

I'M NOT ABOUT TO RESIGN -- Jack Gremillion

Atty. Gen. Jack P. F. Gremillion said today he will not resign and will appeal his federal court perjury conviction.

Gremillion, found guilty Saturday on five counts of lying to a grand jury, said in response to questions about political opponents' calls for his resignation:

"I pay no attention to political gossip and I'm not about to resign, because I believe in the American system of justice and that system has not been finally exploited."

GREMILLION is seeking a fifth consecutive term. Two other candidates for the office, J. Minos Simon, a Lafayette attorney, and Sen. George Oubre of Norco yesterday called for his immediate resignation as a result of the conviction.

Gremillion was convicted after a jury deliberated only one hour and 35 minutes before ruling he lied to a federal grand jury in 1969 as it probed the activities of the now-defunct Louisiana Loan and Thrift Corp.

Gremillion had told the grand jury he owned no stock in the bankrupt corporation, received no dividends from it, had signed no stock voting proxies and had no economic interest in the company.

Under the state constitution, the attorney general can only be removed

from office by impeachment or suit. The impeachment move would have to be made in the House and tried in the Senate, where a two-thirds vote would be necessary.

A SUIT COULD be filed in Gremillion's home parish, East Baton Rouge, where Sargent Pitcher is district attorney, and this must be done when at least 25 citizens and taxpayers file a written request specifying charges.

"The tragedy of the Gremillion conviction is that the federal government

had to step in to take care of what should have been taken care of by the officials of the state of Louisiana," Simon said here.

"I am going to ask, as I had previously asked, that he step down because his continuing to serve brings a great deal of embarrassment to the state," Oubre said.

CONGRESSMAN Edwin Edwards, a candidate for governor, called the conviction another "black eye" for the state.

Edwards and Tom Stagg, Republican candidate for attorney general, both said there should be a state law to require public officials to step down when they are indicted.

"I agree with some of the other candidates who say that when a state official has been validly indicted he

should step aside until the matter has been determined by the courts," Stagg said. "An indictment is quite a serious thing."

THERE APPEARS little that could be done about disbarment.

"Under Louisiana law he is untouchable," explained Thomas O. Collins Jr., executive counsel for the Louisiana State Bar Association. "We couldn't disbar him even if we wanted to."

There was no immediate indication when an appeal to the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals might be filed.

Gremillion faces a maximum sentence of five years in jail and a \$2,000 fine on each of five counts.

Gremillion will be sentenced after a pre-sentence investigation report is prepared for U.S. District Judge Fred J. Cassibry.

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New Orleans, La., Monday, September 27, 1971

Gremillion found guilty

Jack P. F. Gremillion, the attorney general of Louisiana, has been found guilty of criminal perjury — lying while under oath — by a jury of 12 men and women.

Mr. Gremillion was indicted on five counts of perjury while testifying before a federal grand jury about his financial connections with the now-defunct Louisiana Loan and Thrift Corp.

On Saturday, a jury in federal district court here found Mr. Gremillion guilty on all five counts.

In 1968, the state Board of Ethics for elected officials found Mr. Gremillion guilty of a conflict of interest in connection with the use of his authority to advance the interests of LL&T. At that time, we called for his resignation. We reiterate that call today.

Mr. Gremillion is a disgrace to the legal profession, to the State of Louisiana and to its people. If Mr. Gremillion has an ounce of integrity left in his veins, he will resign at once.

If he does not, if he is successful in drawing out the appeals process so that he is not forced out of the race for re-election, we hope the good people of Louisiana will show that they will not tolerate in the office of attorney general, or any

other office a criminal—a man who lies while swearing to tell the truth.

Mr. Gremillion should have been disbarred and removed from office a long time ago by the proper authorities. But they proved to be too timid.

Justice finally has been done, however. And none too soon.

Hugo L. Black

As we noted last week in an editorial on the occasion of his retirement, Justice Hugo L. Black, who died Saturday at the age of 85, will rank with the greatest men who have ever served on the nation's highest Court.

Justice Black, a judicial conservative who believed the Constitution meant what it said and interpreted it literally during his 34 years on the Court, was the backbone of the Warren Court.

Justice Black was a firm believer in equal rights and bulwark against the erosion of individual liberties under the Constitution. He has left a great mark upon this land, which is diminished by his death.