NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

WALL STREET JOURNAL, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2001

Two New York Mayoral Hopefuls Agree To Extend Giuliani's Term up to 3 Months

By STEFAN FATSIS
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

NEW YORK—Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani could be around a while longer after all.

In an unusual display of political cooperation, two of the three candidates to succeed Mr. Giuliani agreed to a proposal by the mayor to delay the inauguration by as much as three months to improve the transition in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. "The reality is that a month-and-a-half transition is not enough under normal circumstances," Mr. Giuliani said. "This is not the best of circumstances."

Democrat Mark Green and Republican Michael Bloomberg agreed to the proposal after meeting separately with Mr. Giuliani, their spokesmen said. The third candidate, Fernando Ferrer, who faces Mr. Green in a runoff for the Democratic nomination, said that he wouldn't agree to the extension.

Mr. Ferrer said in a statement that while "the politics of the moment might dictate a different position," he was "deeply concerned about the precedent this would set and the implications of this extraordinary step for the long-term interests of our city."

"For centuries, we have made orderly, constitutional transitions of government, even in times of crisis," Mr. Ferrer said. "We must not disrupt that process now."

Widespread public approval of the mayor's handling of the crisis gave him substantial leverage in getting the candidates to agree to the possibility of a longer transition. By agreeing to extend Mr. Giuliani's term a few months, the candidates could avoid a potential public backlash. Still, the state Legislature would have to approve such a term change.

More important, however, such a deal could eliminate the possibility the mayor would seek state or city legislation overturning term limits and run for a third term in the Nov. 6 general election. By threatening to challenge the law limiting mayors to two terms, Mr. Giuliani had risked squandering the goodwill he had generated by appearing exploit his newfound popularity for political gain. Recent polls indicate New Yorkers continue to back term limits.

It isn't clear whether Mr. Ferrer's refusal to back Mr. Giuliani's plan would influence the state legislature on whether to consider the proposal or change the mayor's position on trying to overturn term limits.

Mr. Green, the city's public advocate, had been outspoken about denying Mr. Giuliani, a Republican, a chance to stay in office, saying Wednesday that "we don't change the law on the eve of an election."

Yesterday, however, a spokesman for Mr. Green said the candidate told Mr. Giuliani he would support legislation delaying the Jan. 1 inauguration "given the unprecedented World Trade Center catastrophe, the urgent need for a seamless transition and the importance of a united city."

Mr. Bloomberg, who would like the mayor's endorsement, "immediately" agreed to the proposal, a spokesman said.

Mr. Giuliani said extending his mayoralty would allow his management plan for the recovery to be fully in place and "give whatever new team comes in a really lengthy period of time to learn what to do, in the right spirit."

CITY_21MC100_008016669

NYC-WTC_000412059

NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

GIULIANI'S GLOW dims a bit; Democrats see winners in the attack aftermath.

As New York's mayor flirts with seeking a longer term, even admirers wince. Sen. McCain and GOP consultant John Weaver advised Giuliani not to talk politics. Democratic strategist Tad Devine says, "When you climb Mount Olympus in politics, which he's done, the one way to lose your stature fast is to show you're just another politician craving office."

Democrats Rep. Gephardt and Sen. Daschle get plaudits in both parties for leadership. Gephardt takes House Democrats' heat for compromises with Bush, but softens his partisan edge. Former Clinton Chief of Staff Podesta says, "Some Democrats had the sense his time had passed. That's all changed." Sen. Edwards's backers insist he will shine on Intelligence Committee, disputing those who say his 2004 presidential hopes are hurt by his political inexperience.

NYC-WTC_000412060