

Black College Backer Answers Critics

By Mel Baughman
Sentinel Staff Writer

Black Liberation Movement leader Bill Moore last night tried to dispel mounting confusion, opposition and misunderstanding about his proposal to develop the seventh college at UCSC as "Malcolm X College" for teaching of "the black experience."

In angry, emotional tones, Moore responded to criticism by Dr. Max Rafferty, GOP candidate for the U. S. Senate, that "only a racist" could support such a proposal.

"Rafferty should either shut his mouth or come out in the open and debate the subject where the public can hear it. But I question whether he is man enough to have an open debate with me," Moore said.

Moore also replied to apparent ridiculing remarks made by members of the county board of supervisors. Citing Supervisor Tom Black's comment about a college named after Brendan Behan for "Irish derelicts," Moore chided, "Notre Dame is an Irish school. Those people will get very uptight about that. But this is the kind of mentality we're dealing with. These people should either put up or shut up."

Quoting Rafferty's remark that he had devoted his life to education, Moore said acidly, "That's what's wrong with education. That's why problems exist, and why students picket to get a black curriculum. I question his (Rafferty's) life."

Moore refuted the notion that Malcolm X College would be "exclusively black." Said he, "We have black students on white campuses. Why can't we have white students at black colleges?" And he added, "If colleges can be named for whites and their heroes, can't we name a college for Malcolm X, a hero to blacks?" He conceded Malcolm had been a racist, but stated that he changed his attitudes near the end of his life.

Moore said he continues to wait for some response from officials of the university about his proposal for an Afro-American college designed by blacks, staffed by blacks, and teaching the black experience to students of all racial backgrounds.

Moore implied that the university is afraid of the idea and said that it is a challenge "to the educational establishment."

However, it was clear that he would welcome an opportunity to discuss the proposal with UCSC Chancellor Dean E. McHenry. McHenry has been out of town, but reportedly was scheduled to return yesterday.

Moore denied that his college is racist, citing again the fact that if black students can attend white-organized and administered colleges, there should also be a chance for white students to attend black-operated institutions.

Said Moore bluntly, "We want the university to get up . . . and move. If they can't respond to a reasonable request, what can they do? Do more people have to die? Do we have to have more riots and burning?"

"This is the kind of response black people always have gotten. The establishment doesn't really want to solve the problems; they're drawing a line and shoving it toward an open confrontation."

Moore also asked for an open hearing before the academic senate of the university. "If they can't do this, then what can they expect other than for black people to burn down this country?"

Some members of the audience of mixed racial origins attempted to offer suggestions for refining the plan, to point out the problems of operation inherent in the university bureaucracy, and to describe the efforts now being made to develop Afro-American or black programs of studies.

It also was suggested from the floor that Moore's group should seek foundation support and consider another name. Mentioned was Cesar Chavez, leader of California's three-year-old farm labor organizing strike in the San Joaquin Valley.

Moore rejected the proposals. Said he, "Educators want to dilute and distort the black experience. If they try to change this thing, black people are going to smell a sell-out."

"White people have told black people for centuries what they have to learn. Now it's time for black people to tell white people

what they have to learn about the black experience."

In calmer tones, Moore declared, "I'm not trying to threaten or intimidate anyone. But if they can't offer black people education, what can they offer? This is a golden opportunity to help black people, white people, education and society."

"There's no argument against it, except they're (opponents) out and out racists with a good cover story."

"This is not a new idea, but it's a revolutionary idea because now they're in a position to implement it."

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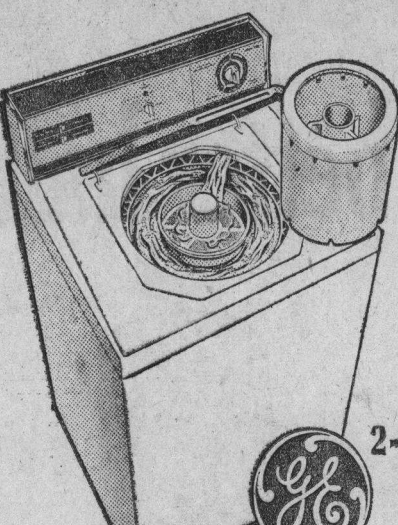
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