

Suit to Oust Reinecke Is Blocked

The California Supreme Court yesterday denied a People's Lobby request for permission to file a suit that seeks removal of Lieutenant Governor Ed Reinecke from office.

The Los Angeles-based activist group first sought Reinecke's removal after he was convicted of perjury by a federal court jury in Washington, D.C., on July 27.

Attorney General Evelle J. Younger denied the group permission to sue, arguing that Reinecke could continue to hold office until he is formally sentenced. Sentencing has now been set for October 1.

Following Younger's decision, People's Lobby filed suit in the state Supreme Court, claiming Reinecke was disqualified from holding office under the state constitution from the moment he was found guilty.

Younger's opposing brief contended that forfeiture of an elective office is "a severe sanction."

"It is not unreasonable," he stated, "that the legislature should have decided that such forfeiture be solemnized by a judgment of the court. We think not."

In Sacramento, before the high court's decision was announced, People's Lobby director Ed Koupal urged the Assembly to impeach Reinecke immediately.

"This is a reasonable and responsible solution," he said, "to having a convicted perjurer a heartbeat away from the governorship."