

# Gurney Appears To Be a Dropout

Washington

Senator Edward J. Gurney (Rep-Fla.), President Nixon's loyal ally on the Senate select Watergate committee has ceased to be an active, functioning member of the committee, according to Senate sources and records.

A check shows that Gurney has not been present at the committee's last eight public sessions.

In contrast, all of the other six committee members have attended at least four of the last eight public sessions, with Senators Lowell P. Weicker Jr. (Rep-Conn.) and Joseph M. Montoya (Dem-N.M.) having perfect

records.

The last eight public sessions cover the time from October 31 to November 15, during which period Gurney acknowledged that the Justice Department was investigating allegations that Florida builders secretly contributed large sums of money to him and expected preferential treatment from the Federal Housing Administration.

Gurney has denied knowledge of such fund-raising efforts.

Efforts to reach Gurney for comment have been unsuccessful.

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