

'Connection' Agent Is Indicted by U.S. In Narcotics Sales

NYT 2/6/73

By JAMES M. MARKHAM

The principal Federal narcotics agent in the celebrated "French Connection" case of 1962 — who has been working as an East Side bartender and as an investigator for crime writers — has been indicted on charges of selling heroin and cocaine, Federal authorities announced yesterday.

The former agent, Francis Waters, resigned from the now-defunct Federal Bureau of Narcotics in 1967 at the beginning of a house-cleaning operation that ended with several score resignations and a half-dozen corruption indictments.

Mr. Waters, who sued the author and producers of "The French Connection" film for portraying him as a dull-witted investigator, was accused in the indictment of conspiring to deal in drugs from 1968 to now.

Daniel P. Casey, regional director of the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, said investigators were trying to determine whether the heroin that the former agent was allegedly retailing had possibly come from the Police Department property clerk's office.

The department has disclosed that 261 pounds of heroin—most of it seized in the "French Connection" case—and 137

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THE NEW YORK TIMES, TUE

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pounds of cocaine were stolen from the police property clerk's office.

The earliest date for the disappearance of some of the narcotics that the police have mentioned is 1969.

Mr. Casey said that his investigators had not identified 1.1 pounds of heroin tied to Mr. Water's alleged dealings as having come from the "French Connection" case, and he was "not optimistic" that the origin of the heroin could be traced.

Joint News Conference

Mr. Casey announced the indictment at a news conference along with United States Attorney Whitney North Seymour Jr.

Mr. Waters is accused of funneling drugs to a former Baltimore-based narcotics official, Charles R. McDonnell, who was jailed in 1971 after having been convicted of income-tax evasion and selling heroin to an undercover agent.

McDonnell, who had been a deputy regional director of the Federal Bureau of Drug Abuse Control, was named as a co-conspirator but not as a defendant in the new indictment, indicating that he may testify against his former colleague and alleged collaborator.

McDonnell was freed from prison late last year after having served a little more than one-fourth of his four-year sentence.

Mr. Casey said that McDonnell had sold the 1.1 pounds of heroin to an undercover agent in July, 1968, but that it was not until last week that evidence was presented to a grand jury leading back to Mr. Waters. A five-year statute of limitations governs Federal narcotics cases.

Purge of Bureau

In 1968 the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, which was part of the Treasury Department, and the Bureau of Drug Abuse Control, which was part of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, were merged in a new agency, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, which is under the Justice Department.

In the course of a virtual purge of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics late in 1968, Attorney General Ramsey Clark announced the uncovering of "significant corruption," particular-



Francis Waters

ly in the agency's New York office.

Mr. Waters, who joined the narcotics bureau in 1956, held the title of supervising agent (roughly comparable to lieutenant in the police) at the time of his resignation in December, 1967. McDonnell had worked with Mr. Waters in New York before being shifted to Baltimore.

In late 1961, Mr. Waters, a stocky man who stands 5 feet, 9 inches, was assigned as a liaison man to the Police Department in what became known as the "French Connection" case.

Although tensely dramatic in book version and even more so on the screen, the case principally involved trailing around New York City after a cabal of French and Italian-American gangsters. Ultimately, 97

pounds of heroin were sized.

Mr. Waters was offended by Robin Moore's book on the case, which pictured him as a thick-headed, skeptical agent, in contrast to Detective Edward R. (Popeye) Egan—who was portrayed as quick-witted and eager to take risks to advance the case.

Although he and Mr. Egan had been good friends, Mr. Waters in 1969 filed against Mr. Moore and his publishers for damages. In November, 1971, with the appearance of the highly successful film—which shows fictitious Mr. Waters being killed by an equally fictitious Detective Egan—retired narcotics agent escalated his claims, asking for \$5-million.

The case was settled out of court with a payment of \$10,000. A copy of the check for that sum was hung on a wall at the Sixish Restaurant, 1701 First Avenue, where Mr. Waters worked as a bartender.

According to Joseph P. Altier, Mr. Waters's lawyer, the 43-year-old former agent also occasionally worked as an investigator for magazine writers who specialized in crime subjects.

Mr. Waters was born in Manhattan on Dec. 29, 1929. He joined the Coast Guard, received a degree in business administration from Hofstra College in 1954 and worked as an automobile salesman before joining the narcotics bureau in 1956. As a narcotics agent, he received two citations.

He lives with his wife and three children at 65 Ingraham Boulevard, Hempstead, L.I.

Last night he was raising funds to meet a \$50,000 bail set in Federal court. He will enter a plea to the indictment Monday.