

Reagan's Suggestion To Reinecke

Sacramento

Governor Ronald Reagan suggested yesterday that it would be better for the state if Lieutenant Governor Ed Reinecke, convicted of perjury, resigned immediately, but the lieutenant governor steadfastly declined.

Reagan said it "could simplify things greatly" if his former heir-apparent relinquishes his office now.

In a hastily called news briefing outside his capitol office, Reinecke said he would not step down.

"I am the lieutenant governor of the State of California and I will be until December 31 or until all posttrial motions are exhausted and judgment is entered," said Reinecke.

Reinecke said he spoke with Reagan and was urged to "fully consider" a legal opinion from the attorney general that his remaining in office threatens the state with long and costly court challenges.

"I have, and I stand on what I said yesterday (Thursday)," said Reinecke.

The 50-year-old Reinecke, who was appointed to the office by Reagan in 1969, said he had no comment on whether he interpreted the governor's statements as pressure for him to resign immediately.

Attorney General Evelle J. Younger said Reinecke could legally remain in office, in spite of the likelihood of challenges, until a sentence is imposed. But the attorney general warned that the challenges would be "long, drawn out and traumatic."

Reagan said he has two options — to appoint the Republican nominee for lieutenant governor, State Senator John L. Harmer of Glendale, and thus give him an incumbent's advantage in the fall against the Democratic nominee, State Senator Mervyn Dymally of Los Angeles, or to appoint a "caretaker" lieutenant governor, one who would fill the duties for the rest of the year.

When asked if, all things considered, he would favor a Reinecke resignation now instead of waiting until August 30 or later, Reagan said he would.

And he will tell Reinecke that when they meet in Sacramento the first part of next week, Reagan said.

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