NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

DAILY NEWS, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2001

Tap Rudy to rebuild N.Y.C.

You hear it all over town: Rudy Giuliani has done such a magnificent job rallying this stricken city that maybe the mayoral election should be postponed so he can continue in office. A tempting thought? Absolutely. A valid proposal? Absolutely not.

Postponing the election, even for a few months, would be a concession to the terrorists who revile American democracy. To New York, and the nation, a delayed vote might seem a minor thing — even though, constitutionally, it is not. But there'd be fanatics dancing in the streets of Kabul and the West Bank, etc., celebrating another "victory": their ability to undermine our laws, our institutions, our government, our very way of life. Why throw them this bone to sink their fangs into?

There's another way to keep Rudy in a central role: Appoint him *special recovery and reclamation administrator. Let him continue to* oversee the massive efforts downtown, which are certain to go on for months. And put him in charge of the $20 billion-plus effort to undo the horrors and rebuild the bombed-out Financial District.

This matter is beyond politics and partisanship. The idea is not to undermine the authority of the next mayor. The new administration would run the city. Giuliani — a man of unparalleled leadership skills — would run a specific, albeit immense, local/state/federal project within the city.

And who better to raise morale, muster the troops and mount the rebuilding effort than the man whose ubiquitous and comforting and heroic presence this past week recalls Winston Churchill walking London's streets during the blitz?

The reassembling of lower Manhattan will probably have to be federalized, so the government should look to this man who has won the unequivocal support of the city. President Bush should swiftly name Giuliani as chief of a New York City reconstruction authority and vest him by executive order with oversight for coordinating all rebuilding and disaster-response efforts.

Historically, the challenge resembles Chicago after the fire of 1871 and San Francisco after the earthquake of 1906. But, in reality, what New York faces is unprecedented in this nation's history.

As the mayor has repeatedly and defiantly vowed: "We're going to rebuild. We're not only going to rebuild, but we're going to come out of this stronger than we were before."

The best way to ensure that is to put him in charge of a Marshall Plan-like crusade to reclaim the infrastructure — and preserve the spirit — of the city he loves with all his heart.

Kindness of strangers

In the subways and on the streets, the difference is evident: Tuesday's events have altered that famous New York brashness. In its place is a newfound tenderness. New Yorkers have traded one attribute for another as we recognize that our lives have changed forever.

Our emotions change by the moment: grief, hope, fury, resolve. Underlying it all is continuing shock. Along with continuing frustration. That sense of helplessness. The desire to do something — anything — to repair the body and the psyche of the city is intense.

The officials coordinating volunteer efforts reported yesterday that there has been a literally overwhelming response and more people have signed up to help than can be put to work at the moment. Eventually, the rescuers at the disaster site will need to be relieved. But right now, do not be discouraged if your offer to assist is turned down.

Look from Ground Zero to your own neighborhood and workplace. We all have friends and neighbors and co-workers in need of comfort. Someone may have lost a loved one. Someone may be dealing with the trauma and guilt of having witnessed the horror and survived. *Just about everyone can use a sympathetic ear and the consolation* of a simple human touch to ease their anxieties.

Reach out to those who have given the most. When you see police officers or firefighters or paramedics — or construction workers covered in ashy dust — go over and tell them they are doing a stupendous job. Extend condolences. Remind them that the entire city is proud of them. Or simply say, "Thank you."

Heed the advice of Mayor Giuliani: Use the city. Go out and walk its streets, shop, go to the movies, to the theater, to the museums. Keep our neighborhoods and businesses alive. Do not give in. Do not let those who hate us degrade our lives or our confidence.

Above all, in ways large and small, let's just continue to be good to each other.

CITY_21MC100_011829432

NYC-WTC_000412170