

Leak From McGovern Camp

WASHINGTON — There is a spy in the headquarters of Sen. George McGovern, who regularly sneaks over to the headquarters of President Richard Nixon with McGovern's travel schedule as soon as it is drafted.

This advance information gives the Nixon team the time break that has enabled them to surround McGovern with surrogates in nearly every city where he has appeared.

ONE SURROGATE is dispatched to appear in a city the day before McGovern is scheduled to arrive; another is sent to speak in that city the day after he leaves, to answer any claims or accusations he may have made.

The system has been quite effective. The surrogates, who are cabinet officers, senators, agency heads, governors, and White House staff members, almost inevitably command local television news time roughly proportional to that which McGovern got.

McGovern's scheduling has been very last - minute and full of changes lately. Fending off the surrogate onslaught may be one of the reasons for that, although lack of good coordination seems also to play a role.

McGovern's answer to the President's stand - ins has been a series of speeches each morning on the Senate floor by Democratic Senators. The idea was suggested by Campaign Chairman Lawrence O'Brien,

who met with twenty liberal senators three weeks ago to discuss ways in which they could help McGovern's faltering campaign.

The senators had hoped to demonstrate forcefully that they are not running away from their party's presidential nominee, although most have chosen to talk about Nixon's failures rather than McGovern's assets. But their efforts have not had much impact, and the Senate probably will adjourn at the close of this week.

Meanwhile, the President's men and women are out in the countryside, helping to distract voters from the fact the candidate himself is not doing much traveling yet.

The surrogates have been chosen carefully to reflect every faction and region of the party, and to have an expertise on every subject that might be an issue. They range ideologically from Sen. Jacob Javits of New York to Sen. Barry Goldwater of Arizona and professionally from White House Consumer affairs adviser Virginia Knauer to Attorney General Richard Kleindienst.

McGOVERN DENOUNCED THE surrogate system the other day, calling them "second - level bureaucrats," and asking the President to get out among the people and speak up for himself.

The President's response was to dispatch another surrogate on McGovern's trail.