

Politics Denied in Fast Bank Charter

WASHINGTON (AP)—The U.S. comptroller of the currency has renewed his defense of a bank charter issued to a Republican fundraiser and a contributor while releasing figures showing they received one of the speediest approvals in recent years.

Figures released by Comptroller William B. Camp show only 12 of 424 applications since Jan. 1, 1967, have received swifter approval than the one filed by a group which included Dwayne O. Andreas and Kenneth H. Dahlberg.

Dahlberg is Midwest finance chief for President Nixon's reelection campaign to which Andreas contributed \$25,000.

According to the figures, only 28 applications, including both approvals and disapprovals, equalled or bettered the handling time for their application to charter the Ridgeway National Bank at Minnetonka, Minn. The charter was granted Aug. 22, 86 days after the application was made.

Camp compiled statistics and a list of applications over the last five years at the request of chairman Rep. Wright Patman, whose House Banking and Currency Committee is conducting an investigation on bank charters.

Camp, who doubles as administrator of national banks, told Patman in a letter the figures show clearly "that there was absolutely nothing unusual about the processing of the Minnetonka application."

The charter award stirred controversy last month and Camp denied in the strongest terms any suggestion that political influence played a role.

He said no member of the Nixon administration nor officials of the Republican campaign had contacted him on the issue. He told newsmen then that most applications were processed in 90 to 100 days.

His letter to Patman Thursday showed 50 of the 424 applications were processed in less than 100 days. The figures

also showed that 69.7 per cent required more than 130 days for processing.

Asked about the apparent contradiction, Comptroller's office spokesman William B. Foster Jr. said Camp "used a lot of approximations" in speaking of the application last month. Foster said the 90 to 100 day span "is just par for the course . . . you shoot

for par but you don't always hit it."

Questions about the bank charter arose when it was disclosed that a \$25,000 contribution made by Andreas found its way into a Florida bank account of Bernard L. Barker, one of seven men charged in the June break-in and bugging of the Democratic National Committee office.