

Watergate Investigator Suspended

Washington

An investigator for the Senate Watergate committee was suspended from duty yesterday because Samuel Dash, the committee's chief counsel, believes that the investigator was the source of a newspaper article that was highly critical of the staff.

The investigator, Scott Armstrong, was deeply involved in the committee's inquiry into C. G. Rebozo, President Nixon's close friend. One senator on the committee said yesterday that Armstrong was "the best investigator on the staff."

A ranking official on the committee described Armstrong as "a tenacious bugger who ticked off everybody in sight but always got what he was after."

The article appeared in the November 22 issue of Rolling Stone, a biweekly newspaper that concentrates on rock music but regularly contains articles on politics and social affairs.

The article, written by Timothy Crouse, contained no details of the committee's investigation that had not previously been reported elsewhere.

But it was savage in its criticism of the committee's top staff. It quoted a "majority staffer" as calling Dash an "egomaniac," and declared that Fred D. Thompson, the Republican counsel, and David M. Dorsen, an assistant chief counsel, were incompetent.

After an investigation by the committee that lasted more than a week, according to one staff member, Dash yesterday ordered Armstrong suspended from the staff without pay for a month.

Senator Lowell P. Weicker Jr. (Rep.-Conn.), a member of the committee, immediately praised Armstrong and offered him a job on his personal staff.

Dash, who was in New Orleans for a meeting of a committee of the American Bar Association, confirmed to the Associated Press that he had suspended Armstrong.

According to that news agency, Dash said that the article has "had a tremendous impact on the morale of the staff" and that Armstrong had violated "a pretty iron-bound rule that is broken too often."

New York Times