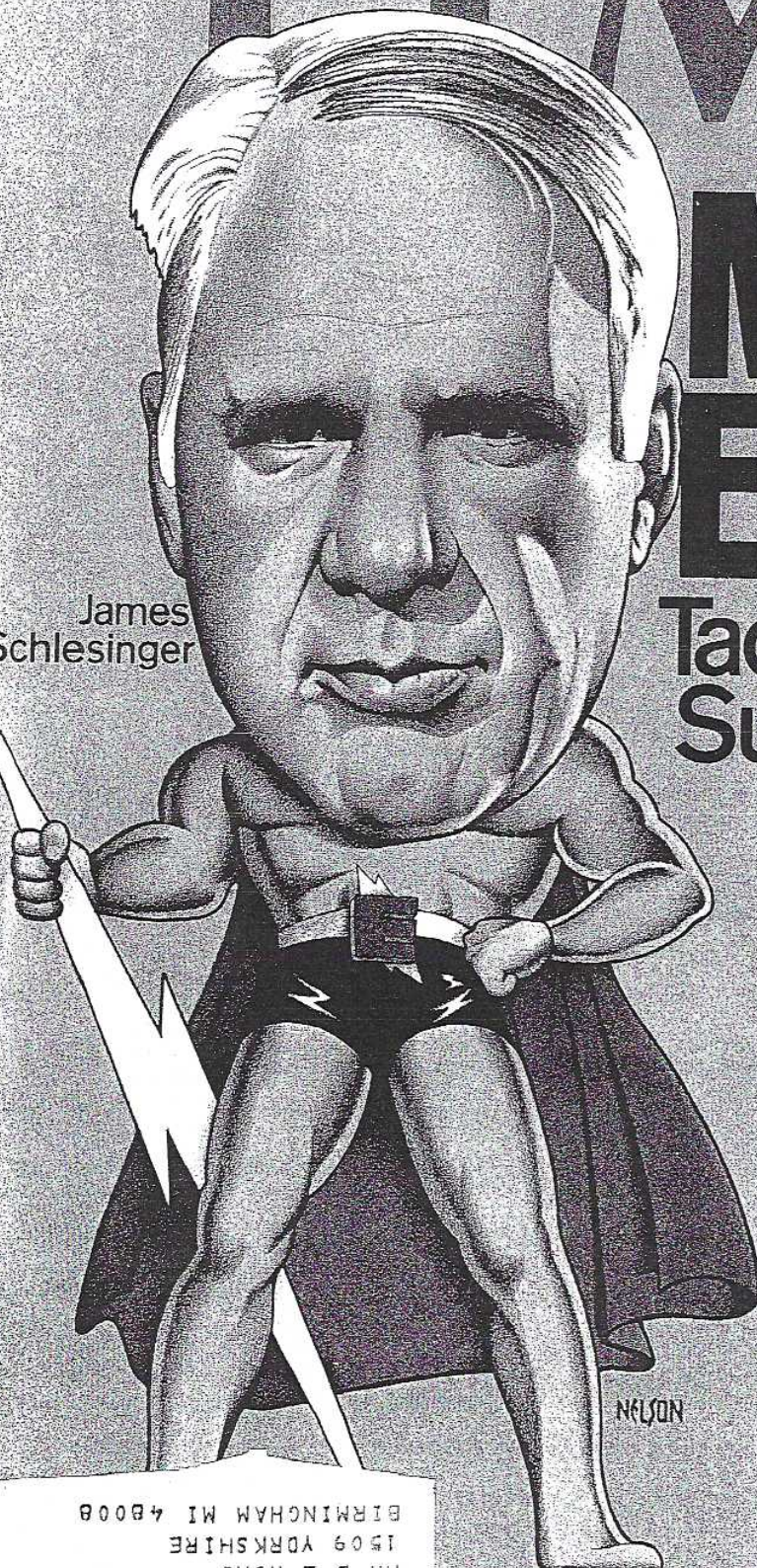


TIME

MR. ENERGY

Tackling a Superproblem

James Schlesinger



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A Vote for Freedom

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for our oil shale, they look for our uranium—they look to Colorado for their energy. But their opening card is to sock us in the face."

This week the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Public Works will begin what are certain to be spirited hearings on all 30 projects that Carter has said he would not approve unless the reviewing panel endorses them. The Senators and Congressmen could vote to put every project deleted by Carter right back into the budget, a step that would match the mood of a number of leading legislators from the South and West. Byrd, Jackson and 33 other Democratic Senators have already joined 30 Republicans to give Carter his first major defeat on the Hill: a 65-to-24 vote on March 10 passing an amendment requiring the President to spend any money voted by Congress for the water-control programs.

Best Soldiers. If Congress does approve the money for projects opposed by the Administration, Carter faces some difficult choices. He could turn down the package, hoping that the budget cutters on the Hill would sustain his veto. Or he could accept the bill and try to persuade Congress to allow him to rescind funds for certain projects—a questionable possibility. Finally, Carter could take the money, swallow his pride and let the concrete pour.

Any maneuver by Carter to thwart Congress could easily work against him. He soon will be trying to persuade the Hill to accept major pieces of legislation, such as his energy program. Senator Russell Long, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, has urged Carter to compromise on the water projects. "Otherwise," warns Long, "he is going to find himself at war with his own best soldiers."

At his press conference last week, Carter declared: "I personally don't believe any of the [30] projects ought to be built." But he added he would "keep an open mind" as the public hearings went on, and he has been taking a more conciliatory approach to Congress. He has promised to consult with affected legislators in the future before proposing to stop other water programs. The White House is striving to make sure members of Congress are the first to know when a project in their areas is in trouble—or if one has been cleared—rather than having them learn about it from reporters, as had happened before. Last week Carter asked Congress to provide \$844 million for drought relief, a move the White House took pains to say was unrelated to the water-projects fight, but which would surely please Western Senators and Congressmen.

Watching Carter operate, and sensing the mood of Congress, House Appropriations Committee Chairman George Mahon is convinced that most of the pork will stay in the barrel. Says he: "The bulk of these dams will be built."



KRISTINE



TIMOTHY



MARK



JILL

CRIME

They All Trusted Their Killer

A grim combination of suspicion, fear and horror hangs over the trim, tree-shaded suburban townships of Oakland County, Mich., northwest of Detroit. For the seventh time in 14 months, a child has been abducted, then killed.

Police are almost certain that four of the murders were committed by the same man. The chilling conclusion of Birmingham Police Chief Jerry Tobin: "We think he is a white-collar-class person or a professional man—somebody who is trusted, like a doctor, a policeman, a member of the clergy." Asked if that means neighbor should watch neighbor, his answer is a terse yes.

The latest victim is Timothy King, 11, son of Detroit Lawyer Barry King and an all-A student at Adams Elementary School in Birmingham. On March 16 he left his home at 8:15 p.m. to buy 30¢ worth of candy at a neighborhood drugstore. He made the purchase—and vanished. Last week his body, still warm, was found beside a dirt road eleven miles away. It was fully clothed and laid out with almost ritual care. The skateboard he had carried was neatly placed next to him.

Timothy had been smothered to death. An autopsy revealed signs of sexual abuse, and there were marks around his wrists and ankles suggesting that he had been tied. His last meal had been chicken (in a TV appeal for his return, his mother had mentioned that his favorite dinner was chicken). His body was strikingly clean. "He was scrubbed, his fingernails and toenails were immaculate," says Wayne County Medical Examiner Werner Spitz. "Even his clothes had been cleaned."

The same remarkable fastidiousness points to a single killer in three other child murders. Mark Stebbins, 12, a quiet boy who lived with his divorced mother in Ferndale, was found in a parking lot on

Feb. 19, 1976, some 17 days after he had disappeared. The body of Jill Robinson, 12, was discovered Dec. 16 beside a freeway, four days after she was reported missing from her home in Royal Oak. Kristine Mihelich, a brown-haired, blue-eyed ten-year-old from nearby Berkley, vanished on Jan. 2. Her body turned up 18 days later in a roadside snowbank. These victims may all have been sexually molested—the Stebbins boy was. Each body was found fully clothed; two were dead from having been smothered. The exception was Jill Robinson, killed by a shotgun blast that the police think accidentally occurred when the killer panicked. All the children, including Timothy King, were last seen within a few blocks of Oakland County's main north-south commercial street, Woodward Avenue.

Promising Lead. More than 200 detectives from 50 police departments are working with state police on the case. Tips from Oakland County citizens are pouring in at the rate of 300 a day. The most promising lead so far: a witness saw Timothy talking with a white male, 20 to 35 years old with shag-cut hair and bushy sideburns, just before his disappearance.

Meanwhile, Birmingham parents are trying to protect their children. "We're terrified," says a mother of three. "We have a rule that no child on the block walks to or from school alone." Many youngsters are being driven to classes, libraries and playgrounds.

Streets are all but deserted after dusk. "I wouldn't let my child walk beyond the corner," says Birmingham Psychiatrist Rafael Gonzalez. The menace is tangible. When the news that Timothy's body had been discovered flashed over TV, one 14-year-old boy who lives near the Kings said to his father, "That means he'll be looking for somebody else, doesn't it?"



THE MURDERER?