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Schlesinger Wins Senate Approval As Defense Chief

United Press International

The Senate yesterday unanimously approved the nomination of James R. Schlesinger, former head of the Atomic Energy Commission and Central Intelligence Agency, as President Nixon's third Secretary of Defense.

Schlesinger replaces Elliot L. Richardson, tapped by the President to head the Justice Department after the Watergate scandal swept Richard G. Kleindienst out of the office.

The senate gave its 91-0 approval after Sen. William Proxmire (D-Wis.) withdrew his objection to the nomination. Proxmire had questioned Schlesinger's testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee supporting the continued bombing of Cambodia and possible renewal of the air war in Vietnam.

Sen. Stuart Symington (D-Mo.) acting chairman of the Armed Services panel, said it would have been "very difficult" for Schlesinger to take any other stand on the bombing, since it reflected administration policy.

Symington described Schlesinger as an "independent and courageous" administrator with the potential of becoming "a really great secretary if he uses his own judgement in these matters." The new secretary is an authority on weapons systems and their fundings.

Proxmire said he still was disturbed by Schlesinger's views on U.S. policy in Indochina, but that he had decided to vote for confirmation because of his general qualifications.

In written question-and-answer testimony submitted to



JAMES R. SCHLESINGER
... succeeds Richardson

Proxmire, Schlesinger explained: "In general the only circumstances in which I could foresee any possibility of renewed U.S. bombing of North Vietnam would be major aggressive actions by the North Vietnamese which would threaten South Vietnam in obvious violation of the Paris agreements.

"I do not believe that such circumstances will arise."

Schlesinger, 44, joined the government in 1969 as assistant director of the Budget Bureau, where he built a reputation as a cutter of spending for weapons systems. He headed the AEC from Aug. 10, 1971, until his appointment as CIA director last Dec. 21.

During confirmation hearings, Schlesinger assured senators he was opposed to use of Pentagon personnel in domestic intelligence-gathering and had "no intention of participating in active political campaigning."