NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

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Rudy's critics should wake up and smell the heroism



BACK off, bullies.

Getting the city back to its natural state, aesthetically, will be a testing feat.

Getting the city's people to come to terms with this disaster, psychologically, will be next to impossible. The last thing we need right now is a changing of the guard.

Mayor Giuliani announced he "wants to make a deal" to ensure unity in the city. He is trying to convince some government officials and candidates for his position that an imminent "seamless transition" of power is necessary to restore the city to that we knew prior to the terrorist attacks.

From the instant they learned the tragic news, the "dynamic duo" of Mayor Giuliani and Police Commissioner Bernard Kerik stepped up to the plate.

Both demonstrated compassion, leadership and strength. Both led the city toward the road to recovery.

Now the question is whether we can afford to let them go.

Even though Rudy has not stated he wants a full third term — the law says two terms is the maximum — some are already saying the mayor is only fixated on a power grab. It has everything to do with "ego," they contend.

"In the past, Rudy's outrageous behavior and need for publicity demonstrate his need for grandstanding," says attorney and political analyst Melvyn Roth.

This might be true. But I believe he has a genuine affection for the city of New York, and his intentions are honorable.

It is relatively easy for those in power to sit behind a desk and issue orders. At the same time, ordinary folks like us are forced to live and function in an atmosphere of unprecedented chaos. And we, the people, have no say?

If Giuliani and Kerik are refused the chance to stay on longer, the response will be "it's politics."

Letting them stay on would be small compensation for the hardship New Yorkers continue to suffer — particularly those who lost loved ones in the tragedy.

Forget campaigning, there's no need. Giuliani not only represents New York — to many who have read coverage of the disaster worldwide — his face represents the U.S.

Giuliani is seeking to overturn term limits which have been endorsed twice by the electorate.

Would it be unethical? We've witnessed far worse. The citizens of our great country have been subjected to the crude personal antics of Clinton, Hart, Jackson, Condit and yes, even Giuliani. Yet, for the moment, all of it seems irrelevant.

This is about what is best for the city of New York. To hell with tradition and democracy. Most of the leaders who make the rules, break the rules. They are of the "do as I say, not as I do" mentality.

So, go on, Mr. Mayor. The curtain is up. The audience is cheering. Grab center stage and take one last bow.

IF we lose Giuliani, we lose Kerik. And boy, will we be in trouble.

Talk about dedication and loyalty. This feisty civil servant is preparing to retire his badge, give up the fast, chaotic chase of cops and robbers and relinquish his title as commissioner in exchange for the predictable, laid-back lifestyle of a writer.

Did I say laid-back? Kerik's memoir, "The Lost Son," will be an instant bestseller.

Yes, he can write. In fact, when we spoke yesterday, I was surprised and impressed to learn he did most of the research as well as the writing — much to publisher Judith Regan's delight.

"He worked diligently on this project and put in a lot of personal time and effort," Regan said.

This superhero has no time to breathe, but a ton of stories to tell. Will he join Grisham or Baldacci?

Regan says: "Bernie can take on the career of a writer with ease. He's a natural storyteller."

I agree. Bernie, you'd better find something to keep busy. You know what they say about idle hands being the devil's workshop.

HOW chilling was the photo published by The Post last week of Osama Bin Laden's 10-year-old son reciting words of hate?

I ask all parents reading this to take note. Our children are products of their environments and will only demonstrate what they have been exposed to and taught.

If you teach your child hate, he will grow to be angry and practice violence. If you teach your child love, he will grow to be kind and compassionate.

E-mail: vgotti@nypost.com

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