

Unlikely footage found in Otter ad

Governor's re-election campaign utilizes shot taken during filming of anti-GOP documentary

Joel Mills/Lewiston Tribune

Boise filmmaker Michael Gough got the surprise of his professional life Tuesday night while surfing campaign ads on the Internet.

"All of a sudden I was like 'Wait a minute,' " Gough said of watching one of Gov. C.L. (Butch) Otter's TV spots. "I rewound it and said 'Oh my God, that's my shot.' "

The interior view of the Idaho Capitol dome is briefly on the screen at the 12-second mark of the ad, titled "Business Testimonial." But Gough said he instantly recognized it as footage that was cut from the documentary "Add the Words" that he produced with Cammie Pavesic earlier this year.

Winner of the Audience Choice Runner-Up prize at the Bend Film Festival in Oregon, the feature-length movie follows protesters who unsuccessfully lobbied the 2014 Legislature to add the words "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" to Idaho's Human Rights Act. The act bans discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

A spokeswoman for the Otter campaign didn't respond to requests for comment Wednesday. Otter faces five challengers including Democrat A.J. Balukoff in his bid for a third term this fall.

Gough said he put some of the unused, generic shots from the film on a stock footage website, where anyone can purchase the video. About a month ago, somebody bought the five-second clip of the dome, but he didn't know who.

"I was excited because somebody actually paid \$75 for it," he said.

But the irony hit once he discovered the footage in its unlikely location. Gough said he initially had mixed feelings about Otter using footage shot for a film that vilifies him and his fellow Republicans in the Legislature. Those thoughts led him to a deeper layer of irony, and a deeper message to people in the service industry who believe it is their right to discriminate against homosexuals based on their moral or religious beliefs.

"Doing freelance video, I'm in the service business," Gough said. "I'm not going to be a hypocrite like some of those guys might be, where they want to deny services to certain types of people. I put this footage up for sale as a service business, and even if I don't agree with who may use my service, I can't really discriminate."

He pointed to the owners of the Hitching Post, a for-profit wedding chapel in Coeur d'Alene, who sued the city in federal court last week over an ordinance that bans discrimination based on

sexual orientation or gender identity. Don and Evelyn Knapp contend that the ordinance will force them to perform same-sex marriages now that they are legal in Idaho.

"You can't just pick and choose," Gough said. "I'm not interested in telling churches or religions what to do. But I feel that if you're going to be out there promoting a service business, you cannot be political about it. It's business. You can't get politically charged or religiously motivated when you're offering a service to your community."

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