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Reported to Republicans, Watergate Spy Claims

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A former FBI agent who took part in the bugging of Democratic National Headquarters says he delivered reports on the eavesdropping to the Committee for the Re-election of the President, the Los Angeles Times reported today.

Times reporters Jack Nelson and Ronald J. Ostrow said they interviewed Alfred C. Baldwin III for more than five hours in New Haven, Conn., last weekend.

The Times said Baldwin, a 36-year-old former Marine Corps captain, decided to become a government witness in the bugging case only after he was "disowned" by the Committee for the Re-election of the President.

Baldwin told the Times he was in the Howard Johnson Hotel across the street when police caught five persons in Democratic headquarters in the Watergate complex in Washington D.C., June 17 as they were installing bugging equipment.

Until that morning, Baldwin told the Times, he had monitored a telephone tap placed in the Democratic offices earlier.

Baldwin said he would put his eavesdropping logs in an envelope, which he addressed to a committee official whose name he has since forgotten and would take them to the Nixon committee offices seven blocks away, the newspaper said.

"An elderly guard was on duty in the building and he took the envelope, recognized the name on it and said he would see to it that the official received it," the Times quoted Baldwin as saying.

The eavesdroppers, he told the Times, apparently were interested primarily in information about Sen. George McGovern, Lawrence F. O'Brien, then Democratic party chairman, and about Democratic political strategy.

The Times quoted Baldwin as saying he was hired by the Committee for the Re-election of the President as a security guard for Martha Mitchell, wife of former Atty. Gen. John Mitchell, but was later assigned such tasks as monitoring anti-Nixon demonstrations.

He told the Times his boss was James W. McCord Jr., security coordinator for the Nixon committee and one of seven persons indicted in the Watergate bugging case. Baldwin has not been charged in the case.

McCord, Baldwin said, assigned him to monitor a phone tap on May 25. Baldwin said he kept logs on about 200 conversations he monitored over a three-week period, the newspaper said.

He would not give specifics on the conversations after his attorneys advised he would be violating federal laws by disclosing contents of wiretap conversations, according to the Times.

Baldwin told the Times reporters he never questioned his orders from McCord.

"After all, his boss was John Mitchell, the committee director and former attorney general of the United States," the Times quoted Baldwin as saying. "And his superior was President Nixon."

"If that was not enough to impress me with McCord's authority and official standing, we were surrounded by former White House aides McCord said were 'on loan' to the committee."

Baldwin told the Times the squad of men entered the Watergate on June 17 after they found out which telephone in the offices was O'Brien's. Only one of two taps placed in the offices earlier functioned properly, he added. That was on the telephone of Spencer Oliver, coordinator of Democratic state chairmen.

Minutes after the five men were caught in the offices, Baldwin told the Times, E. Howard Hunt Jr., an ex-CIA agent and former White House consultant, rushed into his room in the Howard Johnson Hotel and called an attorney.

He said Hunt told him: "somebody will be in touch with you" as he hurriedly left the room, the Times reported.

The Times quoted Baldwin as saying he waited several days and finally called Frederick LaRue, special assistant to the campaign director, and told him of his involvement at the Watergate.

"His whole tone of voice suddenly changed," Baldwin told the Times.

Baldwin told the Times a committee attorney later contacted his attorneys.

"We were looking to the committee for guidance on the case, since I was their employe," the Times quoted Baldwin. "But we were getting nothing but a runaround. The committee apparently was disavowing my employment."

Baldwin told the Times he was later told by McCord that he would be paid for his services, quoting McCord as saying, "Your position is that you were working for McCord Associates, not for the re-election committee."



—AP WIREPHOTO:
ALFRED C. BALDWIN III, center, key government witness in the Democratic headquarters bugging case, speaks with attorneys **JOHN V. CASSIDENTO**, left, and **ROBERT C. MIRTO**, in New Haven, Conn., after telling of delivering eavesdropping logs to the Committee for the Reelection of the President.