

Chotiner Doubt On Agents' Data

Washington

A Nixon campaign associate who bought information from two freelance reporters traveling with the campaigns of Democratic opponents in 1971 and 1972 apparently got little for his money.

"We didn't get anything

we couldn't have gotten in the public press — we just got it a little quicker. I guess it was worth the \$1000 just to know the stuff the newspapers were reporting was quite accurate," Murray Chotiner said yesterday.

He insisted that the agents he hired at \$1000 a week were not "spies" for the Republican party.

A long-time adviser to President Nixon on campaign affairs and press relations, Chotiner confirmed a report by columnist Jack Anderson that Seymour Freidin, now head of the Hearst Newspapers' London bureau, fed political information to the Republicans off and on during 1971 and 1972. Freidin quit his job with the Republicans last September when offered the position he now holds with Hearst.

He is the second reporter found to have been traveling with Democratic candidates not for public news media but to provide private intelligence reports to the Republican party.

Freidin was followed in his job by a free-lance writer, Lucianne Cummings Goldberg, who fed information on the campaign of Senator George McGovern to

Republican headquarters from September until the election.

The Hearst office in New York said that Freidin had vigorously denied the implication that he "spied for Republicans" and said he plans a book on his experience. Mrs. Goldberg offered the same explanation when her role first became known.

According to Chotiner, neither of the two worked for any legitimate news agency while working for him.

Campaign officials, including former Attorney General John N. Mitchell, have indicated that the information was not of much use to the Nixon campaign.

Those involved in the operation, however, were so concerned that the operation remain secret that until recently it was known publicly only as the work of "Chapman" and "Mr. Chapman's friends."

That, Chotiner said yesterday, was the result of his own "twist of intrigue."

"Tom Dewey, when he was in politics, always used the name Chapman when he made a long-distance telephone call on any phone outside his own office," he said yesterday. "He did so because he knew if he gave his real name a hotel operator or some other curious person might be tempted to listen in. Nixon knew about all that, and I thought it would be a little intriguing feature."

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