

No Honeymoon for Newly-Elected Hevesi

By Craig McGuire

Two months after assuming office, New York City Comptroller Alan Hevesi has his hands full restructuring his office, while gearing up for the impending budget wars.

At a recent breakfast hosted by the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, the former Queens Assemblyman offered an assemblage of Brooklyn businessmen some insight into his objectives.

"We are currently in a process of changing the style, characteristics, and productivity of this office," said Hevesi. "I've brought in all new people."

In an effort to streamline services in his office, Hevesi said he fired eight major managers and consolidated their offices into three positions.

"It's a whole different system and a whole new ballgame," said the 41st New York City Comptroller.

Hevesi commented that he will endorse many of Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's proposals to downsize government, to help reduce the \$2.3 billion dollar budget deficit.

Throughout the speech, Hevesi, a Democrat, repeatedly voiced support for the Republican mayor. "Every Democratic politician in New York City has to decide how they are going to

deal with a Republican mayor," said Hevesi.

The cooperation of the city's chief financial officer, responsible for monitoring the allocation of city revenue, will be an invaluable asset for Giuliani as budget hearings continue.

One of the objectives Hevesi will bring into negotiations with the Republican administration and the Democrat-dominated City Council will be a way to stimulate business and recoup the more than 400,000 jobs lost in New York during the past four years.

"The recession is over, and recovery is moderate and modest," stated Hevesi. "There will be 25,000 more jobs in this city in 1994, and 40,000 in 1995," he predicted.

"If the rate of recovery remains modest, full recovery to get back to the point we were at four years ago will take 10 years," added Hevesi.

Encouraging businesses to invest in New York City and stemming the tide of business fleeing the five boroughs are high priorities for the new comptroller.

"We have not been business-friendly in this city, and we have to start if we want businesses to stay and if we want business to come in," said Hevesi.

According to the comptroller, this can be done without sacrificing services to any particular group.

Hevesi's audience reacted positively. Howard Waterman, spokesman for the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, said, "The majority of members that I've spoken to found Hevesi's pro-business approach refreshing."

"Many of his predecessors have not been as recep-

tive to the needs particularly of small business, which is crucial for the city's economy to thrive," added Waterman.

As New York City's chief financial adviser, Hevesi said he plans to increase revenue into city government through increasing investments with the city's \$51 billion pension fund.

"The utilization of the pension fund, through very

careful investment, will get larger," said Hevesi.

Other Giuliani strategies aiming at economic stimulation that Hevesi endorsed include a proposal to eliminate the city sales tax charged on clothing under \$100, and a reduction in the hotel tax to entice tourism.

"We are all in this together," said Hevesi. "After all, I come from rural New York City -- Forest Hills."

Which Way to Sesame St?

By Mina Landriscina

Two young Park Slope residents, Jessica and Iris Mestel, had "sunny days" recently when they were chosen to appear on PBS's "Sesame Street" this season.

Through the theater department of the American Indian Community House in Manhattan, the Mestels, who are Mayan, auditioned at the Children's Television Workshop for the program that for the past 25 years has taught children how to count and spell.

Eight-year-old Jessica and seven-year-old Iris, who attend Public School 107, 1301 8th Avenue, were two of the 600 youngsters that sat, hoping, wishing and dreaming, as they waited to be screened at the Manhattan office.

based on what the editors and the producers feel would be appropriate for that scene -- age, talents and ethnic background," said their mother, Sherry Mestel.

Although the sisters have been raised to be traditional Native Americans, Mestel feels the reason her

children were chosen had more to do with their outgoing personality. "Both are sociable, personable and not timid in any way," said Mestel proudly. "They love the spotlight."

Belonging to the American Indian Community House has, however, helped Iris and Jessica greatly in their young performance careers. Both have modeled for school textbooks, and Iris was in a music video featuring Native American music for teachers.

Since the sisters are avid watchers of the show, actually meeting the actors and the puppets was a highlight of their lives, said their mom.

In all, the Mestels were in five episodes with the show. In one episode, they ate breakfast with Big Bird, Bert and Ernie. "They got to eat real food and they were thrilled," said their mother, who was told by her surprised daughters, "They paid us to eat?"

The Mestels will appear on "Sesame Street" April 15, May 6 and May 10.

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