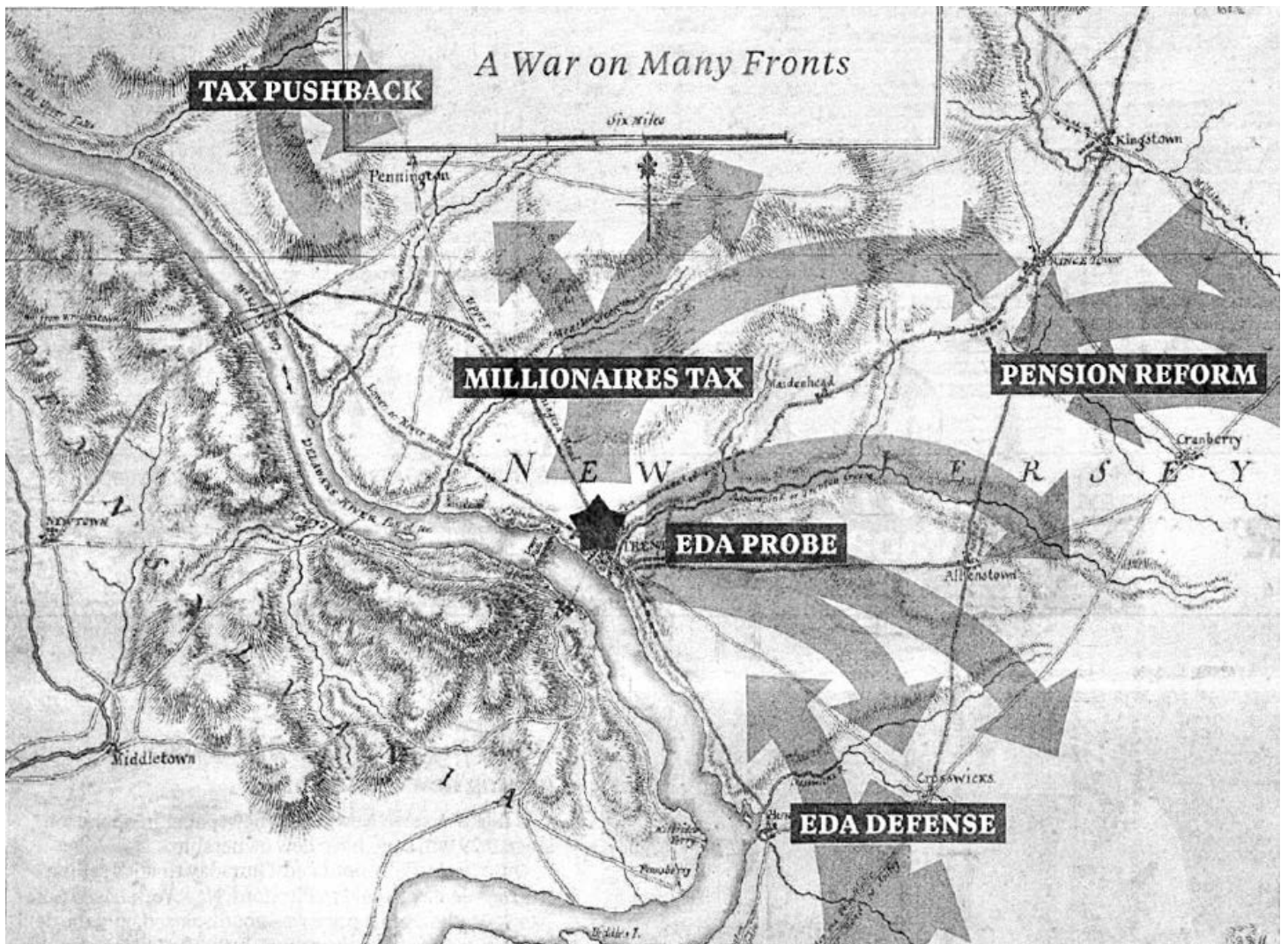


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Conflict in capital escalates as governor is confronted on pensions

Battle of Trenton



Sweeney threat: Bypass Gov.

Senate president says he'd push to amend constitution to enact cost savings

Samantha Marcus For The Star-Ledger

Senate President Stephen Sweeney is threatening to wage a public battle over his plans to cut government

employee pension and health care benefits if progressive Gov. Phil Murphy doesn't play ball.

At a Statehouse news conference Thursday, Sweeney said he is introducing sweeping bills to reduce the cost of employee benefits legislatively but is preparing a contingency plan to ask voters to amend the state constitution and bypass Murphy.