

Editorial

The national stakes in New York City

On Sunday afternoon, Aug. 30, NBC-TV carried the first of a series of debates among the three candidates for this year's New York City Democratic mayoral nomination: the incumbent, Edward Koch, supported by the city's Roy Cohn Republicans and the Reagan administration, as well as by the Felix Rohatyn Democrats; Frank Barbaro, backed by a coalition of social democrats and other leftists; and Mel Klenetsky, endorsed by the National Democratic Policy Committee (NDPC), who proceeded to make Paul Volcker and zero growth the political questions facing the voters in the Sept. 10 primary and thereafter.

The debates, and the front-page coverage day after day in the *New York Times* and the rest of the metropolitan press, have done a great deal to convey to millions of people Klenetsky's insistence that Paul Volcker is wrong when he says that "American standards of living must decline," and there is no need to tolerate the drugged, immiserated, deindustrialized existence Koch is imposing on behalf of that policy.

"Too hot to handle" was the way two of the city's national TV network affiliates characterized Klenetsky's Sept. 2 press conference at City Hall, where he charged that on Mayor Koch's desk has been sitting a list of the precise locations of major drug trafficking in the city, a list Klenetsky released. The mayor, he said, had not only stalled on shutting down those operations but had withheld the information from the public. The candidate also released a series of statistics, suppressed by Koch, documenting the epidemic of drug consumption during Koch's tenure.

WABC-TV covered that press conference, further cracking open a situation that had seemed so tidily under control.

At the same time, favorable coverage of Klenetsky appeared in *The Jewish Press*, the city's largest-circulation newspaper devoted to Jewish readers. The coverage featured the strength of Klenetsky's support (his campaign "amassed 26,000 signatures on his petitions for the right to run," as the *Press* notes, and he withstood a lavishly financed Barbaro effort to chal-

lenge those petitions and his bona fides as a Democrat)—as well as his charges against Koch, his program, his own Jewish background, and his commitment to restoring the greatness of New York.

The Koch/Cohn/Rohatyn strategists are unsettled by the prospect that Klenetsky could attract the attention of the hundreds of thousands of Jewish voters who detest Koch, dismiss Barbaro, and look to the city's once-great role in uplifting its population. What has happened overall is that a different political universe has come into view for New Yorkers; trivial click-clack between Koch and Barbaro has been cut through by a challenge to face the questions of depopulation and economic depression bearing down on the country as a whole.

Americans in other parts of the country who have watched with resignation or hostility as the second-largest city in the United States was turned into a Gomorrah should take special note of Klenetsky's unsparing fight against the plans for "free enterprise zones" in New York, because the Federal Reserve's allies in the Reagan administration are on record as stating that this policy is to be applied across the country. It is a policy of low wages, low technology, subminimal education and services, and deregulated vice: the restoration of everything generations of immigrants came to this country to escape.

Clearly we are not impartial toward Klenetsky, an associate of *EIR* founder LaRouche, or toward his program, which encapsulates the American System economics to which *EIR* is committed: investment in large-scale, advanced industry and educational excellence; punitive taxation of speculative, unproductive capital flows; and a law enforcement and financial war against every level of the drug traffic. We are not impartial, but we are objective, and our conclusion is that, provided the citizenry is up to that challenge, Klenetsky is making a national contribution by superimposing actual politics upon what had been a brain-washed New York consensus for Paul Volcker's austerity.