

Reinecke Talks Of Latest Poll

By Ralph Craib

Lieutenant Governor Ed Reinecke, a deeply troubled man, flew back to California and some more bad news yesterday.

He returned from Washington court appearances involving his perjury indictment to learn that his leading political opponent, Houston Flournoy, had edged past him in the latest California Poll.

Reinecke couldn't manage even a trace of a smile as he faced television cameras in a United Air Lines' lounge at San Francisco International Airport.

The lieutenant governor, drawn and seemingly ill at ease, was greeted by one handshaking supporter and by newsmen when his jet arrived from Dulles airport. He had permission to be absent from a U.S. District Court in Washington where his attorneys were arguing motions to dismiss the indictment or, as an alternative, to move his impending trial to Sacramento or San Francisco.

Until the California Poll was released yesterday, Reinecke held a 41 to 27 per cent edge over Flournoy in the race for the Republican gubernatorial nomination in next month's primary election.

"These things (polls) always close as you near an election," Reinecke said. "This same poll — only a few weeks ago — showed only a differential of two per cent . . . I don't think a slight lead means anything."

Many California Republicans, he said, had been placed "in a sort of holding pattern" about their choice for a gubernatorial candidate. That would end, he said, if he could get the indictment "cleared up."

Reinecke expressed bitterness about his present difficulties. He was indicted in an off-shoot of the Watergate scandals dealing with



ED REINECKE
Back from Washington

his conversations with former Attorney General John Mitchell.

Investigators have been attempting to determine if a favorable settlement of an antitrust suit against International Telephone and Telegraph Corp. was linked to a \$400,000 pledge from the Sheraton Corp., an ITT subsidiary, to underwrite the 1972 national Republican convention when it was proposed that it be held in San Diego.

Reinecke is accused of lying about some details of his own role in arranging the convention, which was eventually held in Miami.

He insisted on his innocence at the brief airport conference yesterday. "This is a flimsy, transparent indictment thrust upon the Republican Party," he said.

"The real indictment should be of the special prosecutor's office (the staff of Leon Jaworski, special Watergate prosecutor) for interfering with the political process in California."

As he spoke, the second day of the court hearing had ended in Washington, where a ruling is to be handed down Friday.

James E. Cox, Reinecke's attorney, told the court that evidence against his client was "tainted" and should not be admitted. He also ac-

eused prosecutors of losing a key piece of evidence in the case.

This was the handwritten original draft of the indictment later returned against Reinecke.

Prosecutor Richard Davis accused Cox of creating "incredible smoke." He said that the handwritten draft was insignificant in the case.

In Sacramento, Governor Ronald Reagan, who appointed Reinecke as lieutenant governor in 1969 when Robert Finch went to President Nixon's cabinet, said that he would himself resign if convicted of a felony while in public office.

But the governor again defended Reinecke. "Nothing has happened to change my mind about his integrity," Reagan said.

Reinecke's trial has been set for July 15. The judge's ruling Friday will also decide if the trial can be held before the June 4 primary, a request Reinecke has made.