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Sharpton, in Attack on Green, Hints He May Sit Out Election

By ABBY GOODNOUGH

Candidate calls for unity after a divisive Democratic runoff.

As Mark Green tried to build support among black voters yesterday in Brooklyn, the Rev. Al Sharpton called Mr. Green's campaign tactics racially divisive and hinted that he might not endorse either Mr. Green or his Republican opponent, Michael R. Bloomberg.

During a rally at the National Action Network headquarters in Harlem, Mr. Sharpton and a number of black and Hispanic lawmakers fumed about Mr. Green's runoff victory over Fernando Ferrer, the Bronx borough president. The race was sharply divided along racial lines, with the vast majority of black and Hispanic voters supporting Mr. Ferrer.

Mr. Sharpton and the politicians at his rally — including Representative Jose E. Serrano and Assemblyman Ruben Diaz Jr., both of the Bronx, and Assemblyman Roger L. Green of Brooklyn — also spoke angrily about the appeal that Mr. Green has made in recent days for their support.

Mr. Sharpton complained about telephone calls that he said some white households received last week warning that Mr. Ferrer would appoint Mr. Sharpton as the police commissioner if Mr. Ferrer were elected. Mr. Green has denied that the calls were made by his campaign.

"There will not be silence and consent to the insult that we've been dealt in this race," Mr. Sharpton said to loud applause, addressing about 200 people.

Mr. Sharpton did not go so far as to say he would not endorse Mr. Green in the general election. But he took every opportunity to suggest that he might sit out the election and urge his supporters throughout the city to do the same.

"I'm not endorsing Bloomberg," Mr. Sharpton said. "But I'm not endorsing nothing that doesn't stand for us. And if I could survive eight years of Giuliani, I can survive four years of Bloomberg." Mr. Sharpton and others suggested that supporting Mr. Green would amount to a capitulation, saying that white voters may have turned away from Mr. Ferrer simply because of his association with Mr. Sharpton, and that Mr. Green's campaign had encouraged them to do so.

In Brooklyn, Mr. Green spent about an hour walking along Flatbush Avenue with several black lawmakers and a crowd of supporters. He ducked into beauty salons, Caribbean restaurants and discount shops to shake hands and pose for pictures as an aide with a loudspeaker chanted, "Mark Green wants to unite the city!"

Mr. Green reiterated two goals that he outlined on Friday: reaching out to Mr. Ferrer and his supporters to "persuade them to join our cause," and accelerating planning so that if elected mayor, he would have selected a cabinet and begun shaping an agenda long before taking office on Jan. 1.

Mr. Green again denied any association with the phone calls warning white voters about Mr. Sharpton, calling them "despicable" and "indefensible." He also said, as he has several times since winning the runoff, that he would welcome Mr. Sharpton's support: "This big city needs a big tent where all the prominent leaders work together, and that certainly includes Rev. Sharpton."

Mr. Bloomberg met yesterday with downtown business and community leaders who are worried about the economic health of the area around the World Trade Center. Mr. Bloomberg, who is expected to unveil an economic recovery plan this week, has made a point of publicly consulting with some of the city's most worried communities.

Continuing an early theme of the general election campaign that he regards the entire city as up for grabs, Mr. Bloomberg also visited another traditionally Democratic neighborhood, greeting shoppers at the Fulton Mall in Downtown Brooklyn. His campaign also confirmed that he met privately with Representative Major R. Owens, a Brooklyn Democrat and one of the city's leading black politicians. No details of the session were made available.

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