Critical of Negro Leaders

Dobbs Says Picket Plan Has Political Motive

By Bob Robertson

Mayoral candidate Harold Dobbs yesterday branded as "politically contrived" plots the plan of San Francisco State College students to picket his six restaurants here tomorrow for alleged "discriminatory hiring practices."

He called it a "shocking reflection on the lack of moral honesty on the part of the Negro leaders involved."

Asked which Negro leaders were involved, Supervisor Dobbs replied:

"The responsible Negro leadership must be aware of it and because they are aware of it and make no attempt to stop it, they must approve of it."

DENIAL.

Dr. Thomas N. Burbridge, chairman of the United San Francisco Freedom Movement and president of the local NAACP, denied that any Negro political leaders were involved:

"Mr. Dobbs has been living under the fallacy that Ihave been trying to get rid of for a long time—that the Negro community is an entirely homogeneous entity," Burbridge said. "As far as provoking these students to do this, I couldn't stop them if I wanted to."

"They have an organization (The Direct Action Group) that is a member of the United Freedom Movement but has autonomy just as the NAACP has autonomy."

Asked if he thought his major opponent in the mayoral race, Congressman John F. Shelley, had anything to do with the picketing plan, Dobbs replied:

"I wouldn't like to think that Mr. Shelley would have anything to do with it because I don't think he is that kind of a man."

However, Dobbs did say that Dr. Burbridge and the Rev. Hamilton Boswell, head of the San Francisco Ministerial Alliance, are Shelley supporters "and they are in charge of certain elements of the Negro leadership of the city.

RESPONSE

Shelley responded with a statement saying that all candidates made a pre-campaign pledge "that we would not attempt to make political capital out of the race situation in San Francisco."

"It is apparent, though," he continued, "that Mr. Dobbs has forgotten this pledge if he dares to imply that I or my supporters had anything to do with the demonstration allegedly planned by a group of students."

"Whatever else is involved, the question is raised whether Mr. Dobbs can effectively handle race problems of the whole city if he cannot handle them in his own business."

STATEMENT

Terry Francois, past president of the NAACP, commented. "There were some efforts by adult leaders to discourage the students because it was feared that Mr. Dobbs would make this very statement. But the students said they weren't interested in the politics and they were going to go ahead."

Dobbs, at a hastily called press conference, said he had been informed of "this threat" yesterday by Lieutenant Dante Andreotti of the Police Community Relations Unit. Dobbs said it had been delivered to Andreotti by Francois.

Both Francois and Andreotti denied, however, that the information had been relayed as a threat.

Andreotti said, "He (Francois) was merely informing me so that we could get the information out to the pre-cinct stations that would be affected and take proper measures to see that things were kept peaceful."

As for the issue of employment practices, Dobbs said, "My restaurants have never had any policy of discrimination in employment at any time."

He said that more than 50 per cent of the 255 people he employs in his local establishments—Hal's, three Mel's Drive-ins and two Red Roof Restaurants—are members of racial minorities and that 27 are Negroes.

The complete proof of the hypocrisy of this action," he said, "is the fact that four years ago when I was last re-elected to the Board of Supervisors, Mr. Francois sponsored my candidacy.

"My employment practices then were exactly the same as they are now, and as they have been throughout the history of my business."

Francois charged, however, that Dobbs does not employ Negroes in "visible capacities" such as waiters, waitresses, bartenders, earphones and cashiers.

"He restricts them more or less to menial jobs," Francois said.

Francois, obviously angered by Dobbs' remarks, said he agreed to sponsor him for Supervisor because "he made certain commitments about employment practices and certain other things. But he hasn't kept them."

"I will agree that Mr. Dobbs' employment practices have always been the same," Francois added. "They've been consistently discriminatory."

FACTORY A

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