

Media's Coverage Of Watergate Hit

CINCINNATI, Oct. 5 (AP) — The original chairman of the Committee for the re-election of the President has accused the news media of giving the public false impressions about President Nixon's part in Watergate.

Francis L. Dale, publisher of The Cincinnati Enquirer, addressed the Cincinnati Rotary Club on Thursday. He was the original chairman of the election group later headed by former Attorney General John N. Mitchell.

Dale criticized The New York Times, the Washington press corps, U.S. District Court Judge John Sirica, and Samuel Dash, chief counsel for the Senate committee investigating Watergate.

"The press has created a wrong impression in the minds of 38 per cent of the people," said Dale, citing a recent poll in which that many people believed the President had advance knowledge of the Watergate bugging.

"We have an obligation to correct that impression," Dale said.

He said he believes some newsmen seeking information on Watergate got help from partisan politicians with political motives, and from civil

servants within the administration who lean towards the Democrats because they were appointed by Democratic Presidents.

He said he believes the press has earned some of the harsh criticism stemming from Watergate coverage.

In some cases, Dale said, the press, instead of reporting, "is now an active participant . . . a major factor in the course of events."

He said that in some instances the press has prostituted itself to the unidentified "reliable sources." He cited The New York Times as being "an attack dog" and the Washington press corps for "bias."

Dale said Judge Sirica failed miserably in handling the Watergate cases and criticized him for bullying the defendants with "tentative sentences."

Dale said Dash has led testimony, that "any competent cross-examiner would have made a shambles of John Dean's testimony," and that "after six months of the circus, there has yet to appear any significant draft legislation on campaign practices."

Dale described his role as chairman of the original re-election committee as "strictly advisory."