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At Judges Council

Participating in the National Council of Court Judges meeting at the Fontainebleau Motor Hotel are, from left, SEN. BIRCH BAYH, D-Ind., an announced Democratic hopeful for President in 1972; Orleans Juvenile Court JUDGE ERNEST N. MORIAL and GOV. JOHN J. M'KEITHEN. (States-Item photo.)

Charges Against DA 'Shocking'--McKeithen

Gov. John J. McKeithen today called the bribery charges against Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison "shocking and very distressing," but he again refused to take the initiative in removing him from office.

"There is no precedent in this state for removing a man from office because he has been charged," McKeithen said in a press conference at the Fontainebleau Motor Hotel. "If he's convicted, he must be removed."

The governor said no group or individual except the Metropolitan Crime Commission (MCC) has called for Garrison's ouster. He said MCC Managing Director Aaron M. Kohn, who last week called on McKeithen to remove Garrison, "has a great opportunity to serve his parish" by initiating removal proceedings himself.

"I'M NOT GOING to make that decision," said McKeithen, who added in response to a question that it was "fair to say" he and Garrison are still good friends. The district attorney was an

early political supporter of McKeithen. The governor said he is "hopeful and optimistic" that the Domed Stadium Commission will be able to sell \$113 million in construction bonds tomorrow. He said he would stay in New Orleans "until the die is cast."

Asked his reaction to persistent legal action by state Rep. Pary Branton of Shongaloo to block dome financing arrangements, McKeithen said "every state has its Brantons" who obstruct progress. He added that Branton won his seat in the legislature by only 300

votes in the last campaign by "conning Negroes into voting for him."

"HE IS the least effective opponent that we could get throughout the state," McKeithen said.

It will be up to domed stadium attorneys to decide whether to file counter-suits in view of the latest legal challenges to the \$129.5 million project, the governor said.

McKeithen was at the Fontainebleau to welcome delegates to the 34th annual conference of the National Council of Juvenile Court judges.