NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

Top cop Kerik nixes offer to be commish for Mike

By JOHN MARZULLI
DAILY NEWS POLICE BUREAU CHIEF

Saying he wanted to "go out on top," Police Commissioner Bernard Kerik announced yesterday that he had turned down Mayor-elect Michael Bloomberg's offer to stay on the job.

Kerik said Bloomberg met with him yesterday to offer him the job, and he declined.

"I thanked him for his confidence in me and the opportunity to stay on if I wished," Kerik said.

It was the third time since August that Kerik publicly stated his intention to leave when Mayor Giuliani's term ends Dec. 31.

KERIK'S ANGUISH
Reveals his tortured life in new bio — PAGES 4 - 5

Bloomberg and former Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly publicly urged Kerik to remain, and it appeared he would at least consider the offer.

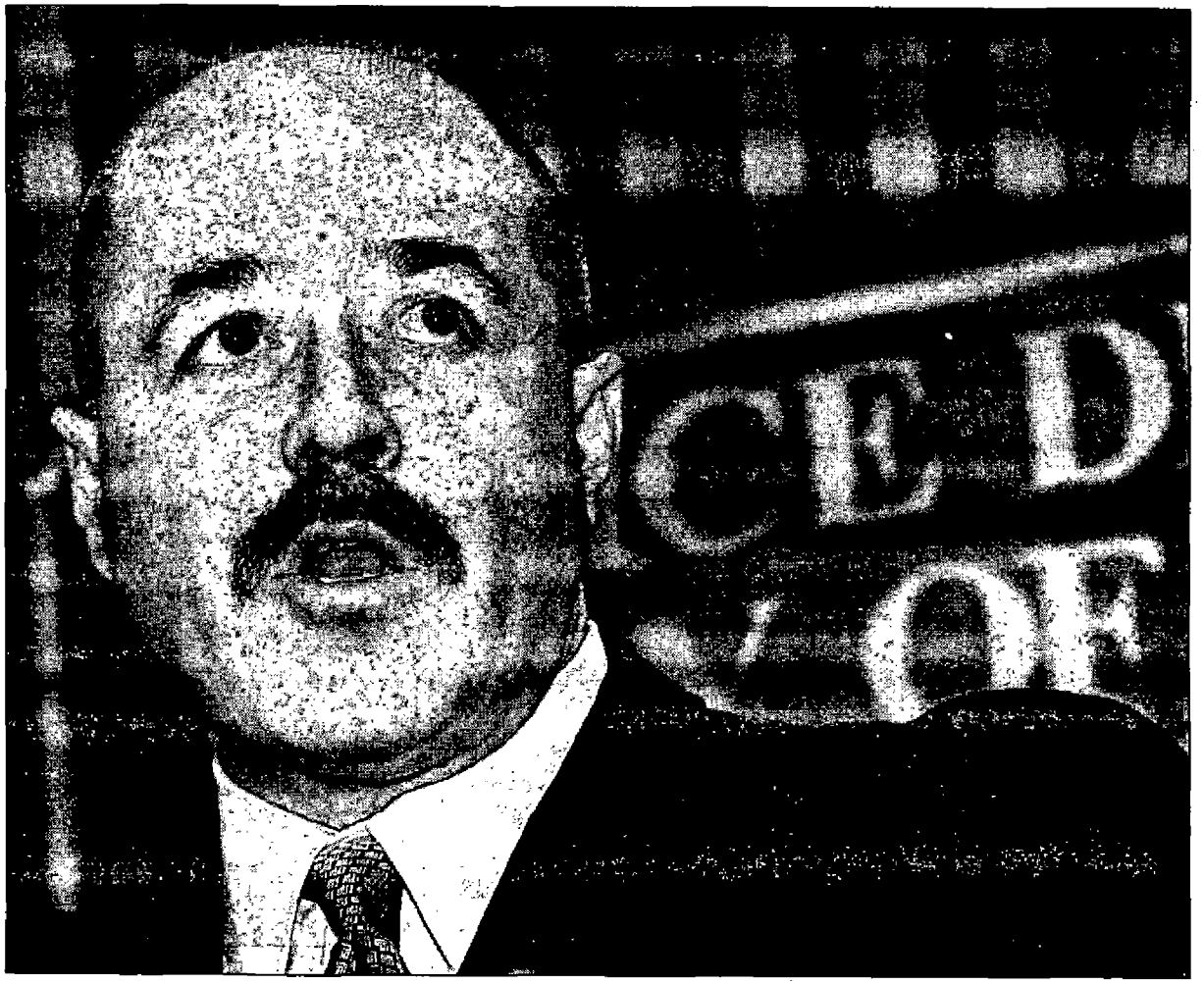
"I didn't anticipate Mr. Bloomberg would win," he said. "At the last moment, there was some reluctance in walking out."

Bloomberg praised Kerik's performance but noted the "private sector has been calling him."

Mum on choice

Bloomberg would not speculate on a replacement, saying only he has "not lacked for candidates."

Kelly, who did not return a call for comment yesterday, is believed to be a top candidate to re-



THOMAS MONASTER DAILY NEWS

MOVING ON Thanking Mayor-elect Michael Bloomberg for "the opportunity to stay on if I wished," Police Commissioner Bernard Kerik announces at Police Headquarters yesterday that he will step aside when Mayor Giuliani's term ends Dec. 31.

DAILY NEWS, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2001

CITY_21MC100_0118327759

NYC-WTC_000414766

NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

turn to the post.

Others who may be in the running include John Timoney, a former top deputy during William Bratton's tenure as commissioner and now Philadelphia's top cop; Baltimore police boss Edward Norris, and Kerik's choice: First Deputy Police Commissioner Joseph Dunne.

Kerik, 46, who was appointed commissioner in August 2000, will leave behind a city and department badly wounded by the Sept. 11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center.

But crime is down 10%, and the NYPD was on pace to log the fewest murders since 1963 — until the twin towers attacks.

"Under his administration, crime continued to decline," said Thomas Reppetto, head of the Citizens Crime Commission. "This is especially notable since crime has begun to go up in other cities. That is the most significant accomplishment of his administration."

Early in his term, Kerik worked to improve community relations, which became frayed under predecessor Howard Safir, after three incidents inflamed the black community: the police torture of Abner Louima and controversial fatal shootings of two unarmed men, Amadou Diallo and Patrick Dorismond.

Outreach praised

Kerik received high marks from community activists and elected leaders for his outreach efforts, though the efforts did not include a sitdown with the Rev. Al Sharpton.

"I do think he was competent, and the Police Department under him did a good job after the terrorist attack," Sharpton said. "But I think he may have been disappointing to some who thought he would go beyond Safir in terms of reaching out to opponents of the mayor."

At the same time Kerik was trying to shore up the NYPD's battered public image, he worked to improve police morale by cleaning up decrepit stationhouses and providing badly needed cars and equipment to cops.

Kerik said he wants to spend more time with his wife, Halah, their 18-month-old daughter, Celine, and his teenage son, Joseph, from a previous marriage.

"I think," said Patrick Lynch, president of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, "he leaves the Police Department a better place."

Speaking with reporters in his office yesterday, Kerik said: "They say if you're going out, go out on top. I feel like this is the time I should leave."

CITY_21MC100_0118327 60

NYC-WTC_000414767