

Gremillion Books Audit Under Way

By BILL LYNCH
(States-Item Bureau)

BATON ROUGE—A new audit of Atty. Gen. Jack P. F. Gremillion's books is being made by the legislative auditor, the States-Item learned today.

The new audit, covering the period since 1964, was prompted by criticism that no report on the attorney general's operations has been published by Legislative Auditor J. B. Lancaster since a study of the 1959 fiscal year.

THE SPOTLIGHT was thrown on the attorney general following revelations of his dealings with Louisiana Loan and Thrift Corp., a lending firm that has since gone into federal bankruptcy proceedings.

The States-Item learned that the last audit of Gremillion's books was made in 1965 for the previous fiscal year but the results never were published.

That audit was conducted by Kirby Smith, an employe in the office, who is conducting the present audit. At least one other examiner has been assigned to the audit.

Two previous audits between 1959 and 1965 were started, with one of them not being completed and another finished but also going unpublished.

At least one state senator, Charles G. Smither of New Orleans, declared that an audit of Gremillion's books should be made. He said that after the session he would ask Lancaster to follow through on an examination of the entire period which hasn't been reported.

SMITHER HAD planned to seek the audit prior to the

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current 30-day special session of the Legislature, in which he unsuccessfully attempted to have Gremillion addressed out of office for his part in the LL&T.

Gremillion received a \$10,000 fee from the LL&T for private legal work and then later rendered a vital opinion for the company and worked on its behalf. The State Board of Ethics for Elected Officials held that Gremillion had failed to measure up to the ethics law standards.

The new audit may be completed in 30 to 60 days.

In the meantime, the attorney general has volunteered to appear before a federal grand jury in New Orleans investigating the LL&T.

Panel Lacks Quorum

BATON ROUGE (AP)—A committee hearing on a resolution calling for a probe of Atty. Gen. Jack Gremillion's involvement in a loan firm was delayed today when a quorum failed to show up.

Sources on the House Judiciary "C" Committee said some members had been "talked to" over the weekend and had been asked not to show up.

Rep. Leon Soniat of Metairie, sponsor of the resolution, said he didn't know why there wasn't a quorum.

He said he will press for a hearing on his resolution, which requests East Baton Parish Dist. Atty. Sargent Pitcher to investigate Gremillion's involvement in Louisiana Loan & Thrift Corp.

Rep. Kenneth Leithman of Jefferson Parish said the failure to get a quorum did not enhance Gremillion's image. He said it was obvious why some members failed to show up.