A Discreet Nominee James Rodney Schlesinger

By LINDA CHARLTON DEC 22 1972

WASHINGTON, Dec. 21-James Rodney Schlesinger, whose expected nomination as the new head of the Central Intelligence Agency was announced by the White House today, received consid-erable public attention as the

SIA

Atomic Energy Commission chairman who took his wife and two of his Man children along to witness the conin the troversial detonation of a hydrogen bomb in the Aleu-News

tion Islands. But that incident, in No-vember, 1971, -about four months after he became chair-

man of the commission, was one of the less startling actions of his tenure. Faced with trying to recon-

Faced with trying to recon-cile the opposing interests of conservationists and advo-cates of nuclear energy, Mr. Schlesinger began by indicat-ing that he was no longer go-ing to take the traditional A.E.C. position of champion-ing the rights of nuclear energy above all others, in-cluding those of citizens. This he did by deciding, on taking office, not to ap-peal a Federal court decision requiring the commission to be responsive to questions on the location of nuclear power plants and their effects on the environment. **Public Interest Stressed**

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Not long after this, he told representatives of the nuclear industry that the commission "exists to serve the public in-terest," not that of the industry.

dustry. During his 17 months as chairman of the commission, he has also undertaken a drastic reorganization of its structure — cutting back on high-level staff and creating a new "assistant general man-ager for environmental and confair affairs"

safety affairs." While the 43-year-old Mr. Schlesinger has made no se-cret of his advocacy of nuclear energy as a power source, he says that the skep-tics have a right to be heard.

tics have a right to be heard. In a magazine interview, he urged "getting away from the attitude, to wit, that atoms are beautiful. "Historically, this attitude is understandable," he said. "But, in fact, atoms may or may not be useful, depending on the circumstances." on the circumstances." He urged the commission

Special to The New York Times to broaden its concern to take in the entire energy area.

Before heading the commission, Mr. Schlesinger was assistant director of the Office of Management and Budget. He joined the Nixon Adminis-tration in 1969 after working for the Rand Corporation as director of strategic studies. During his years at Rand, he was a consultant on atomic energy to the Budget Bureau and directed a nuclear-prolif-eration study commissioned by the Federal Government.

Born in New York

Mr. Schlesinger was born in New York on Feb. 15, 1929-He graduated summa cum laude and was elected to Phi Pate T

He graduated summa cum laude and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. He also won a prize of \$2,400 that underwrote a year's travel in western Eu-rope and parts of Africa and Asia. "I learned that the world was a very complicated place," he said, "and that the narrow discipline of econom-ics gave a narrow insight into ics gave a narrow insight into the social life of man."

He returned to Harvard for his master's and doctorate degrees and in 1954 married Rachel Mellinger, who was then at Radcliffe. They have four some and four doughters four sons and four daughters and live in Alexandria, Va. They moved on to the Uni-versity of Virginia, where Mr.

Schlesinger taught economics for six years except for a six-month leave of absence to teach at the Naval War College in Newport, R. I. He wrote a book, "The Political wrote a book, "The Political Economy of National Secur-ity" and it was this that at-tracted the attention of, and a job offer from the Rand Corporation.

tracted the attention and a job offer from the Rand Corporation. Mr. Schlesinger is de-scribed as an unpretentious, plain-living man who wears off -the - bargain - rack suits, drives a retirement-age car, enjoys bird-watching and reading. Lutheran Theology and writes his own policy speeches. speeches.

speeches. For all his articulateness, the normally frank Mr. Schlesinger has demonstrated recently that he can keep his mouth shut. Speculation that he would be named to the intelligence agency has been swirling through Wash-ington since the beginning of the month, but he has been as discreet as any C.I.A. operative of fact or fiction.