

Agnew Allots Credit in Watergate

Chicago

Vice President Spiro Agnew says the press has had a role in uncovering the Watergate affair but he believes the major credit should go to federal Judge John J. Sirica.

In an interview yesterday with columnist Mike Royko of the Chicago Daily News, Agnew, a frequent critic of the press, said:

"I've indicated that they've had certainly something to do with triggering the public consciousness of Watergate. But I don't believe that the press has been as instrumental in the dredging of Watergate as Judge Sirica."

TRIAL

Sirica was trial judge in the prosecution of the seven men accused in the burglary of the Democratic headquarters at the Watergate complex.

He added: "So while I admire the tenacity of the press for staying with the case and giving it the attention it required, I'm not ready to agree with the self-congratulatory processes that are going on with some members of the press that say they did it. I don't think they could have done it without Sirica and I don't think Sirica was affected by them."

Agnew also said he be-

lieves political dirty tricks and events like Watergate result from "very zealous people who get carried away with what they are doing."

"And if they are inexperienced enough and if they have enough money, they get some very bizarre ideas, some very weird ideas . . ."

Agnew added. "I don't excuse it. I don't condone it. It's a miserable process. And it's debilitating to American politics. We should be able to get along without it."

Associated Press