

Mitchell, Reinecke Story Conflict Detailed

Examiner News Services

WASHINGTON — Before he retracted his story Friday, California Lt. Gov. Ed Reinecke and another state official had told at least three different reporters on three different occasions that he had told Attorney General John Mitchell last May about the Sheraton Corp.'s offer to pledge \$400,000 to the Republican Convention.

At that time, the Justice Department was still negotiating settlement of an anti-trust suit against International Telephone & Telegraph Corp., of which Sheraton is a subsidiary.

However, after it became apparent that their story conflicted with a Mitchell statement issued last

Wednesday denying knowledge of the ITT offer, Reinecke and Edward C. Gillenwaters, director of the State Department of Commerce switched their stories.

They claimed they did not see Mitchell in May at all, but in September, after the ITT case was settled. The case was settled in July.

In May

Reinecke and Gillenwaters told the reporters that they had told Mitchell about the ITT offer during a trip to Washington on May 16 or 17.

Reinecke told Robert Walters of the Washington Star that he informed Mitchell of the ITT offer "as part of the package we were offering to the party" to bring this summer's GOP convention to San Diego.

Gillenwaters told Brit Hume, an associate of columnist Jack Anderson, that

he and Reinecke had told Mitchell about the offer in May, according to Anderson's column, and Mitchell "liked the idea of having the convention in San Diego."

Copley News Service

In addition, Gillenwaters and Reinecke simultaneously told Ben Shore, a reporter of the Copley News Service, about the mid-May meeting. It was Shore, apparently, who first informed the Californians that their story was in conflict with Mitchell's. "They seemed shocked," said Shore.

Friday Reinecke's office put out a statement retracting his and Gillenwaters' earlier version of events.

The statement said that "after checking and verifying our records, we learned that our meeting with Atty. Gen. Mitchell was on April 26, 1971. At that time, we did not discuss the Republican

convention because the idea had not developed at that date.

"On the May 16, 1971, trip to Washington, we did not meet with Mitchell, as I had previously reported.

"This error was brought about by my trying to recall the purpose and dates of several trips to Washington at a time when I was out of town and did not have access to my files or records.

"My discussion with (Mitchell) concerning the convention was ... on Sept. 17, 1971. At no time did we discuss any commitment from ITT with reference to the Republican convention," but did discuss an offer from Sheraton.

"We never discussed or thought of any connection between the Sheraton Hotel and ITT," said Reinecke.

The Facts

These facts emerged to challenge the Reinecke retraction:

- In a June 16 interview in Sacramento, Reinecke told a reporter that during a trip to Washington in late April he discussed San Diego as a possible convention site with White House officials. Evidently, the convention idea had developed at that point.

- Reporters Walters and Shore contended that when they interviewed Reinecke he was in his Sacramento office with his records immediately at hand, and not "out of town."

- By Sept. 17, it was public knowledge that the Sheraton Corp. of America would be contributing \$400,000 to the convention, and Mitchell did not require a private briefing to be informed of the fact.