

Reinecke Says He Listened To Bad White House Advice

By George Skelton
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SACRAMENTO, Calif., Feb. 21—California Lt. Gov. Ed Reinecke said Wednesday he was advised by a top White House aide to answer only direct questions and not volunteer information during a 1972 U.S. Senate hearing into the International Telephone and Telegraph Corp. case.

Reinecke admitted that it was a crucial political mistake to heed this counsel of Clark MacGregor, then chief adviser to President Nixon for congressional relations.

"Obviously, I wish now I had told the whole story at that point," he said.

Instead, Reinecke recalled at a news conference, he held back from telling the Senate Judiciary Committee about pertinent telephone conversations he once had with former

U.S. Attorney General John N. Mitchell.

Senators asked only if he had "met" with Mitchell, Reinecke said, not whether he had talked with him by telephone.

Reinecke and Mitchell reportedly are under investigation to determine whether they committed perjury while testifying before the committee about their conversations regarding an ITT offer to help finance the 1972 Republican National Convention.

The central question involves the date Reinecke told Mitchell that ITT had offered to contribute up to \$400,000 for the convention, then planned for San Diego.

Mitchell insists Reinecke did not tell him about the offer until after a July 31, 1971, settlement of a Justice Department antitrust case against ITT that was favorable to the

company. Reinecke has given varying accounts, but now says he discussed the offer with Mitchell during three telephone conversations in May and June, 1971.

At the April 19, 1972, Senate committee hearing, Reinecke said he did not meet with Mitchell to disclose the ITT offer until Sept. 17, 1971.

But Reinecke insisted he had "absolutely" no intention of misleading the committee.

When asked whether he had learned a lesson from the episode, Reinecke replied:

"I'd have to say yes. The lesson I learned would have been to question my attorney's advice as to whether or not you should answer the questions only and not go beyond."

Asked who his attorney was, Reinecke said: "That was Clark MacGregor, who I had known as a good friend in the House of Representatives."