

Compromise Reached In Nedzi Probe Role

By George Lardner Jr.

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Under a compromise hammered out with the House Democratic leadership, restive Democrats on the House intelligence committee yesterday were promised a separate subcommittee to investigate the Central Intelligence Agency.

In turn, they agreed to abandon their demands that Rep. Lucien N. Nedzi (D-Mich.) step down as chairman of the select committee.

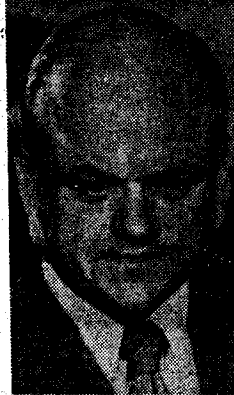
A majority of the seven Democrats on the committee called for Nedzi's resignation last week. They maintained that his effectiveness as head of a committee to investigate the CIA had been irretrievably compromised by secret disclosures the CIA made to Nedzi more than a year ago in his role as chairman of a long-standing House Armed Services subcommittee on CIA oversight.

Backed by Speaker Carl Albert (D-Okla.), Nedzi, however, refused to quit and said he saw no validity to the complaints.

Declaring his full support for Nedzi after a short meeting between the two yesterday morning, Albert said he had thought the Michigan Democrat might want to resign because of the "furor" within the committee, but the speaker said he had no intention of forcing him from the post.

"I'm not going to destroy a chairman," Albert declared. "What are they so mad about?" he asked of the Democratic committee members led by Reps. Robert N. Giaimo (Conn.) and James V. Stanton (Ohio).

The Democratic majority on the committee caucused yesterday afternoon and considered going to the House Rules Committee for permission to carry the fight to the House floor, but realized that it



REP. LUCIEN N. NEDZI
... to keep chairmanship

would have been an uphill battle.

The compromise—a separate subcommittee with full authority over the CIA investigation—was reached at a late afternoon meeting in Albert's office that was repeatedly interrupted by calls for the speaker on the House floor.

Rep. Don Edwards (D-Calif.) is expected to be the chairman of the new subcommittee. The second-ranking Democrat on the full committee, Giaimo, was understood not to want the post in view of the fact that he and Stanton had led the fight against Nedzi.

Giaimo said, however, that he was satisfied enough with the compromise to remain on the committee. He had said earlier that he intended to resign if Nedzi remained chairman.

The head of the new subcommittee will have the power to hire a separate staff, probably in consultation with committee staff director Searle Field, but the details have yet to be worked out.

As committee chairman, Nedzi will remain in charge of the House investigation of the rest of the government's intelligence community, including the FBI, the Internal Revenue Service and the Defense Department's intelligence agencies.

Announcing the plan to reporters in Albert's office, Nedzi said he had agreed to it so there would be "no question in the public's mind" about a thorough, fair investigation. He said he hoped the compromise would lay to rest any allegations of a conflict of interest in his remaining as chairman.

The controversy broke out over the disclosure that Nedzi had been briefed by the CIA more than a year ago about the agency's involvement in assassination plans and illegal domestic spying, but kept the information to himself.

He refused yesterday to discuss just what he had been told but said he regarded it as history when he was told about it.