

\$11 Million Countersuit By O'Brien

Washington

Former Democratic national chairman Lawrence F. O'Brien has filed an \$11 million countersuit against two officers of President Nixon's reelection campaign. The suit is the latest chapter in the war of words and writs over the Watergate affair.

O'Brien filed the suit against Maurice H. Stans, chairman of the Finance Committee to Re-elect the President, and Francis L. Dale, chairman of the Committee for the Re-election of the President.

In the suit filed Tuesday in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, O'Brien asked for \$1 million in compensatory damages and \$10 million in punitive damages.

The suit stems from the Watergate break-in which became an issue during last year's presidential campaign. Seven men were indicted variously on charges of conspiracy, burglary and bugging Democratic headquarters in Washington's Watergate complex.

Stans, a former secretary of commerce, was drawn into the affair because Republican campaign funds turned up in the bank account of one of the five men

arrested in the break-in last June 17.

Stans filed a \$5 million libel suit against O'Brien last September, charging that O'Brien "falsely and maliciously" accused him of a number of criminal acts.

In his countersuit filed Tuesday, O'Brien claimed Stans and Dale filed suit "to cloud public discussion of the serious criminal and tortious invasion of the defendant's rights . . . and repress his exercise of First Amendment rights."

Stans responded that O'Brien's countersuit "is simply another in his series of political stunts. Mr. O'Brien's charges are politically inspired and ridiculous, and he knows they are ridiculous." *Associated Press*