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House Rejects Offer

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WASHINGTON, June 16—The House of Representatives, in a highly unusual action, refused today to accept the resignation of Representative Lucien N. Nedzi as chairman and a member of its Select Committee on Intelligence Activities.

The vote, which was 290 to 64, with 44 other Representatives voting "present," appeared to cast new doubts on the future of the committee created earlier this year by the House to investigate allegations of illegal and improper intelligence activities in the United States and overseas.

Even after the vote, Mr. Nedzi, a Michigan Democrat who has been at odds with insurgent Democrats on the committee, told reporters he could not continue to serve as chairman of the 10-member com-

Continued on Page 19, Column 3

The New York Times

Lucien N. Nedzi after his resignation was rejected.

Continued From Page 1, Col. 1

mittee as now constituted.

"I frankly don't see how I could make a valuable contribution," he said.

Other possibilities that appeared to be open to the House leadership included abolishing the committee, reconstituting it with new members or transferring its duties to another committee. Earlier today, Representative B. F. Sisk, Democrat of California, a member of the House Rules Committee, introduced a resolution to abolish the intelligence committee.

Mr. Nedzi said the vote, which he had not sought, would "maintain the status quo" for the time being and "provide people with an opportunity to think through the precise role the House should play" in the various investigations of the intelligence community.

In an apparent reference to the investigation being undertaken by a Senate select committee and the recently completed investigation of the Central Intelligence Agency by the Rockefeller commission, Mr. Nedzi told reporters at one point:

"To send investigators out to plow the same ground that has already been plowed is of questionable wisdom."

Briefings Cause Split

Mr. Nedzi's difficulties with his committee began earlier this month after a news article quoted authoritative sources as saying that Mr. Nedzi had received briefings more than a year ago, in which he was told about the C.I.A.'s involvement in assassination plots and about possible illegal domestic activity, but did not inform fellow members of his committee.

This caused some committee members to question Mr. Nedzi's ability to conduct an impartial investigation, and last Monday a compromise was worked out under which a small subcommittee, headed by Representative James V. Stanton, Democrat of Ohio, would investigate the C.I.A. while Mr. Nedzi would remain head of the inquiry into other intelligence activities.

But last Wednesday night, committee Democrats decided at a caucus that the new subcommittee should include all 10 committee members, and Mr. Nedzi, protesting that he had been stripped of all but "a gavel and a title," announced his resignation.

Resignation Indicated

Carl Albert, the Speaker of the House, asked Mr. Nedzi to delay submitting his resignation to the House until today and as late as this morning Mr. Albert indicated to reporters that he was prepared to announce the selection of a new chairman to replace Mr. Nedzi.

Normally, such resignations are routinely received and accepted by the House without a vote being taken. Veteran House staff members said that they could not recall a case in recent years when a resignation had been refused.

An unusually large number of Representatives were on the floor as Mr. Nedzi, a baldish man with bushy sideburns, stood in the well of the House chamber to explain his resignation. To remain as chairman under the present conditions would be to be an "accomplice to a charade," he said.

He drew applause at one point when he said: "Mr. Speaker, my service in this Congress for 14 years has, I believe, been honorable. I have not ducked my responsibilities. I have not coveted the role of show horse. I have not made money in politics."

Mr. Nedzi said that even if the House were to give him a vote of confidence, "the small committee caucus," which expanded the C.I.A. subcommittee to the full 10 members, "could still control me."

He said, "The ironic combination of this [subcommittee caucus] rule and the personalities involved on the Democratic side has made my position as chairman intolerable. I have no alternative," he added.

"I know I bent over backwards to be fair to my colleagues and to pursue the investigation in a vigorous and responsible manner. But having been raised in the hard knocks of Detroit-area life, I surely know the difference between a welcome mat and a doormat."

Several influential Democrats, such as Representative Philip Burton of California, chairman of the House Democratic Caucus; Richard Bolling of Missouri, James G. O'Hara of Michigan; and Samuel S. Stratton of upstate New York, urged the House to reject the resignation, in part to show support for Mr. Nedzi and as Mr. Bolling put it, to dispel the appearance that "we have resorted to cannibalism."

One of the few committee members who spoke, Representative Don Edwards, Democrat of California, said that he strongly disagreed with the view that only Mr. Nedzi could head a proper investigation and noted that Mr. Nedzi even without jurisdiction over the C.I.A. inquiry would still have been in charge of the bulk of the investigation.

"This, my colleagues, is hardly being left with a title and gavel," he said.

All 64 votes to accept Mr. Nedzi's resignation came from Democrats. Voting to reject the resignation were 193 Democrats and 97 Republicans, while 34 Republicans and 10 Democrats voted "present."

Earlier today, the House Armed Services committee voted, 16 to 13, to deny one of its members, Representative Michael J. Harrington, access to classified information.

The action was taken against Mr. Harrington, a liberal democrat from Massachusetts, because last year he admittedly made classified material about C.I.A. operations in Chile available to a reporter for the Washington Post.

Mr. Harrington contended today that the material—secret testimony by William E. Colby, Director of Central Intelligence—should not have been classified in the first place.