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percent among them, had not changed his thinking on the Hevesi matter, which before the election caused Spitzer to withdraw his endorsement of the embattled comptroller.

It seems to us that Spitzer could have answered the reporters' query by saying simply "no comment" or "I don't feel it's proper for me to get involved in it" or something like that. His answer made it appear that he's looking forward to addressing the issue, but also somehow makes it seem not to bode well for Hevesi.

Come January 1, when Spitzer has been sworn in as governor, part of the background will be statements he made during the recent campaign about his plans to reform Albany and the reputation he gained for going after law breakers as state attorney general, which propelled him into office.

It doesn't seem it would be in keeping with his image as a tough lawman and a reformer to let Hevesi off the hook. But it should be noted that these images were formed in the past and following through on them might cause a sharp, distasteful clash with Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and Democrats in general, who can be expected to support Hevesi's efforts to remain in office.

Spitzer could get off on the wrong foot, so to speak, by initiating an ugly brawl with his own political party and with an official, Silver, who can be a tough guy to win over, even without the Hevesi

headache. It wouldn't be an auspicious start for the new governor.

Silver had a close and very favorable relationship with Hevesi when Hevesi was the Assembly Majority Leader under Silver for several years. As could be expected, Silver characterized what has gone on with the Hevesi issue to this point as a political charade.

While Hevesi's election victory can be taken as a mandate from the voters to continue in office since they were, in a sense, passing judgement on the Forest Hills pol's alleged actions, and since it can be assumed that most Democrats would not be in favor of Hevesi losing his job and virtually ending his career, Spitzer might feel obliged to ease up on him.

However, another factor will weigh heavily on this matter: the possible indictment of Hevesi by the Albany County district attorney on the same facts that figured in the Ethics Commission's determination. This gets mentioned in every story about Hevesi, and whichever way it comes out, either an indictment or no charges, will have a great deal of importance as to how the case against Hevesi will finally be determined.

An indictment would almost surely force Spitzer to take action against Hevesi, despite all the political perils involved.

No action by the DA would make Spitzer's dropping the case much easier, as it would add to the support and good will Hevesi earned with his popular election victory.

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out-migrate for care at more consistent rates regardless of insurance coverage, indicating a lack of access to care in the region."

In Western Queens, Marshall added, the report showed there is a lack of primary care physicians also.

"Overall, patients with choice, Medicare and commercial insurance coverage, are leaving at higher rates than patients without a choice (such as Medicaid or self-paying patients)," Marshall said.

To remedy the situation, Marshall proposes that Queens should become its own health district and as such, Queens hospitals will find it easier to obtain regulatory approval for key services. Under the present setup of health districts, she said, when Queens hospitals apply for major service improvements, they are considered along with hospital requests from throughout New York City. Usually, Queens hospitals do not win approval.

In proposing a new major hospital in Western Queens, where there is presently a lack of service of this kind, Marshall says such a facility will encourage patients to stay in Queens. Importing specialty physicians to Queens would serve the same purpose.

Marshall noted other reasons why patients leave Queens for hospitals in other boroughs, predominantly Manhattan:

In the neighborhoods of Elmhurst, Corona, Jackson Heights, Maspeth and Woodside, 33 percent of adults have no pri-

mary care provider, and roughly one-third of this population has no health insurance.

In Northwest Queens—Astoria, Sunnyside and Long Island City—28 percent of adults have no primary care provider, and roughly one-third of this population has no health insurance.

The lack of primary care providers in these areas and the lack of insurance coverage limits access to appropriate care.

Current hospital facilities in this region of Queens are not able to provide the necessary services, or are not easily accessible for patients requiring care.

The report showed that in 2004, patients from Queens who went to hospitals in other boroughs deprived Queens hospitals of \$630 million in income. This contributes to the hospitals' low operating margins which, in turn, make capital investments even more difficult for the hospitals in Queens. They then are prevented from making improvements in service that would attract Queens patients to them.

Marshall said she had discussed her healthcare delivery ideas with officials of Elmhurst Hospital Center, Queens Hospital Center, Jamaica Hospital Medical Center, Flushing Hospital Medical Center, Mount Sinai Hospital of Queens, New York Hospital Medical Center, North Shore—Long Island Jewish Medical Center, Parkway Hospital in Forest Hills, Peninsula Hospital Center, St. John's Episcopal Hospital, South Shore, Wyckoff Hospital, SIVCMC St. John's Queens, and Mary Immaculate Hospital.

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