

Angry Blacks Greet Earl Butz

Greenville, Miss.

In his first public appearance since leaving office, former Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz came to the Mississippi delta yesterday. He was immediately greeted by angry black protesters denouncing the racial slur that forced his resignation.

Butz visited this farm community at the long-standing invitation of a local Republican congressional candidate. He was the center of attraction at a campaign fund-raising reception attended by cotton and soy bean farmers who paid \$100 per couple to attend.

At a press conference earlier in the day, the former secretary said:

"I made a grievous mistake and I've apologized as sincerely as I know how. I paid a rather tremendous price for that, and as far as I'm concerned, it's a closed book."

Butz was alluding to racially derogatory remarks he had made aboard an aircraft in the company of entertainer Pat Boone and Watergate figure John Dean, who later published the comments in an article that appeared in *Rolling Stone* magazine.

Responding to a reporter's question about his remarks, Butz said: "I am not a racist and nobody has ever accused me of being a racist."

"The remark I made," Butz

said, "was an illustration of the minority situation 50 years ago.

"It was an old joke I've used about my own group of farmers," he added.

At one point, a black protester seated at the rear of the room shouted to Butz: "Are you a racial bigot?"

"Absolutely not," Butz sternly replied.

The former secretary avoided a group of 25 black protesters upon his arrival at the airport here aboard the private airplane of Clarke Reed, Mississippi Republican state chairman.

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