Freidin Cheerfully Acknowledges Getting Paid by GOP for 'Junk'

LONDON, Sept. 4—American Journalist Seymour Freidin today cheerfully admitted receiving substantial sums of money from the Republican Party for relaying information from the Democratic camp during the 1968 and 1972 presidential elections.

He was commenting on today's syndicated report by columnist Jack Anderson which alleged that during the 1968 campaign Freidin filed three reports a day from Hubert Humphrey's headquarters.

Freidin, now London bureau chief of Hearst Newspapers, said that during both elections he was working as a freelance writer and was engaged in researching a book on the presidential race.

"The basic facts in Anderson's story are correct, although there was never any question of espionage—I'm was surprised by the size of the payments, but they were all legal and aboveboard. The Internal Revenue has taken huge chunks of it."

Freidin said he was merely passing on information that would have been available to the mass media within hours of his reports reaching the Republicans. "What I contributed was junk—they could have read it in the newspapers."

The book that Freidin had been researching was temporarily shelved when the Watergate scandal started to break. "I reckoned the book stood no chance of success. It would have been totally overshadowed by Watergate," Freidin said.

It was now hoped the book would be published sometime next year, he said.

Freidin, who worked for the New York Herald Tribune before it folded in 1966, joined Hearst Newspapers in September, 1972.

He described his political allegiances as "independent Democrat" and added with a laugh: "I've never voted Republican in my life".

Anderson also claimed Freidin was an informant for the Central Intelligence Agency in the 1950s and 1960s while he was working as a newsman.

Freidin said he was in contact at that time with CIA personnel, but on an "exchange of information" basis.

"I know an awful lot of guys who exchange information" with U.S. agents he said.

He said that in his dealings with the CIA and with Republicans "I never did any spying, stealing secret papers or breaking-in. There was nothing underhanded in any aspect of my work."