

50 in House Try To Save Life of CIA Probe Unit

By George Lardner Jr. *7-8-75*
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Fifty House Democrats called yesterday for a special party caucus to prevent abolition of the dormant House intelligence committee.

In a petition gathered by Rep. Michael Harrington (D-Mass.), the 50 House members endorsed a proposed resolution instructing Democrats on the House Rules Committee to oppose dismantling of the select investigating committee.

Efforts to abolish the committee, Harrington said in a statement, "will, and perhaps should, be viewed as an attempt on the part of the House to shift focus away from the primary issue—illegal intelligence activities. Such action would clearly suggest a lack of interest in revealing the truth and throw into question the integrity of the entire House membership."

The intelligence committee has been tied up for weeks in an impasse between Chairman Lucien N. Nedzi (D-Mich.) and Democratic members of the committee who questioned his ability to conduct a thorough investigation of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The House voted overwhelmingly on June 16 to reject Nedzi's tendered resignation, but attempts on the part of the Democratic leadership since then to patch up the rift within the committee have proved fruitless.

The Rules Committee is scheduled to meet Wednesday morning to consider a proposal by Rep. B. F. Sisk (D-Calif.) to abolish the special 10-member panel.

The petition for a special meeting of the House Democratic Caucus to block the Sisk resolution was submitted yesterday to caucus Chairman Phillip Burton (D-Calif.). The signers included Harrington and two other Democrats on the intelligence committee, Reps. Don Edwards (Calif.) and Ronald V. Dellums (Calif.) who have been critical of Nedzi's leadership. more members, Burton said he

Although a caucus must be held at the request of 50 or doubted he could schedule a meeting before next week. He told a reporter that he would probably seek postponement of the Sisk resolution before the Rules Committee so that the caucus could be held first.

Harrington, Dellums and Edwards have also formally asked Nedzi to convene a meeting of the intelligence committee, but the Michigan Democrat has indicated that he favors creation of an entirely new panel to replace the current membership.

While the House CIA inquiry remains in limbo, the Senate intelligence committee operations proceeds with its investigation of CIA involvement in foreign assassination plots.

Back from a 10-day recess, the Senate committee will meet in executive session today to take testimony from retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Edward Lansdale, a counterinsurgency expert during the Kennedy administration, and Roswell Gilpatric, who was deputy secretary of defense in the Kennedy administration.

The Senate committee has been attempting to determine who authorized the CIA to take part in various assassination schemes and has tentatively scheduled closed hearings on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday with former Secretary of State Dean Rusk, former Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara, former White House national security advisers McGeorge Bundy and Walt W. Rostow, and retired Army Gen. Maxwell Taylor, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Committee Chairman Frank Church (D-Idaho) has said the Senate investigation has so far failed to turn up any evidence directly linking any President to assassination plots.