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REP. MICHAEL HARRINGTON
He leaked data on CIA operation in Chile

SFChronicle

JUN 17 1975

A Startling Vote On CIA Prober

Washington

The House, in a vote unprecedented in modern times, rejected yesterday the resignation of Lucien Nedzi as chairman of the dissension-torn special committee investigating the CIA.

The 280-to-64 vote came after B. F. Sisk (Dem-Calif.) introduced a resolution to abolish the select committee, whose investigation of the Central Intelligence Agency and other intelligence-gathering organizations has been stymied by internal squabbling.

The fate of the committee now lies with the rules committee, which could abolish it and create a new committee or transfer its authority to an existing committee.

By refusing to accept Nedzi's offer to quit, the House

in effect told Nedzi (Dem-Mich.) it has confidence in him, and it rejected the argument of five of the panel's seven Democratic members that Nedzi had compromised himself and the committee and could not conduct an impartial party.

The move to oust Nedzi started after he admitted he had been privately briefed more than a year ago by the CIA on the agency's involvement in the overthrow of foreign governments and plots to assassinate some heads of state.

Nedzi told the packed House chamber, "To remain as chairman under the present conditions would be to be an accomplice to a charade. I know I bent over backwards to be fair to my colleagues and to pursue the investigation in a vigorous and responsible manner."

Nedzi, serving his eighth term in the House, drew a heavy round of applause when he said, "My service in the Congress for 14 years has, I believe, been honorable."

A letter of resignation from a committee chairman usually is routinely received and not voted on. The act of voting itself was an oddity.

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but the fact that the resignation was rejected was, according to one staff member with 50 years of service in the House, unprecedented in his time.

The vote also indicated the House is ready either to revamp the select committee to get rid of the dissidents or to abolish it and start over.

The controversy has blocked the panel's investigation into all U.S. intelligence agencies since its creation on Feb. 19, 1975.

Don Edwards (Dem.-Calif.), a member of the panel that sought Nedzi's resignation, said, "Our only intention was to proceed fairly and vigorously to fulfill our mandate."

Edwards noted, however, that Nedzi had received "information of conduct by the CIA in murder and assassinations, illegal conduct and very probably criminal conduct, and had not reported this to the House or to the committee or to anyone."

United Press