



Canadian Institute for Jewish Research
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ISRANET DAILY BRIEFING

Tuesday, February 26, 2013 Volume XI, No. 3,011 Yom Shlishi 16 Adar, 5773

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OBAMA'S HOLDING FIRM ON HAGEL NOMINATION THROWS HIS MIDDLE EAST, ISRAEL VIEWS INTO HIGH RELIEF

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Chuck Hagel's Plan for U.S. Forces in 'Palestine': Joseph Klein, *Front Page Magazine*, February 26, 2013—On the eve of a Senate vote to confirm Chuck Hagel as Secretary of Defense, a 2009 report co-authored by Hagel has surfaced titled "A Last Chance For A Two-State Israel-Palestine Agreement." It called for Israel to make "the hard compromises and painful concessions for peace" without asking anything comparable from the Palestinian side.

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PRESIDENT OBAMA, COME [TO ISRAEL] WITH POLLARD!

[Sign the Petition to Release Jonathan Pollard](#)

Dear President Obama:

We, the People of Israel, look forward hopefully and with pleasure to your visit to our country. In anticipation of this important occasion, we would like to appeal to you about a matter which is deeply troubling to every one of us. Our President, Shimon Peres, and our Prime Minister, Binyamin Netanyahu have both issued formal appeals to you on behalf of the People of Israel, imploring you to release Jonathan Pollard.

Jonathan Pollard has now served 28 years of a life sentence in American prisons. A few short weeks from now, he will mark his 10,000th day in jail. Both he and Israel have repeatedly expressed remorse. We have learned our lesson and have been living with the painful consequences for nearly 3 decades. We are encouraged by the appeals of Secretaries of State Kissinger and Schultz, among the many American officials calling for Jonathan Pollard's release, including many who have first-hand knowledge of the case, because of the gross disproportionality of his sentence. Jonathan's failing health lends urgency to their appeals.

We, The People, simple citizens of the State of Israel, sincerely hope that you will take this opportunity to respond positively to the many requests for Jonathan Pollard's release, including those made by Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Peres on our behalf.

We appeal to you as one who symbolizes the shared values of humanity, compassion and hope for a second chance, that both of our nations embrace. We implore you to commute Jonathan Pollard's sentence to time served without delay and allow him to live out his remaining days as a free man. It is our fervent hope and prayer that your upcoming trip to Israel will bring us the good news we have waited for, for so very long, and that this tragic and painful episode can finally be put to rest once and for all.

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WHY OBAMA PICKED HAGEL

Bob Woodward

[Washington Post](#), January 27, 2013

In the first months of the Obama presidency in 2009, Chuck Hagel, who had just finished two terms as a U.S. senator, went to the White House to visit with the friend he had made during the four years they overlapped in the Senate. So, President Obama asked, what do you think about foreign policy and defence issues?

According to an account that Hagel later gave, and is reported here for the first time, he told Obama: “We are at a time where there is a new world order. We don’t control it. You must question everything, every assumption, everything they” — the military and diplomats — “tell you. Any assumption 10 years old is out of date. You need to question our role. You need to question the military. You need to question what are we using the military for. “Afghanistan will be defining for your presidency in the first term,” Hagel also said, according to his own account, “perhaps even for a second term.” The key was not to get “bogged down.”

Obama did not say much but listened. At the time, Hagel considered Obama a “loner,” inclined to keep a distance and his own counsel. But Hagel’s comments help explain why Obama nominated his former Senate colleague to be his next secretary of defense. The two share similar views and philosophies as the Obama administration attempts to define the role of the United States in the transition to a post-superpower world. This worldview is part hawk and part dove. It amounts, in part, to a challenge to the wars of President George W. Bush. It holds that the Afghanistan war has been mismanaged and the Iraq war unnecessary. War is an option, but very much a last resort.

So, this thinking goes, the U.S. role in the world must be carefully scaled back — this is not a matter of choice but of facing reality; the military needs to be treated with deep skepticism; lots of strategic military and foreign policy thinking is out of date; and quagmires like Afghanistan should be avoided. The bottom line: The United States must get out of these massive land wars — Iraq and Afghanistan — and, if possible, avoid future large-scale war.

Although much discussion of the Hagel nomination has centered on his attitudes about Iran, Israel and the defence budget, Hagel's broader agreement with Obama on overall philosophy is probably more consequential. Hagel has also said he believes it is important that a defence secretary should not dictate foreign policy and that policy should be made in the White House.

He privately voiced reservations about Obama's decision in late 2009 to add 51,000 troops to Afghanistan. "The president has not had commander-in-chief control of the Pentagon since Bush senior was president," Hagel said privately in 2011.

If Hagel is confirmed, as appears likely, he and the president will have a large task in navigating this new world order. Avoiding war is tied directly to the credibility of the threat to go to war. Hagel's experience provides two unusual perspectives. The first is as a former E-5 Army sergeant in 1968, which he has described as "the worst year of the Vietnam War." In summation, another Vietnam must be avoided.

The second is the Georgetown University class that he taught called "Redefining Geopolitical Relationships." He asks the class the basic question: Where is all this going? For example, he has said that one result of the Iraq war has been to make Iran the most important country in the Middle East, and he worried that Iraq could become an Iranian satellite.

When I interviewed President Obama in the summer of 2010 for my book "Obama's Wars," his deeply rooted aversion to war was evident. As I reported in the book, I handed Obama a copy of a quotation from Rick Atkinson's World War II history, "The Day of Battle," and asked him to read it. Obama stood and read: "And then there was the saddest lesson, to be learned again and again . . . that war is corrupting, that it corrodes the soul and tarnishes the spirit, that even the excellent and the superior can be defiled, and that no heart would remain unstained."

"I sympathize with this view," Obama told me. "See my Nobel Prize acceptance speech." I had listened to the speech when he gave it, Dec. 10, 2009, and later read it, but I dug it out again. And there it was: "The instruments of war do have a role to play in preserving the peace. And yet this truth must coexist with another — that no matter how justified, war promises human tragedy. The soldier's courage and sacrifice is full of glory, expressing devotion to country, to cause, to comrades in arms. But war itself is never glorious" — Churchill had called it that — "and we must never trumpet it as such. So part of our challenge is reconciling these two seemingly irreconcilable truths — that war is sometimes necessary and war at some level is an expression of human folly."

That is probably the best definition of the Obama doctrine on war. Applying such a doctrine in today's dangerous and unpredictable world will be daunting — but on these issues Obama seems to have found a soul mate.

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CHUCK HAGEL'S PLAN FOR U.S. FORCES IN 'PALESTINE'

Joseph Klein

Front Page Magazine, Feb. 26, 2013

On the eve of a Senate vote to confirm Chuck Hagel as Secretary of Defense, a 2009 report co-authored by Hagel has surfaced titled "[A Last Chance For A Two-State Israel-Palestine Agreement](#)." It called for Israel to make "the hard compromises and painful concessions for peace" without asking anything comparable from the Palestinian side. Indeed, the report warned against "the Jewish-American and Christian Zionist groups that feel comfortable amplifying the positions of Israeli politicians hostile to hard compromise and painful concession."

One of Hagel's principal co-signatories on the report was Zbigniew Brzezinski, who had advised Obama on foreign policy during his first presidential campaign. Brzezinski has been openly hostile to Israel, accusing it of "brutal repression" and colonialism among other things – i.e., the Palestinian party line. Hagel was obviously not interested in teaming up with an objective analyst, as reflected in the report. Its tone was set when it questioned the historic "intimacy of the American-Israeli relationship," which it said is presenting "policy and security challenges for the U.S. in the Middle East and beyond."

The principal painful concession recommended in the report was a two-state solution that would result in Israel having to retreat largely behind the indefensible pre-June 1967 lines, with minor land swaps. President Obama's own proposal for a two-state solution mirrored this recommendation.

The report also endorsed a Jerusalem divided into two national capitals "with Jewish neighbourhoods falling under Israeli sovereignty and Arab neighbourhoods under Palestinian sovereignty." The reality on the ground, however, is that there is no such strict separation of populations all over Jerusalem. Rather there are some mixed Arab-Jewish neighbourhoods. Many Jerusalem-area Arabs also would not want to give up so easily the benefits of living under Israeli sovereignty, such as superior health care, social security and better access to jobs.

Christian holy places would be administered by Palestine, a dubious proposition considering the experience in Palestinian-administered Bethlehem where Christians were a majority in 1990 and constitute only 15% of the population today. Christians there found the same type of conditions that Christians in Egypt, Iraq, Libya and other Muslim-controlled countries and regions have encountered – beatings, Palestinian occupation of churches, discrimination and other forms of intimidation. The one safe haven for Christians in the Middle East turns out to be Israel, where the Christian population has grown nearly five-fold since Israel gained its independence in 1948.

The report envisions a non-militarized Palestinian state for at least a transitional period, which has about as much chance of succeeding as the failed plan for disarming Hezbollah and other militias in Lebanon. Who would enforce an imposed two state solution according to the recommendations signed off by Hagel? A "U.S.-led multinational force" which would be "under a UN mandate" and "feature American leadership of a NATO force supplemented by Jordanians, Egyptians and Israelis." Jerusalem would have "a special security and administrative regime of its own."

A NATO researcher estimated that about 60,000 US/NATO troops and about 160 billion dollars over 10 years would be required to carry out this UN mandate. Moreover, our troops would be sitting ducks for the kind of terrorist attacks that have killed thousands of American soldiers in Iraq, Afghanistan and Lebanon. And if the report's recommendation to include Jordanian and Egyptian soldiers in the U.S.-led multi-national force is followed, there is a risk of jihadists committing acts of terrorism from the inside as we have seen all too often in Afghanistan. The last thing we need to do is engage in another long nation-building exercise that Islamists will propagandize as a Western crusader occupation and use to recruit more foot soldiers for jihad.

In providing a thumb-nail revisionist history of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict by way of background, the report highlighted the "considerable and ongoing Palestinian suffering" that accompanied "the creation and sustaining of a democratic Jewish State in the wake of the Holocaust." This buys into the Palestinian

victimhood narrative that they were innocents forced to pay a heavy price for a European event in which they had no part. The truth is that the Palestinian leadership and its Arab neighbours threw away the chance for an independent Palestinian state which they could have had for the last sixty-four years. Moreover, the Palestinians under the leadership of such men as Haj Mohammed Effendi Amin el-Husseini collaborated with Nazi Germany. They ended up on the losing side, but still could have had their own state, living side by side in peaceful co-existence with Israel, if it weren't for their determination to destroy the Jewish state from its inception.

Hamas maintains the same rejectionist stance today, but the report bearing Hagel's name recommended U.S. engagement with the jihadist terrorist organization: In brief, shift the U.S. objective from ousting Hamas to modifying its behavior, offer it inducements that will enable its more moderate elements to prevail, and cease discouraging third parties from engaging with Hamas in ways that might help clarify the movement's views and test its behavior.

The idea that there are any "moderate elements" in Hamas is an oxymoron. Hamas is dedicated to the complete destruction of the Jewish state. This has not changed since the enactment of Hamas's founding charter, which remains in effect. Last December, for example, Hamas political leader Khaled Mashaal stated: "We are not giving up any inch of Palestine. It will remain Islamic and Arab for us and nobody else. Jihad and armed resistance is the only way. We cannot recognize Israel's legitimacy. From the sea to the river, from north to south, we will not give up any part of Palestine — it is our country, our right and our homeland."

So much for engaging Hamas on the contours of a two-state solution. In 2011, Hamas's former minister of "culture," Atallah Abu Al-Subh, called Jews "the most despicable and contemptible nation to crawl upon the face of the earth." Chuck Hagel as Secretary of Defense will be in a position to push the disastrous recommendations of the report he co-authored. It would not take much to convince Obama that they are worth trying, particularly if the UN puts its stamp of approval on the plan and it is conducted under the UN's auspices. Any Senator foolish enough to confirm Chuck Hagel, given his demonstrated incompetence, will also have to explain to U.S. soldiers put in harm's way if the recommendations endorsed by Hagel move forward.

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20 CRAZY THINGS HAGEL BELIEVES ABOUT ISRAEL

Joel B. Pollak

[Breitbart](#), Feb. 25, 2013

...Here is a partial list of the bizarre views on Israel that Democrats [and some Republicans] have proven willing to accept in a high official by backing Hagel to lead the Pentagon....

1. U.S. troops should be deployed to Israel and a new Palestinian state at the head of an international peacekeeping force.
2. The U.S. should negotiate with Hamas, a terror group devoted to Israel's total destruction, and which rejects talks or peace with Israel.
3. The U.S. should impose a peace deal on Israel and the Palestinians, if necessary.
4. The U.S. should not pressure the European Union to add the Hezbollah terror group to its official list of terror organizations--i.e. Hezbollah should be allowed to continue to raise money and to organize activities in Europe.
5. Israel should not have defended itself against cross-border raids and terror rockets during the Second Lebanon War.

6. It is acceptable to refuse to express solidarity with Israel when it faces a brutal terror campaign consisting almost entirely of suicide attacks against civilians, in violation of all laws of war.
7. It is appropriate to urge dialogue with Hamas even in the midst of a war in which that organization is firing a barrage of deadly rockets at Israeli civilians.
8. It is acceptable to decline to endorse almost every pro-Israel letter circulated in Congress.
9. It is appropriate to characterize Israel's future as "apartheid" if it does not make deep concessions as urgently as possible, despite the fact that Israel would have a sizable Jewish majority even including the West Bank.
10. Israel's supporters in the U.S., known as the "Jewish lobby" (or, as Hagel put it in his confirmation hearing, the "Israeli lobby) exert undue influence on foreign policy that the government must resist or ignore.
11. It is inappropriate to apply sanctions, unilateral or multilateral, to Iran in order to encourage compliance with binding UN resolutions about its nuclear program.
12. The U.S. must engage the Iranian regime diplomatically, opening a U.S. consulate in Tehran if possible, even if the Iranian regime rejects negotiations.
13. The U.S. should not attack Iran, even if the Iranian regime launches an attack that threatens Israel.
14. While it is right to pressure Israel, it is wrong to pressure Arab states to recognize Israel's right to exist.
15. It is acceptable to accept organizational funding from a known supporter of Hamas as well as from governments that refuse to recognize Israel, such as Saudi Arabia.
16. It is acceptable to be honored by an anti-Israel organization that named a scholarship after Helen Thomas even after she was exposed as an antisemite.
17. It is acceptable to distort essential facts of Israeli history, such as the substance of the Balfour Declaration, or the conduct of the Israeli military during the Second Lebanon War.
18. It is acceptable to describe the Israeli-Palestinian issue as the "core" of Middle East conflict.
19. It is acceptable to make politically convenient conversions on many of the above issues, even when those conversions fail serious examination by the Senate.
20. It is appropriate to mislead the Senate about recent speeches relevant to the issue....

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ON TOPIC

Hagel Proves Politicians Have no Shame: Jennifer Rubin, *Washington Post*, Feb. 26, 2013—Another day and another previously undisclosed Chuck Hagel speech replete with dumb and controversial remarks. Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan joins the government of Iran, the National Jewish Democratic Committee and, as far as we know, every Democratic U.S. senator in giving Hagel a thumbs' up to head the Pentagon.

Hagel's \$160 Billion 'West Bank' US Troops Deathtrap: Mark Langfan, *Arutz Sheva*, February 23, 2013—There is only one reason that Chuck Hagel was picked by President Obama to be US Defense Secretary, and why Obama will go nuclear to get him confirmed: Hagel is the only person alive now dumb enough to deploy US "peacekeeping" troops to what is surely a "West Bank" deathtrap.

Sleepy Chuck Hagel Has Some Bigger Questions to Answer: Jeffrey Goldberg, *Bloomberg*, Jan 31, 2013—During the 2008 U.S. presidential campaign, I interviewed then-Senator Barack Obama on the subject of the Middle East. Much of our discussion was pro forma -- he was trying to convince certain hawkish elements of the American Jewish community that he

wasn't Yasser Arafat in mufti -- and so he expressed, at some length, his appreciation for Israel as a haven for Jews and as a friend of the U.S.

Kerry, Hagel & 'Nam: The Dog That Didn't Bark: Seth Lipsky, *New York Post*, Feb. 22, 2013—Call it the dog that didn't bark. Both John Kerry, the new secretary of state, and Chuck Hagel, the defense secretary-designate, are Vietnam veterans. Both turned bitterly against the war — and that view plainly informs the sensibilities that have guided them ever since.

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