

Ex-FBI Agent Tells Of Watergate Tap

Washington

Star government witness Alfred C. Baldwin II testified yesterday that he was hired by the security chief of President Nixon's re-election campaign to monitor the tapped telephone conversations of a high Democratic official last year.

A dispute over revealing the names of callers overheard in the wiretap was argued by the opposing attorneys and there was a possibility that the Watergate trial may be delayed until the issue is appealed to a higher court.

Baldwin, a former FBI agent who is reported to have been promised immunity from prosecution in exchange for his testimony, provided the most damaging testimony yet in the eight-day-old Watergate trial.

PROMISE

He said he was hired by defendant James W. McCord Jr., then security coordinator for the Nixon campaign, to carry out secret "security work" that included monitoring at least 200 telephone conversations at Democratic national headquarters over a three-week period.



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ALFRED C. BALDWIN
Most damaging testimony

Baldwin said he was promised by McCord that "if the President is re-elected this November, this is the way to join the team and go up the ladder."

McCord and four other men were arrested June 17 inside Democratic offices at the Watergate Hotel complex with burglary tools and bugging devices. The other four have pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy, burglary and illegal eavesdrop-

ping and wiretapping.

McCord's lawyer, Gerald Alch, told chief U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica yesterday that the alleged bugging attempt was prompted by reports — some from the Justice Department — of expected violence by anti-war groups with close ties to Senator George S. McGovern.

Alch said McCord could have committed no crime because he was only trying to "ensure the safety" of Mr. Nixon and other Republican officials.

Baldwin said the tapped telephone line at the Watergate was that of R. Spencer Oliver, who directs the Association of State Democratic Chairmen at the Democratic National Committee.

NAMES

When an assistant prosecutor asked Baldwin to identify people who called on the line, an American Civil Liberties Union lawyer, Charles Morgan Jr., objected.

He told the court that mentioning even the names of people would violate their rights to privacy.

Judge Sirica dismissed the jury for the day and closed the courtroom to all spectators while the point was argued by lawyers.

After meeting in closed chambers with the attorneys for nearly two hours, the judge said he would permit Baldwin to continue with his testimony, and Morgan promptly said he would appeal the ruling to the U.S. Court of Appeals.

Following a procedure outlined by the Court of Appeals last Friday, the judge's order will be heard in the appeals court this morning before the Watergate trial can resume.

INSTRUCTIONS

Earlier, Baldwin testified, "My instructions were from

the moment I woke up in the morning until late at night, and even into the early morning hours, to monitor any conversations that were being transmitted."

"If someone was in the office, and the phone was in use, the (monitoring) unit was on."

He said McCord first hired him to be a security guard for Martha Mitchell, wife of former Attorney General John N. Mitchell, later campaign director for the President.

After he made one trip with Mrs. Mitchell early last assigned him to observe anti-war demonstrations in the Washington area for the next two weeks. Then he was installed May 26 across the street from the Watergate in a room at a Howard Johnson's hotel, where the monitoring operation was set up.

MCCORD

"I went into the room. Mr. McCord was there," Baldwin said. "There were various pieces of electronic equipment in the room and briefcases and attache cases on the couch. Mr. McCord was in front of one of the instruments . . ."

"Mr. McCord said, 'I want to explain some of this equipment. It's what you're going to do now. You're going to be monitoring here in the room.'"

Baldwin testified McCord asked him to use the alias of "Bill Johnson" and that he introduced other members of the team also by aliases. Baldwin identified the others as defendant G. Gordon Liddy, then financial counsel to the Nixon campaign committee, former White House consultant E. Howard Hunt Jr., who also has pleaded guilty to his part in the bugging incident.

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