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# Governor Won't Seek Reelection : Action Sets Off a Scramble for 1990 Contest

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California's political logjam was blown sky-high Thursday when Gov. George Deukmejian announced that he will not seek reelection in 1990.

Some politicians jumped in, some jumped out and others suddenly became coy in the maneuvering that began minutes after the governor's statement.

Moving toward a race for governor were big-name Democrats like Atty. Gen. John Van de Kamp, former San Francisco Mayor Dianne Feinstein and state Controller Gray Davis. Lt. Gov. Leo T. McCarthy also is on the list of Democratic possibles.

## Wilson Mentioned

On the Republican side, U.S. Sen. Pete Wilson would probably preempt the field--if he chooses to run. But Wilson refused to comment Thursday. There was speculation about another big-name Republican, baseball commissioner Peter Ueberroth, but he too refused to say whether he might run.

Los Angeles Police Chief Daryl F. Gates said he would definitely be interested in seeking the GOP gubernatorial nomination in 1990. Moving away from the contest were the likes of Republican state Sen. Ken Maddy and former Rep. Ed Zschau.

Crowded primaries in both parties are now expected in the 1990 gubernatorial race and that in turn will jumble races for other offices and could even affect one U.S. Senate contest.

Democrats have the stronger bench--they hold all of the other constitutional offices except for treasurer--and they viewed the Deukmejian announcement as helping them enormously.

But one Republican, while acknowledging that his party has few big-name contenders, said, "Two years is an eternity in politics and anything can happen."

Mayor Tom Bradley, who barely lost to Deukmejian in 1982 but was soundly beaten by him in 1986, apparently will not be a candidate for the job in 1990.

Asked if there was any chance Bradley would run, top adviser and Deputy Mayor Mike Gage said, "No. And that's it."

Van de Kamp, however, has already made it clear he is running. Although he declined Thursday to discuss his plans, his press secretary, Duane Peterson said: "Yes, he wants the job, but the governor's race is 22 months away and this is not the time to discuss strategy."

An aide to McCarthy, who was on vacation, said, "The lieutenant governor has not made any decisions about his future plans."

McCarthy lost in his bid to unseat Sen. Wilson last November. But soon after that he hired as his top aide Kim Cranston, son of the other California senator, Alan Cranston, one of the most powerful Democrats in the country.

A close adviser to McCarthy said privately that was a signal that the lieutenant governor was not ruling out a race for higher office in the future.

Since McCarthy is also up for reelection in 1990, his candidacy for governor would set off a rush of candidates for his job.

The same thing will happen if Controller Davis, who has often expressed interest in being governor, decides to go for the top job.

Davis said Thursday, "I am going to decide by Feb. 15 what I intend to do in 1990, but I can tell you this: If I do run for governor it will be to stand up for the middle class, because nobody is doing that now."

In San Francisco, Feinstein moved to make herself a candidate upon hearing of Deukmejian's decision.

"His decision made the campaign for governor a wide-open race," she said. She added that she had immediately authorized an exploratory committee.

"The committee will seriously be exploring the race," said Feinstein. "I will be making a formal announcement as to my intentions later this year."

Feinstein and McCarthy both have Northern California bases, while Van de Kamp and Davis are based in vote-rich Southern California.

Los Angeles Police Chief Gates, who has never run for elective office, told The Times last month that he would think about running if Deukmejian decided not to seek reelection. On Thursday, he said, "I will have to give it serious thought, because we need someone who can carry on the kinds of things Deukmejian has done, and I think I can do that."

Two Republicans who could be formidable candidates, state Sen. Maddy and former Rep. Zschau, appeared to rule out a race for governor.

Maddy said in a statement that he plans to run for reelection in 1990 and his consultant, Sal Russo, said: "We explored running for governor very seriously and

Ken's decision not to do it is similar to the governor's. It's personal."

Zschau, who nearly unseated Cranston in the 1986 U.S. Senate race, said: "People have talked to me about the governorship, but I have no plans to be a candidate. I am still planning to run for the Senate in 1992."

Sen. Wilson, who has been under pressure to consider succeeding Deukmejian, told aides Thursday he would not discuss the race and then left for a vacation in Mexico.

A formidable fund-raiser who was just reelected to his second Senate term, the former San Diego mayor has long wanted to be governor, and many Republican insiders believe he would be the toughest candidate for the Democrats to beat in 1990.

But if he lost a race for governor it would make him vulnerable when his Senate seat is up again in 1994, and he and his wife, Gayle, are said to be very fond of living in Washington.

Another possible GOP candidate for governor in 1990 is former Long Beach Rep. Dan Lungren.

Lungren was Deukmejian's first choice for state treasurer but could not get confirmed by the Democratic-controlled Legislature.

Asked Thursday if he would be interested in running for governor, Lungren said he had "an open mind and an open book. . . . I have no intention of making an early decision."

If he ran for governor, Lungren would appeal to California's conservative Republicans because of his congressional voting record and staunch opposition to abortion.

Ueberroth, who leaves his job as baseball commissioner in March, would only say Thursday that he plans to return to California to live. He did not rule out a candidacy for governor, saying that he would "explore all opportunities."

If he chose to run, Ueberroth would attract a lot of interest from California corporate leaders who praised his handling of the 1984 Los Angeles Summer Olympics.

One consultant said Thursday that Ueberroth represents a "Ronald Reagan-type of candidate--somebody from central casting."

The governorship is of added importance in 1990 because of the arcane business of reapportionment. This is the once-in-a-decade redrawing of district lines for the state Legislature, and congressional districts--including four or five new congressional seats that will be allotted California under the upcoming census.

Democrats are virtually certain to control the Legislature, which is responsible for passing a reapportionment plan. Republicans desperately hope for a GOP governor in the Statehouse to prevent a gerrymander.

Once the dust begins to settle on the field of gubernatorial candidates, a whole new army of ambitious politicians will begin airing out their hopes to move up in the Sacramento pecking order.

"This is like crack the whip. It starts today--the ripple goes down the line for two years and we hear the crack in 1990," said one Democratic political consultant.

As the Republicans scrambled Thursday to deal with the fallout from Deukmejian's announcement, Rep. Robert Dornan (R-Garden Grove) seemed to speak for them all when he said, "I am just stunned beyond words. I haven't the faintest idea which Republican can now emerge to take on a Democrat (in the governor's race). And it is especially important because of reapportionment."

Times staff writers Richard C. Paddock in Sacramento, Josh Getlin in Washington and Kenneth Reich in Los Angeles contributed to this report.