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Department of Energy Information



Office of Public Affairs
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JAMES R. SCHLESINGER

James R. Schlesinger became the first Secretary of Energy on August 5, 1977, taking the oath of office in a White House ceremony at which President Carter presided. The ceremony came one day after the President had signed legislation creating the new Cabinet agency.

Mr. Schlesinger joined President Carter's staff on January 20, 1977 as Assistant to the President serving as principal energy advisor. He was charged with responsibility for drafting a national energy policy, and a plan for the establishment of the Department of Energy to implement that policy.

Mr. Schlesinger was a Visiting Scholar at Johns Hopkins University at the time he was selected to join the President's staff.

In March 1969 Mr. Schlesinger began his Government service as Assistant Director of the Bureau of Budget (later the Office of Management and Budget), and served for a period as Acting Director. He left BOB in August 1971 to become Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, a post he held until February 1973 when he was named Director of Central Intelligence. He served in that position until July 1973 when he was appointed Secretary of Defense. He remained at the Defense Department until November 1975.

Born in New York City, February 15, 1929, Mr. Schlesinger received A.B., A.M. and Ph.D. degrees in economics from Harvard University in 1950, 1952 and 1956, respectively. From 1955 to 1963 he served as assistant and associate professor of economics at the University of Virginia. Subsequently he was associated with the Rand Corporation as a senior staff member, 1963-67, and director of strategic studies, 1967-69.

Mr. Schlesinger has been an associate editor of the Journal of Finance, 1964-65; a member of the board of associates of the Foreign Policy Research Institute at the University of Pennsylvania, 1962-63; and a Frederick Sheldon Prize Fellow at Harvard, 1950-51. He is the author of The Political Economy of National Security, 1960, and co-author of Issues in Defense Economics, 1967.

Married to the former Rachel Mellinger, Mr. Schlesinger and his wife have eight children and live in Arlington, Virginia.

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