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## EX-G.O.P. OFFICIAL MENTIONS GURNEY

Pleads Guilty in Plot—Says  
He Aided in Fund Scheme

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Special to The New York Times

TAMPA, Fla., March 19—A former chairman of the Florida Republican party, Earl M. Crittenden, pleaded guilty today to conspiring with former Senator Edward J. Gurney and others to violate Federal election laws in 1971 and 1972, a misdemeanor.

After his plea was accepted by Federal District judge Ben Krentzman, Mr. Crittenden testified that in 1971 he helped set up a fund-raising plan to aid Mr. Gurney's chances for re-election in 1974, and that in its first year, the plan raised more than \$125,000 in cash.

The Government has accused Mr. Gurney and associates of extorting more than \$300,000 from homebuilders seeking mortgage insurance in Florida from the Federal Housing Administration.

### Four Others on Trial

Being tried with Mr. Gurney are two of his former assistants, James L. Groot and Joseph Bastien, and two Florida officials of the F.H.A., Wayne Swiger and Ralph N. Koontz.

The 44-year-old Mr. Crittenden, an Orlando citrus grower and packer who was the chairman of Mr. Gurney's Senate campaign in 1968, overflowed with words during his testimony today, prompting numerous objections from defense attorneys.

"Am I being too wordy?" Mr. Crittenden asked.

"Try to confine yourself to answering the questions," said Judge Krentzman.

Mr. Crittenden said that in February, 1972, he saw a "shirt box or a shoe box" full of cash raised in the first year of the "Gurney booster plan," but was not told how the \$125,000 was raised. "I do know you don't raise that kind of money at a Sunday school picnic," he said.

In an indictment returned last July, while Mr. Gurney was sitting as a member of the Senate committee investigating the Watergate scandals, the Government said that builders were refused F.H.A. mortgage commitments until they contributed to the Gurney re-election fund.

Mr. Gurney did not seek re-election after being indicted.

Mr. Crittenden testified that in the summer of 1971, he laundered money through his business and his personal bank account for the Gurney booster campaign, giving Larry E. Williams, a Gurney fund raiser, personal or company checks in exchange for cash. He said that he did not know where the cash came from.

Mr. Williams also pleaded guilty and has already served a prison term for his part in the scheme.

Mr. Crittenden testified that in the summer of 1972, Mr. Williams told of having arranged for an Orlando developer and architect, John Dye, to give Mr. Gurney a free \$55,000 condominium apartment at Vero Beach, Fla.

The citrus man testified that he refused to let the apartment be put in his name until Mr. Gurney retired from the Senate. He said that Mr. Gurney had told him not to worry about the refusal, saying "there was no problem, they had made other arrangements."

Government attorneys told Judge Krentzman that in return for Mr. Crittenden's guilty plea, the prosecutors would recommend a sentence of no more than six months in jail or a \$1,000 fine. A felony conspiracy charge is still pending against Mr. Crittenden, but will be dropped if he testifies "truthfully and with candor" in the current trial, the prosecutor said.