NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

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Bowl could give N.Y. a Super lift

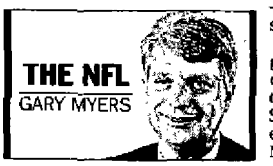
Paul Tagliabue was walking through Penn Station last Tuesday after getting off the Metroliner from Washington when the idea hit him: If the Super Bowl swap can't be worked out in New Orleans, then the NFL should consider playing the game in New York.

For a city that will forever mourn the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, playing host to the Super Bowl for the first time would be a welcome one-week diversion and a small part of the healing process. There are numerous logistical concerns, but nobody can stage a big event like New York. And the NFL.

Bring the Super Bowl to New York.

"The advantages, at least conceptually, are obvious in terms of resilience, optimism, positive psychology and possibly the economic impact," said Tagliabue, standing near the tunnel at Giants Stadium about an hour before yesterday's kickoff of the Giants-Saints game.

It was an emotional day for everyone involved, the first home game for a New York pro football team since the attack on the World Trade Center, which had been so visible from the stadium. Can you imagine the patriotism and emotion if the NFL moved the Super Bowl to Giants Stadium on Feb. 3? It would be a temporary boost to the psyche of the city. It would be a nice gift from the NFL to New York for all it has endured.



"It's realistic," one important NFL source said yesterday.

Tagliabue seems to agree. In light of all the discussions about rebuilding the city, he said, "the challenge of rebuilding the physical structure of the city, the economy of the city, the economy of the nation and the spirit of the people — in that context it occurred to me one thing that should be considered is whether the Super Bowl should be played in New York."

The NFL's first priority is switching dates with the National Automobile Dealers Association, which has a convention Feb. 2-5 in New Orleans, in order to keep the game in that city. But after talking several times last week, no deal is in sight. The NFL is willing to go as high as $8 million for the trade; the car dealers want $12 million and time is running out. Tagliabue expects a decision on New Orleans within days.

The NFL has also spoken to Miami and Tampa about possibly moving the game to one of those cities, but sources said it will come down to New York vs. the Rose Bowl in Pasadena.

Tagliabue raised the idea of a New York Super Bowl with his staff on Tuesday, a sign that he is indeed serious. Mayor Giuliani and Sen. Chuck Schumer have endorsed the idea of a New York Super Bowl — their support is crucial — but it does not happen without Tagliabue's approval.

Switching sites would take 24 out of 32 votes of the NFL owners, but if Tagliabue supports New York, a source said getting the votes will be a formality.

"If this can be a tremendous event that the city wants and an important event for the entire country to make a statement, we would take a real hard and serious look at it," one source said.

Asked how realistic New York's chances would be compared to the other three cities, Tagliabue said, "I think there would be so many issues that you'd have to consider in terms of the national security, air travel, it's not even really worth speculating about. If it became a serious alternative, we would have to sit down and analyze all those issues."

By mid-week, if the car dealers try to squeeze the league for too much money, New York will become a serious contender. I get the feeling the NFL is ready to bail out of New Orleans. And if that happens, the momentum for New York will build. It would have to be a scaled-down Super Bowl week — so much will still be going on at the World Trade Center site — but the NFL will be sensitive to the city's issues.

Of course, there are legitimate weather concerns. The only two times the NFL has put the Super Bowl in cold weather cities — Pontiac, Mich., and Minneapolis — the game was played in domes. It will be cold here the first Sunday in February, no doubt, perhaps frigid if the NFL sticks with a 6 p.m. kickoff.

Big deal. Football is a cold-weather sport. The Giants have played two mid-January championship games here in the last 14 years. The NFL could put down a new field at Giants Stadium to make sure the conditions are as optimum as possible. The rest of the week's practices could be held indoors. The AFC team could work out at the Jets facility at Hofstra. The NFC team would use the Giants facility at the stadium. Both teams have bubbles for practice.

"I think it will be good for the city," Jim Fassel said after the Giants' 21-13 victory. "We all know it's hard to move on. But we need to get back to doing what we're doing. It will never leave our minds. Ever. I'll remember Sept. 11. I'll always feel for those people. I think about them all the time. That will be the rest of my life."

Jason Sehorn questioned the wisdom of putting the game in New York because of the weather and "then with all the security issues this place has going on, the last thing you need is nine million more people coming into this place.

"But hey," he added, "it's their game. It's their ball."

Giants safety Sam Garnes, a New Yorker, said that when he heard Tagliabue was considering the move, "it brought an instant smile to my face."

The spirit of New Yorkers has been so evident since the tragedy. Moving the Super Bowl here would honor that spirit.

E-mail: gmyers@edit.nydailynews.com

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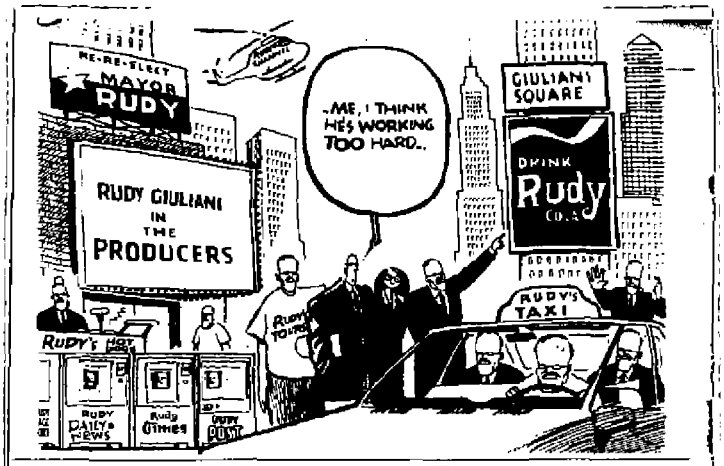

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

Award winner

Bronx: Mayor Giuliani should be given a medal for his loyalty and compassion for this city in its time of need. He is truly the best mayor ever. God bless you, Rudy!

Jennifer Trippedo

Don't take it

Bronx: Air travelers should now know that if their plane is hijacked, it means certain death. The passengers should immediately go on the offensive. Four or five terrorists don't have a chance against a couple of hundred people.

Abe Jacobowitz

Surgical strike

Rockaway Park: Once again, America must send its sons and daughters to combat evil forces. This time, they must be skilled surgeons to fight the nucleus of this disease and all those cells that harbor its existence. We know too well the price we may have to pay, but we must go forward and never fear fear. We are truly a great nation under God, united firmly, and we stand resolute.

Neil McNellis

Sweet dreams

Clifton, N.J.: Why can't airlines have two circulatory systems, one for the cockpit, the other for the rest of the cabin? At the first sign of trouble, the pilot could introduce some sort of imperceptible anesthetic gas into the cabin's vents. The fast-acting gas would lull everyone behind the door to sleep, giving the pilots a chance to land and let law enforcement settle the situation.

Ted Dylewski

Show loyalty

Brooklyn: If Arab-Americans wish to demonstrate loyalty to America, they can offer their services as translators or provide any information they may have regarding suspected terrorists to the FBI.

Wendy Sendelli

Are you happy?

Jackson Heights: To the mastermind and sympathizers of this dastardly inhuman act — don't you see that you achieved only fleeting victories? Have you really helped the people, the causes that you purport justify these cowardly acts? Have you brought down your enemy?

Sabrina Cruz

Condit's a joke

Hollywood, Fla.: This must be a joke. Why would they appoint Rep. Gary Condit to sit on the House Intelligence Subcommittee on Terrorism and Homeland Security? This is a man who cheated on his wife and lied to law enforcement. I don't want to put my life and security in his hands.

Larry Kleinman

Step aside

Bronx: Rudy Giuliani has been a great mayor. But repealing term limits for one man would be a mistake. Great leaders know when it's time to step aside and allow others to emerge. Giuliani will have continued opportunities to serve New York, perhaps at the state or federal level. Our President and governor should present Rudy with an opportunity for continued service.

Frank Gomez

Rudy's ploy

Bronx: Kudos to Fernando Ferrer for opposing Giuliani's defying term limits, a law set by voters. As usual, Rudy ignores the law and the people. Rudy is using the World Trade Center tragedy for political gain. How disgusting.

Michael Wilbee

Get ready

Brooklyn: It's too late to secure our borders. They're already in this country, by the hundreds — plotting and planning. Not even God can help us now. My deepest and heartfelt condolences to the victims.

Dorothy Bastone

Get tough

Brooklyn: The U.S. should not show compassion for the civilians being evacuated from the terrorist's nations before bombing them into submission. They slaughtered our civilians.

Robert Barbarite

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State terror law was needed

Manhattan: Re the Sept. 27 Opinion piece by Donna Lieberman and Robert A. Perry, "Terror laws were passed too hastily": Gov. Pataki's Anti-Terrorism Act of 2001 was a necessary response to the horrific attack on the World Trade Center. It provides critical *tools to law enforcement to prosecute terrorists and those who* aid, solicit or contribute resources for terrorist purposes.

It was not the product of last-minute draftsmanship on the heels of the Sept. 11 attack. Rather, it was introduced in June, three months before, and had been passed by the state Senate. Critics had time to raise any legitimate issues with the proposal, yet none was forthcoming.

State and local law enforcement agencies play a critical role in identifying and prosecuting terrorists. The capabilities of the state need to be expanded, not limited. A product of months of constitutional research and analysis, this legislation does not curtail civil liberties, but carefully targets anyone who commits, urges or supports violent criminal conduct for terrorist purposes. As former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg once wrote, "While the Constitution protects against invasion of individual rights, it is not a suicide pact."

Katherine N. Lapp
New York State Director of Criminal Justice

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