NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

DAILY NEWS, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2001

Mike says diversity makes city strong

By DAVE SALTONSTALL
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Republican Michael Bloomberg, already under fire from some conservatives for being too cozy with city Democrats, defended his efforts at reaching out.

In an Op-Ed piece in today's Daily News, the mayor-elect reveals his bottom-line, businesss-oriented roots, and stresses his commitment to reaching across all party and ethnic lines.

"I want a government that truly reflects New York's diversity and inclusiveness, but also its spirit, its energy, its compassion and its strength," Bloomberg writes, adding that he hopes to "work with labor, the private sector and our local elected officials of both parties, to build the partnerships we need."

BLOOMBERG SPEAKS OUT
Says best is yet to come
IDEAS & OPINION, PAGE 41

The piece comes as the 59-year-old Democrat-turned-Republican faces fretting from some conservatives that he has been too quick to embrace Democratic leaders.

A day after edging out Democrat Mark Green in the race for City Hall, Bloomberg sat down with Green's former Democratic foe, Fernando Ferrer. On Thursday he shook hands with the Rev. Al Sharpton — something Rudy Giuliani never has done. By Friday he had met with each of the city's top labor leaders, all of whom endorsed Democrats for mayor.

"I think he is living up to his original roots — he has been a liberal Democrat his entire life," Conservative Party boss Mike Long said yesterday. "My hope is that he shifts to the right when he governs."

Long singled out Bloomberg's handshake with Sharpton for particular scorn, saying the preacher "represents the very worst in our society."

"And I don't think that is providing leadership when you pander to that kind of so-called leadership," Long said.

"I think Mike Long needs to get a life," responded Sharpton, noting the Conservative Party's record low turnout last week. "Why would I respond to someone who has shown he can't affect any votes?"

Bloomberg's aides yesterday argued their boss was simply living up to past promises and, in meeting with labor leaders, was "sending a signal to those who work for the city that he will be their greatest champion."

"Mike is doing exactly what he said he would on the campaign trail," Bloomberg spokesman Ed Skyler said. "Which is to reach out to every New Yorker regardless of race, ethnicity or party affiliation."

In his Op-Ed piece, Bloomberg assumes the role of chief cheerleader, saying the city's response to Sept. 11 "will define the direction of our city for years to come.

"My message for the terrorists: New York is alive and well and open for business," he writes. "The worst you had to give has only brought out the best in our city."

CITY_21MC100_011832838

NYC-WTC_000414837