



Chuck Hagel's World...

The Washington Post: "Chuck Hagel Is Not The Right Choice For Defense Secretary."

(Editorial, "Chuck Hagel Is Not The Right Choice For Defense Secretary," [The Washington Post](#), 12/18/12)

ACCORDING TO HAGEL, THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT IS "BLOATED" AND SEQUESTRATION DEFENSE CUTS POSE LITTLE RISK TO NATIONAL SECURITY

Asked About The Potentially Devastating National Security Effects Should Sequestration Defense Cuts Go Into Effect, Hagel Said The Defense Budget Was "Bloated," Adding "The Pentagon Needs To Be Pared Down." QUESTION: "On this Joint Committee that's being created, Leon Panetta, our Defense Secretary, has warned of really dire consequences to U.S. national security if this so-called trigger gets pulled, in which case we would see \$600 billion in automatic cuts to the Defense Department. Do you agree with his assessment that that would be very harmful to national security." CHUCK HAGEL: "Defense Department, I think, in many ways, has been bloated. So I think the Pentagon needs to be pared down. I don't think that our military has really looked at themselves strategically, critically, in a long, long time."

([Interview](#) With *The Financial Times*, 9/1/11)

ACCORDING TO HAGEL, AMERICA IS THE PROBLEM WHEN IT COMES TO IRAN

Hagel In 2001: "The National Security Of The United States Is Not Served By Isolating Iran." (Sen. Chuck Hagel, Remarks To The American Iranian Council, Washington, DC, 6/27/01)

Hagel Opposed Sanctions On Iran Multiple Times In The Senate

Hagel "Denounced U.S. Sanctions Against Iran" In 2001. "On June 27, 2001, however, Mr. Hagel, addressing another AIC [American Iranian Council] gathering in Washington, denounced U.S. sanctions against Iran and Libya, asserting that they 'isolate us.'" (Editorial, "Iran And Its Apologists," *The Washington Times*, 3/29/02)

- **Hagel Was One Of Two Senators Who Voted Against Renewing The Iran-Libya Sanctions Act, Which "Helps Deny Iran And Libya Money That They Would Spend On Supporting Terror Or Acquiring Weapons Of Mass Destruction."** "One indicator came on July 24, 2001, when the Senate voted 96 to 2 to renew the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act. The act helps deny Iran and Libya money that they would spend on supporting terror or acquiring weapons of mass destruction. The two senators who opposed the measure? Messrs. Lugar and Hagel." (Editorial, "Hagar The Horrible," [The New York Sun](#), 10/11/04)

In 2007, Hagel Voted Against An Amendment To The Defense Authorization Bill That Labeled The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps A Terrorist Organization. "Iran sprang up as a campaign issue on

Sept. 26, when the Senate voted 76 to 22 for a defense authorization bill amendment sponsored by Sens. Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.) and Joseph I. Lieberman (I-Conn.). The amendment not only urged the administration to label the IRGC a terrorist organization but also said that the U.S. military presence in Iraq could have a critical impact on Iran's ability to pose a threat to the entire Middle East. Twenty-eight other Democrats supported the amendment, including eight who voted against the 2002 Iraq resolution and Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid (Nev.), a fervent critic of Bush's Iraq policies. Only two Republicans opposed it, Sens. Richard G. Lugar (Ind.), the ranking minority member on the Foreign Relations Committee, and Chuck Hagel (Neb.), a frequent foreign policy critic of the White House." (Dan Balz, "Iran Becomes An Issue In Democratic Contest," *The Washington Post*, 10/25/07)

Hagel Was "Solely Responsible" For Blocking An Iran Sanctions Bill In 2008. "If, given the prevailing political winds on Iran, it sounds strange that Republicans would have blocked a get-tough measure on the Islamic Republic -- there's an explanation. According to a congressional aide who spoke on background to the Huffington Post, Nebraska Sen. Chuck Hagel is solely responsible for the hold on the bill. (Request for confirmation from Hagel's press office was not immediately returned.)" (Seth Colter Walls, "Dems Blame Senate GOP For Blocking Iran Sanctions Bill," *The Huffington Post*, 11/3/08)

Hagel Favors "Direct, Unconditional, And Comprehensive Talks" With Iran

Hagel In 2005: "Any Lasting Solution To Iran's Nuclear Weapons Program Will Also Require The United States' Direct Discussions With Iran." SEN. CHUCK HAGEL: "Any lasting solution to Iran's nuclear weapons program will also require the United States' direct discussions with Iran. The United States is capable of engaging Iran in direct dialogue without sacrificing any of its interests or objectives." (Sen. Chuck Hagel, [Remarks At The Council On Foreign Relations](#), Washington, DC, 11/15/05)

In 2006, Hagel Said The Nuclear Issue Could Not Be Resolved Until Iran's "Broader Interests" Were Addressed. "Iran holds the key to so many issues, Hagel said, that the nuclear issue cannot be addressed in isolation. 'Iraq, nuclear capabilities, terrorism, Israel and oil are all part of an Iranian puzzle game that cannot be played one piece at a time,' Hagel wrote. 'There will be no lasting solution to the Iranian nuclear threat until the broader interests of Iran, the U.S., the region and the world are addressed.'" (Glen Kessler, "U.S. Under Pressure To Talk To Tehran," *The Washington Post*, 5/11/06)

In 2007, Hagel Sent A Private Letter To President Bush Urging The Pursuit Of "Direct, Unconditional, And Comprehensive Talks With The Government Of Iran." "I have just secured a private letter -- not yet publicly released -- from Senator Chuck Hagel to President Bush and copied to Condoleezza Rice, Robert Gates, and Stephen Hadley. I should add that I did not receive this letter from Senator Hagel but from other sources. The letter urges the President to pursue 'direct, unconditional, and comprehensive talks with the Government of Iran.'" (Steve Clemmons, "Hagel To Bush: Talk To Iran!" *Huffington Post*, 10/31/07)

In 2008, Hagel Expressed Support For Opening A Diplomatic Post In Tehran In The Form Of A "U.S. Interest Section." CHUCK HAGEL: "Now, as to your question about an interest section, obviously we can't just fly over Tehran and drop an interest section. I get that. But the conversations I've had with the Iranian Ambassador to the United Nations, both -- actually, the last three, including the current one -- other indications I have, I think that that is an area that we could explore. I don't know why that would not be in our interested to do that." (Chuck Hagel, [Remarks At The Brookings Institute](#), Washington, DC, 6/26/08)

In His 2008 Book, *America: Our Next Chapter*, Hagel Said "Regime Change Should Not Be Our Objective." "Regime Change is desirable, but that should not be our objective. Bilateral talks with Iran would have no conditions and there would be no illusions that progress would be quick or easy, if progress is even possible." (Chuck Hagel, *America: Our Next Chapter*, pp. 95, 2008)

- **Hagel: “America’s Refusal To Recognize Iran’s Status As A Legitimate Power Does Not Decrease Iran’s Influence, But Rather Increases It.”** (Chuck Hagel, *America: Our Next Chapter*, pp. 87, 2008)

ACCORDING TO HAGEL, THE “JEWISH LOBBY” IS THE PROBLEM IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Hagel: “The Jewish Lobby Intimidates A Lot Of People Up Here.” CHUCK HAGEL: “The political reality is that you intimidate, not you, but the Jewish lobby intimidates a lot of people up here. And again, I have always argued against some of the dumb things they do because I don’t think it’s in the interest of Israel. I just don’t think it’s smart for Israel.” (Chuck Hagel, Interview With Aaron David Miller For *Too Much Promised Land*, [Random House](#), 11/3/08)

- **Hagel: “I’m A United States Senator. I’m Not An Israeli Senator.”** CHUCK HAGEL: “Let me clear something up here if there’s any doubt in your mind. I’m a United States Senator. I’m not an Israeli senator. I’m a United States Senator. I support Israel. But my first interest is, I take an oath of office to the constitution of the United States. Not to a president, not to a party, not to Israel.” (Chuck Hagel, Interview With Aaron David Miller For *Too Much Promised Land*, [Random House](#), 11/3/08)

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Hagel Said That The Israel Lobby “Locked Up” Legislators To Support Continued Sanctions Against Libya And Iran. “Sen. Chuck Hagel said Wednesday that the pro-Israel lobby on Capitol Hill has ‘locked up’ many fellow lawmakers to favor continuing U.S. economic sanctions against Libya and Iran. Hagel said that policy isolates America.” (Jake Thompson, “Sanctions Aimed At Iran, Libya Should Be Dropped, Hagel Says,” *Omaha World Herald*, 6/28/01)

Hagel Has Argued That Israel Has “Chained Down” The Palestinians

In 2007, Hagel Said The Palestinian People Have Been “Chained Down For Many, Many Years.” SEN. CHUCK HAGEL: “That’s not the issue here. But when people have no hope, when there’s despair, little else matters. And this is not about terrorists don’t like freedom. Tell that to the Palestinian people who have been chained down for many, many years. Terrorism is not a strategy. It’s a tactic. Terrorism is not a plan. It’s not a belief like democracy or monarchy. It’s a tactic. It’s a tactic. And so it’s far more complicated than what, I think, a lot of us are led to believe.” (Sen. Chuck Hagel, [Remarks On S. Con. Res. 2. Expressing The Bipartisan Resolution On Iraq](#), Committee On Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, 1/24/07)

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ACCORDING TO HAGEL, HAMAS AND HEZBOLLAH ARE WORTH TALKING TO

Just Before Obama Took Office, Hagel Urged Him To Talk To Leaders Of Hamas

In A Letter Delivered Days Before Obama Took Office, Hagel Urged Him To Talk With Leaders Of Hamas. “Nine former senior US officials and one current adviser are urging the Obama administration to talk with leaders of Hamas to determine whether the militant group can be persuaded to disarm and join a peaceful Palestinian government, a major departure from current US policy. The bipartisan group, which includes economic recovery adviser Paul A. Volcker and former national security advisers Brent Scowcroft and Zbigniew Brzezinski, made the recommendation in a letter handed to Obama days before he took office, according to Scowcroft. ... Along with Scowcroft, Volcker, and Brzezinski, who was national security adviser under President Jimmy Carter, signatories included former House International Relations Committee chairman Lee Hamilton, a Democrat; former United Nations ambassador Thomas

Pickering from the first Bush administration; former World Bank president James Wolfensohn; former US trade representative in the Ford administration Carla Hills; Theodore Sorensen, former special counsel to President John F. Kennedy; and former Republican senators Chuck Hagel and Nancy Kassebaum Baker.” (Bryan Bender and Farah Stockman, “Top Officials Urge Dialogue With Hamas,” [The Boston Globe](#), 3/14/09)

- **“Longstanding US Policy Has Stipulated That Before Engaging In Any Talks, Hamas Must Renounce Violence, Recognize Israel, And Agree To All Previous Agreements Signed By Palestinian Negotiators.”** (Bryan Bender and Farah Stockman, “Top Officials Urge Dialogue With Hamas,” [The Boston Globe](#), 3/14/09)

During The 2006 Lebanon War, Hagel Called On The Bush Administration To Open Direct Talks With Hezbollah’s Backers Iran And Syria. HAGEL: “Ultimately the United States will need to engage Iran and Syria with an agenda open to all areas of agreement and disagreement. For this dialogue to have any meaning or lasting relevance, it should encompass the full agenda of issues.” (Sen. Chuck Hagel, [Remarks At The Senate Floor Proceeding](#), 7/31/06)

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National Jewish Democratic Council: “In August 2006, Hagel Was One Of Only 12 Senators Who Refused To Write The EU Asking Them To Declare Hezbollah A Terrorist Organization.” (Michael Goldfarb, “NJDC: Obama Appointee Has ‘Questionable Israel Record,’” [The Weekly Standard](#), 10/28/09)

ACCORDING TO HAGEL, THE ASSAD REGIME IN SYRIA ISN’T ALL THAT BAD

Hagel Promoted Increased Diplomacy With The Syrian Regime And Failed To Support Sanctions Against It As A State-Sponsor Of Terrorism

After A 1998 Meeting With Syrian Dictator Hafez Al-Assad, Hagel Said “Peace Comes Through Dealing With People. Peace Doesn’t Come At The End Of A Bayonet.” “Mr. Hagel met in Damascus in 1998 with the terror-sponsoring dictator, Hafez Al-Assad, and returned to tell a reporter about the meeting, ‘Peace comes through dealing with people. Peace doesn’t come at the end of a bayonet or the end of a gun.’” (Editorial: “Hagel The Horrible,” [The New York Sun](#), 10/11/04)

In 2003, Hagel Failed To Vote On The Syria Accountability Act That Authorized Sanctions On Syria For Its Support For Terrorism And Development Of Weapons Of Mass Destruction. (H.R. 1828, CQ Vote #445: Passed 89-4; R 47-2; D 42-1; I 0-1, 11/11/03, Hagel Did Not Vote)

In A 2008 Op-Ed With Sen. John Kerry, Hagel Suggested The U.S. Should Offer “Tangible Benefits” To Syria’s Bashar Al-Assad After The Dictator Complained That His “Positive Steps Have Not Been Rewarded.” “While Syria must crack down on the flow of foreign fighters into Iraq, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad claims positive steps have not been rewarded. We should test whether offering tangible benefits brings better results, starting with providing more humanitarian assistance for the nearly 1.5 million Iraqi refugees Syria has absorbed.” (Sens. John Kerry and Chuck Hagel, Op-Ed, “It’s Time To Talk To Syria,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 6/5/08)

- **Hagel And Kerry Said “Our Policy Of Nonengagement Has Isolated Us More Than The Syrians.”** “The recent announcement of peace negotiations between Israel and Syria through Turkey, and the agreement between the Lebanese factions in Qatar – both apparently without meaningful U.S. involvement – should serve as a wake-up call that our policy of nonengagement has isolated us more than the Syrians. These developments also help create new opportunities and increased leverage that we can only exploit through substantive dialogue with Syria.” (Sens. John Kerry and Chuck Hagel, Op-Ed, “It’s Time To Talk To Syria,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 6/5/08)

ACCORDING TO HAGEL, THE CASTRO REGIME IS HARMLESS

In 2002, Hagel Called Castro “A Toothless Old Dinosaur” And Said That Despite His Support For Terrorist Groups Throughout The Region, Labeling Him A Threat Would Be “Just Goofy.” “Otto Reich, the State Department's assistant secretary for the Western Hemisphere, last week laid out a case against overtures to Cuba and its longtime president, Fidel Castro. ‘Castro has supported terrorist groups in every country in this hemisphere except Mexico,’ Reich told reporters Thursday. ‘So he is a terrorist.’ Sen. Chuck Hagel, a main sponsor of Senate legislation to lift economic sanctions on Cuba, countered Reich on Friday, saying that to term Castro a threat is ‘just goofy.’ ‘This is a toothless old dinosaur,’ the Nebraska Republican added.” (Jake Thompson, “Castro Isn't Threatening, Hagel Says The Bush Administration Says Trade With Cuba Would Be Risky,” *Omaha World Herald*, 8/18/02)

In 2008, Hagel Referred To U.S. Policy On Cuba As “Outdated, Unrealistic, Irrelevant” And Described Arguments Supporting Current U.S. Policy On Cuba As “Nonsensical.” “Backing up to catch Chuck Hagel's comments about engagement with Cuba when he was questioned on CNN a week ago. ‘On Cuba, I've said that we have an outdated, unrealistic, irrelevant policy,’ he said. ‘It's always been nonsensical to me about this argument, well, it's a communist country, it's a communist regime. What do people think Vietnam is? Or the People's Republic of China? Both those countries are WTO members. We trade with them. We have relations. Great powers engage,’ Hagel said. ‘Great powers are not afraid. Great powers trade.’” (Don Walton, “Obama Affects The State,” *Lincoln Journal Star*, 3/3/08)

- **Hagel In 2002: “What Jimmy Carter's Saying ... Is Exactly Right: Our 40-Year Policy Toward Cuba Is Senseless.”** “Wednesday, though, Hagel did endorse Carter's message: that the United States should broaden relations with Cuba and lift its trade and travel embargo. ‘What Jimmy Carter's saying ... is exactly right: Our 40-year policy toward Cuba is senseless,’ Hagel said. ‘It's outdated, it's irrelevant and it just doesn't fit. We should be wise and be trying to enhance America's position with peoples of the world.’” (Jake Thompson, “Hagel Declined To Go But Backs Carter's Message,” *Omaha World Herald*, 5/16/02)

ACCORDING TO HAGEL, IT WASN'T WORTH SENDING A MESSAGE TO RUSSIA'S LEADERSHIP TO CONDEMN ANTI-SEMITISM IN RUSSIA

In 1999, Hagel Was The Only Senator Not To Sign A Letter Condemning Anti-Semitism In Russia. “Jewish leaders are upset that Sen. Chuck Hagel was the only member of the Senate not to sign a letter urging Boris Yeltsin to speak out against growing anti-Semitism in Russia. An advertisement in Sunday's New York Times displayed a Senate letter signed by 99 senators with only Hagel's name missing. Hagel said Thursday he has taken even stronger and more effective action by writing President Clinton, asking him to appeal directly to Yeltsin to combat the anti-Semitic acts and rhetoric. But a trio of Jewish leaders in Lincoln said they wish Hagel had also joined his colleagues in signing the Senate letter.” (“Hagel Criticized Over Senate Letter To Yeltsin,” *The Associated Press*, 6/25/99)