

Merry-Go-Round

Senator Gurney's Campaign Troubles



Jack Anderson

SENATOR ED GURNEY, the handsome handmaiden of the White House during the Senate probe of Watergate campaign tactics, is himself in criminal violation of campaign contributions laws.

Gurney, in failing to file as a candidate for reelection to his Senate seat, put himself squarely in the way of a one-year jail term and a \$1000 fine.

The violation, which his staff concedes, but insists is "purely technical," occurred as a result of a gala fund-raiser on May 23, 1973. Fat cats, including presidential friends "Bebe" Rebozo and the late Murray Chotiner, bought \$21,000 worth of tickets for the Gurney cocktail party.

To bank the money, Gurney authorized formation of the "Friends of Gurney," a political committee dedicated to his reelection. And, under federal law, which Gurney helped pass in 1971, this clearly fits the "definitions (of) a candidate," as spelled out by the statute.

★ ★ ★

THE LAW specifies that Gurney had to file an accounting with the Secretary of the Senate by June 10, 1973, even though the "Friends of Gurney" did make a filing. Gurney failed to file.

For month after month, Gurney has been sitting on the Watergate committee, which is dealing with the very laws he has violated. Indeed, the Florida fashion plate has been particularly cutting toward anti-

Nixon witnesses whom he thought strayed from the straight and narrow.

However, it was not until our associate Bob Owens confronted his office with the fact of his violation that Gurney finally filed the proper forms with the Secretary of the Senate, seven months too late.

In long talks with Gurney staffers, they admitted that the Senator was technically in criminal violation of the law, but they said other Senators were equally guilty. They insisted that Gurney had not committed any "willful" crime.

Two federal grand juries are already looking into reports that Gurney's office had secretly collected more than \$100,000 from contractors seeking help with government loans. Gurney has denied he had anything to do with illegal activities.

★ ★ ★

THE CIA, which prides itself on its hush-hush documents, is quietly publishing maps for the general public. The maps of West Germany, Sweden, Yugoslavia, South Vietnam and North Korea include ports, airfields, vegetation, population density and ethnic groups.

Asked whether guerrillas might not find the maps useful for antigovernment action, a CIA spokesman said that all secret information had been sanitized out.

Today's column was written under the direction of Les Whitten of Jack Anderson's staff.