

Reinecke Says He Talked To Mitchell About ITT

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SACRAMENTO, Calif., June 27—Lt. Gov. Ed Reinecke says he did have a telephone conversation in May of 1971 with former Attorney General John N. Mitchell about an International Telephone and Telegraph Co. offer to underwrite the Republican national convention in San Diego.

In doing so, Reinecke apparently contradicted statements that Mitchell made before Senate hearings into the ITT settlement of an antitrust suit, allegedly in return for underwriting the convention—which was later shifted to Miami Beach.

Reinecke made the statements this morning in a copyrighted article in the San Diego Union. Then he followed in the afternoon with a terse statement that the article was accurate and reflected his views.

In testimony before the Senate hearing, Mitchell had responded to a question about a Reinecke-Mitchell meeting to discuss the offer in May by saying:

"Mr. Reinecke must have had somebody else in mind because he did not meet with me in May and I have read in the paper he has retracted that statement about a meeting in May."

Cornered later today by reporters, Reinecke said that indeed he had not had a meeting with Mitchell. He had conferred with him by telephone instead.

He did not tell investigators that, he said, "because I was not asked. I was advised I should answer the questions asked and nothing more, as you do in any court situation, and that's exactly what I did."

Reinecke also confirmed that he had given the information to FBI agents reporting to Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox, and indicated he would return to Washington to answer questions at hearings if it became necessary.

ITT's offer to help finance the convention was linked to the antitrust settlement in a memo allegedly written by ITT lobbyist Dita D. Beard, and which was made public by columnist Jack Anderson.

The allegations of such a

settlement were vigorously denied by the company and led to the Senate Judiciary Committee hearings.

In the Union article, Reinecke was quoted as saying he told Mitchell in May that a business group in San Diego had been formed in support of the convention and that "we had this guarantee coming through the Sheraton hotels," a subsidiary of ITT.

But, he said, Mitchell had no discernable reaction to the offer.

Reinecke's original disclosure of the conversation with Mitchell to discuss the ITT offer in May of 1971 was immediately changed after an anonymous phone call, he said, advising him to recheck his records.

Reinecke then told the press he had rechecked his records and discovered that the conversation had taken place later in the year, after the ITT settlement had taken place with the Justice Department.

Then, last month, Reinecke said he had also gotten a telephone call from former assistant attorney general Robert C. Mardian, who told him Justice Department records showed the meeting with Mitchell was in 1971, before the ITT offer was made to the party.

At that time, Reinecke said his records confirmed the April date.

Now, asked about the contradictions, Reinecke said, among other things, that he had not noted Mitchell's testimony before the Senate hearing.

"As a matter of fact, he said, 'I never even bothered to read his testimony, so I don't know exactly what he said.'"

Asked if he thought Mitchell was lying, he said he "didn't want to use that word, or suggest anything of that nature."