

# 'Gadfly' in C.I.A. Inquiry Remains on the Sidelines

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By JOSEPH LELYVELD SEP 30 1975

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 29—A frustrated bystander in the struggle between the White House and the House Select Committee on Intelligence over Congressional access to intelligence information is Representative Michael J. Harrington.

Mr. Harrington, a Massachusetts Democrat, was dropped last summer from the committee by the House leadership, ostensibly on the suspicion that he might release classified information. A more immediate cause may have been his view that the House leadership was not serious about investigating the Central Intelligence Agency.

Whatever the reason, the impolitic Mr. Harrington, who was compared last year by a colleague to Benedict Arnold, can claim vindication. Representative Otis G. Pike of Suffolk, the committee chairman, has not only been expressing the same skepticism about previous efforts to investigate the agency but also asserting the committee's right to requisition and publish unclassified documents.

If anything, Mr. Pike has drawn the issue more sharply than Mr. Harrington ever did in a lonely year-long campaign to disclose the facts of C.I.A. operations in Chile. Mr. Pike has gone so far as to make public four words about Egyptian military communications that the Administration wanted deleted from a C.I.A. document it had agreed to declassify.

## Harrington Faces Censure

Though Mr. Harrington derided the classification system as "a joke," he never published a syllable. However, he faces disciplinary action and a possible censure motion by the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. He is charged with having been less than discreet in discussions of secret testimony by the Director of Central Intelligence, William E. Colby.

The committee met today to hear procedural arguments by Mr. Harrington's attorney and then adjourned, without taking any action, until Wednesday. The complaint against Mr. Harrington contends that he made classified information available to "unauthorized persons."

His version of the Colby testimony—which summarized the agency's efforts to undermine the Government of Salvador Allende Gossens, Chile's late President—appeared in The New York Times in September, 1974, a year after the coup that toppled Dr. Allende. Summoned before the House Armed Services Committee that month to explain how the account was leaked, the Congressman denied having been the source but conceded that he had been determined to bring C.I.A. involvement to light.

Mr. Harrington even criticized himself for the "vacillation" that, he said, "had been almost the hallmark of my handling of this whole thing." If he had it to do over, he implied, he would have disclosed the Colby testimony in a speech on the House floor.

"I hope some day every American schoolchild will read that testimony," he says.

A year ago, when Mr. Harrington was the only Representative pressing for disclosure, House rules seemed designed to protest the classification system. Mr. Pike has changed that. Although he takes an identical stance as Mr. Harrington on the issue of substance—classification and disclosure—he has presented himself as the defender of the rules and, by extension, the House.

On Capitol Hill, that makes all the difference. But to the intelligence agency, the Administration and the public, it's the joining of the issue that counts. In this, Mr. Harrington's doggedness has been an essential ingredient.

He is called a "maverick" and "loner" but is more singular than that. Son of an organization politician, he first ran for public office 16 years ago when he was still in Harvard Law School. Now 39 years old—a short, stubby man with a strong chin, broad forehead and restless energy—he is still not sure that he has become a politician.

## Ruminations on 'Politician'

"It has always been something that I wanted to view as a transitional experience," he says. Interested in his own motives and disinclined to be glib, he then turns the word "politician" around and expresses his ruminations on it in long, enigmatic, run-on sentences in which words such as "ambivalent" and "bemused" figure prominently.

Salem, Mass., the heart of his district, is his "reality." Washington isn't; it's the "Pullman Company," a company town. He is not one of those, he says, who wants to make a "quasi-religious experience" out of "this business called service in Congress," waiting "25, 30 or 40 years" to be rewarded for good behavior.

The country is in enough trouble already, he goes on, because of accommodating "Congressional careerists," and "whether you call them Ford, Albert or Mansfield," he says, "is a distortion of the process."

The public thinks Congress is a "nonevent," he says, and so does he. But in the matter of the intelligence agency and Chile he worked overtime proving the point, badgering the House leadership on the subject for the better part of two years.

It was at his instigation that

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the subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee that was supposed to oversee the C.I.A. asked Mr. Colby to testify on Chile.

The transcript of the testimony was then locked in the subcommittee's safe. Mr. Harrington read it twice, to fix it in his mind, and then tried to provoke further action in Congress.

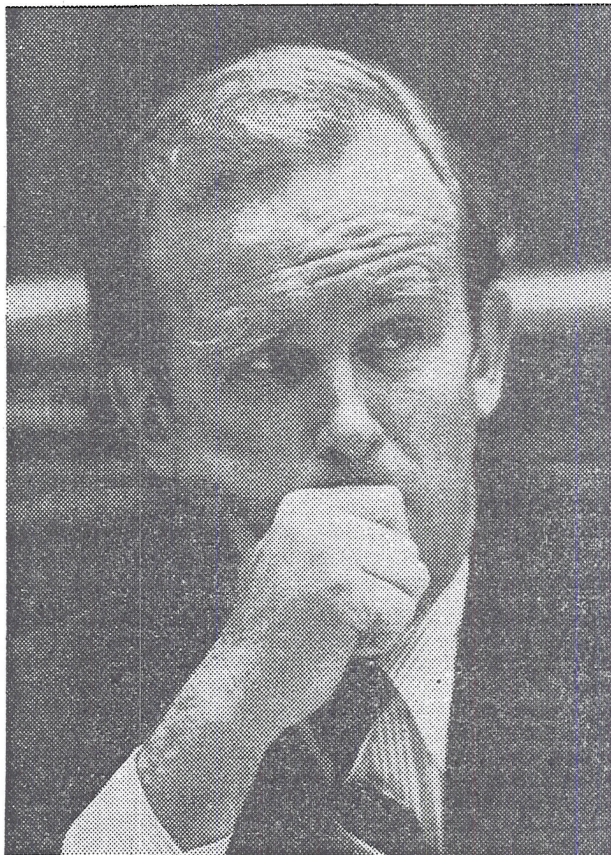
First he asked the subcommittee chairman, Lucien N. Nedzi, what he planned to do about what he had heard. According to Mr. Harrington, the answer was a "philosophic shrug." Later Mr. Nedzi, a Michigan Democrat, said that it had never occurred to him "to challenge the classification of this information on the part of those charged with the responsibility of making this kind of classification."

It occurred to Mr. Harrington. Even after the reproaches he received from the Armed Services Committee when the Colby testimony was reported in *The Times*, he kept trying. In January he introduced the first resolution in the House for the establishment of the Select Committee on Intelligence and lobbied hard for it. When it was formed in February, House Speaker Carl Albert of Oklahoma told him he had "squatters rights" and named him as one of its 10 members.

The next day, he took the floor of the House to denounce the Speaker's choice of a chairman, Mr. Nedzi, who had already shown, Mr. Harrington charged, that he was willing to ignore illegal activities by the intelligence agency.

After the select committee idled for several months, a move was initiated to replace Mr. Nedzi. Eventually Mr. Pike was brought in, but in the same maneuver Mr. Harrington was dropped from the committee.

The maneuvering might have ended there except for a young Republican Congressman from Tennessee, Robin L. Beard Jr.



The New York Times

**Representative Michael J. Harrington, Massachusetts Democrat, has a keen personal interest in the current struggle between House panel and White House.**

Having heard a year after the fact about Mr. Harrington's efforts to bring the Colby testimony to light, Mr. Beard decided to lodge a formal complaint with the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.

Mr. Harrington engaged Philip A. Locovara, a former Watergate prosecutor, as his defense counsel. Mr. Beard countered by engaging the former minority counsel of the Senate Watergate committee, Fred D. Thompson, to press his complaint.

Mr. Locovara said the other day that he was thinking of calling Mr. Pike as a witness.

"Pike has been saying almost verbatim the kinds of things Congressman Harrington was saying," the lawyer said. "He has been saying the House has independent authority to release documents the executive does not want released, and that is really what the guts of this dispute is all about."