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House scraps intelligence panel

WASHINGTON (AP) — Rejecting an effort to guarantee Rep. Michael Harrington, D-Mass., a seat, the House replaced its dissention-torn select House intelligence committee with a new committee Thursday.

After the Harrington vote, the House by voice vote scrapped the 10-member select House intelligence committee and replaced it with one to have 13 members.

Rep. Otis G. Pike, D-N.Y., who conducted the House inquiry on the Pueblo affair, is Speaker Carl Albert's choice to replace Rep. Lucien N. Nedzi, D-Mich., as chairman.

Albert did not announce who the chairman and members will be. There were reports earlier in the week that he planned to put all of the present members except Nedzi and Harrington on the new committee.

The new committee's mandate is identical to the old one's: To investigate

allegations against the Central Intelligence Agency and Federal Bureau of Investigation and review activities of all U.S. intelligence agencies. The committee is to report its findings to the full House by Jan. 31.

Besides conducting the House inquiry into North Korea's seizure of the spy ship Pueblo, Pike was the first congressman to disclose air strikes ordered by former Air Force Gen. John Lavelle against North Vietnam in violation at that time of U.S. policy.

A former House Armed Services subcommittee chairman, Pike has also conducted several investigations of wasteful weapons spending.

Harrington's supporters contended his ouster from the committee would be punishment without a trial for his admitted disclosure last year of secret CIA testimony. The proposal to

guarantee him a seat was rejected 274 to 199.

"I disagree that Harrington should be censured for it," said Rep. Bella Abzug, D-N.Y., "but those of you who think he should be will have your day in court, so don't use this as your vehicle."

The House Ethics Committee has ordered the first formal investigation of a member's conduct since Adam Clayton Powell against Harrington for his disclosure of the CIA testimony.

Harrington has said he disclosed the testimony on CIA operations against Marxist Chilean President Salvador Allende to expose possible unlawful activity.

Harrington's supporters said he was fulfilling his responsibilities as a congressman and that his action in releasing the material has nothing to do with his conduct on the intelligence committee.