



The 'Humanization' of James Rodney Schlesinger

August 12 (IPS) — The *New York Times*, one of the CIA's leading public relations organs, devoted the cover story in its August 4 Sunday Magazine to a slick image overhaul on Defense Secretary James "Rodney the Robot" Schlesinger: "Schlesinger for Defense in a World of Peanuts and MAD."

By stressing Schlesinger's "rivalry" with superstar Henry Kissinger, the *Times* hopes to catapult colorless bureaucrat Schlesinger to the status of another Super Statesman. More important, the *Times* is countering the brand of detente labeled "Kissinger" with the Schlesinger version — detente with a gun.

Schlesinger's previous achievement of note was his role as mouthpiece for the Rockefeller strategy of "limited nuclear warfare" against the Soviet Union. A relatively sophisticated unit in the RAND computer network, Schlesinger is being wheeled out as a factional figurehead in support of Rockefeller's current policy towards the USSR — a policy of aggressively pushing the

trembling Soviets from one retreat to the next and tossing them a superficial gesture towards detente whenever it is convenient. Thus the *Times* puff, which portrays Schlesinger as a hard-headed guy whose time has come, a tough administrator who is pro-detente but "realistic" about defense. Schlesinger's printout reads, "Detente yes, but on Rockefeller's terms."

The particular *Times* twist is the article's secondary theme: Schlesinger as absent-minded professor. The *Times* knows that the portrait of Schlesinger as a philosophizing slob, an unkempt fellow, will pull on the nostalgic heart-strings of liberal readers and evoke bittersweet images of canonized liberals like Eugene McCarthy and Ramsey Clark. Schlesinger's sabre-rattling, his CIA history, the politics he actually represents are not important, says the *Times*. Love him, for he has a thoroughly liberal style — he loves Peanuts and MAD magazine.