

Watergate Figure Hired Ex-House Investigator, FBI Says

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WASHINGTON — A former congressional investigator was employed by a Watergate bugging suspect and by the security firm guarding the building which houses the Democratic National Committee, the FBI says.

Louis James Russell, 54, has told FBI agents he was across the street from the Watergate a few hours before his boss, James McCord, then chief security adviser for the Nixon campaign, and four others were arrested inside the Democratic headquarters.

Russell, chief investigator for the House Un-American Activities Committee when Richard Nixon was a member two decades ago, said he was having a late-night snack at Howard Johnson's Restaurant because he had a "sentimental" attachment to the place. Russell said he once went with a girl who used the Watergate beauty salon.

"We often ate lunch there at the Howard Johnson's," Russell said, "and I went back that night to think about the good times we had."

In an interview last night, Russell said FBI agents have "tried to get me to say I was a lookout that night, but I don't know anything about what McCord was doing in the Watergate." (McCord allegedly used a room on the fourth floor of the motel to monitor bugging devices on the phones at Democratic headquarters.) Russell said FBI agents told him "they didn't believe my story." However, Russell said, he was never called before a grand jury.

He worked for the General Security Services Co., whose clients include the Watergate office building. F. Kelly Chamberlain, chief of the guard force, said Russell did private investigations for the firm, but he had no responsibility for Watergate security.

Chamberlain said Russell

worked for General Security for about a year before leaving last April.

Russell first went to work part-time for James McCord last February, running security checks on personnel hired by the Nixon re-election committee.

Russell told the Star-News last night the personnel apparently had been hired with-

out being checked. His job was to run background investigations on employees already on the payroll because there was a theft problem at Nixon campaign headquarters.

He said one employe had lost a watch.

"Once they learned I was around, the watch suddenly appeared," Russell said. He said some whiskey was taken

too, but it was never returned.

Russell said he was also assigned to scan underground newspapers, such as the Quicksilver Times, to discover any "hippie groups which might demonstrate at the Republican National Convention."

He said he pointed out potential troublemakers to McCord,

whom he described as a "good American," unjustly maligned. Russell said McCord apparently hired him on the recommendations of two prominent Republican friends.

He contacted McCord after the break-in and was told he was out of a job, although he has since done some other work for McCord.

Beginning in June, Russell worked full-time at Nixon campaign headquarters at 1701 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W. as the night security manager. He said the committee decided to beef up its security after a building guard was discovered asleep on the job.

Russell said he guarded the second floor. His main duty was to check out the closed-

circuit TV bought by McCord.

A spokesman for Nixon's re-election committee said last night he did not know whether Russell was ever employed directly by the committee.

Since the break-in June 17, Russell has moved from a one-room \$15-a-week flat in a rooming house in the 1700 block of Q St., N.W. to a

\$185-a-month furnished apartment in suburban Silver Spring, Md.

Russell says a benefactor has not only allowed him use of the apartment but has provided him with a car and often takes him out to dinner at expensive restaurants.

Russell said he is working part-time, doing free lance investigations.

* General Security Services - see NYTimes 26 Jun 72.