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**Explanation
For Absence
Of Gurney**

Washington

Senator Edward Gurney (Rep-Fla) has missed the last eight sessions of the Senate Watergate committee largely because of schedule conflicts, rather than any deliberate efforts to avoid the hearings, his administrative assistant, Jim Allison Jr., said yesterday.

Gurney is involved in a Justice Department investigation of an alleged political fund established on his behalf by Florida builders in exchange for expected preferential treatment by the Federal Housing Administration. The eight meetings he missed occurred from October 31 and November 15, about the time Gurney acknowledged the slush fund investigation.

Allison said the Senator missed the public sessions because of conflicting meetings of the Senate Judiciary Committee, of which he is a member. But Judiciary Committee records showed Gurney did not attend any of its eight public hearings held between November 1 and 20.

United Press