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It's Time to Retire, Warren Says at 77

Earl Warren, now on vacation in San Francisco, retired as chief justice of the United States "solely because of age," it was revealed today.

The disclosure came in the release by the White House of the texts of Warren's letter of retirement and President Johnson's reply.

Warren used the phrase in his letter and — although he declined to discuss his retirement in detail when he arrived here last night — the snow-haired jurist gave substantially the same reason to newsmen.

Was there, he was asked, any "significance" to the time that he chose for retirement.

"Yes," he replied. "My age."

Warren, now 77, pointed

out in his letter to the President that when he first entered public service 50 years ago 150 million of the 200 million living in the country had not been born.

The former chief justice was accompanied by his wife Nina when they arrived last night, and he hinted that their retirement home will be in the Bay Area.

"Unquestionably, when I retire, I'll spend a great deal of my time in California," said the Chief Justice.

In reply to questions about whether home would be Oakland, where he began a political career as assistant district attorney of Alameda County, Warren said:

"I didn't say Oakland. I don't want real estate men crowding around."

He sidestepped all questions hinting of politics, including a query about whether he was distressed about Republican Governor Reagan terming his reported resignation a favor to President Johnson in giving the outgoing president a last chance to appoint a new head of the high court.

"I have been out of politics for 15 years . . . and I'm going to stay out religiously," said Warren, the former California Governor.

He also sidestepped questions on what he considered the greatest achievement of the "Warren Supreme Court."

"Only the future will tell," said the Chief Justice.

Warren said he plans to attend the 60th reunion tomorrow of the graduating class of Kern County High School.

There was nostalgia yesterday at the Warrens' jet arrival at San Francisco International Airport. The Chief Justice was greeted by the men who had formed the nucleus of the first cabinet as Governor of California.

They included Federal District Judge William T. Sweigert, the former Governor's executive secretary; Federal Judge Albert C. Woltenberg, GOP floor leader in the State Assembly and legislative champion of many Warren programs; and Richard McGee, Director of Corrections in the Warren regime.