

GOP Unhurt By Charges, Agnew Says

Cleveland

Vice President Spiro T. Agnew declared last night: "I am confident that serious as it is, the Watergate affairs will have no permanent effect on the electoral fortunes of our party."

"I say this," Agnew said, "because I know the President is determined to see the current investigation through to the end and I am convinced that those who have broken the law will be brought to justice."

"Our opponents may try to convince others through hearsay and innuendo, but the American people are able to distinguish fact from fancy, and gossip from truth."

The Vice President made his comments in a speech at the Cuyahoga county Republican dinner.

While saying he would not gloss over the serious charges leveled "against certain individuals," Agnew said the matter should be viewed in perspective.

"We are so bombarded by sensational accusations that it sometimes becomes difficult to separate facts from conflicting assertions reported by the media," he said.

The Vice President added: "I do not attempt to assert that certain individuals are without fault, or that the Watergate matter is a defensible lark. But I do state that the Republican party is not involved, not indicted and not responsible."

"From what we know of the affair," Agnew said, "it was the result of the misguided zeal of a few individuals who in no way were sensitive to the mandate of the millions of men and women who, just as all of you tonight, worked diligently and enthusiastically for our national ticket and for Republican candidates at all levels."

"I am confident that when the clamor dies we will discover that the guilty are not as numerous as you are being led to believe."

Associated Press