

## Gremillion Unfit; Should Resign

Atty. Gen. Jack P. F. Gremillion today stands condemned of violating the state's Code of Ethics in his dealings with Louisiana Loan and Thrift Co.

The condemnation was made by the Louisiana Board of Ethics for Elected Officials in an advisory opinion requested by Mr. Gremillion himself.

The Board of Ethics, however, dismissed a complaint filed by the New Orleans Metropolitan Crime Commission calling for a public hearing on possible violations of the code's criminal provisions. The board said it was doubtful, in its opinion, whether such violations could be established beyond a reasonable doubt within the narrow confines of a legal proceeding.

MCC President Dr. J. D. Grey expressed disappointment in the board's action, calling it "half a loaf." That it may well be. Nevertheless, on the basis of the board's advisory opinion, Mr. Gremillion today stands in disrepute.

The ethics board specifically found that Mr. Gremillion's acceptance of a \$10,000 private legal fee, which he says was in payment of services performed before the firm's opening for business in New Orleans, as well as his subsequent dealings with the firm, constituted "a substantial failure to measure up to the standards" prescribed by the code.

Mr. Gremillion first came under fire when it was revealed that he issued an official opinion as attorney general in August, 1966, one month after the now bankrupt firm opened for business, keeping it from under the jurisdiction of the federal Securities and Exchange

Commission.

That ruling allowed LL&T to continue its operations under the state Banking Department, even though the firm's articles of incorporation specifically prohibited it from engaging in the banking business, thereby enabling it to escape the more stringent scrutiny of the federal regulatory agency.

The ethics board also found that the \$10,000 legal fee which Mr. Gremillion received was out of line with the services he performed, noting that such a payment should have indicated to Mr. Gremillion "that the promoter was seeking some benefits from his involvement as an attorney beyond the technical legal services rendered."

Continuing, the board said:

"The attorney general should have realized, although no definite commitment was asked, that he might well be expected at some future time to deal preferentially with LL&T . . ."

The board said that based on the facts that it had to conclude that Mr. Gremillion went out of his way to protect and advance the interests of LL&T.

Regardless of whether he is ever criminally prosecuted, Mr. Gremillion has discredited himself and his office by his conduct in this matter.

He has been found in violation of the state's code of ethics. Furthermore, as the record shows, he has lied about involvement with LL&T.

As far as we are concerned, Mr. Gremillion should resign. In our opinion, he has shown himself unfit to hold the highest legal office in this state.