NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

THE NEW YORK TIMES, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2001

A Brutal Final Weekend in the Race for City Hall

By ADAM NAGOURNEY

The contest between Mark Green and Michael R. Bloomberg hurtled through a brutal and expensive final weekend yesterday. Mr. Green took to the pulpits of black churches in Brooklyn to accuse Mr. Bloomberg of insensitivity toward black and female New Yorkers. Mr. Bloomberg filled the airwaves with television advertisements warning that Mr. Green would "tear apart City Hall" if elected.

With the campaign down to its final hours — and a series of polls showing the two men essentially tied, with a huge number of voters still undecided — the candidates and their aides moved through the day to diminish their opponent.

Mr. Green brandished a complaint from a lawsuit that had been filed against Mr. Bloomberg by a former employee in 1997, accusing him — in often detailed and lurid language — of sexual harassment and crude sexual banter. Mr. Green called on Mr. Bloomberg to release the result of a lie detector test he took at the time, in which he denied the allegations made by the employee, Sekiko Sekai Garrison. Ms. Garrison signed a confidentiality agreement as part of a settlement of the case, in which Mr. Bloomberg paid her an undisclosed amount of money.

For its part, Mr. Bloomberg's campaign seized on a vaguely worded 1998 memorandum from an aide to Mr. Green in his public advocate's office. The memo, Mr. Bloomberg's aides asserted, indicated that Mr. Green had made a personnel decision involving a salary increase "based on race." The employee's raise was, in fact, granted, but Mr. Bloomberg's adviser, William Cunningham, invoked the memorandum as evidence of Mr. Green's "attitude of indifference and disrespect toward the Latino community."

By nightfall, it was clear that any sense of decorum that had enveloped this contest in the weeks after the attack on the World Trade Center had evaporated. Although most of this played out with television advertisements and e-mail statements — the tools of the modern-day campaign — the tensions at one point spilled over in a sloppy confrontation that took place outside Katz's Deli on the Lower East Side.

Mr. Bloomberg, campaigning with Edward I. Koch, the former mayor, was met with a group of Green supporters chanting, "Mike is sexist," and "Let Sekiko speak." In a brief scuffle, one of Mr. Bloomberg's aides ripped down a placard held by a Green supporter, and within 10 minutes, five police officers turned up to help keep the peace.

And late last night, Mr. Bloomberg acknowledged that his campaign of-

Continued on Page F4

CITY_21MC100_011832445

NYC-WTC_000414499

NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

Continued From Page A1

fice on Staten Island, the most Republican part of the city, had been distributing leaflets which included pictures of Mr. Green and David N. Dinkins, and which warned that Mr. Green's election would mean a return to the policies of Mr. Dinkins, New York's first black mayor.

The disclosure that Mr. Bloomberg's own campaign was involved in distributing such literature loomed as a potential embarrassment. Mr. Bloomberg had been attacking Mr. Green because his supporters had distributed literature that linked Fernando Ferrer, his Democratic primary rival, to the Rev. Al Sharpton, in a way that Mr. Ferrer's supporters said was racist.

Mr. Bloomberg described the Dinkins literature, which he said had been printed by Staten Island Republicans, as "outrageous." He said he had dismissed the manager of his Staten Island office and condemned the Republicans who had been behind it.

For Mr. Bloomberg, the billionaire founder of a business communications company, the final weekend marked the culmination of an orchestrated escalation of attacks directed at Mr. Green, as Mr. Bloomberg broke modern-day campaign spending records by pouring money into television, radio, telephone calls, and mailings. With the campaign moving into its final hours, he tried to portray Mr. Green as a threat to the legacy of Mr. Giuliani, while playing up his own endorsement by Mr. Giuliani, a fellow Republican.

As Mr. Bloomberg campaigned with Mr. Koch and Gov. George E. Pataki, also a Republican, he urged voters to ignore party affiliation in making their choice tomorrow. "I am not a professional politician," he said repeatedly.

For Mr. Green, the change in demeanor this weekend was striking, and signaled the extent to which the campaign had shifted beneath him. Just 10 days ago, Mr. Green, smiling and serene, declined to engage Mr. Bloomberg when asked to respond to attacks by him. "I don't really have to respond to him," Mr. Green said.

But yesterday, across New York, Mr. Green threw the campaign equivalent of the kitchen sink — or everything but — at his Republican opponent. The attacks reflected the difficulty Mr. Green has had to date in both breaking through Mr. Bloomberg's advertisement barrage, and of finding an effective message with which to demonize an opponent who, as a Republican running in a Democratic city, describes himself as a "liberal."

"Since he's run millions of dollars of negative ads saying that I'm anti-police, and called me a Stalinist, I think I'm now entitled to quote his own words, which document his insensitivity to and disrespect of women, communities of color, and public school students," Mr. Green said.

Most of all, though, Mr. Green invoked the suit filed by Ms. Garrison, brandishing a copy in front of television cameras and passing out copies to reporters. He said she had been "silenced" and called on Mr. Bloomberg to release the results of the lie detector test. The polygraph expert who administered the test had issued a statement earlier in the campaign saying Mr. Bloomberg had passed.

"She said that when she told Michael Bloomberg that she was pregnant, according to her under oath, he said twice, 'Kill it,' " Mr. Green said.

"Because the language in this deposition is so ugly and reprehensible and degrading to women, Mike Bloomberg owes an explanation to the voters of New York before Tuesday," he said.

At a Town Hall meeting in Forest Hills, Queens, last night, Mr. Bloomberg said he never made the "kill it" remark. "I never made that comment," he said. "That comment was ridiculous. Who would say something like that?"

Throughout the day, Mr. Bloomberg and his aides did not respond directly to Mr. Green's demand to release the results of the lie detector test, instead accusing Mr. Green of resorting to unscrupulous attacks to derail Mr. Bloomberg's candidacy. "When the going gets tough — he has a history when elections get close of going to the divisive and the smear and the inaccuracies and I don't think the public pays a lot of attention," Mr. Bloomberg said. "It isn't probably worth talking about it."

And at Katz's Deli, responding to Green supporters describing him as sexist, Mr. Bloomberg said: "I don't think that anybody who knows me thinks that I'm sexist. It's outrageous to say that. It's another one of these smear things."

Issues of sexism and insensitivity, plus a skirmish at a deli.

For their part, Mr. Bloomberg's aides (but not Mr. Bloomberg himself) pointed to a memorandum that Mr. Green's chief of staff, David Eichenthal, wrote regarding pay raises for employees. In it, he recommended against giving a raise to a staff lawyer, whose responsibilities included outreach to the Hispanic community. Mr. Eichenthal wrote that "it's not clear" that "the Latino community is where we need to make our greatest investment."

Aides to Mr. Green, in dismissing the charge, noted that Mr. Green did authorize the raise.

A potential headache for Mr. Green was removed yesterday. Democratic officials said that Mr. Ferrer, the Bronx borough president whom Mr. Green defeated in the Democratic primary, and Mr. Sharpton have both decided against bolting from the Green campaign.

At his church stops, Mr. Green accused Mr. Bloomberg of doing business in South Africa before the end of apartheid. "My rival is a billionaire Republican who joined four white only, male-only clubs, and invested in South Africa before apartheid ended," Mr. Green said.

Mr. Cunningham attacked Mr. Green for saying that. "He knows that's a lie — now he's lying in church," Mr. Cunningham said. "He goes before a black audiences and lies in their church just to try to inflame them."

Reminded that Mr. Bloomberg himself had written in his own book that his company had done business in South Africa during apartheid, Mr. Cunningham responded: "What the book was — it was badly written."

CITY_21MC100_011832446

NYC-WTC_000414500