

Post 8/23/67

Hoffa and Five Others Denied Fraud Retrial

From News Dispatches

CHICAGO, Aug. 22—A Federal judge denied motions today for a new trial for James R. Hoffa, imprisoned Teamsters Union president, and five codefendants who were convicted in 1964 on

charges of fraud and conspiracy.

Judge Richard B. Austin of U.S. District Court made his ruling at the close of seven days of testimony in the hearing ordered by the Supreme Court.

The high Court had ordered the hearing after the Government admitted it obtained evidence by electronic eavesdropping of a conversation between a codefendant, S. George Burris, and a Miami businessman, Ben Sigelbaum.

Judge Austin said: "It is the opinion of the Court that no tainted evidence had been heard in the course of the original trial and that the Government learned nothing new from these overhearings of Dec. 2, 1963 (Burris-Sigelbaum conversation) or other overhearings that have been referred to. . . ."

The defense surprisingly did not call Walter Sheridan, a top aid to Robert F. Kennedy when the latter was Attorney General. Testimony of another defendant had linked Sheridan with knowledge of wiretapping and Sheridan had been subpoenaed by the defense.

Hoffa and his codefendants were found guilty by a Federal court jury in 1964 on charges of conspiracy and wire fraud in the handling of Teamster pension funds. Hoffa was sentenced to five years in prison.

He was taken for the hearing before Austin from the Lewisburg, Pa., Federal Penitentiary, where he has been serving an 8-year sentence for another 1964 conviction—on a jury-tampering charge.