

Denny's to address concerns



SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Denny's restaurants will train its employees in racial sensitivity and use minorities in commercials to settle a Justice Department lawsuit, but the chain denies it discriminated against blacks.

The proposed four-year settlement program, filed Friday in U.S. District Court in San Jose, does not affect a class-action damage suit filed Wednesday by 32 customers claiming that Denny's required blacks to pay a cover charge or prepay for meals and denied a black girl a free birthday meal.

The Justice Department suit cited some of the same incidents in alleging that Denny's and its parent company, TW Services Inc., "treat black customers less favorably than white customers and discourage black persons from visiting their restaurants."

The suit mentioned six occasions on which Denny's in San Jose, San Diego, Santa Clara and Sacramento required prepayment of blacks but, in most cases, not of whites.

One San Jose restaurant had police remove three black high school students and an East Indian, telling them there were "too many of you people here," the suit said. It said blacks in Vallejo and San Jose were denied free birthday meals.

Denny's said earlier in the week that complaints were related to late-night procedures at some restaurants with specific security concerns. The chain, based in Spartanburg, S.C., said it eliminated those

procedures at company-owned restaurants more than a year ago.

Of the 1,460 Denny's restaurants nationwide, 70 percent are owned by the company and the rest by franchisees. The settlement is binding on company-owned restaurants and requires the company to make its best efforts to get franchisees to comply, and to notify the government about any who refuse.

The court papers said Denny's denied the government's allegations but that both sides had agreed to a settlement to resolve the case quickly. The settlement is subject to approval by U.S. District Judge Spencer Williams.

The agreement requires Denny's to:

- Provide government-approved training for all employees in civil rights laws and racial sensitivity.
- Post non-discrimination statements in all restaurants, menus and ads.
- Use at least 25 percent identifiable non-whites, including at least 20 percent blacks, in all television commercials, newspaper ads and promotional flyers.
- Hire a monitor with at least 10 years of civil rights experience to oversee compliance.

Mari Mayeda, an attorney for the customers who filed suit on Wednesday, said the consent decree was an "important first step in resolving this dispute — but the Justice Department's action does nothing to redress the pain and anguish of the families who were humiliated by Denny's."

Letter promises more terrorism in U.S.

NEW YORK (AP) — A group opposing U.S. aid to Israel sent a letter to *The New York Times* claiming responsibility for the World Trade Center bombing, and authorities told the newspaper it was written by a person charged in the explosion.

The letter said that unless the United States severed relations with Israel and met other demands involving Middle East policy, additional attacks would be carried out by a group called the Liberation Army Fifth Bat-

alion, the newspaper reported in its Sunday editions. According to the letter writer, the group had "more than 150 suicidal soldiers" and would attack both military and civilian targets.

"The American people are responsible for the actions of their government and they must question all of the crimes that their government is committing against other people," the *Times* quoted the letter. "Or they — Americans — will be the targets of our operations that could

diminish them."

The letter demanded that the United States halt all military, economic and political aid to Israel, as well as sever diplomatic relations. It also demanded that the United States not interfere in the internal affairs of any Middle East country.

The *Times* said it received the letter four days after the Feb. 26 bombing that killed six people, injured more than 1,000 and closed the Trade Center's 110-story twin towers for weeks.

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