NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

THE STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE, MONDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2001

Clearing the tracks will be a long haul

Restoration of subway service to Lower Manhattan man involve big changes

By RICHARD PYLE
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It used to run every 10 minutes, more often during rush hour, on the 16-mile trip from Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx to the Staten Island Ferry terminal at the southern tip of Manhattan.

But the No.1 train doesn't go there anymore.

In addition to destroying the World Trade Center's twin towers and half a dozen other buildings, the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11 wiped out two of the city's busiest subway stations and severed or disrupted service on six lines that fed into or passed near the busy financial vortex.

Among the disaster's immediate ripple effects was temporary paralysis of virtually the entire New York subway system, which carries 4.3 million riders a day on 25 lines. Although most service was restored within hours or a day, thousands of people walked home.

As of now, nobody can say how long it will take to rebuild the subways, how much it will cost, or whether the work will be expanded beyond a restoration of the former facilities.

"We are looking at different options," said Mysore Nagaraja, NYC Transit's senior vice president and chief engineer.

Preliminary inspections by MTA officials showed debris filled the 1 and 9 subway tunnel just north of the Cortlandt Street station, and damaged the N and R station a block away. Photos show huge steel beams jutting through from above.

Three weeks after the calamity, officials have taken the first steps toward getting the trains running again, Nagaraja said. Workers shored up tunnel ceilings with timber posts and sandbags, and pumped concrete into a critical 220-foot section to prevent further collapse. They also installed concrete bulkheads to seal off 1,800 feet of debris-choked tunnel from possible leaks from the nearby Hudson River.

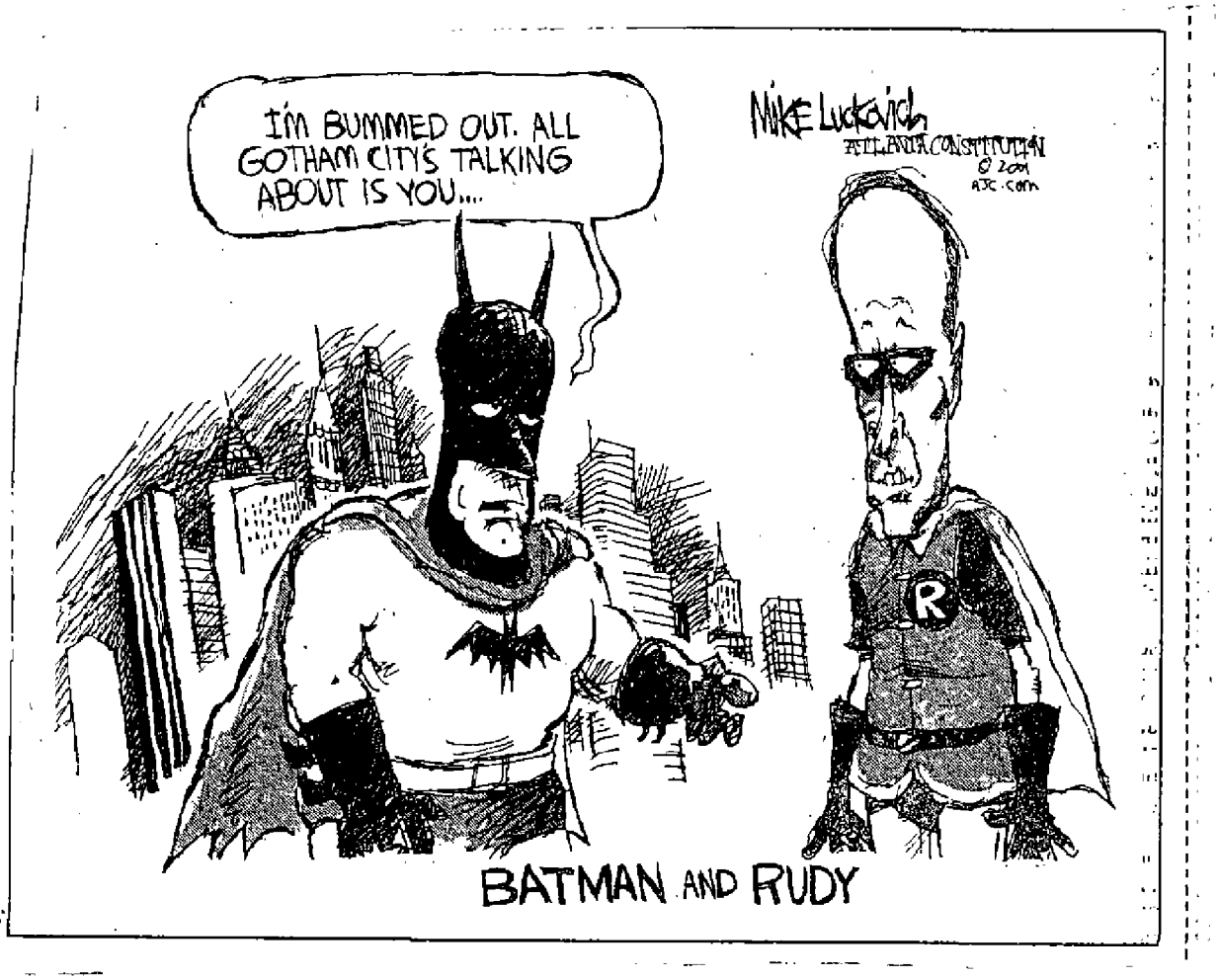
An early priority will be to restore the interrupted portion of the N and R lines that run from Queens through Manhattan and out to Brooklyn, and replace equipment buried in the collapse. Nagaraja said that line, a block east of the trade center, suffered less damage and could be running "in six months or less," if tests show the tunnels are stable enough to withstand heavy equipment on streets above.

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