



Hagel In A Pretzel

Obama's Nominee Is Changing His Tune On A Wide Range Of Critical Issues

HAGEL IS CHANGING HIS TUNE ON A MILITARY OPTION IN IRAN

THEN: While Visiting Pakistan In 2006, Hagel Said “A Military Strike Against Iran, A Military Option, Is Not A Viable, Feasible, Responsible Option.” “April 2006, while visiting Islamabad: ‘I would say that a military strike against Iran, a military option, is not a viable, feasible, responsible option. ... I believe a political settlement will be the answer. Not a military settlement. All these issues will require a political settlement.’” (Max Fisher, “Chuck Hagel’s Ambiguous Stance On Dealing With Iran,” [The Washington Post’s Worldview](#), 12/13/12)

- **At A 2010 Forum, Hagel Implied That U.S. Leaders Who Were Pushing For A Military Strike On Iran Were Living In An “‘Alice In Wonderland’ Type Of World.”** CHUCK HAGEL: “And the military option is always on the table – of course it is – for any sovereign nation. But at the same time we recognize that, that option is there. The leaders of our country, the leaders of the world are not living in an ‘Alice in Wonderland’ type of a world. They are living in a real world and they have to make real decisions based on what they calculate to be the dynamics and the facts as they are today. But probably more importantly, what they think they will be. That’s leadership.” (Chuck Hagel, Iran Issue Brief Launch, The Atlantic Council, Washington, DC, 11/8/2010)

NOW: In Meetings With Defense Department Officials, Hagel Is Now Saying He Thinks A Military Option Should Be Kept On The Table. “President Barack Obama’s pick for defense secretary, Chuck Hagel, is meeting with senior Pentagon staff to try to set the record straight about his stand on Iran, saying he backs strong international sanctions against Tehran and believes all options, including military action, should be on the table, defense officials said Wednesday.” (Lolita C. Baldor, “Chuck Hagel Iran Stance Clarified In Meetings With Senior Pentagon Staff,” [The Huffington Post](#), 1/9/13)

HAGEL IS CHANGING HIS TUNE ON HIS REFERENCE TO THE “JEWISH LOBBY”

THEN: In 2008, Hagel Claimed That “The Jewish Lobby Intimidates A Lot Of People Up Here.” 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)

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NOW: Hagel Apologized To Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz For His “Unfortunate Choice Of Words.” “Chuck Hagel’s years-ago use of the term ‘Jewish lobby’ offends Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz. But the Florida lawmaker and Democratic National Committee chairwoman said after speaking with Hagel yesterday, she is even more supportive of his nomination for defense secretary. ‘He was apologetic. He said he absolutely understands that it was an unfortunate choice of words,’ Wasserman Schultz told the *Tampa Bay Times* on Friday. ‘By the end of my conversation, he really put me at ease. I have a comfort level that I’m very glad that I have.’” (Alex Leary, “Chuck Hagel Apologizes To Wasserman Schultz About ‘Jewish Lobby’ Remark, Allays Other Concerns,” [The Tampa Bay Times’ The Buzz](#), 1/11/13)

HAGEL IS CHANGING HIS TUNE ON ABORTION RIGHTS IN THE MILITARY

THEN: Hagel Voted Four Times In Support Of The Department Of Defense’s Restriction Of Abortions At Military Bases. (S. 1050, [CQ Vote # 192](#): Amendment Rejected 48-51: R 5-46; D 42-5; I-1-0, 5/22/03, Hagel Voted Nay; S. 1059, [CQ Vote # 2514](#): Amendment Agreed To 52-40: R 5-38; D 47-2; 6/21/02, Hagel Voted Nay; S. 1059, [CQ Vote #148](#): Motion To Table Agreed To 51-49: R 49-5; D 2-44; 5/26/99, Hagel Voted Yea; S. 2057, [CQ Vote #176](#): Amendment Rejected 44-49: R 6-46; D 38-3; 6/25/98, Hagel Voted Nay)

NOW: Hagel Is Telling Senators That He Supports An Amendment That Would Allow Military Servicewomen To Receive Abortions. MSNBC’s RACHEL MADDOW: “Let me ask you one last question briefly about Chuck Hagel. You and I have talked about him before, since he’s been nominated. What do you know about how things are going for Senator Hagel in terms of trying to win over his critics? What’s happening with that nomination?” *THE ATLANTIC*’s STEVE CLEMONS: “I’ve communicated with him, and he is off meeting members of congress, over 24 senators in the last couple of days. He’s got a lot of other senators. And he is communicating to them that he is strongly supportive of the Shaheen Amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act that provides support for women in the military who’ve been raped, regarding abortions.” (MSNBC’s [“The Rachel Maddow Show,”](#) 1/11/13)

HAGEL IS CHANGING HIS TUNE ON GAY RIGHTS IN THE MILITARY

THEN: Hagel Wrote In A Letter To The Editor That Repealing Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell Would Impair “Military Effectiveness,” Which “Would Be Irresponsible And Dangerous.” “Among the reasons why then-Sen. Chuck Hagel opposed the repeal of the military’s ban on out gay service in 1999 was his concern that it could impair ‘military effectiveness,’ a common refrain of supporters of the ban. He wrote to *The New York Times* ‘anything that would jeopardize’ the country’s security ‘would be irresponsible and dangerous.’” (Chris Geidner, “Hagel Opposed DADT Repeal In 1999 As ‘Irresponsible And Dangerous,’” [BuzzFeed](#), 1/10/13)

NOW: According To *The Atlantic*’s Steve Clemons, Hagel Is Now Saying He Will Be “A Strong Leader” In The Process Of The Repeal Of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.” *THE ATLANTIC*’s STEVE CLEMONS: “He’s saying he is really going to be a strong leader inside the military of really dealing with something which is a taboo and horrible subject, which is rape in the military of American servicemen against American servicewomen, and also communicating that he’s going to be a strong and adamant advocate of continuing the process of aligning with the repeal of ‘don’t ask, don’t tell.’ So I think all of those messages he is communicating very solidly, and, you know, he’s just working senator through senator. I’m hearing it’s going well.” (MSNBC’s [“The Rachel Maddow Show,”](#) 1/11/13)