



Former staff fights for Hagel; Why Vietnam won't be enough; A student remembers Hagel's class; Why Halloween may matter at the Pentagon; Jim Amos on Margaret Brewer, and more.

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A band of brothers and sisters. Hagel commanded deep loyalty among those who worked for him, staffers who, now that Hagel has been nominated, seek to set the record straight about their boss and counter the charge that Hagel sits far outside the mainstream. As one put it to us, most of his former staffers would "lay in front of a bus for the man."

Indeed, Andrew Parasiliti, who served as Hagel's foreign policy advisor between 2001 and 2005, was quick to defend his old boss, hinting that Republican critics are just trying to settle old scores on Iraq. Hagel voted to authorize the use of military force but angered Republicans when he raised questions about the conduct of the war later on. "Hagel was right on Iraq and paid a price within his party for it," said Parasiliti, now editor of *Al-Monitor* in Washington. "Many of those smearing Hagel clamored for a rush to war and have not done the introspection or due diligence about what happened," Parasiliti told *Situation Report*. "More than 4,400 Americans died and more than 33,000 were wounded after running a war on credit, and our standing in the world sunk." Hagel showed "leadership, wisdom, and accountability," he said. "His critics have shown none of the above and should be embarrassed for themselves."

Another former Hagel staffer: "He is highly qualified, the president wants him, and most of what has been said against him is demonstrably false. He is absolutely confirmable." The staffer added that, as senator, Hagel voted for more than \$40 billion in aid for Israel, traveled there frequently, worked hard to strengthen the U.S.-Israeli relationship, and is "clear-eyed" on the threats posed to that country.

There are plenty who support Hagel. But among those who don't, there is either fierce opposition or cold shoulders. Some senators have either suggested they might not support him, at least initially, or would block Hagel's nomination outright. Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) was one of the first Dems to suggest that Hagel's record would need additional scrutiny; on the other side, Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX) said he wouldn't support him. Hagel's record, as framed through the lens of his critics, can be found at chuckhagel.com, which the *WaPo* and others reported this morning was led by the Emergency Committee for Israel, a conservative group led by Bill Kristol and Gary Bauer.

But in the end, as some Democrats have pointed out, it may be hard for Senate Republicans and Democrats to vote against one of their own, especially after Hagel begins to speak for himself during the hearings, likely to be scheduled in the coming weeks.

Emergency Committee for Israel: <http://bit.ly/bZhWrl>

Still, there are people like freshman Republican Senator Ted Cruz - sworn in just days ago - who typifies the kind of indignant rhetoric coming at Hagel over Israel. Cruz told Fox News' John Roberts: "Hagel's record is very, very troubling on the nation of Israel. He has not been a friend to Israel. And in my view, the United States should stand unshakably with the nation of Israel," he said, adding that Hagel has "consistently advocated weakness" when it comes to Iran. "If you are an Iranian mullah right now and you're looking at a Chuck Hagel who thinks that sanctions are too harsh, you've got to be laughing off any harsher than sanctions."

But an aide to retired Marine Gen. Arnold Punaro of the Defense Business Board e-mailed us this from Punaro, who served as a civilian as a senior staffer on the SASC for many years: "Having been involved with the confirmation process for nine Secretaries of Defense, I am confident the Senate will approve Chuck Hagel's nomination after following the regular order, ensuring all the tough questions are answered, and addressing all of their concerns. He will not be denied an up or down vote. All should remember that political appointees are not entitled to 'personal views;' they support the policies of the President."

ICYMI: Hagel's favorite holiday: Halloween. He's not above wearing a mask on Halloween, former staffers and others who know him say. "He's kind of a jokester," a former student of Hagel's at Georgetown told Situation Report.

Welcome to Tuesday's edition of Situation Report where we are always at least trying to pull the mask off. Follow me @glubold. Or hit me anytime at gordon.lubold@foreignpolicy.com. And sign up for Situation Report here: <http://bit.ly/NCN9uN> or just send me an e-mail and I'll put you on the list. And if you have a report, piece of news, or tidbit you want teased, send it to us ***early for maximum tease.***

What do the active uniforms think about Hagel? It's always hard to poll the true thoughts of the rank-and-file and more so the senior leaders who may interact personally with the new SecDef. The military is more concerned with the order to take that hill than the person giving it. Said one, the military just wants a principled leader who is open-minded. "Most folks are comfortable with that," said a full-bird in the building. That Hagel served his country and made sacrifices on the battlefield affords him a unique perspective that is important. But Hagel's service in Vietnam will only help to an extent. "It's a very different military than it was then and I think he understands that."

At Georgetown, Hagel was on top of things, says a former student, who says Hagel has a photographic memory and a knack for details. Hagel taught a class last fall called "Redefining Geopolitical Relationships" for about 15 students. Unlike other "guest professors," Hagel was always well-prepared and engaged the class in an easy, amiable style. But students had to be on top of things, too.

"He was always well prepared so everyone knew you had to have done your stuff to be participating," the student told Situation Report. "He's actually a good teacher, really understood how to run a class, be involved," said the student who asked not to be identified by name. The class focused on the rise of non-state actors, cyber-security, information technology, and the diffusion of power. They talked economics, critical resources and China. Hagel's love for Eisenhower was an underpinning of the class, the former student said.

Hagel did talk about "Weighing Benefits and Costs of International Sanctions Against Iran," a report by the Iran Project of which he was clearly a proud co-signer, the student said. But what stood out most of all in the class was his service as a veteran. "He clearly carries that veteran experience as a key shaper of his world," the student said.

The Iran Project: <http://bit.ly/NOwWaG>

Not a surprise? The former student got an 'A.'

Guests during the semester: four ambassadors, including from Japan and Russia, John Nagl and NYT journalist Thom Shanker.

Gates: make it a swift confirmation. Geoff Morrell e-mailed a statement from Bob Gates on Hagel: "I congratulate Senator Hagel on his nomination to be secretary of defense. I am grateful for his willingness to take on this responsibility at a time of great challenges for the Defense Department. While there are issues on which I have disagreed with him, such as the 2007 surge in Iraq, he is a man of complete integrity and deep patriotism. He is also the president's choice. The country and our men and women in uniform would be well-served by his swift confirmation."

Flournoy e-mails about Hagel. Michele Flournoy, the Pentagon's former policy chief, who was on the north end of the short list, e-mailed reporters yesterday after the Hagel announcement. Some said the mother of three, whose husband, Scott Gould, works for Eric Shinseki at the VA, didn't want the job; others said she very much did. In the end, she put out a dry statement that reflects sportsman-like conduct: "I respect and support President Obama's choice of Senator Chuck Hagel to be his nominee for Secretary of Defense. Senator Hagel has a long and distinguished career of public service in the military and the Senate, and is well qualified for the position. I believe he will fully support the president's policies and will be a faithful steward of our armed forces."

Commandant Jim Amos on the death of Brig. Gen. Margaret Brewer. Gen. Amos had this to say yesterday about the Corps' first public affairs director and female general officer: *"I was deeply saddened to learn of the loss of Brigadier General Margaret Brewer. Throughout her three decades of service to our Corps and country, she truly led from the front and helped the Marine Corps integrate women more fully into the force. She served during an era when many thought that women had no place in the Corps, but she proved critics wrong time and again. It's never easy being the first, but she was both the first female general officer and the first Director of Public Affairs and met the challenges and responsibilities of each with professionalism and grace. Brig. Gen. Brewer was an amazing and courageous woman who has left an indelible mark on the rich legacy of our Corps and she will be missed. On the behalf of all Marines, we send our condolences to her family and friends."*

Hageling

- Salon: The phony Chuck Hagel fight. <http://bit.ly/TYtN8Q>
- Cato: The Neocons' fight over Hagel moves to act two. <http://bit.ly/WpdK1z>
- White House announcement: <http://1.usa.gov/Zi4GOp>
- Atlantic: Why the Log Cabin Republicans won't forgive Hagel. <http://bit.ly/109Ni4F>
- Polycymic: What my experience as a female tells me about the next Sec-Def. <http://bit.ly/WInPrq>

Noting

- Reuters: Tunisia frees man held over attack on U.S. consulate in Libya. <http://reut.rs/UGeIco>
- The Independent: British soldier shot in green-on-blue attack. <http://ind.pn/RDSLvy>
- The Daily Beast: Syria shut down chemical weapons push. <http://thebea.st/RDFVok>

Studying

- Cato, out today: "China, America, and the Pivot to Asia." <http://bit.ly/ZlxqpL>
- CSIS: The mindless debate over manpower in Afghanistan. <http://bit.ly/ZC4FtK>
- Brookings: Flexible thinking is key for Hagel. <http://bit.ly/XfrXkG>