

House Supports Nedzi

Move to Curb Or End Probe On CIA Seen

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The House voted overwhelmingly yesterday to reject the resignation of Rep. Lucien Nedzi (D-Mich.) from its select CIA investigating committee, setting the stage for efforts either to curb or to end the entire investigation.

The vote was 290 to 44 to keep Nedzi as chairman, but Nedzi said later that he did not see how he could preside over the inquiry with the committee's present membership.

"It's not going to end with this and I don't think it should end with this," Nedzi told reporters. He said he thought it might be just as well to abandon the entire House inquiry on the Central Intelligence Agency.

A ranking member of the House Rules Committee, Rep. B. F. Sisk (D-Calif.), promptly filed a resolution to abolish the select committee altogether.

Nedzi said he intends to wait and see what happens to the Sisk proposal before even calling another meeting of his deeply divided panel.

Struggling in vain against the tide on the House floor, five of the six other Democrats on the select committee voted to accept Nedzi's resignation in hopes of getting another chairman. They said earlier this month that they had lost all faith in Nedzi's determination to conduct a vigorous investigation.

"They don't want an aggressive investigation, that's obvious," Rep. Donald V. Dellums (D-Calif.), one of the committee members, said of the mood on the House floor. "But we'll get our day in court."

Rep. Michael Harrington (D-

Mass.), Nedzi's most outspoken critic on the select committee, said he planned to go to the House Democratic caucus on Wednesday in an effort to insure a thorough CIA investigation.

"We're not going to lie down and roll over," he vowed.

The House vote, however, represented a solid defeat for the committee's restive members. Not a single Republican voted to accept Nedzi's resignation. Ninety-seven GOP members lined up with 193 House Democrats to keep Nedzi as chairman, but without any commitment to keeping the committee in business.

Rep. Andrew Young (D-GA.) announcing that he was going to vote for Nedzi, said he was worried that the House debate would make it seem as though the membership wanted "to give a whitewash to the CIA." He hoped the House would insist, at the same time that there be "a thorough investigation of the intelligence community."

"That question has yet to be determined by the House," Rep. James G. O'Hara (D-Mich.), who led the floor fight for Nedzi, replied pointedly.

Sisk told reporters that his proposal to abolish the select committee was intended primarily as a vehicle to determine what the Rules Committee wants to do.

As alternatives, Sisk suggested that the House might wind up endorsing a new committee to investigate only the CIA rather than the government's entire intelligence community or imposing restrictions on the present committee's conduct, presumably with Nedzi in the driver's seat.

Nedzi, however, voiced

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doubts that the House investigation was needed at all. He pointed to the CIA inquiry already under way by the Senate select committee headed by Frank Church (D-Idaho) and the one already completed by the Rockefeller commission.

"To send investigators out to plow the same ground that's already been plowed is questionable wisdom," he declared after the vote.

Nedzi outlined his reasons for wanting to resign in a midafternoon speech on the House floor.

He said he had tried to act

"responsibly" since the House created the committee in February, but protested that hopes of "successful achievement through mutual trust and respect" had been non-existent from the outset. Then, on June 2, his five Democratic critics on the committee—Reps. Robert Giaimo (Conn.), Don Edwards (Calif.), James Stanton (Ohio), Harrington and Dellums—demanded that he resign on the grounds that he was "non impartial" as far as the CIA was concerned.

The five Democrats, reportedly joined at times by a wavering Rep. Morgan Murphy (D-Ill.), made the move in light of disclosures that Nedzi, as chairman since 1971 of the Armed Services subcommittee in charge of CIA oversight, had been briefed two years ago about the agency's misdeeds and done nothing about them.

His voice trembling with emotion, Nedzi defended his 14-year record in the House as entirely honorable.

"I have not ducked my responsibilities. I have not coveted the role of showhorse," he protested. "I am honored to be a member of the House. I never want to dishonor it, nor myself."

Nedzi said he finally agreed on a compromise plan last week to name a special CIA investigating subcommittee with Stanton as chairman, but dissatisfied with his appointments and insisted that every member of the full committee double as a member of the Stanton subcommittee.

"Thus, even if the House as a whole were to give me a vote of confidence, the small committee caucus could still control me," Nedzi said. "To remain as chairman under the present conditions would be to be an accomplice to a charade

... Having been raised in the hard knocks of Detroit-area life, I surely know the difference between a welcome mat and a doormat."

O'Hara said in a follow-up speech that he knew Nedzi too well to think that he would be "party to any cover-up." And although Nedzi said he was determined to resign both from the chairmanship and from the committee, Rep. Richard Bolling (D-Mo.) said that for the House to accept it would mean "we have resorted to cannibalism."

The select committee, Bolling declared, was a creature of the House and it was up to the House "to determine how its creature, a committee, will

function."

Rep. Samuel Stratton (D-N.Y.) said he was afraid the CIA itself would be in jeopardy if the committee's Democratic majority had its way. What was needed, he maintained, was a chairman like Nedzi who could be counted on to conduct the inquiry "without putting everything in the (news) papers. That's the kind of a man we want."

Speaking for the committee Democrats, Edwards argued that a CIA investigation under Nedzi, in light of his past inaction, would simply not be "credible." He complained that Nedzi had not even consulted the Democratic majority on the panel about his appointments to the CIA subcommittee although it had been their understanding that he would do so.

Edwards contended that Nedzi would still have plenty to do presiding over an investigation of all the other agencies under the select committee's jurisdiction, but few members seemed impressed. The debate was cut short moments later.

House Minority Leader John J. Rhodes (R-Ariz.) said he had initially felt that GOP members should abstain from the Democratic issue, but decided to support Nedzi since he was seeking to resign from the committee as well as from the chairmanship.

Dellums told reporters that moments after the vote, he asked Nedzi on the House floor when the select committee would meet, only to be told that this would have to wait until "the Rules Committee works its will."

"It's just the next phase of the cover-up," Dellums charged.

Rules Committee Chairman Ray Madden (D-Ind.) said he doubted Sisk's resolution would come up before Wednesday at the earliest.