

San Diego's Good News

By Michael Harris

Robert N. Gadbois, president of the San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau, arrived in town yesterday bravely boasting about his community's virtues as a convention city.

Right now, he said, San Diego is "fighting like hell" to get the Buick dealers' convention that was displaced from Miami Beach when the Republican National Convention was shifted from San Diego to Florida.

And right now, he added, San Diego isn't even slightly interested in seeing either the Republicans or Democrats show up in San Diego for their 1976 national conventions.

"We just wanted them one time to show that San Diego is a major convention city, and 85 per cent of that objective has been reached," Gadbois said.

All the publicity, he said has made Americans realize

that San Diego is a big city with a lot of modern hotels.

"The bad publicity San Diego has been subjected to has nothing to do with San Diego as a city. If you took a poll, people would say either Peter Graham (operator of the San Diego Sports Arena) or politics was responsible for the shift."

Gadbois said he had told the Buick management it wouldn't have to deal with Graham or the Sports Arena if they came to town in August to introduce the 1973 line of cars.

"They would go to the Community Concourse—our city-owned and city-operated convention facility," Gadbois declared.

Asked if reports of steadily rising rental demands at the privately owned Sports Arena had hurt the city's reputation for reliability, Gadbois said, "All I can tell you is that San Diego is more than capable of han-



ROBERT N. GADBOIS
'Fighting like hell'

dling any convention.

"The National Rifle Association is coming here in 1975. This is pretty good proof that people who know the convention business are not deterred from San Diego."

As a matter of fact, Gadbois said, "If San Francisco keeps booting Yerba Buena from pillar to post for a few more years, so much the better for San Diego," Gadbois said, suddenly going on the attack.

"I love to see you dragging your feet."