

Spy in McGovern Drive Tried To Sell Note by Mrs. Kennedy

By ELEANOR BLAU

WWT 8/21/73

A writer who spied on Senator George McGovern's Presidential campaign last year at the request of an adviser to President Nixon also created a stir in 1965 by trying to auction a note written by Mrs. John F. Kennedy to Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson.

Mrs. Lucianne C. Goldberg—then Mrs. Cummings—confirmed yesterday that she had tried to sell the note, touching off a flurry in which Mrs. Johnson demanded the return of the letter and Secret Service agents tried to retrieve it.

Mrs. Goldberg apologized at the time for trying to sell the note, calling it an "error in judgment." But she stressed yesterday that the letter had not been stolen. "There was no espionage," she said.

According to Mrs. Goldberg, she handed the letter and other papers to Mrs. Johnson when she was working for Mr. Johnson in the 1960 campaign. Mrs. Johnson looked at them and handed them back, asking her to take care of them, Mrs. Goldberg said.

'Listening Party'

The note was an invitation to Mrs. Johnson to attend a "listening party" for one of the television debates in the Presidential campaign between Mr. Kennedy and Vice President Nixon.

Charles Hamilton, the auto-graph dealer to whom Mrs. Goldberg gave the note for auction, said it would have brought at least \$1,000. He eventually returned the letter by registered mail after Secret Service agents had visited him in a manner he called "a bit Gestapo-ish."

Murray M. Chotiner, a former political adviser to Mr. Nixon, confirmed yesterday that

he had employed Mrs. Goldberg, at a salary of \$1,000 a week, to join Senator McGovern's campaign and provide daily reports of the activities of the Democratic Presidential candidate.

Mrs. Goldberg denied yesterday that she had said that Mr. Chotiner asked her to get "really dirty stuff" about the McGovern campaign.

'That Sort of Thing'

The Washington Star-News quoted her on Sunday as saying that she had been asked to find out "who was sleeping with who, what the Secret Service men were doing with the stewardesses, who was smoking pot on the plane — that sort of thing."

Mrs. Goldberg asserted that the reporter, Bob Walters, a friend of hers, had misquoted her. Mr. Walters visited the Goldbergs in Manhattan for about eight hours Friday, she said, and "never took a note." At one point during the visit, Mrs. Goldberg remarked in jest, she said, that her reports to Mr. Chotiner would probably would have been more interesting if they had touched on drugs and sex.

She said that Mr. Chotiner had indicated that President Nixon knew about the scheme, but, under questioning, she stressed that all he had said was that "one man in the White House knows."

Mrs. Goldberg, who was a public relations consultant in Washington during the Kennedy-letter episode, is co-author of "Purr, Baby, Purr," which scores the women's liberation movement. She said she had written about 300 articles for magazines including TV Guide.