speeches on three New York City television stations, starting at 6:30 a.m., which were entirely devoted to a discussion of how the candidates now viewed the job of mayor given the way the city had been changed.

In interviews on WCBS and WABC, and in prepared statements delivered on WNBC, the candidates offered a variety of proposals for what City Hall should do. They also made an effort to make sure that voters were aware that the primary — which was originally supposed to be held on Sept. 11, the day of the attack — was going ahead tomorrow.



Herman Badillo



Michael R. Bloomberg



Fernando Ferrer

Photographs by ABC



Mark Green



Alan G. Hevesi



Peter F. Vallone

Mr. Hevesi and Mr. Vallone both said they would want Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani to head a rebuilding authority to oversee the reconstruction of Lower Manhattan. Mr. Badillo said he would give Mr. Giuliani any position he wanted in his administration, but would like to see him be in charge of overseeing security programs intended to assure the safety of New Yorkers.

Mr. Hevesi and Mr. Vallone said that the city should give subsidies to Broadway theaters and possibly hotels to help them survive what promises to be a difficult stretch ahead, given the downturn in tourism.

Mr. Vallone, Mr. Badillo and Mr. Hevesi all said that the city should, despite the impending huge reconstruction projects ahead, press ahead with its application to bring the summer Olympics to New York in 2012. Mr. Badillo and Mr. Vallone went further, telling Marcia Kramer on WCBS-TV that other cities that had been bidding for the Olympics should step aside to permit New York City to hold it, as a patriotic gesture that would improve both the economy and the spirits of this city.

Mr. Green said he supported the idea of pursuing the Olympics, but only "were I persuaded that the public funding would be

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modest and the private funding would be substantial." Mr. Ferrer was particularly skeptical of the idea of holding the Olympics.

More than almost anything, the candidates talked about the need for New Yorkers to turn out tomorrow, reflecting concern that Democrats and Republicans are either unaware that the primary has been rescheduled or are too distracted to turn out.

"We must vote," Mr. Bloomberg said in a televised address on WNBC. "Think of it as lighting a candle for the 6,000 missing."

And at an appearance at the Abyssinian Baptist Church yesterday morning, Mr. Green said: "It's awkward, diverting, but essential that we have an election on Tuesday."

He added, "Whomever you vote for, America wins. If we stay as one people, black, white, Christian, Jew, Muslim, we will again rise from the ashes and continue to be in this new century a city of hope."

The candidates have been severely restricted in their ability to campaign since the attack. For one thing, they are concerned about appearing political during such a tough time. In addition, the city's Campaign Finance Board essentially froze the campaign in place on Sept. 11, ruling that the candidates could not spend any more money, other than to get out the vote.

The primary is being restaged. Votes that were cast before the polls closed on Sept. 11 will not count, so New Yorkers who voted on that day will need to return on Tuesday if they want to participate. Absentee ballots cast before Sept. 11 will count toward the result. In addition, New Yorkers who live in parts of Manhattan where the polling places were destroyed can pick up absentee ballots at the Board of Elections today.

Poll Site Changes in Lower Manhattan

OLD SITE	NEW SITE
Leadership High School	Residential Bldg — 45 Wall St.
1 World Financial Center	Surrogate's Court. — 31 Chambers St.
I.S. 89 — 201 Warren St.	Surrogate's Court — 31 Chambers St.
P.S. 234 — 292 Greenwich St.	Surrogate's Court — 31 Chambers St.
P.S. 131 — 100 Hester St.	P.S. 130 — 143 Baxter St.

Source: Board of Elections

As memories of the attack grew further away and the primary grew closer, there were signs of exchanges among the candidates, if indirect ones. Mr. Green disputed a suggestion by Mr. Ferrer that New York, in rebuilding, scatter office buildings across the city.

"The financial services center was centralized in Lower Manhattan," Mr. Green said. "That is the heart of financial services and American business."

And Mr. Badillo took indirect note of Democrats who had been critical of the Police Department, saying: "It's not time for people who have been bashing the uniformed services."

All the candidates acknowledged that their vision of what they would do as mayor had been changed by the attack.

Mr. Hevesi said that his call for raising teacher salaries would have to be slowed down. And he noted that "we'll have to rethink how we build an affordable housing program," given that most of the candidates had planned to use revenues from leasing the World Trade Center to pay for housing.

He also said that the city would need to invest in new tourist advertisement programs to revive the tourism industry.

Mr. Vallone appeared to step back from his commitment to spare the Parks Department from any cuts, though he stressed the importance of city recreation programs, particularly now.

Mr. Bloomberg argued strongly against raising taxes to help the city through this period. Mr. Green said he thought a tax increase would be unnecessary because "I am hopeful that Washington and the state, with generous gifts and bonding authority, will help us."

But mostly, yesterday was a day in which the candidates struggled to figure out how to adapt what had been their earlier campaign themes to this very new political environment.

Mr. Vallone asserted that he had played a crucial role in City Hall's response to the attack.

"Let me take this opportunity to report briefly to you on what I have been doing," he said in his televised address. He added: "I have been doing my job, which is to govern. I've been working closely with the mayor and the City Council and emergency officials, striving to put the city we love on the road to reconstruction and renewal."

Mr. Bloomberg said: "I am a business leader with experience in both good and bad economic times, in creating jobs, in crisis management, in managing thousands of people worldwide, in dealing with billion-dollar budgets, and conflicting priorities. That is why my experience is right for now."

And Mr. Ferrer, asked how he would deal with the crisis, responded: "I faced some of these problems when I walked into my office 14 years ago as borough president — albeit on a far smaller scale, nothing of this dimension."

Finally, the candidates offered some tough words directed at the terrorists. "We will show the world," Mr. Bloomberg said on WNBC. "We will cower to no one! This is America and we are New York!" (The exclamation points were included in the text of his remarks issued by his office).

Mr. Vallone, speaking animatedly to Ms. Kramer, said: "We're going to show these characters they picked the wrong city in the wrong time in the wrong place, and we're going to get back at them in a way they'll never understand."

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