

Anti-Nixon Incident

The San Jose Debate

By Tim Findley

The 11th-hour political brouhaha over Thursday's anti-Nixon demonstration in San Jose fumed with intimations of a "hoax" and "provocation" yesterday, but a curious state of agreement appeared developing between the two principals: the radicals and the Republicans.

Democratic politicians, labor leaders and moderate student spokesmen suggested openly that the much-publicized "attack on the President" and his motorcade was a political ploy to bring sympathy to GOP candidates.

Serious questions were raised about a suspicious laxity in security measures and about the President's flashing of a fingered "V" sign to a crowd of his detractors.

State Senator Alfred Alquist (Dem.-San Jose), a candidate for Lieutenant Governor, called for a Grand Jury investigation of the causes of the incident and San Francisco's Democratic Mayor, Joseph L. Alioto, accused the Republicans of trying to "make political hay on a statewide and national basis of the episode."

But at least some radicals were scoffing at notions that Republicans "staged" the affair and, to the contrary, were touting the "courageous brothers and sisters who attacked Richard Nixon."

Paula Lasich, 22, a San Jose State College senior and member of the San Jose State Liberation Front, termed the violence a "spontaneous upsurge of total rage."

She said planners of the anti-Nixon rally at San Jose Civic Auditorium had intended to avoid violence on a "tactical" basis because the demonstrators were outnumbered by police and Secret Service men.

When President Nixon left the auditorium, however, she said, there was a release of "pent-up hatred."

"The attack against Nixon with rocks, bottles, cigarette lighters and picket signs was certainly justified from a political standpoint if not from a tactical one and fortunately the forces of reaction were in a state of total chaos so very few people were arrested or hurt," she said.

Despite all the political thrashing on all sides — hay making or not — the incident had not been as violent as first reported, San Jose Police Chief Raymond Blackmore said. There were "some rocks thrown," he said, but he had not seen any of them. The "attack" was generally one of a "verbal rather than physical nature," the chief stated.

Blackmore took full responsibility for allowing demonstrators to come within a few feet of the President's limousine; but said he was "at no time concerned about physical violence being brought on the President of the United States."

Blackmore spoke to a crowd of some 2500 students in the San Jose State Student Union yesterday where the causes and extent of the violence were examined step-by-step by Blackmore and San Jose State President John Bunzel as well as student leaders.

The police chief said the incident was "way over-

played" in press accounts and political statements.

Blackmore did not take issue either with reports by students that only five eggs were thrown during the whole incident, and all of them tossed by one unidentified man.

Chris Mosher, head of the Medical Resistance, a group of protest-movement first aid men, said his group searched the entire area of the Civic Auditorium on Friday looking for debris of rocks or other missiles.

At a news conference yesterday, he produced a small cardboard box containing all the debris he said he found in

the area. It included a few small rocks, several tin cans, piles of leaflets, a hair brush and a pair of broken glasses.

"There was nothing to indicate an attack of the intensity described," Mosher said, referring to reports of a "hailstorm of eggs," and a "barrage of rocks" produced after the incident.

Chief Blackmore said Secret Service men had directed him as to how much security should be provided for the President, but that he had allowed demonstrators to come close to the President's car because he was "assured it would be a peaceful gathering."



Chris Mosher led a group which searched the Civic Auditorium area Friday morning and found this cardboard box of debris