

Separate LL&T Trials Sought

The five defendants in the Louisiana Loan and Thrift case began parading to the witness stand in federal court today, seeking separate trials on the fraud and conspiracy charges against them.

The second day of the hearing before District Court Judge Frederick J. R. Heebe was taken up with arguments on the severance motions, sought on grounds that the defendants have "hostile interests" and should not be tried together.

The five were indicted on 16 counts of conspiracy, mail fraud and fraud in the sale of securities in connection with the financial troubles of the bankrupt firm. The five are:

Attorney General Jack P. F. Gremillion, state Rep. Salvador Anzelmo, Earnest A. Bartlett Jr. of Ft. Smith, Ark., Charles H. Ritchey of New Orleans and Joseph Kavanaugh of Baton Rouge.

Kavanaugh was the first to testify today. He said he never attended a meeting of the

LL&T board and "never received one penny for any activity in connection with LL&T."

Asked when he first met Bartlett, he said, "On the date I was arraigned on this charge in this court."

Asked when he first met Ritchey, he said March 8, 1968, when he was asked by the late Clayton James, then state banking commissioner, to look into the affairs of LL&T.

Kavanaugh said he never met Anzelmo until the legisla-

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tive session of 1966, when at James' request he asked him about newspaper ads relating to LL&T.

James, Kavanaugh said, had told him there were complaints that LL&T's ads led the public to believe the firm was doing business as a bank or a building and loan association.

KAVANAUGH SAID when he attempted to question Anzelmo about the ads, the lawmaker "was indignant and asked me how this was any of my business."

The start of today's hearing was delayed by a lengthy pre-conference in Judge Heebe's chambers between attorneys for all sides in an attempt to resolve some of the issues. A total of 79 motions has been filed in the case.

The other four defendants were due to take the stand after Kavanaugh to argue for severances.

On cross-examination by U.S. Attorney Gerald J. Gallinhouse, Kavanaugh, who said he had never been "conservator of LL&T as such," testified in a separate trial of the defendants he could offer evidence favorable to all of them.

Judge Heebe interposed at one point that Kavanaugh was saying he "could" give favorable testimony but the decision on whether he testified is "in the control of his attorney."

"**PRECISELY**, your honor," said the defendant-witness. Later, he said if all were tried together his testimony would depend on the posture of the case and the advice of his attorney.

Bartlett was next on the stand. He testified he had not met Kavanaugh prior to the date of the arraignment and has not communicated with him "to this date."

Bartlett said he never has asserted his rights under the Fifth Amendment because both the Arkansas Loan and Thrift Corp. and the Louisiana Loan and Thrift Corp. are public and information about them should be made public.

HE SAID, however, he has been convicted in the Arkansas case and if the men were tried together he would not take the stand because it would jeopardize his appeal.

Several heated remarks were made concerning "pertinent" and "favorable" testimony, and at one point Julian R. Murray Jr., first assistant U.S. attorney, asked the court to restrict news coverage of the hearing "so that self-serving statements may not be printed" and exposed for the public prior to the trial.

Judge Heebe said he would ask the attorneys to keep questions of a "factual" nature to a limited area. "I think that's sufficient."